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are finally popping up all over Virginia. I'm talking about bike paths here. Bikeways that are paved in asphalt or concrete or finely crushed gravel. These paths are dedicated to cyclists, they are not sharing space with automobiles. And although Richmond has made great strides in entering the 21st century, it has yet to devise a comprehensive transportation plan that would include bicycle-only paths through the city—major arteries, east to west, and north to south. Not bike lanes, but paths exclusively for cyclists. This past summer my son and I were able to sample some of the best bike trails in Virginia, including two right here in Richmond, along with a trailhead, which is a gateway to a capital ride. *continued on page 14*

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Though it didn't rise from the ashes, Holly Lawn, a rare and long-lived home in the Hermitage Road Historic District, was resurrected from the rubble by its owners who spent the better part of two years lovingly renovating this architectural treasure, which is on the National Historic Register of Places and has been called one of the finest examples of Queen Anne Style in Virginia. And this September it will be the Richmond Symphony Designer House.

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18 COMING SOON **Tabol Brewing: "Tart, Wild, Funky"**

Nic Caudle and his business partner, Travis Dise, are set to open a brewery in the enterprise zone just off Chamberlayne Avenue in late August or early September. Like other area breweries they will off some IPAs and stouts, but their main focus will always be the tart, wild, funky stuff.

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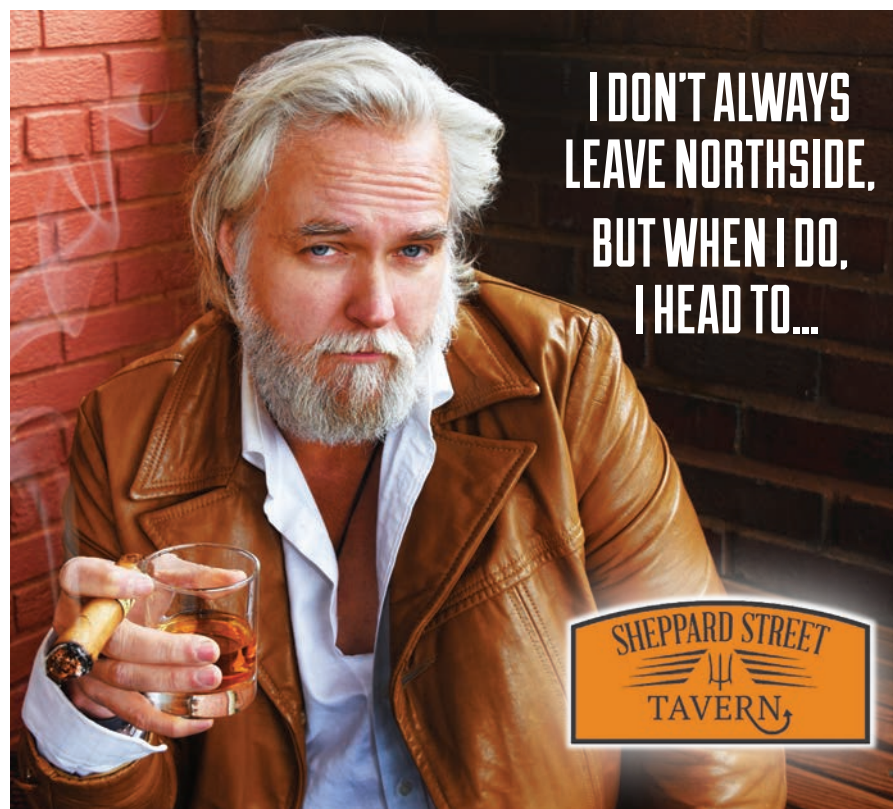
Sometimes I come across a book that is so glorious I must share it with you, even though it is not a new release. This is the case with "The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating," which I heard about and devoured in a single sitting. I am a sucker for nature writing and memoirs, and this endearing little book is both.

20 NORTH SIDER **Chip in for Kaity Kasper**

If you're a Northsider, chances are you know Kaity Kasper. She's an attorney, a cancer survivor, a writer, a gifted story teller, and a spiritual guide. Not long ago, many of us heard that Kaity had sold her house on Brook Road with plans of moving to Charlottesville. After downsizing and moving to Charlottesville, she got some bad news. She's battling cancer again.

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Kosh McGuigan

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

JUST TWO YEARS ago, on our way back from Maine, my son Charles and I visited with my cousin Kosh and her family in Cherry Hill, New Jersey. It was a tradition that had started ten years earlier. We would see them on our way up to New England, and again on our way back down the coast, and sometimes we would spend New Year's with them, and other times Easter. They had welcomed us—my daughter, my son and me—into their family, and to this day Charles still calls Kosh's sons "The Three Brothers," male siblings he would not otherwise have.

Late at night, as the house activity died down, as lights flicked off one by one, Kosh and I sat at the kitchen table and talked. When the dishwasher, with a warm purr, began its final rinse cycle, we replenished our wineglasses and retreated to the back porch of the old stone house where we sat in steel mesh chairs around an oblong table with a glass top. At the far end of the property, practically kissing the rear fence, a large rectangle of turquoise glowed in the surrounding darkness. The day before, The Three Brothers had worked through the entire afternoon with Charles, teaching him how to swim, not simply tread water, and just a few hours ago, even after sunset, he swam laps from one end of the pool to the other with strength and confidence. When Charles flipped over and simply floated on the surface he seemed to be impressed into an enormous emerald-cut jewel.

The rasp of steel on flint, a flurry of sparks, a jet of flame, and Kosh lit a cigarette. She inhaled, released smoke, considered the lighter clenched in her right hand, then spun the serrated wheel with her thumb, and again made fire, studying the flame for a moment before removing her thumb from the fork, which instantly stopped the flow of gas, and the flame died. The third time Kosh lit the lighter, I touched my own cigarette to the flame.

