



Cape Fear

# VOICES

*Providing an Outlet for Creativity in the Cape Fear Region*

Volume 1, Issue 1

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Help Wanted

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Eric Mens

Gerald Decker

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## Welcome to Cape Fear Voices

by Gerald Decker, Magnolia Greens

**C**ape Fear Voices. Catchy name, don't you think? This is the first of hopefully many editions. The founders of this monthly paper, Eric Mens and I, are both active in writing groups in the area. We write weekly for our respective classes and share our stories with each other. Eric is an excellent writer and well, I take courses for a reason. In fact, we just finished publishing our first book last month. More on the Alex Moskowitz story in *Celebrating a World War II Veteran's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday* (BELOW).

What we have found, through our own writing and the sharing that goes on in our writing groups, is that the good stories that should be shared have little chance of being shared. Yes, I know you could put it on Facebook, or one of the many social medias, but then you have to wait for the inevitable critiques. Many times, those critiques are too quick to criticize the thought and

not admire the writing or the grit that it took to write the story.

There you have our purpose for publishing this paper: to give creative people in our communities the opportunity to share their creations in print media. We will focus on individuals, local clubs, and local stories. We want to provide those with an interest in writing, art, photography, poetry, quilting, woodworking, other crafts, or community service, a place to share their work and talents.

We hope that you will enjoy our efforts as well as the efforts of those who contribute to the success of this publication. And, by all means, please support the local businesses who are supporting us by sponsoring ads. Tell them that you saw them in one of our publications.

Thank you!

## Celebrating a World War II Veteran's 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday

by Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

**G**erald Decker and I first met Alex Moskowitz and his wife, Carolyn, in the early summer of 2018. Gerald had single-handedly and doggedly organized a several-day veterans' tour of the war memorials in Washington, DC. Alex would join the busload group of veterans from the Leland, North Carolina area for the trip. Since that trip, our families have formed a fast friendship. We have come to appreciate knowing both Alex and Carolyn. They are kind and giving individuals who are well respected in their community.

Getting to know Alex and to hear his stories has been a rewarding experience and has given us a better appreciation for the Greatest Generation. Our friendship with Alex resulted in Gerald and I co-authoring a short biographical book about him. The book, entitled *Alex P. Moskowitz, The Story of a Jewish Boy Growing Up in America*, tells the story of an Army veteran of the Battles of Leyte Gulf and Okinawa. The book was published by New Hanover Printing in April 2020.

The story of Alex growing up as a first generation American, son of immigrants fleeing from persecution in their homelands during the



Alex and his wife, Carolyn, enjoy his Birthday Party.



early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, is not atypical of what was occurring in America at the time. While the clouds of war loomed over most of the European continent, it was also a time of breakneck technological advances, increasing unrest in communities that struggled to cope with the influx of immigrants, and struggles at all societal levels as the newcomers worked to assimilate into American society. Then came the Japanese surprise and devastating attack on

Pearl Harbor, plunging America into a war that it had desperately tried to avoid.

The vibrant and sometimes chaotic societal environment of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century produced individuals like Alex Moskowitz. Men and women who had fallen in love with their adopted country answered America's call.

See *Veteran's Birthday* Page 2

# A Brief History on Rice Culture and Worship in Southeastern North Carolina

The first in a planned series of articles about the North Carolina Rice Festival

Rice Field Cultivation



by George Beatty, Magnolia Greens & Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

From about 1760 through the 1860s, rice was a major cash crop in this region. In 1860, Brunswick County produced 6.7 million pounds of rice or about 90 percent of the state’s total. Significant amounts of rice were also grown in New Hanover and Pender Counties. These counties, along with Brunswick County, form the northern most section of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor, a federally recognized cultural grouping.

There were rice plantations throughout the area along the Cape Fear River and its tributaries. North Carolina plantations were offshoots of the rice culture centered around Charlestown, South Carolina. Plantation owners, in conjunction with slave traders in the United States and Africa, would import enslaved people from the Rice Coast of Africa, which had its locus in Sierra Leone. Rice had been grown in that region for over 3,000 years, and cultivation techniques were well established. Thus, farmers here imported not only manpower but also the valuable knowledge of rice cultivation.

So many people were brought from Sierra Leone that the group maintained a semblance of the language and culture of their native land. On the language front, to communicate with non-Sierra Leoneans, the Sierra Leoneans mixed their native language with English. That mixture is called Gullah in many locations and Geechee in others. This is how today we have not only the language and culture but also the Congressionally designated Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Commission. The Commission was established to preserve the unique culture of persons brought to this region against their will and who helped to build the society we enjoy today.

The larger and better-known plantations in Brunswick County were Orton, Kendall, Lilliput, and Clarendon, with Orton being the largest and most famous. There were several plantations here in northern Brunswick County, including Belville, Belvidere, Woodburn, Gabriel Bluff, Cobham, Schawfield, Prospect, and Mulberry, to name a few. All of the sites had significant populations of enslaved individuals. As is the case with all human communities, there were births and deaths, and much social activity in between.

One of the leading human activities was worship services. Coming from a variety of worshipping traditions, the enslaved were encouraged or forced to adopt Christianity. That Christianity on the Prospect Plantation (which later became the Cedar Hill Plantation), was expressed

through the African Methodist Episcopal Church denomination. The specific church constructed on or near Cedar Hill Plantation was the Reaves Chapel Church. Reaves Chapel was built as slavery was ending. It stood on its original location until about 1908-09 when it was moved about one mile west to its current location on Cedar Hill Road in Navassa. Reaves Chapel is a prime example of one aspect of the former rice culture that has almost been lost to the ravages of time and progress.

