Long Jewelers

Directly importing the world’s most beautiful diamonds

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Steve Long

The Shopper
Celebrating 39 years!
Your hometown magazine

Octoberfest!
Enjoy the changing season!

Dr. Bill Austin
Terrie Walsh & Connie Huston Tucker
Black Pelican Seafood Company

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Publisher’s Point

Trust But Verify

I prefer to lead with trust and believe that most people are good and honest. Also, because we aren’t always the best we can be, Ronald Reagan coined a phrase – “Trust But Verify” – when dealing with Russia’s Mikhail Gorbachev. It has a built-in trust element but gives us a way to protect ourselves through verification. This approach has wisdom.

Over four decades in business, I have enjoyed relationships with thousands of clients, and have been disappointed in maybe just a dozen. Those are excellent odds.

While some disappointing relationships have not disabused me of my underlying belief in the goodness of most people, I have learned that the responsibility to verify is my own.

Once in business, I realized that my biggest temptation would come from what is also our greatest advantage. We tell the stories of good people – those whose mission is to help others – and those who seek to do business with their neighbors ethically. The flip side is the potential to do harm with this very element we use to do good – the power of the press! I committed, when publishing our first issue in 1981, that I would never use The Shopper to harm, despite temptation.

They did not have to do anything wrong to have not done everything right.

This year I faced a dilemma when a friend compared three reputable companies’ insurance rates for my commercial building to what I was paying for my policy. I could hardly believe these three companies were all about $2,500 a year while my policy was $14,400. I had trusted people I considered friends with my insurance and yet paid more than five times what other companies charged for that coverage.

So what did I learn? The most important thing I learned is that I am the person in charge of my business affairs. I want to assume that people can make a mistake and they can get complacent and not check up on policies that simply renew at increased rates. They did not have to do anything wrong to have not done everything right.

Author Malcom Gladwell, appearing on TV with Fareed Zakaria on September 22, discussed Trust or No Trust as I was writing this column. I was inspired that their consensus was to lead with trust and I will, but I will verify.
If a child can learn their letters, numbers, shapes, animals, animal sounds, etc., at such an early age—why can’t they learn to read music? They can with this music program designed from research from Johns Hopkins University. This is a theory-based program that teaches children 2 years and up to read musical notes and play music.

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Ann’s Hallmark
Celebrating 40 years of providing ideal gifts for any occasion

By Candance Moore

In 1979, former nurse Connie Huston Tucker bought a tiny gift shop in Great Bridge Shopping Center. Her sales staff consisted of her mother, Maretta Miller, and a modest group of down-to-earth moms and wives—Mary Saunders, Sandy Dean, Claudia Rogan, and Barbara Holden—all of whom remain friends to this day. Little could they imagine that 40 years later, Ann’s Hallmark Gold Crown Store would be a major local landmark celebrating a special place in Great Bridge history.

By consistently providing high-quality products and heartfelt neighborly service, Ann’s Hallmark gained a loyal following. It outgrew its first retail space and then its second, finally landing in a spacious location, still in Great Bridge Shopping Center where the children and grandchildren of its earliest customers now come to shop. Connie’s daughter Terrie Walsh watched through the years as their commitment to quality and service continued to bring success. When she moved into ownership in 1999, she promised her mother that this commitment would never change.

“We have generations of local families who’ve come to depend on us,” Terrie says. “When they need a gift or card for a life event, this is where they turn. We feel a huge responsibility to make sure that we take care of them.

Terrie—along with her sister Joanie and brother Doug—assumed ownership after Connie’s retirement. Store Manager Mary Saunders, part of the founding crew, stayed in her role during the transition. The siblings worked hard to grow the business and keep it modern without losing touch with its core values. Thanks to guidance from Connie and Mary, Ann’s Hallmark grew stronger. They expanded into Suffolk and Virginia Beach, maintaining the values that made the business so trusted. Donna O’Sullivan, Mary’s assistant manager, clicked with Terrie. A new team grounded in the old team began to emerge.

The store’s popularity earned its reputation as the go-to place for gifts for any occasion. Regardless of the life event being celebrated or observed, customers came in, trusting the staff to recommend the ideal options. Military families, new to the area and unsure of where to go, came in search of the perfect welcome home gift. Pet memorials attracted customers looking for the ideal token of affection. In each situation, Terrie’s team responded with incredible expertise and grace.

“My employees are fantastic at what they do!” Terrie says with a warm smile. “I often see them crying or laughing with a customer as they find an unexpectedly perfect gift. They truly enjoy their work, and it shows.”

“We have generations of local families who’ve come to depend on us.

When they need a gift or card for a life event, this is where they turn.”

—Terrie Walsh

The search for a meaningful gift for any occasion drove Terrie to expand her vision. While Ann’s Hallmark still sells as many cards as ever, it continually introduces more diverse options for gifts and décor. The staff is fully trained to understand the value and significance of each product line.

When her siblings moved on with other career pursuits, Terrie found herself the sole proprietor of Ann’s Hallmark. “We closed the Red Mill location, but the flagship Chesapeake store and the newly-remodeled Suffolk location are more than enough to keep me busy!” Meanwhile, Mary Saunders had retired, leaving Donna to step into the role of Store Manager. Terrie and Donna work together closely to maintain the level of service their customers have come to expect.

“If we can bring something to the table, then we bring it!” Donna says. “If we can’t, then we don’t add it.” Donna has been with me every step of the way, and I can’t over-emphasize her skills as a manager. She’s an employee, but she’s also a great friend.

