



TIMES

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Seven Lakes, North Carolina 27376

February 16, 2007

Salary freeze, benefit cuts in works for SLLA staffers

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor

A proposed salary freeze and cuts in retirement benefits have the board of directors of the Seven Lakes Landowners Association [SLLA] divided as they put the final touches on their budget for fiscal year 2007 - 2008.

Board members debated and gathered public input on the budget during a special February 8 work session that attracted a few dozen community members. A revised set of SLLA by-laws was also approved at the meeting.

The proposed budget includes no dues increase, so landowners will not be asked to vote on its approval; under SLLA bylaws

that decision will be left to the board.

The 2007-2008 budget proposed by Community Manager Dalton Fulcher included funds to provide variable merit increases to roughly half the Association's employees. Similar increases were part of the budget in the last two fiscal years.

But, after reviewing the budget, SLLA President Don Truesdell and Treasurer Steve Hudson suggested eliminating the salary increases, and, in addition, dropping the Association's match of employee contributions to an individual retirement savings account.

Those changes will generate \$23,240 in savings, Truesdale told

landowners who attended the meeting. He noted that, while the association is "in sound financial condition," and "has no long-term debt," large capital expenditures have had an impact on the community's reserve accounts.

Specifically, \$45,000 was spent to build ADA-compliant restrooms at Sequoia Point, and a whopping \$245,000 was spent on state-mandated repairs to Echo Dam, Truesdell said.

Both Michael Florence and Jack Fathauer expressed support for the cuts recommended by Truesdell and Hudson during the meeting. Ron Richmond, Ed Nuti, and Jeff Herman all expressed opposition to the proposed cuts.

Noting recent spending on bar code gates, security cameras, a new computer network, and a new maintenance building, Her-

(See "Salary," p. 37)

Local Hero



Jack Lynn and his wife Dodie show off medals presented to Lynn for saving Richard Comans' life. [Story on page 3.]

Snow Fun



Mason and Davis Homan helped their Dad Randy build a snowman during the brief snowfall on February 1.

Lauer joins Foxfire Council

by Laura Douglass
Times Reporter

Former Foxfire council member, Joe R. Harsany, was honored at the Village Council meeting on February 13. Harsany received a plaque — presented by Councilman Carl Munro and Mayor George Erickson — and an official resolution commending his service.

The commendation said that Harsany, "diligently supported the interests of citizens of Foxfire and at all times exhibited a deep sense of responsibility and concern for the welfare of his constituents." On behalf of the Village, Mayor Erickson extended "best wishes, hopes, and heartfelt gratitude for a job well done."

Councilman Lauer

The next order of business was the appointment of new Council member Ed Lauer.



Councilman Ed Lauer

Lauer, a Foxfire homeowner for three years, has an impressive resumé. Receiving a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of San Francisco, he went on to achieve two Master's degrees from the University of Washington; one in American Government and the other in Middle East Studies.

A retired Army officer with postings including the office of the Secretary of Defense, Lauer has worked as Director of Strategic Planning for Ardak in Fairfax, VA, and spent fifteen years at the Center for Security Evaluation, as a counterterrorism consultant to the Central Intelligence Agency.

(See "Foxfire," p. 9)

Lea: County must fund big capital projects

"We as commissioners have done a great job, over the years, of getting ourselves elected by keeping taxes low in Moore County," Moore County Commissioner Tim Lea told members of the Seven Lakes Civic Group assembled for their Annual Meeting Tuesday night, February 13, "but we haven't done a great job in paying for the future of this county."

Lea and County Manager Cary McSwain were the featured guests at the gathering, which, perhaps due to a driving rainstorm, attracted a bare handful of Civic Group loyalists.

Lea said the county faces as much as \$300 million in capital expenses to alleviate crowding at the courthouse, the jail, county offices, and schools across the county. Moore County public schools needs \$144 million because of booming enrollment and aging facilities, Lea said, and Sandhills Community College needs more than \$15 million on top of that.

Moore County has a new judge and a new district attorney, but no place to house them, and both the Sheriff and the Clerk of Courts are running out of space.

Lea said the county cannot ignore these needs for space, because North Carolina state

law makes it the responsibility of the county to house these enterprises.

By voting recently to fund an architectural study for a new governmental center, the Board of Commissioners took the first step toward meeting this mandate, he added. But the bigger challenge will be paying for them.

Two sources of funds appeared to be high on the commissioner's agenda: an upcoming property revaluation and the possibility of a one percent tax on real estate transfers.

The latter is an idea that has received much backing from the Moore County Summit — an ad hoc group that has brought together elected officials and governmental staffers from across the county to explore ways they can work together.

Imposing a one percent levy whenever property changes hands would have raised and additional \$8.4 million in revenues for the county last year, Lea said. But only six North Carolina counties — clustered along the coastline, have won authority to impose such a tax.

North Carolina counties are "creatures of the state," County Manager McSwain explained, and can levy only those taxes the General Assembly permits. Lea said other counties have gone to the legislature "a hundred times" over the years to win the right to tax real estate transfers and have been turned away every time.

Still there is a multi-county initiative brewing to take the matter to Raleigh yet again, and Moore County appears to be preparing to join that effort.

The other source of new funds is a revaluation of real property in the county for the purpose of calculating property taxes. County taxpayers will begin

receiving revaluation notices in the next couple of weeks. The revaluation formerly took place every eight years, but the commissioners moved that to an every four year cycle in 2003.

After the last revaluation, the commissioners cut the property tax rate in rough proportion to the increase in property values — a revenue neutral approach.

This time, Lea said, the county will need to keep the extra money.

"There is no way that this reevaluation will be revenue neutral," Lea told Civic Group members. "We are going to have to have every penny of that reevaluation to fund what we are state-

(See "Civic Group," p. 36)

Correction

In our February 2 edition, *The Times* reported that Seven Lakes West Landowners Association Board member resigned in mid-November. That is incorrect; Finney resigned in mid-December. We regret the error.

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Our voice telephone number is 910-673-0111.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

| Issue | Deadline |
|----------|----------|
| March 2 | Feb 23 |
| March 16 | March 9 |
| March 30 | March 23 |
| April 13 | April 6 |
| April 27 | April 20 |
| May 11 | May 4 |
| May 25 | May 18 |

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Jack Lynn receives Red Cross' highest honor

by Laura Douglass
Times Reporter

For heroic actions that saved the life of fellow Northsider Richard Coman last Spring, Jack Lynn was awarded the American Red Cross Certificate of Merit,

the highest award given by the American Red Cross to an individual, on Thursday, February 8.

The Certificate of Merit which bears the signature of the President of the United States, who is the honorary chairman of the

American Red Cross, and the signature of the chairman of the American Red Cross was presented by Morris Pennington, Board President of the Moore County Chapter of the American Red Cross. The action honored

by the certificate exemplifies the highest degree of concern of one human being for another who is in distress.

On May 21, 2006, Lynn and his wife Dodie heard a cry for help from Coman, who had been

fishing on Lake Longleaf when he began taking on water. Attempting to reach shallow water before abandoning his boat, Coman began experienc-

(See "Lynn," p. 5)

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Thieves plunder unlocked vehicles

The Moore County Sheriff's Office is interviewing young people in Seven Lakes in connection with a series of thefts from unlocked vehicles, Detective Sergeant James Threadgill told *The Times* on Wednesday.

A reward is being offered for information leading to arrests in the case.

Thefts of items from unlocked automobiles is a problem that has cropped up every few weeks in Seven Lakes over the past several months. The thefts have occurred on the North, South, and West Sides.

The most recent incident involved twelve vehicles in Seven Lakes South, all entered on the same night, Tuesday, February 6. The addresses involved were clustered on Lancashire, Somerset, Winsford Circle, and Devonshire.

Detective Jeff Medlin told *The Times* that the calls came in Wednesday morning, February 7 when folks getting ready to drive to work or school found items missing from their cars. Items taken from unlocked cars included iPods, camcorders, binoculars, cds, etc.

Medlin said he and two colleagues had spent most of the day on February 7 and 8 in Seven Lakes gathering evidence and interviewing juveniles.

They utilized the Moore County Public Schools telephone notification system to deliver a message to all parents of school age parents in Seven Lakes asking them to report any information they might have about the thefts and encouraging them to lock their vehicles — even when parked in their own driveways.

Detectives also put up flyers carrying the same message around Seven Lakes.

Medlin told *The Times* that there were several instances of cars being rifled through in Seven Lakes North a few weeks ago, prompting Sheriff's officers to interview a number of juveniles from the area. There were a number of instances of thefts from unlocked vehicles in Seven Lakes West last year.

"We hit it pretty hard a couple of weeks ago, and things kind of died down," he told *The Times*.

Then there were twelve incidents in a single neighborhood that one night on the South side.

"That's somebody making a statement, if you ask me," Medlin said. "Okay, now we're going to show you that it's not over."

Medlin said detectives are pretty sure that local young people are involved. He said a stash

of stolen items was found in the woods. "Clearly, someone was expecting to be able to come back for those," he noted.

Threadgill said investigators feel the thefts may be tied to two other incidents reported the

same morning. Someone apparently tried to jimmy open the door the the Seven Lakes North stables, and the drive-in window at the Seven Lakes Prescription Shoppe was broken.

Medlin encouraged residents

to lock their homes and vehicles, and asked that anyone with information that might aid the investigation call the Sheriff's Office at 947-2931.

THROUGH JIM MEIKLE'S LEADERSHIP OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS AND MANY HOURS OF THE ENTIRE SEVEN LAKES WEST LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION BOARD'S LABOR AND EFFORTS, THE FOLLOWING HAS BEEN ACCOMPLISHED!

