

# The Virginia Beach Sun

May 2015

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Virginia Beach's Hometown News and Leisure Magazine and Website

Free - Citywide

## 21st Century Cavalier!

*The city's legendary hotel, The Grand Cavalier, may reopen next April; excitement abounds!*

By Linda McNatt  
Staff Writer

Ann Callis remembers her night in the old Cavalier Hotel. It was a chilly January night in 1953, and she had just gotten married in Portsmouth that day. She and her husband were on the way to their honeymoon trip down south, but they chose to spend a night at the Cavalier first.

"We knew it was a place that we could always remember," said Callis, a Virginia Beach native, noted historian and author. "It was very nice, even then, very historic."

And that night at the Cavalier is one that Callis will never forget. Her husband has passed, but she has a special appreciation for the beautiful old North End building on the hill that has been such an

*Please see The, Page 2*



*The Cavalier Hotel will soon be known as the Grand Cavalier Hotel.*

## In the *Sunshine*: Lee Tolliver

*The VP's superstar sports writer and KHS grad lived in Windsor Woods, loves fishing and sharks*

By Linda McNatt

Lee Tolliver was born in Norfolk, but considers himself a Virginia Beach native after his family moved to the Windsor Woods section of the city when he was 11 years old.

"My dad was in the military," he said. "We were even in Europe for a few years."

But when they moved to Windsor Woods, only about 10 miles from the Atlantic Ocean, Tolliver said he felt like he was truly "home." After fishing fresh water streams and creeks in West Virginia with his father and his grandfather as a young child, Tolliver was ready to get to know

*Please see *Sunshine*, Page 6*



*Lee and Ellen Tolliver*

## *Sun* Arts News

Looking back at Charles Kello III, whose work hung with legends Dali and Wyeth

By Nathalie Owen and Jan DiGiovanni

Charles Kello III was one of the greatest fine artists in Hampton Roads.

He began his art career at age nine, working at his father's art and design shop in Norfolk. Kello's talent was quickly discovered. He began winning awards at the age of 14 and sold out his one-man show in New York City on Madison Avenue at the age of 21, where his work was hung alongside Andrew Wyeth and Salvador Dali. His work became known throughout the world and he won "Best in Show" awards at numerous exhibitions throughout his career.

Perhaps Kello's greatest gift as a painter was capturing mood. Whether painting a portrait of a pet or a natural landscape, he could convey every subtle light and expression. While he could paint any subject, he always preferred natural landscapes. "Nature is truth," he used to say. Kello's rich legacy includes over 8,000 paintings in homes, private collections and museums.



*Charles Kello III*



*"Gloucester Docked"*

## *Sun* Band Spotlight:

### Hotcakes

*Hotcakes, known locally and nationally as one of the hottest dance bands performing today; Spotlight questions answered by Hotcakes' bassist, Bobby Smith*

*Complete name of band: Hotcakes.  
Founding members: Randy Pope, George Bell and Mark Maynard.  
Year band was officially formed: 1975.*



*Performing in downtown Franklin, Va., band members, left to right: Bryan Harrell, David Britt, Marty Akerson, George Bell, Mary Dail and Bobby Smith.*

*Current band members, their roles, cities and neighborhoods in which each one lives and names of their spouses and*  
*Please see *Hotcakes*, Page 11*

*Please see Kello, Page 4*

# “The Cavalier is going to be a showplace.”

Continued from Page 1

important part of her life. And even though was a time when its future was in doubt, it's now on the threshold of hosting new visitors for decades to come.

“I live within a stone's throw of it,” she said. “It's visible from so many parts of the city down here, from so many vantage points. I'm excited that it's not going to disappear. We should all be grateful for what Gold Key is doing.”

The developer, Virginia Beach-based Gold Key/PHR Hotels and Resorts, plans to completely renovate the popular hotel, constructed in 1927 by architect Clar-

ence Neff, and to reopen it next year as the Cavalier Grand Hotel. The reopening is scheduled now for April, said Michael Woodhead, the company's vice president of marketing. One of the reopening's most fun elements is to give couples who were either married at the Cavalier, or spent their honeymoons there, a chance to come back for another opulent event.

