

# NORTH OF THE JAMES®

"Truth and facts, no alternatives."

A close-up portrait of Susanna Wu-Pong Calvert, a woman with long, dark hair, wearing a blue and white patterned top. She is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera. The background is a soft-focus outdoor setting with green foliage and pink flowers.

## SUSANNA WU-PONG CALVERT

Susanna Wu-Pong Calvert, trained as a scientist, had a series of epiphanies that steered her away from labs and university classrooms to trod a road much less travelled. About three years ago, after two tremendous losses in rapid succession, she had a spiritual awakening that led her to create a foundation for healing—a foundation that heals communities, families, and our home planet. The results may one day produce heaven on earth. *continued on page 14*

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Cover photograph by Rebecca D'Angelo

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## BRIEFS

# Whistle Stop Theatre Presents “Our Town” at the Ashland Theatre

**T**HORNTON WILDER'S Pulitzer Prize-winning classic takes center stage in the center of the universe for three performances on November 3, 12 and 13.

Guests are required to present proof of vaccination at the door, and must remain masked unless consuming concessions. Guests may choose their own seats upon arrival, but are encouraged to practice social distancing.

This production is directed by Matt Bloch with music direction by Michelle Bayliss.

For tickets and information please visit [whistlestoptheatre.weebly.com](http://whistlestoptheatre.weebly.com)

## OPENING DOORS FOR FAMILIES BY HOUSING FAMILIES FIRST

Housing Families First is hosting a kickoff event on October 20 to announce its new Opening Doors for Families capital campaign. The new campaign has a \$4.4 million fundraising goal, which will allow Housing Families First to expand services and facilities to help an additional 300 children and parents each year, while also enhancing the experience of dedicated volunteers and professional staff.

“Simply put, this campaign will transform lives,” said Housing Families First executive director Beth Vann-Turnbull. “Even though our shelter is currently the largest in the area for families, we have an enormous opportunity to expand our facilities and programs, which will help us to permanently end the homelessness of more local families and build a stronger community for us all.”

## AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR HERO AGRIPPA HULL TO BE HONORED

The Friends of Richmond Sister Cities will be hosting an event on October 16 at the Branch Museum of Architecture to celebrate the renewed Sister City relationship between Richmond and Olsztyn, Poland. Virginia's ties to Poland date back to the founding of our country, during the American Revolution.



*Our Town coming to the Ashland Theatre in November.*

Agrippa Hull was the free Black man who was the close friend and aid of the Polish General Thaddeus Kosciuszko, influencing his views on the abolition of slavery, and in his will, General Thaddeus Kosciuszko asked that all his war earnings be used for the purpose of freeing and educating slaves owned by Thomas Jefferson. This event will highlight the contributions of these men during the American Revolution, along with General Casimir Pulaski. Each of these men are honored by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

## VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY ACHIEVES HIGHEST ENROLLMENT IN FIVE YEARS

Virginia Union University announced an overall enrollment increase for the third consecutive year with a total enrollment of 1,652 students. This is the highest enrollment for the university since 2015, with a 4% increase over the Fall 2020 enrollment. VUU is also celebrating the highest overall retention of students and the largest graduate enrollment in the university's history.

“VUU is strategically focused on developing students who will create jobs as entrepreneurs or become corporate leaders in careers available today and those that will be created in the future.” said Dr. Hakim J. Lucas, president and

CEO of Virginia Union University. “I celebrate our enrollment success as we continue our pursuit of creating academic excellence and becoming a ‘Best-in-Class’ university.”

## ANTIQUE VILLAGE CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Antique Village, central Virginia's longest continuously running antiques and collectibles road show, celebrates 50 years on October from 8 till 6 October 30, and noon till 6 on October 31.

The Village will celebrate this major milestone with special events, sales, contests and door prizes both days. Foremost in the events column are the annual Visiting Dealer Outdoor Market, with 20 merchants and the tradition of a free pancake brunch, featuring Joe's awesome fried apples. Almost fifty merchants housed inside will contribute with unbeatable sales. A few are having 50% off on almost all merchandise. The Brunch and Outdoor Market are on Saturday only. Founded by Billy and Charlotte Fulwider in 1971, Antique Village is the oldest antiques and collectibles mall in the region.

*Antique Village is at 10203 Chamberlayne Road in Hanover County.*

## PUMPKIN PATCH DAYS AT GINTER PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Tenth Annual “Pumpkin Patch Days” begins this month with plenty pumpkins at the corner of West Laburnum and Seminary Avenues.

Fun activities are planned for every Saturdays in October, and every Friday afternoon join us for Storytime. On Halloween night free coats are available to anyone who wants one, and there will be candy for the kids and hot cider for the adults.

Make sure to wear your face masks and practice social-distancing for everyone's sake. For details please call 262-8651.

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# Transcending the Paranormal At Historic Hanover Tavern

by FAYERUZ REGAN

**V**IRGINIA IS AN OLD and storied state. Before two wars were waged on her soil, there were a couple hundred years of colonialism and at least 16,000 years of American Indian history. Of all the places rumored to be haunted in Virginia, the Hanover Tavern looms large.

My husband and I booked a tour to put our skepticism to the test. I feel that too many places are deemed haunted simply for being old. My husband doubts the very existence of the supernatural.

Hanover Tavern is one of the few surviving colonial-era taverns still operating. The original structure dates back to 1733. It was called Shelton's Tavern, and Patrick Henry married Sarah Shelton, the proprietor's daughter. Rebuilt in 1791 as Hanover Tavern, Henry assisted his father-in-law by greeting guests, tending bar, and playing the fiddle.

Other famous visitors were George Washington, Edgar Allan Poe, and Charles Dickens. Across the street is the Hanover Courthouse, where Henry delivered an impassioned speech that questioned the motives of the Church of England, sowing the seeds for the Revolutionary War.

A group of four people awaited our arrival. Steve Dills is on the Hanover Tavern Board of Directors, and brought along a few people from Transcend Paranormal, of which he is also a director. In a nice touch, member Tiffany Jones was dressed in period costume as Ann Chisholm, a tavern fixture during the Civil War.

Years ago, Transcend Paranormal was commissioned to investigate supernatural occurrences at the tavern, following sightings reported by guests and employees alike. Using highly-sensitive equipment to gauge motion, magnetic fields, faint sounds, and temperature, it was revealed that the historical site is a hotbed of activity.

The structure itself is handsome. The restaurant features wood beams and rock walls. Occasionally, diners spot fleeting black or white shadows crossing the room during their meal. Guests usually take in a show after



*Transcend Paranormal's Tiffany Jones dressed as Ann Chisholm.*

they dine, so we entered the Barksdale Theatre, the very first dinner theater established in the United States. The most active ghost in the theater is said to be that of a playful little girl.