We talked until a little after three that morning. Kosh had been a lawyer before her children came along, had practiced with Barnett and Brown, and knew a lot about labor law. Our conversations would often revolve around politics, religion, travel, art, and, of course, her three sons and husband. Kosh also told me scores



Above: Kosh and Antonis with my children.
Below: The house in Cherry Hill.

of family stories that I'd never heard before, shedding light on the odd dynamics of our family, the causes of ancient alliances, the sources of enduring animosity. Through high school and then college, she practically lived with Laura Cosgrove, my maternal grandmother, and they would sit in her kitchen on Moyamensing Avenue in South Philly, and Kosh would listen to story after story about our family and its history. We were all born of immigrant stock, and at various times our forbears were treated with contempt as aliens in a new world, a not-so-nice world at times. I'd heard parts of these stories before, but Kosh was able to flesh them out and give them context.

Mainly though, she would talk about her three sons—Grigorios, Antonios, and Andreas—and her husband, and their father, Antonis Papadourakis. She would tell me about their progress in school, their interests, their distinctive personality traits, their successes in rowing. That first summer we visited the Papadourakis clan, Kosh's children embraced my son as if he were one of their brothers. Charles is younger than The Three Brothers and they were protective of him, and helped him out of his shyness, and Kosh treated him as one of her own.

At about three o'clock that same morning two years ago, Kosh's speech became slurred, but we'd been drinking

for hours, so there was nothing unusual in this. In a short time she went to bed, and much later that same morning, after Charles and I returned from a bike ride along the Schuylkill River, Kosh was still slurring her words, and, as she stood behind the granite-topped island, a coffee cup raised in her hands like an offering, she lost her grip and the cup fell into the stainless steel sink. It didn't shatter, but Kosh looked at her hands as if she had never seen them before. "I don't think that's ever happened in my life," she said. She didn't say anything more.

EIGHT MONTHS LATER, just sixteen months ago now, Kosh told me she had been handed down a death sentence in the form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a progressive neurodegenerative disease that affects nerve cells in the brain and the spinal cord, a disease which is always fatal. It is the most insidious of maladies.

Nourishment to the muscles ceased,



and one by one they wasted away. Motor neurons began dying off, and slowly Kosh began to lose control of her own muscles, these marvels that had responded to her every whims even before her birth. Suddenly it was gone. Even simple voluntary movements like holding a coffee cup or stepping down from a curb became increasingly difficult. In time she would lose the ability to speak, to eat, to walk, to text a message. To breathe.

In those first few months after the diagnosis, we talked on the phone regularly, and in the beginning her speech was just barely slurred, but as time went on it became increasingly difficult to understand what she was saying, and when she spoke it sounded painful, as if each word formed in her larynx drained her of energy. She often seemed exhausted after uttering a single sentence.

On about that time I sent this letter to Kosh.

Dearest Kosh,

I have been trying to compose this letter to you for more than three months now. I'll get so far, then just scratch it all out, because words do have limitations, and they cannot adequately express the fury, the bitter anger, the deep sense of injustice, the profound sadness and, of course, the overwhelming love I have for you.

It was because of you that the two sides of the McGuigan/Cosgrove clans—divided by a deep rift that cleaved the two families decades ago—reunited, at least somewhat. Your honesty and kindness, your willingness to listen, made all that possible. No one else in these families could have done that, for you possess that rarest of human qualities—the ability to truly see beyond self. You do not judge, you do not mock human frailty, nor do you hold transgressions against the perpetrator. I've often thought that those who espouse Christian values should study your actions carefully; they might learn a thing or two, put into practice the clear words of their Savior as framed in His Beatitudes, but unfortunately, all too often, they are swallowed by their own self-righteous judgement, delight in casting stones, counting their beads, thumping their chests, parroting their empty words in the desolate spiritual chasms of their churches.

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I learned more from you about what godliness really is than from any religious text I've ever read. You embody the profound truths of Buddha, Christ, Mohammad. You live as they lived. You are the best of what they preached, and within you it is a constant. I do hope that all who know you understand the sort of presence they are in when near you. You shower grace on all who are open to it, and it is not some hokum magic grace, emanating from some mythical spot in the heavens. It is real, the sort of grace that makes all feel welcomed and loved: This is Divinity.

You have lived all your days to date with seemingly effortless grace, and your life work glows in the home you created, and the husband and the three sons (Charles' "three brothers") you nurtured. Each of those boys, now men, know what unconditional love is, and will be forever guided on a path of acceptance and kindness in a world where far too many pursue a road that leads to intolerance, pettiness and sheer meanness.

You have created a future for our world through your children, a much better future than the world has ever known, and those future-bearers you created will no doubt one day create more promising futures through their own children. This spark, igniting gentle warmth, was generated by the flint of your kindness.

From the moment my children and I first entered your home in that long-ago summer 2006, you bathed us all in your love and hospitality. Both Charles and Catherine look upon you as another mother. That olive oil bottle and recipe book you gave to Catherine are still two of her most prized possessions; they were among the first things she packed when she moved into her own apartment.

You always allowed Charles to be just Charles. You never raised your voice to him, never said a cross word to him, and your sons captured him in their netting of acceptance, making him one with them. What this did for Charles over the years is beyond measure. You and your family helped him become who he is.

Our long, meandering talks through the night and into the morning, either in your kitchen or out on the back porch, punctuated with tobacco and spirits, glowing and flowing, are among my best recollections, and always will be, as long as memory persists. We all love you very much, and we think about you often.



Kosh with husband and sons.

LATE LAST JULY, CHARLES

and I drove up to New Jersey and spent three days in the old stone house with Kosh. My aunt and uncle, who live just across the Cooper River from Kosh, were frequent visitors at lunch and sometimes dinner. Kosh and I talked almost constantly, including late night sessions on that back porch.

A mysterious vine that grew up along the stone garage in the backyard had all but covered an entire wall. The leaves were something like Virginia creeper, except much thicker and waxier, more like English ivy. For years this vine had remained a mystery, and Kosh had no idea how it got there. It hadn't been there when they bought the house. When Kosh went to bed, I continued sitting in the backyard till well after three in the morning, and at times, just to move, I'd go to the garage and run my fingers through those curious vines, and there was a film of dew on the leaves. Overhead I could see stars, along with Mars and Venus, the wanderers, among them.

A few years back my mother died at the age of eighty-two. Several years before, like Kosh, she had been handed a death sentence by another gruesome illness, one that would ravage her mind for years before she finally gave up the ghost. In my mother's case, the culprit was Alzheimer's, which systematically drained all the lagoons of her memory, yet her body remained healthy. Toward the end, when her mind had all but evaporated, her body persisted.

