



Cape Fear

# VOICES

Providing an Outlet for Creativity in the Cape Fear Region

Volume 1, Issue 4

SEPTEMBER 2020

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Stories & Articles  
Classifieds  
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## Cape Fear Voices

### Editor

Eric Mens

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## Remembering 9/11

Cape Fear Voices and Teen Scene features stories on the day that changed everything

### Lost Summer

Summer was canceled this year.



By Kelley A. Nardell-Powell  
Oh, not the heat itself – and I speak of states south of the Mason-Dixon line specifically - that's been its usual asphalt-melting-hair-frizzing-bug-infested-stickiness. We've had our fireflies and cicadas and daily thunderstorming, our wheezing air conditioners and fruit gnats and lemonade spills and endless "Pew - I need to take *another* shower" moments.

But summer! That ephemeral, concentrated realization, that mental gearshift to "oh, yeah, I remember this" – lost. Vanished in a haze of tragic headlines, frantic dread, weighty sadness, social upheaval, urban violence.

No trips. No graduation ceremonies, no barbecues, no crowds for fireworks,

no endless afternoons at the pool, no concerts, no sports, no camps, no Vacation Bible School, no festivals, no theater, no Taste of Anywhere events...just a quiet, enforced often-solitary vigil against the fear of contagion that has stalked us now for months.

And the echo of all the questions – when will this end? Will time begin again when a vaccine comes? Will we all go back to work/school/life!? The internal litany, on repeat: I cannot fix this/what can I do/I can pray, and donate, and hope, and do it all again the next day. Because after all, how can I complain? People have died. People are sick. People are frightened, hungry, hopeless, angry. People, and not just summer, have been lost.

So. Where to go, when we're trapped and can't go anywhere?

See *SUMMER*, Page 2

### A Day in September



By Eric Mens, Brunswick Forest

For many Americans, September 11, 2001, is etched in our memories.

Colonel V and I stood outside the information technology collaboration center, where we had gathered a team of a dozen government professionals. We would work at the facility for the next week or so brainstorming and creating a more streamlined and customer-focused agency. Our agency, the Defense Supply Service- Washington, would present our final report to the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army in the Pentagon Office. I was the team leader.

The slightly brisk morning breeze brought welcome relief from the summer's heat and humidity.

"What a spectacularly blue sky," I remarked to the Colonel as I extinguished my cigarette. We



Author in the middle

headed into the facility. On entering the collaboration room with its numerous desktop computers and television monitors adorning the walls, we saw people gathered around the monitors. The monitors displayed images of a tower ablaze in New York City.

"A plane flew into the North Tower of the World Trade Center," someone exclaimed.

"Must've been a student pilot," someone else conjectured. We watched, wondering how someone could have made such a gross mistake in flight.

"Take your seats," I announced. "We'll leave the monitors on so we can follow the news from

See *DAY*, Page 3

## September is Suicide Awareness Month



By John Hacker, Magnolia Greens

Every day 20 military veterans, regardless of age or gender, die by suicide. Since 2007 there have been over 70,000 veteran suicides. That is more fatalities than the entire Vietnam War in little more than half the time.

Having served in Vietnam as a combat infantry squad leader, I, like so many other veterans, have experienced the horrors of war. I know firsthand that we all benefit from our veterans' sacrifices. With this in mind, I have been a veteran advocate for quite some time. Over the past seven years, I have worked closely with suicide prevention programs. Today I am working closely with Save A Vet Now, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, operated by unpaid volunteers that is focused ex-

clusively on veteran suicide awareness and prevention.

I also lost a daughter to suicide on May 22, 2008.

It is no understatement when I say the current COVID-19 pandemic has set us back in our suicide prevention efforts. The pandemic happened at the most inopportune time. Social connection is a crucial ingredient of suicide prevention, and here we are practicing social distancing. This can easily lead to feelings of isolation and anxiety. Job loss can be very stressful, as well.

PTSD, depression, and substance abuse are the main contributors to suicide ideation, each of which requires effective treatment by professionals to give these troubled veterans options other than suicide. Unfortunately, too many of veterans resist therapy for various reasons.

Many don't want public knowledge of their illness to interfere with their ability to find a job or, by extension, their ability to support their families. For reasons of their own, some turn away from the VA and decide to "tough it out," hoping that their problems might take care of themselves over time.

In September 2019, VA Secretary Robert Wilke emphasized that the veteran suicide crisis has surpassed the VA's capacity to address this crisis. He also stated that the crisis must be targeted in a coordinated approach with state, local, and private partners. While we wait for this partnership to form, our veterans continue to rely on a VA medical system that is admittedly overwhelmed.

With the roll-out of the Veterans

See *AWARENESS*, Page 2

## About Teen Scene and Cape Fear Voices

### Contact Information

For *Cape Fear Voices*  
editorcfv@gmail.com

For *Teen Scene*  
editorteenscene@gmail.com

### 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 nonprofit 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 nonprofit organizations that work to improve the lives of children and families in the area. In each instance, we intend to provide a quality outlet to publicize the region's literary and other creative talents.

### Our Philosophy

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

### Our Status as a Tax-Exempt Organization

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

### Our Funding Sources

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

Donations may be sent to:  
**The Teen Scene, Inc.**  
Post Office Box 495  
Leland, NC 28451

### Governance

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

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

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## It All Comes Out in The Water



By Jan Morgan-Swegle,  
Compass Pointe

I grew up in the '50s, a time that many people consider "innocent." Based on today's standards, I guess it was. Children could play outside without fear of being abducted or molested, our country had the best standard of living in the world, and one working parent could support the household. The world just didn't seem as complex as it does today.

But that innocence was only on the surface. I lived in a white world. My favorite television programs featured white suburban families. My school classmates were all white, and our neighborhood was the same. I knew that black people existed, often from seeing them on the news, but that was the extent of my "black experience."

My mother believed that people—no matter what color, were the same. They may look different from us, but they were just people. Some were good, some were bad, the color of their skin was not to blame. We were raised to respect differences.

Because of this, it didn't seem odd to me that when I was in my mid-20's, I had a black friend named Nina. Nina and I were both single mothers with 4-year-old girls. We worked at a local bank, and we were both going to college at night to further our careers. Nina had been raised in a similar manner as I was and didn't have a lot of white exposure or experience until entering the working world.

Nina and I shared a vision that one day, our daughters would be paid equally for doing the same job as a man. And, we hoped that our children would respect the differences of others as they were taught.

Nina's daughter, Ebony, had a curiosity like no other 4-year-old I've ever met. She wanted to investigate new things and drew conclusions based on what she saw. To Ebony, a heavily pregnant

**My mother believed that people—no matter what color, were the same. They may look different from us, but they were just people.**

woman must have swallowed a pumpkin. Her imagery was entertaining. My daughter, Jenna, was a thinker. She would happily follow Ebony into adventures, but always reserved the right to have the last word based on her 4-year-old experience.

During one of our school breaks, Nina asked me to keep Ebony for the weekend so she could travel to Toronto. On the appointed day, Nina pulled into my driveway and dropped Ebony off. Ebony was glad to have a playmate for an entire weekend, and she and Jenna proceeded to plot their adventures. As usual, they played with their

See *WATER*, Page 2

## SUMMER

From Page 1

We can go to memory.

My summer is still out there. There is still a beach where the surf roars, and laughs, and the gulls ride the wind and scream at us for bread scraps. There is still a sunset over the docks, and fishermen comparing

catches, and beer and music by a campfire in the soft twilight over the sea. There is yet laughter, and searching for ghost crabs when the moon rises, and sweet sticky salt-encrusted dreams to be harnessed late, late after dark. There is still the dear, renewing hope of sunrise over the gulf and sand dunes.

So Summer, I guess you took

your own vacation this year – but we will meet again, when life resumes sometime. I will be waiting for you, even through the cold months. Indeed, we'll all be ready for your return – with our sunhats and flip-flops, our music and barbecues, our kids and grandparents and neighbors, together in a crowd on the beach, looking forward to the fireworks.

## AWARENESS

From Page 1

Administration's (VA) PREVENTS and REACH Programs, it became clear to me that partners at all levels must join the VA's fight against veteran suicides if we are to get this terrible crisis under control. The crisis is silently happening all around us, and we are making little headway in stopping it.

My conversations with many community organizations about Veteran Suicide and Prevention programs reveal that they want to help. I have made it my mission to educate and inform the public through these outstanding community organizations.

We at Save A Vet Now are aware of the tremendous stress all VA entities are experiencing in dealing with this problem. In response to the VA's call to action, we have decided to help. We have partnered with Wilmington-based Coastal

Horizons, Inc., a well known and highly respected service provider in the field of mental health and substance abuse. Together, we have created the Veterans Outreach Program, which allows troubled local veterans to receive effective and discreet treatment for PTSD, depression, substance use, or any other contributor to suicide ideation. These services can be accessed, without financial barriers, at any of Coastal Horizons' outpatient clinics in Brunswick, New Hanover, or Pender County.

You can find more information about us at saveavetnow.org as well as a link to Wilmington's WECT TV Community Spotlight on Save A Vet Now. More information on Coastal Horizons may be found at coastalhorizons.org.

As you may know, there has been a significant increase in national charitable organizations addressing the veteran suicide crisis. Each approaches the problem in their own way. I

applaud every one of them for the work they do. However, this is a problem that starts at the community level, and that is where it should be addressed.

If each of our affected communities are made aware of their local issue, and they support prevention measures, then the cumulative effect for our country could be significant. The challenge is to get other communities involved. What we need is a highly regarded, veteran-friendly organization such as the VFW, American Legion, or others that have a presence in the communities and a platform from which our message and mission can be heard throughout the Nation.

We at Save a Vet Now have asked organizations meeting the aforementioned criteria to join us in the fight against veteran suicide in ways that are consistent with their values. September is Suicide Awareness month, lets ALL work together!

## The Silent Violin



By Patricia Dishino

"Mom, hurry up! You look great. We will be late meeting Grandma and Grandpa. I can't wait to see them for breakfast and go on our tour."

Angie couldn't help from smiling at her seven-year-old son, Joshua's plea - heartfelt and filled with anticipation to begin his birthday wishes. For a month, Angie and her husband, David, heard details of the special day's action plan.

David mimicked Joshua's daily chronicle describing his birthday agenda, to Angie and Joshua's delight.

"First, we'll go to Grandma and Grandpa's apartment at the Lincoln Tower. Then take a taxi to my favorite restaurant for breakfast, 'Hole in the Wall.' Next, we will walk to the World Trade Center for a tour."

Joshua was a happy child, knowing that he was loved, never experiencing a moment's despair. Today the good life beamed as he welcomed turning eight.

"I'm ready, Josh. It's early," Angie responded, giving one last look in the mirror, approving her new haircut, knowing the change would generate a point of conversation with her parents, Celia and Eli. Her hair went from shoulder length to a

short pixie cut. Be that as it may, they would complement her no matter what they thought. They were so endearing.

Eli Karvinsky was a well-known musician, often serving as guest conductor with the New York Philharmonic. Fame just strengthened his benevolent and altruistic temperament. He also gave his grandson violin lessons, recently praising Joshua's talent.

David realized that Joshua did not want to waste another minute in their apartment. This was such a notable day.

"Okay, Josh, the cab should be here in ten minutes. Let's go downstairs and wait in the lobby."

"YAY!" The newly turned eight-year-old responded.

As they approached the apartment's front door, David's mobile phone rang. He answered, hearing his father-in-law's voice.

"Hi David, don't come to the apartment. Let's meet at the 'Hole in the Wall.' We are at the World Trade Center to get tickets ahead to avoid the wait. As long as we're here, Celia and I will go to 'Windows on the World' to make reservations for lunch."

David questioned Eli, if 'Windows on the World' was even opened at eight-o'clock.

