



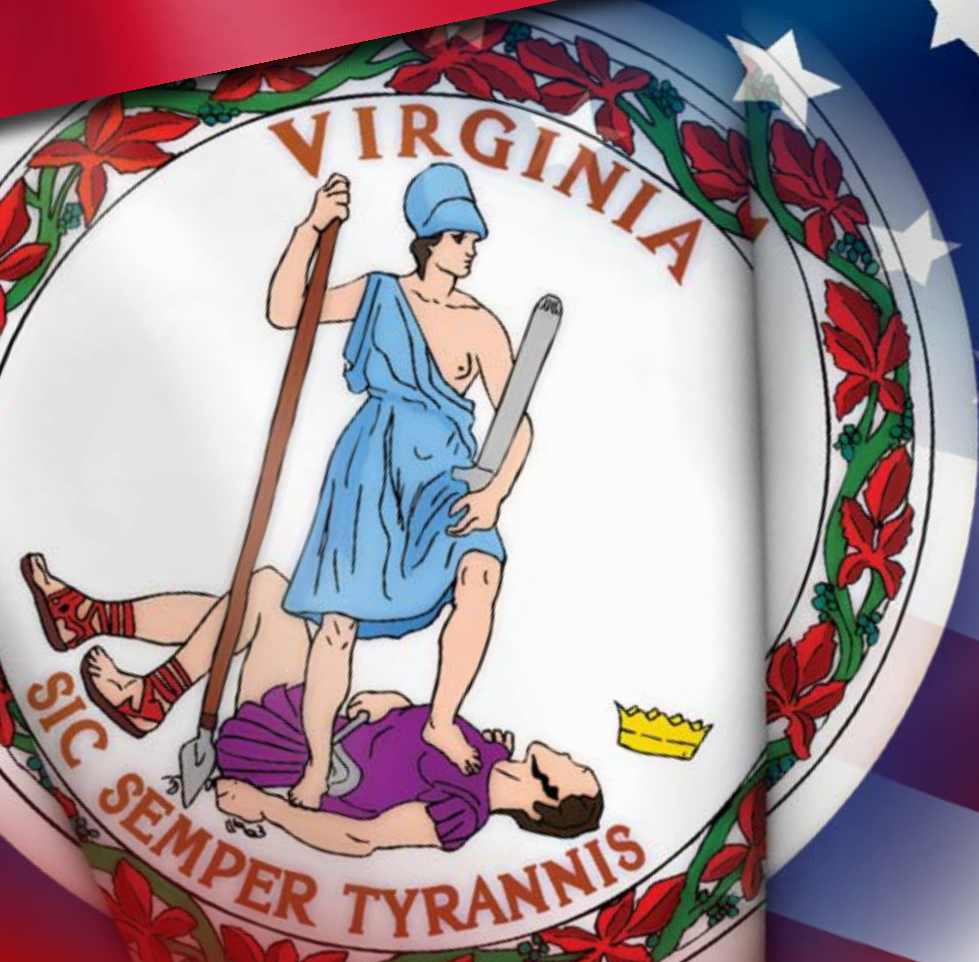
MUSEUMDISTRICT.ORG

The

COLUMNS

A PUBLICATION of THE MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

AUG-OCT 2020



MAKE SURE
YOU'RE
READY FOR
ELECTION DAY.

READ MORE ON PAGE 8 ►

CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

The coronavirus (COVID-19) is here in our community. It is up to all of us to do our part and stop the spread of COVID-19.



COVID-19 is spread mainly from person-to-person:



- Between people who are in close contact with one another (within about 6 feet).
- Through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people who are nearby or possibly be inhaled into the lungs.

Symptoms include:



- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath and difficulty breathing

These symptoms may appear 2-14 days after exposure.

There is no treatment for COVID-19.

To protect yourself from COVID-19:

- Stay home as much as possible and limit visitors in your household (they may have been exposed to the virus and not show symptoms).
- Try to only leave your house to get groceries and essential supplies.
- When you leave your house, wear a cloth mask
- If you feel sick, stay home and isolate yourself from other people in your household. Do not go to work.
- Clean your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water is not available, use hand sanitizer
- Cover your coughs and sneezes
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces daily.

The best way to protect yourself and your family from COVID-19 is to stay home and not allow visitors into your home. This includes family that does not live with you.

