



Celebrating

Janet
Abbott
Fast

*and
25 years of*

CHESAPEAKE PRICELESS
Style

September 1, 2023

FROM THE EDITOR

CAROL J. BOVA



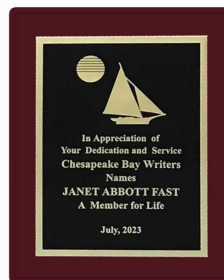
This issue is a tribute to Janet Abbott Fast for all she has achieved and a celebration of twenty-five years of the magazine she created, *Chesapeake Style*.

My connection to *Chesapeake Style* dates back to 2012, the same year G.C. Morrow and I created *The Ditches of Mathews County* project. Janet gave me the opportunity to write a column in each issue of *Style*. For seven years, I shared stories and photos of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) road drainage maintenance failures and described VDOT'S responsibility which we had proved through road plans, state highway plat books, land deeded to the Commonwealth, and other VDOT records.

The columns led me to write my book on environmental hydrology, *Drowning A County: When Urban Myths Destroy Rural Drainage*. Janet's support and encouragement through *Style* and her critique group, The Rappatamac Writers, also helped me create a number of other published works, and like other staff writers, I wrote interview articles, book reviews, and shared stories about writing for *Chesapeake Style*.

Janet served on the Chesapeake Bay Writers Board of Directors for many years. She shared the club's history with me and others, so we were able to pass it on to new board members ourselves years later.

The articles in this issue show a cross-section of how Janet has touched the lives of so many, and their appreciation of all she has done. *Chesapeake Style* was a remarkable publication for twenty-five years, and we thank Janet Abbott Fast for it, and wish her well-deserved good times in her retirement.



To honor Janet's service and accomplishments, CBW named Janet a Member for Life. Denise DeVries presented a plaque marking the occasion.

Carol

IN THIS ISSUE...

FROM THE EDITOR	2	SIMPLE & DELICIOUS FAVORITES, ITALIAN-AMERICAN STYLE	26
<i>Carol J. Bova</i>		<i>Lee Casazza</i>	
WHERE JAN ABBOTT FAST AND I LEARNED OUR "IT'S ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR!"	4	THE POWER HOUR CHALLENGE FOR MORE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS	28
<i>Sandra Wade Hagan</i>		<i>Marianne "Mari" Gibbs, EdD, OTR</i>	
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION 1998	5	CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION RURAL LIFE	29
WRITING WITH JAN FAST	6	WICKED CHICKENS	30
<i>Ellen Dugan</i>		<i>Darleen R. Nichols</i>	
THE QUEEN OF SHEBA	8	THE DEADLINE IS FRIDAY!	32
<i>Grid Michal</i>		<i>Gerhard Straub</i>	
CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION 1999	9	CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION WATERMEN	33
A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE	10	MARIE STONE: SHE ALWAYS DELIVERS	34
<i>Deborah Butler</i>		<i>Martha M. Hall</i>	
FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY	12	RAPPATOMAC WRITERS CRITIQUE GROUP	36
<i>Marie E. Stone</i>		<i>Jeanne Johansen</i>	
CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION WILDLIFE	13	WORKING WITH JANET	36
PROFILE OF A CHESAPEAKE STYLE WRITER—		<i>Ann Skelton</i>	
GERHARD STRAUB	14	CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION SUNSETS	37
<i>Denise Devries</i>		JANET ABBOTT FAST — A WOMAN WITH MANY HATS	38
FULFILLING AN IMPORTANT OUTLET FOR WRITERS AND ARTISTS	16	<i>Denise Devries</i>	
<i>Ficklin Bryant</i>		BOOKS IN STYLE	42
CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION ARTISTS	17	<i>Jeanne Johansen</i>	
EQUALITY	18	TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SUCCESS STORY	42
<i>Kenny Park</i>		<i>Chelly (Michelle) Scala</i>	
IGUALDAD	20	CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION WATER FOWL	43
<i>Kenny Park</i>		FAST TIMES ON THE RIVERS — LOOKING BACK	44
MY JOURNEY WITH CHESAPEAKE STYLE	22	<i>Janet Abbott Fast</i>	
<i>Gwen Keene</i>		THANK YOU TO THE LOCAL BUSINESSES WHO SPONSORED THIS CELEBRATION EDITION	45
CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATIONS	23		
MY CHESAPEAKE STYLE JOURNEY	24		
<i>Gloria J. Savage</i>			

WHERE JAN ABBOTT FAST AND I LEARNED OUR “IT’S ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR!”

SANDRA WADE HAGAN



It really was in the elementary grades of Ginter Park School in Richmond, Virginia. That’s where Jan Abbott and I learned our basics in reading, writing, and arithmetic. Little did we suspect it would awaken the writer and entrepreneur, Janet Abbott Fast, who came to the idea of *Chesapeake Style* through the sale of cosmetics and beauty products and launched a dynamic career in insurance sales. All of this in the business world while rearing her two children (Stephen born in 1961 and Kathy in 1962) in Maryland.

In Illinois and Wisconsin, Jan enjoyed being a Red Cross swimming instructor. Later on, she brought these talents to Virginia and became the Red Cross “go to” instructor for training all others in Virginia in Water Safety. Her program included the handi-capable, and she adapted the Aquatics Program to include this community of participants. We shared this love of swimming as an exercise for several years on this peninsula called The Northern Neck of Virginia.

Jan was a graduate of James Madison University with a desire to return to Virginia in 1993 where she began writing in earnest for the local newspaper. Hers was a very good decision to settle here. We are all happy she chose to plant her roots here and develop *Chesapeake Style* in 1998.

In friendship, she continues to tease me about being two weeks older than she. We will continue to laugh about it and watch various music videos together.

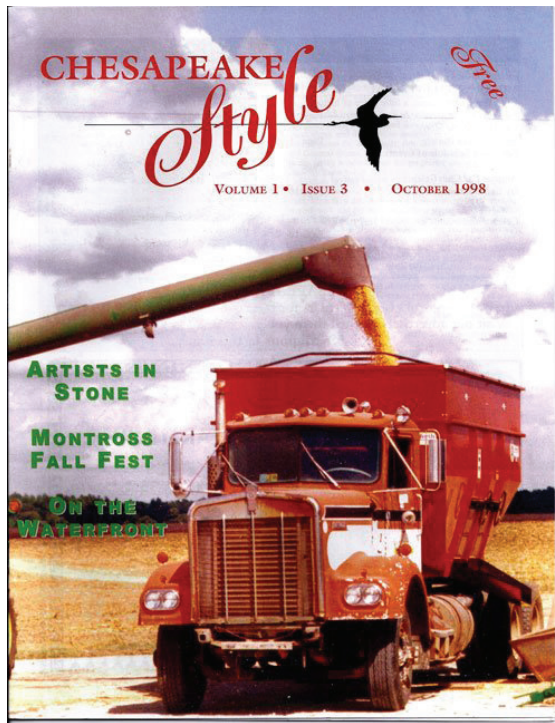
Although not physically active as we once were, our minds keep us alert. We miss our Red Hat group and Lunch Bunch which were lost to Covid.

From childhood school and Sunday School at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Richmond, to senior citizens, our friendship remains.

P.S. I really am 6 months older than Jan.

sandy





CELEBRATING THE
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
1998



WRITING WITH JAN FAST

ELLEN DUGAN



I first met Jan Fast in church. Not a worship service, but a writing group. We were meeting in a back room of either the Wicomico Parish Church, the Wicomico Methodist Church, or the Wicomico Baptist Church. I can't remember the specific one, but I do remember thinking that "Wicomico Church" was certainly an odd name for a town, the first one I had ever encountered.

Getting to the church had been relatively easy even though I was not familiar with the area. There just aren't that many roads to get lost on (although it is possible to go for miles and miles before you realize you're on the right road, but headed in the wrong direction.)

At this time, Susan Christopher was part of the writing group as were several other people who wrote for *Chesapeake Style*. We critiqued poetry, local essays, and fiction. Jan was kind in her critiques, choosing to focus mostly on spelling and grammar mistakes. I found the writing group beneficial in that it made me write at least every other week, and it was nice to be with fellow writers at varying skill levels.

But after two or three meetings at the church – the room was so cold that we had to keep our coats and gloves on – we decided that we weren't willing to suffer this much for our craft and decided to move to a warmer venue and add lunch to our agenda. Here, Jan's resourcefulness and her "let's just get it done" attitude proved helpful. We soon settled in for lunch every other Thursday at the Oaks Restaurant in Lively, the little room to the right as you enter.

I wasn't really interested in writing Spotlight articles for *Chesapeake Style* at that time, but I did

think that it would be a helpful exercise. Also, I needed to add structure and discipline to my writing schedule and felt this was a good way to do so. So, I told Jan I'd give it a try.

This was the winter of 2009. My first two Spotlights, "*Education Farmers*" *Tend Priceless Crop*, and *An Oasis of Tranquility* began respectively:

It's been said that good teachers are to the student what rain is to the field. They water young imaginations, fertilize their dreams with possibilities and enrich the learning soil so that students may flourish . . .

When you step inside the waiting room of Healing Energetics in Kilmarnock, the air is quiet. It greets you slowly, gently, as if waiting for you to catch your breath and then settle for a minute . . .

From my early Spotlights, a monthly Notebook Column, and a regular Spotlight on People feature, I learned several important things about Jan, the editor:

- She did not like you to set manual tabs – they played havoc with her software
- There is a difference between a hyphen and an em dash – and she was relentless in ferreting out the misuse of either one
- Numbers less than ten needed to be written out – always
- Postal state codes were not the same as abbreviations for states – use the abbreviation, please

- Pictures needed to be colorful – and doing something besides posing

I knew these rules already, but it never hurt to be reminded of them. And from our initial association at *Chesapeake Style* up through today, what I learned about Jan, the person and friend is that:

She is extremely self-sufficient. For example, if she needed a new car, one heavy enough and suitable for making deliveries, she went out, negotiated a good price, and bought it. No one walked her through the process or looked for one on her behalf.

She is resourceful. She knows her way around the publishing and advertising industries and could come up with a successful workaround when problems arose, be they paper supplies, interrupted schedules, slipped deadlines, or ad copy that needed changing.

Jan is a straight-shooter. She can relate well to her advertisers and manage their expectations. She did this by being truthful with them. What you saw is what you got. Maintaining their trust was important to her.

Jan has a keen sense of humor and a robust laugh. Remember the name of her cane? Also, her two mis-matched swim flippers from Amazon . . .

- She likes what she likes – fried chicken at the Pilot House Restaurant in Topping (also, eggs and scrapple), extra napkins to keep your glass from leaving water on the table, and a chance to make distribution announcements by tapping a spoon against a glass.

- She likes bright colors and equally bright, dangly earrings – no plain-Jane beige for Jan
- She is generous and enjoyed being with her friends and associates
- She wants writers to do their best, to hone their craft and succeed

The writing group Jan headed, the Rappatamac Writers, continued to meet at the Oaks until the Oaks decided not to do lunch. So, Jan moved us a little way up the road to the Lancaster Tavern, where getting enough chairs around a table that was often too small was almost as challenging as writing the lead sentence for a Spotlight article. But the food was good, the writing got better, and the group grew larger.

