



# The COLUMNS

NOV 2019 - JAN 2020

A Publication of THE MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG



## HAWK WATCH

# LIVING IN HARMONY WITH OUR RESIDENT RAPTORS

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# Winter Savings

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To reach any of our board members by phone, please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message stating the person you wish to reach.

*The board meets at 7 p.m. on the third Monday of most months at All Saints Presbyterian on Grove Avenue. If you would like to make a presentation to the board, please email or call the president.*



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN




With the arrival of November, the leaves of green above our heads turn the golden colors of fall and seem to know that their time in the sun has come to an end. This change always brings a smile to my face, and today, a smile to my column as my time as president of the Museum District Association also comes to an end. While I will miss serving in this role, the change is made easy knowing that **Kyle Elliot**, the current competent chair of our zoning and land use committee, has agreed to take over as MDA president beginning in January.

It has been a terrific two years for me serving in this role. This is thanks entirely to the work of our terrific board, supportive neighborhood and all the efforts of previous board and committee members, especially our most recent president MA Powers, who helped turn the MDA into the institution that it is. At every board meeting, I am always amazed by all the good work done over the previous month by our board and committee members. Because this organization has been so strong for so long, and because we have thoughtful and dedicated members who are always contributing and improving the way we operate, it is no stretch to call the MDA a well-oiled machine.

Each arm of the organization, especially our more long-standing house tour, magazine and zoning committees, have well-established schedules and processes for getting their important work done. This structure makes it easy and enjoyable for new volunteers to join in and begin contributing, while providing more seasoned members a platform from which to innovate and improve the way they operate. In the past two years I have been pleased to see the growth of committees in the areas of membership and public safety, as well as for special projects like our Delicious District initiative and Albert Hill pavilion project. Every individual has their role and together contribute to create something important.

It has been a pleasure to be part of the many neighborhood events and efforts to protect, improve and celebrate our community. However, what I have appreciated the most from my involvement with the MDA is the many people I have gotten to interact with that I never would have otherwise. In our day-to-day lives, we tend to interact with the same people again and again – you may say hello to a stranger on the street, or even ask what their dog's name is -- but seldom do you have a longer conversation. Through the MDA, I have met and become friends with dozens of wonderful, interesting individuals of all ages and background. It has enriched my life and helped me feel more at home in this neighborhood than ever before.

Serving at the helm of this organization for the past two years, playing my own small role running our meetings, helping to keep this institution growing and moving forward has been my proudest accomplishment in my more than eight years of involvement with the MDA, as either a committee or board member. I'm looking forward to serving on the board in the coming year as past president, supporting Kyle in his role and continuing to make my own small contribution to this well-oiled machine we call the MDA.

I invite you to learn more about our organization, our accomplishments, and most importantly, to interact with your fellow residents at our upcoming annual meeting, being held as always in the basement of Temple Beth-el (3330 Grove Ave – use side entrance on Roseneath) on Thursday, November 14, 6:00 p.m to 8:00 p.m. Hope to see you there! 



**STEPHEN VERSEN**  
 2019 MDA  
 Board President

**IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE TO BE PART OF THE MANY NEIGHBORHOOD EVENTS AND EFFORTS TO PROTECT, IMPROVE AND CELEBRATE OUR COMMUNITY.**



**The Underground Kitchen is known for pushing the boundaries of the dining experience. It's not just about eating. It's about exciting the senses, creating community, and exploring possibilities.**

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Because we are always looking for new ways to connect people with food and their community, we can create a profound and unique experience not often captured in a simple evening out. It allows us to celebrate the diversity that surrounds us and share that with an ever-expanding group of people. It also means that no two UGK events are ever the same.



We are about continually developing relationships: with up-and-coming premier chefs, with communities, with niche vendors, and with our new veteran guests. Our newest addition, Eartha: Mobile Chef's Kitchen, Education Center, and VIP Lounge (launching in 2020) will allow our chefs and vendors to talk, in an even more intimate setting, to guests and students about their craft.

For a schedule of public events and more information about our private and corporate events check us out at:

**[theundergroundkitchen.org](http://theundergroundkitchen.org)**

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## The COLUMNS

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**AROUND THE DISTRICT**

# HUNDREDS OF RESIDENTS ACCEPT DELICIOUS DISTRICT CHALLENGE

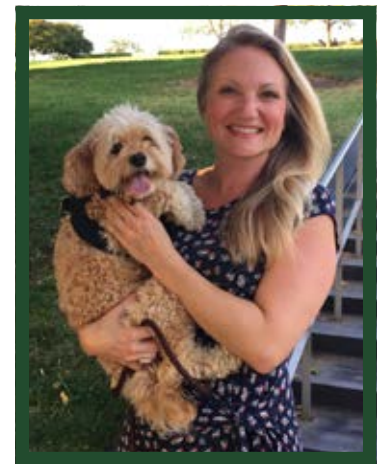
by MA POWERS

**T**he first-ever restaurant crawl through the Museum District came to a close on Labor Day. The six-month long promotion was sponsored by the Museum District Association and prompted area residents to visit not only their favorite spots but to try something new.