- Frequently acknowledged the efforts of the many dedicated volunteers who support the numerous committees that work for the benefit of the entire community
- Established the "Wall of Honor" for members who have contributed exceptional service to our community
- Expanded communication to members by establishing a SLW Web site, with "Breaking News" on the homepage
- Established school bus pick up and drop off at our Community Center
- Established County Bookmobile service to our Community Center
- Continued to improvement the amenities at West Side Park
- Made acoustical improvements to the Community Center's Great Room
- Established a book sharing library in the Community Center
- Planting privacy screening between the Swimming Pool area and the McDonald's Truss Plant in West Side Park (contract in progress)
- Enhanced the Community Recreation programs for members of all ages
- Established a Community 4th of July Fireworks show
- Established the Lake Auman Master Plan Committee
- Established rules and regulations regarding the operation of jet boats and other types of water craft on Lake Auman
- Made improvements to Johnson Point's swim raft, dock, picnic areas and restrooms
- Entered into an agreement with NCWRC which preserves our private lake status and our ability to self regulation the rules and regulations on Lake Auman
- Supported the programs and acknowledge the dedication and improvement for Lake Auman and Johnson Point brought about by the Lake Auman Sports Club efforts
- Expanded our Boat & Trailer storage area
- Continued on the multi year project to improve the drainage and landscaping in Lakeway mall
- Established "Adopt a road" programs to help enhance the appearance of are community
- Prepared and distributes up dated "Seven Lakes West Handbooks" to all homeowners
- Completed "Development Agreements" for Carriage Park III, Colton's Corners and First Fairway subdivisions
- Acquired addition land at NC 73 gate area for future Association needs
- Up date of our "Architectural Standards"
- Established the position of "Compliance Officer" to assist with rule & regulations and architectural control standards
- Convinced the County and State that home on Lake Auman do not belong on the State's Flood Plain maps
- Engaged the Insurance and Personnel committees to review our policies and practices
- Established a "Profit & Loss Budget Performance" and "Fund Status" reporting systems to more fully display accounts activities
- Established a Yard Waster Transfer Station site for SLW
- Convinced Ray MacKay to run for a second Board term and continue providing his engineering and maintenance expertise on the community's infrastructure problems
- Hired Security Forces, Inc. to up graded and provide 24/7 gate security



REELECT JIM MEIKLE TO THE SLWLA BOARD
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Submitted by Ray MacKay

Westside issues correction to ballot letter

Concerns about the handling of ballots and errors in Annual Meeting packets are adding tension to an already contentious election in Seven Lakes West.

Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA] Secretary Jo Nicholas on Monday sent out a correction to all Association members clarifying a typographical error that put a deadline of March 28 on the ballot letter. The actual deadline to return ballots is 2:00 pm

Lynn

(Continued from page 3)

ing hypothermia and was unable to swim away from his craft because of the cold and the fishing line tangled around his legs. Jack instructed Dodie to call 911 and he tried to pull Coman from the water with a stick. However, Coman lost consciousness and went underwater.

Lynn recalls, "I'm a good swimmer, a trained swimmer, and I laid him on his back and pulled him to shore. I was able to get his head and shoulders out of the water and then the EMT's arrived." He continues, "But I was very surprised to find the boat underneath of him. I had pulled both of them in together."

Buddy Spong, Executive Director of the Moore County Chapter of the American Red Cross, in presenting the certificate said, "Jack personifies the American Red Cross mission, its actual being is represented by him: Whether it's a blood drive and Jack is there greeting people and bringing them in to donate, as a lifetime Board member, or jumping into the water to save a life. This award celebrates what's really special about this organization, not only is it about what happened but who is involved." Spong continued, "Jack, you will always be my hero."

Lynn was humbled by the ceremony and the presentation, "The real heroes are in Baghdad and fighting overseas, the EMT's, and the doctors and nurses who save lives." He continued, "The American Red Cross motto is 'Together We Can Save a Life,' well, that's what we, Dodie and I, did together."

on March 18, the date and time of the SLWLA Annual Meeting.

Other minor errors have been reported, including a reference to "six candidates," when there are now only four in the race. In addition, some landowners received packets without the proper return envelopes. Envelopes have been mailed to those who notified the office of the problem.

The unusually combative race for the board has generated dozens of letters to *The Seven Lakes Times*, as well as a number of emails attempting to influence the election that are circulating among community members. *The Times* has also heard reports that a group of concerned citizens went so far as mailing a letter to out-of-town landowners attempting to influence their vote.

Some residents have also expressed concerns about ballot-handling procedures.

Former SLWLA Legal Director Linda Tableman told *The Times* that she asked the board to consider hiring an outside accountant to handle receiving, processing, and counting the ballots, in order to ensure proper handling.

She told *The Times* that several residents had come to her with concerns that the ballots are "tossed into an open box" in the SLWLA office and thus could be tampered with.

The board did not act on her suggestion, but will use essentially the same ballot handling and counting procedures that have

been used in past SLWLA elections.

Nicholas told *The Times* on Wednesday morning that ballots are placed, unopened, in a box by SLWLA staffers as they sort the mail. Initially that was a plain cardboard box, but that has now been replaced by a locked, slotted box into which ballots can be deposited. The ballot box is locked up overnight in a fire-proof file cabinet.

Ballots will be counted by "a group of respected citizens of the community before the Annual Meeting," Nicholas said. Any ballots that are submitted on the day of the Annual Meeting will be added to the tally at that time.

SLWLA Legal Director Hugh Beckwith on Wednesday told *The Times* that he is in the process of contacting a number of landowners to ask that they serve as ballot counters.

The deadline for ballot submission is March 18, at 2:00 pm.

Text of official notice of ballot error

Community Members,

It was brought to my attention, after several ballot mailings had been received, that an error had occurred with the Annual Meeting date.

On the Ballot Letter, it stated that "Votes received after 2:00 pm, March 28, 2007, will not be counted." This is incorrect — it needs to read as follows: "Votes received after 2:00 pm, March 18, 2007, will not be counted."

I apologize for the inconvenience that has occurred with this mistake. I hope to see you at the Annual Meeting on, Sunday, March 18, at 2:00 pm.

— Jo Nicholas, Secretary

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Don't miss these key SLLA meetings

Please mark your calendars with the following dates:

February 22, 7:30 pm, the Seven Lakes Landowners Association Board of Directors will be conducting its work session in the North Club House. This will be a very important meeting as one of the items on the agenda will be a discussion of our budget for FY08 (beginning May 1). The public is invited. If you wish to speak please call the office at 673-4931 no later than Tuesday, February 20, and ask to have your name added to the agenda.

Your treasurer Steve Hudson and I will be hosting a budget workshop on this day from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm.

February 28, 7:30 pm, the Seven Lakes Landowners Association Board of Directors will be conducting its open session in the North Club House. At this meeting we will vote to adopt the budget for FY08. I am going to recommend to the board that we change our agenda to allow public comment as the first item. The reason for this request is we will be voting on motions made at the February 22, work session. Your input is important to us.

March 7, 7:30 pm, the Women of Seven Lakes will be conducting Candidate's Night in the North Club House. There are six candidates, Laura Douglass, Frank McKenna, Loren Swearingen, Donna Stephan, Don Truesdell, and Randy Zielsdorf, running for four seats.

March 25, 3:00 pm The Seven Lakes Landowners Association will hold its annual meeting at the West End Elementary School. You have a vote and it is very important. The voting process will end when this meeting is called to order. You may vote via four separate means: 1. You may go to the office and vote; 2. You may cast your vote at the annual meeting prior to the meeting being called to order; 3. You may mail your ballot to the Seven Lakes Landowners Association, 501 Seven Lakes North, West End, NC 27376; 4. You may vote

by proxy and either deliver your proxy to the office or at the annual meeting before it is called to order or you may mail your proxy. Please remember to vote.

Traffic study

The third traffic study has been completed. The study began on Monday, January 22, at 11:00 am and concluded on Monday, January 29, at 11:00 am. There were a total of 2,142 cars traveling westbound and 1,673 cars

Board Notes

*Don Truesdell
Seven Lakes
Landowners Board*

eastbound. Of these totals 181 cars traveling westbound and 506 cars traveling eastbound would have required law enforcement action. This represents 13.6% of the total number of vehicles in this study. We have asked that the Moore County Sheriff's office conduct a radar trap. If you would like to see the data please go to the office and ask to see Traffic Study 3.

Thefts

As you know we have had another series of break-ins to unlocked cars. Detective James Threadgill of the Moore County Sheriff's Office is investigating these incidents. Please remember to lock your car and house.

Need A Miracle? Saint Jude Novena

Pray the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude help of hopeless, pray for us. Say this prayer 9 times a day for 8 days and then publish. Your prayers will be answered, It has not been known to fail.



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Foxfire 4 Cummings Court



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Foxfire 2 Sunset Lane



4 Bedrooms, 2.5 Baths, All Brick
Golf Front
\$342,000

In memory of . . .

Lawrence Smith, 88, of West End, died Tuesday, January 30, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst.

Bostic Funeral Services in Candor assisted the family.

John Edwin Kleinfeller III, 51, died at his home in Seven Lakes Wednesday, January 31. Funeral arrangements are incomplete at this time.

Boles Funeral Home of Seven Lakes is serving the family.

John Daniel Hoover, 65, of Jackson Springs, died Friday, February 2, at Evans Rest Home in Mt. Gilead.

Mr. Hoover was born in Richmond County to Colon and Lillian King Hoover. He was a self-employed truck driver.

Mr. Hoover is survived by two daughters, Cindy Barbor and Diane Hoover McKinney; his mother, Lillian King Hoover of Jackson Springs; brother, Alvin Hoover of Eagle Springs; two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Briggs-Candor Funeral Home in Candor handled arrangements.

Edward Walter Kudreiko, 82, of Seven Lakes, died Sunday, February 4, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital in Pinehurst.

Born in Hamtramck, MI, to the late Gim and Kate Chyay Kudreiko, he was a graduate of the University of Michigan with a BA in Russian Culture and a Masters in Education. He was a guidance counselor at Dearborn High School and officiated many football and basketball games throughout the Detroit area.

In 1986, he moved to Seven Lakes, where he pursued his interest in golf and woodworking. Many of his friends have received "Driver Ducks" that he crafted. He enjoyed restoring his 1928 Franklin. Mr. Kudreiko was preceded in death by his first wife, Marie Kudreiko.

Survivors include his wife, Katherine Anne Kudreiko; son, Michael Kudreiko of Dearborn, MI; his step-sons: Barry Casebere of Upper Darby, PA and James Casebere of New York City, NY; his step-daughter, Susan Foley of Chicago, IL and six grandchildren.

Graveside services will be in Dearborn, MI at a later date.

A memorial service will be held at Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to Seven Lakes EMS, 969 Seven Lakes North, Seven Lakes, NC 27376 or Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines, 921 Seven Lakes, North, Seven Lakes, NC 27376.

Boles Funeral Home of Seven Lakes is serving the family locally and Howe-Peterson Funeral Home is serving the family in Dearborn, MI.

Donald Bernhardt Meier, 83, of Seven Lakes, died February 10, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital.