It was just the opposite for Kosh: Her brain was in perfect shape, while her body died around it. And one of the more horrific things about ALS is that all five senses remain on the alert. Kosh could see, hear, feel, smell and taste the external world because her brain still received all of those messages, but she could not respond to a one of them.

JUST LAST MONTH I GOT

a call from Antonis, Kosh's husband, who is one of the best men I have ever had the privilege of knowing, and who is more like a brother than the spouse of a first cousin. Kosh had died, he told me, with her family gathered around her. She died in her home with hospice support, and the week before her passing, the only parts of her body she had control over were a thumb and an index finger. The disease had whittled away the rest of her.

The next day, Kosh's eldest son, Grigorios, posted the following on Facebook:

I don't really know what to do or say right now. I still remember that day sitting in the waiting room at Penn before your diagnosis and thinking it was just going to be a routine visit.

You lived with such a horrible, horrible disease for more than sixteen months. Every day was worse than the previous one. From losing your ability to eat and drink to losing your speech and mobility. You endured so much and the only comforting part of your passing is that you are no longer suffering.

It still doesn't make it any easier. You didn't deserve this. You were an amazing mother and wife, a great daughter, sister, and friend. You taught my brothers and me the importance of love, the importance of family. You taught us to be kind and have integrity. You were an example to us of how to be generous and how to follow through. Mom, you were my best friend and confidant. You had the biggest impact on my life out of anyone. I hope you rest easy— I know you're watching over us and I love you more.

Kosh had that impact on a lot of people. She hosted scores of parties and celebrations over the years, and she planned out each and every detail to ensure the comfort and joy of her guests. There was only one thing she

would not tolerate in her home—intolerance. And she would let offending guests know this. I had often thought that she should have posted the following over her front door, a Polish saying I had first heard from my maternal grandmother, a concise saying that speaks infinite volumes: "Gosc w dom, Bog w dom." Which means "Guest in the house, God in the house."

Kosh treated everyone with respect, giving nod to their human dignity, and she could not understand racism, homophobia, classism, or any other form of bigotry.

CHARLES AND I DROVE

up for the funeral on Friday afternoon and spent the night in Falls Church with my sister, Fran, and her husband, Joel, and their daughter, Hilary. From Woodbridge north, 95 had become a slow-moving parking lot. It took us an hour to cover the ten miles that separated us from Springfield. Just as we pulled up the ramp to 495 west, along a thread in the Gordian knot of the Mixing Bowl, Charles suddenly broke down when the enormity of Kosh's death struck home.

He turned his head to me, his cheeks streaked with tears.

"Why?" he said.

I shook my head. "I don't know."

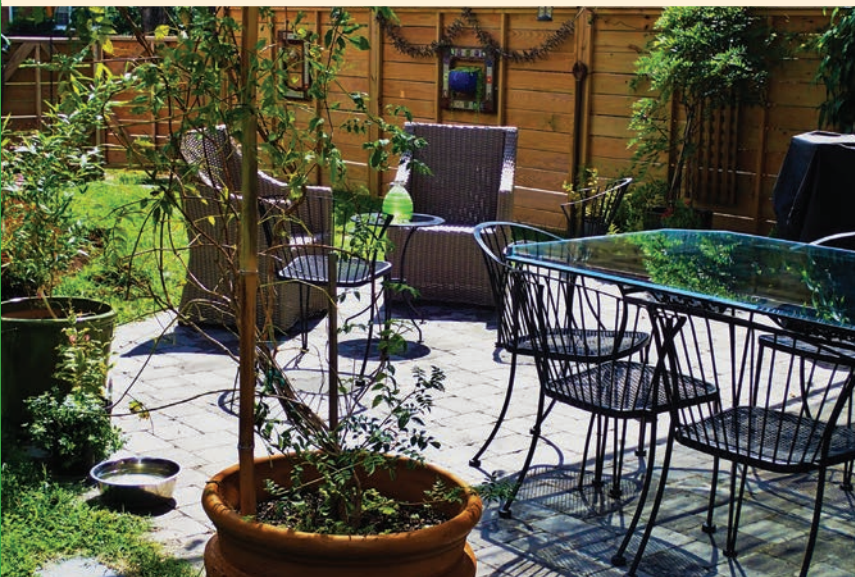
"Why Kosh? Why not a bad person?" He named several men known for their callousness, for the hatred in their hearts, remorseless men who have made their names through inhumane acts and words.

"I really don't know why," I told Charles. "None of it makes sense."

We ate dinner with my sister and her family, then rode with them the next morning at five. We arrived in Haddonfield a few hours later, ate breakfast at a diner and then headed over to Christ the King Catholic Church. Hundreds of people gathered for the funeral Mass. An urn containing the cremated remains of my cousin sat on a sort of draped gurney that rested in the center aisle near the altar. In the front pew, Antonis stood with his three sons. They were all dressed in simple black suits and black ties, and the father's full head of white hair stood in stark contrast to the jet black hair adorning the heads of Grigorios, Antonius and Andreas. Later, at the restaurant where a dinner was held, my sister Fran said that when she saw the father and his three sons walking down the aisle, with Antonis in the lead, she could not help thinking of a drake leading his offspring, now that

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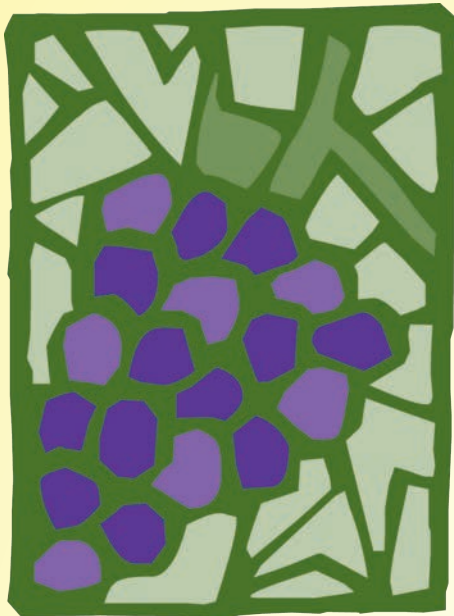
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the mother duck was gone. As we were leaving the church, I stopped by the car that held Kosh's parents, my aunt and uncle. I held Uncle David's hand. It was all bone and thin skin. "I don't know how I'm going to do this," he said. I didn't know what to say; Kosh was just fifty-five.


