Cape Fear VOICES

Providing an Outlet for Creativity in the Cape Fear Region

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http://capefear-voices.org

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The Teen Scene Inc. is not affiliated with any other newspaper or organization. We are registered in the State of North Carolina dba Cape Fear Voices. We are a nonprofit 501(c)(3), funded by advertisements, contributions, and grants. Your support is needed to allow Teen Scene and Cape Fear Voices to achieve our mission and help promote and publish the work of creative minds in the Cape Fear area. We can be contacted at editor-teenscene@gmail.com or editorcfv@gmail.com.

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Spring Break Memories: Triple Bunk Beds and a Whole Lot of Heart

by Sabrina T. Cherry, Assistant Professor of Public Health, UNCW

The morning air was crisp. As my co-lead and I bundled up as best as we could while waiting in one of the university's parking lots, I started to feel a little afraid. What had I agreed to do? Driving six hours from Wilmington to Atlanta with one co-leader and a group of undergraduate students didn't seem as exciting anymore.

Slowly the students began to arrive. Some drove themselves, while others were dropped off by parents, friends, or extended family members. "Act natural," I told myself. What does that even mean, I questioned.

What if we have an accident? What if someone gets hurt? What if they hate the trip … what if they hate me? I worked to silence the noise and prayed for the best.

We loaded the van, shared a few last- minute reminders, and were on our way. The trip started a bit more interactive with music and chatter and laughter. About an hour in, everyone except my co-lead was asleep.

We stopped for a quick bite to eat and made our way to Atlanta. I tried as best as I could to point out all the places I loved and remained in awe of throughout the city I called home for nearly 14 years.

We arrived. We arrived safely! We were welcomed and quickly escorted to our rooms. Triple bunk beds. I'd never seen triple bunk beds. I never knew triple bunk beds existed.

The students piled in one room, while my co- lead and I unpacked our things in the room next door. We were informed we'd be joined by another volunteer - a graduate student - for the week as well. Three young women in one tiny room. With triple bunk beds.

For the next six days, we had early mornings and late nights. We started each morning by helping to prepare breakfast for the women and children living in a transitional shelter. After cleaning the kitchen, we had a few hours to venture into the city and tour historic sites in, as well as around, Atlanta. In the afternoons we returned to welcome the children home from school, help with snacks and homework, and prepare to assist with serving dinner. After dinner, we co- led family- fun or recreation time. After recreation time, we met for our daily debrief along with a group of students visiting from another university. After that daily debrief time, we met with just our group for our own debrief and discussion time. And after that debrief time, my co-lead and I met for our own discussion and debrief, as well as next day, planning time. The week was exhausting, but it was also fulfilling. And heartbreaking. And renewing. And humbling.

For one week, undergraduate students who are braver than I ever remember being gave up their Spring Breaks to serve. They chose to serve! Not go to the beach, not take a family vacation, not lounge in their dorm rooms or houses - although there is nothing wrong with any of these activities - they chose to travel six hours away and serve.

We learned a lot that week. We learned about sudden and adverse events that can lead to homelessness. We learned about perpetual cycles of homelessness. We learned about our assumptions related to homelessness, as well as the support mechanisms needed to create a sustainable livelihood. We learned about one another. We learned about compassion. We learned about patience. And we learned how to live, sleep and serve while resting in rooms with triple bunk beds.

I'll never forget those triple bunk beds. But I'll also never forget those students. Or their hearts. Or their willingness to give. One special and unforgettable week. Triple bunk beds. And a whole lot of heart.

**This reflection is based on a Spring Break trip facilitated in 2020 just before news spread of the COVID-19 pandemic. All students made it back home safely with no COVID- 19 diagnoses.*

Check the Expiration Date… Or Not

by Jan Morgan-Swegle, Compass Pointe

Winter is fading away, and spring is in the wind. Easter is around the corner—a beautiful celebration of the Resurrection. I wonder how Jesus felt about living such a short life. There is no doubt that he accomplished much during his time on earth, but I often wonder if he wanted to do more.

He gave us the mystery of life and taught us how to live a good, Christian life. But being very selfish, I wish he would have done one more little thing. I wish he would have put the date of our death on the bottom of one of our feet. Not how we are going to die, not the circumstance or even the time of day or night, just the date that we will cease to live on this earth.

Think about it. If you were the only one who could see that date--if you knew when you were going to die, would you live your life differently? How much would that knowledge change the decisions and choices you had to make in your life? Would you make a "bucket list" and try to do everything on it before that day? Would you be more daring? Would you go skydiving and jump out of an airplane if it wasn't your expiration date? You wouldn't die, so why not? Would you look at life as if it were a race and the winner was the one who did the most things before their expiration date came around? Or would you sit quietly in a field of flowers every morning, taking in the beauty of the day that is about to unfold because you knew that your time to do this was limited?

If you found the love of your life, would you compare feet to ensure you both enjoyed a long life together, or would you decide that any time together, no matter how short it might be, was worth it?

Would you marry and have children knowing that you would not be in the lives of those children for very long? Or would you go ahead and have children so you could love and enjoy them for a short time? If you had children, would you tell them when you were going to die?

Would you go to college to be educated in your passions, or would you save those years for others? Would you plan your funeral or leave the details to your loved ones? Would you make a will, or would you give your possessions to various beneficiaries with a loving conversation and a hug?

Would you select a few people who shared your interests to become your dearest and most important friends, or would you try to meet as many people as possible to experience different points of view?

How much planning would you put into your life based on your expiration date? Would you share the date with your siblings in case your parents lived longer than you? "Who's going to take care of Mom and Dad when they get older?" Check your foot--are you going to be the long-term primary caregiver or based on the date on your foot, would that be a moot question for you?

If you were on the verge of discovering the remedy for a horrible disease but knew you wouldn't live long enough to finish it—would you carry on until your expiration date, or would you walk away and use the time you had left to be with your family?

If you had a job that you loved and had an expiration date past your retirement year, would you work until the mandated retirement date, or would you throw in the towel early and have a longer but underfunded retirement?

So many questions, so many options. What would you do? Would you have the nerve to pick up your foot, or would you just live life day by day, never lifting up that foot to see when you were going to leave this earth?

Would you check your expiration date…or not?

About *Teen Scene* and *Cape Fear Voices*

Contact Information

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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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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, 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 500-700 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 500-700 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 and received by the 15th of each month for publication in the following month's issue.

Notice on Subscriptions and Mailing

To centralize responsibility for *Cape Fear Voices* subscriptions, we have established a separate email account for our readers and subscribers to use. As a practice, we send papers to our subscribers during the first week of each month. Recently, as reflected in several emails we have received, mail delivery is experiencing delays. These delays may be due, in part, to the fact that Leland-area deliveries are first sent to the central USPS sorting facility in Charlotte, NC, before being returned to the Leland Post Office for delivery to area customers. Our local postal facility is prohibited by policy from "holding" mail for Leland deliveries at the local facility as was previous practice. We ask for your patience as we encounter and work through these delays. All subscription-related emails should be sent to cfvsubscriptions@gmail.

How to Subscribe

Individual subscriptions to Cape Fear Voices are available on an annual basis at a cost of only $24, 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
P. O. Box 495
Leland, NC 28451

Where is my subscription?

From the Editors of *Cape Fear Voices* and *Teen Scene*

We hear that a lot lately. We promise you; we are promptly mailing hard copies of the paper once we receive them from the printer. Yes, we indeed lost a couple of addresses when we shifted to a new system. However, that issue has been fixed, and we have a solid program in place to make sure that we mail all subscriptions promptly and correctly.

In response to our inquiry, a Postal Service employee told us recently that the delays are related to all the sorting machines that were closed down last fall. Post Office staff are working long hours trying to make up for the loss of automation. So far, it is a losing battle.

When your paper comes in, please look at the envelope postmark. If it is the first week of the month, we did our job. If the envelope is postmarked the first week of the month and it's the third or fourth week of the month before you get it, the Post Office is not doing their job.

If you are not already on our email list to receive a PDF copy, we would be happy to add you to our growing list if you would like. At least that would let you see the paper until your hard copy arrives. You are our most valuable asset in this endeavor. Let us know how to make it work for you.

Cape Fear Voices is happy to announce a new addition to our Advisory Board.

MIKE STEDHAM teaches journalism at Jacksonville State University in Alabama, where he serves as faculty adviser for both the campus newspaper and the campus radio station. He has been a newspaper editor, a radio station news director and a TV news anchor. His hobby is community theater, where he has written and directed numerous plays and musicals.

Cape Fear Voices Ad Rates

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

To place an ad contact us at:
editorcfv@gmail.com

Mark Your Calendars

Upcoming events:

Mar. 29 - Vietnam Veterans Commemoration (see page 13 for details)

April 10 - Cape Fear Voices Writers Award Dinner-Blossom's Restaurant, Magnolia Greens

The Great Lockdown of 2020: How I Survived

We are hard at work doing the editing for our book. Thanks to everyone who submitted articles. It is coming together. We will have more info next month on exactly when it should be available.

Remember March 2020:

Mar. 1-Syria launches air strike on Turkey

Mar. 9 Ireland cancels St. Patrick's Day events

Mar. 30 Olympics could be postponed

Daily Covid-19 updates begin

The coupon entitles bearer to
ONE FREE HUG
Redeemable anytime

Steve – A Selfless Loving Man

by Brendan Connelly, Brunswick Forest

When I think about Valentine's Day, it makes me remember a very dear friend - Steve Morda. He always had a caring, loving heart and always put others before himself. Steve has always been a special friend as his wife Stella went to high school with my mother.

Valentine's Day was always Steve's favorite holiday. Steve worked for Hallmark Cards. One Valentine's Day, Steve surprised his wife, his one true Valentine Stella, by arranging for a limousine to come to their house, pick her up and take her out to dinner. Steve was always a sweetheart.

Everyone would see just how strong a heart he had when he began the fight for his life, as in 2009, he was diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer. Once diagnosed, Steve made it his mission to never give up and fight his hardest every day.

One thing Steve wanted to do is to give back to his community. So, he participated in several Pancreatic Cancer walks and partnered with the Lustgarten Foundation to help raise money for other cancer fighters.

It was never about him. He always put his family, friends, and community before himself - the true definition of selfless love.

Another great example of his selfless love occurred in 2012 when Steve's daughter Jackie was getting married in Arizona. Steve had been in and out of the hospital because of chemotherapy. He did not let this stop him. No obstacle or disease was going to stop him from making her wedding.

He had such a strong heart that he willed himself to fly across the country and to get himself out of the hospital in time to walk his daughter Jackie down the aisle. Another act of selfless love.

Before his life journey ended, he did one more act of selfless love. He wanted to make sure his wife Stella and their daughters Jackie, Chrissy, and Stephanie would be well protected financially after he passed.

Steve took on cancer and fought it like a true warrior for nearly four years. On February 14, 2013, this time it was God's turn, granting Steve the gate into heaven after a near year battle with pancreatic cancer. Ironically, Steve died on his favorite holiday. It is God's way of blessing him for all he did for his family and his community and how hard he fought.