Terrie and Donna share ideas on how to bring the most in-demand gifts and products to Ann’s Hallmark. The Nora Fleming collectible stoneware line captivated them, so now it has a prominent table toward the front of the store. 4Ocean bracelets, one of the hottest social movements of the year, was a cause Terrie enthusiastically supported. Ivory Ella, SCOUT, Vera Bradley, Inis, and Simply Southern are just a few of the latest additions. There’s also a growing selection of tasteful gifts for men.

These new additions haven’t crowded out the beloved brands for which Hallmark is known.

“This is still very much a Hallmark store!” Donna says with a smile. “We’ve managed to incorporate some fresh products and worthy causes into our Hallmark identity. It takes hard work and careful planning, but our customers deserve it—and they’ve responded positively.”

Each turn in the Chesapeake store reveals another delight: red cartons of Aspen Cider Spices; the shiny gold wrapping of Godiva Chocolates; the scintillating scents of Michel Design Works and Yankee Candle, and of course, rows and rows of cards for every imaginable occasion. Since Ann’s Hallmark is a Gold Crown Store, it has access to the latest exclusive products, including this year’s line of Keepsake Ornaments. Customers are encouraged to become Gold Crown members for rewards and exclusive deals.

In honor of 40 years of community support, Ann’s Hallmark in Great Bridge is hosting an anniversary celebration October 26th. With special discounts and generous coupons, it’s an excellent opportunity to have extravagant fall décor at this year’s Thanksgiving dinner. It’s also the perfect time to invest in meaningful holiday gifts… not to mention checking out the latest ornaments! After the anniversary event, Hallmark’s annual Holiday Open House is on November 9th.

“It’s a lot of work, but it’s worth it!” Terrie says. “I’m determined to keep this legacy going.”

Terrie certainly has the support of locals, many of whom agree that Chesapeake wouldn’t be the same without Ann’s Hallmark!
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Chesapeake’s First Citizen

Chesapeake’s First Citizen was honored recently at a beautiful reception and dinner at the Chesapeake Conference Center. The 2019 First Citizen is Robert W. “Robin” Tull Jr. of Tull Financial Group, who lives by the motto “service above self”. He is recognized for his leadership and overall commitment to the city of Chesapeake.

From left: The evening’s guest speaker, Steve Krajenka, and his wife, Kathy; this year’s first citizen, Robert W. Tull Jr., and his wife Cathy; Jim and Denise Parroco

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com
Children First
Every Student Deserves Success

The overarching goal of every school system should be that each student has the opportunity to grow and develop into productive citizens with strong educational skills.

For most students, a regular classroom setting and required curricula enhance their educational development. There are others, particularly in the high school years, who are less traditional students. The Chesapeake School System is always looking for ways to reach those students. This year a new program has been implemented for those non-traditional high school students who need a highly-individualized program with a strong, supportive foundation.

The Chesapeake Center for Student Success is located in the Indian River Middle School Annex Building, where the day classes continue to be an alternative program for middle school students. The new evening program is operational from 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. on Monday through Thursday evenings for students in grades 9-12 who need an alternative setting to continue toward high school graduation. It also provides an academic setting for those students whose behavioral issues have led to long term suspensions. The goal is for them to work toward returning to their home school. How do students access this new program? Prospective students are recommended by their home high school principal to a system-wide committee of administrators representing the broad-based needs of students.

When a new school program is implemented, it is critical to get the right personnel in the correct jobs. The new principal selected to bring this dream to fruition is Mr. Nathan Brown. Upon meeting him, one knows that he is committed to making sure each of his students succeeds. He has a winning smile, boundless energy, and a strong educational foundation. Several local administrators described him as having “a unique way of quickly building relationships with students and adults.” When asked what skills and personal qualities he looks for in the teachers he hires, he said they need to have a heart for students and daily investment in their success. He also asked them what made them want to teach in this setting. The school’s theme for this year is “Greatness is waiting for you.”

As the 35 present students enter the building, they encounter positive messages. A huge colorful 16 x 12-foot art canvas covers the entrance wall to the gymatorium. The large word HEARTWORK is in the middle of a gigantic heart made by handprints of all the staff. While each have an individual plan, students are taught in small classes (no more than 10) where they work to complete courses in English, Algebra, Keyboarding, Science, Physical Education and interesting electives like Hospitality and Tourism that will move them closer to graduation. The leadership team is reaching out to local businesses, churches, and civic groups to set up internships, mentors, and other opportunities to build self-confidence and workforce skills for the students. They want to set up sustainable relationships for the future. On the days the students are not in class, they have online courses and modules to complete for their teachers. When the principal walks through the building and asks “How are you doing today,” the response he hopes to receive from students and teachers is, “I’m doing my best.” He loves his job and does not see it as work. When asked what his dream was for his students, Mr. Brown responded without hesitation with the word “Greatness!” Every student definitely deserves that kind of success.

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.

If you want diamonds you go to Antwerp, Belgium.

Steve Long is leaving this October for his 17th annual trip to Antwerp, Belgium to personally select diamonds from the world’s finest and largest diamond cutters. You can save hundreds to thousands of dollars by buying direct.

Visit Long Jewelers and talk to Steve Long about using his 31 years of diamond buying expertise to personally hand select the perfect diamond for you.

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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Diamonds might be a girl’s best friend, but for the spouse, son, or other devotee shopping for the perfect diamond in the right setting, “best friend” may not be the term that comes to mind. Trying to navigate the labyrinth of diamond vendors, dealers, and corporate retailers not only keeps the diamond industry ensconced in mystery but easily frustrates anyone searching for that elusive “perfect diamond.”

