Pariser Dermatology Specialists

Where the latest medical advances and compassion converge

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Dr. Rachel Byrd, Shelly Carpenter and Dr. Kelly DeHart

MaidPro and Eco Carpet Pro

Neil and Lily Carson with their daughters

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Publisher’s Point

A Time to Work and Now...
A Time to Play

Forty years is a long time for one career. So I have been told, and so I now tell myself as I prepare to retire. I’ve loved my business since day one, and have never regretted founding it, growing it, and loving all of it.

Not every day has been perfect, but not one day was bad enough to make me regret my choice of careers. I wanted it to last forever, but there’s a season for everything in life. So, going forward, I will find joy in my memories of an utterly fulfilling career.

I will, of course, miss my long-time team who made The Shopper what it is today. They have all been with me from six to thirty-three years. We have celebrated weddings, births, graduations, divorces, deaths, camaraderie, sorrow, joy. We became family.

Come June, after 40 years in business, I will be ready to enjoy vacations, finish my book, and love my new life. Stay tuned.

The clients and readers who, over the years, have gifted The Shopper with their devotion continue to encourage us as we go forward. For this I am eternally grateful.

Congratulations to Doctor to Doctor Magazine – celebrating its 10 year anniversary!

Looking back over the years, this featured cover is from Fall 2010

Doctor to Doctor Magazine is mailed to medical professionals throughout Southside Hampton Roads and Northeastern North Carolina.

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I am in conversation with others who value The Shopper and are exploring the path to shepherding it into the next 40 years. These include individuals, publishers, and entrepreneurs—some of whom are excellent fits for the magazine we have nurtured. At this point, I am just weeks into ongoing discussions regarding this important decision and, yes, I will take serious inquiries until we have inked an arrangement that we believe is beneficial for all concerned.

Those of you who know me know that I value our magazines and want the next generation to serve you as we always have. By summer, I expect The Shopper will have embarked on the next 40 years. It will deserve a great party! Please accept my heartfelt appreciation to all our dedicated clients, readers, and team members who have made the past 40 years so meaningful. What a grand life you have given me. What glorious memories I will take into the future.

Come June, after 40 years in business, I will be ready to enjoy vacations, finish my book, and love my new life. Stay tuned.

The Shopper is a monthly, direct-mail, magazine serving six community editions in Chesapeake, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Smithfield, Carrollton, in Virginia and communities in northeastern North Carolina. The Shopper has a circulation of at least 10,000 direct mailed in each zone, totaling over 60,000. Additional issues are placed in our advertisers’ stores and in professional offices in our circulation area.

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Addition Associates’ Barry Hobbs
Clients describe what they need, remodeler designs how!

By Jean Loxley-Barnard

Barry Hobbs is an imposing man in so many ways. At 6’2” this mild-mannered gentleman, which is how one and all describe him, is fully present, and, when with a client, eager to find out what they have in mind to make their home fulfill current needs. After hearing what clients need, this designer comes up with the how.

“The thing I enjoy most is the design work,” Barry emphasizes with the enthusiasm he has brought to converting homeowners’ needs into realities for perhaps a thousand homes over 40 years.

Barry Hobbs’ business is appropriately named Addition Associates because what he does is enhance existing homes, executing the visions his clients have for the homes they don’t want to leave. He is the perfect man with whom to share that vision for a needed change.

Barry Hobbs doesn’t just add on a sunroom or an in-law suite, he makes it look as though it has always been part of the home! So often additions can appear incongruent with a home’s original design if they are not executed by a skilled designer/builder. Barry attributes his edge in this market to having studied architecture in college, which supports his goal of making any addition look like it was always there.

“When Barry’s father-in-law asked him to manage his company 40 years ago, he could not have envisioned the success Barry has had in the business. Barry Hobbs’ business has been appropriately named Addition Associates because what he does is enhance existing homes, executing the visions his clients have for the homes they don’t want to leave. He is the perfect man with whom to share that vision for a needed change.

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Nicole Harrell

Service Dispatcher Extraordinaire

It is not every day that we meet a truly happy person whose job it is to solve problems for customers who are often without heat or having a plumbing emergency. But after two years working for Buddy Smith’s ever-expanding company, Nicole Harrell is energized, not spent, as she cheerfully helps callers. Customers can sense a connection with her. They feel that she genuinely cares and will work to solve their problems.

Nicole experienced feeling tuned-in to others long before joining the team at Russell’s. After all, she is a twin, and, as is often the case, even with fraternal twins who are brother and sister, she knows what it’s like to feel a connection to someone else.

“I remember when my brother was in a serious car accident,” Nicole notes. “I got very sick at the same time, without knowing what had happened.” Now working day in and day out with customers, she is tuned in, not at the twin level, but surely at the person to person level.

“I really enjoy picking service technicians who are the best fit for the job each customer presents.”
—Nicole Harrell

“…everything recorded to keep current and give excellent service. We can even refer back to those services to see what was done,” Nicole points out.

Nicole is married to her college sweetheart, has a daughter and two stepsons, and lives in Virginia Beach. She is always looking at the bright side! It is so like Nicole to say, “It is very rare that we can’t take care of a customer. Satisfied, happy customers are the norm! Working here is all-around fun!”

Attention:
Seniors Who LOVE Their Family

“It’s Easy to Give the Best Gift Ever for Valentine’s Day”

Okay, an estate plan is likely not the first thing to pop into your mind as a gift for your family, but you should consider it nevertheless. The truth is that life doesn’t always give us warning signs for mental incapacity and death.

“Bill and Sue” came to see me for an estate plan. Sue noticed that Bill wasn’t feeling well. They decided to return to finish our meeting when he was feeling better. That night, Sue took Bill to the emergency room, and he was admitted to the hospital. Two days later, Bill was in a coma. A week later, he died.

Surprises happen all the time around us. Instant mental incapacity due to stroke, falling, and car accidents can throw a family into crisis and cause a lot of stress.

“Sam” lives in Maine. His parents, “Al and Edna,” live here. Sam explained that his mother was in the hospital and not expected to survive. His dad was fighting cancer. Edna handled the finances, and Al just didn’t have the energy to figure things out. I was able to help by preparing a General Power of Attorney for Al so Sam could manage his parent’s finances. Sam felt stress, frustration, and had sleepless nights because his parents were not prepared.

If you want to make it easy for your family to help you manage your assets, pay your bills, and have a counselor to turn to in case of an emergency or death, call today for an appointment. I can help you prevent a family crisis.

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A Vision of Youth

The Journey

It still seems strange to reflect on my high school graduation and acknowledge that five years have passed. I had no idea what my life would look like after receiving my diploma. I felt daunted by choosing what I wanted to do and be for the rest of my life, and I recognized the same uncertainty in many of my peers. Some people identify their calling at age five and never stray from it. Others are in college, still trying to figure out their career paths. In the end, I sought a position at an animal shelter and remain in that field today. I also pursue my love of writing and aspire to publish a novel. Sometimes our passions will not lead us into sustainable careers, and we must weigh the pros and cons of following a more unconventional path. Now that some time has passed, I can look back and recognize the significant experiences throughout my childhood that influenced where I am today.

