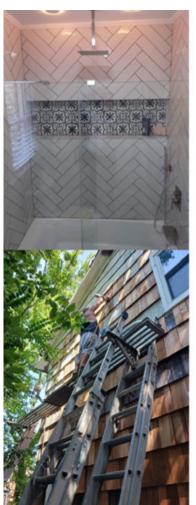
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VOLUME 2 ISSUE 8 PHOTO BY RAMONE PHOTOGRAPHY

DANCING WITH THE HAMPTON ROADS CELEBRITY STARS





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y editor recently asked me, "Can you believe it's already August issue?" With so many activities and local events, summer has blown by. But what a summer it has been! The 4th of July events and fireworks were awesome, we have had several large music festivals, and there is so much more to do before the official end of summer on Labor Day.

Our mission at Virginia Connector Magazine is to build a stronger community, one neighborhood at a time. We encourage backyard networking and "buy local." To accomplish our goals, this month's issue spotlights talented locals: Artist - Abby Pawley; business - Modvintique Home Interior; club - North End Run Club; and nonprofit - Philippine Cultural Center of Virginia.

Save the dates! Check out our calendar section for local entertainment and amazing upcoming events such as Virginia Music Theater's annual "Hampton Roads Dancing with the Stars" at the Sandler Center, Virginia Beach Fallen Heroes "Freedom Festival" at Camp Pendelton and the Judeo-Christian Outreach Center's annual Black & White Gala.

Mark your calendar for the Cape Henry Rotary Club's famous Oyster Crush, a massive fundraising effort for 24 local charities. It's Sunday, October 8th from 1-6 at Ballyhoos. I will be there along with my production team. Please join us and buy your



tickets now. Remember, oysters never donate to charity. They're shellfish.

Virginia Connector Magazine is always looking for local businesses with knowledge and tips to share. If you are an expert in your field, we want to partner with you to make Hampton Roads the best place to live. As I write this, I'm wishing I was more of an expert on dogs. My three fur-babies are driving me mutts!

Michelle

Michelle Westberry

Behind the Scenes

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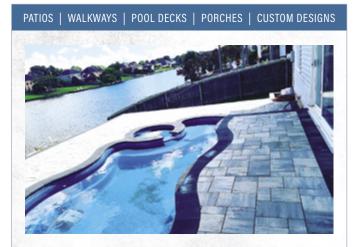
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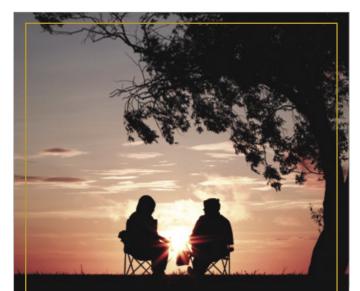




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Around Town

By Joel Rubin

LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL AND BOAT BUILDER TEACH LESSONS IN **COOPERATION**

A canoe and a Bevin's Skiff look remarkably alike, but you row a skiff, you paddle a canoe.

So says Tom Brandl, Naval Academy grad, retired Marine Colonel, and the director of the Tidewater Wooden Boat Workshop (TWBW), which he founded in 2014. He has gained skills over a lifetime to not only build boats from scratch himself, but to teach others to do so as well. For the last eight summers, he has attended a renowned boatbuilding school in Brooklin, Maine where he learns the whole craft of boatbuilding and refines his skills.

Tom and his volunteers teach boat craftmanship in space off Ballentine Boulevard that was donated by the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority. But they also go directly into schools like Green Run Collegiate, the public charter located inside Green Run High in Virginia Beach.

Amelia LeCroy, a teacher at Green Run Collegiate High School with a BFA in graphic design, jumped at the chance to work with TWBW. "They taught our students how to use bandsaws, drills, hammers and other tools to measure, cut and sand the wood," she says. "I love hands-on activities so this was perfect for me," said student Sarah Calpo.

Classmate Luke Weihert adds, "I enjoy woodworking and being able to do it at school was great."

"I helped put the transom together and painted the bottom!" noted Breanna Rice.

Under Brandl and his volunteers' tutelage, the teens finished the boat construction before school was over for the summer and had an early June launch in picturesque Stumpy Lake. They christened her Big Blue which beat out Boaty Boat Face and Ding Dong Texas.

TWBW (www.twbw.org) and Green Run Collegiate are both WINDSday partners and non-profits. "We raise money to give our high schoolers the chance to take trips and build boats," says Joe Burnsworth, the recently retired chair of the GRC Foundation board. "We need funds for equipment, salaries, transportation and other expenses," says Brandl. "It's a great investment in our youth."



A former TV journalist in Hampton Roads, **Joel Rubin** is President of Rubin Communications Group and director of the WINDSday campaign to raise awareness of the offshore wind industry that is coming to Hampton Roads

SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS: ELEVATING YOUR HOME DECOR FROM SUMMER TO FALL

By Debbie McCarter (owner of Modvintique Home Interior)

AS THE VIBRANT DAYS OF SUMMER SLOWLY FADE AWAY, it's time to embrace the cozy charm of fall in your home. Transitioning your decor from one season to another doesn't have to be overwhelming or expensive. With a few key adjustments and a touch of creativity, you can create a warm and inviting ambiance that reflects the essence of autumn.

1. Embrace Nature's Palette

Fall is a season renowned for its rich and earthy tones. Introduce these colors into your home by incorporating accents and accessories in shades of burgundy, burnt orange, deep greens, and warm browns. Swap out lightweight summer throws for cozy blankets in autumnal hues, and replace bright floral arrangements with rustic dried flowers or seasonal foliage. Consider adding organic elements like pinecones, acorns, or pumpkins as decorative touches throughout your space. Embracing nature's palette brings an immediate sense of warmth and sets the tone for the season.

