

# PLEASANT LIVING

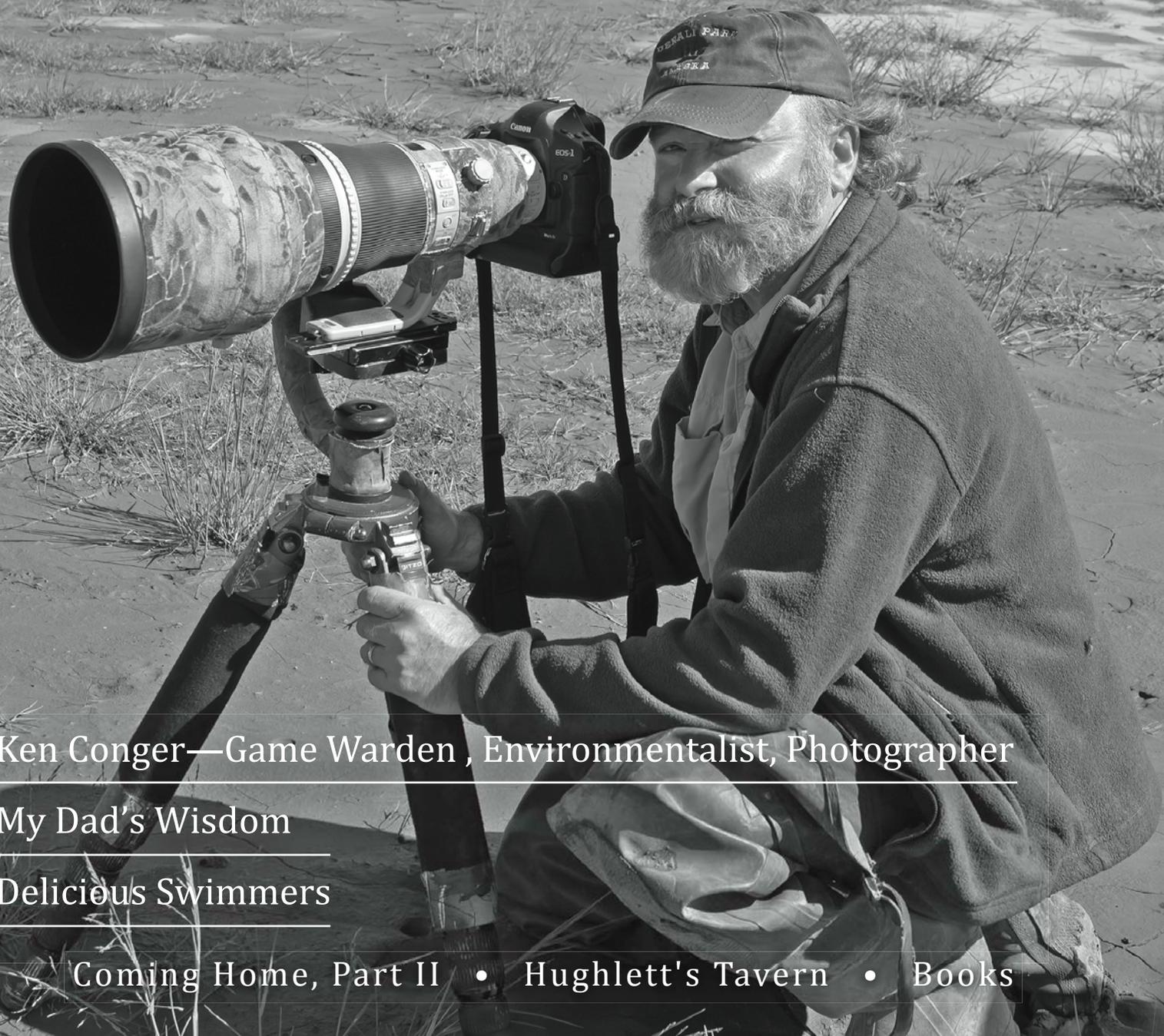
A Magazine for the Chesapeake Bay and River Country



SINCE 1989

**Complimentary**  
**JULY / AUGUST 2015**

26 YEARS



Ken Conger—Game Warden, Environmentalist, Photographer

My Dad's Wisdom

Delicious Swimmers

Coming Home, Part II • Hughlett's Tavern • Books



HOME DESIGNED BY WILLIAM DARWIN PRILLMAN & ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

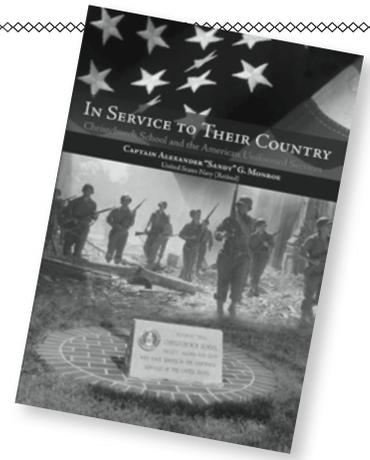
## WALDEN'S CONSTRUCTION

PROVIDING QUALITY SERVICES SINCE 1983

With 20 years experience serving the Northern Neck and Middle Peninsula, we help build dreams one home at a time. Whether you desire a new home or renovations to a family farmhouse, when quality counts, count on Walden's Construction.

559 Moores Creek Drive, Deltaville, Virginia 23043  
804.776.9753

[WaldensConstruction.com](http://WaldensConstruction.com)



## In Service to Their Country

BY CAPTAIN ALEXANDER G. MONROE, USN (RET.)



PLEASANT LIVING  
BOOKS

[www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com](http://www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com)

### ORDERING INFORMATION

This fall, order direct from the publisher at [www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com/books](http://www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com/books), or call 804.644.3090. Also available at amazon.com, bn.com and from your local bookseller. \$15.95 plus shipping/handling.

Your personal express lane



You are ready for take-off



"I'm home early again."

## What if there was a high-way lane just for you?

**NeckRide.org** helps you make the most of the time you have each day. We connect Northern Neck commuters with similar commuters to help you save time and money so you can live more of life.



Share the Ride  
or Park & Ride



ExpressLanes

**NeckRide.org** is a free information service for commuters to help coordinate carpooling and Park & Ride in and from the counties of the Northern Neck – Lancaster, Northumberland, Richmond and Westmoreland.

## neckride.org

Save Time. Save Money. Live Life.

804 333-6683



# PLEASANT LIVING

A Magazine for the Chesapeake Bay and River Country



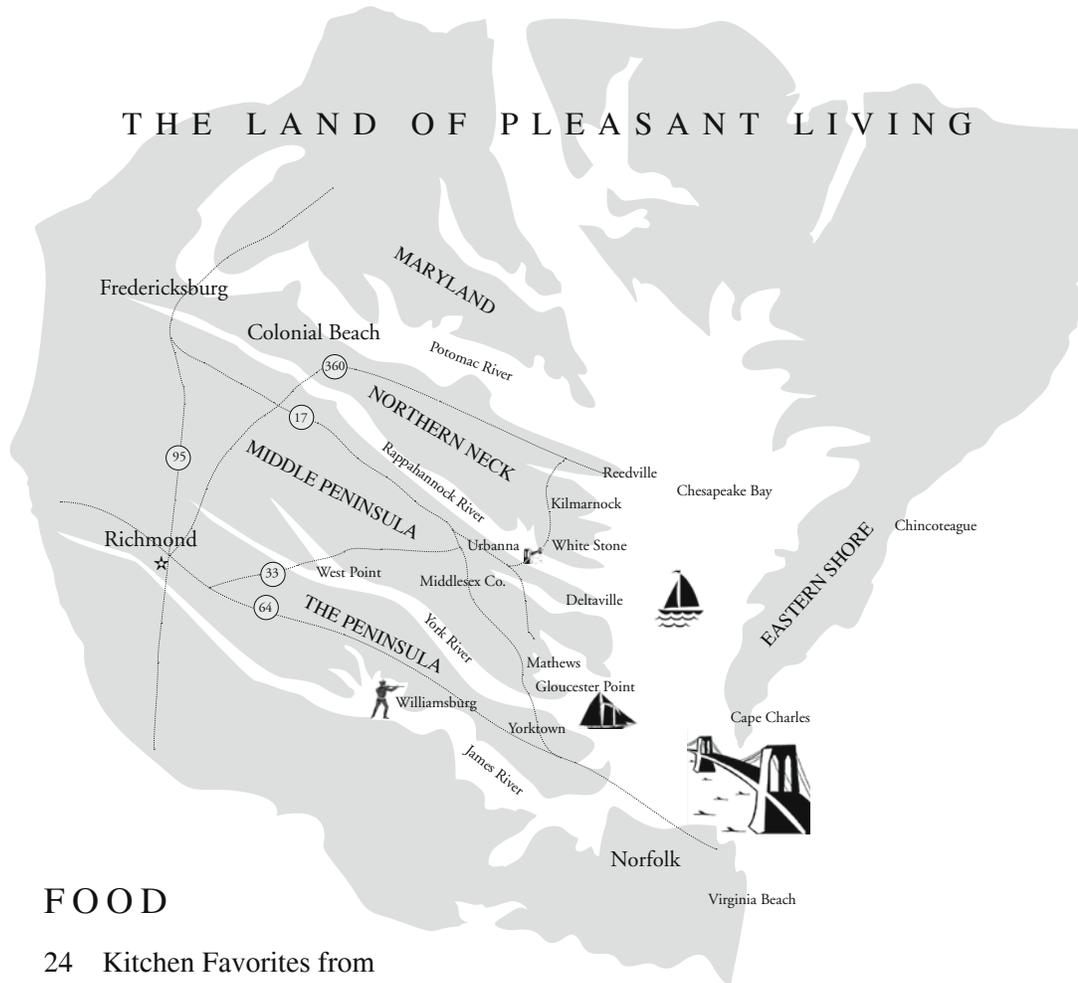
SINCE 1989

Volume 29, Number 4

JULY / AUGUST 2015

## C O N T E N T S

### THE LAND OF PLEASANT LIVING



#### FEATURE

- 5 Wildlife's Greatest Connection  
*By Gabriel Boudali*

#### HISTORY

- 8 Northumberland's Treasure  
*By Madeline Baxter*
- 14 Another Lee, Another Love  
*By Thea Marshall*
- 22 My Dad's Wisdom  
*By John "Sonny" Robinson*

#### NATURE

- 10 Coming Home  
*By Stephen Southall*

#### BOOKS

- 18 Remembering for the Both of Us  
*By Peyton Cocker*

#### COMMUNITY

- 16 Longtime Summertime Tradition  
*By Alyssa Brew*

#### FOOD

- 24 Kitchen Favorites from Pleasant Living  
*By Alyssa Brew*

- 26 Delicious Swimmers  
*By Dan Gill*

#### OUTDOORS

- 20 Summertime Angling  
*By Steve Scala*

#### DEPARTMENTS

- 3 Editor's Journal
- 28 Advertisers' Directory

#### ON THE COVER

Ken Conger, Lake Clark National Park, Alaska.  
Photo by Jose Hernandez

Visit us ONLINE @  
[pleasantlivingmagazine.com](http://pleasantlivingmagazine.com)

**SUBSCRIBE!**





*Flowering Fields Bed & Breakfast*  
 "Where Southern Hospitality Begins"

Breakfast includes famous Crabcakes  
 Near Irvington, Kilmarnock & White Stone  
 232 Flowering Field - White Stone, VA 22578  
 RESERVATIONS: (804) 435-6238  
 floweringfieldsbandb@gmail.com  
 www.floweringfieldsbandb.com

**M&M**  
 BUILDING  
 SUPPLY

**ATRIUM**  
 WINDOWS AND DOORS  
 NOW AVAILABLE

**HARTFIELD**  
 804 776-7777

10859 General Puller Hwy.

**PORT HAYWOOD**  
 804 725-7156

3625 New Point Comfort Hwy.



- ✿ River-inspired home and garden products
- ✿ Beautiful clothing, jewelry, handbags, shoes and more!

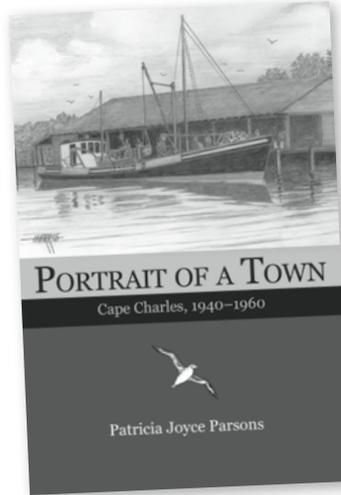
Conveniently located in the heart of the neighborhood at 417 6<sup>th</sup> Street in beautiful downtown West Point

Open 6 days a week  
 Mon.— Fri. 10 a.m. — 6 p.m.  
 Sat. 10 a.m. — 5 p.m.

