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**The Resurrection
of Lakeside Day
a Success**



Lakeside Day. Photo by Rebecca D'Angelo

Merchants on Lakeside Avenue recently host Lakeside Day an annual tradition that has been dormant for many years. It was a booming success which highlighted the scores of locally owned area businesses that call Lakeside home. Despite the threat of severe thunderstorms, there was plenty to do and see with activities for kids, giveaways, sidewalk sales, food and music. "We were hoping to create a fun, fair-like atmosphere along the avenue," says Terri Tatum, Lakeside Business Association president and owner of Whispers of Time. "We were thrilled with the crowd and the enthusiastic response and we're looking forward to Lakeside Day as an annual event – bigger and better each year."

The Lakeside business corridor, bordered by Lewis Ginter Botanical Gar-

**10th Annual Filipino
Festival on August 7 at
Lourdes Church**



Traditional dancers at the Filipino Festival.

Celebrate the 10th Annual Filipino Festival August 7 and 8 at Our Lady of Lourdes Church on Woodman Road. It is Virginia's largest Filipino festival offering fine Filipino food including lumpias, barbecue kebobs, empanadas and turons. Enjoy these and other authentic dishes quench your thirst with San Miguel island brew. Live dance bands, hands-on-crafts and games for the children, specialty vendors, health screenings, and more.

Proceeds from the Festival support various community outreach programs including local food banks, clothes closets, Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Medical Center and the Richmond Chapter of National Alliance on Mental Illness For more information visit www.filipinofestival.org or call (804) 262-7315.

den to the north and Bryan Park to the south, is a popular pedestrian and cycling friendly shopping district with a village-like feel. "Lakeside Day is just one of many events and enhancements we are planning for the area," says Tatum. "We really believe there's lots to love about Lakeside and we're excited to show everyone what we have."

**National Night
Out on Mac-
Arthur Avenue**



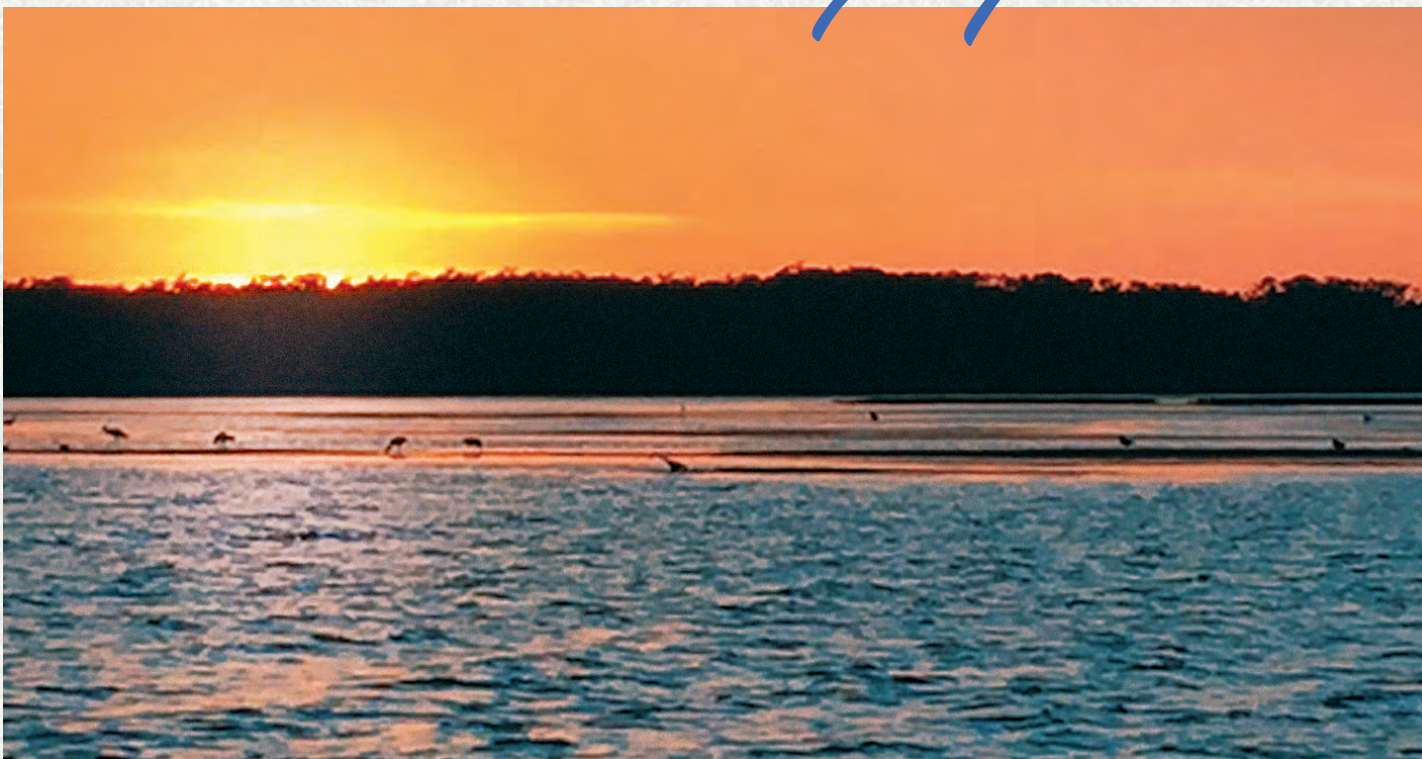
MacArthur Avenue's National Night Out is one of the largest event of its kind in the Richmond metro area, drawing hundreds of people to Bellevue's central commercial strip. Sponsored by the Bellevue Merchants Association and the Richmond Police Department, National Night Out this year runs from 6-8 pm August 4 and will feature Jonathon the Juggler.