Not far from the Reaves Chapel Church’s original location was the Cedar Hill Cemetery. Cedar Hill Cemetery was the burial place first for the enslaved and then for the recently emancipated. In later years, until about 1962, the cemetery was used as a final resting place for the community at large. Folklore has it that the reason the cemetery was discontinued as a burial ground was because of vandalism. The cemetery is in the woods, about a mile from the main thoroughfare and was subject to repeated acts of vandalism and desecration. Thus, Cedar Hill Cemetery was abandoned in the 1960’s and burials took place immediately adjacent to the Reaves Chapel Church in what is now called the Reaves Chapel Cemetery.

Over time, membership in Reaves Church dwindled, and finally, in 2005, the church ceased operations. The church stood weather-beaten and unmaintained until the Coastal Land Trust secured a grant to purchase the building. The award, from the Orton Foundation, allowed the Trust to buy the church from the Methodist Conference for the Cedar/West Bank Heritage Foundation. Currently, the Coastal Land Trust and the Cedar/Hill West Bank Heritage Foundation are working to raise funds for the church’s restoration.

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**NOTE:** The North Carolina Rice Festival is dedicated to supporting efforts to preserve and promote the history and culture of Coastal North Carolina. More events are scheduled for the Leland, NC area on March 5 and 6, 2021. Event funding is dependent upon the generosity of community sponsors, patrons, and grants. North Carolina Rice Festival is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible.

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## Veteran’s Birthday

Continued from Page 1

They paused their family lives and careers to give their time and efforts and sometimes, their lives, to defend America during one of its darkest periods in history. They gave their sweat, blood, and tears. When they re-



turned from the war, they worked diligently to help build America into a world economic powerhouse. They were the Greatest Generation, and Alex epitomizes that generation. Generations that have followed owe them our profound gratitude and respect.

Copies of the book can be purchased by contacting [editorcfv@gmail.com](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com).

On May 6, 2020, Alex celebrated his 97<sup>th</sup> birthday. To honor him on his special day, we organized a drive-by birthday party for him. We invited local veterans groups, the Brunswick County Sheriff’s Office, the Mayors of Supply and Leland, local print and television outlets, as well as members from the community. To our great delight, we had an overwhelming turnout! Over 100 cars and motorcycles drove past Alex and Carolyn’s home to pay their respect to the couple. Like many of us who have put our lives on hold while our country battles the COVID-19 pandemic, Alex and Carolyn have mainly been confined to their home. They were extremely moved by the outpouring of interest and display of respect for them from the community. It is times like these that call on us to recognize those who could use a supportive hand, especially those who have served and continue to serve our country in uniform, whether they be active duty military, veterans, first responders, or our healthcare workforce!



# Navy West Pacific Cruise

by Gerald Decker,  
Magnolia Greens

From January to the end of April, we had undergone drill after drill getting ready for our upcoming tour to the Western Pacific- a euphemism for “I’m going to ‘Nam.” During that time, we had daily practice of shooting the guns, high-lining people and cargo between ships, fire control drills, and inspections-both personal and work space. We also stayed busy with underway replenishment (called an “unrep”). Unreps were for refueling, food, mail, and movies. Since we were a micro-cosm of America at the time, we had also undergone a ship-wide drug bust and court-martial, which resulted in some transfers.

By May 1, we departed Long Beach, California, at 1000 Hours to begin our 8-month tour. We had already experienced the Tet Offensive, Martin Luther King, Jr. assassination, Battle of Khe Sahn, the Orangeburg Massacre, the uprising at Columbia University, and the announcement that LBJ would not run for re-election.

By April 19, the American force level in Vietnam had risen to 549,000 troops. Combat deaths reached 22,951. And now we were a part of those numbers.

"Honey" by Bobby Goldsboro was the number one pop song, and "The Legend of Bonnie and Clyde" by Merle Haggard was the number one country song. What a Wonderful World, by Louis Armstrong, was a top 5 song in England. The Odd Couple, directed by Gene Saks, was

one of the most viewed movies released in 1968. The Tower of Babel, by Morris West, was one of the bestselling books.

I had recorded in my diary of the tour on May 6 at 0700, "ship was sailing to Pearl Harbor, we awoke to two perfect and beautiful rainbows one on top of the other, and from horizon to horizon. It looked like we were passing through the front door of Heaven. It was breathtaking to see."

It was the same day that CBS Evening News headline read: RFK wins Indiana primary; 4th day of Saigon Offensive; and Kentucky Derby winner was on drugs and had to relinquish the title.

We arrived in Pearl Harbor on May 9. At 0500, we saw Diamond Head, the first sighting of Pearl Harbor. As we entered the Hawaiian waters, we had clear views of the beauty of Honolulu and Waikiki Beach. All hands manned the rails to salute as we passed the U. S. S. Arizona. The sight of the Arizona Memorial mesmerized me. It was the first of many Deja vu moments I had while in the Navy. It seemed I knew



Gerald aboard the  
U.S.S. Merrick



U. S. S. Merrick (LKA-97)

a lot about it but wasn't sure why. "It's so hot. The sun isn't out, but still, it is very hot. The countryside here is so beautiful. It sprinkled rain for a while this afternoon." Sounds like Hawaii, right?

