

February 2010

WILLIAMSBURG'S

Next Door Neighbors®

VOL.4, ISSUE 2

PRICELESS

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

Military in Our Midst

Maj. General Robert F. Dees

CWO4 Archie Walker
Colonel Julia Hamblet
Navy Spouse Michele Custis

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Williamsburg's Electric Sideshow

HOME

Caroline Powell
Aromatherapy

HEALTH

Dr. Gisela Fashing
A Woman in Dentistry



NEW!

Visit our website at www.wburgndn.com

Cover Photo by Lisa Cumming

eat. drink. think. save!



**Any Lunch or
Dinner Entree**

**10%
OFF**

with coupon

Limit one coupon per table.
Valid through 2/28/10.

Fork Tender Pot Roast • Grandma's Meatloaf • Jamaican Jerk
Chicken • The Ultimate Vegetarian • Down South • Soups & Salads
• Sandwiches and More!

NEW FOR SENIORS: "The Magic 55"
Healthier Sized Portions and Lower Prices

Please Join Us for Lunch or Dinner!

1647 Richmond Rd. • 757-645-4665
Open 11:30am Daily • foodforthoughtrestaurant.com

NDN012110

I grew up in Lynchburg, VA. There were no military bases there and to the best of my recollection I don't remember ever seeing any men or women in uniform with the exception of an occasional ROTC student in my high school. To me, people who served our country were people I saw on television or read about in the newspaper. They weren't my friends or neighbors.



Meredith Collins, Publisher

It wasn't until I met my husband who was in his 18th year of a military career that I first began to get an understanding of military life. However, I was never what is referred to as a "Navy wife". Being a late bloomer in marriage at age 38, my husband retired from the Navy just two years after we met.

I think I gained a better understanding of military life when I worked for Landmark Communications publishing military newspapers in places like Camp Lejeune, NC and Fort Hood, TX. Even then, however, I was still an observer. I worked on base but 'looked in from the outside'. I admired the men and women I got to know. I even thought I might have enjoyed the adventurous lives they had embarked on had I been young again and starting over. I also respected their culture which seemed to look after its own.

In Williamsburg, we are fortunate to be surrounded by military families - both active duty and retired. When we see someone in the Armed Forces, it isn't an unknown face on our television screen or a name in the newspaper; it is someone who is part of our community, someone we get to know as a friend and neighbor. Unlike people living in cities like my hometown, we have daily reminders of what people are doing to ensure our freedom. We should count ourselves lucky to experience these relationships on a personal level and feel fortunate that we have the military in our midst. NDN

"I have not had a recurrence of severe neck, upper back and arm muscle spasms since Dr. Shaye began treating me six years ago."

"I credit my ability to continue running and working out to Dr. Daniel Shaye who has been treating my degenerated disk at the base of my neck."

~ Col. Timothy Clapp
U.S. Army



**PERFORMANCE
Chiropractic, L.L.C.**

State of the Art With A Caring Touch

(757) 229-4161

www.performancechiropractic.com

- Chiropractic
- Acupuncture
- Massage Therapy
- Sports Medicine
- Seniors Welcome



Daniel Shaye
DC, CCSP, FIAMA



Haley Lauckern
DC



Beth Allar
NCMT

Inside

PAGE 3

Major General
Robert F. Dees

PAGE 15

Military Spouse
Michele Custis

PAGE 29

Health
Dr. Gisela Fashing

PAGE 6

CWO4
Archie Walker

PAGE 17

Lt Colonel
Doug Pietrowski

PAGE 34

Home
Caroline Powell

PAGE 8

Colonel
Julia Hamblet

PAGE 20

GUEST SPEAKER
Terri Harris

PAGE 39

Hey Neighbor!

PAGE 11

CWO
Robert Gremp

PAGE 23

Arts &
Entertainment



Lisa Cumming
Photography

www.lwcpphoto.com

757-532-4037

lwcpography@gmail.com

commercial

industrial

architectural

portrait

Cover Photo by Lisa Cumming

1307 Jamestown Road, Suite 103 in the Williamsburg Office Park

NEXT DOOR NEIGHBORS FEBRUARY 2010

Running a Race of Faith

By Linda Landreth Phelps

Major General (Ret.)

Robert F. Dees, Executive Director of Campus Crusade Military Ministry, appreciates a quote from the movie *Chariots of Fire*. In the scene where Olympic champion Eric Liddell is asked why he runs, he replies: "When I run, I feel God's pleasure." As a Christian, Liddell felt that true joy came with remaining steadfast in faith as he exercised the gifts he was given. General Dees, while running his own life's course in response to his calling, also experiences that joy.

General Dees's Army career began at West Point in the summer of 1968. His father, who was in the Army Air Corps in WWII, told him later in life that his fondest dream was that one of his sons would follow him into the Army. However, when General Dees was growing up, that thought never crossed his mind.

"Thanks to a Sunday school teacher and my grandmother I had become a person of faith at age 12, but as many do, I wandered away as a teenager. I played football in high school and one of the people recruiting me represented West Point. Unknown to us both at the time, he was also the father of a girl I had met and was dating seriously. Needless to say, I opted for West Point!" General Dees says with a chuckle.

West Point presented a new world for young General Dees. "The summer I arrived there they took away everything - my hair, my Pontiac, and my privileges; they called me a plebe. Pretty quickly I came to realize that if I had to depend on what I could dredge up from within myself, I might not come up with the right stuff.



About then a guy named Andy Seidel came into my world, a math instructor there who had attended the same high school in Houston, TX, but ten years before me. He and his wife, Gail, fed me enchilada dinners, encouraged me, and basically mentored me for four years," General Dees remembers. "Andy was active in Military Ministry [founded in 1964 at the special request of Campus Crusade founder, Bill Bright] and helped me realize that faith in the foxhole is very important. It was then that I committed my life to becoming a Christian missionary within the military."

When General Dees graduated from West Point in 1972, he married his high school sweetheart, Kathleen, and when they started a family they also recognized that it was equally essential to have hope on the home front.

The General is passionate when he talks about what makes a good leader. "A leader's responsibility, even if he or she is not a believer, is to recognize that the spiritual aspect of his people's lives is crucial. It is the seat of motivation, what drives a sense of right and wrong. Look at the statistics - military families today are unraveling in record numbers. The Department of Defense reports 28,000 divorces in the last year alone; that's 28,000 families who are affected forever!"

After many years of worldwide adventures in the U.S. Army, General Dees and Kathleen retired from the service. He worked for Microsoft as Executive Director of Defense Strategies for a time, and then began a career with Military Ministry,

whose many worthy goals include the support of a network of chaplains and commanders in all branches of the service.