Steve was always there for Stella and their family helping them get through a couple turbulent years. One year after losing Steve, in the summer of 2014, Stella's sister Maria and brother-in-law Jerry would both lose their own battles with cancer.

Life finally did turn around for Stella as she would move out of Connecticut, move to Florida, and would welcome several grandchildren into the world. None of this would have happened without her Guardian Angel Steve watching down on her telling her that everything will be alright.

Steve was a special person. It was an honor to call him a friend. He leaves behind a great legacy. We can all learn from him - how he never gave up and kept fighting and put others before himself. He inspired so many people in his journey. Steve died a hero! He died a winner!

The Older Woman in America

by Maryann Nunnally, Porters Neck

One of the first realizations that jumped out at me and made me aware that I was old was how men no longer acknowledge my existence. At best, they simply ignore me, and at worst, they look at me and quickly glance away.

Never having been a striking beauty, but being young enough to attract attention from the male population, I felt abandoned when men no longer flirted with me or gave me a quick wink. That soon was followed by pats on the shoulder, or a quick hug, or even a handshake as some man addressed me as "Ma'am."

These days, men acknowledge my husband and call him the "tall drink of water" or "shorty," but pay very little attention to me. One man, after greeting my husband, insulted me by asking: "And how are you doing, Grandma?" I was not that man's grandma, or would I ever want to be, but saying so would just have provoked him, so I chose to smile and shake my head instead, and politely answered, "Just fine, Grandpa."

Men don't look at me, but toddlers and babies check me out all the time. There is something really flattering when a youngster smiles or plays peek-a-boo with me, and that child and I are not even acquainted. On the other hand, dogs almost always growl and refuse to give me a friendly wag. I suppose that is because they are closer to men than women and sense that I am not much of a friend.

Women seem to generally like me and will speak even when we barely know each other. I have learned from all this that grandmothers are accepted by everyone, and other women do not see a granny as a threat. So, there is some compensation to being an old woman.

However, there is little or no compensation when it comes to purchasing clothing. Because I am overweight and average height, I do not look okay in anything form-fitting or slinky. Who am I kidding? I look horrible in anything form-fitting, and slinky comes off as lots of muffin top and love handles.

I would like to buy something bright red, but red clothing for grandmothers usually comes in the form of an apron or smock. Jeans are definitely out, as are tights and leggings. Loose slacks with elastic waists are comfortable, but sometimes I wish that I could be comfortable in something a little more stylish. Comfort I have found is synonymous with dowdy, but hips, tummy, and lack of waistline equals elastic camouflage.

I guess I can't have everything. I am in decent health, have all my own teeth, can learn new material, and remember what I learned yesterday, so I may be an old woman, but I am vertical and still here. If men don't give me much attention anymore, I need to be satisfied that I have excellent eyesight and can notice them.

An Object of Connection

by Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

Before World War II, our family was part of Indonesia's "privileged" class. However, because of our mixed Dutch, German, and Indonesian heritage, we were considered "half breeds." However, as Dutch citizens, we attended the best Dutch schools and universities, served in the Dutch armed forces, and held civil servants' jobs. We were prosperous, owned property, and hired staff to clean our homes and cook.

My family owned a mountaintop hotel in Java that the Japanese occupied during World War II and used as their island headquarters. Before the war, my father had been sent to the Netherlands to study for his degree. While at university, he learned that his father (my grandfather) had been pardoned by Queen Wilhelmina and released from prison after killing a man in a boar hunt. In those days, "drivers" would beat their way noisily through the jungle to drive wild boar towards the hunters and into their field of fire. A court review of the circumstances surrounding the case revealed that one of my grandfather's friends, distraught over his recent divorce, had intentionally stepped into the field of fire as a way to commit suicide.

During WW II, my father served in the Dutch Navy and was captured as the Dutch fleet left port. He endured several years in a Japanese prisoner of war (POW) camp, ultimately observing the second atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki from an island where he was a forced shipyard laborer. His POW experience embittered him even more when he learned that the "half breeds" who had served in the Dutch military would not receive back wages for their internment – a wrong that the Dutch government never corrected. His bitterness and POW experiences stayed with him throughout his life and manifested itself in his treatment towards me. He tolerated no perceived weakness.

We lost every possession and privilege in post-war Indonesia except our Dutch citizenship. Following Indonesia's independence in 1949, hundreds of Dutch citizens' forced repatriation began and continued into the early 1950s. Into this turmoil, I was born.

Despite our Dutch heritage and privilege, my family was heavily influenced by Asian culture. As in most Asian cultures, it was important for the firstborn child to be male. Thus, after my mother became pregnant with her first child, my father had already chosen the name "Eric" for his son. I surmise that our father/son relationship got off to a rocky start when a female became the firstborn instead. I came a year later. Not surprisingly, my older sister's chosen name is "Erica."

Following my parents divorced in late 1952, my father obtained custody of Erica. My mother insisted that he take me as well. Three-year-old Sheelah stayed with our mother. Shortly afterward, my father remarried, and Erica and I gained two older stepbrothers. That same year (1953), we joined the exodus of Dutch citizens. Following several months in Australia, we made the passage to the Netherlands in May 1954. Brother Joe was born shortly afterward. In 1957, we immigrated to the United States.

Having had the audacity to be the second born in his first marriage, I would prove to be a constant disappoint to my father - unlike brother Joe, who had the good fortune to be the first and only son borne of my father's second marriage.

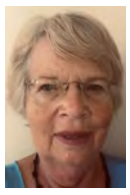
I left his house when I was thirteen and rarely saw or spoke with him afterward. To his credit, he met me at the airport when I returned from Vietnam in 1968. He seemed proud that I had served in the war. The lull in our otherwise life-long rocky relationship was short-lived.

Twenty years after my father's death, my sister from another marriage gave me a photo album. I never gave it much attention because it contained many pictures of my second family, which did not interest me. Recently, while searching unsuccessfully for a picture of my paternal grandfather, I came upon the album. Poring through the images, I established a better timeline and sequence of events after we had left Indonesia for the Netherlands.

I also found pictures of my mother and my sisters. Imagine my surprise when I saw a picture of the four of us in which I wore an outfit that I still possess today - 67 years later. For some reason, I had kept that outfit.

The Blessings of a Snowstorm

by Janet Meuwissen, Brunswick Forest



As I gazed out my Upstate NY living room window at the flaky snow and the freshly plowed 300-yard driveway, I knew I had made the most important decision of my life.

It had been a strenuous, emotional, dreadful - but in the end, rewarding - morning. The three of us had awakened to well over a foot of light, fluffy snow blanketing our three acres of yard, house, barn, and horse pasture. It was the first big snow since Roger had died last spring, and we had taken over all his duties of managing our farmette.

I had my career as a teacher at the high school. Now the title of family overseer had been added to the resume. Ten- year- old Lennie was the farmer in the family, so she took care of her horse, the chickens, and the geese. Eleven- year- old Jason had assumed his father's landscaping and outdoor upkeeping duties.

This day those duties started just after dawn with plowing the driveway. Plowing would be a first for Jason, but he was sure he was up to the task. He had helped his father many times. Starting up the two- wheel- drive 1968 Chevy standard shift C10, a half-ton pickup with the snowplow was the first step in the process.

This was after putting on his snowmobile suit, trudging out to the barn through all the snow to get to the truck, and then climbing up into the truck as only an 11-year-old could do. Now he was ready to start the job. One small problem, besides the bulkiness of his winter clothing, was the length of Jason's legs as he tried to reach both the gas and the brake pedals at the same time. Then there was the 3-on-the-floor transmission shift. But he'd driven the truck with his dad around the farm before, so he put her in gear, and off he started - or not.

There was this snowplow equipment on the front of the truck that had to be lifted off the ground before the truck could move. Absent this step in the process, the truck stalled. Jason tried again to lift it and then move the truck forward to start plowing. And again, the truck stalled.

When I heard this happen a third time, I knew I needed to don my winter outfit and see what I could do to help. Arriving on the scene, it was easy to assess that operating a gas pedal, a brake pedal, a steering wheel, a transmission floor shift, and a snowplow floor shift - especially when your legs could hardly reach the pedals - was more than enough for one person. In the end, Jason and I plowed the driveway - he drove the truck, and I operated the plow. Could we continue to do this after every snowstorm? This was a turning point experience for me.

I had thought about applying to be an education administrator. After sending out a few applications, I received a job offer! This left me agonizing for three days with all the pros and cons of taking the position, moving my family, and starting a whole new life. There were so many things to consider.

However, unknowingly, Jason had provided me with the opportunity to make this driveway plowing the accomplishment I ultimately became most proud of. Together he and I had plowed a 900-foot driveway with an old pickup truck after a heavy snowstorm. We could do it! But it became evident to me that I did not want this life of endless farm chores, in addition to the everyday responsibilities, for my children - and myself. I made the decision.

I took the new job, moved us 200 miles to the east, into the Adirondack Mountains, and our lives were forever changed. We went to the mountains to heal - and we did just that. We accomplished rebuilding our lives.

Cape Fear Woodcarvers

by Jeff Meuwissen, Brunswick Forest

The Cape Fear Woodcarvers Club was founded in 1995 and has grown to become an important arts resource in the Wilmington-Cape Fear area. The club membership includes more than 70 men and women, who come from as far north as Jacksonville, and as far south as Calabash, and all points in between, in the greater Wilmington-Cape Fear region.

The club meets every Thursday morning. Club meetings are hands- on sessions where members work on their latest projects and share information and tips on carving. At any meeting you will observe carvers working on fine detailed bird sculptures, stylistic natural finished woodcarvings, caricatures, plaques, fish, decoys, relief panels, flowers, decorated walking sticks - and the list goes on. Members' skills range from beginner to advanced carvers who have won awards in major competitions at the international, regional, and local levels.

The main focus of the club is on skill development. Beginner projects and instruction are available to those who want to try their carving skills. The club also schedules carving programs of various lengths (one day to one week) taught by skilled club members or outside, nationally recognized, experts.

The club's normal meeting venue is at the S 5th Avenue Methodist Church in Wilmington, NC, 9 am to noon on Thursdays. Since the Covid pandemic, meetings are held primarily on Zoom. Zoom meetings are open to all. If weather is conducive, some meetings have been held outdoors at one of the open-air pavilions in Longleaf Park in Wilmington. For more information contact President Allen Barth.

email: allenB110@gmail.com ***phone:*** (410) 474-8179

"Skating Lessons"

Art by Hilary Conway Lloyd

Toronto, Canada

https://redbootsartwork.blogspot.com/

READY ROSE OF SCANTY HOSE

by Bill Holt, Plantation Village

Make the gate and take your ticket shortchange made seven feet up
Hurry to the Midway dish of quarters, balloons, candy, popcorn
Salt and sugar sell the drinks half a dollar for a water coke
Along the rings, ducks bumper cars tilt a Wheel whirligig mini Ferris wheel
Pulse and pressure going up
Twisted guns and throwing things, animal for your sweety
Leaded bottles dunk the clown same new excitement from the sound
Lurking death at the moto drome cycles cutouts open, will they wreck
They might wreck hand in pocket someone might die what a shame, I was there
Dulcet tones the talker drones practice modulation
Grandsons do the gameshows now, sells a little siding, prime the guilty juices
King serpent wobbly raises head
Ladies and Gents, phantoms of the side show
One thin dime one tenth part of a dollar view the lovely dancing girls
They walk they talk they shimmy, and they shake they quiver, and they quake
They wiggle on their bellies like reptiles
They dance on their right foot, they dance on their left foot
Between them they make a handy fortune like First National Bank of Night
Come on and see the show
Easy, easy no pushing no shoving, you, there in that green dress
There's plenty of room for all slide on down if you want that special angle
Ladies you might learn something be prepared to be shocked! SHOCKING
They flounce, they bounce rocket to the moon they bend over backwards to please everyone
Ready Rose forswears hose and other little things she knows the combination
Every time she does her dance another Seminary shuts its doors
Another Pastor slams the book heading for the desert, locust and honey foreswear all money
Come on in have a seat this show goes on without an end
It starts lives ago

Beach Music

by Sharon Copland, Mayfaire, Singer for *The Monzas* (Beach Music Hall of Fame 2010)

"*I love Beach music! I always have, and I always will*," sing the Embers on my radio.

