



3rd Annual Writers' Award
April 15 at WWAY TV 3



VOICES

Providing an Outlet for Creativity in the Cape Fear Region



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Volume 3, Issue 2

FREE

February 2023

Stories
for your
heart to
ponder...



Be My Valentine

Nancy Bryans, Brunswick Forest



Love stories abound in literature, theater, movies and television, all depicting a variety of blossoming relationships, we

recognize as love. There may be as many ways to fall in love as there are people, and each person's story seems to have unique circumstances when described to listeners.

My first encounter with love occurred at age five. My mother deposited me at a family friend's home while she attended a social function that excluded children. A cute boy answered the door with his attractive mother. The boy and I were to play together in the sunroom until my mother returned. Upon walking into the sunroom, I saw a stack of coloring books. The boy handed me one, asking if I liked it. Wow! It was a Cisco Kid coloring book, my

favorite. I decided at that moment I would marry him. We attended first grade together, and on Valentine's Day as we left our classroom for recess, I cozied up to him, asked him to be my Valentine and kissed him. He smiled and we turned to walk down the hallway. To our dismay, we noticed my older sister staring at us from the opposite end of the hallway. She still teases me about that kiss.

I outgrew my love of The Cisco Kid and that cute boy but not his chestnut handsomeness. One day while sitting in the family car at the local general store and post office, I spied a young brunette boy bounding down the stairs, examining something held in his hands. This boy wore a military uniform I recognized from the school several of my cousins attended. As this boy rushed to his pretty blond mother's car, I held my breath. I had fallen in love again at age 12.

...See "Valentine" P12

Is This Area Growing Too Fast?

Jan Morgan-Swegle, Editor, Cape Fear Voices

Anyone who lives in Leland and the surrounding communities knows that we are experiencing a tremendous amount of growth in both the retail and residential sectors. According to a report dated January 10, 2023, *The Star News* reported that Brunswick Forest, one of the largest residential developments in Leland, will be expanding to the tune of 237 new housing units in 2023.



Go to our website, cfvts.org, to let the editor know what you think.

According to the report, "This new section of the development would be called 'Cypress West.' The expansion looks to add 15 apartment buildings, three of which would be dedicated as senior housing. The number of units in each of the three senior housing buildings varies from 32 to 34, with 99 of the 237 total new units dedicated as senior apartments."

While I have every reason to believe that this expansion would seamlessly integrate into the beautiful Brunswick Forest landscape, I have to ask, is this area growing too fast?

Last year, the Town of Leland heard from a developer that looked to the Malmo Loop area on I 74/76 to create approximately 4,000 single family homes, 693 townhomes, 300 multi-family dwellings and 23 acres of commercial space.

I am all for growth in our communities but do we have the infrastructure in place, or is it planned, to support this growth?

Please share your thoughts with me. Go to www.cfvts.org, click on this story and scroll down to the grey "Leave a Comment," box. You will get an email from our vendor, SNO, asking you to confirm that you sent the comment.

The Unfinished Painting

Maddy Halbach,* Brunswick Forest



William Shakespeare Lewis is a noble name for my noble white Labrador Retriever. He was Will to me, or "My Boy." When I first met him, he was 3 years old and severely underweight. My friend

Phyllis rescued him from a shelter just a few weeks before I visited her in Virginia Beach. She said he was timid and hesitant to go near people, so we were surprised when, without prompting, Will came slowly towards my chair. He looked up at me with his big brown sorrowful eyes, tail hanging low, and put his head on my lap. I looked down and patted his head; he started nudging my leg, looked up and smiled.

I guess you would say he imprinted on me.



Memories cannot always be perfectly captured on canvas.

"Can I take him home?" I asked.

"He just got here," Phyllis said. "Let me think about it."

Will never left my side. The following morning, seeing how attached he was to me, Phyllis agreed. I opened the car door and he leapt in. I swear I could almost hear him say, "Take me home to Maryland." I called my husband to let him know I was bringing William Shakespeare home. Larry said, "I'm not a Shakespeare kind of guy, but which book did you get?" Almost giddy I said, "Not a book, a dog."

In short work Will became part of the family. He would begin pacing just before I arrived home from teaching and Larry would let him out. Will just knew it was time for me to come home.

...See "Unfinished Painting" P5



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Staff

TEEN SCENE INC. PRESIDENT

Gerald Decker

EDITOR

Jan Morgan-Swegle

LAYOUT DESIGNERS

Charles Bins

Laura Askue

This Month's Writers

Caroline Ruth Bailey

Charles Bins

Nancy Bryans

Bill Cavanaugh

Branden Connelly

Gerald Decker

Victor Fernandes

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Teen Scene, Inc.

P.O. Box 495

Leland, NC 28451

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Just Around the Corner

The Cape Fear Voices/Teen Scene 3rd Annual Writers' Award Banquet and Dinner is Coming Soon

Jan Morgan-Swegle, Editor Cape Fear Voices



If there's one thing we can probably all agree on is that time goes quickly by. The 3rd Annual Writers' Award Banquet will be held on Saturday, April 15, at the WWAY Event Center located at 1224 Magnolia Village Way. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., so you can view the auction items and the event will conclude at 9:00 p.m.

We are proud to announce that our Presenting Sponsor for this year's event is the Brunswick Arts Council (BAC).

This year, we are celebrating Super Hero's. Not only the cartoon versions, but people like teachers, school administrators, hospital workers, service workers and everyone else who tries to make a difference every day.

Our guest speaker for this event is Kristie VanAuken, *Special Advisor, Workforce Engagement*, Division of State Superintendent, NC Department of Public Instruction. There will be a buffet dinner presented by Diamond Catering, music by local artist, Susan Salvia, a cash bar,

silent auction and guest speakers. Tickets are going quickly, don't miss this event.

Come and celebrate our teens and senior writers for their creativity and heartwarming stories.



Go to our website, www.cfvts.org and scan our QR code for tickets, which are \$75 per person.

Or just scan here to purchase tickets.

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Cape Fear Voices Submission Requirements

Cape Fear Voices intends to showcase the works of the area's many talented local writers, poets, and craftspeople as well as the work of local non-profit organizations.

- We are looking for contributors to submit their poems, stories, pictures, or art for publication.
- We will not publish any political or religious material and will censor profanity, no matter how good the work might otherwise be.
- All submissions must be single-spaced in Times New Roman 12 and include the title, author's name, picture and community. Please limit your submissions to 500-600 words.
- Any photos intended to accompany a submission must be sent as JPG files and include any required photo credit.
- All written works must be sent to editorcfv@gmail.com and received by the 15th of each month for consideration in the following month's issue.

Ad Rates

	3-Editions	6-Editions	12-Editions
Full Page	\$ 600	\$1,100	\$1,900
Half Page	\$ 350	\$ 630	\$1,070
Quarter Page	\$ 180	\$ 325	\$ 550
Business Card	\$ 90	\$ 160	\$ 280

Save the Dates!
March 2-4, 2023

March 2: "Ancestor Reveal" Event
In conjunction with AfricanAncestry.com, local residents will explore the significance of their ancestral origins connecting them to rice-growing regions of West Africa's fabled "Rice Coast"
Navassa Community Center
338 Main Street, Navassa NC 28451
(6 mi. north of Leland via Village Road to S. Navassa Rd.)
6pm – 8pm (Free and Open to the Public)

March 3: Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Gala Dinner & VIP Reception
Featuring live "edutainment" by the renowned folklore group, **Gullah Kinfolk**, and a mouth-watering Gullah Geechee-inspired menu by award-winning Chef/Festival Culinarian **Keith Rhodes**, owner of **Catch Restaurant** in Wilmington
Leland Cultural Arts Center
1212 Magnolia Village Way, Leland NC 28451
(5 mi. west of Wilmington, 71 mi. north of Myrtle Beach)
6pm – 10pm (Tickets available January 2023)

March 4: Indoor/Outdoor Festival Event
History and Cultural Presentations | Family Fun | Tours & Demonstrations | Live Entertainment | Children's Stage | Arts & Crafts | Gullah Food Vendors | Rice Dish Contest |
Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson Historic Site
8884 St. Philip's Road SE, Winnabow NC 28479
(off NC-133, north of Southport/Sunny Point)
10am – 6pm (Free and Open to the Public)

For more information, visit our website:
www.northcarolinaricefestival.org

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Presented by Brunswick Arts Council



Teen Scene, Inc. 3rd Annual Writers' Award Banquet

Teen Sponsors

Our Teen Sponsors for this event are Novant; Deb Pickett-Financial Advisor, Edward Jones; and First Bank. These Teen Sponsors are sponsoring 12 nominated teen writers to attend the awards banquet April 15th at WWAYTV-3 in Leland.



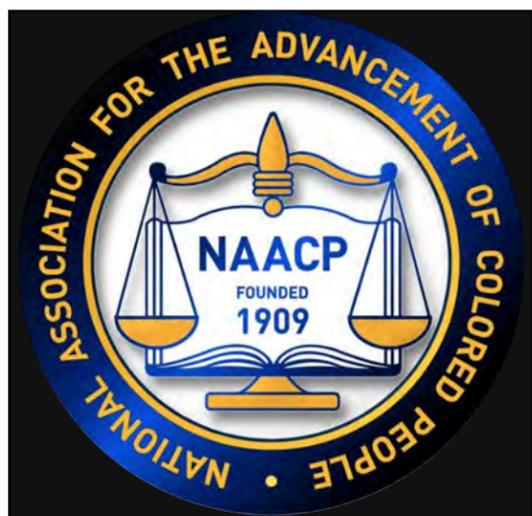
Deb Pickett
Financial Advisor

The Villages at Brunswick Forest
1144 East Cutlar Crossing - Suite 101
Leland, NC 28451
Bus. 910-383-3797 Fax 866-462-3677
Cell 609-774-3818
debra.pickett@edwardjones.com
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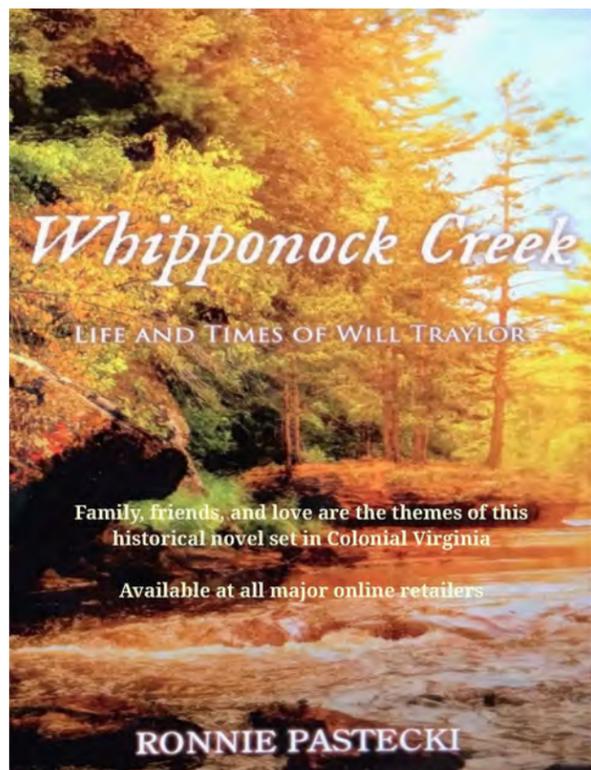


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Portrait of Ten and a Half : Elsie Rose

Alan Sturrock, Wilmington



As I walked through the front door, Elsie [and not Elsie Rose as she previously answered to] bounded down the stairs from her ten-and-a-half-year-old sanctuary and gave me a hug that was at once perfunctory, and at twice, all enveloping.

