

LIVING

SHOP TALK

HELLO, CREWEL WORLD!

Embroidery whimsy
becomes a niche for one
Richmond business



Edited by THARON GIDDENS



In addition to hats and apparel, Crewel and Unusual crafts embroidered patches and decorative items.

SHOP TALK

SEWING FUN

Local embroidery business brings the unusual to Richmond

By Nicole Cohen

Have you ever wondered where you can find a sweatshirt with an embroidered stick of butter design? How about a shirt featuring a cactus sitting in a

car without wheels with the words, “slow down”? Or a hat with a pizza box patch that opens to reveal a pepperoni pizza inside? Local embroidery business Crewel and Unusual is answering that call. With a penchant for unexpected designs in fun colors, most of its embroidered apparel and decor is derived from owner Daniel Crawford’s imagination.

“I just like to make things,” Crawford says. “I’m naturally creative and I’m inspired by things in the world or nature ... and then pop culture things. Pizza is very popular.”

Crawford started the business in 2017, but says his journey began in 2012 when he purchased an industrial sewing machine. He began selling embroidered patches and products under the name The New Woodsman. With a background in

needlework and a lot of trial and error, Crawford has fashioned a successful business with regular local and national clients, three employees, and five machines.

The studio at 2306 N. Lombardy St. is filled with creative patches, shirts, hats and more. The designs are quirky, yet simple — such as a tarot card image reimaged with bread and butter, numerous eyes grouped together, and multiple mushroom patterns. The business’ name is a pun based on crewel, an embroidery term, and the fact that the designs are often not what you’d expect.

Crawford is launching a line of embroidered vintage clothing later this month, making use of the gently loved pieces he’s been collecting for years. “Just trying to make something old new again,” he says.

A large part of Crawford’s business is custom work where clients come to him with an image they want embroidered on a piece of apparel. He’s done everything from company logos to a golden retriever with a mermaid tail for a family vacation. He even has a step-by-step guide available online (crewelandunusual.com) to submit a request for custom work.

Crewel and Unusual products can be found on the website; Carytown’s Ashby also has a small selection. Local pickup is available at the studio.

Crawford says people should wear what brings them joy and if he can assist with that, it’s gratifying. “To be able to be creative, make something, express something, and [have] people get excited about it, it’s invaluable,” he says. **■**

FOOTWEAR

SHARED SHOES

Ashland-based **Stegmann** has partnered with nonprofit Soles4Souls, donating more than 500 pairs of shoes to those in need. Known for wool clogs, Stegmann has expanded into boots, dress shoes and sandals. CEO Andy Jacobs says the July donation prevents discontinued shoes from ending up in a landfill. He says Soles4Souls has a “fantastic reputation for distributing footwear to people in need not just in the U.S. but all across the world, so that really appealed to us.” Look for new footwear selections this fall from Stegmann’s recent collaboration with J.Crew online at jcrew.com. stegmannusa.com —**NC**



AQUARIUMS

FINDING FISH

Caleb Kilgore has moved his saltwater aquarium store, **Reefology RVA**, to 1561 N. Parham Road after his former landlord sold the building that housed his prior location at 11900 Hull Street Road. Reefology carries everything from tanks to a variety of saltwater aquatic life. Services include installation, maintenance and tank relocation, and they also offer touch tanks for parties, allowing kids to learn about ocean life. “It’s hard for us to say no to anything aquarium-related,” Kilgore says. “We just tackle it, and we’re always up for the opportunity.” Kilgore is also bringing on a new partner, Kole Elkin, whom he says has been instrumental in growing the business, which first opened in September 2020. reefologyrva.com —**NC**

CAREER PATHS IN MEDICINE LEAD TO UNIQUE NICHEs FOR SOME PRACTITIONERS

By Tharon Giddens

Find Your Grail

On-the-job stress and burnout are issues often faced by physicians, but overall, they're where they want to be. A 2019 survey by the American Academy of Family Physicians and CompHealth found that 71% of respondents were happy, and 61% would become physicians again if they had a do-over. But what if there is an even sweeter spot out there? Here are two Richmond physicians who fine-tuned their careers and found greater professional satisfaction in the process.

THE NEXT STEP

It's great to help patients take control of an aspect of life, but what if you can do more?

For Dr. Jeffrey M. Sicat of Virginia Weight & Wellness, success in helping people manage diabetes early on in his career two decades ago meant getting their blood sugar levels down and lowering their blood pressure.

