



Cape Fear

VOICES

Providing an Outlet for Creativity in the Cape Fear Region

Volume 1, Issue 3

AUGUST 2020

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Help Wanted

Cape Fear Voices

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My Best Summer



By Brendan Connelly,
Brunswick Forest

When people ask me, what was my best summer, my answer would be the summer of 1988, when I was just one year old. Some people would be curious as to why I would pick a summer when I was so young and can barely remember it. However, something happened that summer that would drastically change my life forever. I was granted a miracle. Let me tell you my story.

I was born on June 11, 1987. From birth, I developed seizures. My parents started doing substantial research and asked several doctors for advice. They were about out of options when they discovered the Ketogenic Diet.

On August 17, 1988, I was put on the Ketogenic Diet, and they stopped the seizures. This date is a very historic day for me because that was my very last seizure. I am now 33 years old, which means this August will be 32 years since my last seizure.

That historic moment helped me to embark on a journey that many people view as a success story. When I started the Ketogenic Diet, my doctor told my parents it would be unlikely that I would go to college.

I was placed in Preschool Handicapped at two years old. I would attend various Special Education schools until the age of 19. In 2006, at the age of 19, I was mainstreamed into Northern Valley Regional High School as a junior. Two years later, in 2008, I graduated from Northern

Valley Old Tappan High School.

My remarkable journey would only continue from there. That fall, I would go somewhere that when I was a baby, nobody thought was possible. I would start college at Dominican College in Blauvelt New York.

Four years later, in May 2012, I became a college graduate with a BA in English. I graduated with a 3.4 GPA. In November 2016, my parents and I embarked on a journey, leaving Harrington Park New Jersey, where we lived for 22 years and moved to Leland, North Carolina.

In 2019, I became the newsletter writer at a local business Kinderstop Flexible Drop- In Child Care. In 2019, I also joined the Next Chapter Book Club, a book club for disabled adults. The founder Tom Fish, a retired professor from Ohio State, took me under his wings, having me read and edit several short stories he wrote. I also wrote a short story myself. My dream is to become a professional writer.

It is remarkable to think back on this fantastic journey my life has been and how far I have come. Without that miracle of the Ketogenic Diet stopping my seizures, who knows what my life would be like today or if I would even be alive. That is why my best summer is the summer of 1988. It saved my life.

I believe my story is a story to be told. I can be a role model for those out there going through a similar situation that I have experienced. Always have faith that you can make it through. Follow your dreams because your dreams will take you very far.

Thank You for the Growing Pains!

As many of our readers know, *Cape Fear Voices'* mission is to showcase the works of the many talented people in our local Cape Fear region – writers, poets, artists, craftspeople, and the like. We also aim to highlight the efforts of charitable organizations that work to improve our communities' welfare and the small businesses that form the economic backbone of our region. Our goal is to inform and entertain, not proselytize or preach. If you find one, two, or three stories in each issue that you find interesting enough to read and perhaps share with others, we have accomplished our mission.

Since publication started in June 2020, *Cape Fear Voices*, with the help of our contributing writers and our ad sponsors, has grown from 8 to 16 pages. We continue to work on how best to distribute hard copies to maximize our reach in the community. Several readers have also provided constructive comments on how to improve our publication to benefit our readership.

We have been blessed with donations from our community and are grateful for the writers who have sponsored ads for their favorite small businesses. We also appreciate those businesses that have paid for advertising space. Several individuals inquired about an internet presence and we recently began planning for the website. With luck and the help of our friend Dan Dodge, we hope to have a website up and running in the next few months.

This month we are also adding an introductory 2-page edition of *Teen Scene*. Getting this part of our program together has been slow due to the pandemic. However, this will give parents and interested teens an idea of what is to come.

In this extraordinary period in our country's history, we are exposed to severe partisanship and negativity daily. We hope that *Cape Fear Voices* provides you, the reader, with a brief respite. In starting this publication, we never imagined how quickly we would be accepted by the community. For that, we are grateful beyond what words can express. Thank you!

Eric Mens and Gerald Decker

All Living Things



By Janet Stiegler,
Brunswick Forest

What if, instead of St. Peter, you were met at the Pearly Gates by a wild oak, a maple tree, or a cactus? And what if those trees were the judges of how well you made the world a better place, not just for humans, but all living things? How would you do when they weighed the scale with what you gave and what you took from the earth?

The tree at the Pearly Gates would likely give me a hard time. I'm better at planting things than keeping them alive. I weed with a vengeance, sometimes taking the innocent with the guilty. My husband is more patient. When we moved into our new home, the builders had left a skinny wild oak near our patio, around which the nursery planted some rose bushes.

The landscapers looked at the tree skeptically and said, "It should probably come down; it won't live another year." When the Master Gardeners came to the house to look at our grass and other plantings, one said, "That oak tree is dead. You should replace it." But my husband was convinced it was just a late bloomer, and sure enough, in late June, it was sprouting buds. By summer, it was full of leaves. It has continued this practice every year since. Perhaps my husband's confidence in its latent beauty had given it a rebirth.

Hurricane Florence uprooted a young willow in our yard, knocking it on its side. Since this same tree had already blown into a neighbors yard during Hurricane Matthew two years earlier, a tree company had tethered it to the ground. Florence managed to break one of the ropes, so the tree was now stretched on

its side, its roots exposed, but still alive. Since this was the second time it had come unearthed, I was inclined to have the tree company replace it with something sturdier.

However, our neighbor, who benefited from our yard's view, convinced my husband that they could get it back up. He had a pulley system that they wrapped around the trunk, then turned a crank at the other end to slowly bring the tree upright again. They struggled at first, so my brother came to help, and I watched out the window as the three of them worked on the tree for several hours. Eventually, they got it up and tethered back in place.

Sweaty, dirty, and proud, they drank beer, laughed, and slapped each other on the back, the way men do when they accomplish something big together. But behind them stood the real champion, her lithe limbs swaying triumphantly in the wind, like a marathoner who, sore and weary, stumbles 50 yards from the finish line, then slowly picks herself up to the cheers of the crowd and hobbles across the finish line.

Who knows how much longer the poor willow will live? Eventually, she may succumb to another hurricane. Or maybe one spring her branches will remain brown and withered, her roots and chlorophyll no longer able to do their jobs. When she approaches the Pearly Gates, she may ask why they did not take her sooner? Why did she have to be tethered to the earth for so long?" You had to teach them," the Gate Master will answer." They needed more time to learn love, compassion, and what it means to care for all God's living things."



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 een 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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Editor's Corner

Welcome Aboard

We welcome Debra Pickett as Secretary/Treasurer for the Cape Fear Voices and Giovanni (Gio) Leone as our Staff Writer.



Deb and her husband, originally from New Jersey, are relative newcomers to the area from Holly Springs, NC. They reside in Leland, NC. Deb has a Master's Degree from the University of Phoenix and started her career as a pediatric nurse. She moved on to hold several positions in sales and marketing for

large corporations and is currently a Financial Advisor with Edward Jones. Deb was recently inducted into the Kiwanis Club of North Brunswick.



Giovanni Leone, a Leland resident, is an undergraduate student at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC). He is an aspiring nuclear and particle physicist, and the President of the UNC Society of Physics Students. When not performing physics research, Gio finds pleasure in studying languages, playing the trumpet, composing music, and drinking coffee in the process. He finds artistry, versatility, and diligence to be the most valuable qualities for success in the sciences and humanities. Gio hopes to apply these traits to spread his love for culture with the Cape Fear community.

"The Great Lockdown of 2020"
 Be a Part of the 2020 Commemorative
 Cape Fear Voices Edition

Cape Fear Voices (CFV) is preparing a commemorative Edition called "The Great Lockdown of 2020." This special publication will be a compilation of as many stories from the Cape Fear area and elsewhere on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted people – their lives, families, and livelihoods. We will compile the entries as a historical document for our area during one of the strangest years in American and world history.

In addition to highlighting the effects of the pandemic on our Cape Fear region, this special publication will include a section dedicated to short stories or even a paragraph or two on how the pandemic has affected people in other parts of our country and world. To date, we have already received submissions from Texas, California, the United Kingdom, Netherlands, and Indonesia.

We expect the publication to be printed in glossy magazine format and between 40-50 pages in length. Copies will be available for sale and donated to local libraries and town halls.

To help ensure our success in this ambitious endeavor, we need you to spread the news of our plans to everyone you know. That can include parents, students, business owners, teachers, community leaders, first responders, and medical personnel – to name a few. If these individuals are not writers, then become a reporter for them. Write their sentence, paragraph, or story. You can also submit a series of quotes from others who want input but don't necessarily want to write.

Photos that were taken during the period between March 1 and September 30, 2020 will also help us to document and remember this strange and difficult time. Please keep entries in the 500-word range or shorter. In order to be included in the October publication, all entries must be submitted to editorcfv@gmail.com by September 15, 2020.

We hope that you will join us in this important project! - Eric Mens, CFV Editor

* * * * *

Questions to ask yourself or others as you begin to record experiences related to
 "The Great Lockdown of 2020" include but are not necessarily limited to:

- ▶ Did you personally experience any particular hardships during the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions?
- ▶ If so, what were they?
- ▶ If so, how did you deal with them?
- ▶ Did you feel a greater amount of stress or anxiety?
- ▶ If so, how did you help yourself feel less anxious?
- ▶ Did you reach out to other people to see how you could help them?
- ▶ What brought you the greatest sense of relief from any increased stress or anxiety?
- ▶ How did you stay in touch with friends or family?
- ▶ Did you travel to see friends or family?
- ▶ Did you do something totally out of character to "stretch" yourself during the restrictions?
- ▶ What would you have done differently?
- ▶ If we have a second pandemic wave, how do you think you will react?
- ▶ If we have a second round of restrictions (lockdown), what would you do differently (if anything)?
- ▶ What type of future planning have you done (e.g., to see friends, travel locally or otherwise, etc.)?

Annual Subscription
 Available

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

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

Special Ad Rates to Support Local Businesses

We continue to promote an ad program that allows individuals/groups to sponsor an ad for a local small business. Since they have always supported our many programs, it's time we did something for them. The cost for a sponsored business card ad is \$30 a month.



Retirement



By Jane Webster,
Brunswick Forest

According to the dictionary, retirement is "a time of cessation from work." In reality, at least as evidenced by life in Brunswick Forest, retirement is a euphemism for Second Childhood. It evokes a return to carefree times, unshackled from the demands and pressures of the workforce. Growing up, references to "second childhood" always seemed to infer that one had lost their marbles. But we're not nuts. We're having the time of our lives!

We've traded in corporate game playing for playing games. Our attire has changed from business suits to play clothes. Out with the neckties and high heels, in with the sneakers and shorts.

"Sen-ager" is the new teenager, with some serious upgrades. No curfews; stay up or sleep in, as late as you want. We've plenty of money, nice cars, and cheap gasoline. Hang out with your buddies every day; alcohol may be involved. Wherever two or more may gather, we'll likely lift a glass. After all, life is a party! Oh, the parties! Why wait for the weekend? Every day is the weekend when you're retired.

Retirement is a balancing act; it's right brain versus left brain. Avocations move front and center, with time to focus on creative expressions, like painting, gardening, quilting, crafting, writing, photography, woodworking. It's an opportunity to try something new or re-ignite an old passion.

Sometimes it's a no-brainer. Time out, time for a nap.

Exercise means going through the motions, everything from mind games like bridge and canasta, poker and Mahjong, to raising a racket in tennis and pickleball, God's gift to the orthopedists. Pushing aside our aches and pains with a little ibuprofen, we strap on our Fit Bits and get out there, walking, jogging, biking, swimming, and working out. Dogs get in on the action, too, walking their people morning, noon and night.

But it's not all fun and games. Retirees give back until their backs give out. As community volunteers, they subsidize the local workforce, lending a hand in fundraising, food gathering, tutoring, mentoring, even sewing masks for the new normal. From Thalian Hall and the Wilson Center to libraries, hospitals, and shelters, to running the Train Museum and local mansion and battleship tours, volunteers are the community's heartbeat. Kiwanis, Lions, Meals on Wheels, Hogs in the Forest, Assistance League and other philanthropic groups thrive on the good works and generous spirit of retirees.

And when it all gets to be too much? We travel! We take a vacation from our busy lives and explore the

world. Suitcases are within easy reach, and travel agents on speed dial, our passports always current.

Sometimes we simply sit on the porch with iced tea and a good book and enjoy the quiet. Or we unwind with a nature walk, appreciating the beauty of our coastal surroundings in its seasonal unveiling.