My passion for animals and animal rescue blossomed throughout my childhood. What began as a fundraiser for our local animal shelter turned into years of dedicated volunteering. I got my first look at what it meant to be a guardian of the forsaken, and I discovered a mission I feel blessed to fight for every day. Similarly, I began authoring short stories as soon as I learned how to write. I have always adored bringing worlds, characters, and adventures to life upon the page. I was a child in perpetual motion, spinning from one hobby to the next. Each experience shaped who I am today, and it was through these activities that I discovered the callings I felt most compelled to follow.

I can look back and recognize the significant experiences throughout my childhood that influenced where I am today.

High school students sometimes struggle to dictate their future because they haven’t yet had a chance to truly live. My experiences guided me through the decisions I’ve made and continue to make each day. Classes, camps, hobbies and other activities provide wonderful enrichment to a child’s life, but their true value runs much deeper. Exposure to life experience prior to life choices can help us make more educated, confident decisions for our futures. Until we start, we can’t know for sure that we have a true grasp of where we want to end. Sometimes our journeys reach a different conclusion than we thought they would when they began. We are never too old to discover a passion our heart feels called upon to answer. In the face of infinite possible directions, moving forward is easiest with an open heart and open mind. We never know where a single day might take us, or which days we will later look back on as the building blocks that shaped the happiness we find along the way.

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

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The Greenbrier/River Walk Shopper   February 2020

By Breonna Loxley

New Year, New Rules
Killing the Drone Industry?

By Terry Young

On December 31, 2019, the FAA published a proposal outlining new rules enabling a system to track all drone flights in the USA. The proposal, released in the interest of public safety and awareness, has a few items that have many drone pilots very unhappy and on the verge of leaving the hobby. The FAA already requires all drones larger than 0.55 pounds (250 grams) to be registered. They also want the drone to broadcast identifying information in order to fly in most locations. The main issue is that current drones do not broadcast all the information that the FAA wants. This means that current drone owners, both recreational and commercial, might have to buy additional equipment and also subscribe to a proposed monthly data service to comply. It is unknown how expensive these will be for regular users. There are fears that they could price out all but larger commercial operators.

Based on the wording of the document, a drone without the extra equipment and monthly subscription may not be able to take off unless traveling an estimated 15 miles to one of a few locations—usually fields called FAA-recognized identification areas (FRIA).

A major concern of most pilots is that the data subscription system will be cell-service based. This means that someone operating the drone in a location with bad, or no, cell service will also be stopped from flying.

I have flown my drones commercially in rural locations like the Eastern Shore, where there has been very weak cellphone service. If I was on a commercial job, not being able to fly when I arrived on-site would be expensive and frustrating. Another concern is that the FAA wants pilot identifying information to be publicly accessible in real-time, for example, via cell phone apps.

This has led to concerns over issues of privacy and possible endangerment.

Because drones are still relatively new and have often been sensationalized in the media as spying machines, some drone pilots have been harassed, injured, and had their property destroyed while flying legitimately. There have also been cases of pilots being robbed or having their apparatus stolen from their vehicles.

Many pilots fear that if the public (including criminals) are able to see details on them, including their exact location, there could be an escalation in confrontations, thefts, violence, and worse.

The next few months are critical in the process, and we expect to see the initial version of the FAA’s rules soon.

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.

Read our story at TheShopper.com

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**Children First**

By Dr. Becky Adams

**What is a Penny Worth?**

Walking through any parking lot of a big box store, strip mall or fast-food chain, all you have to do is look down. Inevitably your eyes will spot a small coin nestled in the concrete or sidewalk. Some are shiny, and others appear to have been there for years. People walk by or step on them. No one seems to pay attention. Every few years, a news story will suggest that the federal government is considering the possibility of doing away with the penny since it is not worth what it used to be, and people find it annoying to carry it around in their pocket or purse. What exactly is a penny worth? Can it make a difference in a child’s life? How could that happen?

I remember a teenage boy in our city who would stop at the drive-through line on a Friday night and open the car door at the pick-up window. On the ground he sometimes found enough dropped change to buy a double taco for two. What did he learn about managing money and how to accumulate it for what you desire?

**What exactly is a penny worth? Can it make a difference in a child’s life? How could that happen?**

In 2000-2001 the Chesapeake General Hospital Foundation had a Silver Millennium Campaign to raise funds for an endowment and to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the hospital’s founding. School children participated in the Million Pennies Project and raised thousands of dollars. Some schools had Math-a-thons that included having children complete a booklet of 200 math problems with parents and collect pledges for the program. Schools counted the pennies donated and made long lines outside the school building to measure how many miles their collected pennies represented. Pennies were integrated into math and science lessons. What were those pennies worth as children learned not only math skills but also the importance of community service?

Parents can have a fun activity with their children with pennies and a magnifying glass. Start by having both parent and child guess what is on the front and back of a penny and write it down on a piece of paper. Don’t look at a penny until after you have written your ideas. Then take the magnifying glass and check out your answers. On the front of the penny is the profile of President Lincoln with the word Liberty on one side of his head. On the other side of his head is the coin’s mint date, as well as a letter indicating where it was minted. Around the top will be the words In God We Trust. On the back of the penny the words United States of America will be at the top followed by E PLURIBUS UNUM (United States motto in Latin, meaning for “out of many, one”) above the picture of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. What is a penny worth in this activity as parents share time together learning about the history of our country and noticing the little things in their daily lives?

As I handed a dollar bill to the young man at the drive-through window last week and waited for my penny change, he closed the cash register. He then looked at me and said, “I didn’t think you would want a penny back.” I smiled as he reopened the register and handed me the penny. I dropped it into the cup holder in my car and drove off. He’ll probably get it back next week with some other coins. What is a penny worth? It depends on how you use it.

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.

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**On The Front Porch With You**

by Rob Lauer

**Throw a Dinner Party and Save the World**

Recently, my friends, Brigitta and Christian, recalled how, shortly after moving to the U.S. from Germany, they invited friends over for dinner. “We spent the day preparing the food,” Brigitta recalls. “Our friends arrived. After appetizers and drinks, we sat at the table and ate. When we tried to usher them to our living room for drinks and conversation, they said it was getting late, and they needed to go.”

“I was confused,” Christian says. “I asked them, ‘How can it be late? It’s not bedtime yet!’”

“In Europe, a dinner party is not only about eating but spending an entire evening with friends,” Brigitta explains.

I wish it was so here. Seven years ago, Carey and I invited friends over for dinner one Saturday night. After we cooked all afternoon, our guests arrived at 6:00 and were gone by 8:45. We wanted them to stay longer, but the food had been eaten, and it was “getting late.”

