



Cape Fear

VOICES

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FREE

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<http://capefearvoices.org>

Sometimes the Best Gifts Don't Come Gift Wrapped

by Chuck Schwartz, Guest Writer*, Hilton Head, SC



In the spirit of the August edition of Cape Fear Voices and The Teen Scene, and of my own birthday (August 7), here is an inspirational story themed after a line in my book "Chuck's Lemonade, A Recipe for Inspired Thinking and Living." The line is "Sometimes the Best Gifts Don't Come Gift Wrapped." The story was recently the basis of a post I shared on my Chuck's Lemonade Blog:

~ Take what you get and make the best of your life.

~ Do you ever expect less and accept more?

~ Do you ever take what you get and consider that it may be a gift?

Years ago, when I was much younger and living in New York, commuting in heavy traffic was an everyday occurrence. No matter how much time you left yourself, it never seemed to be enough. Being late was common. I hated being late.

One day traffic was especially heavy. I was late for my meeting, and every second sitting there in the traffic was eating at me. Technology back then wasn't what it is today. Ideas and thoughts were racing through my head. I wanted to write them down or tell someone before I forgot them, but my hands were tight on the wheel, trying to keep me and my car away from the millions of other vehicles driving in the traffic. The time was passing me by, and I was becoming later by the second — and I couldn't do anything about it. Then, just as I began to pick up a little speed, it happened. I saw the yellow traffic signal

ahead of me, and I wasn't going to make it through it. Then red. I thought something like, "well isn't this great, now I will be even later."

But that moment, I also realized that the red light gave me an opportunity to write down my ideas and thoughts and even to take a moment to breathe, just breathe.

Many years later, I came to realize that the red light was a gift. A gift of a moment of calm in the middle of the chaos. A moment of peace. A moment of serenity. Who knows, but that red light may have just saved my life. That red light was a gift!

Sometimes the best gifts don't come gift wrapped.

Thankfully today, I no longer deal with traffic since now I live and work from home on beautiful Hilton Head Island. But on occasion, if I am traveling for work or visiting family or friends, I now see life (and traffic) through very different eyes.

Today's eyes. Today's eyes live life more gracefully. Today's eyes expect less and accept more. Today's eyes take what I get and make the best of life more.

Today's eyes know a gift when they see one. Think about it.

* Chuck Schwartz is the author of "Chuck's Lemonade, A Recipe for Inspired Thinking and Living" and The Chuck's Lemonade Collection of inspirational books, journals, presentations, and more, all designed to help you think better so you can live better. Visit www.chuckslemonade.com and subscribe to receive a daily dose of Chuck's Lemonade.

Men Delegate, Women Do

by Jan Morgan-Swegle,

Compass Pointe



Years ago, I worked for Chase Manhattan Bank. It was my dream job. I started out as a manager and worked my way up to Assistant Vice President. A new Vice President position was created in my area; I worked hard for this, and I wanted it.

My competition was a man who was older than I who had worked in banking for many years at one of our competitors. He was the typical "good ole boy" stereotype. The office opened at 8:00 a.m., but he would arrive at 9:00 or 9:30, newspaper and coffee in hand, and digest both until around 10:00 a.m. This would be followed by two hours of work before he left for a long lunch.

When the Vice President position was announced, he assumed he would be selected and made no secret of the fact that we would all soon be reporting to him.

At that time, in addition to my day-to-day responsibilities, I had 14 major projects to complete. He had two.

To further complicate matters, I had a small stroke three weeks before the Vice-Presidential selected candidate was to be announced. I stayed in the hospital for eight days and then, I returned to work. I had to, I explained to my husband, I wasn't going to let years of hard work be discarded by a medical issue. He wasn't happy, but he understood me.

I came back to work, basically daring the current Vice President to pass me over for the promotion. He didn't. I got promoted to Vice President, and now, Mr. Good Old Boy reported to me. He was not happy. He petitioned to continue to report to the past Vice President and was refused.

There was an important project coming up that would streamline our department and increase our efficiency. I decided to even the years of me doing most of

the projects and him skating without any. I gave him tasks associated with the upgrade and informed him of the tight deadlines and updates I wanted.

He met the deadlines and updates. I was amazed. He didn't seem to be doing any extra work, but things were getting done. After some investigation, it became crystal clear to me that he was delegating the majority of the project to his subordinates. I was livid.

I called him into my office, closed the door, and let him have it. "How dare you delegate this project," I demanded. "I told you what I wanted you to do. I did not tell you to delegate it to your subordinates."

We were both red-faced, nose-to-nose, and very, very angry. "What's the problem?" He demanded. "This is how guys do it. Men delegate, women do."

I was sputtering mad at this point. "Not when they report to me," I told him.

He went on, "Do you think I would give a project that is this important to someone who couldn't do it? Do you think I wouldn't be paying attention to what they did and how they did it? Do you think I wasn't teaching them what to do?"

I have to admit, his comments made me pause. He continued, "Did I miss any deadlines? Did I ignore my day-to-day responsibilities? Is the project going the way you wanted it to go?"

I stepped back. He was right. He didn't miss any deadlines, and the project was on target. His department was running as it should be, so nothing was being sacrificed for the project.

"Jan," he said, "women think they have to do everything. They don't. They have to have confidence in their subordinates that things will get done."

I was still angry. But this time, I was angry at myself. I was so preoccupied with settling the score, I forgot that I had a competent manager working for me.

Years have passed, I changed jobs, but I remembered I didn't have to do it all, as long as I had a good team. I learned to delegate.

Cape Fear Voices wants to hear from you, Our Readers!
We have added a feature called "What Our Readers are Saying" on our Homepage at capefearvoices.org so you can read what others are saying about our paper. Send your comments to editorcfv@gmail.com.
We look forward to hearing from you!

Teen Scene and Cape Fear Voices**Contact Information:**For *Cape Fear Voices*

editorcfv@gmail.com

For *Teen Scene*

editorteenscene@gmail.com

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.

- We are looking for contributors to submit their poems, stories, pictures, 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 500-600 words.

- We will print excessively larger works in serial form, but it is the author's responsibility to determine proper cutoff for each piece, keeping in mind the 500-600 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 and received by the 15th of each month for publication in the following month's issue.

Who Are We?

The Teen Scene Inc. is not affiliated with any other newspaper or organization. We are registered in the State of North Carolina dba (doing business as) Cape Fear Voices. The Teen Scene, Inc. is a non-profit organization that produces a monthly literary publication written by and for teenagers. Teen Scene's mission is to promote writing skills among area teens. Teen Scene also strives to develop the business skills of teens who take an active role in running the publication and managing its activities. As a nonprofit organization, we plan to offer scholarships to teens who wish to pursue a career in journalism. Teen Scene Relationship to Cape Fear Voices Teen Scene is a monthly, free to the public, publication created by and dedicated to teenagers in the Cape Fear Region. Cape Fear Voices (CFV) is also a monthly free publication that showcases the creative works of adults living in the region. CFV will provide an outlet to publicize other regional non-profit organizations that work to improve the lives of children and families in the area. In each instance, we intend to provide a quality outlet to publicize the region's literary and other creative talents.

Our Philosophy:

We will work to publish the highest quality product. For Teen Scene, we will accomplish this by recruiting dedicated teens who are willing to put in the time and effort to develop their skills. Our role in either Teen Scene or Cape Fear Voices is solely to promote and showcase individuals' creative talents in the Cape Fear Region. As such, we will not publish any religious or political work that may otherwise be submitted for publication.

Our Status as a Tax-Exempt Organization:

The Teen Scene, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Code 501(c)(3). Our Employer Identification Number (EIN) is 45-0539098. Donors can deduct contributions they make under IRS Code Section 170. Teen Scene is qualified to receive tax-deductible bequests, devises, transfers, or gifts under Section 2055, 2106, or 2522. We will acknowledge all donations in our monthly publications unless otherwise requested by any donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Our Funding Sources:

We need public support to allow both Teen Scene and Cape Fear Voices to achieve our stated missions and, especially, to make a difference in the lives of students.

Donations may be sent to:*The Teen Scene, Inc.*

Post Office Box 495

Leland, NC 28451

Governance

An appointed Board of Directors governs Teen Scene and Cape Fear Voices. The Board serves in an advisory capacity to ensure that both publications are operated and published in an ethical and accountable manner.

Board members will represent a broad spectrum of current and retired professionals with extensive experience in working with teens, publications, marketing, and leadership. Directors volunteer their time in an advisory role to ensure that our programs most adequately address the proper standards and ethics for fulfilling our mission.

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Individual subscriptions to Cape Fear Voices are available on an annual basis at a cost of \$25, including the cost of postage. If you want to make sure that you never miss a copy of Cape Fear Voices, please send a check payable to:

Cape Fear Voices Subscription

P.O. Box 495

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Job Listing: Looking for a Sales Rep

Teen Scene, Inc of Leland is looking for an enthusiastic Sales Rep to sell advertising space for our monthly newsletter to businesses and individuals. Reps are needed in the Wilmington, Leland and Charlotte areas. As an independent contractor you would set your own hours. We offer an excellent commission and no previous sales skills are needed. Good P/R and communication skills are required and you must be able to provide your own transportation. A perfect opportunity for a teacher, college student or retiree who needs a little extra income.