It's an evening of fun activities—including the ever-popular misting tent (perfect for a sweltering late summer evening)—and a time for members of the local constabulary to meet with the citizenry they are sworn to serve and to protect.

Virtually every one of the merchants on MacArthur Avenue joins in for the occasion, offering a variety of food and drinks, everything from root beer floats and cookies to snow cones, ice cream, garlic knots, strawberry lemonade and food samples. Don't miss the fun which starts at 6:30 and goes on until sunset. It's all kid friendly. **NJ**

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Farm Fresh Produce in the North Side

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

T IS THE SEASON FOR farm-fresh produce from nearby Hanover County and other rural reaches in central Virginia. In many cases these fruits and vegetables are available to consumers directly from the very hands that raised them, so it makes no sense at all to pay the middle man or woman—owners of chain grocery stores or boutique food markets—higher prices for this summer bounty when you can buy it straight from the farmers and help ensure their livelihood. This is really shopping locally, straight from farm to table.



Bluebird Produce 4009 MacArthur Avenue parking lot

Daryl Callahan genuflects before his crop of English cucumbers, working his way slowly down the weed-free gullies between the rows, plucking, with a twist of his wrist, perfect fruits from the vines that will be at market later this same morning in the parking lot at Once Upon A Vine on MacArthur Avenue in Bellevue. This is one of three farms Daryl works in Hanover County known for the finest tomatoes this side of heaven, along with eggplants, squash, cucumbers, peppers, and cantaloupes and melons to almost die for.

We're on Georgetown Road at one of the three plots Daryl farms. He plants a lot of tomatoes on this land, about 700 in all, some of which are heirlooms. Each plant will produce about fifteen pounds of tomatoes during their growing season. He plants them in successive waves so he'll have them

available clear into September. And each year, as every tomato grower knows, blight will hit them just as they reach their peak of production. It starts on the lower leaves as a yellowing and a curling, and slowly migrates up the central stem, denuding the plant of all its leaves.

"Some people say blight arrives on the fog," Daryl tells me. "A lot of people say it's in the dirt" He considers a host of threats that destroy vegetable crops. "A lot of farmers use herbicides," he says. "But I'm scared to put any of that in the garden. The less chemicals the better."

He moves over to an adjacent plot where the rows are lined with peppers—banana, bell, jalapenos and pablamos. And in another patch that looks to be devoid of any growth except a few spindly stems, Daryl thrusts his arm, halfway up to his elbow, into the soil and uproots a formless clump. As the earth falls away he is holding a half-dozen perfect Yukon gold potatoes tethered together with a network of fine roots.

Along with selling produce at his stand in Bellevue on Saturdays and Sundays, Daryl also supplies a number of local restaurants with local vegetables—Tastebuds, Stella's and Edo's Squid. "And Dot's Back Inn," says Daryl. "They've been making a cucumber salad out of my English cucumbers that everybody says is going over pretty good." There's pride in his voice.



Berry's Produce 9592 Chamberlayne Road

Over on Chamberlayne Road in Hanover County, just a few miles north of the City line, is Berry's Pro-

duce, owned and operated by Sandra Berry and her husband, Bill May. It's a massive produce stand all under open cover and much of the produce comes off the farm her father worked for many years just off nearby Studley Road. These days two of Sandy's brothers grow the produce.

Sandy has been operating her produce stand for nine years now. "I grew up on the farm where our produce is still grown," she says. "So it's always been a family-oriented business. My oldest brother farms sixty acres and my youngest brother has thirty acres. Primarily they are a vegetable famers. They grow Hanover tomatoes, squash, cucumbers, watermelons, cantaloupes, eggplants. Any of the Hanover vegetables I purchase most of my produce directly from them. Anything that I can't get from them I get from other local farmers." She's gets her hot peppers, grape and cherry tomatoes, and a few other products from Robert Dodd, the Tomato King, who farms out in the eastern edge of the county around Black Creek. She also carries local fruit, including peaches and blackberries.

Along with produce, Sandy also sells McCutcheon jams and jellies and locally made baked goods. "I have Montana Gold Bread located in Carytown and Johnson who lives up in the Doswell area supplies me with pies, cookies and other baked goods." She also carries Vance's honey from Ruther Glen.

Sandy's Produce is open from early spring through late fall and is extremely popular with anyone who's ever shopped there.

A few years back Sandy's produce graced the table in the White House dining room. It was the day of the Hanover Tomato Festival and overhead Sandy heard the whirr of helicopters chopping the late the July air. And then a pair of black limousines pulled up, gravel crunching under their wheels. Secret service-

men emerged and took positions around the produce stand and then President Barack Obama climbed out of the back seat. He bought peaches and watermelons and, of course, Hanover's red gold—tomatoes. "He was very cordial, a very nice man and came in and shook our hands and introduced himself and pretty much said he was here to get some of our famous Hanover tomatoes he had heard so much about," Sandy remembers.

As an afterthought the President returned to buy an entire box of Hanover tomatoes that he would hand over to wife Michelle later that evening. "He is a genuinely nice man," Sandy says.



Lakeside Farmers' Market 6110 Lakeside Avenue

Owned and operated by Peter and Sharon Francisco, Lakeside Farmers' Market, now in its eighth season, has been named one of the best farmers' markets in the country. It's easy to see why. It boasts a massive pavilion so you can shop there rain or shine.

