

YOUR GUIDE TO THE LOCAL GOOD LIFE

FRONT PORCH

THE REGION'S **FREE** COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

Local Good News Since 1997

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fredericksburg



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COVER PHOTO BY ARCH DI PEPPE

Wood Artist Joe Wilkinson IN PRAISE OF TREES

BY MERIAN STEVENS



Folks who visit **Brush Strokes Gallery** throughout July are in for a special treat—a panoply of new creations by master woodcrafter, **Joe Wilkinson**, whose intricate creations not only please the eye but also beckon the touch.

Visitors at the gallery have been especially fascinated by Joe's segmented-turning creations, which may be comprised of as many as 500 individual pieces. People muse about the painstaking effort that must go into one of these works and they are correct. One of Joe's

segmented pieces typically takes about 40 hours of work to create and involves a series of different processes that take three or four weeks to complete.

Joe explains that, with these pieces, he begins with a line drawing of the shape of the object and then calculates the number and size of the hundreds of pieces of wood that he will need. After selecting the woods needed for the pattern he envisions, he cuts all the trapezoid-shaped pieces that will be used in the creation. The pieces are then

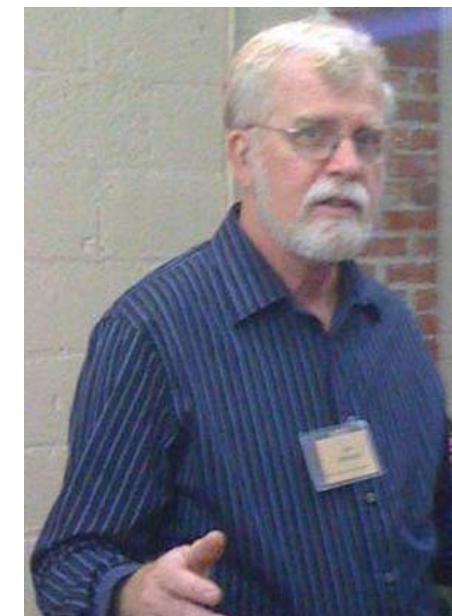
banded together to dry. When they have dried, the circles are mounted on top of one another to follow the general shape of the design and are glued together, then placed in a book press where they go through another drying period. The final stage of formation is to turn the piece on a lathe, finessing the shape both inside and out. The creation is than sanded, burnished with a finish, and allowed to dry once more.

Joe says that both the segmented process and turning creations from a solid piece of wood are fulfilling in their own ways. While he enjoys detailed segmented work, crafting objects from a solid piece of wood allows more freedom and he can follow new inspiration while he is in the process of creation.

Joe's talent, skill, and investment are evident in the pieces crafted for July's show (only one of which has been shown previously.) The exhibit, titled "Black and White- A Celebration of Two American Trees" is crafted entirely from just two types of wood—Black Walnut and



White Oak—and includes bowls, vases, and a series of wall hangings.



While the meticulousness and detail that Wilkinson invests in crafting his creations may reflect character traits he gained through his years at the United States Naval Academy and his 25-year career in the Navy, his love for working with wood goes back to his early childhood. Growing up in a house built in the 1920s with virtually no closet space, he worked by his father's side to create wardrobes for his family as well as other pieces of furniture.

Join us this month at Brush Strokes for Joe's show, July 2-July 29: Black & White, a Celebration of Two American Trees.

Merian Stevens is an artist and an arts writer.

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Joshua Camelli Collette Caprara
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Brian Downing Arch Di Peppe
Austen Dunn Frank Fratoe
JoAnna Cassidy Farrell Joe Gherlone
William Garnett Ralph “Tuffy” Hicks
Rob Huffman Karl Karch
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Amy Pearce Mary Lynn Powers
Susan Carter Morgan Edwin Pardue
Scott Richards Wendy Schmitz
Merian Stevens Brennan Spoonhower
Sara Mattingly Matt Thomas
Rebecca Thomas Christine Thompson
Rim Vining Amy Woodruff

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its people.

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FRONT PORCH FREDERICKSBURG

1281 Jefferson Davis Highway
PMB 208
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Phone: 540-220-1922
E-Mail: frntprch@aol.com
Web Site:
www.frontporchfredericksburg.com

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ON THE PORCH

OUR FLAG

Whether you believe that
America is still “the greatest country in
the world” or that “it can be if we make it
so”, our cover photo this month is for you.

The American Flag is vivid in my
childhood memories. There was always a
bank on Broad Street in Red Bank, NJ or a
car dealer on highway 35 in Eatontown
that waved the biggest flag you ever saw,
a star-spangled banner illuminated by day
in sunlight and by night under a spotlight.

There wasn't a home in
Shrewsbury that did not fly the flag at
every national holiday, if not everyday
year-round. When certain businesses
threw a promotional event, they handed
out American flags on sticks to the boys
and girls who had gathered with their
parents to catch a good deal on a Pontiac,
Ford or Chevy, or a new clothes washer.

At school, we began each day by
standing to say, “I pledge allegiance to the
flag of the United States of America, and
to the republic for which it stands, one
nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty
and justice for all.”

The Pledge of Allegiance did not
brainwash us. I know that because there
are many of my generation who, today,
still push for freedom, who are advocates
for justice, and who believe in striving to
either keep or remake America great. We
know it is not a given; we are aware of the
alarming statistics to suggest it is not so
great; and we also know that it is our
responsibility to change what needs to be
changed and to preserve what should be
preserved.

MESSAGES

Hi Rob!

*I went on vacation just a few
days after the kitty rescue. What a nice
surprise to come home and find that
wonderful article in June's Front Porch
("Emotional Rescue - Cat's in the Bag").
The guys were really pleased! : P We all
were for that matter! When I read your
article/message to your daughter ("On
the Porch - To Alexis Mary"), I was doubly
happy we were able to rescue her kitten.
That article made me cry. You seem like
a wonderful person and I hope to meet
you in person some time. Thanks again
for the shout out to Bartlett.*

Tanya Alexander
Bartlett Tree Experts, 540-898-4442

Dear Rob,

*Thank you for the coverage of
my participation in Artomatic 2012 in
the June issue of Front Porch. It has been
exciting to work with so many
enthusiastic artists from our region. We
are all delighted to be able to share our*

In this issue of Front Porch, our
15th anniversary issue, you will read of
The Greatest Generation (in Arch Di
Peppe's *Quiet Moments*), the generation
that came before his and mine. Our
generation needs to earn that title. So
does the one after ours and the one after
that. We all need to step up to the plate
and attempt to claim it, for the good of us
all. We all need to participate... and to
vote.

Tuffy Hicks points out in
History's Stories how his family talked
about the American Revolution and
American history every Fourth of July.
What about now? Are parents teaching?
Is there an oral history being passed down
from generation to generation to explain
and implore the children and the
grandchildren to step up for what matters
and to uphold the dreams and visions of
our Founding Fathers? Or have we lost
them all to expediency, whateverness, me-
firstism, and whatever medium gives the
most gratifying message? And I have to
wonder when I hear that a school
somewhere in the USA has banned the
American flag; what's up with that?!

Maybe the rest of the nation just
needs to take a closer look at
Fredericksburg, VA. Our people seem to
get it right more often than not. We
balance celebration with giving and our
own wants with the community's needs.
George Washington would be proud of We,
The People of his Burg.

Susan Carter Morgan writes
about a Community Dinner and its

*work with such a broad audience. The
attendance has been great and the
reception of the eclectic work has been
marvelous.*

Sincerely, Pat Thalman

RE: Vanessa Moncure's June Season's
Bounty ("Junebugs"):
*after 50 odd years of partaking
of this delicious delicacy (crabs), I have
found the most popular dipping choice, is
vinegar. I guess she just forget about it.
Of course Old Bay is a given.*
Charles O. Squires, Spotsylvania

Wow. I just had a woman approach me
in the Wegmans in Woodbridge while
eating lunch to say how much she
enjoyed my series in the Front Porch
("15 Principles - A Roadmap to Success") and
to say thank you for kybecca and what a
difference it has made in the community.
Almost made me teary. Sometimes you
never know where kindness and
validation will come from.
Rebecca Thomas
Kybecca



volunteers, like Mary Wools, that speaks to
exactly what I mean here. It's a local
example of stepping up and stepping
outside of one's own needs. And everyday,
there is so much more that points this
way, to a greater good from a greater
people. We should all be proud but not
complacent.

July is a leisure month, a beach
month, a slow-reading month, a grilling
month. But, it is also a month for
reflection on our ways and ideals and our
role in the process. And it's a month to fly
our flag, with both pride and commitment.
We can become, or can still be, the
greatest nation on earth. It will take the
efforts of us all. Are you in?

Rob E. Grogan

Rob,

*Love the Father's Day letter to
Alexis! Brought a tear to my eye!
Michael Corry, Greenwich, CT.*

*What a beautiful article about
Alexis. I am sure it will be a huge source
of strength for her as she recovers.*
Brynn Pacitti, Vienna, VA

Rob & Virginia:

Congrats on 180!!!!
Mary Wadland, Alexandria, VA

NOTE: Mary Wadland is publisher of Zebra
Magazine in Alexandria.

About the Cover:
Archer Di Peppe celebrates our
Independence with this shot of his flag.
Fitting as we celebrate FP's 15th
anniversary in a land where
we are free to publish.

Thank you to the Revolutionaries and
Founders for July 4, 1776, and their
subsequent efforts to assure the
establishment of our free republic.

PORCH MUSIC

BROKEDOWN BOYS - ALWAYS ON THEIR TOES

BY JOSHUA CAMELI



I had the opportunity to sit down
with Fredericksburg's premier Grateful
Dead cover band, the **Brokedown Boys**, in
June, shortly after their third anniversary
show (June 5, 2012). The band's current
lineup includes **Mark Davis** on mandolin
and vocals, **Mark D** on guitar and vocals,
Lowell Sale on Guitar, Banjo, and vocals,
and **John Buck** on Bass. That night, The
Boys were joined by “**Fast**” **Eddie
Dickerson** on fiddle. Together, they
weaved in and out of a set of music,
dripping in inspiration, which culminated
in an epic interpretation of an interlocking
suite of The Grateful Dead's songs;
Truckin’>The Other One>Cryptical
Envelopment

Mark Davis had been teaching
music at Apple Music for five years, when
people starting asking for Mark D, he
assumed they were asking for him. It
turned out people were actually asking
around for Mark D a new music instructor
at Apple. Curious to meet the new guy
who shared the same name and last initial,
Mark and Mark met.

The two quickly bonded over a
love of Frank Zappa and soon discovered
they had other similar tastes in music
which included The Flying Burrito
Brothers, Gram Parsons, Lou Reed, The
Rolling Stones, and of course, The Grateful
Dead. The two formed an instant musical
kinship, jamming any chance they got and
were soon playing in various
establishments in downtown
Fredericksburg. The first song they ever
played together was “Out of Time” by The
Rolling Stones and the two enjoyed
playing an eclectic mix of classic rock, but
it was when they played their first
Grateful Dead song, “Black Peter” that
they knew they were on to something.

“People really gravitated to The
(Grateful) Dead's songs,” Mark Davis
explained. “The first time we played a
Dead tune, I was like, we should play more
Dead songs,” said Mark D. More and more
songs from The Grateful Dead's cannon

crept into the duo's repertoire, and with
an ever increasing and varied set list they
were presented with an opportunity to
start Grateful Dead Night at The Sunken
Well Tavern. With Mark & Mark gaining
attention on the music scene, they
brought in guitarist and fellow Deadhead,
Dave Jensen. “We didn't even have a name
at that point. We couldn't keep calling
ourselves Mark & Mark, because now we
had Dave in the band,” Mark D said. After
much thought and deliberation (and a
little bit of whiskey), the trio decided upon
the name, The Brokedown Boys; a nod to
The Grateful Dead's classic song,
“Brokedown Palace.”

Soon after that, The Boys were
approached by **Jay Starling** to play with
the band and he joined them on dobro.
Mark Davis commented, “We really started
practicing a lot during that time. We
would all get together and just play Dead
songs.” With the four of them fully
practiced, they started gigging at various
venues and parties around downtown
Fredericksburg. Eventually, life led Dave
to Colorado and the quartet became a
trio. It was during this time that the band
would have special friends show up with
them on stage. Such friends would include
Mo Marsh on harp and vocals, **Andra Faye**
playing bass, guitar, mandolin, and vocals,
and **Keller Williams** on bass and vocals.

Recently, Jay left to Ashville, NC
and **Lowell Sale** (Banjo, Guitar, and Vocals)
and **John Buck** (Bass) were brought in to
round out the band in Jay's absence, and
Jay still does make occasional appearances
with the band. The Brokedown Boys still
have their friends sit in with them as well.
All possess an incredible musical chemistry
together. As Fast Eddie told me that
night, “The Dead's music is unpredictable.
You don't know where it's going to go. It
could go anywhere. It keeps you on your
toes and that's what I love about it.”

For booking information contact
Mark Davis at davisme65@gmail.com,
540-840-5650 or visit
The Brokedown Boys on Facebook.

*Joshua Cameli is big brother
at The Sunken Well Tavern and
The Otter House.*

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Community Dinner

“I WOULD GO HUNGREY WITHOUT THESE MEALS” ~ DENNIS DYE

BY SUSAN CARTER MORGAN



A few minutes before 5pm, men, women, and children gather outside St. George’s Episcopal Church, waiting for the doors to open. It’s time for dinner.

Volunteer **Mary Woolls**(above left, with **Cristy Reeder**) welcomes them, saying there is plenty of food to go around. One little girl is already eyeing the ice cream sundaes, but her mom ushers her over to the line forming by the kitchen. The meal is free and served by friendly volunteers — no questions asked.

A man in the back of the room in jeans and a t-shirt offers to say grace for the crowd.



“I would go hungry without these meals,” **Dennis Dye**, one of the city’s homeless says later. “They benefit a lot of people.” He also appreciates the fellowship he feels when he comes to these gatherings, the sense of community that isn’t always available to folks struggling to survive.

