

CHESAPEAKE

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Style



Serves and Celebrates the Chesapeake Bay Region and its People, Past, Present and Future

Fast Times on the Rivers

"I want to wear my Crocs," I whined to Beth, my VCU/Riverside lymphedema physical therapist. She responded by telling me I wouldn't like them, but my best bet was to find a catalog with orthopedic shoes. This was the last day in an arduous journey which began last July.

Sitting in the wound care doctor's office, with an open wound, about the size of a half dollar on my lower leg, I asked him "Why are my legs so swollen?" His response, "There are two diagnosis I don't like to tell a patient—one is cancer, the other lymphedema." Thus began Home Health Care, several times a week—they are wonderful nurses and aides, and one simply adored my hound mix, Brandy. During this time I had resurrected and been reunited with my Crocs, all seven, yes, seven pairs of dusty, colorful and beloved Crocs. All of them had been dutifully washed in the washing machine and lined up side by side, waiting their turn to be worn again! We were happy together, my colorful Crocs and me! Until January.

Finally, in January, my wound had reached a point of being ready to accept treatment and training for the lymphedema. But no more Home Health Care. For four weeks, five days a week, my good friend Marie, drove me to VCU/Riverside for lymphedema PT and training. Our appointments were early, too early for me, but we soldiered on for an hour and a half each morning.

During this time Beth wrapped my legs with compression wraps, which stayed on until the next morning. Each day they were removed, my legs washed and slathered with lotion, and re-wrapped. Thankfully, my legs cooperated with the routine and each day we were rewarded with slightly less swollen legs.

But! My Crocs were no longer welcome on my feet. The wraps had too many layers, my Crocs didn't fit and I had to wear the most uncomfortable and ugly sliders on my feet. They wouldn't stay on, my toes were exposed, vulnerable to cold and bumps. I was grieving for my Crocs! The time came for me to have permanent compressions on my legs. Thankfully, the compressions of choice are Juzo, Velcro wraps—one for each calf, foot and knee. I had high hopes! My Crocs would fit again! No! No? No!

Folks who know me and understand my sense of humor, realize that my conscious and subconscious mind can become quite creative. With the help of amazon, and their Try Before You Buy program, I was able to order different sizes of Crocs to see which ones, if any, fit over my wraps! Did I mention that one leg is always swollen and larger than the other? Did I mention I am a Green Bay Packer fan? My final solution to be able to be reunited with my Crocs, is **Two pairs of Crocs!** One Green, and one Yellow! Two different Sizes. So, to amuse myself and other folks—it's been a very long year, hasn't it?—you will see me wearing my different colored Crocs again! Oh, at night, no wraps, so all of my Crocs have an opportunity to be enjoyed!

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About the cover~

Photographer, Tom Shockley, says, "In North America seeing a Blue Bird meant happiness, good health and hope! Native Americans included it in their art and told stories of its beauty and humility. The early settlers were fascinated by its beautiful blue color and sent its feathers back to their royalty. American farmers built and hung boxes around the fields to encourage them to eat harmful insects. This mama bluebird seems intent on protecting her new home and nest to be! In Virginia bluebirds, obviously, have been here from

the beginning and now live here twelve months of the year. During the winter they group together and live in hedges and thickets. With my photography I feel like I am allowing others to see into the souls of my subjects through their eyes. As I snap each picture it feels as though I'm able to become one with the subject's spirit! I hope this photo brings you that feeling! We live in an amazing area with amazing wildlife. I hope you'll take the time to enjoy it and conserve it for our children and generations to come. I hope you make this a grand day!"

The Family as a Community of Art



By Deborah Butler

Many of us involved in the arts spent the last year apart from our art classes and studios, whether at Bay School or elsewhere, keeping artistic communities alive remotely as best we can. There are, however, entire generations of families involved with art together, keeping their own art communities in the enviable space of face-to-face in-person work, supported by the Bay School's past influence and current outreach.

Such has it been with the Dehoux's, one local family in Mathews. Janet Dehoux, longtime Mathews resident and new Bay School board member, started taking classes in the early days of Bay School's existence. Over the years she continued with 3D arts, especially stained glass and ceramics. To her, art is important, and as the mother-in-law of Jessica and Rachel Dehoux, and grandmother of budding artists Jackson, Greyson, Jameson, and Parker—ages 8



– 4—Janet is the main driver of the family's interest in art.

Both daughters-in-law, Jessica and Rachel, participate in the arts as well. Both women have come to several art stress relief classes with Janet, and a memorable event was this past winter's Christmas cork ornament class at Bay School. Not only did Janet and her daughters-in-law attend and create ornaments, but both Jessica's and Rachel's mothers



attended as well.

Sometimes all three carry their connection to art farther away from home. Jessica says, "Every year that the family goes to Nags Head, and we like to 'modge-podge,' that is, use fabric, paper, and other

mediums to design collages." It's a special time for them to bond further around their art.

Over time, the third generation has been introduced to art while taking Mommy and Me classes with moms Rachel and Jessica, and spending time in after school and summer art camps. Jackson likes clay and watercolor, and Jameson engages with more tactile 3-D projects;

Jackson's bird "Feathers" will be featured on a Bay School t-shirt soon! Rachel says, "Greyson has been coloring and drawing ever since he could use his hands, but Parker over the last couple of years has also become quite the little artist." She adds, "Greyson is working on animal mounts created from scratch with paper and tape while Parker sketches a lot of deer, fish, and dragons."

No pandemic seems to get in the way of thriving on artwork. Janet says that one of the things she feels she can do as a board member to support Bay School is distribute the School's Art to Go kits as

far and wide as she can to others.

They have kept all four grandchildren quite busy this past year. Jessica says, "The kits have kept Jackson and Jameson busy with their favorite mediums, painting and clay, and were a blessing during Covid." Rachel agrees, "The Bay School really came through when

school ended last year. Their crafts helped my kids think outside the box. It was nice that they had other friends participating in the same projects, so even though they couldn't see each other in person we would share pictures with those participating in the same activities from home."

In obvious ways the Bay School's support of art enhances the Dehoux family's engagement with art, but also with each other as a family. Janet thinks that "art adds beauty and self-esteem" in their lives and as they engage in it, together or alone, they find themselves creating and talking more in their family setting. "Last year was so awful," Janet says, and "art just added joy to the family." For Jessica, doing art together "strengthens bonding with the kids in a different way; you get to see different talents coming out. You learn so much more about your own kids." While everyone wishes to return to regular art classes and camps in person, they remain thankful for all the Bay School's art support for their family, friends, and community this past year. *Deborah Butler photos top l, Prize Winner Feathers, Parker and Art to Go,, Greyson and Watercolor, Jessica and Janet, Jackson and Art to Go,*



The Day the Lambs Learned to Tap Dance



By Nan Harvey

Last fall I beat the boredom of lockdown by adding lambs to my family. Temporary fencing in the yard kept them close to home until their paddock fencing could be completed which meant I started each day with them.

Each morning, Alfie and Beto, eyes glued to the house, silently waited for their breakfasts until, seeing me at the door, they joyfully cried “Maa!” “Maa!” and ran to the gate. Then they’d butt their heads gently against my legs,

run alongside me turning lamb cartwheels, and shake their heads.

Their routine: attack their chow as if it was the most delectable meal they’d ever had—though identical to yesterday’s breakfast and the day before that—then bury their faces in the alfalfa, lamb equivalent of French Roast, inhaling the hay aroma. Some cud chewing, then a little nap before they got to work clearing weeds.

The real excitement was in the afternoon when they were sometimes allowed in the chicken yard to clear weeds there. I was getting the Schefflera—leafless but

maybe not lifeless—it had already been pruned hard by the lambs, ready to come in for the winter. Alfie and Beto munch houseplant scraps thrown down while studying my every move.

Bad-to-the-Bone Beto though figured out

how to circumvent the net fencing protecting the deck. I turned when I heard the Clip Clip Clip to see Beto looking around the screened-in porch. Alfie stood at the bottom of the stairs ready to follow, if Beto could manage the stairs down.

Trying to herd Beto back to ground, he ran mischievously just ahead of me until he got to the corner then, in territory too foreign even for him, turned and dashed past me throwing his legs high, CLIP CLIP CLIP CLIP! At the top of the three stairs he wavered a moment, tentatively took the first then leapt to the ground. Both Alfie and I were impressed. I put the fence back thinking that

was the end of that adventure.

Wrong. As soon as my back was turned, I could hear the stealth clip clip clip clip clip of the two of them tiptoeing up the stairs. They stopped at the houseplants on the deck but just briefly. Alfie wanted to see the screened-in porch for herself, but Beto was unbound: he ran to the corner then turned to Alfie shaking his head in a lamb laugh.

Alfie walked towards him slowly, looking down at her feet, click click click. They had always been on grass! The sounds their hooves made were new. When Alfie reached the corner, they both turned and bolted back the length of the deck CLACK CLACK CLACK CLOPPITY CLOP!! Neither even hesitated at the screened-in porch but bounded through one door then the other, sheep smiles on their faces. Bouncing along the deck, trying new combinations, clickety CLACK clack clack CLOPPITY CLOP CLOP! then, not pausing, back to the corner, dancing in place clip clip clip clip throwing up their heads in silent hoots of joy.

They are not the lithe athletes Fred and Ginger in fleeces, just lambs delighting in the music they never had imagined they could make. *Nan Harvey photo of Beto and Alfie “dancing” cheek to cheek lamb style.*

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Growing up in the Northern Neck~Part II



By Denise DeVries

From the time our daughter Delia Ibañez could walk, she loved to dance. At three, she started ballet with Pie Terry in Burgess, later taking classes at "Miss Linda's School of Dance," and then with Chelle De Grasse, Katie Jett and her successor Kara Royall at the Main Street studio in Kilmarnock, now called "Etudes Ballet School." I became one of Those Moms, driving for miles listening to books on tape, sitting backstage, and applying my daughter's makeup before performances.

When she was in third grade, Delia began dancing with Latin Ballet. We rented an apartment in Richmond and home schooled her in fourth and fifth grade so she could dance full time. I did my freelance translation work on

my computer in the Glen Allen school hallway to the sound of flamenco.

We spent weekends in Kilmarnock, where Delia took David Lipscomb's Tai Kwan Do class every Saturday at the YMCA. On Sundays, we attended St. Andrews Presbyterian, the site of Delia's favorite Vacation Bible School. She volunteered at Lancaster Community Library during the summer, helping with Story Time arts and crafts.

Living in Richmond gave us an opportunity to take field trips to historic locations such as the White House and Museum of the Confederacy. Despite spending most of my life on the East Coast, I still thought of myself as a westerner.

My Colorado education had included very little about the Revolutionary and Civil Wars, and I wasn't particularly interested, at least at first. Still, Virginia history was in the curriculum, so we took advantage of the location. We lived just one block from St. John's church, where Patrick Henry made his famous declaration and Edgar

Allan Poe's mother was buried.

