

**A Force to
Contend
With**
*Chesapeake
Councilman
Don Carey
on the Detroit Lions,
the playoffs,
and the future*

Page 7



Asher's Room

"Hey there, everyone! My name is Asher, and I'm a 10-year-old writer and explorer of the world from the cozy confines of my room. You might think it's strange that I rarely leave my room, but thanks to my imagination and the Web, I go on some pretty wild adventures. I have this rare medical condition that keeps me indoors, but that doesn't stop me from discovering the wonders of history, unraveling the mysteries of the present, and even diving into the future! Through my stories, I travel far and wide, meet incredible characters, and experience life's big adventures, all from my very own room..."

Asher and the Lost City of Gold

"Hello, fellow adventurers! It's me, Asher, here with a thrilling journey from my room to the far reaches of the Amazon rainforest! Today, I stumbled upon a website about the legendary city of El Dorado, the lost city of gold, and instantly, my room transformed into a dense, green jungle.

With my trusty notebook and a map sketched on my whiteboard, I navigated through towering trees and chattering wildlife. I imagined the sounds of the jungle around me - the squawks of macaws and the rustling of leaves. The humidity and the scents of the rainforest seemed so real!

Suddenly, I encountered a wise old parrot who spoke of an ancient path leading to El Dorado. As I followed his directions, I dodged imaginary pitfalls and solved riddles etched on ancient stones. The adventure was thrilling!

Finally, after a day of navigating through the underbrush and deciphering clues, I reached a clearing. There, before my eyes, shimmered the golden city, basking in the glow of the setting sun. I had found El Dorado!

Returning to my room, I realized that the true treasure was the journey itself and the wonders of the imagination. Until our next adventure, keep exploring, friends!"



I love reading my friend's stories! If you're a writer, 12 or younger, have your parent or guardian email your short story to our editor at Editor@theShopper.com

Include your full name, age and grade. We might pick your story to print here! See you next month! -Asher

(Stories may be edited for spelling, grammar, and length)

Recently, I discovered this story by Brenden J. Cassel, who is 11 years old and in the fifth grade. I hope you like it as much as I do! Thanks for sharing your story with us, Brenden!—Asher

The Boy and the Dog

by Brenden J. Cassel
Age 11, Fifth Grade

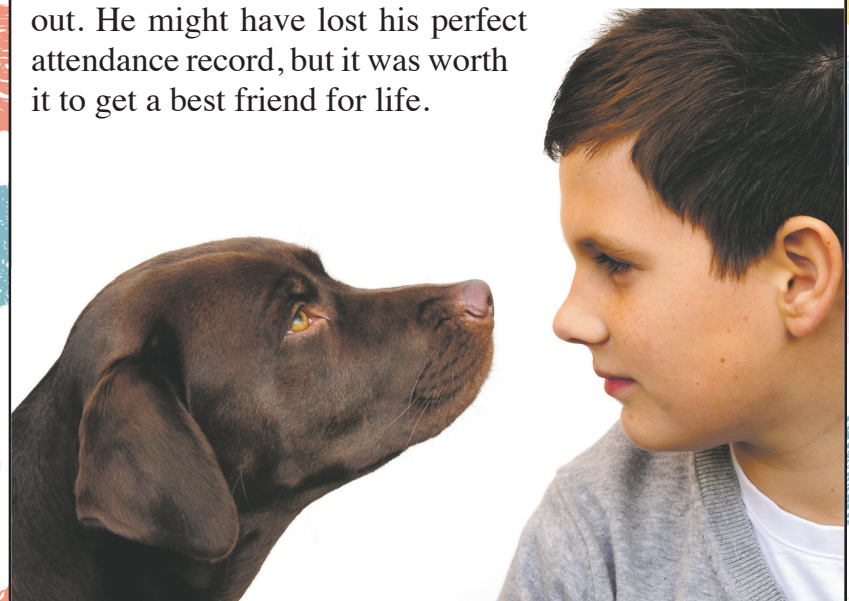
"I must get to school!" Jason thought as he ran to school in the pouring rain.

The rain painfully hit his skin as he ran up his street. As the rain hit him, a trash can filled with water came rolling down at him like an owl hunting a mouse. Jumping over the speeding trash can, he saw a glorious bike glistening in the little bit of light there was that day. He decided it was a good idea to "borrow" the bike (it really wasn't), so he hopped on and regretted it immediately.

Riding down the hill, Jason hit a puddle and went flying off of the bike. He skinned his knee, ripped his jeans, and the bike got all messed up. He looked at his watch and realized he only had seven minutes to get half a mile on his feet in the pouring rain, so he decided to go slow and steady.

When Jason started walking, he realized that wasn't the best idea either, but he only had five minutes, so he had to book it to get to school. He was right in front of the school when he saw a big chocolate lab looking lost and hungry. He had to make a choice: Get to school on time and keep his perfect attendance or help a dog in need. Of course, the obvious choice was to help the dog. He looked at the tag, and his name was Gus.

Jason took Gus to the nearest vet to get him checked out. He might have lost his perfect attendance record, but it was worth it to get a best friend for life.





Children First

By Dr. Becky Adams

Inventions That Impact Our Children's Lives

On a recent road trip, I listened to a fascinating interview on NPR with Roma Agrawal—structural engineer and author of the book, “Nuts and Bolts: Seven Small Inventions that Changed the World.” Those inventions include the nail, spring, wheel, magnet, lens, string, and pump. The inventions we see today are designed using one or more of these basic inventions.

As a child, I spent time each summer with my grandmother on a farm in Mathews County. She loved telling me about the things I took for granted in my city life that she had seen when they were first introduced on the market. It was fascinating learning she had seen the first automobiles, airplanes, Greyhound bus lines to Richmond, refrigerators, gas stoves, electricity in her home, ten-phone-party-lines, radio, television, penicillin (her husband died of pneumonia because there were no antibiotics available), A&P Grocery Store—and the list goes on—until her death in 1969.

Children grow up believing that the items around them have always been there.

Children grow up believing that the items around them have always been there. The only way they will know their history is for parents and grandparents to tell them about their lives when children.

When my three sons were young, there was an invention that had an interesting impact on their lives. As my first child was preparing for preschool, he was learning how to tie his shoelaces—a skill he needed to master to become more self-sufficient. One shoe seemed to work really well, but the other bothered him each time he tried. When buying new school shoes that August, I saw the cutest tennis shoes with Velcro® fasteners. What a saving grace! Getting ready for school was a breeze as my guys slipped on their shoes and pulled the straps across the top without struggling to tie laces. It cut several minutes off preparation time each morning. Velcro® was conceived in 1941 by a Swiss electrical engineer, George de Mestral, who noticed that cockleburs got caught in his clothing and in his dog's fur while walking in the Alps. It took him years to develop two pieces of fabric, one with thousands of tiny loops and the other with thousands of tiny hooks. The word Velcro® was a combination of the words velvet and crochet. By the 1970s and '80s, all kinds of things were being held together with Velcro®. The U. S. military actually used it.

The inventions that impact today's children and youth are primarily electronic: Whether phones, computers, tablets, or smartwatches, they all have a type of screen. We are all impacted by screens from morning until night. Even in our churches, we rely on screens instead of hymn books. One way I taught my children to read was to follow the words with my finger as we sang the hymns in church. That doesn't work with a screen.

Why not ask the children in your world what inventions have the most impact on their daily lives? As an adult, what impacts your life?

INNOVATIVE FOR MATERNITY CARE

Area moms prefer Chesapeake Regional's award-winning BirthPlace.*

Our larger postpartum rooms are open – with more amenities and added comfort for new moms and their families. We have an expanded Level 3 NICU too, with new technology and greater privacy.

Celebrate your baby's birth day with a team dedicated to providing the finest birthing experience.

To schedule a tour, call 757-312-6508 or visit ChesapeakeBaby.com.

the BirthPlace



CHESAPEAKE REGIONAL HEALTHCARE

Innovative for Life



*VHHA market share change for the designated Hampton Roads service area.

Quality, Value & Service



Quality Flooring Products

12 months free financing—\$699 minimum purchase. See store for details, with approved credit.

Family FLOORING
Floors to live on

Laminate, Carpet, Hardwood,
Tile & Vinyl Flooring

Specials

2 1/4" PLANK
SOLID HARDWOOD
\$5.49 sq. ft

PLUSH CARPET
\$1.29 sq. ft

LVP FLOATING
WATERPROOF
FLOORING
\$2.99 sq. ft

300 Battlefield Boulevard North • 757-548-4545
3916 Portsmouth Boulevard, Suite B4 (Stonebridge Plaza) • 757-673-8960
www.FamilyFlooringStores.com [Read our story at TheShopper.com](http://ReadourstoryatTheShopper.com)



the Point

by Jean Loxley-Barnard

Legacy and Friendship

Welcoming a New Era for The Shopper

After 43 years, over half of my life, I've handed the reins of *The Shopper*, my prized vocation, to Wendell Ward. I was curious about how I'd feel about this transition, but to my delight, I was thrilled!

While this job has been the love of my life, I am grateful to have the opportunity to pass it on to Wendell. Our history goes back to his childhood, when he and my son, Justin, were friends.