Fortunately, Steve Long—the plainspoken, no-nonsense owner of Long Jewelers in Chesapeake—set out thirty years ago to make the upper echelons of the diamond market directly accessible to local customers. No endless stream of middlemen, no confusing jargon, and, most importantly, all, no setting for whatever diamonds just happen to be available. Instead, Steve takes an annual trip to Antwerp in northern Belgium—the fabled city where the art of modern diamond cutting was introduced. The very heart of the world’s diamond market, through which 55 percent of the world’s rough diamonds pass, Antwerp is home to the most talented and experienced diamond cutters. In a fairy tale setting of ancient castles, cathedrals, and statues, the city’s skilled artisans hone their craft. Whatever they are presently creating will be next year’s hot new look. Skilled artisans hone their craft. Whatever they are of ancient castles, cathedrals, and statues, the city’s diamond market, doors began to open.

They eventually opened to the inner sanctum where raw diamonds pulled from mines are cleaned, cut, and carefully assessed by those who know diamonds best. Some of these craftsmen grew up in Belgian families whose lineage goes back five hundred years to when Antwerp first became the center of the diamond trade. As Steve grew in confidence, he mastered the delicate balance of going tête-à-tête to negotiate a deal with his impressive hosts.

But once a deal is made, what a deal it is, allowing Steve to return to Hampton Roads with pitch-perfect diamonds that are sure to win the praise of his customers. He insists that seeing the face of a young newlywed light up with joy more than compensates for the bustling negotiations in Belgium. “It is quite intimidating,” he admits with a smile. “Armed guards, redundant checkpoints, a quickness to end a meeting at the first hint of trouble — not everyone can handle the pressure. Technical knowledge isn’t enough to leave those rooms with a deal.”

“My customers have women in their lives they want to honor, and they have a vision of what they want, but the entry barrier puts it out of their reach,” Steve explains. “It’s my great privilege to help them make her dream come true. I go to Antwerp and negotiate with their best interests in mind, and bring back to them a diamond with a story.”

Long Jewelers
Directly importing the world’s most beautiful diamonds

By Candance Moore

Steve Long leaves Antwerp each year with a collection of purchases, some for customers on deposit and others for public sale in his store, shipped promptly from Belgium to Chesapeake, making him quite literally the first area jeweler to become a direct diamond importer. While customers might assume this inside track is too expensive, Steve points out that there is no middleman or costly overhead, bringing an Antwerp diamond surprisingly within many budgets.

Once the diamond arrives at Long Jewelers, the fun begins of setting it in a ring or necklace designed for maximum dazzle. Steve speaks with his customers in understandable terms, pointing out to them their many options. Even men who hate shopping for jewelry have remarked that Steve removed their anxiety. He offers terms, payment plans, processes, and services in a simple, straightforward manner.

Since Long Jewelers offers on-site repair and polishing, a diamond can be easily maintained by the same team who created it. This gives Steve a chance to cultivate relationships with customers who come in to have their jewelry cleaned. Should the time come later for an upgrade, trade-in values are generous, and personal preferences are remembered.

“My customers have women in their lives they want to honor. I go to Antwerp and negotiate with their best interests in mind, and bring back to them a diamond with a story.” —Steve Long

“There’s no reason for simple maintenance to require an outside lab as used by many other stores. Handing a diamond over to a new clerk every time you’re in the store, wondering how many hands it will pass through, waiting weeks to get it back, all for an actual task that only takes ten or twenty minutes,” Steve asserts. “This makes customers reluctant to keep up that sparkling shine. When I tell them that we’ll have the repair done in the time it takes to admire our new selection, they are pleasantly surprised.”

This year, Steve’s voyage to Antwerp will take place in late October. Customers are welcome to visit his Chesapeake store for an inquiry. If they’re interested, a simple deposit will secure the retrieval of a diamond to meet their personal taste. Even if customers don’t know exactly what they want, Steve enjoys patiently guiding those who are new to the diamond world. His Antwerp purchases arrive in plenty of time to craft a complete piece for a holiday gift.

“I’m always looking for ways to make the process simpler at a higher value,” Steve concludes. “My customers count on me to do all the work while they sit back and enjoy a woman’s happiness.”
Real potato prosers among purists

Real homemade mashed potatoes are one of the best things in the world. Make them with cream and butter rather than just milk, and you have a dish fit for a king. Perhaps people make dried mashed potatoes for the ease. I think they make them because they have forgotten the flavor of real potatoes. And if they had cooked them right, they would never have the other again.

But in case it is because they fear failing, there are some secrets to good mashed potatoes. Never use cold or room-temperature milk or cream in mashed potatoes, or they will lump. If the liquid is not hot, the starch in the potatoes seizes.

Boil the potatoes long enough before mashing, so they have no hard centers. Of course, there is nothing wrong with lumpy potatoes if that is the way your mother made them, but usually, that was because the potatoes were mashed by hand and she left a few lumps, not because they weren't cooked properly in the first place.

The potatoes, once drained, should be mashed into a hot pan. The heat under the pan should be low enough so they won't burn, but hot enough so the potatoes are dry before the liquid is added. And, of course, then comes the fresh, good-quality butter.

My sister and I always loved good butter. The best butter, we would declare, would taste like marrow bone, what we called the delicious soup bone my mother would buy and simmer in the soup for us and then let us spoon out with long silver spoons and eat with white bread.

