

NORTH OF THE JAMES



Dodie Lynch

grew up in a house with thirteen other siblings and her mother allowed the kids to have an array of pets as long as they cared for them. When Dodie was very young she noticed she had an unusual talent. Dogs just naturally liked her and she liked them right back. And though she never had human kids of her own, Dodie takes care of scores of the canine variety and loves all of them as if they were her own children. And in some ways they are.

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Cover photograph by REBECCA D'ANGELO

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editor/publisher

CHARLES G. MCGUIGAN

art director

DOUG DOBEY at Dobe Design

contributing writers

**DALE M BRUMFIELD
BRIAN BURNS
ORION HUGHES
ANNE JOHNSON
JACK R JOHNSON
ANNE JONES
CATHERINE MCGUIGAN
JUDD PROCTOR
FRAN WITHROW**

contributing photographers

**REBECCA D'ANGELO
CATHERINE MCGUIGAN**

editorial: charlesmcguigan@gmail.com

advertising: charlesmcguigan@gmail.com

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There's No Fruit For That: Filmmaker Rick Alverson Discusses his Films and Richmond's Potential as a Cultural Hub

by DALE M. BRUMFIELD

AMERICAN SCHOLAR Joseph Campbell's 1949 "Monomyth," or "Hero's Journey" proposes that all narratives that survive history follow the same basic multi-step pattern: an identifiable "hero" is reluctantly called from his ordinary world to adventure. At first refusing the call, he meets with a mentor, who provides tools or advice to cross the threshold into a special world. There he or she is tested with an ordeal but takes possession of the treasure. On a dangerous road back the hero is tested by a last sacrifice before eventually returning with the elixir that has changes his world. Many American movies made today subscribe to this narrative pattern – in fact, George Lucas retained Campbell on the set of the first "Star Wars" film to ensure the script upheld the form to the letter.

Richmond filmmaker Rick Alverson will have none of that.

"I am not all that interested in the wholesale presence of a literary type of narrative in cinema," Alverson says, adding that he prefers to prescribe to a method of cinematic storytelling that focuses on what the form can actually contribute to the act of story, rather than just relying on a strict, almost cookie-cutter literary narrative. "I think that cinema is much more a sensorial and tonal experience, and that it shouldn't be just a literary experience."

Unfortunately, he claims the world looks to the United States to export those cookie-cutter "candy blockbusters" because that's our global legacy when it comes to cinema. "I always found it troubling, so I'm doing my small part to become a thorn in the side of that."

Indeed, Alverson's films are far from being "candy blockbusters." They are challenging, intense, divisive and even aggressive to the viewer. His third film, "The Comedy," with Tim Heideker, is about a slacker who stands to inherit large sums of responsibility and money from the imminent death of



A scene from Alverson's latest film, *Entertainment*, which premiered at Sundance this January.

his father, but prefers to hang out and provoke total strangers with his brand of confrontational humor. Although the film itself was meta-engineered to be uncomfortable and confrontational, Alverson was still taken aback by some of the American responses. "I was shocked to find that people would react so strongly to their perceptions being upended [in] the movie-going experience," he says. "We have the luxury of sitting in the safe petri dish of our living rooms or theaters, but that's where we should be getting upset."

His fourth film, "Entertainment," starring John C. Reilly and Michael Cera, premiered at the Sundance Film Festival last month and Alverson was very pleased with the reception, although he laughs at the pre-release 100% favorability rating the film currently enjoys on Rotten Tomatoes. "That will change!" he laughs, adding that he dislikes film review sites and is frustrated by the metrics they use that do not accurately reflect a film's merit.

"My movies are divisive, and I take pride in that," he says. "But a movie may show a 50% [rating] which

makes it look boring to all parties, when in fact it's that the parties are divided down the love it or hate it line. And Rotten Tomatoes doesn't have a fruit for that." Sure enough, Consequence of Sound critic Justin Gerber wrote that "Entertainment" will be admired by just as many people as it will be despised by, which fits Alverson's intentions.

Alverson lists as one of his heroes German director Michael Haneke, whose 2008 U.S. film "Funny Games" has been labeled both "unendurable" and "a sadistic exercise in chastising an audience" right beside "masterful" and a film that "kicks the Hollywood standard in the nuts."

"Haneke was unhappy with the experience and vowed to never make another film in the U.S." Alverson says of Haneke's aversion to that "candy blockbuster" approach. "The cinema here is a different creature ... [other countries] take cultural investment very seriously, but in the U.S. it is not about the critical reception or the critical value of any given work, it's about the economic value."

Alverson moved to Richmond in 1994 from New York City, and is reflective on this city being upstaged economically and culturally by Charlottesville's Virginia Film festival, making the absence of a world class film festival here palpably conspicuous, despite the presence of more in-house filmmaking talent. "It comes down to venues ... a central hub where [a festival] could take place, and its coordination between varying departments and institutions," he says. "Back in the day the James River Film Festival had a lot of promise but I think due to a lack of a unified front and cooperation between different institutions it seems to be struggling. It isn't known on any national level." He adds that it comes down to Richmond "not operating as a unified whole as far as infrastructure, coordination and planning between disciplines."

"I think if you look at the infrastructure of the towns that have flourishing film festivals, Richmond certainly could get in the game. I think Richmond should be marketing itself as a burgeoning cultural [market] on top of its historic legacy."