Staring out the window at the gloomy rain,y COLD days of winter, my mind drifts to beautiful warm sunny days on the beach. I feel the heat of the sunbaked sand on my feet as it brings up memories of my happy times. Oh, how I love the sound of waves pounding the shore! I smell the salt as the tide dances in rhythms to the music on the radio and the songs in my head. BEACH MUSIC talks to my soul. The days of growing up with the TAMS, The Four Tops, The Temptations, The Supremes, and other Motown groups inspire us to shag on the sand, drink beer, and dance all night.

It's no wonder "garage bands" sprang up in every East Coast high school. I was fortunate to grow up in Burlington, NC. The area produced more beach music bands than any other area of the Southeast. The Embers, Band of Oz, The Monzas, Inmen Ltd, The Attractions, Holiday Band, Willie Tee and the Magnificents, and The Fabulous Five, to name a few. Some still perform after 40-50 years. Once it's in your soul, it comes as naturally as breathing.

My favorite songs include 60-Minute Man (Dominoes), Ms. Grace (Tymes), One Mint Julep (Clovers), Green Eyes (Ravens). My ALL-TIME FAVORITE is **You're More Than A Number In My Little Red Book** (Drifters) (or anything by the Drifters). The best songs for shagging are the oldies from the '40s and '50s. These are a combination of R&B, and a slow Jitterbug played on every jukebox in the country. The tunes are pleasant to hear, and you can actually understand the words and sing along. They are love stories set to music. For instance, "*Ooh ooh ooh Miss Grace, Satin and perfume and lace, the minute I saw your face I knew that I loved you*" or "*Sugarpie honeybunch, you know that I love you, I can't help myself, I love you and nobody else*" and "*Be young, be foolish, be happy*!"

Keep on singing... I hear your joy! If you're like me, when I hear Beach Music, I envision hot summer days soaking up the sun, a cool breeze blowing off the water. Palm trees stir in the wind. In the distance, the children laugh as they build sandcastles and chase waves. You start singing along, and your feet start moving in the sand, practicing a few dance steps in preparation for SOS.

For those unfamiliar with SOS, the correct name is 'Society of Stranders', not 'Shaggin On Sand.' The Strand refers to The Grand Strand in Myrtle Beach, where 2-4 times a year 5,000-10,000 + shaggers descend on the town to dance for ten days and nights. This sacred time is known as 'Spring Safari' and 'Fall Migration.' You can join in dance or watch some of the most magnificent, synchronized footwork in the world.

Groups that have performed at the Strand's nightclubs are a 'Who's Who' of Beach Music. Groups like Chairmen of the Board (I watched them two summers ago), The Drifters, The Vandellas, and Mary Wells, seem to perform forever. When the Originals pass on, they're replaced by younger lead singers. There is an entire new group of beach music performers in their thirties and forties keeping the legends alive. A few new groups release new original beach music - Black Water R&B, Midnight Allie, Jim Quick and Coastline, Sylvia Ritchie, and lots more.

Check out each year's new talent when The Carolina Beach Music Awards induct their Hall of Fame artists. Every Sunday, Surf 94.9 FM plays beach music all day. Some older groups are coming back - Band of OZ, Holiday Band, The Embers, and others. Country is also joining the scene with favorites by Delbert McClinton, Jimmy Buffet, and Darius Rucker. What it takes to make a cool Beach Song is that great shag beat and a love story or a fun place to be.Nothing will ever take the place of the oldies that built priceless memories and dreams for each of us. Remember the magic that is created when you hear "Hello Stranger," "Under the Board Walk," or "Lady Soul." These songs are timeless, as are the memories. So "*Be Young, Be Foolish, Be Happy*!" SUMMERTIME IS CALLING ME, and IT'S NOT THAT FAR AWAY!!

The Impact of Coronavirus through the Eyes of Essential Workers (Part 2)

by Ana Johnson, Cape Fear Community College

Note:This interview is the last of a story first published in the February issue of Cape Fear Voices.

Primary Healthcare Provider:

It is no surprise that healthcare organizations worldwide have had an overwhelming increase in patients due to COVID-19. Doctors, nurses, and other healthcare providers are on the frontlines with specific protocols to keep people healthy. One vital healthcare role that has actively prepared to fight COVID-19 is the Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP). FNPs help manage chronic and acute health issues and see patients for routine check-ups. Many use a nursing approach that views the whole person in the context of their family and environment.

I asked Erin Williamson, an FNP in Wilmington, North Carolina, several questions about how he has handled his critical role during the pandemic.

What is your role as a Family Nurse Practitioner?

I work in an outpatient clinic, seeing patients in a medical office. I am part of a health care team consisting of patient registrars, medical assistants, registered nurses, phlebotomists, pharmacy staff, behavioral healthcare providers, medical doctors, and other nurse practitioners.

What challenges have you encountered during the pandemic compared to the past?

One challenge is the use of telehealth, which is entirely new to most of us. Telehealth visits are conducted via video or telephone to limit people's risk of COVID exposure. Telehealth is much different from conducting an in-person visit, partially since you can't do a physical exam. We are not just missing the in-person experience for diagnostic reasons – it is also valuable to hold a patient's hand, pat their back or even give them a hug when they need it.

Another challenge is a general sense of anxiety in our patients and their families. Many are afraid to undergo routine tests or seek medical care. This aversion makes our jobs more challenging, as we have to work with patients to help them balance the risks. For example, for a frail patient taking blood-thinning medicine due to a heart problem, is it riskier for them to get labs done? Should we continue prescribing a medication without monitoring to see if it is at safe levels in their body? Many patients are also delaying routine screening tests. This worrisome because those tests catch problems early when they are more easily treatable.

Is there a particular line of pressure on healthcare individuals being the pandemic frontline workers?

There is significant pressure on healthcare workers. I'm glad that we have experienced support and recognition from the community. It relieves some pressure to know our work is appreciated. Healthcare workers train for this sort of stress, as it is an expected part of the job. However, this level of pressure lasting for this long is tough to deal with.

Has there been an increase in Coronavirus patients since the pandemic first began?

There has been an increase, especially over the holidays. We must remember that COVID can have lasting effects. So, it's not as simple as someone catching COVID, being sick for a while, and then returning to normal. Many people recover from the infection in a matter of days or weeks. However, the long-term effects linger on. Many remain weak, tired, and short of breath for months after their infection. Some never fully return to normal. This means many people will have more hospital and medical office visits for months or years later. The pandemic's effect on the population and healthcare systems compounds over time.

What observations have you witnessed from your younger and older patients who have coped during Coronavirus?

We screen every patient for depression using a simple questionnaire. Since the pandemic began, most patients answer those questions in a way that reveals symptoms of depression. Persistent stress has adverse effects on all other aspects of a person's health. Studies show that people with depression have more heart problems, worse diabetes, etc. Different people handle stress differently, but most people - young and old - recognize that this is a dangerous situation.

Patients directly affected by COVID with whom I work describe an associated sense of trauma. They show this in their wide eyes, awed voices, and gratitude for still being alive when they talk about their illness. Whether they were personally infected, had a sick family member, or experienced the death of a loved one - all display the effects of experiencing a traumatic event. This is a scary disease, and it leaves a lasting mark on people's lives.

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Dyngus Day - a Unique Polish Celebration

by Veronica Pastecki, Brunswick Forest

"If you ruined my grandmother's dress, Walter Wojcik, I will never forgive you!" I yelled at the rapidly retreating figure of Walter and his friends Adam and Casimir. I looked at the red and white embroidered dress over carefully. Fortunately, there were no rips or tears in this thirty- year- old garment that my Babcia (Polish for 'Grandmother') had bought on a trip to Warsaw in 1990. It was thoroughly soaked, however. Most boys just loaded up regular water pistols for "Wet Monday," commemorating the baptism of Prince Mieszko, thus making Poland a Catholic country. Not Walter, though. No, he went traditional and doused me with a full bucket of water! *Okay, I get it already, you like me.*

Lake Erie's cool breeze and the soaked clothes made this Easter Monday in Buffalo, NY, a very uncomfortable experience. I wrapped myself in my crimson shawl, re-adjusted my floral wreath to sit correctly with the long red ribbons flowing alongside my face. I finally felt ready to watch the rest of the parade as it marched past Corpus Christi Church and then head down Broadway.

"Hey, Karolina, I am starving. Let's head over to the food booths." said my friend Bertha. "The smells of the grilled kielbasa (Polish sausage) are driving me nuts. Maybe I'll have a gołąbki (stuffed cabbage) or a couple of pierogis (potato and cheese dumplings). What do you think? Of course, there will be some paczki for dessert. I do love that rich fried dough filled with jelly or custard."

We followed the sounds of the polka bands towards our destination. The accordions sang out cheerfully. You couldn't help but smile and walk in step to the 'oompahs.' The tent had a dance floor, and several elderly women were dancing together in time to the music. You had to be in pretty good shape to truly dance the polka. I remember dancing with my cousin, Billy, at a wedding a few years back. Besides having my toes squashed when he landed on them, my legs could feel the strain as I kept time to the fast-paced beat.

A group of elderly men, the husbands, I presume, were relaxing with large mugs of iced cold beer. They seemed to be enjoying themselves as they waved to the ladies as they strolled by them. Occasionally, one of the women would insist that her husband dance with her. But as soon as the song ended, he would scurry back to the safety of his friends and the freshly filled beer pitcher.

It was not so different for the group of young men standing at the tent's entrance. They pushed and shoved each other forward, encouraging one of them to ask for a dance from the gaggle of young women standing at the opposite end of the tent near the band. The distance from one end of the tent to the other was overwhelming to a few that ventured forward, swaggering to impress their friends with their macho bravado. Only to turn tail and swiftly return to the safety of the pack when one of the girls looked less than encouraging.

Bertha and I were tapping our toes to the bands' beat when I felt a gentle touch across the back of my legs. I ignored it, knowing that it was just a couple of pussy-willow twigs. The soft, felted heads of this early Spring bloomer actually felt quite nice at first. Then Walter gave me a quick snap with the branch. I yelped and looked at him crossly. "Why did you wallop me?" I demanded. Walter looked exasperated and said, "Well, you didn't respond to my first taps. I didn't think you had felt them, so I gave you a good whack. That got your attention," he smiled.