This was Micah Ecumenical Ministries’ hope several years ago when it stepped in to organize various efforts to feed the hungry. Now, this scene plays out every night at different churches across

the city. At least half of the people served have homes and are the working poor, unable to afford quality food to feed their families.

Volunteer teams have developed smooth systems, efficiently serving more than 120 people at each meal. Germanna Community College professor **Russ Carter** and his wife, **Linda**, have done everything from dishwashing to cooking over the past three years, coming to this with a sense of urgency.

“Nobody in this country should go hungry,” says Linda. “We all have too much.”

a clean place. “Keeping them healthy helps us all.”

During the dinners, volunteers also connect people to other services, such as checking VA benefits or food stamp programs. Recently, they’ve added voter registration. “The line between volunteer and guest is blurred as guests often come early to help set up tables or stay late to clean up,” Mary says. “And volunteers regularly grab some dinner and sit down to eat with the guests.”

One night the air conditioning broke, and everyone pitched in to move the whole operation across the street. Mary loves the “power of all these people pulling together to make this work.”

“There is such gratitude. Hang around a while and you realize that it spurs the donation of home cooked food and motivates the volunteers,” Mary says.

As folks finish up their meals, they relax, chatting with one another across tables. A hug here, a joke there, and then it’s time to clean up. Some head back to their tents, others to homes across the city. But all are comfortable and full.

“I like giving,” says **Danielle Amador**, a student at Virginia Tech. “But I also like what they teach me, life lessons and the wisdom of their experiences.”

Teams at St. George’s do try to add variety to the menu, serving fresh, homemade food and changing things up often.

But **Alan**, a homeless man who has been coming to the dinners for two years, says it really doesn’t matter. His favorite meal is “anything.”

“I so appreciate they just give us something to put in our stomachs.”

Susan Carter Morgan writes from her Downtown Writing Studio at LibertyTown Arts Workshop.

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Baffled

A SQUIRREL’S TALE

BY COLLETTE CAPRARA

I have to admit, I had always thought of **Bob Gramann’s Squirrel Song** (about a homeowner’s futile battles with the squirrel population on his property) as a light-hearted, amusing little ditty. But that was before my husband declared war on those voracious varmints that have infiltrated our yard.

As I write this, within my view lies a four-foot-tall foam-board and duct tape structure, surrounding a newly built construction from a variety of fencing material, above which peek the tips of the branches of a dwarfed fledgling peach tree that this barricade purportedly protects. This evening, I have communicated with our neighbors to relieve them of any misconception that some alien spaceship has landed in our yard.

It all began when I came down the front steps to see my husband standing wild-eyed by the newly planted

tree. “I saw it!” he declared, “I caught that squirrel red-handed!” (i.e. puffy cheeked with peaches). It was true. I followed his finger pointing to the ground to witness nearly a dozen discarded pits from some satisfied transient diners.

And so, the project began. Long-forgotten fencing materials from repairs and constructions of yesteryear were hauled out of our backyard shed. My next peek to our side yard revealed an amazing double spiral scaffold/fence of a variety of heights and aperture sizes.

That night was one of restless sleep, with phrases such as “They ate nearly all the peaches” percolating in the darkness. By morning, more ripening peaches were missing and even more pits were scattered on the grass.

“Maybe you could just put a sign up like the ‘No Burglars Allowed’ one you put up for our neighborhood watch,” I

posited.” Just like many would-be thieves have probably been diverted from their evil intentions, those cantankerous critters will see the ‘No Squirrels Allowed’ post and retreat, saying ‘What was I thinking!’” He was not amused. As I pulled out of the driveway this morning to catch the VRE, I winced as I heard the garage door rolling open and knew that the fortification would grow larger throughout the day.

And so, tonight that bastion of peach protection stands in our yard. With the television on and the world news blaring I breathed a sigh of relief, thinking that things were returning to normal — only to hear him mutter, “They’ll probably get over that one too!”



Collette Caprara is a local writer and artist.

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Go West, Young Men

WHERE THE OPPORTUNITIES EXIST

BY MARY LYNN POWERS



Talking to Christopher and Garrison Rule (pictured with friend Megan Roberts) had me wondering how it felt to be the bearers of artistic talent. Is it disheartening to know there are so many people with similar talents? I would think so, but the creativity of these two brothers never wanes. Whether they are designing a period set including costumes, painting a fantastical mural or designing a website, the flavor of their artistry always comes through.

I have had the great experience of working with both of these gentlemen as waiters (later, with Chris as manager) at Bistro Bethem in the ‘Burg. Not only were they naturals, they honestly looked out for the good of the guests and the owners. A simple task of opening a wine bottle took on the feel of a theatrical performance. Perfectionists at heart, it was always a comforting feeling to watch them in action.

I sat down with Christopher and Garrison on two separate occasions, and listened to their stories, which blended and intermeshed at parts, as brothers’ stories do. I don’t think Christopher has reached the 1/3 mark yet, but he has accomplished much in his years, before and after he attended Savannah College of Art and Design. He graduated in 2008 from SCAD with a major in illustration and a minor in film. He told me that he made his film debut at 3, and has been acting, directing and writing film pieces ever since. His accolades include awards as early as nine and ten for satirical parodies. He enjoyed acting as an extracurricular activity throughout school. At thirteen he directed and adapted an original play for a regional tournament.

Both brothers talked fondly of early years, creating rides, haunted houses, props from anything they could find in their basement for two younger brothers. Chris called these Disney-inspired dark rides. His passion for writing and illustrating was recognized early, and his goals now include pursuing Disney Imagineering, freelance illustration and film acting. He has done three painting and sculpture exhibits in the

area, and acquired numerous commission pieces from these shows. If you have seen the whimsical, fantastical work that he creates, you would see how all things are possible.

Garrison expanded on the stories that Chris told to include making films that he called sequels to current popular movies, one called *Never Gets Shrunk* to follow *Honey I Shrunk the Kids*. Another was *Jaws 5: Terror at Easter*, I can only imagine the props for that! From the ages of four and six, Chris and Garrison spent much of their free time together creating some form of film or theatre. Garrison, the older brother remembers a network of friends in high school that supported and encouraged their dramatic efforts. He told me that he was awarded “Most Likely to Win an Oscar,” in the senior superlative awards. Recently, they have been co-creating 30-40 minute short films. Garrison’s innate understanding of film to include post-production aspects will assist him greatly in his future endeavors.

Garrison graduated from University of Virginia with an Architectural History degree, and a minor in Preservation. He took numerous drama and film classes in elective areas. His degree helps him with his interest in period pieces, and he has been involved in numerous productions here with the Fredericksburg Company, under the tutelage of Fred Franklin. He has acted in many Shakespeare pieces locally. He once worked on a period piece set in 1870, where his parents allowed him to clear their house of furniture and modern touches in order to bring in Gothic furniture. Often, local historic houses were used in their films, and if you live downtown, there is a good chance you might see an exterior shot of your house in one of their productions!

When we talked about the future, the sad part of the story is both brothers are heading west to Los Angeles to find fame and fortune. Their goals are to become involved in some form or fashion with the film industry. Garrison explained it to me simply that if they did not go where the opportunities exist, twenty years later they would always be wondering what they had missed. I asked Garrison where he pictured himself in twenty years, and he smiled and said if all went well we would be seeing a film written and directed by the Rule Brothers. They have already co-written one script that could be made into a feature film down the road. All of their Fredericksburg fans and friends wish them a world of success, and await news of the next chapter in their lives.

Mary Lynn Powers of Stafford County writes periodically for Front Porch.



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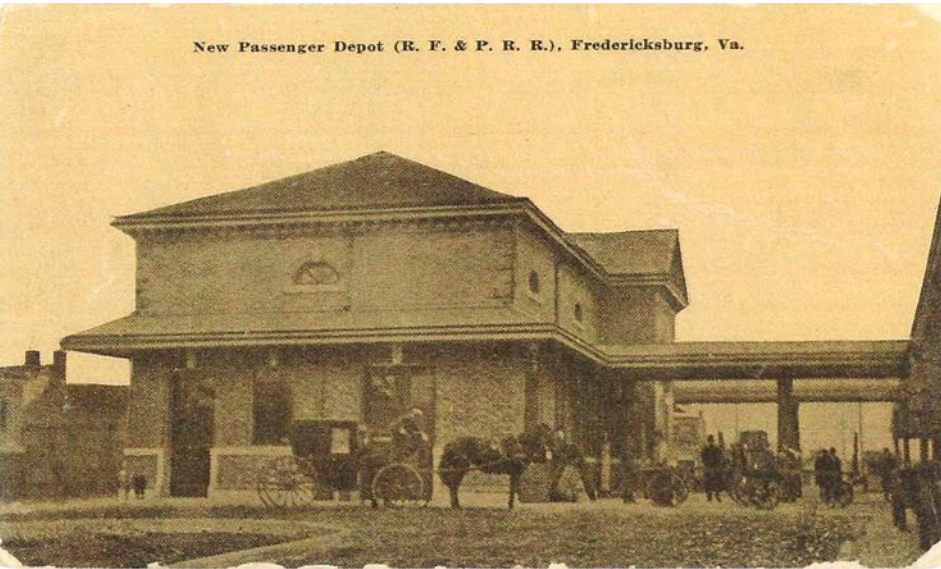
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Jim & Mary

SWEETHEARTS THANKS TO SWEETS

BY AUSTEN DUNN



Just like Charlie and his Chocolate Factory, King George County is home to its own candy wonderland: **Mary’s Cakery and Candy Kitchen**. Covered wall-to-wall with chocolates in different shapes and flavors, and equipped with a fudge and bakery counter, Mary’s would certainly rival Willy Wonka. Luckily for us, no golden ticket is required.

Mary’s, one of Virginia’s largest privately owned cake and candy shops, opened in August 1998 in an old Clift Lumber & Supply building. **Jim Deatherage (pictured)** and his wife **Mary** developed the business from part-time cake sales, to the “four-fold” business it is today.

“Mary’s is a bit of a bakery shop, a bit of a candy manufacturer, a bit of a gift shop,” said Jim. “You see, although fudge and boxed chocolates are often bought to satisfy a sweet tooth, the vast majority of the thousands of chocolate candies made by Mary’s are given as gifts. Because holidays and family events are life’s primary gift giving occasions, these are also the keys to the store’s busiest times of the year.”

Family events are important for sales at the shop, but a family event is also what brought the couple together in 1976 after Jim had moved from Berkeley Springs, WV to King George to work for the Navy.

“Within a month [of living in King George, I] attended a birthday party, that, of course, had cake,” said Jim. “Years later [I] discovered that this Mary was the person who had actually made that first birthday cake.”

In 1978, the two married, and Mary continued developing the cake decorating skills she had learned from her mother, selling cakes from their home in King George. A few years later, the couple welcomed a daughter, **Jennifer**. It wasn’t until January 1995 that Mary added candy to her repertoire. She sold 50 pounds of her first creation, a peppermint patty with a candy center, in the few weeks before Valentine’s Day.

“By Easter, [I] had a second job—selling chocolate bunny pops on the street corners,” said Jim, who still works with the Navy, but spends his evenings keeping the store’s books and his Saturdays as a sales clerk at Mary’s.

Needless to say, Mary’s has grown far beyond the peppermint patties. The shop carries everything from chocolate covered Oreo cookies to chocolate covered potato chips, certainly the store’s most unique product that showcases the popular sweet and salty combination at its best.

Mary works at the Cakery and Candy Kitchen full time with 16 other staff members to keep up with the demands of the shop and their wholesale orders for shops in other states up the East coast, including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, New York and Connecticut.

The candy sales outside of Virginia are just as important for Mary’s. Twice a year since 2007, Jim and Mary travel to the Philadelphia Gift Show in Pennsylvania to cater to the growing list of other gift shops or coffee shops that carry their candies. In the fall of each year, Jim sells their fudge and caramel apples at the Virginia State Fair. He also vends Mary’s holiday treats at their kiosk at Spotsylvania Towne Centre during Valentine’s and Easter holidays.

“Because the generosity of the Navy is limited, these little ‘vacations’ pretty well consume those weeks once used for family camping, dinners with friends and other outings,” said Jim.

To no surprise, holidays continue to be the busiest times for Mary’s. “For candies, Easter is by far the busiest season, followed by Valentine’s Day and then Christmas. For baked goods, Thanksgiving and June graduations generate the biggest sales,” said Jim.

For more information on Mary’s Cakery and Candy Kitchen, please visit their Facebook page or maryscakeryandcandy.com for a look at a small portion of their goodies and to make an online order.

Austen Dunn of King George is a student at William & Mary (Class of 2015) and a summer intern at Front Porch.



Retired & Buck Naked On The Back Porch

MY INDEPENDENCE WALK

BY JO MIDDLETON

sit on its grassy knolls to watch the fireworks over the Washington Monument. The display in Fredericksburg is nice, but nothing compares with the pyrotechnic stars over the Monument, sadly damaged during the August 2011 rippling earthquake. But, we can see its beauty from the Annex, which was built in the forties to be a warehouse. We have to hurry though to watch the show from Annex grounds. Demolition of the Annex has already begun. Space is being prepared to extend Arlington National Cemetery for more young soldier's graves, which come in at the grievous rate of about 6000 per year. Far better thing we do to celebrate our independence from foreign powers to bring our boys home, rather than preparing their graves.

The last time I watched fireworks from that site was when we celebrated our nation's bicentennial on July 4, 1976. Our country, so splintered by Vietnam, came together that night, one nation, indivisible. It was wonderful. The last time I went to the top of the Washington Monument, closed now until all the quake damage is repaired, was when I was about eight-years-old or so, and a student at the Congressional Schools of Arlington, Virginia. We had some pretty athletic teachers who had us walking not only up the Monument steps (much to our joy) but also up the metal stairs, no longer

open to the public, leading to the Capitol's freedom statue. We stood atop that building and knew that this town, the nation's capitol, belonged to us, and that message rings today for families coming from their homes across our nation. With that happy thought I'll go out here, retired and buck naked on the back porch, and rejoice in having had the joy of climbing to the top of that little girl's world, in the beautiful Washington monument and our nation's Capitol. Happy 4th everybody!