The average U.S. household spends around $3,000 a year eating out. Our social lives revolve around breaking bread together, but are we doing much more than filling our bellies?

When I was younger and living in New York City, I worked for six years as an actor in national theatrical touring companies. Nine months each year were spent on the road, eating every single meal in restaurants. Eating out ceased to be a big deal by week two of my first job. The people with whom I shared a table and our conversations became the main course. To this day, I remember stories and jokes we shared over meals, with no memory of the food over which that sharing occurred.

Eating out is overrated and expensive. For less than what Carey and I spend on one meal out, we can prepare dinner for six at home. Of course, that preparation takes time—the one thing most of us have convinced ourselves we lack. But the time we put into preparing a meal is a gift to our friends and family. And the time that they take to enjoy that meal and the conversation afterward is their gift to us.

In 2017, Rico Gagliano and Brendan Francis Newnam published a hilarious—and in my opinion, important—book: *Brunch is Hell: How to Save The World by Throwing A Dinner Party*. They contend that the dinner party—“where friends new and old share food, debate ideas, and boldly build hangovers together”—is the cornerstone of civilized society. By reviving “the fading art of throwing dinner parties, the world will be better off, and our country might heal its wounds of endless division.”

Societal salvation through dinner parties? Think about it. Greek philosophy was born as dinner conversation. Judaism has survived for four thousand years because of weekly Sabbath meals. Christianity has lasted for two thousand years because believers gather for a symbolic meal—“Communion.” Studies show that families who regularly eat dinner together deal better with the problems that life inevitably throws their way.

Perhaps a better response to the seismic social divisions all around us is not another online post or Tweet but a dinner invitation.

Throw a dinner party and save the world? Hey, it’s worth a try.

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.

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“All of our growth has happened organically as more and more patients relied on us. We expand by bringing in the resources best suited to their needs.”

—Robert Pariser, MD

Dr. David Pariser, Managing Partner, and Dr. Robert Pariser put their heads together so that medicine, business, and personal compassion could converge. They connected with like-minded providers and support staff to open new locations. Patient education was deemed a high priority, with technicains taking the time to explain every detail and answer every question.

The Parisers’ pioneering spirit inspired a clinical research initiative to help effective new treatments reach the public sooner. Virginia Clinical Research (VCR), an independent enterprise led by the Parisers, formally conducts FDA-compliant studies on treatments seeking FDA approval. Since extensive testing on a new treatment can be costly and time-consuming, helpful new treatments can get needlessly bogged down in the approval stage. When the Parisers saw how many local patients were willing to do their part, they began conducting clinical trials in the Norfolk location.

“Even if a patient can’t find proper treatment available on the market yet, they shouldn’t give up,” Dr. Pariser notes. “Exciting new options are under development. A clinical trial gives patients early access to potential new treatments, along with the satisfaction of having helped the treatment reach other patients sooner. This allows patients to play a small part in medical history. Patients who come to our practice for medical visits can get information about studies that may interest them.”

Tireless efforts by clinical researchers first paid off about two decades ago when biologics were introduced. Chronic conditions like psoriasis and eczema, sometimes severe enough to disrupt a patient’s daily life, were tamed at last. Dr. Pariser recalls the flood of suffering patients who came in for relief upon learning of this breakthrough. Patients who’d spent their lives nursing rashes were finally able to sleep through the night. Overjoyed at the results, Virginia Clinical Research pressed on into new frontiers.

As the biologic breakthrough re-invigorated dermatology, a medical student named Kelly DeHart was in West Virginia trying to choose his destiny. He attended a seminar on the field of dermatology, which showed him an amazing world of subcutaneous conditions at the forefront of modern research. By 2008, he was a board-certified dermatologist.

One of his schoolmates, Molly Smith, MD, had joined Pariser, where she found a niche in dermatopathology. She told Dr. DeHart about Pariser’s high standards, modern access, and genuine patient care. He joined the practice 12 years ago and never looked back. And four years later, Dr. Kelly DeHart’s identical twin brother, Dr. Kevin DeHart, also joined the staff at Pariser Dermatology.

“With every available tool to care for my patients, and I’m surrounded by an amazing team working for patient success,” Dr. DeHart shares. “Patients who come to us get answers and solutions. It makes me love my job all the more!”

Teamwork is a popular word among Pariser employees. Clinical Supervisor Shelly Carpenter, who’s been with the practice since 1984, plays an integral role in leading Pariser’s exemplary technician team. When asked to describe her job, her passion for patient empowerment quickly begins to animate her voice. She speaks of removing obstacles to care, standing up to insurance companies, finding less invasive diagnostic tools, and comforting children in pain. She also does public speaking on skin cancer prevention to slow the rise of skin cancer in young adults.

“We’re pathfinders in dermatology. We open new avenues and offer new solutions in a much-needed field,” Shelly remarks. “I’m thankful to the Pariser family, and all of our wonderful providers, for giving us this incredible practice where we can make a difference.”

The physicians at Pariser Dermatology recommend a yearly skin exam starting in adulthood. Tanning beds, pollution, and other factors are now causing problems for some patients as early as their twenties. A dermatologist can check hard-to-reach places, examine suspicious areas, and even discuss safe cosmetic options. Children who struggle with excessive acne or chronic inflammation can also benefit from a visit to Pariser Dermatology.

Since 1946 the practice has grown to include 16 physicians, five physician assistants, a nurse practitioner, and four aestheticians. The services and expertise have expanded to include Mohs surgery, dermatopathology, many forms of light therapies, and a full range of cosmetic dermatology services. Patients can be seen at any of the six office locations in the Hampton Roads area from Williamsburg to Virginia Beach. For those not able to be seen in person, Pariser’s teledermatology solution, InTeleDerm, is an option. Patients can be treated by one of Pariser Dermatology’s board-certified dermatologists, 24 hours a day, anywhere they have an internet connection by going online and sending in clear pictures of their skin conditions.

“I tell patients to contact us whenever they’re in doubt,” Dr. DeHart says. “We’re always looking for new ways to make the process easier and more effective. Patients are often surprised by how much we have to offer.”

Pariser Dermatology Specialists, LTD
Where the latest medical advances and compassion converge

By Candance Moore

From its humble beginnings as a small family-run practice, Pariser Dermatology Specialists has grown into a regional multi-site team that’s setting new standards for Hampton Roads. It has the resources to invest in the latest technology, which in turn attracts highly talented and qualified providers. Yet, it hasn’t lost the heart that underlined its initial success. Excellence in every arena—from the personal experience to effective treatment to patient education—has come to define Pariser Dermatology.

“We put thought into every part of this practice,” Robert Pariser, MD explains. “Our medical technology, our support staff, our hiring decisions, everything. All of our growth has happened organically as more and more patients relied on us. We expand by bringing in the resources best suited to their needs.”