What to do if you are sick with COVID-19:

- Stay home except to get medical care. Do not go to work.
- Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation. Try to sleep in a separate room and use a separate bathroom than other people in your home.
- Call ahead before visiting your doctor.
- If you are sick, wear a face mask when you are around other people.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes with a tissue. Throw away tissues immediately.
- Clean your hands often. Use soap and water or hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Avoid sharing personal household items (like dishes, drinking glasses, utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home).
- Clean and disinfect all “high-touch” surfaces everyday (like phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, toilets, tablets, and bedside tables).
- Monitor your symptoms every day.

What to do if you were exposed to coronavirus disease (COVID-19)?

If you had close contact with a person sick with COVID-19, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) recommends that you stay at home for 14 days after the last time you saw the person and practice social distancing. Close contact includes:

- Living in the same household as a sick person with COVID-19,
- Caring for a sick person with COVID-19,
- Being within 6 feet of a sick person with COVID-19 for about 10 minutes, or
- Being in direct contact with secretions from a sick person with COVID-19 (e.g., being coughed or sneezed on, kissing, sharing utensils, etc.).

Call 911 if you have a medical emergency:

If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the operator that you have or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before medical help arrives.

Do you have any questions about COVID-19?

Call our COVID-19 Call Center! We have public health professionals available to talk to you in English and Spanish.



Call: 877-ASK-VDH3



For more information about COVID-19, visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus

MUSEUM DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

Founded 1964

PO Box 7186 • Richmond, Virginia 23221

804-410-1632 • museumdistrict.org



The mission of the Museum District Association is to unite, protect and advance the interests of the neighborhood in order to realize its potential and improve the quality of life in the neighborhood and community.

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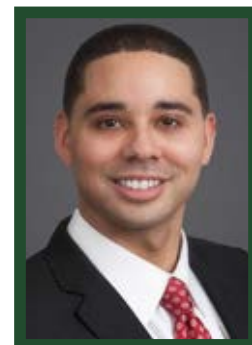
To reach any of our board members by phone, please call 804-410-1632 and leave a message stating the person you wish to reach.

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

Richmond is experiencing a time of heightened racial awareness. As a bi-racial man (black and white), I have an experience that is unfamiliar to some. I am proud of my entire family and my history. In my experience, our society's emphasis on race always made self-identification incredibly difficult. I was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, before moving to northern Virginia. My interests and hobbies often placed me in situations where I was the only person of color. While the feeling of alienation was ineffable as a child, it was palpable. I have made it my goal as a brown man to change these situations for future generations.



KYLE ELLIOTT
2020 MDA PRESIDENT

The progress I have seen in our country since my youth is truly inspiring. What you do and love is much less consequential in defining the immutable characteristics with which you were born. We are multifaceted human beings. I love a variety genres of music, sports, films and activities. Regardless of what I love, I am me.

This is not to say that race does not play a pivotal role in my life. I am proud to be the first person of color to hold the position of Museum District Association President. I am also proud to be one of the 4% of black lawyers in the United States and in an even smaller population of black employment lawyers. In most professional settings, I am typically the only brown or black person in the room. This cannot continue to be the case for future generations.

I'VE HAD SO MANY SINCERE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT EQUALITY AND REPRESENTATION OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS - WITH A SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON ENSURING AN ENVIRONMENT THAT IS INCLUSIVE OF MINORITIES.

I take pride in my ability to be in the room when tough and important decisions are made. I've had so many sincere conversations about equality and representation over the past several weeks - with a special emphasis on ensuring an environment that is inclusive of minorities. This must happen in government, organizations and among employers across the country. I pursued leadership in the MDA, and professionally as a lawyer, because I wanted to be in the room representing people who look like me. But my passion has always been to represent everyone - regardless of race, color, creed, religion, gender, sexual orientation and national origin - by identifying changes that can benefit us all and build a more perfect community. [E]

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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, intellectual, 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!**

Due to the recent pandemic, we have made adjustments to procedures to ensure the health and safety of customers and staff. Masks are required to enter the library.

Please be aware of the following changes:

Updated Hours: Monday and Wednesday – 10:00-7:00
Tuesday, Thursday, Friday – 10:00-6:00

The Library is open for the following services:

- Checking out, returning, renewing items, and placing items on hold.
- Computer usage is limited to 60 minute sessions, which can be extended in 15 minute increments, not to exceed 90 minutes per day.
- All in-library events and programming are currently suspended.
- Notary service is temporarily suspended.
- Faxing charges are temporarily suspended.
- Meeting rooms and study rooms are not available.