Though Transcend Paranormal researches the history and tenants of the places they investigate, the tavern served as a field hospital, war refugee center, and public lodging, so the young girl could have been anyone. Rehearsing actors grew accustomed to hearing a little girl laugh, and seeing shadowy figures darting around the theater seating. In response, they left a small collection of toys backstage for her. Even when the theater is locked up for the night, employees have confirmed that the toys are regularly scattered about when the tavern is unlocked the next day. Once during rehearsal, a ball rolled across the stage.


The oldest surviving part of the tavern was upstairs, where owners lived and guests lodged. The wide plank floors and steep quarter steps are original. This was the eeriest part of the tavern. It was closed to the public on the evening we visited, so many lights were turned off. And on that quiet country stretch of 301, you could hear a pin drop.

While we were chatting upstairs, the chandelier dimmed above our heads. No one was near the light fixture,

and we were all gathered in the same room. We shrugged it off as old, faulty wiring. We attempted to, anyway. But a few minutes later, three people from our group heard a playful call from a young woman in an adjacent room. Among those who heard her was my husband, the skeptic.

Under a full moon, our group crossed the street to the Hanover Courthouse, the third oldest running courthouse in America. Once a site to public hangings, the property was no stranger to tragedy. A wooden prison on site had burned to the ground, carrying with it not criminals, but the poor. It was a debtors prison.

While in the courthouse, employees and visitors have witnessed apparitions in the room, and occasionally a man's voice. Things that go bump in the night regularly set off the motion detector, causing the interior lights to flick on at all hours of the night. Locals often witness the lights turning on from the outside windows.

Given the dramatic history of this site, perhaps it isn't death that ties a spirit to the living world, but emotion. The tavern and the courthouse, in addition to the adjacent Old Stone Jail (circa 1835) are all included on monthly tours of Hanover Tavern. For more information, visit [HanoverTavern.org](http://HanoverTavern.org). 



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# Northside Mural Kickoff

## Ed Trask's First Brushstroke

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

**IT WAS EERILY SIMILAR TO** a morning twenty years ago to the day—clear blue sky, warming sun, a whisper of breeze. But where two towers were toppled and thousands murdered that morning two decades ago, this day saw a remembrance of those skyscrapers as an image on a brick wall, and the beginning of a project that would narrate the story of the diverse neighborhoods that make up Richmond's Northside.

On September 11 about a hundred people gathered in the parking lot behind the CVS on Bellevue Avenue for a kickoff of the Northside Mural which should be completed sometime around Thanksgiving. There were a few tables and tents, and a number of musicians performed on a makeshift stage at the far end of the parking lot.

Joyce Foster, who serves as membership chair for the Bellevue Civic Association, was the chair and organizer of the kickoff. We stood in the shade of a tent. "I also helped select the artist," Joyce told me.

The event, which started at eleven, saw people of all ages congregating on the sidewalk adjacent to Brook Road. "I was so excited once the kids showed up and started doing drawings on the wall, and they had a great time doing it," said Joyce. "There are some great images there. Everybody has had nothing but good things to say."

Among those attending were Anne Holton, Elaine Summerfield and Third District Councilwoman Ann-Frances Lambert.

Ann-Frances was standing on the sidewalk in front of the mural wall. She gripped a thick piece of blue chalk and began inscribing three large capital letters on the uneven brick wall. BLM it read.

"I'm very excited about this," Ann-Frances said. "Bringing artwork into the community. I'm all about beautification, and I love murals."

A short time later, Elaine Summerfield—microphone clasped in hand—addressed the crowd, acknowledging the hard work of the many volunteers who made this effort possible.



*Inset: Muralist Ed Trask applies the first brush stroke to the wall facing Brook Road at Bellevue Avenue.*

*Background: The wall with chalk inscriptions that will soon become the Northside Mural.*

"We have a mural committee that has been meeting for about seven months now to envision this process and pull it together," she said. "This public launch really wouldn't be possible without some key players like Joyce Foster and Janet Forte." She also mentioned Charlie Knight, Tracey Winzel, and Marcie Murphy, along with Rob McAdams, who helped with the music lineup. "We have a lot of other volunteers that helped out," Elaine said. "Thanks to all of them."

She also thanked the vendors who offered food and drink—Stir Crazy, Little House Green Grocery, and Morsels among them. "I want to acknowledge the building owner, Pam Saunders," she said. "She's been kind enough to agree to have this wall available."

"I also want to thank the BCA (Bellevue Civic Association)," she continued. "They have been incredibly generous with financial support (to the tune of \$1500) as well as providing the tent and getting news out for volun-

teers and ways to contribute."

Then Elaine looked out on the crowd, using her flattened palm as a visor. "Our Councilwoman for the Third District, Ann-Frances Lambert, is here," she said. "Say hello to Councilwoman Lambert. She also has been gracious enough to provide financial support through her City Council office. Thank you so much for that support because it's really an effort that takes the public sector and the private sector and our neighborhood to make it happen."

Elaine also thanked Battery Park Christian Church for providing space. "They have been wonderful partners," she said. "And NORTH of the JAMES has been really helpful in promoting and sharing the news about the artist and the mural going in. We appreciate having local in-print media and we've got to keep that going, so pick up North of the James and patronize their sponsors."

Elaine then explained why Ed Trask

had been chosen to create the mural. "A big priority for the committee in selecting the artist was somebody that was going to be willing to work with a team of volunteers and willing to be collaborative and really trade ideas and be open to that process of taking input from the neighborhood," she said. "So when we met Ed Trask we knew that he fit the bill. He was going to be collaborative, great to work with, and above all else he's a very skilled artist and we've seen evidence of his murals all over town, and his murals really are all over the world. So we are so fortunate and so excited to have Ed join us for this event."

Elaine then handed over the mic to Ed. "For years there have been a handful of painters and mural artists who would drive past that wall and look at it and realize that it's an amazing canvas," he said. "And it is an amazing canvas for a lot of reasons. This is a canvas that speaks to an inclusive crowd—Northsideans. It's for everybody from down Brookland Park





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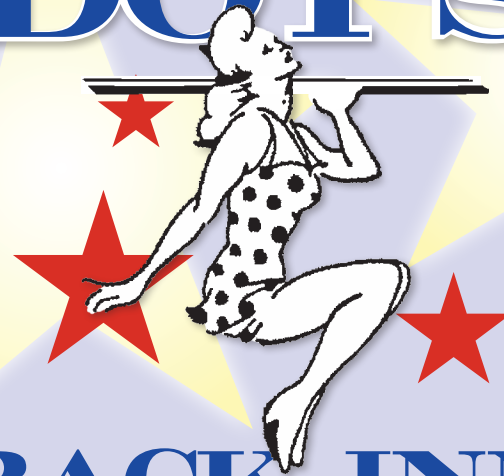
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## FEATURE



Top left: Bellevue resident Jodi Teitelman cuts the ribbon just before Ed Trask puts the first brushstroke on the wall.

