

NORTH OF THE JAMES®

A close-up portrait of Will Turner, a middle-aged man with short, light-colored hair, smiling warmly. He is wearing a dark blue zip-up jacket over an orange t-shirt. The jacket has the 'IRONMAN' logo on the chest. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a blue sky and some structures.

WILL *Turner*

is the Real Iron Man. No special effects, no suit of armor, no comic book fiction. Will is the genuine article. He now holds the world record for the number of Ironman Triathlons completed in a single calendar year, a record he surpassed a couple months ago. As of this writing he has finished 57 of these triathlons, which are considered the most arduous one-day athletic events in existence. You pit yourself against yourself by swimming 2.4 miles, biking 112 miles and running 26.2 miles in rapid succession, and within 16 hours. Will has woven these feats of endurance into the very fabric of our world by conducting them in some of the most transcendent landscapes in the country. He calls this journey 60@60, and out of it has emerged LiveYourBold. But the lessons he's learned on this journey might not be what you expect. He did not feed his ego; he nurtured his soul.

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Our photographer, Rebecca D'Angelo, who is also a real estate agent, appears on HGTV's House Hunters in a seasonal segment called Home for the Holidays. The episode with Rebecca is titled "Old Holiday Traditions Move to a New Home". This segment first aired on December 4, but will be rebroadcast on Christmas Day so you can watch Rebecca shine.
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COVER PHOTOGRAPH by REBECCA D'ANGELO

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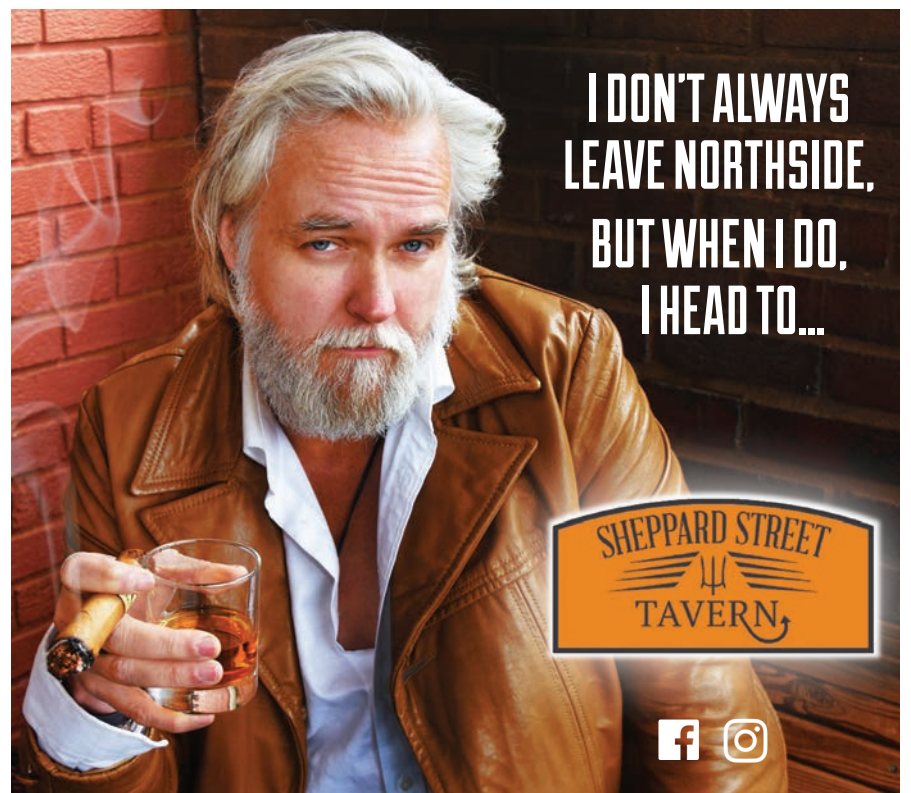
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The Real History of Christmas on MacArthur

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

EARLIER THIS MONTH, on December 8, hundreds of people flocked to MacArthur Avenue, lining both sides of the street from Greycourt Avenue to Bellevue Avenue, in places four-deep, to watch the annual neighborhood parade that forms at Holton Elementary School, then to shop along the 4000 block of MacArthur Avenue, making purchase from the independent brick-and-mortar businesses there as well as from more than fifty artisans who sell their wares from tables on both sides of the street, and later to listen to outstanding live entertainment on a stage donated by Main Stage Productions, then to be tugged along by the youngest spectators down to the throne in front of Samis Grotto where Santa Claus, aka, Joe Stankus, sits and listens patiently to Christmas wishes from the young and the old. The day marked the 14th incarnation of this annual event. Last year's, the 13th, was the only one ever canceled because of inclement weather.

Combing through our archives, I pulled up every write up we have ever printed about this event, which North of the James has sponsored since its inception. And we covered this event every year.

As with so many great things, Christmas on MacArthur had the humblest of origins.

In November of 2005 I talked with Bob Kocher, who'd opened Once Upon A Vine about a year and half before. He wanted to host a Christmas-themed day. It wasn't going to be a fancy PR maneuver; this celebration was going to be for the neighborhood, and kids would be the focus. We started putting it together on an early November afternoon, and that first Christmas on MacArthur was held in the parking lot at Once Upon A Vine. This was at a time when a number of the storefronts on MacArthur were vacant, well before the strip was revitalized. I contacted the inimitable Amy Henderson, and asked if she would play few songs for the event, and she agreed to do so.



Here's the first write up about Christmas on MacArthur that appeared in the December 2005 edition of North of the James.

CHRISTMAS ON MACARTHUR A VISIT FROM SANTA CLAUS

Shop owners on MacArthur Avenue in Bellevue are hosting a pre-Christmas event from noon to 4 p.m. Saturday, December 17. It will include live musical entertainment by Amy Henderson, arts and crafts items by area artists, a City of Richmond fire truck, treats, gifts, warm beverages and a visit from St. Nick.

Children should bring their best hand drawn and colored likeness of Santa to compete for a \$25 gift certificate from Carytown Books, one of the newest businesses on the MacArthur strip.

Kids are also urged to bring at least one unwrapped toy for Sgt. Santa that can be dropped off at any of the MacArthur Avenue shops. Once they deposit the gift in the box they will be eligible to enter a contest to win a bike.

During that first Christmas on MacArthur, Bob Kocher handed out Christmas treats of one kind or other to the kids, and also offered three \$25 gift certificates to Carytown Books (long since closed) for the best hand-drawn likeness of Santa Claus. Carytown Books owner, Rick Zander, invited kids in to decorate cookies and read in the children's room. Stir Crazy offered kids and adults hot cider, hot cocoa and cookies. Dot's Back Inn and Decatur's Garage also handed out treats. And playing Santa Claus that first year was Sgt. Santa, a.k.a. Ricky Duling of the RPD. Kids brought toys for Sgt. Santa to distribute throughout the city to homes where need was keen. Each unwrapped toy allowed the giver to enter a raffle to win a bicycle. Bob Kocher bought that bicycle, and has continued that tradition to this day, only now he purchases eight each year for a similar raffle.