There was a time during and after World War II when butter was rationed. I remember when all margarine was white. It came in a plastic-type bag and had a dot of bright yellow-orange food coloring in it. You mashed it around until it was all yellow and then ate it. I hated it, although I did think the mashing was fun.

One day, we went to visit a cousin of my mother's and to see an air show. We laughed and played so hard and were so hungry by lunch that we ate greedily and complimented everything. We even said we liked the butter. We went so far as to say it tasted like marrow bone. My mother and grandmother were speechless. We always complained if we were served margarine. It turned out my cousin's so-called butter was Blue Bonnet margarine.

We tried to backtrack. We insisted we hadn't meant it to no avail. The next day, my grandmother set out fresh white bread and two yellow sticks, one butter, one margarine. She spread each of us a piece of bread with the first spread and made us eat it, then write down if it was butter or margarine. She repeated with the second stick. We correctly identified the margarine and butter. Infuriated, she blindfolded us and repeated the process. Once again, we knew. It didn't stop the occasional efforts to smuggle in margarine, but we were ever on the alert.

She tried to fool us with Pepsi, too. We were adamant—it wasn't as good as Coca-Cola. Sure enough, the next day, we were blindfolded and tested. We knew the difference.

I'm sure there are just as many Pepsi purists, but I've drunk far too many Coke products to switch. I doubt if the city of Atlanta would collapse without Coke, but what would we have for breakfast? My present Coke of choice is Diet Coke. When I travel, I always check to see if I can get it because I start the day with Coke or tea. I've lugged bottles of Coke all over the globe.

On a trip to Italy with a bunch of food editors, I took two giant bottles of Coke. They all laughed at me until we wound up on a bus for several hours, with the roadside stands offering only a lemon-squash-type drink. My traveling companions polished off both bottles of Coke, and I had to walk around Bologna until I found a tiny shop that sold it. Such is the life of a connoisseur.

_Nathalie Dupree is the author of fourteen 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 best cookbooks of all time list._

ᅬReal potato prosers among purists

**Sinful Mashed Potatoes**

4 Potatoes
1/3 Cup butter
1/2 to 3/4 cup heavy cream or milk
Salt
Freshly ground pepper

Peel the potatoes and cut into quarters or chunks. Place in a saucepan with water to cover. Bring to boil, cover with lid and boil steadily until soft and tender when pierced with a fork. Drain. Place the empty pan back over the heat. Add butter and melt. Scald the cream or milk. Put the potatoes through a food mill into the hot butter, or add the potatoes to the hot butter and beat with a whisk, potato masher or electric mixer. Add hot cream or milk to desired texture. Season to taste. To keep, cover with a thin layer of hot cream or milk. Reheat gently and stir when ready to serve.

**A Matter of Taste**

By Nathalie Dupree

Real potato prosers among purists

Nathalie Dupree is the author of fourteen 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 best cookbooks of all time list.

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Fireworks
Shrimp Feast
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**The King’s Daughters invite you to join us at**
Black Pelican Seafood Company

The ideal venue for family celebrations and business gatherings

By Cristi Sanchez

The season for family gatherings is approaching at lightning speed. From Thanksgiving to Christmas and Chanukka to children home on holiday breaks, people will begin to gather and celebrate. Doug Parsons, General Manager of The Black Pelican in Greenbrier, wants the seafood lovers of Hampton Roads to know that he has just the place for them to host their celebrations.

The Black Pelican’s Jetty Room is a tastefully decorated private dining room that holds up to 55 people and provides in-house catering with a choice of sit-down plated dinners or convenient buffet stations with heavy hors d’oeuvres.

“The Jetty Room has been a welcome addition to the restaurant,” Doug smiles. “From what we understand, there aren’t too many private rooms like this available in the area anymore. They’re in demand, so we’re fortunate to have it to offer. In fact, we’ve seen an increased demand for the Jetty. We’ve had a party in there every day this week for lunch and dinner.”

Though the holidays are approaching, the Jetty Room isn’t just for such gatherings. The multi-purpose room sees year-round use and can accommodate many business and personal functions. The room has been booked for business luncheons, dinners, and meetings, holiday office parties, wedding rehearsal dinners, family holiday celebrations, birthdays, graduations, and family reunions. “The only thing the room hasn’t yet been used for is Super Bowl or March Madness parties, but we would love to see that! It would be fantastic!” Doug says excitedly.

The Jetty even includes a big screen TV that guests can use for a variety of media purposes. From pharmaceutical companies to local businesses hosting working lunches and business dinners, the TV is frequently utilized by guests for presentations. “Businesses aren’t the only ones to use the TV, though,” Doug adds. “A lot of people enjoy bringing personalized photo slide shows or videos to play during their private celebrations.”

Diners in the restaurant and people gathering in the Jetty Room appreciate the privacy the private dining room provides. “It’s nicely secluded from everything else. Once you’re in there, you don’t hear any of the noise or the hustle and bustle of the restaurant—the rest of our guests can’t hear you” he adds with a grin. “If a party gets loud in the Jetty while everyone is having fun, the noise is contained, and guests dining in the restaurant can’t hear anything.”

In helping guests plan for their private parties in the Jetty Room, Doug wants to assure guests that when booked for a special gathering, the room provides much more than just a restaurant experience. “We customize the experience to the guest. We work with the organizer of the event to come up with a customized menu. Some groups may choose to order off the menu, and that’s perfectly fine. We want to make sure that guests using the Jetty have the fabulous experience that they want,” Doug says with pride.