Top right: Ed Trask, his assistant for the day Trinity, and Third District Councilwoman Ann-Frances Lambert.

Below left: Councilwoman Lambert adds the now iconic BLM to the wall.

Below right: Anne Holton talking with Bellevue residents at the Northside Mural kickoff.

Boulevard over to MacArthur Avenue. For me to be able to do a mural on that wall that I've been staring at for twenty years is a great thing. And to be able to do something for you guys and to work with the community that I've loved that's a win-win. I'm totally honored to have this. I can't thank you guys enough."

The crowd then migrated over to Brook Road for a random drawing of two raffle tickets. Jodi Teitelman won the honor of cutting the ribbon, and a girl named Trinity worked side by side with the artist to put the first brushstrokes on the wall.

"We'll do a reference to nine-eleven," Ed said as he faced the brick wall. He then turned to his assistant, Trinity. "I'll do one tower, you do the other tower," he said.

An American flag attached to a slender pole jutting out of the side of the building flapped in a slight breeze as Ed applied the first brushstroke to the mural. After completing his tower, he handed a small can of dark green paint, along with a paintbrush, to Trinity. She filled in the outline of the

second tower flawlessly. "You're hired," said Ed. "You're a pro. You're so good."

Later in the day I talked with Ed about this particular mural, and mural art in general. "I think this has been a community wall that people have wanted to see something visually happen to for a long time," he told me. "It's a great entryway for people coming into the neighborhood and out of the neighborhood, and I think it will make for a good mural. It's a great placement for a mural that's for everybody, for every resident of Northside. I've got a ton of ideas, a few little sketches."

Murals at their best are narrative in style. "I can put a lot of vignettes of different historical references or even modern day references," Ed said. "For me it's straight up storytelling. Sometimes it might not be as literal of a storyline so you kind of have to find it and that's good because you want people to come back and investigate the mural and live with it."

In one form or other murals have been a means of artistic expression since the dawn of humankind. "The use of metaphor and analogy and different

things of that nature have been used in mural making and mark making all the way from the caves to Michelangelo to today," said Ed Trask.

When Ed joined a small group of people, I made my way over to the stage where Micah Berry was performing his set. One of the last songs he sang was an original, and though he would tell me later that it's still untitled, it could easily be called Rise Up. He takes us back to the summer of 2020 and the sadistic murder of George Floyd and the BLM uprising that rolled across the country like a tsunami, and helped wash away monuments honoring traitors and white supremacists. It was a perfect song to pay homage to this mural-in-progress on Richmond's Northside.

*"I walked by painted monuments  
through over crowded streets,*

*Head on collisions with civilians  
and authorities.*

*I find division is a word that comes  
between us,*

*Some blind decisions made by people  
who would keep us on our knees.*

## FEATURE



Singer Micah Berry performs.

*“Desperate cries for justice lie heavy  
in the air.*

*Who here among us would ever  
dare to silence them?*

*But some will try ignorance and  
violence.*

*The least that we can do is  
stand across the aisle from them  
and change.*

*“So rise up, if the blood inside you  
is boiling.*

*Stand up for the ones afraid to rise.*

*Step aside for the next generation.*

*Change is in the wind, like the  
turning of the tides.*

*Change is in the wind.*

*So don't be afraid to rise.*

*“From sea to shining sea the country  
felt it just like I did.*

*Hard talks at dinner tables,  
families divided.*

*I find our differences just make us  
who we are;*

*A land of immigrants we've been  
that from the start.*

*“Some came in search of freedom,  
a place to be themselves.*

*Some came against their will, and  
survived a living hell.*

*But here we are now and the  
question still remains:*

*What will we do with all this  
freedom we've obtained?*

*Will it remain?*

*“So rise up, if the blood inside you  
is boiling.*

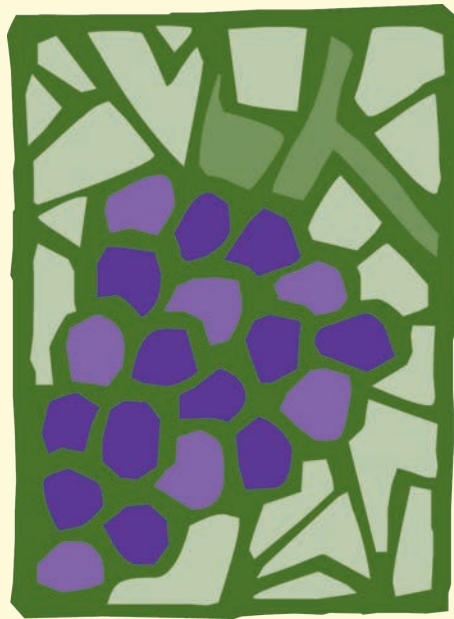
*Stand up for the ones afraid to rise.*

*Step aside, it's a new generation.*

*Change is in the wind, like the  
turning of the tide.*

*Change is in the wind.*

*Don't be afraid to rise.”* 



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# SUSANNA CALVERT

## HEAVEN ON EARTH

### SUSANNA'S HOUSE IS NOT FAR FROM THE MIGHTY JAMES.

We sit on her back porch which is surrounded by small groupings of river birch, their lace-like leaves casting a veil of shadows across her face. On the rear end of the property a number of loblolly pines tower above the birch trees, and everywhere there is the ratcheting of cicadas and the trilling of birds. We are bathed in sweet nature and her sounds and smells, her constant and ubiquitous pulse—reminders of the intricate web that connects everything on the thick shell of our biosphere.

# A

**LTHOUGH BORN IN GEORGIA,** Susanna moved at a fairly early age to Poughkeepsie, New York, where her father, a Chinese immigrant, went to work for IBM. Then, during the bicentennial year, the family relocated to Houston, Texas, and for the young Susanna, still in middle school, it was a terrifying cultural shock.

"It was a nightmare," Susanna says. "I was twelve. It was traumatic. In New York I felt like everyone else, and then suddenly I was like this alien in a strange land. The first year I was there I didn't say a word through any of my classes. My confidence went underground."

The same held true even in college when she attended the University of Texas at Austin where she studied pharmacy. "I was like an alien from Mars," she remembers. "It was that old cliché. 'Where are you from?' someone would ask. Literally every week of my life while I was in Texas that would happen. And I would tell them, I was born in Georgia and they would say, 'Oh, well you speak really good English.'"