Born in Wyandotte, MI, he was the son of the late Magnus and Johanna Lange Meier. He was preceded in death by sisters Lorena and Margaretha, and his brothers Harold, Magnus, Roy and Wilhelm.

Survivors include his wife of fifty-nine years, Dorothy, five children and spouses; Dianne and Jim Surhbier, Abingdon, VA; David and Laurie Meier, Hobe Sound, FL; Donna and John Norman, Tallahassee, FL; Deb-

orah and Bob Lee, Magnolia, TX; Dee Laura and Brian Boyer, Land O' Lakes, FL; fourteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren, as well as many nieces and nephews.

Mr. Meier attended Trinity Lutheran School and Roosevelt High School in Wyandotte, MI. After high school, he joined the US Navy and served on the USS LST 494 as a plank, the initial crew, member and served in both the Atlantic and Pacific in the invasions of Omaha Beach, Normandy, Southern France and Okinawa. Until his death, he served as Officer of the LST 494 Association.

Following the war, he attended Eastern Michigan University,

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the University of Michigan, and Wayne State University earning degrees through doctoral. He served as a teacher, coordinator, principal, and superintendent of schools, in Michigan and West Virginia.

In North Carolina, he was active at Our Savior Lutheran Church. He served on many committees, including the building committees for the new sanctuary and other additions, as well as designing the kitchen in the new wing. He and Dorothy planned and donated the Tree of Remembrance and arranged

the engraving of the leaves and maintained the Memory Book. Don served on Church Council, Altar Guild, chaired the Hospitality Committee, served as crucifer at funerals, initiated the Eighty Plus luncheons and continental breakfasts.

There will be a Celebration of Life service on Friday, February 16, at 2:00 pm at Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1517 Luther Way, Southern Pines.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Our Savior Lutheran Church "In memory of Donald B Meier."



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FORMERLY ART'S DELI MART

Date Night will help raise money for Habitat project

Like a lot of college sophomores, Brittney Martin is interested in giving some of her time to community service.

And, like a lot of college sophomores, Brittney Martin is going to spend that time building a house with Habitat for Humanity.

So what makes Brittney Martin's project special?

She's going to build that house in Thailand.

Martin and eleven of her fellow students at UNC-Chapel Hill are raising \$22,000 to travel to Chiang Mai, Thailand and spend three weeks building a Habitat house for a family in the Thai countryside.

Shirley Ptak, of Kool Kids After School Care in Seven Lakes, has decided to help; and you can help, too.

Kool Kids will host a special Parent's Date Night on Saturday, March 3, from 6:30 to 9:30 pm, and donate all the proceeds to Martin's Habitat International project.

So you and your significant other can drop off the kids, have a great night out, and help some less fortunate family in Thailand get a new home.

Martin told *The Times* that she and her colleagues have been working on the project since September. So far, they raised about half of what they need through a wide variety of service projects.

The biggest money-maker has been advertising to work odd jobs, which have ranged from babysitting to raking leaves — and

even helping an aging baby boomer figure out how to use her iPod.

They've also spent a lot of time ushering at UNC sporting events — helping elderly Tarheels find their seats.

But now they're venturing further afield to generate support in Seven Lakes.

Martin is a native of Eagle Springs, daughter of Tom and Joy Martin, granddaughter of Roger and Francis Martin. A member of the Eagle Springs Baptist Church, she has worked as a teacher for Kool Kids' afterschool program and summer day camp.

Ptak said she was immediately interested in supporting Martin's project because of the experience she and husband Mike had on a mission trip to Columbia, South America.

"Things were so primitive there," she told *The Times*. "We're so affluent here in America. To give someone a house is a good thing."

The house that Brittany and her team — nine women and three men — will build in Thailand will go to a single mother with two children.

She told *The Times* that she does not speak Thai, though she's working on "Hello," "Good-bye," "Thank you," and "Where is the bathroom?" On the other hand, she does like Thai food.

The group will leave from Raleigh in mid-May for a trip that will last nearly a month. Several members of Martin's team will be on hand as volunteers at the special Parents' Date

Night at Kool Kids on March 3.

The cost for the event is only \$10 per child, which includes snacks and plenty of games and other supervised activities. Reservations are preferred, and can be made by calling 673-6789. Kool kids is located at 4139 NC Highway 211 in Seven Lakes — just two doors down from Dollar General.

You can learn more about Habitat for Humanity's global programs at their website: <http://www.habitat.org/intl/ap/205.a.spx>.

And you can contact Brittney Martin directly via email at: UNC-Thailand@gmail.com.



Brittney Martin and Shirley Ptak are getting ready for a special parents' Date Night at Kool Kids on March 3.

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Foxfire Council

(Continued from front page)

Prior to moving to Foxfire, Lauer lived in Pinehurst for six years.

Harsany's resignation also left the position of Mayor Pro Tempore vacant. Councilman Wally Pickett agreed to serve in this position, one which he has previously held.

Annexation: Annexation was a feature topic at the February

meeting, specifically, the annexation of a thirty-acre site off Hoffman Road, near the entrance to Grande Pines. Representatives from real estate developer Frank Betz Associates were on-hand to answer questions regarding the proposed twenty-nine home neighborhood to be called "Pinelands Preserve." The cul-de-sac community will include a common area that could be used

for a future well site. Lot sizes are between .69 and .92 acres each, and the homes, valued at current prices, are expected between \$225,000 and \$275,000.

Betz Associates provided the Village Council with five sample homes which indicate the style of residences to be built. An entrance area with stone walls, earthen berm, and landscaping will face Hoffman Road. Not-

ing the hard work spent in the Village to create a specific identity, Councilman Munro requested that all signage conform to the current Village style.

The three council members present voted unanimously to adopt the annexation ordinance and extend corporate limits to encompass the new area. There followed a short discussion on the process of notifying West End Fire

Department and the automatic increase of county fees.

Public Safety: Councilman Carl Munro introduced several important issues during the meeting.

First on Munro's list was a Community Emergency Rescue Training [CERT] course offered by the county. The training is free and will provide par-

(See "Foxfire," p. 10)

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Foxfire Council

(Continued from page 9)

ticipating Foxfire residents the opportunity to learn how to help in case of a disaster.

In the twenty-one hour class, students will learn how to turn off water and electric lines to homes, receive personal injury and first aid training, and get an introduction to terrorism training.

The course will allow citizens to assist public safety workers during disasters and is part of the Village's Hazard Mitigation Plan. To qualify for a Moore County CERT trainer to teach the class, Foxfire must have at least twelve participants in the course.

In addition to the CERT training, the county will provide the Village with a Rescue Trailer which will remain in the Village but be available to be moved anywhere in the immediate vicinity, if needed. The Rescue Trailer comes fully-stocked with equipment including chainsaws, gas cans, blankets, bottled water, two-way radios, flashlights, etc.

Councilman Munro next reported on the progress of applications for Police Department job openings. There are three strong candidates for the patrol officer position and several applications have been received for the Chief of Police position.

During January, there was a period of eight days without Foxfire Village Police Department coverage. The only police protection during this period was provided by the County Sheriff. To address this concern, Munro said the Village will try to keep officers on rotating shifts overlapping Sheriff patrols to cover understaffed

hours.

Continuing the Public Safety report, Munro addressed burning in the Village. "We can do open burning with tight restrictions with a permit from the police. We will not allow a heavy cloud of smoke to fill the Village."

The lot adjacent to the Police Department will be burned in the near future. "We've held off until the right climate and atmospheric conditions will allow a breeze to carry the smoke out of the Village," Munro said.

Recently, a resident contacted the Mayor's office and asked if any assistance was available regarding concerns over an elderly spouse's wanderings. Munro researched the issue and presented two options using the Care Trak system.

Using this device, a patient wears a bracelet with a tracking unit inside. A perimeter can be set up around a specific geographic area, such as a home or cluster of homes. If the patient leaves the enclosed perimeter, an alarm is activated.

The second option also employs the bracelet. If the patient becomes lost, a wand can be held aloft which allows the user to track the braceleted individual up to a mile away. Councilman Munro suggested the Village might want to investigate purchasing the Care Trak system as "the cost is not that great."

Village beautification was addressed with Councilman Munro reporting that the Crepe Myrtle trees planted along Hoffman Road are growing nicely

and that he expects a "good bloom" this summer. Approximately ten of the planted trees are not fairing as well as the others and would need budgeted funds for replacement.

The need to remove two old generators from the water tower area was then discussed. A motion was made and approved to allow Rick Rhyne to purchase the generators for a cost of one dollar, remove them to his private property, and eventually dispose of them at an appropriate facility. Mayor Erickson also stated that in addition to the generators, the Village will be removing a boat and several old street signs. The metal street posts will be salvaged and reused, if possible.

Zoning: Frank Holloway reported a quiet month with two new homes approved, three certificates of occupancy issued, and forty-six homes under construction. The average value of the forty-seven new homes built in the last two years is \$272,000, Holloway.

This means that the Foxfire tax base has risen by thirteen million in the same period. "If the current increase in tax valuations continues, homeowners may experience a twenty-five to thirty-five percent increase over

previous property taxes," suggested Holloway.

Village Clerk Janice Thomas said that the law requires the village to advertise tax liens. Unpaid property taxes on area lots and homes will be published this Spring.

Finance: Councilman Pickett was not able to attend the meeting; the financial report was presented by Janice Thomas. The General Fund stands at \$343,304; Water Fund at \$49,916; Capital Water Reserve Fund at \$106,140; Supplementary Police Fund at \$17,652; and Park Fund at \$2,333 with an additional \$63,000 still due to the Village from the previous PARTF grant.

The new PARTF grant proposal has been submitted and Mayor Erickson said, "it shows that we'll work hard and get things done with PARTF money."

During the public comment segment of the meeting, Councilman Munro recognized Council member Gene Petrie's work in the Village Green park. "Gene did a marvelous job on the park. It's even better than I ever expected."

Mayor Erickson added, "and this is only Phase I."

The Village Green is the location for the Foxfire Festival planned for Saturday, April 14. The day will kick-off with a dedication of the park. All Mayors of Moore County have been invited to attend, as has Representative Joe Boylan. In addition, Senator Harris Blake has been invited and asked to make comments at the ceremony.

