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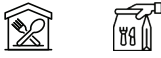
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Dear Neighbors,

As we enter the month of thankfulness, we would like to take a moment to thank all of our readers and sponsors for allowing us to create this medium of connection for our community. We are so honored to be a part of your lives each month through this magazine, and we are so grateful for the opportunities to get to know our neighbors better. Enjoy this month with your family, friends and your nearest and dearest.

This month we introduce you to Sharon Hutcherson Ballance of Topiaries at the oceanfront. Sharon grew up in Virginia Beach, lived for 25 years on Ocracoke Island and returned to Virginia Beach after the death of her husband. She began working at Topiaries and now owns the shop. Learn about her everlasting botanical creations and how much she enjoys her customers in the community.

Speaking of shops, we have a local gift guide full of small business owners in our community who would love to help you find the perfect gifts this holiday season. We have a list of holiday markets as well. Check out our article on the PACC women's tennis team tournament win, and learn about a young golf prodigy.

As the holiday season begins and the hustle and bustle begins to creep in, be sure to take some time to pause and rest for yourself. What better way to kick back and relax than to peruse and read your neighborhood magazine. Happy Holiday Season to you all!

Denise



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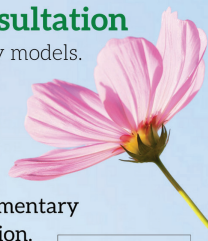
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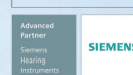
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REPLENISH BODY AND SOUL WITH PERSONALIZED IV INFUSIONS FROM HANG 10 DRIPS

By Lisa Barr, M.D.



You and your neighbors now have an immersive alternative to address chronic pain, gastrointestinal issues, anxiety and depression, and the long-term effects of COVID-19. Hang 10 Drips Infusions + Wellness Solutions is now open by appointment at 933 First Colonial Rd. Launched to help people stay healthy and hydrated, the company offers over a dozen medically-managed IV infusions — and a sunny approach to achieving a healthy lifestyle.

“Infusion therapy has many benefits, especially the ability to bypass the

gut, allowing the vitamins and nutrients we use in our drips to be absorbed in the bloodstream quickly and efficiently,” said Dr. Lisa Barr, medical director of Hang 10 Drips. “It is a great solution, whether you need a customized protocol for an existing condition or immediate relief from a headache or hangover.”

While the website and marketing materials sport a beachy vibe, Hang 10 Drips is serious about the management and protocols of their 13 signature drip offerings.

With cold and flu season converging with the hectic pace of the holidays, the Drop infusion is proving popular among Hang 10 Drip clients. “This drip contains a boost of Vitamin C and other ingredients to shore up the immune system,” Barr said. “It is especially helpful if you are feeling the first signs of illness, exhaustion and stress.” Other popular drip offerings include:

- The Maverick, containing NAD+ to reverse and slow the aging process
- The Peak, to reduce athletic recovery time, soreness and fatigue
- The Shred, to boost metabolism and aid in safe weight loss
- The Swell, to improve mood regulation, sleep and relaxation
- The Pipeline, as the gold standard in IV therapy, this 30-minute drip is an excellent starting point for those interested in IV nutrition

The practice has gained a loyal following since it opened earlier this year. If you are new to infusion therapy, however, here's how it works. Melanie Scaggs, Hang 10 Drips' registered nurse (and resident ray of sunshine!), will discuss your needs, take your medical history and check vital signs. After deciding on the drip that is best for you, she will add the specially formulated ingredients to the IV bag, insert the IV and administer the drip.

Most appointments take between 30-90 minutes, depending on the infusion. Warm blankets, Wi-Fi and charging stations are provided at each chair. And you will even receive a cup of hand-crafted tea from nearby Green Leaf & Pebble to sip while you drip.

Hang 10 Drips' IV infusions and injectable supplements, which are also offered, will help you enjoy long-lasting health benefits. Try dripping for yourself or share the experience with a friend (gift certificates are available). To schedule an appointment, call 757-974-5828. For more info about Hang 10 Drips and their offerings, visit www.hang10drips.com.

A Coastal Virginia native, Dr. Lisa Barr is a seasoned physician with a passion for treating people with musculoskeletal conditions that cause pain and dysfunction. A double alumna of Eastern Virginia Medical School, Dr. Barr finished her training at EVMS in 1988 as the chief resident in physical medicine and rehabilitation. As a practicing physician in the community, she has effectively treated more than 200,000 patients over the course of her career. Dr. Barr is a partner and medical director of Hang 10 Drips and the founding partner at the Barr Center, where she focuses her energies on developing innovative methods to help guide her patients to optimal recovery and their best functional outcome.

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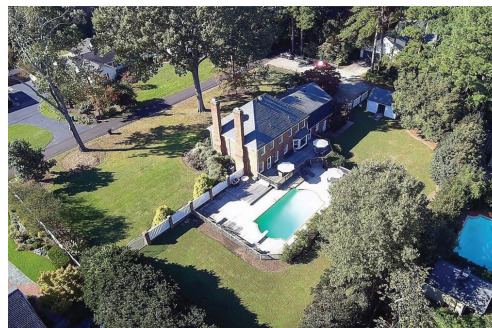
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Topiaries



MEET Sharon Hutcherson Ballance OF TOPIARIES

By Gina Foresta • Photos by Alison Bell Photographer

A “Jane” of many trades, Sharon Hutcherson Ballance, owner of Topiaries at the oceanfront, has worked as a restaurant server, a grocery clerk, shop window display designer, buyer, and much, much more. She knows customer service. Living the vast majority of her life in coastal towns, she is an expert in beach decor and what coastal community residents want.

“Since I was a child I had always wanted my own store,” recalled Sharon. “I love my shoppe! It is always a pleasure to come to work. I have a fun, happy team, and we have the BEST clients.”

A Virginia Beach native, Sharon grew up in the Southern Points neighborhood and graduated from Frank W. Cox High School. In her teen years, she worked at A&P grocery store, along with her father and brother. “A&P was in the union, and you were not allowed to work with your relatives,” recalled Sharon. “My dad worked at the location on Laskin Road for 32 years. My brother, Tommy Hutcherson, and I both worked at the Rosemont Road location. I worked there first, and then Tommy took my place when I went to college. My mom was an accountant.”

Sharon attended Lees-McRae College in Banner Elk, NC for her first two years of college. “Living in Virginia Beach we rarely had snow. I wanted to choose a college with lots of snow and activities,” recalled Sharon. Les-McRae was at the foot of Beech Mountain. “I loved the town of Banner Elk. I took snow skiing and ice skating for my P.E. classes. I was able to ski at Beech Mountain for \$5 from 5-10 pm.” In her junior year, Sharon transferred to James Madison University. She earned a bachelor’s degree in public relations and communications and minored in business and early elementary education.



Sharon and Baby, her late miniature Italian greyhound.



Sharon's parents.



Sharon and brother Tommy at the Ocracoke Variety Store.



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Sharon in training for her future career.



Throughout college, Sharon worked as a restaurant server. During the summers in Virginia Beach, she waitressed at Captain Kids on Atlantic Avenue. Around the time she graduated from college, Sharon's parents made a huge lifestyle change. Her mother's skills as an accountant and her father's years in the grocery business had prepared them well. "My parents purchased The Ocracoke Variety Store on Ocracoke Island, NC," she said. "The store sold groceries, beach goods and souvenirs. After graduation, I went to help out with the family business. I did the purchasing for the souvenirs, clothing, beach towels and greeting cards. I went to several gift shows each year, took classes on displays, how to decorate windows and how to market merchandise to sell." Sharon felt very much at home in her new role. "I felt like this was the path God had for me at this time," she mused.