I began to understand why our area was called the Cradle of History, as I became interested in the lives of ordinary people in the past, such as the sheltered young women who volunteered to work in the Chimborazo Hospital.

Delia returned to Northumberland schools in 6th grade, the first year the new Middle School building was open. She continued acting in school plays, and I was invited to present poetry workshops in the English classes. "Future Problem Solvers," led by Jenny Dunaway, boosted Delia's speaking and presentation skills.

Alvaro enjoyed the daily drive back and forth to school, saving our daughter an extra hour a day on the bus. I fell back into the routine of working at home and waiting for the school day to end. My only contact with the outside world was during the after school activities of a typical Northumberland

mom. I was completely unprepared for the empty nest looming in the near future.

Delia singing at open



house and dancing.

Watch for Part III next month.

Delia began dancing with Kennedy Center Fellow Yvonne Montoya in 2018 at Dance in the Desert. Her dance video in the corn field is part of Ms. Montoya's Stories from Home - Covid 19 Addendum, which can be seen online through Panteon. Stories From Home was originally scheduled to premiere on stage and in person on Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage in September 2020; it will be rescheduled for the fall 2021 season.]

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Style Spotlight~Allison's Ace Hardware celebrates 50 years



By Mark Huffman

In 1971, Ira and Nancy Allison—married for six years and starting a family—decided to start a business too. Allison's Ace Hardware in Lottsburg was born.

Not far from the sprawling and newly enlarged store on Northumberland Highway in Lottsburg, Allison's original location was off the beaten path on Walmsley Road, in the building currently occupied by New Hope Baptist Church.

For the first year Nancy kept her job at Bank of Northumberland while Ira left his job at VDOT to work full time in the business. A year later, Nancy joined him as a full-time partner.

"The business grew and I said, 'well, we're in this together, let's see what we can do with it,'" Nancy said.

As it turned out, they did quite a lot with it. Fifty years later, Allison's Ace Hardware is one of the largest retail concerns in Northumberland County, founded to fill a perceived need in the community.

A popular hardware store in Callao, Sandy's, had just closed its doors. Ira and Nancy had always admired it as the ideal hardware store and used it as their model.

"Sandy's was the cat's meow," Nancy said. "They had the

reputation for having everything you need, the people who worked there were terrific."

The Sandy's model worked, and soon Allison's was thriving and expanded to a store in Tappahannock. Then, in 1992 Ira passed away suddenly, leaving Nancy to manage the store by herself. She closed the store in Tappahannock and began construction on the present, more high-profile location.

Nancy's children, Joey and Greg, were just completing their education but became close business advisers to their mother. After graduation, both decided to enter the business with their mom.

"That was very important to our success," Nancy said. "Without their support I wouldn't be here. I knew what I wanted, to make it a success, especially for their father who worked so hard for what he started. I said, 'okay boys, if you're coming in with me, we're going to give it everything we've got.'"

The new location helped Allison's Ace Hardware significantly grow its business. Not only was the store in a more visible location, it was larger and could hold more inventory and offer more services. Gutters and awnings grew to be an important part of the business.

"We were just so pleased that the expense we had gone through

to move here proved to be the right decision," Nancy said. "But there again, the community was behind me and supported me."

Just like Sandy's Hardware, Allison's Ace Hardware also had a terrific staff of associates over the years.

"Jean Hudson, she was with me for 15 years at least, and there was Tammy Brann, she was my paint manager, one of the best," Nancy said. "Our employees have made this business a success."

Eddie Clark worked at Allison's for 20 years and Billy Crabbe about as long. Eugene Brown, the current floor manager, has been a part of the Allison's team for well over 20 years and Kaki Light joined Allison's in 2005 as

bookkeeper, office manager and plays a large role in the gutter business.

Today, Allison's is celebrating 50 years of serving the community in an enlarged and redesigned building covering about 15,000 square feet. The expansion was launched last year in spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, yet another sign of the confidence that Allison's has displayed over its history. But a driving factor, Nancy said, was the fact the store simply needed more space.

"One of the main reasons was

because we had become a STIHL dealer and that took a large spot in our store and we wanted to make it more visible," Nancy said.

Now, there is a large power tool section at Allison's where STIHL products are prominently displayed, along with tools from other manufacturers. Some of the additional space has been used to expand other departments, such as lawn and garden, marine supplies, and a whole new gift department in the front of the store.

After 50 years, Allison's Ace Hardware is still growing and still serving a vital function in the community. Nancy, Joey, and Greg still have a vision for the future



and even after 50 years, Nancy is still energized by her work.

"This is what I do," she said. "I enjoy it, I feel like having something to get up and come to in the morning – it just suits me. Mark Huffman Photos.

Bay Transit Celebrates 25 Years and 25 Million Miles

By Michael B. Norvell

Bay Transit, the public transportation division of Bay Aging, has been in operation for nearly 25 years and residents across the Northern Neck, Middle Peninsula, as well as Charles City and New Kent Counties have long enjoyed the award-winning service.

Bay Transit began providing public transportation services to the citizens of Gloucester County for two days a week beginning in September 1996. The service quickly expanded to five days a week as word spread about the fledgling

much pent up demand for public transportation in the region that counties including Lancaster, Essex, Mathews and Middlesex also came on board from 1998 to 2001."

By 2015, the service area for Bay Transit had grown to twelve counties covering nearly 3,000 square miles, an area larger than the state of Delaware. To keep up with the demands of the increased service, Bay Transit added two major facilities.

In mid-2010, an operations and maintenance facility opened in Commerce Park in Warsaw. Then in early 2015, Bay Transit added the Middle Peninsula Regional

innovations. "The last twenty-one years have been incredibly exciting," Pollock observed. "We now operate four flexible fixed-route lines in Tappahannock, West Point and Gloucester. Before COVID-19, we operated seasonal trolleys in Urbanna, Kilmarnock and Colonial Beach and hope to reactivate the trolleys as COVID-19 is brought under control.

"Additionally, Bay Transit's New Freedom Mobility Management program is a transportation service providing seniors and individuals with disabilities the ability to attend medical appointments, shop, work and attend social and

in Gloucester County," he said.

Throughout the remainder of 2021, Bay Transit will share stories of program milestones, innovations, strategic partnership, and employee profiles to give the readers of *Chesapeake Style* a greater sense of just how important public transportation is to the communities they serve.

"COVID-19 was a once in a lifetime challenge to transit systems across the country," Pollock noted. "I'm so grateful to the dedicated employees at Bay Transit who carried on so we could operate without a single day of service interruption throughout



public transportation system.

Kathy Vesley, now President and CEO of Bay Aging, briefly served as Bay Transit's Director, in 1999. "It was a very busy time for Bay Transit in those early years," Vesley recalled. "There was so

Transit Facility in the Gloucester Courthouse area of Gloucester.

Ken Pollock came on board as Transit Director in April of 2000, enjoying a front row seat from which to enjoy Bay Transit's rapid expansion and program

recreational events even for travel outside of Bay Transit's service area and/or service hours.

"And this summer we'll be launching one of the first rural "microtransit systems" in the state beginning with a small pilot project

2020. We've had a fantastic first twenty-five years and I'm sure the next twenty-five will be just as astounding," he said.



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Serving the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula

Style Spotlight~Deborah Edgar Real Estate Group~Matching People and Houses



By Carol J. Bova

Deborah Edgar has a way of sharing her excitement about her real estate business and her clients that lets you see why she's so great at helping them. The skills and knowledge Deborah acquired in eighteen years in real estate started when she sold her own house for the first time. She said, "I enjoyed the process so much, and with my previous experience in marketing and advertising, what better way of

serving people could there be than matching people and houses?"

After she built up her real estate business in Richmond, Deborah bought a house in Lancaster County fifteen years ago. She said, "As I come here, I knew I had to make my way into the community by becoming a part of it." Living in the historic fishing village of Morattico, she enjoyed being a volunteer at the Morattico Waterfront Museum (www.morattico.org) and having been the Museum president. "I've been so fortunate and blessed that the community embraced us and our business model."

Deborah Edgar Real Estate Group has a boutique approach to real estate needs. Deborah said, "We are members of four multiple listing services in Virginia where most have one or two. We have a database of lenders and contractors and know where the AirBnBs are for people who want to spend a few days getting to know the area. We want our offices to be

a destination where people feel comfortable to drop in, grab a map and a copy of *Chesapeake Style* and learn about this vast area."

Recently, the first visitors to the new Lancaster Courthouse office pulled into the parking lot and said, "Are you Deborah Edgar? You're everywhere! You just sold the house across the street from us in Richmond in two days. We came down to visit the Tide's Inn and saw your signs everywhere. When we saw your office here, we saw that as a sign to stop in! We want you to sell our house there and find one here."

Deborah's excited about the interest in the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula and that she's in the right place at the right time to open her new office. "We have a knowledgeable group of agents in Richmond and the Northern Neck dedicated to helping our clients. If we can facilitate and help their real estate efforts, our mission is accomplished."

It's not always an easy task. Inventory drives the market. Without houses to sell, no one can move on to the next one, and people line up to try for the ones that are available. In the past, sales used to include a contingency for sale of the current property, but no more! There are too many buyers ready to immediately act on an offer. That explains why houses are selling over their asking price, even though appraisers are being very careful and conservative in their evaluations. But for someone with a good deal of equity in their home, and who is downsizing to a condo, for example, it's a great time to cash out."

One of the reasons the market increased dramatically last year was people could live anywhere

and work from home. But when employers say, "You need to come back to the office," that may lead to another shift in the market. It's an incredibly challenging time for real estate agents. Mortgage interest rates are inching up, and sellers want to line up a new house before placing theirs on the market, which keeps inventory low, making it a good time to list a property.

Deborah's approach is relationship based. Where other companies may track the number of sales, she maintains contact with her clients through her client appreciation program. Every year at Thanksgiving, she has a reception for clients to come, visit, and pick up a pie. She said, "We count the number of pies we give away as a measure of our success! One of our clients has a home-baked goods business, and we order our pies from her. Last year, we gave away over one hundred pies. We establish relationships, and the clients become our life-long friends. We value their trust and loyalty."

The Deborah Edgar Real Estate Group welcomes your visit at 1827 W. Main Street, Suite 202, in Richmond. The new office at 8864 Mary Ball Road in Lancaster Courthouse will officially open on May 1st.

Call Deborah at 804-337-0977. Email: deborah@deborahedgar.com. Her website is www.deborahedgar.com, and she's on Facebook.

Photo courtesy Deborah Edgar.

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Emerging from a Year of Isolation



By Carol J. Bova

After the past year of avoiding contact with anyone but my cat, I've started going out to the post office in the daytime again, instead of going late at night. It's not so easy though, to return to an ordinary awake in the daytime, sleep at night schedule. And I'm still finding it difficult to track what day it is without checking the date on my phone.