When this venue closed, we met at Ms. Phyllis Kitchen in Kilmarnock and later at Java Jacks Café in Tappahannock.

Today, I miss Jan the editor. There is a hole in the space that used to be occupied by a vibrant community publication called the *Chesapeake Style*. And I also miss meeting with Jan the person and friend, who before her health issues and confinement, was as vibrant as her publication.

Thank you, Jan, for many, many things. You are an inspiration. And may you not be wearing beige today.

Ellen

If it is to be, it is up to me.

Jan Fast

Style f



THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

GRID MICHAL

For many years I kept myself at the bottom of the trash pile when I answered calls from Big Shots' secretaries who said, "Mr. ___ would like to talk to you." I always was polite when I replied, "If Mr. ___ is too busy to make his own calls, then I'm too busy to talk to him. If he decides to learn how to dial the phone, tell him it'll be in his best interests to make sure he's not on a speakerphone. Thank you and good-bye." It still put fear in my soul when my boss's boss's boss called me, but my revenues were too good not to let me be a pain in . . .

I was in River Market one day awaiting a heart attack burger and noticed the *Chesapeake Style* magazine. Just my price, too: free! Looking through it, I noted several contributors I knew, and thought, based on my personal familiarity with them, I'd give Jan a call and see if they took unsolicited works. I was prepared to go through a secretary, have Jan call me at her convenience, yada, yada. Doggone if the Queen of Sheba herself didn't answer!

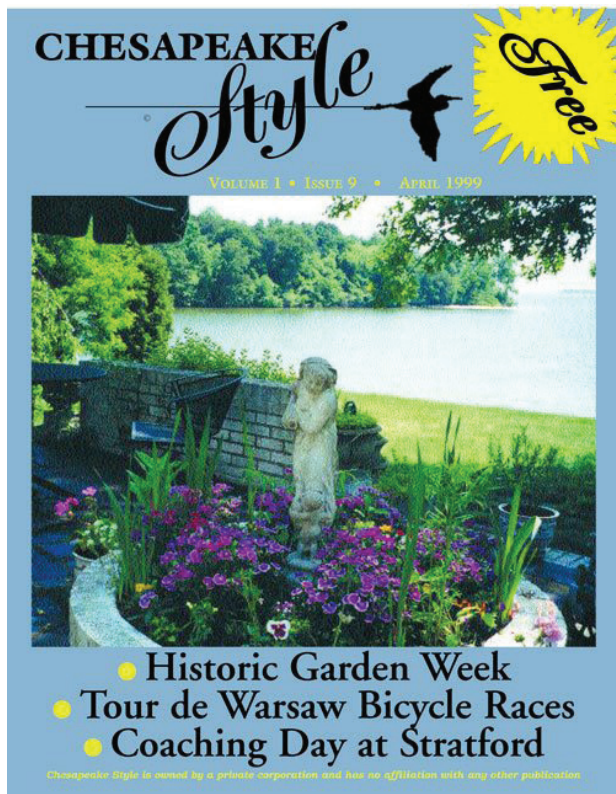
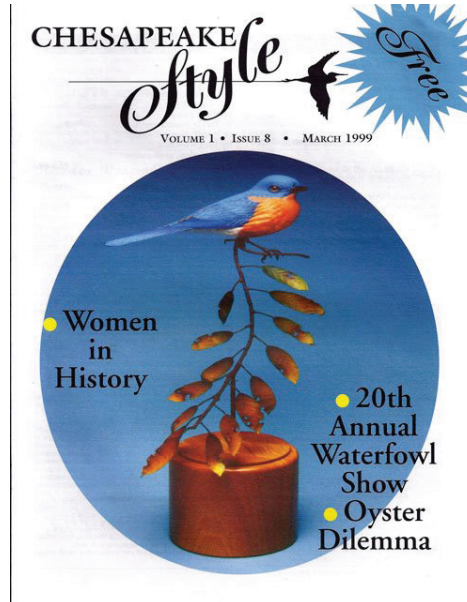
After listening to her spiel about submission dates, payment for articles, (Ha! *That's* why the paper is free!) and a few other details, she allowed as I could submit something. I mean, how dangerous can a boat mechanic be—save for adjectives? I didn't tell her that at that point I'd been writing for two magazines for 32 years, two columns and a feature each month for both means 2304 columns to pick from, or to draw from them. That was in addition to a substantial amount of verse and short stories, plus, at that point, five books self-published.

It took me two days to pore through the offerings, and I think I ended up submitting something from each group. Uh-oh: I went over the word limit! I'd been so ingrained with normal 750-word columns, I forgot that was about twice the limit! Jan taught me a lot about editing out stuff that made the column saleable and fun for boaters, yet still say the same thing in a newly allocated venue. She'd run something of mine every couple of issues—unpaid of course, but it got my name out—and treated me to lunch at the PilotHouse with the rest of the writers.

Jan and I went through many of the same physical ailments, but it finally took its toll on me, and we moved to Canton, Ohio to be close to MaryLou's family who can help her if needed. After three years in hospitals and rehabs, I find I have a whole new bunch of submissions—none for boating!

Jan, I wish you the best in retirement. Thank you for being good to me.

Grid



CELEBRATING THE
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
1999



A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE

DEBORAH BUTLER

Bay School Community Arts Center and *Chesapeake Style* magazine have enjoyed a long, prosperous relationship. In past years, a variety of writers, including Mary Ann Carr, Martha Anne King, and Bay School's Saraya Cheney, wrote features and columns about Bay School activities for the magazine. Only in recent years did I write the columns, and I knew very little about the origins of the organizations' connections.

To discover the history of this long relationship, I spoke with Mary Ann Carr. Mary Ann, along with husband Dave Carr, participated in the early association of Bay School with Janet Fast and *Chesapeake Style* magazine.

Mary Ann recalled that Janet's background as a journalist thrust her into the local writing arena even before *Chesapeake Style* originated. Janet had sponsored a writer's critique group in Warsaw that Mary Ann remembered being very tightly run; a writer received honest critiques that helped their writing grow. Through her future work as owner/editor of *Chesapeake Style*, Janet would remain highly supportive of the writers in the local area, who, in some cases, would become columnists and feature writers for the magazine.

By the early 2000's, Mary Ann Carr served as Vice President and then President of Chesapeake Bay Writers, and Janet Fast served on the CBW board. The two women came to know each other through their experiences working together on the Board. As Janet Fast began to develop her ideas about *Chesapeake Style*, Dave Carr went to some of her first informal brainstorming group meetings, thus keeping Mary Ann informed of progress on the magazine.

From these brainstorming meetings *Chesapeake Style* was born. The publication Janet envisioned could serve the community through describing area establishments and events for the public, and by doing so, it would offer local writers a venue for their words.

Also born with the generation of *Chesapeake Style* was Janet's idea to sell ads to non-profits and company sponsors while promising these groups at least an article, a feature, or a regular column. In this way the local community businesses and groups would get continuous media attention and much needed visibility, hopefully drawing the public to their unique offerings. Mary Ann says, "The brilliance was that Janet thought of this idea to enable various parts of the community to see the whole community in depth."



At this point, the Bay School and *Chesapeake Style* connection began. Serving on the Bay School Board by then, Mary Ann saw the magazine's features as a way to highlight the Bay School, encouraging the public to discover and pursue their creative talents through many classes and activities offered there. The school bought some of the first ads, and Mary Ann herself wrote four to six columns for *Chesapeake Style*, highlighting the creative outlets Bay School offered.

From those early days in the 2000's, the Bay School and *Chesapeake Style* collaborated to showcase both writing and the arts in the Middle Peninsula and the Northern Neck. In fact, *Chesapeake Style* played a role in publicizing the Bay School's first Art Speaks Juried Art Show featuring Virginia artists at Bay School. And that is only one important example of this long-standing, symbiotic relationship.

Bay School Director, Pam Doss, noted, "The magazine provided a means for us to reach readers with our stories, and opportunities for writers to explore new avenues for expression. The articles in *Chesapeake Style* have definitely been more personal than simple press releases sent to the newspaper." The columns have included insights into the children's art world, as well as the work Bay School does with older adults in the community. Columns often served not only to showcase Bay School's community outreach, but its artists' philosophies about teaching and art. Pam Doss concluded, "We have appreciated being able to offer a deeper glimpse into what we do and why we do it."

Deborah Butler



Find the Artist in You

And the Art for You

Celebrating 25 years of supporting the Arts in Mathews

Whether you're an experienced artist or a beginner, we can show you the joys of creating art or taking yours to a new level. For those who just want to enjoy or collect the works of others, visit our Art Speaks Gallery. We have monthly shows, with opening receptions for all.

So stop by, check us out, and unleash your creativity.

**The Bay School thanks Chesapeake Style
for your many years of support!**



279 Main Street, Mathews
804-725-1278
www.bayschool-arts.com



FRIENDS ALONG THE WAY

MARIE E. STONE



Marie Stone and Ron Jewell of Rivah Interiors

Life is an interesting journey for each of us, and as we age, our perspectives change in many ways. I have always felt this was impacted by the people we met over time and hopefully for the better. Along one of my many paths, I met Jan Fast. She asked if I might like to help with the magazine deliveries and I said sure. The beginning of a long and interesting journey, one which brought many new friends into my life.

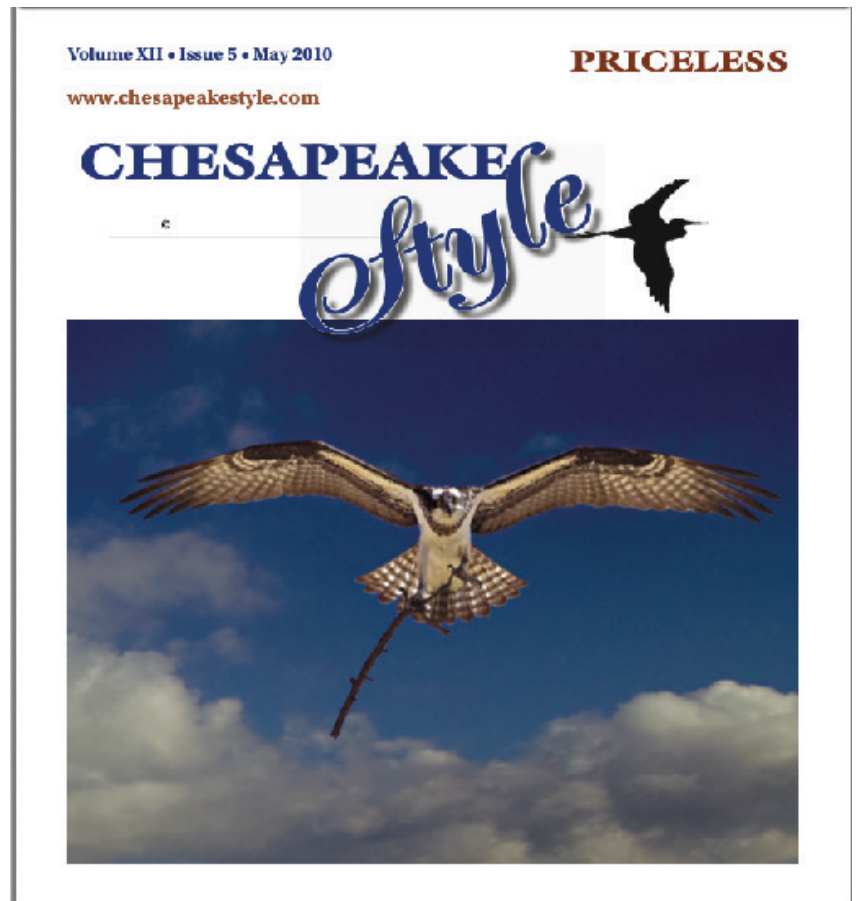
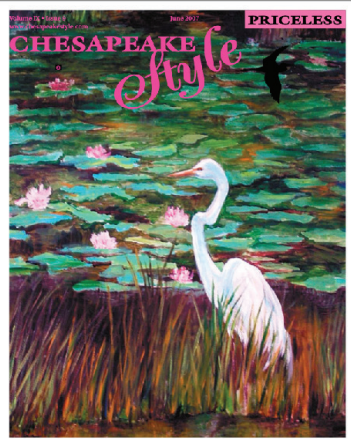
During this time, I made acquaintances in Colonial Beach to Tappahannock and places in between — many in one way or another are still in my life.