- 15 locally-owned restaurants participated
- Patrons obtaining passports - 325
- Passports submitted to earn prizes - 52
- Average number of stickers per passport - 9
- Residents visiting all locations - 6
- Aprons earned - 42
- Percentage of participants residing in Museum District - 84%
- Fire & Hops, the district's newest restaurant, received the highest number of visits during the promotion

Data collection and analysis by Maria Shugars

Remember, every time you dine in RVA, you support Richmond Public Schools through the meals tax. Go to [deliciousdistrict.org](http://deliciousdistrict.org) for more information.



Sara Poindexter of Hanover Avenue (shown here with her dog Bentley) was the \$500 grand prize winner receiving restaurant gift cards and a MDA membership.

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## Belmont LIBRARY

The mission of the Richmond Public Library is to inform, enrich, and empower Richmond's residents: to enrich lives of and expand opportunities for all citizens by promoting reading and the active use of cultural, wintellectual, and information resources through a dedication to excellence and professional service.

In addition to books, e-books, recorded books, and DVDs, we offer programs and classes, meeting room use, wireless Internet access, fax service, free notary service (*please call ahead for this service*) and public use PCs. **Belmont now accepts credit/debit cards and offers self-checkout!**

**The Belmont Library is located at  
3100 Ellwood Avenue.**

**Hours:** Monday & Wednesday 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.;  
Saturdays 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Closed on Sundays.

**For information:** [RichmondPublicLibrary.org](http://RichmondPublicLibrary.org) • 804-646-1139

## BELMONT LIBRARY EVENTS

### Storytimes

**Book Babies** (infant-17 months) -

**Mondays at 10:00 AM and Wednesdays at 4:00 PM**

**Toddler Storytime** (18-36 months) - **Mondays at 11:00 AM**

### Lego Club

**3rd Tuesday of the month at 4:30 PM**

We provide the LEGOs, you provide the imagination! For grades K-6 with a parent.

### Toddler and Preschool Free Paint

**Every 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month at 10:30 AM**

Toddlers and Preschoolers can allow their imaginations to run wild while finger painting during this hour-long free paint! Because who doesn't like to get a little messy?

### Library Yarns - Thursdays 10:30 AM-Noon

If you like to knit, crochet or create other types of handwork, join this informal group at the Belmont Library. Bring your current project/s. Adults and teens are welcome.

### Technology Q & A - Each Wednesday Noon-2:00 PM

Bring your laptop, Kindle, iPad or cell phone and get individual help from staff during a 30 minute session. Call 646-1139 to reserve your space.

### Weekly Tuesday course - 12:30 PM-1:30 PM

Beginners level French. **Camille Zendzian** is the instructor. No fee or registration required.

### GRASP - College Financial Assistance

**Wednesdays 6:00-8:00**

GRASP Financial Aid Advisors help students and families with financial aid and scholarships so students can make their higher education goals a reality. *By appointment only.*

### Rock painting (teens)

**November 12**

Rock art is a widely known and very historical pastime. Come join us as we design our own rocks. Materials will be provided.

### How to Catch A Turkey STEM Activity

**November 26**

"Your family forgot to get a turkey for Thanksgiving and the stores are all sold out! In order to get a turkey for your Thanksgiving feast, you are going to have to design and build a turkey trap to catch a turkey." Join us and build your very own turkey trap! *This activity is for children ages 6+.*

### Nailed It! Dessert Decorating Competition

**December 12**

Join us as we recreate the Netflix show *Nailed It* in which home bakers try and replicate dessert masterpieces. Teens will work in teams to recreate desserts in a two-round competition judged by our baking enthusiast librarians. This program may not be suitable for those with food allergies. Registration is required.

### Wii Fit and Smoothie Party (teen event)

**January 7, 2020**



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# A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD KITCHEN

by **ALLISON C. SCHUTZER**

**J**oe Carter and his wife Sharon share the same birthday. It was on one of their annual birthday trips to Italy that they first tried porchetta.

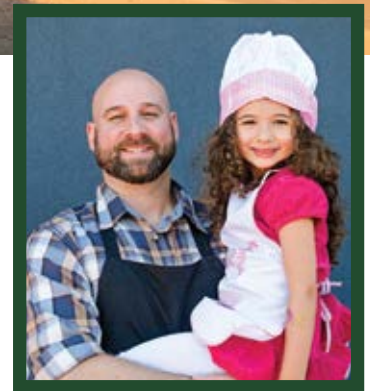
“We were in this little market in Rome called Campo de’ Fiori,” he said. “There was a small place off to the side selling slices of porchetta served on waxed paper. And that’s just how you’d eat it: right off of the paper with a Peroni. I thought ‘this stuff is ridiculous.’”

This experience would eventually inspire Joe to open his new restaurant, Izzy’s Kitchen here in the Museum District. It also illustrates a lot about Joe and the mark he hopes to make on the Richmond food scene. “A lot of the things I’m doing revolve around me making my own meats,” he said.

Joe grew up on a 33-acre family cattle farm in lower Chesterfield and is no stranger to process of butchering his own meats. That was, after all, the featured ingredient at his widely successful sandwich shop Uptown Market previously located in The Fan. While Joe plans to keep most of the well-known favorites on the menu at his newest venture located at Park and Colonial, Izzy’s will have a totally different vibe.