I was reminded of their long-standing friendship recently during a meeting at my home. As Justin ascended the stairs, he and Wendell caught sight of each other, and their joyous reunion was a sight to behold—they embraced and celebrated their reconnection with such genuine happiness. That moment of friendship reigniting right before my eyes is something I'll always cherish.

After 43 years, over half of my life, I've handed the reins of *The Shopper*, my prized vocation, to Wendell Ward

Forty-three years have been fulfilling, and surprisingly, even I felt it was time. It seemed as though I would never step away, perhaps even working until my last moments to prepare *The Shopper* for print. But now, I look forward to seeing my "baby" thrive and grow under Wendell's capable leadership. Watching him evolve from a young *Shopper* employee to completing his Doctorate this year has been a blessing.

This transition feels akin to the joy I find in my son's happiness with his wonderful wife, Julie, and the pride in being a grandparent to Breonna and Tristin. Passing the torch to Wendell adds another layer to these life-enriching experiences.

Moreover, Wendell has invited me to stay on as an advisor, a role that I accept with great honor. It's flattering to be valued by such a talented individual, and I love that I can continue engaging in what I've always loved.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to Wendell and to our readers for their kind support and loyalty. Your encouragement and the simple act of telling our clients, "I saw you in *The Shopper*," have been instrumental in our success. To my community, I express my deepest gratitude for your unwavering kindness, which has not only shaped my past but also brightens my future, a future I eagerly anticipate sharing with you all.

Join us as we raise a toast to the indomitable Jean Loxley-Barnard, our beloved founder, on her birthday!

On January 24th, laughter and cheer were had by all at the splendid First Watch in Greenbrier. It was a morning where the aroma of freshly brewed coffee mingled with the essence of camaraderie.

Amidst the delectable dishes and impeccable service, THE SHOPPER team momentarily tried (and charmingly failed) to steer clear of 'shop' talk, but were reminded once again that our bonds stretch far beyond the office.

The ambiance was as delightful as the company, making it a celebration to remember.

But the celebrations didn't stop there! Daughter Natalie, son-in-law Scott, as well as longtime best friend Elaine Thompson treated the birthday girl to a homemade dinner and cake.



Here's to many more, Jean!



The Women's Division of the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce Chesapeake will be hosting the 55th Annual Woman of the Year Banquet

Saturday, February 17, 2024

Social Hour starting at 6:00 pm -

Program and Dinner starting at 7:00 pm

Chesapeake Conference Center

Tickets can be purchased online at

www.womensdivisionchamberchesapeake.org



Publisher
Wendell Ward

Managing Editor
Rob Lauer

Production Manager
Jennifer Tolarchyk

Director of Sales
Eric Shapiro

Accounting Manager
Connie DiPrima

Writers
Cristi Sanchez
Kym Bach
Kathy VanMullekom

Photographer
Michele Thompson

Company Founder
Jean Loxley-Barnard

*Advertise in THE SHOPPER —
in print and on the web — and join the
narrative of progress and prosperity
that is uniquely Hampton Roads.
Be a part of the story that propels our
community forward. Call Today!*

(757) 317-5465

info@theshopper.com

Contact the Editor at
Editor@theShopper.com
www.TheShopper.com

Look for us on 

Now in its 43rd year, *THE SHOPPER* is a direct-mail 'monthly' serving six distinct communities in Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Northeastern North Carolina. With six editions and a circulation of 50,000*—*THE SHOPPER* serves as your window into the heart of our vibrant community. Each issue is a celebration of small business and local enterprise, each showcasing the innovative spirits and inspiring stories that make our hometown unique. With its in-depth profiles and uplifting content, *THE SHOPPER* is your insider's guide to the pulse of Chesapeake's economic landscape, providing information and insights tailored to enrich your connection to the place we all call home. Join our readership today and be a part of the story that propels our community forward. And advertise in *THE SHOPPER* — always a trusted resource for readers — where we've been amplifying the voices of ethical entrepreneurs since 1981.

Some images provided by Getty images.
Opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of *THE SHOPPER*. ©2024

Mythic Structure

by Wendell Ward



Pure Imagination: Crafting a Community Chronicle

Wonka: But Charlie, don't forget what happened to the man who suddenly got everything he always wanted.

Charlie: What happened?

Wonka: He lived happily ever after.

In the layered 1971 film *Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory* (nod to Roald Dahl), Charlie Bucket, a boy from the wrong side of the tracks, finds himself in "a world of pure imagination." In many ways, Charlie's story mirrors my own journey with *THE SHOPPER*, and with Jean Loxley-Barnard.

When I first joined *THE SHOPPER* (decades long ago), the world of publishing seemed as faraway and marvelous as Wonka's chocolate factory. *THE SHOPPER*, under Jean's stewardship, was a place of magic, where local stories came to life, and our community found a voice. Like Charlie, I stepped into this world with wide-eyed wonder, initially a small part of this grand adventure.

Jean, much like the whimsical and wise Willy Wonka, guided *THE SHOPPER* with a blend of creativity and vision—and a touch of enchantment—creating a space where imagination and hard work were the golden tickets to success, and where integrity was valued most of all.

And much like Charlie, who was tested and emerged as the heir to Wonka's wondrous world, my journey through the ranks of *THE SHOPPER*

has been a similar test. And it wasn't just about the challenges of publishing; it was a test of deeper understanding. It was about team spirit, purpose, ethical enterprise, entrepreneurship, commitment, community—and friendship.

In the film's crucial turning point, Charlie, in a righteous act, returns the *Everlasting Gobstopper* to Wonka. Here, Charlie demonstrates an uncorrupted spirit. And it was also here that Wonka realized Charlie was his rightful successor, the one who would not lead his dream-world astray.

As a writer here at *THE SHOPPER*, each entrepreneur I came to know, each nonprofit I explored, each gathering with neighbors and civic leaders I attended, and each story I wrote sought to contribute to *THE SHOPPER*'s uplifting ethos and its celebration of the people who make our community extraordinary.

The day Jean waved her final flag, entrusting me with *THE SHOPPER*'s legacy, was akin to the final scene in the film. Here, Charlie, Wonka, and Grandpa Joe smash through the factory ceiling in the flying *Wonkavator*, soar through the sky, and find themselves amazed at the beauty of their hometown, seen from a new perspective, looking down from the clouds.

"Look, Grandpa Joe!" Charlie cries. "There's my school! And our house! It's so beautiful from up here." It is a breakthrough, and a rise to new heights, fueled by trust—and a shared vision for the future.

Like Charlie, I, too, step into this new role with a heart full of optimism. My commitment to maintaining the integrity, creativity, and community focus that Jean so beautifully nurtured in *THE SHOPPER* is unwavering. I—along with our gifted and devoted executive team of Jen, Rob, Connie, and Eric—are here to build upon that foundation, and to take us to new heights.

Jean, much like Willy Wonka, created a world of wonder within *THE SHOPPER*—and for our readers. Here is a magical place where the chronicle of life in Hampton Roads comes alive, and where our community's heartbeat is echoed in every article, every column, every photo, and every story.

As I set out to lead our exemplary team, I carry with me the lessons I learned under Jean's tutelage: to always act with integrity, to cherish the trust of our readers, and to boldly venture into new territories without losing sight of our core values—as we celebrate the individuals, organizations, and businesses that make Hampton Roads a joyous place to live and work. As Charlie would say, "It's so beautiful from up here."

To Jean, my hero/trickster, thank you for entrusting me with the magic of your chocolate factory.

To our readers, I invite you to join us in this exhilarating new chapter. Together, let us soar beyond the factory ceiling, and explore the boundless possibilities that await us here in Hampton Roads—and in the pages of *THE SHOPPER*... our hometown magazine.



Meet the Mother of the American Valentine

Until the mid-1800s, sending Valentine cards was a costly, exclusively British tradition. One enterprising young American woman changed all of that.

In 1847, 19-year-old Esther Howland received a valentine from a British family friend. An aspiring artist, she was convinced she could make prettier cards. Asking her father—the owner of a stationery store in Worcester, Massachusetts—to order her supplies from New York City and England, Esther created a dozen Valentine samples. She talked her salesman brother into adding them to his inventory on his next sales trip for their father’s business. Hoping for

\$200.00 worth of orders, Esther was overjoyed when sales totaled over \$5,000! Hiring a few girlfriends, the resourceful teen set up a small assembly

line in her family’s spare bedroom. The cards quickly became a national sensation, making Esther a successful businesswoman in her early 20s. By 1870, when she incorporated her business as the New England Valentine Company, Esther Howland was renowned as “The Mother of the American Valentine.”



Your Pets Are Like Family To Us!