2. Layer Textures and Fabrics

One of the simplest and most effective ways to transition your decor is through layering textures and fabrics. Replace lightweight cotton or linen curtains with heavier drapes in materials like velvet or tweed. Swap out lightweight cushions for plush ones in luxurious materials such as faux fur or chunky knits. Introduce cozy rugs to provide warmth underfoot and create a welcoming atmosphere. These layered elements add depth and comfort to your space, instantly transforming it into a cozy retreat.

3. Warm Lighting Ambiance

Lighting plays a vital role in setting the mood for any season. In the fall, opt for warm, ambient lighting to create a cozy atmosphere. Replace bright, cool-toned bulbs with soft, warm-toned ones. Incorporate table lamps with soft shades and consider using candles or string lights to add a flickering glow. Illuminate dark corners with floor lamps that emit a warm, diffused light. By adjusting your lighting scheme, you can evoke a sense of intimacy and relaxation, perfect for embracing the longer nights and cooler temperatures.

4. Scented Sensations

Scents have a powerful ability to evoke emotions and memories. Infuse your home with fragrances that embody the essence of fall. Consider using scented candles, essential oil diffusers, or potpourri featuring notes of cinnamon, pumpkin spice, or apple cider. These scents will envelop your space and heighten the cozy and inviting ambiance you desire. Be mindful not to overpower the room; a subtle scent will work wonders.

Conclusion

Transitioning your home decor from summer to fall is an exciting opportunity to infuse warmth, comfort, and seasonal charm into your living space. By incorporating natural elements, layering textures, adjusting lighting, and adding enticing scents, you can create a seamless transition that captures the essence of autumn. Embrace the changing season and transform your home into a cozy sanctuary.









Nonprofit Business

PHILIPPINE CULTURAL Center of Virginia

Built by the Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater, Inc.

BEING BORN AND RAISED IN VIRGINIA, one of my greatest pride is being part of the Council of United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater, Inc. (CUFOT) which built one of our community's greatest treasures - our Philippine Cultural Center. CUFOT was founded in 1976 with the mission of constructing and maintaining the Philippine Cultural Center of VA (PCC). The PCC serves as a space for Failipino families to gather, support each other, and host cultural events. Preserving and promoting Filipino culture, traditions, and values, particularly through intergenerational education, is a key focus of the PCC.

Initially, six organizations formed the foundation of CUFOT. The oldest Filipino organization in Eastern Virginia, Filipino Women's Club of Tidewater (FWCT), was joined by Seafarers (evolved into Filipino American Veterans of Hampton Roads (FAVHR), United Ilocano Association of Tidewater (UIAT), Batangas Association, Bataan Association, and Pampango Language Club (PLC) were the initial six CUFOT organizations then quickly added Samahang Tagalog, Cavite Association and Zambales Association as founding organizations. Together, they created a logo symbolizing unity, peace, friendship, purpose, hope and identity as Filipino Americans in Virginia Beach. This seal has served CUFOT well for over forty-seven years to connect the current twenty member organizations and a broad range of individual Filipinos across the region, state, and country.

To fund the construction of the PCC, CUFOT and its member organizations launched various campaigns, including the "Dollar-a-brick" campaign and pageants such as Mrs. Philippines VA and Miss Philippines. Countless fundraising events were held, culminating in the formation of the PCC



Board of Trustees and the inauguration of the PCC in 2000.

CUFOT's leaders have passed down Filipino culture to younger generations, emphasizing family, academics, respect for elders, and the diverse aspects of Filipino heritage. Dance groups and cultural programs, such as SCAPA, PREVa, and Kuntaw Martial Arts, showcase traditional dances and arts.

Fundraising events, like Mrs. Philippines VA 2023 and Court, support the maintenance of the PCC. Health and wellness activities, social events representing different Filipino communities, and religious gatherings are also held at the PCC. It has been a hub for Filipino American activities, and it continues to provide support to the community through various initiatives.

PCC is a hub of Filipino American activities that is welcoming to everyone regardless of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, religion or belief. PCC is open for rentals to assist with financial sustainability. Yet most importantly, PCC is the home to learn, enjoy and perpetuate pride in our special Filipino culture, traditions and value.

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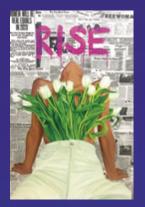
Art Matters



ABBY PAWLEY Full-time Artist and Muralist

Abby Pawley is a locally recognized and self taught artist based in Virginia Beach. She started her artistic journey at only five years old. Growing up she excelled at drawing but found her true expertise with oil & acrylic painting when she turned 18. She never had any formal training besides basic high school art classes. She was discouraged at a young age when she was rejected from an art academy, and credits her elementary school custodian Mr. Nunnally for the encouragement that pushed her to keep working hard. His words have stuck with her through adulthood and helped lead her to become the full time artist that she is today.

In the rapidly growing city of Virginia Beach she is very well known for her large-scale vibrant murals. She took part in the 2021 Vibe Creative District Mural Festival and has done a multitude of murals ever since. She has been locally recognized on the news by WTKR3 on how her work has impacted and changed the community. She has sold many commission pieces such as canvases and surf boards that now hang in many establishments around the country. She has gone outside of her realm and won the 2019 beer label contest at Back Bay Brewing Company and now creates beer labels for Wasserhund Brewing Company on a regular basis. She has even collaborated with large companies such as Malbon Golf and has had her paintings printed on their apparel. She discovered a burning passion creating realistic oil paintings of the female figure. She wants to make a statement with her provocative oil paintings, that women's bodies are temples that should be hung on walls to be admired and not objectified. She seeks inspiration in the people around her and often uses her own friends as models for her paintings. She has attended a plethora of local shows and auctioned off pieces of her work for charity in Virginia Beach. When Abby isn't painting you will probably find her either coaching soccer or playing soccer. In her free time Abby coaches girls soccer for First Colonial High School where she is a 2x state championship coach. She also plays for a local professional beach soccer team called Coastal United Beach Soccer Club.