Meeting patients’ needs was the motivation that sparked Pariser’s growth several decades ago. Dr. Robert Pariser remembers growing up in Norfolk when his father, Dr. Harry Pariser, founded the practice. It was a small one-man operation in 1946, treating neighbors at an office downtown. Dr. David Pariser joined his father in the practice in 1976, and Dr. Robert followed in 1978. Since then, they have been determined to bring innovation in dermatology to Hampton Roads.
What dermatological warnings do people need to know?

Rachel Byrd, MD is a board-certified dermatologist who attended the University of Richmond and went on to study medicine at VCU. She lives in Virginia Beach and is passionate about educating people about the dangers of direct sun exposure (particularly between 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.) and tanning bed use, which can lead to skin cancer and accelerated aging of the skin.

Additional suggestions for protection are:
1. Use daily sunscreen of SPF 30+. Reapply every two hours when spending time in the sun.
2. Wear clothing with UPF (Ultraviolet Protection Factor) which is more reliable than sunscreen in protecting the skin.
3. All adults should consider getting a baseline skin exam by a board certified dermatologist to identify individual risk factors.
4. Check your own skin regularly. Skin lesions that are different than the rest, asymmetric, have irregular borders, multiple or dark colors, larger than a pencil eraser should be evaluated by a dermatologist.
5. Any skin lesion that is enlarging, painful, itching, bleeding or otherwise changing should also be evaluated.
6. Your family history of skin cancer and your own sun exposure history may contribute to your risk of developing skin cancer.
7. A large number of moles may increase your risk of developing melanoma.

Pariser Dermatology Specialists
510 Independence Parkway, Suite 600, Chesapeake
3907 Bridge Road, Suite 200, Suffolk

What does every taxpayer need to know this year?

CPA Beverly Jones did not hesitate to answer. “I would like everyone to know if they owed money last year, now is the time to fill out a new W-4. This is a new form that will allow them to withhold more accurately.”

This simple statement is an example of why those of us who are not IRS savvy need a professional to help us through the trying and important tax season. Keeping up with tax changes takes a full-time commitment that few of us have, and all of us need.

We all need to remember that while we focus on tax time once a year, a CPA is essential year-round to entrepreneurs and individuals whose tax returns are just not simple.

STOP Inc. is a designated Community Action Agency with a 54-year history of addressing local issues of poverty for low-to-moderate-income families and individuals. Funded by various government sources as well as contributions from foundations and individuals, STOP attacks the root causes of poverty.

Regina Lawrence, STOP’s President and CEO, has been with the organization for 45 years. She explains, “We have four main departments. These cover health and wellness initiatives, homeless intervention and support, housing and economic development and management, support and special projects. We embrace a total family concept—a two-generation approach. We go to every individual in a family to determine the needs of each.”

Health and Wellness focuses on nutritional education and training. It issues referrals for much-needed physical and mental health services, with an emphasis on preventing opioid use and abuse. Led by Dr. Christian Joyner, it provides substance abuse prevention training and education. The team presents “Hidden in Plain Sight” demonstrations—interactive drug-educational programs for parents. Christian knows, “Parents need to look at their kids’ phones and be aware of signs.”

STOP interacts with the homeless and housing providers to ensure homelessness is rare, brief, and nonrecurring. Plus, it works with the Homeless Veterans’ Reintegration Program to assist veterans in finding employment.

STOP welcomes volunteers, donations, and community support All help, no matter how small, is so appreciated.

What leads a young woman to become a dentist?

Simply stated, Dr. Kelly B. Paxton of Midgett Family Dentistry gives the credit to her childhood dentist, who was both kind and professional. The young Kelly loved going to the dentist, and remembers knowing since middle school that she wanted to be a dentist.

Kelly’s career path to becoming a dentist wasn’t always easy. She ran track during her undergraduate studies, and traveled with her team while pursuing her degree. She explains that when she went to dental school, it was a breath of fresh air because she could focus more on her studies and not be torn to pursue two passions at once. “I still run,” she smiles.

When looking for a practice, Kelly remembers the day she discovered Midgett Family Dentistry. “I fell in love with this office and doctors from the moment I walked in, 14 years ago!” she explains. “Dr. Baker and Dr. Midgett had the same morals and values as my childhood dentist. They care about their patients and provide top-notch technology.”

When asked what advice she would give to women pursuing careers in business, she counsels, “Find what you enjoy doing and do that to the best of your ability. Don’t do something halfway. If you want to be the best at it, you have to keep going. Education, learning—it’s a long-term pursuit. Things that are truly worth fighting for sometimes take a little longer, so don’t give up.”

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**WOMEN in BUSINESS**

**Q** What is the best thing about owning a hair salon?

**A** Denise Query has owned Hair Kingdom for 31 years, and this attractive owner stands out due to her reputation for being a businesswoman who cares for three groups of people:

1. The hairstylists and personnel of Hair Kingdom are as important to Denise as she is to them.
2. Their clients are important, not just for their patronage, but for the satisfaction the entire team feels when each patron is truly happy with the results of their expertise. Long term clients have become more beautiful and part of the “family.”
3. Finally, everyone who works with Denise knows her heart goes out to anyone in need of help.

Hair Kingdom’s support of charities such as the Her Shelter, Locks of Love, and countless others, who have benefited from the devotion of Denise and her wonderful team.

Hair Kingdom
344 Battlefield Blvd S, Chesapeake  
(757) 482-1900  
www.HairKingdom66.com

**Q** What is the biggest attraction for the Corner Cafe at Bide-A-Wee?

**A** “The beautiful 18-hole Bide-A-Wee Golf Course is not only centrally located, but also open to the public for events and golf. Since expanding last year with Corner Cafe at Bide-A-Wee, we have also expanded our popular catering facilities to serve the Golf Course Pavilion!” Sheri Spries-Skipper, owner of both Corner Cafe and Corner Cafe At Bide-A-Wee, is excited about all the weddings and events held at this beautiful venue. The spacious Bide-A-Wee Golf Course Pavilion can accommodate any size event.

“We love catering there. Each event is different. We have everything from birthdays and retirements to family reunions, showers and weddings,” Sheri enthuses. “We love being a part of so many joyous events. Whether serving regulars and small informal parties in the Corner Cafe at Bide-A-Wee or the big events in the Pavilion, we are in a business that we love where we get to feel part of every event! Thank you, Portsmouth!”

Corner Cafe at Bide-A-Wee
1 Bide-A-Wee Lane, Portsmouth  
(757) 404-1801  
www.CornerCafeAtBideAWee.com

**Q** What distinguishes Premier Roofing and Siding from other home improvement companies?

**A** In the home improvement industry, it is rare to find women in charge. Premier Roofing and Siding is run by two such women: President Pam Standish and Vice President Ann Strader. Premier has kept the same owner, company name, and slogan for 30 years! And all of the management staff have been with the company for 15+ years.

