

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

December 2015

Welcome neighbors,

December is here again and with the commercial entities competing for our attention in an attempt to sell, sell, sell, we believe it appropriate to take a quiet moment to reflect on the reason for the season. Last month we named the many things for which we are thankful. But isn't there something that we should be even more thankful for this month? As we consider the passing year we remember those who are no longer with us. A sad time. But we also see the many smiling faces and hear the happy songs that are so common this time of year. A joyful time. But perhaps Ralph Waldo Emerson said it best: “The purpose of life is not to be happy. It is to be useful, to be honorable, to be compassionate, to have it make some difference that you have lived and lived well.”

Please mark your calendar: Join the Brentsville community Saturday evening, December 12, for two Holiday concerts filled with seasonal music performed by the Brentsville District High School Choir at the beautiful and historic Brentsville Union Church. Enjoy hot cider and cookies by a warm bonfire. Concerts from 5 to 7 p.m. Free admission for all. Additional information may be obtained by calling 703-365-7895.

From our family to yours, we wish you a Merry Christmas, a Happy Hanukkah and a Very Happy New Year!



Very best wishes,
Kay and Morgan

This month:

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If there are any vegetarians in our midst—which I strongly doubt after viewing the embattled females lined up at the meat counter—let me beg them to hurriedly turn the page, as the text for today will be Butchering.

Butchering is more than just another farmer's chore out here, it is also a Social Event. Monday last I was attracted out of my kitchen by clouds of smoke and steam and a sort of general excitement emanating from the direction of the Wolfe's back yard. Turning down the fire under my pickling pig's feet, I gathered up the infants and strolled over to see what was going on. Mrs. Bradshaw and Gladys Wolfe were seated cozily on a log, chatting, while the little ones stood by, big-eyed and a row of interested dogs and cats ornamented the other side of the fence, tongues lolling out, making sociable remarks to one another. Mr. Shoemaker and Mr. Wolfe were in command of operations, while Virginia Bradshaw's new husband acted as enthusiastic, if inexperienced, aide – de – camp. Small boys seemed to spring out of the ground like mushrooms, very anxious to make themselves useful in order to be kept home from school, and they bustled about with a great show of activity, carrying water and firewood and containers of various sizes.

Baby and I joined the ladies on the log to observe the proceedings. There was a large iron cauldron simmering over an open fire, several mysterious tripods, and a sort of oblong wooden trough filled with boiling water. Into this receptacle was plunged the mortal remains of the late lamented Pig, complete with fur and whiskers, and out of it he came again in due time, fat and pink and shiny—quite rejuvenated as to personality.

They hung him up by his feet from one of the tripods, where he swung gently in the breeze, while the ladies on the log made complimentary remarks and the conversation changed from Babies and the Soap-Struggle to Recipes. There was some speculation as to why head-cheese is called souse in certain localities, both horrid names, not at all indicative of the delicacy of the dish. The ingredients of souse and head-cheese are practically identical, we discovered, and the procedure for both equally back-breaking; I could afford to be complacent about it, however, as I had only the night before ladled out the last of mine into empty cold-cream jars, having

long since run out of bowls. Suddenly I remembered my pig's feet and made a dash for it, but between the log and the kitchen door inspiration came:

Let us sing of the joys of the simple life;
Of the trap, and the gun, and the hunting knife,
Of the pigs hung up in the early morn,
Of the open fire, and the roasting corn.

The purr of the kettle, the gold of the batter,
The drone of talk as the house-wives chatter;
Of small boy's mischief, the men folks joke,
And the smell on the air of hickory smoke.

Low of the cow, and bark of the hound,
Last of the vegetables out of the ground;
Cedars black in a darkening sky,
And the work of another day put by.

Mrs. Steven's nephew, Willard Nalls, was a week-end guest in Brentsville.

Mrs. Myrtle Keys visited her son, David, who is sick in Alexandria.

Mr. and Mrs. Beard entertained Mr. and Mrs. Clifford White and Mr. and Mrs. Curtis Mitchel of Ashland, Va.

The Brentsville Presbyterian Church will hold a Christmas program on Tuesday evening at 7:30 o'clock.

Mr. Griffith preached on Sunday at the Baptist Church.