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DANCING WITH THE HAMPTON ROADS CELEBRITY STARS TAKES TO THE STAGE AT THE SANDLER CENTER

BY MEREDITH LIPPERT | PHOTOGRPAHY BY RAMONE PHOTOGRAPHY

The stars will be out at the Sandler Center for the Performing Arts on August 19th as 22 local celebrities take to the stage to perform in the eighth annual Dancing with the Hampton Roads Celebrity Stars fundraising event. Based on the hit TV show, the night of glitz and glam will feature business leaders, media celebrities, civic and political leaders and other professionals from the community. With limited or no dance experience, the contestants will be paired with a professional dancer and will perform in front of a live audience and professional judges. Local entrepreneur and owner of Town Center City Club Barbara Lewis is producing the event while Joe Flanagan, longtime reporter from WVEC will be this year's Master of Ceremonies. The festive and entertaining evening is a fundraiser to benefit local arts groups including Virginia Musical Theater and The Governors School for the Arts. Tickets can be purchased from contestants, local ballroom studios or online at hrcelebritystars.com.

Meet the Celebrity Dancers

ASHLEY ALLMAN

Ashley is Vice President of Marketing & Development at Westminster-Canterbury on Chesapeake Bay in Virginia Beach, VA. In this role she leads the Sales & Marketing Team at the 62+ active adult Life Plan Community. When not working, you can find this Virginia Beach native spending time with her two daughters, Stella and Vallie, and her husband Bailey.

DAVID AMBROSE

After over four decades of experience in commercial building construction, David and his wife Karen relocated to Virginia Beach for their retirement. Together they have three adult children, five grandchildren and one greatgrandson all of which have kept them busy in this new chapter of life.

ASHLEY ARMBRUSTER

Born and raised in Virginia Beach, Ashley earned her Doctorate of Pharmacy at Virginia Commonwealth School of Pharmacy and works as a clinical impatient pharmacist. Ashley and her husband Stephen have to children, Bryce and Blake, who have been practicing their dance moves with mom in preparation for this event.

ANTWAIN BRITT

Born and raised in Hampton Roads, Antwain was a standout high school athlete and continues to crave completion in his adult life, too. He went on to become a professional Mixed Martial Arts fighter and even earned a spot to compete on The Ultimate Fighter TV show. This led Antwain to build his own fitness portfolio as co-owner of three fitness facilities and owner of two Britt's Fitness and Self Defense locations. Antwain is also the founder of Juggernaut Cookie Co, whipping up healthy baked goods the Juggernaut way, with muscle and heart.

JAMES PAUL CADOTTE

Paul hails from Detroit, the heart of Motown, and holds a passion for dance and all things fun. He is highly skilled in various styles of martial arts and is a 4th Degree Black Belt Master Instructor in Tae Kwon Do. Paul now spends his retirement in Virginia Beach where and enjoys formal dance lessons and celebrates 75 years of exquisitely fine aging. He dedicates this performance to all the girls from his hometown, Motown.

TAYLOR DAVIS

A dancer since she was two years old, Taylor danced for most of her youth. After a long break,

and in between her nannying job, she recently picked up two-step, swing and ling dancing. She's excited to get on the stage and give it her all.

ASHLEY FORBES

Ashley is a farm girl turned business professional with passions for people and all things outdoors. She and her husband Chris have two children, Austin and Madison. She dedicates her dance performance to her children and wants to show them to "never let fear get in the way of your dreams, and when you get the chance, accept the dance."

HUNTER HARTNETT

Hunter is a loan officer and graduate of the Darla Moore School of business at the University of South Carolina. When not strapped to his phone, he enjoys spending time golfing, snowboarding, traveling or at the beach with his dog, Preston. He admits his dancing experience is limited to weddings and other social events, but typically only after a drink or two.

BRITTANY HENDRICKSON

Raised in Virginia Beach, Brittany started her real estate career at age 23 and has excelled in this role as a true expert when it comes to Hampton Roads. Brittany and her husband Ryan have to girls, Ellie and Zoie, and two super friendly Rottweilers, Nala and Penny.





STACEY HIGGINS

Born in Norfolk, Stacey is a proud graduate of Old Dominion University where she earned a degree in business administration. With 24 years of marketing and business development experience in the engineering industry, she prepares businesses for growth by directly winning work. When not building business relationships, Stacey can be found at the gym, the beach, or spending time with her family and friends.

RON KILMER

Ron is a US Navy Veteran and founder of Virginia Electronic Systems Inc. He has been married to his wife Andrea for 43 years and they have two grown sons and a beautiful daughter-in-law. Ron admits his dance experience is mostly the world famous Chicken Dance and Hokey Pokey, only displayed at weddings and rumored to have adult beverages involved.

JOHN "JAY JAY" MAYO

An Audacy superstar, Jay Jay is an on-air talent for Z104 serving Hampton Roads. He stepped on stage in Season Seven of Dancing with the Hampton Roads Celebrity Stars and is ready to shake the room once again in Season Eight.



CALEB MYLES

Originally from Roanoke, Caleb is a proud US Navy Veteran, husband, father and business owner. Together with his wife Natalia, he co-owns Lantero LLC., an Underground Utility Construction Company contributing to efforts to rebuild, maintain and improve the infrastructure in the Virginia Beach area and beyond. When not working, Caleb is passionate about woodworking and swimming.

JOY NAIK

A Hampton Roads native, Joy is a mother of four and serves as a Commissioner on the Chesapeake Fine Arts Commission and Account Specialist with Navy Federal Credit Union. She's been involved in dance for nearly 30 years and is the owner of the Dance Theater of Coastal Virginia. She dedicates this dance to everyone who has supported her journey and excited to dive into the world of ballroom dance.

