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WILLIAMSBURG'S

# Next Door Neighbors<sup>©</sup>

VOL.2, ISSUE 3

PRICELESS

Discovering the people who call Williamsburg home

## What We Say About *Leadership*

**Brandon Jones**

Fatherhood Coordinator for  
Child Development Resources

**John Reilly**

Executive Vice President  
and General Manager,  
Busch Gardens

**Tressell Carter**

Director,  
JCC Neighborhood  
Connections

**Tony Shaver**

Men's Basketball  
Coach, William & Mary

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Meredith Collins,  
Publisher

I've always found it interesting to observe how people interact with one another, not only in business environments, but whenever people come together to work toward a common goal. Attend any meeting, and it doesn't take long to identify the leaders - even when a group may come together for the very first time. True leaders don't need titles to give definition to their influence. Whether formally or informally, leaders will step forward through both

their words and their actions.

I doubt most people in leadership positions give much thought to the fact that they are leaders. They became leaders by listening and learning, aspiring and doing - all of which elevated them to the place where they are today. They observed traits in others that they believed were admirable and they figured out how to assimilate those positive traits into their own behaviors. Leaders learn how to make better decisions, improve their communications skills, mentor others, negotiate and compromise and apply a variety of other useful skills because they want to be *better*. Not better than the next person, but *better than they currently are*.

Like many other things in life, becoming a good leader is a life-long process - a journey, not a destination. In this issue of *Next Door Neighbors*, we've interviewed several people in our community who are at different points along the road to becoming a better leader. Perhaps some of these individual's words will move you further along in your own personal journey. NDN

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**CORRECTION:** The story on the Hathaway family in the previous issue of *Next Door Neighbors* contained an error. The organization that Nancy Hathaway is involved in is Heart for Orphans, not Hard for Orphans. Their website is [www.heartfororphans.com](http://www.heartfororphans.com). *Next Door Neighbors* apologizes for the error.

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CELEBRATING OUR 1ST ANNIVERSARY SERVING THE WILLIAMSBURG COMMUNITY

# BRANDON JONES

Fatherhood Coordinator, Child Development Resources, Inc.

By Linda Landreth Phelps

**B**randon Jones is old enough to be a leader, but still young enough to be 'cool'. He has the talk, tattoos, and moves on the basketball court that will give him credibility when dealing with a fifteen year old boy with a new baby. But Brandon also has enough wisdom, experience and training to be a role model and teacher to others, even a first-time father who may be at the opposite end of the age spectrum.

Brandon is admirable for the many roles he plays - husband, father of two, college graduate with a degree in sociology and former professional basketball player. He also serves as the Fatherhood Coordinator for Child Development Resources, Inc.'s (CDR) grant supported program, *Investing in Fatherhood*, benefiting fathers of children under the age of five. Add to those credentials his personal charm and charisma and you have a natural leader, an effective mentor, and a powerful voice declaring the importance of a father's positive influence on his children's lives.

The critical role fathers play is well-documented. Children with involved, loving fathers are shown to do better in school and in social situations. The objectives of the *Investing in Fatherhood* program are to encourage men's involvement by equipping them with parenting, co-parenting, and life skills that increase their confidence and self-esteem. Part of Brandon's job is to point the men towards local commu-

nity resources that are available to them.

Some of the things he teaches through the program are purely practical. "I showed one father who was about 45 that when he was going to give his baby a bottle, he had to test it first to see if it was too hot," Brandon recounted. "Not on his hand, which had calluses and thick skin, but on the inside of his elbow. He acted like this was the greatest piece of advice he'd ever heard."

A private, non-profit organization, CDR is located in a pair of buildings just off of Croaker Road in James City County. Brandon spends most of his days there and his

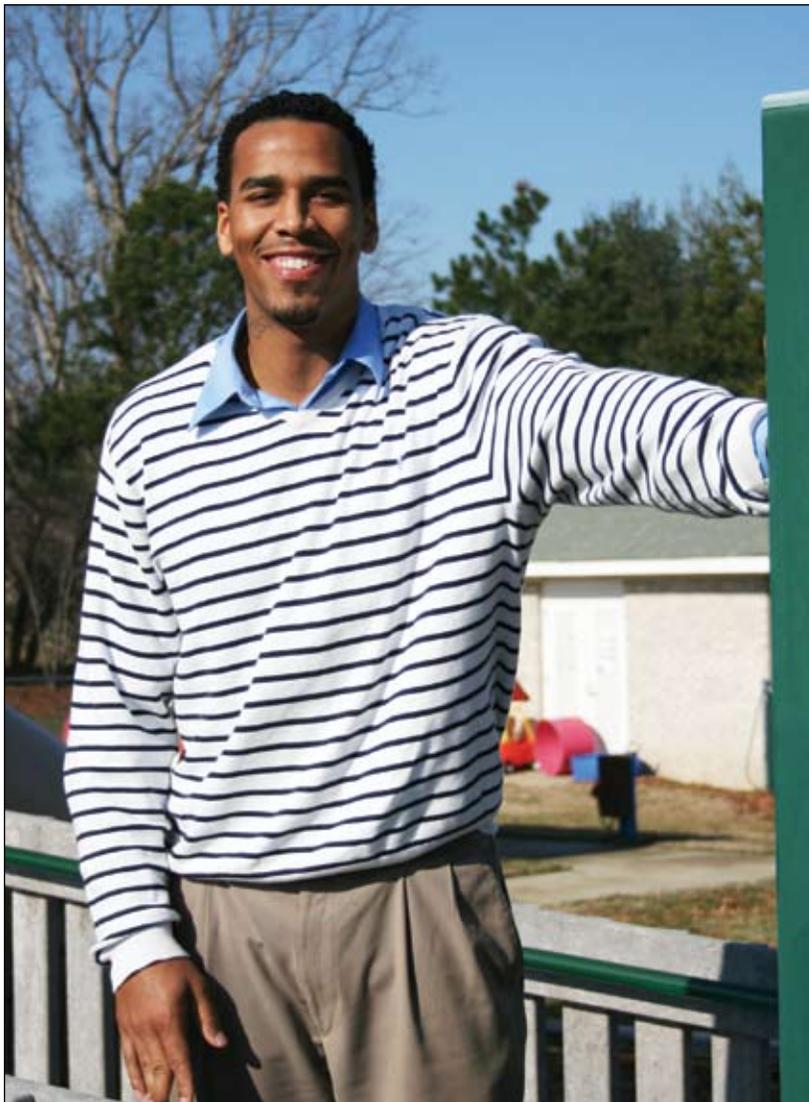
evenings with his wife, Dee, and their two daughters, Jordyn, a precocious nine, and Daryn, three. In addition to being a husband and father, Brandon also finds time to impact the lives of young men as a volunteer basketball coach at the high school where Dee teaches English.

