

AUG - OCT 2023

# COLUMNS

A PUBLICATION of THE MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION



MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG

# STICKY STUFF

## WHY ARE SOME THINGS SO HARD TO LET GO OF?

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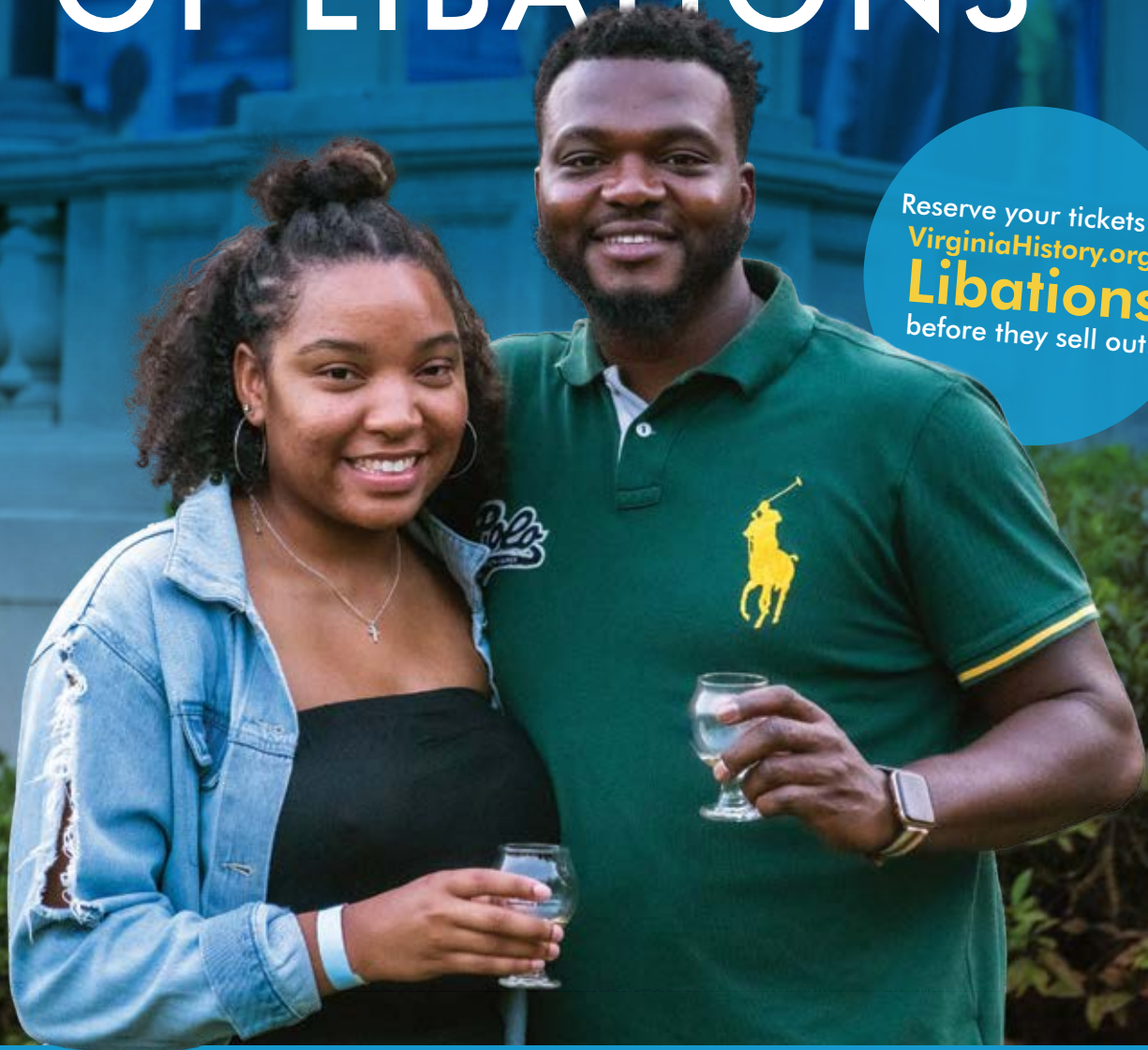
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*To reach any of our board members by phone, please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message stating the person you wish to reach.*

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



## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

# HELLO NEIGHBORS!

**T**his quarter, I'm writing my column from a beach house in the Outer Banks of North Carolina, where I've been lucky to vacation with my in-laws for over 10 years. I feel a great sense of gratitude as I sit here, exhausted but content after a whole day out in the sun, playing beach games with loved ones to the soundtrack of ocean waves. I hope this summer has been full of fun and relaxation for you all too!