That all changed the moment she left the Lone Star State. Susanna did her graduate work at University of California San Francisco where she studied pharmaceutical sciences. "I felt like for the first time I was seen as a person," she tells me. "In Texas, I was totally invisible to people."

In 1993 she accepted a faculty position at Virginia Commonwealth University's School of Pharmacy, and seven years later was granted tenure. "It was

everything I thought I ever wanted," says Susanna. "It fulfilled all the dreams of my Chinese-American parents, and myself. And it was the worst thing that ever happened to me."

Her two dogs, Kennedy, an Airedale, and Romeo, a Schnoodle, are ramping it up on the porch, under the table and under the chairs, then out to the backyard. Susanna takes them inside, and then returns to the porch.

Even before I ask why receiving tenure was the worst thing that ever happened to her, Susanna says: "Because I thought it would make me happy, and I was absolutely miserable. My life was a wreck and my marriage was a wreck, and my health was in shambles. It wasn't authentically me. Even though it was meaningful work—and it's a privilege to be a scientist and a professor—it wasn't authentically me, and because of that, it was crushing my soul."

In those days, Susanna bought into a myth so many of us believe about the road to happiness. "A McMansion in the West End," she says. "A tenured position. Married to a doctor who was half Chinese." But she had been plodding along on this hamster wheel to the point beyond tedium for far too long. "I was literally in despair," Susanna says.

That's when she had a road to Damascus moment. "The dishes were not dry from my tenure party that I threw myself when I decided to take a break from it all," Susanna says.

Susanna gave up her tenure, but was asked to continue teaching, at least on a part-time basis. But soon enough ennui set in again.

She met with the dean and told him: "I'm bored to death."

"Well I could use help consolidating our graduate program," he told her. "Do you want to do that?"

"Sure," Susanna said.

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN



It would prove to be a turning point in her life. “It turns out I loved administration,” she says. “That’s when I became involved in leadership and career development because I really wanted to develop the student as a whole person.” Susanna studied personal and professional development, and worked with the Gracie Harris Leadership Institute at VCU.

“That’s when I had another epiphany,” says Susanna. “This is what I love to do.”

And those around her understood this even before she did. “I was working in the VCU leadership program and I was just having a conversation with one of the participants,” she says. “And she said to me, ‘Oh my God, Susanna, you should do this for a living.’ That had happened ninety-nine times before.”

Through her work, Susanna was helping others to avoid making the same mistakes she had. “I was helping people have the thing that I missed which was to find their best self and their authentic self,” Susanna says.

In about 2010, she had another blinding flash of insight. “Another epiphany,” she says. “I understood this was my calling, and I didn’t even know I was missing a calling.”

So Susanna returned to school, earning a master’s degree in applied positive psychology at the University of Pennsylvania—the birthplace and omphalos of positive psychology.

“Positive psychology is the science of well-being,” Susanna explains. “It’s not the medical side of psychology, which treats mental illness. Positive psychology answers this question: What makes people thrive and have a good life? It’s very much on the other end of the psychology spectrum which I feel we spend way too little time focusing on. Both are very important.”

Armed with this degree, along with coaching credentials and certifications, Susanna began working at VCU again. By then she had divorced her first husband, and remarried Christopher Calvert. Life was good, and then it got even better. “My dream job

opened up at the University of Georgia,” she says. “So Christopher and I moved to Athens where I was the inaugural director of programming in their office of faculty affairs. They created this position to support faculty success. My goal was to improve the well-being of the faculty that would make them be successful in their job.”

Things were going along swimmingly, and then about a year and a half after accepting the position in Georgia, Susanna’s sister died. After returning from the funeral, the couple received dreadful news.

“That week we learned about Christopher’s Stage IV Cancer,” Susanna says. She pauses for a long moment, then looks me directly in the eyes. “Christopher actually passed away three years ago to the day,” she said. “I knew right then that my life as I knew it was over, and I knew I had to lean into the post of traumatic growth, this idea that we can grow and thrive after trauma.”

She continued working in Georgia for another year and a half. “And then I received a divine inspiration to quit my dream job and move back to Richmond and start the Foundation for Family and Community Healing,” Susanna says. “I put all my savings into it. This was at the end of 2018, and our mission is to help all of us learn to create healthy and rewarding relationships with ourselves, each other, the earth, and the living force that connects us. So it’s really about our purpose, and connecting to something bigger than ourselves, our feelings of awe and inspiration and wonder and gratitude and forgiveness. All of those things.”

Since the pandemic raised its viral head, humanity has begun to take notice of things that had been staring us in the face all along. “I feel like a lot of us going through COVID are realizing how our lives are worth much more than what we have been bartering it for,” says Susanna. “A paycheck and materialism and these activities that were supposed to make us feel successful and happy, but often leave us feeling that we need more, something bigger and better. We

are stepping off the hedonic treadmill. People are starting to look for something more meaningful, not only with their work, but hopefully with each other, with themselves, with the earth.”

As things were stripped to the bare bone, people took note. “All those things we thought we needed, we discovered we really don’t need them,” Susanna says. “Non-essential goods and services are non-essential by definition and we’re looking for something else to replace them. They were preventing us from noticing what we really want in our lives, and that’s my own story, too. I had all these check marks, but they were all external things that somehow I made up or I adopted from somewhere.”

One thing Susanna knows for sure from her study of positive psychology is that human joy and income are correlated, but only to a certain point. “They go up together, but when our basic needs get met, things level off,” she says. “What’s always there for us are nature and each other, and so hopefully we are going through a rediscovery. It seems like a lot of people have returned to nature.”

Susanna hearkens back to those days and nights when she nursed her dying husband. “What I learned when I was caring for Chris was that I wanted to support his medical care and nutritional care and so forth, his physical care and healing and repair,” she says. “And at the same time I wanted to make sure that he was bringing all of his resources to the table, not just the physical. So I’m talking about the emotional, psychological and spiritual so he felt safe and loved and cared.”

The same applies, Susanna believes, to the mother of all mothers, and fathers—the earth herself. “This is where we are with earth,” says Susanna. “We are not bringing all the resources to the table for earth healing. Some of us are attending to the physical end, the regulatory and all of that. And there needs to be more of that. But there is also this other opportunity that I think is maybe a more inviting approach to everybody because there’s disagreement on this other end. Regardless of how you vote, I feel that all of us have a loving relationship with at least some part of earth. Either a geographic location or a body of water or something else—a plant or an animal.”