Jo Middleton is a beacon of literary independence.

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5-STAR RESTAURANT IN YOUR OWN HOME

BY ROB GROGAN



There's a five-star restaurant in town, and you are guaranteed a table. It's your own dining room at home, perfect for a special occasion. Don't cook? Don't care. Don't know wine? Whine not. It only takes a couple calls to the right professionals to turn your special occasion into a feast to remember. That's what we did for a family affair in June.

Our first call was to **Personal**



Chef Drema Apperson (540-907-6069; dremaapperson@comcast.net, Member U.S. Personal Chef Association). Drema, a native of Locust Grove, grew up on a farm where she learned the benefits of fresh, local foods. She met us at our home to formulate the menu and learn our kitchen. We clicked. The result: all fresh, local and seasonal ingredients to compose a customized six-course dinner, from amuse buche to dessert. The semi-formal party, sans kids and pets, would be in our Victorian dining room.

Our next call went to **Brian Downing**, (right) United States Army veteran, recent University of Mary Washington graduate, former kybecca server and wine seller and, until recently, a server/bartender at Bistro Bethem. His profile fit. Brian's distinguished demeanor and experience would pair well with our

guests and what the evening promised.

Once the menu was set, Brian held a wine tasting with us at kybecca, joined by a niece on our guest list, **Katie Dunn**. We tasted several wines from the kybecca enomatics machine, and took two bottles over to Katie's George Street home, where we met up with her husband, **Jay**, to continue tasting.

Once the wines were chosen, it was on to the

D-Day (D for Dining), she arrived at two for the 7:00 seating. Brian arrived around five to help Drema with light prep (the server/wine steward in him), review her timeline for the six courses (like a college class schedule), and process the logistics for the event (the military training).

With our eight special guests - **The Dunsns, John & Brynn Pacitti, Harold & Stephanie Bell, Michael & Adrienne Bigenwald** - we three G's convened in the parlor for light hors d'oeuvres and sparkling Poema from Spain. For the seating, Brian clang the dinner bell and called us in by name — two at a time — until everyone was seated at their designated place with a copy of the menu.

Following the first pour, I had introduced Brian. With each marvelous course, Brian would serve and describe the wine and why he had paired it with the particular dish. It was an education and a celebration. Several guests noted later that the wines

without food were good, but with the foods were amazingly paired. We ate, drank, laughed, told stories, and totally enjoyed.

After the entrée was served, Drema (pictured with Rob) joined us to a round of applause and a photo. She was delightful! Here is a person who had worked in the business world as a loan officer, feeding her needs but starving her soul until she told her husband she wanted to change careers and return to her love for the fresh local foods she had known as a child. With his support, she took courses in becoming a Personal Chef at Germanna, earning the designation in 2007. We are so glad she did! And as the evening grew dark and stars shone over a cooling backyard, off came our ties and heels as we 11 took to the patio for an after-party, each still aglow from the incredible evening we had just experienced.

If you wish to enjoy such an experience in your own home (or learn of her other culinary services), call Drema Apperson. For a special event, follow up with Brian. We'll be calling them both again. - RG



Scotch, as an after-dinner choice. Jay, Brian and I headed to the Park Lane Tavern at Spotsylvania Towne Centre to sample nine single malt scotches. Each of us ordered three different one-ounce pours and shared in tasting all nine. We decided on Dalwhinnie 15 Year, with subtle flavors of nutmeg and spice, followed by a delicate smoky, peaty finish.

The day before our dinner party, Chef Drema returned to prep in our



kitchen. She did all the shopping (Olde Towne Butcher, Farmers Market, Wegmans), brought her own tools of the trade, and of course, did the cooking. On

SOMETHING NEW, AND WITHOUT A SAFETY NET

BY BRIAN DOWNING

My eyes lit up when Rob and Virginia Grogan contacted me about serving their event. A six-course seated dinner for 11, with the added responsibility of wine and liquor pairings? Sign me up. They have a beautiful home that was designed to be used for an occasion like this, and I jumped at the opportunity to help them out, and to try something new at the same time.

I've worked in the restaurant industry for over six years as a waiter and bartender, with many different levels of service. The structure of a restaurant with standard operating procedures and points of service can make even the most important event for a guest a mundane matter of logistics. On site catering events require more finesse and flexibility, because you're operating without a safety net.

Working with **Drema Apperson** was great. Drema's menu was solid and led to some terrific wine pairings, like the Red Newt Dry Riesling with Sichuan Carrot Soup, and the Local Berries with Italian Cream and the Michel Jodoit Rose Cider. Service itself was smooth and relaxed, if formal. The hosts were able to relax and enjoy the company of their guests, while I paced the meal, poured wine, bussed, served and introduced each one of Drema's courses.

I found the dinner to be a great change of pace from restaurant work, and was glad to help make Rob's 60th birthday an event worth remembering.

Brian Downing is a military security technician/consultant, and is also available as a server/wine steward for special events.

~ Amuse Bouche ~
Sweet Onion & Parmesan Pudding
Paired with Bony Semillon Sauvignon - Washington

~ Soups Froides ~
Sichuan Carrot & Sweet Red Pepper
Accented with Lime, Ginger & Sesame Oil
Paired with Red Newt Dry Riesling, Finger Lakes

~ Salade ~
Mixed Field Greens with Dried Figs,
Blue Cheese, Walnuts & Sherry Vinaigrette
Paired with Brutally Gamay, France

~ Sorbet ~
Tapioca Lime

~ Entree ~
Beef Tenderloin, Accented with Red Wine Reduction Sauce
Accompanied with Fresh Local Vegetables
Paired with Glen Manor Cabernet Franc, &
Glen Manor Hodder Hill, Front Royal, Virginia

~ Entremets ~
Italian Cream topped with Local Honey
Garnished with Fresh Berries
Paired with Michel Jodoit Sparkling Rose Cider, Quebec

~ Verso Après le Dîner ~
Selection of Dalwhinnie Highland Single Malt,
Warre's White Port & Grand Marnier - Served with
Chocolate Covered Espresso Beans & Pomegranates

IN THE KITCHEN

WITH BONNIE DE LELYS

Getaway!

July is a great month to pack a picnic, relax at the beach or go to a local winery event with friends. The following recipes require a cooler, plastic forks/knives and plastic glasses for your favorite beverage - easy day away.

BBQ Chicken Burritos

1 (2-pound) roasted chicken, skin discarded, meat removed from bones and shredded 1/2 c prepared barbecue sauce 1 c canned black beans, rinsed 1/2 c frozen corn, thawed, or canned corn, drained 1/4 c reduced-fat sour cream 4 piece(s) romaine lettuce 4 (10-inch) whole-wheat tortillas or flavored wraps 2 limes, cut in wedges	Place a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add chicken, barbecue sauce, beans, corn and sour cream; stir to combine. Cook until hot, 4 to 5 minutes. Assemble the wraps by placing a lettuce leaf in the center of each tortilla and topping with one-fourth of the chicken mixture; roll as you would a burrito. Slice in half and serve with lime wedges.
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ARTICHOKE AND RIPE OLIVE TUNA SALAD - SERVE WITH A TOMATO SLICE OR A CRISPY BAQUETTE

1 can(s) (12-ounce can or two 6-ounce cans) chunk light tuna, drained and flaked 1 c chopped canned artichoke hearts (or use fresh avacados) 1/2 c chopped olives 1/3 c reduced-fat mayonnaise	2 t lemon juice 1 1/2 t chopped fresh oregano or 1/2 teaspoon dried Combine tuna, artichokes, olives, mayonnaise, lemon juice, and oregano in a medium bowl.
---	--

Mustard Maple Baked Chicken

3 tablespoon(s) Dijon mustard 2 tablespoon(s) pure maple syrup, preferably grade B 2 tablespoon(s) peanut or canola oil, 1 tablespoon(s) finely chopped fresh thyme, or 1 teaspoon dried 3/4 teaspoon(s) freshly ground pepper 1/2 teaspoon(s) salt 4-4 1/2 pound(s) bone-in chicken pieces (thighs, drumsticks, and/or breasts), 1 1/2 cup(s) Italian breadcrumbs Whisk mustard, maple syrup, 1 tablespoon oil, thyme, pepper, and salt in a large bowl. Add chicken and turn to coat evenly. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes and	up to 6 hours. Preheat oven to 400°F. Set a wire rack on a large baking sheet. Combine breadcrumbs and the remaining 1 tablespoon oil on a plate. Dredge the skinned side of each chicken piece in the breadcrumbs (with drumsticks, dredge the meatier side) and arrange breaded-side up on the wire rack. Leave at least 1 inch between pieces. Bake until golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the meat registers 165°F, 35 to 40 minutes. Serve hot or let cool, refrigerate, and serve chilled.
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Bonnie De Lelys is innkeeper at the Richard Johnston Inn.



Vino

NO KIDDING, A PERFECT PAIRING

BY SCOTT RICHARDS



I never thought of myself as an artist until I was in college, and then only at the suggestion of a friend of mine one day as we were eating lunch in the dining hall. As was my tendency then and to some degree even now, I was making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich.

The observant coed exclaimed to me in the middle of my preparation, “Scott, you are an artist, no one takes such care in making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich!”

Please note that growing up eating this wonderful bit of Americana, I had developed my own style of making it, in addition to the fact that I have seen many incorrect ways that send shudders down my spine.

First of all, both pieces of the bread need to be laid flat on whatever surface is being used, whether a counter top or a plate. Secondly, the order of application is most important with peanut butter being spread on the left piece of bread with a full spread application. Depositing a glob of peanut butter in the middle of the bread and being too lazy to spread it out is just gross. A little work never hurt anyone, so spread it to the far reaches of the crust (please leave the crust on), leaving no part of the upper side of the bread exposed. The same applies to the jelly, applied to the right piece of bread. There is no requisite kind of jelly to use, but for this article, I would say use Concord grape. Again, a little work spreading works wonders for this sandwich, so do not fall into the trap of mixing both on the same piece of bread (even worse are those premixed jars). The jellied bread always goes on top of the other bread and is plated so when one picks up the sandwich and bites into it, the jelly is on top.

This takes practice so do not be disappointed if at first it does not seem to work out well. One of the great things about the practice of making these sandwiches is eating your mistakes.

As a child, I drank milk with my sandwich, but I am no longer a child so I have found something that goes with it equally as well, and even though many think I am merely kidding, I am actually quite serious. My drink of choice with a pb & j sandwich is none other than a good, rich glass of **Malbec**. I am sure the French had no idea of this pairing when developing this wine. Now it is made mostly in Argentina, a new world country, so no holds barred.

This is where the Concord grape comes into play. Its jammyness is offset by the rich fruit forwardness of the wine, with both flavors united by the taste of the peanut butter. While the sweetness of the jelly is pleasant to the end of the tongue, the richness of a quality Malbec carries the entire experience to a moderate, somewhat euphoric, finish.

One must also understand the health aspects of this pairing. The protein in peanut butter is nothing but good. Used in moderate amounts, either crunchy or smooth are excellent. While many may say that jelly is not the most healthy thing to eat, it is offset by the Malbec, a red wine, that is proven to be, in moderation, extremely healthy.

For the skeptics, I would encourage you to try this pairing yourself. Some do not like pb & j, and some do not like Malbec, but I promise you if you do, this delightful pairing guarantees even the haughtiest foodie culinary delight.

Scott Richards of Loch Haven Vineyards is a wine columnist for FP and a sports writer for The Caroline Progress.

Season's Bounty

DOG DAYS

BY VANESSA MONCURE



The air-quality for summer on almost every street corner in New York City is redolent with steamed hot dogs and buns, eye-watering diced onion piled on umbrella-shaded, shiny aluminum rolling street food carts. Lines form for charcoal-grilled peppers, onions and bright red dogs that snap during your first bites; jerky hand-lettered signs advertise unsung lunchtime bargains — *dog and cold soda can just \$1.50*.

What's a NY dog? Call mine an all-beef kosher dog, plenty of spicy mustard and a mound of onions and sauerkraut, rolled in a wax and aluminum square and eaten on the run, dodging lunch-hour workers in the crosswalks. Now the traditional stadium dog's another altogether. But ketchup? Blasphemy on the bun.

Sometime around the turn of the 19th century, an entrepreneur folded sausage into a bun and the American classic hot dog was born. Regionally, the frank has its own buns, dogs and toppings. Grocery store stock ranges from chicken and sun-dried tomato to turkey or tofu dogs! The grilling is great!

CHILI CHEESE DOG

Buy the long dogs and foot-long buns. Either grill the dogs or saute in pan, browning slowly. If you don't have a steamer for the bun, boil a bit of water and place a colander above the water - place buns and cover until soft. Or you can spread with melted butter and grill. Top with your beanless chili and melted Velveeta cheese, fresh onions and spicy mustard to taste.

CHILI FOR DOGS

Lightly brown ½ lb. each ground pork and veal with 2c. finely minced onions, then pour off any grease. Stir in 2T. chili powder, 1 ½ tsp. each garlic powder and onion powder, 1 tsp. each salt, black pepper, worchestershire sauce, cayenne pepper and dry mustard, then ½ tsp each cumin and oregano. Add 2 8-oz. cans tomato sauce and ½ c. water and cook until thickened. Add tomato paste to thicken more if desired. Keeps well. Or buy a can of beanless chili for hot dogs - faster, not better.

WOWSER CHICAGO DOG

Chances are you won't find the right bun, but use one cut open on top. Garnish with mustard, tomato slices, onions, small spicy peppers, celery salt, dill relish and dill pickles.

JOISEY DOG

Grill together slices of onion, green and red pepper strips and small chunks or slices of potatoes until done, S&P to taste. Sprinkle with garlic and bottled Italian seasoning, grated Parmesan cheese optional.