STACY ROGERS

Stacy is an active business owner and engaged member of the Virginia Beach community. She hopes to bring another Rogers Family win, following her husband Jamie's winning cha-cha in last year's event. When not supporting their three teenage boys in their many extracurricular activities, Stacy is the founder and President of Trinitas Group, providing executive consulting and business solutions across public, private and charitable sector clients.

JAKETA CLARK THOMPSON

Owner of Omnia Unlimited LLC, a leading marketing agency, Jaketa is an accomplished entrepreneur and marketing expert. As a devoted wife and mother of four children, she understands the importance of work-life balance and is committed to providing the best possible life for her loved ones.

MARIA M. WEISSENSEEL

Maria is honored to performing in this year's Dancing with the Hampton Roads Celebrity Stars and dedicates her dance to Freda Manolakas and all the strong women who have brought inspiration to her life.

MICHELLE WESTBERRY

Originally from Florida, Michelle has been in marketing since 1999 and loves helping other succeed in their adventures. As publisher of the *Virginia Connector Magazine* she gets to be a part of everything local and help give exposure to the local stories. Michelle admits she has no professional dance experience but is excited for the challenge.

GREGORY S. ZIMPEL

Greg and his wife of 40 years, Kelly, are the founders of Z Wine Guy, a boutique wine distributorship based in Portsmouth. As a resident of Hampton Roads for 37 years, Greg is an avid adventure seeker, dedicated gardener, NASCAR fan and devoted grandfather.



SIMONA CAPORALE

Dancing since she was five, Simona has too many awards and accolades to list. She is an accomplished, world-famous dancer and she and her husband/dance partner Simone Spadoni rank 4th in the world in Italy. As a dance instructor at S&S Dance in Portsmouth, she is excited to share her knowledge of dance with her students.

OSCAR CHACALTANA

Working as a fitness dance instructor in Ica, Peru, Oscar eventually took on various roles as a host, dancer, choreographer and show supervisor at the renowned El Pueblo Hotel in Lima. He currently teaches dance at Arthur Murray Dance Studio in Virginia Beach.

WENDY DENYSENKO

Originally from Maine, Wendy has been immersed in ballet, tap and jazz since she was a young girl. In addition to excelling in the field of dance, she has captivated audiences as an acclaimed singer and actor, earning recognition and accolades in many performances and pageants.

ANDREA FRANCO

A native of El Salvador, Andrea has always loved to dance, especially hip hop and Latin dances like salsa and bachata. After moving with her family to the United States in 2016 she began her college career majoring in Graphic Design and Advertising. She continues to hare her love of dance as an instructor at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio in Virginia Beach.

JACK GABRIEL

Jack hails from High Springs, Florida and was enthusiastic about solo and team sports in his youth. After aspirations of pursuing a career in sports was unfulfilled, Jack enlisted in the Navy at age 19. Once his contract drew to a close, he faced the difficult decision to leave the Navy and embark a new journey – this time as a student at the Arthur Murray Dance Studio. Having embraced the art of dance, he now instructs aspiring dancers, seizing every opportunity to improve his skills.

CAMERON JOHNSON

Originally from South Africa, Cameron has been dancing since he was just five years old. Cameron was invited to immigrate and teach dance in the United States in 2000 and has called it home ever since.

REBEKAH KLYUKIN

A native of the Hampton Roads area since she was one years old, Rebekah didn't discover her passion for dance until college. She has participated in Dancing with the Hampton Roads Celebrity Stars where her students have won the highly sought after Mirror Ball trophies. Rebekah and her husband Zhenya own the dance company, A Time to Dance.

ZHENYA KLYUKIN

Zhenya began dancing when he was just six years old and has earned many championship titles as a competitive dancer in his native Russia. He continues to pursue the completive dance circuit and enjoys sharing his love of dance with beginners and competitive dancers alike.

JAY LEARY

Jay began his dancing career by studying ballet with the Arizona Youth Ballet where he grew up in Phoenix. As a student at Grand Canyon University, Jay majored in Dance Education where he choreographed and performed. As a Navy veteran, he moved to Virginia where he eventually opened his own dance studio, Cutting Edge Ballroom.

RICCARDO PACINI

Riccardo started dancing at just six years old and had the opportunity to train with some of those most esteemed coaches around the world. Since moving to the United States in 2014, he remains

BLAKE PERKINS

Blake was born and raised in Iowa and spent his childhood participating in artistic endeavors like choir, musical theater, cheerleading and eventually, dance. While working a nine-to-five job in Iowa earlier this year, he applied for and was accepted to join the Arthur Murray Dance Studio as a dance instructor. He is grateful for the opportunity to dance every day and share his passion for dance with his students.

MARIE RANTS

Marie is owner of Rants Ballroom Company and an adjunct faculty member at her alma mater, Old Dominion University. Dancing professionally since 1996, Marie is committed to teaching dance as an art even at the social-dance level.

JASON RUSHING

Jason began dancing at Virginia Beach Ballet Academy at age 10. After joining the Atlanta Ballet in 2003, he embarked on his professional ballroom career at Fred Astaire Virginia Beach and later Fred Astaire Fairfax. Jason currently teaches multiple styles of dance at DancesportVA.

SIMONE SPADONI

With 25 years of Latin dancing and 18 years of teaching under his belt, Simone and his wife/dance partner Simona Caporale have an impressive list of awards and. Simone currently teaches at Studio 2C in Suffolk and is exited to share his passion and knowledge with his students.

DIANE TAYLOR

A professional ballroom dancer for over 25 years, Diane is a NDCA Certified Instructor and Adjudicator who also successfully competed on the national pro-dance circuit. Her unique approach to helping students understand their body and connect with their timing and rhythm has brought her a faithful following with her work with deaf, Alzheimer's and cancer patients, and those with complex mental and physical challenges.