“Uptown was more of a take-away and we don’t want our regulars to have the wrong expectations,” he explained. “I worked in the

industry for 13 years before the birth of our daughter and then I needed to get out of that lifestyle. That’s why we’re opening Izzy’s Kitchen.”



*Joe Carter and his daughter Izzy*

And it truly is a family affair, from the restaurant’s namesake, to the photos taken by his wife Sharon on their trip to Italy that line the restaurant’s walls. But perhaps the best part is access to the family farm where Joe’s brother resides with his three sons. They’re no longer raising cattle, but the farm does allow Joe to butcher cattle from farms in the surrounding area. Additionally, some of the produce, including three acres of raspberries grown by his nephews will become various jams and sauces used on the menu.

And what a menu it is! In addition to your favorite Uptown sandwiches (The Cowboy, Cubano, Turkey Pesto), Izzy’s will also feature a “Steak of the Week” based on whatever cut Joe thinks looks best that week and a “Fish of the Week” each cooked to perfection and served with a sauce accompaniment of your choosing.

While Joe plans to feature a lot of meat dishes on the menu, vegetarians won’t be disappointed.

“I grew up on a farm and am no stranger to vegetables,” he said. “We will have something for everyone. And you won’t leave hungry. We want our guests to have a satisfying home-cooked meal, and have a box to take home with them.”

The bottom line he said is that, “we’re making food with integrity. I promise to take every step I can to make sure your meal at Izzy’s Kitchen is the freshest, most homemade thing that you can get, and that will be good for your body, too. Your experience should be light and fun.” **E**

**“WE WANT OUR GUESTS TO HAVE A SATISFYING HOME-COOKED MEAL, AND HAVE A BOX TO TAKE HOME WITH THEM.”**

— JOE CARTER OF IZZY’S KITCHEN



**HAWK WATCH**

**LIVING IN  
HARMONY  
WITH OUR  
RESIDENT  
RAPTORS**

*by* **CHRISTINA NUCKOLS**



## THEY ARE, TALONS DOWN, THE SEXIEST INHABITANTS OF THE MUSEUM DISTRICT. BEAUTIFUL, DARING, LARGE AND IN CHARGE, HAWKS SEEM TO FEEL RIGHT AT HOME IN OUR URBAN NEIGHBORHOOD.

**R**ed-tailed, red-shouldered and Cooper's hawks have all found a niche that enables them to thrive in RVA. Red-tailed hawks, the largest hawk species in Virginia and the East Coast, are particularly well adapted to city life because they are not picky eaters, according to April Harper, environmental educator at Maymont.

"They are a stable bird," Harper said. "They are a resilient bird. They will eat anything they can catch, so it makes it easier for them to adapt to the changes we [humans] make."

Squirrels, smaller birds, rodents – even snakes and groundhogs – are all on the menu for these adventurous eaters. Red-shouldered hawks have similar habits but are partial to squirrels.

"The red-shouldered hawks in particular keep the squirrel population under control in Richmond," said Len Smock, president of the Richmond Audubon Society.

Finally, the smaller Cooper's hawk favors birds and is commonly found scoping out neighborhood birdfeeders.

Like most raptors, all three hawk species are monogamous, and red-tailed hawks mate for life. Red-tailed and red-shouldered hawks return to the same nest each year, while Cooper's hawks stick to the same area but usually build a new nest.



MALINDA COLLIER PHOTO



JEREMY KOSLOW PHOTO

Hawks are planners, and they typically start building or sprucing up their nests during the winter months, long before the spring arrival of their brood. While songbird chicks leave their nests in two or three weeks, hawklets hang around for more than a month, sometimes two.


Even after they leave the nest, the young birds will not set off on their own for several more months. These yearlings are most likely to be mugging it up in photos taken around the Museum District because they are less inclined than their parents to lay low when humans are nearby.

"Young hawks are pretty naïve," said Harper.

How can humans be good neighbors to our Museum District hawks?

"I like to encourage people to keep their distance," Harper said. "I don't recommend approaching a hawk. We want them to be afraid, and we don't want them to get too used to us."

Another important piece of advice is to be mindful of the methods of rodent control we use to ensure we do not accidentally poison one of these resident raptors.

The good news is that hawks have already figured out how to blend into the neighborhood. As long as we give them a little space, they'll be with us for the long term, and we're lucky to have them. 

## SQUIRRELS, SMALLER BIRDS, RODENTS - EVEN SNAKES AND GROUNDHOGS - ARE ALL ON THE MENU FOR THESE ADVENTUROUS EATERS.

# Advent at Richmond's First Baptist Church

**Hanging of the Green** will begin on Sunday, December 1 at 8:30 and 11:00 am and continue each Sunday morning until Christmas Day. Join us on this first Sunday of Advent as we begin the joyful journey of decorating the church sanctuary with greenery, poinsettias, ornaments and light. Choirs of all ages will lead us as we worship.

## **A Christmas Flourish**, Sunday, December 8 at 7:00 pm

Familiar carols and newly composed anthems come alive as the Church Choir, handbells, and the youth and adult choral ensembles are both joined by full orchestra. Music of all styles will be a part of this remarkable annual concert.