And this story appeared in North of the James just a few weeks after that first Christmas on MacArthur:

CHRISTMAS MAGIC ON MACARTHUR AVENUE

Kaitlyn Overman, age 4, dropped seven gifts into the Sgt. Santa box at Dot's Back Inn, which made her eligible to win one of two bikes purchased by Bob Kocher, owner of Once Upon A Vine, and one of the organizers of the first annual Christmas on MacArthur. As fate would have it, Kaitlyn won one of the bikes a week later on Christmas Eve at the time of the drawing. Now, Kaitlyn's grandmother, Barbara Clark, is a waitress at Dot's Back Inn, and knew full well that Santa Claus was planning to put a bicycle under the tree for her granddaughter that very night. So, Barbara and her husband, David, explained to Kaitlyn that come Christmas morning she wouldn't be needing a second bike. Kaitlyn decided to give the bike to someone who really needed it. Barbara walked over to Once Upon A Vine, picked up the bike and pushed it back up MacArthur Avenue to the restaurant



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SUNDAY, DEC 9

10:00 am - Healing Service

6:00 pm - Christmas Concert Potluck - Fellowship Hall

FRIDAY, DEC 14

5:30-7PM - Neighborhood Christmas Caroling

SUNDAY, DEC 16

10:00 am - Service of Praise & Holy Communion With the Dance Candle

WEDNESDAY, DEC 19

6:30 pm - Providence Montessori Christian School Christmas Program - Chapel

FRIDAY, DEC 21

5:30 to 7PM - Neighborhood Christmas Caroling

SUNDAY, DEC 23

10:00 am - Children's Service & Holy Communion

Christmas Eve

MONDAY, DEC 24

6:00 pm
Christmas Celebration & Holy Communion

7:30 pm
Potluck Dinner
Fellowship Hall



where she leaned it in a corner. In the early afternoon, as Barbara hovered around tables, taking orders, delivering lunches and drinks, she couldn't help but notice that a man kept eyeing the bike, going over to it, admiring it. "I know a boy who would love that bike," the man told her. As it turned out the man was a Big Brother and the child he mentors is a ten-year old boy by the name Lucas. "Well, if Lucas can get here before five o'clock, the bike's his," Barbara said. At quarter till five an old Chevette pulled up in front of Dot's Back Inn. Lucas and his mother, Pam, entered the restaurant and picked up the bike. And Lucas brought his old bike as a gift to Kaitlyn. Remembering the events, Barbara told me that there wasn't a dry eye in the house. Even the cooks—Jamie and Mike—were tearing up. "It was quite a Christmas Eve," said Barbara. And it wouldn't have happened if it hadn't been for the kindness of a little girl and her grandparents, and Christmas on MacArthur.

Christmas on MacArthur held December 17 from noon to 4 p.m. was a booming success. Hundreds strolled along the Avenue throughout the day. A fire truck, courtesy of Richmond Fire Station #16 on Chamberlayne, was on hand, and kids got a chance to sit in the driver's seat and pose with real firefighters to the general clicking of digital cameras. Santa Claus made a two-hour visit, and the kids swarmed round him, then climbed up on his lap as he tilted his head and pricked up his ears listening carefully and nodding to their Christmas wish lists. He handed out small toys and sweets to every child who visited him. Amy Henderson and The Orderlies, harmonizing perfectly, entertained the crowds with scores of original tunes and popular covers along with a

couple of carols. Local artists displayed their wares alongside Rich's Stitches in the parking lot of Once Upon A Vine. Stir Crazy offered warm, seasonal beverages—hot cocoa and hot cider, and Carytown Books allowed kids to decorate their own holiday cookies and then consume them. In the kid's book room parent's read to groups of enthralled children. Three kids who entered a contest to draw a likeness of Santa Claus each won a \$25 gift certificate to Carytown Books. Every shop on Bellevue collected new, unwrapped toys and by the end of the day more than two large pickup truckloads of toys were delivered to Sgt. Santa just in time for Christmas. Everyone who donated a toy was, of course, eligible to register to win a bike and one of the bikes that was given away added more than a little magic to Christmas on MacArthur. The event, which was sponsored by the Shops on MacArthur and North of the James magazine, is destined to become an annual event.



The day of that first Christmas on MacArthur, December 17, was bitter cold, yet Amy Henderson, sporting fingerless gloves, played guitar and belted out a number of old familiar carols, along with her band mates.

Since that time this annual, neighborhood tradition has grown by leaps and bounds. And the list of musicians who have played for the event is like a Who's Who of Richmond's musical talent—Susie and the G-Tones, The Soul Proprietors, Susan Greenbaum, Janet Martin, The Taters, The Neons, Laura Ann Singh, Fat Spirit, The MelBays, Jason Newcomb and Frank DeAlto, Susan DePhillips and Friends, Josh Small, and so on. These days, musicians perform on a professional stage, courtesy of Main Stage Productions and Lee Johnson, a close friend of Jimmy Tsamouras of Dot's Back Inn.

Sgt. Santa died a few years after the first Christmas on MacArthur, and after a brief interlude with another Santa, Joe Stankus stepped up to the plate and has played Santa ever since. And he's an old hand at it. This time of year Joe plays Santa Claus for non-profits, people who wouldn't otherwise be able to afford a visit from Saint Nick. "I do a lot of inner-city schools," he told me back in 2008. "So far this year I've done Birmingham, Alabama; Asheville, North Carolina; and Charleston, West Virginia. Normally they collect gifts and I present them. Each one is different. Like the one in Alabama they're all mainly seventh graders through high school and they are basically kids that are almost unadoptable."

He also plays Santa to younger children with special needs. And like the man at the North Pole, Joe takes his show around the world. "I've been to Bangkok, Malaysia and Singapore playing Santa on goodwill tours," he told me.

Wherever he plays Santa, regardless of the prevailing religious beliefs of the country he is visiting, the response is universal. Santa Claus seems to transcend the narrowness of dogma, seems to be closer to universal spirituality than almost anything else. "I was in Bangkok, it was eighty percent Buddhist, and they spoke no English," Joe said. "In Maylasia, it's one hundred percent Muslim, and no English. But when the kids would come up, their eyes would light up, and they would call me Father Christmas."