"Oh sure, John Alessio, the manager, always gets there early. See you at the 'Hole in the Wall' at 9:30."

See *VIOLIN*, Page 4

## Day

From Page 1

New York. We need to start promptly at 9." No sooner had I begun to talk when the monitors showed another plane crashing into the South Tower. Concern grew as the words "terrorist attack" circulated. We watched the replay on the screens. It was 9:05 am.

I resumed addressing the team on our mission and the process that would result in a report on the agency reorganization. With tensions high, we struggled to focus on our job amidst the news coming from the monitors.

Suddenly, the room erupted in a cacophony of ringing cell phones.

"A plane has hit the Pentagon!" someone shouted.

My phone rang. It was my brother Joe calling from New Hampshire. "Are you safe?" he demanded. "Are you in the Pentagon? Are you safe?"

"I'm working offsite at a location down the street from the Pentagon. I'm fine. I'll call you later," I responded.

The room was filled with voices urgently talking to others on their phones. Some talked to family members. Some were taking calls from offices in the Pentagon. We collected as much information as possible and quietly gathered at the front of the room to share what we had learned.

"The Pentagon is evacuating. We have orders to stay in place and not return to our offices," COL V informed us. "Call your families if you can get through. We'll decide what to do after you've assured them that you are safe."

"We won't be able to retrieve our cars, so we'll have to find other ways to get home. METRO may be shut down," he continued.

I called Cindy, my future bride. She was a relatively new employee with the US Department of Education on 14th Street in DC. "I don't care what your supervisor tells you!" I exclaimed. "Get your things and leave the office NOW!"

She responded, "The Secretary has not released us yet."

"I don't care what the Secretary says!" I shouted. "Take leave if you must but get out of DC! Take the Orange line to the Vienna Station. It's as far as

METRO will take you. Wait for me there. But leave now! METRO will shut down, and we have no idea what the roads will be like." I hung up. It was now nearly 10 am.

COL V and I caucused. With no access to the Pentagon and its parking lots, we needed a way to get our folks home safely. We also needed to decide if we would continue our mission. Everyone ultimately agreed that we would return the next day and continue our work.

I loaded six of my co-workers into my Suburban and drove them to their homes throughout the DC suburbs of Maryland and Virginia. As we drove slowly through Arlington, streets filled with people leaving their offices. As they walked, they looked up as if expecting a plane to plummet to the ground. It was eerily quiet. Planes nationwide had been grounded. Later, I picked Cindy up in Vienna, and we headed to our home in Woodbridge, Virginia.

Our offsite work was completed during the following week. Smoke and water damage to our offices kept us from returning to work at the Pentagon for several more weeks. Upon returning, we passed through several checkpoints manned with Humvees and heavily armed soldiers. The loss of life at the Pentagon would have been much higher had the plane crashed into one of the older, less reinforced wings of the Pentagon. But that was little consolation to the families who had lost loved ones that day.

Our agency financial and IT departments lost 40 employees in the attack. More were injured and burned. Ironically, the day before, I had toured the newly renovated wing and admired its modernity, even envying those who had already moved into their new offices.

After I retired, I became a contract consultant to the Federal Transit Administration, overseeing the rebuilding of the transit hub at Ground Zero. Doing so involved working with people who had survived the disaster and were now rebuilding Ground Zero. Watching the Museum, Memorial Wall, Oculus, and new Towers rise from the ashes of Ground Zero, where so many had died, was an honor and a privilege I will never forget.

## Water

From Page 2

dolls and giggled at cartoons. But there was an underlying discussion that I was not invited into that seemed to permeate the visit. Ebony was curious about something, and Jenna was standing firm on whatever position she was defending. During the weekend, I noticed that Ebony and Jenna were whispering and pointing at me. From time to time, Jenna would declare, "Yes, she is."

On Sunday, it was time for Nina to come and pick up Ebony. I packed up her things and ultimately found out what the mystery was all about.

I told the girls that I was going to take a shower and gave them a short list of rules to follow for the next 10 minutes. It wasn't long before I heard the two of them having an argument in the bathroom.

What are you two doing?" I asked over the sound of the water.

At that point, the shower curtain was pulled abruptly across the rod, and I stood there, naked. Ebony registered surprise on her face. She inspected me from head to toe while Jenna stood there, smiling like she had won a prize.

Jenna finally announced, "I told you she was white all over." Ebony just shook her head in disbelief.

Ebony had never seen a white woman naked, so having Nina tell her that people were all the same made her think that I was black—the same as she was. The imagery she created in her mind was that I was basically black, and just the parts of my body that she could see were white.

Ebony continued to inspect me and finally agreed, "Yeah, I guess she is."

The mystery was solved, and off they went, hand in hand, for one last snack.

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## Cracker Sustenance

(Part 2)



By Eric Mens,  
Brunswick Forest

He poled the skiff into the quiet, shallow coastal lagoon that stood between him and his treasure. Emerging quietly through the now-lifting mist, there at the edge of the bank, he saw them. The familiar long neck and slender shape of the Louisiana heron stood out in the fog against the bank. Its dark blue coat contrasted against its white belly stood out in the early morning mist.

The bird had apparently been foraging in the shallow waters. He knew that this species liked to feed by itself and sometimes would drive away other birds that had invaded its small feed-

ing ground. The heron stood a good foot tall above the bird facing it.

He watched in quiet fascination, waiting for something to happen to break the morning calm. The smaller Snowy Egret croaked softly and lifted a foot to move tentatively towards the larger bird. The heron lowered its head and answered in a series of long low croaking sounds as if to warn the smaller bird not to intrude further into its feeding area. With that, both birds turned their backs to each other and began foraging in opposite areas. The standoff was over.

As the birds moved away from the bank, he quietly poled the skiff to his landing spot. The

birds seemed unperturbed by the visitor, instead moving quickly away from him and their first spot of encounter. Jumping from the skiff's platform, he turned and reached for the machete.

Reaching the top of the low bank, he saw a profusion of swamp cabbage of many different sizes. He quickly made his way to several of three to four-foot size and swiftly hacked off the side fronds and the top two feet of each, leaving the fronds that formed the top of the palm. When he had gathered half a dozen of the small trunks, he returned to the skiff. *A sweet bounty for this evening's meal,* he smiled to himself.

Placing the woody stalks in

the bottom of the skiff, he covered them with the tarp. Reaching down, he grabbed the jug of white lighting and took a deep swig. Wiping his mouth with the back of his sleeve, he congratulated himself on retrieving this bounty.

He hoped that no one would ever discover his private grove of swamp cabbage. Proud and self-satisfied, he climbed aboard the skiff, retrieved the long pole, and started to make his way home. The summer sun had begun to blaze in all its glory. With it, the morning's raucous sounds had muted in the still air.

The End

## Jack and Bonnie

(Part 1)



By Paul Stutz,  
Brunswick Forest

It was a warm summer's evening. The lights of the downtown restaurants and shops glistened in the river that ran through the city. Jack was involved in a business meeting. Bonnie was running errands for a sick friend. Except they weren't. There they were, embracing on the Riverwalk, thoughts of their spouses oh, so far from their minds.

They certainly didn't plan this when they first met—two married couples among several hundred living in a retirement community on the outskirts of the city. There were social get-togethers constantly - plenty of chances for people to get to know each other, plenty of opportunities to observe which couples were truly together and which couples had clearly stayed together too long. Jack and his wife, Sara, and Bonnie and her husband, Richard, were two couples that fell into the latter category. So many couples stay together only because separating would be too stressful. They may still "love" each other, but they don't seem to like each other very much.

Jack and Sara moved here from upstate New York. Jack was a successful real estate broker. He still works part-time - with people constantly moving into and out of the area, he can pretty much work as much or as little as he wants to. Bonnie and Richard moved here from Philadelphia, where Bonnie had a rewarding career as a high school science teacher. Between the organized activities and the spur-of-the-moment get-togethers, everyone

in the community had a lot going on. Not that there were cliques, per se, but most couples quickly found themselves socializing with the same couples most of the time.

It was at one of these social events that Jack and Bonnie first started to bond. There was always an abundance of food and drinks, and Bonnie decided to have a second dessert. This did not go unnoticed by Richard, who uttered, "You're having another one?" in a nagging voice just audible enough for Bonnie and a few others to hear.

Jack was one of them, and he gave Bonnie a quizzical look and then just shook his head as if to say, "Why is this jerk giving you such a hard time?" Moments later, as she was sitting at a table eating her forbidden fruit, he came over to her with a sympathetic look on his face.

Jack asked her, "What's the matter with him?" Bonnie answered, "He thinks I'm too fat." Jack told her, "He's lucky to have you in his life. Who is he, Mr. America?" They both chuckled. Richard was approaching them, so they quickly changed the subject to some mundane comments about the night's events. They would have to wait for another occasion to speak seriously, but the groundwork had been set.

To be continued

## Violin

From Page 3

I can't wait to see Josh's reaction to the new violin Grandma and I have for him."

"Okay, Eli, see you then. Josh is chomping at the bit." Josh was nearby, so David didn't dare mention the violin.

"I bet he is. See you soon."

David pushed the down elevator button enjoying his son's exuberance. He glanced at his watch, noting it was 8:05 - enough time for the cab to go from their apartment on Riverside Drive and 72nd street to the 'The Hole in the Wall' in the Financial District. Undoubtedly, the driver would use West Side Drive.

"Happy Birthday Josh," remarked his Dad. "How does it feel to be eight?"

"No different. This is going to be the best birthday ever!" Joshua's smile couldn't be broader.

As they reached the lobby, Josh spied his special friend, Tony, the doorman. "Guess what Tony, today is my birthday. We're meeting my Grandparents at my favorite breakfast place. Then we're going on a tour of the Twin Towers. My Grandpa knows, John Alessio, the manager of 'Windows on the World'. I can look out from the highest place in the city."

Tony answered with a smile that equaled the family's merriment: "Happy Birthday, Josh! What a great plan. Your cab just arrived."

Settling into the cab, David issued their destination, adding, "Best to take the West Side."

As the driver answered affirmatively, David's mobile rang. David recognized his father-in-law's number.

"I just finished talking to John. He is going to make it special for Josh - birthday cake and tour of the kitchen. We are about to take the elevator down and will meet you at 9:30 for breakfast. Oh David, looking out the windows from the restaurant, the sky is so blue. What a perfect day!"

As the conversation ended, David looked at his watch. It was 8:46 am, September 11, 2001.

Joshua never celebrated his birthday, never saw his Grandparents again, and never played that violin. Angie lost her parents.

The World began its 19-year spiral descent, gathering years of discord in its path. Today, a plague, known as the COVID Virus, brings death to millions of lives, adding to the earth's distress.

David always remembered his father-in-law's last words: "The sky is so blue, what a perfect day!"



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## Another Day That Will Live in Infamy



By Jan Morgan-Swegle,  
Compass Pointe

I have always felt like I was the last person on earth to know about the magnitude of the events of September 11. At that time, I worked in a banking Call Center in Cleveland and did not have access to a television set. My team started to get phone calls from their family relaying the event, and I confirmed it with our Human Resources Department. Initial reports were sketchy but not good.

Call Centers are always noisy. Phones are ringing, people are talking to customers, the copy machine is full of duplication requests, and the rhythm of business buzzes all around you. All of a sudden, our phones stopped ringing. The customers weren't worried about their finance charges. They were mesmerized by an event so horrific it stopped the entire world. A terrorist attack on US soil? No, it couldn't be.

Our management team decided we would work the full day—a decision not popular with the staff. Their rationale was that we were not going to “bow down” to terrorists and close. I thought this was flawed thinking, but I supported the company line and tried to keep a sense of calm for the team.

The longer we stayed there, the more calls from family members we received.

