

ION

Fewer abortions today

I moved to greater Williamsburg a year ago, and I frequently find a certain charm in Last Word items. I am distressed, however, that allegations make their way into Last Word with no attribution and often little basis in fact.

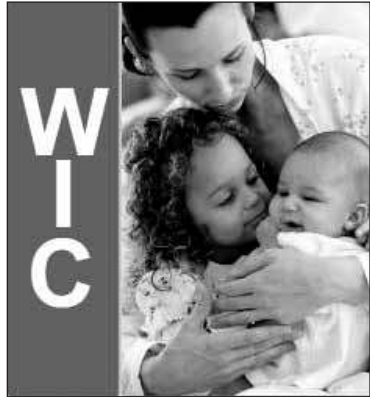
Case in point: A contributor in the Oct. 11 edition wrote that “the Women, Infants & Children (WIC) program was the brainchild of then-President Jimmy Carter. He figured that such a program would result

in fewer abortions, in that mothers would have an alternative under the program. Needless to say, WIC is not working. Accordingly, during this financial crisis it is time to abolish the program.”

WIC was established as a pilot project in 1972 and made permanent in 1974, long before most of us had heard of Jimmy Carter (www.fns.usda.gov/wic/aboutwic/mission.htm). Cost-benefit studies showed that every dollar spent for healthier pregnancies and births saved from \$1.77 to \$3.13 in Medicaid costs.

The number of abortions has been declining in the U.S. After peaking in 1981 at 29.3 abortions for every thousand women aged 15-44, the number has dropped to 19.4 abortions (www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html).

Cindy McClintock
James City



Traffic patterns mandatory

I am a pilot who flies his own airplane out of Williamsburg-Jamestown Airport, and I am writing in response to the letter from Richard Coakley.

From the tone of his letter, one would suppose that the neighbors of the airport live in terror of falling airplanes. The fact is that the one tragic accident last year he referred to is the only fatal accident at the airport since its opening 37 years ago. No one regrets that accident more than the local flying community, but from a statistical point of view, Coakley and his neighbors are in much greater danger every time they get in their cars and head for town.

After describing the traffic pattern at the airport, Coakley says that “now we are told that the left turn out of traffic is up to the pilot.” I don’t know who told him that, but I know that it wasn’t anyone from the FAA, the Virginia Department of Transportation, or anyone associated with flying in any capacity. Traffic patterns at airports are mandatory, not discretionary.

He refers to the danger to Rawls Byrd School. The traffic pattern at the airport requires left-hand turns departing to the west, right-hand traffic landing to the east, and was designed specifically to avoid having planes landing and taking off over the school and adjacent housing areas. That information is contained on all aeronautical charts and in the federal and Virginia airport guides.

Jean Waltrip, co-owner of the airport, has taken the unique measure of including it in the automatic weather broadcast. Any pilot who violates that traffic pattern deserves to lose his or her license. I urge anyone who sees a plane approaching the airport over the school to get the tail number or the color and type of airplane and call the airport and demand that a violation be filed with the FAA.

Coakley’s concern about twin engine aircraft leaves me puzzled. If his complaint is about safety, it’s obvious that having an extra engine makes it half as likely that an aircraft is likely to lose power and fall on his house. I wonder if the real complaint is about noise. If that is the case, the airport opened in 1971. Anyone who bought nearby since that date did so with the knowledge that the airport was there.

As to property taxes, the Waltrips recently paid over \$40,000 in property taxes to James City for the airport. The people from all over the world who use the airport when they visit Williamsburg leave a substantial amount of money behind.

The airport is a great asset to our community, and in the tough economic climate facing us today, it would be sheer folly to shut it down.

Alan Melton
Hunting Cove
Williamsburg

Signals need adjustment

In the Oct. 4 Last Word, three of the comments under “Speeding along” in the Last Word addressed traffic patterns-stoplight issues at Richmond and Centerville roads and Monticello and Ironbound/News roads.



a reasonable doubt.

Add to these intersections the stoplights commencing at Lightfoot Road east to the Route 199 on/off ramps is the non-sequential stop-and-go frequency that adds to delays and excessive gasoline usage by all vehicular traffic along those roads.

Something needs to be done by VDOT to smooth out the flow of the traffic signal system in the area, as it’s SNAFU beyond

Joe Homer
James City

Charm of Williamsburg

By Erin & Art Ruitberg

GRIFFIN, GEORGIA

“It’s just being here....”

Those are the words my husband and I have used over the years to describe our flood of sensations upon arrival in Williamsburg each time we visit.

Like many, we’ve come countless times over the years. Our children grew up vacationing here. Whether by car or plane, it’s always the same, as we travel the roads leading to Williamsburg. Trying in vain to express what we love: the sight and smells of the York River as we travel the Colonial Parkway, the pine-rich wooded areas along the way, the architecture and symmetry of Colonial Williamsburg, the smell of wood-burning fires, the bustle of activity. Giving up, we just glance at each other and sum it up it again: “It’s just *being* here.”

Wanting to capture that feeling when we moved from Maryland to Georgia three years ago, we searched the MLS for any Williamsburg reproduction homes south of Atlanta, without success. Undaunted, we decided to build, and, armed with house plans, we looked for suitable property.

