The Retreat at Kemps River
Community, luxury and an active lifestyle for those 55-and-better
“I wanted an open, bright floor plan with plenty of living space,” Cheryl recalls. “I was prepared for a massive remodeling effort and prayed I could find the right person to finish my dream. I knew exactly what I wanted and eventually I knew Barry was the one who could do it.”

Addition Associates finished the project two weeks early and considerably under budget. “I could not be happier with the results.”

—Cheryl Ruff of Churchland

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When the lockdown began, businesses around Hampton Roads quickly rose to the occasion, finding ways to provide services to their clients while following state guidelines. Three Ships CrossFit was quick to hook up members with multiple daily, coach-led, Zoom workouts that proved to be challenging as well as a fun way to socialize with the outside world.

Daily Zoom workouts lead by owners Ryan and Brittney Smith were a great way to keep members motivated and on track!

Three Ship Members Jennifer Tolarchyk and Stephanie Hadley met weekly at various parks just to walk, get some fresh air, exercise and catch up.

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Publisher’s Point

Life Surprises Us

We never know what changes life will bring us, no matter how well we plan. If we are doing what we love, the old saying goes, we will never work a day in our lives. If that resonates with you, you are in the right place. I know I am.

As I reflect on my 40 years in publishing, I am simply grateful to have had, and still be having, work that fulfills me. My best decisions in hiring have boosted me forward all these years while the worst just taught me needed lessons.

I am smart enough to know the bulk of my success happened because I have had support on three levels. My team members helped, guided, worked to support our goal of introducing our business neighbors to their client neighbors. We told readers their stories, celebrated their success.

We never know what changes life will bring us, no matter how well we plan. If we are doing what we love, the old saying goes, we will never work a day in our lives. If that resonates with you, you are in the right place.

I know I am.

The second level is found through the success of those clients, entrepreneurs serving their neighbors well, making us proud to represent them. The third level is certainly from you - our readers who have supported us all these years, actually telling advertisers, “I saw you in The Shopper.”

I am grateful to have all this support and it is why I am still able to look ahead and see new possibilities for our publications and new ways to connect with clients and readers.

After 40 years, I still find excitement, even fun, in this business. We came through 9/11, the economic crash in ‘08, and continue amidst this pandemic, not missing a beat, even with all the changes.

We needed the stability of our wonderful clients still believing in us and our readers encouraging us at every step. And I want to introduce our team members who should be taking all the bows. I have always known that I get the credit for the outstanding work of each and every one here.

I am the person who says, “Yes.” They are the reasons everything happens.

The Shopper would like to remind everyone in these difficult times that the businesses of our communities need your help now more than ever!

Please remember the hundreds of local businesses you’ve read about in the last several decades in The Shopper, remember your neighbors, and their stories.

Together we can rebuild our community!
Our celebration of 40 years in business comes just after Russell Smith, the founder of Russell’s HVAC, passed away. He was one of our most outstanding early advertisers and his son, Buddy, is also one of our longest and kindest clients. We are privileged to bring you Buddy’s tribute to his Dad, written eloquently by our wonderful editor, Rob Lauer. This heartfelt tribute may be the best story we have ever published.

These were the elements that came together: A man of God who treated everyone with grace, a devoted son following in his footsteps, and an extraordinarily gifted writer. We like to think these outstanding men represent what we should all be about. Find the tribute story in your June/July issue or online at TheShopper.com.

We are fortunate to be trusted with the stories of our neighbors and good samaritans in our communities over these past 40 years. We are entering the next 40 with both gratitude and optimism.

When I announced early this year that I was looking toward retirement, it was pre-Covid. When everything changes, we see everything in a different light. As we continued publishing through the worst of times, we had gratitude for our lives, our loved ones, and our life’s work.

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Jerry Harris Remodeling
Remodeling Hampton Roads for 35 years

By Christine Knapp

As a new homeowner in the 1980s, Jerry Harris began remodeling his house in between deployments on the USS Atlanta. Impressed by his work, neighbors started asking for help with their home renovation projects. Over time Jerry perfected his craft, word-of-mouth spread from one neighborhood to another, and before he knew it, Jerry’s remodeling business was in full swing.

Thirty-five years later, Jerry Harris Remodeling is still renovating homes throughout Hampton Roads. The business is a happy family affair. Jerry is president and CEO, while his older son, Jake, is vice president of operations, and his younger son, Josh, is vice president of marketing.

“One of the main reasons I decided to work alongside my dad and brother was because I want to leave our children a growing, thriving business as their legacy,” Josh Harris says. “I also feel a sense of dedication and pride serving the local Hampton Roads community and fostering growth in our local economy.”

“The time that we devote to every client is reflected in the finished project. As a client, they’re part of our team, and we’re part of theirs. Our team’s goal is to give them exactly what they want.”

—Josh Harris

Still based in South Norfolk, where operations first began, the Harris family dutifully serves all five Southside cities—Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Portsmouth and Suffolk. On any given day, project managers sit alongside clients in their homes, discussing details about kitchen appliances, faucets, cabinets, paint, granite, lighting, porches, decks, and more.

Jerry Harris Remodeling helps clients expand their vision for kitchen and bathroom remodeling projects, as well as additions, exterior, and whole-house remodeling.

“We are a design-build firm that listens to our clients, creates their designs, and then, with their approval, build it in-house,” Josh affirms.

The process is simple. After clients share their budget and ideas in an initial meeting, their in-house designer, Melody Zuniga, completes drawings of the renovated space as well as 3-D renderings. These allow clients to see what the remodel will look like before work begins.

“If a client knows they want to remodel the kitchen but needs help bringing his or her ideas and inspiration into the light of day, that’s exactly what we do,” Josh explains. “Before we ever get to work, the client will see the desired outcome. We know when we begin any project, everyone is on the same page and working toward the same goal; there are no surprises.”

Then the client is paired with the design coordinator, Sydney Judah, and both meet regularly during the design and development phase to choose tiles, countertops, cabinets and other elements. Once the client approves a set of plans, the Harris team hits the ground running. At the end of every week, the project manager updates the client on the project’s progress and plans for the upcoming week.

When the project is complete, Jerry Harris Remodeling provides clients with a five-year workmanship warranty, covering anything done in the house, aside from manufacturer defects. “We stand behind our warranty—every time, without fail,” Josh promises.

“What stands out the most about the Harris family, besides their commitment to their clients and the work they produce, is their commitment to one another. “We intimately feel a duty not to let one another or our clients down,” Josh says. “We feel that duty to the rest of our team members as well.”

Perhaps this sense of accountability and trust comes from Jake and Josh’s participation in the business from an early age.

“From age 13 through high school, I spent my summers working with my family,” Josh reminisces. “My brother Jake did the same while growing up. Upon graduating from Christopher Newport University, he joined my dad and has been with the company for 12 years. Jake is the engine that keeps it all moving forward—overseeing scheduling, orders, job quality control, warranties, client satisfaction, and more. He is the key to all business operations, aided by his project managers and support staff.”