I remember thinking that I would be glad to go home and watch the news and see what really happened because the things we were hearing from others just couldn't be true.

Every hour the stories got worse. One of our commercial planes seized by terrorists hit one of the Twin Towers, no two planes, no it was both Towers, there were more planes and other targets, people were jumping from windows on the floors near the top of the Trade Center. It just couldn't be true. We heard that there was a plane taken by terrorists that was going to fly over Cleveland on route to one of their other targets; hearing this, one person on my staff got hysterical to the point that she almost had a seizure.

At 5:00 pm, I was drained and wanted to go home. The usual traffic snarl was absent—as the other businesses in the downtown area had closed by noon. I found out later, we were the only ones who stayed. I still don't understand why.

I went home. My husband had the television on, and I sat down in one of our chairs, hoping to find out it wasn't as bad as what I had heard from others.

And then I saw it. I saw it from the beginning as all of the news channels were showing film of the event. I saw what I thought was an airplane simply disappearing behind one of the Towers, and I waited to

see it show up in the sky on the other side. But it didn't. Instead, a heavy blast of gray smoke filled the TV screen. I saw glass breaking and a gaping hole in the building. I watched a beautiful, sunny day become full of dust, smoke, and tears.

I saw the Towers come down. Just like a game of Jenga, they were standing tall and upright, and all of a sudden, it was like the building made a curtsy. The top of the building stayed straight up, but it was falling and falling quickly until it rested on the ground, bowing to a greater force.

I stayed in that chair for hours. I watched the news over and over again. I listened to commentators estimating the death toll. They're all gone, I realized. Just like that, they were all gone.

I wondered how many people remembered to kiss their loved ones goodbye that morning. How many parents had told their children, “I'll see you later?” I'm sure no one in those Towers thought that this would be their last day on earth, but it was.

Years have passed, but we still mourn the day. The children of the victims are grown up now; their lives bruised by trauma and death. Their lives were changed forever. Euripides said, “There's something in the pang of change, more than the heart can bear—unhappiness remembering happiness.” He was right.

## Biscuit Weaver



By Gary Neil Gupton,  
Leland

Aunt Nobia didn't have any children, but she mothered several. And she knew how to make extraordinary biscuits. I stopped by her house for a quick visit on the way back to college after Christmas break.

Aunt Nobia's little green asbestos-sided house was set back less than ten yards off Hwy 56, just outside of Lumburg before you get to Pruitt Lumber Company. As I turned onto the gravel drive circling her house, the recapped tires on my '65 Mustang were so close to the edge of her pond that I could hang my head out the window and look down into the slimy green water.

Cane poles hung out in the shed, their tips pointing toward the water waiting for children to take them fishing. Fishing worms wriggled at the end of the drain line that ran from Aunt Nobia's washing machine.

When we wanted to go fishing – and not dig worms – Aunt Nobia made our bait. She'd whip up a batch of biscuit dough from scratch or open a can of Pillsbury from the fridge. Raw dough wouldn't stay on the hook unless she weaved cotton from balls usually reserved for smearing pink calamine lotion on poison ivy rash.

For quick bait she smacked the biscuit can on the edge of the speckled green countertop. Pop! We'd jump. A white blob bulged out the side of spiraled cardboard.

Tippy toed, we'd stand by Aunt Nobia's ample hips, eager to get our hands in the dough. She would let us mash the discs of white dough, flecked with slivers of shortening hard as candlewax, with the heels of our pink, tender hands while she pinched and pulled the rubbery edges of the dough. She'd pluck a cotton ball from the medicine cabinet and pull at the white fibers like she was preparing it for a spinning jenny. When the fluffy ball was spider-webby and flat, she'd spread it over the flattened dough.

We children stepped back,

wary of Aunt Nobia's elbows as she kneaded and weaved the cotton into a mini loaf. But she wasn't going to bake it. She rolled marbles of cotton-reinforced dough for our fish bait. She swatted our behinds and shooed us out the storm door. “You better catch some!” She knew we would catch little bass, plentiful in her overstocked pond.

That was a long time ago. I looked up at the storm the door, halfway expecting to hear Ringo, her white English bulldog, stampeding down the hall. Ringo had died years ago; Aunt Nobia stilled missed him.

“Come on in!” Aunt Nobia greeted me with a big buxom hug.

I sat down at the breakfast nook, reminded of a booth at the Boulevard Drive-in.

“Want me to make you some biscuits? No trouble.” She smiled and opened the sturdy white Frigidaire, fumbling around for buttermilk. She stood up with a viable substitute, a quart jar of Duke's mayonnaise in hand. “If all else fails...”

Out of the cabinet she took down her yellow, melamine bowl, hollowed out a mound of Red Band self-rising flour and plopped a four-finger blob of mayo on the heap, exploding flour dust into the air. She pinched off a bit of dough, rolled it into a marble, and offered it from the palm of her hand.

“No cotton.” She winked. I popped the doughball into my mouth, rolling it around on my tongue, savoring it. In a few minutes, Aunt Nobia pulled the black metal pan from the oven. Warm golden brown, crusty-topped biscuits invited me to stay.

“I've got to go, Aunt Nobia.” “Already?” She wrapped the biscuits in parchment then crinkled shiny aluminum foil around to keep them warm.

She gave me her homemade biscuits, another warm hug, and a peck on the cheek. As I drove passed the pond and looked back, I could see Aunt Nobia – and a dear childhood memory – waving goodbye.



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# Navy West Pac Cruise 1968

(Part 4)



**By Gerald Decker,** now officially a Magnolia Greens member of the

“Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club.” Days became long and hot, “African hot” as Adrian Cronauer would say. We steamed six miles off the coast waiting for a situation that needed us to bring food, ammo, supplies or Marines. Each day brought another readiness drill, lot of chipping and painting, and standing watches. General Quarters consisted of a lot of shooting drills, and helo drills. There were the ever-popular zone inspections by the Captain. Fail that inspection and there was a price to pay, usually extra duty or loss of liberty at the next port of call.

On the morning of August 5, we refueled with USS Chipola. Later that evening the Chipola and the USS Dubuque were having an unrep and collided. One person was injured and both ships were badly damaged. One of my more memorable events happened that afternoon. At about 1600 we observed a phenomenon of the sea.

The event we experienced was due to a major earthquake off the Philippines and Japanese coasts. Navy Oceanographic folks warned us to be on the lookout for a tsunami. The ocean had been a little rough but not bad-about 4-6' waves. At exactly the time they said a tsunami would hit, if it was coming, the ocean got very calm with very small ripples about 10 feet apart for as far as we could

see. It stayed that way for about 20 minutes and then back to regular waves.

Nixon stated on August 9, 1968 at the Republican Convention the famous words, it is “...time for honest government in the U. S. A.” It reminds me of when he said, "People want to know if their President is a crook. Well, I'm not a crook," (What a funny guy he was.)

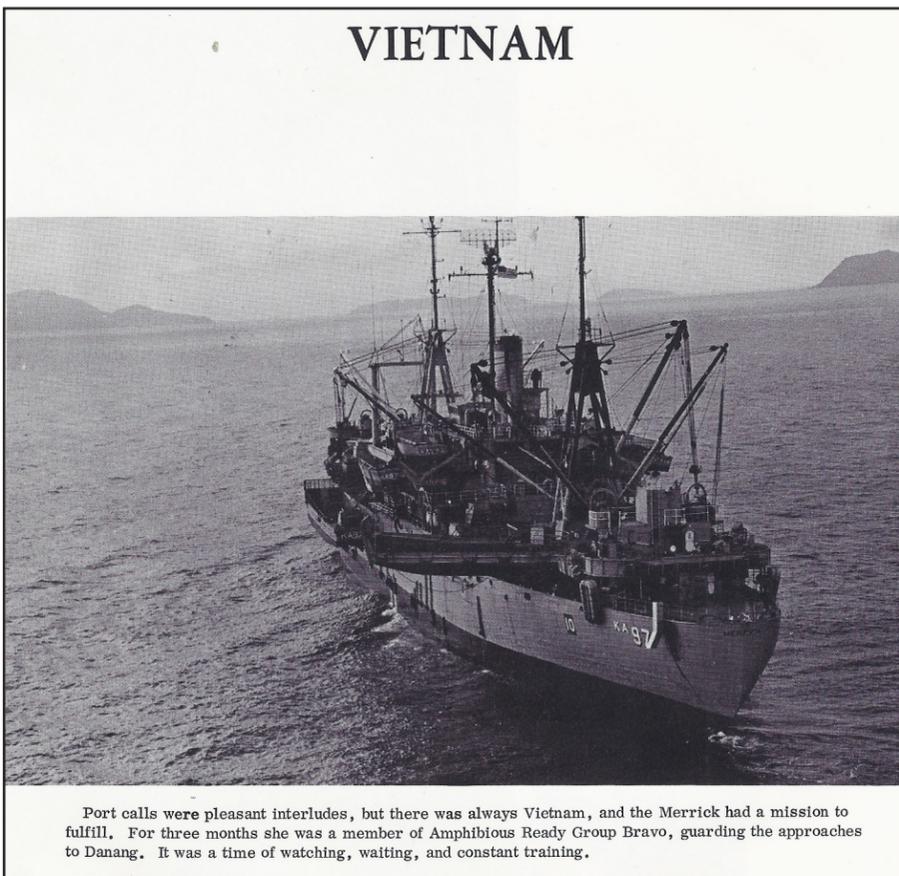
The Civil Rights movement continued to pick up steam and now had another powerful song by James Brown: “Say it Loud, I'm Black and I am Proud.”

By mid-month Navigation Division was finally able to go to a 4-section watch. Now we have 12 hours off duty between watches. That extra 4 hours off the watch cycle is a lot of time to relax. Days seemed longer because of all the work and drills. But we still had our hot showers, steak and movie every night. Compared to others, it wasn't so bad.

We finally had mail call about mid-month. As we all read our letters from home, we were listening over the ship's radio station to the songs of “People Got to Be Free” by the Rascals, and “Green Tambourine” by the Sand Pipers. We also heard the music of Eric Burden and the Animal's, “Sky Pilot,” one of the more iconic songs of Vietnam.

After 21 days on the line, on August 19 we finally headed to port. As we arrived in Subic on the 21st, protesters (hippies) began to arrive in Chicago in preparation for the Democrat Convention.

There is no way to describe lib-



Port calls were pleasant interludes, but there was always Vietnam, and the Merrick had a mission to fulfill. For three months she was a member of Amphibious Ready Group Bravo, guarding the approaches to Danang. It was a time of watching, waiting, and constant training.

erty in places like Subic Bay/Olongapo, Okinawa or Hong Kong, during the Vietnam war. Suffice to say, it was the wild wild west in bell bottoms. It was also the monsoon season and the rain was relentless.

The night the hospital ship Repose showed up with MANY American nurses was probably the wildest. That was the night I was on shore patrol and had to help break up the fights over the nurses. (I had a 6ft. 4in. Marine with a beat stick that did most of the work actually.)

Fun and games ended on the 29th when we set sea detail again to move to anchorage to begin loading. We loaded food, supplies, ammo, equipment and



marines until 0030 the next day and then got underway for Hue at 0315. I had the luck of the draw and had to stand the first watch. It was a very long two days.

At the same time a running back at USC, and future double murderer, was getting ready for a Heisman Award winning season.

# Train Ride

(Part 2)



**By Teena Miller,** Brunswick Forest

"Excuse me again," said the woman as she returned to her seat. Bernice remained silent, and her co-traveler introduced herself as

Maria. "This is my first train trip, and I'm a little nervous,"

Maria said. Bernice said, "I'm sure you'll be fine" and turned to a Vogue magazine she had been reading. Maria was un-intimidated by the lack of response and proceeded to talk about her trip to Albany and her anxiety about being away from family. Maria said she had just passed her RN exams and was going to Albany to work in the NICU. She had rented a room sight unseen near Albany Medical Center to live until she became familiar with the area and could find an apartment.