Late that night, back at my sister's house, Hilary and I sat in chairs on the patio in the backyard. There's a pergola over the patio, something my brother Chris built years ago. Fran had planted wisteria around the supporting columns, and now, the vines, interwoven and interlocked, are so thick that that they form something of a roof which protected Hilary and me from the rain, which was steady at times. As we relived the day, talking about what we had seen, an odd sound emerged from a thicket of hostas, the leaves of which are the size of serving platters. And as our eyes became accustomed to the darkness, we could see the leaves of these plants trembling with the movement of concealed animals. And then came eerie chitterings, a whole chorus of them, as if they were arguing among themselves, or telling my niece and me to leave. Finally, a raccoon emerged, walked over to the pond fifteen feet away from us, reached into the water, retrieved a gold fish, held it up, as if showing it to his friends still concealed among the hostas, then chomped down on it, and again held it aloft like an ice cream cone. The raccoon was in no way concerned about our presence, and its compatriots soon emerged from the greenery, which is when Hilary and I returned to the downstairs sanctuary of my sister's home.

"Had you ever seen anything like that before," I asked Hilary.

"Never," she said.

After reading for about two hours, I returned to patio. By then everyone else in the house was sleeping, and the clouds had parted and the moon had already set. I stood near the pond, and looking overhead I could see a fair abundance of stars, and words came back to me that I memorized more than thirty years ago, words from a poem by William Butler Yeats.

*"Give to these children, new from the world,
 Silence and love;
 And the long dew-dropping hours of the night,
 And the stars above."*

I said them over and over, even after I returned to the guest bedroom in my sister's home. 

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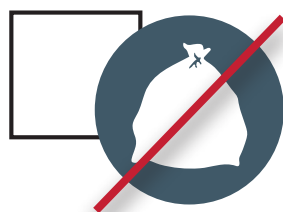
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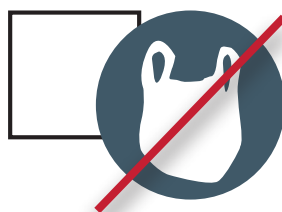


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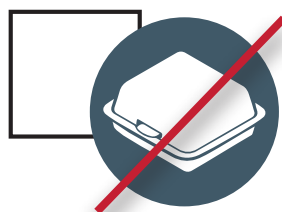
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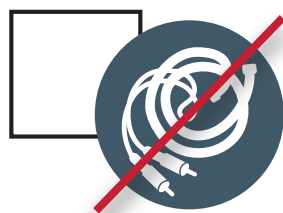
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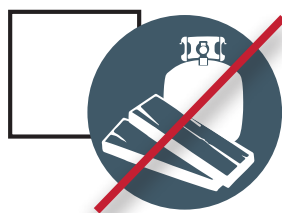
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HOMES



Holly Lawn after the storm, and the effects of the restoration visitor's can expect to see at the Gala and subsequent tours.

2018 Richmond Symphony Designer House Hermitage Road's Holly Lawn, Re-born

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

THOUGH IT DIDN'T rise from the ashes, Holly Lawn, a rare and long-lived home in the Hermitage Road Historic District, was resurrected from the rubble by its owners who spent the better part of two years lovingly renovating this architectural treasure, which is on the National Historic Register of Places and has been called one of the finest examples of Queen Anne Style in Virginia.

On June 16, 2016, a line of fast moving storms stampeded through the heart of Bellevue, uprooting massive trees like spring onions. A local meteorologist called it an "historic wind event".

And it was.

The next morning my son and I rode our bikes through the neighborhood and witnessed massive trees felled by the high winds. A number of cars were crushed beneath these green giants like matchbox toys. A classic arts and crafts cottage on Claremont, just east of Fauquier was almost cleaved in half.

And on Hermitage Road, a queen among the other royalty lining line that North Side boulevard was damned near decapitated when a 175-year old red oak sheared away most of the home's front elevation, ripping off the porch and shattering one of the turrets, and causing untold damage to the entire structure. The owners decided to save the building, and for the next 24 months they performed a miraculous reconstruction.

This September, Holly Lawn will be unveiled in all her new glory. The Richmond Symphony Orchestra League (RSOL) selected this North Side gem as the 2018 Designer House. Some of Virginia's leading interior designers will transform the 14,500-square foot home which sits on a beautifully landscaped 2.1-acre parcel. The RSOL's Preview Gala on September 14 kicks off the 18th annual Designer House with a fabulous party, along with music provided by Richmond Symphony Orchestra musicians, and a preview of Holly Lawn. The Designer House will be open for tours from September 17 through October 14. The ever-popular Thirsty Thurs-

days—featuring beer, wine, live music, and home tours—will be held September 20 and 27, and October 4 and 11, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. "We are thrilled that the owners have made such a generous contribution to open Holly Lawn as our 18th Designer House to support the Richmond Symphony," says Ann Burks, RSOL president.

Holly Lawn's main house features five bedrooms, three and a half bathrooms, a sun porch, a library, a living room, a formal dining room, a spacious foyer, a kitchen with butler's pantry, and a sweeping Southern-style front porch. The house also includes a 1973-addition. One of the earlier homeowners named the estate "Holly Lawn" for the holly trees that ring the estate.