Meredith Lippert was born and raised in the Hampton Roads area and is an alumni of Liberty University. She has been in the hospitality and event management industry for over 20 years and is the Regional Catering Director for Mission BBQ. She is also the owner of Belle Âme Designs, specializing in event production and venue management. Meredith is truly honored to be able to support the local Military, Police and Fire Community through her work with Mission BBQ. She is the proud mother to her 4 year old daughter and wife to Stephen, Director of Operations for Mission BBQ. While Meredith has been a dancer, gymnast, and cheerleader from a young age, she is excited for the new challenge of Ballroom Dancing and is thankful for the opportunity!

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Floor Trader is your flooring supplier for installers and DIY homeowners and home flippers. Although installation services are not employed here, resources for contractors can be provided for you to book yourself. Floor Trader is a large warehouse with millions of square feet of flooring that's readily available to you at the time of purchase.

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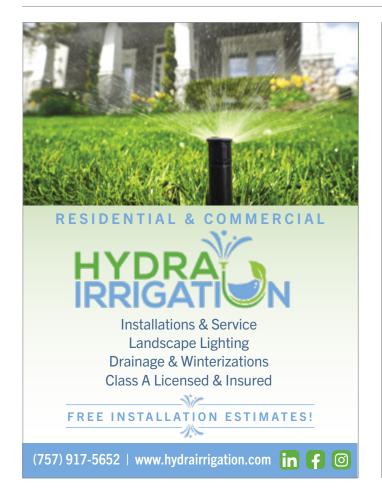


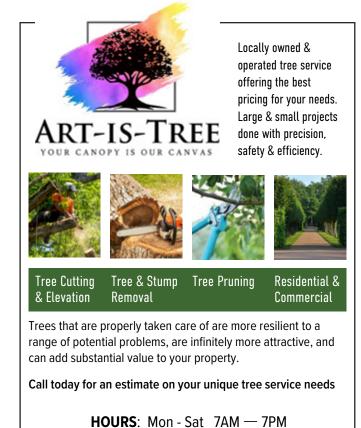
PROSOURCE WHOLESALE prosourcewholesale.com

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Running Around

THE FAST AND THE CURIOUS NORTH END RUN CLUB



By Thomas Marshall Jr.

"I HAVE NO HEALTH PROBLEMS because I run 15 miles a week, at least," said Sandy Newman, who lives near the oceanfront and recently placed 2nd in the 70-99 age group in a 5k race. "During the club runs, I often run with the mom with the baby stroller because she is the same speed as me." Ms. Newman often challenges her friends and family to stay fit as they too get older.

The North End Run Club, founded in 2016, is a free, community driven running club. Its mission is to get outside, get active, and explore Virginia Beach. Run locations are announced on Instagram and Facebook and you can just show up. The club explores a different Virginia Beach neighborhood every Tuesday evening at 6:30. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, the club also offers a Friday morning 6:30 run, either through a Virginia Beach neighborhood or up and down the boardwalk from 1st Street.

"Being out on summer break makes it easy for me to fall out of a routine," said Autumn Guild, a 9th grade English teacher. "I like that the club gives me a reason to get out there on a schedule each week!"

The recent Friday morning gathering at Kings Grant Elementary gave runners a 3 or 5-mile option through Little Neck. Club co-founders Michael Rowland and Barry Clark kept people safe and headed in the right direction.



"We do have some serious runners and triathletes who take off like a rocket when we say go," said Mr. Clark. "Some other people are running for the first time, so we always say, 'it's your race, your pace'."

Mr. Clark explains that curious neighbors are a great source for new membership. "A couple showed up last week after 200 plus people ran through their neighborhood and they found us on social media."

A study in the Journal of the American College of Cardiology found that those who ran just 50 minutes a week at a moderate pace were less likely to die from either cardiovascular disease or any cause, compared with those who didn't run at all. The North End Run Club shorter run option, done twice a week, still amounts to about an hour a week of running. Just long enough to give participants those life-extending benefits!

"I love the North End Run Club because it's such a friendly and welcoming community," said Jacinta Gauvin, Financial Advisor at Raymond James in Town Center. "I get to explore different Virginia Beach neighborhoods, meet new people, and make friends while focusing on my health and fitness."







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Eat Well

VIRGINIA BEACH Eats & Drinks

Good Eats, Drinks, And Dos Across The City And Beyond

By Patrick Evans-Hylton

t's a big city out there, with all sorts of good eats, drinks, and dos. I've covered the cuisine scene in the region for going on three decades, using my training as a chef, mixologist, and wine expert to give folks all the delish details they need to live a good life.

Look for this column monthly in the pages of Virginia Connector.

......EAT......



Barbecue is perennial, but if it had a season, summer would be it.

A Taste of Texas offers an assortment of smoked meats, sauces, and sides crafted in the manner that Tim Dodd enjoyed growing up in the Dallas area.

Foregoing the usual - and delicious - 'due suspect, I enjoyed the Smoked Turkey Platter included three large slices that were extra moist and tender. A smoke ring penetrated into the flesh. I enjoyed it with a piquant Texas sweet/ heat vinegar sauce.

My sides included pit smoked beans, had a deep, smoky flavor. The collards were toothsome, with lots of meat as a seasoning in the earthy broth. The greens themselves were tender, but not mushy.

A Taste of Texas is at 455 S. Lynnhaven Rd. Call 757-589-0762 or visit www.ATasteOfTexasInVB.com



......DRINK

At Union Ale House, they elevate the common cocktail with their Lavender Collins.

Here Reverend Spirits Gin, crafted by distiller Karl Dornemann in the West Ghent area of Norfolk, is the base spirit. We love this gin crisp, clean, and full of botanicals.

It's paired perfectly with St. Germaine, an elderflower liqueur, sour mix, and lavender shrub. At its most basic, a shrub is a concoction of fruit, sugar, and vinegar.