For more information call 804.843.DOCK

Check us out on 

*Visit us soon!*



*Portrait of a Town* takes the reader on a nostalgic, invigorating journey through Cape Charles from a child's-eye-view—from playing in a swamp, to jumping off the railroad's coal chute, to fishing the barrier islands that line Virginia's oceanfront. In this collection of vignettes, Patricia Parsons portrays life in Cape Charles during World War II and beyond, from the 1940s to the 1950s.

"In *Portrait of a Town*, Pat Parsons reflects with warm nostalgia on her experiences growing up in a lovely and proud Victorian bayside village on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Her delightful portrayal of daily life during WWII, and of Cape Charles's struggle to survive the changing times, provide valuable insight into the history of the area."

— John M. Barber, Fellow, American Society of Marine Artists

**ORDERING INFORMATION**

Order direct from the publisher at [www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com/books](http://www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com/books), or call 804.644.3090. Also available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [bn.com](http://bn.com) and from your local bookseller. \$15.95 plus shipping/handling.



Stay comfortable  
 this season with  
 great customer  
 care from NWP

**NWP** The Energy Company  
 NOBLETT • WARE • PEOPLES

**SPECIALIZING IN  
 QUALITY MARINE FUELS**

Proudly serving the Northern Neck and surrounding counties with quality products and exceptional service!

**Authorized Valvtect Distributor  
 Non Ethanol Gas & Marine Fuel Provider  
 Delivery, Installation & Service to Marinas & Residential Locations**

**Propane**

**Bio-fuels** 

**Petroleum Products**

 **NWP Oil & Propane**  
 P. O. Box 426  
 Kilmarnock VA 22482

**800 633-4467** Toll-free

**804 435-1126** Office

# EDITOR'S JOURNAL

## Love in the Kitchen

---

I've always admired the skill of an accomplished cook who has the intuition, palate and imagination to prepare a great lunch, dinner or breakfast with ease and a smile. But I've learned that it's more than skill that creates a great dinner—and more than what's served on the plate. It's also the love that drifts through the kitchen, along with the fragrance of basil and garlic. My wife Tanya and I spend many pleasant hours in the kitchen, listening to great music, enjoying a glass of wine and great conversation. For us, preparing and sharing delicious food is a very special and intimate time, and we love how it wraps the end of the day in a pleasant cocoon.

Perhaps you've known the cook whose stress level rises with the bread dough, and who measures every teaspoon with a tablespoon of fretful intensity. To my mind, this is the opposite of what cooking should be. Food should be prepared and served with love, patience and good company, and for us, *fresh* and *healthy* are key elements. We haven't created a garden yet at our new home, but this is coming. In the meantime, we frequent one of the largest and most diverse farmer's markets in Richmond where we can find the finest local produce, eggs, seafood, honey and other goods from nearby farms. The food revolution is truly alive in the River Country. More people are paying closer attention to where their food comes from, how it's grown and how that food reflects the grower. Does buying that particular head of lettuce support a local farmer who keeps his crop free from chemicals, or is it the product of an impersonal super-corporation whose main concern is the bottom line? When was that salmon really caught? Who planted, nurtured and harvested that tomato you're eating? It's nice when it comes from your own backyard.

In our own backyard at PL, we celebrate fresh and healthy food and local businesses, where you can know the craftsmen and the growers. We also celebrate pleasant summer days, when the tomatoes, cucumbers and melons are colorful, fresh, and juicy, when there's dancing in the kitchen and plenty of hard crabs and love to go around.

Here's to the pleasant life in River Country!



Editor/Publisher

---

### READERS WRITE

We want to tell your stories. For our September/October, tell us about your favorite Autumn event in the River Country. . .

Email us at [pleasantlivingmag@gmail.com](mailto:pleasantlivingmag@gmail.com), or mail your story to  
PL READERS WRITE, 5 S. 1st St., Richmond, Virginia 23219. **DEADLINE: August 10, 2015.**



PRESIDENT / FOUNDER / EDITOR  
Robert H. Pruett  
*editorpleasantliving@gmail.com*

CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
Tom Trezn  
*brandylanedesign@gmail.com*

ADVERTISING DESIGN  
Tom Trezn

PUBLISHER'S ASSISTANT  
Alyssa Brew

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
Madeline Baxter, Gabriel Boudali, Alyssa Brew,  
Peyton Cockrell, Dan Gill, Thea Marshall, Robert  
Pruett, John "Sonny" Robinson,  
Steve Scala, Stephen Southall

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS  
Ken Conger

ADVERTISING SALES  
Nuala Galbari, Stephanie Harding,  
Paul Kelley, Robert Pruett

*For print and online  
advertising information*  
804.644.3090  
*pleasantlivingmag@gmail.com*

EDITORIAL OFFICES  
5 South First Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
804.644.3090 • Fax: 804.644.3092  
*pleasantlivingmag@gmail.com*

BUSINESS OFFICE  
P.O. Box 583 Kilmarnock, VA 22482  
804.435.6900 • Fax: 804.435.9812

*Pleasant Living* is published in January, March, May, July, September and November by Pleasant Living Magazine LLC. Third class postage paid at Richmond, Virginia. Subscriptions: \$24/year. Canada and U.S. possessions, add \$6. Copyright 2015, *Pleasant Living*. All rights reserved. Reproduction in whole or in part, without written permission, is strictly prohibited. *Pleasant Living* accepts no responsibility or liability for the products advertised herein. Manuscripts, photographs, artwork and queries are invited. Submissions will not be returned, and no responsibility can be assumed for unsolicited materials.

[www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com](http://www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com)

# CONTRIBUTORS

**Madeline Baxter** is a poet, student and an intern at Brandylane Publishers in Richmond. She also works as a lifeguard at the YMCA.

**Gabriel Boudali** holds a B.A. in English from Virginia Commonwealth University. He lives and writes in Richmond.

**Alyssa Brew** is assistant to the editor at PL. She is a new mother and a student at Virginia Commonwealth University.

**Peyton Cockrell** holds a B.A. in English from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is currently working as an intern at Brandylane Publishers in Richmond.

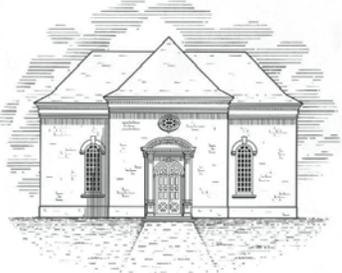
**Dan Gill** owned and operated Something Different in Urbanna, until his death in October 2014. In addition to being a master of barbecue and many other culinary arts, he was a writer and food historian.

**Thea Marshall** is a professional writer, broadcaster, actor, and producer. She writes and broadcasts original commentaries on and about the people, places, history, culture and current issues relating to the Northern Neck for National Public Radio's Richmond/Northern Neck stations, WCVE/WCNV.

**John "Sonny" Robinson** was born in Calvert County, Maryland and grew up on Solomons Island. He currently resides in Lake Ashton, a gated community in Lake Wales, Florida and summers at the Beth Page Campground in Urbanna, Virginia.

**Steve Scala** has spent his entire life in Southern Maryland and the Northern Neck, where his family roots go back to the 1600s. Along with his family, Steve spends much of his time on the waters, and in the fields and woods of the lower Northern Neck.

**Stephen Southall** graduated from the University of Virginia with a Ph.D. in psychology and has taught at Lynchburg College since 1974. He is past-president of the American Boxwood Society. When not teaching or working with his English boxwood, he and his wife Diane enjoy traveling in their fifth wheel RV with their black lab, River.



**HISTORIC CHRIST CHURCH**  
CIRCA 1735  
*Preservation. Education. Inspiration.*

**Visitor Season Begins April 1**

- Church Tours
- Museum Exhibitions
- New Gift Shop Items
- Special Events

---

[christchurch1735.org](http://christchurch1735.org)  
A National Historic Landmark



# Wildlife's Greatest Connection

*A Former Virginia Game Warden Goes Behind the Lens*

By Gabriel Boudali

**K**en Conger is “all about the critters,” as he likes to call the fauna he has spent the better part of his life observing and protecting. His passion for wildlife first gripped him at the age of ten when he attended a campfire program in Shenandoah National Park. He tells the story of how he tugged on his father’s shirtsleeve after hearing a park ranger’s presentation, saying, “Pops, that’s what I want to do when I get older.”

That aspiration never wavered, and soon after college he found himself in the position of game warden and protecting wildlife. His career in wildlife protection lasted for over thirty years, including service in Nor-

thumberland County and the Middle Peninsula, as well as a two-year stint in Alaska’s famous Denali National Park.

In 2010, Conger made a unique but not surprising career change. Shifting the focus of his passion for wildlife, he became a wildlife photographer and continues his work as a conservationist, preserving in stunning photographs the natural beauty of the world’s most fascinating large and small mammals and birds. In his new book, *Wildlife’s Greatest Connection: A Mother and Her Young*, a captivating collection of photographs reveals moments of animal behavior never witnessed before. A magnificent array of species are presented in their natural habitat and bathed in a warm, almost sublime glow

of light that diffuses through his images.

When asked about why he chose the theme of motherhood, Conger laughs and says, “Who doesn’t like a baby anything?” It’s true. From the wild cats and primates of Africa and Asia, to the bears and avians of the Alaskan wilds, one cannot help from emitting *oohs* and *aahs* of delight when viewing these scenes of mothers and their babies. Conger’s work has incredible power.

The images in Conger’s book don’t only showcase the work of a highly-skilled photographer, but reveal a well-traveled ambassador for wildlife conservation. Having worked on six of the seven continents, he has explored most of the world’s ecosystems, observing



*Ken Conger at work in the Northern Neck.*

many endangered species along the way. A description and the circumstances surrounding the shot accompany each of the over one hundred images in his book—insights that give readers a sense of what it's like to be a wildlife photographer. It is clearly a profession that requires determination, perseverance, the technical and artful skill of a photographer, and a sensitive ethical attitude common among guardians of the environment.

After thirty years as a game warden, Conger has plenty of stories about stalking poachers, often alone in the middle of the woods, confronting armed violators who are sometimes intoxicated. It's a dangerous job, he says, one often overlooked by the general public. That's why he has decided to donate ten percent of the proceeds from his book to the Back a Ranger program managed by the World Wildlife Fund, a program instituted to provide game wardens all over the world with the resources and support they need to police crimes committed against the wildlife and the environment.

"The same bylaws for ethical hunting apply to wildlife photography,"

says Conger, who points to the North American Nature Photography Association's principles of field practice as a touchstone for his work. It's that combination of perspectives that makes Conger's work unique, moving from wildlife official to passionate observer, simultaneously upholding the virtues of wildlife protection while presenting wildlife to others in truly arresting pho-

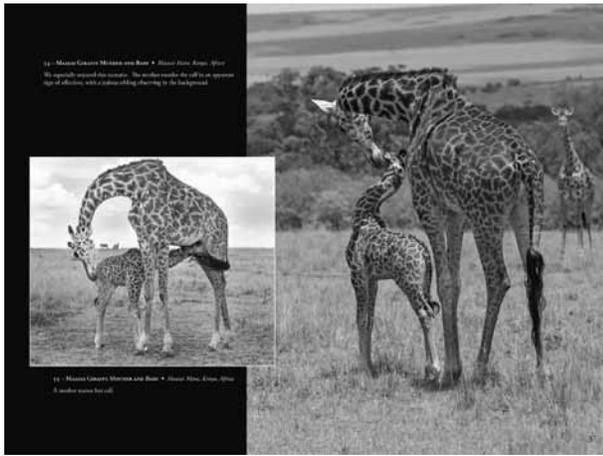
tographs. Perhaps wildlife's greatest connection is Conger himself, striking the delicate but appropriate balance between authority figure and artist.

A few days after the interview for this article, Conger set off yet again, this time to Chile, on a mission to capture images of the elusive Patagonian puma. For this trip he'd have a guide lead him to known stomping grounds of this reclusive wild cat. A trip with a guide is a luxury (or locally mandated, Conger acknowledges). He says he prefers to do his own research for wildlife location. In describing his typical process for capturing a shot, it's surprising how much legwork is involved.