All employees feel a part of the family. Karen Gallond started working for the company back in the late 1980s. Currently, she is the chief financial officer of Jerry Harris Remodeling.

“Karen has been running the office since before I was born,” Josh smiles. “She keeps the gears turning behind the scenes. Chris Williams, our director of design, has helped build our business for the last 25 years, as has Rusty McNair, our longest tenured project manager.

“A similar longevity applies to all of our project managers,” Josh observes. “Cord Whitley has been with us for over 20 years, since he was 18 years old. Chris Hill, our project manager and remodeling consultant, has been with us for 15 years, while David Godfrey and Jason Brewer have been with us for about 10 years. We train our employees in-house and promote from within, and I really think that is the key. Our family dynamic extends to our team. We consider them our family as well. We have even had other members of the same family come work for us. It speaks to the personal connectedness that we all feel. A rising tide lifts all boats.”

“For as long as I can remember, our parents raised Jake and me with certain foundational principles,” Josh continues. “Do unto others as you would have done unto you. Never lie, cheat, or steal. I truly believe if you treat everyone well, it comes back to you. Building a business with my family is incredibly fulfilling. We are always living the business; we’re always in sync. There’s constant communication and an unbreakable bond beneath it. It’s not perfect, but when there are different ways to approach things, we’re extremely comfortable in tackling things together head-on.”

The family often spends their off days on the water fishing.

“If there’s a tuna run coming, we’re out there trying to catch the big one,” Josh laughs. “Fishing is one of the glues that holds our family together. It’s something we’ve always enjoyed doing.”

Obviously, because of the pandemic, the Harris family is extra careful during projects.

“We’re taking every precaution we can. Our entire team wears masks, and they are careful not to touch surfaces. We even offer virtual video conferences when needed.”

Above all, Josh wants every potential and current customer to understand the Harrises’ overarching philosophy.

“We always strive for excellence. We are communicative, conscientious, and thoughtful. The time that we devote to every client is reflected in the finished project. As a client, they’re part of our team, and we’re part of theirs. Our family’s goal is to give them exactly what they want.”

The Harris family plans to remain local. “Hampton Roads is, and always will be, our home,” Josh concludes. “Serving this community has been my family’s life work, and that isn’t going to change.”

Jerry Harris Remodeling
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www.jerryharrisremodeling.com
Obstructive Sleep Apnea
Dr. Samir Abdelshaheed

Sleep apnea is a significant medical issue that affects roughly four percent of middle aged adults. The most common complaints are loud snoring, disrupted sleep, and excessive daytime sleepiness. Patients with apnea suffer from fragmented sleep and may develop cardiovascular abnormalities or airway collapse. Patients may often be unaware of their heavy snoring and may go undiagnosed. It is helpful to question the bedroom partner. Polysomnography in a sleep lab is the gold standard for confirming obstructive sleep apnea, however the test is expensive and may not be widely available.

Initially, partial obstruction may occur and lead to snoring. As tissues collapse further or the patient rolls over on his or her back, the airway will become completely obstructed and the patient struggles to breathe and is awoken from sleep. These periods of awakening are often unrecognized by the patient. This happens hundreds of times during the night and is likely the cause of excessive daytime sleepiness.

Patients may often be unaware of their heavy snoring and may go undiagnosed. It is helpful to question the bedroom partner.

Home testing is used as a more cost effective and convenient method to document sleep apnea issues. Overall, home testing is useful if the results are clearly positive, but negative results do not completely rule out sleep apnea.

Medical complications such as cardiovascular disease are common in patients with obstructive sleep apnea. Hypertension and obesity are also common findings in patients with sleep disorders. Patients who are smokers have more severe sleep apnea and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Psychosocial problems are common in sleep deprived patients such as depression, mood changes, poor memory, irritability, and impaired concentration.

A common treatment for this condition is weight loss. Even a 10 percent loss of weight may reduce sleep interruption episodes. CPAP treatment is used in most patients—the patient wears a fitting nasal mask attached to a fan that blows air into the nostrils to keep the airway open during sleep.

Some of the surgical solutions include gastric surgery, jaw surgery, laser-assisted uvulopalatoplasty, and in noncompliant patients a tracheostomy may be considered.
Almost every minute of every day, someone is frantically calling for help. “911. What is your emergency?”

These operators are frequently the link between living and dying. Their demeanor is vital to the rescue of the caller. What kind of personality can endure this constant stress?

**Poise:** Objectiveness (little emotional arousal; judgement rules) Upstrokes are almost vertical.

**Will Power:** (Controls self through force of will) Heavy t-bar crossing.

**Decisiveness:** (Quickly makes logical decisions; avoids anxiety) I can decide now. Blunt endings on words.

**Determination:** (Resolve lends firmness and strength) play toy Straight downstrokes

**Dignity:** (Acts in a reserved manner) Retraced t- and d-stems.

**Pride:** (Wants to appear “in control” to maintain mother’s approval) Tall t- and d-stems.

**Self-confidence:** (Feels able to cope; does not get agitated) Large capitals are first indicators.

**Rhythm:** (Thinks and responds smoothly, predictably) Even returning of downstrokes to the baseline & even baseline.

**Depth:** (Can contain aroused emotions) Heaviness of the writing

It is not necessary to have all of the above traits to be poised. Also, it is desirable to have diplomacy (tapering of letters) and intuition (breaks between letters in words).

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Up and Away

Watching buildings grow
Aerial photos and video keeping track of construction

By Terry Young

Everyone knows that aerial photos can look truly amazing. Getting that birds-eye view of a property or building from many different heights and angles, you can really sum up the surrounding area and landscape.

While aerial photos and videos have been used in real estate for several years now, one field that had taken a while to embrace them was construction.

For me, the long term construction projects that I follow are some of my most interesting projects. Not being in the construction field, it has been extremely fascinating to follow and record several construction projects from groundbreaking to slab pouring, and to watch as each floor is added, all the way up to the final opening.

For a construction company, having aerial photos taken regularly can save a lot of time, not least in having to visit a site in person.

Photos and videos can be easily used alongside site reports, and quickly distributed to whoever needs to see them.

Shoots can also be tailored to focus on specific items and milestones, such as concrete pouring, adding windows, or the roof as the building progresses.

Visit AirAspects.com for more information on how ongoing photos can help your project.

Terry Young is an FAA licensed drone pilot and professional photographer and videographer. His 30 plus years of experience in pre- and post-production of both still photography and video, coupled with the latest equipment, enable him to create amazing high quality images.

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What a difference a year can make. Just ask Shirley Fremd.

"I was born and raised in Portsmouth," she says. "My husband, Skip, had served in the police department for over 30 years, and we had lived in the same home for decades. Last year, we decided it was time to downsize. At the time, we didn’t know if we would buy a smaller house, build one, or move into a condo. We got to looking around Portsmouth, the Western Branch area and north Suffolk, but we couldn’t find what we were looking for. When my sister’s in-laws had moved into a Weldenfield and Rowe development, we were really impressed by it."