After a few days, we set sail on our journey. This time we were headed to Sasebo, Japan. My first foreign port of call. If it hadn't been for the daily grind of mess cooking, standing watch, and endless General Quarters drills, I think I might have been more excited.

We arrived in Sasebo on May 28. However, before arriving, I was able to experience for the first of eight times, crossing the International Date Line. In the Navy, we call that the "Domain of the Golden Dragon." Going in that direction, we skipped a day-this May 15 was followed by May 17.

My ship, the U. S. S. Merrick (LKA-97) had its own shipboard radio station. "Time Has Come Today," by the Chamber Brothers, "Tighten Up," by Archie Bell and the Drells, and "Sweet Inspirations" by the Sweet Inspirations were three of the top songs we heard a lot.

(To be continued in the next edition.)

# Homecoming 1968

by Eric Mens,  
Brunswick  
Forest

More than half a century ago, my father and I were barely on talking terms. This state of affairs had its genesis in my early childhood and did not improve in the intervening years until he died in 1994. However, to my father's credit, he did welcome me home from Vietnam in December 1968.

I had disembarked from the flight at New York's John F. Kennedy International Airport with some trepidation. My buddies and I had heard the stories about soldiers returning home from Vietnam being jeered and egged, and I had expected worse. We had been warned to be as inconspicuous as possible when mingling with civilians and specifically, to not wear our uniforms in public. The terminal was deserted that late at night, but nonetheless, I felt like a thief in the night. It was an inconspicuous homecoming.

My father had brought along a male friend who I had never met before. I think that he wanted to introduce me to his friend as "the brave soldier" who had served his adopted country and returned home from the war. At the time, I was still a Dutch citizen and would not gain my American citizenship until 1975. What transpired over the next ninety minutes as he drove us back to Connecticut would hardly pass as any sort of meaningful conversation. I never again saw his friend, who accompanied him to the airport that evening.

I ended up staying at my father's house until the following evening – long enough to be shunned by a girl who I had a crush on while in

high school. I had started writing her after "Jody" had stolen my long-time girlfriend very early during my tour in Vietnam. Among us soldiers, "Jody" was the guy who wins over your girlfriend or spouse while you are in the 'Nam. In Basic Training, we would march along in cadence and boisterously sing, "*Ain't no use in goin' home / Jody's got your girl and gone / sound off....*" I had written this girl several times while I was in Vietnam. I was excited about the possibility that we would finally be able to spend some time together.

*The terminal was deserted that late at night, but nonetheless, I felt like a thief in the night.*

Since as it was a few days before Christmas and knowing that she was an avid Beatles fan, I had rushed downtown to buy the Beatles recently re-

leased "White Album." Heart in hand, I went to her home and knocked on the door with great anticipation of spending a lovely evening with my sweetheart.

The door opened, and there she stood. Her face blanched, and she looked shocked to see me. Peering around her and into the living room, I saw a man sitting on the living room couch. He smiled and waved to me. I was in shock. Disappointed, I swallowed my pride, gave her the Christmas present, turned, and walked away. I never saw her again.

With my heart in shambles one more time, I went to stay with a family who had taken me in during my last year of high school. There, I slept well over 24 hours. It would be several days before I would successfully scrub the last of Vietnam's red clay dust out of my skin pores. It would be years before I saw my father again.

# A Lifetime of Experiences

by Terry Monnie,  
Brunswick  
Forest

Almost every day, I contemplate on some level, my lifetime of experiences, beginning with my early childhood years in western Pennsylvania growing up in the small town of Conneaut Lake.

My father was the local printer/newspaperman who published the Conneaut Lake Breeze and did commercial printing for many businesses in Crawford County. His business also included a store selling magazines of every type. It was here that I learned to love reading, and to this day, I prefer this format.

See *Experiences* on page 4



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# For the Love of Wood



by Jeff Meuwissen,  
Brunswick  
Forest



Award-Winning  
Wood Sculpture

Jeff Meuwissen is a retired forester. He worked for the New York Department of Environmental Conservation for 33 years managing private and state lands in the southern Adirondacks.

His love of woodworking came about as a child, having learned it from his father, who taught industrial arts. He has developed his interests in the direction of fine furniture, woodturning, woodcarving and wood art, including developing his own variations of the art of intarsia, a form of wood inlaying. He has worked in stained glass since 1987 and invented his unique intarsia/stained glass style in 1999.

His award-winning work has been displayed in woodworking and woodcarving

shows since 1999. He recently won second place for a wood sculpture in the North Carolina State Senior Games in Raleigh in 2019.

Jeff and his wife, Janet, moved to Brunswick Forest in Leland in 2017. They had a new home built to their specifications, which included a self-contained workshop where Jeff could pursue his artistic endeavors. These pursuits include his art interests as well as building a custom-designed two-part wooden rowboat.

Since moving to Leland, he has become involved in various interest groups. The Art League of Leland, Wilmington Area Woodturners Association, Cape Fear Woodcarvers, Brunswick Forest Fishing Club, and the Brunswick Forest Woodworkers all tend to keep him from getting bored in retirement.

Jeff's Facebook page, **JeffArt Designs**, has an extensive photo gallery of his work. He also recently posted a YouTube video on woodturning. You can view the video at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3-ZqPAU\\_bA&t=11s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3-ZqPAU_bA&t=11s)

## Experiences

Continued from Page 3

My mother was a teacher and taught many levels from kindergarten to senior high, beginning in a one-room schoolhouse with fifteen students in many grades. She was a taskmaster insisting that we devote many hours to our various classes and homework.