## **Youth Pageant**, Sunday, December 15 at 6:00 pm

The students of Richmond's First Baptist Church combine drama and music to present a refreshing perspective on the birth of the Christ Child.

## **Candlelight Christmas Eve services**, Tuesday, December 24 at 5:00 and 11:00 pm

Worship at 5:00 pm is filled with all ages, including children and their families. The 11:00 pm service is more reflective and includes communion.

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# RICHMOND'S OLDEST PAROCHIAL SCHOOL CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL



by **MA POWERS**

**T**his academic year Saint Benedict Catholic School, located in the Museum District, is celebrating a huge milestone: the school's 100th birthday. Founded in 1919, Saint Benedict is the oldest parochial school in Richmond. Today, Saint Benedict offers a classical, Catholic education for a diverse community of students coming from over 20 area zip codes. Saint Benedict educates more than 200 children annually from junior-kindergarten through 8th grade. The small school setting provides for one classroom per grade with an average class size of 20 students. The Museum District



location allows students to benefit from hands-on learning at some of Richmond's most prominent museums and historical sites. Academics are competitive and the classical curriculum teaches students how to think critically about the world around them using logic, faith and reason. The valedictorian and salutatorian graduates of Benedictine High School Class of 2019 were both Saint Benedict graduates!

## HOGWARTS IN THE MUSEUM DISTRICT?

Saint Benedict uses the English boarding school tradition of organizing students into "houses." Houses provide a sense of belonging, and a natural source of friendly rivalry and competition. At Saint Benedict, the houses are named for the four saints surrounding Saint Benedict in the mural found in St. Benedict church: Augustine House, Jerome House, Ambrose House

Top photo: Class of 1939 (Pat Gilman, second row from bottom, third boy from the right)

Photo Below: Doran family sharing a meal at Benedict School. Bernadette Callaban Doran ('27), her son William Joseph Doran III ('57), and his two daughters, Kathleen Doran Blum ('83) and Michelle Doran Clark ('84)

*continued on page 13*



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K Assessment, 10:30am - 11:30am
- Jan. 13 (Mon.) JK Assessment 11am-11:45am
- Jan. 15 (Wed.) K Assessment 10am - 11am
- Jan. 26 (Sun.) Catholic Schools Week:  
JK Assessment, 8am - 9am  
K Assessment, 9:30am- 10:30am  
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## SCHOOL CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

*continued from page 11*

and Gregory House. As in the Harry Potter novels, each house is led by a “prefect,” an eighth-grade student selected by their peers, and houses accumulate points throughout the year in areas of spirituality, academics, community and activities. There are four designated “House Days” throughout the year for special house activities and the year culminates in the awarding of the House Cup, to the house which has earned the most points throughout the school year.

## HISTORY

St. Benedict Catholic School is an outgrowth of St. Mary School, which was formerly located in downtown Richmond and was staffed by the Notre Dame Sisters. In 1868, the Benedictine Sisters replaced these sisters. By 1884, there were approximately 217 children in St. Mary Parochial School. In 1919, on the corner of Grove and Belmont, St. Benedict School opened, with classes being held temporarily in the convent already on site. Sister Edward Galloway was the first principal of the school which replaced the old St. Mary School. The convent was moved in 1923 to make room for the proposed school building. Excavation for the new building was begun immediately and was completed in 1924. By the late 1940s the school was no longer large enough to accommodate the increasing number of students, so an addition was built in 1949.

## FAMILY TRADITION

Because of its long-standing history in Richmond, St. Benedict Catholic School has a large alumni community and has served several generations of local families. The school’s librarian Michelle Clark is also a school parent with four generations of connection to the school. She graduated from St Benedict in 1984 and her son is currently enrolled at the school. Her father William Doran III attended in 1951, and her grandmother Bernadette Doran attended in 1927. Bernadette later became the school secretary. “My parents put six of us kids through Saint Benedict and Dad has some fun stories about his time here, his mom working here, and the priests living in the priory.” Bernadette has since passed away, but left the family a treasure trove of photos and memorabilia from her time at the school.

## ALUMNI MEMORIES

John Patrick “Pat” Gilman began attendance at Saint Benedict in 1932, during the Great Depression. He was just 5-years-old and remembers the humble beginning at Saint Benedict. He recalls his mother running the school’s first parent-teacher organization. Some of her duties included finding proper mattresses for the nuns to sleep on, stocking the pantry with canned goods and finding shoes for children whose parents couldn’t afford them. “We were fortunate to have the sisters teaching and guiding you in the faith on a daily basis, taking you over to church, teaching you prayers and hymns, and engaging you in the life of the parish,” Gilman explained. “It formed you spiritually, strengthened you morally and made you good contributors to society.”