Gladys Wolfe is visiting Mr. and Mrs. Rob Huddle in Vienna.

Herbert Cordell is up and around again after a week in bed.

We are very sorry to hear that Mrs. Yancey is quite sick.

Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Michael visited Irving Spitzer on Sunday.

The young People met at Mrs. Hedrick's on Friday night. The business meeting was followed by a social, and refreshments were served.

Jim Shoemaker is spending a few days in New York.

Mrs. Wolfe, Clyde Jr., and Freddie spent Monday in Washington and George Wolfe was at home for the week-end.

Sincerely,
Agnes Webster

Where WILD things live...

Juniperus virginiana

Eastern Red Cedar

Juniperus virginiana — its common names include red cedar, eastern redcedar, eastern red cedar, eastern juniper, red juniper, pencil cedar, and aromatic cedar — is a species of juniper native to eastern North America from southeastern Canada to the Gulf of Mexico and east of the Great Plains



It is a dense slow-growing coniferous evergreen tree that may never become more than a bush on poor soil, but is ordinarily from 16–66 ft. (rarely to 89 ft.) tall, with a short trunk 12–39 in. (rarely 67 in.) diameter. The oldest tree reported, from Missouri, was 795 years old. The bark is reddish-brown, fibrous, and peels off in narrow strips. The leaves are of two types; sharp, spreading needle-like juvenile leaves 2.0–3.9 in. long, and tightly adpressed scale-like adult leaves 0.079–0.157 in. long; they are arranged in opposite decussate pairs or occasionally whorls of three. The juvenile leaves are found on young plants up to 3 years old, and as scattered shoots on adult trees, usually in shade. The seed cones are 0.12–0.28 in. long, berry-like, dark purple-blue with a white wax cover giving an overall sky-blue color (though the wax often rubs off); they contain one to three (rarely up to four) seeds, and are mature in 6–8 months from

pollination. The Juniper berry is an important winter food for many birds, which disperse the wingless seeds. The pollen cones are 0.079–0.118 in. long and 0.059 in. broad, shedding pollen in late winter or early spring. The trees are usually dioecious, with pollen and seed cones on separate trees.

It is a pioneer invader, which means that it is one of the first trees to repopulate cleared, eroded, or otherwise damaged land. It is unusually long lived among pioneer species, with the potential to live over 850 years. The tree is commonly found in prairies or oak barrens, old pastures, or limestone hills, often along highways and near recent construction sites. It is an alternate host for cedar-apple rust disease, an economically significant disease of apples, and some management strategies recommend the removal of *J. virginiana* near apple orchards

In many areas the trees are considered an invasive species, even if native. The fire intolerant cedar was previously controlled by periodic wildfires. Low branches near the ground burn and provide a ladder that allows fire to engulf the whole tree. Grasses recover quickly from low severity fires that are characteristic of prairies that kept the trees at bay. With the urbanization

of prairies, the fires have been stopped with roads, plowed fields, and other fire breaks, allowing *J. virginiana* and other trees to invade. Trees are destructive to grasslands if left unchecked, and are actively being eliminated by cutting and prescribed burning. The trees also burn very readily, and dense populations were blamed for the rapid spread of wildfires in drought stricken Oklahoma and Texas in 2005 and 2006.

Damage done by this plant includes outcompeting forage species in pastureland. The low branches and wide base occupy a significant portion of land area. The thick foliage blocks out most light, so few plants can live under the canopy. The needles that fall raise the pH of the soil, making it alkaline, which holds nutrients such as phosphorus, making it harder for plants to absorb them. It has been shown to remove nitrogen from the soil after invading prairies. It has also been found to reduce carbon stores in the soil. This reduction in soil nutrients also reduces the amount and diversity of microbial activity in the soil.

Cedar waxwings are fond of the “berries” of these junipers. It takes about 12 minutes for their seeds to pass through the birds’ guts, and seeds that have been consumed by this bird have levels of germination roughly three times higher than those of seeds the birds did not eat. Many other birds (from bluebirds to turkeys) and many mammals also consume them.