- Bathing
- Dental Care
- Microchipping
- Radiology (X-Rays)
- Vaccinations
- Preventive Care
- Boarding & Drop Off
- Hip Dysplasia/OFA/ PennHIP Evaluation
- Surgery
- Orthopedic Surgery
- Laser Therapy

Dr. Geoff Campbell, Dr. Rachel Mapes, Dr. Shane Mulderring, Dr. Heather Price, Dr. Mike Russo, Dr. Becky Oberlander and Dr. Lisa Hundley

233 Hillcrest Pkwy, Chesapeake
www.edinburghanimalhospital.com

432-0488



Read our story at TheShopper.com



Internationally renowned photographer and The Virginia Beach Restaurant Association Create a Perfect “Recipe”

So many of life’s memorable events happen over dinner in restaurants. To celebrate this fact of modern life, an exciting new exhibit, “The Recipe: A Photographic Journey Through the Virginia Beach Restaurant Scene,” is now on display at the Sandler Center for Performing Arts. Internationally renowned commercial photographer Nathan W. Beck partnered with The Virginia Beach Restaurant Association to create this dazzling exhibit of 60 photographs, each capturing some aspect of restaurant life—from food preparation to last call. The exhibit is open and free to the public during Sandler Center box office hours and scheduled events. After closing at Sandler Center, the exhibit will tour other locations across Virginia Beach and beyond. For more information on an exhibit tour of Nathan W. Beck’s work, contact Publicist Elizabeth Duncan-Hawker at 757-477-5691.



Renowned photographer Nathan W. Beck at the recent opening of the exhibit.

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com



A Force to Contend With

Chesapeake Councilman Don Carey on the Detroit Lions, the playoffs, and the future

By Rob Lauer

When the Detroit Lions defeated the Tampa Buccaneers 31-23 on January 21, advancing to play the San Francisco 49ers in the NFL Championship game, it looked as if they might make NFL history. The Lions hadn't taken to the field for an NFC game since 1992, and they are one of only four teams that have never made it to the Super Bowl. As the media was abuzz with speculations, no one anticipated the January 28th game with more excitement than Chesapeake City Councilman Don Carey.

Prior to being elected in 2020, Don had been a safety with the Lions for eight seasons, during which the team went to the playoffs three times, losing each time in the wild-card round: to New Orleans in 2011, to Dallas in 2014, and to Seattle in 2016. Over his 10-year professional playing career, Don received numerous awards for accomplishments on the field and in the community. Among these was the Walter Payton Man of the Year Award, presented by the Detroit Lions. Don retired from the NFL in 2019 and returned to his native Hampton Roads, settling with his wife, LaKeisha, and their children in quiet Hickory, far from the spotlight he'd been under for a decade. Though Don admits that he will always consider Hampton Roads home, his love for Detroit is undeniable when he recounts his first year playing for the Lions.

whose contributions improved life for others. Church on Sunday, where he really listened, gave him a depth of humility that belies his success and built a foundation of faith that continues as the central compass of his life.

When he realized he was good at football, he earned his way into a starting position at Norfolk State, and the scouts soon came calling.

He graduated with honors while transitioning to life in the NFL. After some typical team trading, he landed in Detroit for a long stint with the Lions.

Arriving in Detroit, Don, still in his twenties, quickly made plans for philanthropic involvement. He began with literacy outreach for adults in Detroit's notoriously difficult economy. When the program yielded positive results and was expanded into the public school system to help at-risk youth, the Don Carey REECH Foundation (Reaching, Educating, and Empowering Children) was born. REECH also hosts annual youth camps to expose children to STEM careers through the excitement of a sports venue. The camps earned rave reviews from parents who saw their children come home with a new interest in math.

As a professional athlete, Don was used to getting results. He brought that expectation and his relentless the-sky's-the-limit attitude to his community service.

"In the NFL, you either make the play or not—intentions don't score points," Don explains. "I'm data-driven in how I assess situations, and I objectively find out what needs to happen. Then, I go forth and achieve it. To me, community service is no different. If I set out to solve a problem, I expect to actually solve it."

Since arriving in Chesapeake, Don has thrown himself into philanthropic service, joining the Food Bank, the Chesapeake Rotary Club, and the Southeast Virginia Community Foundation. He and his family are active members of Calvary Revival Church in Great Bridge, serving wherever they are needed. His REECH foundation continues hosting annual camps, introducing children to the surprising number of STEM careers in Chesapeake. And, as Chesapeake City Councilman, Don is constantly engaged in all aspects of the city's life.

However, as the Detroit Lions headed toward their January 28th face-off with the 49ers, interest in Don's public service took a temporary backseat to his thoughts regarding the team's unexpected accomplishment.

"Here's the thing I love: there's no pressure on the Lions," Don said two days before the game. "They



have nothing to lose because they're not supposed to be here. No one expected them to make it this far. They're going up against the big bad 49ers, but they've had a chip on their shoulders for 30-plus years, so they're going to come in swinging. I think they have the potential to rip the hinges off the door."

For the first two quarters of the January 28th game, the Lions did indeed rip the proverbial hinges off the door. Playing a nearly perfect first half and taking a 24-7 lead, the Lions seemed on the way to their first Super Bowl. But San Francisco scored on its first five possessions of the second half, flipping the game on its head. The 49ers scored 27 consecutive points in the second half, defeating the Lions 34-31 and advancing to the Super Bowl.

"I'm extremely proud of the team for making it as far as they did," Don says. "I hated to see them lose. Everyone was so excited during the first half, so it was disheartening to see the defense fall apart in the second half. In the third quarter, the defense really struggled."

Despite his disappointment over the game's outcome, Don sees great things in the Lions' future. "You can see that Dan Campbell has created a culture and an expectation that makes the Lions a force to contend with," he points out. "I'll be interested to see what happens with the upcoming draft. The rookie players were the real standouts this year. I'm looking forward to seeing what they'll do next year."

"In the NFL, you either make the play or not—intentions don't score points...

To me, community service is no different.

If I set out to solve a problem, I expect to actually solve it."

—Don Carey

"When I got to Detroit, it was 2011, and everyone was still dealing with the impact of the Great Recession," Don recalls. "The only reprieve the citizens had was their love for their team. Because of the passion the people have for the Lions, I know the pulse of the city is electrifying right now."

Don's life reads like the quintessential American success story and could also be described as electrifying. His father, William, a Navy veteran, and his mother, Karen, raised him in a loving home. He recalls his no-nonsense father training him to have a strong work ethic and a keen eye for detail. Don was expected to be an achiever

"I'm extremely proud of the team for making it as far as they did..."

You can see that Dan Campbell has created a culture and an expectation that make the Lions a force to contend with."

—Don Carey

The Chesapeake Sports Club's January Luncheon

The Chesapeake Sports Club held its January luncheon at the Chesapeake Conference Center. Legends of Honor Yvonne and Melvin Upton were recognized. Heather McKeating, Director of Community Relations & Merchandise for the Norfolk Tides, was the guest speaker, and four outstanding student-athletes were honored.

Heather McKeating,
Director of Community
Relations & Merchandise
for the Norfolk Tides, and
Will Driscoll, Executive
Director of the Virginia
Sports Hall of Fame



Reagan Davis from Grassfield High School, outstanding student-athlete for cheering



Jordan Harris from Indian River High School, outstanding student-athlete in football

Elijah Woods from Hickory High School, outstanding student-athlete in boys volleyball



Amelia Matson from Stonebridge High School, outstanding student-athlete in girls volleyball



Legends of Honor Yvonne and Melvin Upton with 2024 Chesapeake Sports Club President Glenn Koonce

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com



Relationships

by Dr. Bill Austin

Snake in the Attic

**“Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.”
—Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Several years ago, Karen and I were invited to conduct a marriage retreat in the town where my parents grew up. The church that invited us is where my father and mother were married. The retreat was to be in a cabin located out in the country. This is where Karen and I were to sleep. When we were taken to the cabin, the gentleman in charge said as he was leaving, “Oh, if you hear a noise in the attic, don’t panic. We keep a snake up there to kill the rodents.” It was then that I noticed that the bed in which we were to sleep was located near the door to the attic. Even worse, there was a huge gap between the floor and the bottom of the door—just enough room for that snake to crawl through.

**If we suppress our emotions,
they get stronger
and do not go away.**

The night before the retreat, Karen and I visited my brother and his wife, who lived in a nearby town. When we returned to the cabin, we discovered a car had crashed into a nearby utility pole, knocking out all electricity in the area. Karen and I entered a dark cabin, fumbling around for candles and matches. I was so afraid we’d find that snake instead!

We lit the candles and placed them around our bed. I couldn’t sleep for fear the candles would blow out, leaving the room pitch dark. Karen, on the other hand, went to sleep right away. Later, she said, “If the snake bit me, I would be asleep.”

Every now and then, I heard movement in the attic. I just knew it was that snake moving around, so I stayed awake all night, praying that the snake wouldn’t visit me. What a joy to see the sunrise! Its light illuminated the dark corners that seemed so scary during the night. In the light of day, they were only corners.

It takes a lot of work to suppress what we do not want others to know. For instance, some people, when they go through the grieving journey, stuff their feelings away. They do not want to talk about them. They will say, “That was the past. We need to get over it.” Talking is a way to bring our feelings and hurt out into the light where we can deal with it. If we suppress our emotions, they get stronger and do not go away. By bringing them out into the light, we can begin healing.

Dr. Austin has decades of experience dealing with relationships. He charges clients on a sliding scale according to their ability to pay.

**Tidewater Pastoral Counseling
(757) 623-2700**

YOUR LOCAL, HOME REMODELING EXPERTS.



Woodards Mill,
Chesapeake

Schedule Your Free Consultation Today.
REMODELING TIDEWATER SINCE 1985

ADDITIONS • KITCHENS • BATHS
WHOLE HOUSE REMODEL

JerryHarrisRemodeling.com

JERRY HARRIS
REMODELING

757.545.4551



FLOORS UNLIMITED

FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED SINCE 1972!