“We customize the experience to the guest…
We want to make sure that guests using the Jetty have the fabulous experience that they want.” – Doug Parsons

Customers attending events in the Jetty Room will be treated to The Black Pelican’s unique fare that is locally and regionally sourced. “We’re unique in that we can provide a fresh seafood experience in the heart of Chesapeake,” Doug conveys. “The seafood we feature is as local as we can get. Most of it comes from coastal North Carolina and allows us to offer a variety that you might not normally find in chain restaurants or those not sourced with local seafood.”

And that seafood is prepared under the watchful eye of Executive Chef and Black Pelican owner Jason Smith. Trained under an Italian master chef, Jason was Executive Chef at the flagship Black Pelican in Kitty Hawk, NC. The restaurant’s famous Wanchese Fisherman’s Risotto was featured on Guy Fieri’s ‘Diners, Drive-Ins, and Dives.’

“Jason and the chefs have an incredibly collaborative environment in the kitchen and combine flavors one wouldn’t necessarily have ever thought of before. They all work together to come up with dishes that are just amazing!” Doug enthuses. “Our guests will taste things here that they’ve never tasted before!”

The Black Pelican’s flavorful and unique food isn’t the only thing that the restaurant has to offer both Jetty Room guests and restaurant diners. “We offer an experience, not just a meal,” Doug reveals. “We offer the full package with our dedication to excellence—great cuisine with a full ABC bar, an extensive wine list, pleasing décor in a clean facility, and most of all, exceptional service! When guests first enter, if they are greeted with a smile, that makes a huge impression—even before a single word is spoken. So I insist that our guests are always greeted with a smile and given prompt attention. Everyone is searching for their favorite restaurant. We want to be that restaurant by providing a warm, friendly environment.”

In his pursuit of providing continually outstanding service to guests, Jason Smith recently conceived and implemented the new Black Pelican Platter Menu, a take-out/delivery service aimed at providing group lunches for local area businesses. The menu features various entree and salad platters that serve 10-12 people, with pick up or delivery available Monday through Friday. “This is something new we’ve started and want to let people know about it. It’s great for business lunches or meetings, and we make it convenient. Guests just need to call one hour ahead with their order so we can have time to prepare their selections.”

Whether utilizing the Jetty Room for private gatherings, ordering a business lunch off the Platter Menu, or simply dining in the restaurant, all Black Pelican customers can be assured of one thing: from the front door to the kitchen staff, from the food to the service, there is a dedication to excellence at every level under Doug Parsons’s leadership. He sees to it that all employees go above and beyond to serve not just food, but a dining experience. Doug concisely sums up his pursuit of exceptional service with excellence: “As an independently owned restaurant, we’re a small fish in a big sea of corporate restaurants. It’s our dedication to excellence that allows us to shine.”

The Black Pelican’s private Jetty Room can accommodate up to 55 guests.

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The Retreat at Kemps River
Where those age 55-and-better can find their “forever home”

By Rob Lauer

Evening is settling over The Retreat at Kemps River. The surrounding woodlands that are so scenic during the day are now in shadows. But the spacious clubhouse that is at the center of this 55-and-better adult community is aglow with light and life. Inside neighbors greet one another with handshakes, hugs, and laughter. Some drift outside to relax around the spectacular pool; others settle into the seats around the stone fire pit. The atmosphere is that of a special celebration, but such gatherings are a part of life at The Retreat.

Cindy Godsell, Realtor® with Rose and Womble Realty, LLC, can’t help but smile as she watches the scene. “This is an absolutely beautiful clubhouse,” she says. “I love watching people’s expressions when they come into the community and see it for the first time. The clubhouse really is the social hub of our community. We know our residents are going to spend a lot of time over here, getting to know each other and making new friends.”

Linda Hammond, who recently moved to The Retreat with her husband, agrees. “We love the clubhouse!” she says. “It’s the perfect spot for having activities and entertaining friends and family. There’s a gym here, a fitness room, and, of course, the swimming pool.”

“Being in a 55-and-better community, a lot of our folks are preparing for retirement,” Cindy points out. “They’re looking for their ‘forever home’ where they’ll be spending their retirement years.”

To those searching for the perfect “forever home,” The Retreat at Kemps River offers a collection of single-family attached homes in five distinct floor plans, all beautifully crafted by WeldenField and Rowe. 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 first- or second-floor suites.

Builder Brian Rowe of WeldenField and Rowe, is proud of the care that has gone into The Retreat at Kemps River.

“We took a ton of time with pre-planning, so The Retreat has so many wonderful amenities,” he explains. “We have put a lot of effort into making sure elements conducive to an active lifestyle are built into the fabric of this community. Sometimes when we develop these ideas and dream up the different details, we wonder if those things will help people make a buying decision. What I’ve realized in talking to many of our residents is that they are noticing these special details. They appreciate the unique things that we’ve added—things that we thought were important, but that we weren’t sure would necessarily catch people’s eyes. My hope for residents is that they’ll be able to experience all the different things we’ve put into this community—things aimed at promoting an active lifestyle.”

Cindy agrees with Brian, adding: “The quality of work and care that WeldenField and Rowe Custom Homes put into this development is remarkable. 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.”

“"We have put a lot of effort into making sure elements conducive to an active lifestyle are built into the fabric of this community.”