Much has happened since our last issue, including the return of Spring Fling, a complementary MDA member-exclusive event. Neighbors enjoyed live music, food and drink as well as full and exclusive access to the Virginia Museum of History & Culture's galleries. We hope those of you who attended enjoyed the evening as much as we did.

And who could forget our Mother's Day House & Garden Tour, which brought in even more ticket sales than the previous record-breaking year! I had the chance to work the door at one of our tour homes, and it was an absolute delight to greet everyone and see their enjoyment first-hand. This event is a behemoth to pull off, and we have so many people to thank for their support—you can find them listed later in this issue.

One of the best things about the tour actually happens after the fact as it allows us to provide scholarships to two graduating seniors at Thomas Jefferson High School each year. I'm proud that we're able to support students eager to pursue a post-secondary education—what a joy it was to attend TJ's awards ceremony and hear the cheers of fellow students and parents as honorees were announced! You'll see a write-up on our 2023 scholarship winners later in this issue as well.

We hope you enjoy this issue of *The Columns*. And, of course, my metaphorical door is always open if you have any concerns, feedback or questions about the MDA and our work—please feel free to reach out to me at [mdapresident@museumdistrict.org](mailto:mdapresident@museumdistrict.org). ☑



**JANINE DOYLE**  
 2023 MDA PRESIDENT

## Did you know that an annual Museum District Association Individual Membership is about the same cost as five medium coffees?

**Just \$15** keeps you in-the-know with all things Museum District, including social events, Town Halls and opportunities to get involved with your public schools and neighborhood businesses.

The MDA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that contributes to the beautification and historic preservation of the neighborhood, works to address public safety and environmental issues and strives to create a sense of community among those who live, work and do business in the best neighborhood in Richmond.

Whether you're picking up *The Columns* for the first time or are a longtime member and considering renewing, we hope you'll make the choice to join us and get involved.

**Learn more and join online at <https://www.museumdistrict.org/join>.** ☑





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**INSIDE THE MDA**

## CELEBRATING THE 2023 MUSEUM DISTRICT SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

**C**ongratulations to graduating Thomas Jefferson High School seniors **JANCY LOBO** and **ISIAH MEJIA**, the Museum District Association's 2023 scholarship winners! This scholarship is given annually to two graduating Thomas Jefferson High School seniors, funded by the MDA's Mother's Day House & Garden Tour.

Both students had exceptional recommendations, GPAs over 4.0, demonstrated leadership in their school and participated in community service projects through TJ's Key Club, in addition to other extracurriculars.

Isiah: "The Key Club and the experiences of community service have greatly opened my eyes and have enabled me to see why helping the community around me is so important."

Jancy: "My experience [as a Latinos Unidos Club parent group translator] has affected me because by being a translator, I serve as a bridge between two cultures. It allows me to help parents become more engaged in their children's lives and in the community."

Isiah will be studying Media Arts and Design as well as Communications at James Madison University. Jancy will be attending Brightpoint Community College, pursuing a Liberal Arts degree and certification in Paralegal Studies. We wish them much success as they embark on their next chapter. **Q**



**JANCY LOBO**



**ISIAH MEJIA**

### The **COLUMNS**

A Publication of THE MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

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### STREET CRED

*Have you ever wondered about the history behind our neighborhood's street names? We have! Keep an eye out for your street as we'll be featuring a new pair in every issue.*

#### STREET NAME: **MONUMENT AVENUE**

**DIRECTION:** East-West

**ORIGIN:** Named for the monuments that have lined the street since the first confederate monument to Robert E Lee was erected in 1890, later removed in 2021. Other confederate monuments were removed in 2020. The Arthur Ashe statue remains standing at Roseneath Avenue. Richmond and the state of VA are currently redesigning the avenue.

#### STREET NAME: **NANSEMOND AVENUE**

**DIRECTION:** North-South

**ORIGIN:** Legend has it that the street was once called "Kissing Lane" because it was a favorite area for couples to go courting. The Nansemond Tribe of Native Americans have lived in Virginia since the 17th century. **Q**



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**INSIDE  
THE MDA**

## RETIRING BOARD MEMBERS

### BETH BOSTIAN


Beth has been an incredible supporter of the MDA for years, creating beautiful graphics for our Mother's Day House & Garden Tour as well as serving as our board's communications chair. Her contributions to this neighborhood are countless, and she has consistently been one of the most dependable people to work with, cranking out our Monday e-newsletter every week without fail. Beth's warmth and wit will be sorely missed—thank you for your service to our neighborhood!