She invites me to view the earth as a fellow being. “Everybody needs to start thinking of earth as a loved one who is ailing and that is no different from any other loved one,” says Susanna. “So if your favorite aunt was sick, what would you do? You would go see her, you would be present, you’d put your phone away and all your other devices, you would notice how she’s doing today, and if you thought she needed something you would go fetch it for her. You would tell her how much you love her. You would express your gratitude for the care she has provided to you over the years or the relationship you’ve had with her. You might pray or meditate for her healing. You might sing her a song or do a painting of her in celebration. You would invite others to participate as well. And what does this cost? It doesn’t cost anything. And how much time does it take? It doesn’t necessarily take any time either.”



Susanna attending an environmental march.

And it's simple to address the earth, pretty much anywhere. "It's not like you have to travel to Nebraska to see earth," Susanna says. "And even if you live in the city, you have the sky, the birds and the insects, you have the grass, and the land itself is earth. Even the materials by which we build our homes are made from earth. We don't get them from Mars; they come from Earth."

This in no way discounts the clamps we have to apply to reduce pollution. "We have to stop the polluters and change the regulations and vote for people who are pro-environment," says Susanna. "Absolutely, and we need to increase that tenfold in my opinion. I do believe that we are going to impact earth with our activities no matter what we do. I think, and this is just my

opinion, that earth can support all of us. What she can't support is us living this lifestyle of waste and extravagant and excessive materialism. What she cannot withstand is us being careless and unnecessarily destructive in how we just throw things into landfills."

She considers what is happening worldwide. "Climate change, environ-

mental catastrophe, pandemic, inflation, wildfires, floods," she says. "I think these are natural consequences. To me this is Mother Earth healing herself, just like our immune system has molecular and cellular responses. I think that's what's happening. Earth is just trying to heal herself, which is a natural consequence to our behavior; and if we don't change our behavior it will keep getting worse and worse until we hit rock bottom and we realize we have nowhere else to go and we have to make a change."

Though so much of the news concerning the environment is as grim as a scythe-wielding reaper, Susanna has hope. "We are so much bigger than anything we can ever dream of in our scared little minds," she says. "So whether you think you access the divine from within or the divine from without, it's the same thing."

And just as we need the earth, the earth needs us. "What if we all attended to Mother Earth?" Susanna asks. "What if we all just added earth to our prayers every night? Even just putting that intention in our hearts every day, whether you believe in God or not, I

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think can change things especially if enough of us decide this matters and this is worth doing. I feel when we connect with earth like that it's also good emotionally, psychologically and spiritually for her, for our mother."

She looks up into a tree and shuts her eyes to the warming sun that barely breaks through the leaves of a river birch. "I hear it, I feel it, I sense it, I see it," Susanna Calvert says. "It's very real,

it is palpable. And I feel like when we tap into that then miraculous things can happen. This is our soul's purpose. I can do that, and eight billion other people can do that as well. So what if we did that together? We would literally be creating heaven on earth." **NB**

*Editor's note: If you'd like to learn more about the Foundation for Family and Community Healing visit: [familyandcommunityhealing.org](http://familyandcommunityhealing.org)*

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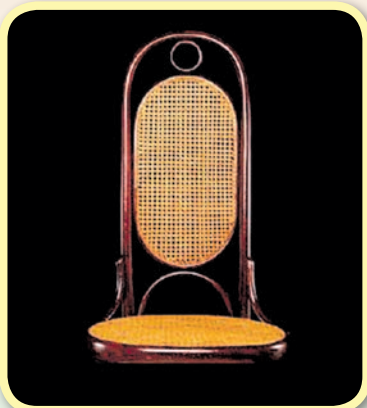
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The overview of the artist's career explores changes in his aesthetics and technique, as well as his constant keen eye for composition. Visitors will experience Ansel Adams's photographs that are some of the best-known images produced by any artist of the era, including Moonrise, Hernandez, New Mexico, The Tetons and the Snake River, and Monolith, Face of Half Dome. In a study of Adams's changing technique, the exhibition displays prints of the same photograph produced decades apart for visitors to compare and contrast.

Curated by Dr. Christopher Oliver, the Bev Perdue Jennings Assistant Curator of American Art, the exhibition explores the multifaceted artist who, in addition to photography, had a lifelong interest in both landscape conservation and classical music. Presentations

within the gallery pay special attention to Adams's tireless efforts to have wilderness and parks set aside for the public good. In a section of the exhibition that focuses on the artist's affinity for certain pieces of music, visitors will hear selections from a 1945 recording of Adams playing several different classical compositions for piano.

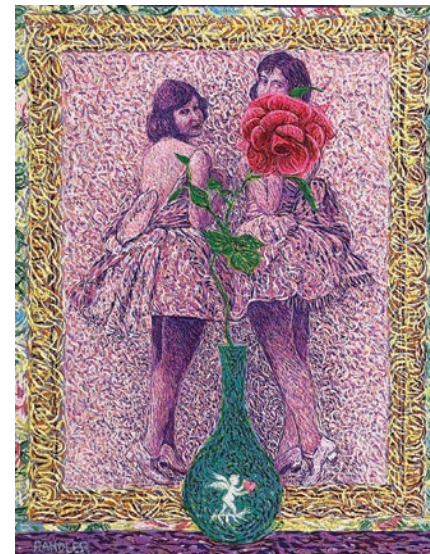
Adams profoundly influenced the course of 20th century photography not only through the example of his sumptuous and technically precise images, but also by means of his personal energy and devotion to advancing the cause of photography as an art form. As an artist, educator, innovator, and writer, he helped establish many of the institutions that have come to represent the highest aspirations of the medium of photography.

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**TED RANDLER AT ERIC SCHINDLER GALLERY**

This month's show "Wonderland" spotlights recent works by Ted Randler. Exhibition runs through October 30. Anyone who enters the gallery must wear a face mask properly, and practice social distancing.

Ted Randler spent much of his childhood moving with his family to New York, Illinois and Texas before settling in Bowling Green, Virginia. He earned his Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University in 1982, and Masters of Fine Art from Syracuse



*Left: Mount Williamson, The Sierra Nevada, from Manzanar, California, 1944, printed 1973-75.*

*Above: One of Ted Randler's new works at Eric Schindler Gallery.*

University in 1985. After graduate school, he resided in New York City for a number years before relocating to Virginia.

He has worked in marketing and magazine publishing including URGE, a regional fine arts journal which Randler led as well as contributed to as an art critic.

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The Gellman Room features "Endurance Challenge—Meditations on a Voyage", a series of paintings and mixed media drawings by Richmond artist Chrissy Baucom inspired by the polar expedition of Ernest Shackleton aboard his ship the Endurance

In the Dooley Foyer & Dooley Hall you can visit "Captured on Canvas", which focuses on the interaction of man-made and nature, and the play of light, both natural and artificial. This exhibit of acrylic on canvas paintings by artist Jordan Flower features detailed views from Richmond and the surrounding area.