People often put off retirement because they don't know what they'll do with themselves, with their time. Retirement is an attitude adjustment, a rediscovery of oneself, outside the parameters of career, and raising families. It is a gift of time, time to do whatever you want.

Now, please pass the Advil. Where'd I leave those marbles?

Your Help Equals Our Future

By Taylor Hardison,
Leland

Open Letter to Older Adults:

Our future is in jeopardy. Chemicals released over the past century from cars, factories, agriculture, and other industries ave settled into the atmosphere, trapping extra heat from the sun's rays that would otherwise reflect back into space. This excess heat is warming our seas, changing our climate patterns, destroying our crops, and starting unprecedented wildfires. Animals are losing their habitat. Species are dying out because their breeding grounds are covered in snow. Severe weather is becoming stronger and more frequent. Air and water quality are continuing to pose threats to quality of life. Climate change is not coming; it is here.

Our daily choices are putting us in danger and we have the opportunity to do something about it. It's easier to

believe it is the natural pattern of things and it will work itself out. To

You've already worked so hard to give so much to so many. Don't let it all be for naught.

believe that means you don't have to do anything. Yes, this approach takes the responsibility off our hands and allows us to continue living the lives we've grown accustomed to. But can we do better? And what happens if we don't?

When your son has climbed with his family onto the roof of their house during a hurricane with rising floodwaters, hoping that a helicopter will save them, will you be proud of yourself for not taking action? When your grandchild is born with a birth defect because of the polluted waters in your daughter's city, will you be content with not having spoken up? You've already worked so hard to give so much to so many. Don't let it all be for naught.

You have gotten to enjoy this

planet for fifty, sixty, seventy plus years. Us young people deserve to have those years here on Earth too, unencumbered by fears of rising sea levels, food shortages, and pollution-induced breathing disorders. We can mitigate these concerns and more through so many methods, like reducing food waste, carpooling, planting a pollinator-friendly garden, eating less animal products, and supporting businesses who run on renewable energy like solar (or even installing solar panels yourself!).

No one can take on every task, but everyone can take on something, so start with your favorite and let yourself feel pride in your contribution. Doing something different is hard. It's really hard. But if you've had the willpower to make it this far in life, I know that you can figure out how to stand strong and join us in the fight against climate change. It's our time as young people to take action because it is our only choice. It is time for you to take action because it is the right choice.

Signed,
A Fading Generation

What do you recommend?



By Gerald Decker,
Magnolia Greens

During this crazy time of dealing with Covid-19, and associated restrictions, life has revolved around cutting grass and watching TV for entertainment. (Cutting grass for entertainment is actually very underrated.) Commercial TV seems to have sold its soul to the highest bidding advertiser. For me, the entertainment value of most primetime TV is pretty much in the zero range. That also includes the incessant commercial and bias-based 24-hour news.

As many of us have done, we have turned to places like Netflix, Amazon, or Hulu to get

through these long evenings. When I think about how much TV I have watched over the last 4 months, it is actually quite depressing. Eating out, bowling, going to the movies, days at the pool or the beach, and traveling have all been put on hold.

Each week instead of our normal activities, I am on the phone with family and friends discussing, "what have you watched," "what do you recommend?" The constant search to find something to occupy the mind as we sit and wait for this pandemic to pass. So, I thought I would share with everyone my list over the last four months and my rating system. Granted, if you agree with me on most of these, you may want to seek counseling.

Stars:

1 bad; 2 bad; 3 tolerable; 4 good; 5 great; 5+ highly recommended but only for the super intelligent and eclectic of mind.

*The Irishman *****
Outer Banks***
Dead to Me***
Medici the Magnificent*****
Bonfire of Destiny***
Borgia*****
(Not a mistake-the best)
Outlander****
Big Little Lies*****
Ozark ***
Jamestown *****
Halt and Catch Fire*****
(Over my head on subject matter but
amazing study of characters)
The Crown *****
The Tudors****
The Last Dance*****

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The Snake Wrangler



by Jan Morgan-Swegle,
 Compass Pointe

There are so many advantages to living in North Carolina. We don't have to deal with mounds of snow in the winter, it's a slower lifestyle and our favorite ocean beach is just 30 minutes away. It's just a nice place to live.

Of course, as with all "nice" places, there are some issues. Yesterday, when Tony was grilling hot dogs, he opened the grill to turn on the propane tank and found a snake curled up around it. We have a bird's nest in the large bush near the grill and we think that the snake had discovered it as a potential food source. It left the grill and climbed up into the bush to attack the baby Thrushes in the nest. Well, Mother and Papa bird weren't having any of that—the snake suddenly dropped to the ground and was chased back to the wetlands by 2 adult Thrush and a Cardinal. They pecked at it and harassed it until it was out of sight. I didn't realize that birds would challenge a snake, but parenthood is parenthood and they were serious about protecting the nest.

And so, the snake drama ended well. Until this morning.

My phone woke me up and as I was speaking to a doctor's office, my husband, Tony, came in and seemed rather agitated. I hung up and he told me to get dressed and come to the lanai.

That's not the usual greeting I get from Tony when I get up.

When I got there, Tony said, "the snake is back. He's in the lanai." OMG! I looked out of the door from the house to the lanai and there it was—up near the ceiling, resting on my twinkle lights. The lights that give our lanai character and atmosphere. The lights that Tony put up just for me. There was no two ways about it, the snake was comfortable.

Tony moved the lanai furniture around and got a broom. The snake just stayed quiet; not moving, tangled in the lights. Tony brushed it with the broom, and it seemed to wake up. As Tony poked it, the snake started to move forward, still hanging onto the lights. It reared up and faced Tony with an ugly glare as if to say, "hey, I'm sleeping here."

Tony continued to poke it with the broom handle until it fell with a thud onto the floor. This was not a happy snake! Tony literally swept it out on to the patio and stayed with it until it reached the grass. The last time we saw it, the snake was headed toward the house next door, which was fine with me.

We checked our "snake guide" and found it was a non-poisonous kind, but just the sight of it invading our living space was enough to freak me out.

Tony has now dubbed himself, "The Snake Wrangler." I know there are people out there who like snakes, I, however, am not one of them.

There are many animals here that I would love to have as visitors—little brown bunnies, a family of wild turkeys, Cardinals, Thrush, Hummingbirds, Mockingbirds—all kinds of pretty things.Snakes—that's where I draw the line.

Head back to the wetlands, you ugly, slithering things, there's a new Wrangler in town and you will be swept away with his strength and determination.

Sunsets

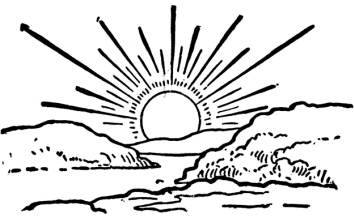


by Sharon Copland,
 The Reserve at Mayfair

I have always considered myself a day person. Give me a sunny day, and I'll sing you a song. Give me a cloudy day, and I'll curl up with a book or a movie. Every day that I'm alive and healthy, I consider myself a wealthy woman. Yet as I thumb through pictures in my collections, I find a common theme, which is numerous photos of sunsets.

I'm drawn to the sky as night approaches and feel a sense of wonder at the various colors as the sun goes down, the movement of the clouds as a cooling begins, and finally, that thin yellow line that says it's the end of the day. As I check the color of the sky, I always think of the phrase "red sky at night, sailors' delight." Tomorrow is going to be a beautiful day!

In a mountain sunset, the colors in the descending clouds vary from grey to dark lavender with a soft orange glow behind them; toward the end, everything becomes silver and dark blue. At an east-facing beach, the sun sets behind you and casts a glow that begins as pink but gets darker and darker until it's gone.



But my favorite is a west-facing sunset, be it an ocean or a river. What a glorious shout out to the day coming to an end. The sun actually gets brighter on the horizon like it's catching the water on fire. Toward the end, the sky and the water light up, and the sun is a distinct ball of brilliant yellow. Then it falls into the sea, and a red glow sizzles into the ocean, and the fire is out. That's when I make a wish for tomorrow to be as special as today, always different and full of surprises.

Sheila's Revival

(Part 1)



By Brendan Connelly,
 Brunswick Forest

Here I am 27 years old, and already both my parents are gone. My challenges only begin there. I have no friends, no one ever acknowledges me, and I usually eat alone at work. I have been scared to express my feelings because I have autism.

I live in a small apartment. I have always loved reading, listening to music, and walking around town. However, lately, I have not been doing that much because I have felt depressed, lost, and hopeless.

I have decided to make a difficult decision and drop out of the part-time courses I was taking at the Community College. I have no one left in the world. I miss my parents, dearly. I wish someone

would care about me. I am starting to feel helpless. Thank goodness I still have my job as a checkout clerk for a big drug store chain.

The next day, while I was at work, this woman walks into the store and sees me crying. "Hi, my name is Gail. You look like you need some help." I wipe off the tears from my eyes, and I tell her, "Hi, my name is Sheila Patterson. No one cares about me, and I feel lost and hopeless."

I explained to Gail that I have been going through a rough time. She seemed very understanding. Gail offered to meet me after work and talk in private. I agreed, and so Gail picked me up. She suggested we go to her house, which was not far from my apartment. Gail offered to make dinner, and I jumped at the idea. I hadn't had a good meal for a long time. "Would you mind if we have grilled cheese? I am kind of a picky eater," I told Gail. She was very understanding. Before I knew it, she had a grilled cheese sandwich and potato chips on the table for my eating pleasure.

There was something about Gail that made me feel relaxed. The more we talked, the more it

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became easier for me to talk about my feelings. I talked about being scared to interact with people because of my disability. "I am scared people will judge me differently than a normal person because I'm different. I have stopped going to Community College because I've just had enough. I don't feel comfortable there anymore."

"Oh, Sheila, I am so sorry about your losses, and I'm sorry about your problems at Community College. However, Sheila, you have come to the right place." Gail shared that she was a teacher at the same Community College I had been going to. However, her class deals with leadership and social skills, among other things like reading, spelling, math, and making friends. "We share a quote of the day, a joke of the day, and I have my students write in their own personal journals every day to share with their classmates. I would love it for you to come join our class. Let me give you some advice: don't be afraid to share your true emotions, and don't be afraid to ask for help," Gail said.

(To be continued)

Poetry



Kelley A. Nardell-Powell

Never Come Back

The ocean was crystalline, glazed in sun glare,
The currents had shifted in synchronized gear,
And I could not escape from the whisper of fear
That you would never come back.

For once you descended, embraced by the depths,
The turquoise and emerald, the span and the breadth
Of fathom and manta, of seaweed and shark
Enveloped by tides in the cool, rocking dark
Will you remember, or will you depart?
To never, no never, come back?

We loved her together, this great span of green
This seafoam and tide lace and deep, secret sheen
Of bottomless opera, a ballet marine
And I wondered if you would come back.

You paused before, cynic and laughing at me –
A pinnacle ego, unalarmed, free!
Yet bound in land-man gear and tempting the sea
You trusted to let you come back.

I watched you descend from my perch in the breeze,
Secure in my craft as the sea would concede
Adrift on the infinite waters beneath,
I waited for you to come back.

I waited two sunsets, four tides for the shine
Of man-gear against phosphorescence and brine
I fainted, though dosed with the salts and the wine
(But her love for you must have been stronger than mine)
For you never, no never, came back.

And I am so old now, my heart the debris
Of hurricane breakwash, my remnants the scree
Shattered on tradewinds, the mind's filigree
Scattered.

And I wait by the ocean, until she claims me,
Her daughter, her last child, with you now and free
And together we'll wander the heights of the sea
(And never, no never, come back.)



Elizabeth Wassum

Vining Plant

Oh, how you creep
Ever slowly toward the sun
Reaching blindly for something solid
A touch of rest for intrepid tendrils
Seeking new light
Continuously creating a path forward



An Ode to Potato Chips

Crunch. Salt on my tongue
Sandwich's perfect companion
No, I will not share.

Cracker Sustenance (Part 1)



By Eric Mens,
Brunswick Forest

distant woodline,
he knew exactly
where he would
find his much
sought-after treasure. Standing in the middle of his
homemade cypress skiff, the sounds of marsh
wildlife greeted him. All around him, frogs
croaked as birds perched high in the treetops called
to each other. Occasionally, he heard the rolling
cuk-cuk-cuk croaking of egrets. His long cypress
pole made a soft *splash* as he lifted and then sank

He left his riverside shanty early in
the morning before the sun had begun
to lift the fog shrouding the marsh-
lands. Poling his way through the
maze of shallow waterways towards a

*God-forsaken tree
huggers trying to
disrupt my life and
livelihood,*

it back into the water.