It’s sales consultants are very knowledgeable, going to clients’ homes to measure in person, working up the quotes, and answering questions. Pam and Ann note they are fortunate to have long-standing in-house installers who are employees of Premier, along with great subcontractors with whom they’ve worked with for years. Everyone at Premier takes pride in their slogan of Promises Made, Promises Kept. They uphold their promises by writing down all work to be performed on the contract and keeping communication with customers open. Premier’s office staff is also available to answer clients’ calls directly.

Both Pam Standish and Ann Strader cite how very rewarding it is to have clients tell them they have done an outstanding job. They have set a standard for their industry.

Read our story at TheShopper.com

Premier Roofing and Siding  
(757) 543-8958
PremierRoofingAndSiding.com

**A** Jean Loxley-Barnard, founder, publisher, CEO, is planning to retire this summer as The Shopper celebrates 40 years. She is already in discussions with publishers and interested individuals. The Shopper may have a life of its own,” Jean hopes. “We have raving fans among our readers, who bring an issue to an advertiser, or simply say, ‘I saw you in The Shopper.’” Jean has always been grateful for them.

It is likely all issues will be acquired by existing publishers, but it is possible publishers will acquire particular areas, with others acquired by entrepreneurs, including account executives or writers like Jean. Interested parties showed up at the first inklings of her retirement.

Retiring entrepreneurs often refer to their business as their baby, and Jean can relate. “I might keep an interest in one or two of the issues,” she admits, but adds, “Being spiritually oriented, I am willing to be guided by what should be.”

The name The Shopper is generic and Jean owns TheShopper.com website, in an era when digital keeps growing along with thousands of visitors each month. When asked in 1997 what she wanted her domain name to be, Jean answered, “TheShopper.com.” Asked for her second choice, she replied, “I don’t have a second choice.” Told that, “TheShopper.com probably wouldn’t be available,” Jean replied, “Trust me, it will.”

The Shopper
133 Kempsville Road, Chesapeake  
(757) 547-0520  
www.TheShopper.com

You can read more about this in Publisher’s Point on page 4.
MaidPro/Eco Carpet Pro

Helping others have better lives is what it’s all about

By Cristi Sanchez

Lily Carson’s business, MaidPro/Eco Carpet Pro, is a labor of love—love for people, love for community, and yes, a love of cleaning. “When I was pregnant with my first daughter, I had this eagerness to clean everything!” Lily laughs. “I’d never been a clean freak, but during my pregnancy, everything had to be clean! I had fallen in love with cleaning and really enjoyed it!”

It was also during that time that Lily was considering her next career move. With two engineering degrees from Purdue University, Lily had willingly walked away from her lucrative job in corporate America to focus on starting a family. Throughout her pregnancy, Lily began considering a new family-friendly career path.

“I wanted to do something that would allow me to be there for my child,” Lily explains with a smile. “Without any business background, I wasn’t sure where to start. I wanted my own business, so I began to consider a franchise.”

But which franchise remained a question until the day Lily’s friend persuaded her to check out a MaidPro truck. Knowing Lily’s newfound love of cleaning, her friend exclaimed, “You can do that! That’s a franchise.” Thus the seed was planted. “That piqued my interest,” Lily notes. “So, I started researching cleaning franchises online and found MaidPro.”

As part of her research, Lily applied to a local cleaning company to experience first-hand the life of a professional cleaner. “I wanted to know what it was like to work in the field,” she recalls, “so for two weeks, I actually worked as a cleaner for a different company before purchasing my franchise. I wanted to experience a cleaner’s life and see if it was something I would want to do.”

What Lily found during her brief employment as a professional cleaner would profoundly impact her philosophy on running her business and how she would treat her employees. “Not only did I see unhappy employees and low morale, but I was shocked at how differently people perceived me when they thought I was a maid,” she notes.

“Coming from corporate America I was used to being treated with respect, dignity and as someone with intelligence. When people heard I was a maid, they immediately treated me differently. The change in attitude was instantaneous. It was quite surprising. I decided then that I would foster an environment that was very supportive of employees, where they know and feel they’re important. Essentially, people are the same; we just have different professions. No profession’s better or worse than any other. As long as someone honestly puts forth their best effort, they should be respected as an equal. I want to support and encourage my employees, so I treat them equally, fairly, and provide them opportunities.”

All of Lily’s employees are offered paid holidays, vacations and sick days, healthcare, 401K accounts with matching payments by the company, and profit-sharing. Lily’s dedication to providing a positive, supportive workplace has paid off in more ways than one. Since it opened in 2008, Lily’s MaidPro franchise has continued to grow, even during the recession.

Lily attributes this success to her team. “I believe it’s because we really have good people,” she states earnestly. “We have a group of like-minded people who are honest, hardworking and want to help others. We’re all a family. I wouldn’t be where I am without my team,” she states earnestly.

Lily and her team succeed because of the consistent, high-quality customer service they provide, from the first phone call until the job is done. “My goal at MaidPro is to provide top-notch service at reasonable prices,” Lily insists. “We work hard to understand our customers’ cleaning needs and budgets, and we tailor our services to fit those. We also provide customers flexibility. We don’t require contracts, so people can cancel anytime.”

To ensure that her customers get the best cleaning possible, Lily never assigns newly-trained cleaners until they have cleaned her own home to her exacting standards. “After my employees are trained, they have to clean my home first,” she smiles. “Then, I can provide feedback. If they’re good enough for me, then they can clean for our customers.”

After every cleaning, MaidPro’s quality control coordinator reaches out to customers to ensure their satisfaction. “We have a 100 percent customer satisfaction guarantee,” Lily explains. “To stay successful, we have to provide customers with excellent cleaning and customer service. That’s what we do.”

“After my employees are trained, they have to clean my home first. Then, I can provide feedback. If they’re good enough for me, then they can clean for our customers.”

—Lily Carson

Lily’s satisfied customers soon began to inquire about carpet cleaning. Unable to find a carpet company to partner with that would provide service according to her standards, Lily created her own. “My husband, Neil, heads Eco Carpet Pro,” she explains. “We offer carpet, upholstery, area rug, and tile and grout cleaning. In some ways, we’re like a one-stop shop.”

Neil and Lily Carson with their daughters, Eliana and Mira.

Lily shares MaidPro’s top-notch service with the community as well through MaidPro’s the Gift of Clean program. In partnership with the American Cancer Society, the program provides free house cleaning to local cancer patients.

“At a time when cancer patients need a clean environment the most, they don’t have the energy to do it themselves,” Lily says. “This program is our way of giving back. Since 2015, we’ve provided $20,000-worth of free cleaning. For our single parent employees who often don’t have the resources to give, the Gift of Clean is a gift of giving for them. During this process, they can see what difference they can make in someone’s life, and it makes them feel good and gives their job meaning.”