Top left: Michelle Doran Clark, school librarian ('84)


Top right: Sean Cruess, the current principal of the school, has served in the position since 2012

Lower: Pat Gilman ('39) and Gretchen Ridgely, Admissions and Development Director

## INTERESTING FACT

*Tuition for Catholic students is \$6,310 and just over \$9,000 for non-parishioners, making it one of the most affordable private schools in Richmond. Students from St Benedict typically continue education at area Catholic high schools, specialty high schools, and governors schools.*

## LOOKING FORWARD

“Many people in Richmond have a connection to our little school at the corner of Belmont and Grove,” Principal Sean Cruess shared. “We are so very proud of the contribution Saint Benedict has made to the Richmond community, and we look forward to continuing that service to families for generations to come.” Events celebrating 100 years of service include students feeding people experiencing homelessness, participating in food drives and visiting the elderly. A centennial gala will take place at The Commonwealth Club on April 25, 2020 and Centennial Mass with Bishop Knestout will take place at Saint Benedict Church at 11:00 a.m. on April 26, 2020. 

# THINK FALL

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# LITTLE FREE LIBRARIES: SHARING A LOVE OF READING

by **LIZ BRYANT**

**N**ot that long ago, they were few and far between. Now, they're seemingly everywhere. Little Free Libraries. Those charming, shingled boxes containing literary delights.

It all started 10 years ago in Hudson, Wisconsin. A gentleman named Todd Bol created the first book exchange in his front yard as a tribute to his mother, who had been a teacher. Fast forward to today and there are nearly 100,000 Little Free Libraries in all 50 states and across the globe in 91 countries. The Little Free Library non-profit organization has a mission to inspire a love of reading, build community and spark creativity.

In the Museum District, I counted six: 3330 Grove Ave., 3519 Hanover Ave., 3100 Park Ave., 3101 Patterson Ave., 426 Roseneath Ave., and by the front door at Ellwood Thompson's.

If you haven't peered into one, you should. You never know what you might find. While most people share stories of discovering a great cookbook or a biography, one gentleman said he found "three bootleg CDs of a Curtis Mayfield concert." That's quite a find.

The rules are simple: take a book, leave a book. And not necessarily in the same visit. And not necessarily in the same Little Free Library. The exchanges work on the honor system and if we all consistently contribute, we'll ensure a good supply of reading material.

To get more information on how to set up your very own Little Free Library, visit their website at [www.littlefreelibrary.org](http://www.littlefreelibrary.org).



# HOLISTIC JUSTICE FOR A SAFER VIRGINIA

by **JANINE DOYLE**

**W**hile the Museum District is lucky to have one of the lower crime rates in Richmond, the city as a whole struggles with one of the highest crime rates in the country. When it comes to nonviolent crimes, one Richmond resident has a plan for progress.

**Tom Barbour**, a private criminal defense attorney, is also the co-founder of the Virginia Holistic Justice Initiative (VAHJI), a non-profit organization dedicated to reducing recidivism and long-term crime trends through a client-centered approach to legal services.

For Barbour, holistic justice fills a gap in what he feels are troubling and outdated perceptions of why people commit crimes. Common practice in today's criminal justice system is to present supportive service options to nonviolent lawbreakers and expect a curative result. While optimistic in nature, this approach does not take into account the specific circumstances that lead an individual to make the initial choice to commit a crime.

VAHJI's model is "based on the notion that people are irrational survivors," Barbour said. "They are exposed to circumstances and they react; some of those reactions are considered criminal, and those people then come into the justice system."

Not looking to reinvent the wheel of available services in Richmond, Barbour's goal is to set up VAHJI's clients with a support structure

**VIRGINIA HOLISTIC JUSTICE INITIATIVE (VAHJI) IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO REDUCING RECIDIVISM AND LONG-TERM CRIME TRENDS THROUGH A CLIENT-CENTERED APPROACH TO LEGAL SERVICES.**

while they navigate the already strong service options the city has to offer. His hope is that, by providing this supportive intervention, their clients will be more prepared to react to future difficult circumstances through a legal support structure.

"We are quality aggregators," Barbour said. "We in effect create an umbrella of services by being the umbrella itself; we do the connecting."

Having recently completed their volunteer-powered pilot program with 15 clients, VAHJI has now shifted to phase two: fundraising. Barbour and his co-founder, Senior Public Defender J. Hess, along with the organization's seven-member operating board, are eager to hire their first full-time case worker to continue supporting their clients and possibly bring on more soon.


To find out more and learn how you can get involved, check out [www.vahji.com](http://www.vahji.com) to sign up for their email list or make a donation.



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## THE CURRENT STATE OF MUSEUM DISTRICT REAL ESTATE

**A**s usual the Museum District real estate market remains strong and remarkably consistent. Through the first three quarters of 2019 there have been 64 single-family Museum District homes sold compared with 72 homes in the first three quarters of 2018. The average price per square foot has increased from \$248/sf in 2018 to \$259/sf in 2019. These numbers closely reflect the overall appreciation in the Richmond metropolitan area. In the third quarter there were 17 homes sold with about half of those selling for more than the asking price.