But that approach ignored another number that was just as important, and maybe more so in determining overall health: their weight. "In the past, if I could help someone improve their diabetes numbers, I'd be so excited: Your sugars look great, your blood pressure is at goal, you're this, that and that," Sicat says. "But in the process, they might have gained you know, 20, 30, 50 pounds, just because

when you start insulin on people, it can cause pretty dramatic weight gain."

But some patients showed amazing weight loss, he says, and with that came multiple benefits. These were obese people who were taking insulin and other medications, who had sleep apnea and other ailments, and when they dropped 30, 50, 70 pounds, "it really just reversed all those things," he says.

They no longer needed some medications and were generally healthier. Their life-changing experience was an aha moment for Sicat. "It really just opened my eyes: 'Gosh, if you can really get skilled at this field, oh, the things you can do with our patients.'"

Sicat can empathize with his patients: After being active and an athlete through college and early in med school, he gained about 50 pounds over five years in residency and the early years of his practice. Stress, crazy hours and lack of sleep, moonlighting to pay off student loans — all of this contributed to an unhealthy lifestyle that crept up on him. "When you're living

life, you don't realize how things impact you," he says. "In retrospect, it's very clear to me why that happened to me."

Weight loss and keeping weight off are very different processes. One problem is that when you reach a maximum weight and it stays there long enough, the body perceives that weight as where you are supposed to be, Sicat says.

The human body, conditioned by thousands of years of dealing with periods of starvation and famine, is trying to protect us; it doesn't register what a good weight is for a particular person, Sicat says.

"[It] doesn't care if that was your normal adult weight, or if that is your healthy weight. Whatever it is, it just knows that you got somewhere, and it thinks that's what you're supposed to be," he says. "So literally when you're trying to lose weight below that weight, your body is defending that weight."

That's why so many who lose weight gain it back — about 80% to 90% of people who lose substantial weight regain it in one or two years.

There are other factors that impede weight maintenance, such as less positive feedback. When you're losing weight rapidly, you feel and see the difference, as do people around you, who reward you with compliments. It becomes less noticeable over the long term. "No one is saying, 'Oh, my gosh, you've been maintaining your weight,'" Sicat says.

His approach is a team effort, to ensure that people looking to drop weight and then maintain that weight loss know it's a long battle, a chronic disease that requires a multipronged approach addressing nutrition, physical activity, behavior and medication.

Obesity also compounds the impact of COVID-19. Age and obesity are associated with poorer outcomes, leading to a greater likelihood that a COVID-19 infection will lead to hospitalization, being placed on a ventilator or death. It triples the risk of hospitalization, accounting for

a third of COVID-19 patients who required hospital treatment, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Unfortunately, stress is a primary driver of obesity, according to Sicat. "Weight is impacted by a gazillion things, and stress is one of them, and it's been a very stressful several years for people," he says.

A licensed obesity medicine specialist, the New Jersey native earned his medical degree and completed a residency in internal medicine in 2002 at Virginia Commonwealth University Medical School, followed with a fellowship in endocrinology, diabetes and metabolism. He was a cofounder of Virginia Endocrinology and Osteoporosis Center in 2004, then went into obesity medicine in 2011.

"It's been wonderful," he says. "It's such a gratifying, satisfying field to be in."

THE KINDEST CUT

For 38 years, Dr. Boyd H. Winslow was a go-to specialist for reconstructive pediatric urology. He could make a urethra using a graft taken from the lining of a mouth, or craft a new bladder for a child by transposing some colon and stomach tissue.

"I did really big-deal things," he says. "I love pediatric surgery because, if you think about a successful operation in a baby, think of the number of good years you're giving them."

Over the decades, one procedure

showed up more frequently on his schedule, referrals to correct bad circumcisions on infants.

For Winslow, it was a burden on his caseload, but for the families of these boys, it was an emotional, traumatic experience, something that he wanted to allay in some way. He put together a visual presentation, descriptions and photos that documented what he'd seen over 25 to 30 years and how he fixed the problem, then he made presentations to various health care facilities and practices.

He had hoped that would result in some positive change, which it did, but in an unexpected way — a sentiment that he describes as, "Hey, he knows this, let's (refer patients) to him."

Now, the semiretired Winslow has a part-time practice, Winslow Newborn Circumcisions.

