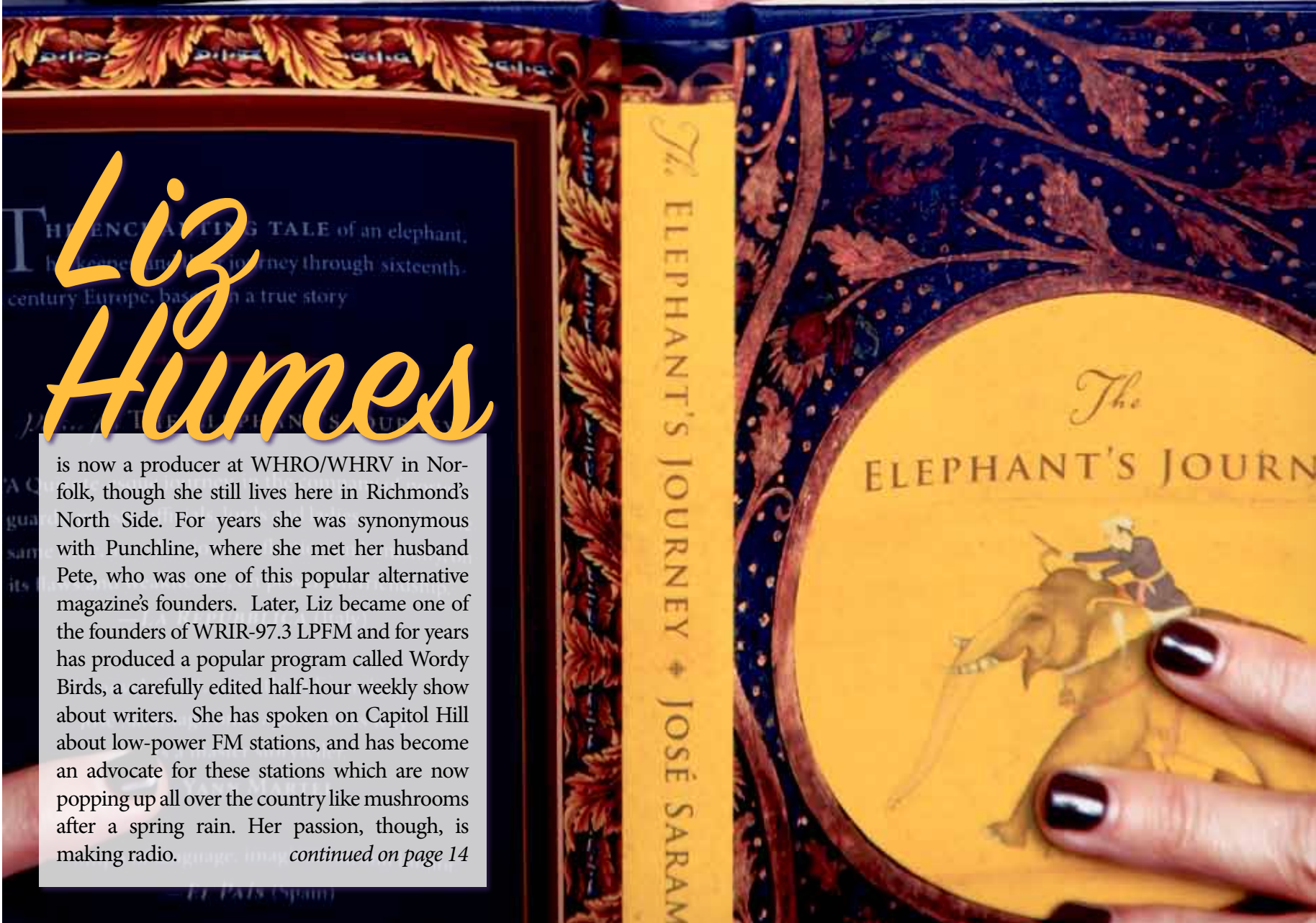


NORTH OF THE JAMES®



Liz Humes

is now a producer at WHRO/WHRV in Norfolk, though she still lives here in Richmond's North Side. For years she was synonymous with Punchline, where she met her husband Pete, who was one of this popular alternative magazine's founders. Later, Liz became one of the founders of WRIR-97.3 LPFM and for years has produced a popular program called Wordy Birds, a carefully edited half-hour weekly show about writers. She has spoken on Capitol Hill about low-power FM stations, and has become an advocate for these stations which are now popping up all over the country like mushrooms after a spring rain. Her passion, though, is making radio. *continued on page 14*

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Cover photograph by **REBECCA D'ANGELO**

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WHAT'S NEW

Ginter Parked MacArthur Avenue's Latest

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN

MACARTHUR Avenue's latest dining venue occupies the lunch wagon in the parking lot at Once Upon A Vine. In past lives this lunch wagon was home to Grey Hill Café and before that Jazzbo's, which was owned by its progenitor the late Jamie Dickerson. Less than a month ago, on a morning that was neither cool nor warm, Amy and Bob Harr were meticulously brushing out the exterior aluminum walls of the lunch wagon in a deep teal paint, catching drips as they went, running neat lines along the trim. Once the facelift was completed, they rechristened it Ginter Parked.

"When I saw it I knew I would never be able to move it with the truck that I have right now and I'm happy staying parked in the neighborhood," Bob tells me a few days after they opened for business. "That's why it's called Ginter Parked."

A few minutes earlier Amy was giving me a little background on her husband. "He was raised in Bellevue, born at Richmond Memorial Hospital (now the condominiums called Ginter Place)," she says. "He has been in the restaurant business since he was an itty bitty kid. His dad was in the restaurant business. In fact, Bob is a fourth generation restaurateur."

When Bob arrives he fills in the details. It all began back in Rochelle, Illinois. "My great grandfather started a restaurant there in 1911 called Harr's and my grandfather ran it for years and then he told my dad to get the hell out of town because there were no more opportunities left," Bob says.

And that's exactly what Bob's father did. He joined the Army, served in Korea, and after that war was stationed at Fort Lee. That's when he hooked up with Dick Ripp. The pair went on to open some of Richmond's most popular restaurants of a bygone era—The Abbey, C.C. Chicano's, O'Brienstein's—to name a few.