"We can accommodate between twenty and thirty vendors," says Peter Francisco. "And we offer more products than just fruit and vegetable. At any one time we have between six and eight produce vendors."

The Farmers' Market has become a hive of activity during its operations on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On a recent Saturday morning, as soon as the gates opened, shoppers poured in and began inspecting the produce and walking away satisfied, carrying bags full of fresh produce.

Beau Mitchell, who owns a 200-acre



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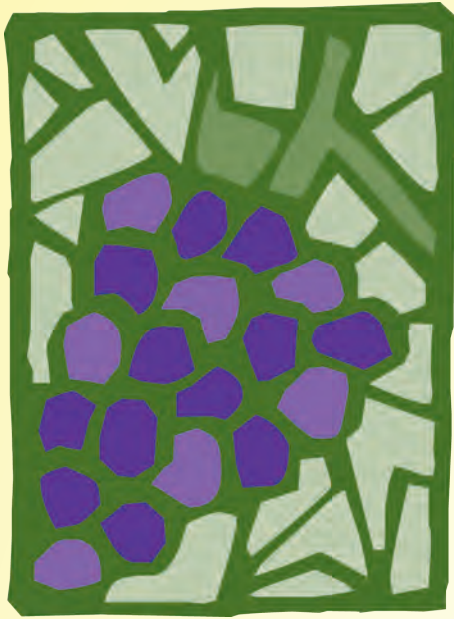
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farm out in eastern Hanover in Old Church hovers over tables covered with tomatoes, cucumbers, melons and other produce. "Thirty acres of my farm is devoted to produce," he tells me. "And I have a couple hundred cows and the rest of land is in soybean, wheat, barley and corn. My primary produce crops are watermelons and cantaloupes."

Peter had told me a couple years ago when the seed of the Farmers' Market was first planted. "Back in 2004 we met out here for a business association picnic and two of our guests were Frank and Betty Thornton," he said. "Frank is our Fairfield supervisor and Betty looked at the garden spaces behind Lakeside Towne Center and said, 'Wouldn't this be a beautiful place to have a farmers' market?'" The Franciscos regarded one another, then looked back at Betty. "She really sparked our interest, so Sharon and I decided then and there to go ahead and move the thing forward," said Peter.

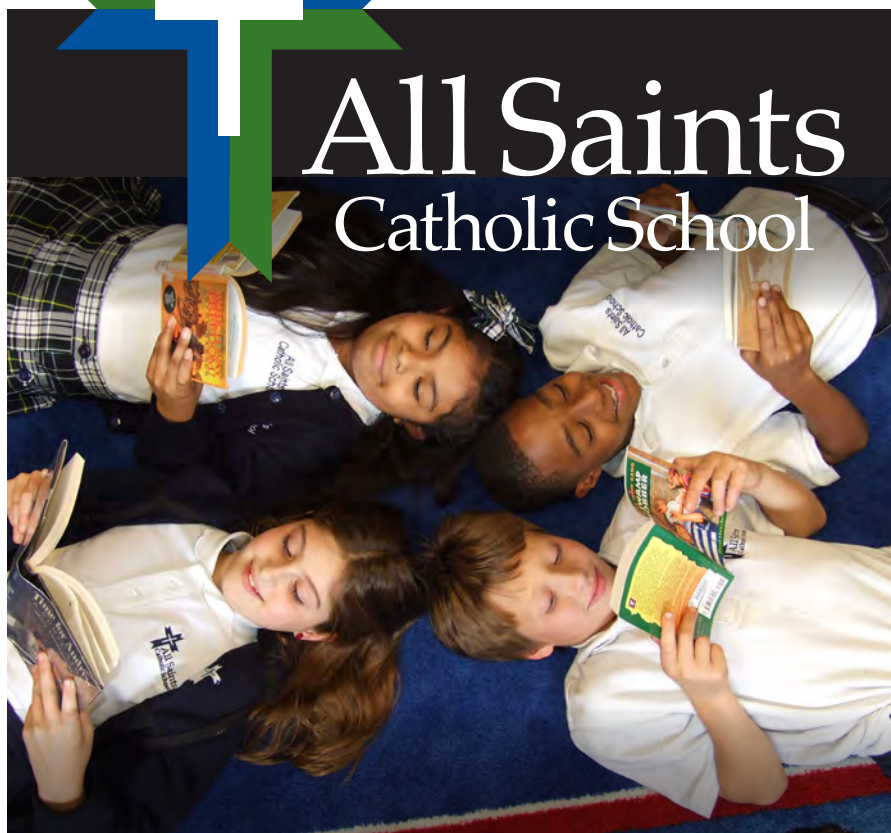
But there were other reasons the Franciscos proceeded with their plans to build a farmers' market. "We like fresh fruits and vegetables," Sharon told me. "And we wanted to do something for the community as well. We like to help the farmers and we believe in homegrown security from the ground up, which is protecting our food source."

"We also wanted to stimulate economic development in this end of town," said Peter. "The Farmers' Market has become a real magnet for drawing people into Lakeside."

I remember looking at the frame truss system that supports the massive seamed roof of the pavilion; then, running my hands along the ten-by-ten inch vertical beams that support the entire structure. "We decided in order to be one of the most successful farmers' markets in the region we needed a sense of permanence," Peter said. "Those posts you're touching are twenty feet tall and go down into the ground six feet, with a tube of concrete around them. You don't get any more permanent than that. This market will be here in a hundred years." 