"You just be careful I don't take my revenge tomorrow. Tradition says if a boy is too harsh with the pussy-willows, she gets to throw some of that nice, heavy Polish pottery at you." I said with a huge grin. Walter looked abashed and took my hand. He twirled me around and said, "Do you want to dance, my Karolina?"

CELEBRATING NATIONAL HERITAGE AREAS:

The Making of the North Carolina Gullah Geechee Greenway/Blueway Heritage Trail (Part 2)

by Brayton Willis, Magnolia Greens

Note: Part 1 of this series was published in the February issue of Cape Fear Voices.

Every story needs champions, and my champions come from the Town of Navassa. Mayor Eulis Willis, his extraordinary Planning Director Barnes Sutton and the Beatty brothers, George and Al. This group of talented and dedicated individuals has worked tirelessly to identify, preserve, protect and celebrate the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage in our area.

Serving as the catalyst for this project, the Town of Navassa has a major effort underway to establish the Navassa Heritage Trail. This 10-mile trail will include both greenway and blueways, historic stops for seven rice plantations, six slave cemeteries, and 10 to 15 parks. It will also include the Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation's development of the Cedar Hill African-American Heritage Park.

This park includes the restoration of the Reaves Chapel and Cedar Hill Cemetery and the planning, design, and construction of the Phoenix Colored School, which will house the Reaves Chapel Church Visitor's Center, the Rosenwald Schools Museum, and the African-American History Museum. Participating organizations in this effort are the Coastal Land Trust, Cedar Hill/West Bank Heritage Foundation, and the African-American Heritage Museum of Southeastern North Carolina.

Navassa is also working with the Coastal Land Trust on a grant from the Navassa Trustee Council to develop the Moze Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Center and multi-use park on a 28-acre former superfund site committed by the Multi-state Trust. This project is estimated to be completed in FY 2026.

Greenways and Blueways

What makes for a great bike and walk? Is it the miles of protected bike lanes? The number of coffee shops or historical and cultural places to visit? An abundance of beautiful or relaxing places to ride or walk or even canoe, for that matter? Many communities lack any bike infrastructure, especially those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged.

Nationally and in North Carolina, there has been a surge of interest in constructing a local, regional and national network of connected bicycle and walking infrastructure called greenways. Additionally, some of these networks include linkages to our rivers and estuaries for canoeists, kayakers, and paddle boarders, which are referred to as blueways.

The rapid growth in Brunswick County has generated much interest in greenways and blueways in our area. As the fastest growing county in North Carolina and the 4th fastest growing county in our nation, this growth presents a unique opportunity to help our newcomers and their families understand our local culture and history.

Since February of 2020, the NAACP's Brunswick County Branch has been engaged with Brunswick County citizens, local and state elected officials, and governments to develop the concept of a multi-use bicycle/pedestrian greenway/blueway within the congressionally-designated African-American Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor.

This project would connect important African-American heritage sites in the 30-mile corridor from Navassa to Southport. The blueway segment would parallel the greenway southward from Navassa along the tributaries and main stem of the Cape Fear River, where many old slave plantation rice fields still exist.

Impacts of COVID-19 on Our Way of Life.

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped our area in many ways. We have seen automobile traffic dwindle dramatically during lockdowns. As a result, an increasing number of people have turned to walking and biking. Bike shops have seen bicycle sales increase dramatically. Which leads us to the next question . . . . where are the greenways and blueways in Brunswick County?

In the early stages of planning this project, I discovered that there were very few dedicated greenway/blueway trails for bicyclists and walkers in Brunswick County. Except for the development of the Heritage Trail in Navassa and the East Coast Greenway effort in Southport, there was little in planning and development for greenways or blueways. We are fortunate that some progressive communities have adopted the "Complete Streets" policy. It is a great start, but it is not the same as a greenway.

In addition to celebrating the diverse history and culture of our area, there are other reasons for moving this project forward for Brunswick County citizens and our visitors, such as:

1. Places to safely enjoy nature and healthy exercise.
2. Improved quality of life and increased property values.
3. Jobs in outdoor eco-tourism, manufacturing, retail, and trail construction and maintenance, including jobs for young people.
4. Carbon-free transportation systems.
5. Corridors of natural land for wildlife habitat and water quality protection.

(To be continued)

Karma and the Case of the Lost Earring

by Janet Stiegler, Brunswick Forest

In Hinduism and Buddhism, karma is the force created by a person's actions in this life that determines his or her fate in the next life. In Western popular culture, karma commonly refers to the idea of *"what goes around comes around,"* in which a person's intent and actions have similar natural consequences later in life.

One day, while walking the dog, I lost one of my favorite opal earrings. Later that afternoon, I retraced my steps, but to no avail. With the sun higher in the sky, the crystalline specks in the sidewalk overwhelmed any glint a small piece of jewelry might have given off. I registered the loss on *Nextdoor,* the community social networking site, but nobody responded, at least not right away.

Now you might say, "Oh, let it go. You had those earrings for many years. Your husband can buy you new ones." But opal is my birthstone, and they had sentimental value. My husband had given me the earrings shortly after our marriage. I wondered if the lost earring was a consequence of what I did *or didn't do* several months earlier.

Paul and I were celebrating our 30th wedding anniversary in Maui. The balcony of our third-floor condo overlooked the ocean and spectacular sunsets. You could not swim in the water outside our condo, but people often walked along the rocky shoreline at low tide, looking for shells.

One day, we noticed a young man searching for something in the water below. He was bent over, wading slowly through the low waves, peering into the water to the sand below. Sipping a glass of wine, we watched as an older man—perhaps his father, a friend, or a stranger—accompanied him. The older man eventually gave up, but the young man persisted.

"I wonder what he lost," I said to Paul. "Maybe he dropped his car keys and can't get around the island. We should help." But enjoying the setting sun, we rationalized that he had sufficient help from family and friends.

The next morning, the young man was back, looking just as intently through the water at the sand below. *How could this be? Surely the waves have dragged out to see whatever he lost. Does he really expect to find it?* We watched him search while eating our breakfast. "Maybe we should go down and help," I said to Paul. "What if *we* had lost something valuable? Wouldn't we want strangers to help?" Despite our empathy, however, we stuck to our planned itinerary and went to the beach instead.

Surprisingly, the young man returned the following morning, this time with a clear plastic container, similar to what you might find at *Wal-Mart* to store clothes. He placed the bottom of the bucket several inches below the water and peered into the open end, using it as a magnifying glass. "I have to know what he lost!" I cried. "Maybe it's an engagement ring! What if he planned to propose in Hawaii but lost the ring beforehand? How heartbreaking!"

I went back inside to change and help. Suddenly, Paul ran into the bedroom: "He found it! He found it! Whatever it is, he held it between his thumb and forefinger and yelled up to another unit that he found it." "Was it a ring?" I asked. "I don't know," he responded. "It must have been a ring," I said. "Why else would he be holding it like that? He must have found his finance's engagement ring!"

I was happy for the young man but also stunned. What are the odds that, three days later, the ring (or whatever he had lost) would still be there? I marveled at his perseverance and resourcefulness. And then a feeling of regret came over me: *if only I had helped and been part of his miracle!*

Is there a moral to this story, like 'never give up' or 'help your fellow man'? And what about my motives? Was it just curiosity or a sincere desire to help? What stopped me from going down to help earlier? I like to think that my intentions were honest, even though they were not followed by immediate action. If genuine remorse counts toward positive karma, it might explain how I eventually got my missing earring back. Several weeks after its loss, a couple picked it up on a walk and posted it on *Nextdoor.* Was that karma, luck, or just the wonders of social media? I'll let you decide.

A Tribute to My Mother

by Brendan Connelly, Brunswick Forest

I am blessed to have a great mother, Deirdre.

She was there for me and helped me persevere through seizures as a young child. She was there for me as I went through various special education schools from age 2-19.

When I was 19, she helped me make a tough decision. I was given the option to attend Northern Valley Regional Old Tappan High School or to remain in special education for another year. We all agreed I was ready for a regular education high school. I was a bit nervous as it was the first time I would be going to a regular education school.

In my first year at the school, I made the honor roll four times and was exempt from all but one final. In my second year, I got B's in almost all my classes. In June 2008, I graduated from Northern Valley Regional High School.

In August 2008, I started college at Dominican College. Four years later, in May 2012, I graduated from Dominican College with a B.A. in English and a 3.4 GPA.

In November 2016, my parents and I relocated from Harrington Park, New Jersey, to Leland, North Carolina.

I am currently a frequent writer for the new *Cape Fear Voices* newspaper. I also participate in two Next Chapter Book Clubs, a book club for disabled adults.

I have come a long way. From seizures as a baby, being in Special Education from age 2-19, being mainstreamed into Northern Valley Regional Old Tappan at age 19, graduating from NVOT at age 21, and then becoming a college graduate in May 2012.

This August, it will be 33 years since my last seizure.

My Mom has been there for me through it all. I would not have made it this far if it was not for the tremendous support I got from my lovely Mom. She is the best Mom in the world. She is my best friend.

I love you, Mom.

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The Historical Perspective of Gullah/Geechee Cuisine;

Through a Chef's Lens (Part 1)

by Ana Johnson, Cape Fear Community College

Cuisine helps form cultural identity and develops a sense of celebration. Many dishes made in cultures worldwide hold value and personal meaning - through memories, storytelling, or family remembrance. Foodways tell backstories of pain, perseverance, warmth, and love. They can also teach visual representation to learn, listen, and educate particular groups of people. Many families want to experience preservation for their culture to prevent it from getting loosely translated or worse, disappearing for a lifetime due to a lack of participation. Cuisine plays major roles in how individuals present their culture.

One role is discussing how cuisine ties into a community and holds a culture together. From flavor preferences, spice selection, and different ingredients, these connections fuse to create unique dishes that impact people's lives. Food is an active part of learning to appreciate other cultures - we become more open-minded about what lies beyond our dinner table. Each dish holds a memory that unites people through the power of sharing/passing a meal. Many of those aspects would be lost without community, making it difficult for cuisine patterns to surface.

The next role is the plethora of traditions that are stored in cuisine. Unlike other cultural elements like religious practices, art traditions, and many more, food is culturally interwoven. Almost everyone can relate to learning a family recipe. It can bring back distinct memories which stay with you for life. Food brings us moments through sight, smell, and taste that reflect on our beliefs, family, and heritage.

Lastly, cuisine also tells us the dietary patterns that influence people worldwide. For example, some cultures may have more of a plant-based diet due to the environmental conditions. Cuisine can even focus on the changes in eating behaviors, depending on the season of the year or the climate based on where crops are grown. It reminds individuals that none of us are the same; we each hold a specific story when it comes to our food.

One individual working to keep his heritage alive is Benjamin "BJ" Dennis IV, a Gullah cultural bearer and chef raised in Charleston, South Carolina. For many years, he has focused on showcasing Gullah/Geechee cuisine in the mainstream media through the art of cooking. Dennis hopes to shed light among consumers with the recipes and traditions that mark the Gullah/Geechee heritage.