When a close family member got the virus and spent seven difficult weeks trying to recover, I

had decided to go into isolation. Shopping online and having everything but food delivered to my front doorstep left me with a mountainous stack of flattened boxes in the garage. My local Food Lion got used to my pattern of online orders and often offered suggestions when my regular items were out of stock.

Along with others working on the same subjects, I did a lot of writing triggered by nursing home disasters and the inability of the Commonwealth to fund enough inspectors for them. I asked questions and pointed out flawed demographic reports.

In a recent situation, 43 percent of the data was unknown, but the Department of Health didn't let that stop them from making pronouncements and plans. More than forty of my articles were published on baconsrebellion.com. I'm not sure if they made much difference. At least I tried to put some facts on the record, if only for future use.

Depression was an unwelcome companion through the winter

months, but has been evicted from my home and life with the arrival of spring. My foggy memory is clearing, and my computer still has its memory intact and retrieves what I need. Friends say they've had the same experience. Maybe as we start to get together again, we can help each other back to where we want to be.

Cooking was relegated to microwavable ready-to-eat meals for the longest time. I'm just now starting to use the fresh vegetables I buy before they turn into mush to be discarded. Just yesterday, I baked a spaghetti squash that had languished on a shelf since last fall.

They are remarkably long-lasting. This one ended up on my dinner plate dressed in tomato sauce and garnished with microwave-melted mozzarella cheese on

top. If I hadn't lost my sense of smell last spring, I probably would have enjoyed it more.

Why I lost the sense of smell is a mystery. I was so disappointed when an antibody test said I hadn't had the virus. I had hoped it would be my get out of jail free card.

That happened with my Pfizer shots in March plus a two-week wait after the second vaccine dose to make sure those antibodies had a chance to develop and percolate through my body.

Moving forward, I'm going to publish my second Chestnut Springs novel, start in on the third, and plant a vegetable garden to celebrate my re-entry into normal life again.

Carol Bova photo of William.



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Style Spotlight~Organizing with Care and Respect



By Gloria J. Savage

Mermaid Home Organization! Sounds interesting: I think I'd like to interview the owner, were my thoughts. As soon as Kristine answered the phone, I knew she was a people person, just like me. There was a freshness in her voice. Her expression came across as pleasant, gentle, and caring. I felt she could do any job and that she enjoyed working with people. In my own humble opinion, I was correct.

Kristine Stables started Mermaid Home Organization in November of 2019. She had worked in corporate America and was now venturing out as a business owner. Her business is located in Jamaica, Virginia. Kristine describes Jamaica as a community filled with generational families located on the Rappahannock River with long views of the water, sunshine, and docks. The pleasantry of her adoration of Jamaica comes across with her words and tone as she ponders and speaks with purposeful reflections.

Kristine's company provides home, home office, and virtual organizing for residences in the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. Her clients are experiencing a life transition to a new location, and those looking for help decluttering and refreshing the look of their current spaces. She provides prepacking, light staging, and recommendations for others who may leave the area and sell their home.

Those who are moving to the area, temporarily or permanently, are offered assistance, which includes unpacking and placing all items in their prospective rooms. The clients decide their preferences and needs. Kristine can work with one room or several rooms, providing full or partial setup. Some clients inherit the home of a family member and want to personalize it, make it their own, or downsize by combining items of two or more homes into one home. Attics and other on property units are suitable for overflow, but they even need decluttering at times.

Unbeknownst to Kristine, she started her business at a time that held future uncertainties. She was inundated with the business startup and working with clients' needs while operating under COVID guidelines and governmental restrictions.

She suspended a few contracts to follow Centers for Disease and Control and Protection (CDC) and local government procedures to ensure everyone follows in-home safety measures. Her husband, Scott, has been very supportive and encouraging. He is smart on design and helps when he can.

While not being where she hoped to be, she comfortably moves along as a new business owner.

She is benefiting the community with every family she serves. She is bright, and she knows how to serve in a caring and decorous manner. She already has a small network of folks to share resources. She doesn't mind sending clients to resourceful professionals and experts to meet the needs of her clients.

As with many other businesses, the hardest part of the pandemic is the financial impact. Stagnation in growth and profit is threatening new and experienced business owners. The pandemic's positive side is that it opened financial opportunities for loans and grants to small business owners. The negative side is that so many owners were not ready for adjustments and had to grasp all the changes and deal with extra paperwork. There was a learning curve to navigate doing business a new way while also living with all the family and community changes.

Kristine serves four to five clients a week and expects her clientele to increase as the pandemic conditions improve. In business, she has integrated her past and present knowledge and maintain her availability to community clients. Those clients, ranging from 50- to 70-years old, are generally in a 40- to 45-mile radius to Jamaica. She offers discounts to military and veterans, as well as first responders and other categories.

Kristine's organizing journey is similar to those she serves. After marriage, they realized that the furnished family house passed down to her husband would hold



the additional household items in each of their current homes. Before starting the business, she told her husband that she wanted to be legitimate and accountable.

They would go on the journey themselves before

going with others. That journey, along with her training, prepared her. She continues to engage in learning opportunities to stay fresh with new knowledge and ideas. Kristine is currently working on a couple of additional certifications to provide additional services.

When you need to downsize and get things in order with care and respect, please don't do it alone. Contact Kristine Stables at Mermaid Home Organization, 804-758-5814, or kristine@mermaidcs.com. Kristine knows that "a more purposeful and peaceful home is healthier for your mind+body connection." Visit <https://mermaidcs.com/home> or following her on Facebook.

Photos Courtesy of Kristine Stables.



The Bright Side of A Traffic Jam



By Ellen Dugan

A precocious nine-year-old boy sits with his mother in the middle of a traffic jam. He is anxious to get going. No one is moving. Everyone is confused. The drivers do not know which direction to go, and the boy notices that the police do not become involved. The child is blessed with a sense of orderliness and a good memory. He does not forget the experience, but more than thirty years will pass before his experience becomes relevant.

The boy's name is William Phelps Eno, and he is known today as the inventor of the Stop Sign and the "Father of Traffic Safety." The traffic jam that helped shape William's thinking occurred in 1867 and involved about a dozen or so horses

and carriages in lower Manhattan.

At that time few places in the United States could have boasted such urban congestion because most folks were living in the country, not the cities. Seldom did anyone see more than a couple of horses and carriages meet.

By 1900, this was beginning to change. Perhaps 8,000 motor cars began to share all sorts of roads with horses, carriages, lorries, delivery wagons, bicycles, and pedestrians. This number would swell to more than a million in the coming decade and eventually reach ten million by 1921.

But in 1900 while the auto industry was still in its infancy, there were already traffic control problems—much like today. People stopped and parked wherever they wanted. They drove down the middle of the road. Ran into one another. Blocked intersections. Left the road entirely or forged a new one.

To William Eno, never comfortable with disorder and chaos and now forty years old, it was obvious that something needed to be done. Equally obvious that his answer to Do you have to watch out for other people? was a resounding Yes!

So, as a concerned citizen he

set about reforming street traffic in New York. During a period when the roads were filthy, there were no speed limits, no lane markings, no directional signage, few street signs, no driver's licenses...he began with three very simple, common principles:

- 1) Devise driving rules, simple and easy to understand;
- 2) Make them visible to eliminate an excuse for not knowing them; and
- 3) Train and empower the police to enforce them.

Eno based his "Rules of the Road"—the first in the world—on these principles and such revolutionary notions as: driving on the right half of the road, yielding rights of way, controlling speeds, signaling before turning, signaling

for slowing and stopping, not driving on sidewalks, and requiring pedestrians to obey the rules.

From here he went on to invent the stop sign—originally a 2 ft by 2 ft square piece of sheet metal painted white with black letters—so that intersections could be safer. His other innovations included the one-way street, traffic circle, taxi stand, pedestrian crosswalk, pedestrian safety island, painted lines down the center of a street, and a host of traffic regulations.

Today, these seem like common sense or no big deal to us, but they effectively revolutionized traffic. Such was Eno's success in New York that he was tapped to develop traffic plans for London and Paris as well—not bad for a man who never learned to drive!

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Style Spotlight~Fitz-n-Sonz Brings Dreams to Life



By Carol J. Bova

Tony Fitzgerald has been an entrepreneur and building contractor pushing some 30 years now.

When he moved to Essex County with his family six years ago, he renamed his company, Fitz-n-Sonz Builders, to give his sons incentive to stay in the family business.

Tony's two sons grew up by his side, watching him work whenever they could. Now Jeremy, 21, and Daniel, 19, each run their own crews in the company. Tony's wife, Idalia, does all the behind-the-scenes work, and daughter Lindsey, who is still in school, will be painting a giant mural on the south wall of the new showroom in Tappahannock. The family enjoys spending time together on their 20-acre farm and have cows, turkeys, chickens, hogs, and even

a peacock. Captain, a young Schnauzer, is also a part of the family and travels to jobs with Tony.

The feeling of family connection extends to those who work for Fitz-n-Sonz. There are thirteen employees, and Tony likes to offer local employment opportunities. Karen

Rasmussen, who helps with the construction side of the business, got to know Tony when he built her house a few years ago. When the job opening came up, she became Fitz-n-Sonz's project manager and designer and wears many other hats.

The Fitz-n-Sonz business is growing, and Tony's adding a new 3,600 square foot showroom, "Fitz Cabinetry & Design," which will be the first in the area. Elizabeth Fowler was recently hired as the Office Manager. She has years of marketing and management experience, and now that her three children are all in school, she is excited to pair that with her love of home design.

Tony, Karen and Elizabeth look forward to making the material and fixture selection a comfortable experience in the beautiful showroom. "We ask

customers what they're looking to do, their likes and dislikes, and then help them narrow down their choices so it's not overwhelming to make their dream happen."

The showroom is easily accessible, just over the bridge in Tappahannock on Queen Street. Clients will be able to come to the showroom to see quality products firsthand, such as Yorktowne Cabinetry, a semi-custom cabinet line with unlimited possibilities. There will be three different style display kitchens— a galley, an L-shape and a C-shape. Elizabeth said, "We're going to



call the C-shape our El Grande Kitchen. There's enough room to do demonstrations for our clients, and we'll even have a big screen to show our unique computerized renderings to give customers a visual of their new project instead of just having to imagine it. In addition to the display kitchens, there will be a laundry area, dog washing station, mini bar, built-in office, and other ways to use cabinetry all over your house."

In addition to offering quartz, granite, and Corian counter tops, Tony is a talented carpenter and can make butcher block counter tops from any species of wood. There are several butcher block counter top displays in the showroom. In fact, Elizabeth's desk top is butcher block that Tony made from heart pine.