All ingredients mix together to create a gorgeous, full-on floral drink that pleases on the nose and the palate. It's bright and refreshing, and great to beat the heat.

Union Ale House is at 2224 Virginia Beach Blvd., Virginia Beach. Call 757-431-7322 or visit www.UnionAleHouseVa.com

......DO

One of the summer's most celebrated eats, the tomato, takes center of the plate at Zoes Steak and Seafood on Aug. 13. At 6:30 p.m.

The lauded Beach restaurant is the only Coastal Virginia stop in a tour of the Summer Supper Somm Dinner Series that showcases top Virginia chefs and featuring heirloom tomatoes and Virginia wine. Other locations are in Richmond and Northern Virginia.

Zoe's Executive Chef Paul Benton and sommelier/owner Marc Sauter will create multiple courses with wine pairings at this sit-down special event, which is limited to 90 guests. The price starts at \$175 per person.

The evening is hosted by Village Garden RVA and Barboursville Vineyards. Reservations are required. **Zoe's Steak and Seafood is at 713 19th St., Virginia Beach. Call 757-437-3636 or visit www.ZoesVB.com**

Raise a glass to the season at Neptune's 8th Annual Coastal Craft Beer Festival. The event takes place at Neptune's Park on Aug. 26 from 1 until 6 p.m. The cost is \$45.

Enjoy more than 60 beers, ciders, and seltzers from 30 breweries, along with live music, food trucks, and more. Food trucks include Moontide Sundries and Sour Street Pizza.

The event is presented by Virginia Beach Neptune Festival. Neptune's Park is at the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, 3001 Atlantic Ave. For more information and tickets, visit www.Neptune Festival.com



Patrick Evans-Hylton is a Johnson & Wales-trained chef and Virginiabased awardwinning food journalist, covering tasty culinary

trends in print, radio, television, and online since 1995. Read him at VirginiaEatsAndDrinks.com

loca MARKETPLACE and EVENTS

Join the Marketplace

Contact: Michelle Westberry | (757) 567-9354 | office@connectormagazines.com | michelle@connectormagazines.com

Event listings courtesy of VBnightlife. com. For more events like these, and a comprehensive list of live music nightly, visit events.vbnightlife.com. If you have an event you would like featured, contact Nicole Maxino at 757-652-0808. To find deals on dining and upcoming events, visit www.VBhotdeals.com

ONGOING:

Wednesdays thru the Summer, 5 to 9pm YNot Wednesday - Free outdoor concert series sandlercenter.org/ynotwednesdays

201 Market St, Virginia Beach Sandler Center Outdoor Plaza

1st and 3rd Thursdays, 4 to 7pm

Kings Grant Farmers Market King's Grant Baptist Church Live music most nights 873 Little Neck Rd, Virginia Beach

Thursday, Friday and Saturday thru the Summer

Parks After Dark - Free Family Fun Williams Farm Park 5269 Learning Circle, Virginia Beach





BEACH IT! FESTIVAL BRINGS THOUSANDS OF SANDY BOOTS TO THE BEACH

Three days, two stages, over 25 country stars, and hundreds of cowboy hats. Country music fans took over blocks of the Oceanfront for the first ever Beach It! Country Music Festival.

The festival took place from Friday, June 23 to Sunday, June 25, and brought a large crowd to the Oceanfront. A giant towering stage took over the beach, returning the Oceanfront to its venue stage form from just a few weeks prior, as it was during Pharell's Something in the Water music festival. Despite the rainpour that delayed the festival on Sunday, people traveled from around Hampton Roads and beyond to be a part of the inaugural festival. Folks walked the beach in everything from fringe leather jackets to board shorts with Liquid Death water cans in hand.

The main stage saw live sets performed by over a dozen talented artists and their bands, including Riley Green, Jo Dee Messina, Kip Moore, Megan Moroney, Brothers Osborne, Jameson Rodgers, Dee Jay Silver, Nate Smith, Alana Springsteen, Cole Swindell, Lily Rose, and Hailey Whitters. Other artists lit up the Welcome From Nashville stage, which was tented for the crowd's enjoyment.Fans sang along to hits by their favorites and learned about some hot new country artists, supporting each artist with applause and cheers song after song.

Miranda Lambert and Thomas Rhett performed the headlining shows Friday and Saturday evenings. On Sunday, the weather took a turn for the worse and delayed headliner Luke Bryan's set, but the show continued after the rain cleared and the festival finished as planned. Chilly wind off of the ocean didn't stop concertgoers from dancing on the endless sandy beach dancefloor.

Restaurant, bar, and treat vendors lined the beach and brought fun handheld foods and cocktails to attendees, from Nashville hot chicken sandwiches to shave ice. Down the beach were other sponsored experiences by such brands as Jack Daniels' Jim Beam swing installation, Chevy's fleet of 2023 vehicles on display for Virginia Beach country fans, and the White Claw Shore Club tent, which has appeared at other such festivals as SXSW and Sundance Film Festival.

If the fun and memories created by the music, the sponsors, and the fans was any indication, the first Beach It! Festival was a huge hit. The next festival is set to return to the Oceanfront for another weekend of fun in 2024, date to be announced. If you are thinking of attending next year, make sure to follow @beachitfestival on Instagram to keep up with ticket and pass sale updates.