'Uncle Mick, it's good to see you,' her muffled voice announced somewhere in my chest. 'Dad said that we were having a special visitor for tea. I'm so glad it turned out to be you...' Hug over, Elsie disappeared, and her father, Ned, shook my hand by way of welcome, and, with the other hand offered me a generous glass of single malt...'

'Glenturret...will wash the traveller's dust from yer throat...' he grinned.

'...a welcome Nordie custom,' I answered, sipping away on the malt.

'...we're out of Bushmills, so it's the next best thing...' he affirmed, helping himself to one as

well. 'Slainte!'

'Beggars shouldn't be choosers, as me mother was fond of saying...' I replied.

Elsie's mother Rebecca, suitably aproned, appeared from the kitchen, gave me a hug and inquired 'Ye'll stay for yer tea?'

'I cleared my social calendar, jist for the occasion,' I responded, definitively.

'How's roast lamb, flurry white potatoes and mashed peas tickle yer tastebuds?' she chuckled. '...a dish fit for a weary traveller' I responded, heartily.

Just then Elsie, reappeared, decked out in her gymnastics outfit. Ned put his hand on my shoulder. 'Time for Elsie's Prime Time in the back garden,' he mused.

On her way to the trampoline, she smashed a stationery soccer ball into the postage stamp corner of the goal at the opposite end. She then poured herself into the trampoline, where she proceeded to perform several flips. Then back onto the grass, where she performed cartwheels, round-offs, and back overs, effortlessly.

I was compelled to spontaneously applaud. Ned stood up and looked towards the kitchen. 'Looks like Becs needs a wee hand...' and he exited.

Elsie danced her way to the seat her father had vacated, and without a moment's hesitation, inquired: 'Do you like History, Uncle Mick? I love History.'



'As a matter of fact, I do,' I spluttered.

'We're studying the Egyptians and the Romans...do you have a favourite empire of the ancient world?' she inquired, as naturally as she might wonder when the rain would begin.

'...did you know that it wasn't the lava that killed the Romans at Pompeii...it was the ash..?'

'Thanks for sharing that tidbit...I'll keep it in mind for Tuesday night trivia...'

'...did you know that the Egyptians worshipped cats as gods? So, what IS your favourite? Egyptians or Romans?'

'That's a tough question, Elsie...both empires excelled in different things.'

'I agree, Uncle Mick but I would have to go with the Romans.'

'...and I'm sure you have at least three reasons for favouring them...' I laughed.

'... actually, I can think of a dozen things...would you like to hear them?' she continued.

Her list was, as she implied, expansive: roads, water supply, bridges, aqueducts, concrete,

canals, taxes weapons, armour, architecture, laws [and the idea of the law] ...and wine. She stopped there, both for effect, and for questions.

'That's an impressive list,' I stated, in a congratulatory way.

'Thanks, Uncle Mick...and there's more! Mom likes the wine invention, Dad likes architecture...' she added.

At some internal peer signal, off she bounded, straight back into her ten-and-a-half-year-old world.

Moments later, Ned rejoined me in the garden. 'You look like Elsie talked yer ears off,' he chuckled.

'..something like that. Very impressive conversation for a ten-and-a-half-year-old...what with you and Becs and that must be a good school she attends..'

'...public school. She has a great teacher this year...a Mrs. Rutherford. She's working on a project about the Romans and their contributions, which she will 'teach' at an upcoming parents' night. It's an IB* school, by the way...we're very happy with it.'

'Doubly impressed, Ned. Soon you and Becs will be bantering about epistemological 'things' at dinner.'

'...epistemological?' Ned asked.

'..theories of knowledge...it's a branch of Philosophy...'

'Something to look forward to!' Ned chortled.

'Jist have Elsie teach you both...after all she was jist practicing on me there for that upcoming parents' night!!'

Pyramid: Sumit Mangela on Unsplash
Aqueduct: Maria Bobrova on Unsplash
Pompeii: Unsplash

PHOTO CREDITS:



Laughing in the Golden Years

Delivering Coal to Kaiser's Bakery

Maryann Nunnally, Porters Neck



February in upstate New York in the 1940s was usually bitterly cold, with blizzard conditions and high winds. One morning when I was about four years old, the phone rang, and as soon as my mom hung up, she told my dad, "Mrs. Kaiser just called. They are nearly out of coal for the ovens and the stoves. She wants you to deliver another three tons of coal to her today if it is possible."

My dad turned to me and asked if I wanted to go with him. To Kaiser's bakery? You bet I did. There were always cookies warm from the big ovens while dad was loading coal into their cellar.

"Okay," dad said to me. I'll load the truck. When I return, you have your snow clothes on, and we will go."

When he came in to get me, I was bundled up in a wool coat, snow pants, boots, scarf, mittens, and a wooly hat that came down over my ears. The coal truck had a heater, but it wasn't very efficient and mostly kept the driver's feet warm.

Kaiser's Bakery was about ten miles out of town and located at the top of a steep hill. In no time, we were at the foot of Kaiser's hill. It had begun to snow hard, and the wind was blowing so fast that it was difficult to see the road. Dad turned onto the hill road and started up. The truck began to slide backward. After at least three tries, dad let the truck roll to the bottom of the hill.

Dad said, "Maryann, do you think you can walk up the hill and ask Mrs. Kaiser to send her boys down here with some ashes? That way, I will be able to get up the hill. I need to stay with the truck in case a car should come along, so you will

have to go up yourself."

I knew I could walk up the hill. I had done it so many times before. It was extremely slippery, and sometimes I found myself on my hands and knees, but I pushed myself up and kept going. Soon I was on the flat parking lot by the front of the bakery. Slipping and sliding around to the front door. I pounded on the door, and Mrs. Kaiser opened it. She was a big woman, probably about six feet tall; looking down at me, she said, "Oh, a *litttle girl*," in her odd accent.



Inside the warm store, I managed to gasp out that my dad wanted her boys to bring some ashes down, so he could get his truck up the hill. Turning from me, she yelled for her boys in German, and three huge men came running. Then, Mrs. Kaiser turned her attention to me. Removing my outdoor clothing, she sat me up on the store counter.

"You are a very brave girl to come up the hill by yourself," she said. "Would you like a cookie?" When I nodded, she handed me a large molasses cookie with red jelly in the middle. Before I ate it, I asked her if I could have one for my brother.

Mrs. Kaiser said, "And you are a big sister who wants to look after her brother. Good for you." I watched while she put another cookie in a small white bag.

Soon, dad was telling me to get my warm clothing back on. He thanked Mrs. Kaiser for looking after me; she just smiled and said I was a very grown-up girl. Riding home after sliding down the hill, dad praised me and said I had done a great job for him.

Then he added, "You know your mother will think you were very unselfish to bring your brother a cookie. But I think we will not tell her about you walking up the hill all by yourself." Then I knew not to tattle on my dad and never told my mom about the walk in the blizzard until I was a mom myself.

"There are Roses"

Dan Neizmik, Hearthstone



(A Rose is a symbol of Love, Promise, Hope and New Beginnings)...

It's easy to get caught up, in the troubles of our time,

And they only seem to get worse, the hard that we try,

I think we need to slow down, and look for Roses in our lives,

You can find them in the children, in an old friend, or a good time.

Let the Roses make you happy, make you sit-up and take notice,

That this world isn't really so bad, if we only take the time...

to smell the Roses.

Roses aren't just flowers, they're all the good things in your life,

They are there for you, to see you through, and help you to get by,

A Rose can be someone you know, or the things you like to do,

And you'll never be alone, if you keep your Roses close to you.

So, if the Roses make you happy, then, I hope you'll pay it forward,

We can make this world a better place, if we only take the time...

to smell the Roses.

I wish I had a garden, or a great big flower store,

I'd give everyone a Rose, and I'd then tell them what it's for,

Let the Roses end our problems, end the anger and the hate,

If we could all learn to get along, the world would be a better place.

And everybody would be happy, no more troubles, no more woes,

I believe that we could save this world, if we only take the time...

to smell the Roses.

Did you see the sunshine?

Did you see the Roses?

Did you stop to smell them?

Did you even notice?

Sometimes we need to slow down, and take a look around,

Among the chaos and the troubles and the problems,

Among the worries and the fears, we've all got them.

There will be good times and sunshine and Roses,

Yes... There are Roses...

Photo by [Jess Bailev on Unsplash](#)

Editor's Note: This was published in the January issue of Cape Fear Voices, but page 2 was left out of print. We apologize to the author and readers.

Paisano the Protector

David Hume III, Brunswick Forest



The paisano fears nothing and if threatened, will attack, never backing down until it has driven the threat away.



For centuries, the indigenous people, and especially the Mascogo (also called Seminole Negroes) tribe, who lived on the arid plains of North America's southwest, revered a bird they considered to have mystical qualities. It was called a Roadrunner by the Anglo settlers but was referred to as a "paisano" by the native people meaning a "protector; a traveling companion, a friend." People who made long journeys on foot often said that the bird would accompany them, staying in sight for days, acting as their scout, leading them to safe trails and warning them of danger. The paisano fears nothing and if threatened, will attack, never backing down until it has driven the threat away.

Neither rattlesnakes nor scorpions are immune from the paisano's wrath.

Members of the Mascogo tribe believed that the paisano was the reincarnation of a warrior spirit who protected travelers. According to legend, a young warrior was asked by his tribe's chief to accompany and protect the chief's family on a visit to another clan who lived a great distance away. The young man was renowned for his speed, agility, and valor. During the trip, the group was attacked by a rival tribe and the chief's family was taken prisoner. Although he fought bravely; the young warrior was mortally wounded. As he lay alone and dying in the desert, he was filled with shame because he had failed to defend the family he'd sworn to protect. He asked his ancestors to allow him to return to the Earth to atone for his failure. His wish was granted, and he assumed the form of a unique bird that exhibited the virtues of speed, agility and valor.

My grandmother, who had grown up near the

Mascogo settlement of Nacimiento in the State of Coahuila, Mexico, told me about an event that occurred when she was a little girl. She and her parents were attending the funeral of a famous Mascogo writer who had written a prize winning book about the lives of four heroic Mascogo tribal members who served as U.S. Army Scouts during the Indian Wars; Seminole Negro/Mascogo Indian Scouts Adam Paine, Isaac Payne, John Ward and Pompey Factor who were awarded the Medal of Honor. For years after the events, the award of the Medal of Honor to these four men of color was a closely guarded secret, but not in their village of Nacimiento. My grandmother described the scene at the author's funeral as the thunderheads built, thrusting their billowing domes higher as the sky turned dark and the winds began to build.

