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WHARF HOME: *A dream renovation*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36C)

master bedroom is a large multipurpose area containing a laundry closet, a walk-in closet in attic space over the former kitchen, and a modern master bath with a two-sink vanity and a spacious tiled shower with built-in seating.

Diane said that Bert did the entire project without written plans. Instead, she said, "it's always in his head." Bert said he knows exactly what he wants to do with a home renovation from the beginning, and, except for slight changes due to unexpected circumstances that

are always part of any renovation, it always turns out the way he envisioned it.

"He sent daily pictures of what was going on," said Diane, who remained at their mountain home during the renovation process. "Some days I was not too impressed. Other days, I said, 'Wow!'"

Bert said he had a conversation with the house on the first day, telling it, "I'm going to make you the grandest lady on the river."

"And she might not be the grandest," he said, "but she's a close second, I bet."

While his son Tim, who lives in South Carolina, and his construction team from



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Each of the bedrooms is spacious enough for a large bed, a fireplace, and a seating area.

River Run Cabinetry worked on the project, Bert said he also hired local contractors to help out, including J.T. Custom Painting, which did a lot of the demolition and

painting, Whitley Electric and Stephen Bennett, who did the porches.

The Coles started out their marital journey in Easton, Maryland, then moved to

Annapolis, then Northern Virginia, and finally the Shenandoah Valley. In moving to Mathews, they said, "We traded the mountains for the water."

Diane worked in the hotel industry in catering and sales before Bert convinced her that "if you can sell space, you can sell kitchens," and she went to work in the family business, both designing and selling kitchens.

Bert said he wouldn't have a new house, even if somebody offered to build him one. He said, "In order to do something like this, you have to love old houses."



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Prep your yard for fall migration

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

The weather is cooling off and leaves are starting to fall in a cascade of wonderful colors. As you transition into the colder months of the year, now is the time to watch for fall bird migration and to help our feathered friends along wherever they are in their journeys.

In a presentation at the

Gloucester County Public Library, Main Street Center, on Sept. 19, Michelle Schopp, community outreach coordinator for Wild Birds Unlimited, Yorktown, described ways people can prepare their yards for birds who are migrating, as well as those who stick around for the winter.

In first steps, Schopp said

people should be able to identify what happens in their yards in the fall, know what birds need in the fall and winter months and create a fall habitat for both migratory and non-migratory birds.

“September’s a really good migration month for our birds,” said Schopp. “The birds migrate primarily during the evening hours.”

One interesting phenom-

enon that you may observe this time of year is flocks of blackbirds taking part in murmuration, where these flocks travel together and shift as a group to deter predators.

“It’s quite beautiful and fascinating to see,” said Schopp.

This is the only time of year this process occurs. Due to cooperative roosting, “they’re already kind

of flocked together to start with,” she said.

Another interesting fact shared by Schopp is that birds will migrate on specific paths year after year.

“There are ways you can check migration,” said Schopp.

BirdCast will show three-day migration forecasts for

SEE FALL MIGRATION, PAGE 41C



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FALL MIGRATION: *Tips to make your yard bird-friendly*



MELANY SLAUGHTER / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Michelle Schopp, community outreach coordinator for Wild Birds Unlimited, Yorktown, provided helpful tips on preparing your yard for birds during the colder months of the year during a presentation at the Gloucester County Public Library, Main Street Center, on Sept. 19.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 39C)

your location and will even predict the estimated number of birds expected to travel through. The online site will also show the types of birds that are migrating.

“It’s always a fun thing to do this time of year,” said Schopp.

However, there are several birds local to the area that do not migrate.

“A lot of people think goldfinches migrate,” she

said. Due to their coloration dimming during the fall and winter months, many inaccurately believe that goldfinches leave when the weather turns cool. According to Schopp, as long

as temperatures stay above zero-degree Fahrenheit, goldfinches will stay.

Since these birds typically do not migrate, they still need a food source.

For this reason, Schopp recommends that people wait to cut back their flowers since these granivores

SEE FALL MIGRATION, PAGE 42C

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FALL MIGRATION: *Provide high-protein food*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 41C)

are probably feasting on them even if you do not notice these birds, especially on yellow-colored flowers.

"They blend in so closely with those flowers," said Schopp.

Fall is also the "last push for pollination before the winter comes," according to Schopp. Goldenrod, which is a late-blooming flower, is important for native bees and other pollinators during

this time. Goldenrod is a decongestant, antihistamine and antioxidant, but is often mistaken for ragweed which causes a lot of allergies.

"A lot of people will confuse them," said Schopp.

Another fall-blooming flower is the aster. If you do not like to plant marigolds, "asters are a great alternative this time of year," said Schopp.

Creating a habitat for birds regardless if they are staying put or on the move

this fall is important to keeping these creatures happy and fed through the colder months.

"Leave your leaves" is strongly encouraged, said Schopp. Small critters and insects will use the warmth of the leaf litter to live through the winter. Birds will hunt for these insects to keep themselves fed when other natural food sources are scarce during the cold months of the year.

In addition to being good for the birds, fallen leaves also provide moisture, create a mulching barrier for lawns and put nutrients back into your yard during decomposition. A lot of chrysalises will also drop into the leaf litter from oak trees with residents emerging in the spring.

"Not all butterflies emerge right away," said Schopp.

Providing shelters for birds in the wintertime is also important so they can take cover from the elements and escape from larger predators. This can be as simple as creating a brush pile from natural items in your own yard, "upcycling the 'trash' in our yards to make it useful to our critters," said Schopp.

This is a great time of year to clean out your bird houses, but make sure to leave them up for smaller birds to take shelter in. "I say, keep your bird houses up all year round," said Schopp.

Adding more feeders to your yard instead of taking them down will also help both migratory birds and those staying put. Since nat-

ural food sources dwindle during the colder months, birds are more reliant on the food humans provide for them.