MUFFALETTA DOGS

The muffaletta is a food icon of the Central Grocery in New Orleans. Their olive/vegetable mixture anchoring the sandwich is second to none - always tried, never duplicated. Grill chicken and sundried tomato sausage, place slice of provolone cheese into a steamed baguette, then sausage, and top with olive salad. You can find OK muffaletta products in local stores, but they do have mail order!

GERMAN FRANK

Grill fresh bratwurst from the Olde Towne Butcher. Place in cut poppy seed bun with hot sauerkraut, drained, spicy mustard and German Potato Salad.

BACON CHEESE DOG - OR THE FIRST BLT DOG

Messiest on the grill, but the first eaten! Par-cook 1 pound thick-sliced applewood smoked bacon - just until it starts to shrink up. Spiral one slice each of bacon on each hot dog, securing with toothpicks at each end. Grill until bacon is crispy, then place in steamed bun atop a slice of American or cheddar cheese. Crazy, but try lettuce and tomato with mayo, dill pickle on the side.

Vanessa Moncure has fun at the grill and stove year-round.



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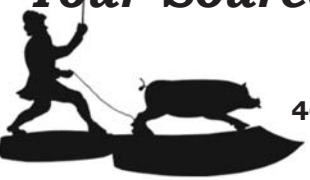
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15 Principles

PRINCIPLE #3: WEIGH YOURSELF EVERYDAY

BY REBECCA THOMAS



Getting on the scale has become an important part of my morning routine. I don't give myself permission to skip it and now view it as a valuable resource in keeping me informed as to how my eating is impacting my weight and appearance. Although this advice flies in the face of conventional diet wisdom I have a few reasons why I think this is a good idea.

First, it gives you a tangible link to your weight loss and maintenance goals. Your weight is a key indicator of your overall fitness and health goals and few things are more defining that the numbers on the scale to judge your success. Further, indulging the night before is not as much fun when you have to face those numbers in the morning. After a few times of experiencing the pain of poor food and/or alcohol choices facing you on the scale and you learn to skip dessert, not have that third glass of wine. Guess what? I still have a great time with friends, at restaurants, wherever. I just consume less. As time goes on making good choices has become more automatic but I never forget to check in with the scale. I may overestimate my activity, food choices, whatever, but the scale always tells the truth.

You can respond more quickly to fluctuations or spot a trend upwards. I give myself some flexibility depending on the circumstances, but not much. Mostly

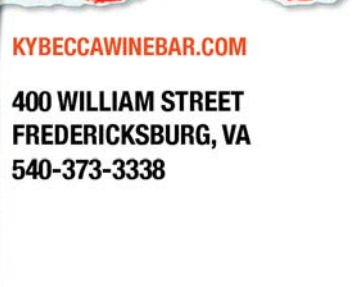
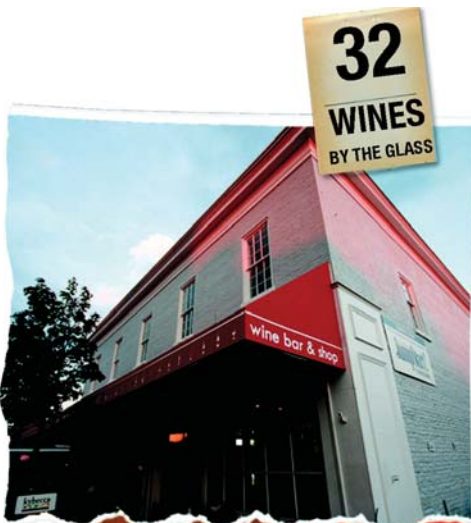
I use it as an indicator to examine my diet, eliminate more sugars, stop eating when I am no longer hungry and focus on foods I know help maintain my weight loss. Another advantage of weighing yourself daily is that even if the news is bad, it can't be very bad. 2-3 pounds is a manageable amount of weight to lose, whereas a 5 to 10 pound uptick feels like a real slide backwards.

Which brings me to... you will learn to make peace with the scale. In this way it becomes less fearsome and more of a tool. I spent years avoiding the scale only to find 5 and 10 pound increases which only worsened the experience of weighing myself. I felt out of control and pained over it. So what did I do about it? Avoided weighing myself like the plague. Even getting a check-up at the doctor's office produced anxiety over what the scale would show. I made excuses to myself even as I was being weighed like shaving off 3-4 pounds for my clothes or maybe I was bloated. The least helpful excuse was that even if I was overweight my health and appearance were still good. All not true. Facing the scale and conquering your natural desire to shy away from the truth is a critical step in facing the music. You will know very clearly your starting place and where you need to go. In retrospect embracing that information is what set me on the path to making a connection between my weight and how I was conducting my life.

Another version of this same idea is using your the way your clothes fit as a barometer for weight. I have a girlfriend who successfully uses this method and never buys a size up. For myself I need a more sensitive tool to gauge my weight as I can easily pack on 5 pounds or more before realizing my pants don't fit properly. I encourage you to take this information and figure out how it will work for you. Maybe you use the way your clothes fit and a once a week weigh in to monitor your progress. Try what seems manageable for you but if you find you are not reaching your goal or seeing a reasonable amount of progress consider the daily weigh-in. It's tough-love but it works.

Having concrete numbers is an important step in creating a mindset that promotes accountability, both in your goal weight and your starting weight.

Rebecca Thomas is a downtown resident, aspiring self-publishing author and partner at kybecca. You can follow her posts at Facebook.com/rebeccathomasme



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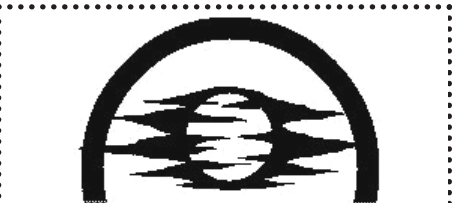
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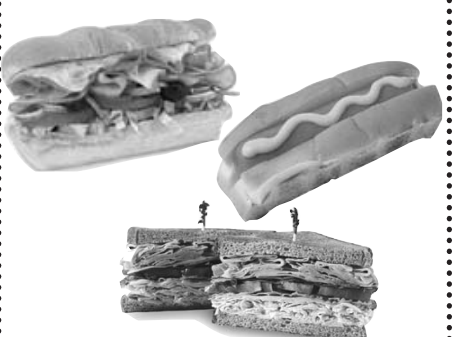
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The Beer Geek

MY FAVORITES

BY MATT THOMAS



People frequently ask me what my favorite beer is. The answer is that I have many favorites that change over time, and really there are too many considerations such as price range and style to pick just one. I do, however, have three in particular that for various reasons I keep going back to over and over, and I'd like to share with you what makes these beers so special.

The first is **Golden Monkey from Victory Brewing Company**. This beer is a *Tripel*, a Belgian ale style that is light amber in color, fairly malty, and strong. Golden Monkey is not the best example of this style - those are from Belgium. But for the money it really can't be beat. At about twelve dollars for a six pack or around six dollars on draft, it's a fantastic deal. Tripels are my favorite style and this beer tastes great, represents the style well and is considerably cheaper than its peers. Even the famous *Le Fin de Monde* from Quebec, another *Tripel*, can't compete with Golden Monkey for value. If I can't find anything new or interesting, this is almost always the beer I go back to.

Number two is a beer that sadly I can only get once per year because it's released around Christmas - *Avec les Bon Voeux* from Dupont in Belgium. Dupont is famous for their *Saisons*, a style of farmhouse ale. Many consider the regular Saison from Dupont the benchmark for the style, and if you've never had it I recommend trying that before graduating to *Bon Voeux*. It's a bit higher in alcohol (as winter beers usually are) and spicier. I love the earthy, floral aromas in this beer and its dry, almost vegetal flavor. That may not sound appealing but trust me, for such a well-crafted beer it is surprisingly easy to like. A casual beer drinker would

recognize this one has having a more "beer-like" flavor compared to my first and third choices, i.e. - not particularly malty/sweet or hoppy/bitter. It also pairs very well with food.

My third choice is one that I sometimes feel alone in appreciating until I go online and see what others say about it. That beer is **Samichlaus, made in Austria**. Samichlaus is the Swiss term for Santa Claus (it used to be made in Switzerland). The founders of *Beer Advocate Magazine* and beeradvocate.com give this beer a perfect 100-point rating, something I only discovered while researching for this article. It's supposedly the world's strongest lager at 14% abc (not the world's strongest beer, just lager). It's brewed in December of each year, aged for ten months, bottled, and released the following December. When drunk "young" it is very malty and sweet with flavors of caramel, toffee, almonds, and spiced rum. You can also age this beer for years, and as it ages it gets dryer and takes on a more sherry-like flavor. One of these will retail for about six dollars (you'll pay more in a bar or restaurant), which makes it an incredible deal. Any wine that ages well for many years will cost a lot more, and unlike many of these wines, Samichlaus tastes great young or old. I should mention that nobody on my staff nor anybody I've introduced this beer to has liked it, usually on the grounds that it is too sweet (as though that was something bad). I'm hoping that if you got this far in my column then you're up for the challenge.

Matt Thomas is a partner in kybecca, LLC.



CALENDAR of events

july 2012... If you cherish democracy, participate! Our Independence did not come easily.

*Some events run same day *weekly* or more than once monthly. Look for their first-time listings.

sunday, july 1

*AM1230 WFVA “Community Link” 8-830A. Registered Dietician Nancy Farrell on summer eating; Woody Van Valkenburgh w/ Rappahannock Goodwill Industries. Host Ted Schubel. Listen at www.wfvaradio.com

F’burg Area Museum & Cultural Center and Hallowed Ground Tours: Greetings from the Past. 1011 Princess Anne. \$4/adult \$1/student. All month. Also: Thrill on the Hill exhibition looks at history of Soap Box Derby in FXBG. Thru Aug

Third of 3 classes: Improve Your Home & Life w/ Feng Shui: Cheryl Shotwell, Feng Shui Solutions. 10-4P. 878-8953, fengshuisolutions@live.com, www.cherylshotwell.com

*Jams: Read All Over Books: Jazz 230P; Colonial Tavern: Jazz 7P; *Sunken Well Tavern: Bluegrass 7P

monday, july 2

Music on the Steps: CRRL, 1201 Caroline, Mon’s in July & Aug - 7-8P. Bring lawn chair, blanket, picnic. Rain venue: library theater. Tonight: Laurie Rose Griffith & Peter Mealy, Acoustic Folk, Pop, Jazz, Originals

*Women’s gentle yoga class every Mon 7P. Thrive Healing Center

tuesday, july 3

American Music Concert Series features UMW Philharmonic playing patriotic tunes, Broadway favorites. 7-9P. Market Square

Bistro Bethem Patriot’s Break: Restaurant closed until Thursday dinner

*Restoration Yoga: Tue & Thurs Noon-115P. Free trial: 582-9600

independence day - wednesday, july 4

Fabulous Fourth at Ferry Farm: George Washington’s Boyhood Home at Ferry Farm, 268 King’s Highway

Annual 4th of July Heritage Festival and Parade 10-4P. Riverfront Park, Downtown

Tuesdays in May, June and September



Picnic in the Park

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Concert: Independence Day Spectacular featuring music by UMW Philharmonic Orchestra and fireworks show at dusk; Pratt Park; 8P. Free

Snead Farm CSA: Pick-ups every Wed thru Aug, first Wed Oct & Dec. www.sneadsfarm.com 540-371-9328

First Wednesday, F’burg Blues Society. 7P. Shannon’s Bar & Grille, Central Park

*Black Dynamite Trio at Otter House: Jazz, Fusion, Funk 9P. No Cover. 21+

*Callin’ all pickers! Scott Wagner & Emily Barker host weekly open mic/jam at Rec Center/Pool Hall. 9-11P

Green Fitness personal training studio on Caroline. Open House/CookOut after parade til 3P. Tours, free food, raffles, lots of fun. Kids welcome

Fireworks launched from Pratt Park around 9P. See VisitFred.com for parking info and details

thursday, july 5

*Every Thursday Live Music: @ kybecca wine bar, 402 William. 8P; *College Night at Otter House: DJs; 10P. No Cover. 21+; *Kenmore Inn live music, 730P-1030P; *Tru Luv’s Live Acoustic Rock Thurs & Fri 7-10P; 1101 Sophia, 373-6500; *Open mic 8P Yakadoos, VA Go Girls Jam, Hosted by Lisa Lim (Every Other Thurs)

Gray Gurkin plays kybecca

first friday, july 6

FCCA Frederick Gallery exhibition thru July 27: Gears, Gadgets and Gizmos; Members’ Gallery: Shirley Whalen - East Coast Land, Sea and Sky. Opening Receptions 6-830P. 813 Sophia

Art Exhibition: May Shorten-Townley with Rick Klingbeil, Ed King, Michael Dean, Renee Gauvin. Reception 6-9P. Virginia Wine Experience, Upstairs Gallery. 826 Caroline

PONSHOP opens its outdoor “garden space” 6-10P. Inside: “Playing Card Series” by Gabriel Pons and his newest “Stake Decks”. Outside: DJ Max’s artfully choreographed tracks

Opening Reception: Art First Gallery’s “Art Pot Pourri” featuring works of Audrey Bruno and Gloria Affenit. 31 local artists. 6-9P. Exhibit up thru July 30, daily 11-5

Liberty/Town Summer Juried Show: F’burg Plein Air Art Exhibit opens 5-9P. Kathleen Walsh is juror. www.libertytownarts.com. Show runs thru Sept. 2

Elby Brass plays the Otter House. FXBG’s premier all brass funk band takes the stage

Brush Strokes Gallery July Exhibit & First Friday Reception: Joe Wilkinson’s talent, skill, and artistic investment are evident in the pieces crafted for July’s “Black & White, a Celebration of Two American Trees”. Crafted entirely from two types of wood — Black Walnut and White Oak. 6-9P. Thru July 29

Music Every First Friday - Wave on Wave acoustic duo at the Courtyard Marriot 6-9P. 620 Caroline. Country, Blues, Rock n Roll, w/ Doyle Green, guitar, Gina Clark, keyboard. No cover

Art Exhibit: “Art of the ‘rails.” New large scale photographic works by Kevin Rodrigue. Thru July 31. Blackstone Coffee, 1113 Jeff Davis Hwy

First Friday at The Creative Side 5-9P. 846-8920

Artful Dimensions: 911 Charles

Anything Goes continues at The Riverside Center thru July 22. riversidedtd.com, 540-370-4300

*Fridays@The Last Resort. St. George’s Church

Central Rappahannock Heritage Center and FAM& CC present Greetings from the Past. 1001 Princess Anne. Thru July 30. Museum admission price

*Potomac Point Winery live music every Friday evening thru Nov 15. 275 Decatur Rd (Exit 143A, Aquia)

December 13, 1862: Union forces penetrated a gap in “Stonewall” Jackson’s line. Tour Stop 6. Fredericksburg Battlefield

Mercutio plays kybecca

saturday, july 7

First Saturday in Mary’s Garden, MW House. Included w/ tour admission

Lake Anna Winery: Cajun Zydeco, 6-10P. Zack Smith& The Dixie Power Trio, and Cajun Fare from Gregory’s Grill. \$15 includes souvenir wine glass, tours, tasting. Gumbo, beads, dancing

7DJ Epidemic brings an 80’s dance party to The Otter House!