"The man, a shaman and member of the Mascogo tribe, rose slowly from his squatting position and walked to the spot where the author's body had been buried. He reached into his leather bag and selected four colored stones, placing one stone on the ground at each of the cardinal points of the compass. Then he took out a long, brown and black speckled feather from the same bag and slowly traced a line, encircling the colored stones and freshly turned earth. It was a tail feather from a paisano. The old man held the paisano's feather in both hands and raised it above his head. Then he closed his eyes and murmured an ancient prayer, calling upon the assistance of the warrior spirit to protect the soul of the dead woman during her journey into the afterlife. As he opened his eyes and looked toward the sky, he saw their forms moving among the clouds. The paisano was guiding her from the darkness to the light.

grateful friend I have yet to meet.

A couple of years ago, William died in my arms, I'm sure, right where he wanted to be. I still think of him often, miss his smile and even his odd behaviors. Since he passed, I have been painting his picture. It still leans unfinished against the easel in my art studio. One day I will capture him perfectly or I might never finish it. Just like I will never forget him.

Happy Valentine's Day, William, My Boy.

*CFV welcomes a new writer.

'Unfinished Painting' from P1

He would wait under our crepe myrtle until he could see my car pull into the driveway. Then he would spring up, come bounding around the house, ears flapping with a big smile on his face, every day without fail. Everything was okay in his world once again.

At 8 p.m. every night William would slink away to the guest room, which became William's room. He would stay there until I would come up to bed. Then he would jump up on mine. If my

husband wasn't already in bed, William would snarl, snap and try to attack him when he approached. A habit we could not break. Larry quickly learned that "Mr. William" as he called him would behave for treats, thus every night a treat at bedtime. Once we were settled, Will would cuddle with both of us until he was tired of the attention and then go back to his bedroom again.

William loved me unconditionally, and I him in return for over nine years. A more loving and



The Teen Scene

Tomorrow's Voices Today



Brunswick County Early College

Celebrating Black History Month



Emmy Russ, 10th Grade

Every February, people across the United States celebrate Black History Month. This

month is a time for everyone to recognize the significant contributions of African Americans in history. The event started being celebrated in 1915 and originally was only a week-long, but it has been expanded to a full month.

The month is used by many to honor the work of black people in history and the current day and recognize their accomplishments that have been overlooked. Ways that people celebrate are by supporting small, black-owned businesses, donating to charities

or signing petitions that promote equality for the races, and educating themselves on important black figures. Some names that are often heard throughout the month are Harriet Tubman, Martin Luther King Jr., and Rosa Parks.



However, it is important to mention the people that have been overlooked, such as Jimmie Lee Jackson, a man whose murder by a police officer led to the "Bloody Sunday" march during the

Civil Rights movement of the 1960s. Another figure is Bayard Rustin, who organized the March On Washington and fought for equality not just among races but also for all sexual orientations. Ella Baker is a black woman, sometimes known as the mother of the civil rights movement, and was a mentor to many well-known activists. Jane Bolin was the first black woman to join the New York Bar Association and the first black female judge. The list of people we often overlook is very long, but it is important to know about them and credit them for all they have done.

Every year, a theme is designated for Black History Month. Last year it was Black Health and Wellness,

and focused on contributions that black people have made to the medical field, along with inequality that has been seen in medical care. This year it is Black Resistance and will focus on black people's fight against oppression.



Art Created by Adison Miligan, 10th Grade

Tormented By Love



Love...

It was always something I could never understand after losing her.

It seemed as if understanding this feeling again was pointless, really, it didn't feel right.

I miss the longing days she held me in her arms, the feeling of being picked up in such a way I could never recreate by any other's

hands.

Oh, how I long to feel that smooth touch along my skin. The feeling of warmth that melted the icy feel of my own skin in these cold months.

But now, these chilled months have increased my body in this box of frozen loneliness, slowly growing with the lack of warmth to soothe my aching body.

I've rested here for thousands of years, isolating myself from these mortal plans.

LeeAnn Simmons, 10th Grade

I stalk those mortals with their partners, who radiated their forms of affection to another. The warmth I saw from their bodies increased from the other's touch.

I envy them.

I envy those mere mortals who, by humane means, can live and thrive with those they call lovers for years while I sit here: lonely and deprived of the warm touch my lady gave me.

They cause me such antagonizing

stress.

Prancing around with their lovers while I hide and bear the fall of my own, loathing their interactions between each other... It pains my heart.

It causes such a feeling of breaking inside my chest, feeling as if the glass of heart I once had is creaking from these sights, time and time again.

Oh, Furina... A woman who stole this breaking heart years ago from a god I thrive at being.

Not in a Hundred Years

Jessica Gomez-Espinal, 10th Grade



Ten years ago, my mom and I moved to Bones Hollow. The house into which we moved was deemed "haunted" or "cursed" by the locals. When you asked why they would call the house that, they would never answer. If, by chance, they did answer, they would only say two words, "car crash."

I never understood why they would say "car crash." The house didn't even look haunted or cursed, so I never understood why.

Suddenly, the phone started ringing, snapping me back to reality.

"Hello?" I answered.

"Sarah, sweetie, I'm going to be home late, so please be careful and lock the doors. I left plenty of food in the fridge, and if you need or want to go out for any reason, please be careful. Okay?" My mom asked.

"Okay."

"Okay, bye love you, Sarah."

"Bye, love you, mom."

I hung up and stared at my computer screen. Just then, I realized how eerie the house was; not a sound was heard. I tried to focus on the math equation in front of me but I couldn't. I had this startling feeling from the house being this quiet. It just wasn't the same without mom around.

As soon as I got up from my desk, I stretched, my bones popping. I looked out the window, seeing large, light orange, fluffy clouds covering most of the sky. When looking at it, I imagined how soft and warm they would be if I touched them.

I figured I could get a better view of the sunset from the park, so I threw on a hoodie and started making my way downstairs. The stairs creaked with each step. When I finally got downstairs, I put on my shoes and grabbed my keys. As I opened the door, I was met with a cold gust of wind,

making me shiver. Stepping outside, I closed the door behind me, locking it.

When I got to the park, I saw Alexander, my boyfriend, with his little brother, Jacob. Alexander was smiling with his dimples on full display, his hair messy from playing rough with his younger brother, and he was wearing a black hoodie with jeans.

"Alex," I said while waving to him with a smile on my face.

He looked up at me and waved back. He started walking towards me, embracing me in a tight hug.

"You wanna know something, Alex?" I whispered while still in the hug.

"Yeah?" He answered back.

"You're the love of my life," I said.

Suddenly, he broke the hug and looked me dead in the eyes.

"Sarah, you haven't been alive in a hundred years. You have to stop reliving this day. It's not your fault you couldn't save your mom from the car crash. Please stop reliving this day so you and your mom can rest in peace," he begged.



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Year Long or Semester Long Classes: Which is Better?

Teacher Perspective

Dr. Dane Fisher, Science Teacher



In considering this question, I have to share my experiences. Many of them cloud or strongly inform my opinion.

Having been a college biology professor for 17 years, followed by my position as a secondary science educator at BECHS for a total of 5 years, I have mixed feelings about this question. Courses that I took as a science student in college and in graduate school were, of course, all semester based. During that time I learned to manage learning material on a short time schedule and how to plan and schedule ahead for exams, laboratory reports, and other assignments. I learned that being organized and using repetition to learn key vocabulary would put me in a position to tackle several courses in the same semester. This was a necessity for how college education and graduate education was performed. This part of me says having semester-long courses in high school is best to prepare students for college and beyond. Also, it prepares students to learn in a concise

manner as a "lifelong learner." Then, there is the teacher in me....

Year long courses would allow me as a science teacher to incorporate more long term and engaging "hands-on" projects in my science curriculum. It would mean that courses just might be more applicable to Standards Based Learning, with students moving at alternate paces. Students might have more time to design their own experiments. Of course, this means probably that this could only be applied to courses that were not EOC exam courses with very regimented curriculum goals, or at least it would be easier to apply year long experiences to non-EOC courses. Then, the teacher in me also thinks this:

Would year-long courses mean students would just fill the extended time with procrastinating activities and not learn to accomplish things in a timely manner? Would they not gain the skills of time management so necessary in our world? Hence my mixed feelings.



Student Perspective

Nathanial Brown, 10th Grade



At Brunswick County Early College, we participate in classes that last one semester

rather than the entire school year. This is mostly because college classes are one semester long and not the whole year.

Recently, the question of whether or not year-long classes would be better than

semester-long classes was brought up to me.

In my opinion, I think that semester-long classes are beneficial and effective for students because they make it easier for them to get the

required credits to graduate.

While I like the semester-long classes, I understand the pros of year-long classes, like growing connections between teachers and students and having more time to learn content.

Both sides of the argument have ground to stand on, but overall, I am a fan of the semester-long classes that we currently have.

BCECHS Focuses on Respect



Emmy Russ, 10th Grade

As part of their plan to strengthen school culture, Brunswick County Early College High School has spent the month of January focusing on respect. During the month, the school had daily reminders to show respect to everyone and a number of activities that stressed the importance of being respectful.

The focus on respect is part of the school's overall plan to reinforce their Five Rs, which are respect, rigor, relevancy, responsibility, and relationships. They are focusing on a different value each month for the upcoming semester and making efforts to inspire students to display them.

One new way that the school is highlighting the importance of respect is by providing a submission box and small sheets of paper where students can write down acts of respect they see around the school and then put them in the box. The students discussed respect during their weekly seminar classes, and the members of the BCECHS Beta Club put together a presentation about the topic for their fellow students.

The school is known for its high standards for the students there, and this is another way that they are displaying that. The Five Rs are a key part of their culture, and reiterating their importance will only benefit the students and staff!

ATARAXIA [Part 3 of KENOPSIA]

Rumi Bennett, 10th Grade



"STAY AWAY FROM HER" A woman's voice rang out from outside the closet.

A small child, a brunette with a light green sweater two sizes too big. The child silently weeps as their parents argue, hugging their knees close to their chest.

The father, though barely visible, could be seen holding a knife in broad daylight.

"That- that THING is not mine! I WANT IT OUT OF MY HOUSE!" The father screams, sobs increasing as the small child's body shakes with each word.

Then, it all went quiet.

"Honey! Honey, hey let's- let's not get ahead of ourselves-!" The woman stammers out, hurriedly running in front of her husband as he strides over to where the child was hidden.

Suddenly, the closet doors in which the child was hidden were thrown open. A man with dark brown hair and even darker eyes glared at the

child cowering in fear.

Soon the mother joined with light brown hair and kinder green eyes ran up, persuading him to stop. Though he never listened as he lifted the knife above his-

Gasp

The dream stops.

I struggle for breath as I try to calm my racing heart.

This has happened every night. Nightmares terrorize my sleep every night.

"If insomnia wasn't bad enough-" I think to myself, pushing myself up from the bed, and peering outside.

Still night, still and silent like the morning and afternoon... and evening... and any time.

Except for when I'm with her, the other one.. that I realized I never got the name of.

Wandering around, I eventually found the hideout she lived in.

Crawling through the little entrance tunnel. Once inside, I noticed she was sleeping on an old mattress. How she got it in was beyond me.

From what I remember from last time I was here, she was a small Hispanic girl, 4'11 at most. She had black hair and dark brown eyes. She constantly wore this navy blue jacket and grey sweatpants. Her cat, Bonita, was a Burmese Cat, while her dog, Taco, was a Golden Retriever. Both animals were lying in their respective beds on the other side of the hideout.