Jan was always encouraging me to sell ads — not my favorite job — and eventually I wrote a few articles and took pictures as needed to accompany articles in the magazine. We developed a comfortable relationship over the years and this continued until several years ago. When Jan's health declined, I found the assistance Jan needed took a different path, one which I was very happy to take with her. The trials that Jan has needed to endure were most always faced through her strength and positive attitude. We all handle struggles in our lives differently, and I often wonder how I would approach a difficult situation as Jan has.

There were major changes that Jan has had to face, but they never lessened our strong friendship. She knows I am always a phone call away as she is for me when one of us needs to hear a voice and share thoughts.

I feel very blessed for our friendship and as long as she needs an outstretched arm, I will always be there for her. She is one of life's gems that I found along my journey.

Marie



CELEBRATING THE
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
WILDLIFE



PROFILE OF A CHESAPEAKE STYLE WRITER— GERHARD STRAUB

DENISE DeVRIES



When Gerhard Straub took the helm of historic skipjack *Claud W. Somers* in 2014, he also set a new course for his writing. “I have a couple of chapters in some technical books that I have written, as well as lots of technical filings and reports at various levels and agencies of the government,” he said. At the time, he might not have predicted that he would end up writing a column for *Chesapeake Style* magazine for several years.



Gerhard sailed on the varsity team while studying at MIT, but he first became interested in traditional sailing when he and his wife Barbara were living near San Francisco. “I started volunteering on a square rigger out there. I was fascinated by the skills required and the sheer number of lines used to control all the sails. It was a relatively small vessel with square sails on the main mast, but there were 88 lines, as I recall, to control everything. Going aloft to get on the yards to furl the sails was all new

to me. It was a thrill to sail on, especially in the big winds on San Francisco Bay!”

In 2002, the Straubs moved to Maryland. “At a maritime festival, I met Captain Jack Russell, a waterman out of St. George Island, Maryland, who was giving rides on his skipjack, *Dee of St. Marys*.” In addition to becoming part of Captain Russell’s crew, Gerard also started sailing on the schooner *American Spirit* out of DC with the National Maritime Heritage Foundation in 2005.

In 2012, when he and Barbara moved to the Northern Neck, he already had a U.S. Coast Guard Masters license. They visited the Reedville Fishermen’s Museum and learned about the skipjack *Claud W. Somers*. Gerhard’s schedule didn’t allow him to volunteer at that time, but in 2014, he said, “We were on the west coast visiting my parents when I read an article in the *Northumberland Echo* that they needed someone to run the *Somers*.” Barbara, who had encouraged Gerhard to take on the challenge of restoring the skipjack, also helped with many of the projects.



The vessel was badly in need of maintenance when he took over. “It really is a full-time job to keep it going. There was essentially one crew member.”

Gerhard drew up a long-range plan for the museum board. “Extensive repairs and inspections were required. In October or November of that year, we had her sailing again and were able to recruit more volunteer crew.” The recruitment efforts led to his connection with *Chesapeake Style*.

Style editor Janet Fast said, “Gerhard was instrumental both at the magazine and the Reedville Fishermen’s Museum. He deserves a great deal of recognition for the work he did there.”

Those of us who work with Jan know her ability to find talent and encourage writers. Sometimes, she pushes us out of our comfort zones. For example, she encouraged me to interview experts like Gerhard and other traditional watermen, despite my lack of maritime knowledge. I was out of my element, but they were kind enough to explain the terminology.

Besides reporting on the *Somers* renovations and progress in *Chesapeake Style* over the years, Gerhard wrote about boating safety, home repairs, LED lights and Museum Ships weekends. He also followed the adventures of an osprey couple, Milt and Martha, attempting to raise a new set of chicks each summer. In 2019, Gerhard wrote in *Style* about the 1977 storm that led to the tragic loss of Captain Thompson Wallace and his crew. “*Claud W. Somers* was raised quickly and put back in to service dredging for oysters.” In a *Washington Post* article in 2022, he recalled the “magical, amazing” feeling of meeting Captain Wallace’s family at the Reedville Fishermen’s Museum. He thinks about the former captain every time he sails. “If you have an interest in maritime history,” he said, “you can’t not be touched by being on that boat.”

Attempting to steer into more familiar waters, I asked Gerhard how the writing craft compares with the hands-on skills used in refurbishing the *Somers*. “Perhaps the one comparison is that you need to have an idea of what you want to write and how you want to get your point across. I guess fixing a problem with an old boat is similar in that you sometimes need some creativity to figure out a fix that is affordable, but workable. Luckily on the writing side, my wife has often helped me come up with the idea to get me started.”

I asked Gerhard if he plans to continue writing and whether he has any specific projects in mind. He answered, “I do not really know the answer to that question, except that I have no specific project in mind. Some ideas have crossed my mind once in a while, but the mood hasn’t struck me yet!”

Meanwhile, all of his articles are available in the *Chesapeake Style* archives and are definitely worth reading and rereading.



FULFILLING AN IMPORTANT OUTLET FOR WRITERS AND ARTISTS

FICKLIN BRYANT

COUNTRY COTTAGE

Gourmet Candy Shop ♥ Homemade Fudge
Handmade Gourmet Chocolates
Premium Hershey's Ice Cream

Thanks for the memories!

Full Service Florist

804-435-3812
795 Rappahannock Drive
White Stone, VA 22578

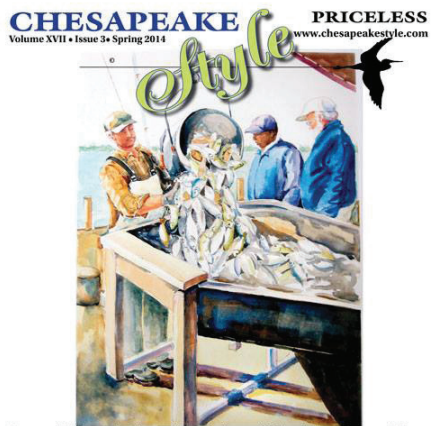
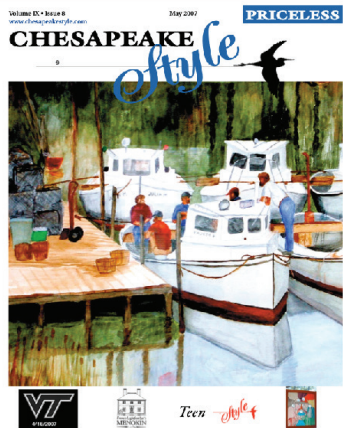
Congratulations to Jan and her many great helpers for 25 years of publications for the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula. It surely takes dedication, knowledge and hard work to run a business and to be successful at doing so.

Having said that, I would also say that the *Chesapeake Style* served an important need for artists and writers to share information and offer it free to the public. Advertising for my Upholstery business has always been mostly word of mouth, however my monthly ad proved beneficial in making my name known in areas that weren't familiar with my services, location, or contact information. I definitely found it beneficial, and I'm sure most advertisers did as well.

I wish Jan, all the best, as well as her longtime assistants. In particular, I want to thank Marie, who we got to see every month when she came to deliver papers. Marie is a delight and we miss her monthly visits very much.

God Speed to All...

Ficklin



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



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



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

CELEBRATING THE
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
ARTISTS

style 

EQUALITY

BY KENNY PARK

Kenny Park 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



I'm sitting on one of the lower levels of a hotel and conference center in Atlanta, and the lobby in front of me has just emptied. A moment ago, it was full of people talking and laughing and drinking coffee and hugging and catching up with folks they likely haven't seen in a while. That's the nature of annual meetings. This gathering is notable (among other things) for how it stands in counterpoint to another recent Baptist gathering in another southern city. This group of Baptists affirms the intrinsic value and an equality of calling of women to ministry.

If I were to reflect – even momentarily – on my faith journey, the predominant influences IN my life have been women – beginning with my mother and continuing with a litany of strong and faithful women who freely gave of themselves in order that I would have an encounter and a familiarity with the risen Christ *through their presence*.

Last week I listened to an interview with a defender of that decision argue that their stance didn't devalue women in eliminating them from being able to hold a leadership role within the structure of the (Baptist) church, and he sounded so sincere, so empathetic in his assertion, that I was almost swayed to allow for that possibility. I mean, we don't necessarily stand on titles when it comes right down to it, right? We do call each other "brother" and "sister" 'round here. Historically, our form of self-governance has been "congregational" – analogous to a direct democracy in the political realm: one person, one vote. Even the Pastor.

The problem is that the statement (resolution, in the terminology of the group) is based on the concept of authority; who has it and who cannot have it (guess which is which?). Given that understanding

results in a greater than/less than dynamic being established. You can say "we are of equal worth" all you want, but in the end, if the practice sets some above others, that "equality of worth" is a hypocritical statement. It is a slightly reworded version of George Orwell's "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others."

The texts used to defend the male-dominant stance are only quoted and studied and exegeted insofar as they agree with a (culturally informed) patriarchal view of scripture (and therefore, God's will for [mankind]). When the reality in them is touched on, (for example, when it is noted that this inequality is a result of humanity's fallenness, and NOT the original design of the Creator, which was one of complete equality/mutuality), there is no room for continued discussion. That prior conclusion is definitive, and there must be no questioning of it.

... Sigh...

If you've gotten this far, you've likely asked yourself multiple times already "what's his point?"

Well, this is my point: Women matter. Women's voices and lives and experiences nurture, inform and sustain us. Their wisdom enlightens, their passion spurs us to be more than we believe we can be. To in any way limit that from being shared not just in a faith community, but in SOCIETY in general is counterproductive at best, disastrous at worst.

When I was first approached by Janet (Fast, the publisher and editor), about writing for *Chesapeake Style*, my initial response was "do I have anything worth saying?" Her request was asking me to give a voice to a community in our midst that hasn't had a consistent voice in the past.

"Giving voice to the voiceless," in some circles,

is considered a particularly partisan phrase. In my early days of writing for CSM, I assumed there was a shared kinship between us in that sense. It wasn't until more recently, when the zeitgeist grew (for me and the community I serve) darker and more foreboding for that and many other marginalized communities (in my estimation), that only in brief conversations between us did we come to understand that we were on different sides of some significant issues.