Schopp said this is a great time of year to try hand-feeding birds since they will let down their defenses in exchange for a meal.

"They're just looking for any food," said Schopp.

Hand-feeding can be a great experience. "It will change your whole perspective about birds," said Schopp.

Birds need food that is high in protein, fats and carbohydrates. Berries, peanuts and mealworms are all great for birds.

A lot of birds will take any

SEE FALL MIGRATION, PAGE 44C

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VLM welcomes new river otter

The Virginia Living Museum, Newport News, announced earlier this month the arrival of Nora, a North American river otter. She joins the museum following her rescue and care at the Maryland Zoo. Later this

year, guests can meet Nora and witness her playful antics in her new home.

Nora, whose name is an anagram of her species (NARO), was rescued last year as an abandoned pup. Thanks to the dedicated

team at the Maryland Zoo, Nora has grown into a vibrant and curious young otter, a release said.

Having received exceptional care and training at the Maryland Zoo, Nora has mastered skills needed for

her species, including hunting and foraging.

As she begins her new adventure at the VLM, Nora will be introduced to her new companion, Moe. This transition aligns with the Association of Zoos and Aquari-

ums' North American River Otter Species Survival Plan, which aims to promote genetic diversity and species well-being through thoughtful collaboration.

SEE RIVER OTTER, PAGE 45C

FALL MIGRATION: *Support birds all winter*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 42C)

food they can find and store it in small crevices during October and November to

“make sure they have a bounty for winter,” she said.

Fall is also molting season for birds and they need a lot of food to help that process

along. “Molting requires a lot of energy,” said Schopp.

Making sure to provide clean, fresh water daily is also key to our feathered friends' survival during this time. Water is not only needed for hydration, but also to bathe. Birds become easy targets when they cannot fly correctly and this is often caused by dirty wings.

“Smaller birds are intim-

idated by deep water,” said Schopp. Placing sticks or stones in your bird bath gives smaller birds something to perch on and will allow them to properly use the water provided.

Providing food and water now will encourage migratory birds to come back to your yard on their return trip in the spring, especially hummingbirds.

“They have really good memories,” said Schopp.

Other tips Schopp provided include turning out unnecessary light in the evening and nighttime hours as to not confuse migrating birds and knowing when migration is happening in your area.

“Be a good bird neighbor,” said Schopp.



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Nora, the North American River Otter, joins the Virginia Living Museum, Newport News, following her rescue at the Maryland Zoo.

RIVER OTTER:

VLM welcomes Nora

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 44C)

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SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Shannon French, at right, shown with trim contractor Donnie Smith, is excited about the project she has undertaken to transform an old schoolhouse in Ware Neck into a comfortable modern home. The school was built in 1908, then closed in 1944 and sold to a private party in 1945. It has served as a residence ever since.

Old schoolhouse gets new life as a Ware Neck home

BY SHERRY HAMILTON

Ware Neck resident Shannon French loves her neighborhood. She was raised in Ware Neck, has spent almost all of her life there, and wants to see it thrive.

That's why a circa 1908 schoolhouse, once a place where black children of Ware Neck were educated but long since converted into a private home, drew her attention as she drove by day after day. She said it had seen better times, and

it made her sad to see that it was unlivable, and could use a facelift.

French did her research and discovered the most recent owner had passed away and the property had gone to three great-nephews who lived in other parts of the country. She tracked them down, made an offer, and bought the property in 2022.

Since then, French and her husband Corey, a contractor and owner of Twin Pines

SEE HOME RENOVATION, PAGE 48C

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HOME RENOVATION: *Old school updated to modern home*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 47C)

Construction and French's Well Drilling, have made an ongoing effort to turn the structure into a comfortable, up-to-date home while preserving as much of the original character of the building as possible.

Because there had been so many renovations and additions to the structure over time, there was little of the old schoolhouse left, but maintaining the size and look of the eight-foot-tall windows was a must for French, even though the windows themselves needed to be replaced. The original staircase was retained, as well, but is still in the process of being refurbished.

The contents of the house were disposed of, and demolition began. Surprisingly, there was no termite or other damage to the support

structures, so all the original early-1900s framing was maintained, but two later additions, one to the front of the house and one to the back, were removed. The interior was gutted, except for the original upstairs wooden floors and a small section of the original upstairs wooden ceiling that French hopes to be able to salvage.

She said that some of the flooring from the building was milled down and turned into an eight-foot conference table for her office at Southern Trade Realty.

"It's a table that little kids walked on," she said delightfully.

The house required all new plumbing, electric, and HVAC, as well as a new septic system. It will also need new cabinetry throughout and new flooring downstairs.

"We were basically work-

ing with a shell and had to bring it up to current code," said French.

Outside, with new Andersen windows and doors installed, an expansive porch with a standing seam metal roof was wrapped around three sides of the house—the front, back, and one end. New exterior siding was installed, as well, with HardiPlank used at the first-floor level and board-and-batten above.

Inside, a complete remodel is in the works that will create a more open, spacious appearance, with an entry hall area immediately opening up to a living room straight ahead, accented by a wall of tall doors and windows across the back—all visible from the equally tall double doors at the front. To the left of the living room will be a

SEE HOME RENOVATION, PAGE 49C



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Work is ongoing to finish the interior of the renovated former schoolhouse. Shown here is what will eventually be a large eat-in kitchen.



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HOME RENOVATION: *Ware Neck school remembered*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 48C)

large kitchen/dining room, still in the making as of early October. A downstairs bedroom with adjacent bath opens off the living room.

To the right of the entry hall are the as-yet-unfinished switchback stairs with storage and a half-bath underneath. The upstairs will have a bathroom off the landing at the top of the stairs; two additional bedrooms, each with a private bath; a second-floor office/gathering room; and a large utility room.

All of the work has been done by local contractors, said French, and all the materials were purchased from local businesses.

