**Patriots Press**

**Patriots Colony Residents Council**

**Front Row:**
Jan Rueter, Food Committee Chair
Phyllis Belden, Community Rep.
Paulette Dawson, Health Ctr. Volunteers Chair
Sue Lester, Health and Fitness Chair
Bobbie Garver, Community Rep.
Carole Green, Health Center Rep.

**Back Row:**
Bryce Hollingsworth, Facilities Chair
Mo Lynch, Secretary
Jim Edwards, Treasurer
Betsy Gremp, Chairman
Dale Hruby, Vice Chairman
Dan Carlson, Health Center Rep.
Glyndond Bruhl, Community Rep.

*Happy St. Patrick’s Day!*
On Saturday, 28 October, a contingent of Patriots Colony residents and Staff members participated in the annual Walk for Alzheimer’s in New Town. After some preliminaries, photo taking, and socializing, there were two choices for the walk: the one-mile route and the three-mile route. Both were clearly marked. Our group started off together and then split up when those who chose the shorter version headed back, while others continued. PJ and I continued on our way. A short time later, we stopped for a water break. As we were ready to rejoin the group, one of the walkers came along. We joined forces and continued on the long course.

We had not gone far when our companion lost her balance and fell, landing face down into a grassy area adjacent to the sidewalk. She was very embarrassed but, fortunately, not seriously injured. Working together, we got her back up on her feet and, with the help of a couple of other participants in the walk and a very friendly neighbor, I was able stop the bleeding. PJ sat at attention and took it all in, which was good as I had dropped the leash and left her on her own. About that time, Dr. Dan Carlson, a fellow Patriots Colony resident – working that morning on the staff of the Alzheimer’s Walk committee – caught up with us and offered his assistance.

At this point, we realized that we were at the mid-point of the three-mile course and about a mile-and-a-half from the starting area where we could get some help. Since no transport was readily available, I suggested that we flag down a passing vehicle and see if they could give us a lift back to civilization. The first car that came along (an SUV) stopped. I explained our situation to the female driver. She and her husband were very friendly – couldn’t have been nicer – so we piled in. Our injured hiker got in the passenger seat; Dan Carlson, PJ and I were in the back seat; and the driver’s husband opened the cargo compartment and climbed in the back. Our driver inquired if we lived in the area. When we responded that Dan and I lived at Patriots Colony, our driver became quite animated and said, “Well, my parents live at Patriots Colony!” Thank you, Joni and Mark Newcomb – daughter and son-in-law of Barbara and John Anderson and parents of Amy, a prior Coordinator for Springhouse – for helping us in our time of need!

– Jim O’Connell –

**DON’T WASH YOUR HAIR IN THE SHOWER**

It’s so good to finally get a health warning that is useful. It involves the shampoo when it runs down your body when you shower with it – a warning to us all!!!
I don’t know why I didn’t figure this out sooner!
I use shampoo in the shower.
When I wash my hair, the shampoo runs down my whole body; and printed very clearly on the label is this warning:

“For Extra Body and Volume”

No wonder I have been gaining weight!
Well, I got rid of that shampoo; and I am going to start showering with Dawn dishwashing soap instead.

Its label reads:

“Dissolves Fat That Is Otherwise Difficult To Remove”

Problem solved!
If I don’t answer the phone, I’ll be in the shower!!!

– A SMALL WORLD –
THE RED BALL EXPRESS AT PATRIOTS COLONY

Many of us remember the story of the famous Red Ball Express from WWII. Over a 14-month period, the U.S. Army created a special transportation force of nearly 6,000 dedicated trucks to resupply the rapidly advancing Allied forces through France pushing the German Army back across the Rhine River.

Well, the PC transportation “force” may not number 6,000 vehicles, but the tasks are nearly as complicated. Sharon Toth, our Transportation Coordinator, and her staff work to properly support the never-ending transportation needs of our residents. Sharon is supported by her full-time assistant, Ed Kissell, and up to four labor pool drivers; she reports to Jim Morris, our Security Director. In tight situations, the team is supplemented by Wanda Young of the Security Team. The vehicle “fleet” is comprised of three buses, including the new, infamous “Blue Beast,” a minivan, and, occasionally, the Security minivan.