Warm, friendly, modest, and smart as a whip, Lily Carson was able to take a strong case of nestling instinct 12 years ago and turn it into one of the most successful MaidPro franchises in the nation through her commitment to excellence, to her employees, and to her community. Her dedication to what she does is summed up succinctly. “We are in the people business. Our services help people have better lives, and for us, that’s what it’s all about.”

www.maidpro.com/hr
1739 Parkview Drive
Chesapeake
(757) 644-5566
www.maidpro.com/hr
www.ecocarpetpro.com

www.maidpro.com/hr
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www.maidpro.com/hr
www.ecocarpetpro.com
Chesapeake Sports Club

The latest Chesapeake Sports Club luncheon was held at the Chesapeake Conference Center. Carl Farris, who attended with his family, was recognized as the club's new Legend of Honor. The guest speaker was Will Driscoll, Virginia Sports Hall of Fame Executive Director.

Guest Speaker Will Driscoll with Chesapeake Sports Club President, Jim Cleavenger

Carl Farris, January 2020 Legends of Honor recipient

Coming soon...

Independent Lens: Leftover Women
10 p.m. Monday, February 10th

Country Music:
Are You Sure Hank Done It This Way? (1973-1983)
9 p.m. Friday, February 14th

Cinema 15:
Sense and Sensibility
8 p.m. Saturday, February 8th

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner
9 p.m. Saturday, February 15th

The Guns of Navarone
8 p.m. Saturday, February 22nd

Love Notes

Our clients love their response from The Shopper!

Join our Shopper family by calling 547-0520!

“I've gotten 90 percent of my patients from The Shopper!”
— Dr. Julia Stevenson
Cardinal Plastic Surgery

“I have had good results with The Shopper.”
—Beverly Jones
CPA, PC

“I feel that advertising in The Shopper has contributed to our having had one of our best years ever. It provided us the ability to remind people that Freemason Abbey is only minutes away.”
— Lori Maddux
Freemason Abbey Restaurant

“For weeks after my story came out, I was busy every day. Jobs big and small came in. And I did not have to ask how my customers found me. It was because of The Shopper!”
—Will Watson
Watson’s Transport & Delivery
Recently, the Chesapeake Sheriff’s Office held their Quarterly Awards. Sheriff Jim O’Sullivan recognized six individuals for their years of service above and beyond the call of duty.

From left: Sheriff Jim O’Sullivan presented “Medals of Valor” to Deputy Q. Burke and Deputy R. Hastings Jr.

From left: Sheriff Jim O’Sullivan, Troy Merritt, Senior Deputy C. Gray, Master Deputy H. Gard, Senior Deputy Gray and Master Deputy H. Gard received “Life-Saving Awards.” Troy Merritt received a “Citizen’s Service Award.”

Above: Sheriff Jim O’Sullivan, left, presented Senior Deputy N. Peng with the “Award of Excellence”

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I CAN RELATE
Part I

“I understand your point of view.” How many times have you heard that, or said it to someone? This is a key ingredient in forming friendships and other social bonds - in establishing and maintaining relationships.

Imagine a good story.

Lower loops of a moderate size indicate an average amount of material imagination. This applies to anything that can be seen and touched, including objects and people. The writer above can relate to people who differ from herself as long as they are not too different.

my story is funny.

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Willow Creek
Gracious Retirement Living

At Willow Creek, our caring management team is here for you any time, day or night because we live here too. We participate in activities, pour coffee at mealtime, and get to know each of our residents and their families. Each apartment is furnished with pull cords that alert our managers if an emergency should ever arise, and you or your loved one needs assistance. Our residents are our friends and neighbors who we get to know on a personal level.

Willow Creek offers studio, one bedroom, and two bedroom/two bath suites with no buy-ins or leases. We know that many older adults live on a fixed income, and that’s why Willow Creek operates on a month-to-month rent with no hidden costs, fees or long-term leases. Meals, all utilities (except phone), housekeeping, and transportation are included in the monthly rent. Plus, pets are welcome too! Our residents breathe easy knowing their budget will be balanced and easy to manage every month.

It’s all included in one monthly rent:
• Caring live-in managers available 24/7
• Three chef-prepared meals daily
• Scheduled local transportation
• Planned activities & special events
• Weekly housekeeping & linen service
• All utilities except phone and so much more

Willow Creek Retirement Community is located at 516 Great Bridge Blvd in Chesapeake. We invite you to drop in for a personal tour, talk with our residents, and enjoy a complimentary meal with us.

To arrange your visit, please give us a call
757-547-7876
CALENDAR of events

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

Chesapeake Planetarium Presents “Death of a Star”
February 6th, 20th and 27th • 8 p.m.
Chesapeake Planetarium, 310 Shea Drive, Chesapeake
Stars have a “life cycle” based on their mass. Smaller less massive stars will last longer due to their slower fusion. At the end of a star’s life its fate may be one of the most powerful events in the Universe. We will examine the fate of our own star the Sun. Due to limited seating, reservations are necessary and may be made by telephoning Chesapeake Public Schools between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. weekdays at (757) 547-0153. For more information visit https://cpschools.com/planetarium/

The Chesapeake Forum – Mae Jemison
March 3rd • 7 p.m. - 10 p.m.
Chesapeake Conference Center, 700 Conference Center Drive
The Chesapeake Forum provides an opportunity for the community to come together and be challenged by diverse speakers to include scientists, artists, historians, judges, financiers, humorists, philosophers, journalists, former government officials, writers, and other leaders in their respective fields. The Forum will neither engage in promoting political persons, positions, candidates, or parties in selecting speakers, nor in its marketing to audiences. Mae Jemison is an engineer, physician and former NASA astronaut. For more information and tickets, visit thechesapeakeforum.org.

Friends Gather to Celebrate!
Keith Tolarchyk, husband of Shopper Graphic Designer Jennifer Tolarchyk, recently gathered with family and friends to celebrate his birthday. Lockside Bar and Grill in Great Bridge was a perfect location for the laid-back festivities.

Gala Brings Mardi Gras to Chesapeake
The 20th Anniversary Mardi Gras Gala was recently held at the Chesapeake Conference Center. The gala has been a signature philanthropic event for nearly two decades, raising funds in support of Chesapeake Regional Healthcare. Net proceeds from the annual black-tie event provide substantial support to help fund program and equipment needs, such as the Interventional Neurology Suite, the renovation of the Emergency Department and the purchase of new furniture in the Mother/Baby Department.

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com
Homemade spaghetti an institution in homes of all-American families

Spaghetti is one of those dishes that never will be dated and always is a pleasure to anticipate. When I was a girl, spaghetti was the first thing you wanted to learn how to cook. It was the first meal a bride served to neighbors and friends. It was what your mother made in the fall, simmering it for hours on the back of the stove.

The pasta was plunged into large pots - sometimes two or three - of boiling water. Only we didn’t call it pasta then; we called it noodles. No one ever had fresh spaghetti noodles, but we still loved spaghetti.

Normally, the spaghetti was cooked just as you were ready for it, not a minute before. We reheated the noodles only if absolutely necessary, by placing them in a colander over the top of the pot with water simmering underneath.

Being able to cook all your noodles at one time was a sign of coming up in the world. As families gained affluence, they purchased tall pots that were called spaghetti pots. When the gourmet cooking rage swept the country, these same pots were renamed stockpots.