"Since Charleston was becoming a very popular food culture/city, I didn't see it being represented in the mainstream," he stated. Dennis wants to infuse many of the techniques he learned from personal experience into his cooking presentations. Now, he cooks for various events and pop-up dinners across the Lowcountry.

"Keeping the cuisine alive is a way of keeping the culture alive. Many people do it through representing the language, music, art, etc. Foodways is my path of keeping things together." Dennis began acquiring his professional cooking skills when he was about eight or nine years old, learning from his grandparents. It was a path that he never thought he wanted to follow at first.

Around the age of 19, he began working in kitchens as a food runner, dishwasher, and busboy at local restaurants. "It took me through a rabbit hole of research and findings on things that I didn't know at the time."

Dennis ended up attending Trident Technical College, where he was pursued a Business Administration major. Meanwhile, he supported himself by working his way up in the culinary experience. Before beginning his second semester, he transferred into the school's culinary program. There he found his true passion for learning foodways.

Around 2004, after four years studying culinary traditions in the U.S. Virgin Islands, Dennis recognized that this decision was a turning point in his life. His mentors inspired him to interpret his culture in a new light and stay open-minded. "There's where I found an unapologetic love for culture. Even though they still go through a lot of the problems that we experience, they have a little more freedom with the expression of their roots," Dennis stated.

Making his way back to Charleston, he demonstrated his refined skills at several restaurants across the Lowcountry - Anson's, Carolinas, Hank's Seafood, and 82 Queen. He told me this experience only motivated him extensively to be an advocate for his people. "I learned that we should be unapologetic about how we talk and the language as well because that is what I saw down in the Virgin Islands.

For the Birds?

by Gary Neil Gupton, Magnolia Greens

My wife and I were visiting a wildlife preserve in Panama a few years ago, and our young guide asked, "Are you a bird-watcher?" I wasn't. Sometimes I watched birds, but never would I consider myself a bird-watcher—the nerve.

A couple of years after that, a friend of ours, whom we had visited in Hawaii for a couple of weeks, gave us a Christmas gift. "We know how much you like to watch birds." The gift was a window bird feeder.

I attached the clear acrylic feeder, with suction cups, to our kitchen window so we could watch for birds in the mornings while having our coffee and tea. Soon the birds discovered us. Pairs of little brown and black-streaked sparrows came first and frequently. "Keep your eye on the sparrow."

Then came purple finches, which aren't actually purple but sort of muted red, particularly their heads. (My family has a lot of redheads, too, that aren't redheaded but more carrot-topped.) Chickadees came, donning their black-tops and searching for the white safflower seeds among the millet, sunflower, and other assorted gourmet fares. A trio of brown-headed nuthatches came, snatching their favorite seeds, also safflower, and flitting to the crooks in the branches of the maple tree to crack open their morsels. Of course, the most favorite seed was the safflower – and the most expensive. Well, it's for the birds.

Occasionally a house wren or two would come, with their brown tails stuck up in the air. Usually, these guys were searching for an obscure place to build a nest, showing up in hanging baskets, fussing at my wife when she watered her petunias. Other birds would fuss and peck at each other, trying to establish a pecking order. Why else would they peck at each other?

Once the little sparrows had decided who was the fiercest, a finch would inevitably fly in and show them who the boss was. Sometimes a flock of black starlings would swoop in, frightening the other birds away. These vermin couldn't make enough wing space for the whole flock, so they would huddle up in the maple tree and wait impatiently. I would sneak, patiently and stealthily, out to the porch and slap my hands together, making a sound like the popping of a champagne cork; the starlings would cower and fly away. Of course, they would return, sooner or later. I don't care much for starlings.

The other day some new visitors came to the feeder. I referred to my handy Peterson Field Guide, which was practically in mint condition after disuse for twenty-odd years. Page 285. Most definitely a redheaded crossbill. But what were the new brown and white streaked birds? They were slightly larger than the sparrows and much smaller than a brown thrush, which stayed on the ground scratching. "A hah!" Peterson seemed to shout out from the page. These streaked birds must be immature crossbills!

I'm sure other varieties of birds will come to visit our window feeder come Spring. Looking forward to it. Each day I find myself looking out for birds, trying to identify them. On a walk around Osprey Lake, I took note of the numerous small black-backed, white-bellied birds skimming the surface of the water, doing loops and swoops, then returning to do it all over. "Peterson?" Tree swallow. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw a blackbird. Did it have a red spot? Red-wing blackbird.

Each morning I return to perch on my yellow-cushioned bar stool, drinking coffee and watching birds outside the kitchen. Bird watching. It's for the birds. (I guess the furry-tailed guy didn't get the message.)

Window bird feeder? Best gift ever. Aloha!

Valentines for Meals On Wheels Recipients

by Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

On Friday, February 12, Meals on Wheels (MOW) deliveries by North Brunswick Kiwanis Club members Cindy Bryant and Eric Mens included Valentine's Day cards and lovely Valentine butterflies made by children in the community for senior MOW recipients. "Thank you!" to the grandchildren of club members Ken and Melody Formalarie for creating these for lovely Valentine butterflies and Kathleen and Dean Giadone and grandson Hudson for the thoughtful cards, butterflies, and origami birds! You made our Valentines' Day deliveries extra special for the surprised and grateful seniors!

Spring into Action

by Chuck Schwartz,* Hilton Head, SC

Spring is just around the corner. Such a wonderful time of year and a great reminder of the beauty and wonder of life. The trees that grace our earth begin to grow back their leaves. Flowers start blooming. Days get longer and warmer. So much for which to be grateful.

The cycle of life. A good cycle. A reminder that just as the earth comes around every year and gives us Spring, it's a reminder for all of us to spring into action also. Spring into action, as in "It's what you do next that matters most!" (from my book *Chuck's Lemonade*).

The truth is life doesn't always go as you planned or as you wished. That's life. It's what you do next that matters most. You can choose to sit back and let life happen to you. Or you can spring into action and decide what happens next. It's a choice - your choice.

You can choose to live positive affirmations. Positive for you. Positive for others around you. Affirmations like: "Expect less and accept more." "Do things to make others smile (they just might make you smile too)," "Do things that your future self will thank you for." "Do things that inspire you and others." "Do things that will leave a legacy."

You can choose to spring into action living affirmations such as "Know that what you do every day is what's most important," "Know you don't have to be great to get started, but you do have to get started to be great," "Remember, you seldom do things to the best of your ability; you do things to the best of your willingness," and "Know that what you water grows, and what you pay attention to and focus on gets bigger. Attend to what you want, not what you fear or despise."

Choose to spring into action this Spring. Change your life. Good change. Good for you and good for others around you. Think about it.

**Chuck Schwartz is the author of "Chuck's Lemonade, A Recipe for: Inspired Thinking and Living, Finding Gifts When Life Gives You Lemons, and Turning Your Lemons into Lemonade!" and The Chuck's Lemonade Collection of inspirational books, journals, presentations, and more - designed to help you think better so you can live better. Visit www.chuckslemonade.com and subscribe for a daily dose of Chuck's Lemonade.*

Did St. Patrick Really Remove All The Snakes From Ireland?

by April Drew, sourced from IrishCentral.com

We all know our man St. Patrick, among many other things, as the man who banished snakes from the green fields of Ireland. Legend has it that St. Paddy stood on a hilltop, dressed in his formal green attire, and waved his staff to herd all the slithering creatures into the sea, expelling them from the Emerald Isle forever. But, considering animal migration, history, and science, this may be more of an ancient lore then literal fact.

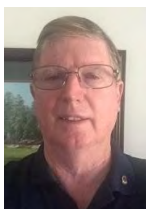
According to scientists, the last time Ireland was covered in a sort of ice age was 15,000 years ago. Only after this time a cold- bloody snake would have comfortably been able to survive in Ireland. However, Ireland had by then separated itself from mainland Europe, causing a 12-mile water gap, *the North Channel*, between Ireland and neighboring Scotland. The channel became a barrier that no terrestrial snake could cross. So the upshot of the story is, there were probably never any actual slimy, slithering native serpents roaming the Irish countryside because they have simply no way of getting there.

So why has St. Patrick been so heavily hailed as the hero that banished snakes from Ireland? Well, some believe that the snake was a symbol of paganism and it is St. Paddy that can be accredited for ridding Ireland of paganism and bringing Christianity to the green isle in the fifth century.

source: www.irishcentral.com/roots/saint-patrick-banish-snakes-irleand

A Friend Indeed

by John Hacker, Magnolia Greens



In 1968, I was part of the 1/6th Infantry of the 198th Light Infantry, Americal Division. (I still don't know what 'light infantry' was all about - we always carried 50-plus pounds in our rucksacks.) We were called the "Gunfighters." My Platoon Sergeant was Finnis McCleery, otherwise known as "Mac." We became friends during the early part of our tour.

Mac and I took part in a significant ambush of our Company during the Tet Offensive on Feb 8, 1968. In two days of fighting, we suffered over 20 killed and another 30 wounded. We talked about how lucky our platoon was to suffer only minor casualties that day.

On May 14, 1968, I was an Infantry Squad Leader at the ripe old age of 21. We were ordered to "take" Hill 352 near Tam Ky. We knew hard core North Vietnam soldiers (NVA) owned the hill. As we advanced up the hill, my squad was the point squad. We began receiving heavy machine-gun fire from three positions from atop the hill.

Pinned down, I knew this was it - we were all going to die. We could not get the firepower to the enemy. As I hugged the ground, a boot appeared beside my face. It was Mac. "Let's go, Hack," he said. Without hesitation, I got up and began firing towards the top. So did the rest of the squad. We started moving up the hill. I have no idea why we did not get hit.

Mac led us up the hill, flanking left across an open area, to close with the enemy. Realizing the damage the enemy could inflict on us, he began a one-man assault on the bunker complex. Scurrying across 60 meters of open ground with extraordinary courage, bullets struck all around him - rockets and grenades literally exploding at his feet.

As he came within 30 meters of the first key enemy bunker, Mac fired furiously from the hip, throwing hand grenades. My squad focused on the number two and three gun emplacements as Mac continued advancing on the key bunker.

Having successfully and single- handedly breached the enemy perimeter, he climbed atop the bunker he had captured and advanced to the second and third gun emplacements in full view of the enemy. We kept firing and advancing. Mac was wounded not once but twice. The enemy retreated from their positions as we took Hill 352.

As Mac was evacuated by helicopter, he continued barking orders to me, "Keep an eye on things while I am gone." I never saw him again during my tour.

Upon securing the hill, my company commander came up and asked me for a status report. I gave him a report and then said, "Mac ought to get a medal for today."

The Captain, who had also come over with us from Texas, said, "I will put him in for Silver Star."

I hesitated and replied," Not good enough, Captain. For what he did today and the lives he saved - especially my own - he deserves the Medal of Honor."

The Captain stopped; turning to me, he said, "Put it in writing and submit it to First Sergeant." He continued, "Keep in mind if you start this, there is no turning back. This Medal is hard to get passed, but just do it, Hack."