The fine-grained, soft brittle pinkish- to brownish-red heartwood is fragrant, very light and very durable, even in contact with soil. Because of its rot resistance, the wood is used for fence posts. The aromatic wood is avoided by moths, so it is in demand as lining for clothes

chests and closets, often referred to as cedar closets and cedar chests. If correctly prepared, it makes excellent English long bows, flat bows, and Native American sinew-backed bows. The wood is marketed as “eastern red cedar” or “aromatic cedar”. The best portions of the heartwood are one of the few woods good for making pencils, but the supply had diminished sufficiently by the 1940s that it was largely replaced by incense-cedar.

Juniper oil is distilled from the wood, twigs and leaves. The essential oil contains cedrol which has toxic and possibly carcinogenic properties. The cones are used to flavor gin.

Native American tribes have historically used juniper wood poles to mark out agreed tribal hunting territories. French traders named Baton Rouge, Louisiana, (meaning “red stick”) from the reddish color of these poles. It is still used in ceremony by some Nations.

During the Dust Bowl drought of the 1930s, the Prairie States Forest Project encouraged farmers to plant shelterbelts (wind breaks) made of eastern juniper throughout the Great Plains. They grow well under adverse conditions. Both drought tolerant and cold tolerant, they grow well in rocky, sandy, and clay substrate. Competition between trees is minimal, so they can be planted in tightly spaced rows, and the trees still grow to full height, creating a solid windbreak in a short time.

In the Missouri and Arkansas Ozarks, eastern juniper is commonly used as a Christmas tree. [In Brentsville too!]

Contact with the leaves or wood can produce a mild skin rash in some individuals.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES OF A BRENTSVILLE GIRL

By Deanie Eanes

Who says you can't come back home? Whoever said that must not be from Brentsville because we are a community who welcomes people and family who lived here in the past and have returned. As a child growing up in Brentsville, I was living in a small community where everyone knew everyone and usually looked out for each other. Just like family, we had our agreements and disagreements, but we knew when someone needed help and usually helped.

As a child we really had seasons where you could plan your days, activities, and clothing—Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall were days of fun and games both in the house and outside where we'd play with or visit neighbor kids at their homes, walking down the road without fear, go down to the run to watch the boys swim or fish, or we'd meet at the Brentsville schoolhouse to play baseball or football. The summers were filled with cutting grass, working in the family garden, outside play from early morning until dark when we'd collect lightning bugs in jars and fall asleep at night watching them. Fall was a time of harvest and we'd be raking leaves and then run and fall in our stacks having to rake all over again. We'd have the chore of picking up walnuts out in the yard for mama to use in homemade cookies or pass them on for others to use in their baking. Spring was a time of new birth, celebrating Easter and enjoying the sight of new flowers, warmer weather, and bright sunny days with outside fun and games. Winter was a time of staying in, having pajama parties and special sleepovers. We'd go out for snow ball battles, building snowmen, and going sleigh riding down the road on some awesome and dangerous hills.



But, in winter best of all was Christmas. We'd have our own church Christmas Program that would take a month of practicing, and then visit each other's churches for their Christmas Programs celebrating the birth of Jesus. There were always refreshments after the programs with hot apple cider, hot chocolate, and if we were old enough we could have a cup of hot tea. There were special cookies in many shapes, secret recipe cakes, and other homemade goodies

to share as we were celebrating the holiday. Sometimes we'd even have cookie exchanges and visit family we didn't see too often. Christmas was a family time, a time of loving, laughter, sharing, excitement, exchanging gifts, and as we grew older we tried to find where Santa hid the presents for Christmas morning where we'd gather around the Christmas tree that my dad or brothers cut down in our back woods about a week or so before Christmas. We'd have fun decorating the tree with special ornaments collected over the years, homemade ornaments we made as we were growing up, and we had the experience of getting sap all over us and scratches from the cedar branches...Oh, but the smell was so refreshing throughout the house.

One of our funniest Christmas trees was a real Charlie Brown tree Johnny cut down out of rebellion because he didn't want to go cut down the tree. He thought he'd make it so mama would not send him out next year and send daddy instead, but it didn't work...she used Johnny's tree anyway. Another tree experience was when I decided to go get a nice big one. Our house has 12 foot ceilings downstairs and I

(Continued on page 6)

wanted a tree to touch the ceiling. My son and I went tree shopping in some woods a friend told me about. I found a beauty, cut it down, and as we were leaving the woods found out I was on private property as a man was coming out of the woods who had been hunting. Thank God we didn't get shot or arrested. We had to tie the tree down across my Volkswagen with a blanket running from one window to the other across the top of the car because I forgot to take rope! And, we had to cut about two feet off the tree bottom to get it in the house. Now that is a memory my son and I will never forget.