In the Second Floor Gallery are "Scenes of Rural Virginia", a group of paintings in oil and pastel of horses and cows with some individual portraits by Richmond artist Patricia Faris.

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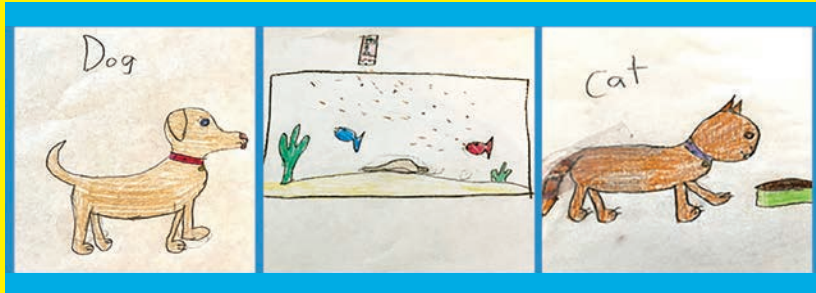
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## MONUMENT REMOVAL

# A.P. Hill Last Confederate Standing

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN



Then, in 1891, Lewis Ginter, who had served as a Confederate major, spearheaded the relocation of Hill's remains once again. This time Hill was buried at the juncture of Hermitage Road and Laburnum Avenue near the neighborhoods Ginter was at the time just laying out. By then there wasn't much left of Hill, just a few bones and some tattered cloth. On top of the burial mound Ginter had a statue of Hill erected.


With the removal of the Lee Monument last month, this is now the last statue commemorating a Confederate left in the city of Richmond. And the rotary it rises from is considered one of the most dangerous intersections in the city.

The monument to A.P. Hill, along with his remains, will soon be removed.

"We were waiting on the family to decide where they want the remains to go," says Third District Councilwoman Ann-Frances Lambert. "So the family has decided that they're going to take the remains to Culpeper, Virginia."

Once the statue finds a home, Councilwoman Lambert is hoping to change the entire nature of that intersection. "We want to make sure we put the right thing there, and we know a roundabout is not the answer," she says. "I want a crisscross intersection there, where you can cross not just from adjacent corners, but in diagonals, so you have people crossing the street from opposite corners."

Councilwoman Lambert also wants to see the students involved with creating artwork for this intersection. "It would be wonderful to have some bright colors on the crosswalk for that intersection," she says. "I would love for it to say Black Lives Matter."

And at the end of it all, Councilwoman Lambert would like to see a large community celebration held on the spot. "I want to have a culminating block party where we're bridging the neighborhoods together," she says. "We finally can celebrate a new intersection and hopefully reduce the number of accidents there. Speeding is a huge issue there, and that's something we're definitely looking to address with these ARP (American Rescue Plan) funds." 

**A**FTER DEATH most of us are buried just one time. That wasn't the case though for Confederate General Ambrose Powell Hill. To date he's been buried on three separate occasions. And fairly soon he'll be reinterred once again.

It all started back in 1865 with the fall of Petersburg. On April 2, just seven days before Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Union troops broke through the Confederate lines. A Union soldier shot Hill. The single bullet severed the general's left thumb, plunged through his chest, and exited above his right shoulder blade. He died almost instantly. Interesting to note: Hill, a week before he was killed, said he had no desire to live to see the collapse of the Confederacy. A dying wish, if ever there was one.

Hill was hastily buried in a family graveyard outside of Richmond on the south bank of the James River just off Cherokee Road. Here's the funny thing: he was buried standing up, something he had requested well before his death.

After mouldering in the shrink-swell soil of Chesterfield County for two years, gravediggers grabbed their spades, shovels and mattocks, and dug him up, then carted him over to Hollywood Cemetery where he was interred in among other Confederate officers.