757-547-7167 | 1020 Cedar Road
www.floorsunlimitedva.net



The team at Floors Unlimited is ready to help you!

- Factory Direct Pricing
- Fast Turn Around
- No Out-Sourcing
- One-Stop Shopping
- See our Google Reviews



Shaw FLOORS

COREtec®
the Original

Carpet
Vinyl Plank
Hardwood
Ceramic
Laminate
Installation



SEE AND FEEL THE DIFFERENCE
SOLIDS | TONALS | ACCENTS

Read our story at www.theshopper.com

History Alive

Shopper Managing Editor Rob Lauer recently interviewed historical re-enactor Steven Alexander for the TV program *Portsmouth Now*. Steven is a talented historical re-enactor from History Alive, an organization dedicated to bringing local history to life. On this episode of *Portsmouth Now*, Steven portrayed early 20th-century local journalist Jeffrey T. Wilson and James Fayette, whose work as a Revolutionary War spy led directly to the American victory at Yorktown.



From left: Steven Alexander as Jeffrey T. Wilson with Rob Lauer



Steven Alexander as Revolutionary War spy James Fayette

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com



Match the Sparkle in Her Eyes this Valentine's Day



701 North Battlefield Boulevard
757-436-1920

Lona JEWELERS

MASTER JEWELER
BRILLIANCE YOU DESERVE™

Come in before Valentine's day for your **FREE** box of chocolates with a minimum \$100 jewelry purchase



GOOD TIMES: A Reflection on Black Sitcoms of the 1970s

By Wendell Ward



The 1970s marked a defining moment in American television history with the emergence of Black sitcoms, heralding a significant cultural shift. This period wasn't just an evolution in the realm of entertainment; it signified a profound cultural transformation. In a nation still processing the outcomes of the Civil Rights Movement, these sitcoms provided a much-needed glimpse into the lives, laughter, and challenges of Black

Americans—something that had been largely absent from mainstream media. These shows did more than entertain; they played a crucial role in challenging and reshaping societal perceptions, contributing to the vision of a colorblind society as envisaged by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Among this influential wave, “The Jeffersons,” “Sanford and Son,” “What’s Happening,” and “Good Times” stood out not only for their humor

and relatability but also for their candid portrayal of pressing issues. They transcended mere entertainment, acting as reflections of American society, showcasing its complexities and its capacity for progress.

Let us revisit these iconic shows and explore their cultural significance, remembering the characters and episodes that profoundly impacted a generation and American culture as a whole.



John Amos as James Evans, Sr. and Esther Rolle as Florida Evans in *Good Times*

Good Times

“Good Times,” an iconic sitcom that debuted in 1974, broke new ground in American television. Set in a Chicago housing project, the series revolved around the Evans family, offering a gritty yet heartfelt portrayal of life in an urban, low-income African American community. The show was groundbreaking for its time, addressing issues such as poverty, unemployment, and racial inequality while still infusing humor and warmth into its narrative.

Central to “Good Times” was the character of James Evans Sr., portrayed by John Amos. As the patriarch of the Evans family, James was a beacon of strength, resilience, and integrity. He was more than just a character on a show; he was a father figure and role model for many, especially those in homes without a father. His hardworking, disciplined, yet loving nature resonated deeply with viewers, making him an emblem of paternal fortitude.

The episode that dealt with James Evans Sr.’s untimely death in a car accident was a poignant moment in television history. The shock and sorrow of this episode were profoundly felt across the nation, especially among Generation X viewers. As someone who grew up in a home with a single mother, like many others, the loss of James felt personal. It was as if a guiding light in our lives had been extinguished. His character’s departure from the show was not just a storyline development; it

was a moment that underscored the fragility and challenges of life in the contexts we, as viewers, understood all too well.

James Evans Sr.’s character and his tragic exit from “Good Times” left an indelible mark on American television and on the hearts of those who saw in him a figure of aspiration, stability, and warmth.

Sanford and Son

“Sanford and Son,” premiering in 1972, swiftly carved out its place in American television history as a trailblazing sitcom. The show revolved around Fred Sanford, a cantankerous but endearing junk dealer, and his son Lamont, portraying their daily life in the Watts neighborhood of Los Angeles. The duo’s dynamic, filled with humor and occasional strife, offered a candid look into the life of a working-class African American family, a narrative that was then rarely seen on TV.

Fred Sanford, played masterfully by Redd Foxx, was the heart of the show. His character, brimming with wit and often grumpy demeanor, resonated with audiences. Beneath his rough exterior, Fred possessed a depth and vulnerability that made him incredibly relatable. This complexity was beautifully showcased in an episode where Fred’s tough façade crumbles as he confronts his loneliness and fears, revealing a softer, more introspective side.

“Sanford and Son” was pioneering in its portrayal of the everyday life of Black Americans. It didn’t gloss over the challenges faced by the father-son duo, including financial struggles and societal prejudices, but it approached these issues with a blend of humor and realism. The show struck a chord with viewers across racial and socioeconomic lines, using comedy as a tool to shed light on larger social issues while maintaining its entertainment value. In doing so, “Sanford and Son” played a significant role in shaping the landscape of American sitcoms and remains a cherished symbol of 70s television.



Redd Foxx and Demond Wilson in *Sanford and Son*

The Jeffersons

“The Jeffersons,” a groundbreaking sitcom that debuted in 1975, was more than just a spin-off of “All in the Family.” It became a cultural icon in its own right, resonating deeply with American audiences. The show chronicled the life of George and Louise “Weezy” Jefferson, an African-American couple who, through hard work and determination, ascend from working-class origins to a prosperous life in a predominantly white, upper-class neighborhood. This narrative of upward mobility was more than a plot device; it symbolized the aspirations and successes of a generation striving for the American Dream.

George and Weezy Jefferson emerged as quintessential symbols of this dream. Their move to the East Side in the pilot episode wasn’t just a change of address; it represented breaking racial and economic barriers. The Jeffersons’ luxurious apartment became a stage where issues of race, class, and privilege were explored with a blend of humor and seriousness that was rare for its time.

The show navigated these themes through the lens of comedy but never shied away from the underlying tensions and realities of a changing America. It was a delicate balance: addressing serious social issues while remaining entertaining and accessible. By doing so, “The Jeffersons” didn’t just reflect a changing society; it became an integral part of the narrative of progress, challenging viewers to confront and reconsider their own biases and perceptions.



Sherman Hemsley and Isabel Sanford of *The Jeffersons*

What’s Happening!!

“What’s Happening!!,” a lively and endearing sitcom that debuted in 1976, captivated American audiences with its spirited portrayal of teenage life, set against the backdrop of the Watts neighborhood in Los Angeles. The show focused on the daily experiences and adventures of high school student Roger “Raj” Thomas, his sassy younger sister Dee, and his inseparable friends Dwayne and Rerun. This delightful quartet brought to life the trials and triumphs of adolescence with a unique blend of humor and heart.

At the center were Raj, the aspiring writer and often the voice of reason, Dwayne—with his unforgettable “Hey, Hey, Hey!” greeting—and the ever-enthusiastic dancer, Rerun. Their tight-knit friendship and the relatable situations they navigated resonated deeply with audiences. A particularly memorable episode that captures the essence of their bond involves the group facing a moral dilemma, highlighting themes of loyalty, integrity, and the consequences of choices.

Through its portrayal of everyday challenges, family dynamics, and the pursuit of dreams, “What’s Happening!!” struck a chord with its young viewers. The show’s ability to address real-life issues faced by teens, such as peer pressure and responsibility, while maintaining a light and humorous tone, made it not just entertaining but also a valuable mirror to the life of American adolescents. “What’s Happening!!” thus stands as a cherished and influential piece of 1970s television, celebrating the vibrancy and complexity of teenage life.



Danielle Spencer as Dee Thomas in *What’s Happening!!*

The 1970s Black sitcoms “The Jeffersons,” “Sanford and Son,” “What’s Happening!!,” and “Good Times” were not just milestones in television; they were catalysts for cultural change. These shows broke barriers, offering a new lens through which American audiences could view the complexities, joys, and challenges of Black life. By bringing humor, heart, and honesty to the forefront, they opened doors to conversations about race, class, and the American Dream, aligning with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s vision for society: “I have a dream

that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Their impact went beyond mere entertainment; they were pivotal in fostering a deeper understanding of the universality of human experience. These sitcoms offered relatable and multifaceted characters that transcended stereotypes, allowing viewers from all backgrounds to connect with their stories on a human level. Today, their legacy endures, resonating with new generations. The humor and

humanity that characterized these shows continue to influence modern television, reminding us of the power of storytelling in bridging divides and nurturing empathy.

As we reflect on their contribution to American culture, it’s clear that these sitcoms were more than just popular TV shows. They were, and continue to be, significant cultural artifacts that reflect and shape our ongoing journey toward a more compassionate and understanding society.

The Real Story: Why John Amos was written out of “Good Times” in season four, at the height of the show’s popularity.

In the world of TV drama, John Amos’ exit from the hit sitcom “Good Times” still turns heads. Playing the pivotal role of James Evans for three seasons, Amos’ character met an unexpected off-screen end as the fourth season kicked off, marking his dramatic farewell from the show.