Part of General Dees and Kathleen's mission is assisting these leaders in caring for the spiritual well-being of troops and their families through programs such as SWAT (Spiritual Wellness Assistance Team). Targeting returning troops and their families and individualized for each installation or community's needs, typical offerings will include military marriage seminars for couples reuniting after long deployments and

ABERDEEN BARN

The Best Beef About



\$42⁹⁵
a Couple

Valid thru
4/1/10

Start your evening with: A Basket of Our Sesame Seed Breadsticks and a Crock of Cheddar Cheese Spread

Followed by: Your choice of one of our homemade soups or salads: Broiled Onion Soup Au Gratin • Shrimp and Scallop Bisque • House Salad • Caesar Salad

Then: Choice of One Entrée per Individual: Roast Prime Rib of Beef Au Jus • Grilled New York Strip Steak • Broiled Seafood Combination of Fresh Sea Scallops, Salmon Fillet, Jumbo Gulf Shrimp

And Finally: The Motherlode for Two: Chocolate Chip Brownie Topped with Vanilla Ice Cream & Hot Fudge Sauce

Entrees served with choice of Baked Idaho Potato, Mashed Garlic Red-Skinned Potatoes, Wild Rice Blend, Fresh Steamed Broccoli, Steak Fries or Barn Fries.

Please Call for Reservations: 229-6661

1601 Richmond Rd., Rt. 60 West • Handicap Accessible
www.aberdeen-barn.com

Open
Daily at
5pm

church training conferences to help sensitize and equip church members to minister effectively to the special needs of their military families.

As an example of the ministry's assistance in specific problematic areas, one of the military's most difficult challenges has been dealing with the aftermath of psychological trauma. Not all wounds of war are visible to the casual observer. There are no scars, no missing limbs or halting steps to indicate that the battles some soldiers are still struggling with are against an invisible enemy.

"Every generation has its own name for it," General Dees says. "In the Civil War it was called 'soldier's heart', and in WWI, 'shell shock'. It was subsequently known as 'battle fatigue' in World War II, and as the fallout from the Vietnam conflict unfolded in the 1980's, it became universally defined as 'Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder' (PTSD). Men and women who suffer from PTSD's symptoms (which may include depression, guilt, irritability, flashbacks, insomnia, and distrust) fight daily battles to be able to function effectively in their careers as well as in society."

A proud military tradition and part of the Army's Ranger Creed is the promise to never leave behind a fallen comrade. Believing that applying purely secular solutions to what is essentially a spiritual wound is not fully effective. Military Ministry reaches out to rescue those who suffer from PTSD with a message of complete healing through faith in God. They strongly believe that healing the wounds of the heart, mind, and soul is the only thing that leads to real restoration and strength to face the future.

Nurturing a worldwide outreach system through their Internet ministry means they do not limit themselves to American forces alone. They also train, equip, and support indigenous military leaders as they build Christian ministries in their own nations. It's an ambitious project for what is essentially a small organization, but the needs are great and they are growing fast in size and impact.

Working for Military Ministry meant another move for General Dees and Kathleen, who chose to live in Williamsburg though the headquarters is in Newport News.

"After moving 23 times in 31 years while in the Army and four more times since we got out, we wanted to settle down and live in a place where we felt we could be part of a community," General Dees explains. "We found that in Ford's Colony, there are peers we felt we could develop long term relationships with. We liked the historic aspect of Williamsburg and the faith opportunities we've found in our church. Our current outreach to the troops means we travel frequently, but once I fully retire, I can foresee spending more time here and writing a book or two."

At a vigorous "almost 60", that day is still a long way off. As eventual as his present life is, General Dees looks for opportunities to get together with the family. Their son, Rob, Jr., now a Major and an instructor on staff at West Point, and their daughter, Allison, have made the Dees' grandparents five times over. All the cousins are close in age and all live in New York State.

"If we want to see them, we have to get creative," General Dees says. "We send them engraved invitations to attend 'Cousins Camp' with us at the Outer Banks. Parents are optional!" he laughs.

General Dees finds his busy life rewarding since there is much satisfaction in being an integral part of a ministry whose goals are eternal. He sees a great need, but he's running the race that is set before him with skill and unwavering determination. And as General Dees runs, he feels God's pleasure. NDN

For further information about Military Ministry, please contact General Dees at info@militaryministry.org, or visit their website, www.militaryministry.org



You are invited to meet
Aurelio Cabestrero, owner of
Grapes of Spain, at a special

Wine Tasting

February 13th
12 pm - 5 pm

1325 Jamestown Road, Williamsburg
(located at the historic Whitehall building)

757 - 253 - 1925

LA TIENDA
The Best of Spain

WWW.LATIENDA.COM

Gourmet food, wine and ceramics from Spain

ETHAN ALLEN®

established 1932

EXTRAORDINARY SAVINGS

UP TO

\$600 OFF

THE BENNETT SOFA

NOW \$1499

AS SHOWN
AVAILABLE IN 23 COLORS
STARTING FABRIC \$1299

LIMITED-TIME SAVINGS ON OUR FABULOUS
EVERYDAY PRICES. SAVE ON FURNISHINGS
FOR EVERY ROOM. GO TO ETHANALLEN.COM
FOR MORE GREAT STYLES AND SAVINGS.

WILLIAMSBURG

3032-1 richmond road route 60 west
local 757.565.0024 toll free 800.486.0024
monday-saturday 10-6

OFFER ENDS FEBRUARY 28, 2010.

PRICES SHOWN REFLECT SPECIAL SAVINGS
©2009 ETHAN ALLEN GLOBAL, INC.

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ARCHIE WALKER

A Love of Adventure

By Erin Zagursky

Chief Warrant Officer Fourth Class Archie Walker fell in love with skydiving just by watching it on TV. After high school he joined the Army to pursue that passion, never expecting that the military would become his career. But more than two decades later, he proudly retired from the service with a lifetime worth of experiences and an unexpected new passion: teaching.

In the years following his retirement, Chief Walker transitioned from teaching soldiers to teaching Virginia schoolchildren. Though he's now retired for a second time, he still seeks to challenge himself and others to continue learning and reach new heights.

As a child growing up in South Carolina, Chief Walker dreamed of becoming one of three things: a teacher, a policeman or an Army soldier.

"Following high school, I was seeking adventure," he said. "I love adventure and doing exciting things, so I enlisted in the military."

Beginning his career as a private in the late 1960s, Chief Walker went to jump school at Fort Benning, GA. He later became an infantryman and machine gunner with the Army's famous 82nd Airborne Division.

"I got a chance to jump on a frequent basis, from both helicopters and airplanes," he said, adding that the experience was more than what he had hoped for. "It was really exciting."