I sit on the floor next to her head, pulling my legs up to my chest. Laying my head into my knees, I sat there in silence for them to wake.

After what felt like forever(about 30 minutes), she started to wake. Stretching, her eyes fluttered as she caught sight of me. Her eyes widened before screaming.

"AHHH, WHAT THE HECK!?" She screamed, throwing a pillow at my face.



Kicking Off The Spring 2023 Semester

Nathanial Brown, 10th Grade



Brunswick County Early College High School students returned on Thursday, January 5th, 2023. Students and staff had a

great first two days of high school classes as they eagerly awaited the start of classes at Brunswick Community College.

BCECHS is starting the semester off without a school counselor, as Ms. Marijayne Jessup is out on maternity leave until after our Spring Break in March (congratulations Ms. Jessup)!

Ninth-grade students are acclimating well to the college environment, and the student body has had a great first week of the semester!

Along with new classes and teachers, the application process to attend BCECHS begins January 18th, so many students, including myself, are

attending the Brunswick County Middle Schools to help explain the environment and application process to the interested students of Brunswick County.

This seems like it will be another great semester for students, staff, and faculty at early college!

How Accurate is Punxsutawney Phil?



Kyler Terry, 10th Grade

Every year on February 2, Americans turn their eyes to Punxsutawney Phil to predict a late spring or an early winter. February 2 is a significant date

as the Christian tradition of Candlemas falls on this date. Unironically, February 2 is halfway between the winter solstice and the spring equinox.

According to History.com, on Candlemas, "clergy would bless and distribute candles needed for

winter." These candles represented the long and cold winter ahead. Germans then expanded on this idea by selecting a hedgehog to predict the weather. If the hedgehog saw its shadow, it would run back to its burrow, therefore predicting a late winter. If the hedgehog did not see its shadow and stayed outside of its burrow, an early spring was predicted.

When Germans immigrated to the United States, they continued this tradition, but they had to substitute the hedgehog for a groundhog. The first Groundhog Day was celebrated on February 2, 1887 in Punxsutawney,

Pennsylvania. A common question, however, is how accurate is Punxsutawney Phil at predicting the forecast? According to livescience.org, It turns out that he is not very accurate, with an accuracy rate of 39%. He does have a 47% accuracy rate when it comes to the seven times he has predicted an early spring. However, that is still no better than a coin flip.

Some might argue that although



Phil has a low accuracy rate, he is better than any meteorologist at predicting the weather. Meteorologists are not perfect as meteorology is an inexact science, but according to

David Unger, "Compared to the terms with which Groundhog Day predictions are made... our forecasts are about 60 percent accurate, or higher."

So, although Groundhog Day is an exciting tradition that has been celebrated for over a century, it is wisest to rely on meteorologists that have a much higher accuracy rate.

Leland Middle School



They Never Deserved You to Begin With.



Lily Rae Bradley, 8th Grade

You were born beautiful but turned out a mess. Destined to be great was what you were told, but you

chose a dark shadow, and followed it. Now see where you have gone. What you have become. As flaming stars rain down on the land and chaos spikes people's fear, you stand in the ruins, blankly, your soul far from here. Trickling tears have stained your dark beautiful skin which has begun to diminish away, revealing light, and your hair stands a mess as string from a yarn ball. Gray flakes drift about you, and you watch as

people run around, crying out for mercy. Lost offspring from their fleeing parents, never yet to turn back and collect them. People push others away, racing past family and friends, fighting for space to escape too. The world was always a cruel, dark place, you thought as you watched the world you once knew be destroyed by inflamed rocks falling out of the sky. Eruptions shake the sinned earth, the loud, heavy sounds rocking your world which you seemed to have toned out. Your heart which never once pumped a lather of empathy instead washed your vision of the destruction with acceptance.

As you turn, you think to yourself, the world needed a new start anyways. Mankind was always ruined at the start. Humans would fight for glory and fame, impairing those who found were in their way. In the abyss of your mind, plucks of strings and music of loft fills your head, a dark, wavery tune that could make your heart lurk. But disregard is what you have chosen, after many dark turns throughout your life, just to end up here. This world was never meant for you anyways.



The Crazienss of Math

Math is not my favorite subject, but I do find fun things about it that just boggle my mind. For example, 0°C = 32°F, so 32°F + 32°F = 64°F, right? But, if 0°C = 23°F does that mean, 0°C + 0°C = 64°F? But what boggles my mind is the fact that 64°F = 17.7778°C, and my question is, does 17.7778°C = 0°C?

Mathematically... this theory is incorrect.

BUT LOGICALLY... it is 100% correct and mind boggling.

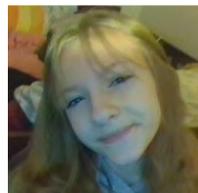


Elizabeth Ford 8th Grade



You Watch Me Cry Willow Shoemaker

7th Grade I sat on the glossy wood floor



I sat my head on my knee

I "always" wanted more

I wish you could see.

"Why do you cry?"

They always ask me

They never walk by

I wish you could see.

I Wish

Eileen Hartman 6th Grade



All this time, I've been wrong

At this point, I don't know where I belong

I'm told one thing here and the opposite there.

I don't know what to believe, from who, from where

This all started when I was young, oh how I wish I could go back

Before the divorce, before chores, before all of that

I wish I could see the truth through my eyes, not theirs

I could see what actually happened, not just hear their words.

If only it were possible, I wish, I wish.

Help

Ashlynn-Claire Morton

7th Grade



"Help! The only words I repeat, yet no one hears.

Except you

I try to scream, but I'm muffled

I say all the wrong things,

Do all the wrong actions

I feel a dark hole sucking all the happiness that was ever truly there

I try to run and hide,

But I can't escape what I've become

The thing I fear most

I've become hated and feared by the

only thing I thought I could trust

But they resent me the most

They hate the way I look

Everything

ME

I can run all I want,

but I cannot hide, From MYSELF"

I need to get to you!

Reach out your hand; I can help!

Don't give up!

She's gone,

It's too late

South Brunswick High School



Into The Mind of An Overthinker



Aaron Maynor 12th Grade

Envision this. You are trapped in an obnoxiously

loud yet eerily quiet house. This house is bright and full of life on the outside. Yet the rooms that lay on the inside are dark, cold and

furthermore, empty. These are rooms with no ending and a beginning that has been lost in the abyss. Welcome into the mind of an overthinker.

The Residence: You have reached the surface of an overthinker. I like to call it the house that is waiting to be sold. Houses that are on the market and open for viewing are consistently in pristine condition. The outside of the house, along

with the property, is the first thing a potential buyer sees so it must always be well-kept. The aforementioned first impression is important to an overthinker. The lawn is catered to daily, the house is freshly pressure washed, and the list continues. The salesman's ultimate goal is to sell the house with the flaws and sins remaining unknown for the better concern of the purchaser. It is his driven

assignment to avoid showing the dark secrets the family that built the home has concealed within the walls. Why? The residence loses market value when it has been damaged by its past. If the walls of the house witnessed a horrific event, the house is not as valuable as it once was. If the walls of the house were abused by the previous owners, it is not as valuable as it once was.

True Paintings



Kennedy Stone,
12th Grade

A little town called Monet held such mystery and marvelous beauty. Monet also had a painter named Dante Coronado.

Dante was a gifted artist who could paint anyone or anything with extraordinary detail. Dante was such a passionate artist that everyone wanted to be painted by him. To have such an exceptional art piece would be like winning the lottery. So, Dante devoted his time and efforts to painting people to share the beauty of the art and people as they were.

Every day he would go into the center where sat a winsome water fountain that had sculpted details of nature and elegance to paint the first soul that would appear by the fountain. The first person that Dante set his eyes on was a

little child that appeared with grace as she wandered toward him with curiosity. She approached him with a question, "Could you paint something for me, Sir?" to which Dante replied with a chuckle, followed by him nodding as he sketched her out onto the canvas.

She stands there observing him before objecting, "Not me. Could you paint something for me?" though the question was simple it confused him, "You don't want me to paint you? What else could you want me to paint?" Dante questioned. She stood with utter confidence, "I want you to paint yourself. See the beauty you see in everyone else within yourself". This was something Dante had never done before so he accepted the request, "Meet me here tomorrow morning and I will have you a painting." The little girl strolled away with the biggest smile.

Dante went home to portray himself on a canvas, to which he found quite difficult. While he sat in front of a mirror sketching himself, he found he could not get the sketch right. He was drawing what he wanted to be portrayed as, so he decided that was what he would do. He painted till he saw a mirror of what he wanted to be in front of him.



As the next morning arose, he found himself excited to present the painting to the little girl. Again,

she wandered towards him with such grace he could not forget. The little girl caught sight of the painting. She looked between Dante and the painting as if to compare them. The little girl's lead by curiosity, "I don't doubt your abilities but the painting does not look like you." Dante responded quickly, "You said to paint the beauty in myself so I did." "You see many beauties in people though you cannot see it within yourself? I find you lovely whether you appear to be or not. For it is who you are," the little girl spoke with such wisdom.

It was at that point that Dante realized paintings should be true to who people are and not something that was picture perfect. Dante Coronado would go on to be a famous renowned painter for painting people for who they truly are.

The Pet Pandemic - Adopt Not Shop



Ashley Subach,
11th Grade

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Americans nationwide rushed to buy puppies to keep themselves entertained during the

indefinite lockdown. However, now that most restrictions have been removed, citizens are back to work and school. This means countless puppies are being abandoned in the streets, seen as a temporary form of entertainment rather than a serious responsibility.

Animal shelters across the country are overflowing with animals because of the massive influx of abandoned pets. Catawba County, North Carolina, for example, is a shelter that is barely able to maintain the level of new animals they receive each week. Jenna Arsenault, the Animal Services Manager of Catawba County, stated that they "took in 100 animals in six days." But, this is not

the only county in North Carolina experiencing this issue. The Wake County Animal Shelter is begging residents to adopt pets from them. There are only 75 kennels for dogs and 42 spaces for cats. As of Monday, 110 dogs and 76 cats are being housed at the shelter in Raleigh. All cats and dogs are available for reduced adoption fees. One can adopt a senior dog for \$25 and a cat for any price.



This issue calls us to reflect on our intentions before finding a new pet. It is incredibly important that we "adopt, not shop" for our pets, especially when animals are being left behind daily. In addition, we must consider the hard work of having a pet. They are not temporary sources of amusement, but real lives that must be respected.

Older

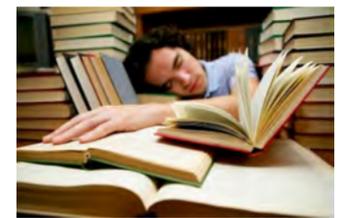


Niyah Messer,
12th Grade

The Autumn season was finally near, colored leaves covered the ground and the air was crisp. The wind blew in my hair as I walked through

the park, an area filled with children's laughter. Oh, to be a kid again, so young and free now I am older less freedom is there for me. The stress of college will start soon as I go to the mountains, the pretty area known as Boone. A place where education is great and the air is cold. The thought of being alone is scary until you do it then you realize it is not as scary as you think. All I could ever dream was to be successful and live my life, working hard as a kid to get to this point in my life. I want to make my family and teachers proud. I stress myself to do the work for the best grades to get to where I need to be. Everyone tells you once you leave

high school you are on your own which is true, the thought may be scary but we can all make it if we try. Working hard can get you to where you need to be which is why parents are hard on their kids for grades. I never understood that when I was younger, I was just doing what I was told. But now that



I am older, I see what they mean. Parts of

me wish I worked harder but I worked enough to get accepted into my dream school and once I am there, I will work even harder my next 8 years. Hard work gets you a lot of places and is worth every ounce of effort. My advice to you is to work hard, study and listen, you will get so far in life if you do. Do not ever give up no matter how hard it is. Nothing is impossible, you got this!