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ENHANCEMENTS

Bike Racks at Lakeside Farmers' Market

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

AT A COST OF ABOUT \$10,000, the Franciscos are installing a total of ten bike racks fronting the Lakeside Farmers' Market. And the bike racks look like bicycles. Manufactured of galvanized steel by Dero each rack will hold up to four bikes.



It seems fitting the bike racks will be on Lakeside Avenue, which was adjacent to one of the first bike paths in Richmond—the Missing Link Trail. Built by Lewis Ginter in the 1890s, the trail, which ran parallel to the Boulevard and Hermitage Road, ended at the Lakeside Wheel Club, a gathering place for cyclists back in that era, which is now part of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, just a healthy stone's throw from the market.

The Franciscos were awarded a \$3,000 grant from the Henrico County Extension Office for the bike rack project. The Extension Office is fully supportive of the farmers' market as a venue for healthful foods and encourages residents to ride their bikes to market. Work on the project will be completed later this month or in early August, well before the UCI Road World Championships 2015 Richmond. The race starts at the Botanical Garden and runs along Lakeside Avenue, right next to the site of Lewis Ginter's Missing Link Trail.



La Bellevue Mont: A Beautification Project.

Great minds think alike, or sometimes just happen to see the same thing that is flawed, that needs improvement, and then act on it, independently or otherwise. That's what's going on at the corner of Lamont and Bellevue Avenues just off the commercial strip there.

A couple years back, Brenda Stankus was doing large painting commissions up in D.C. and New York. So she was already working on large pieces that were eighteen by fourteen feet. Her husband Joe suggested she paint a mural on the side of the building that houses their businesses—Classic Touch Cleaning, The Painting Class and Studio Art 1229. It was a drab exterior and Brenda quickly warmed to the idea. This past Memorial Day weekend she began painting a mural that when completed will span the entire façade on Lamont. "I decided to put the neighbors that I see walking—happy and joyful—on the wall," she says. "We can have a little fun, happy street, so I'm going to put the dogs, the people, the children, all jumping for joy. And the Bellevue Arch. I'm also going to put a banner in one of the dancing woman's hands that says: Live, Work, Play."

At the same time, Brenda and Joe were conceiving the wall mural, Linda Decker, a member of Beautify

Bellevue Volunteers, was eyeing the unsightly tree well between curb and sidewalk from the Bellevue storefronts all the way back to the alley. It's about six feet wide and runs more than one hundred feet and is covered in a sheet of asphalt, presumably a quick fix years ago for weed control.

Beautify Bellevue tends the lovely median strip gardens along Brook Road from Westbrook down to Laburnum. They planted them with a variety of perennials and tend them year in and year out. They have worked similar wonders on the median strip beds at Fauquier and Bellevue, and Fauquier and Laburnum.

Scott Wiley a Bellevue resident and employee of the Timmons Group, drew up landscape design plans pro-bono for the Lamont Avenue project. The plans call for two additional trees—a ginkgo and a hornbeam (there's already a mulberry there), and then the planting of a number of drought tolerant, low-maintenance perennials of various heights and colors that will bloom throughout the spring and summer and into the fall.

"The idea is to create a rain garden there," says Linda. "The idea is not only to create something attractive but to try to make something functional."

Tim McCaffrey of the Cottage Gardener has offered to supply hardscape for the project, and Joe Myer of Glen Allen Nursery will donate some plant material. The city may supply the trees and remove the asphalt as well as six inches of the underlying fill dirt so Linda and her group can add an absorbent growing medium where all the plants will thrive. Linda encourages everyone in the area to volunteer for this project and the ongoing beautification projects in Bellevue. **NJ**



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ELLEN ROAD

Rebecca D'Angelo

I'VE HAD THE GOOD FORTUNE

of working with a number of remarkably talented shooters over the years, but the best of them is Rebecca D'Angelo. And here's why. All I have to do is give her the gist of the story and then she goes out and captures it on her own without further instruction. She gets to know her subjects and makes them feel at their ease with her. I watched her shoot Live Art a couple months back and was in awe of how she worked. Rebecca never attempted to move or pose her subjects, she moved around them, hunkered down, sidling crab-like, shooting frame after frame. This too: After a few minutes it was as if she wasn't even there she moved so inconspicuously, almost furtively. From my vantage point on a row of seats against the wall I could see her scuttling among the performers and it was like a silent dance around oblivious partners. The resulting photos were perfect.



REBECCA, WELL BEFORE she was drawn to the visual arts, was a dancer. A ballerina to be precise. "When I was five I was a seriously good ballerina," she tells me. We're sitting at her dining room table in her comfortable cottage in Lakeside. "I remember being a butterfly, I remember the Mexican hat dance," Rebecca adds.

At that time the family was living in Africa. Her father was a military attache in Liberia. "I was a military brat and we lived everywhere," Rebecca says. "My dad was in the Air Force and retired as a colonel. He flew F-16s in Vietnam and then he was a B-52 SAC pilot."

The family lived in Florida, Texas, California and North Dakota among other

places. "The great thing about moving so much is that it made me adaptable and protean, but it also had pitfalls," says Rebecca. "I remember saying goodbye to my first real best friend when I was four years old. His name was Jeffrey we were underneath the swing set and we promised to marry each other." The next day, Rebecca was receiving a host of vaccinations as the family prepared to pull out for Liberia.

The family finally settled in Northern Virginia and all the while Rebecca had continued honing her dancing skills. "I got a

scholarship to the Washington School of Ballet when I was in ninth grade but decided I wanted to be popular more, and so I decided to be a cheerleader," she says. "But I kept dancing. I danced every day probably two or three hours and then on the weekends it would be six or seven hours a day. I have always had a very intense work ethic. My dream was to become a professional dancer."