The spaghetti sauces were as good then as they are now, combining the best of ingredients and letting their flavors blend for a long time. We knew that spaghetti was supposed to be Italian, but, to us, it was all-American, with a designated position in the week starting in September and ending in May. Most homes had it once every week on a rotating cycle – every Thursday, for instance. It couldn’t be Wednesday because that would interfere with going to church Wednesday night.

Since my mother worked, our spaghetti day was Saturday or Sunday, days when she had time to let it cook all day. My mother made spaghetti once with mushrooms. She didn’t write down the recipe, and I long for it still.

One recent Saturday, I yearned for a thick, rich spaghetti sauce made from scratch. I wanted to luxuriate in the promise of crisp weather, to fill my home with its aroma. I had an abundance of fresh, lush, nearly over-ripe tomatoes ready to burst with juiciness, purloined from a friend’s garden. As so many of my favorite spaghetti recipes call for canned tomatoes or Italian plum tomatoes, I made up my recipe as I went along, using what was in the house.

When it was done, all that was needed was someone to share it, so I called my friend Cliff and took a plate of it to him at his store. I held my breath as he ate, and only when he pronounced it “the best spaghetti he’d ever had” did I release my breath and feel satisfied.

It’s a darn good sauce.

Keynote Speaker
Alonzo Mourning
NBA Hall of Fame

A Different Spaghetti

4 tablespoons olive oil
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 pounds fresh or 1 1-lb, 12-oz can peeled tomatoes
1 cup tomato juice, optional
1 tablespoon fennel seeds
5 tablespoons combined fresh herbs – basil, thyme, oregano and/or rosemary (if fresh herbs are not available, use half as much dried herbs, taste and add more as necessary)
1 12-oz package country sausage links or country sausage
1 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons tomato paste, optional
1/8 teaspoon cayenne or red pepper, optional
salt
freshly ground black pepper
2 7-ounce packages spaghetti freshly ground Parmesan

Heat olive oil in heavy saucepan. Add onions and garlic and cook until soft. Cut tomatoes roughly and add to pot. Cover and let juices cook out. If liquid is needed, add tomato juice. Add the fennel seed and 2 tablespoons of the freshly chopped herbs. Cover and simmer for 2 hours.

Fry the sausage in separate pan, cut into slices or break into pieces and add to the sauce. Taste sauce and add tomato paste, juice, sugar, red pepper and salt as necessary. Move lid to half cover, and simmer very low for half an hour, taking care not to scorch.

Cook spaghetti in boiling water 9-10 minutes. Drain well. Taste sauce, add rest of fresh herbs and serve with Parmesan. Leftovers may be mixed together and refrigerated or frozen to be reheated later.

Serves six.
Mr. Handyman of Virginia Beach

Problem Solved

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
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Mae Jemison
March 3, 2020

7:00 PM - Musical Program by local youth musicians
7:30 PM - Keynote Speaker Program
Chesapeake Conference Center

Engineer and physician Mae Jemison is the first woman of color in the world to go into space as a NASA astronaut. Dr. Jemison leads 100 Year Starship — nonprofit focused on human travel beyond our solar system.

For more information and tickets www.thechesapeakeforum.org

Congratulations Graduates!

Congratulations to the graduates of the 14th Session Chesapeake Sheriff’s Office Basic Deputy Training Academy. After 16 weeks of training—which included, firearms, defensive tactics, emergency vehicle operator courses, and physical training, 21 graduates received certificates and badges from Undersheriff W.C. Bennett Jr. and Chief Deputy K. Kight. City Council Member Dwight Parker was the guest speaker. Deputy Court Clerk Robin Kilgore swore in 20 of the new deputies and one new HRRJ officer. Welcome to the family!

See these and other photos at TheShopper.com
Suffolk Art League’s 37th Antique Show & Sale
Treasures from the past support arts education in the future
By Allison Williams

Searching for an 18th-century Canterbury tavern table to fill that empty nook at home? On the hunt for an eclectic, repurposed piece of vintage furniture?

Whatever one’s taste may be, the Suffolk Art League’s 37th Annual Antiques Show and Sale on February 22 and 23 will have something to satiate every appetite.

With 38 antiques and collectibles dealers from Virginia and North Carolina, the show will feature a variety of experts specializing in jewelry, silver, glass, furniture, and fine arts, according to Linda Bunch, the organization’s executive director.

The show, which is being held at King’s Fork Middle School, will be open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and from noon to 4 p.m. Sunday. It’s expected to draw about 2,000 people from across Hampton Roads, Richmond, and northeastern North Carolina.

“We’ll have something for everyone,” Linda says with a smile. “It’s a fun event. Even if you’re not buying, it’s always interesting to see things from the past and enjoy lunch with friends.”

The two-day antiques show and sale is the Suffolk Art League’s only fundraiser for the year, according to Linda. Proceeds help fund art classes and workshops in the city’s elementary schools, according to Linda Bunch, the organization’s executive director.

“We have a lot of dealers returning this year, and we have nine new dealers,” Linda continues. “In addition to the wonderful antiques and collectibles, we have opened this year’s show up to include some vintage items.”

The art league is hoping to welcome more of the often elusive millennials into their fold of antique shoppers.

“Millennials want to invest in experiences and in things that have meaning to them,” Linda says. “We want to offer younger collectors the opportunity to purchase quality items that have history and soul.

Older pieces have a backstory, and buyers can find that history from the dealer.

“Repurposing well-crafted items from the past is also ‘greener’ than buying new,” Linda continues. “Buying old furniture is good because it is not harming another tree. It leaves no new environmental footprint.”

Collectors of Mr. Peanut — the late iconic legume that has represented Planters Peanuts for 104 years — are in for a special treat.

“The Peanut Pals—an organization of Planters and Mr. Peanut memorabilia collectors—will be making a fourth appearance at the antique sale,” says President Scott Schmitz. The group will have one display table showcasing some rarer Mr. Peanut treasures and six tables of Planters’ advertising memorabilia that will be for sale.

“Things created by past generations that are still in existence and useful today never cease to amaze me.”

— Van Worrell

“We always enjoy visits to Suffolk because that is where Mr. Peanut originated,” Scott says. “We have a lot of people stopping by our tables, sharing stories about how their mother used to work at Planters. Some show us photographs of Planters memorabilia that has been handed down in their families for generations.”

Dealer Van Worrell, owner of Father Time Antiques in Newsoms, always looks forward to the Suffolk Art League’s show.

“I always enjoy trying to get more people interested in antiques,” Van says. “Things created by past generations that are still in existence and useful today never cease to amaze me.”

Van’s professional expertise is in mechanical-time pieces: pocket watches, grandfather clocks and the like. But he will be bringing a variety of items to the Suffolk show, including furniture, glassware, collectibles and advertising pieces.

He will also be replacing batteries in watches and wall clocks on-site and providing verbal appraisals on vintage timepieces.