Water: Newly-installed Councilman Lauer reported that there

(See "Foxfire," p. 37)

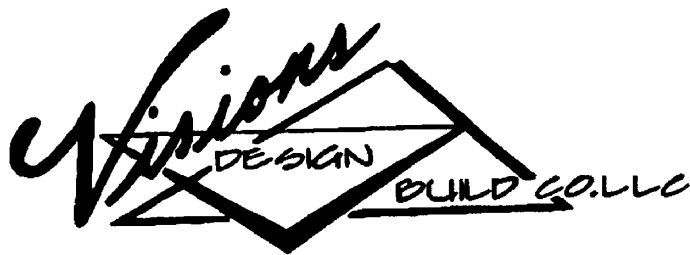
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What's priority? Landowners or employees?

by Steve Hudson
Treasurer, Seven Lakes
Landowners Association

I would like to take this time to let the community know some thoughts about the board of directors, our candidates, and the proposed freeze on salaries.

We are controlled by NC statute H 1541 which says in part that association meetings are to adhere to Roberts Rules of Order.

Henry Robert was a West Point graduate who wrote the first rules in 1874 on parliamentary procedures. It has been revised over and over again these past one hundred thirty years.

There is a quote from Henry Robert that says, "When there is radical difference of opinion in an organization, one side must yield. The great lesson for democracies to learn is for the majority to give the minority a full, free opportunity to present their side of the case, and then for the minority, having failed to win a majority to their views, gracefully to submit and to recognize the action as that of the entire organization, and cheerfully to assist in carrying it out, until they can secure its repeal."

I feel that all board members, including myself, should abide by this philosophy. I would like to also encourage all candidates in the coming election to have some working knowledge of Roberts

Rules of Order as well as NC Statute H 1541.

I would now like to address the proposed freeze on employee benefits and salaries that Don Truesdell and I have brought up.

There are two sets of figures in Dalton's budget for salaries, etc. that were given out the other

day. One is Dalton's and the other is what Don and I propose.

In our budget talks with Dalton, he stated that he was for the employee. That is why we need to be more involved in the budget process.

Who's looking after the landowner? We have twelve full

time employees whose salaries, health insurance, vacation pay, sick pay, paid holidays, FICA, and IRA's take over half our income which is \$1.2 million dollars!

It's now up to the board to decide about putting on the brakes in this situation. There needs to be a personnel committee to oversee wages, benefits,

and compare them to the rest of Moore County. We, the board of directors, answer to the landowners.

Please come to the next meeting and let the board know where you stand.

Is the board supposed to look after over 2,600 people or twelve employees?

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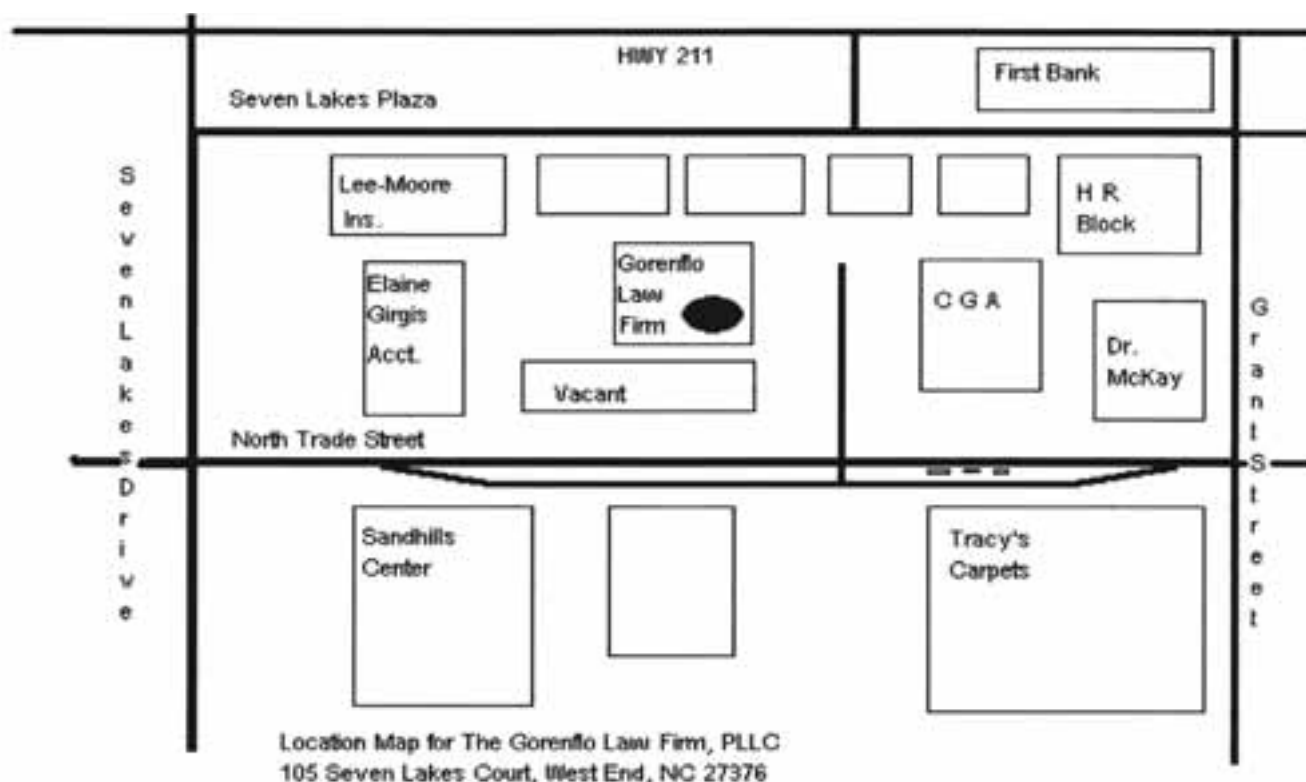
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Candidate's Night

The Women of Seven Lakes are sponsoring a Candidate's Night forum for the Seven Lakes Landowners Association Board of Directors on March 7, at 7:30 pm, at the Seven Lakes North Clubhouse.

Jo Nicholas, Co-President of the Women of Seven Lakes, will host the evening and Linda Tableman of the League of Women Voters of Moore County will act as moderator. The six candidates for the three open positions on the SLLA Board of Directors are: Laura Douglass, Frank McKenna, Donna Stephan, Loren Swearingen, Don Truesdell, and Randy Zielsdorf.

The Times interviews Westside candidates

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor

The Seven Lakes Times interviewed each of the four candidates for the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA] Board of Directors — Jim Haggard, Kathy Kirst, Jim Meikle, and Ed Tuton — between February 2 and February 9. The candidates were not given our questions in advance. Because she is out-of-state, Kirst was interviewed via telephone.

The Times has previously published brief biographical sketches of the candidates — in our December 22 issue — as well as coverage of the SLWLA Candidates Night — in our February 2 issue. Both issues are available in The Times office and on our website at www.sevenlakes-times.net.

Question 1: NCWRC

We asked the candidates a series of questions related to the Association's recently completed agreement with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission [NCWRC]: Whether

they agreed with the board's decision to sign the agreement; whether they agreed with the board's priority of keeping Wildlife officers off the lake; whether they thought the Association should have challenged the Commission in court; and whether they thought the membership should have been given more details about the substance of the negotiations as they progressed.

Question 2: President's role

We asked candidates whether they felt the role of the SLWLA President should be to serve more as a moderator of the board than as the agenda-setting leader of the community.

Question 3: Maintenance

We asked candidates how the community should go about making the decision whether or not to create an in-house maintenance department.

Question 4: Management

We asked the candidates whether the Association should get out of the business of being an employer by retaining the

services of a management company to oversee the community.

Question 5: Referendum

We asked when, if ever, the board should defer to the community — via a referendum — in making decisions.

Question 6: Board relations

We asked the candidates whether, given the current division on the board and the strong words that have been used in the public debate over the election, they could, if elected, put the board back together.

Jim Haggard

Question 1: NCWRC

"Quite frankly, I was going from one side to the other as information about the wildlife agreement came out," Jim Haggard told The Times. "The final thing, in my mind, was this: I think that Lake Auman is the crown jewel of the community. Given all that we now know, will having an NCWRC officer come in three or four times a year change that

crown jewel? No."

"So why take upon ourselves the added responsibility of enforcing state regulations?"

Irrespective of the agreement with the wildlife commission, Haggard said that the community "still needs to address making the lake as safe as we possibly can."

"My suggestion would have been to organize a lake watch — like a community watch." Noting that there are "hundreds of eyeballs on the lake all the time," Haggard said the community could combine a communications system, a rapid response team,

and a comprehensive community database, and be able to respond to any emergency that a resident sees taking place on the lake.

"Would it be difficult? Yes. Would it require volunteers? Yes. Would it become an effective way of dealing with violations and safety on the lake? Yes."

Haggard told The Times that he would not have signed the final agreement with the NCWRC, "but I did go back and forth on it. As information became available I would look at it."

"Ultimately, we signed the
(See "The Times," p. 13)



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The Times interviews Westside candidates

(Continued from page 12)

agreement. But what have we gained?" Haggard noted that Wildlife officers can still enter the community if a boating accident is reported or if residents complained about a lack of enforcement by the Landowners Association.

Though he wouldn't have voted for the agreement, Haggard says he's not in favor of undoing that decision. "I have a problem with that. Fundamentally, if you say you're going to do something, you have to follow through . . . if I say I am going to do something, I should do it."

Asked whether he agreed with the Board's decision to make keeping wildlife officers off the lake their primary objective, Haggard said that it's important to maintain flexibility. "Probably a majority of the people at that point in time [immediately after the Easter Sunday raid] didn't want them on the lake." But, as the community gained more information, opinions changed, Haggard said.

"There are probably other examples where the board took a particular approach, the situation changed, and they didn't look at alternatives adequately."

"The decision not to go court was probably a good one," Haggard said, when asked whether the board should have pursued legal action to keep Wildlife officers off the lake. "You don't know how costly that is or how successful you're going to be you have to ask yourself: 'How much will it cost? What's the chance of success? Is it worth it to the community?'"

"And then there's the alternative: let them come in. What's that going to cost?"

Haggard told *The Times* that he didn't have a problem with the board keeping its negotiations with the wildlife resources commission out of the newspapers. "But it kept dragging on," Haggard said. "The residents have a right to know. It went on and on and on, and there was a lot of discontent about not knowing the status of the negotiations. Then the agreement came out in the board apparently felt they had to make an immediate decision. There was a disconnect there."

"If they wanted to spend however many months in negotiation,

then why make an immediate decision and not get adequate feedback?"