Bernice nodded and said nothing but, I noticed her listening intently. After a short time, Maria brought out a bag of Ghiradelli chocolates she had in her backpack and offered Bernice one. To my amazement, Bernice helped herself and said, "This is one of my favorite

treats. Actually, I'm a little nervous, too," she said hesitantly. "I'm going to visit my daughter, and unfortunately, we've been estranged for several years. I'm not sure what my welcome will be, but she just had a baby, my first grandchild, and I'm determined to mend fences and see my granddaughter."

Maria's eyes watered in sympathy, and she took Bernice's hand. "You'll be fine," she said. "You love your daughter, and whatever your problem was, tell her that you love her and then tell her how important your grandbaby is to you. As a new mother, she will be thrilled to have you in hers and her daughter's life."

To my utter amazement, I watched as Bernice spontaneously hugged Maria, saying in a soft voice, "Thank you, that's just what I needed to hear right now. You will be fine too. People will love you." "My goodness!" she exclaimed, "You are one of the most beautiful girls I've met in a long time both inside and out, and I'm sure you'll bring your love and compassion to the children in NICU. I'm so glad I ended up

on this train sitting next to you."

"Me too," smiled Maria. "I was extremely nervous about this trip, leaving my community and starting a new job. Now I realize as long as I stay positive and be myself, everything will work out just fine."

The two chatted away like old friends for the remainder of the trip. As the official eavesdropper, I vicariously enjoyed their brief but heartwarming meeting. Bernice knew the area well and volunteered to help Maria locate an apartment. They exchanged cellphone numbers and agreed to speak that evening.

It seems I was too quick to judge both of them based on their apparent differences. They didn't view each other based on their age, ethnicity, or background. They were just two women with a fear of rejection and were at the right place at the right time to help each other out.

The End

## Laughing in the Golden Years

### Memories of My Mother's Rules



By Maryann Nunnally,  
Porter's Neck

We senior citizens have fantastic memories for the years when we were young. I can recall many of my teenage escapades, but I cannot tell you what I had for breakfast this morning or where I went last week. One of the fondest memories of my youth is thinking about my mother's odd rules

My mother was a lovely, gracious lady who spoke quietly but firmly. And there was never a time that I felt comfortable arguing with her, although her proclamations were often odd and difficult to understand. For example, when I was very young, she told me to never sit on a concrete sidewalk because I was certain to develop piles. Piles? When I asked what piles were, she gave me her standard answer, "Never mind. You will know when you are older." Of course, the first chance I got when mother was out of sight was to sit down on the sidewalk and wait for the piles. Piles of what, I wondered. Candy bars, toys, money? Alas, much to my consternation, no piles of anything arrived.

Then there was the rule that I must never stare or even look at anyone who appeared different than I. That rule included old people, people of

color, people who didn't speak English, people who wore sunglasses at night, etc." Keep your head down, and don't let them see your curiosity," was what mother said in a no-nonsense voice. As a result, I think, I missed a lot of interesting people in my growing-up years.

But the strangest rule of all was handed out when I started Junior High school. Handing me a *Ladies Home Journal* magazine, mother said, "Now that you are a young lady, if you ever have to sit on some boy's lap, put this magazine across his legs first."

I knew better than to ask why because the standard answer of "Never mind, you'll know when you are older," was sure to follow. But I did dare to say, "When will I ever have to sit on some boy's lap?" I clearly remember mother shaking her head and saying, "You can never tell when that could happen, so just carry that magazine around with you just in case."

Now I remember that I dragged that magazine around with me until I was a junior in high-school when I realized that no boy was ever going to invite me to sit on his lap. Tossing the magazine, I carried my disappointment instead.

## The Hidden Shoe



By Janet Stiegler,  
Brunswick Forest

"What do you mean we can't take down the house? We've got 10 days to move this structure before the road crew comes through." Developer Harry Baxter drummed his fingers on the wooden kitchen table and glared at his skittish subcontractor.

"It's the shoe," said Duncan McLeod, pointing to a dirty, leather woman's shoe sitting between them on the table. The old man shifted his wiry frame uncomfortably on the bench. His dry, cracked workman's hands shook slightly as he pointed to the shoe. "It shouldn't be moved."

"What are you talking about?" Harry asked angrily. "And where did you get that old thing?"

"It was under the floorboards in the living room."

"So?" asked Harry, "Was there a body attached to it? If it ain't got a body, then why should I care?" He laughed scornfully.

Duncan shook his head no, his eyes shifting from the shoe to the developer. "No, Mr. Baxter, but it's bad luck."

"Look, McLeod," Harry said,

bringing his fist down with a bang on the table. "I hired you to deconstruct this ramshackle house. God knows a demolition crew would have been a lot easier, but the folks in Mill Valley seem to think it has historical value." Harry rolled his eyes at the thought of the rickety structure having any monetary worth. "But I'm a businessman, and if that's what they're willing to pay for, so be it." He leaned menacingly across the table. "So, if you're gonna lollygag, I'll get someone else."

Duncan needed the work, but he wasn't sure Baxter understood the implications of tearing down the old edifice "Mr. Baxter, that shoe was hidden over 100 years ago to protect against witches. The smell of the shoe lures the witch away from the residents. Trapped inside, she walks right into that there fireplace."

"You don't actually believe that poppycock, do you?" Baxter asked incredulously. Coming from Boston, he had trouble fathoming these small-town superstitions. "Look, McLeod," he said, trying to contain his impatience. "The road will run right through this living room. We'll rebuild the

house on the other side of town." Baxter displayed his salesman smile, but his eyes remained hard and stony. "Now throw that old thing out and finish the job."

Duncan jumped up. "Oh, no! I knew a family back in Kent," he said. "Removing a shoe from its hiding place brought a slew of trouble." Duncan rattled off a list of unfortunate events: "Baby girl died in her crib, lightning struck the farmer in his field, neighbor's boy fell into the well, cows fell over from some mysterious disease. It was nonstop disaster."

Harry Baxter had heard enough. He wanted to be tolerant, but time and money were at stake. "Are you batty? This house is coming down. It is perfectly safe, shoe, or no shoe. And I'll prove it by sleeping here tonight."

Duncan tried to discourage Baxter from staying but finally acceded to the developer's demands to set up a cot in the disheveled living room. He gingerly placed the old leather shoe in a box and carried it out, glancing worryingly over his shoulder.

When the Duncan returned the next morning, the Mayor and half the town were lingering outside. Two men carried a covered body

out on a gurney and slid it into an ambulance. "What's going on?" he asked.

"That big shot from Boston died of a heart attack," said the Mayor. "I'm not sure what he was doing in the house so late at night with all those loose floorboards, but his facial expression suggests he had quite a scare." Duncan placed his cap over his racing heart.

"Maybe it's an omen," the Mayor said, continuing, "but I have some misgivings about moving this house. It's a historical landmark in Mill Valley, and it just doesn't seem right to uproot it. I'll talk to the county about modifying the road's route."

After everyone left, Duncan slipped back into the house, clutching the box to his chest. He gently removed the weathered shoe and put it back in its original hiding place, toes facing the fireplace. Then he re-nailed the floorboards, swept up the debris, and left.

*JS- This story was inspired by a hidden shoe that my sister and her husband found under a staircase while renovating their century-old home outside Amherst, MA.*

## Funny Facts

Barry Manilow didn't write his hit song "I Write the Songs." And before he recorded it, Barry didn't even think it was a particularly good song.

The blob of toothpaste that sits on your toothbrush has a name. It's called a "nurdle."

President Coolidge had a childish sense of humor. Believe it or not, the 30th U.S. president thought it was hilarious to push the emergency buzzer on his desk and then hide when the Secret Service came running.

One Norwegian town has a super ironic name. There's a village in southern Norway actually named "Hell." And get this: every winter it freezes over!

High heels were originally for men. When high-heel shoes first came into fashion in the 10th century, they were intended for men. It wasn't until the 18th century that more women wore high heels than men.

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# THE TEEN SCENE

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Tomorrow's Voices Today

September 2020

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Stories & Articles

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### Editor

Gerald Decker

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Mata Burke

Erica Hires

Ana Johnson

Myra McGee

Jackson Metty

Breanna Nelson

Kyle Nichols

Lauryn Smith

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(pages 6-7)

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## In One Instant

By Mata Burke  
11th Grade  
(As later printed in the U.S. Congressional Record)

They said we would never forget what we were doing the moment it happened, and they were right. In one instant, everything we ever knew changed, and even three years later, the memory is still fresh in my mind.

It had been like any other Tuesday morning. I had just finished my algebra class, and I was making the quick trek from the high school classroom to the middle school for my Latin class. My only concern at that point was that there might be a pop quiz on the previous night's vocabulary, so I carefully read my notes as I walked. Once I reached the classroom, I noticed the back of a television in the room, and at that time, it greatly relieved me to think that we were going to watch a movie instead of have a quiz. However, when I rounded the corner and looked at the screen, I did not see the usual video about Roman art and civilization. Instead, I saw a close up of a building that appeared to be on fire. A new feeling of anxiety began to trouble me, one that was quite different from the one I had felt just a few seconds earlier. Confused, I sat down at my desk, and asked around about what was going on. No one seemed to know, so I again stared intently at the television screen. I thought, "Oh, well there was probably just an accidental fire that started in one of the offices." But that was when I saw it: something moving across the bottom of the screen and slamming in to the side of the second building. I watched, horrified, as people on the ground began

screaming and running for their lives to avoid the falling debris. Not 5 minutes after this happened, I began hearing talk that this was the result of terrorist attacks on the United States homeland. That was where it all began.

It is strange to think that on that day, something so trivial as a pop quiz had worried me so much. When I remember how relieved I was for that moment to see the television, I feel guilty for letting something so small make me feel that way. So now, it is three years later, and the world has changed indeed. Terrorism is no longer just a vague news report that I hear about happening in far away countries. It is now a part of our everyday lives, just as it has been for many other countries across the world. Constant news reports, newspaper headlines, anthrax scares, and bomb threats are enough to serve as a constant reminder and instill a fear in everyone. The questions are asked: "When will it happen again?", "Can we prevent it?", and perhaps the most puzzling question of all, "Why?" I cannot imagine the grief of someone who lost a family member or friend in the attacks. Still, every single person in the United States was affected by the attacks in some way.

It is hard to imagine the kind of hatred that could spawn such a horrific attack on innocent civilians who were only working their everyday jobs, traveling to see relatives, going on a business trip, or taking a vacation. What was the motive? Several explanations have been investigated, such as greed, religious fundamentalism, jealousy, politics, and social reasons. Perhaps, the best explanation is a com-



bination of all of these. Many people believe that some of the Muslim fundamentalists feel their culture is threatened by the United States' presence in the Middle East. Essentially, they hate U.S. foreign policy. There is no doubt that this plays some part in the reason for the attacks, for in many terrorist speeches there are references to the American support of Israel and its presence in Saudi Arabia. However, the anger is not directed only toward America. In the case of Bin Laden, for instance, there is extreme resentment for Muslim regimes that have "sold out" to western civilization, such as Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, and Malaysia.

Of course, there can be no reason to justify the terrible events that happened on September 11th and other attacks across the world. However, we must not only remember the terrible things that happened on that day, but we must also remember the bravery of the men and women who risked and even gave their lives to save others. We must remember how the entire country joined together to help the families of victims, to show their patriotism and support, and to resolve to never let it happen again. We must now look upon the future with a positive attitude to promote a safer, less fearful world, all the while, never forgetting the day that changed everything.