—Brian Rowe

“I’m a Realtor®, and I’ve been selling homes for many years,” she continues, “and we always hope that what we’re selling will turn out really nice. And that’s one thing about working with WeldenField and Rowe, I’ve just been so proud of every neighborhood I’ve been able to sell for them. Everything has always been so beautifully done. Their customer service—even after the closing—has been outstanding. There’s never been a warranty issue that they haven’t stepped up to the plate to take care of.”

It was WeldenField and Rowe’s reputation that convinced Debra Marks to move to The Retreat at Kemps River.

“We have some friends who live at another WeldenField and Rowe community, and they absolutely love it,” she says. “They’ve made so many new friends, and they do so many activities that we thought it might be great for us, too. Since I just retired and my husband is going to be retiring soon we just thought it would be a good move for us—plus we wanted to move from the big house, the yard work, the maid—all of that—that we could take care of things ourselves.”

Linda nods in agreement. “We had lived in our house for about 20 years,” she says. “As time went on, a lot of repairs were needed. We also lived on the Elizabeth River and were concerned about rising water levels.”

“We looked at other over-55 communities in Virginia Beach, but most were huge,” she continues. “Here at the Retreat with only 80 units, you really get to know your neighbors and really get to develop those relationships. Everything here is a little bit smaller than what we had, but that’s what we wanted—we wanted to downsize. We have cathedral ceilings so it’s very light and airy. Everything is brand new. Who wouldn’t love that?” she asks with a laugh.

“We wanted to get into a community that had a lot of activities,” Linda concludes. “We wanted something new, and The Retreat at Kemps River really fits the bill.”
The Dream

Monday, July 20, wee small hours
I had a vivid dream tonight. Rob walked into the house, up the stairs, and down the hall to my bedroom door. He opened the door all the way and took a few steps into the room. He turned, facing me in the bed, slowly raised a gun and pointed it at me. I awoke with a start. It was so real it alarmed me. It was 4:40 a.m.

Tuesday, July 21, wee small hours
3:45 a.m., I was awakened suddenly by the sound of my phone ringing. It was Lee.
At 3:00 a.m., one of her dogs had awakened her. She got up, went to the bathroom, and could not get back to sleep. She felt danger. Lee described mentally surrounding her family with light, then her home and even her yard. Nothing there. She did the same with our Dad, who was quite ill, and finally with me. That’s where she felt the danger: around me!
Lee then had a wide-awake dream. She “saw” Rob come into my house, go up the stairs, down the hall, and into my bedroom. He took a few steps, turned toward me, and shot me with a handgun. Lee “felt” the bullet go into her stomach, through her and out her back.
Lee struggled with whether or not to call me for a half-hour. When she felt a lump in her throat, she picked up the phone, compelled to call me.
My sister and I have always been connected. I pay attention to her feelings, especially concerning me. Even if I had not before, I certainly would have paid attention since, while still awake, she had the very same dream I had just 24 hours earlier. The only differences were that I had been asleep, and she was awake and had experienced the rest of the dream that I had been too frightened to finish. It was astounding!
I put on my lights and looked throughout the house while Lee waited on the phone. I picked up the portable when I reached the family room and talked to her while I went around the house, putting on lights. I looked in every room, peered out into the night. I saw nothing.

My sister and I have always been connected. I pay attention to her feelings, especially concerning me.

“I’ll drive to Eve’s right now!” I told my sister.
“No!” she was most emphatic, ordering me to stay. “Don’t go to your car without the police there.”
The intensity of her commands startled me even more. I was paying very close attention. I was going to do exactly as she said. We talked until dawn. When the light came up, we felt safe enough to say good-bye and get a little more sleep, protected by the light.

Additional text from this excerpt is available on TheShopper.com
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By Terry Young  

Create the right image  

Keep your listing photos timeless

When selling a property, you want it to look its best in photos, regardless of when it may actually sell.

Something that people will notice is if there is an obvious time of year that the photos were taken, and if that time was a while ago, it can create a negative image of the property.

While both interior and exterior photos taken in spring, summer and early fall will look pretty similar, photos taken in the late fall and over the winter can look more desolate - especially with trees turning bare, or with snow on the ground.

Other elements can date the photos, especially if taken over the holidays. Halloween, Thanksgiving and Christmas decorations will certainly date photos. Some people may think “so what?” Such clear dating is not a problem if the house is very likely to sell within a couple of months.

In fact, a house with a light, warm interior, and a nice green garden, can be more appealing while it is raining, cold and desolate right outside the viewer’s window.

However, if for some reason it does not sell, the MLS listing will show a house with Thanksgiving decorations, and if it is many months later, it looks like the house may be hard to sell for some reason.

Even if this happens only on a subconscious level, it does still have a negative effect on the viewer. I myself have seen properties with such unmistakable dating and wondered what could be wrong with them, especially if they look like a nice house on screen.

Photos taken before the trees change are a lot harder to put a date to; they could have been taken anywhere within about an eight month period.

Furthermore, if those photos are seen out of that season, such as while browsing the MLS in January when it’s snowing outside, the negative why hasn’t this sold factor is a lot less. In fact, a house with a light, warm interior, and a nice green garden can be more appealing while it is raining, cold and desolate right outside the viewer’s window.

The bottom line is that even if a house is not going to be put on the market for a few weeks, photos should be taken while the garden is in bloom and is as green as possible and while the house interior is not decorated for the holidays.

Taking proactive photos can give the MLS listing a much longer lifespan, and create fewer possible negative connotations.

Many things have to be considered when you’re using photos and video to sell a property. This is where an experienced photographer can really make a property stand out from the crowd.

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.