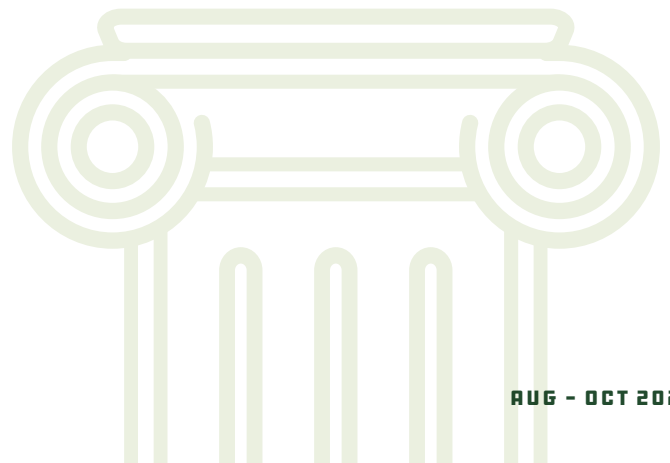
### BEN HOPKINS

Ben has played a pivotal role in the MDA since 2017, serving as writer/editor of *The Columns* until 2021 and then returning as editor/chair in January 2023. A major influence behind this publication's big redesign from black and white newsletter to colorful magazine, Ben has always brought big and bright ideas to the table, pushing us all to reach for our greatest potential. We are forever grateful for Ben's dedication to this organization and our great neighborhood.

*We wish Ben and Beth the absolute best as they move on to their next adventure!*

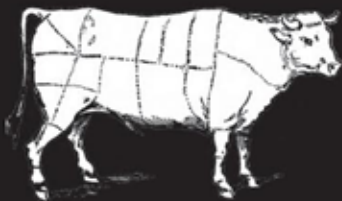
### BETH SHUMAKER

Beth has been the Museum District Woman's Club liaison to the MDA for the past two years; she served as president of the Woman's Club for many years as well. As the MDA and the Woman's Club began hosting events again post-Covid, Beth maintained communications between the two organizations so our calendars would not conflict. Beth brought much life and experience to the MDA board as a long-time resident of the Museum District and member of the Woman's Club. Her perspective was greatly appreciated, and we will miss her dearly as she moves on from her board commitment. 



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# MOTHER'S DAY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR CELEBRATES ANOTHER RECORD-BREAKING YEAR



## MOTHER'S DAY *House & Garden* TOUR

**O**n Sunday, May 14, the Museum District Association hosted the annual Mother's Day House and Garden Tour. Nine homes were on the tour this year. The generous homeowners who opened their beautiful homes are listed on the next page. We could not have been more pleased with the variety and creativity displayed by the homes showcased in this year's tour. This day has become a community event that requires the participation of well over 120 dedicated volunteers and has become an annual tradition. Many of our attendees come with their moms, family and friends. To all those who planned, supported, volunteered and attended the House Tour, thank you. We hope you enjoyed your experience and your visit to the Museum District.

Thanks to the **VIRGINIA MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND CULTURE** for once again allowing the House Tour Committee to use the Museum as a hospitality center and trolley stop. And thanks to the **BELMONT LIBRARY** for opening on Sunday for the tour and to Librarian **BARBARA BOOTH** for making this possible.

I want to express special thanks to the 2023 House Tour Committee members, who not only produced this year's event but also put together the volunteer party on the Saturday night prior, generously hosted at the home of **GARY AND HARRIET FOSTER** (Thank you, Gary and Harriett!). Each year The House Tour Committee begins work in August to prepare for the House Tour the following May. This year's committee worked exceptionally well, and their efforts resulted in one of the most successful tours we have ever produced. We believe we raised more money this year for the MDA than ever before! This means more money to be donated to various charitable organizations. Please thank the House Tour Committee members and every person and company listed below who made this year's tour a success! And please thank the members of the Museum District Association Board who supported the tour again this year by volunteering at one of the homes.

*Thanks again to everyone listed on the next page and anyone else we inadvertently may have failed to mention.*