Virtual Events:

- Virtual Events include Victoria's Kitchen, RPL Presents (virtual storytime), Science Tellers, RPL's Reading Buddies, and more.

These can be found at the following link:

<https://rvalibrary.org/summer-reading-2020/virtual-programs/>.

The Belmont Library is located at 3100 Ellwood Avenue.
For information: RichmondPublicLibrary.org • 804-646-1139



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Please pass your copy on to someone else!



AROUND THE DISTRICT

MDA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS PURSUE DEGREES IN HEALTH SCIENCES

by **MA POWERS**
MOTHER'S DAY HOUSE & GARDEN TOUR CHAIR

In the midst of a pandemic, I was recently part of a joyous celebration. Instead of attending the annual Thomas Jefferson High School Senior Awards Ceremony in a packed auditorium, I gathered with a handful of people in the school gymnasium to present scholarship money to two accomplished young women preparing to leave home for college.

In lieu of a cheering crowd, we brought together a small but enthusiastic group including Museum District Association board members, family members and TJ guidance counselor **WILLIE DUPREE**. We all wore masks and, keeping our social distance, symbolically embraced the graduates.

Even in the intimate setting, excitement and anticipation filled the space, and I couldn't help but feel grateful for that very moment and the two graduates we were there to honor. A sense of joy and pride was palatable as both families prepared for the milestone of high school graduation. Despite the pandemic and all the challenges it brings, these special graduates were giddy with excitement about their futures.

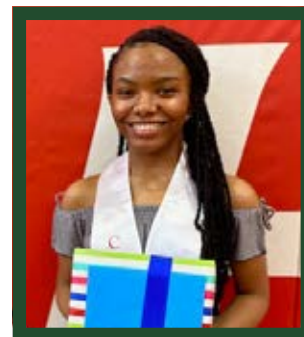
The MDA scholarship program at TJHS was initiated in 2018 by the Mother's Day House & Garden Tour Committee. Awards of \$750, to be used toward college expenses, are generated from Tour proceeds each year. The MDA is the only neighborhood association that makes an annual scholarship contribution at the school. Many of the students who apply for the scholarship have extraordinary financial need, and all of them are exceptional candidates. The scholarship committee struggles to decide on recipients each year and always wishes there were more money to share with additional students.

COVID-19 caused the cancellation of the 2020 Mother's Day House & Garden Tour for the first time in 26 years. The cancellation means there are no funds for a scholarship next spring. However, the board of directors is committed to maintaining the scholarship program in 2021 and is hopeful that residents and friends will consider making a donation to the scholarship fund through our website (<https://www.museumdistrict.org/scholarship>).



THE MUSEUM DISTRICT

Thomas Jefferson High School
SCHOLARSHIP



SIERRA GARR-DAVIS excelled in International Baccalaureate coursework, participated in numerous extra-curricular activities and volunteered to work with children through a local hospital. Sierra will attend James Madison University with plans to pursue a degree in health sciences with dental school as a future goal.



DIAMOND SCOTT graduated with an exceptional grade point average, participated in a variety of extra-curricular activities and is described as a role model for her peers. Diamond will attend Virginia State University to pursue a degree in biology with the eventual goal of attending Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

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COMING TO THE TABLE

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS ACROSS THE RACIAL DIVIDE

by **JANINE DOYLE**

For the majority of my life, I had always considered myself to be a strong ally. Then, in the weeks following George Floyd’s murder on May 25, 2020, my idealistic self-perception came into question as I realized I had barely scratched the surface of being truly anti-racist.

As protests spread across the nation in early June, I found myself feeling helpless to make a difference. I am in a high-risk group for COVID-19, so I was particularly hungry for remote ways to support the cause.

In my search, I happened across a thread on the Nextdoor app titled *Make a New Friend Who Doesn’t Look Like You*, quoting NBA legend Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. The poster, a Richmond resident who self-identified as a white woman, was hoping to meet people with different backgrounds, and the response was endearingly positive.