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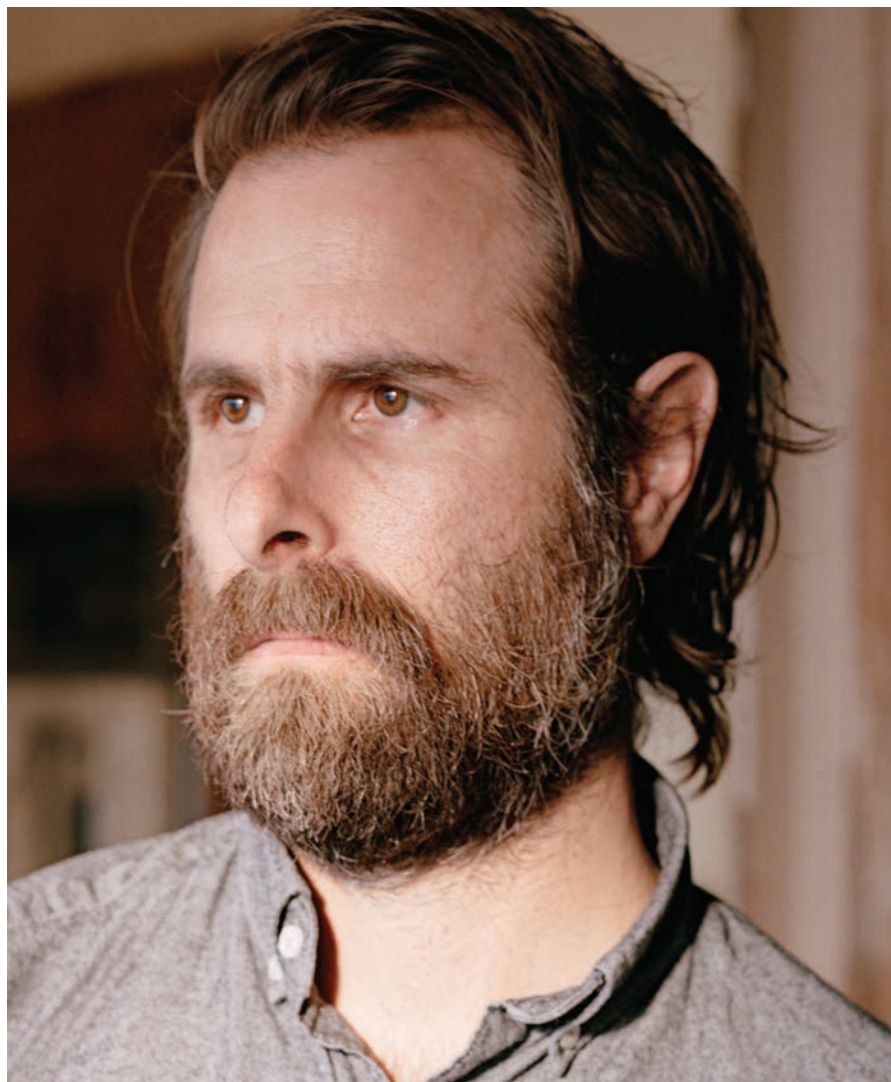
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PROFILE



Alverson commends “stalwart people” like James Parrish, who has worked for years trying to coordinate Richmond’s competing interests to get a repertory theater (a “central hub”) up and running inside the city, something not seen since the Biograph Theater closed its West Grace Street doors in 1987. “The Criterion [Theater] is laudable, but those are more independent commercial films that are reliant on economics rather than on their cultural merit,” he says of the Boulevard venue. “I think the idea of a repertory theater on Broad Street in the heart of an arts district would be really beneficial as that hub that a festival could be built around.”

Is Richmond finally ready for a repertory theater after 28 years? “This [may be] a larger conversation of what makes Richmond functional and what makes it dysfunctional,” Alverson says, “but in the eighties, [downtown] was an economic and commercial daytime hub only; nobody lived there. [But today] the idea of downtown as both a living and cultural center is more typical.” Alverson feels too that more investment in Shockoe Bottom could help. “Not fly-by-night corporate investment but real cultural investment that is inclusive and has legs.”

Alverson is positive about developments in other Richmond neighbor-

hoods. “I’ve been living in Church Hill for 21 years, and it’s so nice to be able to walk down the street and get a coffee if I want,” he says. “I’m really attached to Richmond and Church Hill because I saw a lot there.”

“Entertainment” was chosen for the MOMA “New Directors, New Films” series, playing March 29, and it also played at the “South by Southwest” Festival in Austin, Texas. Despite politics and “crapshoot” distribution deals that frequently prevent not just his but many other exciting films from coming to Richmond, Alverson said he will make sure it screens here. “I just don’t know what form it will take!” he says, adding that’s all the more need for a downtown theater that “doesn’t play by the lowest common denominator economic formulas.”

Alverson believes in Richmond’s potential, and sees the vibrancy of the arts, particularly on Broad Street and places like Fulton and Manchester, positively emerging and changing.

“I hope it continues to grow and diversify.” **■**

Dale Brumfield lives and writes in Doswell. His latest book, “Independent Press in D.C. and Virginia: An Underground History”, will be published April 20, 2015.



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BOOK REVIEW

American Catch: The Fight for Our Local Seafood

by **FRAN WITHROW**

DONT EAT THE TILAPIA. Recently, at the grocery store, I picked up a pack of tilapia, naively assuming it was local, sustainably harvested, and fully of healthy omega-3s.