While we didn't have a lot of money, the parents managed to build a new home on the "west side" about a mile from The Conneaut Lake Park, an amusement park with lots of rides including the Blue Streak which was one of the last wood constructed roller coasters in the region. It was here that I got my first job at the pony track, which featured two circular tracks - one for the fast ponies and the other for the younger children. My job was to chase the fast ponies to ensure a quick ride, which required me to run six or more hours a day. This experience enabled me to later become a cross country runner at Penn State.

This conditioning was supplemented by mowing the grass on the five-acre family tract with a push mower. Luckily my older sister caught the brunt of this as-

signment, but it prompted me to get lawn mowing jobs in town and resulted in my saving about \$4,000 to be used for my first-year tuition in college at Penn State's main campus in State College.

My college years were marked by hard work and relentless studies, including a study abroad program in Cologne, Germany, where I lived with the Berger family, the father being a wealthy industry manager. It was during this period that I hitchhiked thousands of miles throughout Europe, speaking German the entire time.

I also enrolled in the ROTC program and received my commission upon graduation, after some basic officer training at Fort Benning, Georgia.

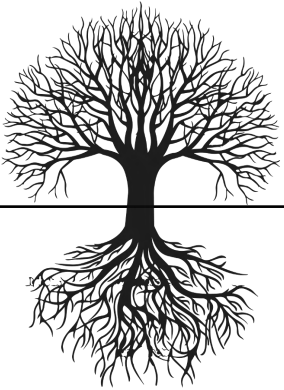
Our entire graduating class was deployed to South Vietnam, where I was the operations officer for the largest interrogation center stationed in Saigon. This assignment was somewhat boring until the Tet Offensive in January of 1968. This life-altering experience remains with me to this day.

For more details, read "*The Lake Effect*" published by my brother and me.

### Editor's Note

The founders of this publication express their heartfelt thanks to Terry Monnie for his donation of \$75 to *Cape Fear Voices*. Your generosity will help us defray our printing costs for this first edition.

# An Honorary Southerner



by Jane Webster,  
Brunswick  
Forest

We might make you an honorary southerner, she wrote. That was the email message from my sister-in-law, Janice, a Virginia transplant living in South Carolina, that really got my hackles up.

"Honorary my foot," I thought. I gazed up at the framed sepia print portrait of my ancestors, hanging in the low country cottage we had recently built near Wilmington, NC. Six generations of women, all of whom hailed from the south. I wasn't just southern by marriage but southern by birthright.

I grew up in the Washington D.C. area, which is well below the Mason Dixon line the last time I looked. The past 30 some years were spent in Amish County, PA. That didn't mean I wasn't as southern as a pecan in a praline. It's not just my affinity for corn pudding and camellias, pimento cheese and pecan pie, cat head biscuits dripping with butter, and the toe-tapping whine of a good fiddle.

A couple of years ago, a long, lost cousin from Charlottesville, so lost that I didn't even know she existed, tracked me down. She explained that her mother, Elizabeth, was my deceased daddy's only living sibling. Her grandmother Mary, our shared grandmother, was a Simpson from Fredericksburg, VA. There are hundreds of years of Simpsons from Fredericksburg, dating back to John the Scotsman, and including one who rode with Mosby's Raiders in the confederate army! My daughter Kate went to college at Mary Washington in Fredericksburg!

So began my journey through worn family bibles and crumbling newspaper clippings, through tintypes and sepia prints, over battlefields and cemeteries, in search of my family history and the discovery of my southern roots.

My favorite wedding gift, some 40 years ago, was a gorgeous scalloped glass platter that I vaguely remembered came from someone named Mozelle in Fredericksburg. Why hadn't I paid more attention when my mother patiently endeavored to explain these relations years ago? Could Mozelle be the connection I was looking for, I wondered. Upstairs, in a stuffy closet filled with cartons of unpacked memories, buried beneath my Longwood College yearbooks and a Janis Joplin concert poster from UVA, I unearthed my tattered wedding gift register. Down the list of crystal stemware, pickle forks, and relish trays, my finger traced. Royal Doulton china, Buttercup sterling flatware, fondue pots, both Sterno and electric, table linens and salad bowls, candlesticks and candelabras, there it was!

See *Southern* on page 5





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**Before****After**



## Southern

Continued from Page 4

A glass platter from Mozelle, Mozelle Simpson! It was her sister Mary, who was my grandmother. Mary, who had wed a dark and handsome Georgetown University law student from Terre Haute, where she lived most of her life before returning as a widow to Washington D.C.

Images surfaced of occasional Sunday afternoon visits in a hot and dreary Connecticut Avenue apartment with a dour old lady dressed in black. She was the woman we called May May, who expected us to be seen and not heard. Being a little girl, I never really made the connection that this austere and humorless woman was my father's mother. We could not wait to escape those visits. Oh, what I wouldn't give to spend an afternoon with May May now.

My maternal grandmother also stemmed from southern roots. Born in Chattanooga, Grandmommy was the third American generation of Welsh immigrants who settled on Mission-

ary Ridge. Her daddy's ancestors settled Jamestown; her mother's built the railroad. As a young girl, she moved with her parents to Washington, D.C., where her father practiced law. She, too, married a Georgetown University law student, from Iowa, and had four children. Her oldest, my mother, married Mary's son, another impressive lawyer from Terre Haute.