FUN, we had fun. Mama would hang our Christmas stockings on the mantel going up the stairs as they were filled Christmas Eve after we all went to bed. Before Christmas we would go through the Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs and mark the items we wanted, wished for, and had to have but mama and daddy told us to pick out one special item and maybe we'd get it. Most of the time we did, and with six children they had some serious shopping to do. We'd make or buy a special gift for our siblings with our allowance as we went shopping in Old Town Manassas because at that time Old Town Manassas and the Manassas Shopping Center was all we had locally. Rohr's was my favorite store to shop—they had a whole room full of toys, games, and candy. One of my best memories is when I received a "Mercedes convertible" in my Christmas stocking because that was the car I always wanted...yes, it was a toy, but mama remembered what I wanted. Another fond and fun memory is when we all found cash in our stockings! Wow, that was a surprise we still talk about. My worst Christmas memory is when one of my brothers and I found Santa's stash that he hid in my parent's bedroom closet. There were no surprises Christmas morning and it was heartbreaking. I never looked for his loot again after that. I enjoyed the surprise along with all the excitement.

I have a lot of good memories growing up in Brentsville and coming back to live in the same house I grew up in brings back many good and happy memories. Brentsville is still a small town, I don't know many neighbors because I was away for quite a time, but I still have family down the road and see many familiar faces when attending Brentsville Presbyterian

Church who just celebrated their 100th anniversary. It's amazing how time changes, how we change over the years, but it seems that time also gives us memories...some good and some sad, but we have memories. I am proud to be a Brentsville Girl even though I'm now considered a senior citizen. I'm still a kid at heart and Christmas is my favorite time of the year. Family is important and I pray everyone spends Christmas with family or someone you've become very close to over time. I've been blessed most of my life and sometimes it takes the experience of hearing about someone else's childhood to realize how blessed I've been. My family is close, we love each other...may not always agree, but that's life. We are there for each other in a time of need and this is just one of the blessings I've received as a child growing up in Brentsville. I was ten when we moved to Brentsville, but my mom was born and raised here. We have deep roots as a Brentsville family and I am proud to say I'm back home! I'm hoping and praying for a Merry Christmas to everyone & Happy New Year.



Brentsville

A Look Back in History

by

Ronald Ray Turner

The Commonwealth of Virginia vs Eliza a Slave

Eliza, a Negro girl that lived in Prince William County in 1830, was confined in the Brentsville jail counting off the days while waiting for her execution. She was tried and convicted at a Special Court of Oyer and Terminer, used in Virginia as well as other southern states to try slaves charged with Treason or Felony. In an adjacent cell confined at the same time was a slave by the name of Charles that had been charged with complicity in the case of the Commonwealth of Virginia vs Eliza. Although not stated in the small amount of records remaining for this case, one could assume that this Charles is the person who intended to flee with Eliza. Charles Grandison Turner better known as Grandison was also in jail awaiting trial. Occupying a third cell or possibly sharing a cell with the slave Charles, was another slave by the name of George. George having been convicted of an unrelated felony was awaiting the same fate as Eliza. Although Eliza's case and the case against George are not related, both will end at the same place on the same day with the worst possible outcome. Neither of the slaves had killed or injured anyone but this was 1830 Virginia, where even minor crimes committed by slaves had the potential of being punished to the extreme.

Eliza had the misfortune of trusting a white man by the name of Grandison Turner. She wanted to escape to a Free State with a slave she was in love with so they could get married. We don't know who approached who but Grandison is reported to have told her for fifty dollars he would take both of them out of Virginia to a safe State.