That night I started reading "American Catch," and discovered how wrong I was.

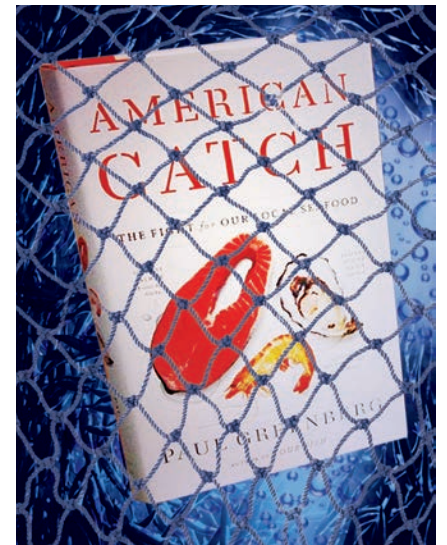
Did you know the top six types of seafood consumed by Americans are imported, or farmed far offshore? Only 9 percent of our seafood comes from the American coast. And we have a lot of coastline.

According to author Paul Greenberg, Americans used to make weekly trips to fish markets fifty years ago, but no more. We now buy 80 percent of our seafood from supermarkets. Local fish markets are few and far between. Greenberg shows how this change occurred by focusing on three main types of seafood: the Eastern oyster of New York, the Louisiana brown shrimp from the Gulf of Mexico, and the sockeye salmon of Bristol Bay, Alaska.

Oysters used to be overwhelmingly cheap and abundant in New York City waters, but sewage contamination, salt marsh draining, and oil spills have left only a few diseased and polluted remnants. Greenberg describes this loss in fascinating detail, and, lest you drown in despair, discusses measures being taken to return them to the New York coastline.

Salt marshes are vital not only for oysters, but also for shrimp. Beginning in 1849, salt marshes everywhere were drained, and with them went important seafood habitat. The one exception is the swampy state of Louisiana. Shrimpers there were particularly hurt by the BP oil spill and the subsequent fear of eating contaminated shrimp. Therefore, most of the shrimp we eat today comes from Asia, and we daily "risk contamination from poorly inspected farmed foreign seafood, less than 2 percent of which receives even a glance."

Much of our salmon is farmed and




imported too. How's this for irony: we are exporting most of our wild salmon to China, and China is exporting fish (like my tilapia) here. My tilapia is higher in omega-6s than the heart healthy omega-3s, which are found in abundance in the sockeye salmon we are selling to Asia.

Alaska's salmon face another threat: the financial appeal of underground ore such as that of the proposed Pebble Mine. The battle over this copper and gold operation has been going on for years. Fears of pollution from the mine and potential loss of salmon habitat have driven fishermen from Bristol Bay to fight this plan. So far they have been successful in stalling it, but for how long? No one knows.

The battle to protect and nurture our coastal seafood continues, not only in Alaska but across the nation. As Greenberg so eloquently puts it, "At sea everything is a miracle...All that the sea asks of us is that we be wise in our harvest, recognize the limits of its bounty, and protect the places where seafood wealth is born. In return the sea will feed us..."

That's a pretty fair trade, and I think I've eaten my last tilapia.

Now, does anybody have a great wild salmon recipe? 

**"American Catch:
The Fight for Our Local Seafood"**
by Paul Greenberg, \$26.95,
The Penguin Press, 320 pages

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EVENT

First Safety Day At Holton Elementary

THE FIRST HOLTON Safety Day, sponsored by the Richmond Police Department, Linwood Holton Elementary School and the Bellevue Merchants Association, was held March 27 at Holton Elementary.

The RPD had three K-9 units on hand, along with two mounted police officers, the mobile command center, a SWAT vehicle with SWAT team, an EOD (bomb response vehicle), a number of patrol cars and police officers, McGruff the crime dog and members of the community care division.

Community care officers gave an anti-bullying talk to the children and provided handouts to the kids, while Jonathon the Juggler entertained the kids with comedy, magic and his inimitable manual dexterity tricks. Both the Mill on MacArthur and Stir Crazy provided refreshments to everyone there.

Children were given tours of the command center, EOD and SWAT vehicles. This is bound to become an annual spring event. **NRJ**

Top right: Richmond's finest with McGruff and Chris Rich of Rich's Stitches.

Middle right: Holton students flock to the mounted patrol.

Bottom right: Claire McGowan of Stir Crazy hands out treats in the Holton gymnasium.






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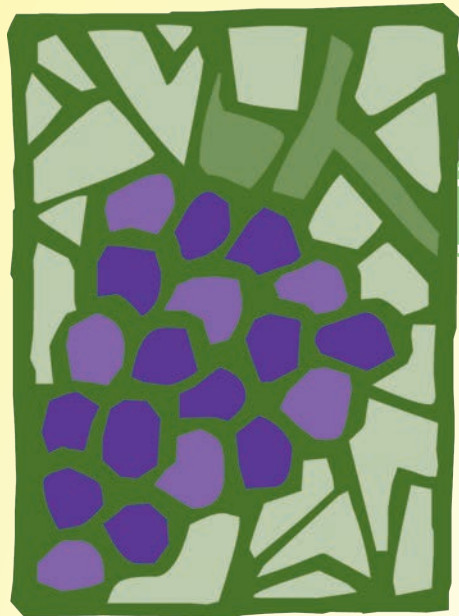



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BRIEFS

North Side Botanical Garden Chosen As Starting Point For 2015 UCI Road World Championships



LEWIS GINTER BOTANICAL GARDEN has been selected as the starting point for this September's 2015 Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Road World Championships. It is estimated this cycling event will be seen on television by more than 400 million viewers worldwide.