But her dream was just that. Rebecca had physical limitations. "I was super short," she says and then corrects herself. "I don't like the word short because it sounds truncated. So I was small. Too small for the corps because they all need to be five-foot-six or taller. And I was good enough, but I wasn't good enough to be a principal." After finishing high school, she came to VCU and entered the dance program. That was short-lived. By the spring semester she moved to the theatre department and when she was just nine credits shy of earning her bachelor's she left Richmond.

"I really would have loved to be a movie star," says Rebecca. "And people have told me I should have been one. But I didn't want to be judged on my appearance for almost everything."

She's dressed in a very light summer dress, cotton, with a floral print and her hair, so dark brown it's almost black, is pulled back and the crescents of her eyebrows accent hazel eyes.

"More than likely I would never have made it as an actress," she says. "It would have been struggling, waiting more tables. And my boyfriend and I were in the midst of breaking up so that's another reason I dropped out of school because I didn't want to be in Richmond anymore."

Late one afternoon as she was mulling these things over, Rebecca climbed the Lee Monument and sat cross-legged on the pedestal between two columns just

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN
PHOTOS JAY PAUL

Look Homeward, Angel



below the massive bronze plate inscribed with the legend LEE. Looking down on Monument Avenue from her perch of stone, the world seemed to erupt in color and her eyes panned the street, framing images, one after another. Her brain just

worked that way and always has. "I had an experience, a moment," she says. "And I realized then I always saw everything in pictures. Even in high school I had a little camera and I was always the one who took pictures. And I would make prints, doubles

and triples, for all my friends and we'd do the Vogue poses." Then and there, in the shadow of the mighty warhorse Traveler, Rebecca decided to study photography. "I started looking into art school," she says. Ultimately she decided on the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque. "It happened to be one of the top two photography schools in the country."

This was well before the advent of digital photography and Rebecca spent hours in a dark room, winding the film on its canister in complete darkness, loading it in the developing tank and then under a red light exposing paper under the enlarger and laying that white sheet into a tray of Dektol, then watching the strange magic as an image emerged on that blank sheet of paper. The strong vinegary smell of stop bath almost hampering breath.

"Digital is bulls***," says Rebecca. "I do not like digital. What happens is like rapid fire. It goes ba-ba-ba-boom because you're not paying for film. So it's taken the thought-

fulness out of photography. I use a digital camera and I have to remind myself to be thoughtful because I used to be like a nature photographer. I had the steadiest hands."

While attending school in Albuquerque, Rebecca's world view began to expand. She took classes in women's studies. "I started getting political and all of a sudden realized women have been oppressed for 2,000 years," she says. This new awareness worked its way into her art and it would stay with her for good and all, informing her as she engaged in new projects.

Three years later, after graduation, Rebecca took a bus back to Richmond intending to apply to graduate school. "I wanted to be an art therapist and work with autistic children," she says. "I also wanted to work in the prisons."

Once settled in Richmond, Rebecca decided to give photography a shot. "I'll give myself ten years and if I don't make it, I'll go back to school," she remembers saying.

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She found a job as a camera grip on “Road to Freedom: The Vernon John Story” which was being filmed on location in Richmond at the time. She did a little studio work here and then headed north to New York City.

Rebecca worked as an intern and a server living in a remodeled nunnery for \$175 a month, but New York was not her cup of tea. “I kept getting fired from my waitressing jobs,” she says. “I was only there for eight months. I did not like New York at all. I stepped in vomit twice my first week and then I saw a man defecate on the street. It was too much for my sensitive soul.” She did land a job with MS magazine, but it took them over a year to pay her.

After New York, Rebecca moved back to Richmond and began searching for work in Washington, D.C. She landed free-lance gigs with The City Paper, then nudged the door open at The Washington Post. In fairly short order she moved up to Northern Virginia and the world started opening up for her.

“I was in town less than a week and I got a job as a copy aid at the Post,” she says. “Then I just started hitting up the photo department. Made friends with Bill O’Leary, an awesome guy. Learned Photoshop.”

Later, Rebecca worked for the Post’s weekend supplement and then began shooting columns for the Post. “I had a column with Roxanne Roberts (a feature writer for the

Post) called Out And About,” says Rebecca. “And then I got Life Is Short where I would photograph environmental portraits of people who would write a hundred words about their life in a sort of haiku-type way. I did both of those for about twelve years.”

Rebecca had found a niche that suited her skills and talents. “I’m good at being in different worlds, being able to talk to all people equally,” she says. “I don’t have that intimidation thing.”

She’s always been fascinated by artists, musicians, the rich and the famous. Loves to hobnob with them. “And one of my super powers is being able to focus on somebody and then everything else in the room drowns out and all I can do is hear their conversation no matter where I am and how many people are around me,” she says. “And I love body language.”

And she reads it very well so she knows when to shoot. “You have to anticipate when they’re going to laugh and you have to anticipate what they’re going to do next and so you move on when they’re not delivering,” says Rebecca. “I know it’s part talent, but it’s a whole lot of perseverance and chutzpah and kismet. I’ve had an awesome career and I’ve gotten to do some really awesome things.”

Among those things was a junket shortly after 9/11 to Cuba with a bunch of other Post photographers. “I ended up hanging



out with a Cuban performer and ended up at a TV station where one of the most famous Cuban artists was being interviewed,” she says. “One of the things I noticed, which I also saw in Vietnam, was there was no abject poverty. They were both very happy cultures. And in Cuba I had the best rum and coconut and the best seafood I’ve ever had.” One of her photos and a small story she wrote about Cuba appeared in National Geographic Traveler.