"From the road, it doesn't seem that grand," she said, "but when you stand next to it, it's incredible to know that children learned here. It's been two years of a labor



SHERRY HAMILTON / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

The old schoolhouse, long transformed into a single-family home, as it looked when French purchased it in 2022.

of love."

About the school

The Ware Neck Colored School was built near the corner of Ware Neck and Ditchley roads in 1908. According to information provided by Colleen Betti, who in 2022 was a graduate student working with the Fairfield Foundation on the history and archaeology of

Gloucester schools, three schools in Ware Neck were closed to form this new consolidated black school, and four teachers were assigned to it. In 1932, the sixth and seventh grades at the school were transferred to the newly-built Gloucester Training School, and the Ware Neck Colored School was reduced to two teachers.

At some point in the ensuing years, the fourth and fifth grades at the school were also transferred to the Gloucester Training School, said Betti, and the Ware Neck school was closed sometime between 1944 and 1945. Land records provided by French show that the County School Board of Gloucester County sold the building and five acres of land in December 1945 to Henrietta Williams.

She paid \$1,145 for it.

Further land records show that Williams transferred ownership of the property to Arlington, Junius and Raphael Williams in 1983, and Arlington and Junius and their wives transferred their interest in it to Raphael Williams as the sole owner in 1994. Raphael died in 2019, leaving the property to his nephews.

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Fleet Brothers

Prepare for winter, storms and more this season

BY MELANY SLAUGHTER

On the heels of Hurricane Helene, many of us are looking for ways to prepare for disasters as the severity of storms are oftentimes unpredictable and can leave us in the direst of straits.

John Phillips and Elizabeth McCormick of Phillips Energy, Inc., have witnessed first-hand the effects of local storms and are knowledgeable in the ways people can engage in disaster preparedness.

Thirty years ago, Phillips Energy entered the propane business. According to Phillips and McCormick, propane is a cleaner-burning energy source as compared to traditional fuels. Propane-powered generators are great appliances to have on hand in the event of an emergency.

"Propane doesn't go bad," said McCormick.

"They're very reliable," said Phillips about these generators.

Phillips and McCormick, who are siblings, remember the impact of local storms over the past 30 years, especially the ice storm of December 1998.

"Some didn't have it [power] for 10 days," said Phillips.

Phillips Energy opened to the public during the aftermath of the storm and had a constant stream of local residents from Christmas Eve through New Year's Eve in need of its services.

"People came together," said Phillips. He and McCormick reminisced about neighbors helping one another during that time, inviting each other over for hot meals and showers for those who did not have a generator.

Phillips and McCormick recommend going into the

winter prepared with water, extra blankets and a heat source that is not reliant on electricity. They advise peo-

ple to have resources prepared to get through at least a few days without power.

"Because you never

know," said Phillips.

In the wake of Hurricane

SEE PREPARE FOR DISASTER, PAGE 51C



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PREPARE FOR DISASTER:

Gather resources

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50C)

Helene, Phillips Energy has been able to deliver fuel to the Charles George Veterans Medical Center in Asheville for residents of North Carolina.

Phillips and McCormick have also found that people are shifting to becoming more energy- and space-efficient in their homes.

“The cost of energy in general is greater than what it used to be,” said Phillips.

One way to help save money and space is to install a tankless water heater in your home.

“Those have really been a game-changer,” said Phil-

lips.

Tankless water heaters only heat water when needed (“on demand”), are compact in size (saving roughly 12 square feet of floor space) and save more than \$150 annually in energy costs when compared with typical electric storage water heaters.

Right now, homeowners can take advantage of a \$300 account credit with Phillips Energy with the purchase of a Navien tankless water heater or a gas log fireplace. Once either is installed, Phillips Energy will credit the customer’s account \$300.

The Virginia Propane

SEE PREPARE FOR DISASTER, PAGE 54C



MELANY SLAUGHTER / GAZETTE-JOURNAL

Phillips Energy, Inc., can help customers prepare for winter and power outages, as well as energy- and cost-savings through propane. Shown, from left, are Phillips Energy team members Elizabeth McCormick, Sherin Stewart, Barbara Ball and John Phillips.

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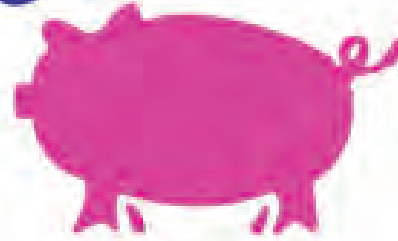
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Prepare your home for winter

As winter season approaches, homeowners are encouraged to take proactive steps to increase the energy efficiency of their homes.

When temperatures drop, we typically turn up our thermostats. By implementing some simple and cost-effective DIY tips from Virginia Natural Gas, customers

can conserve energy and save money on their heating bills.

“We want our customers to understand that conserving energy not only benefits the environment but also translates to significant savings on their energy bills,”

SEE WINTER PREP, PAGE 55C

PREPARE FOR DISASTER: *Keep propane on hand*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 51C)

Research Education Foundation currently has the Safe Appliance Installation Rebate Program ongoing where homeowners or businesses can earn a \$100-\$400 rebate when switching from qualifying electric appliances to clean-burning and efficient propane models.

Even though Phillips Energy has moved away from HVAC services, they still recommend energy- and cost-saving practices to its customers.

One way to help keep heating and air costs low is to make sure your home is properly insulated, especially if the house was built prior to the mid-1980s.

“One of the biggest bangs to your buck,” said Phillips about proper insulation.

Another way people can

save money is having double-paned windows.

“That really helped my electric bill and my fuel bill,” said Phillips when he installed these windows in his own home.

Phillips and McCormick also recommend having heating equipment serviced at least yearly. Tuning up equipment annually and upgrading equipment when needed will help systems run at optimal efficiency.