"I have no problem with keeping negotiations quiet. Then you give people the information and get their feedback. The way it was handled creates a perception that the board knows better than the community what the community should do."

Question 2: President's role.

Asked about his suggestion at Candidates Night that the SLWLA President should function more as the moderator of the board

than as the community's agenda-setter, Haggard said, "it's not the fact that the president doesn't have a strong personality. That's probably required in order to keep order — you have to have the respect of the other board members."

Haggard's said *The Times* question seemed to imply that if the president doesn't set the agenda for the community, no agenda will be set.

"I would disagree. Other board members are well respected in the community and are smart people. If the president doesn't

set the agenda, then, if the other board members get out in the community and talk with people, they're going to come up with agendas for their functional areas. Instead of one person setting the agenda for the community, you're going to have eight different people bringing ideas in from the community."

"You'll have a larger influx of ideas, and then have the opportunity to debate which ideas are better."

"I disagree that the president has to be a strong agenda setter for everything. No one person

is smart enough to set the agenda for the whole community."

The key reason for Haggard's suggestion of changing the role president, he told *The Times*, "is to try to get away from the perception that there's a voting block on the board. There should never ever be a situation where something that has to be voted on has been decided without listening to all the voices on the board," Haggard said.

"I don't necessarily think that is going to be easy," Haggard continued. "It will take some thought

(See "Haggard" p. 14)



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Haggard: Planning, communication needed

(Continued from page 13)
- some trial and error."

Question 3: Maintenance.

Figuring out what to do in the case of a big project, like establishing an in-house maintenance department, all comes down to effective long-range planning, Haggard told *The Times*.

"It goes back to long-range planning: how much money do we need to spend on what into the future? It's not clear that we know that. A couple of board members may know that — the lake and infrastructure directors — but it's not clear the whole board has a good sense of the long-range plan."

"Until you get an integrated plan with goals and timelines and required resources, how do you know when you're going to have the resources?"

Noting that the community has a number of particular needs — repaving, the mailhouse, and others — Haggard said the board needs to put something together that can be presented to the entire community that outlines plans of action to meet each of those needs.

"You can't take one item in isolation and then disregard all the other requirements for funding that we need to make sure that the community has what it needs," Haggard said. "Once you have a long-range plan in a particular year you can decide which projects to take on. I don't think right now we know how much money we need out into the future."

Haggard said the particulars of any long-range plan as well as full financial information on the community's reserves and operating budget should be readily available to residents. "I don't think residents should have to go to West Park and ask. It to be out there so the residents can see it," he said.

Question 4: Management.

Asked to whether SLWLA should expand its employee work force and take on the associated complications of payroll taxes and employee benefits or instead investigate retaining a management company, Haggard said that he has a lot of interaction with the current employees at the West Side Park

Community center because he and his wife use the facility frequently to practice their ballroom dancing.

"They have always been very courteous and polite. I like those people. Are there too many? I don't know because I haven't looked into it."

Haggard told *The Times* that before looking into retaining the services of a management company the board should first assess the workloads of the employees it already has. "If there's a problem, the first option would be to fix that," Haggard said.

"I already know what I've got; I don't know what I would have with the management firm. We would have to weigh the advantages and costs of one of versus the other."

Haggard told *The Times* that he

saw no basic problem with adding employees. "I don't have a problem with that as long as its cost effective and efficient. You have to keep an open mind on that stuff. But fundamentally, you stick with what you've got, and try to fix it."

Question 5: Referendum

Haggard told *The Times* that turning a decision over to the landowners in the form of a referendum is a strategy that has to be undertaken with great care.

"It's okay to put out a referendum, if you establish some very strict criteria to make that happen," he said. Ideally, a certain minimum percentage of the community would have to agree that a referendum was the proper mechanism for making the particular decision, in Haggard's

view.

"If not, you'd get to the point where board members, when they have a hard decision, would refer that to a referendum," instead of making decision themselves.

Haggard expressed concern about the practicality of educating the populace as a whole on the pros and cons of a particular decision in the context a referendum.

"I'm concerned about putting something out for referendum without the appropriate information," he said. "You would

have to have a champion on the pro side of the referendum and one on the con side so that as perfect information as possible would be in residents hands before the vote is taken."

"If you want a referendum, you're going to have to get the information out there," Haggard said, noting that it would be "a costly endeavor."

Question 6: Board realtions

Asked whether, given the upheaval in the Westside community, (See "The Times," p. 16)

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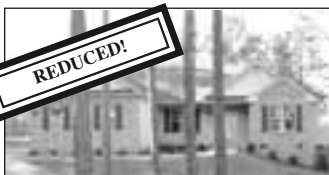
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The Times interviews Westside candidates

(Continued from page 14)

munity and on the Westside board, he, if elected, along with his fellow board members, could put the board back together, Haggard told *The Times*, "I will work with anybody that wants to work with me."

"We've got a big hassle going on right now, and there lot of differences of opinion," Haggard said. "No matter who is on the board, I have to take my hat off to all board members. They spend a lot of time, and I don't think they get up in the morning thinking 'How can I make people mad today?' Right now we have differences on the board about opinion and style; I think the style has to change."

Two non-negotiable style issues for Haggard are open communication and open debate, he told *The Times*.

"It will be my intention to be open with the community. I will not enter into a fortress compound and think that the board is in a position of 'It's us against the community.'"

If I'm in the minority position I'll be in the minority position, but I'll communicate with the community."

"I'll not accept, under any circumstances, decisions being made before they are presented to the entire board and debated," Haggard said.

Kathy Kirst

Question 1: NCWRC

Kathy Kirst told *The Times* that she feels the majority of the West side board had its mind made up to sign the NCWRC agreement before holding a general community meeting to discuss that decision.

"Nothing was going to change their mind," Kirst told *The Times*. "There wasn't any hurry to sign it, and then all the sudden it was signed." Kirst said she felt that the board had not fully explored the sorts of resources that are needed to manage safety issues on the lake.

Asked whether keeping NCWRC officers off the lake was an appropriate goal for SLWLA's negotiations with the commission, Kirst said, "I'm not sure that what they signed actually accomplished that goal."

Kirst said that it remains unclear what happens if SLWLA fails to adequately maintain the standard of lake rules enforcement called for in the NCWRC agreement.

The agreement requires the community to maintain a standard, Kirst said, "That would imply that, if you don't comply with that standard, the NCWRC has the right to come in and enforce it."

"If we don't meet the required level of enforcement, the commission can come in, and then we haven't met the goal of keeping them off the lake."

Kirst said she agreed with the board's decision not to pursue the matter in court. "I think the issue of whether Lake Auman is a private pond was going to be a moving target. However 'private pond' is defined, we were not going to meet that criteria" in the commission's eyes.

"The state had their mind made up," Kirst said. "They were going to find way to make it their jurisdiction."

Asked to whether it was appropriate for the board to conduct its negotiations with the commission away from the public eye, Kirst said, "I think that with this particular decision, the community should have seen the earlier drafts of the agreement, to see what some of the sticking points were. Had the community seen some of the earlier drafts, maybe some of their input could have shaped the negotiations with the state."

By the time of the November public meetings on the agreement, Kirst said, "No one was going to change the mind of board members who had already made their decision on the issue."

"Something of that importance in the community should have involved more meetings," Kirst said.

Question 2: President's role

Asked whether the SLWLA President's role needs to change, Kirst told *The Times* "I actually do see the president as someone setting the agenda — with input from other board members and input from the community."

"The president should be atuned to the community. If we're going to have more open meetings, then we're going to have

more input from the community."

At the same time, Kirst said, she feels the president must function as a moderator in board and community meetings. "It should be, not — 'I'm taking this stance. What do you all think?' — but rather — 'What do you think? What do you think?' — polling the members of the board before giving his or her own opinion."

"The president's opinion should be the last opinion that is expressed — as a deciding vote, not the lead off vote," Kirst told *The Times*.

Question 3: Maintenance

Asked whether SLWLA should move toward an in-house maintenance department, Kirst said

(See "Kirst," p. 17)



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Kirst: More businesslike approach needed

(Continued from page 16)

"the cost-benefit analysis on something like that is a huge undertaking." That analysis must include not only the operational cost of the people but capital and overhead costs associated with a maintenance building, equipment, and so on, Kirst said.

"The cost-benefit analysis has to be very precise," she continued. "You need a lot of board members giving input. There all lot of hidden costs." Kirst said the analysis could be handled by the board or by a committee appointed by the board. "You need expertise from people who have done heavy equipment management, people who have dealt with people management, people who have done contract negotiation with the government."

"If the analysis shows there is a significant savings to the community . . . if the community is going to save X number of dollars per year, then the board can make that decision. I think, once the analysis is done, it will be decisive one way or the other."

Question 4: Management

Kirst said that the proposal that the West Side hire a management company to run the community, rather than continuing to retain its own the staff, is worth a look.

"Maybe in the long-term we do need to evaluate management companies. Places in Pinehurst, places in Myrtle Beach, are run by management companies very nicely."

The community and its infrastructure are significantly larger than was the case just four or five years ago, Kirst said. "Even if we looked at the question of hiring a management company three or four years ago, we should look at it again."

"We need to decide who we really are — what business are we really in? Do we want to be an employer, or to hire a company to manage that for us?"

Question 5: Referendum

Kirst said it she wasn't sure what the trigger should be for deciding to turn a question over to the community to decide in a referendum.

"I really don't know. The

NCWRC may have been one, but the issues were so complex. To be able to explore all the options, possibilities, and implications is a significant task in the context

of a referendum."

"If it's that complex then that would call for many community meetings to discuss all the aspects of the decision before a

vote was taken."

Kirst said that the difficulty of making complex decisions by referendum is one the reasons that it is important to have a

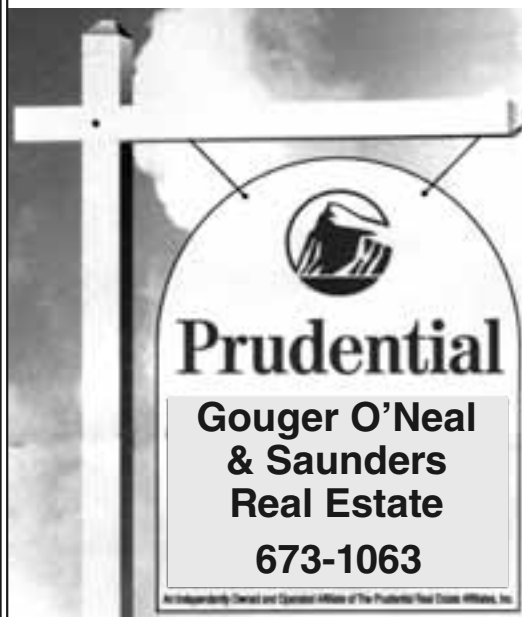
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(See "Meikle," p. 18)

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Meikle: Board must pull itself together

(Continued from page 17)

stands the community's true feelings," she said. "The board's vote on an important issue has to be done with input from the community. It calls for several community meetings. Then you have to trust the board to vote the way the community needs it to vote."