After about three years in the service, Chief Walker knew that he wanted to make the Army his career. However, he decided to change his career field, so he left the infantry and became a combat service supporter.



New challenges started right away when Chief Walker, who was only 20 at the time, was placed in charge of a warehouse with 10,000 items.

"I was responsible for the shipping, receiving and the inventory of those items," he said. "That was a very good start for me because it forced me to be very responsible at a very early age, and the challenges that I faced continued with teaching supply to all different grade levels."

Chief Walker's Army teaching career began when he was asked to teach the advanced individual course for soldiers who were just en-

tering the career field. He taught that course for four consecutive years. Later, he taught non-commissioned officers, warrant officers and finally commissioned officers. Chief Walker found that he enjoyed teaching and the new challenges it presented him.

"I like the challenge of conveying information, and I enjoy watching someone learn," he said. "I learned early on that everyone learns differently, so I learned to use different strategies depending on the audience."

Teaching also challenged Chief Walker to stay up-to-date on the latest technology and processes in his career field.

"I had to constantly research and constantly stay abreast of current strategies and current advances in the logistics field," he said. "I had to be aware of all of the computerized systems that we used. It was a huge challenge, but it was a good challenge because I reaped the rewards in the classroom on a daily basis when I interacted with the students."

When Chief Walker was not teaching other soldiers in the logistics field, he supported different combat arms units - including helicopter units, field artillery units and armored units - supplying all that they needed for their particular missions.

Chief Walker's assignments sent him all over the world: From Fort Lee, VA. to Augsburg, Germany to the Mechanicsburg Defense Depot in Pennsylvania to Worms, Germany and even Korea.

Near the end of his career, he served as a logistics advisor to the Bahrain Defense Force with the American Embassy in Bahrain. He is particularly proud of the work he did during this assignment, representing the American

Embassy.

“The Bahrainis bought various weapons systems from us: weapons, tanks and other various items, and I was responsible for helping them determine what secondary items they needed in order to sustain those weapon systems, so it was huge and quite a challenge,” he said.

In 1990, after 24 years of service to his country, Chief Walker retired from the Army. However, he was not yet done serving.

“When I retired, I continued teaching,” he explained.

Chief Walker went back to school and received his teaching certificate from Norfolk State University. He then took his first non-military teaching position in Henrico County, teaching elementary school children. After three years there, he began teaching at James River Elementary.

Though Chief Walker had years of experience in the classroom, he found that teaching children presented a whole new set of challenges for him.

“I discovered in teaching elementary school students that I had to be totally conscious of what they were receiving, of what they were comprehending,” he said. “I had to be able to determine their level of background knowledge and also be able to fill in that gap. The military prepared me in so many different ways. The military has instilled in me this confidence. I feel that I can meet any challenge and I love challenges. I always thrive on challenges but I think that the military reinforced that based on the fact that I was given those opportunities and had a chance to perform in those various positions and be successful.”

After ten years teaching at James River Elementary, Chief Walker retired for a second time. Yet, the teacher and veteran still seeks to use his skills to teach children.

He plans to volunteer at James River Elementary again, and he currently teaches the high school Sunday School class at the Fort Eustis Regimental Chapel where he attends church. Chief Walker is also beginning to revive a mentoring organization called “To Teach One” that he had begun earlier.

“What it entails is eliciting volunteers from the campus and community and matching them with students,” he explained.

The group previously met on Saturdays throughout the school year and provided tutoring in math and reading for children in grades three through seven.

No matter what Chief Walker takes on next, he says that his experience with the military has forever shaped his life. He said he has always sought to honor the Army’s seven core values: *loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage*. The father of five and grandfather of four, Chief Walker said he has also tried to pass some of the lessons he learned in the military to his children, including the need to be financially and emotionally independent.

“That’s definitely something I learned in the military because when I went in, the pay scale was quite small and that taught me the need to be financially independent,” he said. “And in order to be successful in the military you definitely have to be emotionally sound and I try to instill in my children that they need to be emotionally independent, in other words, don’t be afraid to ask for help but try things on your own - but know when to ask for help.”

A self-described “fitness freak,” Chief Walker – who played competitive volleyball and racquetball while in the service - has also tried to impress upon his children the importance of health. Looking back now on all those years of fitness tests, teaching and traveling in the military, Chief Walker said it went by in a flash.

“My 20 plus years vanished,” he said. “It went by so fast, it’s unbelievable. When you’re having fun, time passes. I have nothing but fondness for my time in the military.” NDN

Love • Money Control



Dick Ferris

Answers from your Estate Planning Attorneys
at Ferris & Associates, P.C.

460 McLaws Circle, Suite 200 Williamsburg, VA 23185

In this issue, we will focus on two commonly asked questions: What is estate planning? and What are the traditional methods of estate planning?

A proper estate plan is a means of preserving and controlling the wealth you have worked for and accumulated during your life so that you may protect yourself and your loved ones either at your incapacity or at your demise. In short, an estate plan will enable you to achieve the definition of estate planning that clients of our firm have expressed to us:

“I want to control my property while I am alive and well, care for myself and my loved ones if I become disabled, and be able to give what I have to whom I want, the way I want, and when I want, and, if I can, I want to save every last tax dollar, attorney fee, and court cost possible.”

There are five techniques that are traditionally used in basic estate planning and everyone, in some manner, is using at least one of these techniques. Let’s briefly look at each one.

INTESTACY. A majority of Americans die without a will or trust. This is called intestacy; giving the state the right to decide who will receive your property. Property that passes by intestacy goes through a probate process which is almost identical to the probate process for a Last Will & Testament.

WILL PLANNING. A Last Will & Testament is a legal document that states how a person wants his or her estate distributed at death. A Will guarantees probate. Probate is a court and administrative proceeding. It is required to manage and distribute a decedent’s estate at death.

JOINT TENANCY WITH RIGHTS OF SURVIVORSHIP. Most married couples own their property as joint tenants or tenants by the entirety. Sometimes you will also see a parent name a child as a joint tenant on a bank or brokerage account to facilitate the payment of expenses and bills. The key element in Joint Tenancy is its survivorship feature. The last joint tenant to survive receives the entire property.

BENEFICIARY DESIGNATIONS. Some types of property pass at the death of the owner to those listed in the beneficiary designation. Some examples of these assets are life insurance, IRAs, 401(k)s, annuities and pension plans.

REVOCABLE LIVING TRUST (RLT). A RLT is a written document wherein you, or you and your spouse, as the Trustmaker(s) of the trust appoint yourself as your own Trustee and lifetime beneficiary. Most of your assets will be re-titled in the name of the Living Trust. As Trustee, you have 100% control over your assets: you can sell assets, buy assets, add and remove assets at any time. The trust includes specific instructions for your disability or your death and names who will become your Successor Trustee(s) and remainder beneficiaries. The RLT is often referred to as a “will substitute” for the transfer of wealth at death.