For years, the waters surrounding his home had
provided him sustenance with its bountiful mullet,
crawfish, and crabs. But today, he had a beautifully
smoked turkey leg waiting for him in the pot at
home. He would have preferred a smoked wild hog
slab, but the turkey leg was all he had for tonight's
meal. By the time that he returned to the shanty, he
would need to add the swamp cabbage and stewed
tomatoes to the slowly cooking brew.

He thought about how things had changed over
the last few years, with the influx of newcomers to
his isolated corner of the world. Long-standing
acres of property owned by his few neighbors
along the river that bordered the marshlands had
been gobbled up by the intruders. They brought
with them a new generation of manufactured
Glades skiffs and, worse, their new-fangled air-
boats. They disrupted the quiet balance of nature
that he so loved about his life.

The best time to avoid the noisy intrusion of
these newcomers into his productive fishing
grounds was early in the morning before the sun
rose. Then, he could still cast his net in peace to
catch the mullet that provided much of his daily
sustenance. But this evening's meal would be
different.

He had sharpened his billhook machete the night
before to make sure that he could do his work
quickly and efficiently before anyone could see
him. The talk in the town's General Store was that
the newcomers had their own ideas about the
"Crackers" - the locals - native to the area. Some
wanted to tighten the restrictions on the daily
catches of mullet. For years, the smoked mullet he
did not keep for himself, he had been able to sell to
the General Store, adding to his meager income.

Others wanted to ban the harvesting of swamp
cabbage on public lands. He considered the har-
vesting of Sabal Palm - swamp cabbage - to be a
god-given right, especially on public lands. The
cabbage had provided sustenance to the locals well
before the environmentalists showed up.

*God-forsaken tree huggers trying to disrupt my
life and livelihood,* he thought to himself as he
slowly poled his way through the marsh. He
looked at the bottom of the skiff, where the ma-
chete lay hidden beneath the canvas tarp. Next to
it, he knew there lay a jug of low bush lightning,
but he also knew that it was much too early to take
a swig. He would reward himself after the harvest.

*Damned if I'm gonna let some tree hugger keep
me from my dinner,* he thought.

(To be continued)

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THE TEEN SCENE

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Tomorrow's Voices Today

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The Issue Inside

Stories & Articles

Cape Fear Voices

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Morgan Bennett

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(pages 6-7)

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Leland Middle School and Leland Magazine Endorse TEEN SCENE

Gerald Decker and Eric Mens of Teen Scene, Inc., publishers of *Cape Fear Voices*, announced this month the support of Leland Middle School and *Leland Magazine* in publishing a new local paper targeted toward area teenagers called *Teen Scene*. The monthly publication will be written, published, and managed by teens. The main goals are to promote the writing and business skills of teens. Our motto is, "Tomorrow's Voices Today."

Recently, Paul Price, Principal of Leland Middle School, commented that the mission and goals of Teen Scene, Inc. coincide with the school's efforts to promote writing and public outreach. "We are excited to introduce *Teen Scene* to our students and parents. Our students will be encouraged to participate."

Jeffery Stites, owner, and publisher of *Leland Magazine* and *Southport Magazine*, recently commented that *Teen Scenes* focus on students learning business skills caught his interest. Mr. Stites stated that as a writer for his high school paper and as a journalism major at Penn State, he learned about writing but not enough about the business side of writing. He said, "I wish there had been this kind of program when I was in school. We are happy to support this program."

Participants in the *Teen Scene* program will learn to develop and implement business plans, develop and im-

plement budgets, learn public speaking skills, learn to organize and implement projects for accomplishing their business plan, and how to write and publish a monthly paper. With support from the public, *Teen Scene* will also offer various other opportunities such as writing/journalism instruction with local writers and educational institutions, scholarships, public speaking opportunities, and community service.

As a nonprofit 501(c)(3), Teen Scene, Inc. funding comes from paid advertisements, donations, and grants. We rely on public support to allow *Teen Scene* to achieve its stated mission and, especially, to make a difference in student lives.

Expectations of an Eighteen-Year Old

By Richard Hopkins

12th Grade

As I was growing up, I experienced certain feelings about the future and specifically about being eighteen. On some unconscious, unspoken level, to me the age of eighteen was synonymous with adulthood, responsibility, freedom, and even destiny. I always received the impression of confidence from eighteen-year olds that left a lasting mark upon me. Each and every one seemed to be developed and in complete control of their life, relishing the challenges ahead like an ace pilot taking to the sky. Granted, as I grew older and gained more knowledge, both of life and of eighteen-year olds, my preconceptions changed and were refined, but only on the intellectual level. Deep inside, I always retained that initial imprint that left me in a state of awe whenever I thought of being eighteen. I didn't merely think that being eighteen was going to mark the beginning of a new era of my life. No, to me experience would be so alien that it would mark the beginning of a new manner of existence and that I would almost be a new creature entirely. Basically, you could only understand being eighteen by being eighteen (anything else was impossible, of course) and that once I reached the magic number, the doors of enlightenment would spread wide and all would be revealed.

Boy was mine turning a rather anticlimactic event. The disparity between my expectations and the reality of the event is rather severe. I didn't feel any different. No sudden understanding about the nature of life, the universe, or ANYTHING came to me. I did not suddenly possess the assurance and poise that I thought came standard issue with being an adult. As a

matter of fact, I have been less sure of anything ever in my life. No, I have no idea what college I want to attend. No, I do not know what major I intend to take. No, I have no clue as to what career I will follow. No, I am completely at a loss to decide what I want to do with the rest of my life!

Surely something was amiss? I mean, it's not POSSIBLE that THIS is what being eighteen is like? Is it?

The answer is, yes it is. Just when I finally think I am getting a handle on life; when I think I am learning to balance everything and enjoy myself; when I finally begin to truly ENJOY high school, I am forced to throw everything into disarray. Now I am asked to consider the future, new problems, and myself. Essentially, after years of anxiety and work, I develop my little corner of peace. Now it is then smashed by a hurricane of change.

Oddly enough, I wasn't even excited about turning eighteen, but that's because I stopped truly celebrating my birthdays years ago. They're nice, but they have ceased to be of any real importance to me. However, one thing I did get psyched about was being able to vote. The very first opportunity I had after my eighteenth birthday, I registered to vote. Of course, it was too late for the last presidential election, but I am looking forward to midterm elections. In all honesty, I view voting as one of the landmark features of being both an adult and a citizen. It is something I take very seriously, and look forward to immensely.

I suppose in this one area, at least some of my expectations were realized. Otherwise, I think I am having an early mid-life crisis.

Poetry

One Last Question

By Morgan Bennett

9th Grade

Published by International Society of Poetry in Colors of Life

Where does the sky really begin?
And where does it end?
Does the sun really rise in the east?
And set in the west?
How do we know?

Isn't it possible that we're wrong?
Isn't it possible that only the birds and the past,
Know the true origins,
Of the sun,
And the sky?

Where does reality end?
Does it even end at all?
How do we know that crazy dreams,
And wishes aren't really,
Glimpses of the future?

If the old days are really so terrible,
Why do we keep,
Returning to them?
Will there ever be a time,
When all men really are equal,

Or is it just an idea that can never be?

Blooming

By Courtney Bennett

10th Grade

I want to watch the stars bloom in your eyes
Like fireworks exploding into the night.
I can't hide--
Your heart is beating in my chest,
Unmercifully reminding me of every picture in my head.
The world is so still,
Barely breathing;
And I think of you
In the quiet of these moments.

Oldies But Goodies

Janet Harbor 9th Grade “...There’s the people you’ve known forever, who like...know you...in this way. That other people can’t. Because they’ve seen you change. They’ve let you change.”

That quote is from an episode of “My So-Called Life”, and is actually a very true quote. You know your kindergarten friends? The ones you’ve known for almost your whole life?

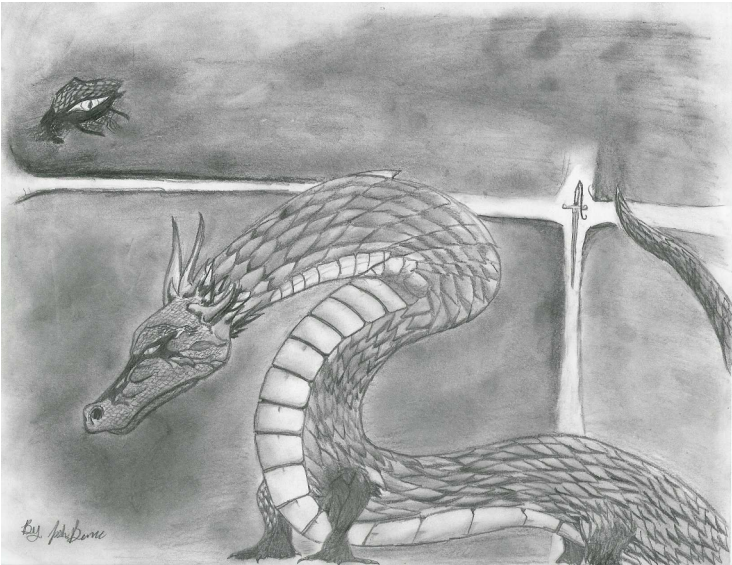
Or maybe you’ve moved to lots of places, like me, and you don’t have a group of friends you’ve known forever, but you’ve gotten close enough to certain people for them to be considered your “kindergarten group”. Those are the ones who have been there with you through everything, even when you let them down.

Can you remember a time when you wanted to hang out with other groups? Now

don’t get me wrong; there’s nothing wrong with hanging out with different groups. But in the process, you sort of/kind of “forgot” about your kindergarten buddies. Yup, that happens a lot. The bad thing about it is that most of the time the new group of friends you’re hanging out with ditch you because all of a sudden, you’re not cool enough in their eyes anymore. And who do you run to? Yeah, you guessed it. Your old pals.

The great thing about them is that they take you back without judging you or anything. That’s when you realize who your real friends are. The ones who say, “I’ve got your back” and mean it.

You might ask what’s the point of it. Well, there’s no point. Just wanted to let you all know that it’s okay to make new friends, but don’t forget about your kindergarten buddies. Because most of the time, they have your back...for real.



The drawing of the dragon is credited as follows:
The artist's name is **Josh Bence**, 10th Grade

Shorty

By Morgan Bennett 10th Grade It seems that no matter how hard people try to give away a puppy, they never can find anyone willing to take it in. As they face rejection again and again, people, by nature eventually come up with solutions, and it looks as if that is what has happened.

Early on a Sunday morning before classes and services, our pastor was walking through the church turning on all the lights, expecting nothing out of the ordinary. However, when he opened the door to the men's restroom of our family life center, a small, scared creature came running out in a frenzy, desperately hoping to find whoever left her there. She was corralled in the gym, and turned out to be a very sociable puppy.

After a little discussion, it was decided that one of the youth would take the little dog home, and by the end of services that morning, everyone in the small church knew about the puppy and who would take her in. That worked so much better than just asking people if anyone would take her. I guess people are much more likely to take a puppy when they think that she is homeless and pitiful than when someone just goes around trying to give her away.

"Cards, Doughnuts and Scuba Masks"

By Courtney Bennett 10th grade This summer I spent the week of the Fourth of July with my friend’s family in Destin. All ten or so of us in one condo, trying to survive (sounds like a bad movie). My friend Jay and I got the den in the basement to chill in. And chill we did.

You see, I have a severe aversion to skin cancer. And swimsuits. And sand in general. So, over the course of that week, we spent some quality time with a pack of cards and her computer (which we miraculously connected to the Internet and hooked up to serve as a television). The one time we went out on the beach in daylight was to have a twenty-minute seaweed fight and rush back inside to the comfort of the shower.

When fireworks were shot on the night of the Fourth, all ten of us squeezed onto the balcony and shouted our praise (which sounded eerily like wolves howling at the moon) to the beautiful light display in the night sky.

I will never forget that week: hissing at the light when it invaded our haven of darkness as someone opened the door; sitting on the beach at night and calling random friends; walking to the cyber ice cream café; and getting whistled at. Or the pigging out on the endless stream of doughnuts, or getting scuba masks thrown at me while I’m in the shower. Good times.

Hang Up and Drive!

By Kera Mullins 11th grade Newsflash!!! Recent studies have shown that teenagers

have the really bad habit of talking on their cell phones while driving. This fact might be true, yet it is not just teenagers that have this habit. I, myself, have seen many adults chattering on their phones while driving down the road.

The invention of the cell phone was once considered strange and really out there. Now all you ever see is people with phones glued to their ears. What’s up with that? Yes, people not only drink and drive, they also talk and drive (This can be almost as dangerous in many cases).

Don’t get me wrong, cell phones are really convenient instruments. Simple-minded Kera even has one and uses it on a regular basis.