Our Ad Rates

Is it worth it to you? Obviously we think it is because you will be helping area schools promote writing and have their own page in our monthly publication. We are proud to say that our distribution has grown to nearly 3,000 email copies and a readership of 5,200, and website availability—especially for advertisers.

	Ad Rates			
	1-Edition	3-Editions	6-Editions	12-Editions
Full Page	\$ 225	\$ 600	\$1,100	\$ 1,870
Half Page	\$ 130	\$ 350	\$ 630	\$ 1,070
Quarter Page	\$ 70	\$ 180	\$ 325	\$ 550
Business Card	\$ 35	\$ 90	\$ 160	\$ 280

To place an ad contact us at editorteenscene@gmail.com

We now have 5 area schools working with Teen Scene. If you would like to support the publications for one of those schools, just designate which school page you want your ad to appear.

Pick your school or encourage your school to participate:

North Brunswick High School**Leland Middle School****West Brunswick High School****Brunswick County Early College****Myrtle Grove Middle School****Meet Our Writers**

Frank T. Stritter lives on Holden Beach, NC in the winter and in Upstate New York in the summer. He received a Ph.D. in Education from Syracuse University in 1968 and then joined the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There he was a staff member in the Office of Educational Development and a faculty member in the School of Education and the School of Medicine until his partial retirement in 1997 and his full retirement in 2003. He both organized and taught in numerous faculty development programs for medical, dental, pharmacy and allied health faculty over the years. He taught and advised graduate students in the School of Education. From 1994 until 1997, he directed one of three national Centers for Research in Medical Education. After retirement in 1997 he directed and taught in the Academic Scholars and Leaders Program for the Associa-

tion of Professors of Gynecology and Obstetrics until his second retirement in 2015. Earlier in his life he had served in the US Army and from that experience developed an interest in military history. He, therefore, now researches topics about the contribution of various individuals important in American military history and presents them to anyone who will listen, such as Boy Scouts, high school JROTC classes, history clubs, American Legion and VFW Posts and senior citizen discussion groups. He occasionally writes short essays about those same topics. One topic that has been of particular interest to him is the discrimination suffered during World War Two by groups such as African Americans, Native Americans, Japanese Americans, and female pilots. Yet, many of them served and made heroic contributions to the war effort through groups such as the Buffalo Soldiers, Tuskegee Airmen, Navaho Code talkers, 442nd Regimental Combat Team and



Janet Stiegler - Born and raised on Long Island, New York, I attended college at SUNY Albany, where I focused on foreign languages and studied abroad twice (Germany and the then Soviet Union). I met my husband, Paul, in Albany's Russian program, and we eventually made our way to the Washington D.C. area to work as analysts for the CIA. Over 32 years, we held a series of analytic, managerial, and senior staff jobs while raising two children in Vienna, Virginia. Both attended Virginia Tech (Go Hokies!) and are now well launched into their careers. The CIA drummed into me the need to write clearly and succinctly since our audience—U.S. policymakers, diplomats, and other decision makers—had busy schedules. Bottom Line Up Front followed by well-supported evidence and credible sourcing. However, it did not leave much room for creativity, which has made writing for Cape Fear Voices (CFV) so grat-

ifying. My writing circle inspires me, and CFV provides a safe place to test literary ideas. One of my ambitions is to write a creative nonfiction story about my maternal grandfather, who immigrated to this country before WWII.

Since moving to Brunswick Forest seven years ago, I've also pursued several educational passions—tutoring at the Cape Fear Literacy Council, supporting Cape Fear River Watch's youth education programs, and helping host online OLLI classes. Three years ago, I joined the Women's Impact Network, whose philanthropic outreach seeks to benefit our local community. My husband and I have also done a fair amount of international (Thailand, Australia, New Zealand, Nova Scotia) and domestic (Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, Florida) travel. And last spring, as most travel ground to a halt, we adopted a year-old rescue—Brianna—a proven antidote to the COVID blues.

Marry-Me-Brownies

by Linda Merlino, Wilmington, NC



As a child, in my grandmother's kitchen, I learned about food. A good meal could bring people together, and a delicious dessert spoke a universal language; both were capable of feeding the soul. My father returned after five absent decades, on a cold January day, twenty-four hours following my mother's death. He called during lunch to tell me I was not alone. I was not an orphan. Good timing.

A spring reunion brought us together. Stilted conversation fostered anxiety and a much-needed change of subject. We passed the time awkwardly and chatted about food like strangers speaking about the weather. He missed good Italian meals. My grandmother would have called it karma.

My father knew nothing about me. Nothing about my life, my career, my children, my family, my writing, my friends, my seven-year stint as a caterer, my propensity to desserts, or the food influence of my grandmother, mother, aunt, and mother-in-law in their kitchens, as well as my genuine passion for all things culinary. Cooking for dad became the icebreaker in our complicated relationship, the eventual path to my writer's journey of forgiveness by dessert.

My mother's sister taught me about using food as an absolution. She faced her life, bound by tragedy, with optimism and turned to cooking as therapy, making the kitchen a safe haven. Her sage advice and quick wit fueled my desire to tackle whatever life tossed in my direction. I perfected her ricotta cheesecake, cookies, biscotti, and dozens of other recipes. But no gourmet delight could assuage the ache of abandonment. Something was wanting. A formula for forgiveness cannot be written, measured in cups or in tablespoons.

My father was gone before I found the missing piece of the forgiveness puzzle, the piece that brought everything into focus, the piece revealing self-forgiveness.

In honor of all the kitchens in my life, as well as the future of a cookbook memoir, here is one Eureka

moment! Some recipes have multiple ingredients, and others come out of a box and necessitate only following the instructions. This is a true example of the latter.



Through the years of attendance at athletic and academic events, I would volunteer to bring a dessert. The easiest and most requested were trays of what became *Marry-Me-Brownies*. This brownie christening came during a high school preseason soccer event for parents. As moms and dads carried their coffee mingling with other parents, they would stop for a sweet treat to place on a paper plate.

Conversations overlapped, and pleasantries were exchanged. I often manned the dessert table, refilled platters, and contributed to passing remarks without feeling guilty about not getting stuck in topics involving school politics. A man paused in front of my brownies and put a few on his plate and one in his mouth. As he chewed, he grinned.

"Did you make these?" He asked.

"Yes," I said.

"Will you marry me?"

We both laughed, and the name stuck.

Aha! Take a bag of semi-sweet chocolate chips, be generous, be heavy-handed, and add chips on top of the uncooked, boxed, chocolate-fudge brownie mixture. When baked and cooled, sprinkle with powdered sugar as garnish. Remember to never overlook a food metaphor that nourishes mind, body and a sense of humor. Who *knew* one ingredient could override *complicated*? Simple. Forgive me.

Ode to Molly



by Marianne Ziegler,
Harrington Village, Leland

Molly is a Bengalese Tiger Cat, descendant from an ancient line. I rescued her five years ago from a shelter and now she's mine. I looked all over the cats and kittens, and the choice was hard to make, but I spotted her and knew then and there, that she was mine to take.



Her love is unconditional, and her trust is equally met, but...she doesn't like to travel, like those visits to the vet! "Luring" her into the carrier becomes a game of cat and mouse, These visits can become quite traumatic, for the cat and the mistress of the house!

While the feeling was mutual, she was skittish with all but some; leaving the safety of her shelter for an unknown future to come? But once at home she settled in, she was house broken from the start; and after a period of adjustment, we became one soul and one heart!

Temper

by Allen Hope, Brunswick Forest



We're not in the car two seconds when the argument starts. Shell calls her sister a butt-face and threatens to slap her if she doesn't hand over the twenty-five-cent plastic bracelet Shell says belongs to her.

Caz tells her, "Go ahead, see what it gets you."

Then the tussling starts. I catch bits and pieces of it in the mirror: Shell in her car seat trying to reach across and slap her sister, Caz, with her hands up to protect herself. If not for her seatbelt, Shell might have some luck. When she realizes her arms are too short to make good on her threat, she starts to scream.

"You're the worstest daddy in the world," she says, "If you cared about me, you'd make butt-face give me my bracelet."

"That's enough out of you, girl," I tell her. "You better get control of yourself 'cause I promise you won't like the punishment."

She answers by kicking the back of my seat, her feet like miniature jackhammers trying to pound their way through the upholstery and sever my spine. Shell's only four, and already her temper controls nearly every aspect of her young life. I'm about to pull over and sort it out myself, make some more threats of my own if that's what it takes. But then the kicking stops, and I hear Shell say, "Daddy, I didn't hit her. I promise I didn't."

I'm not sure what to make of it until I turn and see Caz crying in the corner.

"What's the matter, honey?"

"I miss Pearl, Daddy. Can't you take us to Tennessee so I can see her? You have a map. I know you do."

"Listen, Caz," I say. "It's only nat-

ural that you miss her. But even if we knew where she lived, we couldn't go see her." Pearl is Caz and Shell's birth mother. Shell is too young to remember, but Caz, three years older, has at least some memory of her past.

"Please, Daddy?" she begs.