Spilling the tea, Amos once revealed that his beef with show creator Norman Lear boiled down to two major issues. First, he dished that the sitcom was way too obsessed with JJ, the laugh-a-minute character, sidelining the deeper

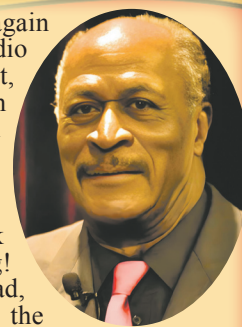
storylines and character arcs.

Then, turning up the heat, Amos aired his grievances about the all-White writers’ room. He felt he had the inside scoop on what a Black family on TV should really look like, unlike the writers. His no-holds-barred approach in raising these issues eventually hit a sour note with Lear.

But here’s the twist: Post-showdown, Lear and Amos didn’t burn their bridges. In his memoir “Even This I Get to Experience,” Lear opened up about their creative clash and Amos’ subsequent exit. Amos, for his part, admitted he wasn’t always the smoothest in making his points, but Lear got the gist eventually.

Capping off this saga with a surprise reunion,

Amos and Lear teamed up again for “Live in Front of a Studio Audience.” This project, reimagining classics from “Good Times” and “All in the Family,” saw Amos as the only original cast member to come back, albeit in a new role. Talk about a Hollywood ending! Despite their rocky road, Amos and Lear showed the world that mutual respect and a flair for collaboration can outshine even the toughest of Tinseltown tiffs.





On the Front Porch with You

by Rob Lauer

Back When Life Made Sense?

People often ask in exasperation, "Can't we go back to the time when life made sense?"

"And when was that exactly?" I'm tempted to ask them. Strolling down memory lane is pleasant because hindsight, being 20/20, makes sense of things that were once confusing. But succumbing to the myth of an idealized past can be dangerous. History is filled with examples of individuals, nations, and empires that brought about their own ruin by doggedly rejecting the present and trying to force a return to "the way things used to be."

Were there good things in the past? Of course; it goes without saying. Were there bad things in the past? Absolutely. Was there an equal balance between the two? Never. For every segment of the human family who imagined themselves blissfully happy at any particular time, there was another segment suffering.

To spread the bliss and eliminate the suffering is the great objective of human striving. But it's difficult to strive for a better future if we're convinced the past is preferable and that those who weren't happy "in the good old days" were either lazy, willfully ignorant, or simply troublemakers. Speed down life's highway with one's gaze steadily fixed in the rearview mirror, and one will crash into the ditch at the side of the road—otherwise known as "the wrong side of history."

That's become a popular phrase in recent years—"the wrong side of history," and our understanding

of it is overly simplistic. There's a tendency to think of history as a battle over issues; one view of an issue is right, the other wrong; those holding the view deemed "wrong" will land on the wrong side of history when those holding the "right" view inevitably carry the day.

The idea that history has a right side was somehow deduced from Dr. Martin Luther King's famous statement: "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice." But Dr. King never mentioned sides or history; he spoke of something eternal—the long arc of the moral universe. That arc doesn't have sides or take sudden turns; over time, it bends.

What we do know is that the future will absolutely be different from the present—just as the present of a century ago was different from that of the prior century.

The answer to the question, "Will the future be better or worse than the present?" is "Yes." It will be better for some and worse for others. The number of people for whom it will be better will depend on the number of us, here and now, who act with integrity upon the lessons that both our history and the present moment can teach us.

So, let's continue driving down the road, our destination being to spread the bliss and eliminate suffering. Focus on the road ahead, notice landmarks as we pass them, take occasional glances in the rearview mirror for the sake of perspective, and remember: time moves in one direction only.

Rob Lauer is an award-winning, nationally-produced and published playwright

the Write Sense



By Betsy Patterson
Master Graphoanalyst

Maybe it's Your First Time...

...to discover how you react to emotional experiences, events, or situations.

(Part 1)

If your written **upstrokes** have a backhand slant as they leave the baseline, you are usually very reserved and not likely to express your thoughts or share feelings with others. If you feel safe and secure, you *backhand slant* might be more outgoing.

Vertical, or near vertical upstrokes

Vertical or near vertical upstrokes show you to be poised; your decisions are controlled, and your objectivity adds rationally to your thinking rather than bias. You have a need for privacy.

Moderate slant A moderate slant indicates you will react with consideration and empathy, modified with common sense. You are not "ruled" by your feelings.

A more forward slant (but not extreme) indicated that you are warm and responsive. This adds zest to your activities. You like and understand people.

More forward slant

Variable slant A variable slant indicates that others may find it difficult to predict how you will react. You may react in several of the above ways depending upon the circumstances.

Remember, the upstroke slant indicates how you *react* to emotional situations. As an adult, you have developed controls (coping mechanisms) that prevent you from *expressing* your emotional reactions. This is not so true with children or immature adults.

757-421-9123



Furniture That Fits Your Life!


casual home
furniture

Read our story at TheShopper.com

Come see us! Mention that you are a friend of *The Shopper* and get an additional discount

Jodi & Josh Briseno



(757) 663-7000 | 413 Centerville Turnpike South • Chesapeake | www.mycasualhome.com

The Chesapeake Sports Club 11th Annual Jamboree

NFL Legend Rocky Bleier to be keynote speaker at the Chesapeake Conference Center on March 28th

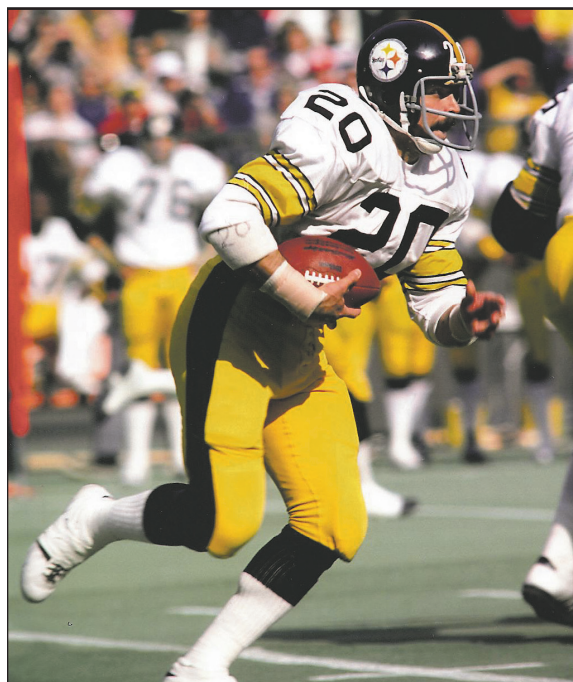
By Rob Lauer

The Chesapeake Sports Club Jamboree is the organization's signature annual event, offering Hampton Roads sports fans the opportunity to meet and hear some of professional sports' most outstanding athletes. Over the past 12 years, the Jamboree's keynote speakers have included legendary sports figures such as baseball great Johnny Bench, Major League Pitcher Goose Gossage, and NBA Star Alonzo Mourning. This year's Jamboree, being held on March 28th at the Chesapeake Conference Center, will be no exception when the Chesapeake Sports Club welcomes NFL legend Rocky Bleier to its podium.

Rocky Bleier played in the first four Steeler Super Bowl victories in 1975, '76, '79, and '80. He caught the touchdown pass from Terry Bradshaw that gave Pittsburgh a lead it would never relinquish in Super Bowl XIII. He also recovered Dallas's onside kick in the closing seconds, sealing the Steelers' victory. At the time of his retirement in 1980, he was the Steelers' fourth all-time leading rusher, with 3,865 rushing yards, 136 receptions for 1,294 yards, and 25 touchdowns.

But what makes Rocky Bleier such a compelling figure are the optimism, sense of humor, and steadfast determination he displayed in the face of soul-crushing setbacks on the road to those accomplishments.

As a teenager, Rocky was a three-time all-state running back at Xavier High School in Wisconsin, where he starred in football and basketball and served as team captain in football, basketball, and track.



Rocky Bleier, starting running back for the Pittsburgh Steelers

Bleier then attended the University of Notre Dame, where he was a standout running back for the Fighting Irish under legendary coach Ara Parseghian. During his junior year at Notre Dame in 1966, the Fighting Irish won the national championship. In his senior year, Rocky went on to serve as team captain.

Not fitting the ideal of what a running back should look like, Bleier had to run harder and play smarter to stand out. He was drafted by the Pittsburgh Steelers in 1968, but despite his drive and ability, the team only considered him a late-round pick. Before his first season playing in the NFL ended, he was drafted again—this time by the United States Army during the height of the Vietnam War.

Rocky volunteered for duty in South Vietnam and was shipped out to Vietnam in May 1969. In August, while on patrol in Hiep Duc, Rocky was wounded in the left thigh by an enemy rifle bullet when his platoon was ambushed in a rice paddy. While he was down, an enemy grenade landed nearby after bouncing off a fellow soldier. When Rocky tried to leap over it, it exploded, sending shrapnel into his lower right leg. "The hand grenade blew one-half shoe size out of my right foot," Rocky later explained.

Rocky's courageous service earned him the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star, but the honors came with soul-crushing news. While recovering in a hospital in Tokyo, doctors told him that the injuries were so severe that he would never play football again. His professional football career seemed to have ended before it began.