Now days, people try to do way too many things at once. What happened to the simple life that we all knew and loved? One thing can be done at a time. Yes, it is truly this simple. If you are operating a vehicle and your cell phone rings, don’t answer it. If you answer, you are not only putting yourself at risk, but you are also endangering others around you.

You might say that I am being a pessimist, yet I am only trying to state the truth. Bad things, such as accidents, can happen in a split second anywhere at any time. Everyone, including myself, needs to pay more attention to the task at hand, in this case driving, and avoid dangerous situations.

My suggestion to you is next time you are out cruising; count the number of people talking on cells. Trust me I have done this and I was truly shocked at what I discovered. Remember people, it is truly this simple: HANG UP AND DRIVE!

Perfect Match: The Jack Russell Terrier

By Emily Rose Thorne 7th Grade The Jack Russell Terrier is a small dog throughout its lifetime of 13-14 years! This energetic dog can be many different colors, but the most popular colors are white with tan spots. They don’t shed too heavily, but there is some hair that falls of these sometimes testy, smart, friendly dogs.

The Jack Russell Terrier is a perfect match for sporty, active people, and normally is very good with kids. They are fairly easy to care for and train, though they are going to need some firm training. These dogs love treats! You’ll need to supply them with lots of them during training! These dogs are almost as good at hunting as hound dogs, so you’ll have to be careful around other dogs and animals. These dogs can jump incredibly high for their

size. They have a history of jumping over fences. They are avid diggers, and make some pretty loud noises when they bark! If you have a fenced-in yard, keep your dog out there most of the time.

That may not be enough though, so be sure that your Jack Russell Terrier gets plenty of fresh air and walked a lot. This is also a good dog for people who like to jog around outside. The only kind of health issues this dog suffers is some joint problems, which is easy to treat. Once you notice these problems beginning, try to make sure your dog isn’t too terribly active, but with enough fresh air and exercise to keep them from growing lazy. Generally, the Jack Russell Terrier is top marks – you should definitely look into getting one for yourself today!

Times They Are A’ Changing

By Kera Mullins 10th Grade Let me ask you this...what is your favorite vacation spot? You know the place that you and your family have always gone to? It’s the place that you can sort of call your second home. Well, for me, this place is no other than Panama City Beach, Florida. For as many years as I can remember, my family and I have made regular trips to Panama City. It is a place that we will always hold very close to our hearts.

You know how places change over the years? Sometimes they change so much that you can barely recognize the place that you once loved. My family recently went back to Panama City for

Spring break. We were in total shock. Not only was there a bunch of crazy college kids running around (that is a whole other story that I won’t go into right now), but the place that we once knew does not even exist anymore. There are monstrous condos and buildings being built. You can not even see the beach from Front Beach Road anymore. Also, one of my very favorite spots (The Miracle Strip Amusement Park) is being torn down. It made me very sad. The place that I have always loved going to does not even look like it once did. Everything has changed.

I realize that different things will change. I know that this is a way and a cycle of life. Yet this made me so very sad. I guess in a way this could

symbolize my life. (I know this sounds a little cheesy, but oh, well.) It really does. Many things in my life have changed recently, this is just another occurrence. Maybe for the better, who knows? This was a bit of a shock. I did not realize how much this simple little place meant to me until I realized it was being torn away. This is another thing that I have learned in my short time of living. The little things like family trips are the things that matter the most.

Panama City is a town known for the crazy nightlife, yet it is also a place that families (like ours) used to enjoy. We don’t even really know if we want to go back. I guess like other occurrences in life we have to move forward. I do know for sure that I will also hold a special place in my heart for this crazy little city.

Train Ride

(Part 1)



By Teena Miller,
Brunswick Forest

Boarding the train to Albany began, and passengers dutifully lined up on Platform 35. Grand Central was crowded and busy as usual. I was headed home after a marvelous weekend in the City with my daughter. I was exhausted and looking forward to relaxing for the three-hour trip to Albany.

was also looking forward to my favorite pastime of observing people and guessing their stories. Just ahead was a tall, slim, sophisticated woman in her early 60's with perfectly dyed blonde hair and currently involved in an argument with the conductor.

"Excuse me! I have reserved seating in First Class. Recheck your list. My name is Bernice Smithington, and I made reservations a week ago." She said in a loud annoying voice with a distinctive Long Island accent. The conductor just shook his head and said, "I'm sorry, lady, you don't have tickets for First Class, but you are guaranteed a seat, and I'll be glad to help you find one." People continued to move around them, and I found an empty aisle seat in the next train car.

There was only one seat left in that car on the aisle directly across from me. On the inside position was an attractive, young Hispanic woman approximately 20 to 25 years of age. The girl was petite with long brown hair in a ponytail. She was dressed in clean but worn jeans. Her slight figure was crouched into her seat as she clasped a small backpack and stared out the window, ignoring the boarding passengers. The conductor came into our car, followed by the elegant, haughty woman he had been speaking to earlier and told her, "Looks like this is the last seat. You better sit down. We will be pulling out of the station shortly." He kept going down the aisle in a blatant attempt to be rid of the woman.

After much huffing and puffing, as she shoved her carry-on in the small space above the seats, she loudly and forcefully announced to no one in particular "How rude! I will be in contact with Amtrak supervisors detailing my treatment." No one paid her any attention, and she settled into her seat, glancing over at her neighbor in the window seat.

I was intrigued by the idea of these two women who seemed to be from such different backgrounds being forced into contact for the next three hours and prepared to eavesdrop unabashedly. As we pulled out of the station, there was an announcement that the dining car would not be open, and travelers must remain in their seats. I watched as "Bernice" heard the news, and I observed her obvious displeasure as she realized she had no escape from the untenable seating forced upon her.

I heard a soft voice say, "I'm so sorry, but please excuse me. I need to go to the Ladies Room." in precise English. Bernice did not budge, and as the woman moved by, she bumped Bernice's knee." Oh, I'm so sorry," the woman exclaimed. Bernice said nothing but exhaled loudly.

(To be continued)

Once Upon a Hot, Hot, Hot Summer



By Janet Meuwissen,
Brunswick Forest

"Whaddaya lookin' at? Go ahead; take a picture of me. I'm just waitin' for ya to finish laughin' about what happened this mornin'," Jake growled.

Aunt Loren said, "Well, you certainly didn't resemble my lanky 6-foot-tall teenaged nephew. That ginger mop-top, face full of freckles, and that inviting smile were nowhere to be found. Besides, you were the one who started it."

"ME?" shouted Jake. "All I did was ask you about the pepper spray."

"That's not quite the way I remember it," Loren said, hands on her hips and leaning forward into Jake's face. "Ever since your family arrived, YOU wanted to see all the stuff going on here at the ranch."

"Yeah, so?" So this morning, I took you with me when I went out to check the trail cameras. Something was killing off this year's new-born calves, and we needed to know who or what." Standing straight again, she continued, "I had the camera equipment, plaster castings, and, of course, pepper spray in case a predator came too close. When we came to our first stop, the camera had recorded a pack of wolves in the area last night."

"Okay, okay," Jake confessed, "That was when I asked you to show me how pepper spray works. Go ahead, I said, and you sprayed near my left side."

"That was nothin.' Do it again," I challenged. You sprayed past my right ear this time. "That was still nothin'; this stuff is no big deal. Come at me."

As she recounted the event, Aunt Loren said, "I sprayed it a third time. This time you leaned into the spray just as a wind gust carried it all over your face and upper torso. That's how I remember it!"

"Yeah, you're right," Jake confessed. "This time, I really learned what pepper spray was all about! My eyes were burning, my lips were burning, my skin was burning, and I couldn't stop

coughing, yelling, and swearing! I tried to wash my face in the cold waters of the nearby creek, but it didn't work. I came up gasping for breath."

Aunt Loren whisked Jake and all the equipment into the Ranger ATV. Off they hurtled, faster than he had ever ridden in one before. But he was in so much pain, he didn't care what was going on. He just wanted it to stop.

When they pulled up to the ranch house, Jake's mom and dad were relaxing on the front porch.

Loren yelled: "Quick, we have to get him into the shower, as she ran into the house. I've sprayed your son with pepper spray!"

Jake's mom, always the calm one, led his blind self to the front door but forgot to tell him about the steps. He pretty much fell into the house. Dad was looking up antidotes to pepper spray on his cell.

After Aunt Loren got Jake into the shower with his underwear and black socks still on, she was frantically getting together all the ingredients that were suggested as possible solutions to the problem. Loren poured some milk on his skin. He didn't want her to waste the milk since he knew that they needed it for breakfast tomorrow morning.

Then Mom poured the honey—what a sticky mess, but at least it calmed the burning. Dawn dish soap took the oil off his skin, and cool water eased the eye pain.

Just like the information on the internet said, after about a half-hour, the pain and burning slowly eased, and he could breathe normally again.

"I learned a few things that day from Aunt Loren, who doesn't forget anything." Jake later recalled. "Thanks to her I received a t-shirt with my new nickname 'Sriracha,' cause I'm 'on fire!'"

I also learned that taunting my aunt was not a wise decision. Now I know what my father meant when he said something about never daring his sister to do anything because she would! After the chaos calmed down, I made a note to myself: never get near pepper spray or tempt Aunt Loren again!

Unexpected Visitors



By Ronnie Pastecki,
Brunswick Forest

I was hot, thirsty, and dripping with sweat as I dragged the last of the unopened boxes into the screened porch. Grabbing a tall glass of iced tea, I settled on the cozy love seat. The overhead fan blew away my tension and anxiety. Taking a long breath, I observed my surroundings. The frogs from the pond behind the house chirruped loudly, the sound rising and falling without reason. A sudden movement caught my eye.

Delicate blue feathers blazed in the sunlight. *We must get that bluebird house installed soon, but that can wait until I sort through these cartons of photos.*

These were the last things that I had packed before our move. Exhausted, I had just tossed them in a couple of large boxes, determined to deal with them eventually. *Guess it was time now.*

Just two weeks ago, we were navigating the moving process. The winters up north had defeated us. The thought of shoveling countless feet of snow was too depressing to bear. We often just stayed in the house

rather than venture out to drive on icy roads. When we first purchased this house, we were thrilled with its proximity to the mountains and lakes. Summers were filled with deep green woods, crystal clear waters, and fresh pine-scented air. Winters were not so kind. Beautiful boughs of pine trees hung heavy with the weight of fresh, clean snow. Heavy snows that pulled at the power lines. Although frequent power outages occurred, we had a generator, a wood-burning fireplace, and a pellet stove. The initial coziness evaporated quickly, cabin fever ruled the day.

Our Southern home was a dream with walking trails and all the amenities that we could want. The neighbors were delightful. We all had so much in common. Only a few miles from the ocean, we could watch the waves roll upon the shore and gather the shells that were strewn upon the sand. The only downside was the 14-hour drive back to see our kids. While we would call each week and catch up with both of them, they each had full lives of their own. *I miss them so.*

I reached into the first box and found a photo album from the mid-1980s. It documented our annual family apple picking. An Autumn tradition in the Northeast, I could almost taste

the crisp, tangy, sweet juices.

The next few albums bounced back from babyhood through college graduations, from vacations to holiday snapshots, and from the then "new" house to finished home improvements. It was like reviewing your life's little moments. Individually they were unimportant, but together they defined who we were.

The second box was filled with even more pictures. Loose and faded by time, they revealed photos of my family no longer with us: my parents and grandparents, my older sister, and my nephew. It was good to see their images and to remember family gatherings. There were aunts, uncles, and more cousins than the room could hold. Memories of my grandmother's delicious food popped up. *No one has ever been able to duplicate her scones.*

I set the pictures back on the table. My original plan was to get rid of duplicates and those in poor shape. Not sure what I was going to do with the rest, probably toss them. As I sipped the remains of my iced tea, I reflected on how much I had enjoyed this time with my unexpected visitors. I put all the pictures back in the boxes and closed them gently. I would store them in the closet until the next time I was feeling homesick and needed a visit from those I loved.

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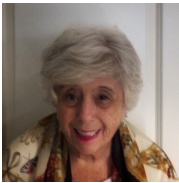
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Lunch with Emma



Steven and Cathy approached the airport full of the anticipation a well-planned vacation generates. Cathy's brother, Mike, and his wife, Jackie, not only relatives but also best friends, boosted their eagerness. Four years ago, the four traveled to France. This year Italy was their playground. Another villa, a large farmhouse in a rural area, fifty kilometers away, was leased for the second week. Arriving at the airport, Cathy produced the necessary documents.

"Mr. Saunders, your passport expired ten years ago."

"That can't be. It was just renewed."

"Your wife's passport is correct, but look at yours."

Steven didn't even have to look. He knew. Instead of ripping up the old passports, he kept them.