Rebecca continued working for the Post even after she returned to Richmond, where she bought a house in Woodland Heights. She commuted and things were running pretty smoothly. Like other Americans she watched in rapt amazement at what happened in New Orleans and the Gulf Coast when Hurricane Katrina struck. Was disgusted by Washington’s pathetic response.

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And then three things happened in rapid succession that would propel Rebecca out of her orbit and force her to confront fears and grief and something beyond human suffering.

"It was my year of loss," she says.

It started with her on-again, off-again boyfriend, a recovering addict, who relapsed. He over-dosed on his drug of choice and for thirty-six hours it was touch and go. "I finally understood I stayed with him four years too long because he chose misery over joy," says Rebecca.

Within a month of her boyfriend's relapse, on a bright New Year's Day, Rebecca heard sirens—ambulances, firetrucks, police cars. They continued to wail and then stopped about a block from her house. Now there was dead silence. A family she had known and photographed—a mother, a father, two daughters—had been slaughtered like livestock in their home. "It was the Harveys and I couldn't believe it," she says. "It traumatized me."

Finally, just a few weeks after the Harveys' brutal slaying, two dogs jumped Rebecca's backyard fence and ripped her cat, Max, apart. "She (Max) was kind of like my familiar," Rebecca says. "It was almost as if she gave me the gift to release all this grief and then I went to New Orleans and photographed after the storm Katrina. I was there for two weeks." Although none of those photos were picked up by any of the

magazines Rebecca regularly tried contributing to, the Library of Congress took them into their permanent collection.

Rebecca was disgusted by the cancer of consumption that seemed to be devouring the very earth we live on. She hit the road with her dog Lakota and visited intentional communities across the country, even did a documentary that can be viewed at vimeo.com/108665704. It's a tight piece and well worth viewing.

After touring these communities, Rebecca decided to pull up her stakes in Richmond and move down to Black Mountain not far from Asheville, North Carolina.

"I gave a lot of things away and sold my house right before the market crashed," she says. "I just thought I want to live in a self-sustainable community and I want to fall in love for real and have a commitment and do all that stuff."

Though she would meet a lot of like-minded people there, Black Mountain turned out not to be Eden. Not entirely. "Within five months I was making my living doing photography again and I opened an art gallery," she says. "I spent the poorest winter of my life there. People would leave me wood for burning and I ate dandelion greens. Life is unsustainable in Black Mountain. So I was going to take off again and travel."

The last place on earth she saw herself returning to was Richmond. "Richmond

was like a bad relationship to me," says Rebecca. "It was like the boyfriend who keeps saying he's not going to hit you and then does again."

But she did return and was pleasantly surprised. "When I came back there were twelve farmers' markets," she says. "There had been a sort of shift."

What's more, the Washington Post, after a brief interview, gave Rebecca what she had desired for years, a column of her own that she would shoot and write. "It was called *The Scene* and I had free reign," she says. "It was my deal."

And during her commutes up to Washington, Rebecca often sought guidance. "I would ask God or the universe or whatever you want to call it, how can I serve my highest purpose?" she recalls. "What am I meant to do?"

One night she had a dream. The Beatles were reunited and among the living and they serenaded her with a song that told her to teach and to find community. Rebecca got her teaching degree through a Virginia Department of Education program and began teaching middle school at Albert Hill.

Despite her teaching schedule, Rebecca continues to do her photography. All through the interview her two dogs, Lakota and Khoe, perfect charmers, wag and nuzzle. "I started focusing my photography

business on pets and I was the official photographer for Pet Expo this year," she says as she strokes Lakota between the ears.

She shows me portfolio after portfolio of her photographs and takes me on a tour of her house that is hung with her artwork. A thread of a theme seems to string them altogether, loosely. "The photography and the other art are an extension of myself," says Rebecca. "It's the way I see the world. Kindness brings me to tears. When I'm teaching, I tell the kids I really only care about one or two things. Kindness is the first one. You know being kind to each other, being kind to animals, being kind to the earth."

She considers the quandaries the world is now in from famine to global warming to war. "There's so much going on that there seems like there's nothing you can do," she says, then shakes her head. "But there is. The only thing you can do is be kind and change yourself to change the world. That's why I like pictures that speak to the heart and to love and to kindness because I think that creates a cellular thing in your body. You create more love."

As we move through the living room looking at her artwork, Rebecca D'Angelo says, "All my pictures seem to be about love. I used to picture myself as an old lady with all these images of love taped to the wall around me. Yet I was never able to nail it myself."

Not so. **NJ**

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The Wright Stuff: On A Wing And A Prayer

by **FRAN WITHROW**

MOST PEOPLE were still traveling by horse and buggy when inventors began to focus on a machine that could fly through the air.

Though many struggled to figure out the mechanics, Orville and Wilbur Wright were the ones who birthed the age of flight. This fascinating story is the topic of David McCullough's latest dip into history.