The company plans to host 85 of those couples with dinner, a big band dance, a big reception and a champagne reception on the lawn, said Woodhead. He said he believes that special wedding celebration will be one of the nicest elements of the grand

re-opening of the new Cavalier's grandeur.

Woodhead said the company has just started getting the word out, but they already have dozens of applications from qualified couples. The couples are required to write their own love story at the Cavalier in 500 words or less and submit photos from the event.

“We believe we'll have thousands of applications,” he said. “There's still a lot to do. We haven't booked the band yet. We're just starting to bring things together. We're all excited about it.”

“We have a vision of old-world design elements with contemporary touches in the

entire development,” Woodhead continued. “We're bringing the old Cavalier site into the 21st Century.”

The Cavalier Hotel, comprised of the grand Cavalier on the Hill, built in 1927, and the contemporary Cavalier Oceanfront, is renowned for its historic architecture, sophisticated ambience. The hotel has served as a naval training center during World War II as well as host to many international dignitaries, celebrities and U.S. presidents.

The rooms in the Cavalier will be completely gutted and rebuilt bigger. The main floor will be renovated but will feature trappings common in the early-20th century, including crystal glass pieces and photographs. The poolside vistas and loggias, those enclosed porches that can open up to sea breezes, will also remain.

The Cavalier's 11-story sister hotel on the oceanfront will be rebuilt and called the Oceanfront Marriott Hotel. The oceanfront hotel sits next to the Cavalier Beach Club, which opened in 1929 and will undergo a \$4 million facelift. The historic Cavalier is expected to reopen in 2016; the Oceanfront Marriott is expected to open in 2017.

“The Cavalier Hotel is an iconic landmark. It's no wonder it's known as the hotel that 'made Virginia Beach famous.' We are honored to preserve the history while making the Cavalier Hotel a luxury destination for decades to come,” said Bruce Thompson, the CEO of Gold Key | PHR

Hotels & Resorts.

The historic Cavalier Hotel is set to reopen in 2016 as a 5-star member of Marriott's distinguished Autograph Collection. As part of the Autograph Collection by Marriott, the new Cavalier Grand Hotel will boast a pool, 90 guest rooms, an onsite bourbon distillery, a ballroom for lavish weddings and social events, a world class restaurant and many of the historic elements it were famous for in its heyday.

The old hotel was built during the roaring '20s, a time when there were plenty of leisure-minded people around to enjoy places like the Cavalier. The hotel had its own railroad station, and the rich and famous came from all over the country to enjoy the ocean front, said Callis.

And even though the Great Depression was about to settle over the country, there were still plenty of wealthy people around to enjoy the Cavalier, she said. The hotel was occupied then by movie stars, members of big bands, politicians and wealthy industrialists, like Adolf Coors, of Coors Brewing.

Coors died at the Cavalier from a fall and that story is still one of the “stories of the rich and famous” that still rings through the old Cavalier's halls.

For nearly a century, the Cavalier Hotel has hosted beach goers and celebrities alike including F. Scott Fitzgerald, Frank Sinatra, Judy Garland, Will Rogers, and Bette Davis. The hotel's rich history, including hosting seven U.S. Presidents, has helped the Cavalier Hotel secure its place on The National Register of Historic Places.

Continues on Page 3



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Continued from Page 2

There are also ghost stories of lesser-known people who stayed there, like the little girl and her cat. Both lost their lives in the hotel pool. The cat is said to sometimes still be seen. Nobody can say if they will remain after the renovation.

The Cavalier Hotel, a Virginia Beach icon, has earned the distinguished honor of being accepted to the National Register of Historic Places. National Register properties are chosen based on age, integrity and significance of the property to the history of their community, state or nation.

The \$70 million interior renovation will change basically everything inside of the hotel, said Woodhead. Room rates are expected to range between \$350 and \$450, depending on the accommodations guests choose. Everything will be available, from a governor's suite to single rooms, he said.

"We recognize the Cavalier is unique," said Woodhead. "It's an iconic part of Virginia's history. We're looking forward to it being a part of Virginia's future."