The Healing Power of Gratitude



Dylan Smith, 12th Grade

Gratitude is perhaps the most important key to finding success and

happiness in the modern day. Knowing what we appreciate in life means knowing who we are, what matters to us and what makes each day worthwhile. Paying attention to what we feel grateful for puts us in a positive frame of

mind. It connects us to the world

around us and to ourselves. Research demonstrates that focusing on what we are grateful for is a universally rewarding way to feel happier and more fulfilled.

As an important mental health principle, the benefits of gratitude extend far beyond what we may imagine. Scientific studies have found that gratitude is associated with:



- Greater happiness
- More optimism and positive emotions
- New and lasting relationships
- Better health
- More progress toward personal goals
- Fewer aches and pains
- More alertness and

- determination
- Increase generosity and empathy
- Better sleep
- Improved self-esteem

We have found that gratitude keeps us healthy and happy which improves our quality of life. And the more people enjoy life and take more action in doing new things the happier everyone will be.

Hurricane



Karsen Hanna,
12th Grade

I want to start by saying this thought... "the storm of life isn't over; it never is, But the rain has at least stopped."

Things get shaken up, trees buckle and break under the wind, homes washed away by waves of water and words, and in the downfall, people react. Arson via Action. Whether it's others or ourselves, nobody comes out unchanged nor with clean hands.

Things are shaken in the inevitable earthquakes, our faults exposed,

and the surroundings are collapsed and wrecked to be rebuilt. The rain, a constant washing in the reminder of the here and now, the feeling of saturation on the soul and skin, the smell of fresh dust and distrust overwhelming the senses. Almost forgettable compared to the calamity, yet one only realizes how much there is to relish in the silence after the tinnitus has gone. A dreamlike state akin to the final memory before a dementia sufferer destruction, a blissful...nothing. The rain stops, the air cleansed from all of history's maroon stains. How one feels their chains crack and break like brittle, the first step covering kilometers of conscious recovery.

The cloud cover being cut by a shimmer of light. Not a brisk, brash flash of lightning, a warm, welcoming glow of sunshine. One sees the clouds still, the rubble and ruin of a mind left behind by the vicious violence of life's vision, but nothing is permanent. Nothing lasts, and while one can find great disparity in that, one can find incredible peace and rest in it as well. The winds always blow, the clouds always float by, and while nothing is left unchanged afterwards, nothing is truly destroyed. Minutes are minutes, hours are hours, days are days... time is a constant, one to count on, so one would be wise to watch the clock when all else is turbulent.

Things desire to return to their own chaotic, unpredictable sense of normal, but it's normal none the less. One will rebuild a home, a life, one's self, and one will rebuild themselves much better equipped for the next storm so that when the rain comes, they're covered.



Cedar Grove Middle School



Gods of Love: A Lost Mythology



Josh McGinty

So there are a lot of mythologies that all have different gods

that symbolize different aspects of life. Some mythologies have gods of wars, gods of gods, gods of poetry, etc. But some gods that don't get enough attention are the gods of love. I'm going to talk about a few of them in honor of Valentine's Day.

The Roman goddess of love is Venus who symbolizes Roman imperial power and beauty. Yes,

the planet Venus is named after this goddess of love.

Benzaiten is the Japanese goddess of love who symbolizes love, beauty, music, and often rides a dragon. The Greek goddess of love is Aphrodite. She also represents love and beauty.

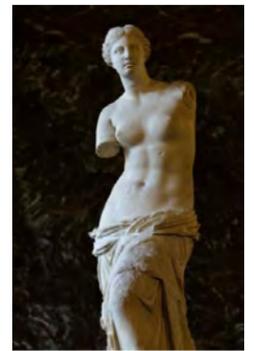
There are many others, but I think that you guys and girls understand that in different cultures, the gods or goddesses that they celebrate, mean more things than just love. There are more meanings to the word love than simple affection

that you feel toward someone. Like we love many things, music, art, dancing, eating, reading, etc. People, there are so many things, I can't list them all!

When people say that love is fake and that it's just a chemical reaction in the brain and we don't feel love like "that". My response to them is, we feel love in the heart for different valuables in life. We have love for friends and family. We love our pets. We definitely love to binge watch our favorite show on Netflix or Hulu. We all love pizza and ice cream. Sometimes, we love

that we have friends we can count on. Whatever it is, we can always find something to love in this life.

So on this Valentine's Day, if you don't have *someone* to love, then love something that you love.



Aphrodite is the Greek goddess of love, and beauty. (Thiago Oliveira)

Who Is Cupid??

Henry Price

Cupid originates from Roman mythology. Roman mythology is the belief that a higher power of god's rule the world. Society nowadays has moved away from that belief, but some still study Roman mythology in order to understand the past. Philosophers argue that Cupid is the equivalent of the Greek god Eros, whose name derives from the word "erotic." In ancient Greece, Eros is often seen as the son of Ares, who is the god of war. The word erotic is associated with love and passion, hence Cupid's role in match making.

According to myth, Cupid is the son of Mercury, the winged messenger of the gods, and Venus, the goddess of love. He often appears as a winged infant carrying a bow and a quiver of arrows whose wounds



inspire love or passion in his victims. Cupid has the typical attributes of Olympian Gods such as superhuman strength, endurance, and longevity. He also has extensive archery skills in shooting love arrows (Wikipedia).

Basically, when Cupid shoots his arrow at you, it makes you fall in love. Therefore, Cupid helps you find love! That's why he's associated with Valentine's Day, the national day of love.

Maybe Cupid can help you find love this Valentine's Day.

Some information gathered from [Wikipedia](https://www.wikipedia.org)

That day. It was the worst day of my life. It was December of 2004. We just got back from a road trip to the mountains. My little sister, Molly, got a doll named Lucy while we were there. Lucy had these beady little eyes that just stared into your soul. She had long brown hair and a baby blue colored dress. The road trip was around nine hours long. About three hours left my sister starts crying saying she lost the doll and how it was just beside her. I say, "Molly it's okay. It's just a weird doll. We can find it when we are home, it's nothing to cry about." I smile at her. She looks at me and cries even more. Finally, she stopped crying and fell asleep. I ended up falling asleep also.

We awoke and we were about to turn into our driveway. The car stops. My

Lucy Finley Anderson

mom gets Molly out of her car seat so she can walk around. Molly then remembers her doll Lucy. She tells our mom and she looks under the seat and everywhere. Eventually we found Lucy under the car seat. I didn't find it weird at all until it was time for bed.

I woke up at around 2 AM. This isn't normal for me so I try to go back to sleep, but I can't because I get a weird feeling someone or something is staring at me. I looked around and there it was. Lucy staring me dead in the eyes. *She slowly creeps toward me.* I could barely see it was so dark in my room. I was hoping it was just a bad dream, so I hid under my covers, reminding myself it's all a dream and that I will wake up tomorrow morning all normal.

I hear something coming towards me. My hair stood

on edge and a shiver was sent down my spine. I peeked out from under my covers and all of the sudden, *Lucy's icy cold fingers gripped around my wrist.* I tried to fight back but I couldn't. I just gave up. She lets go and walks away as if nothing happened.

I didn't sleep that much that night. As I awoke, I smelt the sweet scent of pancakes and syrup. I walked downstairs and there she was. Lucy was staring at me again.





Last year, I wrote about the seasons of my life and how my outlook changed over time. This year I am applying that same thought, but this time to love

language. Love language is something that married couples and those in long term relationships develop over the years. It's a communication pattern and style that only the two of you share.

When Tony and I first got married, our love language was full of, "I love you, I need you, I want you," conversations. We called each other during the day just to hear the other's voice. We whispered off color remarks so the children wouldn't hear and we could effectively communicate with just a sly wink, a nod of our heads and a smile.

For years, we had picnics in front of our fireplace while listening to new age music and sharing wine and cheese. We would examine the events of our respective workdays and update each other on our schedules and commitments that might take us away from each other.

We would leave notes for each other and I would get random greeting cards from Tony telling me how much he loved me. As the children got older, we would take overnight trips to B&B's and visit Ohio wine country.

Love Language

Jan Morgan-Swegle, Compass Pointe

"Didn't we have fun last night," has changed to "How did you sleep?"

Valentine's Day was full of chocolate candy and white underwear with red hearts scattered about and sometimes there were roses delivered in a beautiful vase with a romantic message on the card.

But, just as the seasons of my life reminded me of how I have changed, I find that our love language has also changed after 34 years of marriage. We are in our 70's now and while we are still very much in love, we convey it in a different way.

"Didn't we have fun last night," has changed to "How did you sleep?"

"Have some more wine," is now, "Did you take your pills?"

"Come back soon, I will miss you every minute you are gone," is now, "Drive carefully."

"I'm back, did you miss me," is now, "Where are you?"

"Babe," is now, "Sweetie Pie."

"What do you need help with," is now, "What did you do?"

Whispering in my ear has turned from rich, deep, sweet words to, "I can't hear you; I'm not wearing my hearing aids."

And, romantic evenings, sitting on the floor in front of the fireplace has been replaced with sitting on chairs in the lanai while we watch our lava lamp make different shapes and listen to hits of the '60's and '70's.

Going to wine country has been replaced with visiting area wine bars and Valentine's Day is full of funny cards about how crazy in love we were when we were young.

We talk through our dog now, referring to ourselves as "Mommy and Daddy." As in, "Mommy would love it if Daddy would get up and get her some wine." Or, "If Mommy really loved you, she would take you out to poop more often."

As we enter a new year, who knows how our current love language will change. Maybe it will be more, "I've fallen and I can't get up." Or, maybe it will be "Don't worry, I will always take care of you..."

But whatever it is, our love language will be as sweet as it always was and will be there to comfort and guide us. It will reinforce what our love language has been saying for 34 years, "I love you, Tony." "I love you, Jan."

The Soul of Wheat

Janet Stiegler, Brunswick Forest



Some people -- including many nutritionists -- argue that we should regard food as fuel, but I am not one of them. Don't get me wrong -- I'm not someone who is food-addicted or eats to fill emotional holes in my life. Nor would you call

me a food snob: I ate a simple muenster cheese sandwich every day at work for over 30 years! But I do want my food to be nutritious and colorful, to taste good, and most importantly, to leave me feeling good. And every once in a while, I hit upon a truly transformative meal.

Stumbling upon *Anima di Grano* (the Soul of Wheat), a small pizzeria in Pisa, Italy, was somewhat fortuitous. We had arrived in Pisa early that same morning, 18 hours later than planned after our original flight was rerouted to Venice. Then we got up early for a pre-paid, 10-hour day trip to the Cinque Terre. Needless to say, by evening, we were tired and hangry. Googling "the best pizza in Pisa," we discovered that *Anima di Grano* was a quarter mile from our hotel.