**The Write Sense**

By Betsy Patterson  

Master Graphoanalyst  

DELIBERATENESS AND LAZINESS — TWO SLOWDOWNERS

Use caution before calling someone lazy. Deliberateness and laziness may seem to have little to do with each other, but deliberateness can shade into various degrees of laziness.

The strength of deliberateness lies in its slowness to form opinions — a careful mulling over of the facts or situation, a slow, step-by-step approval. Judges often call for a recess before a verdict is announced so that more careful consideration (deliberateness) can be exercised.

Look for the upstroke of an ascender and the returning downstroke definitely separated. The apex is rounded, not pointed.

If the strokes are firm and well-formed, deliberateness is strong. Look at the slow, easy turn on the m’s/n’s on the baseline.

If the structures are poorly formed with a complete lack of mental vigor, laziness can be seen.

We should not confuse laziness with the relaxation and rest needed to rebuild one’s energy. Sometimes people are called lazy wrongly; the accuser doesn’t stop to think the resting person may be too weary to attend to normal details.

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Halloween Discoveries

Going trick-or-treating can be a journey of discovery. As a kid, peering through the eyes of a plastic dime-store mask, my neighborhood took on a magical glow, seeming new and unfamiliar. Under the milky street lights, it was impossible to tell if an approaching gang of costumed fellow trick-or-treaters were friends or strangers. Anticipating the bestowal of cavity-causing treats, our hearts beat a little faster when knocking on the front doors of neighbors we’d known all our lives. Would the adult inside answer the door wearing a mask or costume? Would they look funny or scary?

When the barber who lived across the street—and who always seemed so solemn—answered his door wearing a red clown’s nose, I felt as if I had discovered something new and essential about the man. The same was true of the retired Baptist minister who lived on the next block. One Sunday afternoon, when we knocked on his door and offered to rake his yard for a dime, he severely scolded us for breaking the Sabbath. But on Halloween, as he handed out candy with a smile and complimented our costumes, I discovered there was more to him than a persnickety tirade on obeying the fourth commandment.

In the working-class neighborhood of my early childhood, there was one house that stood out from the rest. It was a white, two-story Colonial, with a large well-kept yard. It didn’t look scary or haunted; it looked pleasant, welcoming and—to my kid’s mind—boring. For years, we never went trick-or-treating there. Then when I was nine, we did. As we ascended the brick front porch steps, I noticed a small sign in the ivy bed that wasn’t visible from the street. It read: “Two Oaks: Built in 1822.” I was stunned! The other houses in our neighborhood had been built 20 years earlier, but this house was nearly 150 years old! In getting a closer look at something familiar, I discovered that our modest neighborhood had been built on what had once been a large, prosperous plantation. From then on, thanks to trick-or-treating, I never again thought of my neighborhood in quite the same way.

...wearing costumes, playing tricks, and giving treats are ways of revealing hidden aspects of ourselves to others.

Even though we’re too old to trick-or-treat, chaperoning our kids or grandkids on Halloween is a fun way to discover new things about our neighborhoods. Has someone decorated their front porch, or erected a haunted house in their driveway? Why not stroll over and check it out—perhaps not even if it isn’t chaperoned trick-or-treating? Enjoy a laugh or scare; compliment them on their efforts; thank them for bringing some communal fun to the holiday.

We typically think of dressing up for Halloween as a way of hiding ourselves from others. In reality, wearing costumes, playing tricks, and giving treats are ways of revealing hidden aspects of ourselves to others. We might be too old to trick-or-treat, but we’re never too old to see the familiar through new eyes. May this Halloween be a night of fun-filled discovery.

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. Locally, Rob has been producing, directing and hosting three TV series for PCTV (the City of Portsmouth’s official channel) since 2011.

Chesapeake Youth Humanitarian Award

The Chesapeake Rotary Club has recognized its first Youth Humanitarian Award, at the recent First Citizen Banquet, for a deserving high school student. This year’s recipient is Jack Mills of Great Bridge High School. Jack has been engaged in activities that put the needs of others first. He has demonstrated the qualities of selflessness, leadership, and volunteerism at school. According to his principal, “He is an accomplished young man with a very bright future.” Jack is presently in his freshman year at the University of Virginia.
A Vision of Youth

Expressing Grief

Grief includes so many different feelings. Probably the best image of what it is like to work through our many feelings is the onion. When we peel an onion, we go through the many layers. The same is true of feelings. It takes time to peel back the emotions. It is important to remember that working through the layers takes more than listening one time. We may need to talk about our loss for a while. What makes that process difficult is that society sends us the message that we are supposed to be over our grieving in a certain amount of time. It is important to ignore that message and find a support group that encourages us to talk about our loss as we work our way through the many layers of emotions.

The feeling and loss have to be faced. We have to give ourselves permission to feel whatever emotions we may have fully. Sometimes, we think, "If I start crying, I will never stop." The truth is that if we don't allow ourselves to cry and talk it out, healing will be postponed. Consequently, we may find ourselves depressed, which is different from grieving, or we find ourselves physically ill.

The feeling and loss have to be faced. We have to give ourselves permission to feel whatever emotions we may have fully.

Grief will sneak up on us. We know special or significant occasions such as anniversaries and holidays will be difficult, so we prepare for them by being with friends or observing those familiar rituals in new and different ways. We find ourselves getting through those times better than we thought we would. It is the times when we are blindsided that get us. We find ourselves crying. We call that "grief bursts." Our grief pops out when we encounter some smell, ritual, or event that reminds us of our loved one. This is normal, and it is okay. It is a part of the grieving process.