It seems fitting that UCI selected the Garden as ground zero for this event since Bloemendaal House, which is one of the focal points of the botanical garden venue, originally housed one of the first bicycle clubs in the country. Built by Lewis Ginter in 1895, the Lakeside Wheel Club was a hub for cycling enthusiasts in Richmond for many years.

This is only the second time in its 93 years history, that the UCI championships have been hosted in the United States. UCI, along with Giro d'Italia and Tour de France, form the Triple Crown of Cycling.

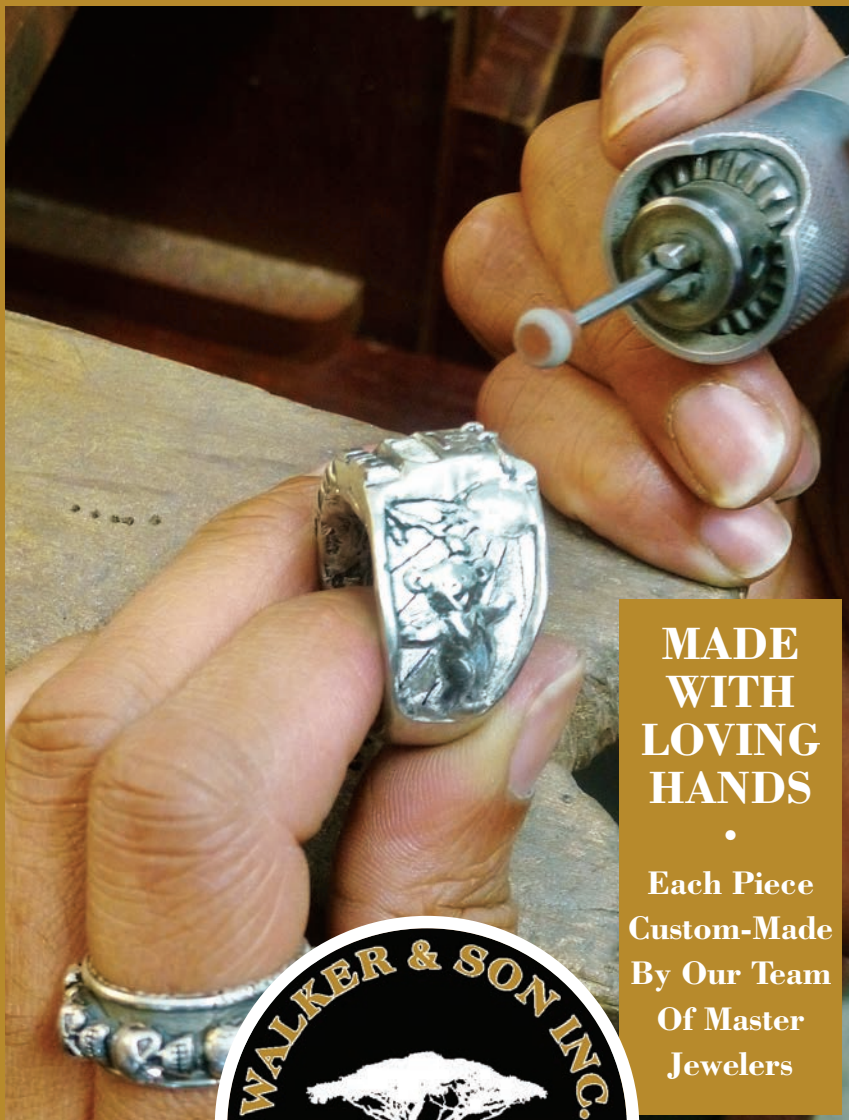
Many nearby Lakeside merchants plan special activities during the UCI which runs September 19-27. Often called the pinnacle of cycling, UCI features a number of competitions for men and women, including time trials, individual pursuits, scratch races and sprints. For further details visit richmond2015.com

Ginter Park Home And Garden Tour

Welcome the long-awaited spring on May 2 from 11 till four with Ginter Park's annual home and garden tour. This year seven gardens and six homes will be open for the tour. Many of these homes were built in the early 1900s and are surrounded by mature trees, brick walls, boxwoods and perennial beds, along with more modern features like water gardens and sculptures. The theme of this year garden tour is A Mad Tea Party in commemoration of the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll's seminal kid's classic "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland". For ticket information visit homeandgarden@historicginterpark.org



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BRIEFS

Partnership For Families And Communities In Schools To Present Parent Power Conference

The Partnership for Families and Communities in Schools will present the 2nd Annual Parent Power Conference April 24 and 25. Due to last year's overflow crowd, the conference is moving to a larger venue – Carver Elementary School at 1110 W. Leigh Street. The Parent Power Conference is a great opportunity for parents to learn new ways to thrive in today's rocky parenting landscape. The program helps caregivers of children from infancy to ten-years old to “Get Charged Up” about facing the unique parenting challenges in the urban environment. Participants will leave the conference with new tools, a renewed spirit and maybe even a new friend or two.

The Parent Power Conference kicks off April 24 at 6 pm with dinner and an inspirational and entertaining program that includes touring comedian Micah “Bam Bamm” White. Then the conference gets down to business the following day with workshops and seminars on relationships, finances, healthy living, planning for the fu-



ture, parenting and other topics that are relevant to today's parents. Meals, refreshments, door prizes, free child care and even transportation from Richmond's North Side will be offered.