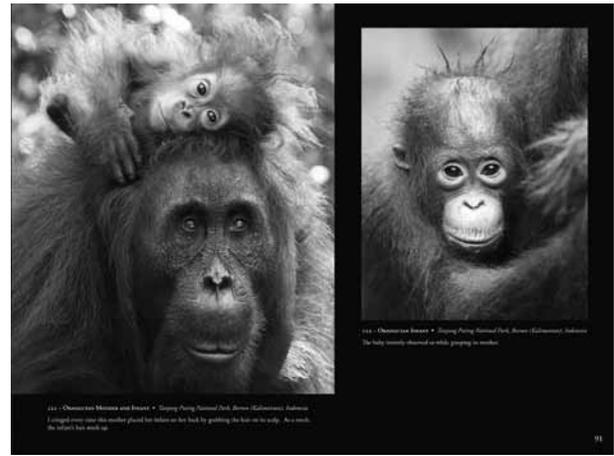
After deciding on a subject, say the loon for example, a large aquatic bird inhabiting northern latitudes, Conger's first step is to look for images of loons on the Internet. "I'm a dime-a-dozen guy," Conger admits. "There are thousands of photographers out there doing the same job as me." Wildlife photography obviously attracts many enthusiasts, from hobbyists to professionals, so the Internet is a great resource for studying the work that's already been done. Conger sifts through images of loons, choosing dozens that exhibit the qualities he himself would look for in the field. Then he digs further, mapping the locations where these images



*Lynx photo captured on a summer trip to Alaska.*



**MAASAI GIRAFFE MOTHER AND BABY**  
*Maasai Mara, Kenya, Africa*



**ORANGUTAN MOTHER AND INFANT**  
*Tanjung Puting National Park, Borneo (Kalimantan), Indonesia*

were shot. Based on those findings, he narrows down what seems to be the region where he'd most likely get his desired shot—in this case, a mother with a chick riding on her back.

Next, he contacts local fish and game authorities, asking what they know about the loon population in the area. Conger then gets in touch with local photographers, finding out about their sightings and access to loon territory. Like a private investigator who works somewhere between municipal police and the street, Conger combines his experience as wildlife officer with his fieldwork as nature photographer to ensure he cracks the case, or in this sense, gets his unique shot.

"That's how it goes when everything works the way it should," Conger says with a laugh. Part of what draws him to the profession is the unexpected. He describes another endeavor, this time stalking beavers. He'd tried for years to get a shot of a beaver, specifically one "chewing on a tree." Beavers are nocturnal, so in Virginia he never had any luck. Then one summer in Alaska, where the light shines twenty hours a day, he made it his goal to finally get his coveted shot. He tracked a family of beavers to their dam and sat anxiously watching and waiting. All of a sudden, he noticed a lynx in the distance stealthily approaching. As the lynx unsuccessfully

lunged for the beaver, it heard Conger's shutter fire and looked directly into his lens, awarding him the shot of a lifetime.

Conger has been taking photographs since an early age, when his father gave him his grandfather's Argus film camera. It wasn't until one fateful day in Yellowstone National Park when he fell into a creek with his Minolta 101—his outdated, yet beloved camera—that he decided to invest in some professional equipment. Since then Conger has had wild success capturing images of rare critters all over the world. Aside from the Patagonian puma, Conger has several other animals on his bucket list. He plans to start training soon for a trek through the Himalayas in search of the legendary snow leopard.

Conger has two pieces of advice for those interested in their own wildlife photography. First, he says, "It's not about the equipment, but the person behind the lens." When he's out in the field, Conger likes to cleanse electronically, not allowing himself to carry a phone or any other distracting technology. He takes a meditative approach to being in the wilderness. One must have a certain frame of mind to do this work, Conger asserts; there has to be an unquestionable appreciation for the surrounding environment. The second bit of advice is to study simple things first. You don't need exotic locations to

make a great photograph. Look to your own backyard or local parks for wildlife's greatest moments, he says, and you will always be surprised if you look hard enough. *pl*



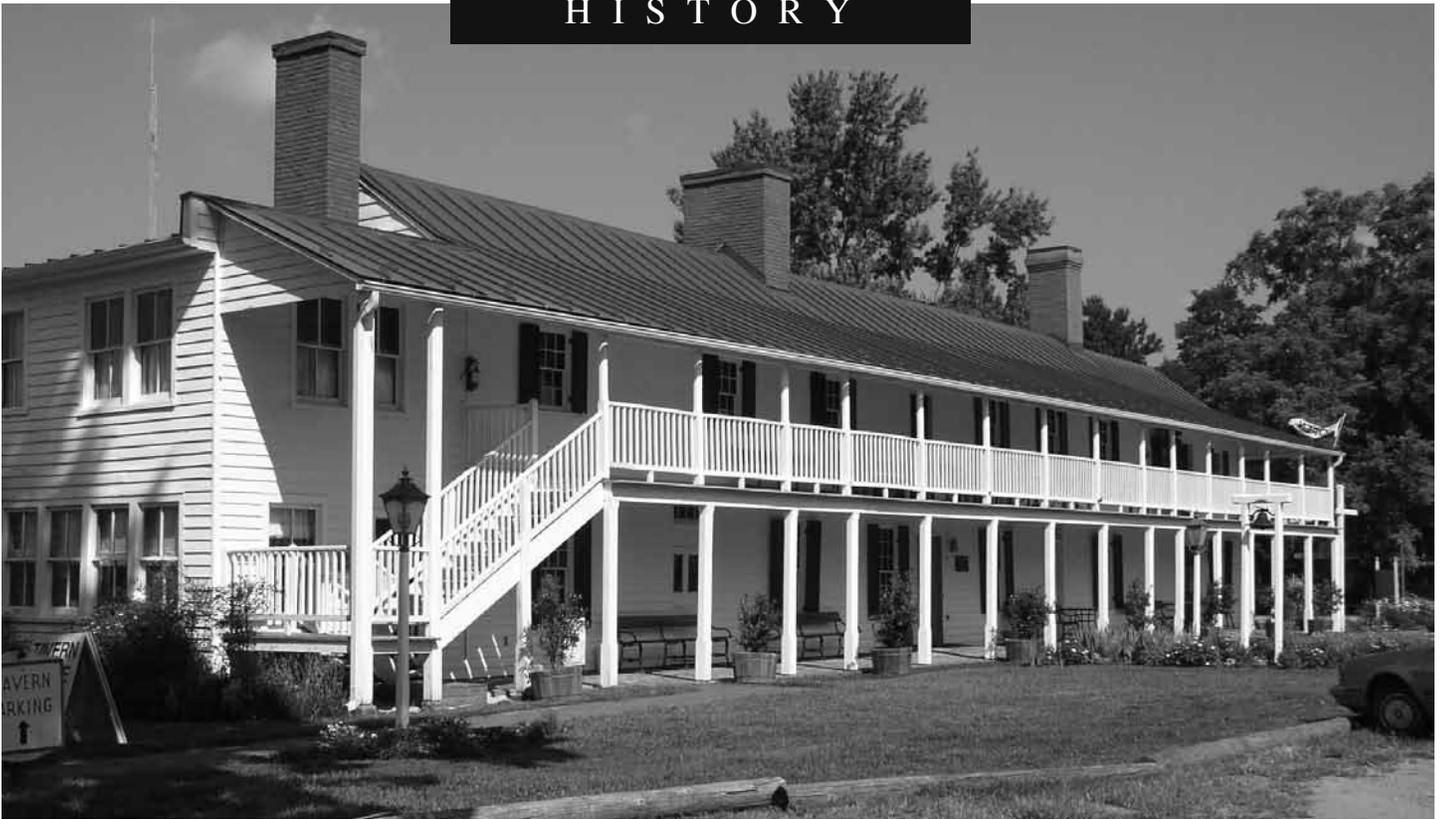
**WILDLIFE'S GREATEST CONNECTION**

*A MOTHER AND HER YOUNG*

By **KEN CONGER**

Throughout his life, award-winning wildlife photographer Ken Conger has visited dozens of national parks and wildlife refuges, documenting the candid behaviors of wildlife in their natural habitats. Over the course of his long career in wildlife protection and conservation, he's witnessed thousands of interactions between animals of all species—but no type of interaction has been as memorable as that which occurs between mothers and their offspring. Now, he invites you to share in the experience of these fascinating moments from behind his camera lens.

Retail: Hardcover 12 x 9" - \$29.95  
 Available from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [bn.com](http://bn.com), and from the publisher at [www.brandytanepublishers.com](http://www.brandytanepublishers.com), or call 804.644.3090



*The tavern today*

# Northumberland's Treasure

## *Rice's Hotel / Hughlett's Tavern*

---

By Madeline Baxter; Photos Courtesy of Hughlett's Tavern Foundation

---

**N**estled just off of Route 360 as it runs through Heathsville, there sits a building with more history to its name than any other structure in Virginia's Northern Neck. Established before 1795, founder John Hughlett built Hughlett's Tavern as a place for visitors to the Heathsville Courthouse to stay overnight or longer. For over 150 years, the tavern was a central location for social gatherings and excitement.

"Today we have TV, the Internet and radio, but in colonial times, a trip to the Northumberland Courthouse was a highlight," says Rice's Hotel/ Hughlett's Tavern Foundation Executive Director, Corinne Becker.

The building stood as a tavern until 1866, when John Rice purchased and enlarged it to operate as a hotel. After centuries of management, Hughlett's Tavern/ Rice's Hotel still serves as a Heathsville and a Virginia landmark.

However, time knows how to take its toll on history. By the 1990s, the building had deteriorated and was targeted for destruction. But where there is a rich history and a heritage, there always seems to be heart and sentiment as well. A group called the Rice's Hotel-Hughlett's Tavern Foundation was formed in an effort to fight for the building's right to remain standing, as well as to begin work on necessary renovations. The leader of the group was a retired construction supervisor from Alexandria named Dan Purvis, and under him were the volunteers who dedicated their time to reconstructing Hughlett's Tavern to what it once was. One of these volunteers, Bob Robinson, affectionately named the group the "Tavern Rangers," a name they still use today.

"Many of these faithful supporters have now passed on, but their legacy is here for all to see," says Becker. The group successfully banded together and funded the renovation



*Farmer's market this past May*



*The tavern of yesteryear (date unknown)*

efforts, and the building reopened as a restaurant and community space in 2002.

Now, all of the passion for and dedication to the building is on display. As the Hughlett's Tavern name suggests, the building contains a restaurant, as well as a pub for visitors to enjoy. But there is so much more culture and heritage resting inside and outside of the structure's historic walls, including the blacksmith shop, transportation building, and old jail, which preserve the richness of colonial history. Inside, the appropriately named Heritage Arts Center is one of the main attractions. Visitors can come and peruse locally crafted art on display, purchase items in the gift shop, and view the many artist studios located in the gallery. Among these studios is the Tavern Quilt Guild, where the members may be found perfecting their craft at the loom. Many other unique and creative artists find their home in the Heritage Arts Center, such as jewelry makers, furniture designers, and others.

There are four guilds total that

are organized here: the blacksmiths, woodworkers, quilters, and the spinners & weavers. Each of these groups teaches classes on a specific schedule to community members and provides fun and innovative ways to incorporate the skills of, for example, rug braiding and basketweaving into a person's daily life. This emphasis on education is further enforced by the yearly field trip the county's fourth graders take to the building, where they are given a tour, are able to interact with members of the four guilds, and can visit the old jail behind the tavern.

Hughlett's Tavern continues to give back to the community, as well as incorporate its own history and heritage into the lives of its visitors, and the people of Heathsville continue to outpour their love for their county's oldest structure. On the third Saturday of the month from April to October, the building returns to its roots in the form of a farmer's market. Local merchants come to sell homegrown fruits and veggies, meats, baked goods, plants, and other items. Objects such as clothing

and jewelry are also sold as new vendors show up at each market.

Every market is conducted with a different theme in mind, which can vary from "Earth Day" to "Plein Air Paint Out," where local artists come and paint amongst the bustle of the event. Participants bring their enthusiasm to every event at the tavern, and the past comes alive.

There is a special dedication required to keep a piece of the past alive for so long. At Hughlett's Tavern, there are centuries' worth of this sort of love and affection stored within the matured walls of a building known to countless generations of people. It is because of this that Hughlett's Tavern/Rice's Hotel is a bridge linking the past and the present—a building that adapts to the modern day yet still retains the sentimental qualities of life gone by.

If you are interested in visiting Hughlett's Tavern/Rice's Hotel or want to access more information, you can visit their website at [www.rhhtfoundationinc.org](http://www.rhhtfoundationinc.org) or reach them by phone at 804-580-3377. *pl*



# COMING HOME

## Part II

---

By Stephen Southall; Photos courtesy of Stephen Southall

---

**I**n the first part of “Coming Home” (see May/June 2015 issue), I described my early life on Chick Cove Farm just outside of Deltaville and the lasting influence that it has had on my later life, both as an academic psychologist and as a grower of boxwood who loved the land. My actual “coming home” began around 1995 when I started planting boxwood in the fields around my parents’ home on the Piankatank. This was my first real contact with actually working with the land since Chick Cove, and I knew that I had begun a very significant phase of my life. This was and continues to be an absolutely perfect location to work. The view is always magnificent, the earth is soft and silky, unlike Lynchburg with its clay and rocks, and the land smells so good when I dig into it and plant a boxwood that may be there for two years or

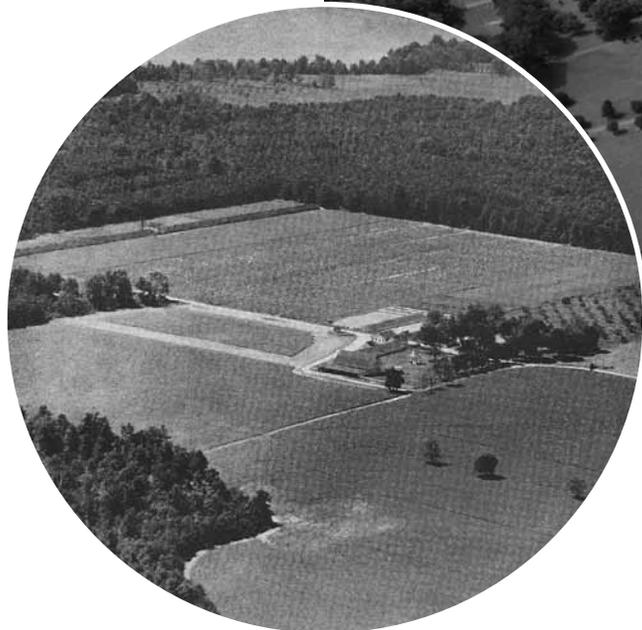
twenty, growing each year.