I never knew how difficult it was and the commitment one has to make to keep the paperwork moving when we had no internet, no texting - nothing but pen and paper. That's another story to be told.

Mac's extraordinary heroism at the risk of his life, above and beyond the call of duty, was in keeping with the highest military service standards. It reflected great credit on him, the Americal Division, and the U.S. Army. He was a friend who saved my life.

In 1994 we met for the first time at a reunion of the "Gunfighters" - my first and last event. Mac came up to me, much more aged and a bit feeble. He wore his Medal and, as he approached, said, "Thank you for helping me get this Medal."

Choked up, I could only reply, "Thank you for saving my life. I know without you, I would not be here today enjoying my children and grandchildren."

What could we do? We just hugged one another. My friend - my Platoon Sergeant - died in 2002. "Gunfighter 1-3, out."

THE TEEN SCENE

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Early College High School

Success is Our Tradition

Lotus Flower

by Arabella Ong, Brunswick County Early College High School, Grade 10

One last time, Minea looked back to the house that raised her. They arrived at Clark International Airport about 30 minutes later. The skies were clear as the blazing sun gave off warmth and light. Big trees were dancing with the wind, seemingly embracing the building. Family from both her mom's and dad's sides were gathered to send them off. A huge lotus flower caught Minea's attention as it gracefully floated through the nearby pond. She observed her surroundings keenly; she knew she wouldn't be able to see her homeland for a while.

"Lagi kang mag-iingat doon, 'nak ha? Huwag kang magpapa-api kahit kanino." *Make sure to always take care of yourself, alright? Don't let anyone step all over you!* Minea's grandmother, who she endearingly calls 'Nanay,' says as she gives her a tight hug. She didn't really get why her grandma was warning her about that, but for some reason, all emotions built up inside, and her eyes started to water. The girl tried to hold the tears back, returning the hug.

On her first day of middle school in the United States, the diversity hits her. She noticed right away that she looks different from her classmates, unlike how it was back in the Philippines where all her friends resembled her. The bell rings. It's the typical first day of school introduction time. Minea had rehearsed what she was going to say with her mom last night, excited to meet new friends. What she imagined, however, was far different from reality. When she introduced herself, revealing that she was born and raised in a small country in Asia and had just moved to the area recently, everyone in the class gave her a peculiar look. They seemed interested, but she felt like their eyes conveyed an evident tinge of judgment.

"Wow. Your English is surprisingly good!" Some of her classmates, even her teacher, remarked. She thought of it as a compliment, but she felt quite odd that they would pay such notice to the simple fact that she spoke the most spoken language in the world. Still, she enthusiastically explained that it was natural for Filipinos to learn English.

"Why did you and your family come to America?" A girl from her class questioned. Truth be told, the inquiry was said in a sarcastic tone. But Minea, thinking that her classmate was genuinely curious, clarified with a smile, "For a brighter future. The United States is called the land of opportunity for a reason." Though she answered confidently, Minea became skeptical upon looking at the girl's reaction. Once more, she saw a peculiar look with a tinge of judgment.

That night, after washing up, Minea stared at her reflection in the mirror. Her eyes were brown and almond-shaped, but they were not as pulled back. Her skin is warm-beige--just typical warm beige. Though her dad's side was minimally Chinese, she definitely didn't look the slightest bit of Japanese.

"What's so wrong about me?" Minea never expected to be viewed so uncannily. She thought that her new peers would be more welcoming and would recognize where she came from. Apparently not.

Her chest tightened, giving her an unbearable feeling of discomfort. She was getting anxious about going to school tomorrow. Having to endure other people's strange gazes and backhanded comments was the least she wanted to do. Minea pulled up her phone and ended up scrolling through her news feed. A video from a news source popped up: *Woman Captured on Video Harassing a Filipino Family*. The video showed the family happily grocery shopping when an old lady suddenly approached them, exclaiming foul words. "Get out of here! Go back to your country!"

Anger. Disgust. Disappointment. Sadness. Fear. All these feelings boiled inside. The woman's atrocious words were not a representation of the Filipino family; rather, it was a reflection of her attitude.

Minea then wondered, "Why should I be ashamed for being me?"

Minea was a lotus flower in the clouded and dirty sea of lily pads attempting to poison her for no reason. Now, no matter how hard anyone tries to step on her, she will rise back up again and ride the flow of the tides.

I smiled as I closed my computer. These experiences have shaped me to live by my name, Minea: the strong one, the lotus flower.

Unrealistically Real

by Arabella Ong, Brunswick County Early College High School, Grade 10

What is the meaning of life if it all boils down to an end?

Well, why do you watch movies if you know

they all end up with resolutions?

With an ending that can be happier than the happiest or sadder than the saddest?

The plot exemplifies life of twists and turns; making up the hardest of hardest decisions of laughter and of tears; the highlights with the downsides of limited time;

confining you at the spur of the moment--unsure of what the next sequence will bring of goodbyes; turning moments into memories.

Regardless, life goes on.

Revolving around nothing else but the Sun.

So comes a new movie.

an impressionism oil flower painting by Claude Monet, 1897

The Hero and The Villain (Part 1)

by Lori White , Brunswick County Early College High School, 10th Grade

Savoria was fatigued and unbearably hungry. Allowing her survival instincts and training to come into play, she searched the ground for edible plants or a small animal. Anything at this point would be a lifesaver. Her emerald catlike eyes spotted a large rat scuttling across the dewy grass and vines, scavenging to feed its young. Without hesitation - for it was told she was born without it - she leapt for her prey. Having left her mind that she was completely armored and weaponed, metal crashed against the forest floor. She sprang up, unlatching her claws from the wounded creature, and moved swiftly away from where she was hiding, leaving a pool of scarlet and the clanking of guards marching to her hideout behind her. It was going to be a long journey.

Savoria was strong. In fact, she was the strongest warrior in Adikia, though she was only seventeen. Her passion was as fiery as her mane of hair, and her strength was unmatched by any unruly monster of the land. Her kind face was often scrunched up in concentration, and her will to fight was deadly to many. She was revered by many women in her kingdom for her knowledge of the blade and her popularity amongst her people. Though the kingdom demanded the men to stay busy with feeding and taking care of children inside their homes, they would hurry out to meet her on her strolls and invite her to dinner. She was the hero of the kingdom, so to speak.

And this hero's closest companion was banished from the kingdom three years ago. Rumors have it that he committed treason, but Savoria knew this was a lie. Lovien was loyal to his kingdom and family and would have done anything to stay with them, though he was a disgrace to them all. He had the heart of a warrior and wanted to defend his home. After cooking and cleaning lessons from his father, Lovien would sneak out to practice sword fighting with Savoria. They were equal in skill and intellect, but she was always stronger. That strength challenged him to become stronger and made him grow as a warrior, leading to him becoming almost as outstanding as his opponent and best friend.

Savoria knew she shouldn't be helping him, but they cared deeply about each other, and she believed he deserved to train as she did. Often, Savoria and Lovien would not see each other during the day due to them being in the School of Warriors and the School of Domesticity, respectively. Lovien was cast out for having different dreams than his peers. At the same time, Savoria grew to be the most praised and validated individual in Adikia. This difference is what led to the night of Lovien's banishment.

While making his way to bed, his father heard Lovien sneak out on a silent night full of fog and lost creatures. He followed him and watched as Lovien approached Savoria with his sword that he had hidden from his family for years after he had crafted it in secret. With this, his father accused Lovien of trying to murder Adikia's best warrior.

Lovien was seized by guards in an instant and was thrown like waste out of the kingdom gates. Savoria uttered nothing. She was frozen by the fear of losing her life-source of praise to a night of training. Heartbroken by the pain on her friend's face, she barely had time to react at all before he was gone, and she would never see him again.

However, this was before Savoria escaped her kingdom undetected to find her friend. Her heart couldn't handle another year of grieving and guilt. She missed her only close companion. The only person that knew she was more than a hero and loved her as a person.

Musty air-filled Savoira's lungs as branches and thorns scratched at her face, making blood run down the crease of her eye. She didn't have time to grab her helmet when she left. The twigs made a popping sound as they hit metal and quickened their rhythm as Savoia's desperate movements became swifter and sloppy. She squinted through the dark liquid and trudged on, gripping the handle of her sword until her hand cramped. The forest that led to the mountains was dangerous at night and, though skilled, Savoria needed to stay focused.

(To be continued)

Leland Middle School Welcomes Joshua Roney!

Hello. I am Joshua Roney, and I will teach CTE classes here at Leland Middle School. This is my first time teaching, so everything is new and challenging at this moment, but I'm slowly learning and getting the hang of things here.

I've lived here since high school and love calling NC my home. When I'm not at school teaching, I like spending my time out kayaking, hiking, reading, and traveling. I also enjoy spending time with my dog Momo.

I look forward to working with everyone at Leland Middle School and the Brunswick County School district.

Being too cool to learn is only cool while you are in high school. Famous last words of a high school "*cool*" person: "I had to learn the hard way after I got out of school."

This Month In Rock 'n Roll

sourced by www.thisdayinmusic.com

John & Julian Lennon

Elvis & Colonel

- 1st, 1967 - Working at Abbey Road studios, London, The Beatles started recording a new song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds'. The song was inspired by a drawing John Lennon's 3 year-old son Julian drew. The picture, which was of a little girl with lots of stars, was his classmate - Lucy O'Donnell, who also lived in Weybridge, and attended the same school as Julian.
- 5th, 1983 - Michael Jackson started a seven week run at No.1 on the US singles chart with 'Billie Jean', his fourth solo US No.1, also No.1 in the UK. And on this day Jackson's album Thriller also went to No.1 for the first time on the UK album chart, it went on to become the biggest selling album of all time with sales over 65 million.
- 8th, 2008 - China imposes stricter rules on foreign pop stars after Bjork caused controversy by shouting "Tibet, Tibet" at a Shanghai concert after a powerful performance of her song Declare Independence. Talk of Tibetan independence was considered taboo in China, which had ruled the territory since 1951. A spokesperson from the culture ministry said Bjork would be banned from performing in China if there was a repeat performance.
- 15th, 1955 - Elvis Presley signed a management contract with Colonel Tom Parker. Parker had previously managed the 'Great Parker Pony Circus' with one of the acts being a troupe of dancing chickens.
- 18th, 1965 - The Rolling Stones were each fined £5 ($8.50) for urinating in a public place, following an incident that had taken place at a petrol station after a gig at the ABC Theater in Romford, Essex, England.
- 22nd, 1974 - The Eagles released their third studio album On the Border. A hidden message carved into the run out groove of some vinyl LPs reads: *"He who hesitates is lunch"*.
- 28th, 2013 - Justin Bieber ran into some trouble at Munich airport when customs officials detained and quarantined his monkey. Bieber had recently been given the capuchin monkey as a pet, apparently bringing the monkey along to join him on the Austrian and German leg of his European tour, but he didn't have the documentation required to bring his new friend into Germany. Bieber went on to perform in Munich while the monkey was kept in the custody of authorities.

Study Skills 101

by Gerald Decker, Magnolia Greens

What are "Study Skills?" According to one source, it includes, "Active listening, reading comprehension, note taking, stress management, time management, test taking, and memorization…," to name a few. But it also includes learning responsibility.