One simple step people can take when looking for energy savings is changing their air filters regularly.

“Changing the filters does make a big difference,” said Phillips.

Phillips Energy has been in business since 1946 and John and Elizabeth are third generation owners.

“We live in a great community,” said Phillips.



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WINTER PREP: *Update appliances*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 54C)

said Robert Duvall, President and CEO of Virginia Natural Gas. “By taking a few precautionary measures now, homeowners can ensure their homes are more energy-efficient and comfortable throughout the winter season.”

Pre-season actions to take around your home: While natural gas remains the best value for heating needs, costs typically increase in the winter as heating systems work harder and run more frequently to keep you comfortable. To help manage winter heating bills, VNG recommends weatherizing your home and following these energy-saving tips:

Pre-season actions to take around your home:

Schedule HVAC equipment check-ups: Keep your equipment running at peak

efficiency with regular maintenance. Rebates are available through VNG for those looking to upgrade or replace their equipment. Need a qualified natural gas contractor? Visit virginianaturalgas.com/contractor.

Install a SMART/WI-FI enabled thermostat: Better control the temperature in your home while you are away. Rebates are available for these devices as well. Visit virginianaturalgas.com/rebates for details.

Clean and replace furnace filters: Follow the manufacturer’s recommendations to ensure your system runs smoothly.

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Weatherize your home: Use weatherstripping on doors and windows and add insulation in the attic. Take our free online home energy audit and request a free energy-savings kit. Visit virginianaturalgas.com/audit to get started.

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THE BOOKWORM

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER

Books about home renovation

“For the Love of Renovating: Tips, Tricks & Inspiration for Creating Your Dream Home” by Barry Bordelon & Jordan Slocum, The Brownstone Boys; c.2024, Union Square; \$37.50; 288 pages

That’s it.

You’re not going one more month with this room like it is. You can’t stand the wall color at all anymore. The sofa is frayed, the chairs need love, and if someone would tell you where to get an inexpensive table, they’ll be your new BFF. And when

you’re done with this room, you’ll start in another room. First, though, you need help and “For the Love of Renovating” by Barry Bordelon & Jordan Slocum is where you’ll find it.

Your humble abode is much more than a big box to put your things in. Say Bordelon & Slocum, in fact, “you deserve to create a truly special place to call home.”

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SEE RENO BOOKS, PAGE 56C

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RENO BOOKS: *Learn how to start your project*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 55C)

they bought and remodeled a beautiful old Brooklyn brownstone years ago and when it came to renovations, they noticed a definite lack of direction for doing it right. Blogs helped, as did magazines.

For you, so will this book. Their first advice: spend

some time figuring out what you want. Would a fixer make you happy, or is move-in-ready mandatory? There are pros and cons to both.

Next, “really start thinking about the B-word.” Budgeting is essential and should be top-of-list for anyone who’s thinking about renovating. Educate yourself on financial terminology

and know ahead how you’re going to pay for any project, no matter the size. Build a “team” to do the job right, and don’t even think about skimping on your workers.

Dare to dream of design at this point. Think about how you cook, if you’re renovating your kitchen, and learn about the kinds of cabinets and counters. If the bathroom’s first, determine how much space you’ll have and what fixtures you require.

And if you’re thinking about a renovation that doesn’t involve tear-downs, you might be in luck: furniture you already have may be able to be refurbished. New window treatments can be inexpensive. Do-It-Yourself tips here can help you save money, and spend it instead on nicer floors, upgraded windows, even new doors.

When you tour a new home to buy or rent, you naturally dream about a reading nook,

a cozy fireplace, holiday dinners, and movie night with the family. So how do you make those dreams into a home? How do you get motivated to tackle a reno job?

You start with “For the Love of Renovating.”

For sure, it’s going to be work, and authors Barry Bordelon & Jordan Slocum don’t hide that fact here. In-

SEE RENO BOOKS, PAGE 57C



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RENO BOOKS: *Find what is best for you*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 56C)

stead, they instruct readers how to make a reno a little less painful, with how-to tips and advice on nearly every homeowners aspect, from finding financing to determining what the outside of your home should look like. Readers will like being forearmed with no-nonsense, no-frills hints. You'll also relish the many, many full-color photos that drip with inspiration.

This is a book you'll page through often, whether you just did a reno or are planning another. "For the Love of Renovating" is a book most homeowners will want to make room for.

And more...

If your home has too much stuff, you'll get help downsizing with "The Afropolitanist's Guide to Living With Less" by Christine

Platt (Simon & Schuster / Simon Element, \$16.99). This book turns mainstream minimalism (which the author indicates is too "white") and adapts it to be a life with less, but with an honor to African American life. This unique book helps readers to rid their lives of clutter, while also keeping in mind and honoring their Blackness, background, and ancestry. You don't have to live with mounds of stuff and unneeded belongings anymore. Now in paperback, this book helps you tame the mess.

Need a place for Mom or want to be a landlord? Then check out "ADUs: The Perfect Housing Solution" by Sheri Koones (Gibbs Smith \$40). ADU, in case you haven't heard, are the latest trend in housing: the letters stand for Accessory Dwelling Unit, which is shorthand for an extra home or apart-

ment in the extra yard or lot you happen to have on or attached to your current property or even your current home. This book offers a look at how homeowners across the nation have created new spaces for income, or to keep parents close. For sure, this book will give you a fresh look at your property and it may improve your wallet, too.

Bring on the green with "House Plants and Succulents for Dummies" by Steven A. Frowine (For

Dummies, \$24.99) and you'll never "leaf" your house. You might literally have a brown thumb but you want it to be green sometimes and this easy-to-follow, easy-to-use book will help you have houseplants that everyone will envy. This book helps answer all your questions, from watering to transplanting, rooting to root rot, which plants will like which window in your home, and what plants are safe to have in your home. Don't let the "for Dummies" part scare

you; the smart "plant parent" will want this book on the shelf!