"They had restaurants up and down the East Coast," Bob says. "They had an Italian ice company and an ice cream company up in New York. They



Amy and Bob Harr.

had restaurants in Connecticut and Maryland. They were big when everything was booming."

Bob's father also opened a restaurant that would become a mainstay well after his partnership with Dick Ripp dissolved. The place was Extra Billy's still family-owned and operated, serving up some of the finest barbecue in the Richmond area, including their signature ribs and beef brisket. Now with two locations, on either side of the James, Extra Billy's is where Bob cut his teeth as a cook.

He worked there from the time he was a kid. In those early years he mopped floors and helped with setups, then migrated to the kitchen, preferring the back of the house to the front. "I ended up leaving them about three years ago which was a hard decision to make," he says. "I went on to The Black Sheep."

Now he's opened his own restaurant as his great grandfather had done over a hundred years ago. He'll continue serving up crab cakes as his direct predecessor had done, and southern specialties like gumbo. "A tip of the hat to Jamie Dickerson," Bob says.

But it's going to be a lot more than that. Along with sandwiches and other lunch wagon fare, Bob has an eclectic menu in mind, something that should

please the diverse community palate of Northsiders.

"I would like to bring some American stuff and I'm really influenced by a lot of Mexican and Asian cooking, so I'd really like to bring other flavors that you might not find up and down this street," he says. "I've got a great meat loaf sandwich and this last week end I did saag, Indian buttered greens with potatoes, and it was very well received. I do a Filipino pork wrap which Adobo style pork barbecue with a lemony kale salad which is popular with a lot of people. I'm doing a lot of different things."

On Sundays Bob plans to open up with biscuits and gravy, and sausage and eggs. "I would like to get some of this traffic that's going down the street on Sunday," he says.

"This is something that Bob's been looking to do forever—to have a neighborhood place," Amy says.

"I've always enjoyed working for mom and pop places and small places and doing a lot more creative things as opposed to corporate restaurants," says Bob. "So I guess now I'm a pop now." **[E]**

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Forbidden City: Imperial Treasures From The Palace Museum in Beijing at VMFA

by CHARLES MCGUIGAN photos by CATHERINE MCGUIGAN

PART OF CHINA'S Forbidden City has moved, at least temporarily, to the River City. Some 200 art objects, from royal paintings to religious sculptures, on loan from the Palace Museum (the largest art museum in China) in Beijing's Forbidden City (the largest palace in the world), now reside at the Virginia Museum. This exhibition at the VMFA, which runs through January 11, will be the only place in the world where you can experience the treasures of the Palace Museum, outside of the Forbidden City itself.

Years in the making, the Forbidden City exhibition gives the viewer a glimpse of almost 500 years of Chinese art from the Ming and Qing dynasties, spanning the mid 14th through the early 20th centuries. But in some very vital ways, this is more than an art exhibit—it's a cultural exchange.

Museum Director Alex Nyerges said as much during the media preview. "This is part of a seven-year partnership that we set up a little more than three years ago that started with two of my colleagues and I going about five or six years ago to Beijing to begin exploring opportunities with our Chinese colleagues," he said. "It's really about exchanges of ideas, long-term and short-term exchanges."

Virginia is on the forefront of cultural, as well as economic, exchanges with China. "The folks at the Richmond Ballet are headed to China next year for a series of performances there," Alex said. "The connections between China and Virginia grow daily so we're on the vanguard. One of the things the ambassador to the United States from China said was this, 'More than any other state in America, Virginia has really excelled in its relationship with China.'"

Over the past several years, Alex and his colleagues have travelled to China on numerous occasions to make this exhibition possible. And it's his hope that the end result will bridge any perceived differences between the two countries. "We believe you're going to get a much better understanding of and gain a much better appreciation for Chinese art and Chinese culture, but most of all



the Chinese people," he said.

Alex also noted that China, like the US, is an amalgam of many different peoples. "There are fifty-seven recognized ethnic minorities in China," he said. "China is as diverse as America maybe more so, in certain ways. And at the same time our similarities outnumber the differences between the Chinese and the American people about a thousand to one."

In the next couple years, VMFA's Faberge collection will be on display in the Beijing's Palace Museum. "It will

be the first time an American museum will have its collection showcased inside the walls of the Forbidden City, ever," said Alex.

He then praised Li Jian, the Carpenter Curator of East Asian art at the VMFA, and Beijing native, who has overseen the entire installation. He said Li Jian has an "expert eye and the ability to understand the business of story-telling in art history, which is a very difficult task."

That's what this exhibit is, when all is said and done. It is a narrative account



through visual art of the Chinese people through a period of almost half a century.

"So enjoy this exhibition for what it is which is great art," Alex said. "It is a landmark. This exhibition is only here so you can't see this in New York or San Francisco. You're not going to be able to see it in Toronto or Miami or Texas. But only in Richmond, Virginia." **NJ**



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ARCHITECTURE

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This seventh annual exhibition, Design 2014: A Retrospective of Winning Works, highlights some of the finest architectural projects on the East Coast.

“We’re so proud to be able to highlight the high quality of creative work being produced by Virginia-based architects,” says Helene Combs Dreiling, executive director of the Virginia Center for Architecture.

Held each year by the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects, the Awards for Excellence in Architecture recognize projects no older than seven years that contribute to the built environment as clear examples of thoughtful, engaging design. This year juries reviewed 155 entries in categories of Architecture, Residential Design, Contextual Design, Historic Preservation, and Interior Design. The 18 projects that received the top awards are featured in the exhibition.

All entries must be the work of architects who have an office in Virginia or are members of the Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects.

The 2014 Awards for Excellence in Architecture are sponsored by Hanbury Evans Wright Vlattas + Company, GeoEnvironmental Resources, and Jack Davis, FAIA.

The Virginia Society of the American Institute of Architects is a professional association representing nearly 2,500 members. Founded by 5 architects, the Virginia Society AIA has represented the professional interests of architects and allied professionals in the Commonwealth of Virginia for 100 years. For more information, contact the Virginia Society at (804) 644-3041 or visit www.aiava.org.

The Virginia Center for Architecture is located at 2501 Monument Avenue in Richmond, Virginia’s historic Fan District. The Center is dedicated to developing the understanding of the power and importance of architecture and design through programs, exhibi-

tions, and its stewardship of an historic landmark. The Center is open to the public Tuesday through Friday from

10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 5 p.m. Learn more at www.architectureva.org.