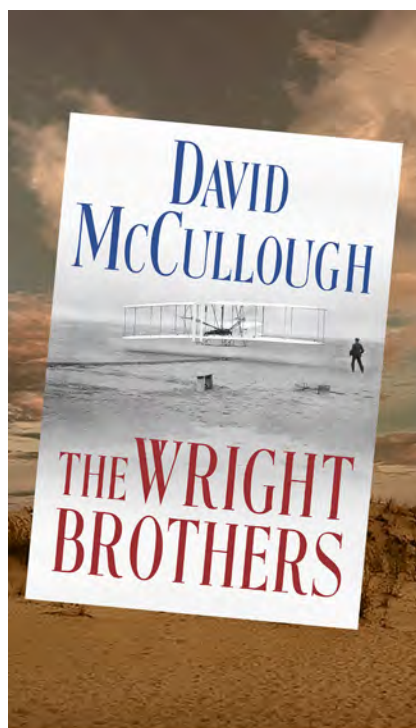
Wilbur and Orville started a printing shop while Orville was still in high school. Later they opened a bicycle shop in their hometown of Dayton, Ohio to cater to this new national pastime. Even then they were passionately interested in the concept of flight, and tinkered endlessly with various designs and models. The brothers, cautious and careful, observed birds intently and did massive amounts of research (primarily with materials from the Smithsonian) to create their flying machine. To test it, they traveled to Kitty Hawk, North Carolina.

Kitty Hawk was a windy, desolate place back then, yet this is precisely what made it a perfect location for the brothers. As their knowledge grew, Wilbur and Orville graduated from kites to gliders to motorized planes, each step arrived at after much experimentation, study and thought.

McCullough paints a vivid picture of the hardships faced in Kitty Hawk: weather extremes, sandstorms, mosquitoes "in a mighty cloud," numerous crashes which meant rebuilding their aircraft, and years spent fixing flaws. Yet they never gave up, and in 1903 they made their first successful flight.

McCullough's meticulous research is apparent as he describes the world in which the Wright brothers grew up, complete with photographs, and descriptions of contemporaries who were also struggling to solve the flying problem. Some of these inventors lost their lives attempting to conquer the skies.

Once the Wrights had conquered the basics, they quickly began doing demonstrations, both in the U.S. and abroad, particularly in Paris. Even



then, flying was not without its perils: Orville, the younger of the two, was severely injured in a 1908 crash at Fort Myer, Virginia that was fatal to his passenger.

The book is full of fascinating tidbits. What was it like on those first planes? Well, for one, it was quite windy perched up there: one had to hold onto one's hat in the sky or risk losing it. Edith Berg, the first American woman to go up in a plane, tied a rope around her skirts so they wouldn't fly over her head.

McCullough also introduces us to Katharine Wright, the only girl in the family, who supported her brothers in many ways and was the only child in the family to finish college. She nursed Orville after his dreadful crash in 1908 and did not marry until she was 58. I read eagerly about this suffragette and long-time schoolteacher who was just as interesting as her brothers.

McCullough, a two-time Pulitzer Prize winner who is well-known for his riveting non-fiction, has done it again with his engrossing account of the Wright brothers. The story of how they took the world into the air is a sweet ride. **NJ**

"The Wright Brothers"
by David McCullough, 2015, Simon and Schuster, 368 pages, \$30.00

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RAINBOW MINUTES

by BRIAN BURNS and JUDD PROCTOR

Just How Gay is Gay Street?



GAY STREET, A CURVED, one-block street in New York City's Greenwich Village, runs between Waverly Place and Christopher Street. Many a photo is taken at the street sign where Gay Street intersects Christopher Street. Right across the street is the former site of the Oscar Wilde Book Shop, and a stone's throw away is the

legendary Stonewall Inn—ground zero for the Stonewall Riots.

Gay Street didn't get its name from LGBT issues, but probably from an early landowner. Originally a stable alley, Gay Street is now lined with Federal style houses on one side and Greek Revival buildings on the other.

The first mention of Gay Street in print appeared in the Common Council minutes of April 23, 1827.

Lesley Gore, an Inspiration

Lesley Gore was discovered at age 16 by producer Quincy Jones during a gig at a Manhattan hotel. He signed her to Mercury Records. After her 1963 hit "It's My Party" took off, others quickly followed. "You Don't Own Me," produced the same year, became a feminist anthem, inspiring teenage girls not be pushed around by their boyfriends. Surprisingly, the song was written by two Philadelphia male songwriters, John Madara and David White.

The song soared to Number 2 on the Billboard Pop Singles Chart in the U.S., just behind the Beatles iconic smash hit "I Want to Hold Your Hand." Gore recorded the song in many languages. She released her first album in 1972,

titled, "Someplace Else Now." Between 1982 and 2005, she didn't release any albums or singles and dropped out of the spotlight until 2003. That was when she hosted an episode of the LGBT magazine show "In the Life," coming out as a lesbian to the public. Her family and coworkers had long known her sexual orientation.

In 2005, Lesley Gore's spotlight brightened with her comeback album "Ever Since." The soundtracks were heard in several movies and TV shows, including "CSI" and "The L Word."

Gore closed her eyes for the last time on February 16, 2015, dying of lung cancer at age 68. She was survived by her partner of over 30 years, Lois Sasson, and their beloved pet dog.

Jasper Johns' American Flags

Born in Augusta, Georgia in 1930, Jasper Johns was drawing by age 3. He never stopped. Periods of study in South Carolina and New York were followed by a stint in the military, ending in 1953. Johns soon settled in New York City and formed a romantic relationship with painter Robert Rauschenberg.