While I was unable to participate in their eventual get together, I spotted a recommendation in the comments for an organization called Coming to the Table - RVA (CTTT-RVA). The comment caught my eye immediately, sharing how CTTT-RVA hosts monthly dinners with structured conversations about race issues. Through their website, I learned about their role in facilitating “courageous, clumsy and often uncomfortable conversations on race,” and encouraging constructive dialogue through restorative language and peace-building principles.

A national organization with over three dozen local chapters, Coming to the Table engages communities to uncover history, make connections, work toward healing and take action to



CTTT-RVA founders Danita Rountree Green and Martha Rollins

“THE MOST DANGEROUS CONVERSATIONS ARE THE ONES WE DON’T HAVE. SO JOIN US AT THE TABLE, A SAFE SPACE FOR CONNECTIONS THAT EMPOWER HEALING ACTIONS.”

– Coming to the Table

dismantle systems of oppression. These four “legs” provide stability for the “table” at which we’re all invited to take a seat.

MARTHA ROLLINS (relative of R.E. Lee) and **DANITA ROUNTREE GREEN** (proud child of the Civil Rights Movement) founded the Richmond Chapter of CTTT in 2014 after attending the MLK Anniversary March in Washington, D.C., the year prior. Over time, CTTT-RVA has grown into one of the largest and most active chapters in the nation, with many ways for interested parties to get involved, including monthly gatherings (currently shifted to Zoom meetings), book and movie circles, and working groups. Their website also features countless resources for in-depth learning and healing.

The path ahead for me as well as for society as a whole is a long one, but it’s reassuring to be warmly welcomed into a community so eager to make a lasting impact on the way we all interact with each other. I now volunteer for CTTT-RVA and encourage others to come to the table as well. Learn more at <https://comingtothetable-rva.org/>.





ELECTION DAY IS NOVEMBER 3

**ARE YOU
READY?**

IT CAN BE A BIT DAUNTING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT DISTRICT YOU'RE IN, WHAT THE REGISTRATION DEADLINES ARE OR WHERE YOU GO TO VOTE. FORTUNATELY, WE HAVE ACCESS TO TERRIFIC RESOURCES AT THE CITY AND STATE LEVEL.



by LIZ BRYANT

The first Tuesday after the first Monday in November is an exciting day. It's Election Day! And this year, it is a big one. I always look forward to voting and have not missed an election since my first one in 1980, when Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan were on the ballot for President. Voting, for me, is a responsibility and a privilege. And I take it seriously.

ON NOVEMBER 3, WE'LL BE VOTING TO FILL THE FOLLOWING OFFICES:

- PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
- U.S. SENATE (MARK WARNER'S SEAT)
- U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
- RICHMOND MAYOR
- RICHMOND CITY COUNCIL
- RICHMOND SCHOOL BOARD

Admittedly, not everyone is as tuned in to the process as I am. It can be a bit daunting to figure out what district you're in, what the registration deadlines are or where you go to vote. Fortunately, we have access to terrific resources at the city and state level.

The entire Museum District is in the 4th Congressional district; but we're not all in the same City Council or School Board districts. The easiest way to find out your district is to go to the City Assessor's page (<https://apps.richmondgov.com/applications/propertysearch/>), type in your address, then click on the "government" tab. For example, our house is in City Council district 2 (currently represented by Kim Gray) and School Board district 2 (currently represented by Scott Barlow).

To ensure that you're eligible to vote on Tuesday, November 3 (6:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) in the general election, pay attention to the following deadlines:

- REGISTER/UPDATE ADDRESS BY:
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 2020
- REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOT BY MAIL BY:
5:00 P.M. FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2020
- REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOT BY APPEARING IN PERSON BY:
5:00 P.M. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2020

The two best resources for voter and election information are the Richmond City Registrar's website (www.richmondgov.com/registrar) and the Virginia Department of Elections website (www.elections.virginia.gov). You'll find everything you need to know about the process for registering to vote — whether in person or absentee: times for voting, polling locations, what you need to take with you, etc.

NOTE THAT DUE TO COVID-19, ALL REGISTERED VOTERS ARE ELIGIBLE TO VOTE ABSENTEE.

If you don't have access to a computer, or simply prefer to talk to a real person, the phone numbers are as follows:

- RICHMOND CITY REGISTRAR:
(804) 646-5950
- VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ELECTIONS:
(804) 864-8901

Of course, individual candidates will have websites where you can get more information on them and their platforms. Should you want to get involved with a campaign, you'll also find that information on those candidate sites.