Even as we approached, we could see the small establishment was already packed. My husband suggested we just get a quick bite in one of the other osterias, but I was undeterred. "There is something special about this place," I told him as we stood outside, salivating over the fluffy discs of wheat being placed before earlier patrons.

The menu only features personal-size pizzas -- not even a green salad! -- because the dough itself is so satisfying, so magically airy, you will not want anything else (except maybe a nice glass of red wine). Made with 00 flour and high-quality wheat germ, the dough goes through four leavenings in 60 hours and involves "ancient methods using yeast donated by grandma over 90 years ago." At least that's what it said on the small paper menu we perused while waiting for a seat.

It was clear the small waitstaff was proud of their product. As each pizza arrived separately, hot from the oven, the waitress would announce its arrival with flair, as if presenting a newly arrived guest to a royal party. "Marguerite," "Quattro Formaggi," "Diavola." Before digging in, the lucky recipient would inevitably press down with a finger on the puffy outside crust, testing its buoyancy. When ours came—the spicy Diavola for my husband and a Melanzana (eggplant) for me--we did the same, then picked up our forks and knives, resisting the urge to tear into the dough with our hands.

Eating at *Anima di Grano* was a spiritual experience. With each bite, the sleep-deprived fog lifted along with our mood. Having gained a sec-

...The waitress would announce each pizza with flair, as if presenting a newly arrived guest to a royal party.



Credit: Photo by Ivan Torres on Unsplash

ond wind, we relaxed, had another glass of wine, and watched how the "soul of wheat" positively affected our neighboring diners.

On one side of us were two young men who had come in, gesturing wildly in argument. After two bites of pizza, however, they were clasping hands across the table and staring into each other's eyes, their apparent love spat subdued by the power of 90-year-old yeast.

On the other side sat a family with two teens. At first, the oldest slumped at the table indifferently. With each forkful of slightly charred crust and oozing mozzarella, she became increasingly more animated. But what we witnessed at the end of their meal convinced us of the pizza's life-changing properties. Once outside, the once surly teen suddenly hugged her father in gratitude. Reborn, the family strolled out of the pizzeria in laughter.

When we think about the word "Love," what truly is it? Some reading this would describe love as the emotion you get having butterflies in your stomach. The fuzzy feeling when around someone you like. Where you get goosebumps hearing the voice of this beautiful person's presence, the hairs on your arms sticking straight up.

Others reading this would describe love as the little gesture you do to show someone who cares about them, by fixing their bed sheets and purchasing gifts for this special person like as if it were their

birthday. Love, as with many other emotions is a form of communication. Everyone reading this article, yes, you! has a unique form of "Love" we all have to show another that they are adored. This is called: "Love language."

Coined by Dr. Gary Chapman of Winston-Salem, NC. States there are five different ways to express love through love language: Words of affirmation, gifts, acts of service, quality time,

Love



Jadon Smith Shallotte

and physical touch. Out of these five different ways to express love, one of these is your dominant form of communication.

No matter which one of these you use, communication is a powerful tool. We use language as a way to express or respond to

others. However, the biggest thing many forget about "love" is that the emotion is not given to others but can give to yourself.

Self-love is taking care of yourself.

Brushing your hair, flossing, drinking water. To many, this would come across as motor functions. On the flip side, these simple actions are an accomplishment to earn at the end of a long journey. Not all can continue a long fight, giving up. Affecting their health. With everyone on their phones nowadays, maintaining relationships can be a struggle.

There are many different ways to express love. Whether it be through love language or learning how to love yourself. This is a robust and raw emotion that encourages us to be motivated in life.

The Greatest Show On Earth



J F Gozzi, Leland

Recently I got a call from a pal asking, "you watchin' the World Cup final?" And I said, "Who's playing?" Ignorance aside I did know the following A. the game was in Qatar, B. the audience is global and

HUGE, C. the crowd roars.

Let's face it, soccer can be the B word (boring). The field is too big- the scores are too low- the fans are polite. That is in America. But for most of the 32 countries at the World Cup, people worship two religions and one of them is soccer (aka futbol).

So, I turned on the game. The stadium itself was spectacular--if I didn't know better, I'd say the outside structure was made of pure gold. The sights of Qatar in the background were otherworldly. And inside the crowd was going bananas. It wasn't an out-of-control drunken mob, probably due to the no alcohol rule, but a bi-partisan mob nonetheless. There seemed to be an equal amount of blue (France) and white (Argentina) clad fans. Now and again, you could spot the surreal sight of a local man in a headdress and robe.

It took me a while to get my bearings with the time clock (clock runs up- not down like in America) but the tension, even as a casual fan, was palpable. It was mentioned that there were



If you thought it was the Super Bowl, guess again.

fans that spent their life savings to be at this game. Now that is INSANE.

The game runs in two 45-minute halves. After the first half the score remained 2-0 and France had not even had a shot on goal. And I'm thinking that is why I'm not a soccer guy. But during that brief intermission there were three or four "experts" tossing out analysis. I recognized two of them as former star U.S. players. The most telling comment being, 2-0 is a dangerous score- one goal by France and they're back in it. If Argentina scores first, it's DONE AND DUSTED.

The second half play was tentative and even more physical. This is a sport without pads for the most part. There were many yellow cards

(warnings for rough play) and numerous players writhed on the ground in agony. If this were an NFL game more than a few players would have been excused from the game as probably concussed.

Finally, later in the half, France, after scoring a goal scored again to tie the game. They were no longer done and dusted and the legion of blue in the stands was going whacko. Then came extra time (like overtime in mainstream U.S. sports only better). Substitutions were made and some of the players exiting were in tears and some looked appalled. Fun fact, unlike basketball or football once you're of the game, you cannot return!

By the end of extra time the game was 3-3 and being called by the announcers as the greatest WC final ever. So, it came down to penalty kicks and the experts predicted if it goes to penalty kicks--advantage Argentina. Almost three hours later they were right and Argentina was the champion. Tears and hugs in the stands and on the field were everywhere and I finally "got it." (Do yourself a favor and watch the concise recap on YouTube.)

The World Cup is much more than a glitzy event held every four years. It is a very tangible struggle of the Best against the Best. Someday, I hope to attend -- it doesn't have to be the finals, just being part of the greatest sports spectacle on earth will be plenty good enough.

Waller Family Pre-Thanksgiving Scare: A Fictional Tale (Part 1)

Brendan Connelly, Brunswick Forest

One week before Thanksgiving, the Waller Family faced the roughest and scariest time of their lives. The parents John and Karen had to go out to a board meeting and had to leave their twin boys Tommy and Timmy alone with a babysitter. Nobody would ever believe what would happen that night. A few hours after the parents left, the babysitter Sharon was alone with the kids. The night was quiet and peaceful. At 8pm, Sharon put the kids to bed. At that moment, the night would change drastically.

At that moment a window was smashed. Within minutes she was strangled and shot dead by two bad guys, Mario, and George. They were mass murderers out to steal loads of money, kill people and then escape to a secluded island in the Bahamas to live the rich life.

After they dumped Sharon's body into the Delaware River, they returned to go after the kids. They stowed the kids into their car and drove them around. They at first fooled the kids, trying to be nice to them. They took the kids to an arcade and a ball field, but both times they ran off to a bank, stole money, and came back.

They tricked them again when they promised them to take them on a boat ride. They sailed around for a few hours. But then they turned evil. They docked the boat in the water, roped the kids in their seats and promised they would come back and take them anywhere they wanted to go. They locked the door and left. The kids would never realize until many hours later that they would never be back.

Back home, their parents began to panic, asking everyone in their neighborhood if they had seen them or heard anything. All Karen and John could do was sit and sob, begging that their precious children be returned to them, unharmed. Karen and John couldn't work, couldn't eat, and rarely slept. All they could think of were the kids.

Each day they would go in to wake up the kids, imaging them there, and

go into the car, drive to their school to drop them off, and then realize once they got there that the kids were never there. They would then run into the house sobbing in tears. They would repeat this sequence daily.



Nils Soderman on UNSPLASH

Back home, their parents began to panic.

They thought about calling their neighbors but decided not to. They felt there were no use trying. They were too sad to even talk to anyone. The parents at this point were completely depressed and felt like they needed a miracle to happen. The parents would not ever believe what would happen on the fourth fateful night.

During the day on the fourth day of them missing, Karen heard there would be a storm coming in that night, which will bring heavy rain and wind. Karen and John continued to be worried about their kids and hoped that the weather would not have anything to do with the incident with their kids.

However, the fear in their minds told them that something was going to go wrong. They feared that the storm would impact where the kids are and what would happen to them. The drama was only beginning as the sky began to cloud up and as day turned to night.

"Valentine" from P1

This boy and his family I quickly surmised were the new arrivals in our village. Later I queried my grandfather about the family and he guessed my inquisitiveness.

My grandfather loved baseball, and he watched every televised game that often interfered with my watching American Bandstand. We compromised; he taught me about baseball and I taught him the latest dance steps, but I didn't like baseball and he didn't dance. One day, with a twinkle in his eye, he insisted we attend a baseball game between our high

school and the military school. We sat in the bleachers and I searched the players for that new boy. My old love was on the field but not my new heart throb. Disappointed, I pretended to be interested in the game. Then a man arrived who looked like the new boy, but where was he? Our team was at bat.

A fly ball. The catcher jumped up to catch the ball, tossing off his face mask. Time stood still as I looked at that boy and he looked at me, but the ball kept moving and the catcher missed the ball. Our home team won.

After the game, my grandfather introduced me

to the father and the young boy, who offered my grandfather one of his candy bars. Then my heart throb looked at me. We were both speechless, staring into each other's eyes. Our romance seemed almost as fatal as Romeo and Juliet's star-crossed relationship, but ours had more twists and turns than the Uncle Wiggly board game. To quote Steve Maraboli: "Our love is sharpened by the stone of our challenges and strengthened by the struggles of our growth." Despite our romantic vicissitudes beginning at age 14, today we both love to hear each other say those magic words: **Be My Valentine!**

Bill Cavanaugh, Brunswick Forest



The summer of '74 before entering the 9th grade, Misty, Melody, Frank and I were walking into the Funland entrance. It was a hot, sunny, summer day and even as the gates opened at 10 a.m. Misty was looking especially good today. Her wavy, shoulder-length hair blowing in the breeze just melts me in my place. It wasn't enough however, to curb my anxiety.

"There it is!" said Frank. "It's even bigger than I remember!"

The girl's played it off cool in that "damsel in distress" flirtatious mode. Melody said, "I dunno. I'm not sure it's safe after all the stories I've heard."

Misty echoed, "Me, too. It's pretty old and made of wood. Very rickety looking."

"Nahhhh," said Frank. "It's all good. Forget them stories of that kid from Chester High School not seeing the low ceiling of wood that lobbed off his head. If it wasn't safe, it wouldn't be runnin'."