Like the hands of a clock sweeping across the face of time, the circle repeats with the generations. I carry the name of my 2x great grandmother Mary Jane from southern Wales and Tennessee.

My southern roots branch both sides of my family. These roots reach deep, deep in the soil of immigrants from Wales, Ireland, and Scotland. Their toil on the railroads and farms, in government and law, created a rich new heritage in America. Today, as my children raise their families on Virginia soil, I hear the softened vowels in my grandson's speech. I recognize the familiar cadence of voices from another age, calling me home. The acorn doesn't fall from the tree, my southern family tree.

## The Birthday Pony

by Janet Meuwissen,  
Brunswick Forest

**“Can I have a pony for my 10<sup>th</sup> birthday? Please? Please? I'm old enough and, we live on a farm, so we have plenty of room for a pony,” a 9-year-old Me exclaimed.**

Janet, what makes you think you want a pony?”, Dad asked.

“When we went to Cousin Patty's house, I loved to ride her pony, Star” I said. “Star, for the star on her forehead, was tan with a blond mane and tail. Together Patty and I rode all around her farm, sometimes bringing a picnic lunch for us and our ponies.”

“My pony's name will be Macaroni, from the Yankee Doodle song we sang in our music class. Our farm has plenty of pasture for Macaroni to eat and exercise in, and so many fields, dirt roads, and woods where I can ride. Then Macaroni's new home will be in our small barn, with a calf for company.” Janet dreamed.

“Janet, wake up! It's your birthday!”, Dad said as he shook me awake. “We're going out to the barn to see what we can find this morning.”

And when Dad opened the barn door, he said, “Here's your birthday pony! I'm sure you'll have great fun riding on her.”

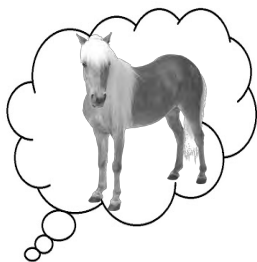
My pony didn't look like Star; she wasn't black, brown, dapple gray, or tan. She was BLUE! She was a new blue Schwinn bicycle with a basket in the front, a rearview mirror, a light, and a horn. I was soooo disappointed.

Dad explained, “If you got a real pony— you would be feeding and watering her every day— twice a day even. You would be responsible for cleaning her stall as well as grooming and brushing her every day. Then, we - you and I - would have to store hay in the hayloft and corn in the silo for Macaroni to eat. Now that you know all the work you would need to do to take care of a pony, what do you think about your brand-new blue bicycle?”

“Having a pony sounds like so much for me to do every day. I might not even have time for my house chores or my homework or playing with my friends,” Janet thought out loud.

“You are right, Dad. My new bike will be as much fun to ride and I won't have to take care of it every day,” I said happily

As the Rolling Stones later taught me, “You can't always get what you want/ But if you try sometimes you find/You get what you need”!



## Death From Virus

To me, the people who  
have lived and died during  
this COVID19 Quarantine  
are heroes.

by Ken Formalarie,  
Magnolia Greens

If any lesson comes to us in life it is that no matter what happens life keeps moving on. It will not wait for us to have a “time out” in order to adapt or change. We have to take a deep breath, keep moving, and make change happen! After a while we recognize that loss will be a continual and natural condition of life. No one is singled out for loss, it is random. If we are to survive the harshness of that loss we cannot dwell for long on its singular events. We learn that the true nature of life is harsh! It is survival. Wisdom may very well be nothing more than the accumulation of events in our life which yield to us the ability to anticipate harsh events, cope with them and move on. Wisdom can come at any age. Traumatic events oblige us to grow up fast and grasp it quicker. The more we accept the true nature of life the better able we will be to find ways to pass it forward so that others of our posterity will not flounder.

All of us become veterans of life, with superior strength from experience. In our military, common people will sometimes become extraordinary to us as we witness their strength born of traumatic events that have broken them or even, sometimes, ended their life. Hopefully we learn to venerate them, as we would anyone else who is merely a veteran of life, for their experience which is only ours to imagine. In fact, the more we inhabit the experiences of these extraordinary people the more we notice how our own lives are shaped. The more willing we are to move past or rise above all of the random pain events of life the more quickly we enter a field of profound wisdom. To me, the people who have lived and died during this COVID19 Quarantine are heroes. They inhabit that field of wisdom born from experience. We all have become aware that we have the strength to endure all of the full lessons of life like this, all of which made us stronger to cope with what comes. This strength could not ever again be taken from us! It dwells in us. Today I am grateful for all those around me who have taught me to endure.

Talula A. Guntner, Ed.S., CTC, MCC

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## Why Write?

by Maryann Nunnally,  
Porters Neck

When I was a much younger person, I hit my pillow every night and fell asleep before I could even take four deep breaths. But now in my eighties, I find that it often takes at least thirty minutes or more to reach that alpha state and welcome sleep. Despite a perfect bed that cradles my arthritic joints and raises me up to allow me to breath easy, I find myself fretting and anxious and worrying about things that I cannot resolve. Thus, I have hit on the best solution that I could find; that is to plan what I want to write the next day.

Writing has always released me from the trivial worries that I cannot solve on my own. Sitting down to the computer each morning helps me to not only relieve my anxiety, but lets me get into the joyful stories that I remember from the past. During the sleepless time that I plan out my

writing, I drift into a lovely, dreamy period of self-contemplation and soon sleep overtakes me. The next day it is all there, and I can hardly wait to get my thoughts down on paper.