The problem with many men is we tend to categorize or compartmentalize what happens to us. We tend to repress our feelings and get busy. This way of dealing (or not dealing) with our emotions is called "masculine grief." We probably know some couples where the husband dealt with a loss in this way. The woman wants to talk about her feelings, but the husband says, "We need to move on. That is in the past." Basically, he is telling her to "get over it."

There is a sense of anger about him as he prohibits her from discussing her feelings. Why this anger? Since anger is a secondary feeling, there are primary emotions beneath the anger. What is beneath the anger? Could it be a sense of powerlessness? The man may be thinking, "My life has been changed, and I did not have any say or control over it. I don't know what to do with these overwhelming feelings."

Next month, we will continue examining what happens to us in the grieving process and ways to handle our grief.

Dr. Austin has decades of experience dealing with relationships. He charges clients on a sliding scale according to their ability to pay. His first book, Creating Our Safe Place: Articles on Healthy Relationships, published in 2004, and his second book, Keeping It Safe, published in 2009 can be purchased through Amazon, publishamerica.com, and at the Parrish Book Store in Virginia Beach. He is also a sought-after speaker.

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Open the Door

Animal rescue is an equally heartwarming and heartrending mission to be a part of. It is an environment which perpetually challenges and teaches those who inhabit it, offering lessons which stay with us both in our field and in our lives. I experienced this a few months ago when I unknowingly set myself on a path of involvement with one of the most at-risk populations in animal shelters. Cats who act feral, either due to fear or lack of socialization with humans, are not recognized as viable adoption candidates. There aren’t enough adopters for the well-socialized cats crowding our shelters—let alone for those who cannot be touched. This means feral cats comprise a large portion of animals euthanized in shelters each year.

Asking for help is a concept worth considering when our burdens become too much to bear.

The shelter where I work is not immune to the challenges of placing feral cats. This summer our population rose to over 30 ferals at one time. This was in addition to “kitten season,” when litters of kittens pour in each year. I was cleaning kennels one afternoon when I began to contemplate contacting a friend who also works in animal rescue. Perhaps I could send her a message, I thought, asking if she could transfer out one or two of our cats. As tempting as the possibility was, I hesitated. Those working in animal rescue are always working beyond their means, overexerting themselves to help just one more... even though it’s never just the one more. Finally, I did reach out to her, and within a short time, our correspondence culminated in the transfer of two at-risk cats. Because I had taken the leap—because she had provided a place to leap—to these cats were safe.

The result of that message stayed with me over the coming weeks. I began contacting other individuals, many of whom put me in touch with their connections or committed to helping a pair of cats themselves. I began utilizing social media to locate those who might sympathize with our plight. Months later, I have personally helped initiate and coordinate the transfers and adoptions of approximately 20 cats. This is not an accomplishment warranting pride, but rather, gratitude. It is not until you make your hurdles known that others will help knock those hurdles down—or else bring their tennis shoes so that they might run the race beside you. Many people already are, but until we remove the blinder that is an unwillingness to ask, we will not see them. Asking for help is a concept worth considering when our burdens become too much to bear. We should not judge for ourselves the capability or willingness of others, but we can open the door so that our guardian angels and everyday heroes find it a little easier to come in.

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.

Dinner at Andiamo Ristorante

Because of Biagio Scire Jr.’s hard work, his restaurant is now one of the region’s most popular destination for lovers of authentic Italian dishes. His father, Biagio Scire, Sr., formerly the owner of Franks II, closed his restaurant soon after the untimely death of his beloved wife, Nerina, in August of 2018. Now he, along with his sons Giuseppe and Giovanni, helps his namesake build his business.
CALENDAR of events

Visit www.theshopper.com to see upcoming events around Hampton Roads

AutumnFest at Chesapeake Arboretum
October 5th • 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.
623 Oak Grove Rd., Chesapeake
Free family activities include hay bale maze, petting zoo, an old-fashioned pie-baking contest and more. Vendors will be on site with concessions for purchase. For more information, call 757-382-6411.

42nd Annual Peanut Fest
October 10th - 13th
Suffolk Executive Airport, 1410 Airport Rd.
$10 per person, per entry $30; 4-day per person. This family-friendly event honors the city’s agriculture heritage and devotion to peanuts. Fun family activities include concerts, amusement rides, contests and competitions, a demolition derby, motorcycle rally, shrimp feast, fireworks and much more. For more information, visit www.suffolkpeanutfest.com

If you have an event you’d like to share, please submit to adcopy@theshopper.com

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Here’s what Samir Abdelshaheed, MD of Family Medicine Healthcare says:
“I would love to see Artificial Intelligence used more to help doctors and experts to predict and remove and potentially eradicate cancer at an early stage.”

As we approach our 10th year publishing Doctor to Doctor Magazine, and reflect upon its past, we are also looking forward. We want to include your thoughts. Please send a brief opinion and a headshot that we can use to: info@DoctorToDoctorMagazine.com by November 1st.

Kapers
Kapers is a delightfully intimate restaurant in Hickory, which backs up to the expressway on South Battlefield Boulevard, just south of Hanbury Road. It sits in a small shopping center at the foot of the overpass, along with The Hair Group and several other businesses.

On a recent weekend evening, we found Owner Todd Prosser celebrating the birthday of his chef, Kevin Christopher Prosser. The presence of family, friends, balloons and good cheer made Kevin’s birthday one that he’ll never forget.

A birthday celebration!

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