## How Social Media has Helped Teens Broaden Their Activism



By Ana Johnson,  
Cape Fear Community College  
Wilmington

Within the last ten years, we have seen social media skyrocket into immense popularity among teenagers' lives. Whether they use it to stay in touch with friends and family, share accomplishments, or even upload aesthetic photos, media culture has slowly taken over our world and made teens gain more information than ever. The question is, is that information helping young people gain more knowledge on what goes on in the world? That's where the idea of social media activism comes in to play. In the past few years, especially in the last couple months, we have seen many movements and campaigns pushing a certain agenda to get a message out. A couple of examples could be the *Black Lives Matter Movement*, *Me Too Movement*, the *March for Our Lives Movement*, *COVID-19 Relief Centers*, the call to help countries going through humanitarian crises, etc. Many of these movements started gaining traction through social media platforms and allowing individuals to help out

more digitally. Social platforms also makes material more accessible for future generations as time passes by. This had me pondering the past few weeks on the idea of if social media has helped young people communicate issues that affected them in today's world.

With teens from all over the country supporting the act of digital humanitarianism and wanting to help causes though online work, I broke down three ways some teens today use their social platforms to get a deeper understanding of important issues that happen in the world. The first point is to inform, spreading the word about a situation you've heard or found out about through a source. An example of this could be hearing about the terrible explosion that happened in Beirut, Lebanon. Most people today gather their information from being online. For instance, the word about this explosion spread around to individuals quickly through social media. The idea of informing is more of a logical way of thinking and through social outlets, young

See *ACTIVISM*, Page 7

## My Remembrance of 9/11

**By Erica Hires** It was a day like any other. I was only 11 years old and I was in the sixth grade. I remember waking up early in the morning excited just because it was a new day.

Like any other person, I would've never thought of what would take place in the afternoon. We had just come back from lunch, when Mr. Bullock (my sixth-grade math teacher) turned on the television. Like all my fellow classmates, I was so excited that we were watching T.V rather than doing fractions. But when he turned on the television, I realized that what I saw wasn't Rugrats. Not even an educational film!

My mind desperately searched for answers and all I could think about was "What is the big deal?" "Someone accidentally ran a plane

into a building, doesn't America have money to rebuild it"? I was so young, and naive. I didn't understand that people were dying not just people but children. After listening to what my teachers explained I fully understood what was happening.

When I woke up the next morning every step, every breath, each time my eye blinked I was grateful. I think back on the families and the children who lost their parents. But I'm older now (and would like to think I'm a little bit wiser) and can understand the full effect of 9/11. When I look back on 9/11, I think of change, change for you, change for me, and change for America. Time has gone by and the sore of America has slowly healed. But like a sore it will leave a scar that will never be forgotten.

## On Returning to School

**By Breanna Nelson, 12 th Grade,** The news on North Brunswick High School and **Jackson Metty, 12 Grade,** North Brunswick High School

Written by Staff

students returning to school changes each day. Sometimes students will attend classes in-person; sometimes, classes will be held through virtual learning. Some states have already opened schools with full classroom participation - some require masks, some require social distancing, and some...yeah, not so much.

All the while at UNC-Chapel Hill, classes closed after 135 students tested positive within a week of starting classes. The University then announced on August 17th that the school is going virtual. NBHS will be going the first 4 ½ weeks in virtual mode then move to a modified in class program- adhering to class size and other changes.

High school football and other fall sports have already begun. Jackson Metty, a senior at North Brunswick High School (NBHS), says he is excited and thankful, that the track team has already started practice, albeit optional. He is preparing for a senior year that may be significantly different from any year he has experienced in school before. As of now, the track season looks like it will go ahead.

Breanna Nelson, another NBHS senior, is concerned that the year may be challenging

for her in several ways. Breanna is a visual learner and doesn't think she will fare well with online learning. Currently, NBHS plans to do both virtual and in-school this year.

Breanna also commented that "Since this is my last year of high school, I'm a little sad. I won't be able to see all of my friends or talk to my favorite teachers. I'm not worried about me this school year. I'm worried about the underclassmen. It was stressful enough when we were in school already, so I can just imagine how they feel now going through all this. As long as when we do go to school, and I can have my teachers to help me with what I don't understand, then I think this year would be a little easier than we think."

From the comments we received, Covid-19 and the ever-changing school situation hasn't changed much for those teens with a car and someone special. Jackson says that teens still hang out together and go to the beach. And, as far as he knows, they are still dating and having teenage fun.

Both of these students echo the common refrain that things will soon return to normal. Breanna says, "I hope everyone this year can learn to the best of their abilities with all this madness going on."

"At some point, we have to go back to normal. Someone will discover a vaccine," says Jackson.

## God Bless America

**By Mya McGee** I remember 10th Grade

it well, the day that changed not only my life, but the lives of many other Americans, kids, teens, and adults. I was in the 7th grade and still living in Kentucky at the time. It happened just as my second period science class was ending. A teacher ran into the classroom and told our science teacher that the Pentagon had been bombed. He sped to the television and turned on the news. We all watched, some in horror, some in shock. For me, it was a state of utter confusion. I was still sleepy and not quite ready for that kind of a morning jolt.

Shortly after, the bell rang and I headed to third period...math class. The first World Trade Center had already fallen by the time I got there. We spent the rest of the

period watching television, which would have been really cool, except for the fact that this was a major crisis. At least ten minutes later, the second building, which was spewing horrible black smoke, crumbled right in front of my eyes. Although the building fell within seconds, it seemed like slow motion to me.

The whole school was in horror, gloom fell upon us for the rest of the day. I arrived home in a daze, unable to think, unable to feel, unable to see anything but fear and danger. I had always thought America was invincible, nothing could harm it, no one would ever dare try. It suddenly occurred to me how bad the conditions are in the world today and how Americans are also in danger of war. That very week, I was surprised at how many

American flags I saw, on houses, on cars, in yards, everywhere! Patriotism was alive and well.

Even today, patriotism is still practiced. But it is not just something to practice until the war is over. In order to keep our country, America the Beautiful, alive and well, we must show our adversaries that we can't be moved. Although so many lives were lost, and are still being lost today, no matter how many families have been torn apart, we can't be moved. The events of September 11 raised the consciousness level of Americans and how we must "stand beside her and guide her." September 11 has indeed left a huge scar on Americans worldwide, but we will heal. We are unstoppable. We are America

God bless America. We shall not be moved.

## Activism

From Page 1

people are able to share information that pertains to today's society and have a voice to use it to their advantage, whether that is negative or positive. Without media outlets, certain issues would have little visibility because of how much time young people spend on social media.

The next point is to observe, this is the way young people react to a situation through their eyes to form their own opinions. Many young people feel the need to speak on what is personally important to them because of empathy and coming from a place of understanding. Social media has helped teens to develop vital critical thinking skills and expose them to material that they would not know if it wasn't on a platform like Instagram, Twitter, etc. An example of young people reacting to an event that affected them is the *March for Our Lives Movement* back in February of 2018. Kids from all over the nation reacted to the shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School, most in anger and frustration. Through social media platforms, young people were able to exchange their thoughts and ideas to make personal changes in their own school districts.

The last point is how young people respond to an issue. This is significant to many teens today because they are able to use their creativity to produce solutions that pertain to a purpose. Examples of responding could be creating donation stations and disaster relief for humanitarian crises, organizing events to promote a certain agenda, educating and learning from people, etc. This comes from an emotional point of view. Even though these actions can seem small, in the long run, they can turn into a broader discussion even in your own community. Today, we are seeing teens being main contenders in movements, volunteering to help a cause and being a voice for people that can't speak up. These three reasons is why I believe that social media plays a major role in how young people make their activism count. And, if they keep this up now, who knows what can come out of it in the near future.

## Hope During War Times

**By Kyle Nichols,**  
12 grade

When it comes,  
Will you run and hide?  
Or will you be brave,  
And fight by my-side?  
When it came,  
Our people died.  
We all hurt,  
And we all cried.  
But we overcame the sorrow,  
On that Unfortunate day.  
We hugged each other,  
And wiped the tears away.  
They hurt our nation,  
And they will pay.  
We're taking the road to victory,  
And we will not stray.  
So when that day comes,  
We'll stand strong.  
We will fight the fight,  
And right the wrong.  
We will remain standing,  
And we will hang on.  
I'll be ready, if and when,  
That dreadful day comes along.

## The Stone Church



By **Ronnie Pastecki**,  
Brunswick Forest

Saint Joseph's Church has occupied this plot of land for the last two hundred years as have I, Molly McKenzie. Today, the structure stands proud with its Gothic style and sandstone facade. The rising sun strikes the high steeple descending to reveal the forms below as daylight fills the square. The large pine tree cloaked in Spanish moss guards the entrance near the wrought iron gate where repentant sinners sit and contemplate their sins.

The verdant green of the side yard cools the air creating a sense of peace. A few headstones border the lawn closest to a pathway recalls the important families who helped to build this house of worship. When I walked the earth, this expanse was an active cemetery with daily mourners placing flowers at the graves of those they loved and lost. I am buried within this great green space, my bones long gone as are all of my deceased neighbors. We were forgotten long before our remains had turned to dust. Once graveyards caused people to quickly pass by, especially on cold and windy nights. Today, young children romp and play above us oblivious to what lies below.

I haunt the yard, along with others who, like me, are not at peace. Unresolved conflicts from our lifetimes still torment us. Aimlessly, we wander unsure anymore of what we seek. Despite the false claims, we only appear at midnight in the dark of the new moon. Confined to shadows, we find some small measure of comfort in our existence.

But I recall when Saint Joseph's was still new. Talented artisans offered their skills and labors while wealthy parishioners donated huge sums for the lavish interiors. Mainte-

nance of the Lord's House was supplemented by the pennies from less prosperous families such as mine. Baptisms, weddings, and funerals were the clergymen's stock in trade. As different ethnic groups moved into the area, the town grew around the Church. Neighborhoods expanded, always outward. This country chapel now found itself in the heart of the city.

For me, St. Joseph's was of utmost importance. It was where I was baptized, married, and brought my children to learn how to be honest and true. I went to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day, praying daily to be a better person seeking my heavenly reward. Sometimes things don't happen the way we hope.

Typical of the time, wives were the property of their husbands expected to keep a house filled with far too many children. Close quarters and a meager income meant a lifetime of strife, poverty, and abuse. I never expected my life to end at the hands of another, someone I had once loved. It was a great comfort for me to be laid to rest in the Church cemetery, finally at peace, or so I thought. I failed to see that the enmity of my spouse as he damned me for dying, would doom me to my current state. He didn't care that our children became orphans when he was found guilty of causing my death. As always, his first thoughts were for himself and his comforts.

Even now, after all the years have passed, I continue to keep watch. Sundays and holidays still bring parishioners, but the rows of empty seats stand in contrast to the once filled pews. Even the clergymen seem to have aged along with their flock. I fear that soon Saint Joseph's will be shuttered. But I will remain to mark the passing of time until the Church no longer stands.

## A Day No One Will Ever Forget



By **Brendan Connelly**,  
Brunswick Forest

It began just like a typical Tuesday morning. In the blink of an eye, the entire world stopped, and for many, life would never be the same again.

As we think back on that dark, sad day, we can all remember where we were and how we felt when heard the news and saw what had happened.

I was on the bus on my way to The Forum School in Waldwick, New Jersey, where I was attending. My bus driver Mario usually had music on the radio, but that morning he had Spanish news on instead.

Nobody thought there was any reason behind it, but once we got inside the school, the entire mood of the day changed dramatically. Once everyone had walked into the classroom, my classmate Andrew Coraci told everyone what had happened.

I can still remember vividly the shock on my everyone's' faces when we heard the news. Andrew lived in Long Island. Andrew and all students who had traveled in from New York had to sleep overnight in the school. Luckily, we lived in New Jersey, so I was able to get home that day.