Sharon was born in Hampton and now lives in Yorktown, with a 52-mile total round trip to work every day. She is married and raised four children, which first got her into the transportation business. Trying to match the complex daily transportation needs of her four active kids led her to get her Commercial Driver’s License and she drove a church school bus for 7 years. Looking for a full-time job with benefits, she studied and became a Certified Nursing Assistant, which led her to Patriots Colony to practice her new skills. It was Providence, she says, that during her service here, one of our senior staff members encouraged her to apply for a vacant Transportation Coordinator position. She was hired for that position and has held it since 2011.

Joining her as a full-time driver and assistant is Ed Kissell, originally from Towanda, PA. Ed was a Navy Corpsman for 4 years and served in Vietnam supporting the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines in Chu Li. After leaving the service, he spent many years in pharmaceutical sales, and moved to the Peninsula for a more leisurely lifestyle. He drove a tram at Bush Gardens, meeting Noel Sinclair, another PC driver who also drove a tram. Noel encouraged Ed to come to Patriots Colony.

Sharon receives driving assignments from IL, AL, Springhouse and Convalescent sources and develops annual, monthly, and weekly schedules from that input. Then, based on individual requests for transportation by residents for medical appointments, she makes the weekly assignments each Monday. She then schedules herself, Ed, and the pool drivers. For the year 2019, her team provided buses for 259 events and 1,212 medical appointments while racking up 35,000 miles in the process. It is an awesome responsibility which Sharon and Ed and the team take very seriously. Besides being an excellent driver and supervisor, Sharon is a patient and very caring person and we at Patriots Colony are most fortunate in having her at the helm, or should I say “the wheel.”

-- Lew Mabie --

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When I was about fourteen years old, a teammate from our high school basketball team bought a second-hand motorcycle. He arrived on campus with his leather jacket and boots and was soon winning a lot of attention from the cheerleaders and other "sweater girls." I mean, just picture the movie, "Grease!" It seemed to me that my pal had hit upon a really neat gimmick. I had saved up some money from my paper route and thought I had found a good use for it. When I announced one evening at the dinner table how I planned to spend my money, my father snapped, "Not as long as you are living under this roof!!!"

This uncharacteristic response from my mild-mannered, soft-spoken father shocked me and shook me. I knew I should not protest. However, he was a thoughtful, considerate man and sensed my disappointment. Over the course of the days and weeks that followed, I probed carefully to construct my understanding of his strong feelings on the subject.

My father was an Iowa farm boy, the youngest of five children of Czech immigrants who had come to this country in the late 1880's. By the time he was born in 1911, the family was well established and from all accounts thriving, raising corn and hogs on the fertile Iowa plains. His oldest sibling was his only brother, 12 years older than Dad. In 1928, as he approached becoming the first of his family to graduate from High School, it became very apparent that his older brother would be running the farm and his role would be that of farm hand. This certainly did not appeal to him, so he decided to join the Army.

In those days between the Wars, the Army was small, and in order to join, you had to find a vacancy. Thus, my father located a position in the 4th U.S. Cavalry stationed at a small relic from the Indian Wars, Fort Mead, South Dakota. The 4th Cav, as it was known, was a horse cavalry unit located on the Eastern edge of the Black Hills not too far from Deadwood. Having been raised on a farm, my father was comfortable with animals and all that that entailed. He took to Army life, received a couple of promotions and then met and married my mother, a nurse in the base hospital.

In the late 1920's and early 1930's, the whole nation was struggling with the effects of the Great Depression and several years of catastrophic weather. As Nazism and Fascism brought war clouds into concern all over the world, the American military began to expand and modernize. This impacted on my father and a group of his fellow troopers of the 4th Cavalry. They were ordered to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to the Harley Davidson headquarters to learn all they could about how to maintain and operate motorcycles as the Army began to replace their horses with motorized vehicles of several types.

Upon return to Fort Mead, they were organized into a motorcycle demonstration unit which performed synchronized mounted drills. The unit was then sent around the country as a demonstration team to help introduce the new weapons systems to the Army. They were also called upon to help modify and develop new "Cavalry Tactics and Procedures."
This period was the source of my father's enmity regarding motorcycles. These young troopers were not newcomers to the mechanized age. They almost all owned cars and worked on them — got them "souped up" and so forth. Most of them also had experience on the farms with heavy equipment and knew how to work with heavy tools. But they were young men who had been introduced to a new toy and the results were often tragic and sometimes fatal.