Callis said she can't wait for the Cavalier to

re-open. The Cavalier has had its problems over the years. There was a serious fire; the hotel was closed for a while. Now, she said she hopes for nothing but the best.

"Instead of criticizing anything that goes on, we need to have a positive attitude," she said. "The celebration? With my husband dead, no, that's not for me. But we all need to celebrate this. The Cavalier is going to be a showplace."

Reach Linda McNatt at [nclmcnatt@gmail.com](mailto:nclmcnatt@gmail.com).

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# Military Kid Art Exhibition" at TCC/City of Virginia Beach Joint Use Library

Artwork by students from six Virginia Beach public schools will be displayed at "The Military Kid Art Exhibition," an art show that will be on display at the Tidewater Community College (TCC)/City of Virginia Beach Joint Use Library throughout the month of May.

This exhibition features paintings, drawings, sculpture, video work, interactive games and books from 100 students who used artwork to showcase their experiences as children in military families. "The Military Kid Art Exhibition" is a collaborative

effort between the school division, the Virginia Beach Public Library Department and the Military Kid Art Project.

The Military Art Project brings together real artists, art teachers and adult military kids to customize art curriculums and lead classes for military kids, their friends and family. This effort is funded by the Military Connected Academic Support Program (MCASP) grant through the Department of Defense Education Activity (DODEA).

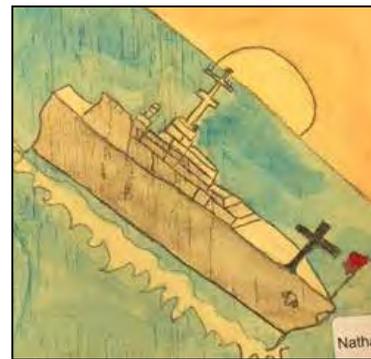
Grants from DODEA support research-based programs that aim to increase

student achievement and ease the challenges that military children face due to their parents' military service.

Through this grant, students at six schools received two full days of art workshops that included creative lesson plans specifically for children in military families.

This year's participating schools were Hermitage Elementary, Birdneck Elementary, Corporate Landing Middle, Landstown Middle, Landstown High and Ocean Lakes High School. The best piece of art from each child was entered into the exhibition.

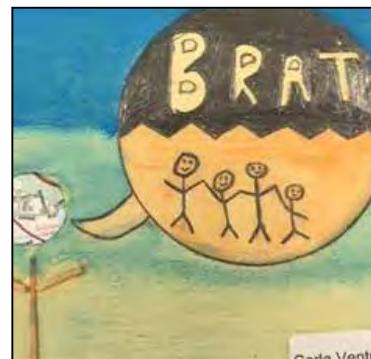
"The Military Kid Art Exhibition" is free and open to the public. The TCC/City of Virginia Beach Joint Use Library is located on TCC's campus at 1700 College Crescent, Virginia Beach, VA 23453.



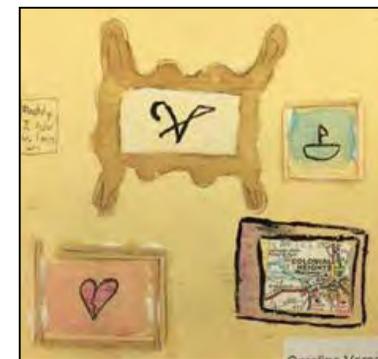
Nathan Jedlick, Landstown Middle School, age 11.



Sarah Ho, Landstown Middle School, age 11.



Carla Ventura Khan, Corporate Landing Middle School, age 12.



Caroline Vorndran, Landstown Middle School, age 14.

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Kello's greatest gift was capturing mood; he loved landscapes

*Continued from Page 1*

Kello is remembered by his family, friends and over 2,000 students whom he taught with passion. Today, Kello's remaining works are exhibited exclusively at the Richard Stravitz 30th Street Gallery, which is managed by Jan DiGiovanni, Kello's best friend for almost 50 years. The gallery will soon also be selling Kello's book "The Artist's New Clothes," a journal of his experience as a

painter and teacher.