"I'm sorry," I say. "I'll tell you what. When you're old enough, your mom and I will help you find Pearl if that's what you want."

In the months after the girls moved in with us, Caz talked less and less about Pearl. But I guess signing the adoption papers yesterday, coupled with a new last name, has reignited her sense of loss. Just when I think my offer to help is enough to calm her, she starts to cry again.

"Daddy," she sobs, "what if we find her and she doesn't remember me?"

Right away, I realize her pain is greater than I could imagine. I want to tell her a mother never forgets a child. I want to wave my hand in front of her beautiful face and erase her memory Pearl. I want to do almost anything to ease the hurt she feels inside.

Before I can think of something to say, I hear a thud and then a slap followed by a scream from Shell's side of the backseat. In the mirror, I see Shell waving the pink-leather purse she has fished from her door panel. Caz is rubbing her ear with one hand and swatting at Shell with the other. Both girls are screaming now. This is where a good daddy intervenes, steps in before somebody gets hurt. But I keep quiet.

Only when the screams become louder, do I check the mirror again. But there is nothing more to see, save the memory of Pearl fading into the past with each swing of Shell's purse.

Turn Back Time

by Brendan Connelly, Brunswick Forest



We all make decisions in life that we regret. We wish we made better decisions and wish we could turn back time and replay the situation over again. A moment like that happened for me in March 2012. We were still living in Harrington Park, New Jersey, at the time.

As some of you may know, I love walking every day. That evening I went out walking into town. I had decided to leave my cellphone at home because I thought I would not need it. That is a decision I would regret later on.

As I got into town, there was a lot of traffic that evening, so I had to cross the train tracks to the lower part of town. My plan was to cross the street, turn around and then continue on toward the reservoir further into town.

However, at that moment, everything would change!

A train came through town and then suddenly had a problem and stopped. So, I was stuck in the lower part of town.

I then started walking in circles around the police and bus station, trying to find a safe way to walk home. I was unable to do so, as there was only one road I could use. However, it was too busy and treacherous as it

was during rush hour traffic. At that moment, I made the determination that was nothing I could do, so I went back to the police and bus station.

After circling the police and bus station for a while longer, I decided to sit down on the bench outside the police station. I decided I would wait there until either my parents found me, a police officer saw me, or until the train was able to move. I was even going to sit there all night if I had to.

Luckily not long after I sat down outside the police station, my parents came pulling. Fortunately, everything turned out fine. They had to go up through several towns cause the train was blocking several entrances.

As I look back on that night now, I credit myself for keeping calm during a difficult situation and did not try to do something stupid and risk getting hurt. However, I regret not taking my cellphone with me so I could have called home and told my parents what had happened and ask for help, and not to scare them.

In the end, a scary, stressful situation turned out fine. I learned a valuable lesson: Ever since that night, I always make sure I have my cellphone with me at all times. It is always better to be safe than sorry.

The Red Chair

by Sheryl Keiper, Brunswick Forest, Coastal Carolina Writers



The year was 2006. I desperately needed to retire from teaching to take care of my father full time as I was an only child. I selfishly could not care for him in a cold environment. My neighbors from NJ had a sister who lived in Wilmington, NC. I had visited her beforehand and fell madly in love with the area.

It was Easter vacation, and I spontaneously bought a house in a new upcoming development when I visited my friends here in North Carolina.

Being on a strict budget, I could only buy limited furniture on "layaway." I purchased a new bed and mattress, a banana yellow leather sofa, and a palm tree red fabric chair. I resolved to move my Dad's old blue chair from NJ to our new house and put it in his new bedroom for him.

I left one important fact out of this story. When I returned from the Easter break, I neglected to tell my Dad that I was moving him out of his home of fifty-three years to North Carolina with me.

Every Monday all through that spring, I would go into the faculty lounge, and my colleagues would ask,

"Did you tell your Dad you are moving him to North Caro-

lina this summer?"

"No," I said, "I'll tell him next weekend when I make him a nice Italian Sunday dinner."

This conversation continued for the next twelve weeks until the summer.

The jig was up. I had to give my Dad the news.

He did not take it well....

That's when I had to use all my propaganda powers to convince him to go with me.

"Dad," I said, "we will never be cold again. You will have your own room and your own bathroom in the new house. I'll make you your favorite meal – hot dogs and beans."

"You will?" said my Dad.

"Yes, of course, and we can watch the Wheel of Fortune every night. I secretly hated that show, but out of respect for my deceased mother, who was an avid fan of Vanna and Pat, I would watch it with Dad. My parents had watched it together almost every night since its inception in the 1970s.

"Well, maybe I'll go," Dad responded reluctantly.

"And Dad, I've purchased the most incredible red palm tree chair easy chair for you," I added.

"Really," Dad said, "well I'll be darned."

So we moved to North Carolina on a scorching July day with a caravan of cars from a

few NJ friends. The temperature was 103 F at 3:00 am when we pulled into the misty driveway.

We made it safely there.

The next morning Dad settled into his new red chair. He seemed content and quickly settled into a nap.

Ten days later, as I ran an errand, he fell and broke his hip in our new home. He would need hip surgery, and he stayed in a rehab nursing home for the next 10 months here. He passed away in that center there the following June without ever sitting in his new red chair again.

I then "adopted" the chair as my own. The first year after Dad's passing, I dutifully watched the "Wheel of Fortune;" then I switched to watching Jeopardy instead in the red chair. I didn't think my parents would mind. In fact, I added a nightly glass of red wine to my routine TV chair watching ritual.

It helped me with the grief of missing my Dad as our "dream" plan only lasted a mere 10 days.

Since that time, Good Will picked up his old blue chair, and finally, just last week, Habitat for Humanity picked up the palm tree red chair. My deepest hope is that someone is enjoying that red chair, somewhere in a home in North Carolina, maybe watching "The Wheel of Fortune," too....

Do You Wonder About These Things?

by Vivien Monnie, Brunswick Forest



Many times, I wake up around 3:30 a.m., can't get back to sleep until 5:30 - 6:00 a.m. Husband Terry wonders (a) why I can't get back to sleep right away, and (b) what I think about. I believe I must have a lot of adrenaline. Therefore, when my eyes are open, I'm AWAKE. This is extremely useful when the dinosaurs are about to attack or, say, a bear is entering your bedroom. Other than those scenarios I ponder:

When are we going to run out of granite? Seriously, learning in high school earth science how long it took to create granite and almost every kitchen and bath in all the communities reading this and all over the world, how long can the supply last? Ditto for Himalayan salt; soon, there will be beds made of this stuff with 25% off coupons on Memorial Day.

What about flounder? Almost all of the restaurants in Wilmington and the surrounding areas serve flounder in many different ways. Is this particular kind of fish that prolific? Isn't it more difficult to reproduce when it looks like a giant stepped on you?

Let's talk about another concern. Refrigerator water filters! Recently my fridge told me I had nine days left to purchase a replacement. Oh yeah, what happens on day 10? Am I not allowed to push either the water or ice buttons; do the filter police show up? So, I paid the FIFTY DOLLARS for a brand name filter. Who knows what would happen if I installed an imposter? I read the box. Wow, so this is so pure, I'll be walking on water after drinking a few glasses. Maybe I should bathe in it!

Ok, one more thing. When working with the Word program, why does it think it knows what I'm about to say? Does it have mind-reading capabilities? When I'm typing along, all of a sudden, a word I know I have spelled correctly has a blue squiggle under it. Whoa, think of the possibilities. If I hold up the Wall Street Journal stock page to the monitor, will Word type out what stocks to invest in? Now, we're talking...but now I'm exhausted. Time for a nap and perhaps more to ponder!

Father MacKenzie (Part 1 of 2)

by Janet Stiegler, Brunswick Forest



This story was inspired by a mystical trip the author took with her husband to Nova Scotia in 2019 to research his mother's roots.

Paul shoved the marriage certificate into the plastic organizer, then chucked it onto the back seat of the rental car with a sigh.

"I've had enough," he said. "Let's get some lobster and beer."

"Come on," his sister responded as she pulled the car into a small, dirt parking lot. "We've spent less than a day researching our Scottish ancestry.

owners as well as philanderers and several ne're-do-wells. Now she was determined to fill out the branches on their mother's Scottish/Canadian side of the tree.

"Really, Paul," she said, dismissing his whining and peering intently through the windshield. "This must be the church where Mom's parents were married. There isn't another church in East Bay."

"There isn't much of *anything* in East Bay," Paul responded sarcastically. He wished he could share Judy's enthusiasm, but so far, it had been an inauspicious start.



Pretend we're detectives gone back in time to uncover Mom's heritage. It'll be fun."

"Fun," Paul said flatly. He liked the earlier part of the week better—touring Cape Breton Island, hiking the Cabot Trail, and feasting on all-you-can-eat lobster dinners. But Judy was on a mission. She had already documented their father's German genealogy, finding farmers, rail workers, and tavern

According to the few ancestry records in their possession, their mother had been born on the other side of the peninsula that jutted into the Bras D'Or, a hamlet called Scotch Lake. Contrary to the name, it featured neither a lake nor scotch—just a dirt road with a smattering of weathered homes and scrawny trees. The bleakness of Scotch Lake had left Paul deflated. *No,*

he thought wryly, *this side of the family didn't do too much better than the German side.*

But St. Mary's Church did look promising. Small and white with newly painted pink doors, it was a welcome splash of color in East Bay. Giant oak trees stood sentinel around its perimeter, and a large, grassy cemetery stretched out back towards the glimmering lake. On a hill nearby stood a large ornate house. "That must be the rectory," said Judy.