Brandon knows from first hand experience how important a strong male role model and leader can be. He first came to this area of Virginia when his stepfather, the man he lovingly calls 'Dad', was stationed at Fort Eustis as an Army doctor and eventually commander of the post hospital. This man was Brandon's third shot at having a father, and by far the best.

His biological father was abusive and his mother left him leaving three year old Brandon with his grandparents while she started her Army career and attended Officer's Candidate School. Brandon's grandmother was a German who had been forced to join the Hitler Youth when she was a child and was rescued by American forces. She married an African American man after the war. Her difficult life experiences helped mold her into a strong, loving woman - just what Brandon needed at that time in his life.

Brandon's mother married again, this time to a man she eventually divorced due to a hidden substance abuse problem. He subsequently died of a drug overdose. From this relationship Brandon gained a younger brother.

Finally, when he was ten,



Brandon's mother met and married the man whom she considered her 'soul mate', and two more sons were born to them. For Brandon, this man was truly his 'Dad'.

Brandon was at a crossroad in his life when his stepfather came into the picture. "I was just one bad decision away from making a mess of my life," Brandon says. "Dad's strength and discipline kept me more or less on the right path through most of my teens. He spent time with me, took me fishing, and did what he called 'bonding', which was basically supervising me as I cut the grass or something. But when Dad was deployed for Operation Desert Storm, it was tough. His everyday influence was gone, so it was easier for me to wander off the path. I lost all direction in my life."

When Brandon's dad returned from the war in Kuwait, he contracted a rare form of leukemia, possibly from exposure to toxic chemicals there. Sadly, he passed away after a failed bone marrow transplant while Brandon was a freshman at Old Dominion University (ODU). Brandon has tried since then to stand in as a father figure to his three younger brothers. "A dad can also be a brother, a grandfather, or a stepparent, whoever plays that role," he explains.

As a surviving dependent, Brandon received financial aid through the Department of Veteran's Affairs, and he wound up transferring from ODU to Christopher Newport University (CNU). He was a standout on the basketball team and was recently voted into the CNU Basketball Hall of Fame honoring his stellar career there. After graduation, Brandon went on to play basketball professionally in South America and Europe.

"I was having a lot of fun and making easy money, but it was a selfish existence," he says. So, at 25, he made the decision to leave Finland, come home, and change careers not only because he wanted 'to give something back', but because he missed his family as well.

"Being an Army brat and moving around a lot, family becomes very important because that's your one constant," he adds.

Brandon knows how important it is to be the head of his family, and takes the responsibility very seriously. His philosophy on being a good leader is to demonstrate positive behaviors and lead through example. Brandon was a young man of 22 when he became a father and his greatest desire is to be the kind of dad to both of his daughters that he wishes he'd had from the very beginning. "I feel like I am modeling the man I want my girls to marry," he confides. "Being in this field has made me determined to become a better parent to my daughters because I see the things that go on. Children get hurt the worst."

Brandon's last job before coming to CDR was working with children between the ages of 12 and 17, all with problems stemming from either a lack of parental involvement or some other effect of living in a dysfunctional household.

"I saw kids when the accumulation of neglect and poor parenting had taken its toll," Brandon says. "It was discouraging because what I really wanted to do was to get to them

early and make a difference, to prevent the kind of problems I was seeing every day. I ran across the notice for this job at CDR at the last minute, when it was almost too late to apply, but it was fate - I was meant to do this."

As important as the practical information he brings to his clients is, the mentoring

Brandon provides through relationships is even more invaluable. Many men are having babies without any idea of what a father's role should be because they grew up without a male role model. Encouraging confidence in their ability

**"I feel like I am modeling the man I want my girls to marry."**

- Brandon Jones

to be a good father is essential. Brandon tells them: "So you mess up - okay, get on with it. Nobody's perfect, but the important thing is what you do next."

When asked his opinion about the best way a man can demonstrate to his children that he is a good father, Brandon replies immediately: "Respect their mother, that's the best thing you can do!" As a leader and role model, Brandon hopes his example will instill in others those enduring standards of behavior that should be passed from one generation to the next. Ideals he tries to embody, such as consideration for others, commitment to your family, following the golden rule, and doing the right thing even when nobody is looking, demonstrates a sense of value that other men can readily respect and follow. NDN

For more information on Child Development Resources, Inc. visit: [www.cdr.org](http://www.cdr.org)

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# HAROLD BAKER

Swimming Coach, Williamsburg Aquatic Club

By Brandy Centolanza

**H**arold Baker, head coach of the Williamsburg Aquatic Club (WAC) for almost three decades, fell into the sport as a young boy thanks to a friend of his mother's. "My mom had a friend in her bridge group who was a swim coach," he recalls. "I started (swimming) at eleven years old, but also played football, baseball and basketball."

Swimming eventually won out and Coach Baker, who is originally from Newport News, started WAC in 1979, after graduating from William & Mary. Today, Coach Baker coaches roughly 400 students a year, including members of the Lafayette High School swim team

and the Kingswood Klams summer league teams.

Though he is the leader, he considers the students themselves to be in charge of the outcome. "I try to be consistent and treat the swimmers as equals within the team framework," he explains. "I hope that they feel that we are partners in their development. I want them to realize that they are the ones with the accomplishments, not myself nor their parents. If they can perform at a high level without me, not because of me, then I have done a good job. That confidence and skill will carry over to anything that they do in life."

Coach Baker also credits the families of his students with helping shape their success. "I have been lucky to be in the right place at the right time a lot, but I think that I really lead through going to work every day and finding ways to make things better," he says. "I have had a lot of great help from parents along the way. Just taking the kids that come through the door and doing the best that you can with them seems to have worked out well over the years."

Coach Baker also owns a sports uniform shop, *Sports In Store*, and tries to find time to swim for leisure, either in his neighborhood pool or during family vacation trips to the Outerbanks. His main focus, however, is on his students.

He enjoys watching those that struggle at the beginning develop confidence and become stars later on. For some, it doesn't come easy, but he tries to let the swimmers develop at their own pace and interest level.

Though he's been a head coach for years, there are still lessons he wants to learn. "Time has taught me to be a better listener," Coach Baker states. "This is an important skill because I see a lot of students everyday but so much is going on in their lives that I do not know about. I want practice to be fun, and an escape from their day." NDN



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# TRESSELL CARTER

Director, James City County Neighborhood Connections



By Rachel Sapin, William & Mary Intern

*Something there is that doesn't love a wall, that sends the frozen-ground-swell under it, and spills the upper boulders in the sun. - Robert Frost*

More than 100 years after Frost wrote *Mending Wall*, his words continue to resonate perhaps somewhat rebelliously in an increasingly individualized society. In fact, it seems that the 'something' Frost could very well be referring to is someone like Tressell Carter, Director of James City County (JCC) Neighborhood Connections and her leadership role in breaking down the boundaries between neighborhoods in Williamsburg. Both Frost and Tressell seem to agree that good fences don't always make good neighbors.