Ocracoke not only introduced her to a new career path, but it also offered love. Sharon met Ocracoke native and her soulmate, David Ballance. They married on the island. I am a widow with no children. "I was married on Ocracoke Island, NC. "It was a beautiful sunny day as I rode to the church with my dad in a horse-drawn carriage," said Sharon. She and David were married for 17 happy years before, sadly, David passed from cancer. In total, Sharon lived for 25 years on Ocracoke before eventually returning to Virginia Beach in 2008.

Sharon's parents still owned the house she grew up in in Virginia Beach. "Mom and Dad let me move into the house I have always loved," she said. "All of the neighbors are friendly and kind. We enjoy getting together and visiting. I take care of one of my neighbors' dogs when they go on vacation."

Six years later, Sharon began working at Topiaries, on the corner of 25th Street and Pacific Avenue, and bought it four years later. She is now the owner, buyer, accountant, greeter; she even enjoys gift-wrapping, which is complimentary. "I love to multitask," she exclaimed. "Topiaries was founded in 1993. We carry Christopher Radko, Mark Roberts, Lori Mitchell, Hot Skwash, KEW pottery, Maison (Lampe) Berger, Votivo, Michel Design Works, D. Stevens Fine Ribbons and more. I go to the Atlanta Gift Mart in Georgia twice a year to purchase for Topiaries." Sharon and Topiaries specialize in everlasting botanical creations. "We are known for our silk flowers that look real. My designers make custom tabletop arrangements, custom wreaths and bows."

Sharon thrives in her role as local Virginia Beach business owner. However, every couple of months, the island calls to her. "I go and visit



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my mom and my brother; my brother now manages the grocery store,” she said. Sharon’s mother will be 89 this month, and her father, like her husband, has passed. “I love walking on the beach in Ocracoke,” Sharon

said. “It frees my mind.” For her, it is the perfect place to savor the ocean and the vast sky and remember the beautiful time there she shared with the love of her life.



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TEN-YEAR-OLD PLAYS THE COURSE

By Laura Hulings

"I love the quote that my cousin, David, shared with me, 'Have the mind of a goldfish,'" shared Ada. "Short term memory when you don't do well and not getting too pumped up when you do well." Virginia Beach resident, Ada Inderlied won the Girls 10-11 division at the regional Drive, Chip and Putt competition in Charlotte, NC earlier this fall and advanced to the Drive, Chip and Putt Championship at The Masters next spring.

Ada loves the feeling of hitting a pure shot and making an important putt. With her dad as her coach and caddie, this father-daughter duo is always working together on the current struggle of the game. As far as pregame rituals, Ada shared, "We pray as a family before every tournament, and an hour before my tee time I start my warmup — putting, chipping, and then heading to the range."

Ada finds her biggest challenge is controlling her attitude. "I try not to get too down on myself when I hit a bad shot or have a bad hole," she shared. "I do many things to manage my attitude including breathing, cartwheels in between holes, and looking at the nature that I am surrounded by on the course." Ada understands that golf is 18 holes, an endurance race. "One time I teed off from the wrong tee in a tournament, was penalized, and had to quickly forget about it. Fortunately, I still won the tournament, but it was embarrassing," smiled Ada.



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During Ada's off season, she focuses on rock climbing, mountain biking and tennis. She enjoys playing ping pong, swimming, and spending time with family and friends.

Ada's goal is to keep getting better at the game and to ultimately play on the LPGA tour.

Her favorite golfer is Jordan Spieth, and if she met the 2015 Masters champion at Augusta, she would ask him to sign her hat.



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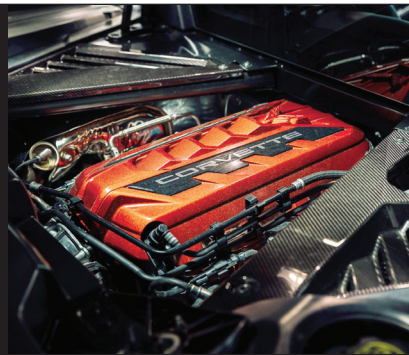
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PACC WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAM BRINGS HOME THE SPINDLE CUP

By Gina Foresta

The Princess Anne Country Club (PACC) women's tennis team ventured to Richmond in September to compete in the Spindle Cup. This tournament honors tennis enthusiasts Dick and Kitty Spindle. Both won multiple titles, were top doubles players and are remembered as beloved leaders of the tennis community. This year is the 17th anniversary for the Spindle Cup and the 10th anniversary of the first time the PACC team won the title. This year brought another win for the close-knit, talented team.

Captain Diane Stein answered a few questions for us.

What is the name of your team?

Stein: We don't really have a team name. We jokingly called ourselves Pinecones this year because it is our club logo, and then throughout the tournament weekend, we evolved into Pinecone Queens!

Are there captains or a coach for your team?

Stein: We vote on a captain every year. I was captain this year, and John Fraser, the director of tennis at PACC, is our coach. There are Thursday Spindle Cup clinics every week, and tennis pro Martin Black assists John with them.



Can you tell us a bit about the competition in Richmond?

Stein: The Spindle Cup Tournament occurs the second weekend in September and is composed of four clubs in the state of Virginia — Princess Anne Country Club, Country Club of Virginia, Norfolk Yacht and Country Club and Farmington Country Club. The host team rotates every year. This year the tournament was held in Richmond at the Country Club of Virginia (CCV). It is very competitive every year. We were tied with CCV going into the second day. In our second day of play, we won all eight of our matches. Honestly, our team really came to play this year, and we crushed it.

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Left to right: Marie Clunan, Anne Standing, Mariah Standing, Michelle Fox, Molly Hobbs, John Fraser, Lexi Rawls, Lisa Deaver, Diane Stein, Dillon Yost, Caroline Dozier and Yolanda Yost.

How did it feel to win?

Stein: The first year we ever won the cup was 2012, my first year on the team. This year's win was special because it was the 10 year anniversary of our first win.

What does a typical season look like for you here?

Stein: This is a single weekend tournament. However, we do practice as a team every Thursday. PACC holds tryouts every year to decide who plays on the tournament team. Tryouts for singles starts in May, and the first weekend in June is our tryout weekend for doubles.

How long have most of your team's players been playing?

Stein: Some players played 15 years ago, took a break and came back to the team. We only had one new player this year. But other years, we have had several new players.

What are your favorite things about playing with your team, or about playing tennis in general?

Stein: I love the fact that we all still have that competitive spirit. But, the camaraderie between our teammates and the other clubs is what I love the most. Most of our friendships are over a decade old.

Caroline Dozier (new player this year): I would say for me as a new player, getting to be a part of a team sport like that later in life was just so fun. It's a really cool tradition, and I felt really honored to be included this year.



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NOW - SUN., NOVEMBER 13

Prisms: Art Camp 2022 Exhibition

@Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art,
Fleming Gallery

Every summer, Virginia MOCA hosts camps for children and teens ages 2-17 years old. At the end of each week of camp, students are asked to select an artwork to include in the Prisms: Summer Art Camp exhibition that demonstrates their creative achievements. This exhibition is a celebration of a fun-filled, imaginative and educational summer in the studios.