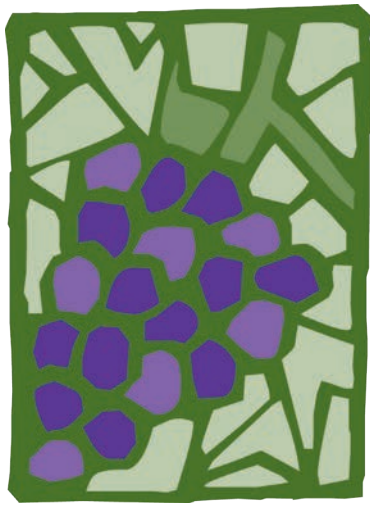
He told a story that happened down in Emporia a number of years ago. He was visiting a school for kids with special needs, and a girl's parents told him that their daughter would never come up to him. Then, lo and behold, this small girl scrambled into his lap, and looked into his eyes. "Even her grandparents hadn't held her at that point," Joe told me, adding that Santa Claus is "the personification of good and how little kids know that, I have no idea."

As usual, Joe was on hand at this past year's Christmas on MacArthur playing Pere Noel. You can even tug his beard to see if it's real or fake. But, it's not going anywhere, because Joe Stankus is as real as it gets.

When Sgt. Santa's workshop closed with his passing, Christmas on MacArthur began collecting for the U.S. Marines and their annual toy drive, Toys for Tots. Over the years, Christmas on MacArthur has collected tens of thousands of toys for this worthy cause, and is now considered the leading donor to Toys for Tots in Central Virginia. Two years ago, some 3800 toys were collected, and this year it looks as if that number will be surpassed. Bob Kocher reported that a total of 22 brand new bicycle were donated this year. Boxes are dropped off before Thanksgiving to scores of local merchants in the North Side and Lakeside and beyond.

In the spring of 2011, I contacted David Hudson, then-principal of Holton Elementary School, where my son attended classes at the time. Mr. Hudson immediately climbed on board Christmas on MacArthur, and the parade grew like a giant's beanstalk, literally overnight. Members of the band and the choir of the school marched in the parade, singing and playing their instruments. They were joined by the safety patrols and many other students, including the king and the queen of the parade. Of course, David, dressed like a GQ model, drove his signature, red BMW that was laden with toys the school had collected. What's more,

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FEATURE



David also enlisted the John Marshall High School Marching Band, along with the Drum Line from Huguenot High School. And that's about the time the parade began forming in the rear of Holton Elementary School. David's successor, Dr. Nikea Hurt, is fully supporting Christmas on MacArthur. And now that David is principal at Franklin Military Academy, the cadets, the honor guard, the bearers of flags of all fifty states from that prestigious school have now joined the ranks of Bellevue's own holiday parade.

The logistics of putting this production together are mind-boggling. Chris and Celia Rich, of Rich's Stitches, along with Mike LaBelle, of Restoration Carpentry, and countless other volunteers make it happen.

For a number of years now, a man bred-and-battered in Bellevue has captivated the parade watchers. Jonathan Austin works his magic and dexterity with a trio of Indian clubs defying gravity as he marches in the parade.

And for the past several years, Bill Bevins of WTVR Channel 6, has graced the MacArthur Avenue Stage as emcee of the parade, introducing each group as it arrive with pithy commentary. He was joined this year by Jessica Noll, and we all hope this becomes an annual tradition. Of course, firefighters and police, dog rescuers and boy scouts, U.S. Marines and YMCA princesses, have also always been part of this parade. And always will be.

The hardest part ever is thanking those who give so much every year to make this a reality. Truth is, the day after the parade, we are already planning next year's event. Bob Kocher told me just three days after the parade, that we might be fortunate enough to have the

drum line and marching band from Virginia Union University. What a coup that would be.

Christmas on MacArthur would not be possible without the hard work and commitment of David Hudson of Franklin Military Academy, Dr. Nikea Hurt of Holton Elementary School, the Bellevue Merchants Association, Jimmy and Daniella Tsamouras of Dot's Back Inn, Mike LaBelle of Restoration Carpentry, Chris and Cecelia Rich of Rich's Stitches, Bob and Rob and Vera Kocher of Once Upon A Vine, Teri Phipps and David Schieferstein, Santos Contreras of Zorba's Express, Amy Foxworthy and Josh Carlton of the Mill on MacArthur, Vickie Hall of Stir Crazy, Bobby Shore and Rich Richardson of Decatur's Garage, Joe Stankus of Classic Touch Cleaning, the musicians who gave their time and talent, each and every participant in the parade, each vendor who rented space to sell their wares, every individual who attended the event, and the scores of volunteers too numerous to name. And we are always looking for volunteers. If you're interested in helping with next year's event feel free to contact me at charlesmcguigan@gmail.com

We are our best selves when we work for something greater than ourselves. That's what seems to happen every year on MacArthur Avenue with this holiday tradition. Every person there, whether they work the event or attend it, seems transformed. Egos are discarded, at least for the four hours or so of this celebration. And every year the Marines come and collect the toys that are destined to be wrapped and later torn open by small hands anxious to discover what has been concealed. **NJ**

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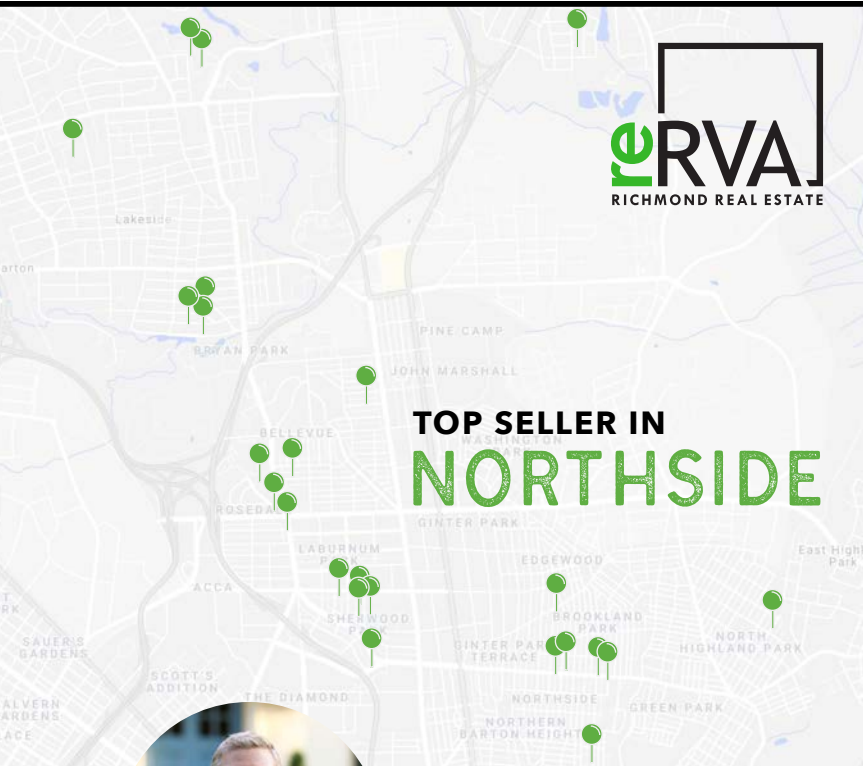
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BOOK REVIEW

The Ethics of Eating

by FRAN WITHROW

FOR MANY YEARS I followed a mostly vegetarian diet, until I began to eat low carb. Incorporating meat back into my diet troubled me, especially since I live with two dedicated vegetarians. How could I ethically eat something that was once living and breathing, that could look me in the eye? That could think?