By this time, my Dad had been promoted to Non-Commissioned Officer and was responsible for the soldiers’ wellbeing and welfare, a responsibility he took seriously. As he talked to me about my "wild ideas," he told of severe, life-changing injuries and deaths that happened during this training period before the war. Memories of hours spent in hospital waiting rooms and dealing with issues of recovery and rehabilitation haunted him through the years. Obviously, my teenaged enthusiasm triggered these old memories and raised new concerns from a father's perspective.

Following the Attack on Pearl Harbor, my father left his fellow 4th Cav troopers. He was assigned to attend Officers' Candidate School at Camp Lee, Virginia, and became a 2d Lieutenant in the Quartermaster Corps.

Dad's original unit, the 4th Cavalry, was deployed to the South Pacific and participated in the island-hopping campaigns that eventually brought an end to World War II. They were a proud and highly effective unit that performed bravely and came home in 1945 with victory and many honors. Their heritage lives today in the 21st Century in our active and reserve forces.

My parents kept in contact with those old 4th Cav friends for years exchanging many visits in various places around the country and even overseas during the Army of Occupation in both Japan and Germany. I enjoyed hearing their stories of those early pre-war years, most of which got better and more raucous with each telling.

After the war, a number of these veterans decided to return to their roots, so-to-speak, and began holding reunions in the town just outside the gates of Fort Mead, which is Sturgis, South Dakota. The word soon got out among bikers all over the world. The 4th Cavalry reunions have morphed into one of the largest motorcycle rallies in the nation, if not the world. Last year, over 100,000 bikers attended the annual event.

I never did get my motorcycle. Life moved on and it has been a wonderful and fulfilling life. I did become a Cavalryman and spent plenty of time on big machines, in the hatch of a tank or the seat of a helicopter. I have been able to enjoy watching my grandsons wrestling their dirt bikes over the trails and byways. But, every once in a while, when I see a clip on the TV about the Sturgis rally, I admit to a faint longing to roar off toward the Black Hills of South Dakota wearing Ray-Bans, with a bandana around my forehead, a cigar in my mouth and my red hot mama, Dodie, clinging to me on the seat behind me!

—— Dale Hruby —

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A TRIP TO REMEMBER
(AKA OUR HEARTS WERE YOUNG AND GAY)

I, Janet Macnair (Price) and Nancy McCrea were DoD teachers in Japan in 1961-1963. During the summer of 1962, we ventured off on “a trip to remember”!

We sailed from Yokohama to Hong Kong and parts South on the freighter SS Fukien – three passengers, British officers and a Chinese crew, with a cargo of jute and hemp. Unfortunately, the jute and hemp had to stay dry and it rained frequently; so we got further and further behind on our schedule.

In the meantime, we enjoyed shipboard life to the fullest – sleeping, eating at the Captain’s table, reading, and enjoying Gin and Tonics with the British junior officers (to ward off malaria, don’t you know!) and sometimes listening to Peter Sellers’ records. To celebrate crossing the Equator, we were presented with beautifully scripted and illustrated certificates which had been fashioned by one of our new friends. The Chinese crew played Mahjong deep into the night with a constant “clickety clack.”

We stopped in Hong Kong, Singapore and finally Djakarta, Indonesia. Our original plan was to fly from Djakarta to Australia; and after a week there, board an ocean liner back to Japan. Alas, we had to cancel Australia because of the rain delays. Instead, we stayed in Djakarta a few days, then on to beautiful Bali for a week, witnessed a mass cremation, stately Balinese women carrying wares on their heads, and much Balinese dancing and music.

Then on to Kuala Lumpur where we met a travel agent who showed us the gorgeous island of Penang. Next by train to Bangkok, befriended by an older Chinese couple, who used sign language to offer the services of their son (a medical student) as a guide to Bangkok. We toured the city in the morning and were feasted to a huge lunch at a restaurant. The couple had invited their entire family to meet us at lunch. We toured again in the afternoon and visited their home for another huge meal! Such wonderful hospitality! After Bangkok, back to Hong Kong and home to Tachikawa (near Tokyo) for the second year of teaching 2nd grade.