"Some people call me an old soul," notes Tressell. "I grew up in a community where the porch was the space where you learned about your history, about your family, and about what community events were going on. When you were on the front porch, people stopped by."

Tressell is not one for putting up boundaries between individuals. In fact, much of her work at JCC Neighborhood Connections

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involves tearing them down in order to provide better communication between citizens and government. "Our organization plays the role of connecting citizens to the right resources in county government and also the resources in the community at large," explains Tressell. "We give people the tools on how to engage in government, how to be civic minded, and how to present their position in order to receive the funds they need."

As a leader working directly with and for the Williamsburg community, Tressell finds it essential to break down barriers not only between citizens and government, but between citizens as neighbors. "One of the things I preach here, especially to the Homeowner's Association, is to remember that your neighbors come first and your grass second," says Tressell. "If we can't find a cure for AIDS and other world crises, we can certainly do this for each other as neighbors."

Tressell works closely with staff to come up with events and programs that will keep the community engaged and informed. "For

any leadership role that I'm in, I keep in mind that I'm only as good as the people that allow me to lead them," she explains. "In the capacity of being the Director of Neighborhood Connections, I provide some type of formulation for how we're going to get things done, but ultimately, it is the team effort that makes things happen."

Tressell's leadership style reflects her give-and-take attitude towards employees. "I'm not a micro-manager and I like for people to feel good about coming in and working and having that flexibility," she says. "I am a task-master and though we have the flexibility we still have to have accomplishments and achieve our goals and be held accountable."

Tressell learned much of her task-management skills from her mother. "I have strong women in my family," she remarks. Growing up one of eight children, Tressell remembers her mother taking in stride the daunting task

of keeping eight children occupied and happy on a daily basis. "She always had a plan for the day and everybody had tasks and you did them; you didn't question it," Tressell remembers.

In fact, many of the skills that Tressell finds useful in her leadership position at JCC

**"One of the things I preach here, especially to the Homeowner's Association, is to remember that your neighbors come first and your grass second."**

- Tressell Carter

Neighborhood Connections are rooted in family experience. "Since I am passionate about my work, I used to have a little temper when I was younger," she smiles mischievously. "I was always impatient. I used to pray that God

would give me patience and finally He gave me my son, Maurice, who has taught me very well. Once I learned how to be patient with him, I learned how to be patient with other people."

In turn, Tressell's grandmother taught her the importance of giving. Tressell remembers being young and helping her grandmother sort out clothing for those in the neighbor-



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hood who needed it most. “I would be putting the clothes into different piles and hear my grandmother say, ‘Well so-and-so just had a new grandbaby, so we will keep these clothes for them in that pile,’” remembers Tressell. “Then we would go to so-and-so’s house with a big bag and put the clothes on the porch. You know, you didn’t ask for big fanfare, it’s just something you did.”

Growing up surrounded and encouraged by family has served Tressell well in developing her skills as a leader who works for both non-profit and government organizations. Still, according to Tressell, there were some leadership skills that she had to learn from on-the-job experience. Through an extensive career in non-profit leadership positions, Tressell has learned that it is often necessary to compromise in order to achieve what’s best for an organization. “I used to do an exercise with my children during their sibling rivalry where if they were fighting over something, I would say ‘the first person who lets go wins,’” recounts Tressell. “In tug-of-war, people think that they’ve won the war by

tugging and pulling the other person across the line, but really they’ve just lost. You just grabbed that person’s problems and pulled them closer to you. So the easier thing to do is say, ‘you can have it’ and drop the rope. And guess what, you don’t have any more war. If you let it go, you can have time to come back and try to collaborate. The quicker I recognize the necessity of doing that to benefit my organization, I go, ‘ok, you can have it,’ and come back later with a plan on how to compromise. It’s a principle I try to apply to my work and with my staff when we have our dramas.”

For Tressell, the ability to compromise has led to much success in the world of non-profit. Before taking her job as Director of JCC Neighborhood Connections, Tressell worked for the Historic Triangle Substance Abuse Coalition where she helped raise half-a-million dollars in funds for programs that still exist in the community today. In addition, she also worked for a time at Virginians Against Domestic Violence where she helped turn a staff of four people with a

budget of \$250,000 into a staff of 17 people with a budget of \$1.2 million dollars.

Tressell’s advice to those who are struggling in leadership positions: get to know yourself. “I always tell people that if they’re taking all of these college courses or making a lot of money but that’s not what they really want to be about, then they need to stop and be ok with that,” says Tressell. “You should not just be sitting there trying to appease, but you should really be trying to figure out, ‘Is this the right environment for me?’ ”

As Director of JCC Neighborhood Connections, Tressell proves that you don’t have to give up yourself or your passion in order to become a successful leader. “It takes some time to get there but I do like this process,” she explains. “It took me a while to even be ok with people calling me a leader. My mother used to say about me that I had a strong head, but I always just saw myself as fighting for what I wanted and standing up for truth.” NDN

To learn more about JCC Neighborhood Connections visit: [www.jccgon.com/neighborhoods](http://www.jccgon.com/neighborhoods)



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# MARK DUNCAN

Director of Community, College & Government Relations, Colonial Williamsburg

By Joe Collins

Sometimes the most effective leaders are the ones who don't necessarily define themselves in those terms. They have reached a high level of expertise in working with people through studying other exceptional leaders and adopting the best of what they observe in order to develop their own, unique leadership style. In doing so, they may

found himself drawn to politics and the challenges of diplomacy and leadership even as a teenager. In High School he worked for Herbert Bateman, a long time member of the Virginia Senate and a U.S. Congressman. Through that association Mark gained an interest in politics and it enabled him to meet many people of diverse backgrounds.

After graduating from college he worked for Senator Tommy Norment as his legislative aide. Two years later, Mark learned Colonial Williamsburg wanted to increase their work with state government and the local community. It was a natural transition for someone who was interested in politics, was firmly embedded in the local community, and was not shy about being out front representing the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation.



not always give themselves credit for being successful in the same way. Mark Duncan is just that type of leader.

Mark is the Director of Community, College and Government Relations for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. He has held that position for the past eight and a half years, acting as a liaison between Colonial Williamsburg and a number of different organizations within the community - the Jamestown/Yorktown Foundation, the Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Alliance, the National Park Service, William & Mary, and various local, state and federal officials. Mark's job, as he puts it, "is to make sure Colonial Williamsburg is represented in the community. We take our role here as a community partner very seriously."