Just the simple act of eating provoked a moral quandary for me.

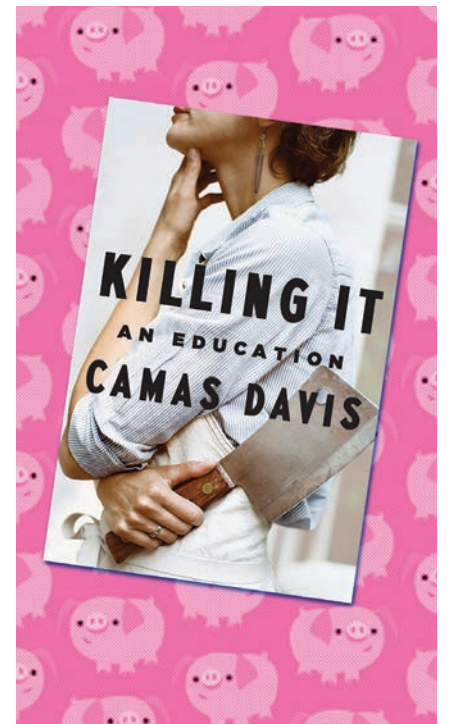
When I heard about Camas Davis' book, "Killing It: An Education," I was eager to learn more. Perhaps this book would help me with my own ethical dilemma.

Davis is a former magazine editor who traveled to France to study whole-animal butchery. She ended up on a farm in Gascony, where she learned how to cut up a pig, to use all parts of the animal, wasting nothing. The Chapolard family farm where she worked makes use of the hog's head, skin, even the blood and trotters. They treat their animals with respect and sell everything they prepare within 15 miles of their farm.

Davis describes the slaughter of pigs and how she learned to butcher meat. But she goes beyond the basics and into the heart of the modern meat-eater's predicament: in today's society, we have distanced ourselves from the killing and preparation of our food. Often, what we buy in the store doesn't even look much like the animal it came from. Davis became increasingly convinced that a stronger link between living animals and the meat on our plate is the way to eat creatures ethically. Only by becoming more connected to the process can we consume meat responsibly, raise animals with compassion, and slaughter them humanely.

Upon returning home to Oregon, Davis decided to start the Portland Meat Collective, which offers classes in how to slaughter, butcher, and use every part of an animal. For her, this was the first step toward raising awareness about how a rib roast or tenderloin lands in front of us.

Davis does not make light of our decision to eat meat. She acknowledges that slaughter is difficult to watch.



One farmer told Davis that the day slaughtering a pig no longer feels "a little horrific" would be the day he would no longer eat pigs.

Eating meat or going vegetarian can be a sensitive, polarizing topic. Davis faced this head on in 2012 when animal rights activists stole some rabbits destined for the cooking pot. Davis also faced backlash when she taught a class for high school students, showing them how meat gets on the table and inviting them to think beyond store-bought hamburgers and hot dogs.

I struggled with my own dilemma as I read. Should I only eat meat if I am willing to be a part of the process of transforming it? This book would seem to say yes to that question.

Gulp.

Davis has produced a well-written, thoughtful peek inside the world of slaughterhouses and butchery. If you are questioning the ethics of meat eating, this book may help you think more critically and compassionately about the animals we love, or love to eat. **NJ**

Killing It: An Education

by Camas Davis

\$27.00

Penguin Press

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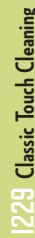
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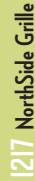
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Will Turner

THE REAL IRON MAN

WILL TURNER GREW UP on a farm in Doswell, Virginia, rolling fields that spilled down to the bluffs of the North Anna River, just a stone's throw from another farm that would one day produce a champion of champions among equines—that noble horse and Triple Crown winner, Secretariat, a tri-athlete in his own right. On the 130-acre Turner farm, Will's dad kept horses and pigs and about 60 head of beef cattle, so there were chores galore for the young Will. Unlike his older brother, Will did not have the build to excel in football. He was tall and lank, downright skinny. Yet he did play Little League football, and when the team would do laps before and after practice, Will noticed that he would always come in first. And a coach noticed this too, when Will was still in junior high. "You go out for track or cross country when you get to high school," the coach told him. But that would never happen.

Before they had tryouts for the track team, while Will was still in junior high, he was out in the back field helping his father feed the cows. As his dad steered the tractor, Will balanced on a steel bar near the hitch to the trailer that was loaded down with bales of hay. He could smell the sweetness of hay, and as his father made the turn into the barnyard, the bar he stood on caught his right foot in a metal grip with the hitch.

"Dad," Will yelled at the top of his lungs. "Dad, stop." His father turned the wheel to release the pressure, and as it eased off, Will could feel the bottom of his right foot split open like a ripe melon, and then a thick red heat surged in the muck boot that still housed his right foot.

Will's father, working fast, moved his son to the flatbed of the trailer and laid him out, then removed the green boot, which was filled with blood. Will was rushed to the hospital where he received more than a hundred stitches, inside and outside of the wound. For the next two months Will would be on crutches. In the hospital, the doctor told Will that he would have to follow instructions to help his foot to mend—things like keeping it elevated. "The only other alternative, if it gets infected," the doctor said, "is chopping it off, or putting maggots on it to eat the infection."

"They wanted me to be in a wheelchair and I refused to go around in a wheelchair because I felt that I didn't want the pity of my classmates," Will Turner tells me. "But I got to be hell on wheels on crutches."

This man sitting at the table across from me is lean as he was in his youth, though he's fast approaching sixty. His hair is wispy, gray and blond, and his com-

plexion ruddy. He is between triathlons, soon to embark for the West where he will do four or five of the final Ironmans before returning to Virginia where he will do the last one on the last day of the year, reaching an unprecedented 60 Ironmans in a single year, well-exceeding the current Guinness World Record of 44, held by a French athlete since 2014.

After high school, Will received a bachelor's degree in political science from Virginia Tech, thinking that he might want to become a lawyer. But by the time he reached his senior year, he realized jurisprudence was not for him, so he earned his MBA, with a focus on marketing, from Virginia Commonwealth University. After college he worked in sales with AETNA Life and Casualty, and then with Strategic Design Group.

Just after the new millennium dawned, Will struck out on his own with a training and development company called Dancing Elephants Achievement Group. Eight years ago he sold his interest in that company and started Refuse Ordinary.

Not long after he graduated college, Will joined a local gym, and did a fair amount of jogging, but nothing too strenuous. Then, in 1987, Will decided to do a half-marathon. It was disastrous.

"I was in my twenties, I was married at that point, and I thought well I can run a half-marathon," says Will.