Shirley and Skip decided to visit one of Weldenfield and Rowe’s newest communities—The Retreat at Kemps River. According to Shirley, when they visited this 55-and-better community in Chesapeake, they fell in love with it. "We had no ties anywhere else, so we decided to just go with it," Shirley declares with a smile. "We were going on an adventure, and this would be a new chapter in our lives."

Everett Sawyer and his wife also decided to start a new chapter in their life. "We had a large home in Great Bridge, and we enjoyed living there," he says. "But we were getting older, and my wife was sick. Looking to downsize, we visited developments all over Chesapeake and Virginia Beach before discovering the Retreat."

Everett was impressed by the Retreat’s collection of beautifully crafted single-family attached homes in five distinct floor plans. All offer two to four bedrooms, two or three bathrooms, and two-car garages. Many feature vaulted ceilings, open kitchens, fireplaces, and covered porches. Buyers can also customize many of the options on their homes, including preferences for additional upstairs guest suites and screened porches.

"When we visited the Retreat, we looked at several models before choosing the Shenandoah," Everett notes. "It’s a nice open design, so I could sit in my office, look through the house and see what my wife was doing. We have a green area in the back, so I can go out there and walk my dog."

"We chose the Charleston model," Shirley says. "We like the fact that all living areas are on the first floor. The open concept floor plan was totally new for us, but we got used to it real fast. It is so bright and airy. We were able to make adjustments to the model and personalize it. We decided not to have an office but to make that area part of the bedroom area. So instead of having a master bedroom, we have a master suite!"

Builder Brian Rowe, of WeldenField and Rowe, is proud of the care that has gone into The Retreat at Kemps River. The Retreat at Kemps River offers five distinct models such as the Charleston pictured here. All feature bright and airy open floor plans.

"A lot of planning went into the development of this community, so The Retreat at Kemps’ River has many wonderful amenities,” he explains. “We have put so much effort into making sure elements conducive to an active lifestyle are built into the fabric of this community. In speaking with many of our residents, they have noticed and appreciate these carefully-planned details."

"I was taking a couple to the Retreat at Kemps River to show them around—and I ended up falling in love with it myself!"

—Bridget Ashcraft

The Retreat at Kemps River’s resort-style clubhouse is the site of frequent community gatherings and social events.

Cindy Godsell, sales manager for Weldenfield and Rowe, agrees with Brian. "The quality of the work and care that WeldenField and Rowe Custom Homes put into this development is remarkable," she says. "They genuinely care about home buyers and are very in tune with what they want and need. We sincerely want to help buyers make their new space something they can be proud of. The buyer is getting an incredible lifestyle along with incredible value.

"I’ve been selling new homes for many years," Cindy continues, "and we count on the fact that what we are selling will turn out very nice. And that’s one thing about working with WeldenField and Rowe, I’ve just been so proud of every neighborhood they’ve built.

The beautiful craftsmanship certainly impressed Bridget Ashcraft and her husband, Larry.

“We had lived in Kempsville for 30 years,” she explains. "We never thought we’d move. In fact, in recent years, we put on a new roof and new siding because we were prepared for it to be our forever home. But then something funny happened. I work for Rose and Womble, and I was taking a couple to the Retreat at Kemps River to show them around—and I ended up falling in love with it myself! The kitchen and master bath really impressed me. The decor, the colors—everything was just me. I knew there was a limited number of homes available, and, being new construction, I also knew that they’d go quickly. Even
though Larry and I intended on staying in our old house, the lawn care and upkeep was getting to be too much for him. So, we decided to move here. If a year ago someone had told me that we would move, I’d have never believed it.

“We have put so much effort into making sure elements conducive to an active lifestyle are built into the fabric of this community. In speaking with many of our residents, they have noticed and appreciate these carefully-planned details.”

—Brian Rowe

“By we, I mean Skip and I.”

“This home is the perfect fit for us,” Bridget continues. “It was awesome to be able to come in and pick out the elements that we liked. I love my personalized cabinets, quartz countertops, and master bath. As we get older, our tastes in decorating change. The way I decorated our old house thirty years ago is not how I would decorate a house now. So, it was wonderful to pick decorative elements that I like now. There’s no outdoor upkeep for Larry, and there’s lots of room for when we have our kids and grandkids over for dinner on Sundays.”

One thing that Bridget, Everett, and Shirley love about The Retreat at Kemps River is that it is centrally located to stores, restaurants, movie theatres, and professional offices in the Greenbrier area. They also appreciate the fact that they are not responsible for landscaping and the upkeep of the outdoor areas.

“The one thing that Skip and I do not miss is yard work,” Shirley laughs. “We had a big four-bedroom ranch on a large lot with trees. When we bought it, we were young, and yard work was no big deal. But at this point in life, we don’t have the time or the inclination to do yard work.”

“When we had our house, I used to enjoy doing yard work and the smell of fresh-cut grass,” Everett remarks. “But I’m 83, so I needed to slow down a bit. It’s nice to have those things taken care of.”

These residents also have nothing but praise for the Retreat’s amenities.

“I like the way that this entire development is laid out,” Shirley remarks. “It’s very conducive to walking. You can stroll around and talk to your neighbors. Before we moved in, we attended an event at the clubhouse. The people are so friendly. They look out for one another. There’s such a wonderful feeling about this place.”

“I love the clubhouse,” Bridget declares. “It is absolutely beautiful. I come from a large family, so I instantly thought of how we could have gatherings there. We had a pool at our old home, but Larry had to take care of it. Here we have a pool to use, and we’re not responsible for its upkeep.”

“The clubhouse is beautiful,” Everett agrees. “I go there and workout in the gym. And I’ve really enjoyed the social functions that we’ve had there.”

The spacious clubhouse that is at the center of this 55-and-better adult community is often aglow with light and life. Residents can also relax around the clubhouse’s spectacular pool or its stone fire pit. Frequent gatherings, with their celebratory atmosphere, are a part of life at The Retreat.

Cindy Godsell considers the clubhouse one of the Retreat’s most impressive amenities. “I love watching people’s expressions when they come into the community and see it for the first time,” she says. “The clubhouse really is the social hub of life here. Our residents spend a lot of time there, getting to know each other and making new friends.”

If the Retreat’s beautiful homes, resort-style clubhouse, and other amenities are the cake, then the sense of community found here is the icing.

“The community here is pretty cool,” Everett says with a laugh. “Because this is a 55-and-better community, there are a few people who still work, but most of them are retired. They’ve been through life, had careers, attended PTA meetings, and they’re still active—still embracing life. They are really nice, caring people. My wife passed away this past December, and I miss her very much, but I’m very thankful that we moved here when we did. Now, when I go off to visit my children, it’s always a pleasure to come back home. I feel like I truly belong here.”