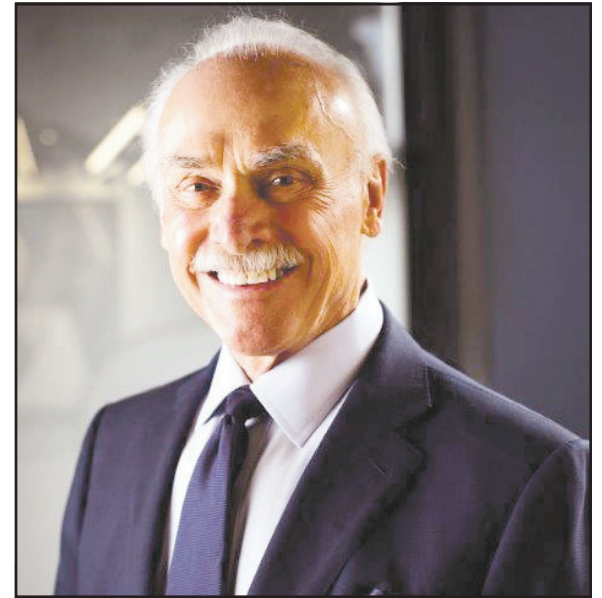
**"Don't lose sight of your dreams...
Truly believe that greatness is on
the horizon and your best days
are ahead of you."**

—Rocky Bleier

In the face of this potentially life-changing setback, hope came in the form of a postcard to Rocky from Steelers Owner Art Rooney. It read simply: "Rock, the team's not doing well. We need you." Regarding Rooney, Rocky later said, "When you have somebody take the time and interest to send you a postcard, something that they didn't have to do, you have a special place for those kinds of people." Rocky was determined to return to the NFL despite what the doctors told him.

After several surgeries, Rocky was discharged from the Army in July 1970 and began informal workouts with Steeler teammates. Weighing only 180 pounds and unable to walk without pain, he was put on injured reserve for the season. Looking back on his struggles at the time, Rocky said, "I didn't want to face the truth. During that training camp, I convinced myself that I actually had a chance to make the ball club. I forced myself to ignore that I still had a noticeable limp."

He spent several seasons trying to get increased



Vietnam veteran and NFL great Rocky Bleier

playing time and was waived on two occasions. But Rocky never gave up. For more than two years, he drove himself, later saying he worked hard so that "sometime in the future you didn't have to ask yourself 'what if?'" Little by little, he overcame obstacles and fought his way back. An offseason training regimen during the summer of 1974 brought Rocky back to 212 pounds, earning him a spot in the Steelers' starting lineup. With Rocky as their starting running back, the Steelers went on to win four Super Bowls, becoming the greatest football team of the 20th century.

After retiring from the NFL, Rocky began the lessons he learned from his years wearing a Steelers uniform and his time in military service, first in his 1980 book, "Fighting Back" (later made into a popular film starring Robert Urich and Art Carney) and then as a powerful motivational speaker.

"Don't lose what makes you the person you are," Rocky tells audiences. "Don't settle for mediocrity. Don't lose sight of your dreams. Believe in yourself and what you know you can accomplish. Don't let doubt and uncertainty rob you of the successes you've had in the past and steal the great things to come. Truly believe that greatness is on the horizon and your best days are ahead of you."

This year's Chesapeake Sports Club Jamboree is an opportunity not only to enjoy a great meal while meeting and hearing this inspiring athlete but also to help young local athletes. Proceeds from the ticketed event support scholarships the sports club gives annually to talented and deserving high school athletes throughout Chesapeake.

"With four Super Bowl rings, a Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart, Rocky Bleier is unique among our keynote speakers," Steven Johnson, Sports Club Board Member and Past President, says. "For service members, vets, first responders, and those with special needs, Rocky's life serves as a lesson in determination and commitment. We're hoping everyone will come out and share an inspirational evening with this remarkable NFL legend."

**The Chesapeake Sports Club
11th Annual Jamboree**

**6:00 pm, March 28, 2023
at the Chesapeake Conference Center**

For tickets visit

www.chesapeakesportsclub.com

The Krypton Winter Games

CrossFit Krypton hosted the Krypton Winter Games, a two-day event with all proceeds going to benefit Young Life Chesapeake and Trails of Purpose. CrossFit athletes from across Hampton Roads and as far away as Washington, D.C., came out and gave it their all to support these local charities.



CrossFit Krypton Owners Chuck, Kim, and Ben Smith



Buffy Banner, Lisa Copeland, and Michele Morgan are "Three Chicks" from Three Ships Collective



Photo courtesy of Kaila Steele

Lauren Sencio

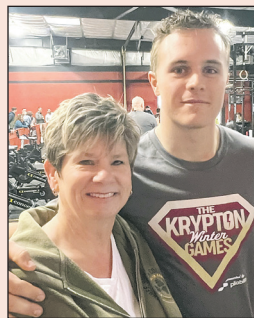


Britney Smith, Lauren Sencio and Heather Stemler made up team Phoenix Rhino Fatale from Three Ships Collective

Ryan Smith, owner of Three Ships Collective CrossFit Gym, and his parents, Cathy and Russ Smith, came to cheer on the athletes representing the gym



JB Anderson, Associate Area Director of Young Life Chesapeake, with his wife, Julianne (right), and their twin girls, Everly and Quinn, along with Kim Smith of CrossFit Krypton



Jennifer Tolarchyk with Krypton Games volunteer Ian Smith

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com



EDINBURGH FAMILY DENTISTRY

Creating Beautiful Smiles With A Personal Touch

What do you look for in a dentist?

Someone who cares? Takes time to listen to your concerns? Educates you? Is compassionate?

LOOK NO FURTHER!

The dentists at Edinburgh Family Dentistry are down-to-earth, compassionate, skilled dentists who diagnose based on need and not dollar signs! They all have a listening ear and always do the right thing for their patients.



EDINBURGH FAMILY DENTISTRY

Where you're never just a number — You're a friend!

- Same-day Crowns
- Comprehensive Dentistry
- Gentle, Compassionate Team
- Digital X-rays & Imaging
- Quiet Electric Handpieces
- Family Oriented (all ages welcome)
- Emergencies Seen Promptly
- TVs in Treatment Rooms
- Complimentary WiFi
- Insurance Friendly (call us about your plan)
- Flexible Financing Options



Come meet our friendly staff!

200 Carmichael Way - Suite 612 • Chesapeake

(757) 204-7210

Monday - Friday 8-5



"Like" us on Facebook!

www.EdinburghFamilyDentistry.com

Changing the World One Word at a Time

*The mission of Chesapeake Native
and International Best-selling Writer
Kwame Alexander*

By Rob Lauer

Like many Chesapeake kids in the late 1970s and early '80s, Kwame Alexander was more interested in playing the newest video games than reading great literature or following world events. Unlike other kids, he was the son of a renowned local historian, Dr. E. Curtis Alexander and Barbara Alexander.

"I grew up in this household where it was all about instruction, how to become a better person and how to make the world better," Kwame recalls. "For a kid, who cares? I just wanted to play Atari video games and play with my friends."

Kwame's attitude changed when he read Mohammed Ali's biography and discovered that books could be "cool" and exciting. From then on, he says "I immersed in this literature that was page-turning, but it was teaching me. Because of that, coupled with my parents, I was destined for a life of trying to inform and instruct through inspiration."



**All that is good and
accomplished in this world
takes work and a little chaos.**



After graduating from Great Bridge High School, Kwame attended Virginia Tech, where he began premedical studies. But when he took a writing class with award-winning poet Nikki Giovanni, his passion for words reignited, changing the trajectory of his life. Rather than pursuing a medical career, Kwame became the internationally beloved best-selling author of 36 books.

"I would not be the writer I am without my literary mother, Nikki Giovanni," Kwame said as the guest speaker at Virginia Tech's 2021 spring commencement. "Virginia Tech gave me the opportunity to sit at the feet of one of the greatest writers to walk the planet, which I did for three consecutive years. It's unheard of to have that opportunity."

Kwame's best-selling books include "Swing," "Becoming Muhammad Ali," "Rebound," the Newbery Honor-winning picture book "The Undeclared," and the Newbery Medal-winning novel "The Crossover." As a poet, Kwame is the recipient of The Lee Bennett Hopkins Poetry Award. Other honors include The Coretta Scott King Author Honor, three NAACP Image Award Nominations, and the 2017 Inaugural Pat Conroy Legacy Award. A regular contributor to NPR's "Morning Edition," he also wrote and, with NBA star LeBron James, executive produced the Disney+ TV series "The Crossover," based on his best-selling novel.

Having inherited his parents' commitment to making the world better, Kwame led a delegation of 20 writers and activists to Ghana, where they delivered books, built a library, and provided literacy professional development to 300 teachers as a part of LEAP for Ghana, an international literacy program he co-founded in 2012. Kwame regularly speaks and presents workshops at conferences across the United States. He has also traveled the world, planting the love of literature in such places as Brazil, Italy, France, and Turkey.

"I love words,"

Kwame says. "That's what I do. That's my avocation and my vocation; it's my hobby; it's my love; it's my life-long passion."