In preparation, he would jog up to eight or nine miles, but beyond that, he had no training, and no real understanding about the body's fundamental needs when it is put through physical challenges. The day of that race was the hottest in Richmond Marathon history. When Will was not far from the finish line he passed a first aid station and was initially going to get a bottle of water, but as a twelve-year old jogger came up alongside him, about to overtake him, Will thought to himself, "I'm not going to let this kid pass me." He ran past the pre-teen, crossed the Nickel Bridge and as he began running up the hill toward Forest Hill Avenue, spectators stopped him. He had been weaving and wobbling.

"The next thing I know I'm laying down on the ground and I've got paramedics around me going, 'What's wrong? What's wrong?'" Will remembers. "In my moment of stupor, I'm like, 'I think I twisted my ankle.' And they're checking my ankle and I say, 'When I was falling down, I think I might have done the other one.' And they're checking both my ankles and they can't find anything wrong with me, and I'm partially delirious at this point so I'm really believing what I'm telling them, but it's not true at all."

He was rushed to nearby Chippenham Hospital where they put him on IVs to rehydrate him.

Will backed off running for a time. He did a few 5Ks and 10Ks, and then in his mid-thirties tried a couple of short distance triathlons, biking twelve miles, running five kilometers—nothing particularly grueling.

At the end of 2001, one of Will's closest friends, Beth, who had recently lost her husband, Tom, to brain cancer, asked him if he would want to run the Richmond Marathon with her so they could raise money for the Virginia Brain Tumor Fund in honor of her husband.

"I'd love to run it with you, but I'm not sure if I can," Will told her.

At that point, Will was running with his golden retriever about two or three miles a day. He decided to try an eight-mile run with Beth. They paced themselves, stopped for water and electrolytes, and at the end of it, Will felt good. "Okay, I'm in," he told Beth.

With no problems, Will completed his first marathon. He was 44 at the time, and he was hooked. The following year, he and Beth, and a few other friends successfully completed the Philadelphia Marathon. A year later, Will ran the Richmond Marathon again, though his understanding of what is necessary for endurance athletic events was still lacking. "I didn't know what I was doing," he says. "I was just kind of winging my way through these. But I was slowly understanding that I needed to figure out how to do it better. So I started being more serious about the training. I ended up having a couple more hospital

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN
PHOTOS BY CHRIS DESTEFANO



visits over the years, learning how to hydrate properly, but I was getting better at it as I went along.”

Just before he turned fifty, Will decided he wanted a BHAG (big hair audacious goal) to go after. He was going to do his first Ironman.

As it happened, his good friend Beth had moved to New Zealand and started a new life there as a massage therapist and a body talk practitioner. New Zealand hosts one of the most renowned Ironman Triathlons in the world. So Will decided to do his first Ironman there, and his life was about to change for good and all.

While training for the triathlon stateside, Will came across a quote that would become something of a mantra for him in every facet of his life: “If your dream doesn’t scare you, it’s not big enough.”

He mouths the words slowly, recalling the moment he first encountered them. “So I was sufficiently scared,” he says. “I mean I’d done a number of marathons, but I’d also ended up in the hospital a couple of times, so I wasn’t this great, proficient marathon runner.”

Will hired a coach, and began rigorous training with an almost religious zeal. He trained six days a week, one day off for recovery. He crossed-trained and learned the disciplines of tempo work and endurance work. “And you have different drills and paces based on your ability,” Will tells me. “So you might have an hour swim in the morning where you’ve got these drills and paces to do, and then, in the afternoon or whenever you can squeeze it into your day, you’ve got a six-mile tempo run.”

Will trained for the better part of a year in preparation for the New Zealand Ironman, and about a month before he was to leave, something ominous occurred.

It was in late January, and he was doing a brick work-

out, where two of the three components of a triathlon are done back-to-back. He had completed the bike component, and began a speed workout on a treadmill in an American Family Fitness Gym.

“I was basically doing half-mile or mile repeats, and then having a very short interval break, but I had to hold a certain fast pace while I was doing it,” Will says.

He was halfway through his third of seven sets, when he felt a sudden deep and sharp pain thrust through the lower calf of his right leg. It stopped him in his tracks. He quit the workout, and by the time he left the gym he was limping.

The next day Will saw a doctor, who had been recommended by his coach. The doctor discovered a partial tear in Will’s soleus, a powerful muscle in the back of the lower leg.

“I’ve got good news and bad news for you, Will,” the doctor told him. “The good news is that you’ll still be able to do the race. The bad news is that it’s going to impact you.” She paused and then continued: “It’s not going to impact you on the swim, it’s not going to impact you on the bike, but it’s going to impact you on the run. Specifically, when you’re going uphill, you’re pulling at the muscles you tore and that’s where you’re going to feel it the most.”

The course Will would run in New Zealand is very hilly, but in a few weeks he flew halfway around the world to compete in the triathlon. Days before the race, as he ran part of the course, as he made his way up a hill, his soleus began to ache. “So I knew it was still there, and I knew that it was probably going to rear its ugly head come race day,” says Will.

He returned to his motel room and talked with Beth. She was sitting on a couch, and suggested giving him a massage. But then she told him about a technique

she had recently learned at a conference for body talk practitioners.

“I’ve never done this before,” Beth told him. “Do you want to be my guinea pig?”

“By all means,” Will responded. “I have nothing to lose. Let’s do this.”

She told him to lay down on the couch his arms by his side, his palms slightly cupped, facing downward. Beth told him to relax and close his eyes. And then she began asking him questions, but not vocally. She spoke to him telepathically, and though he could not hear her, his body could. She would gently tap his hands, and at time they would move and at other times they would remain completely still. Turns out this was how his body answered in the affirmative or the negative.

And then he heard Beth’s voice. “Will, I’m stuck and I want to do a little time out here,” she said. “I’ve gotten to the color red and I’m trying to be more specific with it and I’m just going down these alleys that are cutting me off. If I ask you to think of a color or a shade of red, is there anything that comes to mind?”

With little hesitation, Will responded, “Alizarin crimson.” Will is also a painter and loves the depth and richness of this shade of red.

Beth told him to lay back down and to again shut his eyes, and she began the tapping once more.

A short while later, she told him she was finished.

“Essentially what the process told her was that I had torn my soleus,” Will tells me. “And so your soleus is where you store relationship issues. And I had relationship issues at the time. That part of my body was storing it. And the color red came up because red is fire, red is where the pain was.”

And then she told him something very strange. “You have to heal yourself,” she said. “And it will happen a minute before the race. Not a day before, not a couple hours before.”

The day of the race, as he was treading water in Lake Taupo on the North Island of New Zealand, just as a massive cannon fired, announcing the start of the triathlon, Will thought, “I’m not going to know what impact that had if any until eight or nine hours from now when I start running.”

When he began the marathon, there was no pain in his soleus, and after the race, Will would spend the next eight weeks in New Zealand, exploring both islands with his friend Beth.