For additional insights into each of these estate planning methods, plan to attend one of the no cost educational workshops in our Boardroom. See our website, www.ferrisandassociates.com, for the dates and times.

Please call us with any questions you may have. (757) 220-8114.

COLONEL JULIA HAMBLET

A Lifetime of Service

By Brandy Centolanza

While today it is commonplace to see a female hold rank in the military, such wasn't the case when Colonel Julia "Judy" Hamblet first joined the Marine Corps Reserve during World War II.

Col. Hamblet, now 93, decided to follow in the footsteps of her two older brothers and join the military at a time when patriotism was high in America. Her brother, Phil, was in the Army, while the other brother, Newt, was in the Navy. Col. Hamblet decided to sign up for the Marine Corps Reserve.

"It was a time when everyone wanted to do what they could do for their country," Col. Hamblet recalls. "I had been very fortunate in my life, and I just wanted to give back. I wanted to do what my country was asking me to do."

The year was 1942, and Col. Hamblet, fresh out of Vassar College with a degree in economics, was employed by the United States Information Service (later called the United States Information Agency, which dissolved in 1999). She was offered an opportunity to work in Australia, but instead enlisted in the military. In February 1943, Col. Hamblet became the first woman officer candidate in the Marine Corps Reserves.

Col. Hamblet, who was raised in Massachusetts, underwent training at Mount Holyoke College, learning the basic military rules, regulations, and courtesies in just six weeks.

"They really wanted to get women in uniform," she says.



She moved on to more advanced training at Hunter College in the Bronx, and graduated as a first lieutenant in May 1943.

A few months later, Col. Hamblet found herself at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, overseeing the women's training battalion there. She was quickly transferred to Camp Pendleton in California, where she was named an Executive Officer of the Women Marine Reserve Company and promoted to Captain. She also headed officer training in Quantico,

VA. Between 1943 and 1945, she helped train hundreds of female officer candidates.

In addition to training for service, Col. Hamblet also aided women with the transition to civilian life following their time as Marines. Beauty courses were offered as well as social courses to help them become acclimated back into society.

"These were mothers, and sisters, and aunts," she points out. "We had an obligation to them. We took care of them."

After the war, in 1946, Col. Hamblet traveled to England, intent on seeking a Master's Degree in Economics from the London School of Economics, but before she could enroll, the Commandant asked her to return to head up the post-war Marine Corps Women's Reserve. Eventually, Col. Hamblet was named Director of the Women's Marine Corps, after a law was passed in 1948 enabling women to enlist in the regular military services (until then women were only permitted to serve in the reserve). After nine years as a Director, Col.

Hamblet sought a change.

"I served the longest of any female Director and was the youngest of any female Director," she says. "I felt I was blocking other women from being Director. I wanted other women to have that chance to move up."

Col. Hamblet asked to be reassigned, and was sent overseas as a military secretary to the Commander in Chief of NATO's Southern Command, which included Italy, Greece, and Turkey. The exposure to such varying cultures

At Sentara, You Get More Than Just A Mammogram.



Sentara breast care patients benefit from the area's only full-time radiologists with fellowship training in breast imaging. Along with this unrivaled expertise, our convenient, comprehensive breast centers offer a high-risk assessment program. Patients also receive personalized assistance from a nurse navigator through every phase, including thorough and coordinated follow-up care. These measures of quality are why three Sentara comprehensive breast centers were among the first in the nation to be accredited by the National Accreditation Program for Breast Centers, a prestigious program that sets rigorous standards for breast care.

THREE NATIONALLY ACCREDITED CENTERS

Sentara Williamsburg Comprehensive Breast Center
Women's Imaging Pavilion • (757) 345-4000

Dorothy G. Hoefler Comprehensive Breast Center
Sentara Port Warwick • (757) 594-1899

Sentara Leigh Comprehensive Breast Center
Sentara Leigh Hospital • (757) 261-5738

excited her.

"That was definitely a fascinating assignment, probably the most interesting one I've ever had," Col. Hamblet says. In 1961, she returned statewide to Parris Island in South Carolina, and retired as a Colonel four years later.

Col. Hamblet, who admits that she did not foresee a career in the military, reflects fondly on her time in the service, especially the camaraderie between her and the other women.

"I loved America and everything it stood for," she says. "At the time, it was a privilege, an honor to serve my country. There was no question about serving. I enjoyed the whole feeling of serving, of doing a job, of working side-by-side with someone. You never let your buddy down."

After retiring from the military, Col. Hamblet delved into a new arena as an administrator in the United States Office of Education. She worked for a few years in Washington, DC before moving to Seattle, WA to head up the student loan program for four states: Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska.

"I realized that I knew more about the world than I did my own country," she says. "I had never been to the Northwest, so that is why I asked to go out there."

Twelve years into her second career, Col.

Hamblet retired for good, and in 1978 she settled in Alexandria, VA. Though she was finished with work, she hardly sat idle. Col. Hamblet spent the next several years volunteering for various organizations, including her local church, YMCA, American Red Cross, Republican Headquarters, as well as with the Smithsonian Institution.

Col. Hamblet began looking for a retirement community, and in 1986, found Williamsburg Landing, where she has resided ever since. A few close friends chose to make the move to Williamsburg with her, including Rita Bass, who has known Col. Hamblet since Col. Hamblet was a mere 10-years-old.

Laughs Col. Hamblet: "We have known each other 83 years. That's a very long time. Who else has known someone for 83 years? We have just always, always kept in touch."

Col. Hamblet, who spent ten years volunteering with the Williamsburg Regional Library, continues to volunteer, now mostly within Williamsburg Landing, sitting on various boards and committees, and is currently involved with the activities committee.