Generously sponsored by BB&T, Barbara and Berkley Pickels and Ace Electric, the Parent Power Conference is free, but space is limited. To register, call the Partnership at 804-353-4264, ext. 111.

OUTstanding Virginians Honored By Equality Virginia



At its 12th Annual Commonwealth Dinner on April 18, Equality Virginia honored a number of people from across the Commonwealth for their commitment to the LGBT community. The vast majority of those recognized were Richmonders.

Among the honorees was Richmonder Keri Abrams, a mechanic, who after transitioning from male to female in 2010 at the age of 55, quickly connected with the James River Transgender Society and became a leader and spokesperson in Virginia's transgender community. Today, she shares her story with

individuals and the public alike. One of her goals is to win recognition of the needs and experiences of transgender people out in the broader community. “It's about individuals coming together as a community,” Keri said.

William C. Hall, Jr., a corporate executive from Richmond, was also honored. For decades, Hall has worked to turn the tide in a positive direction for LGBT Virginians. He has served as past board chair for Equality Virginia. After losing friends to AIDS in the 1980s and 1990s, Hall decided that he “just couldn't sit still on this issue.”

We would love to have you as a member!



Community House: Indoor basketball court; Grace Arents Grand Hall and the Ginter Room, with full service kitchen available for you to rent

Pool Activities: JRAC Swim Team; Holiday Parties including Memorial Day, Independence Day and Labor Day; plus other organized child and adult festivities like our annual July 4th Parade

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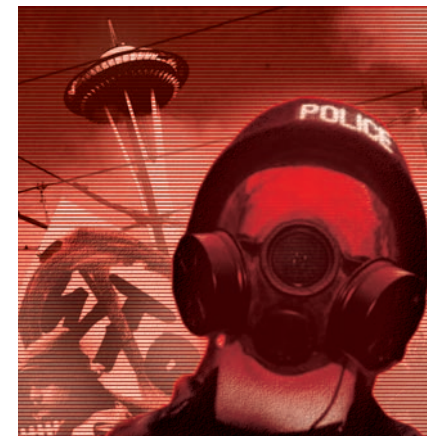
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The Battle for Seattle

by JACK R. JOHNSON

IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO find a more diverse crowd than that gathered in Seattle, November 30, 1999. They came from all walks of life: labor activists, environmentalists, student groups, religious groups, international NGOs and anarchists. Their agendas were as diverse as their names and yet they managed to find a common cause in protesting the meetings of the World Trade Organization to be held on November 30-December 6th, the so-called Battle in Seattle.



Founded on January 1st, 1995, as an outgrowth of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the World Trade Organization or WTO had become a target of increasing wrath among first world and third world citizens alike. The fact that representation at the WTO was not determined by Democratic principle, but rather by executive 'appointment' and that decisions made there were not subject to electoral politics at all made many feel that the decision making process itself was extraordinarily elitist. This was coupled with the fact that many of the so called 'free trade' resolutions and treaties had a primarily negative impact on millions of citizens all around the globe.

As examples, Guatemala made efforts to counter aggressive and mostly false advertisements from the Gerber food corporation that their product was superior to mother's milk. Under the provisions of the WTO, Gerber sued and Guatemala was forced to allow the advertisements. Under the WTO agreement, countries cannot simply say 'no' to genetically modified food. In the United States, they cannot even have such food labeled.

For years, the slow and seemingly inexorable march of free trade capitalism was represented as both symbol and symptom in the annual meetings of the WTO. In Seattle in November of 1999, that silent acceptance of the seemingly inevitable would all come to an end. And with a bang, not a whimper.

After days of protests at the 1999 WTO, downtown Seattle looked like a war zone. Spray paint marked the expensive boutique shops like GAP. Windows were broken and registers looted. The damage to commercial businesses from vandalism and lost sales alone were estimated at \$20 million dollars.

According to the Seattle Weekly, controversy over the city's response to the protests resulted in the resignation of Seattle police chief Norm Stamper, and arguably played a role in Mayor Schell's loss to Greg Nickels in the 2001 mayoral primary election.

Even those in favor of the WTO generally view the meetings in Seattle as a failure. Art Thiel of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer writes... "We blew this WTO gig. Big time. Somewhere, somehow, there has been created a profound disconnect between our wealth-enamored leadership and the vast majority of Puget Sound-area residents. [...] [T]here was no debate on WTO, only a wink and a pat on the head from the poobahs."

According to writers Lynn Owens and Kendall Palmer, anarchists viewed the Seattle WTO protests as a success due to the media coverage. They argued that prior to the "Battle of Seattle," there was almost no mention of "anti-globalization" in the US media. While the protests were generally treated negatively, in the media the underlying question behind the protests had to be asked: why were so many people opposed to the WTO?

The overall historical relevance of the protests may well prove long lasting. An opposition to the de facto rule of the WTO was finally given full voice. Groups that were traditionally in disagreement with each other, such as labor unionists and environmental activists, joined forces; both arguing against the undemocratic nature of trade agreements that overruled national sovereignty in deciding environmental regulation and labor disputes.