Many folks, including our British officers on Fukien and husband-to-be a year later, Dick Price, advised against travel to Indonesia since in 1962 we had no diplomatic relations with Sukarno’s regime. None-the-less, off we went. Nancy and I were naïve and trusting, but also stuck together like glue for safety. We met wonderful, generous people who kept us safe, and added to our experience of a lifetime.

– Jan Price –
A PORT CALL IN RETROSPECT

In 2019, the TV news channels were talking about it being the 70th Anniversary of the Communist takeover of China by Mao Zedong in the fall of 1949. It just so happens that I was there in China one year earlier in October of 1948. Here are some details of that journey.

Jack was a Lieutenant with the 11th Airborne Division in Hokkaido, Japan where his father, MG Wm. M. Miley, was the Commanding General. I had waited 9 months for my port call to join him and had sailed from New York City through the Panama Canal to Japan, arriving on Easter Sunday, 1948. We had been married a little over a year.

Jack’s aunt lived in Manila. Her Scottish husband had survived WWII in the Japanese prison camp at Santo Thomas Univ. My mother-in-law was planning to sail to Manila to visit her sister and invited me to accompany her. I was 20 + years old at that time, and even though I had only reunited with my husband 5 months earlier, I appreciated the opportunity to take part in this adventure. We sailed to Manila in September with a stopover in Okinawa. Then we had a month in Manila where we were well feted by all the Americans there.

Our trip home to Japan was aboard the US Army troop ship, USS Peters. Our first stop was in Shanghai. We had anticipated buying some Chinese rugs but found all the shops boarded up because the Communists were taking power. We could hear gunfire at night coming from the outskirts of the city. Our only other stop was at Tsingtao, now renamed Qingdao. We were still hoping for some shopping success. One night at dinner aboard ship, we were with two young officers. When we discussed our disappointment at not being able to "shop" in Shanghai, they informed us that they knew of a rug shop to which they could take us if Mrs. Miley could request the driver assigned to her to drive us there. They assured us that they would bring side arms. So, we were all set.

Tsingtao was a city that had been settled with a strong German influence. Many of the buildings were heavy, stone structures, and not Chinese looking at all. There were no street lights, and as it was the fall season, darkness prevailed. The door to this shop was boarded up. The young officers knocked and the barricade was lowered so that we could enter. Inside was a treasure trove of rugs, ivory, jade, etc. The merchants wanted to sell anything they could for gold as they knew what was happening to China. We successfully bought 5 rugs. I paid for one with a traveler's check for $120 and a gold-plated Parker 51 fountain pen! The merchant declared that "Missy makes strong bargain." We still have this beautiful green rug. It sits proudly in our bedroom.

That night, as we slept at anchor, an extremely strong wind storm came up. The alarm aboard our ship woke everyone up and sent sailors scurrying. Suddenly, there were two loud bangs to our ship which were caused by the iron cables linking us to the dock breaking and slamming against the hull. We were set adrift. We were blown across the harbor and crashed into some kind of Chinese junk causing their sailors to abandon ship to escape. I don’t think there were any casualties.

But, the reason I am linking all of this to the Communist takeover is because we had stayed in Tsingtao an extra day in order to take on board several Chinese Nationalist officers and their wives so they could come back with us to Japan and then go to Taiwan to escape the Communist regime.

I am so appreciative of having been able to have had this adventure.

– Joanne Miley –
If we can’t go to the Mardi Gras, then we will bring Mardi Gras to Williamsburg, specifically to the residents of Patriots Colony. Looking at this year’s photo of some of the residents, it seems only one person – Eda Mae Hatch – got the memo. The rest of us were minimalists with a few strands of beads.

That wasn’t always the case; for in days of yore, a few ladies put their heads together and came up with the idea that we should dress up and parade through Convalescent Center and Assisted Living, stopping in staff offices along the way.

We began by advertising in the Crier that a Mardi Gras parade was planned for Fat Tuesday—before Lent began on Ash Wednesday. Any interested participants would meet in the main lobby at 3:30 and begin our parade from there. Participants were encouraged to wear festive, tasteful clothing and masks. In this case, many of our masks were authentic masks from New Orleans, brought to us by Gerta Smith’s daughter, Annie. They were huge, brightly colored masks of feathers—purple, green, gold, or a mixture of all three. Of course, one couldn’t have too many beads or boas.
Annie also made us a tape of Mardi Gras music that was played on a boom box carried by Betty Burns. The favorite song, naturally, was “When the Saints Go Marching In.” Saintly might be stretching the meaning of that word for this group of revelers, but we were spritely as we twirled our boas or beads swaying to and fro in step to the music.