My oldest brother Bryan had left early in the morning to take the train into New York to help his college friend move into his new apartment. As he walked up the subway steps, he saw the smoke and heard people screaming - certainly a horrifying feeling. He slept on the floor in his friend's apartment that night and was able to come home the next day.

My Mom was out of work at the time. That morning she had the television off and had taken a long phone call from her good friend. My Dad had finally reached her from work later that morning, telling her what had happened and to turn on the television. She was in total shock.

My Uncle Kevin that day was traveling by plane on business to Texas and had to be put down in Tennessee when all flights were stopped.

My grandmother, my Father's Mother Elizabeth, fell in her house in

the Bronx and needed to go to the hospital. She wanted to go to her favorite hospital in Manhattan, but because of the terror attacks, she had to go to a Bronx hospital. She passed away the following March.

My piano teacher at the time, Helen Patrosio, had left to go to Vietnam to adopt an infant daughter Therese. She was scared for her life since they had to wait until they were cleared to fly back home. Luckily, they were able to do so without a problem.

The sports world paused after the terror attacks to allow America time to grieve, but when they returned, they provided many memorable moments, helping lift the spirit of America.

New York Mets catcher Mike Piazza hit a go-ahead two-run home run to help the Mets beat the Atlanta Braves 4-3 in their return from the terror attacks.

One of the nicest moments was seeing President George W. Bush throw out the World Series's first pitch at Yankee Stadium.

The Yankees and Diamondbacks played an unforgettable World Series in which the Yankees got two extra-inning victories and ended with the Diamondbacks walking off the Yankees in Game 7 to win the World Series.

In the Super Bowl, the New England Patriots defeated the St. Louis Rams 20-17 on a walk-off field goal to win their first Super Bowl Title.

It seemed fitting that at the end of the NFL season, the team hoisting the Vince Lombardi Trophy was wearing red, white, and blue.

We must also remember and honor our great Police Officers, Firefighters, and EMS who helped get people out of harm's way, jumped into the burning buildings, helped get the injured to hospitals, and helped families grieve. Our Police Officers, Firefighters, and EMS were there for us when our country was under attack, and they will be here for us now. They will always be here for us to protect us.

Whenever America gets knocked down, we always rise to the challenge and come back even stronger! America Will Never Die!



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## A Day I'll Always Remember



By Sharon Copland,  
The Reserve at Mayfair

In late 2000, I joined forces with a friend to open a store in Wilmington to import furniture and accessories from Indonesia. On the first trip to Bali, we both went to purchase inventory to get the business going. By the end of the first year, more containers were needed, and I stayed behind to run the store while he traveled to do the buying. On Tuesday morning, September 11, 2001, I was at an early hair appointment, so I would be through in time to open the store. I remember seeing a phone call coming through on my cell phone from my partner in Bali and thinking, "this is going to cost a fortune!" But there was no friendly hello; his first words were, "BBC says the United States has had a terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Turn on the TV and let me know if it's true." There is a 12-hour time difference, so he was calling at 8:55 in the evening as he heard it on the radio.

The girls turned on the TV at the spa to see the first tower in flames and the 2nd plane approaching. We sat there in shock with our eyes glued to the TV as another plane hit the second tower. I can still hear our screams of dismay, feeling disbelief at what our eyes were seeing, and then tears fell from us all. By 9:37 am, a third plane crashed into the Pentagon, and our lives as we knew them were changed forever.

By 10:00 am, I was at home with the TV on, and the news was getting worse by the minute. At this point, Wilmington was in a state of emergency (Red Alert) due to us having a major seaport next to Sunny Point, as well as the number of military bases in NC. The malls and businesses around town were closing; it was a ghost town. By then, the news of the thwarted attack on the Capitol, and sacrifice of the brave souls on that plane was being reported. Every station on TV and most of

the world was filled with live news reports. This was evolving into a true horror movie right before our eyes.

The rest of the day was heart-wrenching, and my memory is blurred for the most part. I do remember the scenes of First Responders going in and out of those two buildings helping people through the rubble and ashes. It was almost too much to absorb. I remember checking on my niece who lived in New York City and finding out that her husband, who usually took the subway into work, walked the six hours home as the transit system was immediately shut down. I'm sure those were the longest 6 hours of their lives. Most of the days after that were filled with breaking news as each minute produced new developments and more sad news.

I know in the minds of the survivors, it has left indelible marks. In the years that followed, I met several NY policemen and firemen who had moved to Wilmington to escape the nightmares they were constantly having. The city was a constant reminder of that time, and the ocean has such healing qualities. I remember the overwhelming patriotism visible in every aspect of our media. Proud To Be an American was not just a song; it was a heartbeat.

For years after the war against Al-Queda began, it wasn't safe when traveling abroad to wear t-shirts with obviously American logos, flags, and slang, especially in Islamic countries. I never felt threatened in Bali, but it was not as easy-going as it was in the beginning. Life was no longer as simple. America's wars were always fought on foreign soil, not in our back yards. I feel we lost our innocence that mind-slamming day and the vivid memories of watching it unfold are always there, reminding me that all the freedoms and advantages we enjoy today are not a right, but a hard-fought-for and a hard-won privilege! God Bless America.

## 9/11/2001 - A Vivid Memory



By Ken Formalarie,  
Magnolia Greens

It was early Tuesday morning. I was a passenger in Joe M's car, a work colleague, driving to Baltimore, Maryland for our annual "Kick-Off Sales Meeting."

Our October Company Trade Show was coming and this meeting was training for it. The meeting would commence at 9:30 am and run right through Friday at noon when we would be released to go home. The ride would take about 6 hours. We had not seen each other for months so we chatted up a storm never needing to turn radio music or news on. We had arrived into the company's headquarter parking lot at about 9:10 am, when a call from Joe's wife came in. He seemed surprised at something she told him. He hung up to tell me she heard TV news of a Passenger Jet that had crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. He turned the car radio on. Every channel was broadcasting this news. It was clear that many other salespeople who had just arrived were doing the same thing. Joe's wife called a second time to tell us that another Jet was reported to have crashed into the South Tower. He told me he had friends who worked in those Towers. Other Sales people were now streaming into our meeting place so we joined them.

Management commenced the meeting by telling us they were aware of the news events unfolding and would keep us informed of any further reporting. Around 10:45 the meeting was interrupted to inform us that both World Trade Center Towers had collapsed. In addition, a 3rd Passenger jet, presumed hijacked, was

down over Pennsylvania. News people were speculating the jet was headed for some target in Washington D.C. Finally an explosion was reported at the Pentagon with fire burning, (this would later be revealed to be yet another Jet that crashed into it.) "No one is certain yet, but this is likely a terrorist attack," proclaimed Jeff S., a marketer who had been talking with us. He continued: "We will carry on with our meeting until Richard L., owner of the company, will interrupt us because he would like to address this news with all of you." At noon, lunch was brought into our meeting room and Richard entered. He told us that "the world was forever changed today..." He said that Governor Glendenning of Maryland had declared a "State of Emergency" and had ordered the closing of the port of Baltimore. The US Naval base at Norfolk, VA, had already dispatched war ships to lock the port down and civil air space over the US was now closed. He further told us that all corporate headquarters and manufacturing centers in Baltimore were to close and send their personnel home.

We could not leave. We were stuck! Most all of us lived out of state and the highways were ordered closed until further notice. As the day dragged on we were given many more details until 6pm when we were dismissed to our hotel rooms. President George W. Bush was on TV at 8:30 pm to address the nation: "Today, our fellow citizens, our way of life, our very freedom came under attack in a series of deliberate and deadly terrorist acts. Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our

See *VIVID*, Page 13

## Beach House



By Eric Mens,  
Brunswick Forest

It was still dark when he awoke. Lying in bed, he listened to the waves softly lapping as they brushed gently onto the shore. Being careful not to wake her, he rose quietly and began to dress.

Treading slowly across the house's old floorboards, he stopped to peer out onto the third-floor balcony. Faint rays of light were beginning to peek over the horizon, turning the morning sky into shades of pale yellows, pinks, and red.

*Good. There is enough time for me to get to the beach before the sun rises any further.*

Continuing on, he reached the rickety stairs. He descended, the treads complaining softly under his feet. Last night's sudden storm and howling winds had rocked the house to and fro as the children and adults huddled, hovering over a Monopoly game. At times, the wind blew so fiercely they thought the house would collapse. They had held their



breaths waiting for the power to go out. The storm ended as quickly as it had come, and everyone had been able to retire to their beds in peace.

Reaching the ground, he walked swiftly to the dunes. He turned around to look back at the house. Despite its age and weathered appearance, it stood proudly amongst its more modern neighbors.

*One day, my bones will fail, and I will no longer be useful to anyone. For now, I will stand proud and tall, ready to weather any storm that may come, it seemed to say.*

Scanning the beach, he saw no one. He scolded himself for not having brought a cup of coffee. Surely if he

See *BEACH*, Page 13

## A Tuesday Like No Other



By Janet Meuwissen,  
Brunswick Forest

The most destructive terrorist attack in the world happened in the United States on September 11, 2001 and I, Candice King, was there. The chaos was overwhelming; yet I had to gather my family and make us all safe again. Here's my story...

What a bright, sunny Tuesday September morning it is for an invigorating walk to work! Lower Manhattan has so many enticements to heighten one's senses as I make my way from my Murray Street loft to my office, a few blocks away.

Almost to my destination, the sky begins darkening and the noise becomes deafening. The world just three blocks south of my apartment is collapsing! I turn to see that one of the towers is on fire; a plane has crashed into it! Sirens are wailing as police, fire, and emergency vehicles rush to the scene. I am stunned as I watch all that is happening around me. Then a second plane hits the other tower and it, too, begins to burn.

Slowly, I come to my senses and realize I must find my children. As I rush into my office building, I try to contact them at school. Matt, a sophomore at Stuyvesant High, and Natalia, a seventh grader at the UN School, are unreachable. I try my cellphone in the lobby; then I climb the stairs to my third floor office and try again. It is useless. I must go

to them and bring them to safety.

Pushing through the crowd of people also using the stairs to exit the building seems to take an eternity. Everyone is in such a panic. Once on the sidewalk again, I see debris crashing from the 80th floor of the 130 story tower as it begins to give way. Acrid odors are filling the air and toxic dust is floating down from everywhere. Waves of heat from the fires and fear of swallowing the dust force me to cover my face and run as fast as I can toward the UN School.

Already the NYPD have begun to set up a barricade around what will become known as "Ground Zero", the destruction site of the Twin Towers located in The World Trade Center. I ask for help, but no one knows where there is help.

For a moment, my cell works. I call both schools. I find out that Stuyvesant has dismissed all their students and told them to go home. But Matt can't GET home, because our apartment is within the blockaded area. Maybe he will stay outside the school entrance until I come for him—which is just what he does. Natalia's school has kept all their students so I run to collect her and we rush to pick up Matt.

My cell works for another brief moment; I call my friends in Upper Manhattan, asking for a place to stay. With both my children in tow, we head in that direction. All of a sudden, Natalia cries out, "What about Harry? We left Harry in our loft, Mom!"

"Yes, yes, where's my Harry? How could I forget our precious Bassett hound!" I exclaimed.

The three of us walk along the barricade until we find an opening which is guarded by a policeman. "We have to return home to find our dog; he is probably scared and hungry," I plead.

"Ma'am, NO ONE is allowed past this point. Please leave," he retorts. I am devastated and turn to go.

A man on a bicycle overhears our conversation. "Why don't you let them through? They seem like good people and they need to take care of their dog, Officer. Whaddya say?" he states. The officer who seems to recognize the cyclist, relents and lets us return home.