“This may be a 55-and-better community, but it is not by any means an old folk’s home,” Shirley declares with a laugh. “These are vibrant people who are ready to take it easy and enjoy life.”

“The sense of community here has been awesome,” Bridget asserts. “I absolutely, positively love my neighbors. I can’t say enough good things about them. I drive down the street, and people wave at me, whether they know me or not. The feeling of living here is like being in a close-knit family. It’s very social. In a way, it was hard to leave our old place, but I have never felt homesick—not once—because I love our life here so much!”
“Adult Children With Problems – Provide An Inheritance Without Making Things Worse”

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Attendees receive a free copy of my book sold on Amazon for $24.95 (1 per household).

Call, because you must have a reservation to attend one of these seminars on Saturday, June 27 from 10:00 am - 11:30 am
638 Independence Parkway, Chesapeake—near Battlefield & Volvo Pkwy
or Saturday, July 25 from 11:00 am -12:30 pm
Russell Memorial Library
2808 Taylor Road, Chesapeake—near Chesapeake Square Mall
Refreshments will be provided.

This seminar is for you if:
• You want to know the big myth you probably believe about probate that is untrue.
• You have resisted or procrastinated, but know you need to get it done.
• You want to know the fib that your banker unknowingly told you.

You can find out more about possible estate planning solutions that allow you to love and protect your adult child even after you are gone. Call now to reserve time with me to find out how.

Come to my book seminar in June or July to find out more. If you have a reservation, you will be notified if I have to cancel.

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Shopper

Photographer Michele Thompson has something to celebrate as her first child graduates from Virginia Commonwealth University with a Bachelor of Science, Mass Communications with a concentration in Public Relations.

Parents Brian and Michele are beyond proud and wish nothing but the best to their daughter as she goes out into the world.

Onto Bigger and Brighter Things!

Emily Brianna Thompson
Virginia Commonwealth University
Class of 2020

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you have imagined.

- Henry David Thoreau

Children First

How Do We Respond to a Challenge?

The last several months have brought societal changes that have impacted every man, woman, and child in our country. In mid-March, 2020, our society underwent a shutdown that closed all businesses, except those deemed “essential.” Schools were closed until the end of the semester. The key to understanding this amazing historical period is to look at how we respond to the challenges we face.

With the safe haven of school life ripped from our children with little preparation, school leaders were forced to quickly put together an educational program for a wide variety of families and home settings. Local schools conducted a technology survey, calling families to find out whether their homes had access to a computer, internet, or Wi-Fi. Many homes only had access to a parent’s phone. The school system worked to provide Chromebooks for high school students taking credit-bearing courses and then moved to provide them for middle school students. Elementary students had educational packets supplied by their schools that were picked up weekly by parents. There are always those educators that go beyond expectations. The guidance counselor at Thurgood Marshall Elementary has been delivering those packets to the families where the parent is at work during the scheduled school pick-up time.

Viewing Wi-Fi as a utility in today’s world, not a luxury, the Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority partnered with Cox Communications to expand the bandwidth on their managed properties. Boosting the signal with routers and repeaters, they gave all of their low-income housing access to Wi-Fi.

The key to understanding this amazing historical period is to look at how we respond to the challenges we face.

Many parents have used this time to truly get to know their children. One father shares how much he and his wife enjoyed reconnecting at the family dinner table with their three teenage sons and daughter. He had each one plan the dinner menu with him and act as his “sous chef” for several meals before each one began to plan and cook the meals for the whole family. They put on soft music and even used candles as they enjoyed talking together each day. He said they realized it might be the last time they would spend that much quality time together with all their children.

A young mother in my Sunday School class talked about a phrase her grandmother had taught her and that she passed on to her own children. She told them to always look for “the angels among us.” During the pandemic, that mother began to sew masks, and her husband was making grocery runs for those who were uncomfortable leaving their homes. Their children had role models of angels among us.

We all have an opportunity to grow and develop each day, whether we are children or adults. Resilience is a quality that enhances life.

A career educator, Dr. Rebecca Adams has served as a teacher in grades two through graduate school, reading specialist, principal, and an educational foundation administrator. She was selected as Chesapeake’s First Citizen 2016 for her community service.

How Do We Respond to a Challenge?

Chesapeake Sports Club
Golf Classic

September 25th
Suffolk Golf Course
1227 Holland Road • Suffolk

Four Man Florida Best Ball
Registration and lunch 11:30
Shotgun start 12:30

Prizes, raffles, and lunch

For more information or to register, contact Sherry Simmons 757-285-7305
sassysherry68@gmail.com

By Dr. Becky Adams

Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority

C h i l d r e n  F i r s t
Congratulations

Samantha Albano
Grassfield High School

Chloe Alliano
Great Bridge High School

Mari Baker
Hickory High School

Dasia Bandy
Grassfield High School

Tyler Bowes
Hickory High School

Kira Brittingham
Great Bridge High School

Gabrielle Byrdsong
Oscar Smith High School

Sydney Cambrong
Hickory High School

Alec Council
Grassfield High School

Jack Curley
Grassfield High School

Nicholas Donahoe
Grassfield High School

Josie Dudley
Hickory High School

Elia Featherston
Tidewater Collegiate Academy

Briana Ferabee
Grassfield High School

Daniel Ferrara
Hickory High School

Mason Fields
Grassfield High School

Eryn Graves
Hickory High School

Alex Gullisano
Hickory High School

Ben Gullisano
Hickory High School

Elizabeth Hagen
Oscar Smith High School

Claire Henniker
Grassfield High School

Jenna Heirich
Grassfield High School

Tyler High
Grassfield High School

Hailey Hoskins
Great Bridge High School

Rachel Hull
Grassfield High School

Quinlon Jackson
Indian River High School

Grace Jewell
Grassfield High School

Sarah Joy
Grassfield High School

Fred Kalule Jr
Hickory High School

Joey Kemp
Grassfield High School

Madison Kelly
Grassfield High School

Kaitlyn Kenney
Hickory High School

Anna Killenbeck
Grassfield High School

Mekhi Knight
Grassfield High School

Matt Kohler
Hickory High School

Sierra Lankin
Grassfield High School

Grant Landreth
Currituck County High School

Kalli Laurendreau
Grassfield High School

Olivia Leonard
Hickory High School

Sonya Lewis
Grassfield High School
We’d like to congratulate these and all Hampton Roads graduates on their accomplishments!
The Northern Way

While her husband, Cris, is away on deployment, Amanda Northern is left to hold down the fort during the pandemic. When not homeschooling the kids, Amanda keeps them busy with fun activities!

“A large chalk drawing occupies an afternoon.”