In none of those conversations and interactions was there ever a hint of pressure exerted to "curb your enthusiasm," and in the one instance that an article resulted in a named critical reader response (asking, in essence, to keep the subject matter of the magazine nonpolitical, "upbeat" and informative), Janet took the opportunity to respond in my defense directly to that person.

THAT has stuck with me ever since. That she may disagree with me but will still come to my defense speaks volumes about her nature, her mindset, and her heart.

To find someone who can hold in herself the understanding that while we may not agree, we are still bound together and the relationship is worth investing in – emotionally by way of friendship, encouragement, support, and humor and spiritually through honest caring, is a treasure that I will always hold close.

Thanks for all you've been to me, Janet! You are worth celebrating!

Kenny

We thank you, Janet, for the many
contributions you have made to the
community through Chesapeake Style!

We wish you many years of deserved
enjoyment in retirement.

Best wishes,
Your friends at



Your real estate source serving Richmond,
the Northern Neck & Middle Peninsula.

It's not just business to us, it's personal!



804.781.HOME (4663)
deborah@deborahedgar.com
<https://deborahedgar.com/>



IGUALDAD

POR KENNY PARK

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



Estoy sentado en uno de los niveles inferiores de un hotel y centro de conferencias en Atlanta, y el vestíbulo frente a mí acaba de vaciarse, donde hace un momento estaba lleno de gente hablando, riendo, tomando café, abrazándose y poniéndose al día con personas que probablemente no han visto en mucho tiempo. Esa es la naturaleza de estas reuniones anuales.

Esta reunión se destaca (entre otras cosas) por su forma de ser contrapunto a otra reunión bautista reciente en otra ciudad del sur. ESTE grupo de bautistas afirma el valor intrínseco y la igualdad del llamado de las mujeres al ministerio.

Si tuviera que reflexionar, aunque fuera momentáneamente, sobre el desarrollo de mi fe, las influencias predominantes en MI vida han sido las mujeres, comenzando con mi madre y continuando con una letanía de mujeres fuertes y fieles que se entregaron libremente para que yo tuviera un encuentro y una familiaridad con Cristo resucitado a través de la presencia de ellas.

La semana pasada oí una entrevista con un defensor de esa decisión argumentando que su postura no devaluaba a las mujeres al eliminarlas de poder tener un rol de liderazgo dentro de la estructura de la iglesia (bautista), y se le oía tan sincero, tan empático en su afirmación, que casi me convenció de que esa era una posibilidad sincera. Quiero decir, no necesariamente nos apoyamos en los títulos cuando se trata de eso, ¿verdad? Nos decimos “hermano” y “hermana” por aquí. Históricamente, nuestra forma de autogobierno ha sido “congregacional”, análoga a una democracia

directa en el ámbito político: una persona, un voto. Incluyendo él pastor.

El problema es que lo formulado (la resolución, en la terminología del grupo) se basa en el concepto de autoridad; quién lo tiene y quién no puede tenerlo (adivinen cuál es cuál). Dado que ese entendimiento da como resultado que se establezca una dinámica de uno manda / él otro (o la otra, en este caso). Puede decirse “somos de igual valor” todo lo que quieras, pero al final, si la práctica pone a unos por encima de otros, esa “igualdad de valor” es una declaración hipócrita. Es una versión ligeramente reformulada de “todos los animales son iguales, pero algunos animales son más iguales que otros” de George Orwell.

Los textos utilizados para defender la postura de dominación masculina solo se citan, estudian y exégetizan en la medida en que concuerdan con una visión (culturalmente informado) patriarcal de las Escrituras (y, por lo tanto, la voluntad de Dios para [la humanidad]). Cuando se toca la realidad en ellos (por ejemplo, cuando se nota que esta desigualdad es el resultado de la caída de la humanidad, y NO el diseño original del Creador, que era uno de completa igualdad/reciprocidad), no hay lugar para continuar la discusión. Esa conclusión previa es definitiva y no debe cuestionarse.

... Uuuuffffff ...

Si has llegado hasta aquí, es probable que ya te hayas preguntado varias veces “¿a qué va?”.

Bueno, a esto voy: las mujeres importan. Sus voces, sus vidas y experiencias nos nutren, nos

informan y nos sostienen. Su sabiduría ilumina, su pasión nos impulsa a ser más de lo que creemos que podemos ser. Limitar de alguna manera que se comparta no solo en una comunidad de fe, sino en la SOCIEDAD en general es contraproducente en el mejor de los casos, desastroso en el peor.

Cuando Janet (Fast, publicadora y editora) se me acercó por primera vez para escribir para *Chesapeake Style*, mi respuesta inicial fue “¿tengo algo que valga la pena decir?”. Al extenderme la invitación, me pedía que diera voz a una comunidad entre nosotros que no ha tenido una voz constante en el pasado.

“Dar voz a los que no la tienen”, en algunos ámbitos, se considera una frase particularmente partidista. En mis primeros días de escribir para CSM, asumí que había un parentesco compartido entre nosotros en ese sentido. No fue sino hasta hace poco, cuando el espíritu de la época se volvió (para mí y para la comunidad a la que sirvo) más oscuro y aprensivo para esa y muchas otras comunidades marginadas (en mi opinión), que sólo en breves conversaciones entre nosotros llegamos a entender que estábamos en lados opuestos en algunos temas importantes.

En ninguna de esas conversaciones e interacciones hubo siquiera una pizca de presión ejercida para “refrenar tu entusiasmo”, y en el único caso en que un artículo resultó en una respuesta crítica del lector (pidiendo, en esencia, mantener el tema de la revista apolítica, “optimista” e informativa), Janet aprovechó la oportunidad para responder en mi defensa directamente a esa persona.

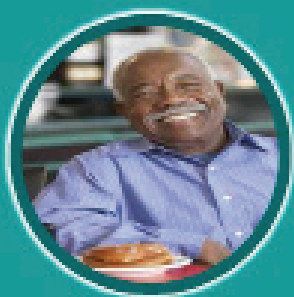
Ese acto se me ha quedado conmigo desde entonces. Que ella no esté de acuerdo conmigo, pero aun así venga en mi defensa dice mucho sobre su naturaleza, su forma de pensar y su corazón.

Encontrar a alguien que pueda comprender que, aunque no estemos de acuerdo, todavía compartimos un vínculo y vale la pena invertir en la relación, emocionalmente a través de la amistad, el ánimo, el apoyo y el humor, y espiritualmente a través del cuidado honesto, es un tesoro que siempre tendré cerca.

¡Gracias por todo lo que has sido para mí, Janet! ¡Vale la pena celebrarte!

Kenny

Are you going on vacation, and worried about your loved one's care while you're away?
Don't be, we offer Short Term Respite Stays to fit your needs in our warm, friendly community.



ESSEX HOUSE ASSISTED LIVING

17976 Tidewater Trail, Tappahannock VA 22560

Call Ginger today to learn more about our Move-In Specials

Visit us online @ www.americanretirementhomes.org

(804) 443-5921

MY JOURNEY WITH CHESAPEAKE STYLE

GWEN KEENE



Gwen Keene's dog Cowboy was a regular in the pages of Chesapeake Style. In addition to being a rescue dog, he is the mascot for Northern Neck Partners for Pets, a no-kill shelter in Kilmarnock, Virginia where Gwen serves on the Board of Directors.

I had not met Jan Fast when I received a call from her offering me the opportunity to write for *Chesapeake Style*. She was so complimentary about my writing and gave me my own column. She also gave me total freedom with the subject matter in my column. Often, I would accept an assignment from Jan to interview one of our advertisers. I enjoyed every moment listening and learning about their business.

As time went on, I discovered my love of writing focused on pets and owners grieving the loss of a special pet. While writing for *Chesapeake Style*, I began to expand my writing and published my first book *Swan Wait*. Yet, I knew there was so much more I needed to learn about writing.

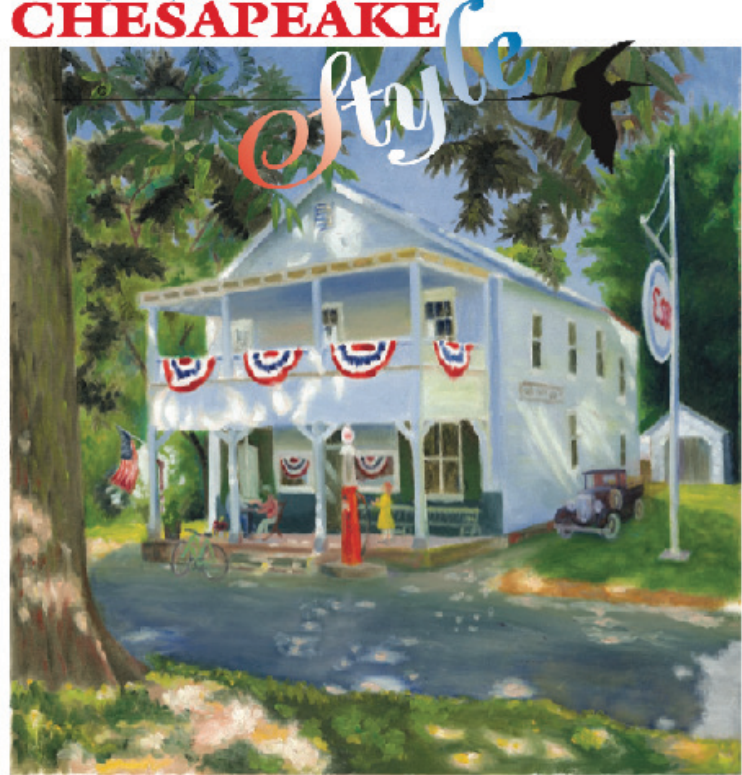
As I pursued my writing education, it became harder to meet the *Chesapeake Style* deadline and word limitation. But Jan was always understanding and encouraging. As a writer for *Chesapeake Style*, we had monthly meetings to discuss the next issue and to share ideas with other writers.

Jan had so much knowledge and writing experience to share with us, her writing team. Sadly though, as my personal writing took over my life, I had to give up my column knowing Jan would mentor other inexperienced writers and give them the opportunities she had given me. I wish Jan the best with her retirement and thank her for helping me become a better writer.

Gwen



Volume X • Issue 7 July 2008
www.chesapeakestyle.com **PRICELESS**



CELEBRATING THE
 CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
 FOURTH OF JULY
 CELEBRATIONS

Style

MY CHESAPEAKE STYLE JOURNEY

GLORIA J. SAVAGE



When I think of Janet Abbott Fast, I smile. She warms my heart and allows me to relax and breathe easily. She is very approachable and understanding, and at the end of the day, that is all most people want.

When I think of *Chesapeake Style* magazine, I think of the opportunity Jan gave me when I was seeking a magazine that would allow me to obtain some writing experience. I wanted to be around people who wanted to be around me, who would openly receive and accept me and help me to grow.

I believed I could write for a magazine, but I needed someone to give me an opportunity. Throughout my military career and work in higher education, leaders and colleagues told me my verbal and written communication were my strong suit and an asset in the workplace. But before writing for *Chesapeake Style*, I had been bullied, ridiculed, and told by a colleague that my communication skills were subpar. This happened during a challenging time in my life, as a close family with cancer was dying. I had two published books then, yet the poor treatment broke my confidence.