Kids who want to get involved in a new home or a fresh look for their existing home will love to have "Woodworking: The Complete Step-by-Step Manual" by DK (DK Publishing, \$40). Kids who want to work with wood will get a good start with this book, which features ideas, how-tos on measuring, choosing the wood,

SEE RENO BOOKS, PAGE 58C



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A brief history of the fibers under our feet

BY TERRI SCHLICHENMEYER
SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT

Imagine what it must've been like for your ancestors, walking across a moss-covered forest floor.

Surely, at one point, one of them looked down and thought, "Plushy!" and decided to take some of that stuff home for the Cave Sweet Cave. Now imagine their dismay when the moss dried up and "Ooooooh! Plushy!" became, "Ugh, scratchy!"

Bummer.

Surely, our distant kin put soft animal skins down to walk on, lounge on, spill stuff on, and to brag to the neighbors about, but the first verifiable human-made rugs were crafted by nomadic

people in the Mesopotamian region some 5,000 years ago. Those early rugs were woven from reeds or grasses or both, and were thought to have been used as a warmer, drier place to sleep on the ground, mattresses being awkward to carry.

A couple thousand years later, the Egyptians were aces at weaving animal fibers into colorful rugs that were primarily used in graves or religious rituals, or as good, thick blankets. By 2500 B.C., the talent to weave had spread north to what is now Europe and Russia.

In the Middle Ages, making carpets was a skill that was promoted by royalty and the fine rugs that re-

sulted were status symbols, which should surprise nobody. Trade routes, at that time, also made it easy to find and fetch back beautiful so-called "Oriental carpets" to Europe for use as table coverings. While the common man often had dirt or grass for the floors of their homes, the wealthiest Europeans (read that: British royalty) had the ostentatiousness to toss those expensive works of art on the floor ... and walk on them. Horrified gasp.

Meanwhile, on this side of the pond, North American Indigenous people were old hands at making rugs to lie on, or to use as blankets. Nevertheless, settlers from Europe brought their own

rugs with them when they came over by ship because the climate was unknown and they must've assumed that rugs could keep a rough cabin floor warm. Besides, rugs made of burlap or scraps of fabric were often part of a woman's trousseau.

In 1791, America's first woven carpet mill was founded in Philadelphia and a few decades later, Erastus Bigelow invented the power loom, which doubled the output of carpet and then tripled it in 1850. At this time, most carpets were made of wool, which lasted forever and kept its shape. To clean it, housewives had to move the household furniture to the

SEE CARPET, PAGE 59C

RENO BOOKS:

DIY fun

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 57C)

and how to safely use the right tools for the job. Once a kid knows what's what, this book offers 25 DIY projects so they can make useful, purposeful items around the house and garden. If Dad, Mom, Grandpa or Grandma is a woodworker, this book is perfect because, if they've got handy, crafty kids ages 8-to-12 in the family, it's a great way to learn. Bonus: you can help, too!



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CARPET: *Different styles, fashion*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 58C)

floor's edges, haul the carpet outside, hang it up, and beat the tar out of it with a wire beater or a broom because vacuum cleaners were far in the future. It was often an all-day job done twice a year.

Don't think about the lack of hygiene. Just don't.

Carpet sweepers were first seen in the later 1800s and were a two-person operation: one to work the bellows and one to blow the dust away. Yes, the first vacuum cleaners didn't suck, they blew the dirt up into the air and can you imagine anything less helpful? The first vacuum cleaner is generally attributed to British inventor Hubert Cecil Booth, who started a business with his contraption in 1901. You con-

tacted him when you wanted your carpets vacuumed, and he'd bring his horse-drawn machine to your house, thread a hose through your window, and suck the dirt away. It wasn't until later in the first decade of the last century that vacuum cleaners as we know them became available.

By 1930, manufacturers offered wall-to-wall carpets, an idea that became more common after World War II. The newly-invented ease of cleaning—and, probably, advertising—helped make newfangled Southern-manufactured tufted carpets popular. These soft plushy carpets were made from cotton material which had their roots in handmade chenille-type bedspreads from Georgia that were sewn and

fluffed manually.

For a few years, Southern-made cotton tufted carpets outsold woolen carpets from the North, mostly because they cost less (but wore out faster). Still, the heyday of cotton carpet was dwindling. Roughly around this same time—the mid-1950s—DuPont had plenty of nylon on-hand, no longer having a War effort to feed. They (and, later, Monsanto) tinkered with the method of tufting that cotton rug-makers had used, they updated it with modern technology, and began making nylon fibers for carpet in the late 1950s.

You can almost date a house by the carpet on the floor: old Victorians and pre-World War II homes often still have remnants of

wool carpet on their floors. Crazy patterns and colors were common in the 1960s, and many kitchens featured carpets, as did bathrooms—both of which trigger the “ick factor” for modern homeowners. You were cool, baby, if you had shag carpet in your living room or bedroom in the 1970s. We went with Berber and neutral colors in the 1980s, and cut

pile and sculptured carpet in the 1990s. Today, you can get rugs made of almost any kind of fiber material including cotton and plant-based materials, although the vast majority of carpets sold are made of nylon or other synthetics.

And you can get it in moss-green, if you'd like. Your ancestors would totally understand.



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Ospreys continue to experience poor breeding due to starvation

The Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William & Mary compiled its 2024 breeding performance results for osprey in the Chesapeake Bay last month after the end of the nesting season, which begins in March and lasts through August. Based upon direct observations during nest visits, the largest contributing factor to poor breeding performance was the loss of young due to starvation, the report said.

According to the report, low food availability leads to a sequential loss of young and results in smaller brood sizes or nest failure. One of the best indicators of food

stress in Chesapeake Bay ospreys is the frequency of single-chick broods in the population.