Eliza was a house servant of Anna Ward and as such knew where she could get the money. Anna Ward, her owner, kept money and other valuables in a small locked trunk inside a large chest. Being a house servant she had observed where a key was hidden for the chest but had no way of getting into the smaller trunk inside. On Tuesday night about midnight the seventh of September 1830 after everyone was asleep, Eliza was able to sneak into the house, find the key, and unlock the chest. She then removed a small trunk and took it out to the stable where Grandison Turner was waiting. Planning her escape she had previously bundled up

her clothes and hid them in a shed so she could leave in a hurry. According to her testimony Turner took the trunk to a Mrs. Courtney's where he opened it and returned to tell her it only had forty-two dollars and she would have to go back in the house and get more money because he would not take her out of state for less than fifty dollars. Eliza went back in the house and took a watch and some coins along with other items from the house. Turner told her the watch was worthless and the coins would be missed early tomorrow and he did not want them. Eliza then returned the watch and coins to their place in the house with Turner keeping the trunk and contents.

Two days later on Thursday night Anna Ward wanted something from the trunk but the key to the chest could not be located. After some time she was able to find a second key and opened the chest. Immediately she noticed the trunk missing and some papers scattered about. Anna then called for all her servants to come to the house. Eliza knowing the purpose, or at least presuming the purpose, was the only servant not to go into the house. When later confronted, Eliza said she had took the trunk and gave it to Grandison Turner but no one would believe her until they discovered that he had left that day for "The Neck" to his Uncle Thomas Turner's house.

An interesting, or maybe the word should be sad, bit of information to come out in the trial was testimony by Anna Ward about the missing items. She testified that in the trunk and missing were bank notes worth ninety dollars, as well as other money and coins that would total one hundred and thirty-nine dollars. All of this money was inside a small red Morocco pocket book, a good deal more than the forty-five dollars Grandison said was in the trunk and much more than the fifty dollars he had agreed to take her out of state.

Eliza was sentenced to "be hanged by the neck until she be dead on the first Friday in January next between the hours of 10 o'clock in the morning and four o'clock in the afternoon of that day." It must be assumed that this sentence was carried out as there is at this time no evidence of a pardon.

When WAR Came to Brentsville

No.113. Report of Brigadier General Lunsford L. Lomax, C.S. Army, commanding brigade. [abridged]

HEADQUARTERS LOMAX'S BRIGADE,
December 7, 1863.

MAJOR: I have the honor to submit the following report of the part taken by this brigade in the recent campaign beyond the Rappahannock, for details of which you are referred to the accompanying reports of regimental commanders:

I will take this opportunity to call attention to the part taken by the sharpshooters of the brigade of this and every other occasion when called upon. Dismounted by regiments and led by the regimental commanders, they proved more than a match for those of the enemy, and an obstacle that their mounted men could not overcome.

I next came up with the enemy at McLean's Ford on the 15th. My brigade was again dismounted, and, moving en masse, drove the enemy across the run and occupied the rifle-pits on this side. A heavy force of infantry, strongly posted on the opposite bank and supported by artillery, commanded the ford. After holding the position for an hour under heavy fire, my men were withdrawn without loss. I then moved my command to the support of General Gordon, who was driving the enemy on the Brentsville road, but darkness precluded the possibility of another fight for that day.

On the 16th, my brigade, with that of Colonel Chambliss, was in position at Bristoe Station, where the enemy threatened all day, but when they attempted to advance were repulsed by a few well-directed shots from Chew's battery. This was my last engagement with the enemy during the campaign. Being in the rear at Buckland, I only arrived on the field in time to join in a rapid pursuit.

Very respectfully, &c.,

L.L. LOMAX,
Brigadier-General, Commanding.



Lunsford Lindsay Lomax (November 4, 1835 – May 28, 1913) was an officer in the United States Army who resigned his commission to join the Confederate Army at the outbreak of the American Civil War. He had maintained a close friendship with his West Point classmate Fitzhugh Lee, and served under him as a brigadier in the Overland Campaign. He was then given command of the Valley District, where he supervised intelligence-gathering operations by Mosby's Rangers.

Born in Newport, Rhode Island, the son of a Virginia-born ordnance officer Mann P. Lomax, Lunsford Lomax was appointed "at-large" to the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York, graduating in 1856 with classmate and friend Fitzhugh Lee. Assigned to the prestigious 2nd Cavalry regiment, Lomax fought on the frontier and served in Bleeding Kansas. During the years immediately preceding the conflict, Lomax resigned from the army in April 1861, and shortly thereafter accepted a captain's commission in Virginia state militia and was assigned to Joseph E. Johnston's

staff as assistant adjutant general. Lomax later served as inspector general for Benjamin McCulloch, becoming lieutenant colonel before transferring back to the Eastern Theater.