“I spent all that time in New Zealand, and Beth and I did a lot of hiking and running on trails on the hillsides and mountains, and I never felt the pain in my soleus again in my life,” says Will.

Over the course of those two months in New Zealand, Will Turner began to change. The catalyst for these changes were the long philosophical talks he had with Beth, their relentless hikes and explorations, the spirit of the Maori culture, and the people of the two islands.

“I don’t think we paid for a hotel or motel the whole time we were there,” says Will. “We would stay with friends of Beth’s and friends of friends of Beth. New Zealand is such a welcoming culture.”

Since the time he was very young, Will had been something of an overachiever. “And I think one thing that came back with me from New Zealand was a focus on joy and balance and being much more mindful in my day-to-day existence,” he says. “Not being so hurried, slowing down and appreciating where I am, and what I’m doing, and what’s around me.”

While traveling through New Zealand, he began to examine why he had done the Ironman in the first place.

“I was going to get my Ironman tattoo when I was done,” says Will. “But after it was over, I realized I didn’t need a tattoo because that’s ego-driven. You want someone to see your tattoo so they say, ‘Oh you did an Iron Man?’ It would have been ego, if I had done that. That wasn’t what this was all about in the end. I thought it was when I started out. I had turned fifty. I wanted to prove that I was young enough and vital enough to do this challenge.”

He had a change of heart even before he began that first Ironman. His business partner who was minding the store in his absence, sent out an email to customers and friends to let them know what Will was doing. “I remem-



ber sitting in my motel room in New Zealand before the race and reading these comments from people supporting and sending love,” Will recalls. “And I just bawled like a baby. I had trained all through the winter in Richmond and it was very solitary. It’s you against the elements. And then when I had this outpouring of support, I realized that it wasn’t about me. It was about all these other people that were there to support me, allowing me to do what I could do. And being out there on the course and having the volunteers and the spectators just cheering you on. It was humbling. I get to do this because all these other people are helping me get there.”

That’s what he came to. An understanding that testing the physical limits of one’s body is not about the self. “You can do it to feed your ego,” Will says. “Or, you can do it nurture your soul. You’ve got a clear choice there, and I’ve known plenty of people that do it to feed their ego. For me though what the journey does is nurture your soul, because it does humble you, and makes you realize that you are just this one small, little piece in this whole gigantic universe, and you’ve got a part to play, but you’re nothing in the big scheme of things. And the race is just this little blip.”

When he returned to the States with his new-found wisdom, Will set his world in motion. “I was a changed man,” he says. “And pretty much everything in my life started changing. I put things in motion to change. I officially ended the relationship. It was the right thing to do, and it was all good. Shortly thereafter, I ended my relationship with my business partner

so I went out on my own again and I got another partner who I was more aligned with me in some ways. I sold my house, and made some big shifts in my life. All of those shifts came out of being in that space in New Zealand, and looking at things differently, and knowing that I wanted something different in my future. I felt like everything I had was good, but I didn’t want to settle for good. I wanted to take the risk and go for great. And if I didn’t make it, at least I knew I went for it. Which kind of set the stage for where I am now.”

A little over three years ago, when Will was contemplating six decades of life, he thought about doing six triathlons in a single year. “I thought that would be huge,” he says.

Until he ran into a triathlete friend of his. When he mentioned his idea, she mentioned a local triathlete who had turned sixty a couple of years ago and done the same thing.

“I went back to the drawing board,” Will says. “And at some point Sixty at Sixty just sounded good. I’ve got a marketing background so from a marketing standpoint Sixty at Sixty’s got a little cache there. So I decided to do it three years ago.”

At that point it was just an idea. “I had a bunch of iron mans under my belt by then,” he says. “I had more flexibility with my job. And I had my Uber Sherpa partner Chris Destefano. But first, I really had to do some mental gymnastics to wrap my head around it.”

Will, a methodical man, decided to test himself and his endurance. “So two years ago, after I’d done the double triathlon, I had gotten involved in

this ultra-endurance community, and realized there were a lot of other crazy people out there,” he says. “I thought let me do twenty in six months, and see how that goes. That was my test to see how my body would hold up.”

Will completed all twenty, well within that time frame. “I was doing one every couple weeks,” he says. “That gave me confidence that Sixty at Sixty is a possibility. Mentally I started wrapping my head around it really well.”

But there was still something missing. He considered using 60@60 to raise money for a charity. “It had to be about more than me just going out and doing a bunch of Ironmans,” says Will. “So I ended up starting what I call Live Your Bold. A lot of what I love to do with clients is get inside their heads and help them break through those limiting beliefs and barriers they have for themselves. I thought, why don’t I take that gift, and those skill sets, and that experience I have, and use that on this journey to help other people. Use it as a way to reach out to other groups, adults and adolescents. And so I’ve put together a Live Your Bold starter kit.”

When those two ideas—60@60 and Live Your Bold—merged, Will went without sleep for three nights running. He created workshops and presentations, and then began sharing starter kits. “That’s what keeps me going to this day,” he says.

So last January 6, Will did the first triathlon race of the year down in Naples, Florida, and he was off and running to complete his quest. The next day he would celebrate his sixtieth birthday.

Over the past eleven months, Will, and his partner and Uber Sherpa,

Chris, have crisscrossed this country from east to west and north to south, and they did it all overland with a tear-drop trailer pulled behind them. They settled into some of the most majestic places on Earth, land that is owned by the people, America's National Parks.

"We were connecting with America, and visiting these remarkable places," says Will. "The Grand Tetons are one of our favorites, but I loved Glacier National Park, Yosemite, Death Valley and Big Sur. We also did the Sonoma coast and Mendocino, as well as the central coast of California. We also did Telluride. And Acadia and Vermont, both during fall foliage. Went up to the Hamptons in Long Island. Have had several in North Carolina, one Maryland's Eastern Shore."

Through it all, Chris stuck close as a tick to Will, providing him with constant support on every single triathlon. What's more, Chris is a phenomenal photographer, and has taken thousands of photos chronicling their odyssey.

"The requests have been fast and furious for a coffee table book just because of all the amazing photos Chris has taken," says Will. "And I'm going to write another book about the whole journey itself. There're other things I

want to do with that, but a book about the journey, and the coffee table book would be the first two things."

And he and Chris have stories about this journey that could fill volumes.

Will is particularly gratified by some of the messages he has received on social media. "I get emails and messages from people almost every day who say that they're inspired," he says. "Often-times, they'll tell me they are going to run their first five-K, or they just ran their first marathon, or they're thinking about doing this because they heard about my journey."

That journey has not been without its share of some formidable bumps.