The monitoring effort included 511 osprey pairs distributed among 12 study areas. Nine study areas were within the main stem of the bay where salinity exceeded 10 parts per thousand and two study areas (used as reference sites for comparison) were positioned on upper tributaries within tidal fresh reaches where salinity was less than 1 ppt.

Osprey pairs nesting within waters above 10 ppt salinity are believed to be highly dependent on Atlantic menhaden to raise broods.

Osprey pairs nesting within tidal fresh waters feed primarily on catfish and gizzard shad, the report said.

Breeding pairs were monitored throughout the nesting season to determine nesting success and productivity. Cameras were mounted on a subsample of nests within all study areas to quantify diet and brood provisioning and to determine the cause of nest failure. Compilation of camera data has not been completed, the report said.

Mean breeding performance for osprey pairs nesting within the main stem of the bay did not meet levels believed to be required for population maintenance

(1.15 young/pair). Collectively, the reproductive rate was 0.55 young/pair.

However, breeding performance did vary between study areas with two areas falling in the range of minor deficit (0.8-0.9 young/pair), two sites falling in the range of moderate deficit (0.6-0.8 young/pair) and five sites falling in the range of major deficit (less than 0.6 young/pair). By comparison, the reproductive rate within reference sites, defined here, was 1.36 young/pair which is above the maintenance target.

The osprey breeding performance in the main stem of the bay that was docu-

mented in 2024, and for the past several years, is not sustainable, the center said. In the absence of immigration from other parts of the bay, or outside of the bay population, the population would be predicted to decline. To date, the Center for Conservation Biology has not conducted surveys throughout the entire main stem to evaluate trends in the breeding population.

2024 objectives

In recent years, the Center for Conservation Biology has published papers on the historic decline of osprey breeding performance in the

SEE OSPREY, PAGE 61C



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OSPREY:

Local birds studied

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 60C)

Mobjack Bay, a sub-estuary of the lower Chesapeake Bay, and the role of menhaden in driving the decline. The center said the primary objective of fieldwork in 2024 was to expand the geographic scope of osprey monitoring to better understand

SEE OSPREY, PAGE 62C



The reproduction rate among ospreys is experiencing a decline. Shown is a female osprey that failed to reproduce this year, most likely due to not being able to reach the adequate physiological body condition required to lay eggs.

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OSPREY: *Reproduction rate down*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 61C)

stand their reproduction throughout the portion of the bay where the species is believed to be menhaden dependent.

Additional objectives include achieving a better understanding of the spatial variation in osprey reproductive performance, quantify osprey diet throughout the main stem of the bay and work to develop a field metric that is a reliable indicator of food stress.

Study areas

The main study area was delineated based on the 10 ppt contour throughout the Chesapeake Bay. Nine study areas were delineated throughout the main study area in early 2024 based on logistics and the known density of osprey to facilitate efficiency.

Specific study areas in Virginia include the Lynnhaven River, Elizabeth River, Poquoson River, York River, Mobjack Bay, Piankank River, Fleets Bay and

Eastern Shore bayside. In Maryland, study areas were Patuxent River and Harris Creek.

Reference study areas were selected within tidal fresh reaches of upper tributaries based on the same criteria. Reference study areas include the upper James River and upper Rappahannock River in Virginia.

Breeding performance

Poor breeding performance was widespread throughout the main stem of the bay and none of the study

areas reached demographic targets. Although spatial variation in performance was evident throughout the season, most of the study areas were considered in the range of major reproductive deficit, the report said.

The overall reproductive rate for pairs in the main stem of the bay was approximately 50 percent of that believed to be required for population maintenance. By comparison, reproductive rate for pairs breeding within reference sites was

well above maintenance levels. Both clutch sizes and hatching rates were generally consistent between the main stem and reference areas and throughout the main stem sites.

A large number of osprey pairs did not lay clutches during the 2024 nesting season. These pairs arrived from wintering grounds in a timely manner (late February to early March). Most of these non-breeding pairs

SEE OSPREY, PAGE 64C



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OSPREY: *Young not eating enough*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 62C)

Causes of nesting failures

remained resident throughout the nesting season and defended territories, but were never documented to lay eggs.

This is the first time this behavior has been documented on a large scale within the Chesapeake. The report said a likely explanation for the behavior is that females were not able to reach the adequate physiological body condition required to lay eggs.

Osprey pairs are subjected to a wide range of forces that may lead to nesting failure. These can include contaminants, weather events, nest competitors, predators and more. Based on other observations and published studies, disease, competition for prey, depredation and pollution do not currently appear to be significant causes of reproductive failure, the re-

SEE OSPREY, PAGE 65C



A clear indicator of food deficit within an osprey nest is the development of asymmetric broods where the young differ in size and developmental stage. An example of this is shown above.

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OSPREY: *Food stress experiences*

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 64C)

port said.

Poor breeding performance throughout the main stem of the bay in 2024 was driven by the loss of young after hatching. A clear indicator of food deficit, or stress, within an osprey nest is the development of asymmetric broods where the young differ in size and developmental stage, the report said, which added that the appearance of asymmetric broods is a precursor to brood reduction by the sequential loss of subordinate young to starvation.

One example of food stress and brood reduction leading to nest failure was captured on a nest camera within the Eastern Shore study area.

The female laid and hatched three eggs. The signs of food stress appeared early in the brood dynamics, the report said. Over a period of three days, the two smallest young died.

The third nestling survived another four days but, after 38 hours without food, died during the night. The next morning, the male delivered a fish and the female attempted to feed the dead young. The female continued to shade the young for the rest of the day.