They tried the door of the church first, but it was locked. Paul knocked tentatively, not really expecting an answer. As he turned to go, the door opened with a creak. A middle-aged man dressed in a long, white tunic stood framed in the doorway. His fine strawberry blonde hair, broad, aquiline nose, and pale, almost translucent complexion reminded Paul of his son, who had clearly inherited most of his DNA from the Scottish side of the family.

"Hello, Father," said Judy. "We are visiting from the U.S., retracing our ancestry. Our grandparents were married in this church, and we wondered if we could look inside."

"Of course," said the priest, ushering them into the narthex. "We don't get many out-of-town guests here. I've been around a while, so don't hesitate to ask any questions." Then he drifted silently out a side door as quickly as he appeared.

Candles bathed the church's hand-hewn beams in a warm, golden hue. While Judy wandered along one side of the nave, Paul settled into a pew. The setting sun illuminated several stained-glass windows, creating a rainbow pattern on the opposite wall. Paul was picturing his grandparents taking their vows at the altar when the priest broke his reverie. "Who were your grandparents?"

"Our grandmother, Katie MacKenzie, lost her parents at a young age," Paul explained. "From what we know, she attended a boarding school run by nuns in Sydney but spend her summers with her uncle, Father Michael MacKenzie." The priest's eyes widened. After disappearing briefly, he returned with a book containing biographies of the priests who had served in the local dioceses.

Father MacKenzie's entry of accomplishments ran for several pages. In addition to St. Mary, he led several churches on Cape Breton, including St. Rose of Lima across the bay. "He had it built so the residents there wouldn't have to walk across a sandbar at low tide to come to church here," the priest chuckled. Then he handed Paul an envelope. "Give this to the sisters at Holy Angels Convent in Sydney," he whispered. "They can tell you more about your grandmother."

(to be continued)

Gullah/Geechee Religion

Ring Shout, Rituals, and Reaves Chapel Part Five (Finale)

by Ana Johnson, Cape Fear Community College



The church ended up becoming decommissioned from the AME Church. However, individuals from the area wanted to ensure the church would not crumble to its ending, as it holds so much resourceful history. In 2013, the Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation was formed. Their group was able to secure a partnership with the North Carolina Coastal Land Trust, in which they approached the AME hierarchy to request the purchase of the church and have the rights to restore its structure.

Later, in 2019, the Coastal Land Trust purchased the church through funding provided by the Orton Foundation. From there, the restoration process has continued to build a support-

ive community to assist their vision. "Reaves Chapel is a staple in the community," Beatty stated. Many smaller areas, including Navassa and Belville, held Gullah/Geechee descendants. Therefore, cultural significance has always played an essential role. Losing the church meant losing history.

"The Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation plans on continuing our work with the state, and we are hoping to turn the church into a museum or community center, which eventually, will be open to visitors," Beatty stated. Before quarantine was put into place last March, the foundation held a community function called the "Gospel Brunch." Visitors and community members from all over the Southeastern area attended to raise money and access information about the ongoing

process. "A lot of people were interested, but most of them had to step back and reassess their commitment with funds."

As far as the outside of the church, Beatty mentions how it's in pretty sad shape. Some of the damage is due to termite infestation. "I'm heavy on the restoration process," Beatty stated. "It would be much cheaper if we could tear down the church and rebuild it from scratch, but that is not the purpose of restoring. You lose the significant and historical factors of that." The main focus is receiving proper funding in regards to the pandemic and the past inclement weather seasons. "We're very apprehensive about the church being able to survive another hurricane season, so we are working diligently as possible to see something happen, so it

is stabilized."

The Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation plans to further its outreach by constructing a website soon. It will give individuals an outlet to see how they can assist in putting their best foot forward in a crucial cause. "The big part of this is education," Beatty stated. "Once we are educated and continuously educate about the significance of the church and the impact that it's played, the community will be very receptive to that."

Donations to help with the ongoing restoration process of Reaves Chapel Church can be made by check payable to Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation and mailed to P.O. Box 7253, Navassa, NC 28451 or online at <https://coastallandtrust.org/reaves/>

Summer Surprises

by Janet Meuwissen, Brunswick Forest



Nothin' could be finer than to be in Carolina in the mornin.' And nothing can be Sweeter than to be at Sacandaga in the Summer—Sacandaga Lake in the Adirondack mountains of New York—it is the best time of the year to be there! My dad spent half his childhood living on the lake, and I loved the times he and my mom would take me there to visit. Having grown up in the city of Charlotte, NC, every trip was full of surprises for a kid from the city.

When I was younger, I'd have to wait for an adult to take me down to the beach to play in cold, wet sand and swim in clear blue water, always seemingly frigid from the fresh mountain streams feeding into the lake. Dad showed me how to fish off the dock by putting those slimy wiggly worms on my hook. We always looked for the huge, slow-moving carp under the dock.

Papa had a canoe, and we would glide along, in and out of the coves and bays of the water's edge.

Gramma would create scrumptious lakeside picnics with family and friends. Sounds of sizzling burgers and aromas of pungent condiments would call us to the table.

My grandparents also had a pontoon boat. I felt like such a Big Shot when Papa would let me steer the boat around the lake. But, when Mom wanted to go tubing behind it, Papa was the Captain in charge. Watching my mom bounce up and down on the lapping boat wake was kind of scary to me, but seeing her huge grin calmed me down.

I remember the time we took a full-day boat trip to the Dam Tie-up Event—it took three hours to get there by boat. We picnicked, listened to the music, and chatted with neighboring boaters. My aunt's friend paddle-boarded over to our boat and gave each of us

kids a chance to use her board. I instantly wanted one for myself.

My aunt bought a Yamaha jet ski, and, to my surprise, she let me drive it! I loved revving it up, but not too much. Turning to watch the rooster tail of water spew from the engine was a real treat. It didn't seem like life could get any better at the lake. But it did.

Our family prided itself on finding entertainment that involved interactions with one another and with nature—entertainment that didn't involve a lot of money, just to have fun. Well, of course, there usually was some money involved.

One Memorial Day, we woke up to a huge blue and white blob in the middle of the bay in front of my grandparents' home. It was a floating island, complete with a slide, balance beam, and trampoline. What a surprise! Papa said that one of their community members was able to acquire the inflatable play center at a huge discount. Then community members installed it for all to enjoy.

Now there was a venue right here in the bay where all could watch and be entertained by the fun being created by the kids and grandkids of the community. Balance beam contests. Sliding into the lake. Trampoline jumping, sunbathing, swimming contests from the raft to the docks—trying to stay away from the seaweed. Waving to moms and dads, grandmas and grandpas on the beach; waving to folks as they took off in their watercraft for other parts of the lake.

Last year I had to wave goodbye to all those surprises on the Sacandaga. Gramma and Papa moved to North Carolina, away from my childhood vacation wonderland. But I still have my memories of that mountain lake, and now I dream of surprises to come in their coastal Carolina home in Brunswick Forest.

A New Awareness

by Eric Mens, Waterford



Thank God, I'm graduating in June.

Shortly after classes started in September 1966, I moved into a friend's house to complete my senior year. The atmosphere in my stepmother's home had become increasingly toxic. I had moved in with her to escape my father's home and his latest marriage. 'Ma' was a devout Jehovah's Witness. Despite her protestations, she helped me early-enlist in the Army. I would report for induction the day after my June graduation and two weeks before my 18th birthday.

I had always been an A/B student. But I had started to wear my hair long and hung out with my fraternity brothers on weekends, usually on unchaperoned camping trips or at a lakeside cottage. That meant lots of underage drinking, late nights out, and an unhappy stepmother trying to raise a delinquent son five years younger than me. The Army was my ticket out of a town that I had grown to despise.

One school morning, standing at my locker, I turned to my friend JC and said, "I'm quitting school and hitchhiking to San Francisco. I'm done here."

"What?!" he exclaimed. "Are you nuts? You are not doing that! I'll talk to my parents tonight. You'll move in with us."

And so, I did. 'Ma' did not resist or complain when I told her that a friend and fellow Scout had invited me to live out my senior year with his family.

That semester I signed up for an Art Class to complete my list of electives and required courses.

My instructor, Mrs. JP, would be my photography teacher. In the eyes of a 17-year-old, she was a gorgeous, long-legged, dark-haired beauty. Her long hair swishing about her shoulders as she walked about the school captivated me. I was in love.

Unfortunately, she was married to my English teacher—a retired senior enlisted man. Mr. P treated his wide-eyed students with a straight back, no humor, and all business. Sitting in his class, I daydreamed about HER and how she deserved much better than him—she deserved ME!

Mrs. JP patiently taught me how to use a Weston light meter, operate a Yashica twin-lens reflex camera, and develop and print the black and white film. She set us loose on the school campus to begin our assignments.