The residents in the various areas seemed to enjoy the hoopla and costumes, although a few might have been a little fearful of people who looked grotesque. Lifting the masks reassured them that there was a real person present. After the parade was over, participants were invited into the Bistro for adult beverages and “King cake”—a fun way to fatten up on any day of the week. The King cake itself is a messy looking cake with green, yellow and purple frosting and has many legends associated with it. The purple stands for justice, the green for faith, and the gold for power. Usually, it is eaten between January 6th, the Epiphany, or King’s Day and Fat Tuesday and originally contained a bean hidden in it.

The French brought it to the Americas. McKenzie’s, a famous New Orleans bakery, was approached by a traveling salesman with too many plastic babies on his hands, and so the bean became a baby symbolizing “baby Jesus.” Whoever gets the piece of cake with the baby gets to be king for a day and is also responsible for buying the next King cake.

Rumor has it that the last known recipient of the “baby” at Patriots Colony was Betsy Gremp; so she has 11 months to bake or buy the next King cake.

— Joann Dettmann —
November 14, 2007 - Between 1974 and 1978, I was the Base Engineer at Ellsworth AFB, SD, a major base of the Strategic Air Command. About a year after taking over that function, we received a new Base Commander, Colonel Orval Cowgill. Yes, “Cowgill.” I didn’t know cows had gills before.

Orval was a really nice guy, but he worried about too many things. He was constantly complaining to me about the air conditioning in his office not working properly. It was a zone system. The thermostat that controlled his office temperature was located down the hall in another office in the zone. I think that what he really wanted was control. It would have cost me a lot of money to relocate that thermostat. It would have involved rebuilding some of the air ducts in the attic. I went over to the air conditioning shop and told them to put an electric motor above the ceiling right over his desk and hook it up to a thermostat in his office. I didn’t want the motor to run anything, but to just make noise and let him turn it off and on with his own thermostat. They did it one weekend and he never complained again about the temperature in his office.

One of my duties was to run the base fire department. Every young boy dreams of becoming a fireman! I really enjoyed managing the firefighting activities. As the Base Fire Marshall, I had my own staff car complete with red lights and siren. I carried two radios with me 24 hours a day. One was the fire department radio; and I always knew immediately when any response was underway. The two channels on the second radio allowed me to communicate with all the building maintenance and roads/grounds maintenance people. All of my supervisors carried radios and I also had all three channels in my car. Communications were the secret. Nothing went on within Ellsworth without my knowledge.

One year, the day after Thanksgiving, I arranged for the Fire Department to conduct a training exercise. We ignited 1,000 gallons of contaminated jet fuel in the training pit and had some of the Fire Department trainees practice putting it out. My father, then visiting me for a week, really went wild taking pictures. I even reenlisted one of my special sergeants in the Fire Dept. by swearing him in while the training fire was burning in the fire pit. It was HOT, but the shot that Dad took and gave to me made the front page of the Air Force Times newspaper.
MAGIC BANK ACCOUNT

The author is not known. This was found in the billfold of Coach Paul “Bear” Bryant of Alabama after he died in 1982. Imagine that you had won the following *PRIZE* in a contest. Each morning, your bank would deposit $86,400 in your private account for your use. However, this prize has rules – and the rules are:

1. Everything that you didn't spend during each day would be taken away from you.
2. You may not simply transfer money into some other account.
3. You may only spend it.
4. Each morning upon awakening, the bank opens your account with another $86,400 for that day.
5. The bank can end the game without warning; at any time, it can say, "Game Over!"
   It can close the account, and you will not receive a new one.

What would you personally do? You would buy anything and everything you wanted. Right? Not only for yourself, but for all the people you love and care for. Even for people you don't know, because you couldn't possibly spend it all on yourself - right? You would try to spend every penny, and use it all, because you knew it would be replenished in the morning, right?

Actually, this game is real! Shocked ??? Yes!!! Each of us is already a winner of this *PRIZE*. We just can't seem to see it. The prize is "TIME."