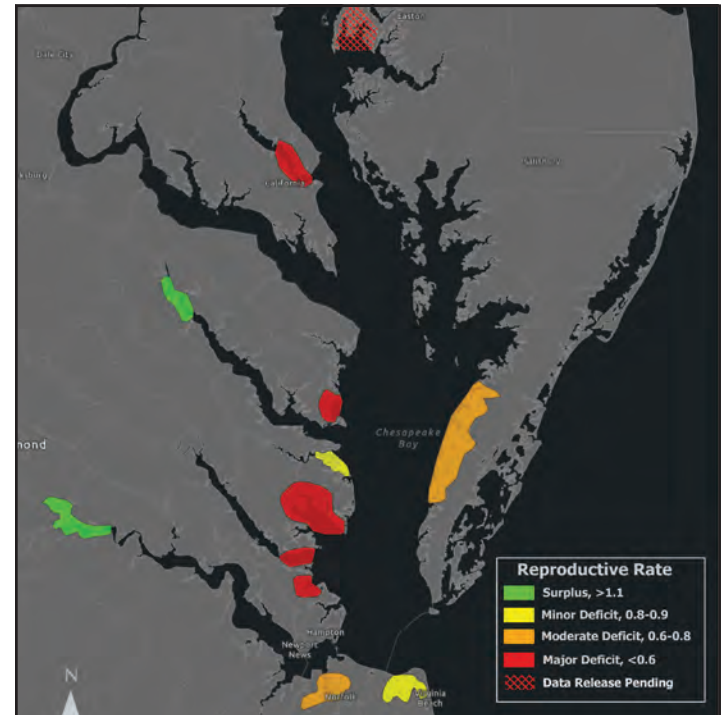
Implications

Overall, poor reproduction in ospreys is not restricted to the historic study area of Mobjack Bay, but is widespread throughout the main stem and likely involves

thousands of nesting pairs, the report said.

Whether there will be a broad-scale decline in the osprey breeding population ultimately depends on the relationship between areas (such as the main stem) that are in reproductive deficit and areas (such as the reference sites) that are producing a reproductive surplus. A determination of whether the bay population as a whole is sustainable given the current prey situation is a topic of ongoing investigation, the report said.

The Center for Conservation Biology, Virginia Aquarium, Maryland-National Capital Park and Elizabeth River Project were all partners in this study.



The Center for Conservation Biology at the College of William & Mary has compiled its 2024 breeding performance results for osprey in the Chesapeake Bay, which shows that these birds continue to experience poor breeding due to starvation. Shown is the reproductive rate of these birds along the Chesapeake Bay.



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Yorktown celebration to be held this weekend

The weekend of Oct. 18 and 19 are jam-packed days filled with exciting and historic events in Yorktown.

The weekend features the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's Grand Tour of 1824, a specially-themed Victory Market, and a day of celebration to commemorate the British surrender at Yorktown. All events are free, unless otherwise indicated.

USS Yorktown (CG-48) Reunion: Friday, Oct. 18-Saturday, Oct. 19. Times and locations vary.

Former officers and crewmembers aboard the USS Yorktown (CG-48) will be attending a reunion in Yorktown to honor the legacy of the ship's sponsor Mary Mathews and to reminisce about their time sailing on the legendary vessel. During its time in service, the Ticonderoga-class cruiser played a pivotal role in the Achille Lauro rescue efforts and Operation El Dorado Canyon off the coast of Libya. The group will meet at noon on Friday, Oct. 18, at the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown to honor the late Nick and Mary Mathews. The following day at 10:30 a.m., they will be featured in the Yorktown Day Parade on Main Street. The group has several other events planned throughout the weekend to commemorate their time together.

Bicentennial of Lafayette's Farewell Tour: Friday, 3-5 p.m., Riverwalk Landing.

This event marks the 200th anniversary of Lafayette's return to America in 1824 as

the "guest of the nation" in which he visited all 24 states and all surviving presidents. At 3 p.m., interpreter Mark Schneider will appear as Major General Lafayette and disembark the tall ship Luna. The Fifes and Drums of York Town will lead him to the Riverwalk Landing Stage for a special ceremony to commemorate the anniversary of his return. Prior to the event, the 229th Infantry Band will perform at Riverwalk Landing, and the American Revolution Museum at Yorktown will host an artillery salute. The tour is presented by the American Friends of Lafayette, Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, and America 250.

Yorktown Day: Saturday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Victory Monument and Main Street.

The day begins with a wreath-laying ceremony followed by a patriotic parade down Main Street to commemorate the victory at the Siege of Yorktown in 1781, coordinated by the Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation. The Fifes and Drums of York Town will perform during the parade and at a special ceremony at the Victory Monument. The festivities will end with a performance by the Williamsburg Youth Orchestra and a lecture in York Hall by Dr. Tom Chávez regarding Francisco de Saavedra and his efforts