"Cat, stay here. I'm going to grab a taxi for home, and pick up the right passport."

"Steven, it will take you more than an hour if all goes well. The plane takes..."

Steven didn't wait for his wife's answer. Flagging the first cab in sight, he described his crucial situation. The taxi left, generating the sound of screeching wheels. Cathy watched the wall clock tick time away. Each time their flight was announced, she cringed.

"This is the final call for boarding for Delta Flight 324 to Florence, Italy."

That unalterable blow brought a flood of tears. Blinded, she missed a familiar sight.

"Cathy, get up. Let's go."

There he was. They were the last to board. But that was fine. Two weeks in Italy with those she loved, including a love bug hug from precious Emma, restored wellbeing.

The Florence villa, with its Tuscan landscape, was perfection. Steven rode down a

steep hill to the local bakery purchasing mouthwatering pastry. As he pedaled the arduous return, good spirits engulfed. This had to be a high point in life. Emma was the icing on the cake, sharing her infectious laughter. The farmhouse, home for the second week, proved as enjoyable as week one. Two days before they were to leave for home, Cathy suggested they visit Arezzo, where the movie, "A Beautiful Life," was filmed and Cortona, site of a novel she recently read, "Under the Tuscan Sun."

After a delicious lunch there, Steven and Cathy left first, with plans to reconnect in Cortona. There, they entered a store carrying a variety of items. After a few minutes, selecting last-minute purchases, a blaring radio surprised shoppers. Suddenly, everyone in the store, regardless of their homeland, stood still, heeding the words, "The Trade Center". Questions erupted, more from curiosity than fear at this point in time.

"What happened?"

"A plane hit the "World Trade Center."

"Oh, remember when a plane hit The Empire State Building years ago?"

"Yeah"

"Probably a small plane with an untrained pilot."

The conversation quickly switched to shock as the shop owner explained in English that it was a commercial jet causing extensive damage. A couple from England approached Steven.

"You're American, correct. It's horrible. Why don't you go to that ice cream store on the other side of the Plaza? There is a television on the wall."

"We are so sorry."

There they watched another jet struck the second tower. Steven proposed they go back to the farmhouse. Words were replaced with nods of acceptance. As the group left the store, bystanders rushed to them, sharing sympathetic messages.

The farmhouse became a barrier against chaos. Through the years, the picture of Emma sitting in a heart-shaped chair, in Arezzo, personified the end of a kinder era.

At a Crossroad



Looking back over a full life of 70 plus years to seize upon a day, a moment, a decision that may have precipitated all else, is a daunting task. So many of those moments occur when one is actively involved with

By Gerald Decker, a social network, a professional endeavor, or a life pursuit. Life pressure can sometimes give in to the temptation to over rate some experiences and under- estimate others. However, as Robert Frost told us in his poem, *The Road Not Taken*, often when one takes the less traveled, it becomes the story we tell with a sigh "...somewhere ages and ages hence."

It was in July 1967 two months after graduating from high school that I knew my macho attitude, heavy drinking, partying, and crazy days had come to an end.

All my classmates and girlfriend were headed off to college. I knew I would never be able to go to college straight F's, low attendance and no money pretty much guaranteed that.

It's hard to think back to that and realize at the same time my girlfriend was one of the most beautiful women I had ever met and was beyond question one of the smartest people in town. I guess it's true that opposites really do attract.

That "Summer of Love", was a summer for the ages- Haight- Asbury, hippies, urban unrest, and an escalating war in Vietnam. For me, it was a summer of being madly in love and desperately seeking a job, just to be able to date.

I searched all summer for a good job that might lead me to something that I could have some pride in my direction in life. Very importantly, something that my girlfriend could take pride in, knowing that "her guy" was doing something with his life. I got a job in a small textile factory in town putting snaps on blue jeans. I was miserable from the first moment I sat at the machine. I was making minimum wage and doing work that I knew would never be my calling in life.

My girlfriend was out of town for a few weeks that summer visiting relatives in Maryland. During her absence, it all became very clear that I had reached the dead end. Something had to be done or I would end up like my drinking buddies- living in a trailer and drinking white lighting every night. They thought I had made it by getting a job at the factory. I knew there was a war going on. I knew that eventually Uncle Sam would be calling. I decided to be proactive and not wait. If I had to go, why not go now and get out of this place.

So, on Sunday Aug. 27, 1967, I boarded a bus in Anniston, Alabama headed for the induction center in Montgomery, Al. Two days later I was in boot camp. Interestingly, on a side note, many years later I visited a psychic to see if she could tell me anything about my deceased twin sister. The psychic told me, among other things, that she was with me in my 18th year when I was at a crossroads in life. She helped walk me through that time.

I feel like I took the road less traveled for the time- I had volunteered not waited to be drafted. And without question, it "...has made all the difference."

Doggy in The Window



Mom abandoned me! She said, "Be good. I'll see you soon." Then she just left. I'm cold and lonely. I wander into her bedroom.

By Ronnie Pastecki, Snuggling on her pillow makes me feel more secure and safe. Maybe I'll get under the covers, might as well be warm too.

"That was a good nap." I head to the kitchen with thoughts of refreshing, clear water. "Not sure how long she will be gone. Can I hold it till she gets back?" I forgo the water as I remember once I didn't make it 'til she got home. She didn't yell, but I could tell she was mighty disappointed in me.

I head to the living room, the picture window beckoning. Stretched out on the wide sill, I bask in the warm sun. I hear a thud at the door. Intruder! No one is at the front door. "It's just another package from that man in the noisy brown truck." He rings the bell then runs away, dropping his bundles on the porch. He seems sneaky tome.

"I can't nap here, too many interruptions." I snuggle on the couch and fall fast asleep. My foot starts to twitch; I breathe in ragged pants. It is my favorite dream of chasing that big, brown rabbit out of my backyard. Keeping a close eye on that fuzzy white tail as he zigzags across the grass, he

heads to the rhododendron. I can smell his fear from across the yard. flush him out and race across the yard. Somehow, the rabbit squeezes through the metal fence. "He got away again, but next time, I'll get him for sure."



I wake up and head back to the window. It's the rabbit again - only in the front yard. I bark and bark as loud as I can. I hop up and down on the windowsill until my foot slips. I tumble to the floor. Good thing it was carpeted. That would have hurt.

Hungry and worried, I wonder, "What if something happened to Mom? Did she have an accident? Who will feed me? Who will let me out to do my business?" Speaking of that, I could really use a trip outside about now. I hope Mom comes home soon.

"What if she never comes back?" I miss her so much. I'm starting to pace in front of the front door barking intermittently. When I realize Mom wasn't returning, I really turn up the noise. I howl and bay and let everyone know how unhappy I am. "I'm so lonely. It's terrible to feel so forsaken."

"Wait, what was that?" I hear the car engine in the garage. Mom's back! I bark loudly to show my relief. She opens the door and cries out, "I'm home! Were you a good boy?" I am so happy. I don't care that she was gone forever; she's back now. Mom lets me out to take care of business. "What a relief!" She doesn't know how close I came to making a mess.

How important is one vote?

- * In 1645, one vote gave Oliver Cromwell control of England.
- * In 1649, one vote caused Charles I of England to be executed.
- * In 1776, one vote gave America the English language instead of German.
- * In 1839, one vote elected Marcus Morton Governor of Massachusetts.
- * In 1845, one vote brought Texas into the Union.
- * In 1868, one vote saved President Andrew Johnson from impeachment.
- * In 1876, one vote changed France from a Monarchy to a Republic.
- * In 1876, one vote gave Rutherford B. Hayes the Presidency of the United States.
- * In 1923, one vote gave Adolph Hitler leadership of the Nazi Party.
- * In 1941, one vote saved Selective Services just 12 weeks before Pearl Harbor.

Barnwell Women’s

(Part 3 of 3)



By Teena Miller,
Brunswick Forest

Chief Inspector Jamison was one of the first to arrive and talked to the distraught woman. “Linda, please tell me exactly where you were and what happened when you got home?” Linda told him her story, and he was very interested in the part of her joining the Barnwell Women’s Club. “Can you tell me if any of the other members every talk about their husbands and their tragic losses?”

“Oh, yes!” said Linda. “They all grieve for their husbands but have managed to make the best of their situations.” “Why Marge loves entertaining so much she is hosting an enormous Holiday Party this year for the senior citizens home. She could never have done that when her husband was alive, and Candace has already planned a 60 day around the world cruise for next year.”

"Charlene is dating again but swears she will be the other woman this time, not the wife." Linda laughed, “and even Ethel seems relieved she won’t have to watch as her poor husband slowly disintegrates with that dreadful disease. I know they must all miss their husbands, but yes, they made good lives for themselves.”

Chief Inspector Jamison then asked her if that's what she planned on doing "Making a good life for herself now her husband was dead?" Linda was shocked; he was so insensitive, and she immediately started to cry again.

"I'd like to meet with this BW Club tomorrow, can you arrange to have everyone get together?"

"Yes," said Linda in a frightened, timid voice.

The following afternoon Marge, Charlene, Ethel, Candace, and Linda all waited at Marge's house for Chief Inspector Jamison.

“I can’t imagine what he wants with us,” Ethel said.

Charlene said, “I'm sure he's just trying to tie up all loose ends. Linda, do they have an official cause of death yet?"

"He shot himself with the pistol he kept hidden in his desk drawer. There was no note, but after going through his bank account, they found large sums of money deposited. They are checking the books at his accounting agency and are quite certain he was embezzling. I can’t believe I didn’t know that,” Linda whispered.

Candace comforted Linda and said, “I’m sure it will work out in the end. Whatever he was doing, he must have been afraid of being found out and he couldn’t face possible imprisonment. Don’t worry, Linda, we will be here for you.”

Chief Inspector Jamison knocked on the door, and Marge ushered him in. He was of medium height, sandy brown hair, and had dark brown eyes with no distinguishing features. He looked at each lady with a searching glance and a hostile attitude.

"Thank you for meeting with me, ladies," Chief Inspector Jamison said. "I'm hoping you can shed some light on the many deaths that have occurred over the last few years. I'm a suspicious person by nature, and it hasn't missed my attention that each of your husbands conveniently died while you

were at your weekly Barnwell Women's Club meeting and had the perfect alibis."

The women all responded at once, "How dare you, my husband committed suicide!"

“Mine choked to death, really!”

“Seriously, mine couldn’t stay on a horse!”

“And mine couldn't stay off other women, and you're trying to blame us!"

"Calm down, I didn't say you were suspects or that your husbands didn't die by natural causes or at their own hands, I just pointed out the extreme coincidences."

Marge took charge and, in an assertive, calm voice said, "Chief Inspector Jamison, we are more than happy to answer any questions you may have, but unless you have something other than a suspicious mind, I advise you to treat us all with respect. Superintendent Cowan is a close family friend, and I will not hesitate to report your behavior, especially if you feel it is necessary to harass poor Linda, whose husband just took his own life."

Chief Inspector Jamison was not a fool, and he was aware of the dilemma of offending a friend of his boss. He also knew he had nothing but a gut instinct that something was wrong. All the evidence of last night's death and, for that matter, the passing of the other husbands pointed to either suicide or unfortunate accidents. He also was aware of the abuse Linda had received at her husband's hands and felt that even if he could prove she was involved in his death, she would never be convicted.

Chief Inspector asked a few routine questions and then stood to leave. He told the women, "I feel comfortable closing this case and officially recognizing it as a suicide. I do want you ladies to know, though, that I am very aware of your group. You can expect to see me again if there are any more coincidental deaths that are related to your BW club."

“Thank you, Chief Inspector. Please show yourself out,"Marge said.

Well, that was interesting," Charlene said.

"Yes,” Marge said, "Did you know that Chief Inspector Jamison's wife lives in the village of Troston a few miles away? I've heard rumors he has is a miserable, stingy man when drinking.”

“Really! Maybe we should reach out to her and see if she would like some female support," said Ethel.

“I’ve met her several times, and she is a lovely person, although she is very placid and seems easily intimidated," said Candace, "I think she could be an excellent addition to our little club.”

“Alright, Candace, why don't you invite her to lunch with her and get to know her better and find out more about her personal life,” said Marge. “If you think she would make a good candidate for our club, invite her to a Friday night meeting so we can all get to know her better. We do need to be very vigilant in ascertaining how she would fit in with the objectives of the BW Club. You should definitely advise her not to mention her invitation to her husband if she is interested in learning more about our group,"

Marge paused. "You know how some of the local ladies we haven't included in our club have nicknamed us the Black Widow's Club instead of Barnwell Women's Club. We wouldn't want her to become aware of that malicious rumor or.....at least not until we are better acquainted with her.” she chuckled.