The practice of circumcision is ancient. The procedure is often performed in the first month after birth, frequently in the hospital within two days after delivery. About 60% of newborn boys in the United States are circumcised, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

It is an elective procedure. The driving force behind circumcision decisions are cultural, Winslow says. Many families of Jewish, Muslim or Christian backgrounds prefer to have the procedures performed on or as close as possible to the eighth >



Dr. Jeffrey Sicat, a licensed obesity medicine specialist, says he takes a team approach in working with people to lose pounds and then maintain the weight loss.

day following birth, as prescribed in the Book of Genesis.

Some of the standards for the procedure in American medicine may lead to complications, according to Winslow. For starters, circumcisions are often performed in the hospital, soon after delivery by the obstetrician/gynecologist. They are specialists most familiar with “female reproductive parts,” Winslow says, “but somehow, by default, they got to do newborn boys’ circumcisions.”

He educates parents on some of the benefits of the procedure (such as reduced risk of urinary tract infections in infancy and reduced risk of sexually transmitted diseases later in life) and potential cons (such as bleeding, pain, discomfort, yeast infections).

Winslow limits his work to the first 41-44 weeks after conception (average birth date is 38 weeks after conception). Any later, and general anesthesia may be required because of the risk of movement on the part of the child.

He also contends that there are health benefits to that time window. The sucking reflex in infants releases endorphins, which soothes the child. The reflex has generally kicked in by then but is often not there in the first couple days after birth, when many circumcisions are performed in-hospital, according to Winslow. That time frame also brings distance from the stresses on mom and infant from childbirth. The infant is better able to heal and there’s less bleeding, he says.

Winslow performs the procedure with parents present, with the mom sitting beside the child to comfort the baby. “I want this to be as emotionally calm, lacking in turbulence, as it can possibly happen,” he says.

Winslow says he listens to the parents, provides exhaustive answers to their questions and allays their concerns. The emphasis for him is on investing time in working with the family and in the procedure itself.

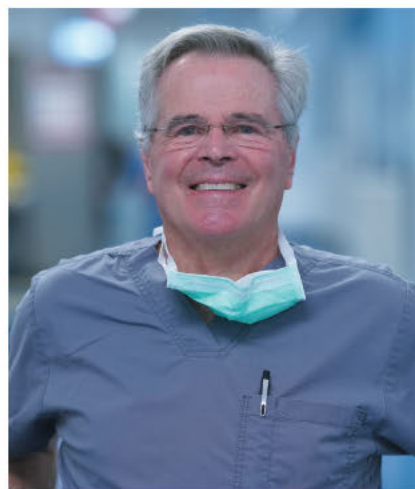
It’s the least he can do for the family,

Dr. Boyd Winslow started Winslow Newborn Circumcisions months into his retirement from a full-time practice.

and for the child, he says. “I’m working on the only penis that that little boy is going to get, and it deserves a few extra minutes of care and making it pain free and making the outcome aesthetically acceptable. There’s no need to hurry for a medical procedure on something that’s that small and delicate,” he says.

The New England native earned his medical degree from Harvard Medical School in 1974, then he served residencies and fellowships at Massachusetts General Hospital, receiving training in surgery, urology, renal transplantation and pediatric urology. He began a 14-year service with the Children’s Hospital of the King’s Daughters in Norfolk in 1981, where he worked with noted Drs. Charles Devine and Charles Horton, developing his interest and honing his skills in genital reconstructive surgery. He also became the hospital’s chief of urology and a urology professor for Eastern Virginia Medical School. Winslow and his family became Richmond residents in 1995. His practice became part of Virginia Urology, then morphed into Children’s Urology of Virginia.

Several months into his retirement in 2016, friends called and encouraged Winslow to continue with the circumcisions, and he returned to practice, working part-time. “[I] went back to work on my terms and not as an employee of anybody,” he says.



“I THINK I’M PRACTICING MEDICINE THE WAY EVERY DOCTOR WOULD LIKE TO PRACTICE, BUT THEY CAN’T,”

—Dr. Boyd Winslow

Now, he works a couple mornings each week. “It’s not terribly taxing on me,” he says.

He also is in demand from other urologists who want advice on how to create a similar business. His advice: Start helping families and obstetrics doctors early on, “so they connect your name with a careful, deliberate, complication-free circumcision.”