Wandering around the campus, I struggled to find worthy material. Each week, my classmates would show and talk about the shots they had taken—mainly of students involved in school activities.

As the semester's end neared, I panicked. Mrs. JP wanted to publish our work in the school's annual Art Bulletin—a compendium of student photos, poems, and short stories. I had nothing to contribute.

I wandered about the wood-fringed campus and discovered a long row of rusty barb wire stretched along a collapsing stone wall. *Perhaps the farmer had laid the wire to prevent critters from harassing his herd of cows.* Framed against a gray, cloud-swept sky, the scene reminded me of the WW I frontlines that I had seen on television documentaries. I took several shots.

I discovered that by laying down on the floor in the auditorium, an empty and dimly lit row of seat supports looked like a row-upon row of Roman or Grecian arches. I snapped away. At JC's girlfriend's house, I discovered that laying down beneath the chandelier gracing her hallway, I could get a star-shaped perspective of the brightly lit chandelier.

Hours after processing film and printing photos, I had several shots that I felt pretty ambivalent about. They provided a unique perspective through my eyes, but I wasn't sure how Mrs. JP would react.

Handing her the prints, I watched her reaction closely. Choosing the images described previously, she looked at me and said, "You've got a unique perspective, Eric. A good eye. These are great! All three will go into our Art Bulletin."

My heart soared. *Wow! She likes what I did!*

"It would be a shame if you didn't follow through on your creative talents," she continued.

I was, indeed, in love.

It Was the Time of the Year When...

by Gerald Decker, Magnolia Greens



...in the Summer of 1967, I realized my playing days were over. The Summer of '67 (*The "Summer of Love"*) was a time for the ages, and we just didn't know it at the time. As T. S. Eliot said, "We had the experience but missed the meaning."

While I had great fun in high school, I never spent much of my time reading or studying. You see, I was one of the cool guys who already knew everything. Because I was already 18 when it was time to graduate and perfect war bait, I was allowed to graduate with my class like I was a real scholar. However, within days of graduation, I realized that things were different. All my friends had scattered to all parts of the world. Everyone was planning for college or summer vacations. Going to college wasn't really an option for me at that time. I certainly didn't have any money for a vacation.

Reality and the world seemingly exploded in front of me. I was completely unaware of world events and unprepared to react to them. People were "Going to San Francisco" with flowers in their hair, young men my age were going off to war and dying, riots and civil unrest were everywhere, representing every cause imaginable. The group Buffalo Springfield released their now-iconic song, "For What It's Worth," which us a hint of what was to come:

"There's something happenin' here, / What it is ain't exactly clear / There's a man with a gun over there / Tellin' me I've got to beware / I think it's time we stop, hey what's that sound / Everybody look what's goin' down / There's battle lines being drawn / Nobody's right, if everybody's wrong"

Frenzy engulfed the Haight Ashbury district of San Francisco in the spring and summer of 1967. Thanks to a song by Scott McKenzie, "gentle" people were headed to San Francisco with "...flowers in their hair." He told us in the words of that song:

"Summertime will be a love-in there / In the streets of San Francisco / Gentle people with flowers in their hair."

As it turned out, San Francisco was about the only place for love and flowers.

During this "Summer of Love," there were a reported 128 cities that suffered from riots and civil disorders. Detroit and Newark were arguably the worst of these. Altogether, rioters struck 114 cities in 32 states. There were 88 deaths, more than 4,000 other casualties, and 12,000 arrests. The cities most affected were Wilmington (DE), Toledo, South Bend, Grand Rapids, Pontiac, Milwaukee, New Haven, Providence, Saginaw, Flint, Portland, and Cambridge (MD).



The theme of a 1967 Arlo Guthrie tune, "Alice's Restaurant," was draft evasion. Virtually every undergraduate dormitory had a collection of leaflets providing tips on how to get rejected at Selective Service physical exams. One suggestion was to "Arrive high." Many draftees did just that. Quite a few young men went to Canada. Neither of those options was ever a consideration for me.

My summer was more of looking for any other work I could get. It never occurred to me that local businesses were not hiring recent high school grads because they would soon be going to the military. It was a time of high anxiety for me. I realized that, at that moment, that I had no future on the path that I was on and that I was only "Blowing in the Wind."

It didn't take me long to figure out that there was only one acceptable option for me. In late July, I went to see a Navy recruiter. By Aug. 27, 1967, I was sworn in and on my way to Navy boot camp. My summer of love ended with 4 am reveilles and long marches. August 1967 was the time of the year when I realized my education was just beginning.

If We Are Not Careful...

by Veronica Pastecki, Guest Writer, Saratogo Springs, New York



Recent events reminded me of a lesson I had learned and stored away. It came by way of advice from a Muppet. Yes, that's right. A Muppet. With changing circumstances in our lives, my husband and I decided to sell our lovely winter home in North Carolina. It was a whirlwind experience, with two offers on the second day of showings. Both bids were for the same price. We chose the cash offer. Our buyer wanted to quickly conclude the process, so the standard requirements of inspections were to be within ten days and closing the following week.

My husband and I scrambled to complete minor repairs, box up donations, and discard items. Next, we focused on packing and arranging for the furniture and items to head back north with us. Then, the boom fell.

Eight days in, the buyer backed out. He was only purchasing our beloved home as a rental property. His accountant deemed it would not be as profitable as initially thought. Shaken by the experience, we harbored relief that our warm and friendly tiny enclave of neighbors would not be inflicted with a revolving door of new tenants. The realtor reached out to the other buyer. "Don't worry," she promised, "We'll sell this house again." *Easy for her to say.*

Our thoughts and emotions flooded in. Would the other buyer still be interested? Had they found another place when ours was not available? Does this mean that we would need to stay longer than planned? With pressing obligations in NY, should we leave and come back when the house sells?

The phone rang. Hallelujah! The second buyer still very much wanted our home but wanted the furnishing included. But much of the furniture was now gone. Would the buyer be okay with that? Should we re-evaluate our belongings? Would any of these items enrich our lives?

An essential line from a children's movie, *The Labyrinth*, came to mind. This was a Jim Henson classic starring David Bowie as the Goblin King and Jennifer Connely as an unhappy teenager coerced into babysitting her baby brother, Toby. In a fit of pique, she wished that the Goblin King would take him away. Bowie had happily done so. But Bowie was not my focus.

When the young heroine searched desperately to locate Toby, she met a strange, hunched-over old woman. Lad-

ened with all of her possessions, high upon her back, she has carried this burden, watching it grow as she amassed even more things throughout her life. She warned the youth:

"Beware, if we are not careful, the things that we love to own begin to own us."



The Junk Lady from Jim Henson's "Labyrinth" (1985)

That advice kept ringing in my head as I looked at the accumulation of items before me. Furniture purchased thirty years ago, still in excellent condition, was loved not just for its style and functionality. Instead, because it was given as a gift from my husband's parents. Each item before me had a history, the dining room set was a gift from my grandmother, and the wall unit was the first big purchase that we had saved to buy. Money was always tight when we first married. This piece signified that we were economically able to enjoy the finer things in life.

There was no extra room in our NY home, and even if space could be found, our styles and tastes had changed over the years. Memories associated with these home goods would not fade. It was time to let things go.

We would miss our close-knit community of friends and our warm and sunny winters in NC. The furniture would go to the new owner, an active military man who probably had limited space for personal possessions. We wish him well in his new home. May he enjoy the furnishings as much as we have.

Before heading north, we cleared out the last things. I came across a book by Marie Kondo that my daughter had given me. "Look at an item and if it does not spark joy, remove it from your life." Advice not that different from that sage Muppet seen ages ago. After contemplation, I tossed it into the library's donation pile.



These pictures are from Zierikzee in the province of Zeeland, Netherlands. Photo Credit: Claire Boon, CFV Advisory Board





THE TEEN SCENE

Tomorrow's Voices Today

SUMMER EDITION

Teen Scene Staff

Editor

Gerald Decker

Lead Layout Designer

Giancarlo D'Alessandro

This Month's Writers

Gabby Hamilton

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A Message for Brunswick County School District:

Welcome Back!!!

Each school is planning a special welcome back for their students. We are excited to have all of our students back five days a week.

Leland Middle School Welcomes You To A New School Year!

by Dr. McDuffie, Principal

As the time approaches for students to return to school, I grow more excited each day. I am looking forward to seeing each student and staff member. A school is just a building when students and staff are not present. I certainly have missed each of them! I am looking forward to meeting my rising 6th graders, new, and returning students. This year is going to a year to celebrate! We have overcome quite a bit last school year. This demonstrates our tenacity and will to be the best. Nothing can stop us!

Thank you, parents, for sending Leland Middle School the very best possession that you have-your child! With your help, we are going to continue to prepare students for success.



Author Kurt Vonnegut on Learning New Skills

Reprinted from University of California at Santa Barbara

The Media Center is committed to supporting UCSB students in their professional endeavors. It also encourages you to try your hand at anything creative regardless of your skill level or your ultimate goal.

Not sure who said this but, this is what we're talking about:

"When I was 15, I spent a month working on an archeological dig. I was talking to one of the archeologists one day during our lunch break and he asked those kinds of "getting to know you" questions you ask young people: Do you play sports? What's your favorite subject?"