Over time, my confidence returned. There is a cliché that says, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me." In my opinion, that is a "straight up" lie. Words have power. Some

can tear you down, and others can build you up.

When someone told me *Chesapeake Style* was looking for writers, my excitement grew. I called Jan, and she was so warm and friendly. We talked about the magazine, and she said she would happily have me as a writer. My excitement went to the next level! Later, she invited me to a Zoom meeting, with writers who lived in different areas across the Middle Peninsula and the Northern Neck. It was exciting to be a part

of a group of people writing for a magazine. God, Jan, and many others, knowingly and unknowingly, helped me in so many ways.

For me, the *Chesapeake Style* environment was different. People genuinely embraced me, starting at the top with Jan. I remember when she told me I was a good writer. I was almost in tears, but I could not tell her why at that time. Sometime later, I shared my thoughts and feelings with her.

Some days, Jan would come across as a little intense. I knew she was busy, and I understood. The beautiful thing is, a day or two later, she would invariably call me and say something like, "I hope I didn't come across too strong." She always showed care and concern for others.



Jan had a planning meeting at her home on a Tuesday one October. It was a working lunch, and she supplied lunch for us all. It was my first time at her home. The food was excellent, and the meeting went very well. Jan provided lunch too at our regular staff meetings in Topping at the Pilot House. Bonnie, and her staff at the restaurant, were an added benefit. The food was delicious, and Ms. Bonnie let me get Lantana clippings from her Lantana bushes out front.

On occasions, Jan would have her visiting family members at the meetings. I enjoyed talking with her son, Steve, and his children, Rhobi and CoCo. Jan loved having them with her. Steve was always helping in any way he could. He even presented a certificate of appreciation to a colleague on Jan's behalf. She and her family are intelligent, and I always enjoyed chatting with them.

Through writing for *Chesapeake Style*, I had the opportunity to write a column on Health and Fitness. I also interviewed and wrote articles on local business owners. It was a great way to connect with them and learn about their astounding work. Some businesses for which I wrote Spotlight articles are: Kinsale Museum, Commonwealth Florist, The Wellness Place, Mermaid Home Organization, Corner Cottage Frame Shop, Spa 2 U, Left Bank Art Gallery, Rainbow Storage, Thyme in A Basket, Bay School Community Art Center, Courthouse Restaurant, Virginia Shoe Clinic, King William Alpacas, River Title Escrow, and Riverview Inn. Comments from many of the owners were such blessings.


Jan started *Chesapeake Style* magazine when she was 60 and has operated the business for 25 years: Jan, Happy 85th and Happy 25th. Having you in my life is a joy and a blessing. I love you so much!

Gloria

Best wishes on your retirement
from all of us at Riverview Inn.
We wish you the best, Janet.

RIVERVIEW INN
24 Hawthorne Street
Colonial Beach, VA 22443

NEWLY RENOVATED



(804) 224-4200
www.colonialbeachriverview.com

Newly renovated 21-room boutique inn, located 1/2 block from the water and boardwalk. Enjoy a warm welcome, beautifully updated accommodations, free wifi, and so much MORE!

Always fascinated with computers, I bought a TRS-80 in 1977. While working at a local newspaper in 1994, I fell in love with a Mac and never looked back."

Jan Fast

Style

SIMPLE & DELICIOUS FAVORITES, ITALIAN-AMERICAN STYLE

LEE CASAZZA



Lee Casazza first started sending recipes to *Chesapeake Style* in October of 2020.

"It is so rewarding to share my recipes with Virginia readers. People come up to me and say how much they enjoy the publication and my recipes."

Lee's Kitchen Tips:

Buy fresh mussels, which makes all the difference.

Ask your fishmonger if your mussels are wild or cultivated. If they are wild, make sure they have beards attached. Do not remove beards until just before cooking. Removing the beards causes the mussels to slowly die. Wild mussels have a slightly stronger flavor. Cultivated mussels do not have any noticeable beards and have a more delicate taste.

- 2 lbs. fresh mussels, beards attached
- 2 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- 2 Tablespoons avocado oil
- 2 large shallots or 1 medium onion, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup dry white wine or white vermouth
- 1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves or ½ t dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon red pepper flakes (optional)
- Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 Tablespoons chopped Italian parsley

Scrub the mussels with a brush under cold running water.

Place in a bowl and refrigerate until ready to use.

In a large heavy pot, heat the butter and oil over medium heat.

Add shallots or onion and sauté 5 minutes.

Add garlic and sauté another minute.

Add the thyme and red pepper flakes.

Season to taste with salt and pepper, then add the wine and bring to a boil.

Remove mussels from the refrigerator and using "kitchen-only" pliers, remove beards.

Add mussels to the pot, cover, reduce heat and simmer until shells open, about 5 to 6 minutes. Discard any unopened mussels.

Ladle into a warm serving bowl or two smaller warm bowls and garnish with parsley.



I knew the paper wouldn't make a 60-year-old woman the editor, and so Chesapeake Style was born!

Jan Fast

Style 



THE POWER HOUR CHALLENGE FOR MORE SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS

MARIANNE “MARI” GIBBS,
EdD, OTR

MARIKIBBSFORSCHOOLS@GMAIL.COM



This issue would not be complete without offering a way for readers to honor Janet's caring and concern for children

The need is great for the presence of great role models for our students in public schools. As a current member of the Mathews County School Board and avid volunteer in our schools, I see the importance of expanding citizen involvement in our schools every day. Students need a stable, positive environment in which to learn. Citizen volunteers can support our schools in many ways. I have found that whether others and I are tutoring students, working in the cafeteria, wrapping books in the library, or taking tickets at an athletic event, these efforts are very appreciated AND making a difference to student success.

After being elected to the MCPS School Board, I immediately asked school division principals specifically how I could help them. Our middle school principal quickly expressed three volunteer needs: greeters in the morning as the students entered the school to welcome them in, lunch buddies – volunteers who could sit with students during lunch and just talk with them, and volunteer tutors, especially in math.

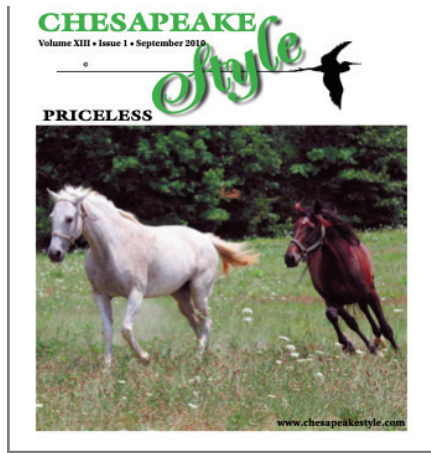
I reached out to many of our local civic organizations and their leaders to spread the word about the need to increase citizen volunteerism in our schools. Once approved via the online application process, new volunteers began showing up and their efforts were so welcome! In fact, with regard to tutoring, several students met goals of being tutored into success and therefore, did not require summer school services.

THE POWER HOUR CHALLENGE!

The volunteer effort in MCPS has been successful and welcomed with open arms by our schools, and my goal is to keep it growing. This summer I am promoting the Power Hour Challenge to increase citizen volunteerism in our schools. The Power Hour Challenge encourages all citizens to become school volunteers and then to spend just one hour per week volunteering. Just one hour per week, per volunteer – surely, we all have one hour per week to give to our schools and students – our future! Of course, one hour is just the minimum. Yes, the needs in our schools are great, but, just as significant is the priceless reward from volunteering and helping students.

Expanding volunteerism provides a critical resource for school personnel to access in order to benefit students. I believe all qualified volunteers have so much to give back to our schools and students. Beginning the 2023-2024 school year with an army of volunteers means our schools can hit the ground running with positive volunteer support for increased student achievement, positive learning environments from excellent role models, and school spirit.

Retirees, parents, grandparents, organizational leaders, and county officials – will you join me in leading by example as school division volunteers and take the Power Hour Challenge? Not just in Mathews, but in all of our localities. One hour a week, one student at a time, we can and will make a positive difference in students that will last a lifetime!



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



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



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

CELEBRATING THE CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION RURAL LIFE



WICKED CHICKENS

DARLEEN R. NICHOLS

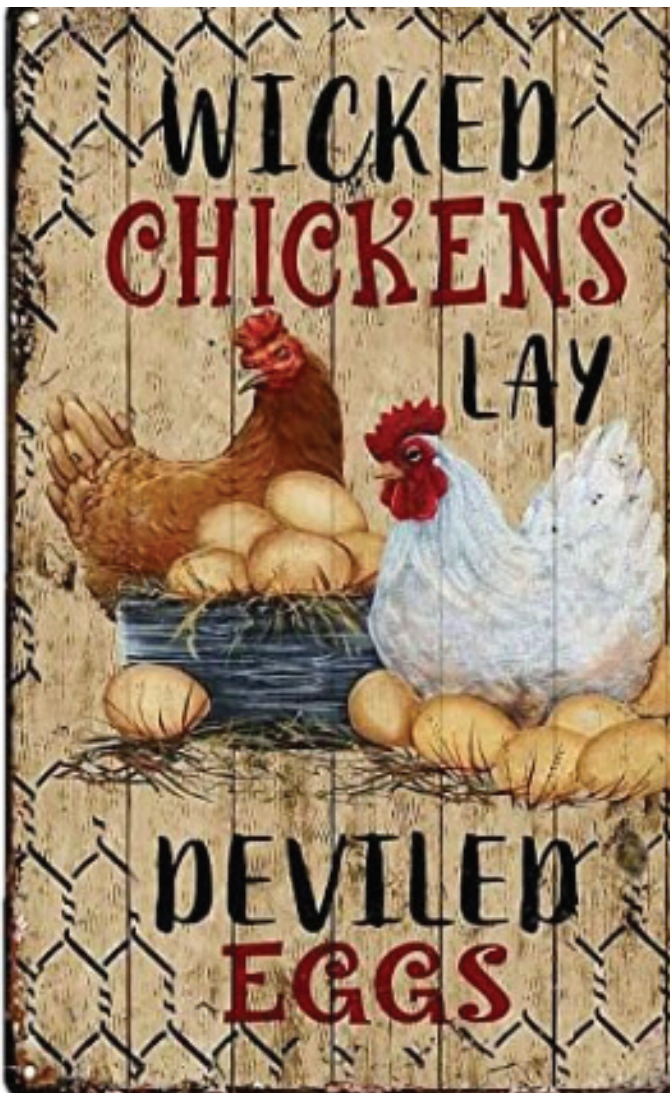
There is a story behind this title, but it comes later in the article. Jan and I were scheduled to meet in early 2015 when I was working for a newspaper in the area. I was a reporter for and an investor in this paper, but for some reason, the publisher decided to take the sportswriter to meet Jan instead of me. Don't know why, but that's what happened. I ran that newspaper for a year after the death of the publisher, but decided it was too much for me alone at my age.

I just wanted to write and *Chesapeake Style* was a perfect fit for me. I called Jan and we arranged to meet for lunch at Java Jacks in Tappahannock. We really hit it off at that lunch, and I did something I had never done before nor have I ever done it since. I literally poured out all of my problems to Jan's very sympathetic ears.

In addition to a love of writing, we found that we had other things in common as well. For example, we both like football. Jan is a rabid Green Bay Packers fan while I was a tepid Redskins fan. Now I have no pro favorites at all. I just like watching a good game.