"There is always something going on here on a daily basis," she says. "I enjoy being in Williamsburg. I just love the feel of it. I'm keeping busy. I'm loving life." NDN

Next Door Neighbors

Publisher.....Meredith Collins
Managing Editor.....Joe Collins
Copy Editor.....Al White
Lifestyle Editor.....Greg Lilly
greglilly@cox.net
Arts & Entertainment Editor.....Sara E. Lewis
saraelewis@cox.net
Cover Photographer.....Lisa Cumming
Graphic Designer.....Sue Etherton

Writers

Linda Landreth Phelps, Rachel Sapin, Brandy Centolanza, Muna Killingback, Natalie Miller-Moore, Alison Johnson, Ryan Jones, Lillian Stevens, Erin Zagursky

Advertising Information

(757) 560-3235 or www.wburgndn.com

Please email your questions, comments and ideas to: meredith.collinsgroup@cox.net

Next Door Neighbors is a monthly, direct-mailed magazine serving the residents of the Williamsburg area. Circulation: 36,525



COLLINS GROUP

PO Box 5152, Williamsburg, VA 23188

Quilts & Textiles



Quilts • Coverlets

Sewing Items • Quilting Squares

- Furniture
- Art Work
- Militaria
- La Petite Tearoom
- Estate Jewelry
- Silver
- Collectibles
- Vintage Clothing

45,000 square feet of Antiques - Over 300 dealers

(757) 565-3422

Open 7 Days a Week

Monday - Saturday, 10 AM to 6PM Sunday, 12 Noon to 5PM

500 LIGHTFOOT ROAD

www.antiqueswilliamsburg.com



Kathy Yent
*Expert in Quilts
and Coverlets*



CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER ROBERT GREMP

A Military Way of Life

By Ryan Jones


When Robert (Bob) Grempe made his way over to the Chicago, IL recruiting office in the fall of 1952, it is unlikely his imagination would have stretched far enough to allow him to foresee the rich storehouse of memories he would collect over the next 27 years while serving in the United States Navy. Retiring over 20 years ago as a Chief Warrant Officer (WO), Grempe has found that he is able to swap war stories with the best of them as he recounts tales that include several successful missions

through potentially mine-infested waters in the Pacific, participation in a blockade of enemy ships near Cuba as the world hovered on the brink of nuclear war, and marrying the girl of his dreams while living on a tropical island.

A colorful picture of Bermuda centered carefully on the living room wall and a small container of Nellie & Joe's Key Lime Juice on the kitchen counter offer an appropriately balmy introduction to the Grempe's home in Patriot's Colony. Echoing the relaxed island

lifestyle the couple enjoyed while WO Grempe was stationed in Key West, FL, their home is warm, bright, and welcoming. Though they still prefer tropical breezes to cold winter air, they are both enthusiastic as they reflect on their life in Williamsburg, expressing particular appreciation for the time they are able to spend among friends and neighbors with similar backgrounds in their small community.

"Around here, you hear a lot of neat stories," says WO Grempe. "That's one of the best things



Discover the peaceful balance of vibrant health

Anahata Yoga Center
104 Bypass Rd., Williamsburg
253-0080
www.williamsburgyoga.com

GIVE US ONE NIGHT...WE'LL GIVE YOU A BETTER DAY!
I PROMISE.



Affordable Quality Custom Made Mattresses

We custom make our mattresses with a 90 day comfort guarantee at prices that suit your budget. Queen mattresses starting at \$699.



6961 Richmond Road • (757) 564-7378 • www.bedcraftersbymichelle.com

Questions About the Real Estate Market?

I have the Answers!

Call Me!

cell phone
757-570-4076



William E. Wood and Associates REALTORS

Robert Marakos

rmarakos@williamewood.com

Why Walsingham?



"Because Walsingham is an established educational setting that nurtures the development of advanced academics.

It provides the spiritual atmosphere we want for our child while encouraging individuality, diversity and community responsibility."

Randy and Arnetta Hamrick
Parents of Leyjah - 2nd grade

Come see for yourself! Join us for an
Open House - January 31, 2010
from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

What will YOUR reason be?

Academics • Spiritual Growth • Athletics •
Community • Opportunity

Walsingham Academy is a distinguished Catholic, Christ-centered community for Academic Excellence serving Pre-K—12th grade students in Williamsburg, Virginia.

Contact Walsingham Academy at 757-259-1430 for information.
www.walsingham.org

We Salute Our Military!



To honor our military, bring us your valid Military ID with this ad and receive

10% Off All Service

Includes Active Duty and Retired

Offer Expires February 28, 2010

Let us help you extend the life of your European car.

AUDI/VW • BMW/MINI • JAGUAR • MERCEDES-BENZ • SAAB • VOLVO



421 East Rochambeau Drive (757) 220-9660
www.eurocarsofwmsbrg.com

here - the comradery, openness, and friendship among people. We all speak the same language."

The language spoken among veterans and other retired government workers in Patriot's Colony is one that is easily recognized by scores of men and women who have devoted time and talent to serving and protecting our country in the various branches of the U.S. armed services. WO Grempp remembers approaching the military fresh out of high school with dreams of adventure on the high seas and a desire to follow an inner call to patriotic service. He is quick to recall some of the details of his first deployment off the coast of Japan as the Korean War raged in the early 1950's.

"My specialty was anti-submarine warfare, so I was into sonar and things like that," he says.

The ship WO Grempp served on was a "minesweeper" that frequently scanned the blue waters of the Pacific Ocean for the presence of explosive mines. He remembers learning procedures for disabling a variety of mine types, and recalls being sobered when he was told that the old WWII ship to which he had been assigned was moderately damaged from previous mine sweeps. WO Grempp soon found that life on the open sea was no picnic.

"The ships that were built during WWII were not designed for comfort - it was the bare necessities," WO Grempp says. "After three days, we were out of fresh bread. Then it was dried milk and powdered eggs. Timed showers were required to conserve water, and by the end of a month, we were running out of fuel, water, and food. Those were interesting times."

As the 1950's came to a close, WO Grempp found himself stationed in the pleasantly remote island of Key West, FL, a quiet location with a large military presence and an average annual temperature of 77 degrees. "When I got there in 1959, there were still planes flying down to Havana, Cuba, which is roughly 90 miles off the coast of Key West," says WO Grempp. He smiles as he quickly adds, "It wasn't recommended, though."

WO Grempp remembers being assigned to a Destroyer during the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.

"We spent the whole crisis sitting off the coast of Havana, essentially blockading," he recalls. "Once, we had to go down and take pictures and run surveillance on a Russian freighter. You could see the missiles on the deck."

He chuckles as he remembers trying to keep busy during mostly uneventful days of guard duty during the crisis.

"One day, a reporter from the Miami Herald decided to get permission to come down and take some pictures. As his plane came down, he saw our Destroyer and directed the pilot over that way. Noticing an airplane in the sky, we decided to have a tracking drill. We turned on the radar and pointed our guns in that direction."

Seeing the huge guns aboard the Destroyer swiveling to take aim at his small airplane gave the big-city reporter second thoughts about conducting a "hands-on" photo shoot during a national emergency.

"He wrote an article about how alert we were," says WO Grempp, laughing at the memory.

After the crisis passed and the political waters calmed a little, WO Grempp continued to spend his time aboard an old WWII Destroyer testing and evaluating more effective methods of utilizing sonar detection. It was while stationed in Key West that he met his wife, Betsy. As a civil service employee, Betsy worked on base at the communications station.

STOP THE EXCUSES!

Get Fit & Healthy in 2010!