Amanda Northern biking with her children, Nathan and Claire, on the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail

Picking Strawberries during the pandemic

See these and other photos at Theshopper.com

Volunteer opportunities include:

- provide a meal • maintenance • yard work • gardening
- re-decorate a room • movie nights • kids game/craft nights
- childcare for job interviews/support groups
- 24hr Hotline • Goal Coach • Life Skill Presenter
- H.E.R. Ambassador • hold a drive • hold a fundraiser

H.E.R. also provides a 24 Hr Emergency Hotline, case management, community support groups, court advocacy, child trauma program and age appropriate support, housing assistance and employment empowerment programs.

For more information visit www.hershelter.com or contact Volunteer Coordinator at 757-485-1445 or volunteer@hershelter.com.

If you need help from H.E.R. please contact the 24hr Hotline at 757-485-3384.

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All proceeds are for the benefit of the Chesapeake Shrine Club and are not deductible as a charitable contribution.
ON THE FRONT PORCH WITH YOU  
by Rob Lauer

From the porch to the street
The front porch was once where many Americans ended their day. Workplace stress, family arguments at the dinner table, worries over one’s bank balance, and news of global upheavals could be put aside. Sitting into a rocker or porch swing, one could “sit a spell” and “take a breather.”

Not that any of the world’s troubles went away. They were still waiting to be dealt with, but for a while, one could sit and breathe. Conversations could be casual or non-existent. Words weren’t necessary. Quietly sitting and watching the night come in was all that one need do.

We humans need silence as much as words. Perhaps as much as air. We need stillness to make sense of all the movement in our lives. Sitting on our proverbial, if not literal front porches, we can observe with a sense of temporary detachment whatever is happening on the street where we live. We need time to ponder things and mull over the consequences of our choices. In the stillness, we can reexamine what we long ago accepted because parents and grandparents, teachers and preachers told us that was the way things had always been.

Lately, Mother Nature, unpredictable old girl that she is, has given the world a kind of forced time-out. That can be as edifying as a breather on a front porch if one takes advantage of it. Apparently, many have.

Recently two friends posted online a photo taken from the front porch of their house in the Fan District of Richmond. Their home, well over 100 years old, was built by a retired Virginia governor, and it is a beauty. My friends have hosted parties and gatherings there, and no matter the weather or time of year, guests invariably drift onto their front porch. Because theirs is an English basement-style house, the porch is on the second floor. Being more of a balcony, it offers a fantastic view of the street below, lined on both sides with historic homes.

Two blocks away, the street runs into a graceful circle with monuments erected a hundred years ago to honor the way things had been in a previous age. From this front porch, we have watched annual marathons and parades.

The photo that my friends posted showed a different kind of event. Their two-lane street was filled to overflowing with people of all ages, colors, and genders. Walking in the direction of the circle, most carried posterboard signs. The scene was like those flooding the media of other such marches happening the world over. Though this image was still and silent, I could sense the movement and hear the soundtrack.

For as long as I can remember, marches and protests have been a part of the daily news. But this time, they look different. No particular age, ethnicity, or gender dominates the crowd. And beneath the shouting, chanting, and outrage, I sense a spirit of calm assurance that change is indeed coming. It’s almost as if those marching had “a breather” on a front porch. It’s as if they’ve pondered the way things have always been and have decided that parents, grandparents, teachers, and preachers were, in some essential way, mistaken. And they’ve decided that parents, grandparents, teachers, and preachers were, in some essential way, mistaken. And so, they’ve left their porches and walked into the street.

The insights that come to us on the front porch must not stay there. Streets run through our neighborhoods, and neighborhoods make up our world.

Rob Lauer is an award-winning, nationally-produced and published playwright with over 35 years of experience in the entertainment industry. His national credits include production work for MGA Films, Time/Warner TV, The Learning Channel and The History Channel. L

Web Works
By Terry Young, CEO

I need your service and do you take credit cards?

Since the COVID-19 lockdown began, I have personally received four emails which begin with the same question. They are all money laundering scams.

The emails start pretty normally. The person says that they have a need for your service, and then immediately asks if you accept credit cards. If you reply, which most people would because it’s potential business, the scam begins.

The first stage is to set three conditions in motion.
1. They say that you can only contact them by email. Usually the reason is they are either in hospital now because of COVID-19, or they are traveling a lot, or, in early versions of the scam, they are deaf.
2. They introduce the concept of a third-party person—such as a contractor, designer, architect, or other person—who is crucial to the supposed project.
3. They outline some very expensive project specs, which they know would cost between $5,000 and $10,000.

If you reply with a price estimate, they move to the second stage.

Their next email will say that they accept the price, and will pay you a deposit (usually half your quoted price) but they need a favor. If you ask what the favor is, the sting starts to take shape.

They will tell you that their third-party person needs to be paid upfront for the project, but that they do not take credit cards. The scammer explains that, being in hospital, he doesn't have access to checks or anything, so if they overpay you by say $10,000, would you forward that to the third-party person as a direct wire. They stress how important it is that this happen quickly, to preserve the project's timeline.

If you accept, they give you freshly stolen credit card info, which is unlikely to be discovered for a few days. You then process the payment, and immediately wire the $10,000 to the third-party's account.

A few days later, the card is flagged as stolen and the transaction is stopped. This means that you are now out $10,000, and may possibly come under investigation for money laundering.

If you receive emails which immediately ask about credit cards, you should always treat them as suspicious. If you do reply, look for the sequence I have outlined above. You should never wire money anywhere until you are certain that the original transaction has gone through.

Terry Young is the founder and CEO of Internet Marketing and Design. Since 1997, his computer programming and graphic design knowledge have kept his company at the forefront of the latest technology in web development.

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Home Schooled
Four schools under one roof has become the new norm for the Blackburns and many other families in the area. Despite the unknown and the new pressures of homeschooling, the Blackburns have handled the situation without missing a beat. When it comes to tutoring younger siblings, it doesn’t hurt to have a college freshman at home!

Tommy, a seventh grader at Hickory Middle School, completes an assignment

Sydney, a junior at Deep Creek High School, is busy writing a paper

Though missing her friends and classmates, Oscar Smith freshman Audrey finds ways to communicate with them via zoom and Google classroom.

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com

Read our story at TheShopper.com

Internet marketing and design
(757) 549-4764  Internetmark.com

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Terry Young—A Secret Weapon
A technological genius from England appeared at The Shopper to stay

By Jean Loxley-Barnard

When it comes to the world of technology, this publisher has needed so much help. But, for 23 years, The Shopper has had a secret weapon.

It was 1997 when I was first introduced to Terry Young. From across the pond he created and launched a state-of-the-art new website for The Shopper. We all have our strengths and weaknesses and throughout the years, Terry Young has come up with simple answers to such questions as, “How do I turn this on?” He has been there to solve the most intricate problems. He even built and set up our in-house server from scratch, saving us almost $20,000!

No matter whether our questions were elementary or sophisticated, Terry Young was there, never demeaning anyone—just fixing the problem and trying to explain so we could understand.