And I told him, no I don't play any sports. I do theater, I'm in choir, I play the violin and piano, I used to take art classes. And he went WOW. That's amazing! And I said, "Oh no, but I'm not any good at ANY of them." And he said something then that I

will never forget, and which absolutely blew my mind because no one had ever said anything like it to me before: "I don't think being good at things is the point of doing them. I think you've got all these wonderful experiences with different skills, and that all teaches you things and makes you an interesting person, no matter how well you do them."

And that honestly changed my life. Because I went from a failure, someone who hadn't been talented enough at anything to excel, to someone who did things because I enjoyed them. I had been raised in such an achievement-oriented environment, so inundated with the myth of Talent, that I thought it was only worth doing things if you could "Win" at them."

Source: <https://mediacenter.as.ucsb.edu/author-kurt-vonnegut-on-learning-new-skills/>

Classic Study Skills That Every Student Should Master

(From Cape Fear Voice's website)

- ~ Effective Reading
- ~ Memorization
- ~ Note Taking strategies
- ~ Test taking skills
- ~ Time Management & Organization

courses be included in the students' curriculum formally or implemented as workshops for students.

Question - *If I practice dancing or playing the piano, or running a football will I get better at it?*

Yes, of course you will. Surprisingly, the same applies with writing. What's the best thing about writing practice? No uniforms are required. Just a pencil and some paper. And of course, there is always the burden of knowing that nonwriters want to be you. We have trainers to help you with the sport of writing. It's free. Contact us at editorteenscene@gmail.com.

Check! All of that will be covered in the Study Skills Classes offered free to all middle and high school students by The Teen Scene. It doesn't matter if you attend a public, private, faith-based, or homeschool. We have room for you. Compliments of the Brunswick Arts Council, Draw Fire, and other local donors.

Regarding the very important role of study skills in learning, academic researchers have recommended that 'study skills' and 'study habits'

Hello from England

by Gabby Hamilton, 11th Grade, Manchester, England

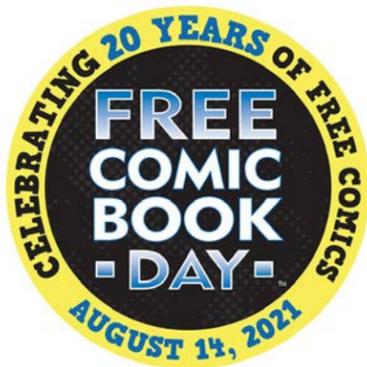


My name is Gabby, short for Gabrielle, and I am a 16-year-old currently living in Manchester, England. I am about to go into 6th form (11th Grade). I am happy with the opportunity to write for The Teen Scene. I do have a lot to say, and now I have a place to share with you the experience of growing up in England.

I struggle with a lot of the same issues as other teens around the world, but I also deal with the fact that I recently came out as gay. Writing might just prove to be a very healthy outlet for me as I am anxious to share my past and my struggles discovering myself at a time when all the other high school struggles and social events come into play. Actually, accepting who I am has blessed me with a peace of mind and mental calm that has been absent for a while.

I hope people, especially the teens, will relate to what I write. I hope this can be a place for exchanging ideas about how we all have our struggles to succeed in class and feel good about ourselves in public. I am looking forward to sharing my experiences of living in the UK.

Right now, I am on the longest school break I have ever had. But when I was in school, I went from 8:30 in the morning until 2:50 in the afternoon, wore a uniform, and took five classes (English, math, science, art, and food tech). This coming year will be a little different. In college (11th Grade), there is no uniform and only courses I want to take. My hours will be very different. I don't know them yet as college starts in September. Another big change for me will be that I'm not required to stay on campus when I'm not in lessons. In college, I will be taking criminology, sociological, and public services.



Find a participating comic shop at <https://www.freecomicbookday.com/storelocator>

Teen Humor & Jokes!



Q: How does the moon cut its hair?

A: E-clipse it.

Q: What starts with E, ends with E, and has only one letter in it?

A: An envelope

Q: What do you call a pig that does karate?

A: A pork chop.



The Lost Art of People Watching

by Alan Sturrock,
Wilmington, NC
underground,
the traveler waits;
and waits,
on a train,
measuring myriad miles
on a third rail...

perfect strangers stand,
mesmerized by tiny
cell-phone screens,
similarly waiting
for that third rail
'thrill' to arrive...

with their free hands
they scroll through
personal circuses,
lost in small screen trances;
a bubbled reality,
unshared, alone...

An older woman,
nose in her Kindle
flips a station instalment
again, again, and
again...

A homeless man
sleeps on a bench;
inhaling the underworld's
darkness, soon, to be
oblivion...

the train rumbles into
the dimly-lit station,
gasping, squealing,
into deliberate slowness...

faceless faces exit;
more faceless faces enter,
led by their small screen
noses...

the doors close, not
once but twice;
the train slowly, surely
trundles into another tunnel
of lost people watching;
fading to social media
black...



(below) a picture of Hurricane Florence taken from space.



Laughing in the Golden Years Volunteer Firemen Field Days

by Maryann Nunnally, Porters Neck



In the fifties and early sixties, our area volunteer firemen had a parade each summer and some kind of a festival afterward. The year I turned 16 and my brother, Wally, 15, we were recruited to play in firemen parades by five different volunteer fire departments. Wally was a very talented trumpet player. I was an adequate clarinetist. We came as a team, so if they wanted Wally, they got me, also.

Each fire department had an annual field day, and we played our instruments and marched in the different local parades. There were no rehearsals, and the music was always Stars and Stripes Forever or something as simple as that. The director was usually a man known for leading a church choir or a school band, who never required much from us musicians. We were assigned uniforms, mostly a high-necked jacket and a pair of creased pants. Since neither of us had a driver's license, my parents chauffeured us around to the various towns where we needed to be.

That summer, a nearby larger city invited all the area volunteer fire departments to join together for one big field day. Wally and I were pretty excited when we learned that the bands would be given prize money for the music and the ability to march in drill formation. For the first time, we were asked to show up a day ahead of time and practice marching. It was a piece of cake for Wally and me because we had marched in our school band all year long. We definitely had experienced marching in drill formation.

On the morning of the joint field days, our parents loaded all our uniforms in the trunk of their old Ford car and drove us to the city. Parked under some shade trees near the reviewing stand, we got ready to march in five different bands. We decided that we would only march with a band when it was getting close to the reviewing stand and then drop back and march with the next band that we belonged to.

Mom held up a blanket, we changed into the required uniform, ran out to the street, jumped into formation, and managed to march in all five of our bands. At the end of that day, three of our bands had won first, second and third prizes. The directors split the money up between the band members. Wally and I cleaned up. It had been a successful endeavor.

Later that summer, our own volunteer fire department had a field day in the town. Once again, Wally and I marched in the parade, then ran home to change into our summer clothing. Wally was quicker than I and left the house to go to the festivities on the town green. Because I was meeting my best friend there, I took my time and walked upstreet to meet my friend.

Just as I stepped onto the Village Green, Wally appeared in front of me. He had a terrible painful look on his face. Blood ran down from his head to his chin. I passed out dead away. The last thing I remembered hearing was, "Pie, pie, pie," but I was gone.

When I came to, three firemen were bending over me. One of them was trying to give me a drink of water. Each tried to tell me that Wally had been in a pie-eating contest, and a rotten kid had come by and pushed Wally's head in the pie. What I thought was blood was actually cheap, reddish-brown pie filling. When everyone around me had a great laugh over the incident, I had time to talk to my brother. The look of pain on his face was really anger as he plotted out how he would get revenge on the kid who shoved his face into the pie.



Before I wrote this piece, I called Wally to ask him if he remembered the summer of the bands and the pie in his face incident. Not only did he remember, but he could tell me how much money we made that summer - thirty dollars each. He even remembered the name of the boy who pushed his head into the pie. Did Wally get revenge on him? "No," he said, "Mom made me feel so sorry for that kid that all I could do was ignore him whenever I saw him. Besides that, Mom convinced me that he was poor, and after all, you and I got rich that summer having the time of our lives."

The Story of My Hurricane Florence

by Patricia Yokley, Wilmington



The weather forecast was bad for about a week, saying it would make a direct hit on my city, Wilmington, NC. It turned out that Hurricane Florence made that direct hit farther north, but what a day it was.

I awoke on Friday morning to find water coming in through the window next to my mattress at the Cape Fear apartments in downtown Wilmington. You see, my windows were big - almost to the ceiling. I called and texted a couple of friends as I had my morning coffee. My friend Jonathon came down to my apartment. We discussed the predictions of a bad, bad storm.

As we sat there, I began to feel a little afraid, antsy perhaps. The wind was blowing tremendously from nearly all directions. For those of us who decided to "ride out" the storm, it was a day to remember.

After breakfast, we learned that tenants were gathering in the second-floor ballroom. I went down around noon.

The storm became worse - much worse. The building, all nine floors, seemed to be shaking. I was okay until I learned that only one manager had stayed for over 100 tenants. Many of the people who lived there were elderly. A lot were disabled. She (Cindy) said she just couldn't leave us alone with no help.