Born and raised in Newport News, Mark

"I work with a lot of different people and feel privileged to be able to interact with a real cross section of the community," Mark says. "Colonial Williamsburg is a large organization. I grew up in the area and had affection for it and I thought I knew Colonial Williamsburg. My respect for the foundation has only increased since I've come to work for it and I've discovered it is a far more complex organization than I had anticipated."

Mark has learned a great deal from some exceptional and noted leaders. "I've been very fortunate to be able to work for people that I think are great leaders like Congressman Bates, Senator Norment, and Colin Campbell, Chairman and President of Colonial Williamsburg," Mark reflects, adding his current managers, Tom Shroud, Director of Public Affairs and John Bacon, Sr., Vice

President of External Affairs for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. "I've been very fortunate to have the mentoring opportunities that they all provided me. I have been incredibly fortunate to have those life experiences."

Mark is thoughtful as he talks about leadership and what makes someone stand out in that role. "A good leader is one who can rise above the fray and cut across disparaging and disparate viewpoints," he says. "They find some sort of cohesion and lead a group that is disparate to a unified goal."

While Mark modestly evaluates his own traits as a leader, others apparently are very aware of his capabilities. Mark was appointed Chairman of the Board for Williamsburg Chamber of Commerce's prestigious Leadership Historic Triangle program. A 2001 graduate of the program himself, Mark says the program is designed to identify, encourage and support present and future leaders by introducing them to other leaders in the area and helping them to network and discover different styles of leadership throughout the community.

Dedicated to the community and practiced at the art of negotiation and compromise, Mark is honing his leadership skills almost daily with the busy schedule he keeps. Perhaps best of all, he is able to keep it all in perspective and remain upbeat and positive about the path ahead.

"Being in politics you see the good, the bad and the ugly," Mark says. "There have been some moments that I've said 'that's not good'. And I've seen some that have been something I respect and admire and that I want to be like. Being able to rise above the fray, being able to take people of different viewpoints and find a common goal - I think if we all did that we'd be in a much better place." Perhaps that's a lesson in leadership we can all learn from. NDN

*The Leadership Historic Triangle program is now taking applications for it's 2009 class. Applications are due by March 21st. For more information visit: [www.leadershiphistorictriangle.camp7.org](http://www.leadershiphistorictriangle.camp7.org)*

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# JOHN REILLY

Executive Vice President and General Manager, Busch Gardens

By Linda Landreth Phelps

In 1985, a summer job at Busch Gardens was like a high school rite of passage - almost everybody wound up working there sooner or later, either to earn a few bucks or just to hang out with friends. John Reilly, the new Executive Vice President and General Manager of Busch Gardens, Europe, and Water Country, USA, was no exception. John's career began in the summer before his junior year, selling popcorn and sodas from a small kiosk in the shadow of 'Nessie', the Loch Ness Monster roller coaster. Later he was promoted to Muffin Man. Instead of his present day tailored business suit, his work clothes then consisted of knickers, long socks, and a tall white hat.

**"A leadership style needs to be reflective of who you are."**

- John Reilly

At sixteen, most of his friends' ambitions probably didn't go beyond gas and movie money, but young John soon had his sights set on something higher. There was a strong leadership management curriculum offered through Busch's Organizational Development Team and John took advantage of it. By his second season, he was already in a managerial position. He graduated from high

school and attended William & Mary while he continued to work seasonally in the park as a Culinary Manager at Das Festhaus.

There were numerous resources available within the Busch Gardens system that went along with opportunities for John. "It was a great thing for me then and still is a good opportunity today," John says. "Programs such as 'Peer Today, Leader Tomorrow' groom those who show desirable qualities and prepare them to be promoted within the company. Team members see jobs posted and can apply for any of them or for the training necessary to become qualified for that position."

But not all lessons can be taught in the classroom alone; some have to come from more personal mentorship. "Communication is one of the most important elements of effective leadership, and I learned a lot about the attributes of a good leader from Cal Krusie, the late Culinary Operations Manager," John remembers nostalgically. "He never let a team member leave work without a personal acknowledgment, or a 'Thank you!' at the end of the day. It sounds simple but it's

so important. I learned by his example that the more a person is valued, the more successful they will be. I want to be that kind of leader today."

It's obvious that John subscribes to the theory that in order to lead, a superior must inspire others to follow. "We have a saying here: 'Use your ears and your mouth in the proportion they were given to you,'" John smiles. "I operate with an open door so that everyone will feel engaged and part of the process. You can't lead unless you're a good listener."

"A leadership style needs to be reflective of who you are," John continues. "With that said, mine is a blend of many factors: lessons learned from my mentors here at Busch Gardens Europe, leadership-training programs at our parks, leadership-development teams at Anheuser-Busch, and outside development courses and reading."

As John speaks, it's apparent that his emphasis is on the teamwork it takes to help him lead a complex operation. At its seasonal peak the Busch Gardens and Water Country operation involves 4,500 employees. "I have had the opportunity to teach leadership courses to our first-time park supervisors in a program called *Fundamentals of Service Leadership*," John goes on to say. "It's a four-

day experience. I have learned that on the first day of class when we address leadership fundamentals, most students tend to think about their supervisor and how he or she performs as a leader. As students progress through the course and learn more about leadership principles, they begin to focus on how they are perceived as a leader by others. The transition from focusing on yourself to focusing on your team is crucial for a career in management."

As far as John's own career goes, it's been a ride that never slowed or stopped - the ultimate 'Local Boy Makes Good!' story. As a young William & Mary graduate with a degree in Spanish and History, John accepted a teaching fellowship position at the University of Kansas. After he'd been there for a while, he realized how much he missed the energy and fellowship of the park and wanted to come back and make it his career. John was offered a job as an area manager in Banbury Cross and returned to Williamsburg in 1991.

For the next ten years he steadily worked his way to positions with increasing respon-



sibility, such as managing Festa Italia culinary operations, where he says he enjoyed the sight of people savoring a good meal and dancing to the music of the Starlight Orchestra. After that, it was back to the polkas at Das Festhaus for a while, and then in 1997 he served as Director of Culinary Operations. In 2001, John left for a four-year stay at sister park Sea World San Diego, serving as Vice President of Culinary Operations. From

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John arrived back in Williamsburg in November of 2007 and is pleased to be in his present position as General Manager and Executive Vice President. He is also delighted to be back in his home state of Virginia, close by his parents and a sister and her family. It's been several months now, and John is settled into his chair behind the big desk and enjoying his reunion with Williamsburg.