Top: Round Hill Farm Pavilions and Landscape in Orange, Virginia. Designed by Spatial Affairs Bureau, Charlottesville, Virginia. The design team included Peter Culley, Stacey Farinholt, Andrew Montgomery and James Hill.

Center: The Beacon Theater in Hopewell, Virginia. Designed by Commonwealth Architects Richmond, Virginia.

Bottom: Komai in Alexandria, Virginia. Designed by Robert M. Gurney, FAIA, Architect, Washington, D.C. Project designer Brian Tuskey, AIA.

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BOOK REVIEW

The Omnivore's Dilemma

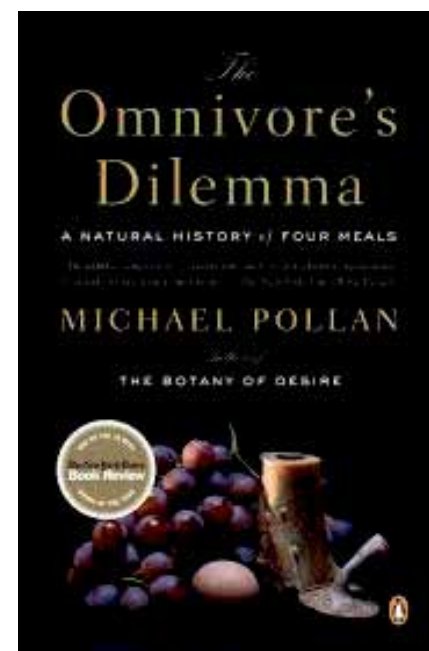
by FRAN WITHROW

IT WAS WITH SOME trepidation that I finally checked out a copy of “The Omnivore’s Dilemma” from the library. I was worried it would have too many graphic descriptions about how food animals are raised, or that it would make me feel too guilty for not growing what I eat. And while the descriptions of how cattle and poultry become steak and chicken depressed me, what was more unnerving was Pollan’s description of how corn has become the ultimate source of almost everything we eat.

Since government subsidizes farmers for growing corn, and since there has been a vast surplus of corn for years, industrialists have come up with creative ways to use the excess. From forcing cattle to eat corn-based meals to producing corn by-products (sugars, starches, alcohols, and acids) found in virtually every processed food, corn really is king.

The problems associated with this corn based food system are manifold. Farmers struggle to increase their yields to break even financially, cattle develop health issues related to a diet they were never meant to consume, and food companies constantly look for ways to get consumers to eat more processed (corn-based) food, thereby minimizing surplus. Farmers pour on more fertilizers in their quest for higher results, cattle need more antibiotics to offset their inappropriate diet, and people quietly consume increasing numbers of cereals, bars and nuggets we didn’t even know we needed. It feels as if we are on a runaway train, heading toward an inevitable crash.

This all feels so discouraging that I read Pollan’s descriptions of alternative food sources with great hope. Yet even Whole Foods and Earthbound Farms, with their emphasis on healthier, organic alternatives, are not problem free. For instance, our society has forgotten that fruits and vegetables are seasonal. Earthbound Farms rotates production in various parts of the West Coast and Mexico to ensure year-round availability of



produce. The resulting carbon footprint as we truck these foods around the country is pretty significant.

Yet Pollan also visits a wonderful local, organic farm, the most intriguing part of the book for me. Polyface Farm’s owner feels the best farms are small, and that every part of a farm should be constructed to “feed” every other part. Cow manure causes corn to ferment, for instance, creating a place pigs love to root, which creates compost. Compost is spread on the pastures. “There it will feed the grasses, so the grasses might again feed the cows, the cows the chickens, and so on until the snow falls...” in a logical, respectful, never-ending cycle.

Whether we are vegetarians, meat eaters, local food supporters or fast food lovers, the fact remains: in order to survive, we must destroy “life and form.” The question Pollan helps us ponder is how to eat with as light a toll on the earth as possible, how to eat with awareness, and, especially, to be conscious of where our food has come from, the long road from sun to grass, from grain to table. **NR**

The Omnivore’s Dilemma:
A Natural History of Four Meals
by Michael Pollan.
450 pp. The Penguin Press.

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RAINBOW MINUTES



Remembering We'Wha

During National American Indian Heritage Month

ON AUGUST 3, 1990, President George H.W. Bush approved a joint resolution designating November "National American Indian Heritage Month." Also known as "Native American Heritage Month" and "National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month," it is considered a landmark bill honoring America's Tribal people.

This specially designed month provides a platform for native people to share their cultures, traditions, music,

crafts, dance and concepts of life.

We'Wha was a Zuni Native American from New Mexico. The most revered of the Two-Spirit people, he assumed the female gender and did women's work, wearing a mixture of women's and men's clothing. By tribal sacrament, he was honored as healer and prophet.

We'Wha was described by an anthropologist as "the strongest character and the most intelligent of the Zuni tribe." In 1886, he was welcomed as a diplomat in Washington, D.C. in 1886. His social circle included government officials and the local elite. No one knew this so-called "Princess We'wha" was actually a man.

A Thanksgiving Tribute

On this Thanksgiving Day, we remember Joseph Christian Leyendecker, whose illustrations adorned many Saturday Evening Post covers during the Thanksgiving season from 1907 to 1928. The November 24, 1928 cover celebrated 300 years of Thanksgivings. It featured a Pilgrim shouldering a shooting piece and a rugged football player standing over his football. Both masculine men are staring at each other

while standing their ground.

Leyendecker was also commissioned to do men's fashion advertisements including a series of images for the Arrow brand of shirt collars. He often used his lover Charles Beach as the model for the illustrations.

Upon his death in 1951, Leyendecker left half of his estate to Beach, who died just a few months later.

Remembering Those in Uniform

Before "Don't Ask, Don't Tell," gay and lesbian U.S. veterans served in the shadows. Among them was Henry Gerber, who served in the US Army during WWI and WWII. In 1924, he founded the first gay civil rights group in the U. S., based in Chicago.

lasting gay magazine in the U.S. When it was confiscated by Postal officials, he helped bring the landmark US Supreme case that ultimately preserved freedom of speech in the mail.