I can remember way too many times trying to start a class, both at middle and high school, when I was interrupted by someone saying, "Mr. Decker, do you have a paper (or pen or pencil) I can use?" There are always those in the class who have not come close to doing the homework and are entirely unprepared to learn. (I was one such student until the military taught me the need to always be prepared.)

I believe learning responsibility is the first step to learning study skills. I try to relate it to their parents' obligations to be prepared for work each day. A plumber or an electrician can't go to work without their tools. A doctor cannot go into surgery without preparing. A stay-at-home parent has to have all the supplies at home every day to be ready for any contingency. I try to show them why it is equally important that they never come to class unprepared to learn.

Parents should prepare a checklist for the student to use each day to make sure they are prepared to learn when they show up for class.

Here is a lesson I used to ask everyone to at least try to be better prepared:

If you aren't going to read the assignment, outline it.

For example, history textbooks are color-coded in consistent styles. For instance, in my history book:

1. Blue is Topic
    a. Red is a subtopic
        i. **Bold** is a term.

In a history class, if you have the outline, you can at least explain what is in the chapter. Now all you have to do is fill in the blanks as the instructor covers those topics.

Stay away from negative people. They have a problem for every solution.

-- Albert Einstein

West Brunswick High School

Preparing Today's Learner for Tomorrow's Future

Through The Eyes of A (Scholastic) Journalist:

Madison Ward's Journey from High School to College Journalist

by Katelyn Lewis, West Wind Editor-in-Chief

Journalism by definition is the activity or profession of writing for newspapers, magazines, or news websites or preparing news to be broadcast. However, it is so much more than that. It is a community of people who love to tell stories, but most of all it's a vital part of our culture.

The West Wind is a great place for students to learn the basics of journalism and to gain hands-on experience of what being a journalist would look like after high school. West Brunswick alumna and sophomore at UNC Chapel Hill, Madison Ward, is assistant editor for the arts and culture desk for the Daily Tar Heel and knows exactly what it is like to make the transition from high school journalism to the demands of college Journalism.

"It's a lot more people and a lot more stories," said Ward. "It's also the most widely read paper in Chapel Hill for the people that live there. At West, the stories kind of come to you just because it's right there, and you're in that bubble, but here you have to search for stories a lot of the time."

Much of journalism is speaking to people in order to write your story. This is one of if not the most important part of story writing. So when interviewing, the interviewer must remain professional while still making the person they are interviewing comfortable.

"You have to have a certain level of professionalism when you are conducting interviews," said Ward. "You can't just talk to them like you're talking to a friend; you could still be comfortable with them, but you can't joke around or anything because then you're not going to get the story or the quotes that you need for writing."

For students who want to write for a college paper like the Daily Tar Heel, don't worry it's not out of reach. Ward explains that the process to begin writing for them isn't as hard as it may seem.

"The application process is pretty simple," said Ward. "You just do a couple short essays, kinda similar to a college application but a lot shorter, just like why you want to work for the Daily Tar Heel, and then you submit two writing samples."

Spending hours on one article can be very draining, but there are ways to still get a good story from a difficult topic. Most of the time, all you have to do is relax or refocus.

"I think it's important to take a break, like if you're not able to write it at that time," said Ward. "Don't force it 'cause it's not going to happen, and if it does happen, it's probably not going to be good or what you want,"

For students considering taking journalism at West, there are virtually no downsides to the class. Not only will you make new friends and be pushed out of your comfort zone, you will also learn skills that every writer will use in the future. Whether that be in a collegiate writing course or just everyday writing skills, you will gain a whole new perspective on writing.

"I think it definitely helped me," said Ward. "It made me realize how much I really like writing and also just helped me in learning the basic format like what goes into producing a newspaper."

Contact Sports During a Pandemic

by Lauren Nelson, Staff Writer

Men's basketball is having to take many precautions due to **Covid-19, while also** having to deal with the constant fear of it all being shut down in an instant.

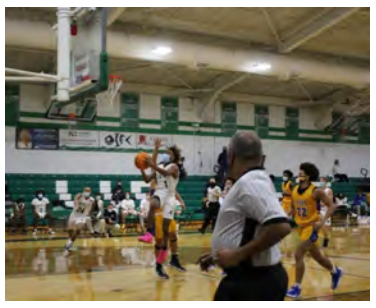


Photo by **Teagan Coley**

Varsity player, JJ Cobb jumps up to make a basket.

The men's basketball program has had to make vast adjustments to their daily operations on and off the court to keep practices safe. When athletes arrive, they have to go through several steps before the start of practice, including temperature checks and scanning a QR code to fill out a COVID- 19 Symptom Check Google Form. Additionally, athletes must keep their mask up and maintain six feet of distance when possible.

"The only time they don't have to wear a mask is when they are getting something to drink, and we are not allowed to have a water jug there," said head coach Aaron Taylor.

"They either have to bring their own water bottles or they don't get any. We also have to disinfect the basketballs between JV and varsity practice."

In addition to following many new protocols, the coaches and players have to adapt to changes on the fly. For example, from December 12, 2020, to January 11, 2021, basketball was shut down due to its designation as a "red-sport." As a result, the coaches came up with a creative solution so the teams could still grow stronger.

"We were outside on the track doing nothing but conditioning. We weren't allowed to use any equipment," said Taylor. "The same parameters were still in place where we had to wear a mask the entire time and maintain 6 feet of distance. We weren't allowed to be inside the gym or touch a basketball."

Overall, the varsity and JV teams are doing everything they can to follow the rules and keep playing, with safety and adaptability as a priority.

The New Solar Charging Station at West

by Zoey Boswell, Staff Writer, 10th Grade

Check out the first ever solar-powered picnic table in the courtyard!

In January, 2021 Brunswick County's three traditional high schools were introduced to a new solar-powered picnic table with solar paneling, wireless charging, and Wi-Fi hotspots.

So what is this?

The fancy picnic table you see in the courtyard is the newest solar powered charging station with a Wi-Fi hotspot. The table is made completely from recycled material with the goal to promote natural resources.

Where did this come from?

This charging table was donated by Schneider Electric when they decided to partner with BCS in 2017 to start the self-funded energy project. The schools were presented with the opportunity to receive the table and West Brunswick gratefully accepted.

Why do we have this?

The goal of the solar-powered charging station is to provide self-sustaining 'green' energy from the sun. By their expectations, this machine will save Brunswick County Schools $23 million dollars.

"I hope that teachers can use this as something teachable that's on campus" said Paschal. "Hopefully we can use this for learning what green energy really is."

What's next?

It's too early to say if more of these will be added to our school.

"We can imagine that something this new can be fairly expensive," said Paschal. Schneider Electric says the tables are the first of several smaller tools to come.

Photo by **Anna Saunders**

PBIS at Town Creek Middle School

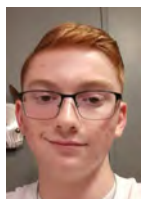
by Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

The North Brunswick Kiwanis Club (NKBC) teamed up with the Town Creek Middle School (TCMS) Communities in Schools (CIS) Success Coach Michelle Rau to provide incentives to middle school students to improve attendance, focus, positive behavior, and grades. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), supported by the U.S. Department of Education, aims to improve social, emotional, and academic outcomes for all students, including students with disabilities and students from underrepresented groups.

TCMS students can earn "Coyote Bucks" as small rewards and use these 'bucks' to make small purchases from a Positive Behavior cart. Town Creek students are working hard during these difficult pandemic months, and NBKC wants to help the school staff encourage students through the PBIS incentive program. Cindy Bryant, the school's NBKC Lead, stated that the club collected snack items such as individual bags of candies and chips and other donated items such as ear buds, personal hygiene items, games, art kits, throw blankets, and stress balls. "Thank you" to the residents of Brunswick Forest who donated to this drive! To learn more about the club and its role in the community, visit us on the Web at northbrunswick.org, "like" us on Facebook, or send an to email secretarynbkc@gmail.com. You may also call and talk with Club President Rick de Moya at (608) 695-8762.

Life for High School Seniors

by Samuel Cahenzli , West Brunswick High School



With April right around the corner, many seniors are wondering what's happening with prom. Many of the seniors today had that same question last year when Covid- 19 first hit our state and forced things to shut down; the only difference is, they were juniors at the time. It has been a full two years since the last time anyone had a prom or military ball (for those that are in JROTC), and many people are upset. Senior year is a time to make memories, whether that be taking the field one last time, getting awards for a club they've been a part of for the past four years, and take part in senior skip day.

Instead, they're watching from afar, waiting for their Zoom classes to start, waiting to get cleared to go back to practice, waiting for a chance to make those memories. These next few months will be the last time many of us are in high school, the last part of us being able to be teenagers and have fun. Some will be going to college, some will go into the workforce, and some will go into the military; they'll no longer be seen as teenagers but as adults. Yes, schools are back to doing two days in person for a specific group and then two days for the rest of the students, and that works for learning, but not for making memories.

Teachers are now at the first of the list for getting the vaccine, but that brings with it two great points - how soon can they get vaccinated, and when will students be able to. As of January 26, 2021, the latest news for teachers getting the vaccine is that as a whole state, we're months away from having every teacher vaccinated because each county decides when to start vaccinating teachers. Even with teachers now being put on the top of the list, we're nowhere closer to having a prom for seniors. We can also assume that students are at the bottom of the list for vaccines.

In conclusion, there will be no prom. For some, they'll be able to take the field one last time for a home game; they'll finally win that award they've been after for four years… But for all of us, there won't be that shared memory of a senior prom. Instead, we'll all share the memory of sitting home for eight hours, staring at our laptops.

Some article contributions can also be read at The West Wind, The student newspaper of West Brunswick High School. It is produced and published each year by the newspaper journalism class.

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The Culture of Product Placement, Modern Advertising and How It Impacts Teenagers (Part 1)

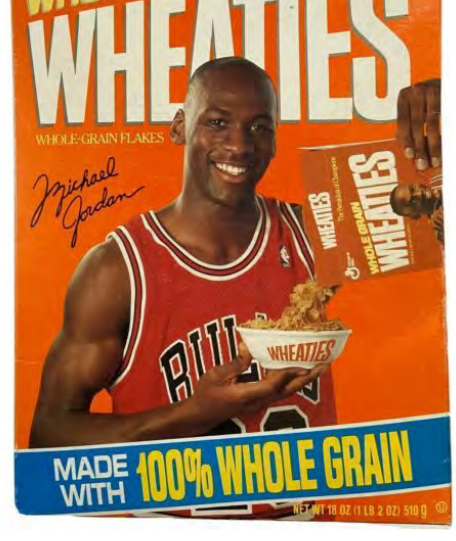
by Ana Johnson, Cape Fear Community College

The power of advertising - we witness it on various occasions. Traditional forms of public promotion have been implemented into our daily lives for years. It is the key ingredient to marketing a product to a projected audience, based on the influence of a brand. No matter what kind of approach you take to sell your idea, advertising has three primary purposes: to reel in new consumers, to demonstrate the benefits of a product, and to distribute messages with biased input on the product being publicized. Social media has only increased public promotion in our digital spaces and develop quickly within the world of advertising.