Dealer Madalyn Grimes, who has been coming to the Suffolk show for 24 years, will be offering a plethora of items: vintage postcards, sheet music, pocket knives, Boy Scout memorabilia, and several small pieces of furniture.

“I enjoy the Suffolk show,” she said. “This is also a social event. After all these years, you get to know many of the other dealers and your repeat customers.”

Veteran dealer, Peg Lockwood of Zuni, who owns a shop in Norfolk’s Ghent, is excited to return to the Suffolk.

“We always have a good crowd there,” Peg says. She specializes in 18th- and 19th-century English furniture, as well as English and Asian ceramics and silver.

Peg adds that she is glad the show’s proceeds support art workshops for young people. “I think art enriches all of us,” she declares. “It’s particularly important to foster an interest in creativity among kids.”

Kim Mason, an art teacher at Nansemond-Suffolk Academy, couldn’t agree more.

“No one is going to go on to become a professional artist,” Kim says. “My goal is to have students who have experiences that make them appreciate and respect the arts when they become adults.”

For years, the Suffolk Art League has brought in professional artists to conduct quarterly workshops that rotate between the city’s public and private high schools. Small groups of students join one art teacher from each high school in hands-on workshops, learning new mediums and skills to take back to their respective classrooms.

“The best part is that teachers become students,” Kim says, a laugh in her voice. “We get to create and learn, as well. We can bring it back to class to share with students who weren’t able to participate in the workshops. As a school system, we could never afford to pay to have a professional artist come in and spend an entire day working with us.”

At the middle school level, the Suffolk Art League sponsors visits by local and regional artists for half-day workshops on mediums the schools don’t cover, Linda explains. Past workshops have included clay, quilting, bookmaking, and painting with pastels.

This year, for the first time, the organization has expanded its offerings to include one-hour art workshops in the city’s elementary schools, according to Linda.

Kim says she is looking forward to attending the antiques show and sale.

“I’m always a big supporter of the Suffolk Art League,” Kim says. “They care about the (arts) education in Suffolk’s schools, and are always looking for workshops that will continue to spark students’ interests in the arts.”

Suffolk Art League’s 37th Annual Antique Show & Sale
Saturday, February 22, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Sunday, February 23, 12:00 to 4:00 p.m.
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You’d be surprised at what people forget about planning their wedding,” says Dana Clarke Epstein, who, with her husband, Phillip, owns the Grey Goose in Hampton. “Over the years, we’ve planned and catered countless weddings. Couples will be particular about the venue, the food, the drinks, the décor, and the dress—everything. Then we’ll ask who is performing their wedding, and we’ll get blank stares. You’d be shocked at how often couples forget to hire someone to officiate—to actually perform the wedding.”

When this happens, Dana recommends Carey Whitley and Rob Lauer of CareRobe Expressions. As ordained ministers, Carey and Rob are licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia to serve as wedding officiants. They offer their services to couples who are either religiously unaffiliated, are entering an interfaith marriage, or having difficulties finding clergy to marry them.

“Recently, Dana directed a couple our way who had planned out their entire wedding—except for finding someone to perform the marriage itself,” Carey recalls. “Neither one of them belonged to a church or faith community, so they weren’t interested in having a religious ceremony. They wanted a strictly secular ceremony in front of about two dozen family and friends in a banquet hall they had leased for the occasion. After the ceremony, the couple planned to join their guests for a sit-down dinner. The bride told me that she wanted the ceremony to be celebratory, but also quick, sweet, and simple.”

“Like a growing number of people who aren’t affiliated with a particular faith, this couple hadn’t given a lot of thought to the words they wanted to be spoken at their wedding,” Rob explained. “They weren’t interested in writing their own vows or having a lot of flowery language. They wanted to keep their vows short, simple, and direct. We were happy to oblige. We also presented them with several other elements to incorporate into the ceremony. We suggested beginning the ceremony with a simple but beautiful reading on the nature of love and commitment. We recommended ending it with an Apache wedding blessing. This blessing was not explicitly religious, but it beautifully celebrated the emotional importance of the couple’s commitment, as well as their hopes for their future life together. After the ceremony, a number of the guests commented on how moved they had been by this very simple blessing.”

Recently a couple contacted Carey and Rob just two weeks before their wedding. A hall had been rented for the occasion. Caterers had been contracted. Family members from out of state had made travel arrangements. The couple, however, had no one to perform the wedding. The bride had no religious affiliation, but the groom had been raised in a very devout Southern Baptist home. Though he was not currently active in a church, his identity as a Christian was essential to him. He wanted liturgical elements in the ceremony that were explicitly Christian—Bible readings as well as prayers and blessings. The couple had written their own vows. They wanted a candle-lighting ceremony in which each of them took individual candles and lit one single candle, symbolizing their union. The bride also wanted her two teenage daughters to take part in the ceremony. Carey and Rob were able to customize a wedding liturgy that perfectly met this couple’s needs. They presented a wide selection of Biblical readings, Christian prayers, and blessings for the couple’s consideration. They listened to their thoughts, offering advice and suggestions as needed. To involve the bride’s daughters, they composed a vow for the groom in which he promised to care for the girls as if they were his own children. In turn, the daughters vowed to support the couple in their marriage. This was followed by a sand-pouring ceremony. The groom, the bride, and her daughters each poured separate containers of colored sand into a large glass urn—creating a rainbow that signified the blended nature of their family.

Because so many families now are blended, Carey and Rob are dedicated to helping people celebrate the commitments they are making in ways that resonate with their most deeply-held beliefs and values. Since the establishment of marriage equality in 2015, same-sex couples often have a difficult time finding clergy who are willing to marry them. “I can’t believe how same-sex couples struggle to find ministers who will marry them,” Dana Epstein says, shaking her head. “I have actually gotten on the phone myself and called around, trying to find clergy who are willing—or able—to marry my same-sex clients. Now, when those situations arise, I call Carey and Rob. I know they will help everyone.”

“Often, people mistakenly assume that same-sex couples are not as devout as opposite-sex couples,” Rob says. “This isn’t true. One wedding I performed was for a mixed-faith same-sex couple. One gentleman had been raised as Mormon and still identified as such. The other gentleman had been raised as an Evangelical and still believed in important aspects of that faith. I have an extensive background in comparative religious studies and American religious history. So, drawing on my knowledge of these two very diverse religious traditions, I was able to craft a liturgy that articulated and blended the beliefs of both men.”

Carey and Rob excel at creating an individualized wedding ceremonies that meets the needs of any couple. A nationally-recognized, award-winning playwright, Rob’s inspirational writings have been published in such diverse religious publications such as The Upper Room, Friends Journal, Quaker Life and Sunstone. “I enjoying finding the right words to express a couple’s emotions, thoughts and convictions as they commit to one another,” he says.

Carey and Rob excel at creating an individualized wedding ceremonies that meet the needs of any couple.
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