Urban Decay 3: Workhouse Arts Center 9601 Ox Road, Lorton. Panel Discussion 5-6P. Opening Reception: 7-11P. Thru July 24. Aesthetic of street art, urban culture and contemporary ideologies. FXBG’s Kenny Brown Jeremy Gann, Kevin Murphy, Kevin Rodrigue. Workhouse Arts Center.

sunday, july 8

*AM1230 WFVA “Community Link” 8-830A. Rob Grogan on Front Porch Magazine’s 15th Anniversary. Hosted by Ted Schubel. Listen at www.wfvaradio.com/

Art Journey: An Exhibition of Paintings by Virginia Artist, Barbara Duke Jones at The Montpelier Center for Arts & Education thru Aug 29. Opening Reception 3-5P

monday, july 9

Major Monroe’s History Camp: hands-on history camp for boys/girls ages 7 to 12. Games, crafts, demos, tours introduce lives of soldiers during Revolutionary War. 908 Charles. 9-Noon Mon & Tue. \$40. Space limited to 15 children. Reservations: 654-1043

Music on the Steps: CRRL, 1201 Caroline, Mon’s in June, July, Aug, 7-8P. Bring lawn chair, blanket, picnic. Rain venue: library theater. Tonight: Jeni & Billy, Appalachian Folk and Bluegrass

tuesday, july 10

Jonathan Wiley & Ashleigh Chevalier play Bistro Bethem 8-11P. 309 William

thursday, july 12

Kyle Davis plays kybecca

friday, july 13

Evening on the Rappahannock: fireflies light up the air! Paddle the glassy river by moonlight. Min. age 6. Meet at City Dock. 730-10P. Backup date: July 14. \$15 indiv/\$45 family (\$12/\$36 for members)

saturday, july 14

An Evening with Tamara Mills: Inspired by the Blue Ridge Mountains and their rich musical traditions, Tara Mills describes her music as, “original blue ridge mountain folk.” The OH

Second Saturdays at the Museum! 1-3P. “Thrill of the Hill”. Kids create own miniature Soap Box Derby cars w/ inspiration from Derby cars and memorabilia on display. 371-3037, ext. 142

American Music! Concert Series. The Green Boys blend familial voices, melodies of the banjo, and rhythm of drums to create bluegrass-folk music like you’ve never heard before. 7-9P. Market Square

Tyler Reese Duo plays kybecca

sunday, july 15

*AM1230 WFVA “Community Link” 8-830A. 1st District Congressman Rob Wittman; Rebecca Thomas on living well. Host Ted Schubel. Listen at www.wfvaradio.com/

monday, july 16

Music on the Steps: CRRL, 1201 Caroline, Mon’s in June, July, Aug, 7-8P. Bring lawn chair, blanket, picnic. Rain venue: library theater. Tonight: Jim & Holly Lawrence w/ Lauren Smith: Celtic Music

tuesday, july 17

Becky, Slam, and Y Limon play Bistro Bethem 8-11P. 309 William

wednesday, july 18

FAM & CC Summer Camp thru July. www.famcc.org

thursday, july 19

Ray Woodruff plays kybecca

friday, july 20

3rd Friday, 830A business ladies’ free networking “TIPS”. Call Ellen Baptist, 548-0652

Jonathan Scales is an American steel pannist and composer who has recorded and produced three albums, the most recent being Character Farm and Other Short Stories, released April 2011. The OH

Laurie Rose Griffith & Peter Mealy play kybecca

saturday, july 21

Stafford Regional Choral Society annual summer concert: “All in Fun”. 7P. Colonial Forge High School, 550 Courthouse Rd. Children welcome!

Free Vegetarian Cooking class every 3rd Sat. 2-330P. Free Meditation 4-5P. Porter Library

Dorothy Hart Community Center: hands-on, messy, fun! Explore art, science w/ variety of stations and roaming mad scientist. Great way for kids to explore creative side and see how art relates to other subjects. Free admission. Some stations cost nominal fee of 25cents-\$1. Children 3 -12. 10A-2P

Lake Anna Winery Wine & Whiskers, 6-10P. Fund raiser for SPCA. Wine tastings, cash wine bar, light fare, desserts, silent auction, door prizes, music. \$50 includes appetizers, souvenir wine glass, tours, tasting

sunday, july 22

*AM1230 WFVA “Community Link”. 8-830A. An update on Health So. Rehab Hospital w/ Donna Phillips; Partners In Aging w/ Pat Holland, Kristen Hanson. Host Ted Schubel. Listen at www.wfvaradio.com/

Learn river safety w/ FOR member and avid riverwoman Carol Brooks. Take leisurely float down river in tubes! Min. age 8 years. 1230P-430P. \$15/indiv; \$45/family

monday, july 23

*Music on the Steps: CRRL, 1201 Caroline, Mon’s in June, July, Aug. 7-8P. Bring lawn chair, blanket, picnic. Rain venue: library theater. Tonight: The Believers: Traditional Bluegrass by local favorites!

tuesday, july 24

Bruce Middle Trio plays Bistro Bethem. 8-11P. 309 William

wednesday, july 25

Want to get dirty w/ this year’s Via Colori artists? Learn more about street painting w/ this year’s featured artist, Michael Kirby, professional street artist who has worked internationally. Celebrate Virginia 6P. Free training workshop. www.viacolori.com

Two Art Films 7P at HQ Library Theater: Georgia O’Keeffe. Documentary portrays legendary painter candidly revealing warmth, humor, practical wisdom. (2006/45 min.); With Hand and Heart: Portrait of Southwestern Native American Artists: intro to thousand-year-old artistic traditions. (2006/28 min.)

thursday, july 26

Pete Fields plays kybecca

friday, july 27

The WAVOS play The OH. Ride the wave, it’s what you crave! For a taste scramble up The Killers, Green Day and Depeche Mode: rocktronic dance-pop w/chewy ‘80s alternawave center. The OH

saturday, july 28

Free Community Event at Aikido of FXBG, 6155 Hickory Ridge Rd. 1030A. Free legal briefing on how to prepare your personal affairs for illness and death. Basic info on wills, trusts, advance healthcare directives. (540) 582-9600

How to Photograph your Art: Sponsored by Colonial Beach Artists Guild, hosted at The Lighthouse Restaurant, 11 Monroe Bay Ave. Instructor: Vincent Knauss. \$30

Michael Geddes Sr. plays kybecca

American Music! Concert: Mid-Atlantic Wind Symphony. 7-9P. Market Square
Comedy at the Courtyard Marriott. Coolcowcomedy.com has info

sunday, july 29

AM1230 WFVA Community link: Harry Crisp, Gary Snellings on planning for 350th anniversary in Stafford; National Park Service Historian John Hennessy. Host Ted Schubel. Listen at www.wfvaradio.com/

monday, july 30

World Jam Club featuring Don Brown, Brazilian & Afro Cuban Jazz. Kenmore Inn

tuesday, july 31

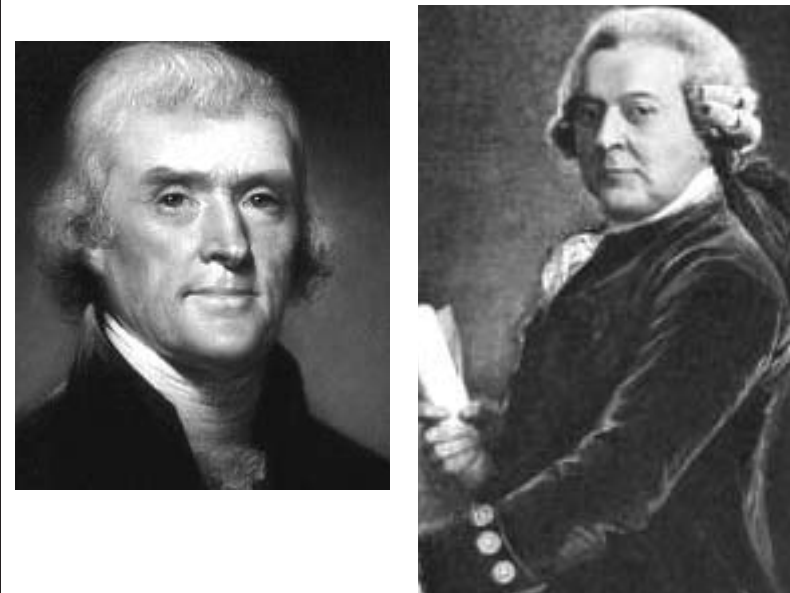
Eddie James Trio plays Bistro Bethem 8-11P. 309 William

**This 181st consecutive monthly issue begins year 16 of Front Porch Magazine, launched July 1, 1997.
Thank you, Fredericksburg!
- Virginia & Rob Grogan, founders.**

**If you are reading this 181st issue of FP, thank an advertiser!
If you are an advertiser, list your event! Deadline for Aug is July 20. Paste your event in an email to frntprch@aol.com or go to <http://frontporchfredericksburg.com/calendar/sbmitcalevent.cfm> for both print and e-editions.**

July 4th

BY RALPH “TUFFY” HICKS



My favorite holiday of the year is the 4th of July. I always look forward to Christmas and the beauty of the season; however, July 4th remains my special time of the year. As a child we would spend the day in Fredericksburg with parades and different events. Dad would always bring home fireworks and we would spend the evening with cookouts and listening to stories about the American Revolution and especially our local hero, George Washington.

The story of the death of Thomas Jefferson and John Adams on July 4th 1826 is still one that I tell every year. It was as if Adams and Jefferson planned to pass on July 4, 1826, exactly 50 years after the Declaration of Independence was signed. John Adams had been in failing health for many weeks in his hometown of Quincy, Massachusetts. He was well respected in Quincy and the town had big plans for the 4th of July in his honor. When he was asked for his ideas for plans for the event, he replied, “Independence forever.” On the 4th Adams requested he be placed in a chair in front of a window so that he could observe the celebrations. Adams went into a coma as he observed the festivities and was placed in his bed. Just before he died that evening, he awoke and it is said his last words were “Jefferson still survives”.

Adams did not know that Thomas Jefferson had died earlier in the afternoon. Thomas Jefferson had told a relative in the spring of 1826 that he did not expect to live past the summer. He had been in and out of a coma and on July 3rd he woke in the evening and asked his physician, “Is it the 4th?” The doctor told Jefferson it soon would be. He died at one o'clock on the afternoon of July 4, 1826.

Take a few quiet moments for the 4th of July 2012. Tell stories of our history. Talk about our Constitution. Remind your family, this is about much more than fireworks and hot dogs. It is about brave citizens and leaders who established our free and democratic society. It's about Independence.

Tuffy Hicks is free to roam this sovereign nation of ours.



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OUR HERITAGE

THIS MONTH'S LOOK AT THE CENTRAL RAPPAHANNOCK HERITAGE CENTER COLLECTION

1911 SWIMSUITS



The highway's jammed with beach-bound vacationers crawling their way to OBX, Top Sail or VA Beach. One alternative is to leave your house at 2 or 3 in the morning. Another is stay local and cruise on in to Colonial Beach. OK, so it's on the Potomac, not the Atlantic, but it does have an offshore casino if you like, an art gallery or two, and a boardwalk, plus it's an easy day trip.

Early in the 20th century, Colonial Beach was a paradise destination for Washingtonians and Virginians alike. More than a day trip, it was a dream vacation spot for many families. Catching the steam ship St. Johns etched memories that lasted a lifetime. The 1911 Chamber of Commerce brochure touted Colonial Beach as “The most attractive summer resort on the Potomac River.” With the Potomac to the east and Monroe Bay to its west, Colonial Beach offered four miles of bathing beach just 66 miles from Washington.

Today, landmarks remain within a few miles of the town in Westmoreland County. Wakefield, the birthplace of George Washington; Stratford, the home of Robert E. Lee; the old mansion now a

part of the Colonial Beach Hotel that was once the home of General Lighthorse Harry Lee; and, Monroe Bay's namesake, James Monroe's birthplace, are all part of the attraction.

In 1911, the summer population of Colonial Beach was about 15,000. Perhaps it was the healthy salt air that drew them. In what now seems like a comment a century ahead of its time, the 1911 brochure boasts “The ozone-laden air is unsurpassed, owing to the splendid combination of salt water and the vast growth of pines, firs and balsams in the near vicinity.” That would be a selling point in today's green-conscious society now, wouldn't it? Few would argue with, “Where the air one has to inhale is free of foul and poisonous gases there true health abounds.” So pack the car. I'm sold on Colonial Beach, even if 99 years may have tainted the ozone layer a tad.