As the publisher, this genius of a man who came into my life like a long-lost son sees what we need and does it. As we have introduced new magazines, or even tried new ideas, he has been there to match the technology to the task, whether in new equipment or a new online presence. He is why we’ve survived technologically and are still here almost a quarter-century after he began commuting from the U.K.

Terry’s career has been fascinating. Before coming to the U.S., this Brit had worked in video and technology fields for his adult life, including working for IBM and NBC News. He met our then-COO, Nikki, when she traveled to England, and they were smitten with one another. He began flying back and forth across the pond every few months while building his business in England. In 2001, he relocated himself and Internet Marketing and Design here permanently.

Terry has launched websites over many years that have been staples of successful entrepreneurial businesses. His love of technology, design, and communication is evident in the name of his company: Internet Marketing and Design. He helps closely held corporations and mid-sized companies keep growing by leaps and bounds. One of his favorite success stories is a retired Navy SEAL Senior Chief, who exposes Stolen Valor online and hosts several Wounded Warrior hunts a year.

As the publisher, this genius of a man who came into my life like a long-lost son, sees what we need and does it. He is why we’ve survived technologically and are still here a quarter-century after he arrived from England.

Always looking to expand on new ideas and technology services, Terry was one of the first FAA-licensed drone operators in Hampton Roads, adding aerial to his existing photography talents and blazing a path in the Real Estate world. These services became so popular that a new company, Air Aspects, was formed to deal with the demand.

Terry has not only flown, photographed, and filmed in many U.S. states but also in several other countries. He has covered tourism, residential and commercial Real Estate, and is currently recording several long-term construction projects in Virginia and North Carolina. Terry brings as much professionalism to this arena as any others, focusing on the intricacies of the law while protecting himself and his clients from disastrous events that could ruin a project and cause significant losses in time and money.

This quiet man becomes absorbed when taking on a task for clients, as if their businesses were his own. Terry Young tells it like it is, as he sees it. Passionate about steering clients with the admonition to “Do it right the first time,” this perfectionist is dedicated to keeping those clients pointed in the right direction. Ever vigilant with details, this man’s reputation for being a stickler is proudly earned every day on every project.

One of Terry’s foundational beliefs is to never cut corners. While almost all other web designers download free software and sell it on for huge mark-ups, Terry refuses to take that easy way out. “Most other designers sell Wordpress simply because it’s free and they can make a fast buck,” he says,

“However, it is also extremely insecure, accounting for over 95 percent of the hacked websites in the world. I have seen firsthand how being hacked can affect a business both legally and in regard to their reputation, and I would never do that to a client.”

Terry went beyond what The Shopper asked of him, thinking of what we needed before we knew it could be requested! Seeing what we needed, he just did it! One example is the sales system he designed for being a stickler is proudly earned every day on every project.

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Bald is Beautiful!

St. Baldrick’s Foundation’s Big, Bold, Bald Head-Shaving Benefit was originally scheduled for the end of March, but due to COVID-19, the foundation adjusted gears. Over the past several weeks, several shavees have done virtual shaves. Recently, James Lantry and Jamie Yoakem took advantage of the loosened restrictions to shave at Big Ugly Brewing. The brewery’s garage doors were opened and, to comply with restrictions, a barber chair was moved outdoors. This year, despite COVID-19, Big Ugly Brewing raised over $6,800 of its $10,000 goal for St. Baldrick’s Foundation—the number one private funder of childhood cancer research.

In the coming weeks, Big Ugly Brewing hopes that others will come forward for a shave. One of the Beertenders, Will Forrest, said that he’d even shave his thick hair if the brewery raised another $1000 in the coming weeks. Donations can be made online at www.stbaldricks.org/events/bbb18.

“Just a little off the sides,” says Jamie Yoakem. This his fourth year participating.

Jim Lantry has his head shaved for the eighth year in a row by Cole Bryan

Jamie proves that bald is beautiful!

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com

Illustration by Daniel J. H. McDonald

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For more details: aspca.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/disaster-preparedness

Illustration by Daniel J. H. McDonald
William “Russell” Smith
Living an interruptible life

By Rob Lauer

It has been said that people can approach life in two ways. One is to live as if life’s objective is the creation of an outstanding resume. The focus is on accomplishments—degrees earned, jobs held, money and property accumulated, honors, awards and distinctions received. The other is to live with one’s eulogy in mind. The focus is on character, deep personal relationships, meaningful endeavors, and making the world a better place. Listen to Buddy Smith speak about his father, and it is evident that the latter was the case with William “Russell” Smith.

“Often people will say a lot of flattering things at a funeral as a way of honoring the person who passed on,” Buddy observes. “With my dad, I can say nothing but good things and still be totally honest.”

“No matter what my dad had going on in his life, when someone went to him—no matter what he was doing or in the middle of—he made that person feel as if he lived an interruptible life.”
—Buddy Smith

Buddy’s father, William “Russell” Smith, passed away past March 27th. Born in Richmond, he served in the Navy before founding Russell’s Heating, Cooling, Plumbing & Electric in 1977. Buddy is now the president and owner of this hugely successful company. When speaking about his father, however, business and financial success are barely mentioned.

“When we had Dad’s funeral, only nine people could attend because of the pandemic,” Buddy says. “When my nephew spoke, he said that no matter what my dad had going on in his life, when someone went to him—no matter what he was doing or in the middle of—he made that person feel as if he lived an interruptible life. ‘Grandpa lived an interruptible life,’ my nephew said. ‘That is something we should all strive to live.’

“That idea really stuck with me,” Buddy continues. “I wish I was not so hyper-focused on accomplishing what I need to get done on any given day. I need to develop the ability to realize that no matter what the situation is, the person right there in front of me is what is most important at that moment.”

Buddy remembers growing up feeling as if he, his sister and mother were the most important things in his father’s life. “Dad was always busy running the company, but I don’t ever remember him not being around for me,” Buddy recalls. “One of my earliest memories was of running service calls with him in the snow. I don’t think I did that very often, but the times when I went with him really stand out in my mind. I remember that when he had a garden, I would be at his side as he worked there. As a kid, I was really into skateboarding, and Dad was always totally supportive. He got me a railroad tie for doing tricks on. Whenever I learned a new trick, he would come outside to watch me do it and encourage me.

“I remember those things about him makes me aware of the way I father my three kids,” Buddy says. “Just the other night, my daughter wanted to jump on the trampoline with her. She’s really into gymnastics, and she wanted to teach me her new routine. I felt like a goofball, trying to keep up with her. It was getting pretty late in the evening, but we stayed out there jumping on the trampoline anyway. The neighbors were probably thinking, ‘What in the world is he doing out there?’ But it was important to my daughter—and it was important to me that the two of us spend time together. I know from the time I spent with my dad, how important that is for a kid.”