For campaign swag, my go-to site is Café Press (www.cafepress.com), where you can purchase bumper stickers, hats, T-shirts, yard signs and pretty much anything you want or need to promote your candidate of choice. It's mostly for national candidates, so for local promotional merchandise I would contact the campaign directly.

See you at the polls on November 3! 🗳️

Virginia Vote by Mail Application Form

Print your Personal Information

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in the city/county of: _____
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If yes, which party primary ballots would you like to receive? (if none selected, we won't send primary ballots.
3 Democratic Party Republican Party I do not wish to receive ballots for Primary Elections.
4 Address: _____ VA Zip Code: _____ Apt/Suite #: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Country: _____
5 Address: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
City: _____ Country: _____
6 Telephone: _____
Email/Fax: _____
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7a Former Full Name: _____ Date Moved: _____
Former Address: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____
City: _____
I am submitting this registration application and this is your first time voting in this city/county. You have to vote in an election for U.S. President, U.S. Senate, or U.S. House

FASHION MONTH FALL 2020
TOOK PLACE IN FEBRUARY,
JUST BEFORE THE COVID-19
PANDEMIC WAS DECLARED.
BUT NOT ALL WAS DARK
AND GLOOMY.

FALL FASHION

by **ALLISON SCHUTZER**





Fashion waits for no one. Not even a pandemic. Trends that begin during bi-annual Fashion Weeks in Paris, Milan, London and New York City do (eventually) make their way to us here in Richmond, and the work of each designer reflects or communicates with the world around us.

Fashion Month Fall 2020 took place in February, just before the COVID-19 pandemic was declared, with a number of shows in Milan cancelled as it grew. Across the globe, Fall 2020 designs were marked by an apocalyptic vibe that found its way onto the runway. Not all was dark and gloomy, but certainly expressive of the times. Designers created a series of remarkable shows idealizing how we hope to look from September through the end of the year. Here's what to expect:

METALLICS/SEQUINS/BLING – Something shiny always brightens the mood; and turning yourself into a sparkling gem is certain to light up a room after months of social distancing. A satin gold gown, a floor length chainmail skirt or a jewel-embellished top is certain to dominate your gatherings (or Zoom calls!).

“PREPPY” ATTIRE – As we decide how and when students will go back to school, a plethora of prep school/collegiate looks have popped up across the globe. Stripes, sweater vests, tailored blazers and pleated skirts will all be in full swing. This style has a unique “Americana” vibe evoking a sense of nationalism in individual cities.

PUNK ROCK – Music-influenced counterculture is a history that repeats itself. Now it's returning to fashion as our country embarks on its own movement for social justice. This throwback comes in the form of plaids, leather and deconstructed fabrics.

SOMEWHAT “INTIMATE” APPAREL – The hemline index is a tried and true theory, so let's take this trend as a sign of optimism. Full lace or mesh gowns, sheer overlays and bra-tops paired with latex pants and an overcoat will take us into fall. If the theory holds true, economic stability lies ahead.

FRINGE – Straight out of the bohemian 60's, fringe will make a resounding comeback this fall. Not only in accessories, but tops, skirts and jackets as well.

VICTORIAN – High necklines and button-up collars will also dominate this upcoming season. Perhaps a further ode to “covering up” and “keeping to yourself,” this style will be seen in women's and menswear alike.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



FALL FASHION 2020

continued from previous page

GLOVES – Gloves of various lengths and materials were used heavily by designers during Fashion Week. In fact, keeping hands clean and covered was a theme in and of itself. Leather opera-length gloves, half scoop driving gloves and crochet mesh gloves provide options to accessorize all of your looks.

FACE COVERING – Head and face coverings will be a staple for the entirety of 2020, and, realistically, beyond. Whether it's a partial or full head covering, masking your face is as trendy as it is important.

While I anticipate seeing many of these style elements on members of the Museum District this Fall, quarantine “street style” (looks not developed on the runway) will likely carry over as well. How lucky we are to have had the uprising of *athleisure* wear over the past few years only to prove its worth with “shelter-in-place” orders around the world! Dressing down has become as normal as dressing up. As has my favorite quarantine Zoom hack: the fancy blouse paired with gym shorts. Because...no one really needs to know.