Harry is shaking when we walk in the door. Since we'd left the windows slightly open for his ventilation, we think he has PTSD from all the noise and all the dust inside the apartment. However, his shaking turns to wagging as we scoop him up, head toward Upper Manhattan, and finally with relief collapse in the safety of our friends' apartment. Thinking about the events of the day and having a chance to calm down, I realize why the cyclist was so familiar to me, as well as to the Officer. He was James Gandolfini of 'The Sopranos' HBO series. I made my family safe, but not without the assistance of a mobster!

## Author Facts

**William Shakespeare's** legacy survives not only in his many plays, but also in his contributions to the English language. Did you know these phrases originally came from Shakespeare?

· *dead as a door nail*  
· *fair play*  
· *all of a sudden*  
· *in a pickle*  
· *night owl*  
· *wear your heart on your sleeve*  
· *star-crossed lovers*  
· *off with his head*  
· *green-eyed monster*

**John Milton**, author of *Paradise Lost*, had a huge influence on America's Founding Fathers. His political pamphlet *Areopagitica*, which argued in favor of the freedom of the press, was a key influence on the U.S. Constitution's First Amendment.

**Mary Shelley** started writing *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus* when she was 18 years old. It was published only two years later.

**Victor Hugo's** *Les Misérables* wasn't only popular with 19th century Parisians. This massive novel was one of the most widely read books amongst American soldiers in the Civil War.

## Dog Lives Matter



By Sheryl Keiper

A visit to the veterinarian can be a positive or negative experience. The joy of welcoming a new kitten or puppy to the household can be an uplifting event.

I do fondly remember adopting a pathetic looking kitten years ago from a NJ shelter. I named him "Gus." He apparently had investigated something gluey as his face had nasty glue spots everywhere. At his first vet appointment, my vet and staff ogled over how adorable he was. The truth was – I had recently lost my beloved cat Jonah to the Rainbow Bridge. I knew they were exaggerating about Gus' beauty as it was a white lie to make me feel good.

I guess I needed to dovetail into my most recent vet visit this past Monday. It was so traumatic and surreal that my subconscious made me think of Gus...

Approximately 9:00 am on

Monday morning, I woke up and as was washing my face, my beloved greyhound Molly uttered a small "yelp" from her bed. You must understand that the greyhound breed is one of the most stoical of dogs. They rarely yelp, cry, or bark if they are in pain. It's inbred in their nature. Maybe it was Cleopatra's fault for disciplining them centuries ago...

So, my Molly yelps. I react immediately. She cannot stand. It's time, I'm thinking; I had mentally prepared for "that day" but one is never ready.

The universe was good that day. Jim, my neighbor across the street, brings meds for her pain.

Roy, head greyhound adoption in Wilmington, is home and responds to my call. He clears the vet's schedule for an emergency X-ray. I make coffee and stupidly stare at my Mr. Coffee machine perking away as these two tall men make a makeshift stretcher out of a large blanket that ironically reads "Good Dog" everywhere in black and pink letters. They carefully carry Molly to Roy's awaiting van.

We speed to Wilmington to the vet; I forget about Covid 19. Park, call, at the vet. The tech comes out with a stretcher. Molly is quickly wheeled away. I wait in the van with Roy who gently touches me and quietly says "You need to be prepared."

The vet arrives five minutes later. The news is bad. Molly has broken her tibia bone in four places. My choices are surgery, amputation, or euthanizing. I have five minutes or less to make a choice. I discuss the three options with Roy; he mentions the word pain, involved in option one and two.

My devoted dog who has loved me more than any human has for the last eleven years will suffer no more. I love her too much. And love is setting your loved one free.

I walk numbly into the sterile room. Molly is comfortably gazing at my face. The vet injects the morphine shot but Molly's vein collapses. She flinches as a rub her between her ears and tell her how much I love her and what a good dog she is.

Finally, the ethanol shot is in-

jected. Molly doesn't flinch, urinate, or vomit. She stares at me with the most serene expression in her eyes. "I love you to the moon and back" I say to her.

She almost smiles.

"Don't be sad" she says. "I will be pain free now. It is my time to leave. You will be OK without me. I will see you soon on the Rainbow Bridge, my dear Mom. Thank you for loving me." And she is gone...

Roy, the vet, and the tech leave the room. I cannot. I put my head on her chest and I can feel her heart still fluttering. I hope that sound is the wing of an angel whisking her to dog heaven safely.

She is still warm. I then remember that a dog's normal temperature is 103 F. She will be warm on her flight home, even with those thin ribs..

I say "Farewell, my sweet angel. Say hello to my two other greyhounds. I will see you all soon. I will bring you your favorite treat - your chicken jerky biscuits.

I will love you always. You taught me what unselfish love means...

## Speak or Forever Remain Silent



By Patricia Dischino,  
Brunswick Forest

Sara moved away from the mirror after noticing permanent lines were forming on her forehead.

*Summer is almost over and a sad one at that. I'm always angry. The world is in such chaos. People are dying from a horrible virus. The news is depressing. It's turning my face into a turnip.*

Whenever Sara pouted, her mom plied that cliché. Even though her mother's voice, no longer audible, silenced by death, she remembered that reproach well.

*I wish I were going to lunch with you, Mom, instead of Anne Harris. They were lovely times, as we never missed a beat. I still hear your laugh.*

Anne Harris thought she was a close friend, but to Sara, she was simply an acquaintance. They knew each other for years, both belonging to clubs of similar interests. Sara found her tiresome with Anne's recurring criticisms of people. Just thinking about their visit to Angel Gardens was a case in point. As they listened to the speaker, a Master Gardener, Anne kept bending over, whispering in Sara's ear:

"Look at that ugly dress. You think, as a speaker, she could find something better to wear. Can't wait 'til this is over so we can go to lunch."

*Why don't I ever tell her to be quiet? I don't even want to go today, yet, I'm afraid to say "No."*

The drive was short, giving little time for angst.

Lunch began pleasantly enough. As a result of the COVID virus, tables and customers were limited. However, the food and service were first-rate. Sara's uneasiness softened. Shortly, she could go home, kick off her shoes, and relax.

Then the clouds of discontent began to form as Anne injected a new topic. "I'm sick and tired of these protests," she said, referring to the Black Lives Matter demonstrations. "So many of them are hoodlums anyway. Lots come from absentee fathers with mothers, not working but just collecting welfare."

Those words pierced Sara's psyche creating an eruption against life's values. Her chair fell over with a *WHAM* as she leaped up, startling the

entire place—that sound and the diatribe that followed shocked even those in the kitchen.

Within seconds of standing, the water glass held in Sara's hand found itself airborne until it came to rest, splintering into slivering pieces on the white linen tablecloth. One shred landed on Anne's grey plaid jacket, clinging like a dagger, signifying the gravity of the moment.

Anne's face skin tone instantly matched the tablecloth's milky color. Disbelief of the previous moment filled her with deep intensive alarm. Never would she have predicted this adverse reaction from a friend.

The right words swam in Sara's wits, begging to be voiced. They were jumbled, not cohesive. She stood for a minute or two, silent. Her rage impelled words to form a straight line of response. The message flowed on wings attacking the many injustices Anne had delivered for years.

"Anne, you are a racist! What do you know about the protestors? Have you ever listened to what they have to say? Do you even know that they do the jobs that keep our lives together? Would you clean floors in a hospital where people are dying? No, that would be beneath you. You think they are below you. Why do you judge people by how they look or where they come from, without even knowing their story? You've always have been that way while I just listen and say nothing. People like you are disuniting our country!"

Sara went on for a few more minutes unloading remembrances of past disagreements, before tearing out of the restaurant towards her car.

This was the first time since meeting Anne that a feeling of power had gripped Sara. Smiling was effortless now, realizing she had also stuck Anne with the bill.

*I stood up for what is right. I didn't back down. Maybe it's not a big thing, but it is my contribution to speaking out against Anne's racism and her lack of concern for others. I am proud of myself.*

As Sara drove away from the site of the confrontation, her smile continued.

*I never have to have lunch with Anne. I don't even have to ever see her again.*

## Vivid

From Page 11

biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America. These acts shatter steel, but they cannot dent the steel of American resolve..." This had been the strangest day of my life, and getting through each day thereafter was increasingly more difficult until Friday when we went home. The highways had reopened for cars but not trucks or vans. Joe and I saw truckers standing on top of the cabs, lined up

on the both sides of I-95 and the NJ Turnpike, waving American Flags and holding up signs that said: "Honk for America," the roads were noisy! What irony when we reached the George Washington Bridge to see it was lined on both sides with armored military vehicles. Soldiers were everywhere stopping all trucks and vans turning them back. As we went over the bridge we had a clear view of Manhattan and two huge plumes of dark smoke rising well into the Atmosphere from where the towers had stood. This was a sight I will never forget!

## BEACH

From Page 11

had brewed the coffee, he would have awakened someone. That would have ruined his chance at a solitary reflection. He had also left his camera behind.

*Just as well, he thought. I would be distracted, trying to take the "perfect" picture instead of enjoying the sunrise.*

A slight cooling breeze met him as he found a place to sit on the beach, aligning himself with the rising sun. As it rose higher, its rays pointed directly at him and the waves crashing softly onto the beach.

He watched a pod of porpoises swim past. Diving in and out of the water, they quickly made their way southward. Soon after, a trio of pelicans flew silently past, occasionally dipping into the water before flying on, also headed southward.

*It would have been nice to share this with someone, he thought. Still, he was grateful that he alone was witness to the scene in front of him. There'll be enough time to be with the others later.*

Looking over the ocean, he thought about the last few tumultuous years. His father had died a lingering death, and his own career had nearly been torpedoed. His marriage had fallen apart, and his relationship with his children had almost been destroyed. Fortunately, he had found a therapist he could trust. With her help, he had begun the long walk to recovery from the depression that had nearly overwhelmed him. He knew that he would not be here today, had he succumbed to the lure of the darkness that had beckoned him.

He had chosen to live. He had no idea what would lay ahead, but he knew that he had chosen a different path. This beach vacation with the kids would be a new beginning for all of them.

"There you are." He heard her call from behind.

"I've brought you some coffee." She settled next to him on the sand, still wet from the night's high tide. Leaning towards him, she brushed her lips against his cheek. "Mind if I join you?" she smiled.

"Not at all," he replied. They sat in silence, watching the day unfold in front of them.



### VETERANS NEEDED

Leland VFW Post 12196 is recruiting members to join our new post.

We meet the second Tuesday of each month at 7 pm via Zoom (until further notice).

Contact us at 910.408.1934 or  
email at vfwpost12196@gmail.com



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# Your Community

## 30th Annual Brunswick County Literacy Council Golf Tournament

### Time To Tee Off for Literacy



Carolina National Golf Course at Winding River  
 Saturday, September 19th  
 Registration – 8 AM Breakfast  
 Shotgun Start- 9:30 AM

**Tournament Registration, Payment, and Sponsorship Application Forms** are on the Literacy Council website at [www.bcliteracy.org](http://www.bcliteracy.org) or call the BCLC office at (910) 754-7323 or email [bclc.golftournament@bcliteracy.org](mailto:bclc.golftournament@bcliteracy.org).

Brunswick County Literacy Council (BCLC) will celebrate 30 years of golf for literacy at its annual fundraising golf tournament September 19 at Carolina National Golf Club.

Tournament format is Captain's Choice with an 8 a.m. sign in, shotgun start at 9:30 a.m., and three flights—men's, women's, and mixed foursomes. Entry fee is \$85 per person and includes green fees, cart, a \$25,000 hole-in-one contest, breakfast, lunch, beverages, awards presentation, raffle prizes, and a silent auction.

To mark 30 years of fighting illiteracy in Brunswick County, the Council is also offering a chance to score an exclusive BCLC trip for two to San Francisco that combines seaside golf at beautiful Bodega Bay with a Napa Valley wine train tour and tasting, good for the next three years and at a bargain price.