Luxury vinyl floors are appealing, easy to clean and waterproof. CORTEC has durable options with a wide variety of patterns and colors that look like wood or stone tile. There are budget friendly flooring lines too. Onyx and Tere-Stone shower enclosures are a nice alternative to tile. They're customizable to add soap dishes, benches, or grab bars. Fitz is exploring new lines of faucets and hardware. Watch for the announcement of the Grand Opening this summer!

Fitz-n-Sonz works on outdoor settings too. Outdoor living spaces are popular and more in demand than ever. Whatever you think of, from a screen porch to an outdoor kitchen, they can do it.

Sometimes, bees build a hive in a wall or a ceiling. Tony and his sons are experienced beekeepers—in their spare time—and can safely relocate the

bees without harm to the bees or residence. Tony's strong work ethic and helpful nature are clear in how he works. He often says, "No job is too big or small. We'll be there 'til it's done, even if it's hunting or fishing season."

Fitz-n-Sonz serves the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula within an hour radius of their showroom and office in Tappahannock located at 303 Queen Street, Suite D, Tappahannock, beside NN Burger in Virginia's largest LOVE mural. Phone 804-925-6600 or email tony@designsbyfitz.com about the new showroom or tony@fitznsonz.com for contracting, home building or remodeling. They're on Facebook; the website is <http://fitznsonz.com>. *Jillian Tonkin and Fitz-n-Sonz photos.*

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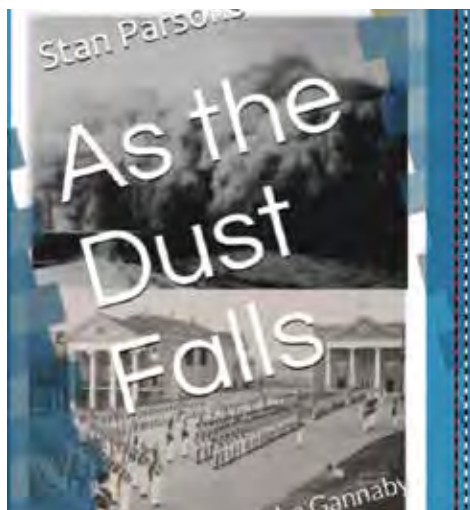
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Writers in *Style* ~ As the Dust Falls



As The Dust Fall by Stan Parsons
Review by Nan Harvey

Are you looking for that next potboiler with the steely eyed detective, the nasty people and gratuitous sex scenes in your next fun read? Yeah, neither am I. That's

why I so much liked Stan Parsons' second in his Gannaby family saga.

Don't let the thought of a second in a series put you off. I hadn't read the first and the second definitely stands on its own. A historical family saga set in the Depression, beginning in the Dust Bowl of the middle plains, Stan captures the time and the sense of the horrific storms with vivid detail making the reader feel like they are experiencing it too.

The Gannaby family, suffering unimaginable obstacles in western Texas, decide to move to western Virginia where Ed, World War I veteran, had grown up. We travel east with Ed, his new wife, Myra, and their son Andy by train when we learn of Ed's older cousin, Al, a childhood bully who's grown into a killer. With deft strokes Stan

describes the family dynamic and their native American neighbors.

We move with the Gannabys and their neighbor Nita, who's become part of the family, to the Shenandoah Valley. Stan describes Depression era Virginia small town life but in his capable hands it's not disheartening. Through descriptions of Salem, Lexington, Staunton and the surrounding area anyone familiar with this part of Virginia will quickly feel how the region has changed.

Besides letting the characters tell their own story with dialog, Stan weaves in period details to keep the reader in the time very different from our own. Well-crafted dialog using easily readable dialect is not the only other charm of the book. Two assassins have the funniest car driving story I've ever read. Laugh

out loud funny. Reread funny.

Available on Amazon, interested readers might want to visit www.stanparsonsbooks.com and get a preview of some of this talented author's other books first. Additionally, Stan does his own lively readings from his books at the studio of Denise Devries and her husband, Alvaro Ibanez Museum and Gallery outside of Kilmarnock. More information about scheduled readings is available at FaceBook, A-Ibanez Museum and www.a-ibanez.org. *The cover of Stan's book shows a photo from the Dust Bowl and a historical photo of a military formation at Staunton Military Academy.*

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Unexpected Blessings in the Classroom

By Sandra C. Fykes

As an older graduate student who received my AARP card a long time ago, I was often asked: "What was it like being in school with 20 year olds?"; "Was it hard to keep up?"; "How did you manage with the technology?"; and "Didn't you have more wisdom, knowledge, and experience than some of those young professors?" The answer to the latter still is a definite, point blank "NO"; those young professors have brilliant minds and know much more than I do and most likely ever will, which is just fine with me. I am a lifelong student, and I'm willing to learn from anyone regardless of age. However, I can elaborate a little more on the other questions, and some answers

changed after each class session.

In general, I really enjoy being around young adults. I don't have any children, but if I did, they would most likely be in their mid-to late 20's. The only time I was around so many of them was when I was in graduate school. I love their energy, and how I wish that I could receive a small fraction of it! Especially during the one and only evening class that I had when I quickly learned that I am not suited for classes that end at 9:30 p.m. It only took one class session for me to reach that conclusion. Even before we were dismissed, I was so exhausted that I prayed to God to please keep me awake for the duration of the class and so that I could get home safely. When class was over, my younger cohorts were making plans to go

out to dinner, watch a movie, and then have a group study session. They were fresh-faced, wide eyed, and ready to go. I, on the other hand, was trying to get home safely and make a beeline for my bed.

I am also captivated by their natural ability to multi-task and listen, especially in the classroom. I am an old school student. I like to sit in the front of the classroom with my eyes locked on the professor, the white board, or my computer screen, dutifully trying to listen and type copious notes. The majority of my younger classmates had an uncanny ability to listen while multi-tasking on other things that may or may not have been related to class. Were they really listening you may wonder? Yes, most of them were because I heard them respond with minute detail to our professor's multi-tiered questions. I suspect some of my professors were asking themselves the same question during their lectures. After hearing their flawless, eloquent responses, I often wondered if there is a natural supplement for multi-tasking; and if so, can I get a Senior discount if I go to my drug store on Seniors' day?

Technology is also a fact of life in graduate school. It's a given, not an option; and just when you think you have finally gotten the hang of

using one platform, do not boast or get comfortable because it will inevitably change to something more complicated. Along with those changes came another patch of grey hair to symbolize my defeat, victory, or perseverance, depending on the day. Yes, I asked for help. The professors empathized with me, as they were learning, too, and referred me to Tech Support. However, my issues were never straightforward, and Tech Support only had so much time for said client, and rightly so. My lifeline, and more than once or twice, were several of my 20 something classmates who patiently listened to me ramble about my issues, then pulled out their laptop or grabbed mine and calmly walked me through the process. I thanked them profusely (still to this day), and most of them replied, "No problem, I do it all the time for my parents and grandparents." Was I still as grateful since they correctly implied that I, too, am in that same category? Yes, and thank you, very much so!

I have learned a lot from my younger classmates, and I will never take them for granted. Sometimes I think they are trying to figure us seniors out, too, because we are the rare birds in the classroom. I enjoyed talking to them, and we have had some heartfelt conversations about a variety of topics they said they never or rarely discuss with their parents and older family members.

I am blessed to have had the opportunity to study alongside young adults. I will always be grateful for the many ways they have helped and encouraged me, and for their friendships. I have learned so much from them, and they truly made my time in school a richer experience.



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It's Time to Make More Decisions



By Gloria J. Savage

Have you at least been thinking about exercising? I hope so, but I know it is hard with some of the strange weather. Some days the weather is much like a seesaw, up and down, and then up and down again. Think about it. One week it was warm and sunny. The following week, it snowed, and then it was nice and sunny the third week.

These weather disparities keep some people housebound. Don't let it happen to you. You know how I feel about scheduling and staying on track. Make plans so that you won't totally abandon your exercise routine. This reminder is to make planning an essential

part of your health and fitness incentive. You know it will help you stay focused to establish and meet your health and fitness goals.

Here's a little exercise. Think about what you are doing with your time and whether you are satisfied with your accomplishments. If you are not satisfied, do something about it. Schedule the events you want to complete. If it is not exercising, don't schedule it right now. Schedule a small goal that is relatively easy and commit to it.

If you want to exercise:

1. Pick a goal that will help you get back to exercising, for example, increasing your water intake or eating one serving of fruit a day.
2. Don't forget to add a time frame to your goals.
3. Don't make it too drastic if it is overly different from what you are doing now or imagine doing in the future.

You know what I mean. If you regularly drink only one sixteen ounce bottle of water a day, don't try 80 ounces a day unless it is for a single day. That would be similar to running ten miles when you generally run one and a half.

I have a few words for those of you who are satisfied with your progress, especially if you

have improved your distance or time. Many Congratulations to you! Don't stop progressing. Continue to improve by working on your speed or distance.

Don't try to improve both at the same time or too quickly. That is a sure way to increase your chances of getting injured. Slow incremental growth is safe and profitable. Experience a little success in one area before moving on. A focused increase in your speed or distance once a week is enough to keep any of us encouraged and injury-free.

Remember, be creative. If you want a workout buddy and you can't meet face to face, give them

a call. Try scheduling a walking or running exercise session by phone, or consider a stretch or weight session on Zoom. While talking on the phone with a friend, you can walk at your pace. If you are a runner, that might be difficult and unsafe. Don't do that! Stretching and low impact exercises are favorable for a Zoom session.

Try some new ideas. You might be surprised what a few minutes of encouragement can do to help you stay motivated and fit. Whatever you do, be careful with all your exercises. Please don't overdo them. Save some energy for another day. *Gloria J. Savage photo.*

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Restoration

By Don Loop

I went to the river one morning
to Waterman's Park on the shore
a hill overlooking the water
for my spirits I hoped to restore.

But the river was shrouded in fog
not a ripple there was to see!
I sat on the bench contemplating
the song of the wild 'Lor-e-lei.'

Only there wasn't a 'bright
coming morn.'

the fog persisted 'til three.
In the gloom there must
have been sailors
adrift on that unseeing sea!

So I rallied my flagging spirits
and imagined them safe by a pier.
I felt a good deal better having
implored that their safety was near.

Then I went away from there happy
having lifted my gloom
'cause of them
and praying for all of their safety
became exuberant again!

Style &

They

By Don Loop

They say that watched
pots never boil;
The weather they say
will be good...
Like as not it'll rain a flood!
Who are the 'know
it all' called they?

Webster says the authorities.
This of course is how I feel,
Those known as they
cannot be real

Yet do so much influence me!

It's time that we expose their ilk,
But, where on earth
do those theys stay?
Some place convenient I'd say,
So readily they're brought to use.

Often those theys
are misinformed,
And pass their error on to us!
Oh well, it'll come
out in the wash.
It must be so—for so they say!