Every Thursday, Friday and Saturday Live Music at Old Beach Tavern Bands such as: The Janitors, Hotcakes, Intangible Cats and more 3020 Virginia Beach Blvd, Virginia Beach

Fridays thru the Summer, 5:30 to 8pm Live on the Lawn - Free outdoor concert series Taste Unlimited 4097 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach

Fridays thru August 25 Friday Nights in Ocean View Ocean View Beach Park - Free oceanviewbeachpark.org

Fridays thru the Summer, 7 to 10pm Hoedowns at the Virginia Beach Farmer's Market Live country music - Free 3640 Dam Neck Rd, Virginia Beach

Saturdays 9am to 12pm Old Beach Farmer's Market 620 19th Street, Virginia Beach

HRRA ANNUAL KICKBALL EVENT & AFTERPARTY









HOWARD HANNA PRESENTS FREE CARE FUND ENEFIT CHKD R **MUSIC-RAFFLES-SILENT AUCTION-**FACE PAINTING-GAMES-AND MORE! SPECIAL GUESTS: 23 **PUPS AND PINTS** NORFOLK ADMIRALS MASCOT SALTY DOG 2413 London Bridge Blvd SEPT Virginia Beach, VA 23456 For more information: 3-7 Free Admission Jobel Daugherty 757-650-6977 jobeldaugherty@howardhanna.com **PM** Open to the Public

Saturdays 9am to 12pm Shore Drive Farmers Market 2961 Shore Drive, Virginia Beach

Sundays thru September 3 BBOB – Big Bands on the Bay Concert Series Ocean View Beach Park Free oceanviewbeachpark.org

Sundays from 9am to 7pm Sunday Dog Days at Norfolk Botanical Gardens Explore the Gardens with your Canine Best Friend norfolkbotanicalgarden.org

July 6 - September 2 Van Gogh - Immersive Experience vangoghvirginiabeach.com Virginia Beach Convention Center

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July 17, 24, 31, August 7, 14, 21 (most Mondays thru the summer) 8pm Movie Night on the Cavalier Lawn The Historic Cavalier Hotel & Beach Club, Virginia Beach

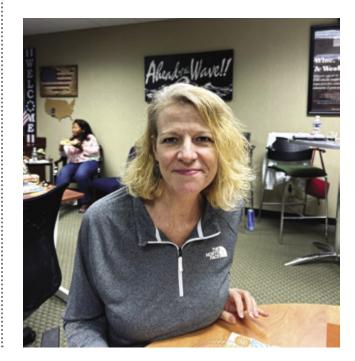
July 18 - 22, 27, August 3, 10 & 17 Beach Blanket Movie Festival 29th Street at the Oceanfront Free movies on the beach

July 19, Aug 2, 16 & 30, 7pm Karl's Open Mic Beach Barracuda's 1479 General Booth Blvd, Virginia Beach

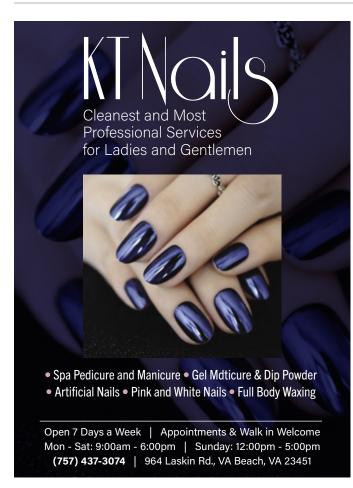
July 19, 7 to 11pm Oceanfront Concert Series

Andy Grammer 17th Street Park Virginia Beach Oceanfront beacheventsvb.com Free

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July 26, 7 to 11pm Oceanfront Concert Series beacheventsvb.com Soccer Mommy 24th Street Park, Virginia Beach Oceanfront Free

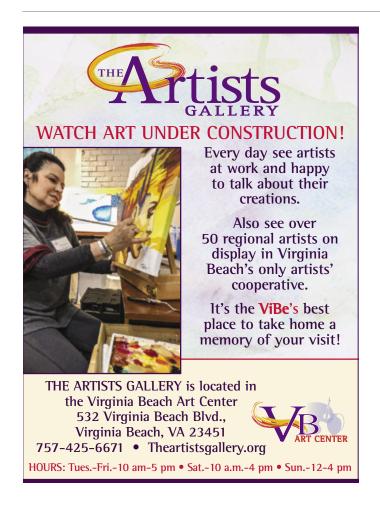
August 1, 8pm Full Moon Party with Movie Historic Cavalier Hotel - On the Lawn Free

July 25 to 30; August 1 to 6 and 22 to 27 Norfolk Tides Baseball at Harbor Park Cost: \$15 to \$35 norfolktides.com

August 2, 7 to 11pm Oceanfront Concert Series Arrested Development 17th Street Park, Virginia Beach Oceanfront beacheventsvb.com Free

WINE DINNER @ TOWN CENTER CITY CLUB









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> OYSTERCRUSH.COM 21+ over only





Boa MARKETPLACE and EVENTS



Growing up, I thought the last time I'd have to worry about what I was going to wear was on prom day. As I stepped into the real

world, I realized there's an art to what people wear every day - especially in the business world!

We've got business attire, business casual and maybe even the Covid Mullet - which is business on top and party in the back. (Fun fact: When covid hit pant sales plummeted because folks only needed tops!)

Now, you might be sporting your company's shirts in the workplace, but what if you don't know what to wear to, let's say, the next networking event?

The short answer is to wear something that makes you feel comfortable and confident, but it doesn't stop there!

Ultimately, my personal success has been a nice balance between adhering to the dress code and standing out from the crowd. So, check with the host on the expectations, and then find some ways

to spice it up!

NETWORKING IN THE 757 WITH JAKE MAINES

Standing out can be simple! it could be a funky tie, a special pin that you wear with your shirt or a scarf to wear over your outfit. Or you could go the extreme route and wear something similar every day like the likes of Mark Zuckerberg and Steve Jobs. Both have said they wear the same outfit every day to not waste brain cells choosing. Smart?!

Check out some of my favorite networking events: Networking At The Narrows: Network in a relaxed outdoor, meaningful environment while bonding with like-minded business professionals. Events take place at The Narrows in First Landing State Park. Email gina@socialsipper.com to register.