Proceeds from the Designer House, which in the past has attracted 7,000 visitors, will benefit the Richmond Symphony Orchestra. The Richmond Symphony Orchestra League supports the growth and development of the Richmond Symphony. For more information and tickets for this event visit www.rsol.org

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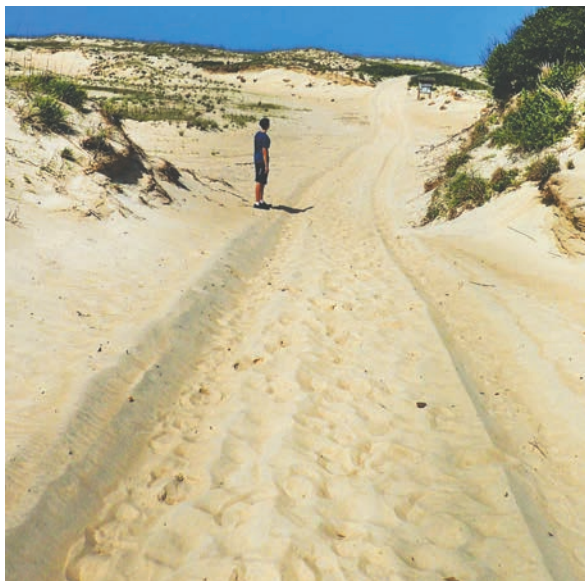


Bike Trails

ACROSS VIRGINIA

NO MATTER WHERE WE ARE, WHEN TRAVELING

along the Eastern Seaboard, my kids and I have always sought out segments of the East Coast Greenway. In Brunswick, Maine there's a great trail along the Androscoggin, a vast tidal river that once powered many of the towering mills that have since been condominiumized. And in deepest of the Deep South, there is the Florida Keys Overseas Heritage Trail, which utilizes the rail beds and bridges of Henry Flagler's doomed Overseas Railroad. Last summer my son, Charles, and I rode a thirty-five mile stretch through the Lower Keys; it became our main mode of transportation from Big Pine Key to Key West. When the East Coast Greenway is completed, it will link together scores of cities along a 3,000 mile stretch of off-road bike paths that will begin at the Canadian border in Calais, Maine and end at the Caribbean-lapped shore of Fort Zachary Taylor on the southernmost tip of Key West. It's an ambitious project begun almost thirty years ago, but today fully one-third of it is complete.



STARTING BACK

in late May, Charles and I decided to visit as many of Virginia's bike trails during the summer as time permitted. It seemed fitting that we would begin where Virginia begins, and where Virginia began.

At First Landing State Park on Cape Henry we shared a cabin, for one night, with Nick Kambourian and his mothers, the two Melissas. Established in 1933 as Seashore State Park, this was the first park in Virginia's system. The cabin we slept in was built during the dark days of the Great Depression by African-Americans who worked for the Civilian Conservation Corps.

My daughter, Catherine, and her beau, Tyler, joined us and we all headed down to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, just below the town of Sandbridge.

All seven of us rode along the dike roads sandwiched between the endless ridge of sand dunes to our left and the wide expanse of Back Bay, mother of Currituck Sound, to our right. The first couple miles of the trail are flanked by open land, dominated by brackish marshes and waving fields of pea-green spartina, or cord grass, which form the incubators for many marine organisms. The air here is salt-rich with a faint hint of sea-decay.

In a sort of cul-de-sac at the end of one of the lagoons bordered by the dikes, we counted a total of eighteen freshwater turtles sunning on half-submerged logs, and in the very next lagoon, a very thick, five-foot long cottonmouth that slithered on the surface of the water in a feat of total buoyancy.

We penetrated a thick maritime forest composed of wax myrtles, gums, loblolly pines and wind-sculpted live oaks, and when we entered False Cape State Park, we made our way across a veritable desert before crossing thirty-foot high sand dunes to wade

in the Atlantic. The round-trip was just a little over twelve miles.

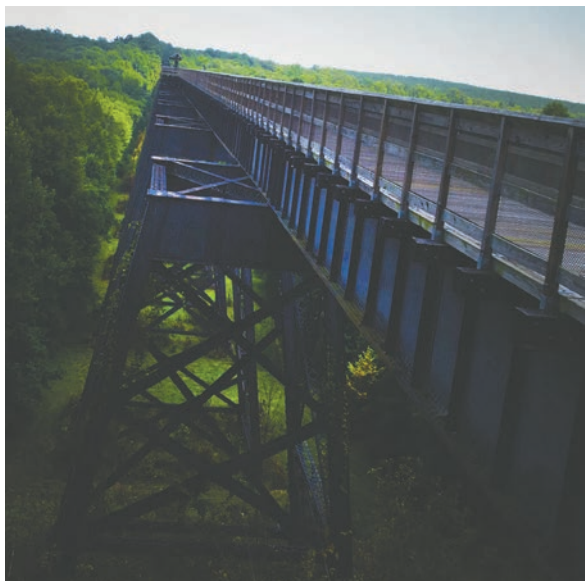
Catherine and Tyler left that evening, and the next afternoon the Kambourians headed back to Richmond. Charles and I spent another night in the cabin and early in the morning hit the Cape Henry Trail, first cycling west on a path that runs through the backyards of a residential neighborhood. When the path ended we rode along a lightly traveled street, and meandered over to Lynnhaven Inlet.

We returned to First Landing, and then biked the eastern portion of the Cape Henry Trail. Here it is wild. There is an ancient cypress swamp on one side of the trail, and a thick maritime forest on the other. And this, too: Spanish moss festoons branches of the oaks and pines as if you're in South Carolina's Low Country. These woods smell of the pines, not at all like balsam, more like tar, which adds to the primordial feeling of this place.

At trail's end, about six miles southeast, we emerged from the forest into a residential development on 64th Street in Virginia Beach. We rode due south along a paved bike trail and later an access road, both of which run parallel to Atlantic Avenue.

At 40th Street we linked up with the paved bike trail that runs parallel to the boardwalk, then cut over at 5th Street to South Beach Trail, crossed Rudee Inlet, and rode into Croatan Beach. On our way back to First Landing, we ate a very late lunch at Waterman's at 5th and Atlantic—a massive platter of Old Bay-seasoned steamed shrimp, a bowl of hush puppies, all washed down with their signature Orange Crush. It had been a long day. We covered twenty-eight miles, and almost as soon as we started the trip back to Richmond, Charles turned the passenger seat into a recliner and slept until we pulled up in front of the house on Greycourt.

On a Saturday in early July, Charles and I took to the North Bank Trail along the James River right



Top: Vast expanse of sand and dunes at False Cape State Park, heading seaward.


Bottom: High Bridge Trail.