Jere Denton



Peggy McDonald Howells

Fitness Together Helped Us Reach and Surpass Our Fitness Goals!



Margaret Wiley



Kathryn Hamrick

We Wanted to Get Fit and Healthy... and We Did!

"After 40 years of not exercising, Fitness Together has gotten me back in the habit. They actually have me enjoying that feeling that comes after a good workout. More importantly, they have supported me in reaching my long term goals through both diet and exercise. The staff encourages me to push myself and build confidence in what my body can do. They are a wonderful team. No wonder three friends recommended them to me."

~ Jere Denton

"Nearly two and a half years ago, I signed up with Fitness Together. I had to do something to improve my health and lifestyle. At 72, my joints ached, my steps were slower and I was feeling what I thought were the effects of aging! One-on-one workouts with a trainer was a new concept for me. I have since realized that this arrangement is ideal - sessions are geared to the competency of the client. The trainers at Fitness Together are very professional and outstanding individuals!"

~ Peggy McDonald Howells

"Fitness Together is a great place to go to achieve your fitness goals. The trainers provide one on one training, discuss better eating habits and provide accountability. The FT trainers know how to balance accountability with results. I would recommend Fitness Together to anyone looking to lose weight, get in better shape or feel healthier overall."

~ Margaret Wiley

"I can't say enough good things about my experience with Fitness Together. I wholeheartedly recommend them to anyone who is willing to make the investment in fitness or weight loss goals. After a difficult pregnancy interrupted my active lifestyle, I found myself flabby, unhealthy, and terribly out of shape. After training at FT this past fall, I have lost weight, gained muscle, and am beginning to feel like myself again!"

~ Kathryn Hamrick

**Make 2010
the Year
You Change
Your Life!**



FITNESS TOGETHER
1 Client 1 Trainer 1 Goal

757-345-2246

www.ftwilliamsburg.com

4854 Longhill Rd. in the Olde Towne Square Plaza

**Second Location
Now Open!**

1408 N. Great Neck Road
Virginia Beach, VA

757-412-0700

Breakfast Time!

at Williamsburg's Best Kept Secret... Baker's Crust for Breakfast!

only
\$3.99
WITH COUPON
Expires 02/07/10

Saturday 8 a.m. - 11 a.m.
Sunday 8 a.m. - 12 noon
Beverages, tax and gratuity not included.
Dine In Only. One Coupon per Person.



BAKER'S CRUST
"Eat well. Be happy."

5234 Monticello Ave.
(Next to Trader Joe's)
(757) 253-2787



VOTED
#1 NEW
RESTAURANT!
'09 VIRGINIA GAZETTE'S
BEST OF WILLIAMSBURG
READER'S SURVEY

SPECIALTY OMELETTES
BELGIAN WAFFLES
BAKER'S BREAKFAST
CROISSANTS
HEALTHY BREAKFASTS & MORE!

www.bakerscrust.com

PEACE OF MIND IS ACHIEVABLE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

No matter your lifestyle or lifestage, plan now to attend our popular educational workshop and delicious dinner, *free*.



John M. Sadler
Attorney at Law

In under two hours learn how peace of mind through proper estate planning can be yours.

Choose Thursday, January 28
or Wednesday, February 3
6:00pm - 8:00pm

CITIES GRILLE, Rt 5,
Governors Green Shopping Center

Event is free, space is limited.

To register, call 229-5510 or visit our website.



**WILLIAMSBURG
ESTATE PLANNING**

115 Bulifants Boulevard, Suite A, Williamsburg, VA
757-229-5510 | www.WilliamsburgEstatePlanning.com

Betsy has fond memories of their life together, both before and after getting married on the small island. She remembers the warm night in July, 1969 when she and WO Grempe joined the rest of the world in watching the crew on board the Apollo 11 spacecraft as they readied for their mission to the surface of the moon. After watching the liftoff on TV, she and WO Grempe quickly moved outside for a better view.

"We got on the roof of the Bachelors Officer's Quarters on base. In the distance, we could see the rocket because it was so dark. It took off from Cape Canaveral, and we watched it go up. It was the neatest thing," she says.

They were both disappointed when continued government downsizing finally closed the Key West Naval Base. By then, Betsy had been moved over to the Commanding Officer's staff. She wistfully remembers writing down the Commanding Officer's final speech to the troops, distributing last paychecks, and watching the base flag go down with the setting of the warm tropical sun. Packing their clothes, furniture, and hundreds of good memories, the couple reluctantly headed north to start a new life far from the subtropics. They eventually found themselves over a thousand miles from their old home as WO Grempe was transferred to the Norfolk Naval Base.

"I forgot how the seasons went!" Betsy laughs as she remembers their first winter here. "I was used to going to work in sandals. I didn't have a winter coat. All of a sudden it got cold - I had to call a neighbor to help show me how to turn on the heat!"

Fortunately, the years were good to the two islanders as they successfully learned to adapt to colder winters on the mainland in the Old Dominion. Having lived in several southeastern Virginia locations, both say they have grown to love the quiet, close knit community they enjoy as next-door neighbors in Williamsburg.

"It's just such a neat little town," says Betsy. "There's so much you can do and it's so quiet and comfortable. Even with all of the tourist activity, you still get the feel of a small town."

With their thoughts turning to the future, the WO Gremps express appreciation and concern for the new generation of troops that protect our country both at home and abroad.

"I think we have to do everything we can do to support them," WO Grempe says thoughtfully. "I think we should take time to look at the progress they are making over there. They're putting in water works, electrical systems, and water treatments. Sometimes we don't hear about that."

Betsy agrees with her husband as she gives voice to the admiration she feels as she watches our nation's brave soldiers at work. She also acknowledges the compassion that naturally flows from the heart of a seasoned military mom of two.

"I think I would just hug them all and cry," Betsy says as she considers what she would say if given a chance to speak to our troops.

If it can ever be done, there is little doubt that the Gremps will try to find a way to bottle up one of those perfect Key West island sunsets and send it packing next to a slice of Nellie and Joe's Key Lime Pie for our troops to enjoy as they serve our country overseas. Today, they focus on something a little more practical and a lot more valuable. WO Grempe nods his approval as he joins his island sweetheart in sending out a heartfelt declaration of faith and an expression of sincere gratitude for the military in our midst... spoken in language that can be felt and understood by anyone who shares the heart of a patriot: "God bless them all." NDN

ON BEING A MILITARY SPOUSE

By Alison Johnson

To Michele Custis, the first homecoming – the first time a loved one comes home after a long deployment – is perhaps the most important moment in the life of a military spouse.

The amazement, joy and power of that event have stayed with Michele every day, whether she's juggling four children and her own college coursework and career, fearing her husband might have to deploy to a war zone or thinking about the future of her oldest child, who recently joined the Air Force.