This and other similar stories were elevating my anxiety level beyond measure. My one and only experience with a roller coaster was a family visit to a fall festival carnival. A compact, portable metal coaster called the Demon Mouse, was one of the rides. I was in the first grade, and at my mom's insistence and my dismay, she and I rode the single unbelted car through the maze of dips and turns. At the end of the ride, I was in full on tears, hyperventilating, screaming, and wanting



"Forget them stories....If it wasn't safe, it wouldn't be runnin'."

to disown my mother, my family, and live in the woods. Better to be a "jungle-boy" than endure further torture from these people.

This has "marked" me for many years. I have recurrent nightmares of the experience. Sometimes in my dreams, the ride descends into deep holes of fire and heat, to which I wake to my own screaming, sweats, heart-racing, and gasping for breath.

"Maybe we should do some other rides first, you know, to warm up," I suggest. No one responded.

Misty then looks at me with an enticing hair flip, smile, and playful hit of my arm, saying, "You better hold me nice and tight on that thing."

What Demon Mouse? I was thinking.

From a distance, there it was: The Giant Claw. It was roaring loud as it sped along its deadly circuit. The sound was deafening, louder than anything I've ever heard. Did I just see a rider's head get lobbed off and fall to the ground? My life was about to flash in front of me.

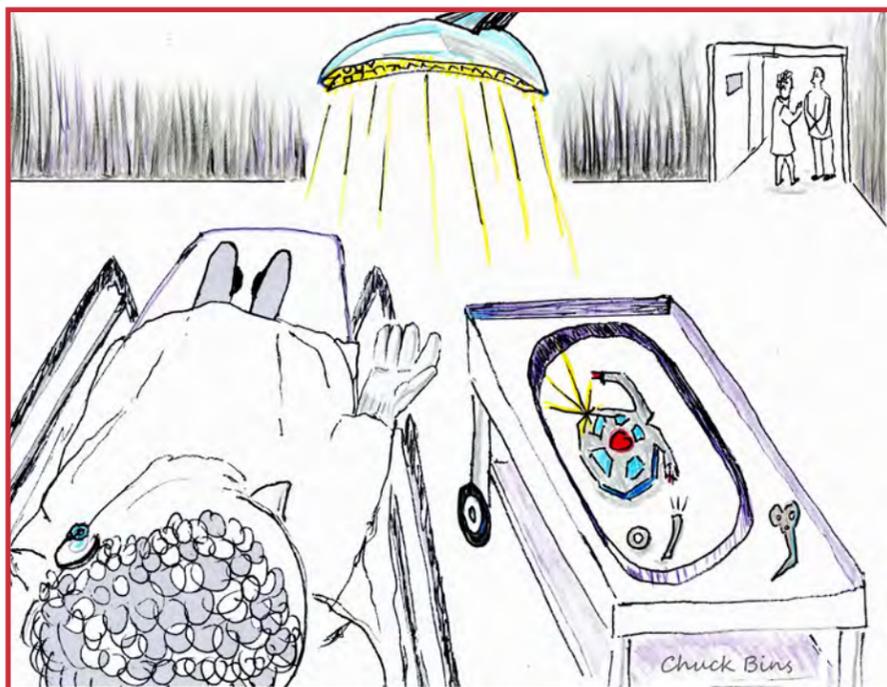
"Let's get in line fast before the real crowds start to pour in," said Frank.

As Misty and I dropped into the seat together, the lap bar was locked down and the belt pulled tight. Our bare legs touched under the bar, which momentarily distracted me. Misty snuggled up tight to me as I

placed my left arm up and around her shoulder. While doing all this, my mind kept repeating, "I can do this. It ain't nothing. Don't look scared." My heart is now racing, and I feel sweat on my forehead, and my mouth has gone dry. I think Misty hears my rapid hyper breathing.

"Are you ok?" she asked.

With a quick short nod of my head, the coaster train jerks forward as it pulls away from the station. Screams of excitement from nearby riders are heard, in addition to my internal scream of fear. I had a quick thought that my life to this point, had been pretty good. And if this was the end, well at least I sitting nice and close to Misty Matthews. "



The attendant reminded me that transplants were routine, and I'd only be out a short time.

2079: Tommy watches as I lay on the table awaiting my procedure. Monitors blink and bleep, and the switched-on Bach seems calming. The attendant smiles.

I had known Tommy Wilcox since he was a toddler scampering off to mischief, leaving fingerprints everywhere. A dust cloud followed him wherever he went, and that meant more work for me.

Bob and Carol said I was Housekeeper #3. I told them my name was Hazel and reminded them I didn't do diapers--or

windows.

Carol assured me Tommy was out of diapers. He was an only child, overweight, clumsy and affectionate. His parents, though, never taught him to put things away like the three other families I'd served. Now I've been with the Wilcox's for 15 years, and Tommy still treats me well.

Last month, Bob said I left the lasagna in the oven too long. The cooking time was nonstandard. Tommy wanted me to add more cheese, so 127 seconds was the

2079: HEART TRANSPLANT

Charles Bins, Brunswick Forest

volumetric adjustment. But Bob and Carol both reported the crust 'overdone.'

This week, Carol announced she detested the smell of *Windex*, and after 15 years of washing windows she would not do another. She said something had to change.

'Little Tommy,' now 225 pounds and home from college, offered to take me for my procedure today. I rolled in and laid under the lights. The attendant reminded me that transplants were routine, and I'd only be out a short time. Tommy held my hand when I winked out.

I'm fully awake, looking at a metal tray containing my old heart. "All done," they say.

Tommy's friendly on the way home; even buys me flowers. I really can't smell them, but they are a blast of color.

When Tommy opens the front door, Bob and Carol are on the couch licking strawberry cones. Carol hands Tommy a chocolate cone and asks how I am.

I scan the area: A sink full of dishes, peanut shells scattered, 3½ pairs of



shoes strewn about and a pile of ironing 87 minutes high. "Everything is springtime and daffodils," I say. "And Tommy bought me flowers."

"Put those in water," Bob chirps, "and please make us dinner now."

I agree -- and ask if there's anything else.

Carol replies: "The downstairs is a disaster; please tidy up after dinner." Then she sniffs, "Hazel, we bought an odorless window cleaner, so you can start on windows in the morning."

I tilt my head 40 degrees to study her. Deep in my memory banks I hear: "Are you serious? I just had a transplant. Don't you people think?" But those words won't come. Instead, I say: "Alright, Carol, which room would you like me to do first?"

She is smiling broadly and winks at Bob. "Start in the living room."

"Well, Carol," Bob chimes in, "I think the transplant's a success." He winks at Carol.

Tommy looks at me, puzzled, worried or both. His ice cream tumbles to the floor. In a wink, it's cleaned up.

Starting 2023 Strong



Victor Fernandes,
Brunswick Forest

It's that time of year again – when resolutions are made and broken almost instantaneously. And I'm not saying that to put down resolutions.

I'm actually in favor of making resolutions. I'm in favor of anything that gets people excited enough to take control of their health and fitness and attempt to make tangible – and permanent – changes in their lives.

Here's the catch, though. According to countless studies, at least 80% of resolutions fail every year – and in most cases, before the end of February. Why? Resolutions are thoughts and ideas that sound good while we're thinking about them, and even when we begin to take positive action on them.

For many people, they have considered those same thoughts and ideas year after year, and yet still find themselves in the same place in life year after year. Resolutions don't overcome the root of the problem most people face but fail to address – their mindset, frame of mind and mental approach to consistently sticking to a plan and putting in the work every day, even lack of motivation sets in for them.

We have to overcome obstacles, which often have been ingrained within our psyche for many years. We often hear the phrase, "New Year, New You," around this time, but the old you plays an integral role in whether that happens.



The process begins with addressing mistakes we have made, excuses we have allowed to creep into our minds, that impacted the decisions we previously made about our health and fitness. Those bad habits need to be replaced by good habits. To do that, we have to understand why those habits infiltrate our minds in the first place. I didn't balloon to nearly 250 pounds in my early adult life simply because I made unhealthy choices in the kitchen and spent most of my daily life sitting at a desk and not getting any exercise. Those bad habits were merely the end result. I consistently put my health and fitness on the back burner because I felt I had put everyone and everything in his life ahead of my own needs.

Family came first. Career came first. I didn't even come second, or third, or fourth. I didn't take care of myself at all. Once I discovered, with help from family and a health and fitness coach, that being at my best personally leads to being at my best in all facets of life...

The obstacles in my way vanished.

It didn't occur overnight, of course, but it cleared the way for me to take action by focusing on what's right in front of me and leaving the past behind. Why have you struggled to gain control of your health and fitness?

What obstacles do you face that derail plans to improve your well-being?

What steps will you take to address those obstacles and face your journey to better health with a positive mindset?

Being honest with yourself, and delving deep into those answers, are the first steps toward reaching your coveted destination, and learning a lot about yourself.

And if you need help along the way... Contact me at 814.504.7774 or by email at info@fernandesfit.com, and let's face that journey together. You can also get more information on my website at fernandesfit.com.

It's Time to Let My People Go, Already

Paul Stutz, Brunswick Forest



The holiday season is over and, hopefully, everyone had an opportunity to worship as they saw fit and to spend quality time with their families and friends. This is often the most joyous time of the year – a time when most people put aside any petty grievances they might have and help their families, friends and neighbors end the year on a positive note. It would be fantastic if that feeling of good will could somehow extend throughout the entire calendar year. After all, we are all God's children. We should be grateful for whatever good things we have in our lives and we should help others achieve that same satisfaction.

So, why do so many people think that they are better than others based on the way they worship? Why is there so much hatred and discrimination in our society? I don't get it! And, while any kind of bias against another person's religion is deplorable, what is most puzzling and most sickening is the centuries-old antagonism toward those of the Jewish faith.

Antisemitism goes back hundreds of years before Jesus Christ appeared, but it became even more virulent after the crucifixion, when Jewish people were falsely accused of betraying him. It is true that certain leaders in the Jewish community at that time stated that his teachings were subversive. However, most historians have concluded that Jesus did not pose a credible threat to the Jewish community and there is absolutely no evidence that anybody in that community had anything to do with his capture and execution by the Romans. In 1965, the Catholic Church formally absolved the Jewish people of any complicity in the crucifixion, and in 2011, Pope Benedict XVI reinforced that declaration. Yet, the accusation persists, and millions of Americans still believe it.

These same people also buy into other false stereotypes. "Jews" are money-hungry. They control the media and the banking system. "Jews" are cheap. These people should take a stroll through any large city in the U.S. and note the Jewish names on the faces of museums, libraries and entertainment centers. These names are there because Jewish philanthropists donated millions of

dollars to help build these structures. The fact remains that Jewish people are just like any others – no better and no worse. It is time to put this hatred to rest once and for all.

Finally, it would be most helpful if other ethnic minorities would band together to help. Recently, there have been some prominent members of the African-American community spouting what sounded to me, like antisemitism rhetoric. They should remember that during the Civil Rights movement of the 1960's, Jewish people were at the forefront of the protests. I believe that people of the Muslim faith should also be sympathetic. After the September 11th attacks, many of them were victims of unwarranted prejudice. Asians were vilified in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. We should all remember that people have no control over the characteristics they were born with—gender, race, religion, etc. We should only be judged by how we live our lives and how we treat others.

Let us all join together to help achieve liberty and justice for all!