But if visiting Colonial Beach this month isn't in the stars for you, consider at least exploring it at the Central Rappahannock Heritage Center - air-conditioned, quiet, close by - where you can spend an entire day escaping to the past. - RG

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Porch Light

STORIES THAT SHINE A LIGHT ON LIFE

PERFECTION

BY EDWIN PARDUE



The sun had disappeared, first below the horizon and then it's final light blackened by clouds that moved in slowly from the northwest. It's very difficult to predict when a perfect moment is about to happen and harder even still to realize you are experiencing one at the very moment that it occurs.

The sky suggested something foreboding. At any moment a crack of lightning or the roll of thunder would have sent the assembled crowd scattering for shelter. The very warm, almost hot air of earlier in the day had been pushed aside by the cool front of weather now encroaching upon the little baseball diamond.

It was the top of the last inning and our home team was ahead; stop 'em here and the game was over. I had walked down from the small bleachers and stood along the first baseline across from the home dugout so I could better observe the play of the infield. I watched as first one and then two outs were secured.

By this time the weather gave the impression of being less ominous. The night had become darker obscuring the clouds completely. With the imminence of the rain and storm now diminished, calm replaced the restless wind of just a few moments earlier.

With special interest I watched the second baseman. He appeared at ease and relaxed as he warmed up for the inning; talking it up with his fellow players as they took grounders and made throws to first. Now with two outs away, one more out would send them home winners.

Rarely is a perfect moment a grand thing; that may be why they are so easily overlooked or missed until sometime later when they can be appreciated only through the reflection of time. A perfect moment is so often something routine, but the combination of the time, the setting and the characters come together to make the ordinary marvelous.

The hollow metal clink of an aluminum bat hitting the ball sent the grounder just to the left of the pitcher's out stretched arm, just missing his glove. The second baseman I had been watching made a quick jump to his right. A quick stab of the hand and the ball found rest in the web of his glove. The second baseman paused, reset his feet and made a routine throw to the first baseman. Batter out; game over. The teammates exchanged a few high fives as they trotted off the field. A pleasant ending to a fine night of baseball.

As I walked behind the back stop towards the home dug out I caught the eyes of the second baseman. The teams had lined up to shake hands. I spoke not, but simply raised my right hand and pointed to him in acknowledgement. My son, James, simply smiled a slight smile, gently nodded his head and tipped his glove to me.

Perfection.

Edwin Pardue is Director of Sales at Thunder 104.5 / 95.9 WGRQ Radio. James Pardue, his son, is 11 years old and plays for the Diamondbacks in the Stafford Baseball League.

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PATIENCE, PUPPY DOG

BY WENDY SCHMITZ



I have always credited my first dog with teaching me patience. Cody was very frustrating when I rescued him as a pup, and more than once I thought about returning him to the shelter. In the end, we ended up sharing 14 years together that I wouldn't trade for anything. He turned out to be the best dog I have ever known and the best friend a person could ask for, but I always considered his greatest accomplishment teaching me patience.

I'm not sure if I lost the patience when he died or I just became a busier adult stretched in many directions, but it is apparent to me that whatever patience I had is all but gone and I long for Cody to come back from the spirit world to guide me back to safer waters.

I had a second baby last summer, when we were already sharing our home with 4 big dogs and our first son. So to say I didn't have time was an understatement. Between working full time, kissing boo boos, cooking dinner, and doing everything else, my poor dogs had taken somewhat of a back seat. None more than my youngest boy, Backup.

This dim-witted dog was young and in need of more training and more patience from me. Every day he was kind enough to remind me of this fact as he harassed my son into sharing food, stood on my feet for attention, and ate carpet when he was bored. I finally understood what all my dog-training clients were talking about when they'd told me they just didn't have time for training. I

remember foolishly thinking, "Well make time, this is important", and while I was right, so were they.

So instead of Backup getting the extra time he needed to become a good boy, all he got were my grumpy looks, loud words, and excessive time outs. It wasn't his fault he didn't get all the training he needed. It wasn't his fault I worked a lot. It wasn't his fault all our lives changed with the arrival of our son. Nope, none of it was his fault, yet he had to suffer the consequences.

This is the sad plight of many dogs, and my own advice over the year's rings in my ears constantly, "it isn't their fault, you need to be more patient". So I am setting out to find patience this month; patience with my dogs, with my sons, my husband, and with my life in general. The dogs are probably the easiest place to start. Here is a good plan for busy folks.

I suggest you can make change by doing pretty much the same things, in the same time, but by acting more deliberately and thoughtfully. For example, we feed the dogs twice a day. We have them sit and wait for their food, now they will sit, down, and wait. The extra command increases contact, training, and results in better responses to commands going forward, and it only took 5 more seconds. Another example would be instead of just letting them in the house I will have them sit and down before coming in. Again, this increases awareness of words, slows down the stampede of dogs, and results in less frustration for all of us.

This method isn't quick. I'm not going to lie to you and say you'll see results over night. What I am saying is if you slow down just a little bit and be patient you will see change. In the end I realized that losing my patience with Backup actually took more time and energy than it would have to just teach him my expectations to being with.

Now if someone has advice for patience with husbands, I'm all ears * wink wink*.

Wendy Schmitz lives near the raging wildfire zone in Colorado Springs. FP sends her family safe karma.



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Quiet Moments

LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY

BY ARCHER DIPEPPE

My parent's generation may have been the Greatest Generation, but my generation was the Most Fun Generation. I say this with all due respect to the Greatest Generation because they made it possible. The Great Depression and WW II seared a determination to make things better for themselves and their families.

The survivors of the Greatest Generation are tempered steel, but for the most part, this didn't harden their hearts. To the contrary, they probably should be called The Generous Generation. Two convictions were born of their experiences. As far as the Depression was concerned, **they were never going to be in that position again.** If they made two nickels, they saved one of them.

I grew up hearing the stories. Here is a softer one: In his first year of high school, my father needed a winter coat, so my grandfather took him downtown. The salesman helped my Dad pick out a coat and my Dad stood in front of the mirror while the salesman made sure it fit. It did. Then my grandfather turned to the salesman and said, "Same a thing, two sizes larger." My dad said, "And then we both went home in it."

I don't have those stories to tell about growing up. My stories are all about great Christmases and birthdays. My stories are about whatever was the latest thing that were being hawked on Saturday morning TV that I just couldn't live without. My parents wanted their children to have everything they didn't. That was the second thing that came out of their experiences. **Their kids would have it better.** We were not only going to have all the material things, we were going to have the opportunities our parents never had. In the end we might squander them to the horror of our parents, but, By God, we were going to have them!

Of course since we didn't personally go through the fires of hell to get it, we didn't appreciate it. In fact, we came to expect it as if it were some entitlement. This drove our parents crazy. They created a fantasy leisure world that we were all too eager to embrace. This is not a criticism of my parents, they did it out of love, and they somehow got a vicarious experience by seeing us with so much.

So I grew up in the Fun Generation. Most of us had part time jobs, but we got to spend the money on ourselves. It was a much safer world, and



there weren't nearly as many ways to get in serious trouble. We stayed out late and slept late. Nobody bothered the young princes and princes. We laughed at all those old fashioned ideas. We were the Pepsi generation. Our parents looked on with that "what have we done?" look. We ignored them. We were good at that. Now, everyone wonders what happened to personal responsibility? That was one of those things that got squandered.

Things didn't change much until we had our own kids. Then we could hear our parent's voices in our own. NO! DON'T! STOP! We even said them with the same frantic intonation. It took a while for that whole "wages of sin" thing to dawn on us. My father used to enjoy laughing at me when my young children drove me crazy. Now, I enjoy the same thing. Somehow I tried to pass on to my children all those crazy ideas my parents had, and my kids are doing the same thing with their kids. The Greatest Generation just might live on much longer than they thought in the hearts and minds of their grateful families.

Archer Di Peppe still has fun, and is pretty great, too.



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SENIOR CARE

RETURNING HOME

BY KARL KARCH



- ✓ Creating a plan of care after discharge.
- ✓ Who pays for various options? What does insurance cover?
- ✓ How to prepare for a safe return home.
- ✓ Details on what to do when it's time to go home.
- ✓ Managing medications.
- ✓ How to minimize the potential for readmission to the hospital, especially during the first 30-days after discharge.

An alarming statistic is that 20% of Medicare patients discharged from the hospital are readmitted within 30 days costing an additional \$17.4 billion dollars annually

Occasionally our phone rings and the person on the other end is in a panic: “Mom’s being released from the hospital this afternoon. I’m at work in northern Virginia and don’t know what to do. I need help for mom. Can you help me?” Unfortunately this type of scenario happens too often. But, it doesn’t have to happen this way.

For a senior, being hospitalized can be a traumatic experience. But it can also be traumatic for the children as well. And, the discharge can be even more traumatic if you and your loved one are not prepared. In order to have a smooth transition home, the time to prepare is well before the discharge date. Preparation for the return home is such an important issue that Home Instead Senior Care developed a website to help families through the discharge process. Go to www.ReturningHome.com where you will find a wealth of information including articles, short videos and a Returning Home Guide booklet that you can download. This website will guide you through the preparation process prior to discharge, the discharge process, and the next 30 days which are the most critical to reduce a readmission to the hospital.

Valuable topics such as:

- Asking the right questions.**
- ✓ What types of equipment you may need.
 - ✓ The best place for your loved one to recover. (What support system is needed? How to assess the amount of care needed. For example, you may hear that 24-hour care is needed for the first few days. Is that really needed and what options do you have to meet these needs?)

according to the New England Journal of Medicine. The readmission is often more traumatic than the original hospitalization. Conditions that have the highest occurrences of readmissions are: heart attack, congestive heart failure, pneumonia, diabetes, and comorbidity (multiple conditions). And if these don’t get you readmitted, falling and injuring yourself may. Fortunately, 75% of these readmissions are preventable. The top areas that can reduce readmissions are: medication management/compliance, follow-up doctor appointments, nutrition management, follow-up on warning signs, and home safety issues.

LaNita Knoke, President of the American Association of Managed Care Nurses summed up the readmission problem very well: “One of the reasons we have large numbers of readmissions, many of whom are elderly, is because seniors are sent home unprepared, or they don’t follow or understand directions, or there is not adequate support at home or availability of a family caregiver - which puts them at risk.”

A return to the hospital may be unavoidable, but with adequate preparation and attention during the 30 days after discharge, your loved one has a good chance (75%) of not being readmitted. So, bookmark this website and put it in your favorite category. That way you will be prepared when/if your loved one is admitted in the hospital.

Karl Karch is a local franchise owner of Home Instead Senior Care, a licensed home care organization providing personal care, companionship and home helper services. Please go to www.homeinstead.com/FredericksburgVA



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JOANNA CASSIDY-FARRELL

ULCERS

The two major kinds of ulcers are duodenal (found in the first part of the small intestines) and gastric (stomach) ulcers. In both ulcers, the tissue lining has been damaged and eroded by digestive acids because the stomach basically is trying to digest itself.

The abdominal cramping and nausea pain starts about 45 minutes after eating and during the night. Contributing factors can be food allergies due to a poor diet low in fiber; stress, alcohol, smoking, medications such as aspirin and especially non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's).

The bacteria *Helicobacter pylori* is believed to be responsible for causing many ulcers, and is reported to be found in 95% of patients with ulcers. To deal with ulcers in a natural way, one must first identify and remove the factors that caused the ulcer. Once the contributing factors have been eliminated, the next step is to heal and protect the tissues. Diet should consist of water, unprocessed foods and incorporate cabbage juice to speed up tissue healing with ulcers. The herbs to use are chamomile and licorice taken in a capsule form or as a combination herbal tea one half hour before meal time and again before bed to inhibit the growth of the *helicobacter pylori* bacteria.

Other herbs to heal the tissue lining are Aloe Vera juice and my favorite to relieve the pain immediately is 2-3 capsules of slippery elm.

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AARPED

GOLDEN AGED

BY ROB HUFFMAN

Aarp? It sounds like a partially stifled gastric accident at an all-you-can-eat restaurant. Aarp - actually, AARP, all caps: the **American Association of Retired Persons** - is an “exclusive” club for geezers — exclusive in the sense that the young are spurned but the 50 or over are avidly sought.

I’ve been asked to join. Am I honored? Would you be? (Or rather, will you be? Or were you?) My response was to make an Edvard Munch-worthy face and then leap feet-first into denial. (Mirror, mirror on the wall, who’s so not ready to be some old dude?) The implications are terrifying. Do I need to go ahead and put that left turn signal on and let it click away for the remainder of my terrestrial sojourn? Shall I go ahead and hike my pants up under my armpits now?

I grow old. I grow old/I shall wear the bottoms of my trousers rolled. In college, Eliot’s line had seemed comical. Looking down now at my own pants legs pooled around my ankles, whiny Prufrock isn’t so funny anymore. Am I going to be one of those annoying old coots who hold up the line at Ponderosa arguing for my 15-cent “senior” discount? Like Groucho Marx (knowing who he is marks me “senior”), I don’t want to belong to any club that would have me for a member, particularly when membership requires little more than successfully avoiding death.

Not that there haven’t been signs that my AARP reckoning was coming. Certain physical clues, for example. Around my fortieth birthday



“Don't worry. I turn 50 tomorrow. AARP will find me.”

these specs presented a fresh hassle, because to find my glasses, I needed — well, you know. And so, while searching, I bashed about the house, blinking, banging into furniture, swatting at phantoms. Ultimately I found the glasses, of course, in the time-honored way of sitting on them: “Ah yes, that’s where I left them”, I chuckled upon hearing the tell-tale crunch.

There have been other inconveniences, too. (Just as you reach an age where convenience is so highly prized

and readily available in the form of valet-parking, young folks popping up asking if they can carry stuff for you, comfort-fitted pants.) For example, the little aches and pains that make getting out of bed a fresh adventure. Can I get up without using furniture - a dresser, say - as a crutch-lever, something to grab onto and hoist myself up as I struggle to assume the proper human bipedal stance? Can I find things - toothbrush, soap, underwear - without my glasses? And finally, can I lurch-scuttle (a little sideways a la John Wayne) to the bathroom in time?