1. Each morning, we awaken to receive 86,400 seconds as a gift of life.
2. And when we go to sleep at night, any remaining time is NOT credited to us.
3. What we haven't used up that day is forever lost.
4. Yesterday is forever gone.
5. Each morning, the account is refilled, but the bank can dissolve your account at any time … without warning ...

SO, what will YOU do with your 86,400 seconds? Those seconds are worth so much more than the same amount in dollars. Think about it and remember to enjoy every second of your life, because time races by so much quicker than you think.

So take care of yourself, be happy, love deeply and enjoy life! Here's wishing you a wonderful and beautiful day. Start spending ...

"Don't complain about growing old; some people don't get the privilege!"

– Contributed by Roberta Estes –
FUN FILLED PHIL

Many residents will remember the late Philip "Phil" E. Coghlan for his sunny personality, his dancing in the hallways, and his perpetual smile. Thanks to Aline Coghlan who shared two stories – one funny, one scary – about the man who told her every day that he loved her.

"Nobody who knew Phil's joyful personality could believe he was an FBI agent," Aline began. "He specialized in Russian espionage. Once, when he was a new agent and we were living in Cleveland, he was assigned to follow some Russians to see where they went and who they met. It was a miserable winter night and the roads were dangerously icy, but he and his partner followed these Russians as they crept along, until they went into a store. When they came out and got back into their car, they couldn't move. It was stuck in the ice and snow. Phil was delighted – now he didn't have to continue to follow the men over the treacherous roads. All of a sudden, he saw two men he recognized as fellow FBI agents drive up and, being Good Samaritans, they pushed the Russians free, not realizing they were in the midst of a surveillance operation, helping the enemy."

"Some years later, in the late 60s or early 70s, the opportunity of a lifetime came to us through the auspices of the Catholic Church: a 6-week, church-sponsored, goodwill trip around the world with stops in Russia, Japan, Korea, China, the Philippines, Poland, France, Portugal, and other countries. Phil didn't really want to go, but I talked him into it. He had to get permission from the FBI because the itinerary included two Communist countries, China and Russia, where they knew he was an American agent. It took a while, but he did get permission, and we set off on this trip with about 500 people in a chartered airplane. Things went smoothly until we reached Russia, where the authorities were waiting for Phil. They pulled him out of the group and took him away for questioning. It was quite scary. Our plane wouldn't leave without him, so the group waited and waited until finally, they let him go. He rejoined the tour, but he never told us what happened or what they asked him."

Phil had joined the Navy out of high school and served on a transport ship that crossed the Atlantic, ferrying wounded troops home. The worst trips, he recalled, were during the Battle of the Bulge, when his ship was stuffed with soldiers suffering from seasickness on top of their injuries. After the war, he joined the FBI. Phil passed away in 2017.

– Aline Coghlan and Mary Miley Theobald –
Are you discouraged with the state of education today? Does it seem that the younger generation has a lack of patriotism? Or worse yet, they won’t have enough knowledge to make an informed decision at the voting booth!! It is because of these fears that we offer you this information in the hopes it will give you faith for the future.

For the last six years, Harvey and I have participated as volunteers in a program called “We the People.” This is a national competition for high school and middle school students devoted to the study of our constitution and the application of constitutional law as it affects the citizens of our country.

This year, the Virginia State Finals took place Jan. 24-25 at the Darden Conference Center at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, VA. Both the Secretary of the Commonwealth and the Secretary of Education of Virginia were the keynote speakers for the awards ceremonies at the conclusion of the contest. After studying the Constitution, using We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution textbooks, students compete in simulated congressional hearings.

Each member of the class becomes an expert witness on one of six units in the text. They then testify along with their assigned team by delivering and defending a written brief before a panel of judges acting as U.S. congressional representatives. The teams competed on various local and regional levels before arriving at the state finals. Civic teachers are trained during special summer sessions in order to coach their students. It is obvious that both students and their coaches are seriously committed to this program. During the simulation, students are judged on six criteria: understanding, constitutional application, reasoning, supporting evidence, responsiveness and participation.

The high school state champions from Douglas Freeman High School (Richmond) will represent Virginia at the 2020 We the People National Finals in Washington, DC. The program has existed for 33 years and has been administered by VA Civics since 2018. Prior to that, We the People of Virginia was located at James Madison’s Montpelier Foundation. VA Civics is a non-partisan, non-profit organization which was “established to promote constitutional literacy, critical thinking, and civic engagement, empowering the next generation of leaders in Virginia.”