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Andre Rieu~His Music Touches the Soul

By Darleen Nichols

Hard to believe now that two years ago I had never even heard of Andre Rieu much less seen any of his concerts. I am not an aficionado of classical music. The 1950's and 60's is my favorite music. Also enjoy Big Band and Country. One night my dear friend Mary called and told me to turn my TV to the PBS Channel and watch this amazing show. So I did as she suggested and have been hooked ever since.

First, a little background on this Dutchman. Andre Leon Marie Nicholas Rieu was born on October 1, 1949 in Maastricht, Limburg, Netherlands. His father was the conductor of the Limburg Symphony Orchestra and most of Andre's brothers and sisters are

professional musicians. At age five, Andre began playing the violin.

Even at that young age, he didn't like the cold, formal air of the classical symphonies. That all changed during his conservatory training when he took a job playing in an ensemble featuring dance and light music. He performed Franz Lehr's Gold and Silver Waltz. Andre loved the lilt and discovered this was to be his kind of music. He continued on and formed his now famous Johann Strauss Orchestra which first performed in 1988. The King of the Waltz was born and zoomed to stardom in countries around the world.

The concerts of Andre Rieu are usually sold out well in advance of the show. And, yes, he and his orchestra do a show not just a concert. Andre and the orchestra have this amazing ability to pull

the audience in and make them part of the show. I have watched many of these concerts on YouTube and have been in awe of the audience participation.

Have you ever seen a conductor of classical music dance around on the stage and interact with the audience while playing a violin? No, neither have I. The members of the orchestra do the same.

Everyone involved appear to be having the time of their life. One would surmise that doing these concerts night after night in appearances around the world would become old hat and tiresome after so many years. No, instead every performance is filled with joy and excitement.

When I was ill with pneumonia in January, I wasn't interested in watching TV so I listened to Andre's music on YouTube instead. It is so uplifting, so filled with emotion it's hard to explain. My favorite is *You Raise Me Up* and his treatment of this piece certainly does that. Even hymns like *Amazing Grace* imbue the listener with new meaning and reverence.

Needless to say, I now have a collection of Andre's music on DVD and CD's. And, I am also the proud

holder of two tickets for excellent seats at his concert in Jacksonville, Florida on March 11, 2022. I invite you to enjoy a wonderful experience on YouTube by selecting Andre Rieu and watching and listening to this world famous conductor entertain his audience. I guarantee you will not be bored or disappointed. In his own words, "I know that when I like music, when it touches my heart, that it will touch your heart too. That, I think, is the secret to my success."

Andre has been married to wife Marjorie since 1975 and they have two children. The eldest is Marc who is an accomplished artist and Pierre who is in the entertainment business also. Pierre is the father of twins. Wife Marjorie also plays a major role in the family business. Another quote from Andre closes out my observations of this master showman. "When my twin grandchildren, Linda and Lyeke, were born two years ago, it changed me. I felt it was the essence of what life is about, and I cried all day. When my son, Pierre, their father was born I didn't cry like that."

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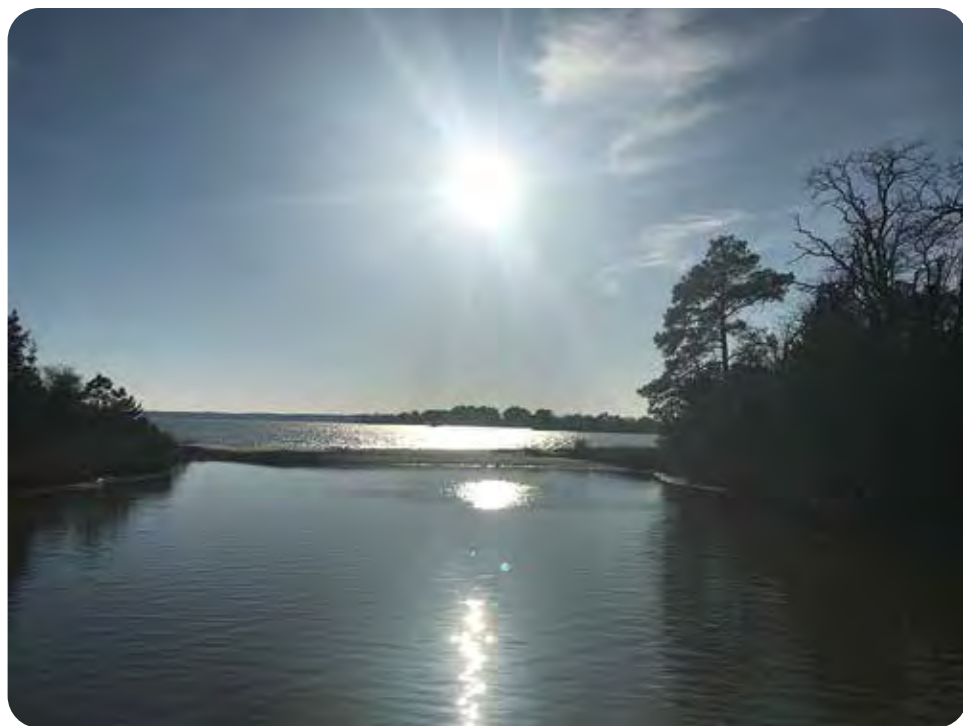
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Public Boat Ramp~Pay to Play?



By Ann Eichenmuller

It's a perfect spring day for paddling—slick, flat water, puffy white clouds, and plenty of sunshine. You're looking forward to exploring a new creek, and so you load up your kayak and head to the area's public ramp—only to be greeted by a bright red poster warning you that “public” is no longer free. You'll need an annual pass for \$23 or you'll need to pay the four dollar daily use fee—both of which you must do online before you can hit the water.

I guess the Virginia General Assembly has never tried to use WiFi on a secluded dead-end road in the Northern Neck...

Fortunately, you won't face this situation until next summer—the legislature has put a hold on fee collection until July 1, 2022. When the new law went into effect in January it was plagued with problems, Internet access being only one of many.

There was confusion about who needs it—no one under 17 or in possession of a hunting, fishing, or trapping license, or with a boat registered in the state—and it was creating a nightmare for outfitters who make a living providing transportation to launch points. They had to walk paddlers through the online application process one at a time, which some say added 10-15 minutes per person to their check-in. The same was true for environmental education trips for adults.

In addition, non-waterfront hotels and B&Bs, along with their surrounding shops and restaurants, hoped to bring in paddlers because of proximity to public ramps. Now they were concerned that they would lose revenue as visitors opted for waterfront accommodations without the hassle of paying online fees. The flood of questions and complaints led to a decision in March to halt fee collection for now.

The rationale behind the new

fees seems reasonable enough. Ramps are increasingly being utilized by folks who do not provide financial support for their upkeep. Owners of larger boats pay registration fees to support public ramps, as do those who hold DWR licenses to hunt or fish.

The new fee law is an attempt to make all ramp users pay their fair share. Unfortunately, the devil is in the details. Our ramps are not attended like state parks.

There is no one to collect the fee, making compliance dependent on Internet access at the site or widespread awareness of the fee for all residents and out-of-state visitors so their passes can be obtained in advance. And assuring ramp fees are paid and violators ticketed will fall on the already overburdened shoulders

of our Conservation Police.

The DWR is taking the remainder of this year to meet with citizens and seek out possible solutions to these problems. Have an awesome idea or opinion to share? This is time to contact them and make your voice heard.

Ann Eichenmuller is an award-winning marine and travel journalist, public speaker, and the author of the Sandi Beck murder mysteries, available on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and at select booksellers. Contact her via her website at anneichenmuller.org.

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No One Is Crabby Here!



By Mari Bonomi

Olde Crow and Crab is a new shop in Callao, and it's a very cheerful place indeed!

Vickie Alsop explained her shop's name. "I love crows and my husband loves crabbing since we moved here. I let my Facebook friends choose among a number of possible names, and they chose this one."

The cottage housing the shop on Route 360 was for many years a real estate office, but then it was empty for some years. When Vickie saw it, she knew immediately that it was perfect for her vision of a shop that offers unusual artisan crafted items and occasional antiques. "I just love this little house," she said.

"I'm tweaking things all the time," Vickie said. "People like a variety of things." She focuses on Virginia made items, from wines to cheeses to Virginia crafters and artists. She carries items from a number of vendors. Small quilted items, beautiful woven pieces, soothing lotions, jewelry, and decorative items populate the cottage's rooms.

Vickie and her husband Mike spent time in the Northern Neck growing up, and they decided to return to the area when they retired. "My husband found land

in Lewisetta with a pier," Vickie said. He's very busy with crabbing and now oystering. I had nothing to do," she continued. "I left Fredericksburg and friends, church, activities behind when we moved here." She noticed that there were no gift shops in Callao at that moment, so she saw a niche for Olde Crab and Crow.

While in

Fredericksburg, Vickie worked for GEICO as a claims adjuster, then decided to drive a school bus as her "preretirement" job. She also had a beauty salon and taught cosmetology. But she grew up with family in the restaurant business and going to auctions with her antique dealer father.

"I especially love primitives," Vickie said. "I learned to love them going with my father. I learned a lot over the years, especially about small pieces that people created to use to meet an immediate need."

Vickie currently focuses on what she calls keepsakes. "So many people are now downsizing their large items, and they will only pick up something that sparks joy and perhaps memories for them," she said.

Seeing the cottage lit a spark for Vickie. She has been a crafter much of her life, making jewelry as "the Purple Frog," soaps and lotions, and pillows. "The Purple Frog is my jewelry company," she said. "I have always loved frogs, and purple is simply my color."

"And I always had a booth in an antique mall for jewelry as well as antiques," Vickie said. But when they sold their horse farm, with acreage and two small houses, she had to get all her collections out. "I



had so much stored there!" she said.

The couple bought and live in Uncle Pete's house near Olverson's Marina, which is about halfway between Mike's Lewisetta spot and Callao. So the cottage was a perfect place to set up shop.



Although Mike claims, "I'm the brains and the brawn behind the outfit," it's actually Vickie and their grandson Jeremy Smith who

keep the shop running.

There's a kitchen related shop in the actual kitchen, some interesting clothing items in the bedroom, and every sort of goody in the other rooms. Even the side porch, newly restored, sports items.

Vickie is a big supporter of local organizations. She recently held a fund raiser for the fire house where crafters set up at the shop to introduce themselves to the community. Her next fundraiser will be for Smith Point Rescue.

"I love it here in Callao," Vickie said. "I love the people here; everyone is just so nice."

Jeremy added, "I'm just here to help my nana out" and to get some retail work experience. "Everyone is so nice here; people here are not judgmental," he said.

Vickie also appreciates having days when the shop is not open. "I love meeting people. I love being out. But I also like that I'm not here every day."

Vickie says she plans "to just keep on doing what I'm doing." She's looking forward to people coming in to enjoy the shop and what she's doing.