Time: Thur., 10am-8pm; Fri. - Sun., 10am-4pm
Cost: Free to attend; donations welcomed.
virginiamoca.org

NOW - SUN., JANUARY 1

Dominion Energy Garden of Lights

@Norfolk Botanical Garden

Time: Nightly 5-9pm • Cost: Value Nights (Mon. - Thur.), \$10-\$18; Premium Nights (Fri. - Sun., November 23-27, December 21-25, \$10-\$25.
www.norfolkbotanicalgarden.org

NOW - SUN., FEBRUARY 5

"More Than Shelter" Art Exhibit

@Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art

The essentials for human survival are

food, water, and shelter. These needs take precedence over all the others. Eleven artists received an invitation to participate in the exhibit, "More Than Shelter," and were asked to consider what the idea of shelter means to them, choose an avenue of investigation, and connect with partners who provided unique insight. Time: Thur., 10am-8pm; Fri. - Sun., 10am-4pm • Cost: Free to attend; donations welcomed. virginiamoca.org

TUE., NOVEMBER 1

Read Books Independent Bookshop Fall Books and Brews Event

@Back Bay Brewing Company

Read Books is partnering with our friends at Back Bay Brewing Company to bring you an exciting evening full of books, brews and buddies! Each ticket includes four tasters (two beers, a seasonal cider and a cocktail), book recommendations paired with each beverage, and time for lively conversation and general merriment. • Time: 7-9pm • Cost: \$20
www.readvb.com

WED., NOVEMBER 2, 16

LGBTQ+ YouthNight

@Virginia Beach Sports Center, 1045 19th St.

YOU is a meeting for youth (Ages 12-18) who identify as part of the LGBTQ+ community. This is an affirming space that is just for YOU. Come as YOU are, because we love YOU! This group

meets in-person on the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. For more information, please contact Nicole Pixler (she/her) at NicoleP@standupforkids.org or Casey Butler (they/them) at cbutler@lgbtlifecenter.org.
Time: 6:30-9pm

FRI., NOVEMBER 4

VB Flea Night Market

@The Alley, 19th Street

Time: 6-10pm • Cost: Free to attend.
Purchases vary. • Instagram: @v.b.flea

FRI., NOVEMBER 4 - SUN., NOVEMBER 13

Aware: A Community Art Project

@Virginia Beach Art Center

Participate in or visit this community-based art installation, focusing on a chapter of Native American history, intended to bring history, cultural diversity and the community together through art.

Time: Tues. - Fri., 10am-5pm; Sat., 10am-4pm; Sun., 12-4pm • Cost: Free to attend.
www.artcentervb.org

SAT., NOVEMBER 5, 19

Old Beach Farmers, Art & Eco Markets

@19th Street and Cypress Avenue

Time: 9am-12pm
Cost: Free to attend. Purchases vary.
www.oldbeachfarmersmarket.com
Instagram and Facebook:
@oldbeachfarmersmarket



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SAT., NOVEMBER 5

Virginia Bourbon Invitational

@Great Lawn of the Historic Cavalier Hotel

Calling All Bourbon Lovers. You're invited to experience the 3rd annual Virginia Bourbon Invitational. Join us for an afternoon of bourbon and other spirits tastings from Virginia distilleries and beyond, tapas-style food from leading culinary restaurants in coastal Virginia and live music on the Great Lawn of The Historic Cavalier. Cast your vote for your favorite bourbon in our People's Choice Awards. 21+ only. Enjoy responsibly. Proceeds will benefit the Virginia Gentlemen Foundation
Time: 1-5pm • Cost: \$60-\$195
www.vabourboninvitational.com

SUN., NOVEMBER 6

Cape Story By the Sea Annual Oyster Roast

@Cape Story By the Sea Neighborhood Park

Enjoy oysters, barbeque, burgers, hot dogs, side dishes, beverages (beer, soda, water & wine) and live music. Cash donations and non-perishable food items are welcome to benefit CSBTS Thanksgiving and Christmas Food Drive.
Time: 11am-3pm • Cost: Tickets \$50
Facebook: @CSBTSAnnualOysterRoast

SUN., NOVEMBER 6

Daylight Saving Time Ends

Time: 2am

TUES., NOVEMBER 8

Election Day

TUE., NOVEMBER 8

Full Beaver Moon

Historically, this was the time to set beaver traps before the swamps froze, to ensure a supply of warm winter furs. This is also the time of year that beavers are actively preparing for winter. It is sometimes also referred to as the Frosty Moon. • Peak Time: 6:02am EDT

FRI., NOVEMBER 11

Tidewater Veterans Day Parade

@Beginning at 16th Street and Atlantic Avenue, turning on to Virginia Beach Boulevard, Mediterranean Avenues, 19th Street and ending at the Tidewater Veterans Memorial

Time: 9-11am • Cost: Free
hrcvo.org/veterans-day-parade/

FRI., NOVEMBER 11 - SUN., DECEMBER 11

"White Christmas" Musical

@Little Theater of Virginia Beach

Time: Show times vary. • ltvb.org

SAT., NOVEMBER 12

"Journey to the Center of the Earth" Family Performance

@Zeider's American Theater

Descend, bold traveler! Children's Theater of Hampton Roads presents Jules Verne's classic tale brought to life with actors, puppets and interactive storytelling! What mysteries lie beneath the very ground below our feet? What secrets will it tell? Will there be treasure untold? Will we be met by monsters out of time? There's only one way to find out. Explorers of any age are invited to attend, but the experience is best appreciated by adventurers ages 4 years old and up. • Time: 11am and 2pm • Cost: \$10
thez.org

FRI., NOVEMBER 18 - SAT., NOVEMBER 19

7th Annual Coastal Virginia Auto Show

@Virginia Beach Convention Center

cvautoshow.com

FRI., NOVEMBER 18 - SUN., NOVEMBER 20

Foodbank of Southeastern Virginia Mayflower Marathon Food Drive

@Pembroke Mall behind Walgreens or online
Mayflower Marathon is a 57-hour consecutive food and fund drive that occurs each year on the weekend before Thanksgiving. The tradition of the drive-thru model allows the Foodbank to collect and distribute food quickly to families in

need this Thanksgiving

Time: Fri., 5:30am - Sun., 3pm

www.foodbankonline.org/mayflower-marathon

FRI., NOVEMBER 18 - SUN., JANUARY 1

Bayport Credit Union Holiday Lights at the Beach

@Enter the queue line at 21st Street & Atlantic Avenue

Time: Sun. - Thur., 5:30-10pm; Fri. - Sat., 5:30-11pm • Cost: Admission prices vary per vehicle capacity. • beacheventsby.com

SAT., NOVEMBER 19

VB Flea Market

@The Alley, 19th Street

Time: 9am-2pm • Cost: Free to attend. Purchases vary. • Instagram: @v.b.flea

SAT., NOVEMBER 19

k5k: A Run for Kendra

@Virginia Beach Boardwalk or Virtually

Join us for a run/walk to honor and celebrate the life of Kendra R. Atherton and to raise money for a scholarship fund in her name to benefit college-bound high school seniors who display the qualities possessed by Kendra, and like her three children. To date, the k5k: A Run for Kendra has awarded over \$96,000 in scholarships. Join us for our after party at The Shack. • Time: 9am • Cost: Ages 12 and under: \$20; 13-24: \$30; Adults: \$35. • www.k5k.run

THUR., NOVEMBER 24

Thanksgiving Day

THUR., NOVEMBER 24

Tidewater Striders Turkey Trot 10K & Mile

@Mt. Trashmore YMCA

Times: Vary • Cost: \$25-\$45
www.runsignup.com

FRI., NOVEMBER 25

Native American Heritage Day



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LOCALLY INSPIRED “WANT, NEED, WEAR, READ” GIFT STRATEGY

By Gina Foresta

With the weight of inflation, our gift budget this holiday season may be a bit leaner. However, fewer gifts doesn't have to equal a less memorable or meaningful celebration. In fact, being intentional about the number of gifts we offer and receive can be liberating. Oftentimes, less is more.