That package, along with more great destinations at great prices for a great cause, will be available from September 8-18 through the "Buy It Now" link on the Council's website at [www.bcliteracy.org](http://www.bcliteracy.org). Player registration forms, sponsorship applications, and more information about the tournament are also available on the website. No need to be a player or a sponsor to take advantage of this opportunity to make plans for post-pandemic travel now.

The golf tournament is a primary source of funding for BCLC and the only fundraising event the Council has been able to hold this year and still comply with COVID-19 restrictions. It offers businesses, clubs,

and individuals the opportunity to support a critical need for Brunswick County residents to improve their literacy skills and open new opportunities for themselves and their families, and, in turn, making them better able to contribute to the community.

Available sponsorships range from \$100 to \$5,000. Sponsors not only help finance the Council's mission to provide free assistance with reading and writing skills to adult residents, they also demonstrate their commitment to broader community well-being and development. Every sponsorship level includes recognition on the BCLC website, including sponsor logos and websites when provided. In addition to sponsorships and playing in the tournament, donations of items for raffle prizes or for the silent auction are also welcomed.

Carolina National is taking numerous precautions to ensure a safe environment for members, guests, and staff, including following the North Carolina governor's Executive Order requiring face coverings when in public spaces at the club. For complete golf club COVID-19 information, go to <https://carolinanationalgolfclub.com/covid-19>.

The Literacy Council, P.O. Box 6, Supply, NC 28462-0006  
 Phone: (910) 754-7323; Fax: (910) 754-7325  
 email: [bcliteracy@yahoo.com](mailto:bcliteracy@yahoo.com) website: [www.bcliteracy.org](http://www.bcliteracy.org)

## FREE DISASTER RECOVERY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Each information session will provide general information about how Legal Aid NC's disaster relief project can assist with disaster recovery. The sessions will also cover a specific recovery topic in more depth.

Registration is not required. Conference call information is below. Register to view via webinar at [legallaidnc.org/disaster](http://legallaidnc.org/disaster).

Accessing recovery funds

Duplication of benefits and FEMA recoupment

<p><b>August 25 at 12 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 819 0918 6407                      Participant ID: "#"</p>	<p><b>August 26 at 6 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 854 6807 5396                      Participant ID: "#"</p>
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Clarifying home ownership during disaster recovery

Heir property and family trees

<p><b>September 22 at 12 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 837 1107 3650                      Participant ID: "#"</p>	<p><b>September 23 at 6 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 871 4279 1374                      Participant ID: "#"</p>
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Estate planning for disaster recovery

Wills and Power of Attorney

<p><b>October 20 at 12 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 895 3084 3010                      Participant ID: "#"</p>	<p><b>October 21 at 6 p.m.</b>                      Call-in number: (312) 626-6799                      Meeting ID: 810 3299 9494                      Participant ID: "#"</p>
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Learn more at [legallaidnc.org/disaster](http://legallaidnc.org/disaster) • Call Legal Aid NC's Helpline at 1-866-219-5262



## Brunswick Family Assistance

Brunswick Family Assistance (BFA) is a private, non-profit (501)(c)(3) organization that helps low-income people in Brunswick County live a higher quality of life. BFA, headquartered in Shallotte, NC, has provided essential life-sustaining and emergency assistance to people in the county since 1981. The organization's mission has become even more critical due to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on the economic well-being and health of County residents.

BFA also relies on a cadre of volunteers to help it meet its mission. Volunteer positions are available in both the Shallotte and Leland areas. Functions include servicing clients at BFA's food pantries, gleaning from local grocery stores, stocking pantry shelves, assisting in client intake, packing commodities for commodity distribution days, assisting on commodity distribution days, etc. To volunteer, please go to <https://brunswickfamily.volunteerhub.com/> and create an account, complete a brief online orientation, and sign up for the functions you are interested in volunteering. You will be providing an invaluable service to BFA and Brunswick County clients!

- Virtual ESL Classes on Zoom/Skype/FaceTime and Other Platforms
- 1-on-1 Tutoring
- US Citizenship Preparation
- Computer Skills/Digital Literacy
- Test Preparation
- Daytime, Evening, and Weekend Classes
- Free, Personalized, and Confidential

1012 S. 17th Street, Wilmington, NC | (910)251-0911 | [cfliteracy.org](http://cfliteracy.org)

FOLLOW CFLC:

# Your Community

## MILITARY NEWS

### Support for Veterans



**By Lane Adrian, Service Officer**  
John E. Jacobs American Legion Post 68, Leland

American Legion Post 68 is involved in many veteran and community endeavors. The number one priority of the American Legion is to provide necessary support and assistance to any and all veterans.

Post 68 conducts fundraisers and collects members' yearly dues as the principal avenue in maintaining our financial ability in providing this support and assistance.

Post 68, since the start of 2020, has provided support to three widows of veterans requiring walking assistance in providing the needed construction for wheelchair ramps to access/exit the home.

Placed veterans in contact with various local non-profit support organizations such as Brunswick County Veterans Service Offices, Brunswick Family Assistance, etc.

In addition, Post 68 has partnered with several other American Legion Posts in Brunswick County in providing support outside of the Leland area.

The Post Service Officer (PSO) has established a program with the Brunswick Senior Center in

Leland that involves monthly meetings with veterans and or widows of veterans to identify benefits one may be entitled to through the Veterans Affairs (VA) Administration.

Post 68 established a motorcycles 'Riders' Chapter that was scheduled to conduct two fundraisers at the Carolina Coast Harley Davidson dealership in Wilmington. However, due to COVID-19, the first fundraiser scheduled in April was canceled, and the second fundraiser scheduled for October is questionable as of this writing.

The Chapter 68 Riders have participated in three funeral runs by standing honor and providing escort along with the Patriot Guard Riders prior to funerals and Honor Guard services being ended due to COVID-19.

Chapter 68 Riders participated in an honor drive-by for a WWII veteran in appreciation of his 95th birthday and service to the country.

Post 68 is involved in several activities in providing veterans the help they need. One of the biggest was to be the 4th annual Veterans Experience Action Center (VEAC) scheduled for April 16-18, 2020. The event was canceled due to the pandemic. Post 68 members are looking forward to holding the VEAC in 2021.

## Celebrating a World War II Veteran's 93rd Birthday

**By Gerald Decker, Commander,** Leland VFW Post 121 and **Eric Mens, Jr. Vice Commander,** Leland VFW Post 12196

On August 14, 2020 - a beautiful but sweltering and humid day - numerous

Leland citizens, family members, friends, and area veterans came out to celebrate the 93rd birthday of

an American hero - Navy WW II veteran Mr. Paul Phillips. After completing boot camp, Mr. Phillips was assigned as a Gunner's Mate aboard the USS North Carolina where he served from 1946 to 1947. During his 20-year Navy career, he also served in Korea and Vietnam. His military specialty was as a diver with explosive ordnance disposal. After retiring from the Navy, Mr. Phillips worked as a civil servant for 20 years with Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, followed by many years as a security guard for the Cameron Art Museum in Wilmington.



Mr. Phillips



Mr. Phillips and his wife, Evonne

land and Fire Departments, and nearly 100 cars. The Friends of the Battleship North Carolina and the Cameron Arts Museum were also on hand to honor the veteran. Anne Brennan, Executive Director of the Cameron Museum, spoke glowingly of the Museum's history with Mr. Phillips.

The Friends of the Battleship presented Mr. Phillips with a flag that had flown over the battleship on the morning of his birthday. Leland Mayor Brenda Bozeman also presented Mr. Phillips with a Proclamation from the Town of Leland proclaiming August 14, 2020, as his special day.

Mr. Phillips was surrounded by family and friends who witnessed the outpouring of love and respect for him. In addition to birthday cards he received from the parade participants, Mr. Phillips received a birthday greeting from the Governor's office. In his letter, the Governor wrote that Mr. Phillips is "a treasure to your family and a treasure to North Carolina."

We salute this member of "The Greatest Generation!"

## Spic and Span with Robert Rossi



Hailing from Westchester County, NY, Robert "Bob" Rossi is the owner of the Home Design Outlet of Leland, situated on Old Fayetteville

**By Giovanni Leone,** Brunswick Forest Staff Writer

Road. After selling a retail floor coverings chain,

he decided to move down to Leland, NC, six years ago. Now, he and his fiancé Julia Voster are successfully managing the home design center during the COVID-19 Pandemic. However, this is not the first crisis that he has had to fight through.



Picture by Julia Voster

For a 19-year-old kid, Rossi remembers his time enlisted in the United States Marine Corps as an "encompassing position." In November 1966, Rossi was sent to shores of Vietnam in the 1st Battalion 9th-Marines. He worked his way up to a platoon leader even though he was only a sergeant. After being wounded in combat, he worked in a Combined Action Company with 24 other marines and 60 South Vietnamese military personnel, focusing his time on nighttime ambushes and assisting local South Vietnamese governments by building hospitals and offering his assistance wherever he could. After working his way up to Combined Action Company Commander, his tour ended. He returned to finish the remainder of his service in the United States. Afterward, he pursued a college education in interior design and enjoyed feeling "like a kid again." Now, he looks back upon a successful career as an interior design businessman.

As we, a Nation, face a seemingly endless and destructive pandemic, Rossi offered his wisdom as guidance. He recalled that joining the US Military as a young man gifted him with a great sense of responsibility and humility. By honoring our Nation during a period that was riddled with tension and strife, he reminds us that we have an obligation to honor our Nation in its current state however we can. Join the Service if you can. Get an education if you can. Command a greater self-presence and remind your community of the underlying compassion that you hold for it, no matter the discord found lying on the surface



## Help Wanted

### Layout Editor

The Scene, Inc and Cape Fear Voices need intelligent young person who is good with Microsoft Publisher to do layout for monthly newspaper. Pay is very modest but experience is priceless.

### Creative Writers/Artist

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

*Contact:*  
[editorcfv@gmail.com](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com)  
for all positions.

### Outside Ad Sales Rep Needed

Teen Scene, Inc. is a company that produces a monthly publication called *Cape Fear Voices*, written by and for creative minds in the Cape Fear Region. We also produce a monthly publication entitled, *Teen Scene*, which is written by and for creative teens. We are a non-profit, 501(c)(3) company which depends on donations, grants, and advertising revenue as our sole source of revenue.

#### **GENERAL FUNCTION:**

As an outside sales rep you will be making contact with local community and businesses on a daily but unstructured basis. You will set your own hours to be compatible with your school workload and other obligations as a student. This position offers a very generous commission plan for the right student.

#### **ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- Contact individuals and businesses in the Cape Fear area to promote *Cape Fear Voices* and *Teen Scene*.
- Effectively communicate the company's procedures for donations and advertising.
- Follow up with donors and advertisers to verify contributions used as promised.
- Maintain records of all revenues received.

#### **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:**

- Ability to develop and implement a work plan.
- Ability to work without supervision.
- Good communication skills.
- Clean criminal background and valid NC Driver's License.

#### **PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:**

- This position requires standing, walking, bending, reaching, and lifting up to 25 pounds on occasion. Also, operation of one's personal vehicle.

#### **PREFERRED QUALIFICATIONS:**

- Self-motivated individual with a 'can-do' attitude.
- Good people skills.
- Effective communication skills.

### Thank You to Our September Donors

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:

**Cindy Haga and Ken Formalarie**

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!

## **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](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com) and received by the 15th of each month for publication in the following month's issue.

We at Cape Fear Voices are happy to recognize the Leland Piggly Wiggly. Ryan Saunders and staff have always supported the efforts of non-profit organizations in our community.



www.pigglywigglystores.com  
facebook: pigglywigglystores

### **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**

	<u>1-Edition</u>	<u>3-Editions</u>
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](mailto:editorcfv@gmail.com)**

### **Special Ad Rates to Support Local Businesses**

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!