And so they arrive - these deceptive and faux-cheerful pieces of mail from the good AARP folks. The envelopes feature improbably slender, grey-maned women with tennis rackets casually resting on their shoulders. And chiseled, white-haired dudes launching off some diving board. Why do these “elderly” models really look like twenty-somethings? C’mon. If there’s one thing we elder statesman can identify, it’s phoniness.

Don’t pander to us. We can take it. Instead of that tennis babe, show us a tired granny chasing her jelly-smeared granddaughter. Instead of the stud, give us a plaid-shorts guy in black nylon socks high on his hairless calves tapping a croquet ball as his grandson stands by, texting.

In any case, the American Association of Retired Persons! Retired? People retiring at 50! In this economy? I’m still laughing about that one.

Rob Huffman is researching anti-aging methods. We are enrolling him in the Art of Aging Gracefully.

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Lara Klopp

PICTURE PERFECT

BY A.E. BAYNE

The lens is complex. A barrier between dimensions, it allows a necessary distance between artist and subject, if only to offer the artist perspective and provide the subject a sense of autonomy. At the same time, the lens is an extension of the artist's eye, capturing at once light and shadow, personality, and the subtlety of the subject's nature, challenging the photographer to capture a life on a single sheet of paper.

Lara Klopp works deftly within the parameters of the lens, coaxing luminescence and vitality from the two-dimensional images captive on the page. Perhaps that talent lies in her painter's sensibilities, which she began developing during her years studying fine arts at

that I hadn't seen during the shoot or an intense stare that makes the person stunning. My job is to bring out those qualities when people are at their most amazing."

While painting has been Klopp's primary medium over the course of her artistic career, she explains that photography, especially digital, offers exciting possibilities. She sees the two methods as connected and says the means are not as important as working directly with a subject, both to learn more about their personality and to determine what they expect from the work. Klopp acknowledges one difference, "A portrait painting has a presence that a photograph doesn't always have; but I just enjoy the



photographer has to be careful not to shoot subjects in a bunch of similar poses, because it eventually becomes the same picture over and over again but with different people. It's essential to figure out what's special or interesting about each person so that their personality comes through." She adds that communication between she and the subject is key, saying, "I will work from photos that a person brings to me if they want to commission a painting, but it's harder because sometimes what makes a good picture in someone's mind stems from a sentimental moment that doesn't always translate into a painting. I do love the challenge of combining the two though."

Klopp's most recent accomplishments include a Judge's Choice Award for "Teatime Devotion" (pictured left) and a Merit Award for "Ellie" in the 2012 Biennial King George Art Show. You can view these and other samples of Lara Klopp's paintings and photography at Lara Klopp Studio on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/LaraKloppStudio>, or contact her directly via email at laraklopp@aol.com.

A.E. Bayne is a teacher and writer who has lived and worked in Fredericksburg for fourteen years.

William and Mary, and later at Wichita State University; and maybe it has been nourished on her experiences in meeting hundreds of students over the past six years while teaching art at King George High School. Whether through painting or photography, Klopp is gifted with an innate ability to envision the unique characteristics that make things beautiful. She says, "Everyone has moments when they are breathtaking. One person's moment might be when they look incredibly serious, while another person's moment is when they're smiling. I never quite know when that moment will happen, so I take many pictures. Even as a photographer, I may think I am capturing a great picture, but then I look at the photos and notice a brilliant smile

process of being with a person while photographing them, and talking with them during the shoot helps me capture their different moods."

As an artist, one hopes that their work becomes recognizable for certain details, qualities, or a specialized style. Klopp has most recently been painting from commissions, and mainly from photos that she has acquired from personal collections or those that people have given her and asked to have painted. While she will continue taking commissions, her goal is to offer a wide variety of options, including photography sessions allowing for numerous shots from which subjects can choose to have a painting done or to have framed as a portrait photograph. Multiple shots are important, Klopp explains, "A portrait

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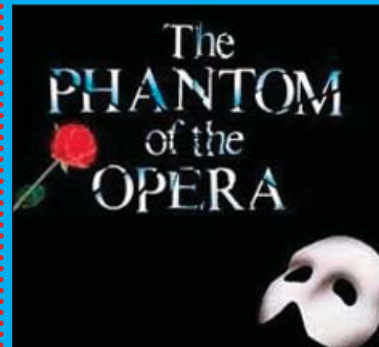
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by megan byrnes

Heard (or, rather, misunderstood) From **Scott Howson** - So I picked out a new pair of walking shoes, and handed them to the young lady at the register. "Is this going in a cold storage facility?" she asked. I hesitated, and asked, "Do a lot of people use these in a cold storage facility?" She stared at me for at least five seconds. "I said, 'Is this going on a Kohl's Store Charge this evening?'" Basically the same thing, I think.

Food 'n drink: All you locavores, rejoice! You'll be able to get your buzz on while perusing the tomato selection at the Farmer's Market this summer, as it looks like wine tastings will become part of the scene; the beer fridge at Kybecca is stocked and ready for summer BBQ's; local photographer **Aaron Spicer** took photos of his "favorite downtown eatery", Foode, one evening last month. The restaurant has already used some of his snaps on their Facebook page!

Speaking of wine, **Edwin Wyant**, owner of Virginia Wine Experience, has picked up quite the moon lighting gig; he is now officially a real estate agent at RE/MAX Bravo. If you were ever wondering what red pairs well with mid-century modern, Edwin is definitely your guy!

Sending well wishes to FCCA artist **Shirley Whelan**, as she just returned home from undergoing cancer treatments at the hospital. Her daughter, **Kathleen Wolthuis** thanks everyone for the visits and cards; obvious day-brighteners for sure!



Heard: Mark Mantarrez (above) was named sous chef at Bistro Bethem last month. So many changes for 309 William last month! Both **Brian Downing** and **Tammy Cooke** made their exists last month, as did...

Horseshoes and Hand Grenades celebrated their grand re-opening last month at their new location on Princess Anne Street. The video

game/record/vintage/art shop completely transformed the old Apple Music space into something completely unique for this town. My favorite part is the floor - a collage of old comic book covers. Congrats and great job to H&H's owner, **Mike Skinner**!

Chris and **Garrison Rule** (right) hosted a small going away party for their friends and family last month, before they head off to the city of dreams. BFFs **Sara Hall** and **Stacey Pratt** were there to say their farewells, as was **Olivia Cooper**, **Brian Downing**, **Lori Izykowski**, and **Lexi Grogan**.

Blind Item: What man-about-town was working on his fitness at last call late one evening downtown? Sources say the gentleman was doing pull-ups on the La Petite outdoor awnings, surrounded by a rather supportive fan club. LP's response to the shenanigans? "Please don't do pull-ups on our awning, sir". Yeahhhh, bet they never thought they'd have to say that.



Scene: Rebecca Thomas and **Katelyn Snyder** (above) stand-up paddle boarding along the Rappahannock River. Paparazzi **Bill Beck** snapped this photo of the pair mid-journey.

Heard: **Andrew Hellier** did double duty at Colonial Tavern last month; both Modern Yesterday and Rotoglow performed on Saturday evening at the popular music venue.

Happy June birthday to lovebirds **Dave Minkler** and **Megan Mason** (right) (I hear Megan celebrated 29!); **Rob Grogan** and **Laura Craig** both celebrated a milestone kind of number, with Laura's minus 30. **Lindsey Quinn**, **Joan Limbrick**, **Kimberly Suttle**, **Chris Rule**, **Missy Colombo**, **Derek Kirkland**, **Jeffie Nazworth** and **Charles O. Squires** (working on 80) were some other Fredericksburgers who celebrated another year.

Matt Paxson may have not won the mayoral race this time around but that doesn't mean good news didn't come his way this spring. He and his wife, **Julianne Paxson**, announced that they are expecting their first baby!



Scene: Carole Garmon (below)

and her installation art class giving the brick walls on Melcher's Hall a makeover of day-glo proportions. The (non permanent) color has given the traditional façade a fun (and very on-trend!) look for the warmer months.



Seen: Tommy Manuel at 7-11,

Bill Harris at Cheeburger Cheeburger with his family, **Claudia Emerson** walking into Pueblo's TexMex Grill on the last spring-ish day of the season, **Paul Quinn** and his family taking a walk downtown, **Jim Burton** enjoying breakfast at Hyperion Espresso, an untold number of Fredericksburg residents in front of my house (quick tip: if your home's stair railing happens to be a clue in the Itty Bitty City Scavenger hunt, either keep your blinds closed or be prepared to have an audience while you make dinner).



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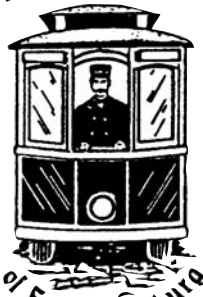
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The BUZZ at the 'B'

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There's no static here — WBQB (B101.5 FM) and AM 1230 WFVA won seven awards at the 75th Annual Virginia Association of Broadcasters Awards Banquet, June 22nd, at the Hilton Virginia Beach Oceanfront Hotel.

The two Fredericksburg radio 'sister' stations, both owned by Centennial Broadcasting II, LLC, headquartered in Clemmons, NC, grabbed some top awards in news and entertainment in both the Medium Market category and in all radio divisions.

WBQB won 1st Place - Outstanding Website - www.b1015.com; 1st Place - Best Station Promo/Contest - B101.5 Kids Convention; 1st Place - Best Public Service/Community Event - Breast Cancer Awareness "Pinktober"; and 2nd Place - Best Morning Show - Chris and Dee in the Morning, in the Medium Market category.

WFVA won 1st Place - Outstanding News Series: Changed World: The Impact of 9/11 Here; and 1st Place - Best Commercial: Chrysler Of Culpeper - "Pile of Window Stickers" in the Medium Market category. The station also won 1st Place - Best Documentary - 9/11: Ten Years Stronger, among all radio divisions.

"This is a true testament to the top quality talent we have at our radio stations", said **Tom Hamilton**, WBQB/WFVA Market Manager.

Front Porch sends a special shout-out to News Director **Ted Schubel**. In addition to his award-winning duties at both the AM and FM stations, Ted produces and hosts "Community Link" every Sunday morning at 8:00 (on AM1230 WFVA and WFVARadio.com), in partnership with this magazine (see July's schedule of shows in our *Calendar of Events*.)

Now meet the good-looking award winners in the team photo:

(L-R): **Kristin Nash** (Midday Host), **Dee Daniels** (Morning Show Host), **Bill Carroll** (Production Director), **Sean Quinn** (Events/NTR Director), **Ted Schubel** (News Director), **Trapper Young** (Afternoon Drive Host), **Chris Centore** (Morning Show Host), and **Chuck Archer** (Operations Manager).

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15 YEARS LOVING THE BURG

BY SARA MATTINGLY

To the loyal readers of **Front Porch**, the name **Rob Grogan** is synonymous with the magazine. Known in various circles as Rob, Mr. Rob, El Editor, or Papa G, Rob's been the face of the publication for its 15 years. He's the front man in the band, so to speak. But Rob will be the first to acknowledge **Virginia B. Grogan** as "the vision and catalyst" for Front Porch and "our climb that began with a dream."

A dream, "literally and figuratively" Rob tells me one morning before heading over to WFVA for a taping of *Community Link* with host **Ted Schubel**. Rob usually does a 15-minute segment with Ted but this time Ted is devoting the entire half hour to "the history of Front Porch" as the publication celebrates its 15th anniversary and begins its 16th year this month.

"Virginia had a dream one night while we slept and the result was this!"

Rob explains with unbridled enthusiasm. "180 months just flew by", he says, picking up a copy of the June issue, number 180. "Now comes 181 and who knows how far we'll go - 300? 600? It all depends" on the market, and the one thing under Rob and Virginia's control — their passion for the Burg and the Front Porch metaphor.

"We've changed over 15 years," says Rob. "Not just our aging photos (ha!) but our content. The local culture has changed. Food and wine are huge in this town, and creative 'people' have surpassed history as the driving force behind Fredericksburg's attraction. People, often artists, are our focus editorially in FP." The magazine still runs true to its history buffs and wellness followers, while interesting personalities from various walks of life come alive, Rob says, "Thanks to a cool stable of writers" in print and online.

"We are seeing fresh writing and

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fresh voices, often younger ones, and their energy keeps us going and feeling young," proclaims the editor who turned 60 in June. He and Virginia feel blessed to be doing what they know and love in a community they love, and making a living from it, through advertising sales.

"Ad sales are my labor of love," says Rob, who would much rather be writing. "Ads feed the family," which includes their 19-year-old daughter, **Alexis**, who has grown up on the magazine's pages. "She's even contributed a poem and a couple articles on pet care." Her "Wags & Purrs" pet au pair business is doing well, and she recently began coaching at Paragon Training Center, a natural outcome of a Junior Olympics tumbling and acrobatics career that included two national bronze medals.

Of the three Grogans on the porch, Virginia is the least public but the most vital, according to Rob. "She's both the percussion and rhythm sections of this band. I get to sing lead vocals and reach out into the audience, but VA is the heart and soul in this gig," says Rob.

Both Rob and Virginia acknowledge the many persons who have helped make Front Porch an almost iconic success in the Burg. "Alley Door Hair

Studio and White Oak Animal Hospital have run ads in all 181 issues; Whittingham and Jabberwocky, and many others, as well as writers and photographers, especially **Rich Mason** during the early years and cover photographer **Arch Di Peppe**, who has shot most of the covers in recent years and has written for most of the 15," Rob says.

"I'm a lucky man doing what I love where I love. I'm proud of my wife's vision and our daughter's journey. I'm thrilled that writers like **Ruth Cassell** went on to bigger things in communications and that **Rob Du Bois' For Goodness' Sake** column seeded his book, *Powerful Peace - A Navy SEAL's Lessons on Peace from a Lifetime at War*," which Rob G. edited. (Both Robs appeared together on *Community Link* and will be re-broadcast in August.) Rob G's "15 years on the front porch" airs **Sunday, July 8 at 8 a.m. on AM1230WFVA and at WFVARadio.com**

Sara Mattingly is senior editorial assistant at Front Porch Magazine.