"After you've had that homecoming feeling, you know a time that feels like an eternity will come to an end," says Michele, whose husband served 22 years in the Navy, the latter part in security. "As horrible as a separation is, you can hold on to that. Everyone has seen the pictures of kids running up to their dad when he returns, but you can't even put into words how intense the feelings are when you're actually there."

Michele, a 40-year-old Web Designer, doesn't come from a military background, although her husband's grandfather and father both served in the Navy. The grandfather, a Navy man for more than 30 years, was in Pearl Harbor as a member of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team when it was bombed.

"There is a great deal of family pride tied to this family's military history," Michele says.

Michele grew up in the bucolic, snowy Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania and was



working for Blue Cross/Blue Shield in New York City when she met her future husband, MAC(SW) (Ret) George R. Custis IV, on a blind date. They were engaged two months later, married four months later. They now have four children: sons Andrew, 20; Rue, 16; Marc, 13; and daughter NovaLee, 8.

While her husband, who goes by "Rik," was deployed to Japan and Korea right before their wedding, his assignments since then have kept

the couple in America. They have lived in New Jersey, New York, Texas and Virginia. "I kind of got ripped off when it comes to the international travel thing," Michele jokes.

Rik's first six-month cruise was tough on Michele. "I'm driving home on the highway thinking it's pouring rain, but it's just me crying," she remembers. "I definitely should have pulled over. But then each day chips a little bit of that sadness away because you think, 'OK, I made it through that day.' You just try to keep yourself and your kids busy."

Michele has experienced her share of emotionally draining moments. Rik has been cut off from communicating with his family for weeks when at sea. In 1991, he was working near Kuwait just before the United States went to war with Iraq.

"I'm thinking, 'Please, please just get him out of there,'" Michele remembers. "Not knowing what's happening is tough. He got home right before the bombing began – literally the day before."

A bigger scare for Michele came in 2007, when her husband was chosen to go to Iraq for a 15-month deployment. There, he would lead convoys out of the "Green Zone," a heavily-guarded diplomatic and government center in Baghdad. Michele had more than a month to prepare for him leaving, and she grew increasingly terrified.

"I just had this real gut feeling that if he went, he wouldn't come back," she says. "It got so far along that I had to take him to the airport

and say goodbye, which was the worst thing I ever went through. He flew to North Carolina for two weeks of preparation, and somehow they decided they didn't need him in Iraq after all. When he came home, there were so many tears of relief."

Rik did have to deploy for a year, but instead of Baghdad, he went to Diego Garcia, an island in the Indian Ocean. The island is home to satellites for global positioning systems and landing sites for refueling planes – as well as palm trees and plenty of seafood. "He would tell us it would be paradise if he had his family with him," Michele notes.

Instead, Rik made a teddy bear with a voice recording for his young daughter to hug and watched from afar, via a Web camera, as his children opened their Christmas presents. The family used his image from the computer to include him on their Christmas card. "You come up with ingenious ways to keep them connected," Michele says.

Rik also had to rely on friends to take care of Michele when she went to the emergency room with wrenching stomach pains and needed gallbladder surgery. "He'll still look at my scars and apologize for not being here," she says.

When one of his sons balked at tackling schoolwork usually done with his dad, Rik talked to him over the phone; he also advised his wife on what to do when their car needed work. However, Michele didn't brief him on every problem and worry she had, such as a bad grade for one of the kids.

"You do censor yourself a bit," she says. "You don't want to upset them when they're not here and will only feel helpless. You find other people you can reach out to. You make sacrifices for each other."

Asked what might surprise people about military life, she notes all of the ways a spouse can contribute, such as planning a party for the children of an entire ship's crew to crafting a flag for their unit. "The military allows us to become an integral and truly vital part in our spouses' careers," she says. "Where else do you get that?"

The juggles of a military spouse aren't easy, Rik recognizes. "It's tough, really tough, to maintain the household on your own," he says. "You have to take on both the mother and father role. I'd say it's the toughest job there is." Still, the couple also believes strongly in the saying that absence makes the heart grow fonder.

"People don't understand how you can deal with (deployments), and it can feel unfair and frustrating," Michele says. "But at the same time, it does have some benefits. You gain such an appreciation for each other and for what the other person does. With us, it made us stronger."

In fact, Michele is happy that her three sons appear to be following in their father's military footsteps. After staying home to help his mother during Rik's year-long deployment – during which time she earned a degree in Web Design from ECPI – Andrew is now in Air Force boot camp in Texas. He will train in aviation electronics until summer, after which time the family isn't sure where he might go. Rue and Marc also have expressed interest in joining the Air Force.

While there is always some motherly fear of a tragedy, Michele's pride comes in knowing her children are looking to the military for the same reasons that her husband did. "The whole point is that you're willing to sacrifice your life for your country," she says. "You don't go in for some easy ride. If you're not willing to have that mentality, then you don't belong there." NDN

CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT UNIVERSITY'S



Your ticket to a Signature Season!

Text Arts to 757411 for special offer (Standard text messaging rates apply)

<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">Band of the Irish Guards</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">ROYAL REGIMENT OF SCOTLAND</p>  <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">JANUARY 21 AT 7:30 PM</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">THE SPENCERS</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">THEATRE OF ILLUSION</p>  <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">FEBRUARY 6 AT 7 PM</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">DIRECT FROM MOSCOW, RUSSIA</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">MOSCOW STATE RADIO SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">Alexander Sinchuk, Pianist</p>  <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">FEBRUARY 12 AT 8 PM</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">London Philharmonic Orchestra</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">Vladimir Jurowski, Principal Conductor</p>  <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">MARCH 4 AT 7:30 PM</p>	<p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">Moscow Festival Ballet</p> <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">Swan Lake & Coppelia</p>  <p style="color: white; font-weight: bold;">MARCH 6 AT 2 PM & 8 PM</p>
--	---	---	--	--

Join the E-club at www.fergusoncenter.org • www.ticketmaster.com • (800) 745-3000





LTC DOUG PIETROWSKI SHAPING THE LIVES OF OTHERS

By Lillian Stevens

*L*ieutenant Colonel (LTC) Doug Pietrowski is the Chair of the Department of Military Science at the College of William and Mary, a post he has held for nearly two years. He also commands the Revolutionary Guard Battalion, which consists of some 120 cadets from William and Mary and Christopher Newport University. Classroom courses are taught at both schools, with field leadership training conducted at sites such as Ft. Eustis, the Mariner's Museum, and in the woods surrounding William and Mary's Lake Matoaka.

Under LTC Pietrowski's command, cadets are trained to become Army officers, capable of providing purpose, direction, and motivation to various sizes of Army organizations in order to accomplish missions throughout the full spectrum of military operations.