"Telluride was kind of my nemesis in this," Will says. He had completed his swim in a pool on the other side of Dallas Divide, and was about 70 miles into his bike ride, which would end in Telluride. Chris had gone ahead to scout out the area, and when he returned to Will, he said, "I've got really bad news for you. There's smoke in Telluride from a wildfire near Durango." Telluride sits at the base of a box canyon so all the smoke from that wildfire settled in, and to breath the air there would have been equivalent of

smoking seventeen cigarettes in under ten minutes. "And so we made a tough decision at that point to pull the plug and just stop it, which is what we did," says Will. But early this fall, the pair returned to Telluride, and Will completed a triathlon there.

Then there was a time this past June in northwest Montana near the Canadian border where Will swam in water just this side of ice. "I had to swim in Lake Coocanusa which was the worst swim I had all year long because the water was so cold," Will says. "I came out of the water, and Chris was there waiting for me, and I was just shaking and I could barely walk. I was on the verge of hypothermia. I kind of felt like I was walking like Frankenstein, all stiff, and my teeth were rattling."

When he posted this on line, a number of people asked why he was wearing a sleeveless wetsuit. Will explained that he didn't have the extra \$750 to purchase one (he estimates that this past year has cost about \$100,000).

"A few weeks later I get and email from a friend of mine from New Zealand," says Will. "He happened to know the blueseventy wetsuit distributor in New Zealand. So he reaches out to his friend and says, 'I've got this buddy who's do-

ing this thing in the States, and he doesn't have a full wetsuit. Is there anything you can do to help him out?'"

Will would eventually talk with the blueseventy CEO in Seattle, who would present him with a wetsuit. "So from across the globe, people are going out of their way to help me to get a new wetsuit out of the generosity of their own heart and spirit," Will says.

Will Turner speaks again about being humbled, and remembers a night run through Death Valley. "There's definitely a spiritual component to all this," says Will. "We talked earlier about all the politics and crazy news that's going on this year. When I'm out there on my own, I'm in my own space. I don't hear the news. I'm not on social media. I'm with nature, and a lot of times it's just me and nature. One of the first triathlons I did was out in Death Valley. I'm running on a road in Death Valley in the starlight, pitch dark at night, no city lights within a hundred miles. I could see the Milky Way, I could hear the coyotes howling in the distance, and I was on this road and all I heard above the coyotes was my own footsteps on the asphalt. And I was in awe of what I was in, in touch with the universe and everything else. **NJ**

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Honduras: A Short History of a Small Place

by JACK R JOHNSON

THE DECISION OF about 160 Honduran migrants to travel as a group in the open to the U.S.—and the decision thousands have made since then to join them en route—is the result of a situation that has little to do with Trump, that, in fact, predates Trump by centuries.

In fact, since the declaration of the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, the political interests of North America and Central America have been joined at the hip. Nowhere is that more explicit than in Honduras, sometimes derisively called a ‘Banana Republic’ because of the monopolistic practices of a U.S. company called United Fruit, and its most prominent money making crop, the banana. For years, United Fruit’s machinations politically and militarily kept a firm grip on the Honduran country side; and pretty much ensured the company’s welfare was always aligned with the country’s welfare as well.

As historian Walter LaFeber writes in “Inevitable Revolutions: The United States in Central America,” American companies “built railroads, established their own banking systems, and bribed government officials at a dizzying pace.” By 1914, U.S. banana interests owned almost 1 million acres of Honduras’ best land. These holdings grew through the 1920s to such an extent that, as LaFeber asserts, Honduran peasants “had no hope of access to their nation’s good soil.” Over a few decades, U.S. capital also came to dominate the country’s banking and mining sectors, a process facilitated by the weak state of Honduras’ domestic business sector. This was coupled with direct U.S. political and military interventions to protect U.S. interests in 1907 and 1911.

Such developments made Honduras’ ruling class dependent on Washington for support. A central component of this ruling class was, and remains, the Honduran military. By the mid-1960s it had become, in LaFeber’s words, the country’s “most developed political institution,” – one that Washington played a key role in shaping.

In exchange for military aid, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, John Foster Dulles and his law firm, Sullivan & Cromwell, negotiated the land giveaways to the United Fruit Company in Guatemala and Honduras. John Fos-



ter Dulles’ brother, Allen Dulles, who did legal work for United Fruit and sat on its board of directors, also headed up the CIA under Eisenhower. In a flagrant conflict of interest, the Dulles brothers and Sullivan & Cromwell were on the United Fruit payroll for 38 years. Recent research has uncovered the names of multiple other government officials who received benefits from United Fruit.

Matters became worse under the presidency of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. As part of its effort to overthrow the Sandinista government in neighboring Nicaragua and “roll back” the region’s leftist movements, the Reagan administration stationed several hundred U.S. soldiers in Honduras. It trained and sustained Nicaragua’s “contra” rebels on Honduran soil, while greatly increasing military aid and arm sales to the country.

The Reagan years also saw the construction of numerous joint Honduran-U.S. military bases and installations. At that time, U.S. political and military policy was so influential that many referred to the Central American country as the “U.S.S. Honduras” and the Pentagon Republic. Such moves greatly strengthened the militarization of Honduran society. In turn, political repression rose. There was a dramatic increase in the number of political assassinations, “disappearances” and illegal detentions.

According to Dr. Joseph Nevins, associate professor of geography at Nasser College, “The Reagan administra-

tion also played a big role in restructuring the Honduran economy by strongly pushing for internal economic reforms, with a focus on exporting manufactured goods. It also helped deregulate and destabilize the global coffee trade, upon which Honduras heavily depended. These changes made Honduras more amenable to the interests of global capital. They disrupted traditional forms of agriculture and undermined an already weak social safety net.”

In the post-Reagan era, Honduras remained a country scarred by a heavy-handed military, horrific human rights abuses and pervasive poverty. But there was a liberalizing tendency and an effort to self-heal, to provide for Democratic reform.

In 2006, these forces combined to elect Manuel Zelaya, a liberal reformist, as president. He advocated progressive measures such as raising the minimum wage. He also tried to organize a plebiscite to allow for a constituent assembly to replace the country’s constitution, which had been written during a military government. However, these efforts incurred the ire of the country’s oligarchy, leading to his overthrow by the military in June 2009, quietly supported by the Obama administration.

Dr. Nevins writes, “The 2009 coup, more than any other development, explains the increase in Honduran migration across the southern U.S. border in the last few years. The Obama administration has played an important role in these developments.

Although it officially decried Zelaya’s ouster, it equivocated on whether or not it constituted a coup, which would have required the U.S. to stop sending most aid to the country.

“Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, in particular, sent conflicting messages, and worked to ensure that Zelaya did not return to power. This was contrary to the wishes of the Organization of American States, the leading hemispheric political forum composed of the 35 member-countries of the Americas, including the Caribbean. Several months after the coup, Clinton supported a highly questionable election aimed at legitimating the post-coup government”

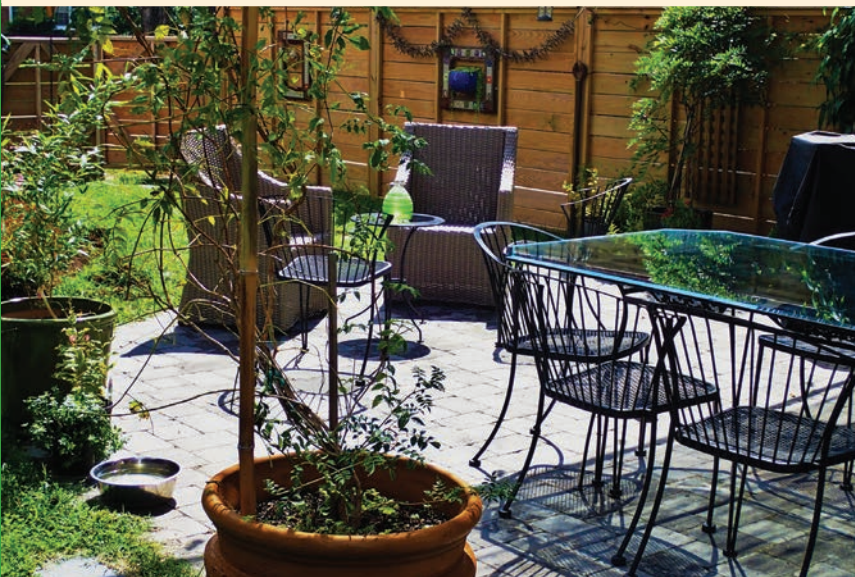
Historian Dana Frank writes that since the coup, “a series of corrupt administrations have unleashed open criminal control of Honduras, from top to bottom of the government.” The Trump administration’s recognition, in December 2017, of President Juan Orlando Hernández’s re-election—after a process marked by deep irregularities, fraud and violence is just the latest in a long chain of such events.

Meanwhile, post-coup governments have intensified an increasingly unregulated, free market form of capitalism that makes life unlivable by undermining the country’s limited social safety net and greatly increasing socioeconomic inequality. Government spending on health and education has been eviscerated in Honduras, while the country’s poverty rate has skyrocketed. In May 2017, President Juan Orlando Hernández launched an initiative to revise the criminal code to allow children as young as 12 to be prosecuted as adults, rather than through the existing juvenile justice system, in violation of international standards. Abortion is illegal in Honduras and women who have an abortion, even in cases of rape, can be sentenced to up to six years in prison. In 2015, Honduras had one of the highest murder rates in the world. The Inter-American Commission for Human Rights (IACHR) described Honduras in August 2016 as one of the “most hostile and dangerous countries for human rights defenders” in the Americas.

Maybe it’s time to insist that accepting Central American refugees is not just a matter of morality or American benevolence. Indeed, it might be better described as a matter of reparations. **NJ**

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TV

New Home for the Holidays



NORTH OF THE James photographer, Rebecca D'Angelo, who is also a real estate agent, appears on HGTV's House Hunters in a seasonal segment called Home for the Holidays. The episode with Rebecca is titled "Old Holiday Traditions Move to a New Home". This segment first aired on December 4.

According to HGTV's website: "A single woman searches for her first home in Richmond, Virginia with the help of her mother and grandmother. But the ranch-style home she wants is proving hard to find in her price range, and the pressure is on for her to find a home in time to host the annual family Christmas party."

That single woman is named Asia, and during her house-search she was accompanied by both her grandmother and mother, Netta and Shawnda, respectively. Rebecca showed the trio three houses in three different Richmond neighborhoods—Barton Heights, Highland Terrace, and Lakeside. She fielded all of the questions like the pro she is.

"I am beyond tickled, though a little nervous, to see myself on House Hunters," Rebecca said. "I ended up, quite by luck, on HGTV's House Hunters, as I met a client that led me to the show. She is fabulous, and I know you will love her and her family as much as I do."

To find out what house Asia ultimately decided on, check out the rebroadcast of this episode at 8:30 pm on Christmas Day, and watch Rebecca shine. You can also check the segment out on YouTube at [youtube.com/watch?v=URf6fvNut9Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URf6fvNut9Q)

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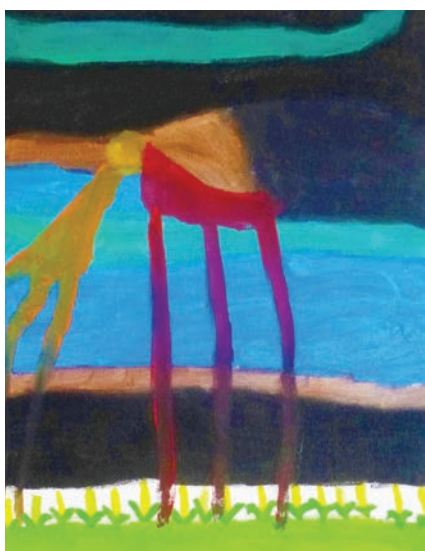
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The Art of Charles Brandon Rapp McGuigan



"A Night View of the Tropics", acrylic on canvas.

AN EXHIBIT OF Charles Brandon Rapp McGuigan's art is on display through January 2019 at Stir Crazy Café. About twenty works in various mediums cover what he calls "just about everything under the sun." And that's an apt enough description. Consider some of the titles: "A Trace of a Floating Sky", "Welcome to Crack Mountain", "The Eccentric, Peculiar Vases", "The Darkness Rises", "Stern but Somewhat Smiling" and "Love is the Answer". Although none of these works are for sale, Charles has a large selection of drawings that are available for purchase. You may contact the artist at createkindart@gmail.com 

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Michael Geddes to Perform at Stir Crazy December 20



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Geddes. He has been per-
forming as a solo artist,
singer, and songwriter for
the last 35 years beginning his career
in Tampa Florida in the mid 1970's as
the opening act for Judy Collins, Pure
Prairie League, Dave Mason and Lou
Rawls. A key performer at Massanut-
ten Resort, Big Meadows and Skyland
in the Shenandoah National Park for
almost 20 years, Michael and has been
performing in the Richmond area
since 2002. His solo presentation con-
sists of songs, some original, that span
a 70-year period from the swing era to
the new millennium. He is also a pro-
fessional guitar teacher and owner of
Studio Guitar Lakeside. 

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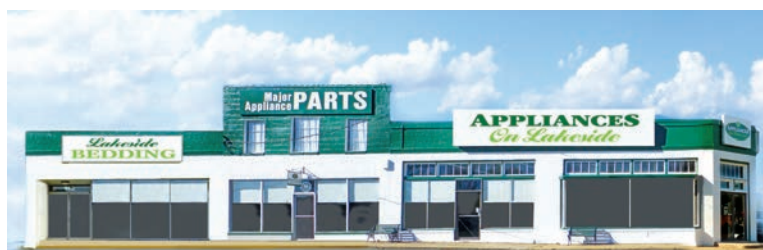


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