Say you decide to visit the grocery store because you forgot to pick up some wheat bread for breakfast this week. As you get distracted walking between all of the aisles, wanting to buy more than you require, you stumble upon your favorite basketball player featured on a cereal box. You stop, excited to see their profile plastered on the front of the label. As the consumer, you are drawn to observing the product and, most likely, purchasing to bring home. Your brain is influenced by witnessing the predetermined approval of a highly-praised advocate or persona, causing your perception of that brand to become inherently positive. That is one of several examples of blatant advertising that we have seen within our lives

One of the more popularized advertising types is product placement, which has taken off at the height of digital media. This method has allowed a broader audience, specifically a younger demographic, to interact effectively. For some context, product placement, also known as 'embedded marketing,' is a type of advertising where branded goods and services are featured in a digital program to cater to a larger audience. Billions of dollars are spent every year for this branded content, assuring to persuade a crowd for their product to be viewed successfully.

Product placement is typically shown through three individualized strategies: implicit, integrated explicit, and non-integrated explicit product placement. Implicit placement, which is the most practical identifier, is where a brand/product is presented without being formally expressed. Its general purpose is to increase familiarity in faint appearances without a clear demonstration of the product itself. This strategy is relatively common in movies or television shows to make the exchange less evident to the viewer. Examples could vary, from recognizing a particular cookware set used in a cooking show or a car company showcasing their latest model in an action film.



Vintage 1990 Collectible Michael Jordan Wheaties Cereal Box

German car company AUDI is featured in several Marvel movies. By combining this high level of visibility and the record-breaking theatrical audience of the movies, this product placement was worth 5.9 million dollars in advertising value for Audi.

The next strategy is integrated explicit placement, where a brand/product plays an active role in the digital program and is demonstrated relatively well. It is expressed formally, often persuading consumers' attitudes concerning the brand itself. Of course, we witness this strategy through commercials. A visual representation, like a *Swiffer* advertisement playing as a piece of background noise in an ongoing film, can demonstrate awareness to the audience and discover how the product is better than other competitive brands on the market.

Lastly, non-integrated explicit placement is where the brand/product can be expressed. However, this strategy is not incorporated throughout the digital program. For instance, a brand may showcase its name at the beginning or end of a well-known podcast (for example, "*This episode is brought to you by*"), indicating a partnership between the brand and the broadcasting company. Employing this strategy is a quick way to build community engagement with the listening audience without the central premise revolving around the advertisement

(to be continued)

Your Community

Military News

National Vietnam War Veterans Day Ceremony

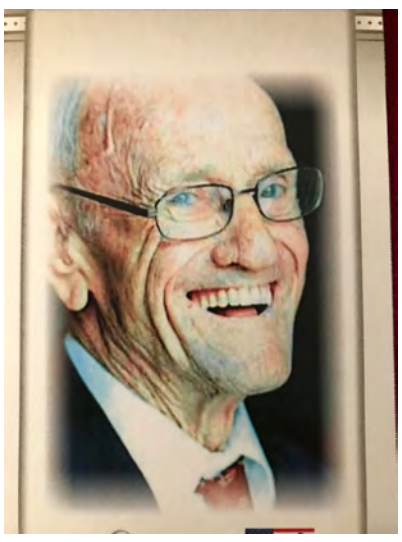
Leland VFW Post 12196 will host a National Vietnam War Veterans Day on March 29, 2021, at 5 pm. The event will be held at the Belville Memorial Park on Hwy. 133 (US 17) in Belville, NC. The commemoration recognizes all who served on active duty in the U. S. Armed Forces at any time from November 1, 1955, to May 15, 1975.

As part of that ceremony, veterans will receive the Vietnam Veterans Lapel Pin shown (below) as a lasting memento of the nation's gratitude. Surviving spouses of those who served will also be recognized. This commemoration includes veterans classified as "Vietnam Era Veterans." Everyone who served during that time played a role, thus the saying;

"All gave some, some gave all."

Veterans and their family members MUST pre-register to receive the pin. If you would like to be a part of this event, please contact us vfwpost12196@gmail.com, attn. Nate Pringle.

From the Family of Paul Phillips of Leland, NC



A special thank you to each and everyone who has honored our Paul with so much love. To Gerald Decker, our wonderful VFW Post 12196 and their veterans. Brenda Bozeman and the Town of Leland, and Leland's first responders. The Phillips family would like to thank Lower Cape Fear Hospice and also Life Care for their efforts in keeping our Paul healthy.

Thank you to the Red Cross Foundation, for their honor to Paul. Thank you, Battleship NC, for honoring Paul. But also, many others who came and honored Paul on his 93rd birthday. To Anne Brennan, the director at the Cameron Art Museum, and the museums staff and members for loving Paul so dearly. Thank you, Doug Bevell, of the Wilmington Funeral and Cremation, for being such a special friend to Paul these past years and going above and beyond when helping Paul through his final decisions. From his loving wife Evonne, and the entire Phillips family, **Thank You**.

We are so thankful for the thoughts and prayers, as well as all of the food, flowers, cards, calls, visits and other condolences during these times.

(Paul was a WWII veteran who served on the U. S. S. North Carolina during WWII. He retired from the Navy as a Chief Gunners Mate-underwater demolition expert.) He was a proud member of Leland VFW Post 12196. As a member of the Post, he was invited to meet President Trump during his Sept. 2, 2020 visit to Wilmington. During the President's speech, he even mentioned Paul by name.)

Community Blood Drive

by Richard N. Fry,
Public Relations Officer, American Legion Post 68 Leland

On Thursday, February 4, 2021, the John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68, Leland, NC and WWAY TV Wilmington, NC hosted a Red Cross blood drive. The event was held at the WWAY Event Center in Leland from 10:00 am to 2:30 pm. It's not often that we, as private citizens, have an opportunity to do something that has such a lifesaving impact. Unfortunately, COVID- 19 has made donating blood more difficult due to safety restrictions and lack of available donation venues. Alan Simmons, Red Cross Volunteer Ambassador, Post 68 Past Commander, and 9/11 survivor commented "The need for blood never takes a holiday and this blood drive was especially critical due an acute shortage of certain blood types."

Due to this critical shortage, the Red Cross, Post 68, and WWAY organized this blood drive in a very short period of time. But in less than a week following the initial call for donors, Brunswick County residents had filled all available appointments. Despite these challenges, 42 units were collected – that's 126 lives saved!! What a great way to pay it forward and make an impact on people in our community and across the country.

The blood drive was an incredible success, and we extend our sincere thanks to all the donors, Red Cross volunteers, and Post 68 members who made the event such a success, achieving over 100% of our blood donation goal. James Jarvis, Major, U.S. Marine Corps (Retired), Executive Director of American Red Cross of the Cape Fear Area stated "In any clime or place, our veterans served our country and American Legion Post 68 served our community again yesterday by cohosting a very successful blood drive with WWAY TV. The 42 pints of blood that we collected has the potential to save many lives and we couldn't be more honored to partner with the Legion to help our community hospitals receive the blood they need."

Post 68 will sponsor additional blood drives this year to commemorate Memorial Day and 9/11.

Leland VFW Post 12196 meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at Blossom's in Magnolia Greens. Dinner at 5:30. Meeting at 7 PM For more information contact us at:

vfwpost12196@gmail.com

or call **(910) 408-1934**

Your Community

BRUNSWICK ARTS COUNCIL

Celebrate, Cultivate, Community Outreach

The Mission of the Brunswick Arts Council is to support, sustain, enhance and cultivate the arts in Brunswick County 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, Parks & 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.

SOLSTICE by the SEA

"Arts & Parts"

Recycle Runway Challenge

Call for Entries!

Ages 8 to Adults

Wear it: June 19, 2021

Solstice by the Sea Festival

For complete contest rules, forms & prizes

Enter online:

www.brunswickartscouncil.org

Contact us:

execdir.brunswickartscouncil@gmail.com

BRUNSWICK ARTS COUNCIL

Celebrate, Cultivate, Community Outreach

Do The FASHION CHALLENGE

Take lots of these:

And turn them into:

Wearable Art!

Kids: Enter your artwork in the

Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Art Contest!

* * *

Brunswick County in the year 2040 -your design for the future

What will Brunswick County be like in the year 2040? Show us how you imagine Brunswick County's future.

The contest is open to children in grades K-12 or those home schooled from ages 5 to 17. Winners will be announced Thursday, April 15.

Artwork must be accompanied by a completed entry form. Submit entries by Wednesday, March 31, to Shane Miller (Brunswick County Schools) or by email or mail to the Brunswick County Planning Department at P.O. Box 249, Bolivia, NC 28422. For rules and entry form, visit www.brunswickcountync.gov/blueprintbrunswick/art-contest/.

Winners will receive prizes and have their artwork displayed on the Brunswick County website or in public facilities.

Would you like to enter?

- Complete an entry form
- Submit entry to your school, mail or email it in.
- Deadline: Wednesday, March 31

For More information about the Blueprint Brunswick 2040 Project visit:
www.brunswickcountync.gov/blueprintbrunswick/

BRUNSWICK ARTS COUNCIL

BLUEPRINT BRUNSWICK

BRUNSWICK COUNTY NORTH CAROLINA

SOLSTICE by the SEA

This NEW Festival is brought to you by :

Brunswick Arts Council

Friends of Oak Island Parks & Rec

The SoundHouse

Southport Evening Rotary

Are you: 1) a vendor w/**arts & crafts** or other **products** to sell; or 2) representing a **community group** and want a 10x10 space? $40 for vendors. Free for community nonprofits. Contact us at:

execdir.brunswickartscouncil@gmail.com

Are you a **food truck** & want space at the rodeo for the Festival? $100 per truck. Contact us at

rgordon@ci.oak-island.nc.us

CALL FOR VENDORS!

1st Soundstock Solstice by the Sea Festival

June 19, 2021

10-8 pm

Food Truck Rodeo ● Music ● Vendors
Corn Hole Tournament ● Fun

Celebrations!!!!

Sportsmanship of the Week Award

Noah and Sofia Palacios - Magnolia Greens. Noah was awarded "Sportsmanship of the week" by his i9 Sports* team. The recognition shows that he was modeling the traits a team leader would portray. He was helping others with drills and being used as an example of dedication and leadership. Noah has finished the season and will begin again in March.

* i9 Sports® is the nation's largest multi-sport provider focused solely on high-quality, community-based kids sports leagues.

Congratulations Mia Vogelsong on your acceptance to NC State! Mia is a Senior at Laney HS and is interested in studying Computer Science and music.

Go Pack!

Happy Birthday Kennedy Decker! One year old in Lock Down. Born on Mar. 17, 2020

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.®

State Farm®

1801075.1 State Farm, Bloomington, IL

Cape Fear and Teen Scene Thanks Our February Advertisers

Does your wardrobe need some sprucing up?

Cape Fear Voices and Teen Scene shirts are now available to order. Shirts are available in short sleeve ($20), long-sleeve ($22), and short sleeve polo ($25). Please log-on to **www.thepaisleyumbrella.com** to see colors, sizes, and designs available. All proceeds benefit Cape Fear Voices/Teen Scene.