Together they managed to stop trade agreements between the most powerful corporations and countries on earth. No small feat. **NE**

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WHAT'S NEW

Decatur's Garage Round the Car Service

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

IN THE PAST COUPLE MONTHS, Decatur's Garage on MacArthur Avenue has been going through a renovation. Its new owner Robert Shore—though everyone calls him Bobby—has spruced up the waiting area, which is now painted a deep blue thanks to his daughters and wife, and he plans to add greenery out front to soften the edges of what for more than twenty years now has been Bellevue's own auto repair shop. Its former owner Rich Richardson still works there. "Rich is staying on and the shop still offers the same quality of work," Bobby tells me. "I think the same way Rich does. It's uncanny. We think the same way which is to run a straight business like you're supposed to. Do the right thing."

Bobby grew up in the automotive repair business. At age ten, every day after school, he would ride his bike from the family home in Windy Hills, just off Elm Drive in Mechanicsville, and make his way over to his father's shop, Valley Radiator. "Dad was a specialist and his shop was on Mechanicsville Turnpike, right next to Bruce's Auto Parts," says Bobby. "That's how I got started and that's all I ever wanted to do."

After graduating from Lee-Davis, Bobby took classes at the Richmond Technical Center. "I also went to college part-time at J Sarge where I studied business management," Bobby says. Meanwhile, his father's shop also started installing air conditioners in cars. "We got the Chrysler contract to put in dash air conditioning so we did all the local dealerships," he says. By the early nineties the radiator repair business was showing signs of going belly up in large part because automobile manufacturers began making disposable radiators. "The radiators became plastic and aluminum and you didn't need repair them anymore," says Bobby.

Bobby then went to work at Jim and Glen's, a general auto repair shop also in Mechanicsville. "I was an engine tech and I did contract work on heater cores," he says. "Then I started working the office, being a front person and ran their business when the owner wasn't



Rich Richardson with Decatur's new owner Bobby Shore.

there." Which is pretty much what Rich does at Decatur's these days.

"In 2015 I made a decision," Bobby says. "I was going to work for somebody else or myself and then this opportunity came up. I remember this place being run down in the 1980s and then I came over here and said, 'This is a great area.'"

That was back in September and after hopping through all the necessary hoops, Bobby took possession of Decatur's in February during this region's unprecedented Arctic snap.

"We started off here kind of rough," Bobby recalls. "We had a snow storm. Our tech guy was on vacation. We had software issues. The furnace was screwing up. But we hit the ground running."

Aside from some cosmetic changes to the building and landscaping, nothing else will be altered. "We're keeping everything the same," says Bobby. "Decatur's is a branded name and we bought the name. We'll continue to do the right thing and take care of the customers. We're the neighborhood shop and we try to take care of most everything quickly and we're able to do it, most of the time, in one day. It's like our motto says, 'Round the car service.' **N3**

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Dodie Lynch

FOR THE LOVE OF DOGS

SAMANTHA OR SAM, DODIE LYNCH'S DOG, EYES ME, moves over to the couch where I'm sitting, and climbs into my lap. Sam is a golden who weighs in at about 75 pounds, but she thinks she's a lap dog and who am I to argue. We're in the office at Diamond Dog House and Dodie sits across the room at her desk. People come and go, picking up and dropping off their dogs, and Dodie knows each human and corresponding canine on a first name basis.



DODIE HAS AN uncanny relationship with dogs. It's as if they sense her love and respond in kind. She's understood this about herself since she was a child.

When Dodie was just eight years old her father died, leaving her mother with 14 children, three of whom had gone off to college. The remaining brood of eleven lived with their mother in a single apartment on Patterson Avenue in the West End. "The rumor was the Lynches had two apartments," says Dodie. "But we really had only one apartment."

name's Anne because there's no saint named Dodie. Not yet."

Dodie's mother, who had served in the Army, ran a tight ship. "My mom was strict," Dodie says. "She had to be. We were crammed in that apartment. We had five boys in one room, five girls in one room and my mom and my little sister slept in one room. We used bunk beds and had a great life. I had the greatest childhood of anyone I know. We always had so much fun."

Frequently, after school, the kids would

kind of tomboyish," says Dodie. "They always let me play sports with them. And then we got all the neighborhood kids to play against us because we had our own team. It was the Lynches against anybody else out there."

The Lynch household followed a fairly intense regimen. After breakfast the kids would get their lunches. "You would have your brown bag with your name on it in the refrigerator and they would be lined up so you would get the right bag," Dodie tells me. "Then you'd go to school and if you weren't playing sports after school you'd play outside." TV was never an after school option. "You played outside and then you had to be in by quarter to six to wash up," says Dodie. "And you were at the table at six o'clock to eat. If you didn't come to the table at six, you didn't get your dinner." After dinner, there were assigned chores and then the whole group would take their seats at the kitchen table and do their homework. Then to bed.

"My mother was the strongest woman in the world," says Dodie. "And I think the reason I love the outdoors is because we never watched TV. We weren't allowed to and to this day I don't have cable."

One thing Dodie's mom did allow her children were pets, provided they take care of them. There were cats and dogs, gerbils, guinea pigs and mice, and tropical fish. "I have a love for animals which is something my mother also gave me," Dodie says.

As a young girl living at Yorktown Apartments, Dodie discovered something unique about herself. "It was really strange," she says. "A lot of the people living in those apartments had dogs, and they would allow me to walk their dogs or visit or play with their dogs because at that time we didn't have a dog and I was craving one."