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN

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here in Richmond. Early that morning, we pulled into the parking lot on Pump Road, just below the Boulevard Bridge, and began our ride west along the Kanawha Canal, which we would follow, more or less, for the next four and a half miles. This part of the trail, which skirts the Japanese Gardens at Maymont, is flat and paved with finely crushed gravel of some kind, but on the other side of Texas Beach it becomes fairly challenging, and there were points, particularly in the shadow of the three cemeteries, when we dismounted and walked our bikes. Where the trail ends at Oregon Hill, we cut over to the trail that leads through Tredegar, crossed the bridge to Brown's Island, and worked our way over to the Canal Walk, crossed under the I-95 bridge, then over to Dock Street, where we rode under the elevated rail until we got to the Great Ship Locks.

And as we stood on the main gate of the locks, facing the south-flowing James, we could see in one glance the entire history of transportation in Richmond; from the river itself that tall ships ploughed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, to the canal that penetrated ever inland, to the rails in the sky that displaced the

canal; from the footpaths first trod by Native American Indians, to the cobblestones laid for horse and wagon, to the asphalt that covered those roads to make way for the automobile, to this trail which was built just for bikes.

The following morning, we parked near Tredegar and rode over to Brown's Island and then along the Manchester Floodwall Walk, under 14th Street, and then further south till we hit the Richmond Slave Trailhead. The Floodwall Walk gives you a unique back end view of the city, beyond the gentrification of Manchester. There are still pockets of decayed industry from a bygone era—silos made of cement, decaying bridge columns of concrete, a mothball fleet of graffiti-scarred boxcars.

Instead of taking the trail down to the notorious Manchester Docks, we rode along Brander. Not one car passed us going in, or coming out. On the waterfront it was somber and we were the only people there. Here is one of the darkest stains on Richmond. For thirty years, up until the outbreak of the Civil War, Richmond exported more enslaved Africans than any other city on the East Coast. As Charles and I stood on the banks of the river there was the shrill of cicadas all around, sometimes



Along the south flood wall.



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Heading toward the Great Ships Locks.

coming from inside our own skulls. No movement of air, the smell of alga, a merciless sun overhead. From this point of land, that juts out into the James, thousands of families were torn apart, children from parents, husbands from wives, and sold downriver to the highest bidder. Despite the heat, I shivered, and looking upstream, and across the river, my son and I could see the Great Ship Locks where our ride had ended yesterday.

A week later we were in downtown Farmville where a seminal battle occurred in 1951 when African-American students at Moton High School staged a strike, giving birth to the student protests of the Civil Rights Movement, and laying the groundwork for one of the cases that would lead to Brown v. Board of Education and end segregated schools.

The High Bridge Trail cuts straight through Farmville, and we picked it up near the old train depot and began pedaling east. This trail, which follows an old rail-line that ran from Pamplin to Burkeville, is one of Virginia's newest state parks. The entire trail, made of finely crushed limestone, is thirty-one miles long, with very slight grades.

Just five miles outside of Farmville, we hit the centerpiece of the trail, a half-mile long bridge that crosses the Appomattox River. Halfway across the bridge we were suddenly above the tree tops, and looking to the west we could see hills giving way to mountains. It is the longest recreational bridge in Virginia, and one the longest in the country.

Half a mile east of the bridge there are earthen fortifications built by Confederates to protect the South Side Railroad, incorporated in the 1850s, from Union attacks. One of the last battles of the Civil War occurred here, and the last Union general to fall in that conflict died here. Two days after that battle near High Bridge, Lee surrendered to Grant at McLean House in nearby Appomattox Courthouse. We ride into Burkeville, then head back for a round-trip of about thirty miles, then eat a packed lunch and drink a lot of water in the shade of the Farmville Farmers' Market pavilion.

The following week we bike the Virginia Capital Trail, but that's another story for another time. **NJ**

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Tabol Brewing: “Tart, Wild, Funky”

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

NIC CAUDLE HAS been a beer connoisseur for a long time, and about ten years ago he decided to become a homebrewer. He was on a trip visiting his girlfriend's parents up in New York, and they killed a day by shopping in small, locally owned businesses. Nic entered a shop that sold home-brewing supplies and he bought the basics. Once back in Richmond, he created his first brew.

“That batch was horrible,” he says. “It was an immediate drain pour.” He realized he'd done several things wrong, and started over. The next batch was better, and over the years he began experimenting with new recipes, frequently purchasing supplies from brewmeister Tony Ammendolia, owner of Original Gravity/Final Gravity in Lakeside.

We're sitting in a small office within a large building just off Chamberlayne Avenue in lower North Side. This was the former home of Research Glass, where, for 25 years, glassblower John Bivins, and later his son, Brian, made scientific glass. And even as it is now transforming into Tabol Brewery, some of the beakers and graduated cylinders from the building's former incarnation, are finding new use in that ancient branch of chemistry—brewing.

For the past several years, Nic and his business partner, Travis Dise, had been toying with the idea of opening their own brewery. They talked about it often enough, but never really moved on it.

“Then Travis approached me about two years ago and he said, ‘Hey, have you really thought about this? Because I'm ready and I'm serious,’” says Nic. “That's when we started delving into the business research. What will it take to actually get something up and running? We pored over a lot more info than you'd think. So after about a year or so of planning, we started looking for property and that took a few months and we first looked at this building May of 2017, and we're not even fully there yet. It's a long process.”

In Richmond, these days, you can barely swing a cat without paw-patting a microbrewery (Scott's Addition alone is home to ten of them), and a lot of folks wonder how many brewer-



Above: The updated exterior facing Dawn Street looks ready for business. Right, top: Taking advantage of some flasks left over from the building's last owner. Right, below: Partners, Travis Dise and Nic Caudle.

ies the area will be able to keep afloat. On this, Tabol has an edge. When the brewery opens later this month, or in early September, it will fill a sort of niche market.

Nic remembers the moment he got the idea. It was years ago while he was dining at Mekong and ordered a saison by Stillwater. It wasn't like anything he'd ever tasted. “Holy crap,” he thought. “This is what I want to drink all the time.” Unfortunately not many stores at the time carried this product, and those that did charged an 18k-gold arm and leg for it.