Athleisure wear is not only about being comfortable, it's about practicality. It uses fabrics that are machine washable and low

HOW LUCKY WE ARE TO HAVE HAD THE UPRISING OF ATHLEISURE WEAR OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS ONLY TO PROVE ITS WORTH WITH “SHELTER-IN-PLACE” ORDERS AROUND THE WORLD!

maintenance if nothing else to save you a trip to the dry cleaner. I anticipate we will continue to see many of these elements in what we wear this fall. And if you are a first responder, teacher or front-line worker, companies like Adidas, Under Armor and ASICS are all offering sweeping discounts on their online stores.

Christian Siriano and Pyer Moss, both NYC based designers, began producing gloves, masks and gowns in an effort to aid in the global public safety efforts during the pandemic. Many designers continue to do so now as both a necessity and a statement. You can also shop local for fashionable masks. A number of mask-making entrepreneurs have arisen all over the city in a beautiful community effort for public safety.

In addition to the grassroots efforts by seamstresses citywide, retail shops have also contributed to the cause. Ledbury in downtown Richmond has dedicated its shirt-making facilities





WHILE RETAIL STORES BEGIN WELCOMING BACK CUSTOMERS, I KNOW WE'LL SEE ACCESSORY SHELVES STOCKED WITH A VARIETY OF DIFFERENT FACE COVERINGS THIS FALL.

to the production of protective masks for businesses, schools and other organizations. Today they offer 1-for-1 donations to an organization in need with every mask purchased. Mamer-Sass, a company focused on repurposing textiles, also saw an opportunity during the pandemic to put their skills and resources to good use, also offering a 1-for-1 donation with the purchase of any mask.

While retail stores begin welcoming back customers, I know we'll see accessory shelves stocked with a variety of different face coverings this fall. Do not miss this trend! It's not only cool to wear a face mask, it tells your friends and neighbors that you care about them. 📺



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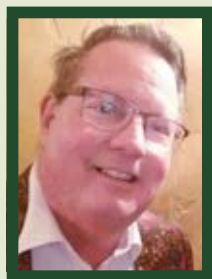
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60-year-old **WILLIAM (BILLY) POARCH** has lived in the Museum District for 31 years. Billy is the CEO of the nonprofit ACTS, an interfaith organization working to prevent homelessness in the Greater Richmond Area by providing funds, support and other resources to our neighbors in financial crises.

In March 2020, after a trip to New York, Billy became ill with COVID-19. Below is his story of survival and the power of neighborly love.

SURVIVING COVID-19 IN THE MUSEUM DISTRICT

Interview by **JANINE DOYLE**



Q: WHEN DID YOU FIRST KNOW SOMETHING WAS WRONG?

A: “I went to New York on a small trip from March 6-11. On March 13 (which was ironically Friday the 13th), I had a little cough, but I thought it was just due to allergies. I felt fine and didn’t have any other symptoms that morning.

“By 3 o’clock that afternoon, I told one of my employees that I was sick and needed to go home. I remember driving down Monument Avenue, halfway to my house and realizing I shouldn’t be driving, I immediately took my temperature when I got home and had a fever of 103 degrees.”

Q: HOW DID YOUR SYMPTOMS PROGRESS?

A: “For the first four days, the fatigue and chills were absolutely horrible. I’ve never experienced anything like that in my life. I was sleeping 19 hours a day and could barely drag myself out of bed. I lost 20 pounds in the first week.

“On day 13, I emailed my doctor, letting him know that I was feeling better but still had a nagging cough. He ordered a chest X-ray and called me immediately after to tell me that both of my lungs were completely covered in pneumonia. This proved to my doctor beyond a shadow of a doubt that I had COVID-19 — he said normal pneumonia doesn’t look like that!

“While he stayed very positive and told me I was going to be fine, my doctor did also say he couldn’t believe he had been talking to me for 15 minutes and I wasn’t gasping for air.

“The pneumonia caused a deep burning and it felt like someone was sitting on my chest. I started feeling better for a couple of weeks, but then two weeks later I started coughing and feeling horrible again.

FOR THE FIRST FOUR DAYS, THE FATIGUE AND CHILLS WERE ABSOLUTELY HORRIBLE. I’VE NEVER EXPERIENCED ANYTHING LIKE THAT IN MY LIFE.

“On May 1, that was the first actual day that I felt like I was recovering. So my symptoms lasted from March 13 to May 1.”

Q: WHAT WAS THE RECOVERY / TREATMENT LIKE?