The dogs so loved Dodie that they would often jump their fences and meet her when the school bus dropped her off in the afternoon. "So it ended up that people couldn't keep their own dogs in their yards," she remembers. One of those dogs would eventually become Dodie's own. "This Irish setter would meet me every day the bus stop, every single day he'd jump the fence, come to the bus stop and wait for me," says Dodie. "The lady eventually gave me the dog because she couldn't keep the dog in



She ticks off the names of her brothers and sisters like the dwarves in one of the opening chapters of "The Hobbit".

"There was Donna, Dana, Denise, Denis, Daniel, Douglas, Deirdre, Dorsey, Daryl, Derick, Dion, Daren, Dodie and Dolores," she says. "You had either a first or second name after a saint. My second

play team sports, baseball or football, depending on the season. "There were four boys ahead of me, which is why I'm

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN
PHOTOS REBECCA D'ANGELO



Kelly Powell, Dodie, and Bryan Totty of Diamond Doghouse with some of their canine friends.

the yard. His name was Big Red.”

After high school, Dodie attended Ferrum College for two years and then went to work for United Virginia Bank, which was gobbled up by Crestar, which was then devoured by Sun Trust in those years when banks went on a feeding frenzy. In all, she spent 16 years with that group, the last five of those years as a business banker. She learned how to read tax returns as if they were tea leaves. “When you can read tax returns you can tell if someone is making money or if they’re spending their money the wrong way or whether they’re profitable or whether they’re taking too much salary out of the

account or draining the account,” Dodie says. “You can learn a lot.”

After leaving Sun Trust, she spent two years as a business banker with BB&T at the Summit Avenue branch in Scott’s Addition. This was all preparing her for the business she would open on her own nine years ago—Diamond Dog House.

“It was the key to my opening my own business because I already knew money and I knew what it took to make money and how you can make money and how to save,” says Dodie. “I’m very frugal. I’m so good with money it’s sickening. My mom was very, very frugal, too.”

After leaving the bank she went to work with her former husband who owned a general contracting business. “I did all the side work for the company,” she says. “I did outside sales, made sure the guys went to the job and did the job, went and got materials, drove by the jobs, called back clients, set up appointments for new clients, did all our bills, ran the accounting.”

After their divorce, Dodie decided to take the entrepreneurial plunge. “I was trying to see what kind of job I was going to do,” she says. “I knew I wasn’t going back to the bank because if I was going to work 14 hours a day I was going to work for myself.”

Her love of dogs had always been a constant in her life, so it made sense to create a sort of dog day care center. Friends of hers in Ohio had done well with a similar project there, so Dodie began researching the business. She rented an old warehouse just off The Boulevard and began renovating it. Once open it took time to attract clients, but after the first year the business began to blossom, growing stronger with each successive year. Today, Diamond Dog House has 4800 square feet under roof and another 6000 square feet outside.

“I love dogs because they’re so loving and comforting,” Dodie says. “Of course, I love my dog best of all.” She reaches over

and scratches Sam between the ears. “I think dogs are people’s kids today,” she says. “They’re replacing a lot of people’s children and they’re an added child for those who already have children. They’re just the greatest animals in the world. I love them and they love me and they feel comfortable with me. I think they feel safe with me, too.”

Her clients sense that about Dodie. They’re secure in the knowledge that this woman views their dogs as not mere pets, but members of a family, and that she and her staff of 19 tend to them as if they were children in a day care center.

Because many of her clients are long-term, Dodie develops familial ties with their dogs. “One of the great things about this business are the clients who started with us so long ago,” she says. “But it’s also hard as the dogs get older and pass on. We feel like they are part of our family and we get to know them through the years they’ve spent with us so we go through the good times and we go through the heartbreak as well. And then somebody brings in a new puppy and you think life has started all over again.”

What Dodie cannot fathom is how anyone could ever mistreat a dog. “If someone could take advantage of an innocent dog that could not even fight back, that

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person would do the same to a child," she says. "I do believe that if you would harm a dog, you would harm a human being. I don't like animal abusers or children abusers. They're all the same; they're just bad people."

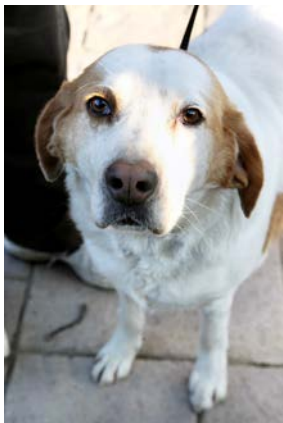
As people come to collect their dogs, Dodie automatically reaches for one of some 50 or so leashes that hang on the office wall right next to the Dutch door. "I know exactly what leash goes to what client and what dog," she says. "I know all of their names. It's one of the building blocks of this whole relationship we have with our clients and their dogs. It's knowing the person, knowing the needs

of the dog, and understanding the needs of the client. Clients work hard and they want to have a tired, happy dog when they get home, and that's what we try to do for them and have a safe area for this to happen."

Kelly Powell, one of Dodie's long-time employees, reaches for a leash as another client approaches the half-door to pick up his dog.

"I really take the time to choose the right people to work here," Dodie Lynch says. "I won't just hire anybody. They've really got to love the dogs. They have to love the dogs as I love the dogs, as if they dogs are people" 

Meet Wilfred!!



Wilfred is an abandoned/surrendered hunting dog who was taken to Henrico Humane Society. He is currently living at Locke Taylor Vet, but needs a forever home. Wilfred has the most SOULFUL EYES. He just laps you into his gaze. He is a gentle creature. He is a hound dog, but does not bark incessantly. He is easy going.