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FXBG Music

GETTING PEACE BACK IN THE WORLD

BY ASHLEIGH CHEVALIER



Becky says the love of music inspires and is the glue to the group: “God moves through us in getting the message and some peace back in the world.”

The Stewarts (Visit SlamOne.com) also performs with local reggae group *Sons of Solomon* and as a trio with Limon. Slam and Becky have even performed as a duo where Becky sings and plays jazz standards. She and Slam always go back to the music. They keep their husband/wife working team balanced by identifying individual strengths and sticking to them. Becky does a lot of the business side, with booking, marketing, and other paper work. Slam does a lot of gig planning and logistics management: setting up the equipment, managing sound, etc. Becky and Slam have fun wherever they are performing, and it touches every crowd around them.

It’s all about the love - especially with **Becky and Slam Stewart**. They love each other and they love the music they create. Becky and Slam met back in 2004 and married in Vegas soon afterwards. Since then, they have built a life upon teaching, writing, and performing music. Becky was not playing music for a living at the point. She was commuting to D.C. to make a living. But, as it seems, true love has brought her back to her first love - music.

The question becomes, “What don’t these two do?” Slam is a percussion and drum teacher, specializing in younger ages. Becky sings and teaches voice, piano guitar, and flute. She also works with music transcription - helping artists put notes to musical paper. They also have a recording studio and offer recording services. Becky and Slam both have a passion for teaching and sharing music.

Undoubtedly, you have heard of their hot world music group **Sabor Afrocubano** (SaborAfrocubano.com), featuring renowned Cuban percussion player **Alberta Limonta**, or Limon. This group has every audience smiling, laughing, and dancing. Most of the music is Limon’s original music, but the group has been writing a lot collectively lately, according to Becky (who plays flute and keys for the band). Slam plays kit drum, **Young Nic Sam** plays a “pinch of bass” and **Tom Beaulieu** plays guitar.

Ashleigh Chevalier is a singer and a music journalist in Fredericksburg.

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THE POETRY MAN
- BY FRANK FRATOE

You make everything all right. - Phoebe Snow

Creation
(From Genesis, chapter 1)

Where lava boils the sea,
rocks fuse from embers that close, then open out,
cooling and pulverizing,
re-cooling and exploding
into red ocean’s steam.

It is the earth’s blood,
swelling by liquid stone
veins which find the sea,
bursting and fusing again,
to create a promontory
blue ocean thunders upon.

Frank Fratoe “celebrates life and its sources” with his current poetry.

AutoKnown Better

INDEPENDENCE

BY RIM VINING



Frank Lloyd Wright’s Lincoln

July is for celebrating independence! Ever wonder what kind of cars the Founding Fathers would have driven? Jefferson was rather tall so I am thinking he wouldn’t have been too comfortable in a Civic. Maybe a Cadillac CTS would’ve suited him for those quick runs from Mitchie Tavern back up to Monticello. It is a great road for driving and in his day there were no speed traps. Of course a Cadillac doesn’t know the way home in the dark when you’ve had a few pints with the patriots. One more reason we should have stuck to horses.

Still, independence comes in many forms. We recently visited Frank Lloyd Wright’s Falling Water and Kentuck Nob in the Laurel Highlands of western PA. As we were driving through Cumberland, MD we saw a ’70 VW bus for sale complete with peace signs and flower stickers. From the back seat our friends remarked how their 20-year old son would kill to have that ride. Okay retro, I get that.

What is amazing is to stop for coffee at the local caffeine café a few weeks later and there is the bus with new Virginia plates and this driver was not being retro. The years and experiences with a VW van were clearly evident through the smile on his face and the gleam in his eye. Talk about distracted driving. I wonder what thoughts are rolling through that brain while cruisin’ in the van?

Old Frank Lloyd Wright was a flamboyant independent who definitely set off fireworks on many levels. He also was a lover of automobiles as works of art to be driven and enjoyed. He had a lifelong affair with Cords, Duesenbergs, Mercedes and Lincolns, owning two pre-war Continentals. He once bought a 1937 AC 16/80 by placing his phone number on the windshield when he saw it on the

street simply because it was beautiful. And all his cars were painted his signature Cherokee red. Like Panama Red but different. Not a terribly attractive color for some of those cars but you knew who owned it by the color.

I’m also imagining the fierce independence required to drive a late model Mercedes dressed in a silver top made in small facets like armor and a pair of black Capri’s while sporting hot pink shoes with four inch platforms and stiletto heels that added another five. Cell phone glued to the ear and nine inches of shoe going from the throttle to the brake... they actually did a driving study to gauge the effect of wearing tall shoes and flip flops vs. real shoes. Reaction times can suffer. Watching her maneuver those things into the car and up to the pedals was a sight to behold.

I’ve also caught glimpses of, but not yet caught up with, whoever has set up their motorcycle as an old board track racer with big front and rear tires and everything else stripped off. It has low flat handlebars and a side stick shift. It looks fantastic and I’ve encountered it just enough that it has taken on the role of Suzanne Somers and the white T-Bird in American Graffiti. Maybe I’ll never catch up to him.

It is July and we’re celebrating Independence Day, so put raccoon tails on your tail pipes, streamers on your handlebars and cards on the spokes of your wheels. Make a little noise and try not to think about the year being half over with Christmas just around the corner. Although it is a cool thought in the summer heat. autoknown@aol.com

Rim Vining is an independent thinker (ya think!?) and car aficionado.

UN-SINGED SATISFACTION

TEN TIPS FOR SAFE SUMMER GRILLING

BY AMY PEARCE

The thrill of the grill is on the front burner this month. Pardon the profile, but it’s man’s world when it comes to firing up the coals or igniting the gas. My husband, for example, is ritualistic. His preseason starts in early May, he gets into full stride in June, and by July he is a barbecue beast, all the way through October. After that, he toys around all autumn and winter, bundling up when necessary. Yes, his grilling season is long. He really takes only two weeks off in March, and I think that is more in line with feeling like a pro than actually not being able to use the grill. Ah, men!

But it’s July we are talking about now. Summer grilling season is officially underway with backyard barbecues, cookouts, picnics, family reunions and many other reasons for outdoor eating. Not being one to play with fire, I picked through the press releases in the **Front Porch** editorial in-box and chose the one that led with “**Chancellor Volunteer Fire and Rescue** offers 10 helpful tips to stay safe when you fire up that charcoal or gas grill for a flavorful meal.” I decided that my husband, and our readers, would be wise to review these 10 safety tips (and avoid a scene like the one in the picture):

- 1.Designate someone to be in charge of the grill at all times.
2. Keep a fire extinguisher handy and know how to use it.
3. All barbeque grills, whether charcoal or liquid propane gas, must ONLY be used outdoors. Using grills indoors or in enclosed spaces is not only a fire hazard, but it exposes occupants to toxic gases and potential asphyxiation.
4. Always position the grill well away from combustible objects such as buildings, fences, deck railings and landscaping that can easily and quickly ignite.
5. Be sure to place the grill a safe distance from other outdoor activities such as lawn games, play areas, foot traffic, pets and children. It is best to establish a 3-foot “safe zone” around the grill and never leave a lit grill unattended.
6. Always use long-handled grilling utensils and heat-resistant oven mitts to avoid exposure burns from heat and flames.
7. Periodically remove grease build-up in catch-trays to prevent it from igniting. A clean grill is a safer grill.
8. For charcoal grills, know how to light the charcoals safely. Improper use of lighter fluid is a major cause of burns.
9. For gas grills, check underneath, inside and behind the grill regularly to remove any obstructions in the path of the fuel.
10. Have a basic knowledge of how to treat minor burns by cooling the burned area with cool running water for several minutes (do not use ice) and applying a topical burn ointment or spray. Call 911



to seek medical attention if the skin is blackened or blistered.

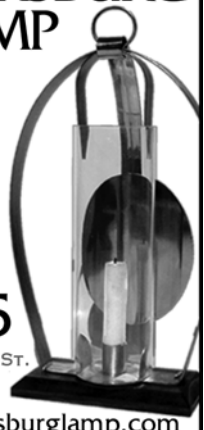
“We want everyone to enjoy their summertime grilling experiences,” said **Kevin Dillard**, Administrative Chief for **Chancellor Volunteer Fire & Rescue**. “These ten tips will help to keep your cookouts full of fun, instead of becoming an emergency situation.”

Chancellor Volunteer Fire & Rescue has served Spotsylvania County for over 50 years. Currently, the organization has over 250 all-volunteer personnel that operate out of four fire companies and five rescue stations throughout the county. For more information, visit www.cvfr.net.

My husband offered no resistance once he saw these tips were from real firemen. Ah, boys will be boys!

Amy Pearce is an editorial assistant at Front Porch. She cooks indoors on the stove and oven.

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Catching Air With 'Boner'

EPIC SKATEBOARDING



Bonner conquered Washington DC's Canadian Embassy stairs, it made waves in the skate world. We never expected the mainstream media to dive into the story" (as you will see they did in this video).

Paul Workman, Washington Bureau Chief at CTV News, wrote of Brandon: "He is the one and only person who has ever flown over them at truly breakneck speed and landed on his feet. Or rather, landed on his skateboard... Simply look under "Most Epic Skateboarding" on YouTube. Better still, just type in "Boner Embassy 21."

"The Canadian Embassy, that's definitely a big one," Brandon repeated to me in the alley behind Bistro and La Petite. In his first attempt at the 21, Brandon wiped out. He routinely nurses - or just ignores - his constant bruises and aches. The second try was a gravity-defying poetry in motion, captured by a friend's video cam on a lazy Sunday in the nation's capital. "Like I told the TV man, I was just thinking, go as fast as you can, and make sure you pop it. I made sure!"

The jump he accomplished is a fete at the pinnacle of boarding. The legendary 21 steps are skateboarding's public Everest. The jump brought close to 30,000 hits on YouTube. "People have been trying and trying. But I finally came in there and I got it, Rob."

At Sinclair Brooks Park on Butler Road, Brandon Bonner is the envy of every boy with a skateboard. He's the Michael Jordan of his set, soaring ridiculously where no man has dared to go, and unlikely will if the Canadians beef up their security. It is hard to believe that Brandon is telling me all this while we mop the kitchen and bar after a long shift at Bistro. It's cool in a humbling way. He should be on a Shawn White kind of path; I should be a published novelist. He's got more time remaining than I do. We laugh at each other's comments in the dish pit as we finish up. It's humbling but it's real, and it goes to show, you do what you gotta do while you pursue the dream. If nothing else, Brandon Bonner is the real deal wherever he soars at whatever he dreams. - RG

Brandon's Canadian Embassy caper caught national news attention, but hopefully not the attention of the Canadians. He had to kind of skirt the law to enter the fabled 21 steps on Pennsylvania Avenue that no skater had ever conquered - until Brandon Bonner did, that is. After taking apart the security gate, he cleared the 21 steps on his second attempt, again defying gravity, catching air like no one else; all in a day's progression in the life of Brandon B.

Blair Alley, writing for Transworld, wrote, "... when Natural Koncept's new am Brandon "Boner"

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HomeTown Heroes

SIX FROM THE BURG!

BY BRENNAN SPOONHOWER

Every year, the law firm of **Allen & Allen** (with an office in Fredericksburg at 3504 Plank Road; 866-388-1307) solicits nominations throughout the state for its annual **Hometown Heroes** awards. On June 27, the firm announced its 50 statewide winners, including 6 from the **Fredericksburg** area. Each local winner is described below (with their statewide ranking listed). **Front Porch** salutes them all!



15. Jared Egan, (above) Fredericksburg Jared has devoted countless hours and a great deal of dedication working as an EMT for the Spotsylvania County Rescue Squad. In 2007, when he began working with the squad, he was honored as Rookie of the Year. Many times, Jared has sacrificed family time to serve his community, but the satisfaction outweighs the sacrifice because he loves helping people.

17. Don Forrester, Spotsylvania Don is blind, but his nominator says, "he has more vision and wisdom than most people who have full eyesight." Moving to Fredericksburg to start a church

more than 35 years ago, he grew into Faith Baptist School and recently semi-retired to fulfill his role as president of Virginia Baptist College. Serving on many state boards and religious boards, he has been a light in the community for more than three decades. Always encouraging and uplifting, Don will make you smile every time you talk to him.

21. Amber Hildebrand, Fredericksburg Full of energy with a wonderful attitude, Amber is always willing to help anyone in need. She is a Big Sister and has made a profound impact on her "Little." Amber also babysits for a 13-year-old girl with Down's syndrome, developing a strong and mutual bond with her. Not to mention, she rides on an ambulance helping those in the community.

26. Steve Maslock, Spotsylvania A career firefighter for the past 10 years, Steve is dedicated to protecting and serving the citizens of Spotsylvania County. This line of work is a great fit for him because he has such a big heart, says his nominator. His dedication to his job is only equaled by his dedication and love of his family.

41. Jan and David Snow, (right) Fredericksburg For the past six years, Jan and David Snow have hosted a block party. The party has become a staple in the Fredericksburg community each December. The event has continued to grow each year, despite the economy, raising approximately 1000 toys in 2011. Their daughter writes that "they put needy children first every year."

50. Kathleen Wilson, Fredericksburg Receiving ten nominations, Kathleen is the mother of 10 children (seven of whom were adopted) who has dedicated her life to the less fortunate. She founded a homeless shelter for women and children in Fredericksburg. Starting this shelter out of a basement, it has now grown to four homes in the Fredericksburg area. As the director, Kathleen Wilson receives no paycheck, even though the position takes 60 to 70 hours a week. Thanks to her hard work and devotion, these women and children come home to a warm, caring environment instead of a sterile cinderblock facility.

To see the entire statewide winners' list and read more about Hometown Heroes, visit Allen & Allen at <http://www.allenandallen.com/hometown-heroes.html#15>

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