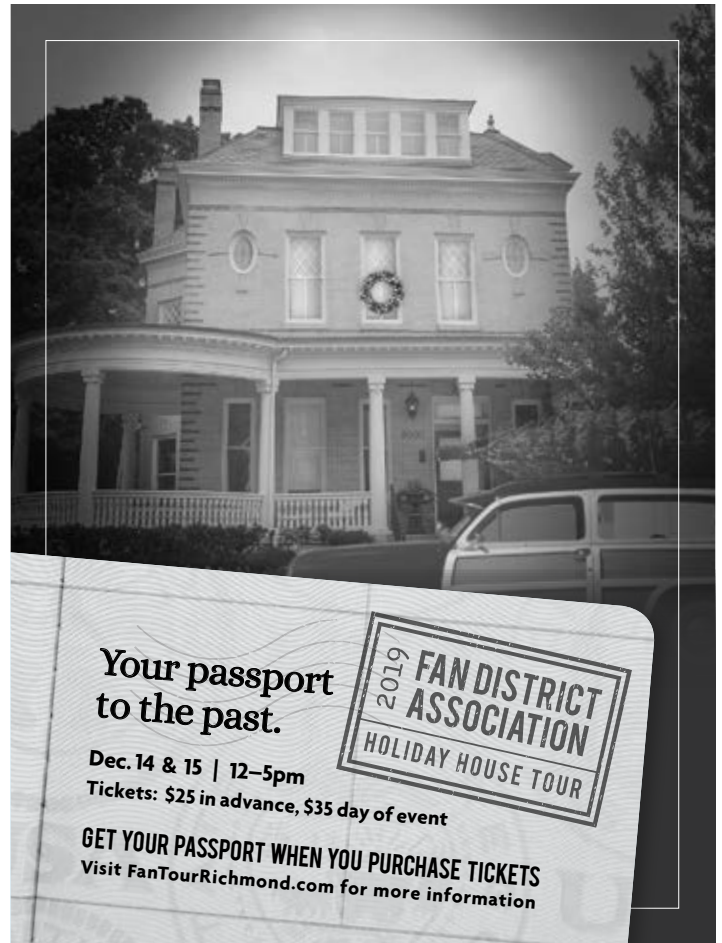
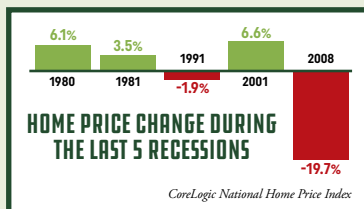
**STEVE JONES**  
*Joyner Fine Properties*

Condo sales also remain consistent with year-to-date sales holding steady with about 30 sales, similar to 2017 and 2018.

For the Richmond market in general the rather lackluster first quarter appreciation rebounded significantly to a healthy 3.42 percent in the second quarter. This puts us on pace to continue the 5.5 to 6.5 percent appreciation that we have seen over the past few years.

Mortgage interest rates have remained below 4 percent, although there has been a little volatility recently.

For those that might be concerned about the overall economy and how long the current expansion (one of the longest in recent history) will continue, the accompanying graph should provide some comfort regarding how economic slowdowns have affected home values. Note that during the last five recessions home prices have mostly improved or at least held their own during four of those recessions with the housing bubble of 2008 being the anomaly.



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## ANIMAL FOSTERING: A KEY LINK IN THE ADOPTION PROCESS

by **LIZ BRYANT**

**I**f you're an animal lover and want to make a life-saving impact, but for whatever reason may not be able to make a lifetime commitment, you may want to consider fostering. Dogs and cats of all ages are in need of temporary homes, for varying amounts of time.

### SOME THINGS TO CONSIDER BEFORE FOSTERING INCLUDE:

- 1. HOW MUCH TIME CAN YOU COMMIT?** Newbie kittens and puppies need round-the-clock care and bottle feeding, while an older dog or cat may only eat twice a day. Adult dogs will need outdoor walking and play time. Cats still need playtime, but their bathroom schedule is pretty much on their time with a litterbox.
- 2. WILL THE FOSTER BE WELCOMED BY THE ENTIRE FAMILY?** This includes both human and animal family members. Consider especially how your existing pets may react.
- 3. ARE YOU WILLING TO PROVIDE TRAINING IF NEEDED?** That adorable 2-year-old beagle may be appealing, but may also not be house-trained. Are you willing to put in the time to do that?
- 4. ARE YOU ON BOARD WITH SOCIALIZING YOUR FOSTER?** An important part of fostering is making the animal feel safe and loved and is given opportunities to interact with both two- and four-legged friends.
- 5. ARE YOU WILLING AND ABLE TO DEAL WITH SPECIAL NEEDS?** The tabby you're fostering may be on a medication schedule or the older basset hound may need to take extra slow walks.

If you'd like to consider being a foster pet parent, contact your favorite local animal rescue organization. They can give you information on what animals may be available and what sort of training and support they provide.

Fostering is great because you are not only providing care and a loving home for an animal in need, but you are also playing an important role in getting that dog or cat ready for adoption into their forever family. Who knows, after fostering you might even decide that it's your. **G**

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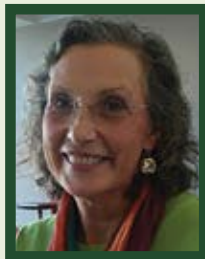
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# A MERRY, MERRY MUSEUM DISTRICT HOLIDAY SEASON TO YOU!

by **JANE HOLLIDAY WILSON** with contributions from Phyllis Laslett and Dory Klein of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Carla Murray of Maymont and Jenny Jenkins Rash of Sneed's Nursery & Garden Center

**M**y Charlottesville gardening girlfriend and I have developed a longstanding Christmas tradition. Every year we give each other a wreath making class early in December. We have the best time fussing over materials, deciding what will go best on our respective doors and generally pretending we are garden geniuses. For years we went to Monticello. They cut greenery from the grounds and teach you to make your wreath from the ground up. Around year seven or eight, we decided we could probably teach the class ourselves and started casting around for something new.