The electricity had been cut, and I saw Cindy looking a bit frantic. I offered to help her, and I helped refurbish the snack table. Many were sitting, sleeping, or sitting around worrying. Some had lanterns, and I had my trusty flashlight.

About 2pm, a window blew in suddenly, cutting a woman on

her arm. Shards of glass went everywhere. The next thing I knew, firemen came and said we had to leave the building immediately. The wind was incredible.

I went up to Jonathon's room on the seventh floor. He said okay, he would leave, and I left him there. As I went down the stairs, it was pitch dark because they had cut the electricity. We led people down the stairs one by one with a flashlight in hand.

Reaching the lobby, we had to wait to be bussed to a shelter. Getting on the bus, I could not believe the amount of water, and the wind coming from all directions. That day, the state of North Carolina had eight BILLION gallons of water dumped on it.

We all piled onto buses and went to an elementary school that had been turned into a shelter called Codington. It was nice. The next day, we went to the nicest shelter in Wilmington called Hoggard. I met some amiable people, and there were folks from the Cape Fear apartments.

One girl I had met bantered with me about fashion and amusing other things. Our joking took away some of the stress and trauma. I liked her and hoped to see her again after the ordeal was over. I also got to know better some of my neighbors at the Cape Fear. There was a mysterious woman from Bosnia Herzegovina. She spoke in a very soft voice, telling her story - the story of her life. And then there was Jonathon - supposedly my friend. So incredibly selfish. Once he actually let me see his cell phone for news, as I had limited access.

We stayed at the shelter for about 10 days. The Governor came to visit, and he took note of some personal stories. Stories of what people had lost and their plans for the immediate future. I took a photo and told him what an effective job the rescue and security personnel were doing.

When we got out of the shelter, I went back to the Cape Fear to check on my things. It was very, very hot, and the sun was blistering. The fire alarm was sounding continuously. I stood at one of my big windows and felt a cool breeze. Afterwards, I packed my bags as quickly as I could and wheeled them out.

Cardinals

by Maryann Nunnally, Porters Neck

A male cardinal flutters down to my backyard feeder
Sporting his spring time colors;
A red so resplendent that he cannot
Possibly camouflage himself against the newly leafed
out trees.

Repeatedly he calls for a female in his
Shrill incessant cell phone tones.

Soon she flies onto the feeder
Lands one level down.

A slightly smaller brown bird,
Plain, despite her shiny orange lipstick.
The male carefully chooses a black-oil sunflower seed,
Bends down and daintily feeds his hoped-for mate.



From the window I call out to her:

“Don’t be a fool!

He only wants one thing from you,
And when he gets it

It will be eggs and fledglings all summer.
You can get you own seeds.

Remember how he drove you away all winter.

Fly now while you’re still a free bird.”

**Delfino Vineyards,
Roseburg, OR**
photos by Jim Delfino



(below) Sunset over Delfino Vineyards



(above) Jim Delfino picks Tempranillo grapes during harvest

Tempranillo is a black grape variety widely grown to make full-bodied red wines in its native Spain. Its name is the diminutive of the Spanish word, *temprano* (“early”), a reference to the fact that it ripens several weeks earlier than most red grapes.



(above) These grapes are soon to be harvested!

Letting Go and Moving On: The Story of a Weaving Loom

by Sherrod Sturrock, Wilmington, NC



In the late 1970s, I was living in North Georgia in a log cabin on a mountainside. We had a large garden, and I canned, pickled, made jam and preserves, baked bread – a poster child for ‘back to the land.’ There wasn’t a whole lot to do there, so we learned to “have fun on a flat rock,” as the saying goes.

I was a new wife then and found the notion of living in the mountains quite romantic, in an Annie Dillard sort of way. I decided I wanted to learn to weave, grow herbs, and raise bees. I’m proud to say that I did, in fact, do all three. My neighbor, an experienced beekeeper, helped me set up a hive and patiently taught me how to take care of them. My husband dug up a little patch behind the cabin for my kitchen herb garden where I could plant ‘parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme.’ And I ordered a Harrisville four-treadle floor loom kit from New Hampshire.

When the kit came, I assembled it all by myself but had no idea how to start. About five miles down the valley lived an older couple who had a farm – Miranda and Harry Brown. Mrs. Brown was a master weaver and agreed to teach me. I set up my loom in her home and went several times a week to weave with her.

I will never forget one cold, bleak January day. I had a young girl with me, the granddaughter of the local tavern keeper who was at loose ends. We worked and chatted all morning. When it came time for lunch, Mrs. Brown brought us into her warm country kitchen. She filled a saucepan halfway with cooking oil and turned it too high. Then she peeled and sliced up several large potatoes from her storage room, transforming them into homemade French fries, and dropped them into the hot oil.

She pulled three beef patties out of the freezer and dropped them on top of the potatoes. And then she pulled three apple hand pies out of the freezer, put them on top of the patties, put the lid on, and started setting the table. I was nonplussed by the technique, but it was the best meal I had eaten in a long time. Everything was raised right there on the farm. That little girl could have eaten the whole thing twice over, I think. She was just beaming. It was a magical day woven together with work and stories, food, and laughter.

Mrs. Brown died the following summer, and I brought my weaving loom home, where I did manage to finish very homely, uneven curtains for my little log house. When I left Georgia, I left that life behind and never wove again. But I carried that loom with me through the years, through many moves and four states. It spent 30 years folded up, with my last unfinished project still strung on it, in a corner of the backroom of the garage. I thought that when the kids were older or gone, or when I retired and had time, I might pull it out. But as I cleared out the accumulations of a lifetime in preparation for the next chapter of my life, I came to terms with the fact that I would never weave again. That young back-to-the-land, carefree hippie has been gone for a long time. So, I reluctantly advertised the loom on Freecycle, determined to find the right person to inherit this symbol of lost dreams.

And they found me. Homesteaders, full of enthusiasm, bearing Swiss chard and blackberry jam, happy and excited about the life they are creating. They were as thrilled to get the loom as I was for them to have it. And I moved forward into retirement a little lighter but a little nostalgic for that young girl with such simple dreams.

The Gullah/Geechee Language and Its Fundamental Roots That Influenced the Present (Part 1 of 2)

by Ana Johnson, Cape Fear Community College



By developing effective communication, each culture can relate to different customs, beliefs, ideals, etc. The Gullah language is one of the traditions that make up the rich Gullah/Geechee heritage. Its history brings us back to around the 18th century. The transatlantic slave trade was actively taking place during this period. The British were the foremost perpetrators that took the initiative to enslave many Africans for their personal use. Many African languages were spoken, which included Fula, Yoruba, Igbo, Twi, etc.

One of the methods slave owners enforced to maintain control over enslaved Africans was mixing their diverse languages to conveniently prevent consulting. However, slave owners did not keep in mind how enslaved Africans could quickly strategize what they were being taught (English) and incorporate it into their language with their values ingrained in them. When enslaved Africans came to the coast, their language continued to flourish within private quarters. As a result, this came as a benefit to the Gullah/Geechee descendants as they could assimilate their culture.

The Gullah language stemmed as an English-based Creole that would soon take over the Sea Islands. Some saw the language as the “Broken” form of English. However, their state of commu-

nication had its own set of grammatical rules, word order, and ancestral meanings that preserved Africanism. The perception of the language is not dead as many would say, but rather, evolved into different forms as each generation takes something to make their own. Therefore, carrying out cultural pieces of information onto the next journey.

I spoke with Sunn m’Cheaux, an artist, educator, and advocate, about what the language means to him. Since 2017, he has been the first and only Gullah language instructor at Harvard University. His main goal is to “Teach a curriculum based on extensive research and his own personal Gullah/Geechee knowledge and experience.” As a Gullah/Geechee native himself, raised in Charleston, South Carolina, he experiences first-hand the impact of understanding the values relating to his culture.

“Because the environment was so hostile, many of the plantation owners would leave them secluded for many periods; it was considered free time,” m’Cheaux stated. “It gave them the time to be able to cultivate new customs and also hold onto old customs which included preservation of language.” He mentioned that just like any other form of communication in other countries, the Gullah language helped maintain the descendants’ integrity.

(To be continued)

Your Community



Military News



VFW Buddy Poppy Program

Reprinted from the VFW Media Guide

Before Memorial Day in 1922, we conducted our first poppy distribution, becoming the first veterans' organization to organize a nationwide distribution. The poppy soon was adopted as the official memorial flower of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, as it remains today.

During our 1923 encampment, we decided that VFW "Buddy"® Poppies would be assembled by disabled and needy veterans who would be paid for their work to provide them with financial assistance. The next year, disabled veterans at the Buddy Poppy factory in Pittsburgh assembled VFW Buddy Poppies. The designation "Buddy Poppy" was adopted at that time.