It's the job of a leader to provide planning and strategy - strategic direction, framework, and vision. With a large new attraction at Water Country due to open this summer and seven major events planned for Busch Gardens, John will have ample opportunity to show his team that he is well qualified to take on these new challenges. After 23 years of experience and training, The Muffin Man has become... The Man. NDN

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# LISA HAMBY

Postmaster, Williamsburg Post Office

*By Suzi Drake*

Last June, the Williamsburg post office was awarded the United States Postal Services' coveted 'Best of the Best' award for the first time in history, which is a tremendous accomplishment. This designation was received just two short months after postmaster Lisa Hamby took her station.



"It takes outstanding scores in an all-around city carrier operation to win this award," Lisa said. "What this tells me is that my carriers are doing an exceptional job and they are motivated to achieve the goals I've set for them."

It also means Lisa is doing a bang-up job. While she credits her employees with this achievement, it's plain to see that something must have inspired her crew to excel. Inspiration, in fact, is one of the key ingredients in Lisa's homemade recipe for successful leadership.

For the four years prior to the beginning of her postal service career, Lisa wore the hat of a U.S. sailor, stationed aboard the USS Yellowstone in Norfolk. There, she became accustomed to a military style of leadership. Effective as it was, Lisa found this way of managing people lacked on an interpersonal level. "There was no human side to it," she said. "It was just get the job done and that's it."

It wasn't until she was assigned as a clerk at the Hampton post office that Lisa realized that being in charge didn't have to mean bark-

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ing orders.

"In Hampton, I encountered the most remarkable leader," Lisa remembered. "My supervisor, Janice Smith, showed me that a leader doesn't have to be a dictator and you don't have to be militant to inspire people to get the job done. When you work for her you just want to be the best you can be. She inspired me and the people around me with her good nature, the respect she showed everyone and an amazing spirit. She showed a human side to leadership."

Lisa credits Smith with not only inspiring her to put her heart into her job, but to aspire for more. Smith showed her a side of leadership she could relate to and it was then that Lisa set her sites on assuming a leadership role herself. She enrolled in the United States Postal Service supervisor-training program and never looked back.

During her training, however, Lisa discovered that she wasn't exactly like her mentor. "I learned that I wasn't just like Miss Smith," she said. "I took the qualities I admired most from her and the things I learned from my Naval career and tied them together. Now I have my own style."

Working her way up from a transitional employee at a remote encoding center in Newport News, to clerk, supervisor, manager and finally postmaster in just thirteen years, has proven that Lisa's style works. And to keep her career and home life balanced, Lisa stresses the importance of delegation. "Delegation is imperative," she said. "It's a team approach. We succeed together and we fail together. Everyone has to be involved. Besides, if you try to do it all yourself, you'd never get to go home."

Home for Lisa, a native of Orland, ME, is now Newport News, where it has been since she and her husband, R.M. Hamby, a sergeant with the Norfolk Police Department, married 14 years ago. But even after a 10-hour work day, things rarely slow down for the Hambys.

Her eleven year old daughter, Breanna, plays on the Back River Surge traveling softball team, and her five year old son, Kobe, already has a full schedule, playing soccer and T-ball. "So it's obvious what I'm doing on the weekends," she quipped. "But it's so great. When I'm not at the post office I'm loving being a mom. When I am at work, I just focus on being the best postmaster I can possibly be."

In her new position (since April 2007), she is now the head of both the main office on Boundary Street and the rural office on Monticello Avenue. A total of 69 routes, both rural and city, depart from these offices. To keep things running in tip-top shape, she relies on her ability to inspire, motivate, delegate, adjust and understand her employees.

"You have to get to know your employees, because no two people are the same. Every single one deserves the same respect, but you have to deal with each one as an individual," Lisa said. "In this office there are so many kinds of people, and you have to embrace this diversity. You have to treat everyone's differences as assets." NDN

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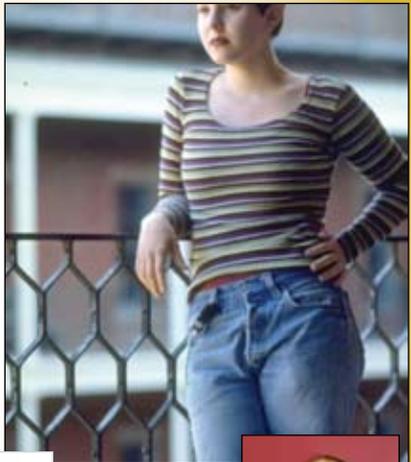
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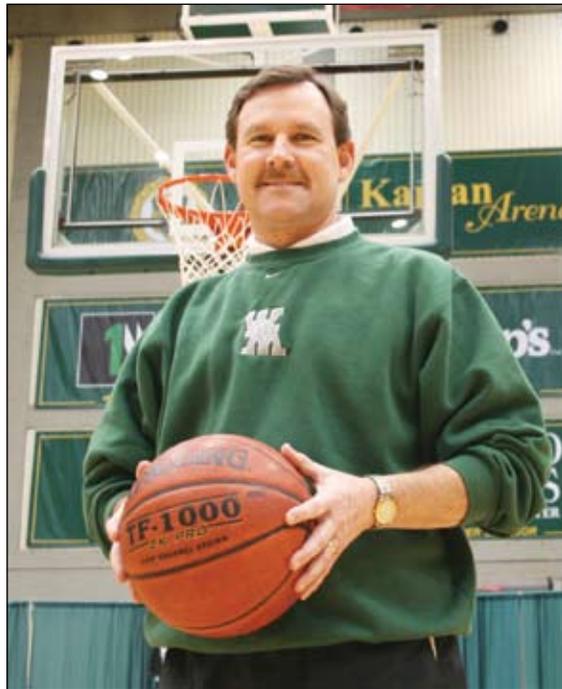
Men's Basketball Coach, William & Mary

By Meredith Collins

For those of us who have played basketball competitively on a high school or college team, watching a basketball game from the sidelines gives us the opportunity to be 'wanna-be coaches'. It allows spectators to analyze, comment and critique with no risk. Some people might even kid themselves that they could do a better job filling the coach's shoes because they've played the game. Any failure to execute - a pick and roll that results in a turnover or a full court trap that fails to break down the offense - becomes an obvious coaching deficiency. After all, the view from the stands is completely free from pressure to perform.

That's why when people decide to become coaches and step onto the court to lead a team, I think they are pretty special. After all, I never had the guts to do it and I was an athlete at one time. My respect for those who coach led me to decide to keep this story assignment on Tony Shaver, Williams & Mary's men's basketball coach, to write myself. To my way of thinking, coaches are the ultimate leaders because they lead young people every day, but they don't just mold athletes - they mold minds. They mold character. They mold work ethic. Most importantly, they give a young person many of the tools to mold their own future. Those 'wanna-be coaches' sitting in the stands thinking about how they could do it better are only privy to a small fraction of what coaching is really all about.