Don Slater served in the US Army during WWII and in 1952 cofounded "One" magazine. It was the first long-

Sarah David served in the WAVES during WWII and escaped a lesbian witch hunt. After serving, she participated in the Gay Games, winning a gold medal in swimming.

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HISTORY AND CULTURE

the
Rainbow
minute

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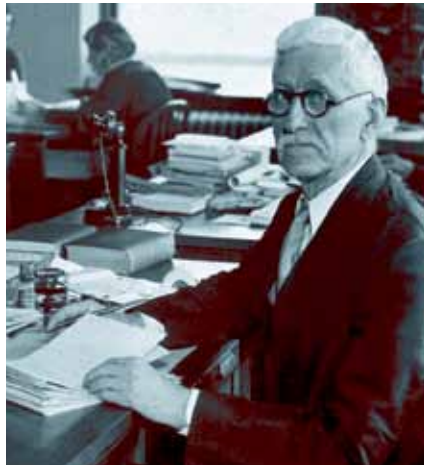
When Is An Indian Not An Indian?

HERE'S A QUESTION for the Thanksgiving season: when is an Indian tribe not an Indian tribe? When they exist in Virginia, apparently. Throughout the early 20th century, after the early years of outright genocide by incoming Europeans (check the history of the Paspahegh Indians, for example) many surviving Virginia Indians began to reorganize into official tribes, but their designation as "Indian" was opposed by Dr. Walter Ashby Plecker, the head of the Bureau of Vital Statistics in Virginia from 1912-1946.

According to J. Douglas Smith, writing in the *Journal of Southern History*, Plecker was an avowed white supremacist and advocate of eugenics. He wanted to prevent miscegenation, or marriage between races, and thought that a decreasing number of mulattoes meant that more "mixed" race individuals were passing as white, including Indians. In response, Plecker along with two other white supremacists, helped to draft the "Racial Integrity Act of 1924."

According to Tori Talbot, writing in encyclopediavirginia.org, "The legislation [which was passed by the Virginia General Assembly] prohibited whites from marrying non-whites, and explicitly defined racial classifications by following what was euphemistically known as the one drop rule; that is, one drop of blood: "The term 'white person' shall apply only to such person as has no trace whatever of any blood other than Caucasian." All others were "colored." In addition, the law asked people to voluntarily register their racial identity with the Bureau of Vital Statistics, making the falsification of one's racial identity, or "color," on a marriage license or birth certificate a felony offense punishable by up to one year in prison." Thus, only two races were recognized in Virginia, "white" and "colored."

What this meant for the Indian tribes of Virginia was ominous, to say the least. The policy's legacy was effectively to erase "Indian" as an identity; a kind of genocide on paper.




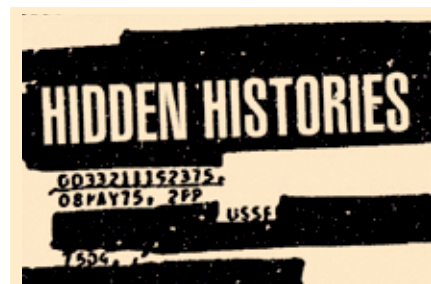
Making matters worse, Plecker also signed off on the Interior Department taking of Indian lands of the Ani-Stohini/Unami between 1907 and 1913, saying that there were no Indians left in Virginia.

Where this puts Plecker, historically, is among the fine record keepers of Nazi Germany, a fact not lost on Plecker himself. In a 1943 letter to John Collier, the U.S. commissioner of Indian affairs, he bragged that the state's records tracing racial ties back through the mid 1800's were at least as efficient as Hitler's "genealogical study" of the Jews.

The Racial Integrity Act was finally repealed in 1967, after the ruling of the U.S. Supreme Court case *Lovings v. Virginia*, which stated anti-miscegenation laws were unconstitutional. Today, at least eleven Virginia Indian tribes have been recognized formally by the state of Virginia and are fighting now for Federal recognition.

In 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a law to recognize the Virginia tribes at the Federal level, but in the U.S. Senate the bill has a hold on it placed for "jurisdictional concerns" by Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) who believes that requests for tribal recognition should be processed through the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a process the Virginia tribes cannot use because of the destruction of records under—wait for it—Dr. Walter Ashby Plecker.

Dr. Plecker died in 1947, a year after retirement from the Bureau of Vital statistics. Reports indicate he had a reputation for never smiling. 



Hidden Histories is written and produced by Jack R. Johnson and airs every Wednesday and Friday at 10 am on WRIR- 97.3 FM. It is also webcast at wrir.org



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Liz Humes

CHARMED LIVES AREN'T ALL THEY'RE CRACKED UP TO BE.

Their courses are all too often straight and narrow with no divergence, no side trips, never a cul-de-sac of remorse, nor a stultifying dead end. Maybe that's why those born with platinum spoons dangling from their mouths seem almost unbearably smug and boring. Nothing ever happened to them, challenged them, made them duel it out with reality, examine their own perceptions and beliefs. Things were done for them, or they were born with utter good fortune. Sad though, because they have no real understanding of human experience, which may, in its conclusion, be sweetest joy, but it is a joy that comes slowly, rising sometimes painfully through layers of defeat, self-loathing and even exquisite pain. Trauma tests us, reshapes us. It can hurt to the core and at times may crush us. In some people it does just that, snuffs out life before its natural end. Others just begin to run, frequently in dizzying circles that bring them back to the point of starting. But others learn to mold that pain into understanding and then compassion, which inevitably leads to a desire to know everyone's story and listen with an ear that is both sympathetic and empathic. It doesn't matter what that trauma was. What matters is how the woman or man, the boy or girl who felt the pain ultimately made it to work for them. How they made a story of their own life. Brought meaning to it all and moved on to the next chapter.

I first met Liz Humes about five years back when I was pitching *A Grain of Sand* to WRIR. She was extremely supportive of the show, which features audio stories about human beings, rich in sound, some real, some fictional. Liz got where I was going with it from the very beginning and I've been forever grateful to her. She understood; she had the ear for it. What's more, Liz comprehended the passion that drives such stories. You either have that passion, or you don't, and nothing will ever buy it for you, or rob you of it. Passion is what you own. And I knew Liz shared that passion.

We're sitting in the conference room at Stir Crazy, sequestered from the buzz of the coffee shop, enjoying comparative silence underscored by the white noise of the HVAC, which purrs and thrums, something alive behind the walls that surround us and the ceiling above us. Liz wears deep crimson lipstick in contrast to her pale complexion and dark brown eyes and hair that is almost black. She is animated as she speaks.