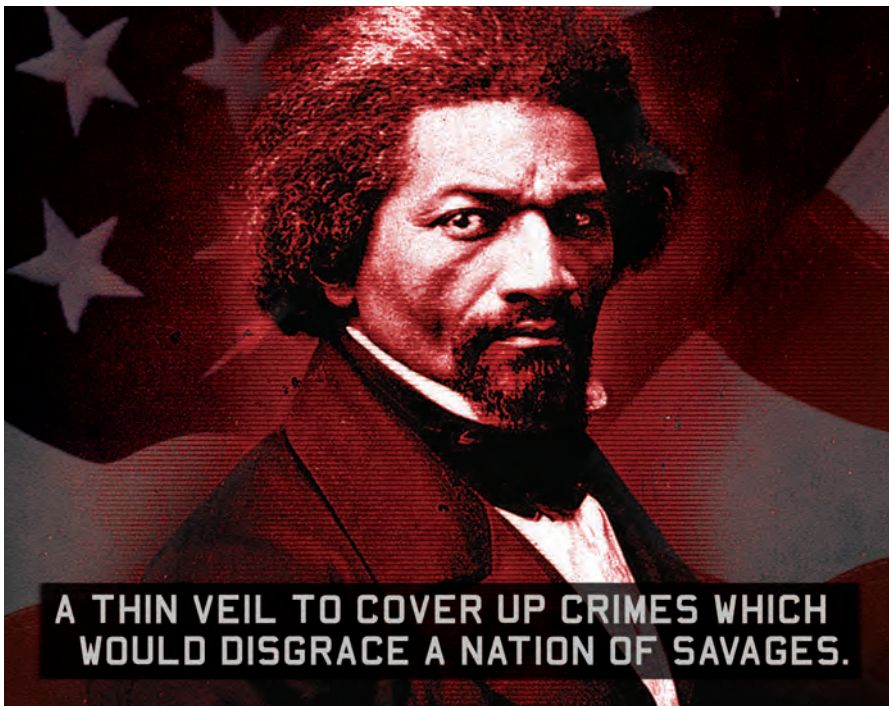
Johns was strongly influenced by a gay couple – choreographer, Merce Cun-

ningham and composer, John Cage. Working together, the three men explored the contemporary art scene.

Johns created the first of his many flag paintings in 1955 – a dried wax, oil and collage on fabric, mounted on plywood, which came to him as a dream. Years later, Johns' piece "Three Flags" was displayed as a symbol of patriotism at a New York museum after the attack on the World Trade Center. **NJ**

Frederick Douglass' Fourth of July speech: The Meaning of July 4th for the Negro

by JACK R. JOHNSON



ONE DAY AFTER our day of independence, on July 5, in 1852, at Rochester's Corinthian Hall, Frederick Douglass gave a speech commemorating the signing of the Declaration of Independence. It was biting oratory, in which the speaker told his audience, "This Fourth of July is yours, not mine. You may rejoice, I must mourn." And he asked the audience, "Do you mean, citizens, to mock me, by asking me to speak today?"

Within the now-famous address is what historian Philip S. Foner has called "probably the most moving passage in all of Douglass' speeches."

Here it is:

"What, to the American slave, is your 4th of July? I answer; a day that reveals to him, more than all other days in the year, the gross injustice and cruelty to which he is the constant victim. To him, your celebration is a sham; your boasted liberty, an unholy license; your national greatness, swelling vanity; your sound of rejoicing are empty

and heartless; your denunciation of tyrants brass fronted impudence; your shout of liberty and equality, hollow mockery; your prayers and hymns, your sermons and thanks-givings, with all your religious parade and solemnity, are to him, mere bombast, fraud, deception, impiety, and hypocrisy -- a thin veil to cover up crimes which would disgrace a nation of savages. There is not a nation on the earth guilty of practices more shocking and bloody than are the people of the United States, at this very hour."

He ends on a bitter-sweet note, saying, presciently,

"...notwithstanding the dark picture I have this day presented, of the state of the nation, I do not despair of this country. There are forces in operation which must inevitably work the downfall of slavery."

A little over thirteen years later the Civil War ended and slavery was abolished in the United States.

The full text of his speech can be found here: www.historyisaweapon.com/defcon1/douglassjuly4.html



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July/August



Molly Hood as Hamlet, Thomas Cunningham as Horatio and Patricia Alli as Marcellus. Photo by Aaron Suttan.

Quill Theatre Presents Hamlet

Annual Richmond Shakespeare Festival at Agecroft Hall presents Hamlet through August 2. Director Dr. Jan Powell explores this Shakespeare classic through an alternate lens. Molly Hood, a woman, plays the title role. Shakespeare lays bare his characters' nobility and fallibility and, in that spirit, this production will investigate the implications of a modern woman as heir to an ancient throne. All the immortal passion, tumult, and force of Shakespeare's text will shine in this contemporary kingdom, as our 21st century Hamlet contends with a feckless mother, venomous stepfather, and forbidden love. Arrive at 6pm and stroll through the gardens, or bring your picnic dinner to enjoy on the lawn while being serenaded with songs and monologues from our Festival Young Company actors. Then enjoy the performance in comfortable outdoor seating. Thurs - Sun 7:30pm; grounds open at 6pm.

Agecroft Hall, 4305 Sulgrave Road Richmond, VA 23221 Tickets available at www.quilltheatre.org/ or by calling 340-0115.



"Family Photo" by Kris Taylor among works on display at Stir Crazy for the month of August.

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September 3, Hotel X

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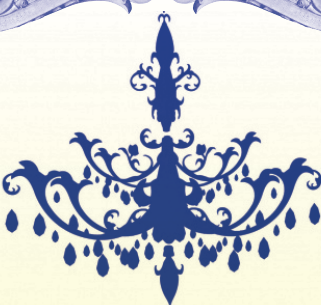
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