Boxwood can be raised in either pots or in the ground. In my initial experience with boxwood around 1985, I concentrated on growing them in pots. I found this method to be very labor intensive in terms of constant watering, issues with drainage, temperature, weed control and disease. In addition, there is more work involved in potting them up to the next size as they grow. These factors all combine to make pot production much more complicated than field growing.

Growing boxwood in the ground is a long-term endeavor, much like dollar cost averaging and investing wisely over the years. Proper spacing and layout of rows in the beginning insures that they do not have to be moved and makes weed control much easier to handle.



Aerial view of Chick Cove Farm today.



Circa 1950 aerial view of Chick Cove Farm.

Raising boxwood for my children and now my grandchildren has been important because it has taught them the value of good, hard and honest outdoor work. They all have been involved in the experiences of rooting and potting up boxwood. Sarah, David, and Joseph all have stories to tell of their experiences while working with the plants and the soil. Rebecca, on the other hand, challenged my behavioral psychological strategies in getting her outside with boxwood, but to her credit, she volunteered to handle much of the computer duties involved in keeping client lists. I am very proud that all of my children have an absolutely wonderful and strong work ethic, and I like to believe that at least a part of it comes from their experience working outside in the soil. My grandchildren have also become active in the business. Christopher, my oldest, has helped me during the summer, but Katie, his sister, seems

to be following in Rebecca's footsteps. She much prefers her outstanding performance as a goalie outdoors on the soccer field.

As the boxwood inventory in Hartfield began to grow, I was excited to begin transitioning from raising plants exclusively in pots in Lynchburg, to putting plants in the ground in Hartfield. I see that time as a marker in establishing my business, English Boxwoods of Virginia. I remember an experience my father had when he raised some tomatoes at Chick Cove. They all ripened at the same time and he had to get rid of the entire field immediately or lose them. Boxwood are very different. If you don't sell them one year, they simply grow larger, and you will be able to market them later at a larger, even more appealing size.

The very beginning of a boxwood plant involves taking cuttings around 4-6 inches in length from larger

## Rappahannock Record

Kilmarnock, VA • Since 1916

*Serving the lower  
Northern Neck audience  
in print and online.*

**18,317\***  
readers of the printed  
paper each week.

**108,599\*\***  
monthly page views on our  
RRecord.com website.

*To reach our audience,  
call 804-435-1701*

\*Pulse Research survey of Record readers  
\*\*Google Analytics report



The author's grandchildren, Katie and Christopher, packing plants for shipment.

established plants around the first of July when the new growth has had time to harden off. This involves stripping the lower 2-4 inches of leaves from the stem of the cutting and while holding it between your thumb and index finger, stick the cutting into the ground or a pot about 4 inches deep. Try to compress the rooting medium around the stem for good contact, which facilitates the stem staying wet. They should be kept in shade and possibly leaves or pine straw laid over the top to keep them from drying out. Watering on a very regular basis is important to keep the leaves from drying out while the stem is beginning to produce roots. I water mine automatically for one minute six times a day, and within a month roots begin to appear. This process is done in Lynchburg where I am able to maintain close supervision over the watering and care of them in the pots. The plants can be marketed the next year and can remain in their pots for three to four years. They will grow from the original cutting about four inches high to approximately ten to twelve inches before a transition is

needed. During this time, I market them at various sizes and ship them UPS to various parts of the country. When they become too large for the pot, they can be "potted up" to a larger pot, but I prefer to bring them to Hartfield where they are put in the ground. These beds I refer to as my "babies," "teenagers," or "adults," depending on their size and age. The ideal time to put plants in the ground is September and October because this provides the maximum amount of time for the roots to establish themselves prior to the heat and dryness of the following July and August.

People often ask about the difference between an "American" (*Buxus sempervirens*) and an "English" boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens 'Suffruticosa'*). American boxwood grow much faster; they are not very dense, and one can often see right through them. Their leaves are very pointed at the tip, much like a sword. An English boxwood, on the other hand, grows more slowly, an inch or two a year, and is therefore much

more dense. The leaf is much more oval, and in most cases, if observed closely, the tip of the leaf has a heart Valentine shape.

The care of boxwood is both interesting and important. I have two cardinal rules: never use hedge clippers on boxwood and never fertilize them with anything that you would use on hollies or azaleas because they like a neutral soil with a pH between 6.5 and 7.2. Both of these points are explained in articles that I have written on my website at [www.englishboxwoods.com](http://www.englishboxwoods.com). There are really four dimensions of English Boxwoods of Virginia—raising the plants, sales, consultations, and speaking engagements.

Given that this article is going to press in early July, there are some summer tips that I can offer. Established plants probably do NOT need water. Too much water, especially from watering lawns, has killed more boxwood than drought has. Summer is a time to begin planning for fall planting. Get a soil test done. It doesn't make sense to add fertilizer or other amendments without knowing anything about the soil. As a part of the personal consultation service that I offer, I am glad to send out free soil kits from Virginia Tech, who will analyze the soil. Copies of that analysis are then sent both to my customer and to me.

When my wife, Diane and I go home to Hartfield to work in the boxwood, it is a very communal family experience. All four of us have our individual roles. Harvie, my sister, as she likes to be called, is the chief executive officer, keeping all of us on task and on time but always finding time to pick up pine cones that litter the yard and driveway. Warren, her husband, is the social chairman in charge of laying out the "golf course," which is made up of boxwood pots serving as holes 1 – 9. He also plans the boat trips on the river with fried chicken from Deltaville Market.

Diane is my total organizational expert, who does all of the planning for our many trips to Hartfield during the year. Prior to each trip, she packs up every necessity, including clothes, food, and even our deep fat fryer for when we might want to indulge a bit on French fries or onion rings! She is also the culinary expert who oversees, plans and coordinates the beautiful and delectable meals that we enjoy together as a family. Her second love is caring for and pampering River, our Black Lab, who loves to be with me while I am working.

Coming to Hartfield on weekends and during the summer doesn't feel like hard work because of the total family experience—the food, fellowship, work and fun that we all enjoy together. When we cross the Middlesex County line, we all feel that we have truly *come home. pl*

# English Boxwoods of Virginia



"Everyone likes to talk boxwood some of the time, we like to talk boxwood all of the time!"

Virginia's Premier Supplier of English Boxwood



**Personal Service  
Sales and Delivery**

**Home Consultations  
Group Presentations**

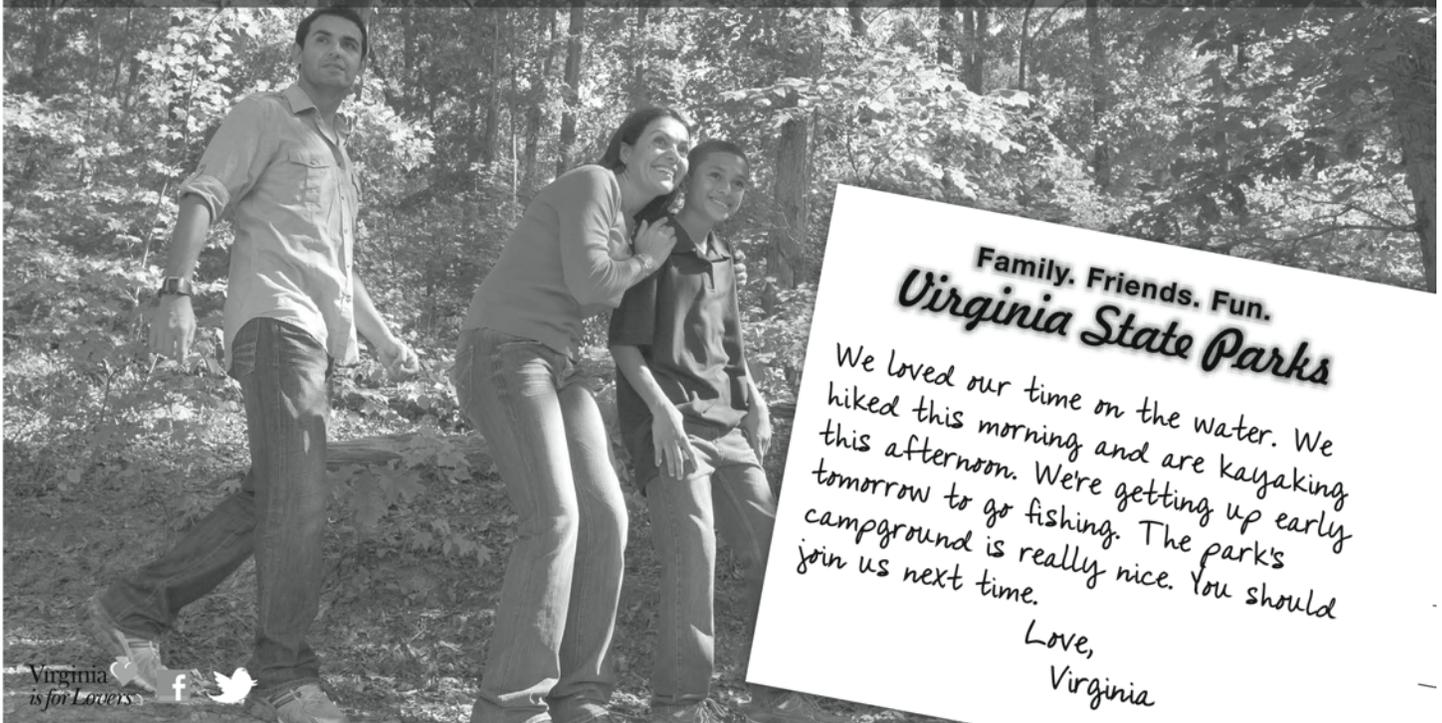
Stephen D. Southall  
(434) 385-5312

Sales by appointment only.  
southall@englishboxwoods.com

Check out our website: [www.englishboxwoods.com](http://www.englishboxwoods.com)

## Virginia State Parks

Belle Isle | Caledon | Westmoreland

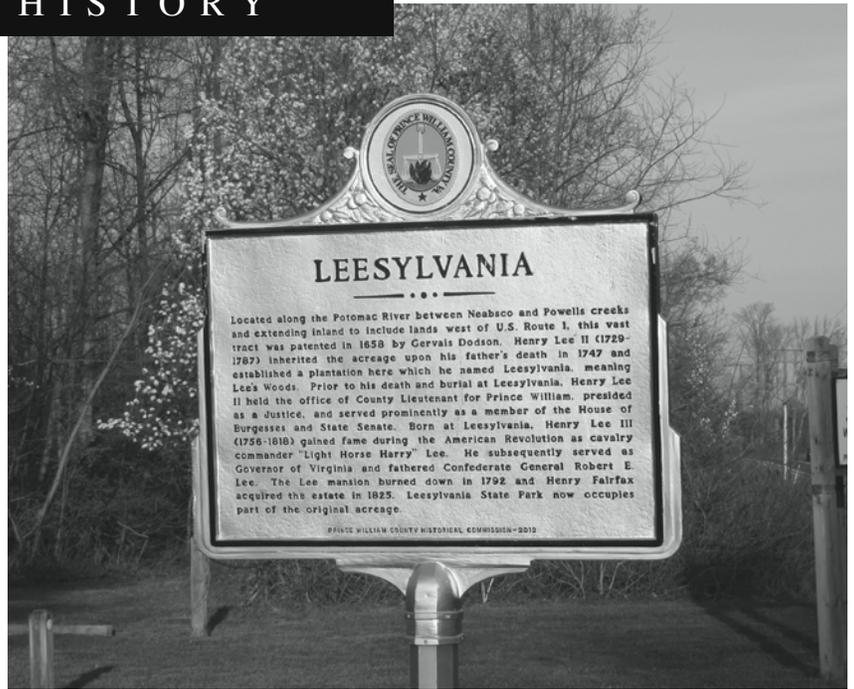


**Family. Friends. Fun.**  
**Virginia State Parks**  
We loved our time on the water. We hiked this morning and are kayaking this afternoon. We're getting up early tomorrow to go fishing. The park's campground is really nice. You should join us next time.  
Love,  
Virginia

Virginia  
is for Lovers



800-933-PARK (7275) | [www.virginiastateparks.gov](http://www.virginiastateparks.gov)



## Another Lee, Another Love

This essay appears in *Neck Tales: Stories from Virginia's Northern Neck*  
by Thea Marshall, published in 2009  
by Brandylane Publishers, Inc.