Appointed colonel of the 11th Virginia Cavalry in time for the Gettysburg campaign, Lomax was promoted to brigadier general in the aftermath of the battle. Lomax fought his brigade under the division command of his old classmate Fitzhugh Lee from Culpeper Courthouse through the Wilderness and around Petersburg until promoted to major general in August 1864 when he was assigned to Jubal Early in the Shenandoah Valley. After escaping capture at the Battle of Woodstock, Lomax was given command of the Valley District. When Richmond was evacuated, Lomax tried to join forces with John Echols's men at Lynchburg, Virginia, but unable to do so, Lomax finally surrendered with Joe Johnston in North Carolina.

Lesser known is Lomax's role in the formation of the partisan units that fought in Northern Virginia during the latter part of the War. In a statement made to Caroline Harper Long shortly before his death, published in the Baltimore Sun in 1920 by Beth Rhoades, entitled "Gray Ghost of the Confederacy," Mosby writes:

General Lomax was with McCulloch in West Tennessee and after McCulloch was killed he was with Van Dorn. In the Fall of 1862 he was ordered to Richmond on a special mission. He was then detailed back to Van Dorn just before Christmas. He was a Lt. Colonel and placed in command of the 11th Virginia Cavalry. When Lomax was in Richmond he learned of his future transfer to Virginia. He had a scout sent up from Tennessee to assess the military information situation and to set up partisan scouts in the valley. Up to that time everything in this area had been disorganized and difussed [sic] and relatively ineffective. Lomax wanted a scouting system identical with the very excellent system which existed in West Tennessee. He picked his men from amongst the scouts in West Tennessee and selected a man by the name of Boyd. He had been a railroad detective and he was among the best they had. He arrived in Richmond several days before Lomax left and Boyd proceeded on to Staunton where he was met by one of Winder's detectives by the name of Turner. Boyd recruited and trained some 35 to 40 men in Rockingham, Shenandoah and Augusta counties and formed them into the Linville Partisan Rangers. He taught them the fine points of scouting,

telegraph line tapping, use of blasting powder, and all the other things a good scout needs to know. Boyd was one of Van Dorn's best scouts and did a fine job of setting up the partisans in the Valley.

Lomax had also arranged for me to begin independent operations in Loudon County to the North. I got started about the first of the year. At that time I only had a few men, less than a dozen but we soon expanded and trained the men we had. We never were a large group nor were we designed to be a large fighting force. We had to form up and dissolve into the countryside in a few minutes. Secrecy was our greatest ally. We didn't drill like regulars and we had no permanent camps to provide that camp drudgery so disliked by regulars. We used dinner bells and whistles to signal with and to cause assembly. ...

In June of that year my outfit was designated the 43rd Battalion Partisan Rangers. But on his way back to Tennessee Boyd was captured and in fact did not get back to Tennessee before Lomax was transferred to Virginia. In February, after the capture of Boyd became known, the Linville Rangers were put under the command of Jake Cook but they were never officially recognized by the Confederate government and they were never paid. But they were active throughout the valley and they provided good information to Lomax.

So it is clear that part of the opacity that surrounds Lomax's military career is the fact that he was the commanding officer of Mosby and more loosely, the other partisans units in the Valley that brought information to General Lee and others. In fact, Mosby tells Caroline Harper, an acquaintance who had been raised in the same aristocratic circles of Old Virginia, the illegitimate daughter of a prominent politician, that he had not felt he could even give the interview until Lomax's death, in order to protect him, for they were the closest of friends, both during and after the war.^[1] After Appomattox, Lomax farmed in Caroline and Fauquier counties for over 20 years, then was appointed president of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute in 1889. Serving for five years, Lomax later became a clerk in the War Department assembling and editing the Official Records of the war and was for a time commissioner of Gettysburg National Park.

Lomax died May 28, 1913 and was buried in Warrenton, Virginia.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Brentsville Neighbors

“Preserving Brentsville’s History”

Contact us on:

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All back issues on:

<http://www.historicprincewilliam.org/brentsvilleneighbors/index.html>

IN GOD WE TRUST

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