The familiar Want, Need, Wear, Read targeted gift model can be a great way to truly listen to our loved ones in regard to their interests and needs. For example...

A **WANT** gift can be tailored to the recipients' passions and what truly makes them happy.

A **NEED** gift requires paying attention to passing comments about an item for which they may need an upgrade or a void that can be filled.

A **WEAR** gift is self explanatory, but can still be customized to the recipient's needs or current style.

A **READ** gift is also obvious, but the genres and choices are practically endless. Even if the recipient isn't an avid reader, a book on a particular interest, such as cooking, gardening, history, etc., can be a welcome surprise.

Following are just a few suggestions of the many locally owned shops or markets where you can easily complete your shopping list.

WANT:

VB Art Center — a pottery or painting class
www.artcentervb.org

The Beauty Tree Holistic Day Spa, The Ageless Face or the **Restorative Therapy Co.** — spa and services pass
www.thebeautytreespa.com
theagelessfacebycheryl.com
www.restorativertherapyco.com

Wave Riding Vehicles — new surfboard or skateboard
www.waveridingvehicles.com

The Lemon Cabana or **Long Jewelers** — the perfect piece of jewelry
www.lemoncabana.com
www.longjewelers.net

V.B. Flea Market — a vintage tchotchke or handmade gem
[@v.b.flea](https://www.instagram.com/v.b.flea)

Vinyl Days — an album by their favorite band
www.vinyldazerecords.com

NEED:

Kitchen Barn — new cooking tool, serving ware, grill tools, dishes and more
www.kitchenbarnonline.com

Studio Optix — beautiful frames for needed glasses
www.optixvb.com

Contes Bikes or **Free Wheelin Bike Shop** — a new bike for the one they've outgrown or outridden
www.contebikes.com
www.freewheelinbikeshop.com

Wild Birds Unlimited — a beautiful bird feeder and feed for your yard's feathered visitors
www.wbu.com

Jim White Fitness & Nutrition Studios — personal training sessions to stay healthy and strong
jimwhitefit.com



WEAR:

The Lemon Cabana — comfortable coastal chic
www.lemoncabana.com

Pixelated Boutique — for the younger at heart
www.pixelatedboutique.com

Great Outdoor Provision Company — for the outdoorsy
greatoutdoorprovision.com

Trish Boutique — high quality latest fashions
trishboutique.com

French Twist — French and Italian inspired designs
www.frenchtwistboutique.com

Beecroft & Bull — high quality latest and classic fashions
beecroftandbull.com

Jody G. — latest fashions to appeal to most ages
shopjodyg.com

The Quality Shop — high quality latest and classic fashions
thequalityshops.com

Gypsy Soul Boutique — bohemian flair
gypsypsoulboutiqueia.com



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The Collective — contemporary clothing & activewear
www.thecollectivevb.com

Wave Riding Vehicles — for the salty ones
www.waveridingvehicles.com

READ:

Visit our community's only independent bookshop, **Read Books**, or order online at www.bookshop.org via www.readvb.com to support all independent bookshops. Here are just a few title suggestions.

Contemporary Fiction: *It Ends With Us* by Colleen Hoover

Nonfiction: *Riverman: An American Odyssey* by Ben McGrath

Memoir: *Dinners with Ruth: A Memoir on the Power of Friendships* by Nina Totenberg

Cooking: *Dinner in One: Exceptional & Easy One-Pan Meals* by Melissa Clark

Nature: *World of Wonders: In Praise of Fireflies, Whale Sharks, and Other Astonishments* by Aimee Nezhukumatathil

Historical Fiction: *The Lost Flowers of Alice Hart* by Holly Ringland

Poetry: *And Yet: Poems* by Kate Baer

Mystery: *Wrong Place, Wrong Time* by Gillian McAllister

Fantasy: *Court of Thorns & Roses* by Sarah J. Maas



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www.horticulturedesignco.com

Topiaries — botanical and home decor
www.topiariesva.com

The Wandering Petal — gardening, vintage and home decor
www.thewanderingpetal.com

Read Books — book paraphernalia, candles, mugs
www.readvb.com

Jars of Dust — handmade pottery items for all budgets
jarsofdust.com

The Lemon Cabana — jewelry, home decor, novelty gifts
www.lemoncabana.com

Nothing Bundt Cake — for the sweet tooth
www.nothingbundtcakes.com

The Globe Fine Gift & Home — home decor and gifts
theglobe.myshoplocal.com

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"MARKET" YOUR CALENDAR FOR EARLY HOLIDAY SHOPPING

By Gina Foresta

FRI., NOVEMBER 4 - SAT., NOVEMBER 5

Topiaries Christmas Open House

@Topiaries

Time: 10am-5pm • Cost: Purchases vary. www.topiariesva.com

SAT./SUN., NOVEMBER 5,6

SAT./SUN., NOVEMBER 19,20

Santa's Stocking

@ Princess Anne Rec Center, Virginia Beach

Crafters will sell unique handmade items, everything from stocking stuffers to fine works of art, all at budget-friendly prices. And don't forget to have your photo taken with Santa.

Time: Sat. 9am-5pm; Sun. 10am-4pm

Cost: Purchases vary.

www.ds-stride.org/

FRI., NOVEMBER 18 -

SAT., DECEMBER 24

Holiday Fine Art Boutique

@VB Art Center

Time: 10am-5pm • Cost: Free to attend; purchases vary.

www.artcentervb.org

SAT., NOVEMBER 19

A.R.E. Holiday Gift Bazaar and Mind, Body & Spirit Fair

@Edgar Cayce's Association for Research & Enlightenment

Find unique gifts and creations from local businesses and artisans, sign up for a massage, Reiki or reflexology session, and enjoy free lectures, mini-workshops and meditations throughout the day.

Time: Doors open at 10am.

Cost: Purchases and service fees vary.

www.edgarcayce.org

FRI., NOVEMBER 25 -

SUN., NOVEMBER 27

Annual Virginia Beach Christmas Market

@Virginia Beach Convention Center

Time: Fri. & Sat., 10am-6pm; Sun., 10am-5pm • Cost: Purchases vary.

SAT., NOVEMBER 26

Kate's Next Door Market Holiday Market and Grand Illumination

@Back Bay's Farmhouse Brewing Company, 1805 Kempsville Rd.

Time: 11am-3pm

Cost: Purchases vary.

www.katesnextdoormarket.com

SAT., NOVEMBER 26 -

SAT., DECEMBER 24

Winter Wonderland

@The Shack

www.theshackvb.com

SAT., NOVEMBER 26

Small Business Saturday

SAT., DECEMBER 3

Holiday Yule Log Bonfire & Holiday Marketplace

@Town Point Park, Downtown Norfolk Waterfront

For one afternoon, Town Point Park is transformed into a festive outdoor wonderland highlighted by a towering Yule log bonfire, a local artisans market, Christmas caroling, hot chocolate and whiskey tastings, and a visit from the Big Man himself.

Time: 12-8pm • Cost: Free to attend.

Purchases vary. • festevents.org

SAT., DECEMBER 3

Holiday Handmade/Maker Market @757 Makerspace,

237 W 24th St., Norfolk

This all seems (orna)ment to be! Come shop the locally owned and operated small businesses

of 757, and enjoy food by TFK Taco Bar, an ugly sweater contest and more. Time: 11am-3pm

Cost: Purchases vary.