### **KAREN LEBO**

*Chair, 2023 Museum District Association  
Mother's Day House and Garden Tour*

# A very special thanks to all that made the 2023 House Tour possible!



## HOMEOWNERS

Dave and Pat Caulkins  
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Kelsea Burton and Nick Marfing  
Sabet Stroman and Bob Gorrell  
Denise Miller  
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Barbara Ambrose	Harriet Foster	Bosha Nelson
John Ambrose	(Hosted Vol Thank You Party)	Shelley Nickel**
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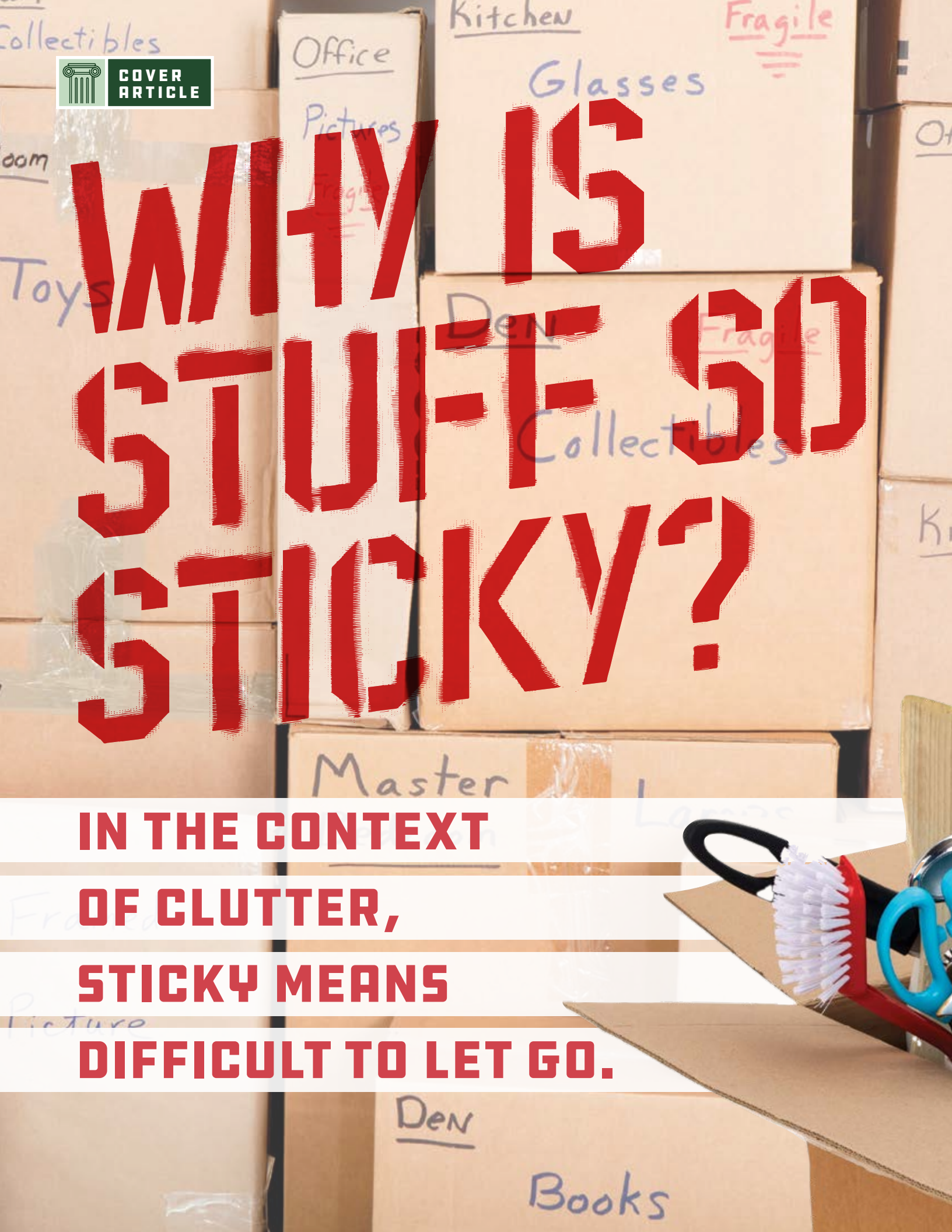
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# WHY IS STUFF SO STICKY?

**IN THE CONTEXT  
OF CLUTTER,  
STICKY MEANS  
DIFFICULT TO LET GO.**

by **AMANDA SCUDDER**

*MSW, Certified Professional Organizer*

**T**welve years ago, I had an epiphany: more stuff was making my life more difficult. With two little kids, assorted pets and a full-time job, my days and my space were filled to the brim. One overbooked Saturday, as I grumpily crammed a stack of t-shirts into an over-filled drawer, I realized we simultaneously had too much stuff, commitments and stress and not enough time, simplicity and calm. I decided to prioritize the latter and began a decluttering campaign that led me to greater peace of mind and a new career as a professional organizer.

So I speak from the heart when I say decluttering is life-changing. It makes housekeeping easier, helps you think more clearly and recognize priorities, reduces stress and improves productivity and mental clarity. In the years since my epiphany, I've found my calling: helping people with their decluttering and organizing journeys.

Over the next four issues of *The Columns*, I'll be sharing some of what I've learned along the way, starting with the question: *why is stuff so sticky?* If you have toddlers, the answer may be obvious, but in the context of clutter, sticky means difficult to let go.

I remember the moment I first realized the importance of this question. A client who felt totally stuck with her clutter drolly commented, "Don't ask me why I'm keeping this." I sensed something. "Do you want me to ask you why?" She laughed, "Actually, I think I do!" Exploring her whys provided us with valuable insight into beliefs about stuff that are deeply ingrained in our human nature, with roots dating back thousands of years.