**JANIE WILSON**

Two years ago, we went to Maymont and got instruction from the amazing Peggy Singlemann (of VPM TV Virginia Home Grown fame) and her staff. They helped us to make a holiday swag and topiary. Last year, we had great fun sipping wine and decorating premade wreath bases at Sneed's Garden Center (a great place to find all things live – trees, wreaths, garland, flowers – during the holidays).

So this season we decided to check out Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden (LGBG) to see if they had anything to offer. And boy do they! Turns out that our very own neighbor, Phyllis Laslett, is the Adult Education Manager there. Phyllis moved to the Museum District back in 1994 when the "Devil's Triangle" was still a thing. She has since been planning fun things for adults to do year-round at LGBG. The holiday line-up is much more robust than I had imagined.

Here's a link to the class schedule: [www.bit.ly/ClasSchedule](http://www.bit.ly/ClasSchedule). My girlfriend and I are taking the December 3rd wreath making class. But listening to Phyllis's descriptions makes me want to take in every single offering.

Professional wreath tip: **NEVER SHARE BOXWOOD**. Who knew? Boxwood blight is something that we should all be concerned about. No one knows where it might come from or when it might show up. So, if you have boxwood in your garden here's your rule: NEVER bring anybody else's boxwood into your yard or home. Here's a link to more detailed info. From VA Extension: <https://ext.vt.edu/search-results.html?q=boxwood+blight>

With all these fun things to do a Lewis Ginter, don't forget that Maymont has some great holiday offerings, too. There is nothing better to get you into the holiday swing of things than a tour of the Mansion all done up for the holidays. And they offer their holiday decorating




Wreath Making at Maymont

classes throughout the season. Here is a link to those classes: <https://maymont.org/?s=wreath>. Register online at [maymont.org](http://maymont.org) by Dec. 3. For more information, call 804-358-7166, ext. 310.

With a lovely and unique selection of trees, wreath bases, plants and charming holiday decorations at Sneed's Garden Center, you can accomplish that holiday dream: one-stop-shopping when you sign up to make your holiday wreath at Sneed's. They have two different options, both offered at two different times. The evening classes include wine – how lovely! For information and to register, call 804-320-7798, extension 306.

So, what about those who want to enjoy all the greenery, but are not "do-it-yourselfers"? There's good news. King of Pops, known for their frozen treats, turn their staff into tree elves in the wintertime. They send the elves to your door with a live tree, already in a stand, and set it up right in your house. You can choose from several sizes. When the holidays are over, set the tree, stand and all, on the front porch and they will come and take it away. How great is that! Here is the link to their site: <https://www.treelives.net>

With so many fun options for getting your holiday groove on, it is sure to be a merry, merry season in the old Museum District in 2019. Cheers! 

## HOLIDAY PLANT QUESTION

### MUSEUM DISTRICT RESIDENT BEN HOPKINS ASKS, "ARE POINSETTIAS REALLY POISONOUS TO PETS?"

Dory Klein, librarian at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden answers, "Poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are part of the spurge family (Euophobiaceae); many spurges, including poinsettias, contain a toxic milky sap that exudes from the plant when cut or crushed (or eaten). Poinsettia is no exception, but the toxic effects are less potent (still a terrible idea for a snack, though). While consuming poinsettia plants is unlikely to prove fatal to dogs, cats or humans, it can cause irritation to the mouth and stomach, including abdominal pain, vomiting and diarrhea. If you think that your animal or human friend may have snacked on a poinsettia, you should definitely consult your local vet or human doctor, respectively. And if you'd like to learn more, I recommend *The North American Guide to Common Poisonous Plants* by Nancy J. Turner and Patrick von Aderkas (Timber Press, 2009)





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Museum District Resident

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# THE PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE

Adapted by **BEN HOPKINS**

*The Proust Questionnaire is a series of questions about personality that became popular in the late nineteenth century. While French author Marcel Proust did not write the questions, his answers (and the questions) were published in 1890. Modified versions of the questionnaire have been used over the years by James Lipton as part of his show "Inside the Actor's Studio" and Vanity Fair magazine, which features the answers of celebrities in the back pages of each issue.*

## WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

*Being three courses into a five-course meal at a table surrounded with chairs full of friends, empty bottles of wine, and the air filled with laughter.*

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST FEAR?

*To have hurt someone through my own thoughtlessness.*

## WHICH LIVING PERSON DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

*My dad's pretty great – retired professor, active photographer, public radio DJ – lives life fully, is always learning something new, serving others in some way, and has a keen appreciation for all the beauty in the world.*

## WHAT IS THE TRAIT THAT YOU DEPLORE IN OTHERS?

*Greed – especially by those who already have so much and should know better.*

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

*Good vermouth. I'm OK with a value bourbon, but good vermouth is essential for a great Manhattan.*

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST REGRET?