“So Tabol will have a 90 percent focus on the tart, the wild, the funky stuff,” Nic says. “We'll have a hoppy beer or two on tap, and we have plans for some stouts for the cold weather. We'll try to make a little bit of most everything. But mainly it will be the tart, wild, funky stuff. What is the main thing for most breweries will be our side project. And their side project will be our main focus.”

Nic takes me on a quick tour of the brewery. The production space is already filling up with barrels and a few large stainless steel tanks. “In your typical brewery you've got these massive steel tanks that everything sits and ferments and ages in,” he says. “Here, except in the brew house itself, where we make the unfermented beer, there are no steel tanks. Everything is going

immediately into various oak casks. That's where they'll do all their fermentation and aging.”

This production area is about 6,000 square, and the next room we enter—about 2,000 square—is the tasting room. Two men, wearing dust masks, guide large floor sanders in concentric circles. A thick dust of concrete and debris falls in their wake, and a man with a shop vac trains the hose on the small mounds of grey dust, sucking up each particle in an instant. By tomorrow the floor will be ready to coat with clear epoxy resin.

“This wasn't the first place we looked at,” Nic tells me. “We started looking in January of 17, and we looked everywhere.”

The problem was invariably the size. “Richmond has a lot warehouse stock,” Nic says. “But it's either 5,000 and below, or 15,000, 25,000 and above. There's very few in that middle range, which was what we were looking for. We found some places. We even put an offer in on a building in Scott's Addition, but it had gotten too high for us. And then we came in here. It hit that sweet spot. It's right at about 8,000 square foot, and it has the potential for the deck outside, and plenty of parking.”

Looking to the very near future, Nic Caudle says, “When there's something ready that we can package, we'll either put it into kegs, or if we like it and we have enough of it, then we can bot-



tle some of it for taproom sales as well. We're not looking to put product on a shelf or to try to fight for a tap line at a bar. It's too cutthroat. If we can work with a distributor to work with the occasional bar, restaurant, or festival for an event. Perfect. Otherwise we want people to come here, sit down, enjoy a beer or two, maybe take a bottle home.” **NB**

Tabol Brewing
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Life Lessons From a Gastropod

by FRAN WITHROW

SOMETIMES I COME across a book that is so glorious I must share it with you, even though it is not a new release. This is the case with “The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating,” which I heard about and devoured in a single sitting. I am a sucker for nature writing and memoirs, and this endearing little book is both.

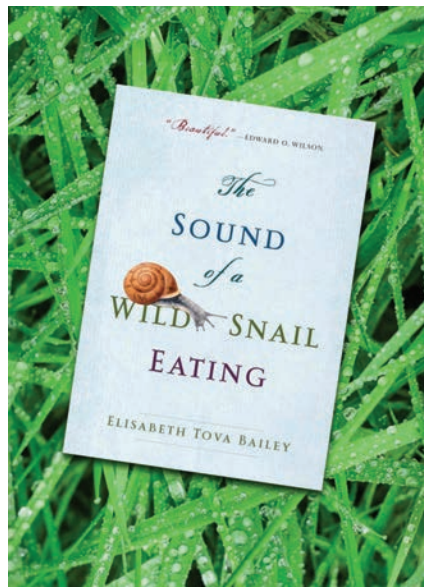
At age 34, Elisabeth Tova Bailey was struck by a mysterious pathogen that devastated her nervous and circulatory systems so badly she was bedridden. Unable to even sit up, her world suddenly became one of intense isolation and helplessness. This formerly active hiker and dog lover was now transformed into an invalid. It would be easy to fall into a depression under such difficult circumstances.

Enter snail.

One day, a friend found a land snail in the woods and carried it to Bailey in a pot of violets. Since Bailey couldn’t do anything else, she watched the snail. And thus was born this tender, contemplative narrative.

Bailey weaves her observations about this snail with what she learns through research about these quiet but fascinating creatures. She finds parallels as well as contrasts between her life and that of the snail, and her relationship with the snail is the slender thread that carries her through the heart-break of her physical ailments.

I quickly became captivated by her snail, this slow creature traversing its new habitat while leaving behind a slimy trail. Bailey’s description of the snail, sleeping sweetly under a leaf during the day, awakening at night to snack on mushrooms or crushed eggshells, crawling out of the pot of violets only to return to it each morning, made this little gastropod seem utterly charming. Her snail is eventually moved to a terrarium, which she makes as much like its natural habitat as she can. She appreciates its amazing spiraled shell, how this geometrically pleasing “house” grows as the snail



grows. She learns that the snail’s foot is versatile; that it not only moves the snail but can also dig a chamber for hibernation. She muses on our common ancestor, our similarities. She marvels at its tentacles and rows of tiny teeth.

Bailey’s writing is compassionate and warm, a gentle meditation, thoughtful and provocative. She is aware that she has upended the life of her snail by keeping it in captivity, just as she is trapped in her own weakened, fragile body. When she is finally able to leave the studio apartment where she has been staying and return to her farmhouse, she releases her snail, only keeping—temporarily—one of its offspring. (Yes, here you can learn about snail babies too!)

Her respect for wildlife—and what she discovers about how nature can help us rise above the things that bowl us over—make this an alluring read. And when you next come across a snail, determinedly wandering among the loam, you’ll be less likely to casually nudge it aside. Perhaps you will sit with it awhile, observing, before walking on in gratitude for life’s gifts, both large and small. **NB**

The Sound of a Wild Snail Eating
by Elisabeth Tova Bailey
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NORTHSIDER

Chip in for Kaity Kasper As She Once Again Battles Cancer

IF YOU'RE A NORTHSIDER, chances are you know Kaity Kasper. She's an attorney, a cancer survivor, a writer, a gifted story teller, and a spiritual guide. Not long ago, many of us heard that Kaity had sold her house on Brook Road with plans of moving to Charlottesville. After downsizing and moving to Charlottesville, she got some bad news. Recently, Kaity posted this on Facebook:

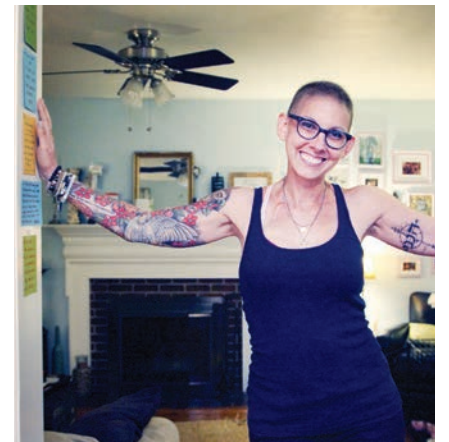
"As many of you have begun to hear, earlier this week I received my third cancer diagnosis. I knew if this time ever came that chemotherapy would not be an option I would consider. I have done it twice - each time with less than ideal results. I am fortunate to have an extremely compassionate and brilliant care team on my side who have put together an alternative protocol they feel will be successful in getting this out of my system for good. More on that later.