**Here are some of the most common reasons people struggle to let go of things even when they believe that doing so will be good for them:**

### **EMOTIONAL ATTACHMENT**

Many items hold sentimental value, reminding us of important moments, people or experiences. Things can also become entwined with our identity, representing hobbies, achievements, or social status. Letting go of these belongings can feel like letting go of ourselves and our past.

### **GRIEF**

An emotional superglue, grief can bind us to even seemingly valueless items that have a connection to a loved one. This isn't a new phenomenon; archeologist Dr. Lindsey Buster posits that caches of everyday items found in an Iron Age Scottish fort settlement could be mementos kept as reminders of people who have passed away.

### **GUILT AND OBLIGATION**

Have you ever kept something you don't like because it was a gift or you inherited it from a loved one? You're in good company. This can also show up as a reluctance to break up a set or get rid of duplicate or blurry photos—we just feel obligated to hold on to them.

### **FEAR OF WASTE OR REGRET**

It can be hard to let go of items that still have perceived value, even if you're not currently using them and don't know when you ever would. The fear of wasting resources or the belief that the item might be useful in the future or missed once it's gone can stop decluttering efforts before they even start.

**CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE**



## WHY IS STUFF SO STICKY?

*continued from previous page*

### LOSS AVERSION

Human brains are wired to prefer avoiding losses over acquiring gains (primate brains are too, so this goes way back evolutionarily). We tend to overvalue what we already have, which makes it harder to let go of things even if they no longer serve us or bring us joy.

### OVERWHELM AND DECISION FATIGUE

Our brains use a lot of fuel to make decisions. When there are too many choices, our mental muscles run out of energy and default to the path of least resistance, which is often doing nothing.

### INDECISIVENESS AND PERFECTIONISM


Seeking the perfect solution or becoming overly concerned about making the right decision can be paralyzing. It's also common to let things you've decided to pass along sit around for months while you figure out the perfect place for them to go.

### NEURO-DIVERSITY

There are many brain-based conditions that can make decision-making difficult, including executive function disorders,

ADHD, anxiety, depression and more. All brains are different and what works for one person may not work for the next.

These challenges are common and normal. Everyone's attachment to possessions is unique and it takes time and practice to improve relationships with stuff. It's important to be patient and compassionate with yourself on your decluttering journey.

In our next issue, we'll explore some strategies for getting unstuck when it comes to making decisions about stuff. In the meantime, I hope you find value in asking yourself, "Why am I keeping this?" 

# DECLUTTERING AND GETTING RID OF THESE STICKY THINGS IS LIFE CHANGING!





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Our meeting rooms and study rooms will soon be open to reserve online. While virtual programs continue online, many locations are providing onsite programs outside.

Explore our updated website <https://rvalibrary.org/> for continuing updates to programs and library access. Also check out our new, advanced, library catalog to search for items and place holds.

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We are no longer offering curbside service because all of our RPL locations are now open to the public. And because we are no longer quarantining returned library items, library users can get their items with less wait time! Our hours at this time are Monday-Friday 10:00 am-6:00 pm, Saturdays 10:00 am - 5:00 pm. Programming remains virtual at this time.

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- **Reading the MDA (This Week in the Museum District) email update** – it's a terrific source of the most up-to-date information. Have you signed up for this?
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- **Exploring our website** to discover events, concerts and other special happenings. <https://rvalibrary.org/events/>
- **Checking out our virtual programming** for children and teens <https://rvalibrary.org/kids/online-programs/>. Here you will find weekly storytimes, crafty sessions, author highlights and classes of all kinds.

### DID YOU KNOW?

You can access library resources, popular and classic ebooks and over 39,000 downloadable audiobooks through the **Libby App** (also known as *Overdrive*). Just use your RPL library card and make sure to download Libby onto your device. Check out up to 25 items at a time.

The Belmont Library is located at 3100 Ellwood Avenue.  
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# LEASH LAW: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

by LIZ BRYANT

**T**he City of Richmond has a “leash law” for dogs. The Code section makes it clear that a dog must be controlled by a “fence, tether, lead, or leash” and not simply under voice command. There are some exceptions to this when a dog may be off leash, such as being on private property or in a designated and posted dog exercise area. While the majority of dog owners follow the leash law, there are those who don't. So, what to do if you encounter them? Richmond Animal Care and Control recommends the following tips:

## Some dos and don'ts to consider when encountering unpleasant situations with off-leash dogs:

- Always call 911 in the event of an emergency. If you or your pet are being attacked or you see someone else being attacked, call 911.
- If you see an off-leash dog, change course and head a different direction if possible.
- Pay attention to your surroundings.
- Carry treats with you when you're out on a walk.
- If confronted by an unleashed dog and owner, remain calm.