Though she was born in Scotch Plains, New Jersey, Liz grew up in Virginia Beach where she attended Kingston Elementary, Lynnhaven Junior High, and First Colonial High school. The family lived in the

middle class suburb of Kings Grant, and Liz, one of six children, served as president of various high school clubs and acted as secretary for student council. But her grades weren't great. Even during her high school years, Liz worked full-time at The Limited in Lynnhaven Mall, putting in 40-hour weeks, selling clothes. She had no plans to attend college and shortly after graduation moved out to Boulder, Colorado and then San Francisco and later Jacksonville, Florida. "I worked for Green Peace, I skied, smoked a lot of pot and took a lot of hallucinogenics," Liz says.

Eventually, she settled in Richmond where she took classes at Virginia Commonwealth University. She studied communication arts, English, sculpture, but never graduated. "I didn't want to commit to it," she says. For years she lived in Oregon Hill, when it still had grit to it, before gentrification stole away its soul. "I lived at 525 South Laurel Street," Liz says. "There were still tarpaper shacks. Six-year olds smoking cigarettes. There were still the fields down by the James River."

Somewhere in there a terrible thing happened to her, one of those trans-

forming traumas that drive you but never really leave you. Without telling me what happened, Liz says, "You can't drink it out of yourself. You're still here. I'm still here. There is this other mind swirling around that lives inside this body that is in this world and focuses."

She pauses for a long while, which is quite uncommon, and then says this slowly, the words coming one by one. You can see them forming in her eyes before they flow over those bright red lips. "I think that's what radio is," she says. "It's the mind that lives within the world. It's all of our ids. They get a chance to talk. It's who we are. The appearance of the voice within our minds. It's almost like we set that free by making radio. Radio is your internal voice." I nod vigorously in full agreement.

When Liz was 27 she had her first daughter, Sophie. During her pregnancy she worked for ADT security. "Right before Sophie was born I got married," she says. That marriage dissolved three years later.

She went to work for STYLE as the classified customer service manager and later became operations manager. "The learning curve was amazing," Liz says. "I did distribution and accounting for the quarterly reports." Liz moved up fast and then the publisher decided to cut both her salary and responsibilities. "The publisher didn't know what she was doing," she says. Liz left STYLE and slung sushi on the Slip for a while and then took a job at Punchline, when that magazine was about three years old. Hired as assistant publisher, Liz took over the classifieds and made them sing. "Then they offered me partnership and ownership and I became one of the owners of Punchline," she says. "Then I became full on publisher."

At Punchline she also fell in love with the man she would eventually marry—Pete Humes, one of magazine's founders. She began writing columns while at Punchline, in addi-

BY CHARLES MCGUIGAN

COMMITTING ACTS OF LOVE



PHOTOS REBECCA D'ANGELO

tion to being sales manager and handling distribution and billing, and almost anything else that had to do with the magazine.

They finally shut Punchline down in 2004 and Liz's husband, Pete, went to work for Royall and Company and then the Richmond Times-Dispatch, where he was a freelance writer doing feature-length profiles. And then he was hired by the TD to start up that mock alternative magazine called Brick Weekly, which always reeked of the parent corporation. "That was a tough time in our marriage," Liz recalls. "There was a lot of ego in my response. I was jealous he was doing a publication without me."

Throughout the interview, Liz keeps checking the broad face of the wall clock behind her. She's got to pick up cupcakes for her daughter Lola's birthday party at Holton Elementary School and she can't be late.

Three days after Lola was born to Pete and Liz Humes, they were told that their infant daughter had a congenital heart defect. "That was eight years ago," Liz tells me. "And I still wonder if I did something wrong, if I was accountable." Rationally, she knows she didn't do anything wrong, but the feelings still tug away. "That's the case with all women," she says. "We hold ourselves accountable for what happens."

Liz and Pete would later learn their daughter had pyloric stenosis, a narrowing of the pylorus, the lower part of the stomach through which food passes on its way to the small intestine. "She wasn't absorbing food," Liz remembers. "She was throwing up a lot. There was a period of two weeks that I went to a different specialist every day. Her esophagus was also all screwed up."

Lola had her first operation when she was just three years old. And later, surgeons would crack her sternum to get at the little girl's heart and mend a tear that had enlarged as the heart grew. Today, her daughter is doing just fine.

After the demise of Punchline and before the birth of her daughter, Liz did free-lance writing for Vegetarian

Times and Prevent Child Abuse Virginia. “Exactly one year after Punchline closed I started at WRIR,” she says. “I helped write the business plan along with Chris Maxwell and others. I did a media kit, I wrote press releases. There was the board but everybody else was doing all the work. None of the board members had any media experience.”

Liz committed herself fully to this experiment called WRIR, a low-power FM station, still struggling for its first on-air breath. “I wanted to do public radio, I love public radio,” she says. So she ended up raising money for the station before it even broadcast its first signal. As the director of development she was paid commission for her efforts. She would later serve as vice-president of the board, then president, along with other duties that included managing the talk show hosts and producing her own show—Wordy Birds.

In March of 2005 Liz produced her first installment of Wordy Birds. Since that time, she’s done well over 400 programs, each one a gem in its own light. She’s also served as the station’s NPR liaison and started its FCC committee.



It was always her program, though, that she loved first and foremost. She tells me about an interview she did some years back with Reginald Dwayne Betts who penned “A Question of Freedom: A Memoir of

Learning, Survival, and Coming of Age in Prison”.

“He was an honor student from Maryland just outside of D.C. and his friend got a gun and they carjacked this

guy,” she says. “They were caught and at 16-years old, this kid was sentenced as an adult and went to prison for ten years. It was a personal story, but the interview was about the criminal justice system. He discovered poetry and read non-stop everything he could get his hands on while he was in prison.” Liz pauses for breath, then adds, “The cadence and some the things this kid said about a justice system that is not just were absolutely riveting.”

Of all the interviews she’s ever done, her favorite was with Charles Shields who wrote both “Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee”, and “I Am Scout: The Biography of Harper Lee”. She had just completed an interview with David Sedaris and though she was taken by the author, the interview wasn’t particularly revealing. “David Sedaris is a lovely human being,” Liz says. “But he’s a celebrity and over-saturated, so it’s not a good story.”