Buddy says that his father was a quiet, reserved, thoughtful man. “Dad kept a bunch of old notebooks filled with detailed notes he made about processes and procedures he had come up with for the company. He had a lot of very solid ideas—really good business plans. But when summer kicked in—the company’s busiest season—Dad felt he needed to get in the truck and put himself out there with the workers and the customers. He could have easily spent most of his time in his office, focusing on all those processes and procedures he had developed. But he put more value on his personal relationships with the people who worked for him and the people his company served. Most people outside of the company never realized that for him, the most important thing about the business was the people who worked with him. He became a mentor to them about personal issues, career advice—you name it. No matter how much of his time someone needed, he would give it to them.”

“There is a bit of irony in the fact that William “Russell” Smith made a name for himself installing and repairing heating and cooling systems. ‘He grew up in a house without running water and electricity’ Buddy shares. ‘When he was young, he chopped off a finger while chopping firewood. Growing up in those conditions, he could have used his business as a way to simply acquire wealth, but money was not what was most important to him.

“My dad went to Bible College at age 30, thinking that he would become a preacher,” Buddy explains. “Though he ended up taking another career path, he taught the Bible to a group from his church for years. To say his faith was important to him would be an understatement. Serving God and serving others was Dad’s top priority in life.

“After Dad retired, he and Mom worked with missionaries who served in third world countries but had to come back to the U.S. to maintain their citizenship. While they were in the States, my parents would house them, feed them, and help them raise money for their work. A lot of those missionaries were from places like the Philippines and New Guinea. They didn’t have vehicles here. So Mom and Dad would also drive them wherever they needed to go.

“Such generosity of spirit was an open secret to all who knew William “Russell” Smith.

“I miss my Dad,” Buddy concludes. “I am sad to know that a man like him is no longer here among us. But Dad had no regrets. He lived a good life and left behind a happy family. We knew he loved us, and he knew we loved him. What more could one want out of life?”
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A vision of youth

By Breonna Loxley

When people ask if I enjoy working at an animal shelter, my answer is always the same: it’s both rewarding and challenging. Every day I have the chance to protect, heal, and comfort abandoned animals until they are adopted into new homes. At the same time, I must also navigate the physical labor, never-ending task list, and emotional strain this environment entails. It’s a peculiar pinball machine of emotions, a constant contradiction of exhaustion and fulfillment. As hard as it is, I feel blessed to pursue a career I’m so passionate about. Animal rescue is a ceaseless war; it is one of many. The world is full of them: wars of human ignorance, negligence, and cruelty.

The coronavirus is unlike anything I’ve seen in my lifetime. I have no idea when the world will be back to normal, or if “back to normal” will really look normal at all. Maybe some things will never go back to the way they were. Maybe that would be for the better. In describing animal rescue as a ceaseless war, I believe that will be true for a very long time. I believe this because humans are slow to change and because many of us don’t become involved in a cause until it touches our lives in a personal way. This only makes sense; we only have so much time, energy, and resources to devote. There are so many deserving causes to rally behind. No one person can possibly contribute to them all. Why then do we so passionately fight these challenges with no clear end in sight?

We do it because things do get better. Despite our flaws, we have hope. Slowly, bit by bit, we make changes. This is the only way the world can heal. Our world needs healing—it needs every one of us to do our part. Life as we knew it has been on pause, which provides an opportunity to reset. We have a chance to reevaluate our lives, our communities, and our planet. What about our economy needs to change? What about our environmental impact needs to change? What problems has this pandemic forced us to pay attention to? I hope the time is near when we can once again congregate together. I hope we glean something from the hardships we’ve endured; I hope we learn; I hope we move forward in a better way.

Breonna Loxley is an animal care technician at an animal shelter. She is an avid artist, writer, and animal-lover. She lives with her parents, a younger brother, two cats, and one dog.
Nathalie Dupree

Personal stories
and beloved recipes from Southern Cooking’s Grande Dame

By Rob Lauer

O
nce there was a little girl who, feeling unnoticed and unwanted by her quarreling parents, decided to run away from home. She carefully prepared a lunch to sustain her on the journey ahead: a peanut butter sandwich (her favorite comfort food), a banana, some ginger snaps, and some Coke in her school thermos. Placing the meal in a brown paper bag, she left the house unnoticed. On the bicycle that her father had recently given to her, she pedaled off in the heat of the day toward the new life she imagined for herself. Her destination was a big house with white columns that she had often seen from the highway. She imagined a wealthy family lived there who would want a little girl like her. But as she pedaled up the hill and down the road, she realized that the house must have been farther away than she thought.

Pulling onto the dirt strip beside the road, she decided to eat her lunch. But the hot, dry peanut butter sandwich tasted like banana and stuck in her throat. The Coke was also hot, and her thermos had squashed the banana.

She began to doubt that the family in the big house would want her. Maybe they already had children. Toward the end of the day, the little girl returned home, hungry, tired, and broken in spirit. Her family hadn’t even noticed she had gone. Her parents divorced soon afterward. As life went on, the girl discovered other foods that were as comforting to her as her beloved peanut butter sandwich. She came to realize that food could not only nurture but bring solace to herself and others. When she grew up and moved to another country, she introduced the foods she loved to the people there.

That little girl was Nathalie Dupree—now internationally renowned as the Grande Dame of Southern Cooking. The author of 14 cookbooks and the host of more than 300 cooking shows that have aired on PBS, Food Network, and The Learning Channel, she introduced the foods she loved to the British. The teacher thought of apple pie as being British. Of course, I wrote, ‘As American as apple pie.’ My grade was marked down because of that answer. The teacher thought of apple pie as being British. There’s much in English cooking that is at the roots of American cooking. Maybe my teacher didn’t realize that.

Nathalie Dupree’s Favorite Stories and Recipes

At the time, the British had some notions about food that Nathalie found odd. “I learned that, according to the British, one was not supposed to put gravy on mashed potatoes — something that I found completely incomprehensible,” she says with a laugh. “I remember on one quiz we were given we had to complete the phrase. ‘As American as...’ Of course, I wrote, ‘As American as apple pie.’ My grade was marked down because of that answer. The teacher thought of apple pie as being British. That’s valuable advice for everyone—whether they’re running away from home or staying right where they are.

Nathalie graduated from Le Cordon Bleu, the only American in her advanced certificate class. It was at that time that she first met one of the institution’s most famous graduates, Julia Child. “I didn’t watch much television at the time,” Nathalie explains, “so I didn’t realize what an impact she was having on world history. Rulers have controlled millions by controlling the food source. People are not truly in control of their lives until they control how they nurture themselves. Everyone should find at least one thing they can cook without thinking. There’s a deep sense of satisfaction that comes from knowing you can feed yourself.”

“We timed this book to come out for my 80th birthday,” Nathalie explains, speaking from the Charleston, South Carolina home that she shares with her husband—author and journalist, Jack Bass. “In it, I tell stories about foods and relationships, broken love affairs, my parents reuniting after years of divorce, and dinner parties I’ve given over the years.”