A: “I was instructed to take Tylenol for the fever, but I was sleeping so much so I didn’t take it very often — I just let the fever run its course, and I was prescribed Zithromax Z-PAK after my chest X-ray.

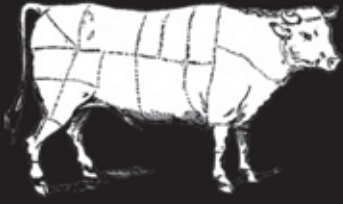
“When my symptoms got bad again, I emailed my doctor and he said ‘We don’t understand this virus, I’m so sorry that you’re going through this again. I think it’s just a blip.’ He told me to not second guess myself and call the hospital if I developed other symptoms — for many, by the time they got to the hospital, it was too late.”

Q: TELL US ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH RICHMOND’S HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS THROUGHOUT THIS EXPERIENCE.

A: “I was so proud of my doctor for telling me to remain positive. He said, ‘I don’t know what’s going to make you happy, but you need to do whatever it is, and do not let your mind wander to the dark side or dark thoughts.’ I thoroughly loved his holistic approach, which was also recommended by a dear friend who is a doctor of Chinese Medicine.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

THINK SUMMER
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SURVIVING COVID-19

continued from page 15

“So, I stopped watching the news — I didn’t want to see people dying. I delved back into my love of music and did research, posting a new song on Facebook every day that would either bring back music that I’d known and loved over the years or just kind of matched my mood for the day.

That’s what I did to keep my mind occupied, and it was really fun. I think it was a form of journaling.”

Q: WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR PEOPLE TO SAFELY SUPPORT THEIR LOVED ONES IF THEY CONTRACT COVID-19?

A: “Emails, text messages — just staying in touch. Instead of asking someone how you can help, just do something. My friends and wonderful neighbors brought me food and other items that they would leave on the porch.

“It was also really helpful to have friends ask what I needed from the grocery store because I couldn’t get out to do the shopping myself. Just be neighborly — it’s so important in today’s world.”

Q: ARE ANY OF YOUR SYMPTOMS PERSISTING / WERE THERE ANY SYMPTOMS THAT SURPRISED YOU?

A: “Overall, I have felt much better since May 1. However,


IT WAS ALSO REALLY HELPFUL TO HAVE FRIENDS ASK WHAT I NEEDED FROM THE GROCERY STORE BECAUSE I COULDN’T GET OUT TO DO THE SHOPPING MYSELF.

the emotional toll was unexpected. I am a pretty emotional person to begin with, but when I would be watching TV while I was sick, I would just start crying, even watching advertisements.”

Q: DOES IT CONCERN YOU TO SEE THE CITY REOPENING / PEOPLE NOT WEARING MASKS?

A: “I have been very concerned about it. We don’t know much — do I have immunity? I’m not sure, so everywhere I go, I wear my mask. If I’m in public, my mask is on.

“It just disappoints me to see people out and about without them on, because I just think it’s a total disregard for humanity. Had I known I should’ve been wearing a mask and gloves while I was in New York, I would have. But it was still so early on.

“I don’t wish this disease on my worst enemy, so I certainly would not wish it on my friends. I fully recognize what this virus can do, and we need to remember that and stay vigilant.” 

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LET'S NURTURE SOME SOULS.

by **JANIE WILSON**

Well, we've had our share of hubbub in the 'hood in 2020. It's early summer as I write, and I'm wondering how anything I can say will be relevant tomorrow, much less early fall when you'll read this! For all I know, the trees may be throwing apples at us like a scene from *The Wizard of Oz*.

Here's the thing: no matter what's going on, our beautiful Museum District is a gateway to our city — and we have a unique opportunity to demonstrate kindness, courage and a welcoming spirit to all who wander through it.



JANIE WILSON

Some of us are making masks and some are marching. Others are meeting in small learning groups, upholding institutions that are part of the solutions, and some of us (thank you dearly!) are on the front lines. There are many ways to be useful.

But this is a gardening column, so I have a gardening suggestion to add to the mix. Let's all make an extra effort to beautify our gardens. This solution is uplifting, not only to ourselves, but to everyone who passes by. Natural beauty nurtures the soul. What could be more needed right now? Over these crazy

LET'S ALL MAKE AN EXTRA EFFORT TO BEAUTIFY OUR GARDENS. THIS SOLUTION IS UPLIFTING, NOT ONLY TO OURSELVES, BUT TO EVERYONE WHO PASSES BY.

months, when there was nothing else to do, at least I could tend my garden and make it beautiful for passers-by.