But Charles Shields was another story. “Every word in that book he wrote on Harper Lee was perfect,” says Liz. “Exactly the right word at exactly the right time and that is just breathtaking when you see it and when you know it. And Charles spoke like that

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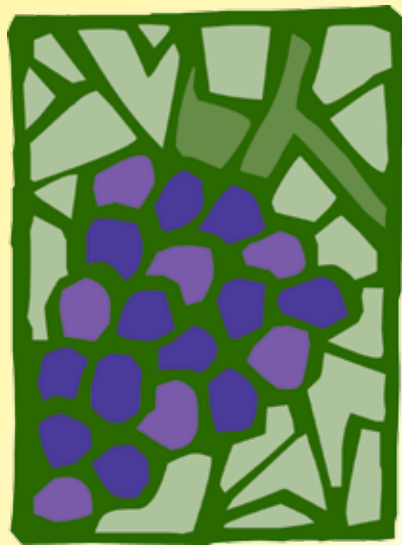


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too. It was my favorite interview.”

That interview also led to Liz’s work with the University of Mary Washington. “Charles Shields was heading up this program called the Chappell Great Lives Lecture Series,” Liz says. “Charles called me and said, ‘I want you to come up and help me with this lecture series.’ So for the next three years I interviewed their authors, I did these video introductions, I did stage introductions of the authors, and sometimes I would go to dinner

with them. It was 24 authors over four months—all biographers.” Though part of the university’s history curriculum, the lectures were soon open to the public and the response was astounding. More than a thousand people would pack the hall to hear the lectures every Tuesday and Thursday night. Liz considers the popularity of these lectures. “It has to do with the appreciation of history unique to the Civil War south,” she suggests. “We are all aware of our shadows.”

All the while, Liz honed her skills as producer, writer and interviewer. “I was sharpening my tools, getting my ten thousand hours in.”

Not long back, Liz Humes was hired professionally as a producer with WHRO/WHRV down in Hampton Roads. She commutes, spending time with her aging parents in Virginia Beach. It is a dream come true, what she has worked toward most of her life. “The people in the building where I work are amazing and it’s

really exciting to work with people who have spent their lives working toward the same goals with the same passions that you and I have worked towards,” she says to me.

Liz also works as a consultant to groups wanting to form their own low-power FM stations. After all, she had spoken before Congress prior to the passing of the National Local Community Radio Act, spoke to these representative about the success of WRIR. Eventually passed, this act has allowed for the pro-



liferation of LPFMs all across the country. "I went to Idaho last year for ten days for migrant Latino potato pickers who were starting up a station way up on the Snake River," she says. "Now, they're putting together funding for me to go to Alaska and work with an Inuit tribe there. I love doing all this work."

As a consultant she helps newbies realize their own dreams of the profound inner voice that is public radio at its best. "Since birth I've been a fighter for the underdog, I'm a believ-

er in the underdog," she says. "But I also believe that not everybody gets their fighting chance in the beginning of life, which doesn't mean that they need to be diminished as a person. So if we can just give equal voice or some voice to all people and an opportunity to express their stories I think it's a life worth living for all of us."

And then Liz Hume is off to buy cupcakes for an eight-year old girl with a distinctive voice and singular stories of her own. **NJ**

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MUCKRAKING

A Conspiracy of Common Sense?

by CAROL A.O. WOLF

THE GOOD NEWS is that a majority of the current members of the City of Richmond School Board have the innate good sense to know that now is not the time for them to be jetting around the country, staying at fancy hotels, wining and dining on the taxpayers' dime.

The bad news is that two of their colleagues appear to lack any semblance this same good sense. A recent investigation by WTVR's Lorenzo Hall recently revealed that so far this year, Richmond School Board members Tichi Pinkney-Eppes (9th-District) and Mamie Taylor (5th-District) each attended conferences in Miami, New Orleans and Portland.

Once you add up food, airfare, registration fees and hotel stays — including a stop at the Four Seasons in Miami — these two school board members spent more than \$16,000. Pinkney-Eppes' tab for her travels and accommodations was \$8,556. Taylor, who joined Pinkney-Eppes on those same trips to New Orleans, Portland and Miami, spent \$8,107. Taylor's travel expenses are not limited to out-of-town trips. Richmond taxpayers also pay for Taylor's gas when she drives from her house to every school board function. Receipts from December 2013 to March 2014 show she was reimbursed a total of \$199.

Rather than simply apologize for spending this kind of money on out-of-town junkets and acknowledge that these trips do not demonstrate the wisest use of tax dollars, these two school board members instead doubled-down and launched into all-out diva-drama-defenses that blamed the media, their own colleagues and even RPS staff members for "leaking" information and deliberately disseminating false information. (These accusations are all without any foundation).


And rather than attempt to share what they might have learned on these trips, they instead lobbed accusations at their detractors and accused one and all of being in some sort of a grand "conspiracy," a "cabal,"

designed to discredit them as African-American women.

Given the dire academic straits that so many of our Richmond Public Schools are in, there is absolutely no reason for city taxpayers to be paying for school board members to attend various "professional development" conferences in trendy locales.

If this School Board seriously wants to engage our community in being a part of improving our schools, the members should consider organizing a professional development conference here and invite experts from other parts of the country to travel to our city, stay in our hotels, eat at our restaurants, enjoy our entertainment venues and yes, invite our community members, our teachers and our families to attend this conference and learn what we can do to help fix our schools.

And if that is too big of a project for them to undertake, then how about restricting out-of-state-travel and designating the monies that will be saved go into a fund so that our students can learn computer coding skills on decent computers, have field trips, music, art and sports program improvements and equipment, scholarships, dance festivals, students newspapers?

Call it "A Conspiracy of Common Sense." 

Carol A.O. Wolf is a former City of Richmond School Board member [2002-2008] and an investigative journalist with more than 30 years of experience whose work has appeared in The Denver Post, Westword, Mother Jones Magazine, The Washington Post as a member of former investigative journalist and columnist Jack Anderson's Merry-Go-Round staff, the now defunct Richmond News Leader and was a Style Weekly writer and editor. She currently writes a blog "Save Our Schools" at saveourschools-getreal-richmond.blogspot.com, contributes Back Pages at Style Weekly and is a frequent guest on "Open Source" at WRIR radio in Richmond.