Olde Crow and Crab is open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Summer hours will be 10-5. Jeremy may occasionally work additional hours. The shop is at 283 Northumberland Hwy, Callao. Phone is 804-599-8236 and Facebook page is Olde Crow & Crab LLC.

Mari Bonomi photo of Vickie Alsop, top, Jeremy Smith.

Transformation and a Little Red Mailbox



By Cindy Balderson

For more than a year we have been bogged down in the background noise of other's opinions, mindless chatter, and media mayhem. I recently took a day off to do some soulsearching and find peace in an otherwise troubled world. Little did I know how the profound impact of one simple thought would steer the course of my day, restoring my peace and hope.

A mild and somewhat sunny day, birds well within sight, I ventured onto the balcony of my hotel room, coffee in hand, to watch the waves roll onto the expansive shoreline. Taking in my surroundings, I remember thinking it was one of the calmest days I had ever seen on the Atlantic.

I was suddenly overwhelmed with the thought "do what you know." Four words that would transform and restore my inner

peace. Those words quickly intensified, enhanced by the reminder to follow my intuition, don't conform to the world around me or let other's opinions cloud my judgment. I am a leader in my field and part of a team that often knows what's best but is also capable of accepting failure as an opportunity to learn and grow.

On my personal quest for peace and renewal, I received affirmation I didn't realize I was seeking. I often DO know what is best, but I needed to take time to reflect,

regain my focus and eliminate the negativity revolving in the world around me and stealing my joy.

As a child I spent summers in Sandbridge, an expansive stretch of pure sand and striking scenery south of the Virginia Beach boardwalk. I knew this place of my childhood had to be my destination on this journey, so I ventured away from the city streets peppered with modern conveniences. As I took the final turn past an old church that marked the way, I was pleasantly surprised to see much of my old haunts unchanged. The market and restaurant virtually untouched, a step back to a simpler time.

Throughout this adventure I encountered small reminders of my earlier enlightenment. A red mailbox on the pier inviting visitors to leave a note of hope in memory of a young surfer and a memorial plaque boasting simply "March to your own drumbeat".

At first sight, I was struck by the beautiful pristine beach and

breathtaking hues of blue and green as the sun sparkled beyond the breaking waves and I said aloud "I remember." I walked along the shoreline, picking up shells in awe at the collection of sponge and driftwood washed up on the sand, seeing everything around me with the amazement of the child I had once been.

As I walked, finding renewal, peace, and the perfect seashell, tiny and untouched by time, I was inspired to leave this note of hope



in the little red mailbox that I leave with you now... "May you always remember what brings you peace and do more of what you love for that is where you will find hope in this world of so much uncertainty." *Cindy Balderson photos.*

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Fifteen Years

By Kenny Park

I received a call from their youngest daughter in mid-December, and I could hear the tension in her voice. They were worried about her brother, who had come to the states for a short time but had decided to return to Mexico and make his way there rather than here.

Life happens. You meet, fall in love, get married, have children, and then, for any number of reasons, things fall apart. Your partner leaves you, takes the children, and you are left in pieces. It happens.

They had been in constant communication with him over the last several months, as things had grown darker and darker for him, and it got to the point that they were worried for his safety—that he

was in danger of hurting himself. His mother decided to travel back home to spend some face-to-face time with him. She hadn't seen him in about 15 years, the last time was when he was still an adolescent.

Now, thanks to technology, they were able to have video chats, could see each other's faces, could read the body language, could tell what was being said without words, and that was causing the concern.

So her daughter called me to help them obtain a one-way ticket for a flight to Mexico for Mom. They decided to not let him know she was coming, afraid that that might trigger the action they were fearing.

We managed the purchase, got her packed up, and on the appointed day, I pulled into their driveway to pick her up and take her to the airport, almost three

hours away. I thought it might be just her riding with me, but they all came. Mom, Dad, and the two daughters. I realized then that it was very possible that this might be the last time I saw her.

Repeating the crossing that she, her husband, her daughters, and her son had made so many years ago was an arduous journey at best, and she is no longer a young woman.. She was part of 'our' community, the smaller one within the larger one. We had shared in watching her daughters grow, finish school, become mothers, and we had shared in watching as her grandchildren grew and filled their lives with joy.

But there's a downside to leaving family behind. As much as you want to be there for them, video chats only go so far. She

decided it was time for some one-on-one time with her son. Looking him in the eye and making sure he was going to be okay. That as difficult as what he was going



through *Was*, he would be able to make it.

A month ago, her youngest daughter called me and left a message to let me know that she would be arriving the next day, thanking me for my help, and wishing me and my family well.

It caught me by surprise. I was thrilled, of course, but I honestly had resigned myself to the idea that I wouldn't see her again this side of heaven.

I am glad to have been able to help her go. I can't imagine going fifteen years without hugging your son/mother. *Kenny has served the Northern Neck Immigrant community and as Pastor of Jerusalem Baptist Church in Warsaw since 2003. His email address is Kenny.park@gmail.com.*



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Quince años

Por Kenny Park

Recibí la llamada de su hija menor a mediados de diciembre y pude discernir la tensión en su voz. Estaban preocupados por su hermano, que había venido a los Estados Unidos por un corto tiempo hace años, pero había decidido regresar a México y ganarse la vida allí en lugar de aquí.

La vida pasa. Conoces a alguien, te enamoras, te casas, tienes hijos y luego, por diversas razones, las cosas se desmoronan. Tu pareja te deja, se lleva a los niños y te quedas en pedazos. Sucede.

Habían estado en constante comunicación con él durante los últimos meses, ya que las cosas se habían vuelto cada vez más oscuras para él, y llegó el momento en que estaban preocupados por su seguridad, que estaba en peligro de hacerse daño. Su madre decidió viajar de regreso a

casa para pasar un tiempo cara a cara con él. No lo había visto en unos 15 años, la última vez fue cuando aún era un adolescente.

Ahora, gracias a la tecnología, podían tener videoconferencias, podían verse las caras, podían leer el lenguaje corporal, podían decir lo que se decía sin palabras, y eso era lo que causaba la preocupación.

Entonces fue cuando su hija me llamó para ayudarles a obtener un boleto de ida para un vuelo a México para mamá. Decidieron no dejarle saber que ella iba en camino, temiendo que ESO pudiera desencadenar la acción que temían.

Gestionamos la compra, la empacamos y, en el día señalado, me encontré a la entrada de su casa para recogerla y llevarla al aeropuerto, a casi tres horas de distancia. Pensé que podría ser solo ella viajando conmigo, pero vinieron todos. Mamá, Papá y las dos hijas. Entonces me di cuenta de que era muy posible

que esta sería la última vez que la vería. Repetir la travesía que ella, su esposo, sus hijas y su hijo habían hecho tantos años atrás fue un viaje arduo en el mejor de los casos, y ya no era una mujer joven. Ella era parte de "nuestra" comunidad, la más pequeña dentro de la más grande. Habíamos compartido el ver a sus hijas crecer, terminar la escuela, convertirse en madres. Habíamos compartido al ver cómo sus nietos crecían y llenaban sus vidas de alegría.

Pero hay una desventaja en dejar atrás a la familia. Por mucho que quiera uno "estar ahí" para ellos, los chats de video solo llegan hasta cierto punto. Decidió que era hora de pasar un rato a solas con su hijo. Mirándolo a los ojos y asegurándose de que estaría bien. Que por difícil que fuera lo que estaba

pasando, podría salir adelante.

Hace un mes, su hija menor me llamó y me dejó un mensaje para avisarme que llegaría al día siguiente, agradeciéndome por mi ayuda y deseándome lo mejor a mí y a mi familia.

Me pilló por sorpresa. Estaba emocionado, por supuesto, pero honestamente me había resignado a la idea de que no la volvería a ver a este lado del cielo.

Me alegro de haber podido ayudarla en su viaje. No me puedo imaginar pasar quince años sin abrazar a tu hijo / madre.

Kenny ha servido a la comunidad de inmigrantes de Northern Neck y como pastor de la Iglesia Bautista de Jerusalén en Warsaw desde el año 2003. Su dirección de correo electrónico es Kenny.park@gmail.com. Quince años.

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Tidewater & Timber~May Excitement In The Outdoors

By Chelly Scala

May is finally here and with it comes the opportunity for anglers to catch the popular striped bass, which many know as rockfish. The Maryland spring trophy season is May 1-May 15 for recreational striped bass in Chesapeake Bay from Brewerton Channel to the Maryland-Virginia Line. This excludes all bays, sounds, tributaries, creeks and rivers, except Tangier Sound and Pocomoke Sound. The creel limit is one fish per person per day with a minimum size 35 inches. Eels may not be used as bait.

Then from May 16-May 31 the line in Maryland for the striper season in Chesapeake Bay

adjusts northward. Please check the below website for location specifics. The creel limit is one fish per person per day with a minimum size of 19 inches.

Anglers must use non-offset circle hooks when live-lining or chumming, when using fish, crabs or worms as bait while targeting striped bass, or when using processed baits and targeting striped bass. Be sure to check the following website for further questions/information: www.eregulations.com/maryland/fishing/striped-bass/

The first Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) striped bass season is from May 1-May 15. The open area for the first season is waters downstream of the Harry W. Nice Bridge (Rt. 301) with a minimum size of 35 inches and one

per person per day limit. Anglers cannot use live eels and may not use more than two hooks per line. On May 16 the second PRFC season begins and includes Potomac River waters from the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (I-95) to Smith Point, Virginia with a minimum size of 20 inches with two per person/day limit. Anglers may not use more than two hooks per line. Please reference the following websites for further information/questions:

www.prfc.us/fishing_potomac.html and www.prfc.us/pdfs/BLUE-SHEET.pdf

The Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC) eliminated the spring Striped Bass Trophy Season for the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, the Virginia tributaries of the Potomac River and the Virginia Coastal waters. The VMRC spring season opens May 16 through June 15 with a minimum size of 20 inches and a maximum size of 28 inches and a possession limit of one per person. Please reference the following sites for additional information: www.mrc.virginia.gov/recreational.shtm or <https://webapps.mrc.virginia.gov/public/reports/swrecfishingrules.php>

The 2021 spring gobbler season is now underway in Virginia and continues through May 15, 2021. Until May 2, hunting hours are from one half hour before sunrise until 12:00 noon. Hunting hours for Virginia's spring gobbler season from May 3 until May 15 are from one half hour before sunrise until sunset. The daily bag limit is one bearded bird per day with a maximum of 3 bearded turkeys per license year, if no turkeys were harvested during the Virginia 2020 fall season. Harvested gobblers must be checked in by calling

866-GOT-GAME. (468-4263).