A friend who writes poetry for a living, tells me that she also plans out her writing just before she falls asleep. And that brought me to asking another friend about her painting. “When,” I asked her, “do you plan out your next painting?” Her answer was interesting, but not particularly surprising, “I often get my inspiration just before I fall asleep,” she said. Then, she added, “It is the perfect time to visualize the colors and shapes that I want to get down on the canvas.”

Why write or create or paint? Obviously, the planning may be the best part of what we do, and if it helps us get relaxed, then we have the added bonus of a good night's sleep.

# Mama Never Did

by Lorraine Gilmore,  
Brunswick Forest

Mama never did say there’d be days like this. Mama never did say much. She and Daddy both worked full time and they were tired when they came home after a long day at work. It may have also reflected lifelong habits of keeping their thoughts to themselves. Words seemed to be in short supply in our house. Sharing thoughts might have stirred up a hornet’s nest of emotions which were better held kept in check.

Mama lived through the Great Depression and two world wars, but neither mama (or anyone else) could see ahead and help me to prepare for the pandemic which began earlier this year. I am grateful to say that none of my friends or family members have been diagnosed with COVID-19, but everyone I know is suffering on some level because of this pandemic.

*People* do need other people if they want to have good physical and mental health. We want to feel connected; we want to inter-act face to face in real time and we crave skin contact. A lot of us didn’t give this any thought to this prior to the lockdown. You really don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone.

Someone I know told me that his father-in-law died because of the virus. Amidst the grieving this death, the family had to deal with the issue of being denied participation in visiting hours or any kind of service. The loss of this comfort was felt by all of them and magnified their grief.

Some of us are in lockdown with a partner or other family member. Somedays this can have a downside. As much as we need to be social, we also need our own space. With all of the stress of our uncertain future, the other person’s fears can exacerbate our own. Sometimes they get bored and come to us with their need for entertainment and we feel unequipped to handle their needs plus our own. In an interview on TV the other day I heard a prominent divorce attorney say that business will be going up for her. Therapists may also see an increase in clients.

I also suspect there will be an increase in attendance at Weight Watchers and Alcoholics Anonymous meetings at the end of lockdown as people are eating and drinking more to relieve their stress. Our fears, doubts, insecurities and lack of control over what’s happening threaten to overwhelm us and we forget how to self-soothe in a healthy way.

As distressing as I find the situation my focus has been on gratitude. I feel intensely grateful that I am healthy and safe in the midst of this unknowing. I am aware of my fears, but I acknowledge them and let them flow past me. I stay in the present and do my best to stay grateful and calm.

Mama never said there’d be days like this. Mama didn’t know.

The following sentences are from songs and are the prompts which inspired this piece:

*“People do need other people.”*  
*“You don’t know what you’ve got till it’s gone.”*  
*“Mama never said there’d be days like this.”*



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# The Car

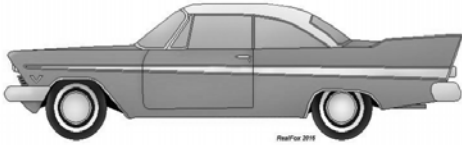
by Ronnie Pastecki,  
Brunswick Forest

It was maroon with high shark fins in the back and low fender skirts that made changing a tire near impossible; a 1957 Plymouth Belvedere “Shark”. It was my father’s work car with a ladder strapped to the roof and a white glove on the standard transmission column. There was no power steering and when you sat in the driver’s seat, you sank about three inches. It was a clunker, but it was mine for the summer of 1970 while my parents went on an extended vacation to visit family.

Following a manual transmission lesson, I stopped at a traffic light. With no air conditioning, the windows were cranked down to provide some relief from the early July heat. A little girl in the car next to us yelled, “Hey Mommy, it’s a lady construction worker!” I was mortified! I was a 19-year-old coed and females held traditional jobs at that time. My Dad promised to remove the ladder before they left.

He also gave me some last-minute words of wisdom including “Don’t fill up the tank. If anything happens, you don’t want to lose your investment in the gas.” He also said to always bring a screwdriver with you in case the car breaks down. “Just take the license plates and walk away.” I, justifiably, had some reservations about the next few weeks.

My parents left and I drove the car to Stony Brook University for a couple of



summer classes. I parked in a typical student parking lot, miles from the nearest building with nary a tree in sight, just endless tarmac. Returning from class, I developed a new-found appreciation for that scorned white cotton glove. That stick was HOT! Sitting in the sun all day made it painful to try and shift gears. The glove made a reappearance after that.

The next couple of weeks ran fairly smoothly until I was asked to go to a party. I took the Plymouth but didn’t count on the need to parallel park this behemoth. A group of young men standing on the porch watched me try and park. Flustered. I stalled the car several times before finally maneuvering it into a spot, not much partying after that.

One day in late July, I got a frantic phone call from my sister who was eight months pregnant and in labor. Could I drive out to her house and bring her to the doctor? I drove the 30 miles out, took one look at her and panicked. I drove like a maniac on the LIE hoping a police officer would stop me and take over but no such luck. The doctor took one look and said go to the hospital right away. My nephew was born later that evening and my parents hurried home to meet their first grandchild.

As for me, I was happy to return the Plymouth to my Dad who was far more appreciative of its finer qualities than I.