Hampton Roads Networking Group: HRNG meets monthly on Thursdays for either a morning event or Happy Hour! The emphasis is on fun and relaxation, so the locations are chosen carefully and there's usually something fun to do to break the ice. Email MarkellaMitcheison@gmail.com to register.



#DowntownNFKLadies: A meetup for professional ladies from different industries looking to engage, connect, and build relationships. Email hmorgan@ gotechark.com to register.

Networking Happy Hour: A low-key, no agenda, meet new people/catch up with old friends-type of event. Occurs the first Wednesday of every month. Register at networkinghh.com or by scanning the QR code below.

Cheers, Jake Maines



REGISTER FOR NETWORKING HAPPY HOUR!

HOW TO RESPOND TO SITUATIONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS? USE THE **STAR** MODEL! BY SUE LEBRATO



Interview questions go beyond a resume review. You may be presented a scenario such as: "Tell me about a time you had to deal with x, and how did you resolve that?"

If you use the "STAR model", you will be able to provide a crisp response that gives the interviewer what they need to know. STAR = Situation, Task, Action, and Result.

Describe the **Situation**. Define the **Task** at hand; highlight any challenges involved. Next, explain the **Action** you took to address the situation, emphasize your role and the steps you followed. Finally, discuss the **Result** of your actions, quantify your achievements and highlight any positive impact.

By following the STAR model, you showcase your ability to; analyze situations, take initiative, and achieve tangible results. It enables you to demonstrate your problem-solving skills, adaptability, and leadership qualities. *Practicing the STAR model before your interview* will ensure your comfort and preparedness. Good Luck!



Reach out to me at slebrato@icloud.com for a consultation. Sue Lebrato & Associates LLC. dba You're Amaz

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August 5, 5:30 to 9:30pm Water Lantern Festival Mt. Trashmore Park

August 8, 7:30 pm The Avett Brothers Chartway Arena (ODU) Cost: \$54 to \$84 ChartwayArena.com

August 16, 7 to 11pm Oceanfront Concert Series Ace Frehley 17th Street Park, Virginia Beach Oceanfront beacheventsvb.com Free

August 18 & 19, 5 to 11pm Norfolk Waterfront Jazz Festival at Town Point Park Cost: \$35 to \$70 festevents.org

DEALS ON SUMMER CAMPS / SUMMER FUN:

June 12 thru the end of summer Wes Laine Surf Camp - all ages vbhotdeals.com - save \$75 per week 3rd Street on the beach

5 weeks beginning June 26 Stand-up Paddleboard Camp for teens and pre-teens vbhotdeals.com - save \$95 per week 2500 Shore Drive First Landing State Park

12 days throughout the summer beginning June 19 Tech and Gamer day camp for teens and pre-teens vbhotdeals.com - save 30% per session New World VR Corp Norfolk Premium Outlet Mall

July 3, 8, 12 & 15, 7pm Virginia Beach United Soccer vbhotdeals.com - save on tickets vabeachunited.com Virginia Beach Sportsplex



Emily and Romello (both in Navy) showing their love poolside for Virginia Beach.







ARE YOU AN EXPERT?

ARE YOU AN EXPERT IN YOUR FIELD?

We want to hear from you... and so do our readers! 2023 is an exciting year for Virginia Connector Magazine. We are now offering business owners the opportunity to further promote themselves and their companies through written Editorials. We have different options available to help you achieve your branding goals. Check them out:

LOCAL EXPERT EDITORIAL

This option allows you the opportunity to showcase your expertise by entertaining readers with an interesting article. Choose a topic within your business category and write away! This can be in the form of a real-life story or experience, tips and tricks that everyone should know, or perhaps a dos and don'ts to keep readers informed. Be creative!

Branding yourself as an expert is a powerful thing. Allowing our readers to get to know you, expressing your personality and portraying your wealth of knowledge will inevitably lead to increased revenue for your business. You are making them WANT to do business with you, WANT to meet you and WANT to learn more from you.

LOOK CLOSER EDITORIAL

This option allows you the opportunity to promote your business by informing readers what makes you and/or your company the best in town!

Every business has something unique to offer customers, something they do the best, or an owner with a long list of achievements. Use this opportunity to highlight what makes your business distinctive and special. Does your business donate a portion of proceeds to charity? Have you been featured as an expert on TV? Do you have a money back guarantee that your service professionals will be on time? Tell the community all about it with a Look Closer Editorial.

> Limited to one per business category. Call today before your competitor does!

CALL FOR MORE INFORMATION (757) 567-9354



ViBe EVENTS (through November)

Singer Songwriter Saturdays - every Saturday from 9am to noon during in ViBe Park and on 19th Street come hear local musicians aing a mix of original songs and old favorites.

First Friday Mural Walking Tour 6-7:30pm #FirstFriday No RSVP required. Meet up at the LOVE sign on Cypress Ave at 18th Street to join the guided 1.5 miles walking tour around the arts district.

First Sunday Public Art Bike Tours 9-11am.

Ride at your own pace on your own bike as a guide leads your around the arts district sharing stories behind the murals and other public art works.

Second Saturday Mural Walking Tour 10am-11:30am No RSVP required. Meet up at the LOVE sign on Cypress Ave at 18th Street to join the guided 1.5 miles walking tour around the arts district.

Second Saturday South Bath Experience 10am and 10:45am Bring a yoga mat or borrow a complimentary hammock to enjoy two 30 minute sound art sessions in 18th St Parklet.

Vibrant Drumming Circle- Last Sunday Monthly - 6-7:30pm, in ViBe Park. Bring a chair and a drum or borrow one on site in ViBe Park at 18th St and Cypress Ave. This causal meet up group practices both guided and free from drumming.

Golf Cart Tours for persons with disabilities - please call to schedule at least 1 week in advance 757-202-9533. www.vibecreativedistrict.org





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