Jan and I are dog people as well. I know she has lost Brandy, her last beloved pet. My little Mini-Pin Cassie has something called Mast Cell Sarcoma and will probably not survive it. Jan has been just wonderful in sending loving thoughts and prayers for her.

During the pandemic, keeping *Chesapeake Style* going was a real challenge. The Spotlight articles were very important to the magazine and to the advertisers. I remember doing many of these articles by phone. It was somewhat complicated with the



going back and forth for approval, but Jan managed to hang onto all of her advertisers. We joked that one issue of the *Chesapeake Style* was written by me!

Jan has had many challenges during the past 25 years, but I doubt if many have surpassed 2020. Yet she sailed through it with her knowledge and determination. She has many friends and admirers in the community and in publishing. We haven't seen one another much of late as we're both dealing with physical issues that keep us close to home.

In closing, here's the explanation for the title of this article. I learned early on that Jan loved deviled eggs and made them for her on a fairly regular basis. One Christmas, as I was wandering through a local antique store, I spotted the perfect gift for Jan. It was a metal sign approximately 12 by 14 inches and read, "Wicked Chickens Lay Deviled Eggs."

Darleen

DID

YOU

KNOW?

AmeriCarePLUS
In Home Personal Care & Live-In Agency

Provides Summer Respite Help!
When Family Becomes The Primary Caregiver of a Loved One,
Finding Qualified Help is Only a Phone Call Away.

3-24 Hours Per
Day To Best
Meet Your
Needs.



Serving the
Northern Neck
&
Middle
Peninsula

Call us today and take that vacation you deserve!
(804) 333-0099

"Letters to the editor are welcome. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, lousy spelling or any other reason that strikes her fancy."

Jan Fast

Style 

THE DEADLINE IS FRIDAY!

GERHARD STRAUB

I don't remember the exact date, but probably around 2016, after helping the Reedville Fishermen's Museum get the skipjack *Claud W. Somers* back in operation, I was looking to generate some publicity for the vessel and program. I wrote up a press release in sort of an article format and sent it to various publications, including *Chesapeake Style*. I was thrilled when the publisher and editor, Jan, accepted the article.

Once that was all in place, since I had occasionally thought about doing some writing, I casually told her that if she ever wanted an article about something I was knowledgeable in, she should just let me know. Without hesitation, she said, "How about writing a monthly column?" Kind of stunned, I asked what she wanted me to write about. She said, "Anything you want." I guess "flattery will get you everywhere," and not knowing what I was in for, I readily agreed.

Jan didn't mislead me when she said I could write about anything I wanted, but you better not miss

a deadline! Many times, I was wracking my head trying to find the right thing to write about, when the dreaded email would arrive...in all BOLD type, no less...DEADLINE IS FRIDAY! Luckily, my wife would feed me lots of ideas that on more than one occasion would allow me to squeak by under the deadline and rescue me from the editor's whip! She acts tough, but Jan even gave me a few extensions when I was running way behind.

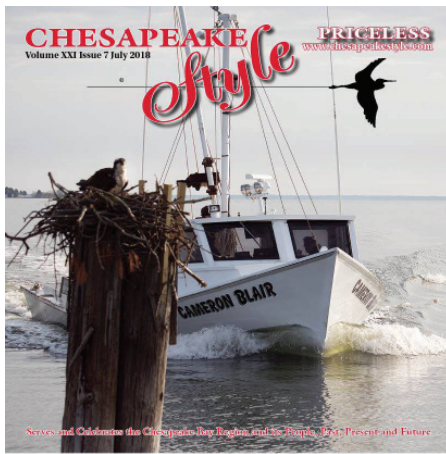
I have to confess that I have never even met Jan in person. My schedule never allowed me to attend any of the in-person meetings. However, emailing back and forth, talking on

the telephone, and even talking once on a Zoom meeting, I feel like we got to know each other a bit.

My association with her and the magazine has been nothing but a positive experience, allowing me to more deeply connect with the beautiful region we live in. *Chesapeake Style* magazine is truly a gem and a quality publication and shows her deep love of the region. It has been my privilege to be associated with the magazine.



Gerhard



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





MARIE STONE: SHE ALWAYS DELIVERS

MARTHA M. HALL



Visiting with Marie Stone is always a pleasure: she is a positive, cheerful, and determined force for good, and talks with her always leave me feeling that I can do so much more to make the world a better place. Humble to a fault, she always turns the conversation to the needs and experiences of whoever she's talking to, and my interview with her for Jan Fast's final, celebratory issue of *Chesapeake Style* was no exception.

Marie has been friends with Jan for over 20 years, and so her migration to *Chesapeake Style* was a natural progression. Marie had been helping with a Northumberland County periodical when Jan decided in 2007 to begin a print version of *Chesapeake Style*. Jan first asked her to help with delivering the magazine, and Marie began delivering all over the Northern Neck. "I covered everywhere from Colonial Beach to Tappahannock and points in between," Marie told me. "But I loved it, because I made many, many contacts along the way: people who became long-term friends, and folks I still go by to see, even now. The people to whom I delivered magazines were interesting to me, and I kept up with the events in their lives and the lives of their families. I really enjoyed my deliveries — Jan wanted me to begin selling ads, but I wasn't very interested in that. She gave me a few accounts, and I covered those, but I was never much of a salesperson."

Preferring to stay in the background, Marie began to take on more responsibility for the magazine's production by helping Jan with proofreading. "I found that I could focus all my

attention on the words and images in front of me, rather than being distracted by the content of the articles, and I learned to spot an error very quickly. I was so focused on their form that I never really read the articles! Someone would comment on a particular passage to me, and I was unable to remember ever reading the article! I think I was a really good proofreader," she laughed.

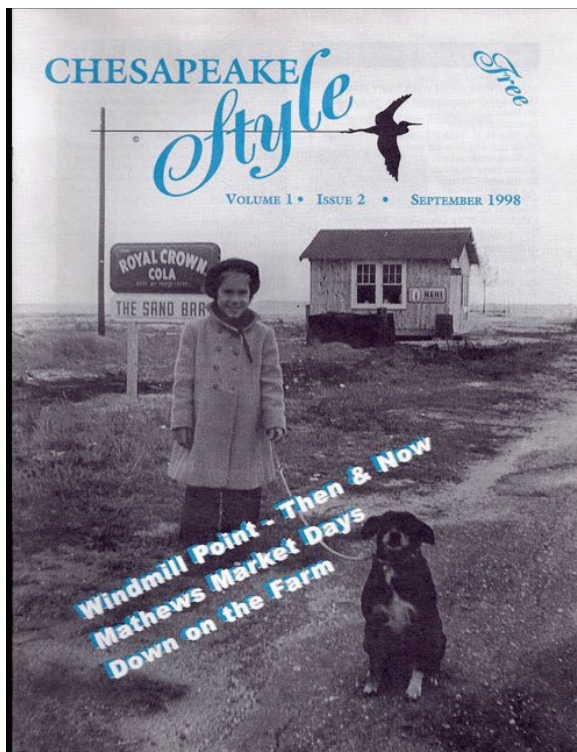
Marie said she occasionally wrote articles for the magazine, mostly the Spotlights that highlighted local businesses, but her favorite thing was keeping in touch with the businesses on her delivery route. "I think I got the first look at any new merchandise



— several of my businesses were responsible for furnishing my house! I was forever seeing something that I wanted. Visiting folks at least once a month was deadly to my budget, but great for their bottom line!”

As the years went on, and Jan’s health issues became more challenging, Marie assumed more and more responsibility for the distribution of the magazine. Besides continuing with her own deliveries, she began coordinating the other drivers and their deliveries, meeting the Virginia Beach publisher at the Pilot House Restaurant in Topping, and arranging for the monthly pick-up and lunch that was the hallmark of the “*Chesapeake Style* experience.” By helping Jan write and deliver the checks, she ensured that the writers, salespeople, and drivers got their payments on time. As *Chesapeake Style* headed for its final wrap-up, Marie’s last job was to collect all the racks that had held copies of the magazines at so many businesses for so many years.

We will all miss the magazine and our many adventures with its publication, but I will miss most especially Marie Stone’s calm, assured outlook, her genuine love for all the contacts she made over the years, and her willingness to drive just a little farther to make sure *Chesapeake Style* and its workers were all they could be.



I started working with Jan in 2007---I was starting my own business, so I advertised with her first.

I started writing my column on Brain Injury when I worked for the Brain Injury Association of Virginia (BIAV) in 2010. One of the requirements of my contract with them was to make contact/establish a relationship/publish an article about brain injury each month. Jan let me write a brain injury article each month, and I continued to write articles for *Chesapeake Style* even after my contract with BIAV expired in 2014.

When my contract with BIAV expired in 2014, I immediately began to work with Jan on a more consistent basis, both in sales and writing Spotlights, and I also started doing distribution. I enjoyed the folks I worked with---we met monthly at Topping for lunch and to pick up our mags for distribution, and Jan would periodically schedule get-togethers, either at her house or at a local restaurant, for us to brainstorm ideas for the magazine. These were fun gatherings---not long on problem-solving, but a chance to see others who were involved in writing, selling, or distributing (or, as in my case, all three!)

Martha

WORKING WITH JANET

ANN SKELTON



Though I've never heard her say so, I know, as a writer submitting work, that Janet is proud of the publication she created. And rightly so. Each issue treated readers to topics ranging from personal foibles to dealing with trauma to reviews of books written by authors in the Chesapeake Bay region. I was treated to Janet's editorial approach each time I submitted an article.

Some years ago, I submitted a requested article on overcoming writer's block. I learned then that whether developing an article, or submitting a book review or a recipe, Janet has already provided detailed and firm instructions, not on content or tone, but on format and number of words acceptable for that page – good lessons from the journalist for me as a writer.

We will miss you Janet.