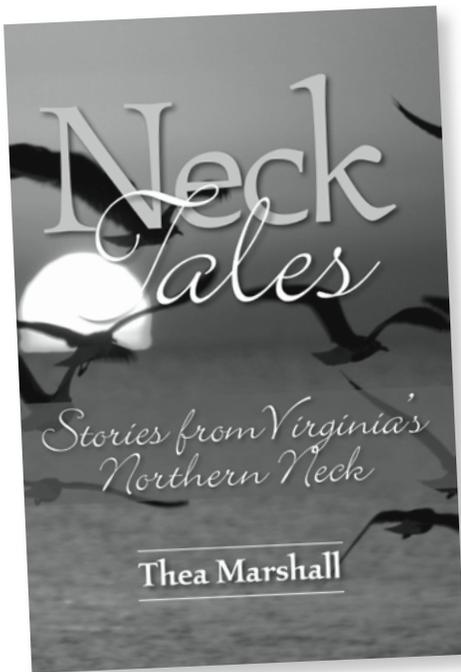
By Thea Marshall

Once again, I've fallen in love with an older man with the last name of Lee. I'm really not fickle; it's just that every time I read more about a Lee man, I'm overwhelmed. This Lee was a war hero, close friend of our most famous general, not much good with money (which is putting it kindly) and of course he was married, twice. His first wife was called "divine." I call her "high maintenance Matilda." She died after only eight years of marriage. He married again a couple of years later to another beauty, much younger than he, Ann Hill Carter, from the hugely wealthy Carter clan. Both marriages brought lots more Lees into the world and one of his sons became even more famous than he.

You may have guessed that the object of my affection is Henry "Light Horse Harry" Lee, and how he got *that* name is a tale unto itself. What a tragic and, I believe, honorable life. He came back from Princeton College to fight heroically under General George Washington in the Revolutionary War, and they became fast friends, so close that Harry was asked by Congress to deliver Washington's eulogy. It became renowned, describing him as "First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

General Henry "Light Horse Harry" was also a fine statesman, was elected to the new Virginia House of Delegates and later, as Governor of Virginia.

Light Horse Harry's talents didn't include financial horse sense. His land speculations were his greatest



\$16.00 paperback, 132 pages, 6 x 9"  
ISBN 978-1-883911-86-7

# Neck Tales

*Stories from Virginia's Northern Neck*

Join National Public Radio commentator Thea Marshall for an historic and contemporary journey through Virginia's Northern Neck. First broadcast by Ms. Marshall on NPR, these stories paint a vivid portrait of this part of Virginia that's a world apart—from the region's wine, watermen and Chantey singers, to its poets, patriots, kings and citizens.

"If anyone is qualified to write about Virginia's Northern Neck, it is Thea Marshall. *Neck Tales* is a compelling, valuable, literate and enriching contribution to the cultural history of the Neck."

— Roger Mudd, former anchor, CBS News

Order direct from the publisher at [www.brandylanepublishers.com](http://www.brandylanepublishers.com);  
804.644.3090 or write 5 South First Street, Richmond, Virginia 23219.  
Also available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com) and [bn.com](http://bn.com). \$16.00 plus shipping/handling.

miscalculations, landing him in that debtor's prison. Amazingly, in spite of the humiliation, he "kept on keeping on," writing in his tiny prison cell the now famous *Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department of the United States*.

What is there about a flawed hero that makes him so appealing? His first wife loved him madly, and the love was returned in kind. She, the divine Matilda, was known to have lofty tastes. She had inherited Stratford, that famed birthplace of Lees, from her father Philip, and they lived an extravagant life. Ann Hill Carter, wife number two, was a different sort. She was religious, practical, physically fragile and also very much in love with Harry. When they were at their most destitute, with Harry in prison in Montross, she would ride there each day to bring him his dinner.

His adventures didn't end there. After his release, he was nearly killed

in a political riot in Baltimore when he and friends, defending the right of a free press and free speech, were beaten savagely by a mob. Harry was permanently injured, and died a few years later, with many of his dreams dying with him.

Ann moved the family from Stratford, where all their children had been born, to a small house in Alexandria, Virginia where their fifth child, Robert Edward Lee, took on the role of the man of the family. Robert Edward Lee was heartbroken even as a very young boy to leave Stratford. The boy who was to become the brilliant general of the Civil War had, like his father, unfulfilled dreams, most notably the dream to somehow buy back Stratford. But how's this for sweet irony: In 1929, The Robert E. Lee Memorial Association was formed, and bought Stratford, and today manages it as a tribute to all the Lees, particularly Robert E. *pl*



[www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com](http://www.pleasantlivingmagazine.com)

**THE SHED  
MAN, INC**

Quality - Portable, Amish-Built  
Backyard Sheds  
Sizes 8 x 8' to 14 x 30'  
Delivery and set-up included

On Route 360  
Office 804-769-1112 • Home 804-769-0359  
7147 Richmond-Tappahannock Hwy,  
Aylett, VA 23009



# Longtime Summertime Tradition

*Kilmarnock Carnival Celebrates Eighty Years*

---

By Alyssa Brew; Photos courtesy of Johnny Smith

---

With warm weather in the River Country once again, some of us are filled with memories of childhood summers. The Kilmarnock Volunteer Fire Department Carnival is one of mine, as I frequented this event for many summers when I was growing up. No school, no responsibilities, long humid days and sultry nights. Enjoying the carnival on those nights, I remember being incased in a plethora of unforgettable smells, sights and sounds.

Still perched in a grassy field on Waverly Avenue, the carnival celebrates its eightieth year this summer. I had the pleasure of talking with the president of the operation,

Johnny Smith, who provided some background on this historical event. He says that it was actually the Kilmarnock firemen who came up with the idea to put on a carnival in the mid-1930s, as a way to raise money for new gear, including jackets, helmets, gloves, and safety equipment for the firehouse. As for as the location, originally it took place where Tri-Star Supermarket sits today, and then moved to its current locality on Waverly in the 1950s.

This small town carnival has undergone a number of changes through the years, but it turns out the simple and classic rides, games, and food have always been winners for both the young and young at heart. The

Ferris wheel (“Big Eli”), merry-go-round, tilt-a-whirl, and bouncy house remain staples, but this year there are two new swing rides expected to make their debut. Mr. Smith also says that in addition to games such as Bingo, their oldest game, “the pick up duck” has been running for fifty-one years, operated by local fireman, Lester Brent.

Surely, this family friendly event is not easy to run and takes much work and effort on the part of those who tend the rides and stands. These folks are mainly made up of volunteers from the community, as well as from the fire department—people who take the time to come out and ensure that everything runs smoothly. Another exciting event



80th Anniversary Grand Prize 2015 Chevy Camaro

that carnival-goers look forward to is the raffle to win a brand new car; and this year it is a 2015 Chevrolet Camaro! Raffle tickets are \$10.00 each, and may be purchased from Noblett's in Kilmarnock, or from any Kilmarnock fireman.

This year, the carnival begins on July 30 and runs through August 8 (except on Sunday), from 7pm to 10pm. Parking is free and located on the grounds. Tickets are between \$2 and \$5. So if you are looking for some old fashioned family fun this summer, craving the smells and taste of cotton candy, funnel cake, (and the best homemade fries in town), or the wind on your face as you ride the Scrambler, you don't want to miss this hometown summer tradition. Remember that if you attend this year, you are not only supporting the local Kilmarnock Volunteer Fire Department, but you will be taking part in an eightieth birthday party for an event that continues to be a main artery in the huge heart of a small town. *pl*

*We would like to give a huge "Thank you" to the over 70 Kilmarnock Volunteer Fire Department firefighters, (including past and active service) who risk(ed) their lives to keep our community safe. They make such a difference in people's lives every day, and deserve to*

*be recognized. Also, thank you to folks in the community who volunteer their time at the carnival, which includes over 200 people, as well as over 100 local businesses who donate prizes to be given away each night. Thank you to everyone for all that you do to continue to make this a success!*

*For further information about this event, contact Johnny Smith, president of the Kilmarnock Volunteer Fire Department Carnival, at 804.436.2002.*



**Celebrate your next event or birthday with us!**

**18 Holes & 20 Flavors!**  
FEATURING  
*Hershey's Old Fashioned Hand Dipped Ice Cream*

Newly Redesigned Course!

Play 18 holes in the wildly fun world of COWTOPIA

Enjoy Hershey's hand-dipped ice cream too!

**Open daily starting May 22  
10 a.m. – 10 p.m.**

4817 Old Virginia St., Urbanna

**804-758-GOLF**

Like us at Facebook.com/  
BethpageGolf

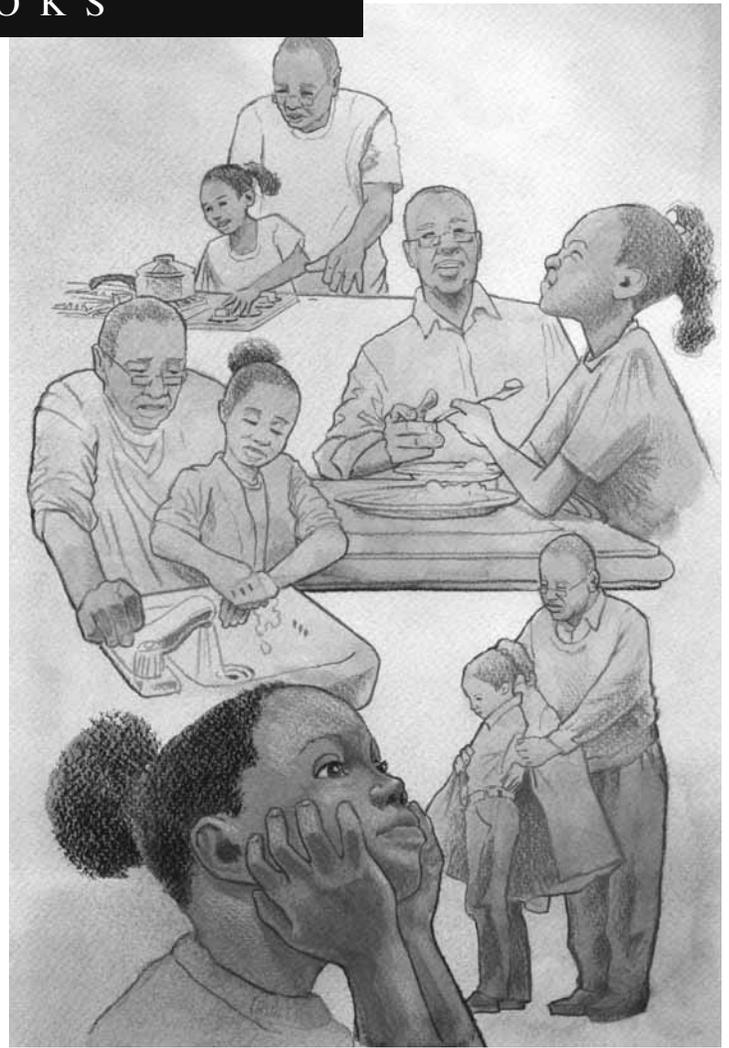
# Remembering for Both of Us

*Teaching Children  
About Alzheimer's*

---

By Peyton Cocker

---



Charlotte Wood's husband William was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease when her granddaughter, Amina, was ten years old. Even after thirty-two years of teaching in public schools, Charlotte wasn't prepared to teach her young granddaughter about the baffling disease. She enjoyed regular reading sessions with Amina, and was particularly struck by the girl's confused reaction to her grandfather's condition. For William, the symptoms began as they do for many—simple things like forgetting directions, leaving the keys in the refrigerator, or putting his shoes on the wrong feet. As time passed, the disease intensified and William began to not recognize Amina, whom he regularly called his “Precious Little Girl,” whenever he saw her. The

deterioration of her husband's condition and its effect on her granddaughter motivated Charlotte to share her story with families in similar circumstances. This desire was the beginning of her honest and emotional children's book, *Remembering for Both of Us*, recently published by Brandylane Publishers, Inc. in Richmond.

Charlotte knew nothing of Alzheimer's before William was struck by it, so she immediately read everything she could and saw numerous doctors in an attempt to help him. While caring for William, she understood that she would also have to explain to Amina what was happening to her grandfather. Amina was immediately very receptive and offered her services in any way, including cooking and cleaning around the house. This acceptance moved

Charlotte and helped inspire the main character in *Remembering for Both of Us*.