The additional hunting hours during the last two weeks of the Commonwealth's spring gobbler



season provides some interesting opportunities, especially for those who enjoy a later afternoon-early evening hunt. On warmer days, wild turkeys may congregate in shade areas and limit their movements and activities. In the afternoon as the day begins to cool, they become active and forage more in preparation to going on roost for the coming night. Also, gobblers may be more prone to responding to calls in mid-May if the hens are either on a late nest set or busy with young newly hatched poults and less interested in boss tom. Detailed information on the 2021 spring gobbler season in Virginia can be found at www.dwr.virginia.gov/hunting/regulations/turkey
Kevin Brown photo of Cindi Brown.

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The Best Laid Plan~The Curse Of 2020 Continues!



By Gerhard Straub

In the last issue of 2020, I mentioned all the inspections the Coast Guard requires of a wooden passenger boat and how all of them were due for the skipjack *Claud W. Somers* this year. The plan was to get those out of the way last fall so, “with a little luck, that will allow us to have a normal, uninterrupted season next year, assuming the virus cooperates.”

Ha! We did finally get the mast out of the boat and thanks to the museum Boat Shop and the generous support from Cockrell’s Marine Railway, we were able to replace a couple of planks and get the boat back in the water.

Ocean Products Research, Inc. donated a bunch of new rope of various sizes, so that some of the rigging could be replaced, and

things were looking really good. And then we found it. The mast step, the place that the mast rests on in the boat, is rotten. So, while there are only minor issues with the mast and rigging, none of it can go back in the boat until the mast step is repaired, and that is a major job.

Oh, now if that were the only issue! Turns out that due to rot in both ends, we also need to replace the boom. That is the piece of wood that the bottom of the sail is attached to. This is no small chunk of wood. It is 41 feet long and about six inches in diameter and heavy—ask the guy that was at the helm when it broke! Now someone had the great idea to get a wooden pole, like a utility pole or dock piling, and turn it in to a new boom. After talking to several people, including some wooden boat experts, this sounded like a great idea. Wrong! Turns out that if we use a different

wood with different weight characteristics, we would need to submit plans to the Coast Guard for approval and possibly do another stability test on the boat to see if the change in weight affects how the boat sits in the water and handles.

You would think that a Chesapeake Bay boat would probably have a pine mast and boom, just like the pine used for pilings, since that stuff grows all over the region. But

Claud W. Somers is “special.” The mast and boom on *Claud W. Somers* are made from Norwegian Spruce! Spruce is lighter than pine, and it is easy to find....in Northern Europe! In a small twist of the plot, the Reedville Fishermen’s Museum actually has a spare spruce mast for the boat. We inspected it and found a crack near one end, so it might not work as a mast, which is taller than the boom is long, but it should work as a boom!!! There is the minor issue of taking a 14 inch or so diameter log and making it a 6 inch diameter

log...details, details and, as the head of the Boat Shop says, “an opportunity for a whittling party.”

If things come together, we still hope to be sailing this season. However, at the moment, it sure feels like the curse of 2020 continues.

See you on the water! (maybe)

Gerhard Straub is master of the skipjack *Claud W. Somers*, which is owned and operated by the Reedville Fishermen’s Museum
Photo by Gerhard Straub—A sad looking Claud W. Somers awaits her mast.

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Writers in *Style*~Sweet Tea and Vinegar Pie

Reviewed by Susan Riley May

Myra Jean Evans is truly a late bloomer. Duty, societal restrictions and sadness kept her life small and unfulfilled. She did not value her career in teaching. Her parents never recognized her dreams and talents. She was too useful to them in her role as dutiful daughter. Her life for the first time is now her own. Myra Jean's move from Baltimore to rural Virginia is designed to save money for an outrageously ambitious trip. Her plans really do not include the people in her new community, but people and place are hard to separate.

Denise DeVries' Sweet Tea and Vinegar Pie is a lovely reminder that life is rich and interesting at all ages. DeVries' characters fill the roles expected in a rural, depression era town. She created the preacher's wife, the unmarried teacher, the snooty town pillar, the son who refuses his position in the family. Fortunately, all these characters blossom. No one is stuck where we find them. The reader

can enjoy this glimpse into small town life.

Denise beautifully captures that feeling of seeing a place with fresh eyes. Anyone who has moved to a rural area with deep generational roots will relate to Myra Jean's experience. Myra Jean does not relish being reviewed by her neighbors at every turn. Like all of us, Myra Jean needs that one friendship to break the ice. Her new friend, Bitty, is a lovely character. Readers familiar with the Northern Neck of Virginia will enjoy all the local references. Other readers will easily imagine the rural community of Hull Crossing.

So often, mature female characters in novels are static. These characters are props for younger more dynamic characters to act around; more setting than

character. Myra Jean, a woman in her late sixties, is the main character of this novel. It is her forward momentum that is causing others to change. She is likable. You easily invest in her dreams and cheer her on.



Sweet tea in the title clearly places this novel in the south where good sweet tea makes or breaks a restaurant and graces many a country song. I had to do a little research on vinegar pie. Southern Living's recipe refers to it as a desperation pie. The ingredients would have been available in a depression era pantry where little was plentiful. It is also referred to as a poor man's lemon pie. Despite her diminishing circumstances, Sarabell Simms, a major character in the novel, probably did not serve vinegar pie to her neighbors.

Congratulations to Denise on a lovely novel. Denise's novel is one where mature women dream big and good guys can still win. In this time of social distancing and mask wearing, church socials and neighbors at the dinner table sounds lovely. I would be pleased to visit Hull Crossing again.

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Brain Injury and COVID-19~Threat Has Not Disappeared

By Martha M. Hall

It's Spring, and we are finally emerging from the dark Winter of COVID-19, a pandemic that held the whole world paralyzed in its frightening grasp. The axioms of "wash hands, socially distance, wear a mask" were ingrained in us as we tried to avoid "catching it."

It has been a challenging year, but it turns out that the dangers and consequences of the Corona virus are not over, despite the fact that we are experiencing a rapid roll-out of vaccines designed to blunt the force of this virulent virus. We are now learning the true impact of COVID-19 on the brain injury community: there may now be more of us than we thought.

COVID-19, long believed to be primarily a respiratory disease, is rapidly becoming recognized also as a neurologic disease that

can have long-term cognitive impacts on survivors, not unlike the effects recognized in those who have sustained a brain injury.

Although research on the long-term effects of COVID-19 is just now getting underway, early investigation is showing that the effects of brain injury that we are already aware of are also part of the pattern of COVID-19 infection in a number of survivors. We know that in a brain injury, pervasive cognitive, behavioral, and psychological problems can result. Depending on the severity of the injury, these effects can be temporary or long term. It turns out that in some COVID-19 survivors, there is an increased display of problems due to some of the same issues normally associated with brain injury: lack of oxygen, inflammation of brain tissues, and strokes.

The documented cognitive deficits that a number of COVID survivors are experiencing may be temporary or may be part of a syndrome we are now recognizing as "long COVID," a persistence of physical and psychological issues long after the patient is deemed recovered from the virus.

Symptoms can include changes in a person's sense of smell or taste, extreme fatigue, headaches, or cognitive impairments, such as memory deficits. Cognitive effects can lead to difficulty managing medications or finances, comprehending written materials, even carrying on conversations with family or friends, all of which we recognize as characteristics of brain injury survivors.

Although there is little research available on "long COVID" currently, it is encouraging that therapists are beginning to refer

survivors to cognitive rehabilitation programs more typically used for patients with concussions and other traumatic brain injuries. Brain rehab clinics help patients with strategies such as dividing up a longer task into small increments, with breaks. Taking notes, using a planner or app to record information, setting electronic reminders, getting proper sleep, managing stress, and increased exercise can help people improve memory and organization. These are all techniques familiar to those who work with brain injury survivors.

COVID-19 may have caught us by surprise, but its unexpected and perplexing aftermath is a situation we are prepared for because we are already familiar with approaches to brain injury, and that's a good thing.

For more information contact 800-444-6443 or at www.biav.net.

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Farmers Market, Wine/Brew/Spirits Fest, Flower Show

By **Corinne Anthony Becker**

There are always lots of reasons to visit Heathsville, but Saturday, May 15th is one of the best days to Make It a Heathsville Saturday.

On this day, the entire Heathsville community will be coming together to offer a variety of shopping and fun things to do. It starts with the Heathsville Farmers Market, located at historic Rice's Hotel/Hughlett's Tavern—RHHT.

The Heathsville Farmers Market opens at 9 a.m., offering fresh Northern Neck produce and meat, flowers and nursery plants, baked goods, oyster spat and floats, gourmet peanuts and BBQ sauce, plus locally-made handcrafts. The Northumberland Library's TechMobile will also

be on site and open for tours.

Inside the historic Tavern itself, the Heritage Arts Center gift shoppe will be open for business. Shoppers will find artists working in their studios, and one-of-a-kind, locally-made artisan wares for sale. The Tavern Cafe' will be serving light luncheon fare, all homemade by the volunteers of the Tavern's Culinary Guild. Special on Market Day, the cafe' makes glazed donuts, hot out of the fryer.

Inside the Tavern Meeting Building, the Chesapeake Bay Garden Club is holding a National Garden Clubs Standard Flower Show. The theme of the show is A Year Like No Other and the exhibit will contain floral arrangements, horticulture and botanical arts exhibits created by club members. The show is free and open to the public.

But by 11 a.m., it's time to start savoring the flavor of local wines and brews at the Tavern's annual Wine, Brew & Spirits Fest. Tickets will be sold at the gate for \$10,

which includes a complimentary etched tasting glass. Several local wineries, a brewery and two distilleries will be pouring, plus Ditchley Cider Works.

The Farmers Market and Flower Show officially end at 1 p.m., but the Wine, Brew & Spirits Fest continues until 4 p.m.

Dating back to the late 1700's, historic RHHT is home to four active artisan guilds, which will be on-site that day, demonstrating and selling their wares. Follow the smoke to see Blacksmiths working in the Tavern's Forge. The Woodworkers have both a modern and a colonial era workshop in the Carriage House, which also houses a collection of antique carriages. The Quilters have a studio on the first floor of the Tavern; Tavern Spinners and Weavers gather in their studio upstairs.

But elsewhere in the Heathsville community there are other big doings. You'll find interesting shops, attractions, eats and historical sites. Visit Ye Olde Book Shoppe, a used book store run by volunteers of the Northumberland Public Library. Browse classy church thrift shops

run by St. Stephen's Episcopal and Light of Christ Anglican. Check out Kathy's Korner for unusual collectibles and antiques. Heathsville United Methodist Church is selling homemade ice cream. Pick up your Historic Heathsville Walking Map, and wander past homes and structures from every century since the 1700's.

All sites are located on Route 360 in Heathsville. Historic RHHT, a nonprofit run entirely by volunteers, is found at 73 Monument Place, hidden just off Route 360 behind the old Northumberland Courthouse.