Our search came to a screeching halt when we were shocked to see a faithful reproduction of the George Wythe House! It wasn’t on the market, but we pulled over to admire the perfectly reproduced symmetry and understated elegance of that incomparable house: Flemish bond brick, period appropriate detached garage and a dependency building situated on almost an acre of landscaped property. We knew it well. A piece of Williamsburg.

Amazingly, our agent knew the family, and these fellow Williamsburg lovers offered the house to us for purchase.

The Wythe house balustrade staircase and moldings throughout, three fireplaces, wide plank floors and period details provided exactly the right ambiance. We renovated the kitchen with stainless steel appliances and granite countertops and added a four-square herb garden in the yard of the

dependency. For three years, it has almost been being there.

The next step is for us to really be there, and permanently. So our piece of Williamsburg in Georgia is now on the market. And our story has come full-circle.



The Ruitbergs’ Wythe House in Georgia.

After years of vacationing in Williamsburg with our children, it appeared they did not share our passion for the area. Their interests revolved around the animals and candy shop. Can anyone relate?

So, recently, when my daughter became engaged, we were surprised to receive an e-mail from her with these words: “Mom, what do you think of an outdoor wedding in Colonial Williamsburg?” The wedding is set for next May in the fountain garden across from the Williamsburg Lodge.

We were fortunate enough to discover John Womeldorf, who has patiently helped us scout out dozens of neighborhoods and given us all the insider knowledge we needed to make a selection of which Williamsburg neighborhood we will eventually call home.

Yes, it really is, just being here.

Erin and Art Ruitberg will soon be moving to Williamsburg.



What is York’s high standard?

JAMES CITY

I must admit that I’ve always been a bit leery about venturing into York County.

They have only a few sheriff’s deputies to keep the scofflaws, crooks and Dodge City types at bay, whereas James City County and Williamsburg have cops, College of William & Mary police, State Police and vigilantes known as Neighborhood Watch people, to keep us all safe.

Add to that the fact that York gave us the Rappster and the Pogger, and you have to wonder how much vodka they’re tossing into the water over there on Election Day or any other day. It’s really a very scary place.

Despite all that, however, I’ve come to the conclusion that York County might be the place for me. And this because their Board of Supervisors has it all over the James City supervisorial crew.

The James City blokes are forever mired in incredibly boring budgetary brouhahas, development menus and lengthy discussions about whether or not they should be ethical. The answer to the last is apparently no.

Rather than dealing with the mundane stuff that’s better left to professionals, the York board is much more attuned to the needs of ordinary citizens and swiftly takes action to deal with troublesome personal complaints.

For instance, at its meeting on Oct. 7, the supervisors responded directly to a parent who took her child to a store in which was displayed, to her at any rate, an offensive DVD cover. Not satisfied with the resolution concerning the display that the woman and the store owner reached on their own, the supervisors acted immediately to rectify this outrage by passing what they called a “community standard of decency” to protect innocent children from the blatant evils of the capitalistic world in which they live.

York moved to establish “a community standard that reflects and promotes a wholesome environment for children and families and shall work toward becoming a model community in the voluntary establishment and support of that community standard.”

What could be clearer than that? Yet supervisor Sheila Noll had the audacity to opine that the board had come up with a garbled gangle of gobbledygook. She claimed it was “nebulous” and “not the type of thing we should be doing.”

“What does it say?,” she wondered, and then went on to suggest that it was totally unenforceable.

I suspect that Noll had Sarah Palin in mind and visions of a York-Wasilla connection that would involve offensive library books flying off the shelves and

Notes from the edge



LowLeadbeater

music stores forced to keep scatological DVD and CD covers locked in a basement vault.

I’m somewhat bemused by Noll’s objections, since the supervisors have passed what I consider to be a measure whose degree of clarity is unsurpassed by anything I’ve heard coming out of a James City County supervisor meeting.

Simply put, they want a standard that everyone will voluntarily support to establish a standard. Certainly they’re not going to define what the standard is, since that would immediately obfuscate the issue and severely reduce the volunteerism needed to establish and support the standard. Why muddy the reservoir with gobs of sludgy specificity?

Obviously the key to understanding the resolution lies in the fact that York County wants to establish a “wholesome environment for children and families” with a view to setting up a “model community.”

I suppose Noll would like them to define what constitutes a wholesome environment, but why would you open up that can of worms if you want to develop a standard? What’s the point?

If things go too far down the definitive trail of logic, they might wind up ousting all single people from the county and, God forbid, shutting down Hooters. Or tearing down all the architectural monstrosities that grace the rest of Bypass Road. Or getting into useless discussions about global warming and diesel emissions. Or putting blinders on kids when they go into a store.

What does any of that have to do with building a wholesome environment?

Nothing.

No, what the York supervisors clearly understood was that once you get into the business of defining community standards you get crocheted into all kinds of legal knots and First Amendment canoodles that county leaders simply don’t have time to deal with.

Far better just to announce that you’ve established a subjective, undefined standard that will attain objectivity when everyone voluntarily complies with whatever it is. That is the genius of this resolution, and that is why I for one would like to be associated with the incredibly profound minds that formulated this masterful piece of legislation.

Eat your hearts out, James City County supervisors.