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Selah of the Seas

Caroline Ruth Bailey, Holden Beach

Come back to self, Child
All bleary, weaByry, teary eyed with nameless longing
Searching clouds, sands, counting waves in breathless anxiousness
yet no appearance with the incoming tides
Now, distant blackness hovering over the breakline
ushers' simple salvation, quells the searching for an instant
Oh, quickly now! Quiet, Child!
Our help, She comes with the Pelicans
Breathing now gentles for set teeth un-clenching upon their arrival
With humbled grateful greeting those in full view
silent seekless vessels of wonder, most Ancient of Days in Ancient of Ways
Selah of the Seas
Quickly now, Child! Go join their Great V
Leave behind your solitary U
Albeit with stiffness and clumsiness, spread dusty wings and follow the Pelicans
Soundless undulations of grey ivory winged bodies levitating over grey green waves
Rest in oneness, without identification, sweet separate-less-ness
Safely in the Great V
Soar now into harmony
Flying home to U





Leland VFW Post 12196 recently celebrated the 3rd Anniversary of receiving a Charter. Guests included Mayor Brenda Bozeman, Councilperson Veronica Carter and VFW District 5 Commander, Bradly Lauver.

During the event Post Commander Decker highlighted some of the many accomplishments by the Post in three years, including being "Mayor's Choice of Citizen of the Year" in 2020 and All-American and All-State honors this year.

One highlight of the evening was the opportunity for the Post to recognize Councilperson Bill McHugh for his outstanding work for our community and his commitment to support local veterans.

Leland Councilman Bill McHugh (left) receiving certificate from Commander Decker.



Leland VFW Post 12196 is now seeking members for an Auxiliary. If you are interesting in becoming a member contact us at vfwpost12196@gmail.com or 910-408-1934.



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Community News

Brunswick County Literacy Council to Host 2nd Annual Mardi Gras Fundraiser

The second annual **Books, Brews & Beads Mardi Gras Celebration** benefiting the Brunswick County Literacy Council will take place on Sunday, February 19, from 3 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at Makai Brewing Company, 5850 Ocean Hwy W., Ocean Isle Beach, N.C.

The fun begins the moment you stop at the bead station to grab a handful of colorful beads to throw

around your neck. The brewery will be bathed in vibrant Mardi Gras colors. Start the afternoon with a trip to the cash/credit bar for one of Makai's amazing craft beers or a glass of wine if you prefer. Next, peruse the gift baskets that will be up for raffle. Hold onto your ticket stub for a chance to win door prizes throughout the event.

Outside, the Beyond the Bayou food truck for a bowl of chicken and smoked sausage jambalaya. And don't forget the King Cake sweets! Then, get ready to enjoy some live music from the Sea & Sand Band! They'll keep the music going throughout the event

playing a variety of music from old standards, R&B, jazz, rock, and beach music, so they have all your musical tastes covered. Bring your folding chairs and enjoy the music.

Tickets for the event are \$40 in advance or \$45 at the door. The price of each ticket includes food, live music, and a chance to win door prizes. The event will take place rain or shine. All funds raised will go to Brunswick County Literacy Council's operating and program budgets. The cost of a ticket buys workbooks for one student. Learn more at www.bclitearcy.org.

For more information about Brunswick County Literacy Council or to purchase tickets for Books, Brews & Beads visit www.bcliteracy.org or contact the council at 910-754-7323.

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Happy Valentine's Day!
(from the staff)

PHOTO CREDIT: Aitac on Unsplash
Psyche revived by Cupid's kiss,
sculpture by Antonio Canova.



American Red Cross Community of Giving

Blood Drive

The American Legion Post 68 & WWAY

1224 Magnolia Village Way
Leland, NC 28451

Friday, February 17th, 2023
10:00AM to 2:30PM

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BRANDON'S BATTLE FOUNDATION "NEVER GIVE UP"

SUPPORTING PEDIATRIC CANCER PATIENTS LIKE BRANDON SINCE FEBRUARY 2013.

CHARITY BASKETBALL GAME

NEW HANOVER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE VS BRUNSWICK COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

FRIDAY, FEB 24TH
DOORS OPEN AT 6:00 PM & GAME STARTS AT 7:00 PM

WILMINGTON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
ADMISSION: \$6 ADULTS \$3 STUDENTS (5 & UNDER ARE FREE)
CONCESSIONS AVAILABLE

Sponsored by: **WILMINGTON CHRISTIAN ACADEMY** **COAST 97.3** **ECONOMY EXTERMINATORS**

GUEST EMCEE DAME BRITT & MUSIC BY SANDRA MCCLAMMY AKA "THE MIDDAY MISS"

North Carolina Rice Festival Events Set for March 2-4

The 2023 North Carolina Rice Festival (NCRF) will consist of three events, at three locations, Thursday-Saturday, March 2-4.

On Thursday, **March 2**, there will be a "Reveal" party at the Navassa Community Center where a group of local citizens who had their DNA tested will learn the details of their ancestry. The DNA testing was performed through an NCRF partnership with African Ancestry, Inc., an organization which helps people of African descent trace their ancestral roots back to a specific present-day African country and, in many cases, a specific tribe/ethnic group. The event is free and is open to the public as a means to inform individuals with known, or suspected, Gullah Geechee heritage of the personal benefits of learning more about their ancestry and to increase awareness of, and preserve, the significant history and contributions of the Gullah Geechee people.

On Friday, **March 3**, the Third Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Gala will be held at the **Leland Cultural Arts Center**. The **Gala** will again be catered by renowned Gullah Chef Keith Rhodes and his Catch restaurant and feature traditional Gullah cuisine. Entertainment will be provided by Aunt Pearl Sue and her nationally recognized group, The Gullah Kinfolk (pictured). Gala tickets are \$115. Ticket sales to date assure a sell out, so check the NCRF website:

www.northcarolinaricefestival.org for availability.

The third Rice Festival event will be held on Saturday, **March 4**, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at North Carolina State Historic Site, Brunswick Town/Fort Anderson. There will be four components to the Festival. History and cultural presentations will take place on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission Stage. Seven hours of entertainment will be presented on the Come Hear, NC Stage, a project of the NC Department of Natural and Cultural Resources to promote North Carolina performance artists and musicians. A new addition this year will be a Children's Stage with storytellers and special activities for youth of all

ages. The fourth component will be an exhibit area where vendors will display and sell a wide variety of art, crafts and products. There will also be several food trucks on site with a variety of menu selections. The confirmed Festival line-ups are as follows:

Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission Stage

Jim McKee—Historian, author and Brunswick Town site manager will present a history of Brunswick Town and its connection to rice growing and Gullah Geechee culture in the Cape Fear region.

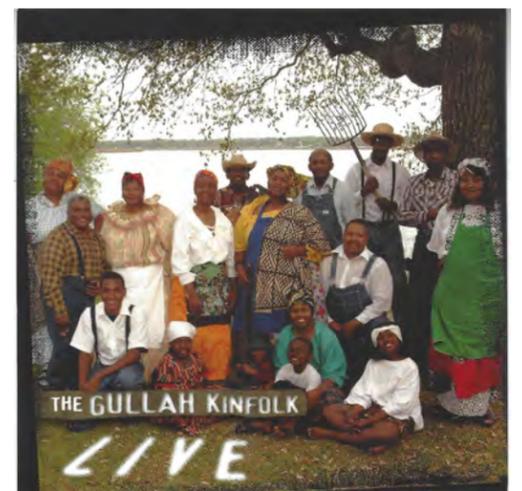
Tyrone Hill—Growing up in the Cape Fear region, Hill heard stories of his ancestor who worked on the rice plantations on Eagles Island in the Cape Fear River. His presentation will offer a local perspective by relating some of those stories.

Sunn m'Cheaux, AKA The Gullah Professor, teaches Gullah language in the African Language program at Harvard University. He will entertain the audience with a presentation focusing on the history of the Gullah language and its origins in the countries of West Africa.

Amadu Massally—CEO of Fambul Tik an organization which promotes the importance of expanding ancestral knowledge through sponsored trips for descendants from Sierra Leone. The 2019 trip was featured in the documentary *Gullah Roots* presented at the 2022 Rice Festival. His presentation will address the relationship between expanding ancestral awareness and the preservation of Gullah culture and heritage.

John Jeremiah Sullivan—A local historian and writer involved in projects focused on the history of the Cape Fear region, including several pertaining to the 1898 Wilmington Coup. Sullivan will address why much less is commonly known about the history of rice and the cultural contributions of the Gullah people in North Carolina than is known in the states farther south. He will make the argument that through a coordinated strategy of research and revival, this problem can be turned into a creative opportunity.

Blues DeVille



Come Hear, NC Stage

The entertainment line-up will include local groups and performers, **Blues De Ville**, **Imperial Reggae Band**, **Ian Daviz**, regionally known **Blackwater R & B Band** and nationally renowned **Aunt Pearl Sue and The Gullah Kinfolk**.

Throughout the day tours of the Brunswick Town ruins and Fort Anderson will be available, as will discussions regarding rice growing at an existing rice field on the Russelborough site at Brunswick Town. **Admission is free to all March 4, Festival activities.** For more information about the NCRF events and directions, visit: www.northcarolinaricefestival.org

Ghosts trees of the Cape Fear River

A Poem by Brayton Willis
Chairman, NC Gullah Geechee Heritage Trail Project

As I gaze out o'er the Cape Fear River
Where ghost trees seem to have eyes
Enchanted sights from a haunted giver
Spirits of old come alive

Hear the whispers through the trees
Of stories told within their rings
Silted waters brown meandering
Within this ancient course it brings.

Rice harvested in the heat of day
Trees -- their stories tell
Relentless work, no time to play
Ironic transition from heaven to hell

Songs of fields, songs from souls
Fade with twilight, just memories now
As Cape Fear ghosts roam the shoals
Like kindred spirits that never bow

Watered with blood, watered with sweat
Here is where gold was grown
With ancient hands cold and wet
Shadows dim of those unknown

Darken sky, an evening's chill
As the veil of dusk descends
Night brings fear and mystery
Ghost trees' presence lends

Murmured messages of the old
For all the moons they have seen
Miseries' waters that flooded their souls
Speaks truth to what has been

Silhouettes take root along the shore
Revealing this, a solemn sight
A languorous vision of ghosts before
Frail branches of the night

Listen to the whispers of the ghost trees
For they know this story well
Through the ebb and flow of time
They stand as the last farewell.



Help Wanted:

Teen Scene, Inc., publisher of *Cape Fear Voices* is seeking a **Chief Operating Officer**. This position would be responsible for **growing the business through public speaking, fundraising, growing our mission to promote writing and business skills among teens and overseeing the monthly publication of Cape Fear Voices/The Teen Scene.**

If interested in learning more, please contact us at editorteenscene@gmail.com.

February Birthdays

James Toto Feb. 2
Greg Miller Feb. 4
Mitzie Brooks Isear Feb. 8
Buddy Frank Wheeler Feb. 8
Brian Decker Feb. 14
Mara McJilton Feb. 14
Kelley Nardell-Powell Feb. 15
Brenda Stedham Feb. 22
Joey Upchurch Feb. 23



Warren Hodges Feb. 24
Tony Swegle Feb. 24
Katie W. Abbott Feb. 26
Jeri Abernathy Feb. 29