Since I hadn't met Coach Shaver before



nor seen his team play, I attended the recent William & Mary vs ODU basketball game to observe his coaching style. I knew he had played basketball at the University of North Carolina (UNC) but seeing his team play confirmed this. Coach Shaver's team exhibited the disciplined style of play that reminded me of the way the former legendary Carolina coach, Dean Smith, led his teams. I played on the women's team at UNC from 1979-1982, and I had many opportunities to interact with the men's team, watch their practices and learn a little about the game and one of its greatest leaders, Coach Smith.

A few days after the game, I interviewed Coach Shaver in his office at William & Mary. I was not surprised to learn that he attributes his leadership style primarily to three key people in his life: His parents, Jerry and Chloe, and one of the greatest basketball coaches of all time, Coach Smith.

Coach Shaver grew up in High Point, NC and played every sport he could in high school - football, basketball, golf, and baseball. He loved all sports, but like many young boys growing up in North Carolina he always hoped he would be good enough to become a Tarheel. When his opportunity to attend UNC and play basketball for Coach Smith finally arrived he didn't hesitate for a minute.

"My dream, quite honestly, was always to go to Carolina and play basketball," Coach Shaver said. "I was not a highly recruited athlete at that level, but Coach Smith did give me the opportunity to play on the freshman team. I was able to live a dream - play at North Carolina a little bit. I had a chance to learn from one of the best there is, Coach Smith. I watched him on a day-to-day basis - how he handled the team and how he handled himself, and how he handled troubled times. His mind is phenomenal. His knowledge of basketball is phenomenal, but what I thought made him special was just his ability to mold a team together."

A solid work ethic was impressed upon Coach Shaver at an early age by his parents and was insisted upon by Coach Smith. When

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he graduated from UNC in 1976 with a degree in Business Administration, his heart was not in the banking opportunity that was on the horizon. Instead, he wanted to find a way to stay involved in sports and coaching was his calling.

Coach Shaver has had only three coaching positions since he left UNC over thirty years ago. He landed his first coaching job at Episcopal High School in Alexandria, VA where he spent a decade teaching and coaching. In 1986, he started coaching on the college level at Hampden Sydney and remained there for seventeen years before moving to William & Mary where he is in his fifth year as the head basketball coach.

"I think one of the things I learned from Coach Smith and my family, my father in particular, was that your work ethic is really important in your life," Coach Shaver said. "Paying attention to detail - taking care of the little things and letting the big things take care of themselves - is really crucial to being successful no matter what you do in your life. I learned that at home from my parents but it was reinforced with Coach Smith and his attention to detail."

Shaver shared a story from his days playing

at UNC that had a deep impact on him as a young college player and that illustrates how much Coach Smith emphasized work ethic and detail. One of Coach Smith's requirements was for his players to practice shooting without the ball before they went onto the practice floor. This was called 'form shooting'. This exercise forced the players to concentrate on pure shooting form without the distraction of seeing if the ball went through the hoop. On this particular day, the team would be having team and individual photos made and Shaver was proudly wearing his new UNC uniform. Instead of practicing his shooting form without the basketball, Shaver was taking shots with the ball when Coach Smith arrived.

"Coach Smith was coming down the steps and said in his nasally voice, 'Shaver, did you do your form shooting?'" Coach Shaver recalled. "I said, 'No sir.' He did let me have my picture taken but that whole day of practice I never stepped on the practice floor. He put me in a weighted vest and I ran up and down the steps of Carmichael Auditorium for two hours. I can promise you I did my form shooting after that."

Coach Shaver is soft-spoken as he talks about his leadership style. It is obvious that

he is a man who is not afraid to reflect on his work, his team and his own abilities as a coach. He is a man who loves working with his players and developing them both on and off the court. For those watching from the sidelines, he is also a man with big shoes to fill.

"I hope people watch our team play," Coach Shaver concluded. "I think it's a disciplined team that plays very well together. I do think most people look at me as a pretty intense person. I'm encouraging and supportive of our players but demanding at the same time. From a leadership perspective, forming a great work ethic has got to be number one. Number two is your ability to communicate with your kids and the people around you. Those are the two things I think I've always tried to do."

I would expect that anytime Coach Shaver needs inspiration on how to lead his team and instill a strong work ethic in his players, he can always think back to the valuable lesson he learned during his own college basketball days. He can probably still recall how his legs felt after two hours of ascending and descending those steps in a weighted vest... and he can fondly remember the disciplined teachings of his own mentor, Coach Smith. NDN

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# SAM SAMAHA

Executive Housekeeper, Williamsburg Marriott

*By Rachel Sapin, William & Mary Intern*

When you enter the Williamsburg Marriott, the first word that comes to mind to describe it is elegance. As graceful chandeliers linger above the entryway, warm hues of blue, red and yellow checker the lobby below. Marriott Executive Housekeeper, Sam Samaha, is also the type of person one might describe as elegant. Although he oversees one of the biggest and most demanding departments in the hotel, he is surprisingly sweet and soft-spoken in person.



Sam's position as a leader is not always easy. As Executive Housekeeper, he is in charge of the housekeeping staff at the Marriott on all levels: from room attendants to laundry staff to supervisors. “At peak times, my department employs from 30 to 32 employees who come from all different backgrounds,” he says. “They all look for some kind of guidelines and leadership during the course of the day.”

Sam's leadership style is to lead by example. He has a quality about him that is intellectual in both a mental and physical sense. He's the type of worker you expect to admire in a mural by José Clemente Orozco but rare in terms of someone you would expect to encounter in real life.

Although Sam received a degree in Hospitality Management, he learned most of the skills needed to work in the hotel industry from on-the-job experience. “You cannot do this job from behind a desk or in an office,” he says. In fact, most of Sam's day is spent outside of his office: on the floor, in the hotel rooms training associates, dealing with guests and at the same time, communicating with other hotel

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departments. "It's a job that requires you to wear multiple hats, and be dealing with different personalities and the different styles of managers on the property," he explains. "At the end of the day, you need to put it all together and provide quality service and a quality product."

As a leader, Sam does exactly that. One of the most important skills needed for Sam's job is an attention to detail. The hotel has 295 rooms that need cleaning on a daily basis as well as public areas such as the lobby, bathrooms and the largest ball and conference room in the Williamsburg area.

Keeping up with the hotel's aesthetic needs is no easy feat. "Every day is different," he explains. "We have different guests with different needs so the job requires constant training for employees." Taking his lead-by-example method literally, Sam has employees observe how he does the job before putting them to work. "In order for me to really lead my staff in cleaning these rooms, I better know how to clean a room," he says. "You have to do it yourself first. People will respect you if you advise them to do something and they see that you know what you're talking about."