He is extremely proud of his work at William and Mary with the United States Army's Reserve Officer Training Corps – or ROTC.



This is the largest officer producing organization for the Army, for the active component as well as for the Reserves and National Guard.

"We produce agile, adaptive warrior leaders,"

LTC Pietrowski says. "The way the system works is that if you are selected for an ROTC scholarship, it covers your tuition and books, plus a monthly stipend. Then you graduate from college with officer rank and go into active duty or you can go into the National Guard or Reserve – all with that scholarship."

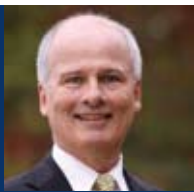
LTC Pietrowski's ROTC days stretch back to his own college years at St. John's University in Minnesota where he received an ROTC scholarship after his freshman year.

Upon graduation, his plan was to serve four years of active duty, and then return to Minnesota where he and his wife Susan, whom he met in college, had purchased a farmhouse and some acreage.

"But plans change and over the years I have found that I enjoy leading soldiers and seem to have a good aptitude for it," he says.

In 1991, as the Gulf War was winding down, LTC Pietrowski's first assignment took

WFG | WILLIAMSBURG FINANCIAL GROUP



Michael Stewart

LPL Registered Representative

Comprehensive Financial Services
IRA ■ 401(k) ■ 403(b) ■ Pension Rollover

4365 New Town Avenue
Williamsburg, VA 23188

mstewart@williamsburgfinancialgroup.com

p. 757.941-2600 ■ f. 757.941-2601

Securities and Advisory Services offered through
LPL Financial, Member FINRA/SIPC.

PHA PENINSULA HEATING & AIR



757-877-4241 • 804-642-6163

www.pha4u.com

Offering the Professional Difference



Every Day is Valentines Day!

At the Blue Heron Restaurant

Two Maryland Style Crabcakes stuffed with scallops and shrimp with two sides **OR** One Maryland Style Crabcake stuffed with scallops and shrimp with a 4 oz. Filet Mignon...

\$15⁹⁹

FULL MENU AVAILABLE LUNCH THRU DINNER!

Coupon Expires 2/28/10.

**MAKE YOUR
RESERVATIONS
NOW FOR
VALENTINE'S DAY!**

**LUNCH
OR
DINNER!**

- Special Dishes Made Just for Valentine's Day
 - Roses for the Ladies
- Limited Seating! Call Today!*



Reservations: (804) 829-9070

The Blue Heron Restaurant

On the Banks of the
Beautiful Chickahominy River

DIRECTIONS: 9100 Willcox Neck Rd.

From Williamsburg: Rt. 5 West. Cross Chickahominy River. Go 3 miles. Turn right onto Rt. 623 (Willcox Neck Rd.) Go 5 miles and turn right on 623 (again). Look for the River's Rest Marina sign.

HOURS Open Tues. - Thur. 12 noon to 8 pm; Fri. and Sat. 12 noon to 9 pm; Sunday 12 noon to 8 pm

him to Fort Richardson, Alaska where he worked as a Field Artillery Officer. FAO's are experts in the tactics, techniques and procedures for the employment of fire support systems in the Field Artillery Branch. From Alaska, he was assigned to five other stations before being transferred to Hawaii which is where he was based during two combat tours, one in Iraq and one in Afghanistan.

LTC Pietrowski says, "I feel very privileged to have had the opportunity to lead soldiers into combat and see what they've accomplished. But what I will never forget about Afghanistan is that I was there when the country had its first national elections in 2004. I saw people travel for days to vote, and then to show their inked finger – how proud they were of that!"

Still, it is not a career for the faint-hearted.

"At a minimum, every soldier puts his or her normal life on hold for a year or more," says LTC Pietrowski. "We work 16 to 20 hours a day in austere, stressful, uncomfortable and dangerous environments without a day off. We miss birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, births of our children, and other major family events. Some get wounded, some get killed, and everyone deals with the emotional strain of such events. But we're always hoping that the fruits of our labor bear something good and that there's a sustainable Middle East and that there's peace in Iraq and Afghanistan."

LTC Pietrowski remembers the intense heat in Iraq.

"Being from Minnesota, I don't particularly care for the heat – and I'm telling you that it was more than oppressive" he explains. "Not just 140 degree heat – but consider the amount of personal protective equipment that we wear – vests with a ceramic plate inside, helmets, gloves, elbow and knee pads. And the iced water they provided was as hot as coffee within three hours and you had to force yourself to drink it!"

Still, his time abroad has reinforced what everyone knows is true: people are people wherever they live – whether in this country or Iraq or Afghanistan. They want their children to grow up with opportunities, in peace and relative prosperity.

"In the waning years of my life," he says, "I will rest easy knowing that I stood up for my country and did what was asked of me – for the greater good. It's been an honor and a privilege to do what I've had the opportunity to do and it has not been easy always, but it has been so rewarding and has really shaped my life. And I get to shape the lives of others."

LTC Pietrowski appreciates his life choices as well. "This really has been a good life for my family and me," he says. "We have traveled all over the world and met so many great people. It's like I tell our prospective cadets – it is about having a job that matters on such a large scale – something bigger than you or me. You're not spending your work day worrying about the annual report or profit sharing. You are defending the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic."

The Pietrowskis, who have made their home in Williamsburg for two years, have found the community – and Hampton Roads – a wonderful place to live, work and rear their five-year-old daughter, Brynn.

"We absolutely love living here," LTC Pietrowski says. "It is a great community, so friendly and unique. This is a community which really supports its military members. When I'm in uniform, people walk right up to me and thank me for my service. I'm always humbled by that. There are a lot of great folks who appreciate their military around here."

This summer the Pietrowskis will be moving to Camp Carol near Daegu, Korea. After that, they plan to return to their farm in Minnesota where they will see their daughter through her teen years. While they have adjusted to many changes during LTC Pietrowski's military career this is one plan they hope they won't have to change. NDN

Concrete Jack solved my sinking concrete problem.

"Over time my driveway had cracked in several locations. Kirk [Roberts] came out to see what we needed done. I just knew as he talked that I was in good hands. I was very much impressed with his workmanship and how thorough he was. He took the time to explain to me each of his processes."

"The owners of Concrete Jack come across as responsible - as people with integrity. You just know you are going to be treated fairly. The price of doing the job was just incidental to my feeling that these are fine people. I am pleased that I called them to do this work. The work was completed months ago and I haven't had any problems with it. I was perfectly satisfied."

- Bill Corvello, Kingsmill

- Costs about one third of replacing concrete
- Removes tripping hazard of uneven concrete

Learn more at www.concretejack.com