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HERE FOR THE GIRLS

By Laura Hulings • Photos by Tara Council

Here for the Girls strives to improve the lives of young women under the age of 51 diagnosed with breast cancer. They focus on supporting younger women facing different challenges because of their age and season of life than their more mature counterparts, challenges that can impact them far beyond diagnosis and treatment. Here for the Girls does not raise money for a cure, they are not involved in research or medicine. They offer free social and emotional support for women in the thick of treatment and survivorship. Members receive support through a variety of programs and services that encourage emotional healing, including annual weekend workshops, an annual calendar that includes a breast

health guide, educational sessions with partnering physicians, program activities, and communications, along with in-person and virtual support.



Tara with her husband and daughter.



Pleasure House Brewery charity BINGO night.

All these offerings are available at no cost to young women with breast cancer.

Virginia Beach resident, Tara Council, was diagnosed at the age of 33 with invasive breast cancer. "I am happy to report that this December will mark 4 years of being cancer free," exclaimed Tara. Tara currently facilitates a Here for the Girls virtual "newly diagnosed" group for women navigating the beginning stages of their diagnosis. "I was honored when I was selected to be one of 12 survivors featured in the upcoming *A Calendar to Live By 2023*, a 'breast health guide disguised as a calendar that is produced each year by Here for the Girls.'" Tara is Miss October, and is using this opportunity to spread the Here for the Girls message on a larger platform and to raise money for their much needed and valuable programs.

To learn more about Here for the Girls visit www.hereforthegirls.org



Tara's family reunion



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MAY WE RECOMMEND...

Submitted By Jill Doczi • Photos by Shirley Callis

At this time of year, the mild weather and blue skies may be tempting us outside more often. We may enjoy our morning coffee on a porch or walk our dogs in First Landing State Park. And as local or migrating birds fill up on seeds and berries to sustain them in the leaner colder months ahead or the long trek south, we may wonder — what bird did I just hear? Did you know there's an app for that?

The free Merlin Bird ID app for your smartphone, created and operated by the Cornell Lab at Cornell University, not only can identify a picture of a bird that you snap, but it can recognize it just by its song. Merlin uses thousands of recordings to learn the vocalizations of each bird species, and it works anywhere in the world.

Download the free app to your phone, choose the bird pack for your area, and see how quickly your list fills up. You may not be able to see every bird Merlin recognizes, but if a bird is calling out nearby, it will name it. Indeed, it records noise surprisingly well as long as it is close enough for you to hear. After about 10 minutes of recording, the app prompts you to end your session or continue recording.

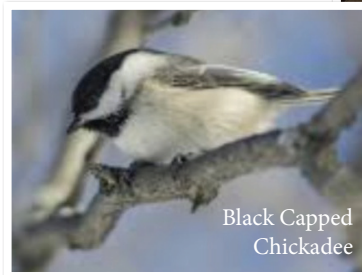
The photo identification tool allows you to snap an image of a nearby bird to upload or choose from a library of options. You can save bird IDs and just explore the app to learn about birds in your area. The app can currently identify 7,500 species. Within minutes of downloading the app, I recorded and identified the sounds of a house wren, yellow warbler, red-bellied woodpecker, house sparrow, osprey and more — all while enjoying my morning coffee.



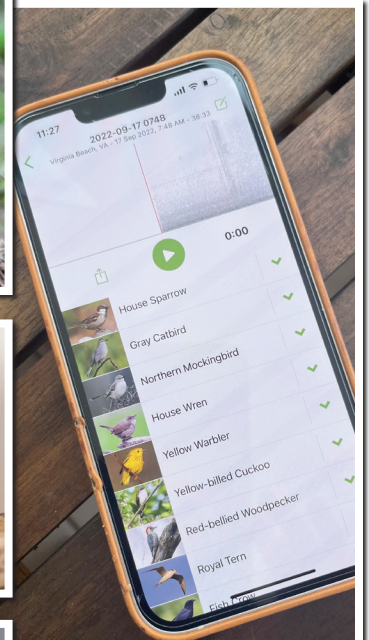
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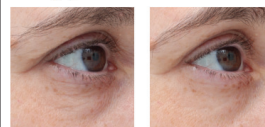
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THE (NEARLY) SECRET GARDEN

By Thomas Goodall, Mary's Garden board member, and Gina Foresta • Photos by Jean Marie Randolph

If you live in Virginia Beach, you may have had occasion to visit Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital (SVBGH) as either a guest or a patient. Perhaps you even noticed a sign with an arrow in the main hospital corridor directing you to “Mary’s Garden.” If you heeded its call, you found a special oasis; and if you have yet to visit, a respite designed to induce relaxation and to memorialize two amazing women awaits.

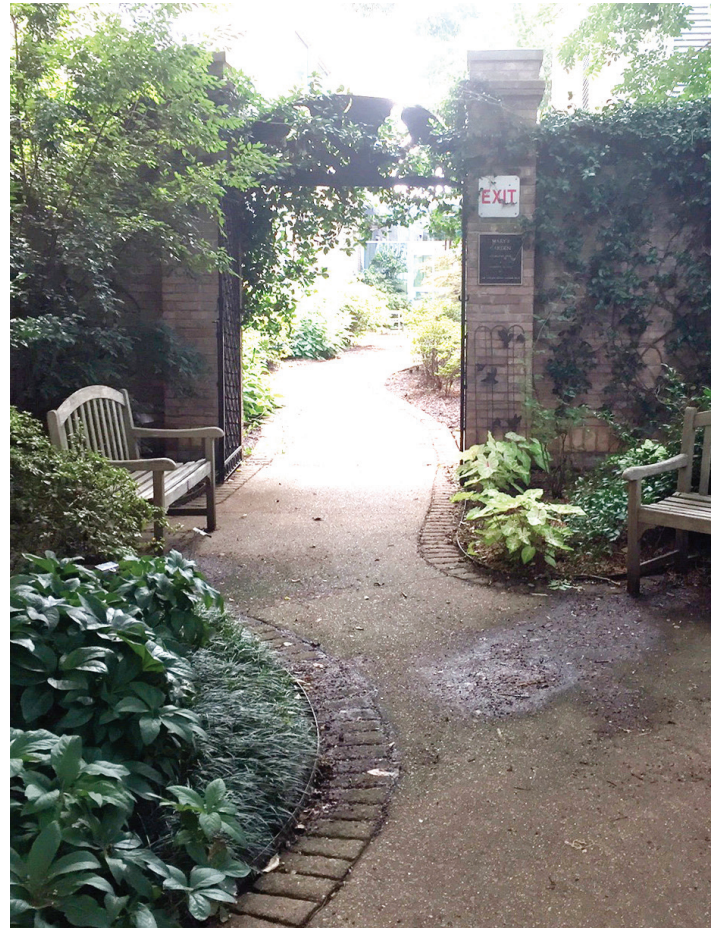
The garden’s name has a dual meaning and is shared by two honorees. One woman provided the inspiration for the garden and another jumpstarted the financial support for its creation. After many lengthy stays in SVBGH, Virginia Beach resident Mary Babb Savage longed for a beautiful place to rest, recharge and build the energy needed to face her next challenge.

“Mary Babb Savage was a dear friend of mine, and she had nowhere to go outside when she was so sick with leukemia,” recalled Virginia Beach Garden Club (VBGC) member Jean Marie Randolph. “She was so ‘alive,’ and this is a great reminder that her death was not for naught.” The garden was Randolph’s brainchild to honor her friend. “It took a lot of discussion with the hospital, and, with their permission, I was able to make my idea come to fruition,” she said.