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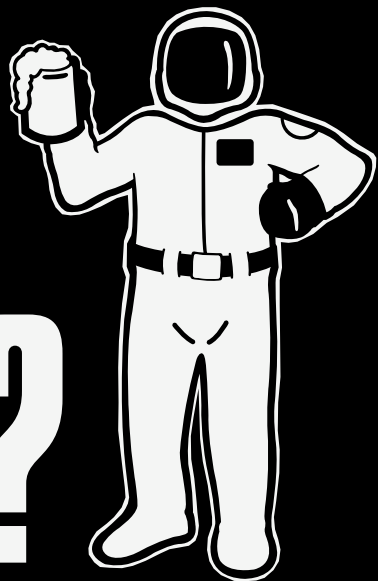
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SEASONAL OFFERINGS

McShin Foundation's 10th Annual Holiday Silent Auction & Party

IT WOULD PROBABLY BE impossible to determine just how many lives have been saved by the McShin Foundation which was founded ten years ago by John Shinholser. Located in the annex of Hatcher Memorial Baptist Church on Dumbarton Road, the McShin Foundation uses peer to peer recovery support, which employs recovering addicts and alcoholics to educate, mentor, and spread the message of recovery to individuals new to sobriety. They operate out of a 15,000 square foot center offering discussion groups, 12-step meetings, access to computers and phones, and assistance in recovery support services available in the Richmond area. The list of services McShin itself offers includes, among other things, transitional recovery houses along with substance abuse treatment and aftercare. McShin's CEO, Honesty Liller, a recovering addict herself, once told me that if it hadn't been for McShin and John Shinholser she would not be alive today. She now runs the foundation, with John serving as the board's emeritus president.

Come enjoy the McShin Foundation's Holiday Silent Auction & Party at 6 pm December 1 at the Virginia



War Memorial, 621 South Belvidere Street and learn a lot more about this remarkable organization. Enjoy holiday food and beverages, bid on some truly unique auction items and hear the words of Brian Cuban, best-selling author of "Shattered Image: My Triumph Over Body Dysmorphic Disorder," which chronicles his first-hand experiences living with, and recovering from, clinical depression, eating disorders, alcoholism, drug addiction and Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD).

Thursday Night Music At Stir Crazy



Thursday nights are now synonymous with live music at Stir Crazy on MacArthur Avenue in Bellevue.

On December 4 Hotel X returns to the coffee shop with its innovative and interpretative jazz inspired by the musical wealth of Africa and Latin America.

On December 18 Stir Crazy welcomes Elana Lisa and the Hot Mess, a female-

fronted band that plays anything from swing to folk and blues. Four-part harmonies are one of their signatures.

On December 19th My Son the Doctor known for their unique mixture Eastern European, Balkan, and Mediterranean folk music, with an emphasis on Yiddish, Hebrew, and Roma traditions.

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Henley Street Theatre and Richmond

Shakespeare present the world premiere of this Christmas classic as adapted for stage by local playwright Bo Wilson and directed by Gary C. Hopper. This four-person production runs November 28 through December 21 at VCU's Grace Street Theatre at 934 W. Grace Street. In addition to regular performances, there will be four talk-backs with the cast and the playwright.

For more information please visit www.HenleyStreetTheatre.org

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<p>PREVIEW GALA Friday, Dec 5th, 7-10 pm Adults Only Tickets \$20 advance, \$25 at door</p>	<p>NATIVITIES EXHIBIT & FAMILY/CHILDREN'S AREA Saturday, Dec 6th, 10am-8pm Sunday, Dec 7th, 9am-4pm</p>
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SEASONAL OFFERINGS

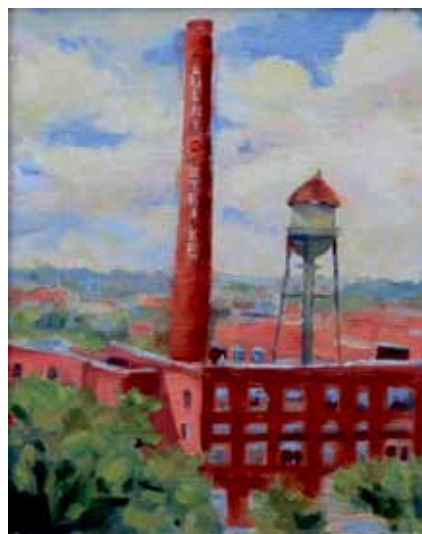
Concert Ballet Of Virginia's 39th Performance Of The Nutcracker



Thirty-nine years ago the Concert Ballet of Virginia began a tradition that has since resonated each holiday season with all Richmonders. The Concert Ballet of Virginia's Nutcracker Ballet is easily the best rendition of this holiday classic performed in the metro area, What's more it's family friendly, intimate and held in a number of locations in the surrounding counties. The full version

of The Nutcracker, about two hours long, will be held at the following venues: Monacan High School, 2:30 and 7:30 pm December 13, and 2:30 pm December 14; Atlee High School, 2:30 and 7:30 pm December 20, and 2:30 pm December 21. Adults \$24; Senior/Child \$20. For more information call 804-798-0945 or visit www.concertballet.com/

Virginia Plein Air Painters At Stir Crazy



Lucky Strike, oil on canvas, by Mary Peini at Stir Crazy.

It's only fitting that this show hangs in the heart of Bellevue at Stir Crazy through the holidays. All the paintings now on display were made during a paint-out in North Side Richmond on June 27 and September 6, 2014. So you'll see a lot of places you recognize.

The Virginia Plein Air Painters is a group of dedicated artists committed to communicating the value of local, spontaneous art that captures the light and emotion of the moment. The Virginia Plein Air Painters encourages broad-based participation and welcomes all. For more information visit www.virginiapleinairpainters.com

A Civil War Christmas At Firehouse Theatre

In the former capital of the Confederacy, Firehouse Theatre will perform A Civil War Christmas: An American Musical Celebration, by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Paula Vogel. The play runs November 20 through December 20, 2014.

show not only because we have a stellar cast of performers, musicians and artists working on it but also because the show itself is truly an 'American' Christmas Story," says director Pettiford-Wates.