## Love

**As Andrew Lloyd Weber said in Aspects of Love:**  
*“Love, can make the summer fly  
Or a night seem like a lifetime  
Yes love, love changes everything  
Nothing in the world will ever be the same...”*

by Gerald Decker,  
Magnolia Greens

Mr. Henslowe in Shakespeare in Love might suggest that love, “is a mystery.” It takes over our mind, our whole person and makes us do silly, often irrational, things just to show that special someone that we want them to like us back. You know it’s a very special day when a friend looks at you with a comforting smirk and says, “I’ve found someone.” You know “it’s too late to turn back now”, according to Cornelius Brothers and Sister Rose. As we know from Jack and Rose in the Titanic and Sonny James, there’s nothing like “young love, first love.”

Movies and music have always provided a guided tour to understanding the concept of love. The Monotones suggested that we look into something called, “The Book of Love.” Frankie Lyman asked us early on, “Why do fools fall in love?” Adele taught us all what it feels like when we


experience lost love. Johnny Mathis showed my generation how to experience love wrapped in the most passionate romantic music one could imagine. When Tia Leone said in Family Man, “I choose us” we all knew we wanted that kind of love.

As for me, I knew the minute I first laid eyes on her. I basically proposed to her that day instead of asking for a date. That first date is memorialized in the great song by Nat King Cole, “That Sunday, That Summer.” It took a while, but it did happen. Two and a half years later. we were married. As we drove off to start our adventure I was reminded of a song by the Temptations. “Lady Soul” sung by Paul Williams:

*“I always knew we’d end up together  
Right from the very start  
And I believe we will make it forever  
It’s written right here in my heart.”*



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**Monthly Meetings:**  
Third Thursday of each month  
Meet & Greet 5:30pm, meeting at 6pm  
Blossoms Restaurant Banquet Room  
Magnolia Greens Golf Course  
1800 Tommy Jacobs Dr, Leland, NC

# Barnwell Women’s Club

## (Part 1 of 3)

by Teena Miller,  
Brunswick Forest

It was another Friday night, and the Barnwell Women’s Club had gathered together to discuss books, recipes and share their support with the other ladies in the group. They lived in a small English village, and the club was comprised currently of five permanent members with additional women selected infrequently to attend a gathering or two to see if they would benefit from joining the tightly knit group.

The group had started over five years ago when Marge's husband Charlie passed away unexpectedly. He had been out riding, and his horse threw him, and he, unfortunately, was dragged for a long distance and died that day. His horse had always been a temperamental animal, but Charlie was an excellent rider, and it was shocking to everyone who knew him. There was speculation that something may have startled the horse, but after an investigation, the Police Investigator Jamison ruled an accidental death. Marge had always enjoyed entertaining, but Charlie was more of a recluse and hated socializing. After his death, Marge decided she needed a support group and started the weekly gathering at her house with several women that she was acquainted. She loved prepping for the ladies to visit and made unique appetizers, snacks, and elaborate desserts that she could never prepare for Charlie. He was a meat and potatoes man and did not appreciate any efforts to change his routine. She found much in common with the core group of women and appreciated the support they provided to each other.

Charlene, another BW member, was an attractive, vibrant blonde in her late 50’s who did regular strength training to stay in shape. Charlene had been married to a serial womanizer. Although it was not a happy marriage, she had two beautiful grown daughters that she often visited, so even though Charlene was aware of his unfaithfulness; she decided it was worth staying in the marriage for the sake of her daughters and grandchildren. Charlene was at the BW Club

with Marge and Candance the night her husband died. Ethel had stayed home that night complaining of an ensuing cold, so she did not hear until the next day that Charlene's husband was found with a typed suicide note on his computer saying his current girlfriend had jilted him. Beside his body was a decanter of wine with what was later identified containing a high dose of OxyContin from his prescription. At first, Charlene was furious that he was so dismayed over one of his female companions that he would kill himself and leave her to find the incriminating note and dead body. Thankfully, the women of the BW Club were there to support her and helped assure her that it would all be okay. Charlene soon realized she was now able to do all the things she had wanted to when he was alive but did not because of the need to keep up appearances of a happy marriage. She was truly free for the first time in many years and quickly embraced her new life and had recently started dating.

Ethel was the oldest at 71 and was widowed only a few years ago when her husband George, who had dementia, wandered out of the house and fell into a ravine adjacent to their property. Ethel and George had both said they would not want to die the slow, agonizing death dementia can bring, so in many ways, she felt it was a blessing but still missed George. She had been at Marge's house when George wandered off, and she felt guilty she had left him. Charlene, who wasn’t at the gathering the night George died, was especially comforting and reassured her that George would have wanted to die quickly and not suffer the indignities of his illness.

The next member to join was Candace. She lived up to her name in every way; sweet, bubbly, and enthusiastic. She was in her early sixties and had recently retired. She desperately wanted to travel and had always saved and

planned for the day when she and her husband Ralph could see the world. She had no children and spent long days at work and taking care of Ralph's needs. The ladies had invited her to join their club about six months ago, and it was just what she needed after discovering a very disappointing fact. Her husband had always promised when she retired from her job as a bank clerk, he would close his small business, and they would finally travel. She had never traveled more than 100 miles from where she was born and raised, but Candance loved to read about exotic and exciting places she would someday visit. After her retirement, she started planning upcoming adventures but was shocked to learn Ralph had no intention of going anywhere. She found out he had taken the money from their joint account and invested in a high-risk portfolio and lost everything. She went into a deep depression, and it wasn't until she started meeting with the BW club she began to come out of her depression.