A leadership quality that Sam also seems to know a lot about is how to work with people. For Sam, one of the most fulfilling parts of his day is putting a smile on a guest's face. "You can ask almost anybody who is in the hotel business why they got into this business and they will tell you it's because of people," he says. "The rooms are the same every day, the physical things are the same but our business depends a lot on people who have different personalities."

Sam recalled how he recently made one couple's stay at the hotel particularly enjoyable. After having an informal conversation with the couple one morning at breakfast, Sam learned that they had come to the Marriott to celebrate their anniversary but hadn't told anyone else about it. "I took that information and went ahead and inquired about their room number and how long they were staying here," he says. "When they came back to their room that evening, they had all the amenities necessary to celebrate their anniversary. They were on cloud nine. They made sure to talk to me every time they saw me after that and tell me how happy they were."

As a leader, Sam finds it essential to provide a safe and comfortable work environment for members of his staff. "Every single day I have a meeting with my housekeeping staff and we go over issues from the previous day and training issues," he explains. If an employee is struggling, Sam takes the extra time to work with them on an individual basis. "You need to adapt your training techniques to fit each employee," he explains. "If in a meeting, an employee is struggling to understand something, I will take them to an actual guest's room where we have a kind of show-and-tell. No two days are alike, so you have to adapt and be creative every single day in order to accomplish your goals and help others accomplish theirs."

When you hear Sam talk about how important personal application is to being a leader you can't help but smile. "Anybody who wants to be a leader in this business needs to really do the work themselves," he intones. "This business is about people, it's about guests, it's about employees, and you need to understand them." Amidst the lavish furnishings at the Williamsburg Marriott, Sam manages to stand out as one of its most elegant and essential amenities. NDN

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# MARK ORTON

Plant Manager, Ball Metal Beverage Container Group

By Brandy Centolanza

As plant manager of the Ball Metal Beverage Container Group on Pocahontas Trail, Mark Orton's duties are "to take care of every aspect of the organization," he says.

"Not only do I deal with everything internally, but I also deal with the community, with our customers."

It's not something that he would have ever thought he would be doing when he started with the company 27 years ago. Mark had been a car dealer in Saratoga Springs, NY, when his mother-in-law told him about an ad she saw for a new company starting in town. He applied for a position, and has never looked back. Mark transferred from New York to California and ended up in Williamsburg in 1995, working for Ball internationally in between. He became supervisor seven years ago.

"I would describe my leadership style as participative," he states. "I know that I am ultimately responsible for the overall performance of our plant, however, I know that the success of our plant relies on having engaged employees that can make good decisions in their areas."

He has had many influences as he worked his way up the ladder.

"First and foremost, I would say that my father set the stage by teaching me to always be honest, work hard and never be satisfied," Mark reflects. "In my profession, I have had many role models throughout my career who have taught me many valuable lessons,



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### Essentials of Community Association Volunteer Leadership

Date: March 15, 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Location: Ford's Colony Swim & Tennis Club  
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Presented by: Central Virginia Community Assoc. Institute  
James City County Residents - \$25; Non-residents - \$35

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and have guided me. In my earlier years, my first plant manager taught me that success is not only measured by your financial performance but measured by how you touch the lives of those around you."

Mark takes that to heart not only when he is dealing with his customers, but especially with his employees. "Not only do I strive for the success of our corporation and this individual plant, I also strive for the growth and success of every individual at this location," he remarks. "I think a good leader possesses the vision of what can be with the strength to allow people to learn and grow to their individual potential. A good leader gives clear goals and expectations, gives support, allows groups to think through the processes, supplies resources, and encourages success."

**"A good leader gives clear goals and expectations, gives support, allows groups to think through the processes, supplies resources, and encourages success."**

**- Mark Orton**

He offers this advice to other supervisors, or those looking to step into a leadership role: "Know your customers, know your business and know your people. You need to have a clear understanding of what your customer actually wants not what you perceive they want. You need to know your company and what your role is in achieving success. You need to know your workforce to understand what motivates them and what role you play in their success. Be true to these three segments and you'll have a better chance for success."

"No one person can make a successful business," Mark summarizes. "It takes everyone in an organization working together to achieve exceptional results." NDN

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# GREGG WALKER

Owner, Curbside Services, Inc.

By Suzi Drake

**G**rowing up, Gregg Walker's father offered him much guidance. There was one piece of advice, however, that seemed to stand out above all the others and stand the test of time.

"He said, 'Son, always treat people with respect, be kind to folks and great things will come your way,'" Gregg remembered.

While his father, Benjamin Walker Jr. or 'the great BWJ' as friends knew him, passed on more than sixteen years ago, Gregg has used this nugget of wisdom to lead him along his path and help others on theirs.

Gregg and his wife, Patrina, began operating Curbside Services Inc., a medical transportation service, three years ago. With just four employees and three cars, the Walkers set out on a mission to make the road to medical care a little smoother for Williamsburg residents, taking them to and from appointments and other medically related locations.

To manage his business, along with the advice his father gave him, Gregg relies on honesty, his finely honed people skills, a strong sense of spirituality and a little bit of humor to help his company succeed and ensure his clients are well-served.

"I've been told I am quite comical," Gregg said. "I use that to build a rapport, and from there people tend to relax and feel comfortable."

A native of the Williamsburg area, Gregg has become a familiar face to many people. "Many people know me as a man of God and that spirituality is very important to me," said Gregg, who attends Living Water Christian Fellowship. "They also know that when they get into the car with me, Gregg is going to give them a good word; something they can hold on to as they go into the

doctor's office and face what he has to say."

Three years into the business, Curbside Services is expanding.

The Walkers now have five cars, including a handicap-accessible van, and six employees. Looking back, Gregg realizes that it took a great deal of dedication and leadership on his part to turn his vision into a successful reality. He also says that his method of leadership doesn't only apply to business, it applies to family and faith, as well.

He and Patrina have six children – Roneka, Shaunta, Janis, Kiara, Lamesha and Gregg, Jr. – all between the ages of 17 and 25. All five girls are currently attending college or trade school, while Gregg, Jr., a junior at Brunton High, is filling the shoes of star quarterback.

"As leaders within the family, I do have to say that my wife and



I have done a fine job," Gregg said.

And as if leading a business and a family weren't already a full plate, Gregg is preparing to take on yet another role of leadership – one within his church. He is enrolled in a ten-week leadership course that will prepare him to possibly become a minister.

"I believe I have something to share with people," he said. "From my experience I have gained knowledge – knowledge that I know can help someone out of the dark."

As his business continues to grow, his family flourishes and he embarks on a journey of spiritual leadership, Gregg knows he has the late pastor Joyce Miles to thank. "She was my first pastor," he said. "She taught me how to be faithful, how to be honest and how to give excellence. It was she who gave me my roots in spirituality." NDN

# Hey Neighbor!

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**ATTENTION NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS!**

Please email [heyneighbor@cox.net](mailto:heyneighbor@cox.net) on or before Tuesday, March 4th to be considered for inclusion in the March 20th issue of *Next Door Neighbors*.