*Not trying harder to be a writer.*

## WHAT OR WHO IS THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE?

*My family. From the one that raised me to the one I'm raising now.*

## WHICH TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

*To be a good dancer. What's more fun than that?*

## WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT STATE OF MIND?

*Happiness and satisfaction with the life I've made and appreciation for everything and everyone that has gotten me here. Trying to squeeze as much enjoyment from this wonderful time in life when everything is going well, your parents are healthy and your children still like you.*

## IF YOU COULD CHANGE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

*That's really hard to say – things are about as good as I could reasonably expect. Our life is full, but nothing is perfect. Adding something would mean taking something else away. I mean, it might be fun to*



**STEPHEN  
VERSEN**

*be a traveling family ukulele band – but then, we'd be a traveling family ukulele band.*

## WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

*Making delicious food and drink for my friends and family. That's how I show people I love them.*

## IF YOU WERE TO DIE AND COME BACK AS A PERSON OR A THING, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

*Maybe one of those early 20th Century British explorers – touring the ruins of ancient civilizations, meeting uncontacted civilizations, exploring a still mysterious and exotic world – that all sounds very exciting.*

## WHAT IS YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

*It'd either be a painting of sailboats my Mom made when she was young that now hangs in my son's room, or – and you're going to think I'm nuts – this fork I've got at work. I'm a big believer in lunch. Especially during a work day – even if it's spent at your desk. I found this fork in a school cafeteria in Oxford, England some 20 years ago. It was different from all the rest; sturdy. So I pocketed it and it has been the fork I've used for lunch my entire working life.*

## WHAT DO YOU REGARD AS THE LOWEST DEPTH OF MISERY?

*Guilt, shame, letting other people down – you know, the usual stuff.*

## WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

*I hate that we are wrecking this world, that we humans know it as clear as day, and that we still can't find it in ourselves to stop.*

## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO DIE?

*Old, sentient, and surrounded by friends and family. Or in some spectacularly glorious and/or hilarious fashion that brings pride and/or laughter to people for many decades to come.*

## WHAT IS YOUR MOTTO?

*It's good to be wanted. This is what I tell myself when I feel overburdened by the demands of life.*

## WHAT'S THE MOST RICHMOND THING YOU CAN DO?

*Craft beer at the river or the Easter Parade on Monument Ave. *



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

### CITY

Mayor Levar Stoney	804-646-7970
Chief Administrative Officer ( <i>Vacant</i> )	804-646-7978
Citizens Assistance	804-646-7000 or 311
Public Works ( <i>Leaf and trash collection, sidewalks and tree maintenance, etc.</i> )	804-646-0999
Building Permits, Inspections	804-646-6955
Environmental/Housing Code	804-646-7448

### POLICE & FIRE

Emergency	911
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Police Non-emergency	804-646-5100
Crime Stoppers	804-780-1000
3rd Precinct	804-646-1412
Animal Control	804-646-5573
	(after hours) 804-646-5123

### RVA311

RVA311 is the City of Richmond's new centralized format for easily reporting, filing and tracking all resident service requests.

Replacing the old SeeClickFix system, RVA311 is a full-scale online and mobile app solution which allows residents to record service requests directly to various government entities including the Richmond Police Department, the departments of Public Works, Public Utilities, Social Services and Finance and the Department of Planning and Development. Requests for service cover everything from pothole reports, broken streetlights and damaged infrastructure to unlawful dumping, sanitation concerns, graffiti, abandoned vehicles and much more. The system is very user friendly, and even includes a FAQ section to help with general questions about taxes, parking and other city-related functions.

To get started, residents can go to [www.rva311.com](http://www.rva311.com) and set up an account for reporting. Once issues or complaints are filed, they can be tracked from inception, to assignment and ultimately through to conclusion.

### CITY COUNCIL

Andreas Addison (1st District)	804-646-5935
<a href="mailto:andreas.addison@richmondgov.com">andreas.addison@richmondgov.com</a>	
Kimberly Gray (2nd District)	804-646-6532
<a href="mailto:kimberly.gray@richmondgov.com">kimberly.gray@richmondgov.com</a>	
Parker Agelasto (5th District)	804-646-5724
<a href="mailto:parker.agelasto@richmondgov.com">parker.agelasto@richmondgov.com</a>	

For information on City Council meetings, visit <https://richmondva.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

### SCHOOL BOARD

Jason Kamras, School Superintendent	804-780-7710
Elizabeth Doerr, Vice Chair & Richmond 1st District	804-929-6624
<a href="mailto:edoerr@rvaschools.net">edoerr@rvaschools.net</a>	
Scott Barlow, Richmond 2nd District	804-929-6571
<a href="mailto:jbarlow3@rvaschools.net">jbarlow3@rvaschools.net</a>	
Patrick Sapini - Richmond 5th District	804-929-6930
<a href="mailto:psapini@rvaschools.net">psapini@rvaschools.net</a>	

To watch school board proceedings and meetings:

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### VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Delegate Betsy Carr (69th)	804-698-1069
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