Question 6: Board relations

When *The Times* asked whether, if elected, Kirst and her fellow board members would be able to put the board back together, Kirst responded "I hope so. There are always going to be disagreements in business, but if they're personal disagreements they have no business on the board."

"Business disagreements you talk about, you take a stand, and you negotiate. It's a business issue. On the board, you need to discuss things from that perspective."

"Hopefully, the board can get to the point that it's not a 5-4, 6-3 board — not always the same people voting the same way," Kirst said. "I don't think we need any more divided boards, as we have had in the past."

Noting that recent errors in the ballot packets that were mailed out to landowners, Kirst said "this has been a frustrating time, and am hoping that all this will come up in the end, that we have a good, workable board that works for the best of the community."

Jim Meikle

Question 1: NCWRC

"I was intimately involved in the negotiations, sitting across the table from the chief of Wildlife's enforcement division and an Assistant Attorney General of the State of North Carolina," Jim Meikle told *The Times*, when asked whether the SLWLA Board had made the right decision in signing the agreement with the NCWRC.

"Having participated in those negotiations, I clearly understood exactly where they were coming from — what they were willing to give and what they were not willing to give. When presented with the alternatives, I felt that it was in the absolute best

interest of the community to sign the agreement."

The alternative was a long, costly, legal battle which the association had very little chance of winning whether it pursued that battle in the courts or in the legislature, Meikle told *The Times*. "And if, by chance, we had won, they told us they would have gotten the law changed to ensure their jurisdiction over Lake Auman. All the money would have been for naught, because we would have lost in the end."

The other option was to let NCWRC officers patrol Lake Auman, Meikle said. "They would come in once or twice a year and enforce only their rules and none of ours."

"Signing the agreement maintains our status as a private lake, and continues the association's control over our lake. Allowing them in would turn control over to them."

"Categorically, I am very comfortable that decision," Meikle said "the board voted their approval of the agreement, because the majority knew it was the best decision. I stand by that decision 100 percent. It was absolutely in the best interest of the community to do that."

Asked whether the board had the right priority in negotiating with the NCWRC, Meikle said "my concern was that the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association maintain control over the asset that it spent \$660,000 to acquire."

Meikle noted that the community's strong negative reaction to NCWRC's Easter Sunday raid made keeping wildlife resources officers off the lake an important priority, "but that wasn't the highest priority. My priority was more protecting our asset."

Responding to recent criticisms of the board for budgeting for a lake compliance officer, Meikle said hiring such an officer was something that the board had started talking about long before the NCWRC issue came up. "The lake is growing smaller because of the growing number of boats on it," Meikle said. Noting that it is hard for neighbors to enforce rules on neighbors, Meikle said the board determined that having a uniformed, non-resident person, would pro-

vide the best means of enforcing lake rules.

Meikle said he was comfortable with the way the board had handled its negotiations with the NCWRC. "You have elected officials whose job that it is to negotiate on the community's behalf," he told *The Times*. "Hugh Beckwith is the Association's Legal Director. We went out and hired a highly reputable, well recommended lawyer, whose sole purpose was to do the best that he could do in this situation."

Asked whether earlier drafts of the NCWRC agreement should have been shared with the community, Meikle said "We had earlier drafts that we were uncomfortable with. It was still in negotiation; nothing was final. Taking that to the community would have been unproductive, until we had something we were comfortable with."

"When we had that, we brought it to the community, and asked for their thoughts. One of the major points was a question about what it did to affect our liability. Not until we got a letter from our insurance company assuring us there was no impact on our liability did we sign the agreement. It was a board decision to sign it."

Question 2: President's role.

Meikle's description of the way in which he, as president, currently conducts board meetings suggested that the changed role advocated by other candidates may not be that much of a change.

He noted that it is the duty of president to set the agenda for board meetings under the SLWLA bylaws. "I put on the agenda the issues that the board is currently dealing with as well as anything that individual board members send to me to add to the agenda," Meikle said.

"Our bylaws state that I preside over board meetings. It has always been my natural tendency, both professionally, and while on the Board, to act as a leader of discussion, while giving everybody an opportunity for input."

"Generally, any comment I have, I reserve until every one else has made theirs," Meikle described going around the table and asking for the comments from each board member in

turn.

"I have made only one motion since being elected president," Meikle told *The Times*. "In a roll call vote of the board, I always vote last."

Question 3 :Maintenance

Meikle said that the board, in looking at the question of whether to bring its maintenance functions in-house, had formed a committee to review the option.

"There were several meetings of the committee," he said. "We came up with some really good research numbers and with some numbers that still needed a lot of work. This is not an issue that can be jumped into lightly. There are all sorts of costs associated with it. This is a situation where all the T's need to be crossed and all the I's need to be dotted correctly."

On the other hand, Meikle said, "the board feels it is an absolutely positive step forward for the community. It has all sorts of benefits. But we're still looking at the availability of money and some of the lingering questions. This is definitely not the appropriate year to move forward on this."

"There are cost and control benefits" to moving the maintenance functions in-house, Meikle told *The Times*. "But it is not a short-term payback — it's more of the middle term payback from the capital investment point of view."

"The board should feel totally comfortable that it has all facts and has considered all the ramifications before making its decision," Meikle concluded.

Question 4: Management

Meikle said the community is unlikely to be able to find the level of experience contributed by current employees like Denise Duncan and Tony Robertson in an outside management company.

"Denise has a photographic memory," Meikle said, "and Tony has a network of connections throughout the county that is invaluable. You're not going to get from any management company what we are getting with these people."

Responding to wording of *The Times* question, which noted the difficulty the Seven Lakes Landowners Association [SLLA]

is having building its reserves while maintaining benefits for its employees, Meikle said, "the SLLA had severe problems because they were giving their employees 100 percent medical coverage." When SLWLA first started to hire employees, he noted, they were hired as contract employees, with no benefits.

The board later recognized, Meikle said, that "in this day and age it is hard to get qualified employees unless you offer them some sort of medical coverage." The SLWLA insurance committee worked on the issue and ultimately arrived at a plan, adopted by the board, to provide medical coverage with a 30 percent contribution by employees.

Any management company hired to oversee the West side community would have to — just like the association itself — find qualified employees. And those employees very likely would come in with no existing knowledge of the community, Meikle told *The Times*.

Question 5: Referendum

"The community votes on elections to the board, we vote on the budget, and on dues increases," Meikle told *The Times*, when asked at what point a referendum should be used to make decisions. "At other times — like revisions to the rules and regulations, or like the Wildlife decision — the board seeks community input, tries to listen, and makes its decisions based on that input."

"You have the community of 1,700 people," Meikle said, "800 of whom live in the community. A portion of those have an idea of what is going on, but many do not follow the news. We can't leave decisions up to people who don't know what's going on."

"That's why we're a republic," Meikle continued. "We elect people who come in with an open mind, hear all the facts, and make a reasonable decision."

Question 6: Board relations

"It's the responsibility of anyone elected to the board to put all this behind them and attempt to work together," Meikle said when asked whether the cur-

(See "Tuton" p. 19)

Tuton: Always room for honest disagreement

(Continued from page 18)

rent rifts in the board can be repaired. "We need a bipartisan effort to build the community's trust in the Board and the Board members' trust in each other."

"That should be one of the major goals of anyone sitting on that Board," Meikle said. "We have to let bygones be bygones."

"In the best interests of this community, this Board must pull itself together, for the betterment of the community."

Ed Tuton

Question 1: NCWRC

Ed Tuton told *The Times* that he had several problems with the way the association's negotiations with the the NCWRC were handled.

"I think the decision was rushed," Tuton said. When SLWLA's special counsel Kurt Olson appeared before a general meeting of the association, he "indicated, iterated, and reiterated, that he felt we had had very good case for having the body of water declared a private pond," Tuton said. "If the counsel tells us we have a good case, and we paid \$30,000 to \$40,000 for his advice, then why didn't we take it?"

Secondly, Tuton told *The Times* that he felt the board hadn't negotiated hard enough with the Commission. "I have been involved in complex negotiations, and I have never seen anyone in a position of responsibility roll over and take the first offer. There wasn't a negotiation."

"Finally, there seemed to be some undo hurry in signing the agreement," Tuton said, "for reasons that have never been disclosed as far as I know."

Keeping Wildlife officers off Lake Auman was the right priority, Tuton said. "But I see nothing wrong with doing that by maintaining our position that we were a private pond not under the authority of the commission." When *The Times* noted that NCWRC and chief Kenneth Everhart was unwilling to negotiate on that point, Tuton responded, "nobody can make anything a non-negotiable. Once you have conceded a non-negotiable, you've lost the negotiations."

Asked whether the board was right to have conducted its negotiations with the Commission behind closed doors, Tuton told *The Times*, "I believe any decision that is made that impacts a significant number of the residents of the community, generally has

to be made public — unless we're assuming that the members of the community are either incompetent or incapable of having any rational insight into the process."

Keeping the negotiations quiet "factors the community members out of the decision, as well as any insights they might have to improve the process," Tuton said.

"I feel this is a very bright community, and that they might have been able to afford some insights that might be useful in the negotiation," he added.

Question 2: President's role

Whether the role of the SLWLA President needs to change is an open question for Tuton, he told *The Times*, but he definitely sees setting the board's agenda as the team effort.

"Each board member has a number of priorities that they want to address," Tuton said. "Each board member should assemble items to be discussed for the agenda . . . and the board members should prioritize these."

As far as the President's role, Tuton said, "the question comes down to how the presiding officer should run the show. In essence, when there is a lack of consensus, the president

becomes the tie breaker. He acts as a moderator between two sets of opinions, and makes sure that these are explored thoroughly."

Tuton that this idea of the President's role is taken from Robert's Rules of Order. He said he was open to seeing the president adopt this sort of role, but could also see the president functioning in a more traditional, leader-like role.