Kwame believes, heart and soul, that poetry is the basic building block of all writing and has the power to change the world. He uses it

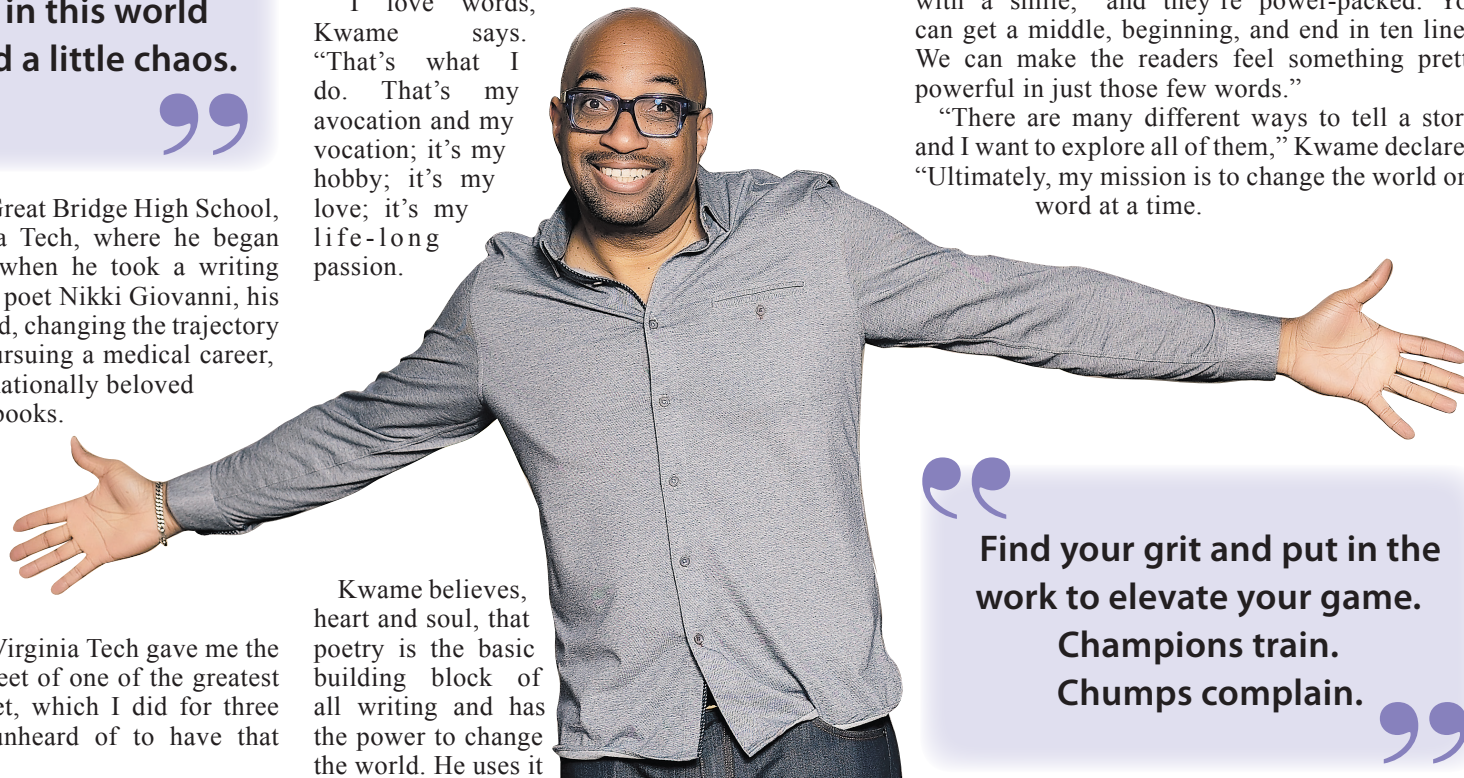


to inspire and empower young people through his Book-in-a-Day literacy program, which has created more than 3,000 student authors at 69 schools across the U.S., Canada, and the Caribbean.

Kwame's ability to tap into his deeply personal sense of joy and use it to connect with others has made him an international favorite with audiences of all ages. Last April, he returned to his hometown to speak at The Chesapeake Forum. "We were so pleased to have Kwame Alexander return to his Chesapeake roots," Chesapeake Forum President Becky Adams says. "He is an outstanding example of how all of our students who choose to work hard and develop their talents can change the world."

Kwame Alexander's love of writing is infectious. He speaks with such joyous enthusiasm that even non-fans of poetry are bound to smile when listening to him. "Poetry is like the entire human soul distilled into very few words," he explains with a smile, "and they're power-packed. You can get a middle, beginning, and end in ten lines. We can make the readers feel something pretty powerful in just those few words."

"There are many different ways to tell a story, and I want to explore all of them," Kwame declares. "Ultimately, my mission is to change the world one word at a time."



**Find your grit and put in the
work to elevate your game.
Champions train.
Chumps complain.**





Madam C. J. Walker: An American First

— Rob Lauer

hardships. Orphaned at six, married at 14, and widowed at 20, she worked as a laundress in St. Louis to support herself and her two-year-old daughter. In St. Louis, while juggling her job and night school, she first met Charles J. Walker, the man who became her second husband and inspired the name of her eventual empire.

After enduring a rare scalp disorder, Walker developed a homemade remedy to prevent further hair loss. This led her to create a line of hair care products and scalp treatments specifically for Black women, which she called the “Walker System.” At first, she sold her homemade products directly to Black women, using a personal approach that won her the trust of loyal customers. Later, she employed teams of saleswomen, whom she called “Beauty Culturalists” to sell her products.

Walker became one of the nation’s best-known African Americans. The financial success of her business enabled her to live in homes that were a far cry from the humble dwelling of her Louisiana childhood. Walker’s country home, Villa Lewaro, in Irvington-on-Hudson, was designed by Black architect Vertner Tandy, while her Manhattan townhouse, later in the 1920s, became a salon for members of the Harlem Renaissance.

Besides being a savvy entrepreneur, Walker was a dedicated philanthropist. She established clubs for her employees, encouraging them to give back to their

communities and rewarding them with bonuses when they did. During a time when Black women had limited business opportunities, Walker promoted female talent, stipulating in her company’s charter that only a woman could serve as its president.

Madam Walker died at age 51 from complications related to hypertension at her country home in Irvington-on-Hudson on May 25, 1919. Her plans for her Indianapolis headquarters, the Walker Building, were carried out after her death and completed in 1927. Today that building is home to the Madam Walker Legacy Center—a non-profit organization dedicated to providing cultural education, promoting social justice, supporting entrepreneurship, and empowering youth to become the next generation of entrepreneurs and civic leaders.



Madam C. J. Walker—America’s first Black woman millionaire—made her fortune from a line of homemade hair care products for Black women. A talented entrepreneur with a knack for self-promotion, the self-made millionaire generously used her wealth to fund scholarships for women at the Tuskegee Institute and support the work of the NAACP, the Black YMCA, and other charities.

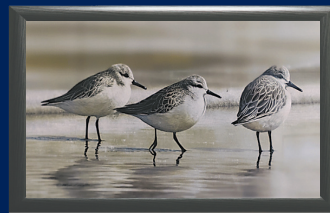
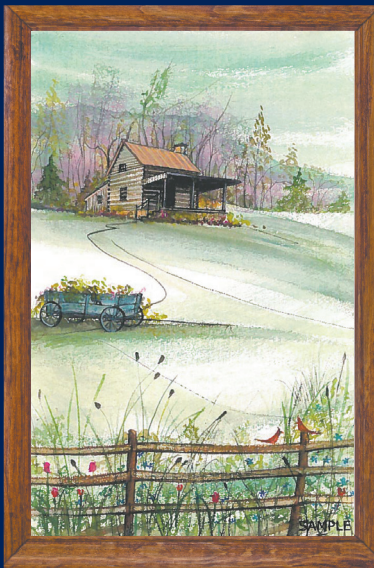
She was born Sarah Breedlove in 1867 to formerly enslaved Louisiana sharecroppers. The first of their children to be born free, her early life was filled with



Dealers for
P. Buckley Moss,
John Barber and
Casey Holtzinger



Featuring Artists
such as
B. Sikes,
Ray Hendershot,
Michael Parkes,
Michael Clifton
and more!



We’re always ready to help
with all of your picture-framing needs.
Best Service, Best Prices, Guaranteed.

Customized Framing:

Senior Photos

Diplomas

Awards

Photos

Artwork

Glass & mat replacement

Large Selection
of already framed artwork!

Great Bridge
Frame & Art

Affordable custom picture framing



316 Battlefield Boulevard South (757) 482-1771

Across from the Great Bridge Shopping Center

M - F 9:30 - 5:30 | Sat 10:00 - 4:00

www.GreatBridgeFrame.com

Mr. Handyman of Virginia Beach

Projects TO DO ...

- Powerwash Deck or House
- Replace or Repair Doors
- Siding Repairs
- Fence Repairs
- Grout Tiles
- Caulk Bathrooms
- Drywall and Ceiling Repairs
- Replace Light Fixtures
- Cabinet Repairs
- Replace Ceiling Fans
- Hang Mirrors and Pictures
- Repair / Replace Window Screens
- Clean and Repair Gutters
- Get more free time...
- Call Mr. Handyman

Problem Solved



Say **hello** to Mr. Handyman & **goodbye** to that "To-Do" list!