## Hey Neighbor!

BUNKO TOURNAMENT TO BENEFIT BREAST CANCER RESEARCH

**MARCH 1, 2008**

The Kingsmill Ladies Bunko group hosts a Bunko Tournament (no experience necessary!) to benefit the Susan G. Komen Foundation for breast cancer research. In partnership with the *Beyond Boobs* local support group ([www.beyondboobsinc.com](http://www.beyondboobsinc.com)). \$20 per person. Bring your Bunko group or make new friends! Learn how to play that night. Raffles, prizes, refreshments. Register in advance for this event – no registrations at the door and space is limited! Register via email: [kmbunko@yahoo.com](mailto:kmbunko@yahoo.com).

## Hey Neighbor!

KING OF GLORY CONSIGNMENT SALE

**MARCH 7, 2008**

Stop by the 9th Children's Consignment Sale at King of Glory Lutheran Church on Longhill Rd. Friday, March 7th, Noon - 7pm and Saturday, March 8th, 8am - Noon. We have a great selection of new and gently used items for babies, children and expecting parents. Toys, books, videos, clothing (newborn to 14 and maternity) anything and everything that relates to children.

## Hey Neighbor!

WILLIAMSBURG CHORAL GUILD

**MARCH 10, 2008**

The Williamsburg Choral Guild presents "Sailing the Fair Isles" featuring music by English composers Stanford and Vaughan Williams on March 10th at 8:00 p.m. The Chorus of 90 singers and full orchestra will be joined by soprano soloist, Kara Charise Harman, and baritone soloist, Christopher Mooney. The performance will be held at

CrossWalk Community Church at 7575 Richmond Road, Williamsburg. Tickets for this concert are available by calling 757-220-1808 or visit: [www.williamsburgchoralguild.org](http://www.williamsburgchoralguild.org).

## Hey Neighbor!

AMERICAN RED CROSS

March 2008 is *Red Cross Month* and also kicks off the "Heroes for the American Red Cross" Campaign for the Colonial Virginia Chapter. A Hero makes a good faith attempt to raise \$1,000 for the Chapter with the help of their company, church, school or civic organization. They may enlist others to help in their endeavor or may choose to work alone.

**APRIL 25, 2008**

Friday, April 25, 2008 is our American Red Cross Charity Golf Classic Tournament at Ford's Colony Country Club, Marsh Hawk Course. Captains Choice Play; 1pm Shotgun Start. Sponsorship packages and player opportunities are available. Contact Jean Smith, Chapter Resources Director, Colonial Virginia Chapter (757) 253-0228

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**APRIL 27, 2008**

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## Hey Neighbor!

THE WOMAN'S CLUB OF WILLIAMSBURG SEEKS SCHOLARSHIP APPLICANTS

**DEADLINE: MAY 12, 2008**

The Woman's Club of Williamsburg will offer a \$2,000 scholarship to a high school senior at Bruton, Jamestown, and Lafayette High School who is planning to attend an accredited four year college or university. Information on the scholarship requirements will be available in the Guidance Department of each high school. Criteria for the award will include academic standing, leadership ability, and extra-curricular activities. Terry Paniczko, Woman's Club of Williamsburg [4my-l@cox.net](mailto:4my-l@cox.net)

## Hey Neighbor!

NETWORK WILLIAMSBURG

Visit [www.NetworkWilliamsburg.com](http://www.NetworkWilliamsburg.com), the home of a new non-profit organization dedicated to increasing awareness of the needs in the community, encouraging community involvement, and expanding resources available to nonprofits. NetworkWilliamsburg is designed for businesses, non-profits, individuals, and civic and faith-based organizations. Visit our [www.NetworkWilliamsburg.com](http://www.NetworkWilliamsburg.com) for more info. Karen Dutro

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# “3 More Great Reasons to Invest Now in Buying a Home”

(Besides low interest rates!)

## 1. A house is a place to make a home, not just a buck.

Most purchasers don't buy a house to flip it. They buy it to live in it. The value of strong communities, rooted families, civic pride, comfortable retirement and a higher quality of life, can't be expressed on a balance sheet.

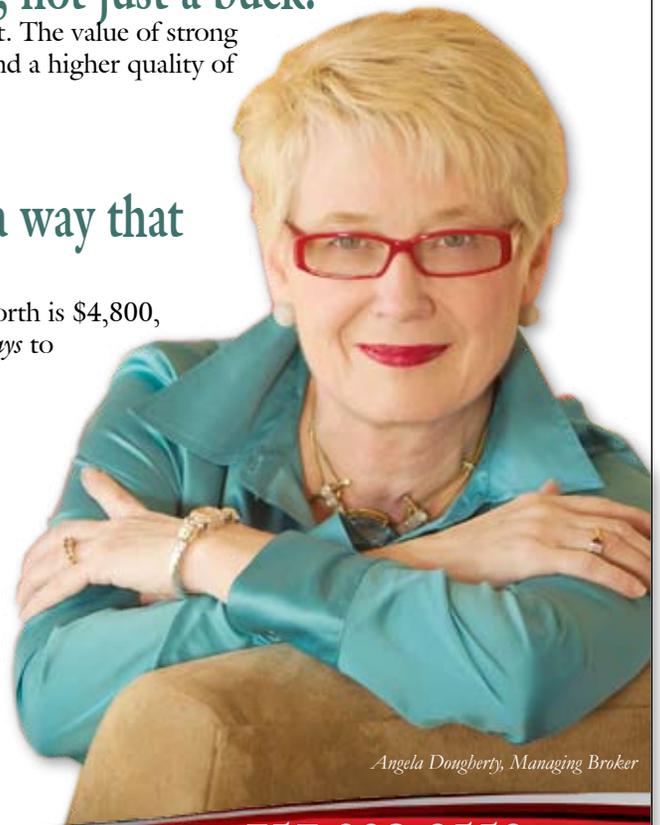
## 2. Owning a home builds wealth in a way that renting can't.

According to the Federal Reserve Board, the average renter's net worth is \$4,800, while the average homeowner's net worth is \$171,000. Clearly it *pays* to own a home.

## 3. Now really is the time to buy.

Housing inventory levels are the highest in years, and interest rates are low. If you're a buyer, this market is for you. *But...if you need to sell first, be patient, and price your home correctly.* Right now Virginia homes sell after an average 127 days on the market, only five days more than the 10-year average of 122 (although this number varies among price ranges and markets). Competitive price is important. Experts agree, well-priced homes sell faster.

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