Nathalie first experienced cooking for others while in college. Tasked with preparing meals for her dorm, she quickly discovered the priceless value of learning from mistakes made in the kitchen. When she confided in her mother her desire for a career in cooking, she was told, “Ladies don’t cook.”

Nathalie Dupree was followed by eight more series. Nathalie was undeterred. When her first husband, David Dupree, was transferred to London for work in the late 1960s, she set up a dessert business out of their flat. This gave her the experience she needed to gain entry at Le Cordon Bleu, where she earned a prestigious advanced diploma at age 30.

“It was while living in London and attending Le Cordon Bleu, that I realized how much I loved Southern food,” Nathalie recalls. “I missed the depth of its flavors. Except for curry dishes, well-seasoned foods were rare in London during the late 1960s and early 70s. I missed Southern home cooking, and I longed for grits. Of course, no one there had any idea what grits were.”

“Southern cuisine is music at the table. Its rhythms are those of that region’s seasons and people.” —Nathalie Dupree

Nathalie has sometimes compared Southern cooking to another beloved creation of the region: Jazz. “Like Jazz, Southern cooking draws from multiple cultures,” she says. “It’s tied to geography. What’s growing in the ground? What ingredients do the people have on hand? It grew out of improvisation. Southern cuisine is music at the table. Its rhythms are those of that region’s seasons and people.”

Whatever cuisine one may prefer, Nathalie firmly believes that everyone should learn how to cook.

“If someone loves to eat and doesn’t know how to cook, sooner or later, they’re going to realize that they are controlled by whoever is doing the cooking,” she points out. “Food is a control issue—the most powerful control issue there is. Look at world history. Rulers have controlled millions by controlling the food source. People are not truly in control of their lives until they control how they nurture themselves. Everyone should find at least one thing they can cook without thinking. There’s a deep sense of satisfaction that comes from knowing you can feed yourself.”

That’s valuable advice for everyone—whether they’re running away from home or staying right where they are.
Chesapeake Sports Club
College Scholarships Awarded to Local Students

Due to recent events, the Chesapeake Sports Club was, unfortunately, unable to host its luncheon honoring the winners of its scholarship awards. However, the winners deserve to be recognized for their outstanding achievements as student-athletes!

Alvin Nguyen, from Oscar Smith High School, was the recipient of the Robert G. “Buddy” Bagley Community Service Award. Emily Kroliczak, from Great Bridge High School, was the recipient of the Nathan T. Beck Scholarship.

Logan Rawlings from Atlantic Shores Christian
Carolina Brunns from Deep Creek High School
Savannah Etheridge of Grassfield High School
Emily Kroliczak from Great Bridge High School
Noah Temme of Great Bridge High School
Haley Roberts from Great Bridge High School
Sarah Harrell from Greenbrier Christian Academy

Chloe Barrett from Hickory High School
Shaniya Overton of Indian River High School
Alvin Nguyen from Oscar Smith High School
Amuli Alvarez of Oscar Smith High School
Caleb Hasty from Western Branch High School
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Publisher’s Note: We’re rerunning an old favorite—the second of the series. We hope you enjoy it too!

A Matter of Taste
By Nathalie Dupree

Cooking for a person and a cat can be Beautiful experience

Beautiful came as a kitten to the house after the divorce, brought by concerned friends trying to give solace. He became her cat immediately and named himself by running up and purring in response to, “You’re beautiful.”

The cat has stayed through the teenagers’ comings and goings. He knows when every member of the household gets home, sensing their presence before anyone else does. Even when they arrive in a taxi and slip quietly up the steps, he is there at the door, mewing to announce them before they enter. He is like a guard at his mistress's feet, slipping off the bed before a key turns in the lock.

Even when the eyes of his mistress are closed and she doesn’t stir, Beautiful knows when she is awake, and, just to play cat and mouse with her, he pads up to her and kneads the covers. They open to him, and Beautiful slides down, purring. They rest a few minutes.

Normally, he sets the time for breakfast, demanding his food by bounding up and rattling any papers or loose objects he can find. He returns to bed after eating, prancing on the coverlet, begging to be brushed.

When Sunday comes and life is slower, Beautiful behaves quite differently. Knowing there is a treat in the offing, he doesn’t nag to get fed dried food. His mistress brings in the paper and comes back to bed. Then, with Beautiful curled beside her or quietly at her feet, she sips tea or Coke and reads until hungry.

There was a time when the mistress dreaded a late breakfast alone. She ate mundane meals and lost weight. Now she plans her breakfast with the cat.

They debate each dish seriously. Sausage? Beautiful’s ears go back. How about sausage and apples or ham with pepper jelly? Or Coca-Cola sauce? He props himself up on his mistress’s foot, savoring her voice, translating her desires, anticipating his pleasure. How about Toad in the Hole? Or scrambled eggs? Or poached?

Finally, his mistress gets up. She opts for sausage and apples. The sausage is frying while she cuts the apple into wedges and adds it. She slips the eggs into the bread, in which she’s made a hole. By then, the sausage and apples are done.

Out comes a favorite tray, a crystal glass with juice, tea or Coke, depending on the day, perhaps a flower, china plates and napkins. Beautiful watches in silence, smacking his whiskered lips once or twice.

He jumps back in bed, nesting just below the food. He is sliced a bit of egg (good for his fur) and some sausage (no medical justification)—all put onto his own china plate on the floor. They both eat.

Satisfied, the mistress moves the tray down next to his plate on the floor, and finishes the paper as Beautiful delicately cleans his paws, one by one, and then his whole body in grave self-satisfaction.

The timing is just right. As his mistress leaves for church, he jumps to the window to supervise the birds.

Solved

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Fried Sausage and Apple

1/3 Pound bulk sausage
1 Sliced cooking apple, cut in wedges

Fry the sausage in a skillet. If in link form, prick first. When nearly done, add the apples and saute in sausage fat until nearly soft, but not mushy. Remove and drain on paper towels.

Feeds 1 person and 1 cat.

Toad in the Hole

4 Tablespoons butter
2 Slices bread
2 Large eggs

Melt the butter in a heavy skillet large enough to hold both slices of bread. With a biscuit cutter, cut a hole in the center of each bread slice. Place the bread in the butter and fry until browned on one side. Turn. Crack the eggs separately and drop into the holes. Cook slowly until the eggs are fried and the bread browned, three or four minutes. If the bread browns before the eggs cook, cover and let sit for about a minute until done.

Nathalie Dupree is the author of 14 cookbooks and syndicated columnist who, since 1986, has hosted hundreds of cooking shows on PBS, the Food Network, and the Learning Channel. Honored as the 2013 Woman of the Year from the French Master Chefs of America she is known for her understanding of Southern cooking and started the New Southern Cooking movement. Two of her books, New Southern Cooking and Mastering the Art of Southern Cooking, are on the 2017 Southern Living 100 best cookbooks of all time list.
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William “Russell” Smith

Living an interruptible life

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The late William “Russell” Smith shortly after founding Russell’s