Honorary VBGC member Mary Hamilton Winder heard about Randolph’s idea and allotted money from her estate toward the project. Next, the VBGC donated money to begin the building and planning of the garden. Randolph and her husband raised the remaining funds.

“I can remember going out at night to speak to garden clubs and recreation centers to raise the money,” recalled Randolph. “My husband was a banker, and we called on businesses, friends and organizations to reach our final goal.” Today, nestled between the hospital proper and the 1080 building is a beautiful, tranquil and private garden aptly named in memoriam for both Marys. Patients, guests, volunteers, hospital staff and even pets are welcome to visit and relax.

The building of Mary’s Garden was a notable collaboration. Landscape designer Meg French, a member of the Junior Virginia Beach Garden Club at the time, designed the layout. Randolph designed wrought iron gates featuring a sycamore tree. Local sculptor Matthew Fine designed a central fountain with marble columns salvaged from the Federal Building in Norfolk. It is encircled by four six-foot-long benches handmade



by local furniture designer and maker Jeff Lawson, who incorporated reclaimed angelique wood from the building of the Schooner Virginia.

From concept to construction, it took almost two years to complete Mary’s Garden which opened its arched gates on June 5, 2005. Plants were selected for their cool, calming colors and to provide a year-round display of blooms and color. The layout design of flora, bushes and trees held the intention of providing a peaceful atmosphere and a chance for



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fresh air to renew mind, body and spirit. Mary's Garden now offers a respite from the confines of hospital walls, and encourages not only peace of mind, but healing and vitality.

"ICU patients have been brought outside by a team of doctors and nurses for their last breath of fresh air with the sun on their faces," explained Randolph. "The Rehabilitation Center uses it daily, weather permitting."

There are now many benches, tables and chairs to accommodate all who wish to rest among the garden's charm — there is even a child-sized table with chairs. Randolph said, "It is not unusual to see a doctor out in the garden



with their feet up on the table and their eyes closed, resting between surgeries, or a doctor with a family huddled together trying to make a final decision for a loved one."

This beautiful "healing" garden exists as a special place for all who wish to visit. However, nature still benefits from nurture. While it exists under the umbrella and blessing of SVBGH, Mary's Garden is maintained and funded separately by Mary's Garden, Inc. and runs on donations from the public.

For more information on Mary's Garden and how you can help the cause, go to www.marysgarden.org.

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ART ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE:

Little Theatre of Virginia Beach Highlights the Veterans in "White Christmas"

By Ghillan Porter • Photos by J. Stubbs Photography

Military families move often, say goodbye often and must find and create new support groups quickly. At Little Theatre of Virginia Beach, many veterans, veteran spouses and children of veterans find a welcoming, creative space to belong. You will find them involved in every production — from building sets to performing on stage, even choreographing dances — all serving our community in a different way while having a blast.

While the LTVB production of "White Christmas" celebrates the holiday spirit, it also highlights the second life of veterans, asking the question, "What do you do with a general when he's no longer a general?" Once leaving military service, many veterans take on a second career, becoming teachers, police officers, accountants, and in the case of Bob Wallace and Phil Davis, showmen. LTVB thanks our military community for their service to our country and for helping make LTVB a destination for great shows and life-long friends.

We've asked the upcoming leads of "White Christmas," Jessi DiPette (Betty), Nathan Jacques (Bob) and Kobie Smith (Phil), to share with us their connection to the military and showing support to the community.

Q: What is your military connection?

[JD] "I am a military spouse of an active-duty Navy sailor."

[NJ] "Both of my grandfathers, my father, my stepfather, my uncle and my brother have served in the military. Two of my best friends are Navy as well. It runs deep in my life."

[KS] "My dad served in the Coast Guard for 19 years and both of my grandpas on my mom and dad's side of the family served in the Navy. My grandma was also Civil Service for 40 years. Their hard work and dedication are the reason I have so many opportunities today, and I'm so grateful for their service."

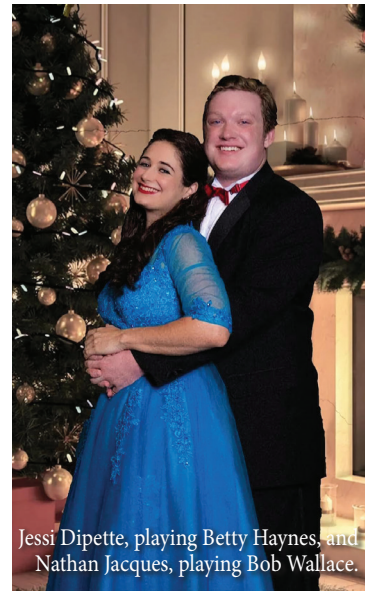
Q: What are ways people can stay connected during deployments over the holidays?

[JD] "Deployments can be long. I'm grateful for video chats and instant messaging. I think my deployment distance with daily calls feels much more manageable than the telegrams and letter writing of the 1940s."

[NJ] "Texting and speaking to my brother and friends who are stationed across the map certainly helps bridge that gap. We are fortunate to live in an era where communication is quite literally at your fingertips."



Coral Mapp, playing Judy Haynes, and Kobie Smith, playing Phil Davis.



Jessi Dipette, playing Betty Haynes, and Nathan Jacques, playing Bob Wallace.

Q: What ways can people support our military community?

[JD] "Supporting your military loved ones during the holidays can be as simple as inviting someone to spend the holidays with you instead of alone. An organization near and dear to my heart is the Arts in the Armed Forces nonprofit, which brings theater and films to our troops serving overseas." aitaf.org

[NJ] "Toys for Tots is a beloved cause in my family as a result of our connection to the Marines. It's a great way to help the less fortunate share in the joy of giving every holiday season." toysfortots.org

Q: What does "White Christmas" mean to you?

[JD] "Since I have spent Christmases without my husband while he served overseas, I appreciate the celebration of togetherness and love that this classic musical showcases."

[NJ] "Christmas has always been our family's favorite holiday. While I have never seen 'White Christmas,' we do enjoy 'It's a Wonderful Life' and 'The Polar Express' immensely. Sometimes, we even watch them in the summertime. Now we must add 'White Christmas' to that list."

[KS] "My favorite memories as a child are making gingerbread houses with my mom, riding through the botanical gardens to see the lights, and spending hours of fun in the snow. 'White Christmas' reminds us what the holiday season is all about: Love. I resonate with this show because it is a beautiful expression of how far love compels us to go for one another and what it means to be there for someone."

"White Christmas" at LTVB runs from November 11 through December 11 on Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are available at ltvb.com or the box office at 757-428-9233.



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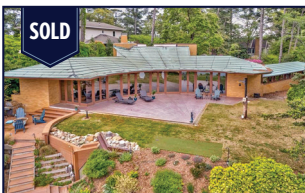
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SAFE HOUSE PROJECT EFFECTIVELY COMBATS HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN VIRGINIA

By Gina Foresta

"Thank you for believing me and helping me when everyone else said no. It's because of you I am alive. It is because of you, I am free,"

— Summer, Trafficking Survivor

The trafficking of humans is considered the second largest criminal industry in the world, surpassed only by drug trafficking. While human trafficking reaps an estimated \$32 billion yearly, it is considered a hidden crime. In 2018, the Department of State listed the United States as one of the top three nations in the world for human trafficking offenses. According to the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, over 70 percent of identified trafficking victims are Americans being bought and sold by other Americans.