Kello spent most of his life in Norfolk's Ghent area, but spent some time living on Great Neck Road. Before the Stravitz galleries were around, he exhibited at the South Beach Gallery and Jan Mar Gallery in Virginia Beach.

*Charles Kello was born on August 19, 1942 and passed on February 19, 2015*



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# Sunshine: Lee Tolliver has been writing for his readers for almost 40 years

Continued from Page 1

the big time, the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

"Fishing has always been a part of my life, mostly blue gill and crappie at first," he said. As an adult, smaller salt water fish, and bigger fish like tuna, became a part of his existence.

Tolliver also spent his school years with an eye on journalism. He studied photography for a while. His dad even installed a dark room in their house for him to de-

velop photographs, but, when that became too expensive as a hobby, he turned to the written word.

He studied journalism in his senior year at Kellam High School and joined The Virginian-Pilot's team of correspondents, writing about local high school sports. When he wrote a story about the Kellam High School football stadium in 1976, he was about to graduate and the Norfolk, Va.-based daily newspaper offered him a job.

While working, Tolliver attended Old

Dominion University and managed to find time to study criminology, English and meteorology, at least a couple of subjects conducive to working in the great outdoors. Tolliver went on to become sports editor for The Beacon, The V-P's community tabloid section, and while there, was twice named the Writer of the Year by the National Softball Writer's Association. Still, he said then as he says now, fishing has always been his first love.

"I started with a job as a copy boy and

worked my way into the sports department," Tolliver said about his career with the Pilot. "Finally, they asked me to take over the outdoor stuff, a helping out kind of thing at first."

Tolliver has now been the man in charge of outdoor writing for more than 14 years. In

August, he will have been with the paper for 39 years. In addition to the outdoors, Tolliver also helps out with high school sports coverage and is responsible for field hockey and gymnastics.

He and his wife, Ellen, vice president of a Norfolk community bank, moved about 10 years ago to northeast North Carolina after living in Virginia Beach for decades. The Tollivers, who have no children, take a

trip to Mexico about twice a year and enjoy the Caribbean.

Tolliver likes to fish and enjoys hunting. This time of year is his favorite on his outdoors beat, he said. And even though he loves fresh water fishing for large-mouth bass and yellow perch, there's an excitement about the salt water fish, especially the sharks.

"Jaws" is off the coast of Virginia and North Carolina every year," he said. "And whenever I write anything about sharks in any of my stories, that story gets the most comments, more Internet hits than anything else in the paper on that day. I've said I need to find a way to get the word shark into all of my stories."

Tolliver admits that he's never seen a

Please see *Sunshine*, Page 7



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**Sunshine:** Lee Tolliver has been writing for almost 40 years

*Continued from Page 6*

great white in the wild, but he would love to.

"I've scuba dived with sharks in Mexico, but never a great white," he said. "I am entranced by them. They are amazing."

Great whites are seldom landed on a hook and line simply because they are so large and so powerful, said Tolliver. But in mid-April, two juvenile great whites were playing off the coast of North Carolina, and it was Tolliver's role to keep track of them, kind of like the sheriff, Martin Brody, on Amity Island in the blockbuster movie "Jaws," released in 1975.

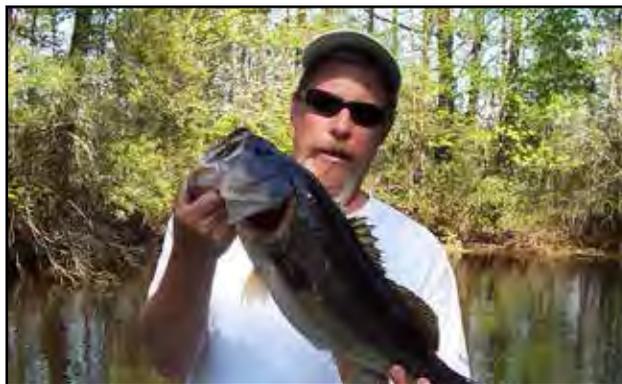
The local sharks were joined by a third great white, somewhat older and about 16 feet long, while Tolliver was still following them. Tolliver said Virginia Beach marine officials don't like to hear it, but the Chesapeake Bay is home to the highest concentration of sharks in the world.