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# A Judicial Shadowland

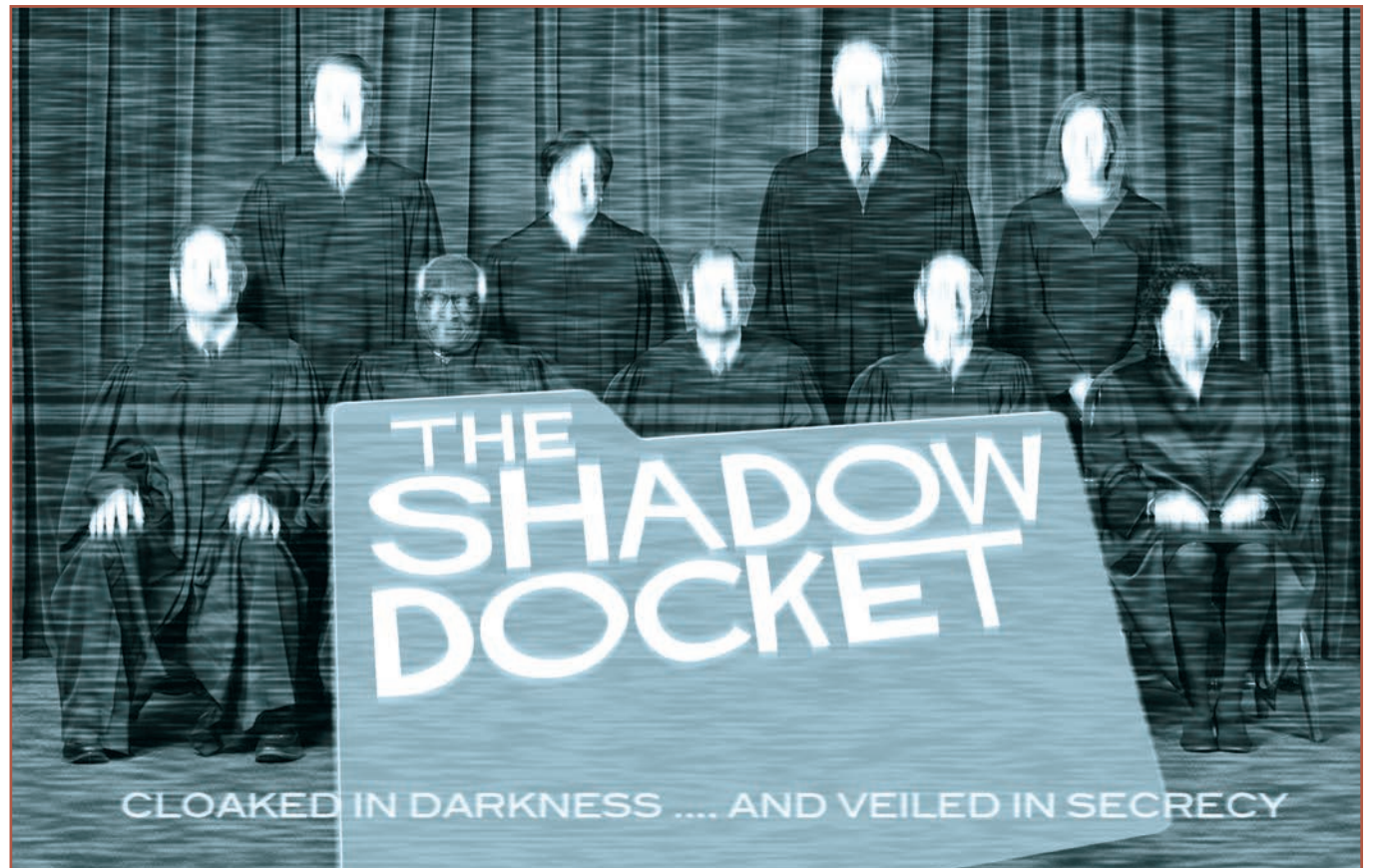
by JACK R. JOHNSON

Perhaps the most important part of the Texas SB 8 law that bans abortion after a fetal heart beat is detected (at approximately 6 weeks) isn't the fact that at least 85 percent of abortions in Texas take place after the sixth week of pregnancy, nor the fact that the sixth week of gestation is so early in a pregnancy that many people aren't even aware they are pregnant. Nor even the fact that this arbitrary time frame clearly violates the precedent established in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992), which protects "the right of the woman to choose to have an abortion before viability and to obtain it without undue interference from the state."

No, maybe the most significant legal part of the law is its enforcement mechanism. No Texas state officer is permitted to enforce the statute. Instead, the law permits "any person, other than an officer or employee of a state or local governmental entity in this state" to file a lawsuit against an abortion provider or anyone who "aids or abets the performance or inducement of an abortion." A plaintiff who prevails in such a lawsuit is entitled to a bounty of at least \$10,000, paid by the person they sued.

The Texas Legislature fashioned this convoluted scheme because federal constitutional challenges to state laws ordinarily are brought against state officers who are in charge of enforcing the law. This is necessary because the 11th Amendment that prohibits federal courts from hearing suits against the state itself, so individuals representing the states through employment or appointment are used. By prohibiting state officers from enforcing the law directly and relying instead on citizen bounty hunters, the Texas hopes to make it difficult for federal courts to stop the law, or at least slow them down.

The Texas law, which took effect Wednesday at the stroke of midnight means anyone who is even suspected of performing an abortion after the sixth week of pregnancy can be hauled into court at any time by a private citizen. The abortion provider will then have to hire a lawyer and defend itself against any and every lawsuit. And if the provider loses just one case, it will



have to pay a bounty of "not less than \$10,000 for each abortion that the defendant performed or induced in violation of this subchapter."

Note that there is no cap in the law for the bounty, it merely states "not less" than \$10,000. So, as Ian Millhiser has noted, "a judge with particularly strong anti-abortion views might award a bounty of \$20,000, or \$50,000, or \$18 million."

The language is also particularly loose with regard to who might be held responsible. Anyone who "aids or abets" the abortion can be hauled before a Texas court. As NYU School of Law professor Melissa Murray recently pointed out in the *New York Times*, "If the barista at Starbucks overhears you talking about your abortion, and it was performed after six weeks, that barista is authorized to sue the clinic where you obtained the abortion and to sue any other person who helped you, like the Uber driver who took you there."

And the problem here goes beyond Texas. For if Texas can avoid a court order blocking its anti-abortion law by delegating enforcement of the law to private bounty hunters, so can any other state. Indeed, nothing in the Court's order prevents another state from pass-

ing a law banning all abortions — provided that the law is enforced using SB 8-style private lawsuits.

Some states, including Florida, are already considering legislation similar to SB 8.

If that is the most significant legal part of the law, the close runner up is the vehicle through which this all came to pass—the so called 'shadow docket.' Basically, the shadow docket is "a mix of emergency motions and other decisions that receive only cursory briefing and no oral argument." In the instance of SB 8, the justices took away the right to an abortion in one-paragraph, after considering the case for less than three days.

Since August 24, that truncated process known as the "shadow docket" has moved at astronomical speed, producing decisions related to immigration, COVID-19 and evictions and, most recently, abortion. Cumulatively, the effect is like watching the Titanic of deliberative case law, the Supreme Court usually takes months to decide, rapidly sinking into the deep, while the shadow court's emergency orders and injunctions, with little legal reasoning, become the norm.

Three major cases—effecting millions

of citizens—have been decided by the so called shadow docket in just the last few weeks. The first decision dealt with the Biden administration's attempt to end a Trump-era program that forces people to wait in Mexico while seeking asylum in the U.S. With three liberal justices in dissent, the high court refused to block a lower court ruling ordering the administration to reinstate the program informally known as "Remain in Mexico."

Days later the court's conservative majority said the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lacked the authority to re-impose a moratorium on evictions, a temporary ban that was put in place because of the coronavirus pandemic.

And this past week, the court allowed Texas law SB 8 to go forward banning most abortions in the state and instantly becoming the biggest curb to the constitutional right to an abortion in decades, despite the fact that the justices said there were serious questions about the constitutionality of the law.

In none of these cases were oral arguments offered, and fully reasoned majority opinions were entirely absent. In fact, the dissents offered by justices who disagreed with the majority were

by far the most thoroughly articulated legal arguments. The single paragraph 'reason' given by the majority for allowing SB 8 to proceed in Texas was that it declined to grant relief because of "complex and novel antecedent procedural questions," that, in fact, the Texas legislature had consciously designed. As Justice Sonia Maria Sotomayor noted in her dissent, "Today, the Court finally tells the Nation that it declined to act because, in short, the State's gambit worked."

Those decisions, with the conservative wing of the court in the majority, have the potential to affect millions of people in a fraction of the time and outside the normal scrutiny signed opinions can bring. And the legal rationale for the decisions can be as obtuse as that given in the Texas SB 8 case, or be absent altogether.

If this is problematic, a kind of judicial fiat without explanation, then the partisan nature of the shadow docket makes it even more so. In the past five years, the shadow docket has been a tremendously successful venue for the right. Stephen Vladeck, a law professor at the University of Texas at Austin

who has closely followed the shadow docket, counts at least 41 requests for "emergency relief" submitted to the Court from the Trump administration, compared with eight under the Obama and Bush administrations combined. And he counts only four occasions during the Trump administration on which the Court denied "the government's request outright." That deference has not continued into the Biden administration.