SEE CELEBRATION, PAGE 70C

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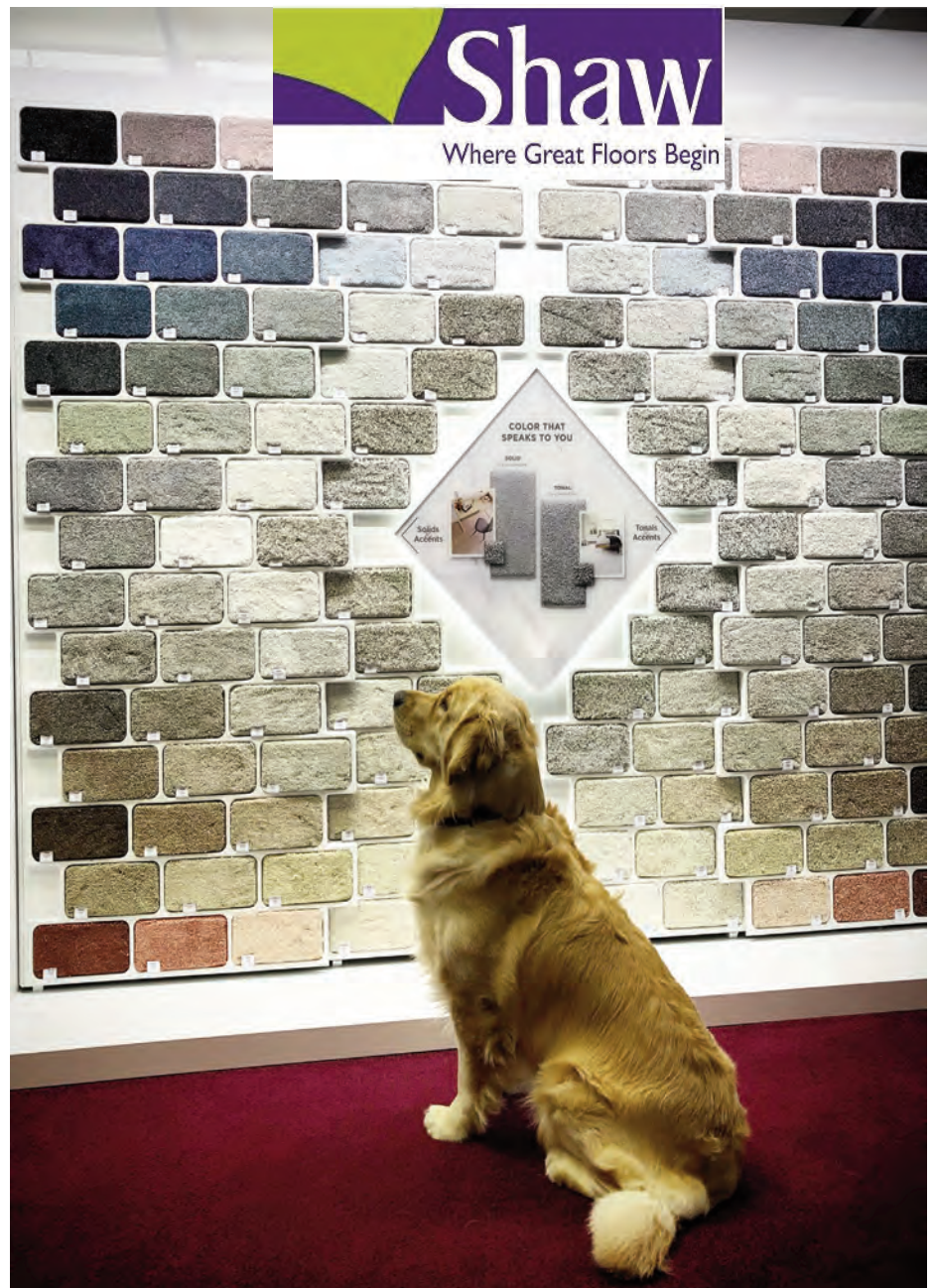
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CELEBRATION:

Fun in Yorktown

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 66C)

to support the American war effort. In addition, visitors may tour the Nelson House, Yorktown Custom House, York County Historical Museum, Watermen's Museum, American Revolution Museum at Yorktown, and the Battlefield roads. The Colonial National Historical Park will also be hosting a Yorktown Day Youth Art Contest, a walk down Surrender Road with a ranger, and cannon-firing demonstrations.

A victory celebration will be held all day on Saturday at the American Revolution Museum.

Stories of citizens and soldiers unfold daily through immersive films, exhibition galleries, and outdoor re-creations of a Continental Army encampment and Revolution-era farm. Among the interpretive programs, visitors can discover military tactics on land and at sea with a look at the Battle of the Capes, one of the most significant naval battles in American history. Artillery demonstrations, showcasing the varied roles of the artillery crew, will take place in the outdoor amphitheater at 11 a.m. and 3 p.m., followed by the crew firing a salute in honor of the victory at Yorktown. On Oct. 19, the mu-

seum offers free admission to active duty, reserve, and retired military personnel and up to three direct family members with military identification.

Yorktown Market Days: Yorktown Victory Market. Saturday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Riverwalk Landing.

To celebrate Yorktown Day and the Bicentennial of the Lafayette Tour, Yorktown Market Days will feature an inaugural Victory Market at Riverwalk Landing. Guests will be able to shop from a variety of vendors selling patriotic art, jewelry, local produce, and seasonal goods, as well as enjoy a wine garden with selections from France, Germany, and Spain. The event will also include games for children and a patriotic concert from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. by the band Prime Time. As an added bonus, participants can take part in a Lafayette Storytelling Trail where they'll learn the story of the war hero and win a prize upon completion.

For more information on these or our partner events, visit www.visitorktown.org/va250, or call Visit Yorktown at 757-890-5900. Events are subject to change without notice. For inclement weather updates, call the Event Weather Hotline at 757-890-3520.

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Tree seedling store now open

Every October, the Virginia Department of Forestry offers a wide variety of trees and shrubs for purchase through its online seedling store. Bred specifically for Virginia's soils and climate, seedlings are grown and sold directly from the agency's self-supporting nurseries in Augusta and Sussex counties.

This year, more species are available than ever before, 57 in total. Seedlings, including best sellers such as eastern redbud, chickasaw plum and American hazelnut, can be ordered in quantities ranging from five to 25,000. Packaged as bare-root seedlings, orders can be delivered right to your doorstep or picked up directly from our Augusta Nursery. Deliveries and order pickups occur next spring, be-

tween Feb. 18 and April 30, 2025.

DOF accepts orders until April, but supplies are limited, and some species do sell out quickly. To browse the tree seedling catalog, visit BuyVATrees.com.

In addition to many species of trees and shrubs, DOF offers several "seedling packs" with pre-selected species for specific popular qualities such as fall colors, pollinators, riparian buffers and wildlife. For landowners with other goals in mind, DOF nurseries grow a variety of pine and spruce, as well as dozens of hardwood varieties used to establish timber stands, pulpwood crops, Christmas tree plantations, wildlife habitats, stream bank stabilization, and urban forests.




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Winter Nature Nights

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