The End

Best Friend Forever



By Eric Mens,
Brunswick Forest

"Nothing binds us closer than our common experience.” - Unknown

My first best friend is still my best friend today. In good times, when we were young and living on Dr. Izzo’s defunct dairy farm, we would ride horses together. On summer days, we would lay on our backs in the field next to the old barn, peering deep into the azure sky, wondering how far we could see and calling out the shapes we saw in the occasional cloud that strayed across our field of vision. At hay harvesting time, as we unloaded the bales from the bed of the old truck and into the barn, we laughed and conspired about the secret places that we would build after the lone farmhand went home.

In winter, we tobogganed in these same fields, shrieking and laughing hysterically as we sped down the hill, hoping to avoid crashing into the stone wall that loomed at the bottom. Other days, we would take the toboggan into the woods with Dr. Izzo's teenage daughter Marianne. There we would collect "*crow's feet*" (*Diphasiastrum digitatum*) for making wreaths and decorating our homes at Christmas.

It was on the farm that I learned to drive the tractor and later, under Marianne's tutelage, the farm's Jeep. When we moved into town, life became more complicated.We learned to skip school and even set a record for the number of days skipped in succession (30) before the truant officer finally caught up to us.

In bad times, we covered for each other when one of us got into trouble and tried to help each other with homework and chores. Sometimes, we held each other and cried when we found life unbearable and impossible to understand.When she ran away from home (which happened quite often), I would be sent to find her.

Living on the farm, it was a safe bet that she would not hide by the pond or in the woods but rather in the warm, dry safety of the old barn, hidden in one of the tunnel forts that we had made. After we moved into town, her hiding places became more difficult to find.But find them, I did. Sometimes she would be hiding in the safety of a friend’s house or even a nearby 24-hour laundromat. Although she was afraid to return home, she always gave in to my pleas. You see, I could not go home unless SHE came home as well.

After high school, I joined the Army.Before I left for Vietnam, I went to the local Red Cross office in my hometown.It was a dreary, cold, and snowy afternoon in early November.I asked the Red Cross officials to find our mother.The last time that I had seen her, I was four years old, and my sister was five.

I knew our mother’s maiden name and that she lived in the Netherlands. I explained that my sister did not belong where my father had institutionalized her.Midway through my tour in Vietnam, I learned that the Red Cross had, indeed, found Mother.Better yet, they arranged for my sister to be released and sent to the Netherlands to live with her.

In retrospect, by seeking the Red Cross’ help before I left for Vietnam, I kept honor with my mother’s plea that long-ago night when we last saw her: “Take care of your sister and keep her safe.”Yes, my best friend was then and still is now, my older sister Erica.

Note: The author’s story won a Second Place Award in the 2019 Brunswick County Senior Silver Arts Writing Competition.

Trivia about books and literature.

All of the roles in Shakespeare's plays were originally acted by men and boys. In England at that time, it wasn't proper for females to appear on stage.

Cinderella's slippers were originally made out of fur. The story was changed in the 1600s by a translator. It was the left shoe that Aschenputtel (Cinderella) lost at the stairway, when the prince tried to follow her.

Dr. Seuss wrote "Green Eggs and Ham" after his editor dared him to write a book using fewer than 50 different words.

Edgar Allan Poe introduced mystery fiction's first fictional detective, Auguste C. Dupin, in his 1841 story, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

Frank Baum named "Oz" after a file cabinet in his office. One cabinet was labeled "A to N," and the second was labeled "O to Z."

Ghosts appear in 4 Shakespearian plays; Julius Caesar, Richard III, Hamlet and Macbeth.

Harriet Beecher Stowe's "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was published March 20, 1852. It was the first American novel to sell one million copies.

Sherlock Holmes never said 'Elementary, my dear Watson.'

The occupations of the three men in a tub were butcher, baker, and candlestick maker.

The original story from Tales of 1001 Arabian Nights begins, 'Aladdin was a little Chinese boy.'

The Three Musketeers names are Porthos, Athos, and Aramis (D'Artagnan joins them later.



Broken Arm Summer

By Maryann Nunnally, Porter's Neck

When World War II ended, my mother decided that she could let my ten-year-old brother and me have some freedom. The local school had offered free swimming lessons at Oneida Lake. Mom promptly signed us up. She probably was happy to get Wally, my rambunctious brother, and me out of her hair. The school not only offered the lessons but also provided transportation in an old green and white school bus. The lake was about an hour away, but with a governor on the bus that controlled the speed to thirty miles an hour, it took about two hours to get there.

Every weekday morning, Wally and I, carrying our brown-bag lunches, walked the two miles to the school to meet the bus. Our driver, swim teacher and general supervisor was our P.E. coach. He was a young, handsome, athletic guy with smiley eyes and dark curly hair. Every girl on that bus had a crush on him despite his pretty wife and two little boys. All the girls, me included, ignored his family and dreamed of the day that he would get sensible and marry one of us.

Upon arriving, he would divide us into groups of four and took my group into the water, while the other groups were instructed to stay on the sandy beach until he called for them. The water in the lake was very shallow and sun-warmed. I could walk out about a quarter of a mile before the water reached my chest. Oh, the joy of that warm water. Coach quickly taught us to do the "dead-man's float," the "dog paddle," and to float on our backs.

Despite being the skinniest girl there, I soon discovered that I could float on my back without moving a muscle. When the coach saw that I had more adipose tissue than could be expected from my skinny body, he allowed me to stay in the water while he was instructing the other groups. After all that time of being held close to home, there can be no description of the joy I experienced in floating around in Oneida Lake.

At noon each day, we settled down to eat and wait to go back into the water. In those days, the rule was "No swimming until one hour after eating, lest you get cramps and drown." We waited but not patiently. One day after lunch, the boys were chasing each other, throwing water from their soda bottles. There was a sudden hush, and I looked up to see coach bending over my brother, who had fallen. Wally was very white, holding his arm and rocking back and forth. The coach diagnosed a broken arm, and he directed my brother to sit in the shade until we left for home. So, my brother sat all afternoon, cradling his arm and getting more and more ashy looking by the minute.

We reached home at about five o'clock. Coach let my brother off right in the middle of our town to walk home all alone. I remained on the bus so that I could be with the popular girls and discuss our love for our gorgeous coach. After a while, I walked home from school with some other town kids.

My mother was waiting for me in the doorway, and one look at her face told me I was in deep trouble. "You are no daughter of mine," she declared. "How could you let your brother walk home all by himself with a broken arm? I am so ashamed of you."

Dad had taken Wally to the doctor. When they returned home, Wally had a huge white sling supporting his arm. It was a green stick fracture, therefore, no need for a cast. For the next month, I was Wally's slave and jumped through the proverbial hoops every time he demanded something. I was also not allowed to go back to the swim lessons.

I have carried that guilt ever since until about a month ago. My brother and I were reminiscing about our childhood. I reminded him of his broken arm, and to my absolute amazement, Wally did not remember it. When I expressed my guilt of not walking home with him, he simply said, "I can't recall that either."

Over seventy years of hauling that guilt around and he did not even remember the broken arm much less my abandoning him to walk home alone. So, I have given up the guilt and now try to only remember the wonder of floating in a warm lake on a beautiful summer day.

Odd and interesting facts

Snails have 14,000 teeth and some can even kill you!

Admiral Ackbar from *Star Wars Episode VI: Return of the Jedi* was not a man in a suit, it was actually a giant puppet.

The human nose can remember 50,000 different scents.

If you die in Amsterdam with no next of kin, and no friends or family to prepare funeral or mourn over the body, a poet will write a poem for you and recite it at your funeral.

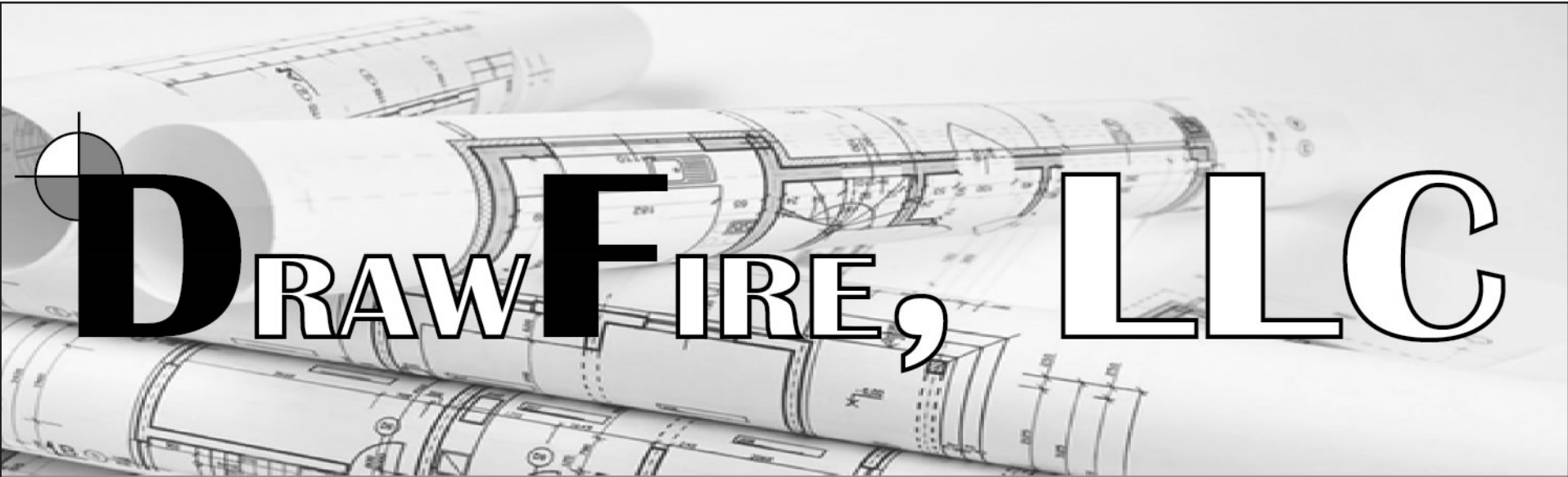
Alligators will give manatees the right of way if they are swimming near each other.

Some areas in [Scotland](#) and Japan switched to [blueprint](#) lights at night, and saw a decrease in crime & suicide rates.

'Digging a hole to China' is theoretically possible if you start in Argentina

Dead people can get goosebumps!

Iguanas have three eyes. Two normal eyes and a third eye on top of their head that only perceives brightness.





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A Lifetime of Experience

(Part 3 of 3)



By Terry Monnie,
Brunswick Forest

My tour in Vietnam ended in early July, and I was assigned to Cincinnati, OH, as officer in charge of the local Army reserve units- more like an overseer as I was normally outranked by the officers on reserve duty. It should be noted that there was massive unrest in Cincinnati with riots, shootings, and gunfire standard in many areas like Avondale, a large African American community.

My most troubling memories of this time, which should have been a relief after “Nam” was my obligation to notify parents and spouses whose loved ones had died in Southeast Asia. The higher-ranking officers in the area refused to do this, and I carried the burden of doing the in-person notifications and handling the transport, burial, and funeral of the deceased. On one notable occasion, as I drove my Army vehicle into the street of one of the decedents, his mother was working in the yard; saw

my car; screamed, and ran into the house as she knew why I was there. I was only able to do this for six times when I got shingles due to the stress.

After my service obligation ended, I gained employment at the local gas and electric utility company, Cincinnati Gas & Electric Company (CG & E), buying "right of way" for the utility. Unfortunately, I did my job too well by finishing before noon and was let go for "not fitting in."

My next job was working for a local Savings and Loan (S&L) company working with the foreclosed properties, I spent several years and was eventually a branch manager.

During this time, I decided to attend the Salmon P. Chase College of Law, which had an evening program with a J.D. after four years. This was arguably the busiest period of my life as I was also building single-family residences, working full time at an S&L, and attending law school in the evening.

I even opened a law office near my home and was then approached by a local real estate attorney who was ar-

guably one of the best real estate attorneys in Ohio, suggesting I come to work with his firm. This was a life-changing time as I was getting the training and guidance I needed to succeed.

I convinced “Jack” that we should purchase a vacant office building nearby and that I would do the renovations necessary to accommodate our growing firm. The building was a former residence with high ceilings, fireplaces, and chandeliers. When completed, the building was placed on the Register of Historic Buildings.

All went well for several years until the day a local detective entered our firm looking for “Jack.” When I questioned "why?" he refused to answer, and that was Jack walked in, having returned from a Board of Education meeting in Columbus. The detective instructed us to go to Jack's home in the suburbs where his wife was reported missing...thereby casting suspicion on Jack, who was out of town.