The central relationship in *Remembering* is that of young Tasha and her grandfather, PaPa. Channeling the family's true experience, PaPa and his “Precious Little Girl” are nearly inseparable. However, Tasha begins to notice PaPa acting strangely, sometimes not even recognizing her. Told through the perspective of a child, Wood's book demonstrates how young people can learn about Alzheimer's and help those close to them who are affected by it.

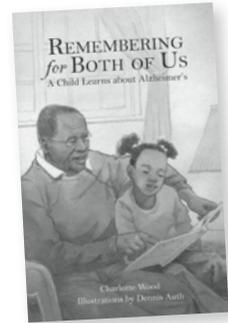
Writing was originally an outlet for Charlotte to express her thoughts and emotions, and she kept a “thankful” journal where she would write down everything for which she was thankful—one of the many coping

mechanisms she learned along the way. After William passed away in 2014, Charlotte began work on *Remembering* as both an outlet for her thoughts and an attempt to understand and explain to her granddaughter the impact of Alzheimer's disease. She and her family prayed on a daily basis and started an arts and crafts day where the family would make things like drawings and scrapbooks of memories.

Beautifully illustrated by Dennis Auth of Virginia Beach, *Remembering* is an authentic reflection of Charlotte's personal experience and teaches important lessons to children about Alzheimer's. Over five million Americans have been diagnosed with this devastating disease, a number that is expected to rise. But the numbers do not fully capture the countless caregivers who look after their loved ones. For those struggling with this condition, Charlotte suggests learning

everything possible and finding the right doctor. She also recommends trying to find humor in the situations that arise from Alzheimer's. She notes that sometimes she just had to laugh at the outrageous things her husband would say.

Although she is still struggling from the costs of her husband's treatments, Charlotte hopes to use the proceeds from her book to aid those still coping with Alzheimer's. She would like to start her own foundation and bring as much support to Alzheimer's research as possible. In the meantime, she is finding other ways to contribute to the cause. The Alzheimer's Association is making great progress in Alzheimer's research and can be contacted online at [alz.org](http://alz.org). Charlotte, at the behest of those close to her, continues to write. In the battle against Alzheimer's, she's not ready to give in. *pl*



## REMEMBERING for BOTH OF US

A Child Learns about Alzheimer's

By Charlotte Wood  
Illustrations by Dennis Auth

Tasha loves her grandfather, and she knows that PaPa loves her. But lately, PaPa has begun to forget things. He's often confused and upset. Sometimes, he doesn't even recognize his own family. How can Tasha's grandmother help her see that while PaPa is changing, his love for Tasha has not?

Hardcover and softcover,  
Retail: Hardcover: \$18.95 Softcover: \$12.95  
Available from [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [bn.com](http://bn.com), and from the publisher at [www.brandylanepublishers.com](http://www.brandylanepublishers.com), or call 804.644.3090

## Keep your heating & cooling system in peak running order from season to season.

Redlaw's **Service Maintenance Agreement** is just what the doctor ordered! Call Redlaw Mechanical today to schedule your seasonal system check-up.



Our highly-trained, veteran service professionals can ensure your heating and cooling system is energy-efficient, safe and comfortable.



**REDLAW**  
"Quality HVAC Service"  
**MECHANICAL, INC**  
**804 462-0640**

### REDLAW MECHANICAL

2798 White Chapel Road  
Lancaster VA 22503  
804 462-0640

[www.redlawmechanical.com](http://www.redlawmechanical.com) [redlaw@va.metrocast.net](mailto:redlaw@va.metrocast.net)



# SUMMERTIME ANGLING

## Spanish Mackerel are the challenge

---

Story and Photo by Steve Scala

---



July and August are made for being on the water, and one of the top reasons is the different species of fish in the Chesapeake Tidewater region. North of the Virginia line, two recreational striped bass seasons continue in Maryland and Potomac River Fisheries Commission (PRFC) waters. While the Virginia striper season remains closed until October, there are plenty of other fish available for “catch and keep” in the Commonwealth section of Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. From Cobia to Spanish mackerel and Red Drum, to blue catfish in the upper tidal rivers, there is plenty to keep the hook n’ line and family and friends on the water. Fishing is the focus for many, but so is boating, tubing, skiing and swimming. It can get pretty busy out there during these summer months so remain alert while operating a boat. Shade, sunscreen, safety gear and plenty of cold water are as important as fishing tackle during this time, so check all your gear before you launch the boat or leave the dock.

Spanish mackerel are roaming and foraging across a wide swath of Chesapeake Bay waters these next two months, so having lures and rod and reel combinations aboard for this popular fast moving species is required. These summertime

speedsters are often in pursuit of shiner minnows who themselves are never caught being still. As with many migratory saltwater species, find the bait and you will find the fish; nothing could be more applicable to that statement than the Spanish mackerel. I have chased mackerel for several miles in just a few hours of fishing, trying to keep up with them as they pursue fast moving baitfish schools. Trolling is the only practical way to catch mackerel, unless you are fortunate enough to be able to drift and jig over top of them. Even if they seem to have slowed their movement, count on Spanish mackerel to soon pick up the pace again. Trolling outside of foraging mackerel schools is the best approach, either in a wide half circle or parallel to their movement. The strategy is to get the lures near the fish, without running through the school with the boat wake and scattering the school.

Trolling tackle can be very different for fishing Chesapeake Bay waters during July and August. Planers can replace drop sinker rigs or even most inline weights and leaders. The lures must be durable enough to withstand the teeth that mackerel and bluefish have. Planers in #1 and #2 sizes are best, as when trolled together they cover the upper 25 feet of water column

at different depths. When set up and adjusted properly, trolling a combination of #1 and #2 planers can be done with minimal line tangling. A mix of lure colors and sizes are the best tactic to use when determining what Spanish mackerel and bluefish are after. Small Drone spoons with hot pink, chartreus or white mirror finishes are good combinations to use, along with 1/0 or 0/0 Clark spoons in chrome or gold colors. Fish one of the Clark spoons on a #1 planer and the other on a #2 planer which runs deeper to see where the mackerel are. This same tactic of fishing lures at different depths should also be considered for the drone spoons. The leader between the planer and lure should be 20-25 feet long and 30-pound test. This will help limit line twists and breaks due to the teeth that blues and mackerel have. *pl*



**DELTAVILLE  
YACHTING CENTER**  
& CHESAPEAKE YACHT SALES

*Classic Integrity ~ Quality Service*

**Doing everything to  
keep you on the water.**



**YACHT SALES**  
*New & Used*

Conveniently located on Broad Creek between  
the Rappahannock & Piankatank Rivers

Slips and Boatel Spaces Available

Catalina, Carolina Classic, Albin & Mainship Specialists

Full Service Repair & Rebuild Shop . Certified Technicians  
ABYC . Cummins . Yanmar . Onan . Cruisair

18355 General Puller Hwy . Deltaville, VA 23043  
**804-776-9898 . www.DYCBot.com**









## Trusted, Comfortable & Caring Dentistry

Meet Dr. Friend & Dr. Lawrence



Dr. Friend, Dr. Lawrence & the rest of our team have dedicated our professional careers to providing you with the best that dentistry has to offer. As a family practice, we provide comfortable care for patients of all ages. From routine checkups to restorative care, we are your neighborhood home for all things dental.



5204 Patterson Avenue  
Richmond, VA 23226  
**804-282-3838**

[www.DocFriend.com](http://www.DocFriend.com)

Thank You RVA  
for Voting Us as Your...

- **Top General Dentist**  
in *Richmond Magazine*, 2013  
( As Voted by Other Local Richmond Dentists)
- **Favorite Dentist**  
in *STYLE*, 2013
- **Top Dentist**  
in *Virginia Living*, 2014

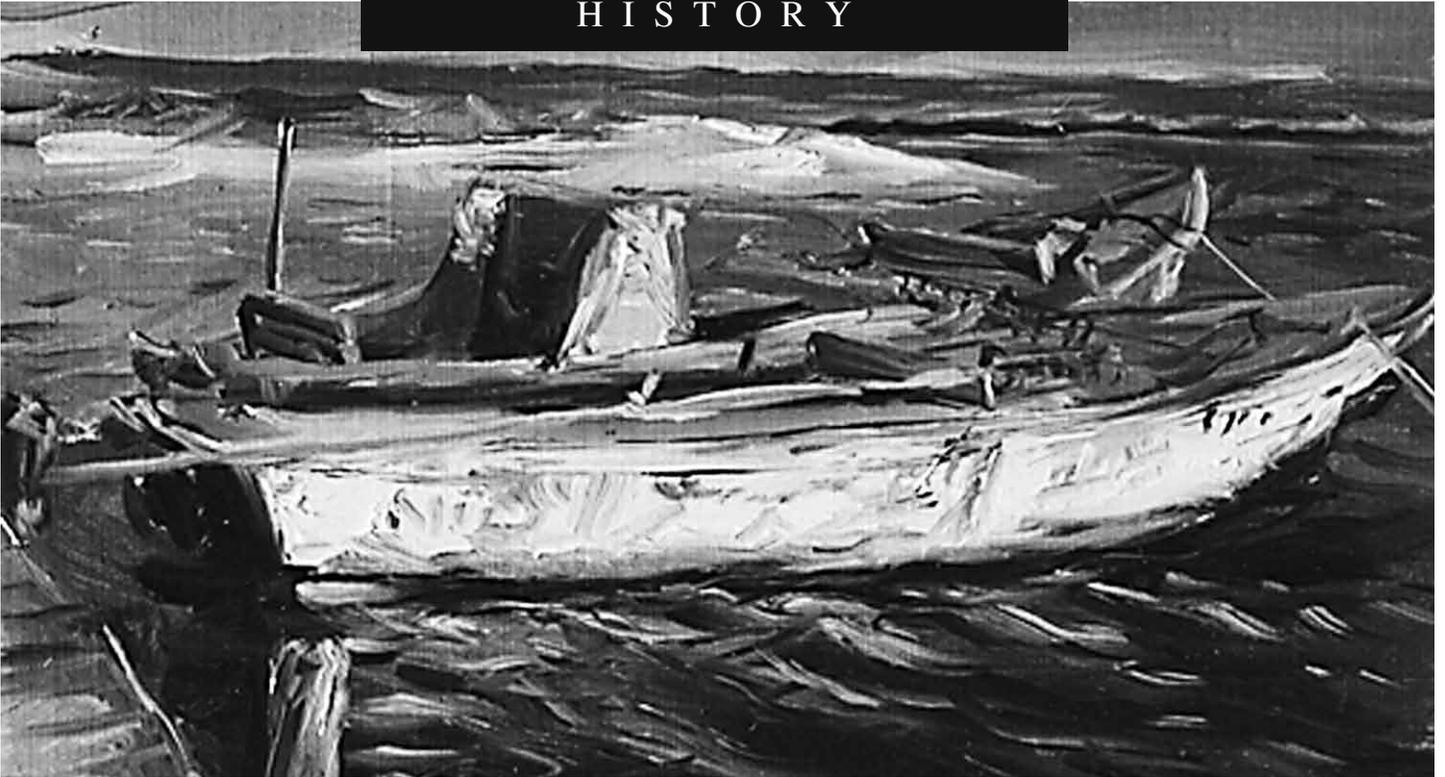


We are Honored  
& Humbled by  
All Your Support



© 2014 Chraad, Inc. all rights reserved.

**Convenient Appointments From 7am to 6pm!**



## MY DAD'S WISDOM

By John "Sonny" Robinson

**I**t's October, 1948. I am twelve years old. Tomorrow is Saturday. I'm so excited I can hardly sleep. My dad has promised to take me with him to work on the water.

I live on Solomon's Island, a small pipe-shaped island at the mouth of the Patuxent River where it empties into the majestic Chesapeake Bay. Working on the water to earn a living is a way of life here. My grandfathers, "Wash" Robinson (Paw-paw) and "Piedmont" Jones (Poppie) both have their captain's license and earn their living from these waters. Paw-paw harvests oysters during the winter season, usually October until mid May. During the summer, he works as a shipwright. Poppie captains a fishing party boat, which is owned by a local businessman. I hear people say he's good at what he does, but dad says he's lazy.

My dad, Ellis Robinson, "EL" to locals, also spent his share of days working on the water, but not anymore. Now he works for the government at the Patuxent River Naval Air Station as foreman of the boathouse. It's his job to maintain the security patrol boats in ready

condition for any emergency situation involved during flight training. Dad only works the water on his days off to provide the family extra spending money. He says the price being paid for oysters is up and we may get thirty cents a bushel tomorrow. With any luck, we'll board about two bushels an hour, and since we plan to work for four hours, we should net about two dollars and forty cents for our day's work. I'm just hoping to earn enough money to go to the movie. It's hard to earn spending money as a young boy here on the island in winter.