Humans are trafficked for a variety of purposes in which a third party individual profits based on the exploitation of another individual. Alia Dewees, survivor of domestic minor trafficking and now the director of aftercare development for Safe House Project said, "Buyers of adult media content in the United States are the largest drivers of demand globally, and the highest levels of this media that involve children are produced in this country to sell around the world. As a survivor of domestic minor trafficking, I believe it is critical that we understand how this is affecting vulnerable individuals in our communities, but more importantly, how we can work to protect them and prevent the spread of trafficking." Human trafficking affects every race, gender and socio-economic class. Traffickers prey on vulnerable individuals and exploit those vulnerabilities to coerce them into trafficking.

Virginia Beach resident and military spouse Brittany Dunn lived just outside Reno, NV before she moved to Virginia Beach. "Brothels were legal there, and it was reported that people were being trafficked through the brothels and at massive local events, like Burning Man," she recalled. When she moved to Virginia Beach, she met two other military spouses who shared her concern. Kristi Wells saw human trafficking while she was on a missions trip in Costa Rica in tent cities where children as young as 5 years old were being sold to tourists. Vicki Tinnel witnessed it on the streets of Atlanta, GA prior to moving to Virginia Beach.

Left to right: Patrina Mosley (Douglass Leadership Institute), Barbara Amaya (survivor leader), Congressman Chris Smith (NJ-R), CocoEva Soleil LuzGuerrero Alcazar (survivor leader), Brittany Dunn (COO & co-founder of Safe House Project) & Mary Vigil (legislative director for Congressman Smith)



Photo by Michael Final, press secretary Representative Chris Smith.

"When we learned that hundreds of thousands of Americans are trafficked every year and that Virginia is 15th in the nation, our hearts were broken," explained Dunn. "Vulnerable boys, girls, women and men, from very young children to the elderly, were trafficked in our own community, and only one percent of those being victimized were ever identified."

As mothers, the three women felt a strong urge to respond. With seven children under the age of 7 years old between them and three deployed spouses, they found time to learn as much as they could about the anti-trafficking cause. "We researched what was being done well, determined what needed to be improved, and identified what strengths we had to use for service to tackle this complex issue," said Dunn.

They launched the Safe House Project in 2017. "Our mission is to increase survivor identification beyond one percent through education, provide emergency services and placement to survivors, and ensure every survivor has access to restorative services in a safe house," said Dunn. "By leaning into a vision beyond our resources, a commitment to serving survivors with excellence, and empowering others to be part of the solution, we have seen incredible steps taken towards eradication."

To date, Safe House Project has trained over 250,000 people to spot, report and prevent trafficking. The project has provided emergency services and safe house placement to over 270 survivors, and helped launch 272 new beds in safe house programs. Safe House Project also regularly educates policymakers on effective legislation to support survivors at the state and federal level.

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Over the past five years, Dunn, Wells and Tinnel have learned that they can do what they love — serving and empowering others, providing education, finding strategic solutions, and advocating for change — to fight something that they abhor. “It is the survivors who inspire us to get up each morning and keep going, because they are worth every investment of our time, talent and treasure,” emphasized Dunn. “But no matter how big those numbers get, our team always comes back to the fact that every number has a name, and every name has a story, and we are grateful to be a small part of their healing story.”



Left to right: Melissa West and Mitzi Nuckols: World Day Against Trafficking in Persons Awareness Walk in Town Center

A survivor, Lily, recently said, “When I called Safe House Project they heard me. They actually listened to my story. They believed me. And even after they knew what had been done to me, they still looked at me like I was a person. They still looked at me with compassion in their eyes.”

The training and education offered by Safe House Project provides effective results. One volunteer reported, “I just wanted to share an experience I had last week, and, because of your training, I knew what to do. After attending a movie, I went to get gas for the long ride home. I noted an older gentleman with a young child walking through the parking lot late at night. I noted he was dressed appropriately for the warm weather, while the child had on a parka, and they were headed toward a motel. My gut immediately felt uneasy, but by the time I stopped pumping gas, they were gone. I contacted the local authorities, and long story short, they provided me with an update this morning that the officers investigated and rescued a little boy who was being trafficked.”

Dunn added, “This is one story that shows the power of understanding this complex issue, and how, when we each have our eyes opened, we can be part of the solution.”



Inside one of the safe houses.
Photo by Sam Steingraber



Left to right: Co-Founders Brittany Dunn and Kristi Wells
Photo by Sam Steingraber

Here are three simple ways you can engage:

- 1. Increase Survivor Identification:** Educate yourself on how to properly identify and report suspected trafficking — take our free one-hour OnWatch training at IAmOnWatch.org.
- 2. Provide Emergency Support:** Support survivors who are exiting their trafficking situation with emergency services by signing up as a monthly “Forty for Freedom” at www.safehouseproject.org. Your support is critical to helping us safely exit a survivor from their trafficking situation, provide emergency support services, housing, food and basic necessities. When our survivor response team steps into their world, we speak life into a survivor reminding them that they have value, dignity and worth as a human being and that we want to see their dreams restored.
- 3. Engage:** Volunteer as part of our Hampton Roads Leadership Team. Learn more at www.safehouseproject.org.



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MONTHLY MANUAL:

November

By Gina Foresta



READ: *On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous* by poet Ocean Vuong. This critically acclaimed, multiple award winning *New York Times* bestselling debut novel is a stunning masterpiece of storytelling. It is a letter from a son to an illiterate mother that redefines family, reveals a long family history centered around Vietnam, explores race, class and masculinity, and invites the reader to witness the author's revelation about his mother, his heritage and himself. Vuong poses the question of how do we stay true to ourselves while still helping to heal and support others in their own survival — and find joy in it.



LISTEN TO: "November Boogie" by Sonny Boy Williamson



SOW: trees. Yes, trees! Most of us likely think spring is the season for planting trees, and yes, trees can do well when planted at the beginning of the growing season. However, there are many advantages to planting a tree at the end of a growing season. When trees are planted in the spring, they must grow roots, new leaves, photosynthesize, phew! When trees are planted in the fall, they can put all of their energy into growing a strong root system. The soil is warmer from the summer and stays warm for quite a while. Fall-planted trees get to stay young through the winter and aren't pressured to grow up super quickly. By the time spring rolls around they have strong root systems, are more robust and are able to take the stress of summer heat and pests. In addition, trees planted in the fall require a lot less water as they get established and can often get enough through natural weather patterns. Some of the best local trees to plant in our area include White Fringe, Red Maple, River Birch, Sweetly Magnolia, Sourwood, Eastern Redbud and Black Cherry.



NOTICE: the beauty of the beach in the fall. When you live in a coastal town, it is easy to take the beach for granted because it is always there. We may not even consider visiting it in the non-summer months. However, fall and winter can be some of the most beautiful days on the beach. The air is crisp, the crowds are non-existence, and the canvas is clear for the ocean, sand, seabirds and more to shine.



CELEBRATE: Small Business Saturday on Sat., November 26. Started in 2010 as an American Express campaign, this promotional day for small business owners has fortunately become an established practice. Shopping at small businesses follows the trend of supporting local farmers and artisans and has a similar positive environmental impact. Patronizing local, small businesses helps to strengthen the local economy and the community. Relax on the day after Thanksgiving, spend time with your family and wait until Saturday to begin your holiday shopping.

IT'S 5 O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE:

A "Bitter" Winter

Submitted by Gina Foresta

Making your own bitters is easy, but does involve a few unusual ingredients. Visit sites online, such as mountainroseherbs.com, to find them easily. This recipe requires three weeks of steeping. Begin soon, and have homemade bitters in time for the holiday season. The bitters can be sipped on its own or used in any recipe calling for bitters.