Wilfred is dog, cat, and child friendly. He does seem to prefer female dogs (he is a dude afterall!) He cannot tolerate a crate. He is potty trained, but may need gentle reinforcement since he has mostly been living in a large outdoor pen for awhile. He enjoys being outside as much as he likes being loved on inside the house of his loved ones. A fenced in yard is very important so that he may enjoy the outdoors without getting away or being "tethered".

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THE ARTISTIC CAREER of Joseph Christian Leyendecker spanned more than 50 years. He is best known for his Saturday Evening Post and Collier's Weekly magazine covers, as well as Arrow Collar and Shirt advertisements.

Born in 1874 in Germany, he immigrated to America while a child. At 15, he apprenticed himself to a Chicago

engraving company, and took lessons at the Chicago Art Institute.

In 1905, his ad concept of the Arrow Collar Man turned Arrow into the largest shirt brand in America. Women swooned over Leyendecker's ads of handsome young men.

In fact, it was his lover of 49 years, Charles Beach, who was the model of the Arrow Collar Man – the symbol of American sophistication, masculinity and style.

At the Top of Mt. Battie

In 1910, an eighteen-year-old girl with flaming red hair left her home in the early morning to climb the hills near Camden, Maine. Her name was Edna St. Vincent Millay, and she had been writing poetry about nature since she was five.

But this day, she wrote a poem called "Renasceance," which received immediate public acclaim. It was the inspired beginning of the career of America's finest lyric poet.

Writing of "three mountains and a wood," and "three islands in a bay," it's believed that her poem was inspired by the view from atop Mount Battie. Today at that very site is a bronze plaque commemorating the poet and her auspicious beginning there in her beloved hills.

Openly bisexual, Millay's later works made a big shift, with descriptions of free and cavalier female sexuality.

Sipple Saves a President

On September 22, 1975, soon after Gerald R. Ford became President, he was departing from the Saint Francis Hotel in San Francisco. Standing among the crowd of over 2,000 well wishers was Sara Jane Moore, pointing a .38 caliber pistol at Ford.

According to reports at the time, Bill Sipple, an ex-Marine living in San Francisco, grabbed her arm and wrestled her to the ground. In doing so, a

bullet missed Ford's head by five feet.

Three days later, President Ford wrote to Sipple, thanking him for his selfless heroism. The local press outed Sipple as a "gay hero," which caused estrangement from his family. Nevertheless, Sipple treasured the letter until his death in 1989.


Twelve years later, Ford made public statements supporting equal rights for gays. 

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION by DOUG DOBEY

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Henley Street Theatre and Richmond Shakespeare are proud to present the world premiere of Sam and Carol: A Play Where Everything Is True, by Richmond award-winning author and author playwright David L. Robbins. Directed by Dr. Jan Powell, this play will run April 2-25 at Gottwald Playhouse at Richmond CenterStage. This play is part of the Richmond Acts of Faith Festival – the largest faith-based theatre festival in the USA.

Talk-backs with Mr. Robbins, Dr. Powell, the cast and leaders from the Acts of Faith festival will take place on



North Side Bike Ride

SLATED FOR MAY 3

GRAB YOUR BEST COSTUME AND BIKE, AND JOIN US for a fun, family bike ride May 3. Bike Walk Northside is hosting this fun ride event to celebrate the arrival of warm weather and to try out a demonstration bike lane on Brook Road. Our short ride will travel along existing and future bike lanes (with cones to mark the route and volunteers posted along the way) as well as through safe, quiet neighborhood streets. Treats and quick bike adjustments will be available, too. Activities start at 1 pm in the field at the Westwood Tract at the corner of Brook Road and Westwood Avenue. The ride kicks off at 1:30. Costume prizes will be awarded in several categories, including Most Colorful, Best ORIGINAL Superhero and Best Group costume. A group photo will be taken before everyone gets sweaty from riding! Let's make this a great, fun ride for kids and riders of all ages! Rain date May 9.

For more information contact Bike Walk Northside: BikeWalkNorthside@gmail.com

April 10, 12 and 19 immediately following the performances.

For tickets visit henleystreettheatre.org/tickets-direction

43RD STREET GALLERY HOSTS Teapot Show & Anniversary Bash

Celebrating 30 years of handmade pottery and fine crafts, the 43rd Street Gallery will have an opening reception for an all media show of Teapots on April 24th from 5-8pm. From functional to decorative, the exhibition and sale will be a delight for both tea drinkers and lovers of fine handmade art.

The 43rd Street Gallery was created in 1985 as a retail outlet for the pottery studio set up by Robin Cage and fellow potters Lee Hazelgrove and Diana Cole. Located in the Forest Hill neighborhood on Southside, the gallery has become a Richmond destination for fine crafts. Robin, the owner and resident artist at the shop, has been making high-fired functional pottery now at this location for 30 years. She has broadened the range of work available in the gallery now to include



over 25 local artisans in many media and specializes in American handmade contemporary crafts of fine quality and affordable prices. Robin Cage was recently named a Virginia Master Artisan by the Artisans center of Virginia (ACV).

The public is invited to visit the studio and gallery for the opening reception of the Teapot Show on April 24. All are welcome to join us for refreshments and a gathering of friends and customers to celebrate 30 years of fine crafts at the 43rd Street Gallery. For more information call (804)233-1758 or visit 43rdstgallery.com 



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