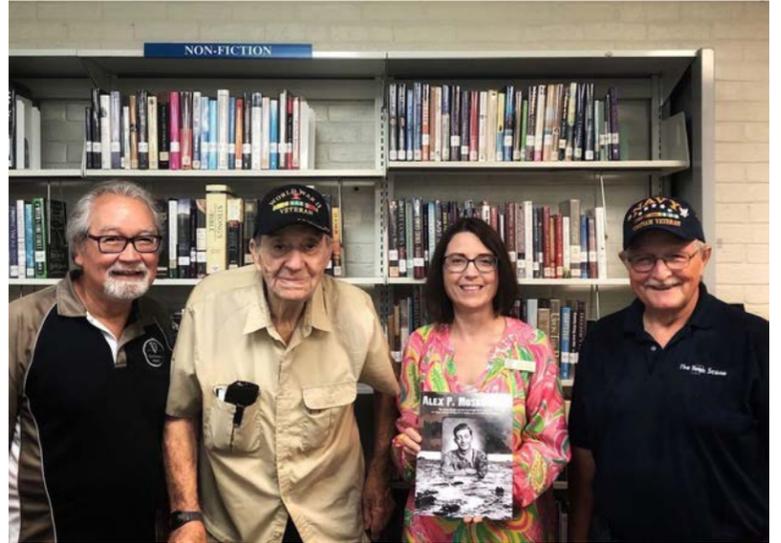
In February 1924, we registered the name Buddy Poppy with the U.S. Patent Office. A certificate was issued on May 20, 1924, granting our organization all trademark rights in the name of Buddy under the classification of artificial flowers. We've made that trademark a guarantee that all poppies bearing that name and the VFW label are genuine products of the work of disabled and needy veterans. No other organization, firm or individual can legally use the name Buddy Poppy.

Today, our Buddy Poppies are still assembled by disabled and needy veterans in VA Hospitals.

The VFW Buddy Poppy program provides compensation to the veterans who assemble the poppies, provides financial assistance in maintaining state and national veterans' rehabilitation and service programs and partially supports the VFW National Home for Children.

Hear from those who assemble the mighty little flowers in "The Veterans Behind the Buddy Poppy" video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6TUjEMjSZY>.

The Alex Moskowitz Story



(L to R) Eric Mens, Alex Moskowitz, Shallotte Librarian Kelly James, and Gerald Decker

In April 2020, we published a short biography on the life of local WWII veteran Alex Moskowitz. On publication, we planned to make a copy available to all the local libraries. But like everything else at the time, we had to wait because of Covid-19. Recently we were able to meet up with Alex and his lovely wife Carolyn for lunch. Afterward, we stopped by the Shallotte library to make our donation. There we met Kelly James, Manager of the Rourk Branch Library. Ms. James says the book will be available in the Genealogy section of the library. We also presented a copy to the Leland Library.

VFW Thanks Carolina Shores Car Wash

Leland VFW Post 12196 extends its heartfelt thanks to Jimmy Politis, Director of Operations, Carolina Shores Car Wash, Leland for his generous donation to the Post Relief Fund. We greatly appreciate your continued and unwavering support for all veterans in the area!



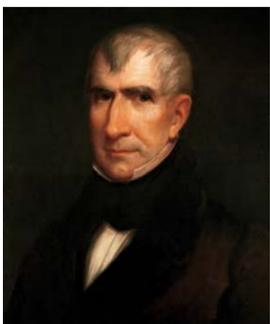
(Pictured above: Gerald Decker, Senior Vice Commander, VFW Post 12196, Leland, and Jimmy Politis, Director of Operations, Carolina Shores Car Wash)



Presidential Trivia



Which first lady of the United States never stepped foot in the Executive Mansion?



William Henry Harrison served for 31 days in 1841. He gave a 2-hour inaugural address in a sleet storm, caught pneumonia and died 30 days later. He never introduced even one piece of legislation. Anna, his wife, stayed in Indiana for the inauguration, awaiting better weather. Thus, she remains the only first lady to never step foot in the executive mansion since it was built.

Which President's daughter was married to the President of the Confederacy?



Zachary Taylor's daughter, Sarah Knox Taylor, was the first wife of Jefferson Davis. She died three months after the wedding from malaria. President Taylor died suddenly while in the White House from over-eating (frozen milk, large bowl of cherries, and many glasses of water) after sitting in the hot sun for hours. Rumors persisted that his wife had poisoned him. An autopsy in 1991 put that rumor to rest.

Which President had an artificial jaw?



Grover Cleveland had cancer in the roof of his mouth, resulting in surgery to remove most of his upper left jaw. He had an artificial jaw of vulcanized rubber. It was kept a secret until years later. The candy bar, Babe Ruth, was named after his daughter. As many men of standing did in those day, Cleveland paid an immigrant \$150 to take his place in the Civil War.



VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS.

Leland VFW Post 12196 meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Blossom's in Magnolia Greens. Dinner at 5:30, Meeting starts at 7pm. For more information, contact us at vfwpost12196@gmail.com or call at 910-408-1934



The Mission of the Brunswick Arts Council is to support, sustain, enhance and cultivate the arts in Brunswick County by making cultural events, arts education and appreciation the arts available to the diverse range of county residents.

We are a community nonprofit working in partnership with NC Arts Council, Brunswick County, Park & Recreation and other businesses and artists to help provide funding for programming, plays, concerts, shows, workshops, festivals, school events and other art activities. Operating "without walls", we hold our own activities in different spaces through the county.

Events in August

August 20

Brunswick Arts Council is hosting the "Restart the Arts Roundtable" luncheon at Inspiration Dance Center in Boiling Spring Lakes. Starts at noon.

Come meet your fellow artists, arts businesses, organizations, educators, nonprofits, arts supports and more. Let's network & find ways to share, collaborate, promote and form partnerships to strengthen the arts in Brunswick County.

\$10 covers lunch. Inspirations Dance Centre, 91 W Boiling Springs Rd. RSVP Mary Beth at execdir.brunswickartscouncil@gmail.com

August 21

Leland Under The Lights Car Show 4 – 9 PM
at Lowes Foods of Leland, 1152 East Cutlar Crossing, Leland, NC



August 23

First Day of Classes in Brunswick and New Hanover County Schools

Grassroots Grants

For arts projects from July 1, 2021 to June 15, 2022

Brunswick Arts Council is the Designated County Partner for the North Carolina Arts Council program in our community. All applicants must contact BAC before submitting an application. We look forward to working with you to celebrate, cultivate and provide community outreach through the arts.

Workshops:	July 10 10 am	Barbee Library, Oak Island
	July 23 4 pm	Harper Library, Southport
	Aug 14 10 am	Leland Library, Leland
	Aug 19 4 pm	Rourk Library, Shallotte
	Aug 27 10 am	SW Brunswick Library, Carolina Shores

Applications: www.brunswickartscouncil.org/grants

Contact: Mary Beth Livers
execdir.brunswickartscouncil@gmail.com

Submission Deadline: Friday September 10, 2021

Cape Fear Voices Wants To Hear From You!

Announcements!

We are happy to announce the Writing Awards Banquet for 2022 has been tentatively set for March 12, 2022. Save the date. Please send us an email to nominate your favorite articles for possible recognition at that banquet. It will be held at the Leland Cultural Arts Center. Please submit your moninees for best stories of the year.



Our website is open for your review. Readers and writers alike, let us know what you think about our paper, good and bad.

- ~ If it's good, we will do more of it.
- ~ If it's bad, we will try to fix it.

People who are not yet a part of this adventure would benefit from your review.



The Live Oak Bank Pavilion opened in July. Located on the riverfront of downtown Wilmington, it has put our town on the national music scene. It opened with soulful band Widespread Panic. Picture sourced from WECT.

This past July, Wilmington opened up an outdoor amphitheater called the Live Oak Bank Pavilion. Able to seat over 7,000 people, it has become the area's largest venue to hear musical acts. Guaranteed to bring in a huge amount of money to the area, some people are concerned because of the potential noise pollution and lack of parking to match this number. Because of its size, the venue also doubles as a beautiful park during the day. Have you seen a show or visited this new spot in Wilmington?

Email us with your experience on the amphitheater and its impact on Wilmington and the surrounding area, with the subject line: "Amphitheater" to editorcfv@gmail.com.



What Our Readers Are Saying!

“This publication is wonderful. You do and continue to do a lot of positive outreach in your community.”
- Karen Fischetti, Leesburg, VA

“Cape Fear Voices gives voice to the avocational writers among us. We all have a story to tell, a perspective to share. How rewarding to have a community publication for the many-layered textures that speak to the human condition.”
- Sherrod Sturrock, Wilmington, NC

“Love it! Your newspaper is spectacular. I love reading it. And it’s really cool to know some of the authors!”
- Ruth Thompson, Success Coach and Peer Court Coordinator, Communities in Schools of Brunswick County, Leland Middle School

“Many thanks for sending...keep up the terrific work!!”
- AS, Wilmington, NC

Celebrations!

Happy Birthday to

Ben Purdum August 29

Bob Czaplinski August 11

Donna Czaplinski August 13

Happy 3rd Anniversary to Steven and Sarah White August 4

(The traditional material for the third anniversary is leather. This rugged and resilient material symbolizes security and sense of touch, just like a marriage needs to be.)



**Family.
Friends.
Community.**

Josh London Ins Agcy Inc
Josh London, Agent
1112 E Cutlar Crossing Ste 104
Leland, NC 28451
Bus: 910-383-1303

We're all in this together.
State Farm® has a long tradition of being there. That’s one reason why I’m proud to support Cape Fear Voices.
Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.®