He’s at a stage in life where he can do what he wants professionally. “I sleep well at night because in good conscience (I) delivered my very best care. I just wish I never had to hurry through anything.”

This practice has provided great satisfaction to Winslow. “I think I’m practicing medicine the way every doctor would like to practice, but they can’t,” he says. He and his wife have five grown children, so there’s no longer the financial burden of caring and feeding and educating kids to worry about. “I would be petrified if this is all I did when they were young,” he says.

Health care professionals are being squeezed by a system that emphasizes speed, quantity of care and profits, he contends. Doctors are perceived as akin to laboratory equipment, a useful cog in the profit machine.

There’s also a perception that doctors are mostly motivated to enrich themselves, but Winslow says that’s just not true.

“Doctors are being squeezed from every angle,” he says. “To me, it’s still remarkable that so many good people choose the profession, and it truly is out of humanitarian purposes. It’s a wonderful profession because people put into your hands their well-being.

“Each day, it’s not for me, this is for them.” ■

LIVING



Jason Walter



Michael Groffus

STYLE

FASHION STATEMENTS

What are society's hangups about men wearing skirts?



Forest Grant



Revel

Edited by THARON GIDDENS



BY JON COPE

PERSONAL STYLE

SKIRTING'S THE ISSUE

It's time for men to embrace skirts into their wardrobe

If you are a man, regardless of sexual orientation or identity, I would like to issue a challenge: Wear a skirt for one day.

This is an experiment that asks, "What is manhood?" and why does wearing a skirt reflect upon one's masculinity? In theory this task should be quite simple, but as I posed this challenge to many of my more open-minded and progressively thinking male friends, it proved to be laden with complexities.

I was elated when I met Tyler Holt, a white, straight, cisgendered male, at a party one night. I told him about this challenge and what it meant to me. A few days later, he and his girlfriend, Emily, were fervently looking through my closet as we sought to style him.

Holt's final look can be viewed at the top of this page, and the images of several other men who participated in this experiment are on Page 53. These are males of varying sexual orientations and identities. They all show that men can be playful with their wardrobe and still be secure in their manhood.



CREATING A LOOK

Construction worker Tyler Holt sports a spaghetti-strap maxi dress printed with red and light blue small paisley-esque flowers with two slits on the side hems. To balance the strong femininity of the dress, it was paired with his red construction hat and boots inspired by Prada's Monolith collection.

"I wanted to see what it was like," says Holt. "I consider myself a pretty open guy, and I don't worry much about what the general public thinks about me."

But many expressed reservations. The root issue seems to be feeling uncomfortable wearing a skirt casually around town, mostly due to societal constraints. Even Holt, who wore one of my skirts out on an all-day Richmond excursion that following weekend, confessed to having an "overall illuminating experience," as he relished in the increase of ventilation and navigated the more subtle differences in how to carry oneself in a skirt. But he had concerns about parking close to his construction site, where his coworkers might see him, and admitted he would save skirt-wearing more for going out than wearing around during the day.

What is society's hang-up with men in skirts? In 2003, Andrew Bolton, head curator of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute in New York City, curated an exhibition entitled "Bravehearts: Men in Skirts." The book that goes with the exhibition explores in detail the history of men in skirts throughout time and in different cultures, to "dispel the myth that the skirt is an exclusively female garment." There are examples of powerful and prolific males

throughout history in nonbifurcated garments, next to images of designs by Jean Paul Gaultier, Vivienne Westwood and others who have showcased the beauty of men in skirts throughout their collections.

As I see more examples of men, especially straight men, such as NBA basketball players, Jordan Clarkson, and Russell Westbrook, who have been wearing Thom Browne's male skirt suits as of late, I see them as examples of warrior heroes broadening the scope of masculinity and supporting the idea of self-understanding through clothes.

This is a pivotal point in time to expand the notion of masculinity and integrate with a higher sense of self. We as men can stand to experiment with more examples of what it means to explore fashion in the same way women have been borrowing from the male wardrobe for centuries.

For those who opt not to wear them, consider this a practice in empathy. Support others in their quest to understand themselves. As Holt shows, you don't have to be gender non-conforming, or queer to be excited or curious about how all clothes make you feel. **LI**

Jon Cope (imfstyling.com) supports Richmond's fashion and nonprofit community as a stylist, educator and interior designer.



2003 Met Gala exhibition "Bravehearts: Men in Skirts"