Their statistics show that, for students who are alumni of the program, “they outperform the national sample of high school students in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in every category of civic knowledge delineated in the survey, outperform university students on political knowledge tests, exhibit less political cynicism, and are more politically tolerant than the average American.” We offer this information as a tribute to the diligence of the students and their teachers and wish them good luck as they proceed to the National Finals. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities with this program, please contact Doris Margulies.

– Doris Margulies –
Why Am I Still Here?

Why am I still here? As I snuggle into my Lazy Boy, and Shadow (my kitty) quickly assumes her rightful position in my lap, my eyes are drawn to the shimmering waves of red and golden flames emitting from my fireplace gas logs. As I watch the flames, the face of a loved one seems to emerge, only to fade as another image appears, then fades, to be replaced by still another, then another. These souls were all once dear to me. So many! And all of them gone! But I’m still here. "Why?" I wonder out loud; and only the gentle sound of a flickering flame and the sleepy murmur of a dozing feline acknowledge my query.

In this dreamy state, my imagination begins to draw me into a luxurious banquet hall. The hall is quiet. In the shadows cast by the flickering lights of dimming candles, I can see a dinner table. The table is laden with the remains of a once bounteous feast. Now only scattered crumbs, crumpled napkins, empty wine glasses and dinner plates, soiled and sitting in anticipation of a cleaning crew who should be appearing soon to remove them. Against the wall of the room is a long table, draped with a beautiful linen cloth.

Ah, yes, the serving table. It, too, is strewn with the crumbs of what must have been generous offerings of elegant, tempting dishes. All the platters and bowls appear to have been emptied. But as I gaze through the shadows of the fading lights, I see that right at the end of the table, there is one dish which still contains an ample portion of a pastry. Hmm, I’m musing that folks must have just loaded their plates so full that they hadn’t room for that one last dessert.

I’d been convinced that I was the only remaining soul left in this once joyous gala event. But now, as my eyes have become accustomed to the near-darkness, I become aware of movement toward the other end of the hall. As I squint, I’m able to discern another person, also sitting quietly. Obviously he, too, was studying the scene and contemplating the feast that was.

Maybe I should walk over to him? Maybe I should gently touch his shoulder and speak softly to him, and perhaps we could begin a conversation? Maybe we could share memories of the wonderful feast? Maybe we could become friends?

No, I guess that would be too much to imagine, even in fantasy. Well, at least I can speak to him and maybe we can share that last piece of blueberry pie.

– Liz Shwiller –
LAWBREAKER ARRESTED BY WILLIAMSBURG POLICE

The manhunt ended early Friday evening, January 3rd, on Monticello Avenue. An alert young female police officer spotted the getaway car with an expired license plate registration. She ordered the driver, 92-year-old felon, Joanne Miley, to pull over – which she did.

Upon further questioning, it was determined that not only had the car registration expired two months earlier, but said felon had been drinking alcohol. She was directed to get out of the car, stand in the rain, and submit to a breathalyzer test. Joanne and her 95-year-old co-conspirator husband, Jack, had been on their way home from Opus 9. She was appointed designated driver since she had had only – wait for it – one glass of white wine. Despite the fact that the test results were below the limit and showed she was legally sober … even so, the ardent police officer called for backup assistance and the criminals were then told they could not continue driving home.

Fortunately, Patriots Colony came to the rescue. The convicted driver asked the arresting officer to call PC Security who then arranged for two brave residents to volunteer to come drive the offending car the remaining mile and a half home. This was accomplished without further incident. The guilty were allowed to enter their home, recover, and go to bed. The $66 fine for lapsed registration was paid online by credit card.

— Joanne Miley —

My Living Will

Last night, my kids and I were sitting in the living room and I said to them,

“I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug.”

They got up, unplugged the computer, and threw out my wine!!

The little ingrates
Editorial Policy

Patriots Press is a quarterly newspaper published by and for the residents of Patriots Colony to inform and entertain residents and other interested persons. The editors welcome contributions such as original writing, art, reports of committees, clubs, and social activities of residents, as well as articles of general interest. The newspaper staff reserves the right to edit contributions. The newspaper will not accept letters to the editor.

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