I hate to get up early, but all work on the water starts early. Dad is patient and takes it in stride. The morning weather is menacing—the sky dull-grey overcast. Winds are twenty-five knots from the northeast with the thermometer showing twenty-seven degrees. It is not your typical late October day. As usual on most Saturdays, dad has arranged to borrow Paw-paw's boat, a V-bottom log canoe, hand-built by him. Today, I say a prayer thanking the Lord for Paw-paw's wisdom in adding a small cabin in the bow. As we make our way out into the river, the salt spray driven by the wind soon engulfs the small

boat as if a spring thunderstorm had suddenly descended upon us. Dad uses the windshield wipers so he can see to maintain our bearing. We do not go far into the river. Dad, wise in the ways of the water, anchors in an oasis of near calm water close to shore. I feel better now, more awake, and some of the excitement has returned as he makes fast the anchor.

He uses an eighteen-foot long pair of tongs to rake the oysters from the river bottom while maintaining his balance on the bobbing fantail. He handles the tongs with ease after years of working at this trade. He dumps the contents of his labor on the culling board, a wide tray set across the boat and resting on the gunnels. The tray has open ends to allow the culler to sort the good oysters from the empty shells and undersized oysters. Normally, dad handles both tasks, first filling the culling board and then culling out the good oysters. Today, he has a helper, who should produce more oysters in less time.

EL is a small man, five-foot five-inches tall and about one hundred and eighteen pounds. His muscles are like steel bands from years of working on the water. He handles the tongs deftly and keeps the culling board piled high with a mixture of river bottom debris. Working the tongs is hard work, but the exertion helps him to offset the stinging cold and damp wind as it whips across the water in gusts.

As for me, I am dressed for the Arctic. This morning, I donned two pairs of socks, pants and two sweatshirts, all of which are covered by rubber boots, a long rubberized apron, thick rubber gloves and topped off by a woolen stocking cap. I work as fast as I can, accumulating the keeper oysters in a haphazard pile around my feet, while returning the remaining residue to the river's angry surface on the opposite side of the boat. I have no time to watch the empty shells, small

oysters and other debris slip beneath the surface of the murky water and fade out of sight.

Standing there with oysters piled up to my knees, my rubber glove frozen in a knurled upturned position and every muscle in my young body aching, I suddenly understand why my dad no longer seeks to make his living on the water. I am tired. I am cold. At this moment, the movies seem much less important.

A long four hours later, we're waiting in line at Lore's packing plant behind several other boats, to unload our day's catch. Dad shovels each

measured wire basket level to the top. I know that this is the way of determining the value of the oysters. We only have five bushels, but dad says that's okay due to the weather conditions. We make a dollar and fifty cents for our morning's work.

I didn't know what my dad was thinking when he chose to take me with him, but years later, I came to the conclusion that he was a very smart man. I realized, standing on that boat, I didn't know what I wanted to do or be when I grew up, but there had to be a better way to earn a living. *pl*



**H&R BLOCK**

# COMPLICATED TAXES? BRING IT ON.

**TAXES ARE COMPLICATED.**  
Getting your taxes done isn't enough - you need your taxes done right. That's where we come in. We hire and train the most qualified tax professionals to ensure you claim every credit and deduction you deserve so you get your maximum refund. Guaranteed.\*

**YOUR LOCAL OFFICE(S):**

- 1840 White Oak Village, Tappahannock, VA 22560  
804-443-5110
- 100 Winter St, Ste 108, West Point, VA 23181  
804-843-2117
- 800-J Rochambeau Drive, Williamsburg, VA 23188  
757-220-2395

\*If you discover an H&R Block error on your return that entitles you to a larger refund (or smaller tax liability), we'll refund the tax prep fee for that return. Refund claims must be made during the calendar year in which the return was prepared. 0817H&R3696 ©2015 H&R Tax Group, Inc.

**HRBLOCK.COM**

# Kitchen Favorites from Pleasant Living

Assembled by Alyssa Brew

The kids and grandkids are on summer break, and the days are long and warm, so it's time to spend some quality time with friends and family in the kitchen, backyard, or both! Best of all, it's a wonderful time for seafood in Virginia's River Country— especially when it comes to hard crabs. Also booming in the summertime are berries, peaches, corn, squash, cucumbers and tomatoes for starters. So hit the kitchen or fire up that backyard grill and try out these hot weather favorites from past issues of PL!

## Devilled Crab

### Ingredients

1 egg, beaten  
1 tablespoon butter, melted  
½ teaspoon salt  
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
½ cup half-and-half  
Dash hot pepper sauce  
1 tablespoon lemon juice  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
½ cup breadcrumbs  
2 teaspoons finely chopped parsley  
1 pound cleaned crabmeat  
Dash paprika  
Dash cayenne pepper

### Directions

Mix all ingredients together, adding crabmeat last. Toss lightly. Place in ramekins or cleaned crab shells. Sprinkle with paprika and cayenne pepper if desired. Bake at 375 for 10 to 15 minutes. May be served hot from oven, at room temperature or chilled. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

*Recipe courtesy Mary Beane  
Summer 1989 issue*

## Macaroni Salad

### Ingredients

1 (16-ounce) package uncooked elbow macaroni  
1 cup diced cucumber  
¼ cup diced green pepper  
¼ cup diced red bell pepper  
3 tablespoons pickle relish  
3 teaspoons grated onion  
½ cup reduced-fat mayonnaise  
½ cup reduced-fat sour cream  
Salt and pepper to taste

### Directions

Cook and drain macaroni according to package directions. Rinse in cold water and drain again. In large storage container, mix macaroni, cucumber, green and red peppers, pickle relish, and onion. In small bowl, blend mayonnaise, sour cream, salt and pepper. Pour mayonnaise dressing over macaroni mixture and toss well. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

*August/September 1995  
author unknown*

## Cool as a Cucumber Soup

### Ingredients

2 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded and chopped  
1 medium red onion, sliced  
1 teaspoon dill weed  
2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves  
2 cups buttermilk  
½ cup sour cream  
½ cup chicken or clear vegetable broth  
3 tablespoons red wine vinegar  
¼ teaspoon black pepper  
1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1/8 teaspoon salt  
1/8 teaspoon celery salt  
Parsley sprigs

### Directions

Place chopped cucumbers, onion, dill and mint in food processor; whirl for 30 seconds or until smooth. Add buttermilk, sour cream and broth; whirl an additional 20 to 30 seconds or until well blended. Transfer mixture to glass bowl; add vinegar and remaining spices. Cover and refrigerate for at least 5 hours. Garnish with parsley. Serve chilled.

*June/July 1999 issue  
author unknown*

## Grilled Oriental Croaker

### Ingredients

4 large whole Virginia Spot or Croaker, dressed  
¼ cup soy sauce  
2 tablespoons brown sugar  
1 clove garlic, minced  
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced  
2 tablespoons orange peel, cut julienne  
2 tablespoons orange juice  
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes  
2 tablespoons butter, melted  
4 green onions, sliced

### Directions

Place fish in bowl, combine remaining ingredients and pour over fish. Marinate 1 hour. Place fish on grill, about five inches from heat for 10 minutes per inch thickness of fish, turning once halfway through cooking. Baste often with marinade. When fish is tender and flakes easily, remove from grill and serve hot. Serves 4.

*Recipe Courtesy Virginia Marine Products Board  
December/January 1998/99 issue*

## Pineapple Chicken Breasts

### Ingredients

½ cup pineapple juice  
1 teaspoon chopped cilantro  
1 teaspoon grated lime peel  
½ teaspoon ground cumin  
½ teaspoon onion salt  
6 boneless skinless chicken breasts  
1 can (or fresh) pineapple rings

### Directions

Mix juice, cilantro, lime peel, cumin and onion salt together in measuring cup. Place chicken breasts in shallow baking dish. Pour pineapple marinade over chicken breasts; cover and refrigerate for 3 hours.  
Over medium coals, place chicken breasts on grill rack sprayed with nonstick cooking oil. Grill for 5 minutes, basting with any reserved marinade. Turn chicken breasts, baste and continue grilling until juices from chicken run clear. Garnish each chicken breast with a pineapple ring.

*August/September 1996 issue  
author unknown*

## Summer Medley

### Ingredients

4 slices bacon  
¼ cup oil  
1 large onion, sliced  
1 green pepper, diced  
2 cups hot water  
1 pound green beans  
6 ears corn  
1 tablespoon salt  
½ teaspoon black pepper  
2 tablespoons granulated sugar  
3 small zucchini, cut into 1-inch cubes  
3 small yellow squash, cut into 1-inch cubes  
2 large ribs celery, sliced  
2 large tomatoes, cut into wedges

### Directions

Place bacon in microwave-safe dish and cook according to package directions; drain on paper towels. Crumble bacon and set aside.  
Over medium heat, place oil in large skillet. Sauté onions and green pepper in oil until lightly brown; add water, green beans, corn, salt, pepper and sugar. Heat to boiling and cover. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes.  
Add zucchini, yellow squash and celery; continue to simmer, covered, until all vegetables are tender; drain.  
Arrange vegetables on platter and sprinkle with crumbled bacon and garnish with tomato wedges.

*Recipe courtesy Suzanne Best, Lancaster, VA  
August/September 1999 issue*

## Peach Cobbler Colonial

### Ingredients

Batter:  
1 cup all purpose flour  
½ teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
3 tablespoons butter  
¾ cup of sugar  
½ cup milk

Sift flour, measure. Sift with salt and baking powder. Cream butter, add sugar gradually. Add dry ingredients alternately with milk.

### Fruit Mixture:

4 cups fresh sliced peaches  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 tablespoon lemon juice

### Topping:

Combine 1 tablespoon cornstarch, ½ cup sugar and 1 cup water. Bring to a boil, whisking as needed until sugar and cornstarch are dissolved.  
Place fruit mixture in buttered 9x9x2 inch Pyrex baking dish. Cover with batter. Pour topping very slowly over entire mixture. Bake at 350 for about 1 hour, until top is lightly brown and crusty.

*Recipe courtesy Recipes from Old Virginia*

## Chocolate Raspberry Bars

### Ingredients

6 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped  
¾ cup (1/2 sticks) unsalted butter  
½ cup seedless raspberry jam  
4 eggs  
2 cups granulated sugar  
1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 cup flour  
3 (1/2 pint) baskets fresh raspberries  
Confectioners' sugar

### Topping

½ cup whipping cream  
¼ cup seedless raspberry jam  
1 tablespoon butter  
8 ounces bittersweet or semisweet chocolate

### Directions

Line a 13-x9-x2-inch baking pan with foil; lightly butter pan. Combine chocolate, butter and jam in heavy saucepan. Stir over low heat until smooth. Remove from heat. Whisk eggs in large bowl until foamy. Add sugar, vanilla and salt and combine thoroughly. Stir in chocolate mixture. Add flour and mix until just blended.  
Spread batter into prepared pan. Bake at 350 about 30 minutes, until springy to the touch or toothpick comes out clean. Spread topping over brownies. Top immediately with raspberries. Chill until cold. Cut into bars and serve sprinkled with powdered sugar. Yields 24 bars.

*Recipe Courtesy G.D. Novak, Queenstown, MD. February/March 1998 issue*

# Delicious Swimmers



*This article appeared in the July/August 2006 issue of PL. Dan Gill, renaissance farmer and owner of Something Different in Urbanna, wrote his column for PL for ten years, contributing his homespun, knowledgeable commentary on food, history and life. He passed away in October 2014.*

*(The information about seafood markets in this article may be outdated.)*

---

By Dan Gill

---

Every spring the shores in the Chesapeake Bay region are littered with small, empty crab shells as young blue crab peelers seek the relative safety of shallow water to shed, and hopefully, get to be big crabs. Tender and sweet and delicious to eat, the soft crab is sought, not only by us, but also by just about everything that swims, crawls or flies—including other crabs. This is why there are so many croakers, and occasionally rockfish, in shallow water during the spring and early summer: They are much better at catching soft crabs than we are.

When I was coming along, we caught soft crabs along the shore and in the eelgrass beds with a dip net. We would go out on the tide, in the evening or early morning, and either pole a special "crabbing skiff" equipped with a built-in live well, or walk along in shallow water pulling a bushel basket stuck in an old inner tube. We looked for holes in the sand with just two eye-stalks showing above the mud, or a log or board that crabs could hide under. We would probe likely places with the net trying to scare up whatever was hiding there. If the resident swam away fast, it was hard; but if it swam slowly, then it was soft and we'd catch it. Crabs molt all summer, but shedding peaks in May and is known as the "May run." Locals think these are the best soft crabs of the year, possibly because they are the first crabs of the year. "May run" crabs tend to be small; you can eat them in two bites. Due to a number of factors, eelgrass beds are mostly gone now; consequently, shallow waters are not as clear and hardly anyone crabs along the shores.