Ann Skelton

RAPPATOMAC WRITERS CRITIQUE GROUP

Jan Fast founded and led the Rappatomac Writers Critique group. She wrote in her invitation:

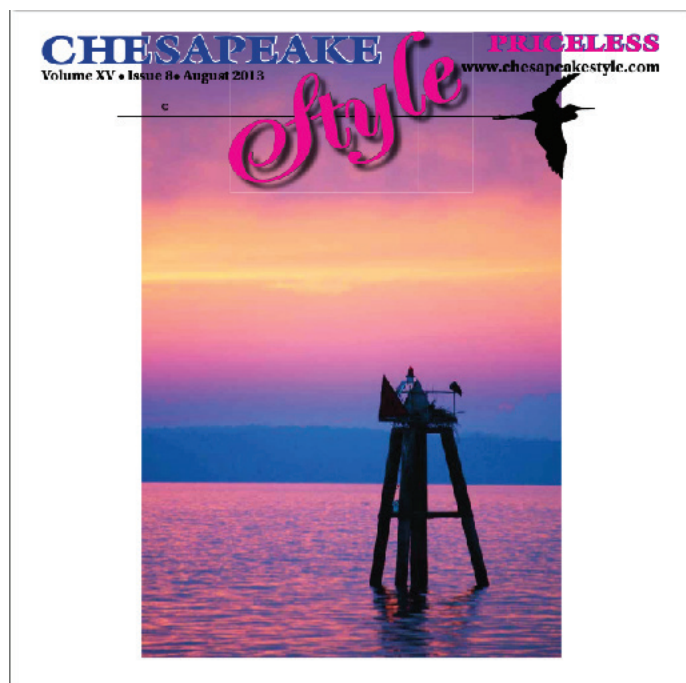
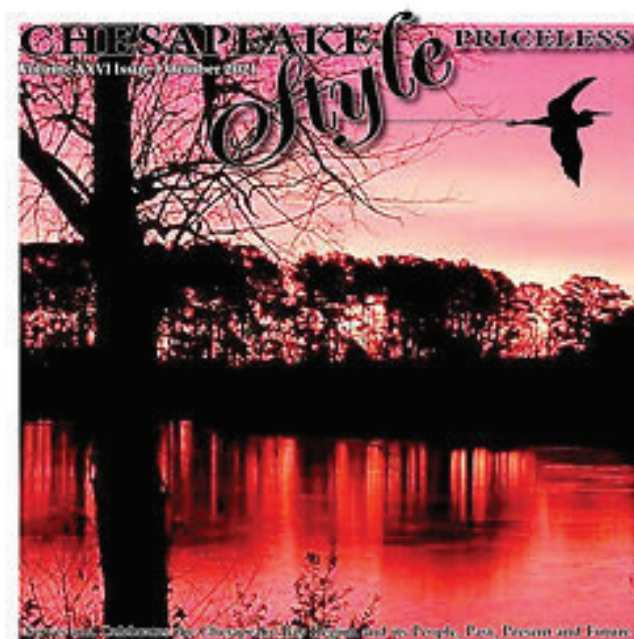
Join the Rappatomac Writers Critique group where you will find enthusiastic support and gentle critiques to help you on your way—along with fun and laughter to make your journey a pleasant one. If you like to write or listen, have a song in your heart or a poem in your soul, join us.

The Rappatomac Writers—where the science of writing meets the art of persuasion—encourages and supports aspiring writers. The meetings are PRICELESS.

The group met monthly until 2023 at various locations in the Northern Neck. Many of us met other writers there who have become life-long colleagues and friends. I first met many of the authors High Tide Publications, Inc. went on to represent in their publishing journey. I thank you for that opportunity, and your encouragement over the past fifteen years.

Jeanne Johansen

HIGH TIDE PUBLICATIONS, INC.



CELEBRATING THE
CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
SUNSETS



JANET ABBOTT FAST — A WOMAN WITH MANY HATS

DENISE DeVRIES



"The hat in the picture is an Oleg Cassini hat. I bought it when we lived in Madison Wisconsin. We went to church every Sunday and of course, at that time in the middle 60s we all wore hats to church. And I also at the time had a French twist which fit very nicely in the hat."



Janet's children Stephen and Kathy

When I met Janet Abbott Fast in the late 1990s, I had no idea how many hats she had worn. After our recent interview in her home, I began to get an idea.

"Swimming is a pretty important part of my life," Jan said. "I became a water safety instructor with the Red Cross when I was 18." She taught swimming in college. "Everybody had to pass beginner swimming to graduate. "I understood how people felt. If they did not know how to swim by the time they were adults, it was because they were afraid of the water."

Born in Ashland, Kentucky, Janet lived with her mother in an apartment above a garage during the early part of World War II. Her father was stationed in Okinawa. When he returned home, he took a job with the Chesapeake and Ohio railroad in Richmond and lived in one room there. Janet and her mother would take the train from Kentucky to spend time with him. Janet remembers seeing the front or the back of the train at certain curves on the New River Valley stretch of the railroad. The family moved to Richmond together when Janet was in third grade. She attended four schools between third and seventh grades and always walked to school. Grades eight through twelve, she went to the original Hermitage High School.

Janet had graduated from high school when the railroad began to move her father around. The family lived in Clifton Forge, Virginia, Hinton, West Virginia, where she was married, Then the railroad moved her father to Huntington, West Virginia, Cleveland, Ohio, and ultimately Baltimore, Maryland. By this time, it was called CSX and her father was an executive.

Jan met her future husband before her senior year in college, and they married in the summer of 1959. In the spring of 1960, Jan graduated from James

Madison University with a degree in elementary and secondary education. She was pregnant with their first child Stephen when the couple moved to Edgewood, Maryland, for her husband's army duty. Two years later, the couple moved to Madison, Wisconsin. Jan said, "I had one-month-old Kathy and 18-month-old Stephen, a five-month-old puppy, a turtle, 26 houseplants and a husband in a Rambler station wagon." After moving to Wisconsin, Jan became a lifelong Packers fan.

Jan said, "Over a period of around 25 years we boated in the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. We had a 1930 custom built 34-foot Chesapeake Bay Deadrise cruiser pleasure craft with a single engine and outboard rudder. Her keel was a cypress log, her underwater parts were oak, and her bright work was Honduras mahogany. She had been in the family, and I spent time on her as a child. After her original owner died, we bought her and



trucked her out to the Midwest. I loved that boat!" The next boat had belonged to her parents. "It was a 34-foot Owens Brigantine sport fisherman, the first fiberglass boat that Owens built. She had two 250 HP engines." Jan would bring both boats back to Virginia.

"No article about me would be complete without mention of my dogs," Jan reminded me. She grew up with a dachshund. They bred and showed standard smooth-coated dachshunds in Wisconsin for several years. Jan said, "One day we were leaving a dog show in Milwaukee, and I came upon this dog sitting on his grooming table. He was a good size dog. I walked up to him and I said, 'aren't you the homeliest dog that I think I've ever seen! You have a face that only a mother could love!' He brought his paw up as if to put it on my shoulder." This began Jan's love affair with German Wirehaired Pointers as they were leaving Wisconsin. "I swore that I would not live in Illinois without a big dog.

I began learning to work with him in the field. They are considered a versatile hunting dog. That means they point fur and feather, and they retrieve on land and water. When I moved back to Virginia, I had two, Sarah and Buffrey. Sarah became a champion, and several dogs from her litters became champions. They earned titles in the field as well as in the show ring."

In the 1960s and 1970s, while the children were at school, Jan sold cosmetics by individual consultation. She said, "I thought I was teaching women how to take care of their skin, but at the end of nine years, I realized I was learning to be really good at sales."

In Wisconsin, Jan put on her swim cap and whistle again. "Red Cross sent me to aquatic school and I learned about adapted aquatics." After the training, Jan started a program in Wisconsin at the local Holiday Inn five days a week. "We taught deaf children, blind children, physically handicapped children, and children with different levels of mental disability." She added, "I later trained instructors to teach adapted aquatics." One of the schools put in a swimming pool in their facility as a result of Jan's classes. She said, "Even today those classes are continuing, so that's quite a legacy for me."

The family's next move was to Batavia, Illinois, 35 miles from Chicago. In the 1980s, Jan took her sales experience into the insurance field. "I cracked the glass ceiling," she said. Jan found her niche in small group health insurance. As one of the few or perhaps the only female sales manager for that company in Illinois, Jan topped the national charts. She recruited people already selling life insurance, and they added health policies to their portfolios. "I had seminars all over the state of Illinois when I was recruiting or looking for independent agents to sell our product. So again, I was teaching. I believe I've spent most of my life teaching."

Always fascinated with computers, Jan bought a TRS-80, one of the earliest mass-marketed retail home computers, in 1983. She said, "the computer put me light years ahead of the competition." She would continue in the forefront of technology trends in business. Jan said, "After moving back to Virginia while working at a local newspaper in 1994, I fell in love with a Mac and never looked back."

Eventually, Jan sold her share in the insurance business. "That was when I decided to come back to Virginia after 31 years in the Midwest. I never missed a high school class reunion at the original Hermitage High School." In 1993, she began to plan her move to

Warsaw in the Northern Neck. She had worked closely with the architect who designed her house in Batavia, which was built to fit into a long, narrow lot between trees. She liked it so much that she created her current home from the design with a few changes.

Jan drove back to Virginia in 1993 with the help of some friends. Her children were grown and independent. Jan said, “I had a 21-foot van that thought it was a motor home, a new baby blue Suburban, two dogs, two cats, six parrots, and no husband.” The couple had divorced after 27 years of marriage. “I always thought I would get married again. However, as time went on, I discovered that my Dealbreaker List got longer,” Jan said with a smile.

Again, Jan glimpsed the glass ceiling, this time in 1998. She worked as a journalist for four years for a local paper. As she learned her way around the Northern Neck, she met people in the community and became known. “I knew the paper wouldn’t make a 60-year-old woman the editor, and *Chesapeake Style* was born!”

The magazine began as only a vision. “I never had a particular target audience,” Jan said. “I sold ads by the seat of my pants.” Through her local contacts, Jan met the authors who would contribute to the first issue of *Chesapeake Style* in August 1998. Jan’s column, “Fast Times on the Rivers” appeared throughout the magazine’s 25 years. The masthead contained a paragraph saying, “Letters to the editor are welcome. The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for clarity, lousy spelling or any other reason that strikes her fancy.”

When it comes to her writers, Jan rarely brought out the red pencil. The individuality of each author’s voice was one of the keys to *Style*’s popularity. Jan featured local artists and writers and also encouraged teachers to contribute students’ work.

Jan hired an artist to design the logo that identified the magazine over its lifetime. “Writers and artists contributed their articles and artwork for covers. With 10,000 copies per issue, the magazine gave them exposure. Many writers got their start with *Style* and went on to write for other publications.” *Style*’s monthly columns gradually evolved according to the participating writers. The *Chesapeake Style* Facebook page also helped to promote advertisers.

At first, Jan delivered all the magazines in her baby blue Suburban. She picked up the magazines from the Times Dispatch in Richmond. And delivered to Fredericksburg, across the full Northern Neck, and

Middle Peninsula. Later, there were delivery people who picked up in Topping and delivered to over 300 locations.

Chesapeake Style produced twelve issues per year until 9-11, when advertising decreased. “We continued online only, but, due to the demand for print, we started again in 2007 after a five-year hiatus. A friend in the Lunch Bunch said she’d help with sales and writing.”

Thanks to her entrepreneurial spirit, Jan has been a mentor and resource for many people in multiple fields. She has followed opportunities and made the most of them, but never allowed negative circumstances to hold her back.

Jan said, “I realize that had I not been divorced, I would not have designed and built two houses, raised my dogs and enjoyed them as much as I did. When I was in my early 50s, I traveled 7000 miles out west in six weeks with two German Wirehaired Pointers in my Roadtrek van.” She added, “If I had not been on my own, I certainly would never have moved back to Virginia! I would not have learned to write, pursued journalism or started *Chesapeake Style* magazine, and I might not have been asked to write a book to honor Chief Tecumseh Deerfoot Cook on his 100th birthday.”

Jan’s accomplishments are as numerous and varied as the stylish headwear that has become her trademark. All that can be said is, “Hats off to you, Jan!”