"They're there; it's just the way it is," he said.

Tolliver said that one great white shark was caught about three-quarters of a mile off of Rudee Inlet a couple of years ago. The shark weighed an estimated 1,500 pounds and was 15 feet long.

"I would have loved to have been there," he said. "I would have loved it."

Reach Linda McNatt at [nclmcnatt@gmail.com](mailto:nclmcnatt@gmail.com).



*Lee Tolliver holds a bass he caught in Sawyers Creek, Camden County, N.C.*

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Photos Joseph Rampale

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There were over 25 exhibitors selling authentic and Indian-inspired arts and crafts

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The 13th Annual American Indian Pow Wow: A Celebration of Life for all People was held recently at Mount Trashmore Park with hundreds of people attending. The free and open to the public event allowed attendees to experience Native American culture as it is showcased through spirited music, inter tribal dancing and drumming, and American Indian cuisine at this interactive and educational event. Attendees also learned about various dances and regalia and inter tribal dancing. There were over 25 exhibitors selling authentic and Indian-inspired arts and crafts and there were educational displays of American Indian artifacts. American Indian foods were also available. Featured performers and their tribes included, master of ceremonies: Clark Stewart, Chickahominy; arena director: Chief Thomas Lewis, Meherrin; head male dancer: Mavrick Wallace, Creek; head female dancer: Jesse Wallace, Creek; host drum: Stumptown Singers (St. Stephen's Church, VA); guest drum: Red Blanket (Bridgeton, NJ). The event was produced by the city of Virginia Beach.

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## Sun Closeup: Claudia Finn talks about her creative process

The Great Neck artist, mother and wife finds spirit in her work; she and husband, Pat, heading to Nicaragua for church work

By Brian Murden

Claudia Finn can often be found digging a new hole for a plant in her garden.

"It's a palette that is always changing and always inspiring," she said. "Being out in the garden creating fuels the creative process in my art studio. When somebody recently asked me why I paint, it made me think about it again and I came up with this thought: The beauty of God's creation speaks to me and I love using colors in paint to express my thoughts about it. There is such a sustained joy in finding a subject and then spending time exploring it in color and texture.

Claudia's styles in art are quite diverse from thick palette knife oils to happy paintings representing beach life to soft pastel garden interpretations. Some of her is on display at Beach Gallery, along with other paintings that represent several of these styles.

She and her husband, Pat, are partners



Artist Claudia Finn, is inspired by her work.



"Dolphins at Play," acrylic on canvas, by Claudia Finn.

in two Tropical Smoothie Cafe's. One is on Great Neck Road the other is in Ghent. Pat is a partner at Finn Gartman Hart CPA's at Hilltop. Both are looking forward to participating with a mission trip to Nicaragua this summer with Grace Bible Church.

She and Pat have lived in the Great

Neck area for twenty five years. Their children Kate and David are both students at Old Dominion University.

Brian Murden owns Beach Gallery at 313 Laskin Road, Virginia Beach, Va. [www.beachgallery.com](http://www.beachgallery.com).

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The Federal Tuition Assistance Program enables you to pursue your education and prepare yourself for the cost of attending school. This program assists with the cost of tuition up to \$250 per credit hour based upon availability of funds.

In addition to Federal Tuition Assistance, many states also offer their own tuition assistance benefits. Contact your local recruiter for more information on state programs.

**MONTGOMERY GI BILL**  
Under the Montgomery GI Bill - Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR), you receive a monthly payment toward the cost of attending school. Current payment amounts are available at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov)

In addition to the MGIB-SR, you may also qualify for the MGIB "Kicker" by enlisting in certain jobs with a six year enlistment. This program provides an additional \$200 or \$350 per month toward the costs of going to school.

**STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM**  
The Student Loan Repayment Program may pay up to \$50,000 for certain jobs with a six year enlistment. To qualify, applicants must have existing student loans at the time of enlistment.

**START BENEFITING RIGHT AWAY**  
A number of your educational benefits begin as soon as you enlist in the National Guard. These include free academic testing such as ACT, SAT, CLEP and more. When you complete Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training, you will be eligible to begin taking advantage of the Montgomery GI Bill and Montgomery GI Bill "Kicker" benefits.

**ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES**  
The Guard has other programs and services to help you achieve your college goals. For details about all the educational opportunities available, visit:  
[www.NATIONALGUARD.com/education](http://www.NATIONALGUARD.com/education)

**MONEY FOR COLLEGE**  
The cost of higher education should not stop you from reaching your goals in life. In addition to your monthly drill pay and allowances, the Guard offers numerous educational benefits including:

- Federal Tuition Assistance
- State Tuition Assistance
- Montgomery GI Bill
- Student Loan Repayment Program
- Free Testing Opportunities:  
-ACT, SAT, GRE, GMAT, PRAXIS, CLEP

The Virginia National Guard State Tuition Assistance Program (STAP) currently pays up to \$2,500 per semester for tuition & fees, and also includes a \$350 per semester textbook grant. This program must be used at schools located or headquartered in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**REACH YOUR GOALS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD**

An advertisement for the National Guard's education benefits. It features a central image of a soldier in camouflage uniform standing with two young women, one of whom is holding a stack of books. The background is a collage of images showing students in various educational settings. The text is arranged in columns around the central image, detailing various benefits like tuition assistance, the Montgomery GI Bill, and the Student Loan Repayment Program.

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## Sun band spotlight: Hotcakes, one of the area's best dance bands.

Continued from Page 1

*immediate family members:* Bobby Smith, bassist, married to Bobbie Bullock-Smith and lives in Point O Woods; George Bell, sax man, married to Diane Bell and lives in the Birdneck North area; Mary Dail, vocalist, married to Alex Dail and lives on Linkhorn Bay; Bryan Harrell, keyboards and vocals, lives in Sandbridge; David Britt, trumpet, married to Karen Britt, lives in Carrollton, Va.; and Marty Akerson, drums, lives in Green Run.

*Describe the band's style of music:* All dance, all of the time; anything that gets the party started.

*What are the band's Top 3 most-requested songs:* Lynard Skynard's Freebird, Freebird and then there's Freebird.

*What's your favorite song, band or entertainer (not your band):* Got to go with Tower Of Power and the Brian Setzer Orchestra for favorite bands. It's very tough to name a favorite song but if pressed, it would be "Moonlight Feels Right" by Starbuck.

*How often a month does the band perform:* We average 12 to 15 gigs a month.

*Where's the most unusual venue the band has played and why was it different:* Busch Gardens Water Country, where we endured a measured 115-degree air temp on stage. That's some HOT Hotcakes!

*What do you enjoy the most about playing music:* Locking in on a tight groove and feeling the energy from the audience as you take them on a journey.

*What do you least enjoy about playing music:* Dealing with obnoxious audience members and rude club owners.

*If you weren't playing music for a living, what type of work would you like to do:* Professional race car driver.

*Who are your greatest musical influences:* Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie. As for bassist, Larry Graham, Rocco Prestia and Jaco Pastorius.

*What advice would you offer amateur musicians trying to become professionals:* First, master your craft. Second, have something good to fall back on just in case.

*How do you hold your band together:* Most of the band members have been with me for a long time. I liken it to one big dysfunctional family. It's no easy task and not nearly enough space here to even scratch the surface.

*Name a venue you'd like to play, but never have:* Superbowl halftime show. But seriously, I think Hotcakes has played just about all of the local night spots.

*Have you played music in other countries and where:* I've played from Canada to Key West. Yes, I know that Key West is not a foreign country. It just seems like one.

*What's the best advice anyone has ever given you personally:* "Find something that you love to do. Then, figure out a way to get paid for it."

*Any observations or comments not contained in this questionnaire about playing music or life:* I used to tell folks that I was lucky to be able to play music professionally then a friend said, "there's no such thing as luck. Luck is when preparation meets opportunity."

*Here is how to reach me and the band:* [www.hotcakesband.com](http://www.hotcakesband.com) or 1.757.463.7294. Hotcakes can also be booked by calling Southern Entertainment of Virginia at 1.757.431.0051.



Bobby Smith



Hotcakes

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