Question 3: Maintenance

Asked how the board should decide whether to move its maintenance functions in-house, Tuton said, "I think they should run the numbers."

"If you can hire something out cheaper than having it done in-house, hire it outside. On the other hand, if the numbers show savings based on having it in-house, have it in-house."

Making the decision comes down to "a simple cost benefit analysis," Tuton said. "One advantage of in-house is to be able to attend to the immediate issues very quickly," he added.

"In the long run, given the size of the community — which is growing — it is probably something that is going to have to happen sooner or later."

Question 4: Management

Tuton bought up the idea of hiring a management company to oversee the West side during SLWLA's Candidates Night.

"I believe people in the business probably know all lot more than anyone here about how to run the community more efficiently," Tuton told *The Times* in our interview.

While it's not an issue that needs to be addressed immediately, he said, "it really, seriously has to be considered." Tuton said that the long-range planning committee may be the group best equipped to evaluate whether to bring a management company on board.

Making that decision, again, comes down to a cost-benefit analysis, Tuton said. "It sounds easy, and it is not. My gut feeling is that it would take a great deal of analysis to really get down to whether it is a benefit to the community to do that. It would take a lot of time, work, and effort."

Question 5: Referendum

Tuton said he couldn't recall whether the association bylaws provided any direction about when a referendum should be used to make community decisions.

"I do think that the bylaws need to be scrutinized and redone," Tuton said, "redone to reflect the size of the community and what we have its stake."

"We need some checks and balances," Tuton said, and some limits on the size of expenditures that can be authorized by a single staff or board member. "These are things that have not been defined."

He said one trigger for a referendum might be an expenditure involving a certain defined amount of money or when the board is faced with a very critical decision. He noted that there was a vote on the construction of West Side Park — "a fairly expensive project. And that would be a good example of something that would require a vote by the community."

Tuton said that he was not in favor of relying on a referendum to replace good, information-based decision-making by the board of directors. "I think generally, if you have your finger on the pulse of the community, you can probably get enough input to give you a direction as a board member."

Question 6: Board relations

"I think essentially each board member feels they want to do the best they can for the community," Tuton said when asked whether would be possible to heal rifts in the board of directors.

"Starting with that, having open meetings, not having excessive executive sessions, I believe that the process should be pretty smooth and easy."

"There is always room for honest disagreement," Tuton said "if you disagree, say why. Then we'll have a vote. Whatever wins, wins. We'll go on from there."

"One of the first things we should do is really set a list of priorities," he added. "I think we are all in agreement with where we want to go — the difference is how. We need to lay the priorities out, and attack them one at a time."

Don't miss the 7 Lakes St. Patty's Day parade!

Come on out and join in the celebration of St. Patrick's Day during the traditional Seven Lakes Parade and Luncheon on Saturday, March 17.

Bands, clubs, organizations, businesses, and families with or without pets are all welcome to participate in the parade. Decorate your car, golf cart, truck, boat, bicycle, wagon, or just yourselves and be sure to wear something green!

The parade forms at the North Clubhouse and steps off at 11:00 am. Entry forms for the parade are available from John and Connie Loy at 673-5571, or John and Dorothy Kelly at 673-1605.

A delicious corned beef sandwich luncheon is served at 11:45 am, immediately following the parade. Irish music will be performed by The American Heritage Band under the direction of Larry McCune.

Ticket holders may carry-out or eat-in at the North Clubhouse. Tickets are \$5.00 and can be purchased at the North and South mail houses on March 2-3, and March 9-10, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm, and at the Westside mail house on these same days from

3:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

Luncheon tickets may also be purchased by contacting Ginny Heerema at 673-5150, Maureen Malone at 673-2553, Judy Collins at 673-5505, or Peggy McCallum at 673-1506.

And don't forget to nominate your favorite Little Miss so that she has a chance to be the reigning queen of the parade or a court member. Riding in a pretty convertible is so much fun!

Ballot boxes are located at the mail houses and at the Seven Lakes Health and Fitness Center. The drawing will be held on February 20 — so nominate your beautiful little girls, aged six to eleven years, now!

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 16

- **Project Linus "Make a Blanket Day" at Bookshop by the Lakes and The Coffee Scene** – 10:00 am – 5:00 pm. A special project day at the Bookshop. Drop off a completed blanket, quilt, or afghan, check out a blanket kit, or donate materials or funds and receive a coupon for a free cup of coffee courtesy of The Coffee Scene. Show your support and register for a prize drawing. For more information, call Pat Weber at 673-1457.
- **Sweetheart Swing Dinner & Dance at Seven Lakes Country Club** – 5:30 pm cocktails, 6:30 pm dinner, 7:00 pm music and dancing. The ever popular Glenn Davis will entertain guests at this Sweetheart Swing dinner and dance. Member's pricing, including tip, tax, and entertainment is \$22.50, non-members \$27.50.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 17

- **Gallery at Seven Lakes Open House** – 1:00 pm -

4:00 pm, St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Dr. A new gallery showing entitled Blossoms and Buildings, each work of art features flowers and or buildings. The artists will be on hand at the Open



What's When Calendar

House. Refreshments served. The Gallery at Seven Lakes is open Wednesday & Saturday afternoons.

- **Weymouth Woods Bird Walk** – 8:30am, Weymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve, Southern Pines. A two mile hike to look and listen for birds like white-throated sparrows, kinglets and more. Bring binoculars & field guides. Meet at the Weymouth Woods parking lot.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20

- **Project Linus Workshop** – 9:00 am – 4:00 pm, Seven Lakes North Clubhouse. A special Wednesday workshop for those who have a conflict with the Tuesday sessions. Call a neighbor and come help us make blankets for children in Moore County. Contact Pat Weber – 673-1457.
- **League of Women Voters Luncheon** – 11:30 pm, Paddock Restaurant at Longleaf Country Club. Guest speaker Ben Vaughn, Utility Operations Manager for the Moore County Public Works Department, will speak about water issues in Moore County. Luncheon cost is \$12; checks only, payable to LWVMC. To reserve a seat please call Charlotte Gallagher at 944-

9611 or Norma Sullins at 673-3980 by Friday, February 16.

- **Area "A" Small Area Plan Steering Committee** – 5:30 pm at Old West End Cafeteria building.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21

- **American Red Cross Blood Drive** – 1:00 pm – 6:00 pm, Seven Lakes North Clubhouse. Blood types O negative, O positive, B negative, B positive are at emergency levels. If you are in good health, over seventeen years old and 110 pounds please make it a date and bring a new donor with you. Time reservations made be made by calling 673-4931. Donors must present a donor card or photo ID. For information, call 673-1589.
- **Sunflix Movies at Sunrise Theater – The Painted Veil** showing Feb. 21 - 28, Weekdays at 7:30 pm and Saturday & Sunday at 2:30 & 7:30 pm. Drama,

Romance, Adaptation. (PG-13). A love story set in the 1920s about a young English couple—a conservative doctor and a restless society girl—who marry hastily, relocate to Hong Kong. There they betray each other easily, and find an unexpected chance at redemption and happiness while on a deadly journey into the heart of ancient China. 250 NW Broad St., Southern Pines 692-3611.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22

- **Seven Lakes Republican Precinct meeting** – 3:30 pm, Seven Lakes Fire Department building. Registration begins at 3:00 pm. Attendees will elect Precinct Officers consisting of a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, and as many Members-At-Large as deemed necessary to conduct business of the Precinct.
- **Seven Lake Landowners Budget Drop in Meeting** –



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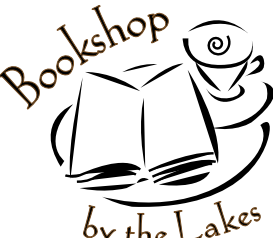


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Lie Down in Darkness
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for Landowners – 4:00 to 6:00 pm at the North Clubhouse.

- **Seven Lakes Landowners Association** – 7:30 pm, Board members work session at Seven Lakes North Clubhouse Conference Room. All welcome.
- **Bookshop by the Lakes** - 7:00 pm. Join the Book-group for a discussion of *Lie Down in Darkness* by William Styron at the Coffee Scene.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23

- **Lenten Friday Night Fish Fry** – 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm, St Anthony of Padua Parish Hall, 320 North Ashe St., Southern Pines. Baked and fried fish dinners with side dishes are eat in or take-out. Everyone is welcome! Dinners \$8.00 adults; \$4.00 ages six to twelve; and kids under six years old eat free! Fish Fry continue each Friday night through March 30.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

- **Kubotan Key Chain Self-Defense Class** – 9:00 am - 11:00 am, Goshin Dojo at intersection of Seven Lakes Drive and Rt. 211. Sensei Tim Smith, the only certified Kubotan instructor on the East Coast, presents a self-defense class using the Kubotan Key chain Defense System. Cost for the class and Kubotan Key chain is \$35. Previous participants may attend a Refresher class at same time for free. Contact Goshin Dojo at 673-5370, to reserve your spot as class size is limited to twenty students.
- **Big Medicine Concert** – 8:00 pm, at the corner of High and Blue, downtown Aberdeen. The Rooster's Wife, an organization dedicated to bringing live entertainment to the community of Aberdeen and surrounding areas, presents a house concert featuring Big Medicine, a string band specializing in music of the rural South: old-time melodies and mountain harmonies, ancient ballads, and archaic fiddle tunes, heart songs, hollers, hymns, and a touch of early bluegrass. Donations of \$10 are requested. For ticket infor-

mation, email therooster-swife@yahoo.com or call (910)944-7502.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25

- **Fayetteville Symphony Orchestra** – 3:00 pm, at Fayetteville State University's Seabrook Auditorium. The second concert of their subscription season, "The Many Talents of the FSO." Tickets for this event are available online at www.fayettevillesymphony.org. Prices are \$22 for Adults, \$18 for Seniors/Military, \$8 for Students, and free for children twelve years and under. A small reception will follow the performance in the lobby of Seabrook Auditorium as a chance to meet the soloists. For more information please call the FSO 433 4690.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26

- **The Sandhills Natural History Society Meeting** – 7:00 pm. Karen Beck will present a program on "Living With Urban Wildlife." Visitors welcome! Call 910-692-2167 for meeting location or visit our website at www.sandhillsnature.org.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 27

- **Seven Lakes West Landowners Association** – 7:30 pm, monthly General meeting at West Side Community Park Center.