Mac and Gretchen, two of the dogs Janet bred in Virginia, visiting their co-owner with Janet in Chicago

CHESAPEAKE *style* **PRICELESS**
 Volume XVII • Issue 8 • July 2014
www.chesapeakestyle.com



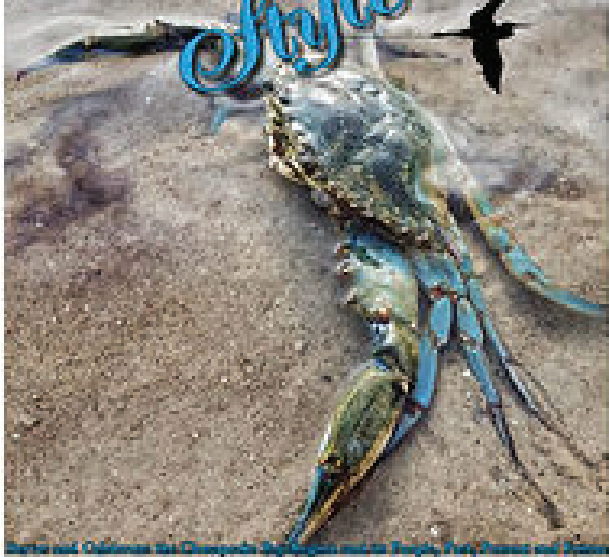
Serves and Celebrates the Chesapeake Bay Region and its People, Past, Present and Future

CHESAPEAKE *style* **PRICELESS**
 Volume XVII • Issue 5 • May 2014
www.chesapeakestyle.com



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

CHESAPEAKE *style* **PRICELESS**
 Volume XVII • Issue 6 • June 2014
www.chesapeakestyle.com



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

Volume XII • Issue 3 Winter 2008

PRICELESS

www.chesapeakestyle.com

CHESAPEAKE

style



I never had a particular target audience for the magazine. I sold ads by the seat of my pants.

Jan Fast

style

TWENTY-FIVE YEAR SUCCESS STORY

CHELLY (MICHELLE) SCALA



Twenty-five years ago, I was approached by Janet Fast to write a fishing and hunting column for a new magazine she was starting called *Chesapeake Style*. She said that she had read my articles and asked that I write in her magazine. She decorated me with compliments, and I already liked her style. She was a great businesswoman, and I was so excited to be a part of this wonderful magazine. Well, twenty-five years later, I am still writing for *Chesapeake Style* and have loved every minute.

Janet was determined to have her magazine fit everyone's interest, whether cuisine, traveling, nature, gardening, fishing, hunting, boating, health, animals, or spotlights about our area.

Janet has always had a love for animals and early on invited me to see her dogs, cats, and exotic birds. Wow!

Janet finds a way to always be successful and is very creative! One of my favorite parts of the magazine has been Janet's column, "Fast Times on the Rivers!" I love feeling part of the family and always know what's going on. Janet, thanks for letting me be a part of *Chesapeake Style*!

Chelly

BOOKS IN STYLE

"Writing a book without promoting it is like waving to someone in a dark room. You know what you have done, but nobody else does."

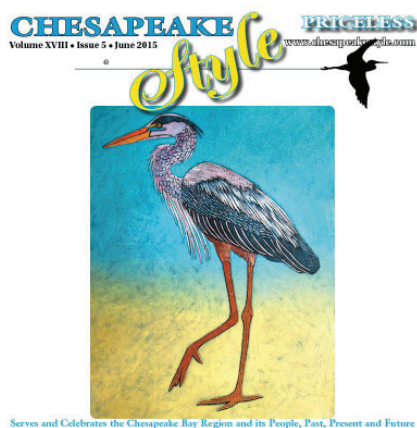
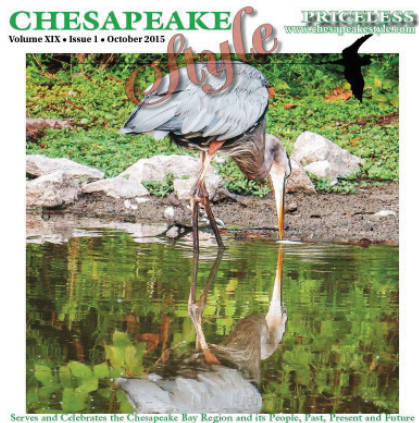
Ask any author - they will tell you that marketing is their least favorite job...right after edits. Janet Fast knew that, and she created an opportunity for over 100 authors to have a review printed in *Chesapeake Style*. The column was called *Books in Style* and gave new and seasoned authors an opportunity to promote their book.

Marketing is the most challenging step for authors on their publishing journey, and the opportunity to have a review was priceless. The 500-word reviews boosted many Virginia authors, especially first-time writers, allowing the opportunity to reach readers.

As Jan said, "Send the review with a graphic of the cover to *Chesapeake Style* for publication. You will be glad you did!"

Jeanne Johansen

HIGH TIDE PUBLICATIONS, INC.



CELEBRATING THE
 CHESAPEAKE BAY REGION
 WATER FOWL



FAST TIMES ON THE RIVERS— LOOKING BACK

JANET ABBOTT FAST

When I was in college I joined a sorority, Alpha Sigma Tau, and I have carried a piece of it with me for my entire life.

Recently, one of my grandchildren came to visit. She is approaching 30, and she had many questions about specific areas of my life. We had a wonderful weekend together, and at the end of the weekend, I had an epiphany.

Although I don't remember the exact words of the sorority pledge or the vow that we made, the essence of it was to always serve or give back to the community. The combination of the article Denise DeVries wrote for this issue and my conversations with my granddaughter made me realize how much I had in fact, practiced that sorority pledge I made so many years ago through my entire life.

When I was teaching swimming, I was giving back to the community in many ways. We were called Red Cross Water Safety Instructors, and of course, we were expected to teach people to be safe around the water. The adapted aquatics instructor trainer in me helped to make the world a better place for those children who had various levels of disabilities. We were teaching them swimming, not, and I emphasize not, practicing therapy.

When I was selling cosmetics, my primary goal was to help women take care of their skin. My attitude and feeling was that if a person looks good, they feel good, and if they feel good, they would do a better job—even if that job was scrubbing floors.

I was several years into selling cosmetics when I realized that I was good at sales.

In the insurance business, particularly the life insurance business, I sold the piece of paper that people didn't need until they couldn't get it. And I was very aware that those insurance policies would make people's lives better when their loved ones left this world.

I also served my church. I was on the vestry and served on the altar guild, and head of the altar guild in several different churches over the years.

Although it might sound like I'm stretching things, one of my dogs was a narcotics detector dog for homeland security. He served for many years at Laredo, Texas at the border. I agreed to give him to his handler, because they formed a bond over the years. The owner handler called him Handsome.

With *Chesapeake Style* magazine, I made it a point early on to have writers who were from diverse backgrounds. The inspirational articles Kenny Park wrote were published in English and Spanish. Many readers didn't necessarily realize our diversity unless they knew the writers or unless the writers took photos of themselves. If I had a choice about which photos to go into an article, I always chose the photo of a person of color to be inclusive of the entire community. And on the lighter note, if I had a choice between an animal and a person, I would always choose the animal picture to be in the magazine.

There was more diversity in the magazine than anyone might realize. We had folks who wrote who were straight; we had folks who were gay. We had folks who are from different political parties and felt very strongly about their politics. However, I never allowed them to write with any biases in the magazine.

Despite our differences, we thrived and learned from each other, and we became friends. And many of my writers didn't even know what other folks' politics were, or anything about their personal lives.

I was honored, delighted, and humbled, by the wonderful article Denise DeVries wrote about me for this issue of *Chesapeake Style* magazine. Denise pointed out that I rarely brought out the red pencil. And she was right. I did not very often bring out the red pencil. I felt that it was extremely important that my writers keep their

own voices and style. Many of them went on to write books. Several of them went on to write for bigger and more prominent magazines, and were paid very handsomely for their writing. I was always happy to see them move on to bigger and better things.

Looking back, I must say that I am humbled that I have accomplished so many things over the period of my life. And I am humbled that my friends chose to use this issue of the magazine as a tribute to me.

I thank everyone who gave me the opportunity to keep my sorority pledge to always serve or give back to the community and be an example to others.

DID YOU KNOW? **AmeriCare PLUS**
In Home Personal Care & Live-In Agency

Provides Summer Respite Help!
When Family Becomes The Primary Caregiver of a Loved One,
Finding Qualified Help is Only a Phone Call Away.

3-24 Hours Per Day To Best Meet Your Needs.



Serving the Northern Neck & Middle Peninsula

Call us today and take that vacation you deserve!
(804) 333-0099



Find the Artist in You

And the Art for You

Celebrating 25 years of supporting the Arts in Mathews

Whether you're an experienced artist or a beginner, we can show you the joys of creating art or taking yours to a new level. For those who just want to enjoy or collect the works of others, visit our Art Speaks Gallery. We have monthly shows, with opening receptions for all.

So stop by, check us out, and unleash your creativity.

**The Bay School thanks Chesapeake Style
for many years of support!**

Bay School
Community Arts Center

279 Main Street, Mathews
804-725-1278
www.bayschool-arts.com

ART SPEAKS
GALLERY

We thank you, Janet, for the many contributions you have made to the community through Chesapeake Style!

We wish you many years of deserved enjoyment in retirement.

Best wishes,
Your friends at

Deborah Edgar
Real Estate Group




Your real estate source serving Richmond, the Northern Neck & Middle Peninsula.
It's not just business to us, it's personal!

804.781.HOME (4663)
deborah@deborahedgar.com
<https://deborahedgar.com/>

Best wishes on your retirement from all of us at Riverview Inn. We wish you the best, Janet.

RIVERVIEW INN
24 Hawthorne Street
Colonial Beach, VA 22443

RENOVATED




(804) 224-4200
www.colonialbeachriverview.com


Newly renovated 21-room boutique inn, located 1/2 block from the water and boardwalk. Enjoy a warm welcome, beautifully updated accommodations, free wifi, and so much MORE!

THANK YOU TO THE LOCAL BUSINESSES WHO SPONSORED THIS CELEBRATION EDITION

COUNTRY COTTAGE
Gourmet Candy Shop ♥ Homemade Fudge
Handmade Gourmet Chocolates
Premium Hershey's Ice Cream



Thanks for the memories!



Full Service Florist

804-435-3812
795 Rappahannock Drive
White Stone, VA 22578

Are you going on vacation, and worried about your loved one's care while you're away?
Don't be, we offer Short Term Respite Stays to fit your needs in our warm, friendly community.



ESSEX HOUSE ASSISTED LIVING
17976 Tidewater Trail, Tappahannock VA 22560
Call Ginger today to learn more about our Move-In Specials
Visit us online @ www.americanretirementhomes.org
(804) 443-5921

Copyright © High Tide Publications, Inc 2023

Celebrating Janet Abbott Fast and 25 Years of Chesapeake Style

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN: 978-1-945990-58-8

First Edition 2023

Published by High Tide Publications, Inc.
Deltaville, Virginia

Find us at:
www.HighTidePublications.com
Printed in the United States of America.

Publisher

High Tide Publications, Inc.
www.hightidepublications.com

Editor

Carol J. Bova

Layout and Graphics

Firebelliedfrog Graphic Design
www.firebelliedfrog.com

The mission of *Chesapeake Style* is to serve and celebrate the Chesapeake Bay Region and its people - past, present and future.

The current issue and archives are located at
www.chesapeakestyle.com.

The opinions expressed in *Chesapeake Style* are those of contributing writers and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of *Chesapeake Style* or its advertisers. Reproduction in whole or in part of any material in this publication without permission is strictly prohibited.