On a rising tide, ripe peelers move along the shallows next to shore looking for a safe place to hide and shed. If they encounter an obstacle, they try to go around by moving to deeper water. Watermen learned to take advantage of this behavior with the peeler run: a wire fence obstacle that crabs follow out, right into

a trap. Traps were fished once a day (except Sunday) and the crabs were culled and separated. Ripe peelers, those showing a "pink sign" on the margin of the swimming appendage, were then placed in a shallow float in the creeks to shed. As summer progresses, the water in the creeks gets relatively warm and low in oxygen, leading to high mortality during shedding. Peeler runs and shedding floats have now been replaced by specialized crab pots and shedding tanks on shore. Recirculating water systems and biological filters, which are underground tanks filled with oyster shells, ensure consistent water quality. In the summer, water can be cooled and oxygenated to increase survival rates.

Summer in River Country means crab season, but visitors are faced with having to find good sources of local crab in "user friendly" forms. Most commercial watermen sell by the truckload to major northern markets and local restaurants, and are not inclined to stop what they are doing and sell to the public. There are a few seafood markets scattered throughout the Bay region that sell steamed crabs, soft shells and crabmeat to the public. Sometimes they make homemade crab cakes, deviled crabs and other local specialties for sale. These markets are usually sidelines to wholesale seafood businesses. They are often located off the beaten path in waterfront communities and along the creeks. In the Urbanna area, there are only two remaining:

Shores & Ruark, about two miles north of Urbanna on Robinson Creek (804-758-5640) is usually open Wednesday through Saturday or by appointment (it is a good idea to call first). One of the few commercial crab steamers and pickers left in the area, Shores & Ruark has a small retail store in the building where they shed crabs. They sell live or steamed crabs by the dozen or bushel, and their own picked crabmeat. Dianne Shores Ruark makes crab cakes and deviled crabs for sale using old family recipes straight from her Tangier Island heritage.

Payne's Crab House, on Urbanna Creek at the end of Prettyman's Rolling Road (now Old Virginia Street), sells primarily to the public. Hours are from 7:00 AM to 1:00 PM, and by appointment (804-758-5301). Operated by two sisters, Beatrice Taylor and Catherine Via (also of Tangier Island descent), Payne's sells soft crabs, steamed crabs, and backfin crabmeat. The shedding tanks are in a building right behind the small retail shack. During special events, such as the Fourth of July weekend, Labor Day and the Urbanna Oyster Festival, they fix crab cakes and soft crab sandwiches for sale.

Although not in the retail business, many local watermen operate their own shedding tanks and will sell soft and hard crabs by prior arrangement or if you happen to catch them at the right time. If you are really lucky, you can get "super softs" or "velvets" right out of the shedding tanks. When crabs first back out of their shells, they quickly absorb water and inflate to their new size. They are then plump and extremely soft; this is the best time to harvest them for eating within a few hours or for freezing, but they are too delicate for storage or shipping.

## Something Different

213 Virginia Street  
Urbanna, VA

Home of THE Virginia Sandwich  
Smoked Turkey & Country Ham Salad

BBQ, Ribs, Smoked Meats & Salmon  
Freshly Roasted Coffees & Peanuts  
Homemade Sides and Desserts  
Deli Sandwiches - to order  
Fine Wines and Cheeses  
Homemade Ice Cream  
Parties & Platters



**Hours:**  
Wed. - Fri. 10 - 9  
Sat. 8 AM - 9 PM  
Sun. 8 AM - 3 pm  
**Closed:**  
Mon. & Tues.

**Righteous Ribs &  
Bodacious Butts!**

Call in orders 804-758-8000  
www.pine3.info \* sdcSDeli@yahoo.com  
www.facebook.com/sdcSDeli

Commercial shedders typically allow crabs to rest and strengthen for another hour or two before harvesting. These are the soft-shelled crabs typically found in stores and most restaurants, especially inland and in the cities. If they stay in the water too long, they become "paper shells," good only for bait. Watermen fish their tanks every three to four hours in order to harvest at the best stage.

Soft crabs are sold by size: The smaller "mediums" and "hotels" are popular with locals, while wholesale buyers seek the larger "jumbos" and "whales." Prices vary throughout the season depending upon availability and demand. The middle size, "primes," are often the most economical to buy because, although they are approximately twice as heavy as "mediums," the price is often only 50% higher. Price per dozen usually takes a major jump for "jumbos" and "whales" because of market demand.

Don't eat the yellow stuff! Many crab lovers prize the strong flavored fat called mustard or tomalley. We now know that the yellow stuff, found in the body cavity of steamed or soft crabs, is not fat; instead, it is part of the digestive system and functions as both liver and pancreas. It filters impurities from the crab's blood and therefore concentrates environmental contaminants.

At Something Different we make traditional she-crab soup, crab cakes, Welsh crab melts and soft crab entrees, all from local crabs. Sometimes we have steamed crabs by the dozen and we can supply bushels by prior arrangement.

According to legend, she-crab soup was invented in Charleston, South Carolina, in the early 1900s. The mayor was entertaining President Taft and asked his butler to dress up their popular but bland crab bisque for the occasion. He added some red crab roe for color and extra flavor, a little Worcestershire sauce and a healthy splash of sherry. Crab roe is hard to come by now, so in practice, most she-crab soup is actually a rich and creamy crab bisque flavored with sherry and sometimes colored by egg yolk. We make the real thing with backfin crabmeat, crab roe and kelp (to replace MSG and boost and harmonize flavors. See "The Magic of Umami" published in *Pleasant Living* magazine January/February 2006. The article can also be found on our web page). *pl*

## RECIPES

### Old Virginia "no-filler" Crab Cakes

When my mother married and moved here to the flatlands, she had to learn how to cook local delicacies. An old family friend in the Northern Neck showed her how to make traditional Virginia crab cakes without breadcrumbs or cracker meal. With minor modifications, this is the recipe we still use at home and at Something Different.

1 lb crabmeat, picked over to remove any shells. "Lump" is nice but expensive and "special" often has too much shell, so we use "backfin."

1 egg, beaten  
4 tsp. mayonnaise  
2 tsp. prepared mustard (Frenches or dijon)  
3 drops vinegar  
½ Tbsp. heavy cream

A sprinkle of Old Bay seasoning or salt and pepper to taste. We use 1 tsp. of our "KA" Caribbean seasoning.

Mix ingredients in a small bowl. Gently coat crabmeat without breaking it up. Shape into cakes about 3-4 inches in diameter and ¾ inches thick. Roll in flour or bread crumbs (preferably Panko or Japanese style bread crumbs) and fry in a hot skillet. To broil, dot with butter, squeeze over a little lemon juice, and place under the broiler.

### Fried Soft Crabs

When I got married and brought my Life-Bride, Barbara, back to the farm, she had to learn local cookery, as did my mother before. Faced with a dozen fresh soft crabs, she called mother to find out how to cook them. "Oh, just dredge them in flour with a little salt and pepper and sauté them." To Barbara "sauté" meant "fry gently in butter," so I was presented with a plate full of limp, under-cooked critters. She quickly learned that the best way to fry soft crabs is in an iron skillet with an inch or so of good cooking oil heated almost to the smoking point. Flour and season the crabs and carefully drop them in the hot oil, then stand back or immediately use a good splatter-shield because they are going to pop grease! Turn them once to get both sides crisp and brown.

**ADVERTISERS' DIRECTORY**



Page # Advertiser

- IBC Belle Isle Books
- 17 Bethpage Miniature Golf & Ice Creamery
- 7, 19, 23 Brandylane Publishers, Inc.
- IBC Booth and Son, Inc.
- 28 Comfort Inn
- 21 Deltaville Yachting Center
- 2 Divin' off the Dock
- 13 English Boxwoods of Virginia
- 2 Flowering Fields B&B
- 21 Friend, Jeff DDS/RVA Dental Care
- 23 H & R Block
- 4 Historic Christchurch
- 2 M & M Building Supply
- IFC NeckRide.org
- 2 Noblett, Ware, Peoples
- 28 Office Supply of Gloucester
- IFC, 2 Pleasant Living Books
- 28 Rappahannock Hang-ups
- 11 Rappahannock Record
- 19 Redlaw Mechanical
- 15 Shed Man, The
- 27 Something Different CSD
- 13 Virginia State Parks
- IFC Walden's Construction
- BC WCVE / NPR

# PLEASANT LIVING



We'll deliver great writing to your door six times a year.  
Visit us at [pleasantlivingmagazine.com](http://pleasantlivingmagazine.com) or call

**804.644.3090**



A Magazine for the Chesapeake Bay and River Country



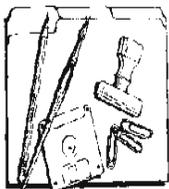
BY CHOICE HOTELS

Reservations:  
804.695.1900  
[www.comfortinn.com/hotel/va315](http://www.comfortinn.com/hotel/va315)  
6639 FOREST HILL AVENUE,  
GLOUCESTER, VA 23061

FOR ALL YOUR OFFICE NEEDS SEE

**OFFICE SUPPLY**

SERVING THE COMMUNITY FOR OVER 25 YEARS



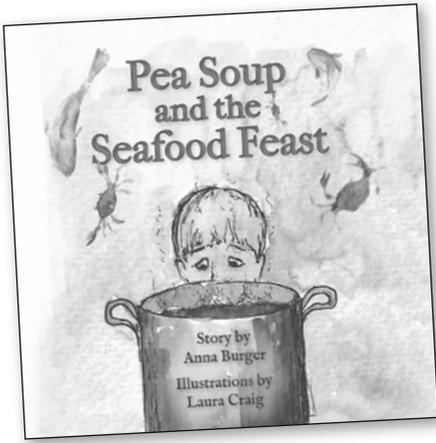
GLOUCESTER  
Edgehill Shopping Center  
(804) 693-4155

Come in and spend some time at the gallery.



**rappahannock hang-ups, inc.  
& gallery**

Tuesday-Friday 10-5; Saturday 10-2  
74 S. Main Street, Kilmarnock, VA 22482 804-435-6669

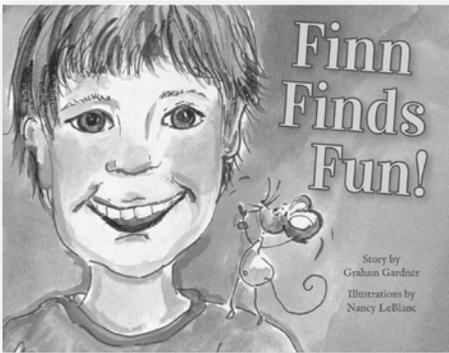


Story by Anna Burger • Illustrations by Laura Craig

When his mother tells him they're having pea soup for dinner, Jack wonders how he'll survive. Then he comes up with a plan: he'll catch his own seafood feast instead! Relying on skills learned from his grandfather, the resourceful boy embarks on a seaside adventure, casting for fish, digging for clams, and setting traps for blue crabs. In the process he learns that the only thing better than a basket full of crabs or a bucket full of clams is a heart full of appreciation for the natural wonders of the bay. With playful prose and vivid watercolor illustrations, *Pea Soup and the Seafood Feast* teaches readers to value and sustain their environment with gratitude for life's little gifts.

BELLE ISLE BOOKS   
www.belleislebooks.com

8.5 x 8.5" | \$19.95  
ISBN: 978-1-9399304-6-0  
Coming this fall



Story by Graham Gardner • Illustrations by Nancy LeBlanc

How can Finn turn an absolutely no-good, horribly bad day into one of the BEST DAYS EVER? Is it really possible for Finn to become positively positive? After one especially un-fun day, Finn's clever mother lets him in on the best secret in the world: Finn has the power to turn the worst day around, if he chooses to find fun in everything he does!

BELLE ISLE BOOKS   
www.belleislebooks.com

11 x 8.5" | \$17.95  
ISBN: 978-1-9399304-1-5  
Coming this fall



W.F. Booth & Son, Inc.



  
Custom Interiors

*Our services include:*  
Home Decorating Consultation  
Furniture for any Decor  
Floor Coverings  
Window Treatments  
Bedding  
Home Accessories  
Pool and Patio

  
Main St.  
Kilmarnock, Virginia  
(804) 435-1329

Toll Free  
800-543-8894

Monday - Saturday  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

www.wfbooth.com





PLEASANT LIVING *is printed on recycled paper.*

M-F | 5-9 AM

**Kick start your day.**

*Hosts Renée Montagne and Steve Inskeep*

**morning edition<sup>®</sup>**  
NPR<sup>®</sup> NEWS

For over three decades, MORNING EDITION has taken listeners around the country and the world with multi-faceted stories and commentaries that inform, challenge and occasionally amuse. WCVE's Wayne Farrar and his team work to provide local news and commentary and every other Wednesday at 8:45 am hear Thea Marshall's original commentaries about the people, places, history, culture and issues relating to the Northern Neck.

**89.1 WCVE | npr<sup>®</sup>**  
Serving the Northern Neck Since 2006  
[ideastations.org/radio](http://ideastations.org/radio)