Arriving at the home, there were ten Sheriff deputies on site but no sign of "Barb," but there were blood smears down the staircase and through the kitchen to the garage where the trail ended - our supposition that Barb had been beaten and

dragged to a car and put in the trunk and taken away.

There was no word of her for over a week, with Jack appealing for her return on local radio and TV. Finally, a local priest indicated that the assailant had contacted him and arranged for Barb's return to the priest, who later refused to identify the kidnapper based on priest-client confidentiality.

Barb was hospitalized and recovered soon after, but the effect on Jack was life-changing.

While the firm continued to prosper, it was apparent that Jack was “different," and he took several expensive family trips, which I questioned but got no answer since he was the managing partner.

This all changed one day as I was working in my office when a man in a suit and tie entered and showed his ID as an FBI agent, and who informed me that Jack had been embezzling monies from our trust account and local banks. I was instructed to take my coat and leave, which I did but not before taking a wall photograph reflecting the downtown Cincinnati waterfront.

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

Navy West Pac Cruise 1968

(Part 3)



By Gerald Decker,
Magnolia Greens

We left Chu Lai on June 30 for Yokosuka, Japan. By July 4, we had been at sea for 5 days. For three of those days, we were bobbing in the ocean like a cork due to Typhoon Lucy. We didn't have drills during storms, but the work continued. There is a lot of cleaning, polishing brass, and sewing up holes in clothes. Yep, every sailor has to know how to hand stitch or have the money to pay someone to do it for them.

Independence Day's Observance meant no reveille, two movies, bingo, awards ceremony, and a cookout on the fantastic. A good day at sea.

The next day we arrived in Yokosuka for a 10-day visit. Everyone was busy repairing or replacing equipment, painting, or as in my case attending various quartermaster related schools. My buddies in Navigation and I took tours of the city and thoroughly enjoyed ourselves.

We heard news reports that the Marines had launched a major drive to the DMZ. We wondered if it was the guys we dropped off. As the Marines were battling it out at the DMZ, Aretha Franklin releases “I Say a Little Prayer.”

In other news of the day, it was reported that a total of 1,446 Americans was killed or wounded the previous week in the Vietnam War, the lowest seven-day total in six months.

Back in the world, the Ada, Oklahoma news reported, "Racism Number One Problem" (we sure have made progress on that front, haven't we?) And, "One Life to Live” premieres on TV “back in the world.” If you missed the premiere, just watch tomorrow's episode, and you will be caught up. “On the Road Again” and “Be Young Be Foolish” were on the radios. James Earl Ray was still trying to convince everyone he was innocent of shooting Martin Luther King. The songs “Green Tambourine” and “Grazing in the Grass were two popular songs this month.

By the 16th, we were off to Okinawa to pick up more Marines for a week of amphibious landing exercises every morning from 3 am until 10 am. This many drills, lasting this long, must mean we will soon be headed back to Da Nang.

Liberty in Okinawa was always great, so all the drills were quickly forgotten when Liberty Call was sounded. There’s nothing quite like returning to the ship drunk and taking a Mike boat ride from a boatswain mate who didn't get liberty. Seems like they wanted to remind everyone that they were working while we played.

We pulled out for Subic Bay on July 23, and by the next morning, we hit a storm (Nadine). As soon as we were out of that one, we hit another (Olive). We had waves of up to 30-35 feet and 50-knot winds. The mess decks were a mess.

In Cleveland, they were having more race riots, which resulted in 11 people killed,including 3 police officers. Riots in America were a big deal in the '60s. Some of the race riots of 1968 include Washington, DC, Baltimore, Chicago (April), Kansas City, Louisville, Cleveland, Akron, and again in Chicago (August).

I enjoyed my first liberty in Subic on the 26th. I know guys reading this will remember the River, the kids swimming in the river, the Sampaguita Club, the incredible quality ofFilipinos' voiceson stage singing all the popular songs of the day, and jeepneys- hundreds of them. There were no lanes on the road. They drove both ways on the same side of the street and upon the sidewalks if necessary. It was a ride most enjoyed coming back from liberty.



Highline Exercise During Refueling.



Gerald's residence.

The fun came to an end on the 28th as we set sail for Da Nang. After offloading all day in Da Nang harbor on the 30th, we pulled out to our op area. We relieved the USS Washburn in Amphibious Ready Group Bravo that day. As night set in and the fireworks started lighting up the horizon, we listened on the ship's radio to the number one song of July 31, "Hello I Love You," by the Doors.



Standing Day Watch

(To be continued)

Your Community

Setting Out to Fight Hunger



By **Emily Silverman**,
Brunswick Forest

For us, it started in 2012 with a couple of cans of tuna fish. We had just moved to Chatham County and heard about PORCH,



the monthly food drive in our new neighborhood.

We walked over to our neighbor's house, saw a dozen grocery bags of food on her stoop, and added our cans to the beans, rice, oatmeal, and vegetables at Vickie's front door.



After that, every month, we filled our own bag of groceries. Across our community, the cans added up and became hundreds of bags and thousands of pounds of food for our local food pantry. Together we helped provide emergency food for neighbors who did not have enough to eat.

When Mike and I moved to Brunswick Forest in Leland, we missed that monthly gathering of shelf-stable foods to donate in our PORCH bag. We reached out to the founders of PORCH (<https://porch-communities.org>), an all-volunteer hunger relief organization that started in Chapel Hill ten years ago. PORCH created a simple, replicable model of monthly neighborhood food drives to support local pantries. It has spread across North Carolina and even to other states.

We felt sure PORCH would work well here. We started small in January 2020 with just some nearby Shelmore neighbors, and we collected 80 pounds of food for our partner pantry, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Over a few months, we expanded to four porch collection sites, and now all homes in Shelmore are invited to participate.

In May, Cypress Pointe, an adjacent neighborhood in Brunswick Forest, joined in. Like us in Shelmore, volunteers host food drive collection points at their homes. Since January, we have collected over 7,000 pounds of food and personal hygiene items for Mother Hubbard's Cupboard.

When we started PORCH in Brunswick Forest, there was no pandemic. We knew food insecurity was a significant problem in our region, so we looked to partner with an organization that focused on providing emergency food. We se-



lected Mother Hubbard's Cupboard food pantry (<http://www.mother-hubbardsnc.org>) for several reasons, among them: pre-COVID they were open five days a week (currently two days a week); they are entirely volunteer-run; they serve residents of Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender counties; and they actively partner with other agencies like Nourish NC and the Good Shepherd Center.

Now, during the pandemic, food pantries are serving more families than ever. One week in June, more than 230 families came to Mother Hubbard's. Many of those families have five or more members. Every month we put a paper grocery bag aside and gradually fill it up—canned vegetables on sale, two-for-one boxes of oatmeal, and, of course, tuna fish. We are lucky to be able to share.

We have built an incredible team of neighborhood volunteers who host our porch collection sites and deliver the donations to Mother Hubbard's. Collection day is a highlight of our month. The response from our Shelmore and Cypress Pointe neighbors has been terrific. The appreciation from Mother Hubbard's is inspiring us to do even more.

We invite other neighborhoods in Brunswick Forest and Leland to join us. If you are interested in learning more about PORCH food drives for a local pantry, please contact us.

Emily Silverman and
Mike Milewski at
Essilverman@gmail.com

MILITARY NEWS



Pete Erbe 1936-2020 Our community has lost a great warrior, veteran, and human being with the recent passing of Pete Erbe.

Henry "Pete" Erbe Jr., was born December 9, 1936. He passed away at Lower Cape Fear Life Care in Wilmington, NC, on July 6, 2020. Pete was a man who gave freely of himself to all he encountered. He is survived by his wife, Dana Parker Erbe, their four children, Hank (Henry) Erbe, Peter Schwartz, Mark Steven Erbe, daughter, Lauren Schwartz Nash, and eight grandchildren.

He was born in 1936 in Otis, Mass, the son of Dr. Henry and Mrs. Cornelia Prindle Erbe. Pete grew up with his sister, Carolyn Erbe Gangloff, and brother Sumner Prindle Erbe. His parents were loving mentors with high expectations. Pete enjoyed recounting that he attended a two-room elementary school in Otis before finally matriculating to The Hotchkiss School in Lakeville, Connecticut. There he was captain of both the football and ski teams and learned the values of discipline, teamwork, and academia. He often explained to loved ones how these values contributed to his success as a parent, teacher, coach, community volunteer, and military leader.

Attending Middlebury College, he was a member of the ROTC program and went on to serve in the U.S. Army for 21 years. Pete was stationed in Germany, Vietnam, Korea, and USMA, West Point, among others. He also earned two Master's degrees, which enabled him to teach at West Point. While at the Military Academy, in 1980, he was recognized as the "Outstanding Military Educator" and honored with the William P. Clements award. He retired as a Lt. Colonel, having been awarded the Bronze Star and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry. Upon retirement from the military, he was Vice President, Fortune Franchise Group and Dunhill Personnel Systems. After moving to Leland, Pete also became an active member of Le-

land's American Legion Post 68 and VFW Post 12196.

He and Dana then moved down to North Carolina, where he dove into community and volunteer service in Southport and Leland, NC. He was an instructor at Brunswick County Academy and taught the Career Development Program. He joined Kiwanis, an organization whose motto is "Serving the Children of the World." Pete served Kiwanis in the Southport/Oak Island Chapter and North Brunswick Kiwanis Club. He was elected both President and Lt. Governor. He received the honor of being named Kiwanian of the Year and the George Hixson Fellowship Award. He volunteered as part of the Community in Schools program. He especially enjoyed the time he spent as a tutor and mentor at Kid's World Academy, where he worked with under-served 4-year-olds and where he was fondly known as "Mr. Pete."

Pete was a man of remarkable integrity. He was always there for those in need and would do whatever was necessary. On the sidelines, at an athletic event, he was a force to be reckoned with. One might even say loud. A member of The Bridge Presbyterian Church, he was a man of strong personal faith. You knew that you had a good man on your team when he shook your hand and said he would pray for you or your loved one that evening.

In service to his country, community, family, and friends, he was second to none. It was unquestioned. There was about him the aura of a military man coupled with a remarkable humanity. His favorite word when complimenting someone or something that had been done that he enthusiastically endorsed was "Outstanding!" A good man of humble origins who touched so many, he will be missed. Pete - you were one "Outstanding" human being! Rest easy, your mission on earth was well accomplished!

In lieu of flowers, a donation to North Brunswick Kiwanis, PO Box 391, Leland NC 28451, would be much appreciated on Pete's behalf.

VFW Post 12196 Partners with Brunswick Cove Living Center

Gerald Decker, Commander of Leland VFW Post 12196, and Tammy Elfman, Director of Marketing at Brunswick Cove Living Center, in Belville announced that they have partnered to provide services and increased recognition to Center residents who are veterans.

Commander Decker commented that this agreement is a culmination of efforts by Eric Mens, the Post Surgeon,

to provide improved recognition of veterans living at the Center.

Some of the areas where the VFW plans to provide assistance includes: helping to develop and enhance a "Wall of Heroes" at the Center, assisting families in obtaining appropriate military records and veterans care, providing flags for various holiday ceremonies, and participating in various holidays and ceremonies at the Center.

Be sure and check out the
Teen Scene on pages 6 & 7.

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Your Community

The North Brunswick High School Army JROTC
Getting Kids off Their Parents' Couches since 1972



By Giovanni Leone,
Brunswick Forest
Staff Writer

It felt like everybody was in JROTC. Six years ago, when I was first attending North Brunswick High School (NBHS), a public high school in Leland, NC, the sight of students marching by the football field in Army Combat Uniforms or walking to class in Dress Blues was anything but unusual. It was incredibly familiar. Soon after I finished my first Algebra 2 class, I found First Sergeant (1SG) trying to squeeze a beret on my head, warmly reminding me about male haircut regulations.

In the year that followed, marching in cadence with the NBHS Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) was among the most informative and influential experiences that I had at school. I recently had the privilege of talking to COL (Ret.) Steven Baker, the current Senior Army Instructor at the NBHS Army JROTC, about the program's impact on its students and the local community.

Over 150 students (~14% of the student body) are cadets in the program at a given time. COL Baker and his colleagues 1SG George Williams and SFC Timothy Washington strive to make better citizens out of all of them, teaching students army values outside the classroom. The program offers a wide variety of opportunities for students to engage in - from the traditional drill and ceremony teams to more modern and technical teams such as a STEM Robotics Team and a Cybersecurity team.