## If no owner is present:

- Put yourself between your dog and the other dog.
- Talk calmly to the other dog. If that doesn't work, you may have to (in a commanding voice) tell the dog to “go home” or “get back.”
- Throw treats at the other dog.
- Deterrents can be used if needed: citronella spray, use of an air horn (can be bought in small sizes), or carrying a walking stick.
- Other things to put between you and the other dog: trash cans, bicycles or an open umbrella.

- If it's safe, use your cell phone to take photos and call Animal Control at 804-646-5573.
- If either you or your dog gets bitten, seek medical attention immediately and report the bite to animal control.

## If the other owner is present with an unleashed dog:

- Stay calm, but act assertively.
- Call out to the other dog owner if you see them approaching with an unleashed dog.
- Let them know you're not comfortable with their dog approaching yours off leash.
- If the other owner refuses to leash their dog, avoiding a confrontation is best. Call Animal Control or Richmond Police and avoid the area. 🚫

## DOG BITE PREVENTION TIPS



- Never approach a strange dog, especially one that's tied or confined behind a fence or in a car.
- Don't pet a dog – even your own – without letting it see and sniff you first.
- Never turn your back to a dog and run away. A dog's instinct will be to chase and catch you.
- Don't disturb a dog while it's sleeping, eating, chewing on a toy or caring for puppies.
- Be cautious around strange dogs. Always assume that a dog that doesn't know you may see you as an intruder or a threat.

Source: Richmond Animal Care and Control



AROUND THE DISTRICT



# TRAFFIC CIRCLES

by AMANDA SCUDDER

ANSEL SCUDDER PHOTOS





***While this traffic-taming mechanism is statistically shown to reduce accidents, calm traffic and improve traffic flow, neighbors who live near them can attest to seeing more than their fair share of crashes.***

**T**he Museum District is home to several traffic circles. While this traffic-taming mechanism is statistically shown to reduce accidents, calm traffic and improve traffic flow, neighbors who live near them can attest to seeing more than their fair share of crashes. Why is something that's supposed to make us safer causing such problems? It appears there are several reasons, including the lack of a cohesive traffic plan and funding for signage as well as general confusion about how traffic circles work.

To understand more about this issue, I recently walked Floyd Avenue between Auburn and Belmont with First District City Council Representative Andreas Addison. As we stood observing one such circle with a broken curb and mangled reflectors that neighbors purchased and installed in desperation, a garbage truck made a nonchalant left-hand turn in front of the circle rather than going around. A moment later, a sedan flew through without yielding to pedestrians. Next came a minivan, coming to a complete stop while the driver looked confused before inching timidly into the circle.

As it turns out, we've got some pretty big issues! For one, the use of "chokers"—the concrete bump-outs that restrict the road at the point of circle entry to create a buffer zone for pedestrians—is inconsistent. At Belmont, where the offset circle already puts the crosswalk too close to street traffic for comfort, there are none. There are also few streetlights to illuminate the circles at night. When combined with minimal signage and few visual cues, it's not terribly surprising that most of our circles have been bulldozed by errant vehicles. And did you know the speed limit on Floyd is 20 mph, not 25 like it is in the rest of the neighborhood? If you didn't, the blame isn't entirely yours—there's a distinct lack of speed signage along Floyd, which is designated as a bike boulevard. Illuminated signs that show drivers how fast they're really going would be a big improvement.


Councilman Addison says that to make a real difference, we need a holistic approach to street design for safety. This

includes his proposal to recreate a Department of Transportation that considers both how traffic plans are created and how funding is secured and allocated. Currently, the funding of infrastructure depends on the availability of federal grant dollars, while a more sustainable solution would be to write that funding into the capital improvements budget. So just what can Museum District neighbors do about that? It comes down to making our voices heard, not just in our own district, but also in the Mayor's office.

In the meantime, we can do our best to educate ourselves and others about how to safely navigate these roundabouts, which can be confusing if you don't know how to use them.

**According to Richmond Public Works Department, traffic circles are easy to use if you remember the following:**

- **Slow down to 20 mph when entering.**
- **Let vehicles already circulating go ahead.**
- **First in, first out. Yield right-of-way to first vehicle to approach the circle.**
- **Obey all one-way signs.**
- **Watch for pedestrians, bicyclists, emergency and large vehicles.**

**Remember that the yellow diamond signs mean "yield." When approaching a traffic circle, drivers entering the circle must give way to vehicles approaching from their left and must yield to a driver who is in the circle and turning left.** Drivers should use signals to indicate their intention to other drivers. Perhaps most importantly, drivers must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks when both entering and exiting the circle. We're grateful to everyone who uses care and caution when driving through the neighborhood! 