Make It a Heathsville Saturday takes place monthly on the third Saturday, April thru October. Each Farmers Market has a different theme. In response to COVID-19 health restrictions, be prepared to wear your face mask and practice social distancing. Other precautions will be in place to help keep everyone safe.

For more information, visit www.RHHTFoundationinc.org, e-mail info@rhhtfoundationinc.org, or call 804-580-3377

Photos courtesy RHHT.



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My Healing Garden

By RuthE Forrest BCTMB

With a name like Forrest, it's no surprise that I find joy in gardening.

Having my hands in dirt and watching the fruits of my labor unfold in gorgeous colors and scents is pure bliss.

My creative juices flow as I harvest and process my plant gems into usable lovelies. I have perennial favorites to help keep my body in tip top shape, and I always stretch my body before, during and after gardening. Extra massage sessions during springtime help with my inevitable gardener aches.

I grow several varieties of mints. Besides tasting wonderful, they're great tummy tamers when made into tea. I make a simple syrup of organic sugar and water with freshly harvested mint leaves steeped into the barely boiling mixture. Cooled and stored in the fridge, this syrup is added to everything from iced drinks to fruit salads.

With a jigger of clear rum it

makes a mean Mojito! At season's end I freeze the syrup in small cubes to use during winter. I really appreciate this little taste of summer on bleak days in January. I've also dried the leaves, but find they lose flavor brightness quickly. Due to their strong scent, mints deter pests when planted around a veggie garden or house perimeter.

Alliums are awesome! I love any onion, and always grow chives as they add so much flavor to everyday dishes and are easy to gather with the snip of a scissor. I have several varieties growing in many different areas of my yard. Around my vegetable garden they deter predators and pests. They add bright green foliage and pretty late season flowers to container gardens.

Garlic is a new allium I'm experimenting with this year. I'm excited to see elephant bulbs planted last fall healthy and greening nicely after a relatively mild winter. Plants in the Allium family are traditional healers, their antioxidant and antibiotic properties well documented. I

use them fresh, and sliced to dry and freeze for winter storage.

Calming herbs and flowers are garden stars. Rose, Chamomile, Bee Balm, Echinacea, and Nasturtiums are sprinkled throughout my veggie and flower gardens. Besides being beautiful flowers, they perform wonders when taken as a tea, infused in a tincture or simply eaten fresh.

Many flowers are edible, adding spicy deliciousness to summer dishes. These beauties calm so effectively because they're great at reducing inflammation and relaxing smooth muscle. We're fortunate that so many varieties of herbs can be grown in our area. Local garden centers are now brimming with healing herbs ripe for picking.

Consider growing your own medicine. Much information is

available for the novice. Grow a pot of chamomile flowers on your porch and enjoy a cup of iced tea with a calming twist after summer guests are gone. Have a cup before turning in for the evening to foster sleep.

The plant you grow and harvest with gratitude tastes better, and is more nourishing than that little bag you got at the grocery harvested who knows how long ago and shipped from faraway. My daddy taught me to spit on my seeds before planting them so the plant will grow exactly what my particular body needs to thrive, and to "sing them in." Happy planting!

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By Lee Casazza
**Sunday Rigatoni with
 Beef Shank Gravy**

Here is a hearty Sunday Italian-American dinner from Mamaw, Elizabeth Greco Noviello. Some Italian-Americans called their sauce that was cooked with meat, “gravy”. The beef is so tender and the marrow bones give the sauce so much flavor. Buona Domenica a tutti! (I wish you all a good Sunday).
 2 (28 oz) cans whole peeled Italian tomatoes
 2 lbs beef shank with marrow bones intact
 2 T extra-light olive oil or avocado oil, divided
 1 medium onion, diced
 4 oz pancetta, diced
 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
 2 T tomato paste
 1/2 cup dry red wine
 1/2 t red pepper flakes
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 T chopped fresh basil
 1 lb rigatoni
 Chopped fresh basil, for garnish
 Freshly grated Grana Padano* or Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese
 Pour tomatoes into a large bowl and hand-crush them, removing the hard center cores.

Alternatively, use an immersion blender to chop the tomatoes.

In a large heavy pot or Dutch oven, brown the beef shanks in a tablespoon of oil for about 6 to 7 minutes on each side. Do not turn the shanks until they are deeply browned. This will add flavor and allow the meat to release from the pan. Remove the meat from the pot and set aside.

Pour off any excess grease and add the rest of the oil.

Sauté the onion and pancetta for about 10 minutes over low heat. Add the garlic and sauté another minute.

Add the crushed tomatoes, tomato paste, wine or water, red pepper flakes, and season to taste with salt and pepper.



Simmer for 10 minutes, then return the beef shanks to the pan and nestle them into the sauce. Cover with a tight-fitting lid and place in a 325-degree F oven for 2 to 2 1/2 hours.

Using tongs, transfer the beef

shanks to a cutting board.

When cool enough to handle, shred the meat and place back into the pot. Discard the marrow bones. Reheat gravy and stir in chopped basil.

Boil the rigatoni in salted water for about 9 to 10 minutes, until al dente.

Drain rigatoni and pour back into the pot.

Add a couple of ladles of the gravy (with some shredded meat) to the pasta and toss.

Spoon into warm pasta bowls, add a little more of the gravy and meat to the top of the pasta. Sprinkle with some chopped basil and serve with grated cheese.

Serves 4

* Grana Padano cheese is one of the world's first hard cheeses; it was made by monks near Milan, Italy, in the 12th century. Grana means “grain” in Italian, referring to the texture of the cheese.

Sicilian Ricotta Cheesecake - Torta di Ricotta

Ricotta cheesecakes are easy to make and they are so very delicious. This one has a graham cracker crust on the bottom and partially up the sides. I found a box of graham cracker crumbs in the supermarket. This saved me from crushing them in my food processor. It's always nice to save a step if you can.

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs or about 20 graham crackers, finely crushed

1/2 cup melted unsalted butter

32 ounces whole milk ricotta cheese

4 large eggs

1/2 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup granulated sugar

1/4 t sea salt

Grated zest of 1 large organic or

carefully washed orange

2 T orange juice

1 t pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.

Mix together the graham



cracker crumbs with the butter.

Firmly press graham cracker crumbs into the bottom and about 1 inch up the sides of a 7 to 8-inch springform pan.

In a large bowl, mix together the ricotta and eggs.

Mix in the flour, sugar, salt, zest, juice, and vanilla extract.

Mix until completely combined.

Pour batter into pan and place on a baking sheet or pizza pan.

Place in center of the oven and bake for 1 hour 15 minutes.

Turn oven off and let cheesecake sit in the oven for another 15 to 20 minutes, until firm throughout.

Let cool on the counter, and then refrigerate for 2 hours to set.

Remove from springform pan to a cake plate and decorate with confectioners' sugar or more grated orange zest, if desired.

Serves 6 to 8.

If you like my recipes and are interested in many more, please visit www.leecasazzacooking.com. There are links to two separate cooking blogs for you to enjoy Lee Casazza photos.

Wild *Style* Cuisine~Snow Goose Hash



By Wendy Hyde

Hash is a hearty dish whose name comes from the French word *hacher*, meaning to chop. The regulars in hash are some type of potato, onion, and meat topped with a sunny side up egg. It's a perfect way to use leftovers because the ingredients in hash can be swapped around to take advantage of seasonal produce. Spring and summer versions can include fresh asparagus, scallions, spinach, zucchini and sugar snap peas. Fall and winter versions are well-suited to root vegetables like turnips, carrots, parsnips, sweet potatoes, and beets. Fruits—apples, peaches, and dried cranberries—add a complementary flavor and interesting texture. This recipe features ground snow goose meat soaked overnight in buttermilk, but it can easily be replaced with raw ground turkey or pork

sausage. Ground venison, Canada goose or boar are flavorful substitutions as well. Precooked meats like corned beef, shredded pork or pot roast can be used for a quick dinner solution.

Serve hash for dinner accompanied with a salad or mix up a skillet full for breakfast and add a side of biscuits. Use this recipe as a starting point then replace equal portions of similar vegetables to clean out the fridge or make it into a dish that even the picky eater in the house will enjoy. If there are any leftovers, they're great warmed up the next day with a fresh egg on top!

Snow Goose Hash

Serves 4

Marinating Time: Up to 24 hours

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 35 minutes

3/4 lb. boneless, skinless snow goose breasts

4 c. buttermilk

1/2 lb. bacon, cut into 2 pieces

2 lb. russet baking potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2 chunks

1 Tbsp. olive oil

1/2 tsp. Kosher salt

1/4 tsp. ground black pepper

3/4 c. onion, diced

2 medium cloves garlic, minced

1 large red bell pepper, diced

1/2 c. heavy cream

1/2 tsp. hot sauce

2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

4 large eggs

Salt and pepper, to taste

Clean goose meat, checking thoroughly for any feathers or shot pellets. Combine buttermilk and meat in a zipper top bag or plastic

container and refrigerate up to 24 hours. Drain meat—do not rinse—cut into medium strips, toss with bacon, and grind using a small die. Keep the meat very cold for grinding to achieve the best texture. Using your hands or a wooden spoon, stir to evenly combine.

Combine the potatoes, oil, salt, and pepper in a microwave-safe bowl. Loosely cover the bowl and microwave on high until the potatoes begin to soften, 7 to 10 minutes, stirring several times. Drain the potatoes well.

Heat a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium-high heat and cook the ground meat just until it is no longer pink, breaking it into small pieces as it cooks.—If using precooked meats, warm the meat over medium heat and continue with remaining steps.—Add the onion and red pepper and cook until softened and lightly browned, 5-10 minutes.

Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds, stir in the potatoes, cream, and hot sauce. Using the back of a spatula, gently pack the potatoes into the pan and cook undisturbed for 2 minutes. Flip the hash, one portion at a time, and lightly repack it, repeating the flipping process every few minutes until the potatoes are nicely browned, 6 to 8 minutes. Stir in the parsley, repack the hash, and make four shallow wells in the hash. Crack 1 egg into each well and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover with a tight-fitting lid, and

continue to cook until the eggs are just set, about 5 minutes. Divide between four serving bowls, top with Fresh Tomato Relish, and serve immediately.

Fresh Tomato Relish

2 Tbsp. onion, fine dice

1 c. tomato, small dice

1 tsp. balsamic vinegar

1 tsp. canola oil

1/2 tsp. granulated sugar

A few pinches of salt

Freshly ground black pepper

2 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley

Put diced onion in a bowl, cover with cold water and let stand 5 minutes; drain and pat dry. Combine onion with remaining ingredients, cover and let stand at room temperature while hash is being prepared.



Photo by Wendy Hyde. All recipes included in this column are original by Wendy Hyde unless otherwise noted. Hash is a variation of a recipe originally printed by America's Test Kitchen. She can be contacted at wildstylecuisine@gmail.com; follow her on Instagram as [girlgamechef](#).



Made in the shade Umbrella Sale!



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