"For now, my first set of orders was to 'change everything'. In that vein, I've sold or donated 98% of what I own and Hope and I will be leaving Virginia to relocate to Ohio in a handful of days. Regardless of whether or not this protocol works, I plan to spend the rest of my life living slowly and quietly in nature with those I love most. This move will facilitate that.

"I have been asked how people can help. My course of treatment is not covered by insurance and is not inexpensive. A dear friend has set up a Go Fund Me page to assist in paying for those costs. If you feel compelled to help, this is the most needed item right now.

"Xoxo."


That dear friend Kaity refers to is Bellevue resident Mary-Catherine Berry, who wrote: "Recently, Kaity was re-diagnosed with cancer in her lower abdomen. As traumatic as this is, her doctor is super optimistic about the success of her treatment plan so she can get back to living her great life! Treatment will require regimented



diets, supplements and regular medical procedures starting immediately and continuing through the next few months. She'll need our prayers, thoughts and love!"

The outpouring of support for Kaity Kasper was immediate. In a little over a week the original Go Fund Me goal of \$16,000 was reached. But the bills are piling up fast. The new goal is \$32,000, which is not much when you consider the outrageous costs of healthcare.

So Kaity wrote, "Hi friends! This is Kaity. Mary-Catherine let me hack in to update you and say a huge thank you! I am overwhelmed by the generosity that has been shown in the last several days.

"You'll notice we increased the goal for this fund. We did this at the encouragement of several dear friends. \$16K is my health insurance out-of-pocket maximum and will cover my out-of-pocket expenses for the ER visit, two drains, surgery later this week, and all of the imaging done in the last 2 weeks." 

To donate, please go to www.gofundme.com/kick-kaity039s-kancer

While you're at it visit Kaity's blog at www.kaitykasper.com/blog

And here's an audio story about Kaity Kasper and her unique spiritual journey:

exchange.prx.org/pieces/199892-kaity-kasper-from-the-mouth-of-god-part-1

exchange.prx.org/pieces/200627-kaity-kasper-from-the-mouth-of-god-part-2



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RECYCLING

CVWMA Needs You To Recycle Right

THE CVWMA (Central Virginia Waste Management Authority) recycling containers are for recyclable items only. Placing inappropriate items, such as plastic bags or food-contaminated containers, with appropriate recyclables create additional processing and disposal costs.

Place only loose acceptable items in the recycling container. Do not bag your recycling in plastic bags. Anything in a plastic bag will not be recycled. CVWMA's recycling vendors will no longer pick up unwanted items. To avoid this, visit cvwma.com and make sure you Recycle Right.

This is more important now than ever. Nearly all of the paper and cardboard collected in Central Virginia for recycling was marketed to paper mills in China. China was the largest importer of recyclable material in the world until recently when they stopped allowing certain commodities such as mixed paper into the country because of poor quality. The Chinese are tired of buying poor quality feedstock for their mills.

The continued success of recycling programs, locally and globally, is dependent on economically feasible end markets. In the past, revenue generated from the sale of recyclables had covered labor and equipment necessary to sort, bale and transport the commodities to respective markets.

"Nearly all of the paper and cardboard collected in CVWMA residential recycling programs was marketed to Chinese mills because of the high demand," says Kim Hynes, executive director of CVWMA. "Other buyers such as Vietnam, India and Korea and domestic mills are now flooded with scrap paper and are becoming pickier than ever on accepting the material."

CVWMA collaborates with 13 local governments in Central Virginia and provides residential recycling to 275,000 households in nine jurisdictions and also provides recycling opportunities at 35 drop-off locations for cardboard, paper, cans, bottles, cartons and other plastic containers.

This situation with China and the recycling markets has created a dis-



Recycling the wrong items can have terrible consequences. Someone apparently tossed a lithium battery into a recycling container. The discarded battery caused a fire in this truck.

ruption in the industry, the reality of which will reveal the true costs of recycling, particularly as markets fluctuate and local processors seek new outlets to sell collected commodities.

"You can always find a market for a quality product," says Lori Scozzafava, senior vice president of Gershman, Brickner & Bratton Inc., a national solid waste consulting company. "China doesn't want poor quality feedstock materials and neither do we."

Adjusting to this new normal will require people to change their approach to recycling. "In the short term, we need to prioritize education, update technology in MRFs, identify new markets for materials and be more transparent about costs associated with recycling as well as the revenue that's generated from the sale of recyclable material," says David Biderman, executive director and CEO of Solid Waste Association of North America.

CVWMA is taking immediate steps to educate and inform central Virginians on the impact our actions have on the continued success of our recycling programs. Whether your recyclables are picked up from your home, or whether you drive them to a drop-off site, recycle only loose acceptable items and do not bag your recyclables in plastic bags.

For additional information, call CVWMA at (804) 340-0900 or visitcvwma.com. You can also find CVWMA on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



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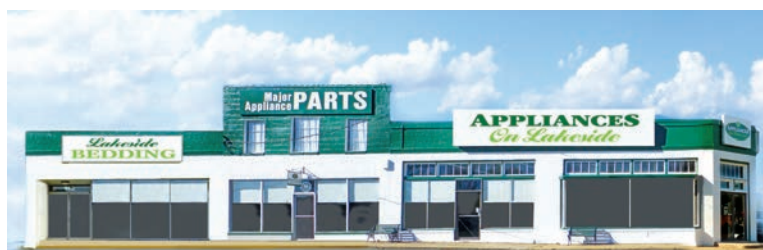


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