Several months after she joined the club, she returned home from a BW gathering to find Ralph sitting in his favorite comfortable chair, not breathing. When the police and ambulance came, they took him away and determined that he had choked somehow on an apple core found wedged in his throat. Now Ralph was a greedy man, but the local police Chief Inspector Jamison felt it was odd he would have died this way. There was no evidence that there was any foul play, so Ralph's death was officially declared an accident, and Candace wasted no time burying him and heading off on a 30-day cruise. When she returned to Barnwell, she was a different person with a new lease on life and gave the BW club all the credit for giving her the courage to live her life.

(To be continued in the next edition.)



## Cape Fear Voices Advertising Rates

|                       | 1-Edition | 3-Editions |
|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Full Page             | \$225     | \$600      |
| Half Page             | \$130     | \$350      |
| Quarter Page          | \$70      | \$180      |
| Business Card         | \$35      | \$90       |
| Help Wanted (3 lines) | \$15      | \$45       |

## Classifieds

**Cape Fear Voices**  
Contact us at [editorcfv@gmail.com](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com)

**Teen Scene**  
Contact us at [editorteenscene@gmail.com](mailto:editorteenscene@gmail.com)

### Layout Work

Cape Fear Voices needs intelligent young person who is good with Microsoft Publisher to do layout for monthly newspaper. Pay is very modest but experience is priceless.

### Looking for Creative People

Cape Fear Voices needs creative people to submit articles, pictures, drawings, poetry or short stories for publication in local paper. Ever wanted a place to publish your work or spotlight your creativity? Cape Fear Voices might just be what you are looking for.

### Advertising Sales Representative

Teen Scene Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation dba Cape Fear Voices. Teen Scene, Inc. is looking for an advertising sales rep. Must be responsible high school or college student to work part time. The position is for an independent contractor, working a flexible schedule.

### Seeking Motivated Teens

Teen Scene is seeking motivated teens as writers, editors, layout editors, photographers and business minded teens. Any local teenager, aged 13-19, from any school or homeschool is welcomed to participate. The purpose is to promote writing, communication and business skills. Must have parents’ approval.

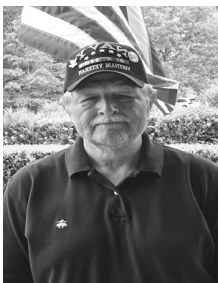




# Cape Fear Voices

## Founders

**Gerald Decker** is a 4-year Navy veteran with four tours to Vietnam between 1968-1971. Gerald earned a Master's Degree from George Washington University and has worked as a U. S. Senate staffer and educator. He is a member of the North Brunswick Kiwanis Club and serves on the Board of the North Carolina Rice Festival. Gerald's retirement hobby is researching and writing about historical events and veteran history.



**Eric Mens** is a 3-year Army veteran who served with the 1<sup>st</sup> Air Cavalry Division and the 2<sup>nd</sup> Armored Division, including a tour in Vietnam in 1967-1968. He is a retired Department of Defense analyst with a Master of Science Degree from the Dwight D. Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, Fort McNair, Washington, DC. Eric is a Past-President of the North Brunswick Kiwanis Club and currently serves as Secretary of the North Carolina Rice Festival. His hobbies include writing and metal detecting.

# Cape Fear Voices

## Submission Requirements

**Cape Fear Voices** intends to showcase the works of the area's many talented local writers, poets, and craftspeople as well as the work of local non-profit organizations (e.g., American Legion, Brunswick Family Assistance, Kiwanis Club, etc.). We are looking for contributors to submit their poems, stories, or articles for publication.

We will not publish any political or religious material and will censor profanity, no matter how good the work submitted might otherwise be.

All submissions must be in Times New Roman 12, single spaced, and include the title and author's name.

Please limit your submissions to 500-700 words. We will print excessively larger works in serial form, but it is the author's responsibility to determine proper cut-off for each piece, keeping in mind the 500-700 word limitation per each submission.

Any photos intended to accompany a submission must be sent as JPG files.

All written works must be sent to [editorcfv@gmail.com](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com) and received by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month for publication in the following month's issue.

### NOTE

As a nonprofit, we can accept your tax-deductible contributions. If you like what we are trying to do here, please consider helping us make it work. All donated funds will be used to cover the cost of publishing the paper and working on programs with teens to promote writing and business skills.

# Cape Fear Voices

## Contributors for June 2020 Edition

### Brunswick Forest



Lorraine Gilmore



Eric Mens



Teena Miller



Terry Monnie



Janet Meuwissen



Jeff Meuwissen

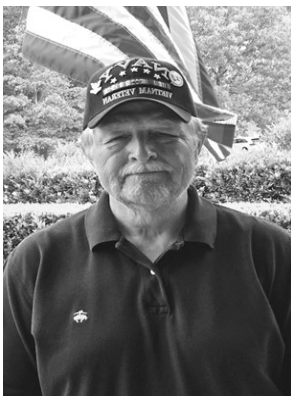


Ronnie Pastecki

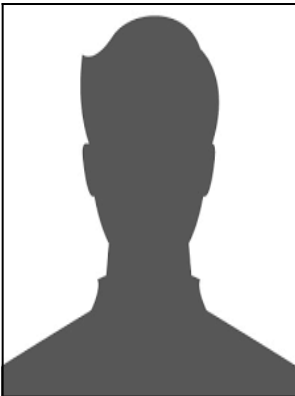


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### Magnolia Greens



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