Ingredients:

- Zest from four to five oranges, any type will do
- 2 star anise
- 1 teaspoon anise seeds
- 1/2 teaspoon dried burdock root
- 1/2 teaspoon dried gentian root
- 1/2 teaspoon dried juniper berries
- 1/2 teaspoon dried coriander seeds
- 1/4 teaspoon dried sassafras root pieces
- 2 cups Tarnished Truth or Chesapeake Bay Distillery vodka
- 1 cup filtered water
- 2 tablespoons local honey



Directions:

1. Add the orange zest and all herbs to a quart size mason jar. Cover with vodka, and seal with a lid. Place the jar in a cool, dark place, such as a cabinet or pantry, and shake it a few times over the course of three weeks to combine.
2. After the three weeks, place cheesecloth over a bowl to strain the contents of the jar. Rinse out the jar, and pour the strained liquid back into it.
3. Add the water to a small saucepan, and bring to a boil. Remove from the heat, and add the honey. Stir to dissolve the honey, and cool to room temperature. Pour the honey simple syrup into the strained vodka, reseal the jar, and shake to combine.
4. Allow the infusion to steep for another two days. Any remaining sediment will settle to the bottom of the jar. After the two days, carefully pour or ladle the liquid into a clean bottle, avoiding the sediment. Enjoy!

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If your neighborhood civic league or homeowner's association information appear inaccurate or is missing, please send an email Gina Foresta at gforesta@bestversionmedia.com with correct and current information. All information for listed groups acquired from the City of Virginia Beach website or submitted by association leaders.

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VB PUBLIC LIBRARIES TEEN ADVISORY GROUPS HELP TEENS GROW IN THE COVID AFTERMATH

By Kate Murray, Student Legal Studies Academy
Program First Colonial High School

To fill the void created by the lack of social interaction during the COVID shutdown, many teens began volunteering at their local libraries. Not only does volunteering connect them to other teens, but the work builds intrapersonal skills and a better understanding of their community. The role the public library system plays in the community is vital, and these teen volunteers, ranging in age from 12 to 17 years old, develop a sense of pride in being part of a beneficial system.



The Teen Advisory Board is a library-based program encouraging teens to be active members of their local community in Teen Advisory Groups (TAGs). The program dates back decades through the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). Promoting social and emotional growth, TAGs have sprung up in libraries all around Virginia, including Alexandria, Woodbridge and Virginia Beach. Virginia Beach alone has groups in The Central, Great Neck, Oceanfront and Pungo-Blackwater libraries.

YALSA is a division of the American Library Association intended to spread equal resources for young adults through each community. They advocate for the continuing role of libraries in the development of children and teenagers. This is especially true now, with teens missing nearly two years of true social interaction during the pandemic.

Virginia Beach residents and high school students Mollie and Aiden Donovan have participated at their Kempsville library TAG group for nearly four years. They have engaged in numerous activities and have gained a strong appreciation for their library's contribution to the community. "Volunteering for TAG has opened my eyes to how important libraries are to a community and how underutilized they are," Mollie said.

During their time in TAG, Mollie and Aiden have planned and hosted events alongside their peers and library staff. For example, during Teen Times,

Mollie and Aiden teach and facilitate fun activities with participants. During a Harry Potter-themed event day, Mollie dressed up as a character and played fun games with other teens. Their favorite activity by far, however, was a series of murder mystery nights, in which they created a story line and planned clues. It was a fun way for them to get creative and see where their imagination could take them.

Through working under different TAG leaders, with multiple other teen advocates and teen library program participants, and by witnessing the growth of their peers, seniors Mollie and Aiden will graduate high school knowing they were able to make a difference in their local community. Aiden said, "Volunteering through TAG has helped me open up to others my age and has helped me find a new way to help my community through my library."

The Virginia Beach Public Libraries are always looking for new volunteers to participate in TAG groups. It is a great way to get service hours and is a valuable addition to college applications.



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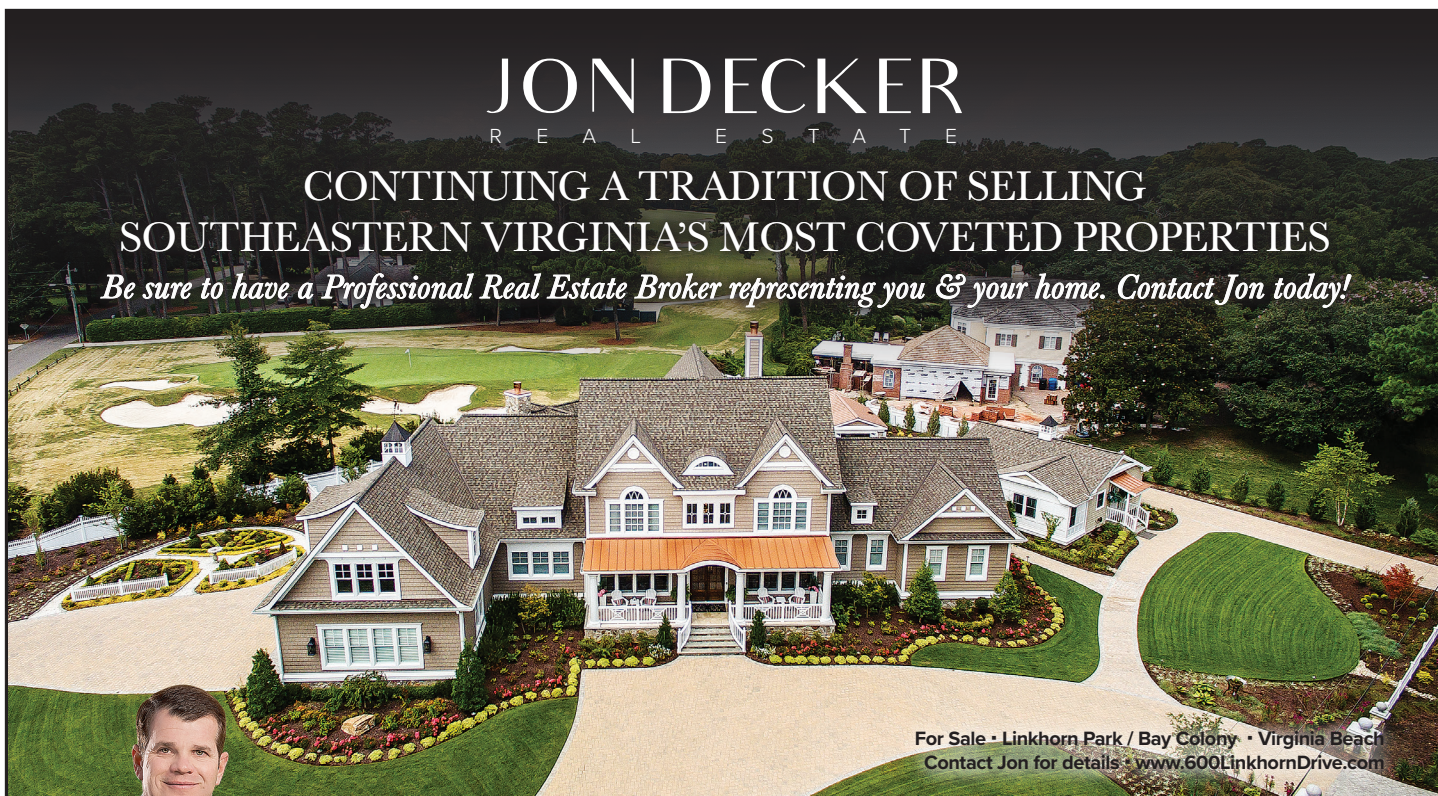
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