The students have been extremely successful. According to the NBHS JROTC website (<https://www.bcswan.net/Page/969>), the program has won the Fourth JROTC

Brigade Air Rifle Championship each year since 2012 in addition to competing in national competitions and making appearances in other championships. When students are not focusing on competitions and ceremonies, they focus on volunteering through community service and parades. In general, each JROTC student volunteers 20 hours annually. However, COL Baker noted that many of his cadets go far beyond that requirement, committing 50- 100 hours each year.

The NBHS JROTC consists of a diverse set of students from various racial backgrounds with a wide range of interests. Together, COL Baker expressed that its graduates leave with "realistic and focused" goals, "so they can continue to achieve after graduation." Being a military institution, the program graduates many students that have successful military careers. According to COL Baker, "about 25% [of each graduating class] end up going into some branch of the service." However, there is no recruitment quota to meet. Resultantly, many students go into trades or pursue a college education once they graduate from the program, receiving scholarships in the process.

Now, with the current pandemic keeping students outside of the classroom, teaching military values to students over video calls has become one of the program's most significant challenges. Even though students cannot march in formation, the JROTC Instructors are inventive, holding uniform inspections online while continuing programs to the best of their abilities. NBHS Army JROTC continues to strive to enrich its students beyond the classroom by giving them the tools necessary to succeed beyond North Brunswick High School.

Our Condolences



Cape Fear Voices Advisory Board Member Bev Haedrich lost her father on July 18, 2020. On behalf of her friends at Cape Fear Voices and VFW Post 12196, we sent flowers for his (private) funeral service. The obituary for 1st Sgt Clyde Ash, Jr., USMC Retired, follows below:

1st Sgt. Clyde Ash, Jr., USMC Retired, 90, of Cambridge Village in Wilmington, passed away on July 18, 2020 after complications from a fall on Father's Day.

Clyde was born on December 7, 1929 to Clyde and Naomi Beatrice Ash in Bancroft, WV. Shortly after graduating from Saint Albans High School in 1948, he enlisted in the Marine Corps. He was a decorated veteran who served in Korea and Viet Nam. During his twenty-two year career, he was stationed in Quantico, VA, Louisville, KY, Charleston, WV, overseas in Taiwan and Okinawa.

After retiring, he continued a career in government ser-

vice with the Internal Revenue Service. It is believed that, while playing in the IRS Golf Charity Golf Tournaments, his love for the game of golf later produced three Hole-In-Ones.

In July of 1955, he married the love of his life, Doris E. Lanham and they spent 61 years together before her passing in 2016. Together they raised three children, Beverly Haedrich (Ken) of Wilmington, Clyde (Chuck) Ash, III (Kathy) of Lexington, SC, and Lisa Ash of Wilmington. In their retirement years, they enjoyed traveling, usually with Exchange Club friends, across the country and into Alaska.

Anyone who met Clyde knew he lived a life of honor, integrity, and love of country. He enjoyed watching westerns, was an avid reader of historical biographies and novels, playing Trivia, and watching WV football and basketball.

He will be missed by many including his sister, Betty Cunningham; his three children; three grandchildren, five great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Services will be private.

"I would rather be a has been than a could have been by far. A could have been has never been but a has been was once an are."Jimi Hendrix

The Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor

By George Beatty,
Chairman, NC Rice Festival

Note: This article is one of several that have been or will be published in

future issues of Cape Fear Voices. We want our readers to gain a sense of our region's history. Notably, as that history pertains to Gullah Geechee culture and traditions, their contributions to North Carolina's early economic development, and their relationship to the North Carolina Rice Festival. This article has been excerpted from the July 2020 NC Rice Festival Business and Marketing Plan prepared by NCGrowth and SmartUp. As the planning for an NC Rice Festival event continues amidst the restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we plan to keep you informed on the history of our region and be apprised on festival developments in future issues.

The Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor is a 12,000 square mile tract of land designated by the U.S. Congress to commemorate the history of the Gullah Geechee people. The Corridor spans portions of Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. The trail presently includes notable sites such as the McLeod Plantation, the Caw Caw Interpretive Center, the Gullah Museum of Georgetown, and more.

In North Carolina, the Corridor runs from Pender County to St. John's County. Soon, additional sites

to see will operate in Northern Brunswick County, NC. In 2006, the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelly Foundation awarded \$25,000 to support the Gullah Geechee Heritage Trail and sponsor local festivals. These local festivals have been an instrumental tool to provide educational, cultural, and community building experiences as well as to support economic development.

The Gullah Geechee people are Black Americans who are descendants of Central and West African enslaved peoples who were traditionally enslaved in isolated areas along the Atlantic Coast. According to the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission (2020), this isolation enabled them to retain African traditions related to food, crafts, music, and even language.

Gullah, a Creole language, was created from a blend of African and European languages and is normally spoken in coastal regions of Georgia and South Carolina. Additionally, the peoples in Georgia go by the shortened name "Geechees." The Gullah diet was rich in locally grown fruits, vegetables, meat, and seafood.

During the slave trade, okra, rice, yams, peas, peppers, peanuts, watermelon, and sorghum were imported from Africa. In addition, enslaved peoples were brought to this region of North Carolina specifically for their knowledge of how to grow rice. These people engineered and transformed swampland into rice fields and

cultivated rice on what would become large rice plantations. As a result, rice ultimately became one of the most profitable exports of this region.

The northernmost section of the federally designated Gullah Geechee Heritage Corridor includes Brunswick, New Hanover, and Pender counties. In Northern Brunswick County, there is a sizeable community of Geechee people; in fact, Navassa is made up predominantly of Gullah decedents. In the Leland and Navassa areas, the Geechee people had a strong sense of community. They practiced religion at churches like Reaves Chapel, sent their children to Rosenwald schools of which there were several in the area, and buried their ancestors together at African American cemeteries. Due to the rich Geechee history in this area, it is a prime location for ecotourism.

(To be continued)

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Your Community

LOCAL ARTIST WINS RIBBONS IN SENIOR GAMES ART COMPETITION



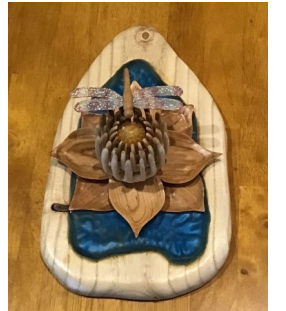
Local artist, Jeff Meuwissen, of Brunswick Forest recently competed in the Brunswick County Gator Silver Arts and Senior Games, sponsored by the North Carolina Senior Games. He won three First Place prizes and a Third-Place prize, which qualifies him to participate in the State competition, held each year in the Fall. This year's state details are not yet final. Plans are being developed to hold the event on a virtual basis to eliminate the need for personal attendance.

Brunswick County Parks and Recreation, with support from numerous local business and

government patrons, sponsors the annual Gator Games. A variety of visual and literary art categories were included in this year's exhibition.

Jeff's Gator Games First Place prizes are entitled *Dragonfly on a Lotus* in the sculpture category, *Heron in a Tree* in the woodcarving category, and *Fuji*, an example of his combination of intarsia and stained glass, in the Mixed Media category. His piece entitled *Bluenose* won a Third Place in the wood-working category. Jeff has a Facebook page entitled JeffArt Designs where these pieces and much of his work can be viewed.

An accomplished artist, Jeff specializes in wood and stained glass. His interests include woodcarving, wood-turning, intarsia, furniture making, and stained-glass creations ranging from small items to large windows. He has developed his own unique combination of wood and glass that he has been perfecting since he first experimented with it in 1999.



Volunteering at the Cape Fear Literacy Council



By Janet Stiegler,
Brunswick Forest

"Opening Doors, Changing Lives." That is the motto of the Cape Fear Literacy Council (CFLC) in downtown Wilmington. Managed by a small staff, the Council depends on several hundred volunteers to tutor, conduct special events, and carry out periodic administrative tasks.

Volunteer tutors can choose from among the CFLC's three programs:

- The Adult Literacy (AL) program helps adult learners develop their literacy or math skills. Tutors work one-on-one with students, tailoring the lessons to his or her needs and abilities.
- The English as a Second Language program helps adults improve their English proficiency, either one-on-one or in a classroom setting. Tutors also prepare some students for the U.S. citizenship exam.
- The Digital Literacy Program, the newest of the three, helps adult students learn basic computer skills through workshops or drop-in labs.

The main requirements for tutoring are an interest in helping others, patience, and a few hours to prepare and meet with your student each week. Prior teaching experience is useful but not necessary. The CFLC staff provides training, appropriate skill-level materials, and ongoing support, but tutors have considerable freedom to supplement the workbooks with online resources or self-created exercises.

I became an AL tutor several years ago to "give back" in an area that I am passionate about—literacy. CFLC/AL teamed me up with "Sandy," a middle-aged woman whose goal is to pass the GED so she can get a higher paying job with health benefits. Since Sandy works full-time, we have been meeting late afternoons twice a week. To start, we've been focusing on reading comprehension, language arts, and social studies. (Math and science will come later.) Sandy has made great strides, and it was gratifying to both of us when she passed the social studies portion of the GED last year.

The workbooks that the CFLC provides are good, but it helps to reinforce the lessons with

other materials. To encourage Sandy to read outside the classroom and keep up with current events, I sometimes develop assignments based on an article in the *Star News* or a local magazine. I brought in a street map of New Hanover County to make a lesson on the four cardinal directions more relevant. Before leaving on an extended vacation last summer, I assigned Sandy some exercises and writing assignments based on a book of vignettes. It was the first book she had read in years, so finishing it gave her a sense of accomplishment. Her essays needed some grammatical work, but those covering personal themes—her family, childhood, or wedding—were detailed and colorful.

Sometimes my ideas are unsuccessful, and I have to take a different approach. During a section on poetry, for instance, I encouraged Sandy to write a haiku poem for homework, but she struggled with the lack of rhyme and the five- and seven-syllable lines. Poems by Maya Angelou (*Phenomenal Woman*) and Langston Hughes (*Harlem*), on the other hand, resonated, so I found more works of theirs to illustrate figures of speech like metaphor, simile, and alliteration. Some concepts have to be repeated or approached in different ways before they are understood. But we are getting there, and tutoring has been a great way for me to refresh my knowledge on subjects I studied years ago. Of course, not every student is at such an advanced level. Some are still struggling to read their mail or write a grocery list. But whatever the level, finding something useful or meaningful to the learner helps the lesson stick.

The COVID-19 pandemic put a two-month stop to our lessons, but we recently resumed a few evenings a week with some online reading comprehension exercises. It is more challenging than meeting in person, but Sandy is committed to achieving her goal. It takes courage to come back to school after several decades, especially when balancing work and family obligations. Her motivation inspires me, and I hope to be there on the day she earns her diploma.

Note: CFLC is celebrating its 35th year of "opening doors and changing lives. You can help advance its mission by tutoring, assisting in a computer lab, or donating to this important cause at www.cfliteracy.org.

Brunswick County 2020 Senior Games Awards

Several of *Cape Fear Voices* writers and contributors recently won awards for their submissions to in the 2020 Brunswick County Senior Games and Silver Arts. Congratulations to all the winners!

In the category of Heritage Arts:

Jeff Meuwissen – First Place in Woodcarving for "Heron in a Tree" and Third Place in Wood Working for "Bluenose" (read his story in the article above). Jeff's awards will qualify him to compete at the North Carolina State level.

In the Category of Literary Arts – Life Experiences:

Eric Mens – First Place for "*The Gift*"

Veronica Pastecki – Second Place for "*Unexpected Visitors*" (published in this issue)


Veronica Pastecki – Third Place for "*Adventures in Scotland*"

In the Category of Literary Arts – Short Story:

Eric Mens – First Place for "*At Peace with Nature*"

Jane Webster - Third Place for "*Cross my Heart*"

First and Second Place awards in the Literary Arts category qualify Ronnie and Eric to compete at the North Carolina State level.



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Creative Writers/Artist

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The Editors of Cape Fear Voices express their thanks and gratitude to the following individuals who have made donations to help defray our monthly cost of publication:

Howard Cohen
Mendel Hill & Helen Zivkoviche
Joedy C. Kimball
Susan P. Drozdowski

The following individuals have donated or purchased a 3-month Business Card advertisement for \$90 for a particular local small business:

Susan P. Drozdowski – Alterations by Susan D.

A heartfelt "Thank You" to all! As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, we are dependent upon donor generosity to continue showcasing our Cape Fear community's creative talents!

Please note that if you have a favorite local small business that you would like to sponsor for a 3-month business card ad (\$90), please send the card and check made payable to Teen Scene/Cape Fear Voices to P.O. Box 495, Leland, NC 28451. We will make sure that we notify the small business of your particular support. You will be promoting the small business to the community and helping to defray the cost of publication of Cape Fear Voices. We appreciate all of our supporters!

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 11, 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.



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