For more information call 355-2001 or visit www.firehousetheatre.org

"I am very excited about directing the



rebecca d'angelo
PHOTOGRAPHY



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SEASONAL OFFERINGS

Christmas On MacArthur 2014 To Benefit Toys For Tots



Celebrate the central message of the season and jump start your holidays with Christmas on MacArthur, a day of family fun that solely benefits Toys for Tots. Festivities run from 11-4 pm Saturday, December 13 on the 4000 block of MacArthur Avenue in the heart of Bellevue. Make sure to bring an unwrapped toy with you the day of the event, or drop it off beforehand in the Toys for Tots boxes at many of our local merchants. Or, if you're a student at Holton Elementary or Albert Hill Middle you can drop the toy off at school. Every child who donates a toy will be eligible to enter a drawing for one of six brand new bicycles, courtesy of Bob Kocher, owner of Once Upon A Vine, and Tim McCaffrey, owner of The Cottage Gardener.

Headlining this year's event is a free concert on the MacArthur Avenue Stage with All Saints Catholic School Choir, 12:15 - 12:30; Susie and the G-Tones, 12:45-1:30; Amy Henderson, 1:45-2:15; and The Soul Proprietors, 2:30-4.

This year's Santa Parade will feature kids choirs, kids bands, the John Marshall High Marching Band, students of Holton Elementary School and Albert Hill Middle School, St. Andrew's Legion Pipe and Drums Corps, Benedictine Honor Guard, Police, Firefighters, Richmond

Police, U.S. Marines, Fireweed Farms Alpacas, antique cars, trucks and even a trolley, courtesy of Peter Francisco. And much, much more, including a visit from St. Nick (aka Joe Stankus, owner of Classic Touch Cleaning), who will hear kids' Christmas wishes directly after the parade.

Scores of vendors offering their handmade arts and crafts will be on hand. Vendors interested in participating should contact Teri Phipps at vendor@bellevueweb.org as soon as possible. Booths are 10'X10'. Indoor spaces cost \$45; outdoor spaces cost \$35. Vendors must be on site by 9 am the day of the event and have their vehicles off the street by 11 am. Make your reservations now; space is limited.

Please help us make Christmas better for those who have little by supporting Toys for Tots. Christmas on MacArthur is now the largest single donor to in the Richmond area to Toys for Tots, sponsored annually by the U.S. Marines. For more information contact Mike LaBelle at the taz23227@yahoo.com

This event is sponsored each year by the Bellevue Merchants Association, North of the James and Holton Elementary School.

NorthSide Grille

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Monday through Saturday: 11am till closing*

Sunday: 10am till closing*

Join us early for brunch or dollar tacos later in the day

*limited menu after 10 pm

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A circular poster for the 11th Annual GINTER PARK HOLIDAY SHOW. The text is arranged in a circular pattern. At the top, it says '11th Annual' in a cursive font. Below that, 'GINTER PARK' is written in large, bold, block letters. Underneath, 'HOLIDAY SHOW' is written in a smaller, bold font. The date and time are 'SATURDAY DECEMBER 6, 2014 10AM-5PM' and the address is '3421 HAWTHORNE AVE, RVA 23222'. At the bottom, it says 'over 40 artisans' with decorative arrows. There are three banners at the bottom: 'Free Admission', 'LIVE MUSIC, FREE PARKING', and 'Great Food!'.

39th annual Nutcracker

- Nov. 22 Nutcracker Suite;
Williamsburg Regional Library
- Nov. 30 Nutcracker Readings; Wilton House
- Dec 13 & 14 Monacan High School Theatre
in Chesterfield
- Dec 20 & 21 Atlee High School Theatre in Hanover

798-0945 concertballetofvirginia@yahoo.com www.concertballet.com



SEASONAL OFFERINGS

Kick Off The Holidays With An Extra Helping Of Taters



Craig Evans and the Taters will be performing four holiday shows this season, beginning 5 pm December 1 with the lighting of the Christmas Tree at the Jefferson Hotel. You can also catch the Taters at Rumbleseat Grill 8 pm December 13 and on New Year's Eve at JJ's Grille. And you don't want to miss The TaterSons annual Christmas Show at Ashland Coffee & Tea at 8 pm December 20. Music critic Gordon Ely, in a review Billboard, described the Taters as "determinedly- and gleefully-forging a path with no limits or end in sight . . . the Taters draw up a formula that can rightly be claimed as their own"

7th Annual No Room at the Inn At Church Of The Redeemer




In the past six years, No Room at the Inn has raised tens of thousands of dollars and built six homes for people in Haiti who had had no homes. The beauty and the wonder of it is that funds are raised through Nativity scenes, the same story told over and over again in every language and every culture, a story of homelessness and the birth of an infant in a stable, an infant who would be God made man born of an unwed Jewish mother. In the end God knows us intimately, understands our yearnings and fears, our loathing and joy, and refuses judgment reminding us that there is an ember of the Divine in every human being, an ember that glows brightest in those who have the least.

When you stand in in the parish hall at the Church of the Redeemer, particularly when it is dark outside and there are no crowds within, there is a cathedral hush and each Nativity of the hundreds scattered throughout the room seems to have a life of its own.

A couple years back with my kids in tow I spoke with a woman who was wandering up and down the aisles inspecting each Nativity. "When the people are all gone and you're here by yourself with the Nativities you feel an immense power," she said. "That's the only way I can describe it. They have an energy force all their own and you can feel it in the room and it's a remarkable experience."

And it's true. I don't know why. But experience for yourself and remember again the central message of this celebration of light. It has nothing to do with materialism.

Preview Gala, Friday, December 5, 7 pm-10 pm, \$20 in advance, \$25 at the door, adults only ; Exhibit & Family/Children's Area, Saturday, December 6 and Sunday December 7. Church of the Redeemer is located at 8275 Meadowbridge Road in Mechanicsville.

For more information and advance tickets please call 804-928-9621 or visit www.churchredeemer.org/no-room 

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During the winter months, many of our farmers offer produce year 'round from their greenhouses. So, there are always lots of root crops and green vegetables. The chickens never stop laying eggs. We always have fresh baked goods on sale. And of course, meats like chicken, pork, lamb and beef are always available. Inside Lakeside Farmers' Market Too you'll find Virginia wines, pasta, seafood, pies, cakes and assorted creations from unique artisans.



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