It doesn't matter whether your garden is one potted plant sitting on your apartment balcony or a raucous cacophony of shrubs, herbs and wildflowers like mine. There is always something you can do. Nor does it matter the season — your joy (and ours) can shine through the decorations you merrily display for "Thank Goodness the Kids Went Back to School Day," Halloween, Election Day, Diwali, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, Christmas or, God-willing, New Year's Day 2021 — who can wait for that?!!

The point is, our neighborhood is a highly visible place in the heart of a suffering city — our city. Let's get out there and show the world that our city has heart. **G**

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THE MARKET REMAINS RESILIENT

What a time it has been over the last few months. With the onset of the pandemic there was some uncertainty about how the Real Estate market would be affected. There was some fear of a repeat of the housing market bust of 2009, however the driving factors in that collapse are not present and the market remains healthy despite the lack of inventory. It appears that many potential sellers have delayed putting their homes on the market until they get comfortable with the current health risk environment.



STEVE JONES
Joyner Fine Properties

A common measure of the market is Months Supply of Inventory, defined as the measure of how many months it would take for the current inventory of homes to sell given the current pace of home sales. In a healthy market there are 5-6 months of inventory. You will see on the graph below that in the past three years inventory in the Museum District has generally floated between 0.5 and 1.5 months supply.

While inventory is low there appears to be no lack of buyers for homes in the District, Fan and Near West End areas. Many properly priced homes are having multiple offers with contingencies waived and other enticements to help buyers have their offers accepted.

Pending home sales, a leading national indicator, saw a huge rise of 44% over April.

When looking specifically at the Museum District, the numbers are a little surprising in that we had more sales of both townhomes/

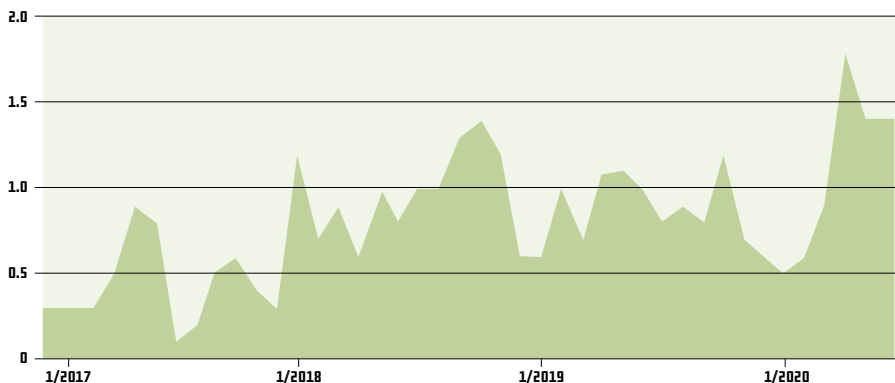
condos and single-family homes in the 2nd quarter of 2020 than during the same period in 2019. Part of that may be due to the strong momentum we had going into March and part due to the upbeat financial markets. Museum District homes sold for an average of \$266 per square foot, although there are a number of factors that need to be considered when applying that number to a specific home.

As of this writing there are five townhomes/condos for sale and five single family homes for sale, most of which have been on the market for a number of weeks.

On another front, there is some concern that the recent unrest in the area may have an effect on the local real estate market, but it is too soon to make a judgment on that. **■**

WHILE INVENTORY IS LOW THERE APPEARS TO BE NO LACK OF BUYERS FOR HOMES IN THE DISTRICT, FAN AND NEAR WEST END AREAS.

MONTHS SUPPLY OF HOMES FOR SALE IN THE MUSEUM DISTRICT



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About Mike

- ★ Graduated from the University of Richmond in 2006
- ★ Co-Founder and Successful Small Business Owner for 11 years
- ★ Named "Top 40 Under 40" by Style Weekly in 2015 and is a graduate of both Leadership Metro Richmond and LEAD Virginia
- ★ Former President of his Civic Association
- ★ Member of the Board of Directors for Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Member of the Board for the Public Relations Society of America Richmond Chapter's Foundation
- ★ Former President of the Massey Alliance and Former Commissioner of the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike" with a long horizontal line underneath.

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