Mr. Handyman of Virginia Beach

757-767-0577

www.mrhandyman.com/virginia-beach/

\$20 OFF

This coupon is valid for \$20 worth of services provided by Mr. Handyman.

Minimum of \$300 of Project Labor Service. Offer valid one time per household. Available at participating locations only. Not valid with any other offer.

OFFER EXPIRES: 2/28/2024



Home Improvement Professionals

\$40 OFF

This coupon is valid for \$40 worth of services provided by Mr. Handyman.

Minimum of \$500 of Project Labor Service. Offer valid one time per household. Available at participating locations only. Not valid with any other offer.

OFFER EXPIRES: 2/28/2024



Home Improvement Professionals

“It’s About Making Well-rounded Individuals”

Performing Artist & Producer Tanya Rollins Shadley aims to make a big impact in Hampton Roads

By Rob Lauer



When meeting Tanya Rollins Shadley, one’s first impression is that here is a woman who was born to be on stage. Friendly, confident, and supremely articulate, she exudes a joyous energy that would captivate any audience. Indeed, Tanya’s respect and reverence for the profound emotional connection a performer can establish with an audience began when the Norfolk Native was a child.

“I began singing in church at age five,” Tanya recalls with a smile. “The choir director put a mic in my hand, and I absolutely loved the feeling I got from the congregation. Then, when I was eight, I auditioned and was cast in my first stage play, ‘Black Girl,’ at Norfolk State University. I couldn’t believe how a person on stage could affect an audience. I loved it! I even loved the nervousness I felt right before going on stage, and I used it to fuel my performance. There is nothing like that feeling! After the experience of being in that show, I told my parents, ‘This is what I want to do. Hang up the doctor/lawyer thing. I want to be a performing artist!’”

In summer workshops offered by the Southeastern Virginia Art Association (SEVAA), young Tanya immersed herself in theatre. “At SEVAA, we received quality training about everything that goes into putting on a production, and then at the end of the summer,

we put on a show. It was great hands-on training—which I’m super grateful for! I received a scholarship to attend one summer program at Hurrah Players at age nine, but once the scholarships ran out, I no longer had access to that program.”

At the tender age of ten, Tanya realized talent wasn’t enough. To properly develop that talent, a child needs access to high-quality training and education. Fortunately, by the time the talented teen was ready to begin her freshman year of high school, such training was accessible through the Governors School for the Arts. “I auditioned for the Governors School for the Arts and was accepted on the spot,” Tanya says. “I am so grateful for all the training I received there—classes in acting, singing, dancing—and all the chances I was given to perform.”

After graduating high school and being accepted by several colleges, Tanya chose to attend ODU. “It’s important to get an education,” she says. “It’s good to have talent, but you need to be smart, too.” While a student at ODU, Tanya lived in Rogers Hall as a resident assistant, was chosen as Homecoming Queen, and in 2000, she portrayed legendary Blues singer Billy Holiday in the one-woman show “Lady Day at Emerson’s Bar and Grill.” During her senior year, she lived in the international dorm as Dorm Director, earning a B.A. in Theater Arts and graduating with honors in 2002.

“After college, Broadway was my trajectory,” Tanya explains, “but then I started working with local youth, and the desire to go to New York City went away.” She began teaching SEVAA arts workshops and worked as the theatrical director for a local Christian school system, teaching theater to students in grades six through twelve.

Tanya began to realize theatre’s potential to powerfully address societal issues. “I started writing material that I could produce myself,” she explains, “plays dealing with issues like domestic violence, addiction, and the struggle of working single mothers.”

In 2006, she launched her first company, TRS Productions, to provide quality entertainment featuring local artists. “Our first production was a concert at the old Kempsville Performing Arts & Recreation Center. There were only 25 people in the audience,” Tanya recalls with a laugh, “but I thought, ‘It can only go up from here.’” Tanya went on to write and produce “The Ninth Hour,” “Onward and Upward,” and “Lady Shadley’s Juke Joint.” Looking back on those shows, she notes, “It’s amazing to put something on stage and have it move people—amazing and humbling.” Recently, TRS Productions became a SWaM-certified business.

As a Hampton Roads-based producer, Tanya saw a need for local youth to have access to quality and affordable entertainment and theatrical training. “TRS Kids was birthed in January 2020 to give students between the ages of 5 and 17 training in the performing arts—especially those in underserved

communities,” she says. “I started teaching classes in all facets of theatre. To access opportunities, kids have to know those opportunities exist. So, I began writing scholarship applications for kids to get into performing arts schools and programs. I let our students know when theatres are auditioning kids for upcoming shows. One of our TRS Kids was cast in the musical ‘School of Rock’ at Virginia Musical Theatre.

“As a Governor’s School graduate, it was important that kids who looked like me knew about the school and had access to it,” Tanya continues. “So, in 2022, we forged a partnership with the Governor’s School that enabled us to have workshops in their building over the summer. I work with redevelopment and housing authorities to take kids in underserved communities to performing arts events.”

Students at TRS Kids are also given ample opportunities to perform—in plays and concerts, at local events like Downtown Norfolk’s Grand Illumination, Norfolk State University’s Homecoming Parade, and Norfolk’s annual Juneteenth celebrations.

“Performing builds confidence, so if you know a young person who’s interested in the arts, connect them with us,” Tanya says. “I take pride in being able to pull that potential out of people when they may not see it in themselves. My goal is to give our kids the experience and communication skill set they need to walk into any situation with confidence. If some of those kids are talented athletes who go on to have success in sports, I don’t want to see them giving an interview on TV and hear a lot of ‘uhs’ between every other word. Being able to speak in front of people and communicate effectively with confidence is going to help a person succeed and have a better life no matter who they are or what they choose for a career. We offer quality training in arts, but it’s not about creating artists. It’s about making well-rounded individuals.”

TRS kids
Performing Arts

TRS Kids Performing Arts

757-201-2496

www.trskids.com

TRS Productions

TRS Productions

www.trsprroductions.org



Cristina Alencar, MD
Medical Oncology



Sowjanya Naga, MD
Medical Oncology



Stacey Rogers, MD
Gynecologic Oncology



Valiant Tan, MD
Medical Oncology

Expert Physicians. Exceptional Cancer Care.

At Virginia Oncology Associates, we understand every cancer is unique and so is every patient we treat. Our team of experienced physicians and staff provide advanced care, innovative technology, and personalized treatment options.

This includes research and groundbreaking clinical trials taking place right here in Hampton Roads, giving our patients access to therapies not yet available outside of the studies.

Virginia Oncology Associates is an affiliate of the US Oncology Network, one of the largest cancer treatment and research networks in the country. This affiliation enables us to incorporate the expertise of nearly 1,350 physicians nationwide into our delivery of patient care.

VirginiaCancer.com

SOUTHSIDE | (757) 466-8683
CHESAPEAKE • NORFOLK
SUFFOLK • VIRGINIA BEACH



Virginia Oncology Associates is part of The US Oncology Network and is supported by McKesson Specialty Health. © 2023 McKesson Specialty Health. All rights reserved.



Attention Postmaster: Please deliver in home 2/6/24-2/8/24

Z-1

"It's About Making Well-rounded Individuals"



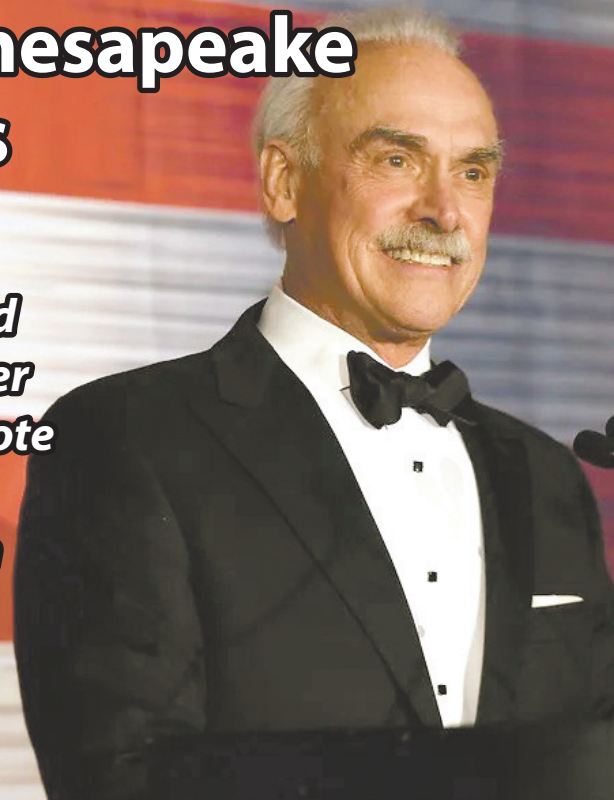
*Performing Artist
& Producer
Tanya Rollins
Shadley
aims to make
a big impact in
Hampton Roads*

Page 18

The Chesapeake Sports Club

*NFL Legend
Rocky Bleier
to be keynote
speaker
at the 11th
Annual
Jamboree*

Page 13



Changing the World One Word at a Time

*The mission of Chesapeake Native and International Best-Selling Writer
Kwame Alexander*

Page 15

GOOD TIMES: A Reflection on Black Sitcoms of the 1970s



Page 10