***When approaching a traffic circle, drivers entering the circle must give way to vehicles approaching from their left and must yield to a driver who is in the circle and turning left.***



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AROUND THE  
DISTRICT

# PERMACULTURE IN THE CITY

by AMANDA SCUDDER

**PERMACULTURE IS AN ECOLOGICAL APPROACH  
TO CREATE REGENERATIVE HUMAN-NATURE  
INTERACTIONS.**

**A**bout 15 years ago, my family made a really tough decision. We hired a tree removal crew to take down a 50 foot Magnolia that dominated our 30' x 30' front yard. Why? That winter, an ice storm showed us just how perilously close that tree was to knocking out our roof and power lines. This, combined with a hate-hate relationship with the compost-resistant leaves that fell ALL SUMMER, a time when leaf collection shouldn't be an issue, pushed us to the point of tough decisions. That tree was coming down. We did have a farewell party with the requisite kids-in-branches photos and plentiful Juleps for the adults. I'll admit, I shed a tear when I drove by on demo day and saw the saws at work. But as they say, when one door shuts, another opens. We had the leaves and branches shredded into mulch, which spawned a glory of fungi. We had recently stumbled onto the concept of permaculture, and we saw opportunity! We decided to create a front yard permaculture-inspired garden to grow food for our family and build community.

Permaculture is an ecological approach to create sustainable and regenerative human-nature interactions. Developed by Bill Mollison and David Holmgren in the 1970s, permaculture principles can be applied to many contexts and can be particularly helpful for urban gardening, where space is limited:

**1. OBSERVATION AND INTERACTION:** In a small urban garden, it's easier to pay attention to little things like soil type, sunlight patterns and water flow. By paying careful attention, you can make informed decisions about plant placement, irrigation and overall design so you work with nature rather than against it.

**2. DESIGN FOR EFFICIENCY AND RESILIENCE:** There are rarely straight rows in a permaculture garden. Intermixing companion plants that benefit each other, like tomatoes




with basil and marigolds, allows you to maximize the number of plants per square foot while reducing the need for pesticides and fertilizers. Using mulch helps conserve water and suppress weeds. Planting high-maintenance or frequent-harvest varieties nearest your home will conserve one of your garden's most important resources—your energy!

**3. USE RENEWABLE RESOURCES:** Rainwater harvesting, composting and incorporating organic matter back into the soil enhance your garden's fertility, improve water retention, reduce the need for synthetic fertilizers and keep compostable items out of the landfill. We joke that we are free-range worm farmers because we simply dig holes for our compostables. The worms make short work of the scraps and we don't have complicated systems to maintain.

**4. INTEGRATE DIVERSITY:** Diversity increases resilience and creates healthier ecosystems. Plant a wide variety of vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers. This promotes biodiversity, attracts beneficial insects, reduces pest problems and enhances the overall well-being of your garden. I'm happy to report that we have an endless entourage of birds, bees and beetles enjoying the diverse vegetation we have introduced.

**5. STACK FUNCTIONS:** Select items for your garden that serve more than one purpose. For example, a fence can also be a trellis for climbing vines; a fruit tree provides food, shade and shelter for people and creatures; ground covering plants crowd out weeds and help retain moisture and nutrients in the soil. Fair warning, this can be addicting and can also introduce invasives like garlic chives, wild arugula and blackberries. You've been warned.

Viewing your garden through a permaculture lens can generate lots of creative ideas for making the most out of your garden with the least amount of input. And in doing so, you will help preserve soil, prevent rain runoff and promote bio-diversity. The wild things will thank you! 



# THE PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE

Adapted by editor 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.



**CRAIG ROLAN MARTIN**

Museum District resident and co-host of PBS's documentary series, *The Good Road*

## WHAT IS YOUR IDEA OF PERFECT HAPPINESS?

Perfect happiness is that moment when I know that I have done something really exceptional to help other people (some who I don't even know), my family and friends and myself. Philanthropy in its truest sense (love of fellow man) is what drives me and drives everything I do. And, I am really happy when I meet goals I have set that relate to that work.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST FEAR?

In general, I don't fear many things. But, if I had to settle on something I would say the fear that keeps me up at night is whether I can balance the financial aspects of my work with the need to provide for my family.

## WHICH LIVING PERSON DO YOU MOST ADMIRE?

There are so many, but if I had to choose one person who I know personally it would definitely be my wife. That sounds trite, but it is true. She inspires me each and every day with her mix of integrity, honesty, humility and intense knowledge of our world. The person who I admire most who I don't know would be Barack Obama.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST EXTRAVAGANCE?

Travel. It will always be travel. And, not just travel to the expected places like Europe, but the off-the-beaten-path places like Kazakhstan or Myanmar.

## WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST REGRET?

As a, now sober, alcoholic I regret the decades of alcoholism that controlled my life and the lives of family and friends around me. I can't turn back the clock but that is, by far, my biggest regret.

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

My wife Erika Martin with a close second being my twins, Craig Andrew and Isabel.

## WHAT IS YOUR CURRENT STATE OF MIND?

I am probably in one of the most joyful times in my life. Things are good and I am very happy.

## WHICH TALENT WOULD YOU MOST LIKE TO HAVE?

I would love to have the ability to play and perform music (that is one of the reason I helped start a record label). I won't ever realize that dream but I can certainly help people who are realizing that dream.

## WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER YOUR GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT?

Despite my failings in their early life due to alcohol, I am a good Dad. Raising my twins was, on the one hand, tough but they are two incredibly wise and compassionate individuals. While I have done some things in my career that I am proud of (my tv show broadcast nationally and films in theaters nationally), those things pale in comparison to the values of love and empathy for your fellow man that I feel my parents passed on to me.

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

I would come back as a black or indigenous woman. Life is too short to be given everything and I would want to be a person who takes on one of the biggest challenges our society puts before women of color which is to actively demand respect because of the heaps of disrespect piled on them for centuries.

## WHAT'S YOUR MOST TREASURED POSSESSION?

You can't possess a person so I guess I would have to say it is my house for what it represents. I am so connected to my neighborhood, my neighbors and it is the first house my wife and I have owned and we have so many happy memories raising our twins in this space, the only house they have ever known.

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

*Through my decades of documenting the human experience I will never understand nor fully comprehend the evil of people who abuse and exploit others. Attempted genocide and ethnocide have been in front of me for decades and I have documented horrible atrocities, but the people who have suffered the worst oppression like the abuse of their child in front of them by an evil oppressor is what I consider would incite the lowest depth of misery.*

## WHAT IS IT THAT YOU MOST DISLIKE?

*Narcissism and authoritarianism*


## HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO DIE?

*My preference would be to die quietly into the night*

## WHAT IS YOUR MOTTO?

*I don't have a motto as much as I have a life mantra/purpose: I want to impact culture, I do that through having the largest audience possible for my ideas and I can measure that impact by the success of capturing that audience through mass media*

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### CITY

Mayor Levar Stoney	804-646-7970
Citizens Assistance	804-646-7000 or 311
Public Works (Leaf and trash collection, sidewalks and tree maintenance, etc.)	804-646-6430
Building Permits, Inspections	804-646-4169
Property Maintenance/Code Enforcement	804-646-6398

### POLICE & FIRE

Emergency	911
Fire Non-emergency	804-646-6640
Police Non-emergency	804-646-5100
Crime Stoppers	804-646-6733
3rd Precinct	804-646-1412
Animal Control	804-646-5573
	(after hours) 804-646-5123

### RVA311

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

RVA311 is a full-scale online and mobile app solution that 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) - <a href="mailto:andreas.addison@richmondgov.com">andreas.addison@richmondgov.com</a>	804-646-5935
Katherine Jordan (2nd District) - <a href="mailto:katherinejordan@richmondgov.com">katherinejordan@richmondgov.com</a>	804-646-6532
Stephanie Lynch (5th District) - <a href="mailto:stephanie.lynch@richmondgov.com">stephanie.lynch@richmondgov.com</a>	804-646-5724

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

### SCHOOL BOARD

Jason Kamras, School Superintendent - <a href="mailto:jkamras@rvaschools.net">jkamras@rvaschools.net</a>	804-780-7700
Elizabeth Doerr (1st District) - <a href="mailto:edoerr@rvaschools.net">edoerr@rvaschools.net</a>	804-929-6624
Mariah White (2nd District) - <a href="mailto:mwhite4@rvaschools.net">mwhite4@rvaschools.net</a>	804-221-9389
Stephanie Rizzi (5th District) - <a href="mailto:srizzi@rvaschools.net">srizzi@rvaschools.net</a>	804-929-6930

To watch school board proceedings and meetings:

Go to: <https://goboarddocs.com/vsba/richmond/board.nsf/public>

### VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Del. Betsy Carr (69th) - <a href="mailto:DelBCarr@house.virginia.gov">DelBCarr@house.virginia.gov</a>	804-698-1069
Del. Jeffrey Bourne (71st) - <a href="mailto:DelJBourne@house.virginia.gov">DelJBourne@house.virginia.gov</a>	804-698-1071
Sen. Ghazala Hashmi (10th) - <a href="mailto:district10@senate.virginia.gov">district10@senate.virginia.gov</a>	804-698-7510

### US CONGRESS (DISTRICT 4)

Rep. Jennifer L. McClellan	DC Office - 202-225-6365
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### US SENATE

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