"During the Trump administration, it was on the shadow docket that basically all of Trump's controversial immigration policies affecting millions of people were allowed to go into effect, including the travel ban," Vladeck said, "During the Biden administration ... perhaps the biggest shadow-docket ruling so far was the ruling last week that froze and effectively killed the CDC's revised eviction moratorium." The ban on evictions, a two-month order, was issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The pause was meant to cover parts of the United States that are experiencing what the CDC calls "substantial" and "high" spread of the coronavirus. The court denied the extension

so that millions of Americans are now subject to eviction in the middle of a continuing pandemic.

The rationale for this judicial fiat?

Congress should have passed a law requiring the eviction moratorium, the majority declared, even though the CDC clearly has the power written into the constitution to effect such a moratorium and did so effectively for nearly a year.

"What is so troubling about this trend is its continuing acceleration, not in volume, but in quality," Vladeck said. "The Court seems increasingly untroubled by deciding big questions that affect lots of people this way."

As Adam Sewer has noted in *The Atlantic*, "The shadow docket has begun to look less like a place for emergency cases than one where the Republican-appointed justices can implement their preferred policies without having to go through the tedious formalities of following legal procedure, developing arguments consistent with precedent, or withstanding public scrutiny."

For a freedom loving state, Texas has sent us one of the most draconian laws

in U.S. history, designed in such a way that every citizen becomes a cop, complete with wiretap and a surveillance camera. All of this is occurring with the full knowledge and effective support of the majority of our Supreme Court. One wry commentator noted, "This is not Texas, this is East Germany. This is the Stasi." Meanwhile, through the shadow docket, our five conservative justices disingenuously plead judicial impotence: plugging their ears, binding their mouths and blinding their eyes. In her scathing dissent, Sotomayor notes with frightening prescience that this goes far beyond a legalistic debate on the merits of abortion: "The Court should not be so content to ignore its constitutional obligations to protect not only the rights of women, but also the sanctity of its precedents and of the rule of law."

Ultimately, the partisan bias that underlies the shadow docket, the promiscuous use of unsigned and unargued decisions, and the flagrant disregard for precedent is the greatest threat—and why everyone—even those who are opposed to abortion—should be concerned. **NB**



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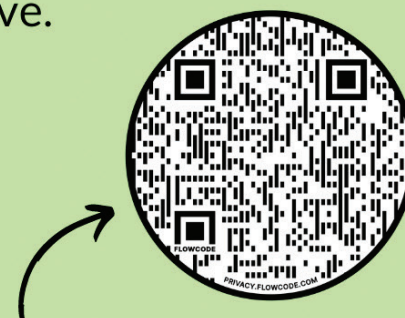
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## BOOK REVIEW

# Life Among the Stars

by **FRAN WITHROW**

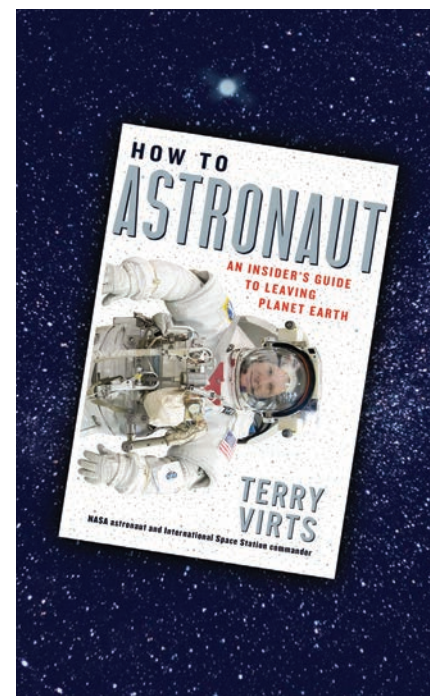
**A**RE YOU CURIOUS about astronauts? Do you wonder about what it takes to be one, and how it feels to be free from gravity? What's it like to be at the International Space Station for an extended period of time? How do astronauts manage toileting, bathing, and eating? Do they get along with colleagues from other countries?

If you have ever gazed up in the sky and longed for more information about life beyond the confines of Earth, Terry Virts can tell you everything you ever wanted to know. "How to Astronaut" covers it all.

Virts started out as an Air Force fighter pilot before joining NASA and piloting the space shuttle Endeavour. He later served as the International Space Station commander, and his book is an easy, conversational read that answers all those space questions that have been keeping you up at night. In 51 essays, he discusses daily life on the International Space Station, traveling on a space shuttle, and even what the future might hold for space travel. His writing is warm and personable with a positive, upbeat outlook.

The essays can be read in any order, though Virts groups them by subject: Training, Launch, Orbit, Spacewalking, Deep Space, and Re-Entry. Each essay is relatively short and Virts is refreshingly honest about the challenges he faces, mistakes he makes (as well as those made by NASA), and what it takes to handle 200 days at the International Space Station.

Virts discusses all aspects of life in space. Even putting a suit on for a spacewalk is worth a chapter. Virts, for instance, has a large head and really struggles to get his helmet on. The suits for spacewalks are so tight a fellow crew member must help. And the challenge doesn't end there: spacewalks themselves are exhausting. The astronauts can be outside the space station for hours, doing repairs or completing other tasks. It takes courage, a relentlessly positive attitude, and an understanding that survival is not guaranteed to be a successful astronaut.



The real reason for the existence of the space station mission is science. Virts says there were over 250 experiments going on during his stay on the space station. In addition to the usual investigations on mice and worms, the astronauts themselves are experiments. How does the human body tolerate extended days in space? What can we learn that might help us deal with diseases on earth, or prepare us for a trip to Mars? And speaking of Mars, Virts thoughtfully discusses how we might get there, and how realistic it is.

The chapter on re-entry to Earth convinced me that space travel is not on my bucket list. In addition to his own experience with re-entry, Virts was present at the Columbia tragedy. Yet he also waxes eloquent about the beauty of earth as seen from above, the breathtaking vistas he witnesses and the fragility he notices about Earth, the only home we have.

A kindhearted, compassionate look at life among the stars, Virts has written an illuminating book about every aspect of traveling in space.

***How to Astronaut: An Insider's Guide to Leaving Planet Earth***

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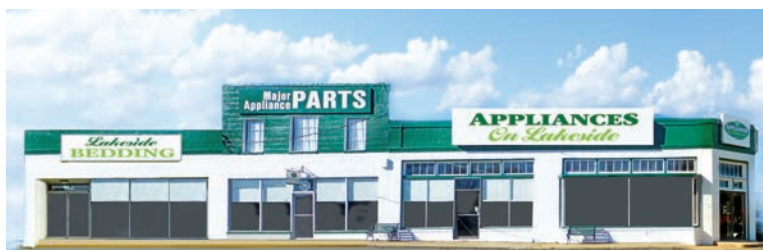


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