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28

- **Seven Lakes Landowners Association** – 7:30 pm, General meeting at Seven Lakes North Clubhouse. Public welcome.

THURSDAY, MARCH 1

- **Women of Seven Lakes Meeting** – 2:00 pm, Seven Lakes North Clubhouse. Rene Jennings-White of the Skin Renewal Clinic will speak on anti-aging and skin care. Special needs for "Friend to Friend" donations are laundry detergent, room

air deodorizer, batteries, light bulbs, and kitchen-size trash bags.

- **Weekly Canasta** – 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm, Moore County Senior Enrichment Center,

8040 Hwy 15/501 – 2 miles North of the traffic circle. Weekly Canasta game for Moore County residents. Call 215-0900 for information and to sign up.

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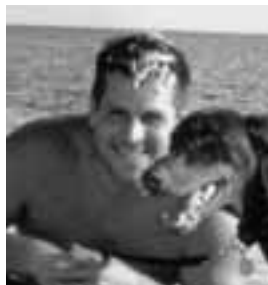


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Editorial

Nickel and Dimed in Seven Lakes

Let's imagine for a moment that you worked for *The Seven Lakes Times* — served, perhaps as a correspondent in one of our far-flung foreign bureaus: Derby, maybe, or Harris' Crossroads.

Let's imagine that budget time was upon us, you sat down with your editor, and he said:

"Scoop, you're a loyal employee, and competent, too. Best of the best. We consider ourselves lucky to have had you for the past dozen years."

"But times are tight. The price of newsprint is up, that new computerized page layout system set us back plenty, and we need to put back a little cash for next year in case Michael Florence makes a run for the Senate and we have to open a bureau in Washington."

"We really appreciate all your hard work over the years, but I'm afraid we're going to have to freeze salaries this year. And we'll have to cut out that match on your IRA contributions — I know it's the only retirement plan we've got for you, but times are tough, boy."

"Besides, we're not going to ask you to pay any more on your health insurance this year — percentage wise, that is. You'll have to pay whatever your twenty percent share of the premium increase is, of course."

"Next year, we'll be upping that to 25 percent — but maybe we'll give you a little cost of living increase to help pay for it — if we don't have to replace the office coffeepot or run into any other major capital expenses, that is."

Now, if you were Scoop, you might come out of that meeting feeling just a wee bit under-appreciated. And you would definitely be looking at a smaller dollar amount on the bottom line of your paycheck. If you were Scoop, you might not feel all that valued, or respected, as an employee of *The Times*.

So, just like Scoop, the folks who mow the grass, feed the horses, manage the recreation programs, and run the operation over at the Seven Lakes Landowners Association may be feeling a little under-appreciated right now.

That's because the Association's President and Treasurer, after combing through the budget, looking for ways to save money, figured the best way to do that was to carve it out of the paychecks of SLLA employees.

So they carved out a few thousand dollars of proposed salary increases and dropped the Association's matching contributions to employee IRAs. The Association will still pay 80 percent of employee health insurance premiums; both the association and its employees will likely see an increase in the actual dollar amount they pay.

When you add all that up, it means less take-home pay for a lot of employees. That's not a good motivator; and it's not news that any of the current board members would welcome coming from their employer.

In fairness, the Association is caught in the same bind as a lot of employers: health insurance costs keep going up — at double-digit rates. And the Board of Directors is trying to address that problem by shifting a portion of the premium payments onto its employees and by ending a longtime deal that had the association covering employee deductibles in order to reduce Association premiums.

That's hard for employees to swallow — but it's arguably a fair move toward sharing the risk of higher health care prices. Unfortunately, when the SLLA Board made that move a year ago, it didn't proportionately increase employee salaries to soften the blow. So, everyone got a cut in their take home pay.

Now, everyone is about to get another cut in their take home pay — and lose their only retirement benefit other than Social Security.

As Jeff Herman rightly pointed out in a recent special session on the proposed budget, the Board of Directors has spent a lot of cash recently on new technology: barcode gates, computer networks, surveillance cameras, vehicle speed recording devices, and so on. Some of that technology has yet to be installed, so it's too early to judge whether those expenditures will have a positive impact on the quality of life and property values in the community.

There's no question, on the other hand, that both the quality of life and the property values in Seven Lakes are improved by having talented, experienced, and dedicated employees to maintain the plantings at the front gate, keep the roadsides and dams mowed, keep the fence and playground equipment repaired, develop day camps and bus trips, hire the lifeguards, feed the horses, get the bills out on time, and help the dozens of residents who walk into the Landowners Office every day with problems large and small.

Ed Nuti was right on target in that budget meeting when he said, "Good employees are an amenity, too."

If the Seven Lakes Landowners Association has incompetent employees, the Board should fire them. If the Association has too many employees, the board should cut some positions.

What the Board of Directors should not do is carelessly demoralize its entire work force by nickel-and-diming the paychecks of solid, competent, experienced employees.

Winter pursuits

Now that we are all in the grip of cold winter weather please allow me to sound off about some wonderful fun you can have sitting in a comfortable chair with a good reading light behind you. Oh yes, and with a good television screen before you.

First, a good book, *The Baptisms of Spider Webb* by Dub Graham, a Westside neighbor of all of us. Graham, a retired attorney and executive of Progress Energy has written a book of fiction that takes place in Jefferson Springs with some action happening in East End. Now

Do any of you remember *Brideshead Revisited* produced by Masterpiece Theater for television in 1981?

Based on a novel by Evelyn Waugh, this series was so popular in Great Britain and the United States that a number of restaurants and theaters closed their doors on Sunday nights. The cast for this series was great. Jeremy Irons, Anthony Andrews, John Gielgud, Claire Bloom, and Lawrence Olivier were the lead actors. Great actors all.

This series can be secured from the Netflix company in six disks. Other film companies

surely have this series. I recommend it highly.

Oh, I guess that I have to get you out of your lounge chair or bed so that

Ollie's Thoughts

Oliver Gossard



the truth is that Graham grew up in Jackson Springs and knew West End very well. And I suspect that the colorful characters that spring to life in his "novel" could be identified with their real names by older citizens of Eagle Springs.

This is a big book. I read ten or twenty pages of it before I go to sleep at night. As I read about the lives of the wonderful people of "Jefferson Springs" I am moved to laugh from time to time. Or sometimes tears come to my eyes.

You would enjoy this book.

you can see a movie or two. First Helen Mirren certainly should win an Academy Award for her lead role in *The Queen*. She could play either Queen Elizabeth with great skill, as she has. How many of you were privileged to see her play the role of the very competent alcoholic detective recently on British TV? Great actress.

One final negative word. Haven't we all head enough yet from and about Donald Trump, Rosie O'Donnell, and people like that skinny Hilton girl? Good grief!

SEVEN LAKES TIMES

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Northside 'security hole' is no more

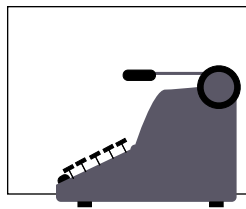
Dear Editor:

I am writing this in response to the letter published in the February 2 issue of *The Seven Lakes Times* titled, "Security Hole?" I am the owner of the land where the fence line and accompanying gate in question are located. I hope that this letter will be able to belay any fears or concerns that have been created as a result of the letter published in the last issue.

Let me begin by stating up front that at no time did the Seven Lakes Board ever give me permission to "come and go at my leisure." Any one, who is familiar with the Board and Dalton Fulcher, knows that they would never do anything that irresponsible. There have been no "handshakes or promises made" and frankly, I am insulted by the implications and must clarify things if for no other reason than to show that the Seven Lakes Board has done nothing but look out for the best interests of our community.

The issue of putting up a fence on the property line, where Seven Lakes has a ten foot easement along the border, came up as a

result of a pattern of vehicles driving through the property, using the upper portion of the driveway as a way to exit and enter Seven Lakes North. On one occasion, there was a near accident, at which point I brought the matter to the atten-



Your Turn

John Fletcher
Seven Lakes North

tion of Dalton Fulcher and Chad Beane. We met several times to discuss the long term options as this also happens to be the area that the Seven Lakes horse trail crosses the property. Seven Lakes has been given a twenty foot easement in the areas where this trail traverses the property. The solution that was decided upon was to erect a fence line along this easement, leaving only enough room for the horses to cross, but not for vehicles. The time frame of these discussions was around late spring or early summer.

Some of you may recall that during this time, the Seven Lakes maintenance staff was involved in several projects, the biggest one being the sealing of pavement cracks and holes along our roads. The expense associated with renting the equipment for this project made finishing it first a priority. However, they did take a day to at least begin the fence line in

the area that vehicles were using in order to put an end to the access and egress that had been going on. Unfortunately, I was not in town the day that they did this and they did not have a survey map with them, resulting in most of the fence line being off Seven Lakes' land. Once this was brought to my attention I informed Seven Lakes that the line had to be moved. The maintenance staff does not have unlimited resources, so it was several weeks before they were able to free up crews to get back to the fencing project. Because

I was required to remove the fence from the neighbors land, this left several weeks with no fence. Almost immediately people started using it again. Over the holidays we were finally able to get the entire 400 feet of fence line put up. I would like to mention here that in order to erect this fence line, I purchased the material myself at a cost of over \$2,400. I too am concerned with the safety of Seven Lakes. My wife and I moved here in 1999. We have four children and we are very aware of the security risks associated with people being able to come and go as they please.

With regard to the sixteen foot gate in question, this was included in the fence line to address some concerns that were brought up when we first applied to build a horse farm in Seven Lakes North. Some of you may recall the issues that were brought up two years ago in association with this. One was the possibility of unwanted debris falling off of trucks onto the Shagbark Court when hauling away manure, transporting horses or bringing in hay. To alleviate that

concern, permission to use the gate was granted for that purpose only. From Seven Lakes' standpoint, it does not hurt to have an alternate gate in the case of an emergency. I will say at this point that we were remiss in not keeping the gate closed for several days after it was installed, but did close it immediately when a neighbor expressed concern about this. Again, in defense of the board, they beat me to the punch and locked up the gate before I did it myself. The gate has not been opened since.

Hopefully, this clears things up a bit for my neighbors. I have to say that, after what happened

(See "Fletcher," p. 22)

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Get your Sunday Times at Friendly Mart

Dear Editor:

Three or four weeks ago when driving back from Olmstead Village with my Sunday edition of The New York Times, a drive which I have taken with regularity over the past ten years, I decided that I would ask the new owner of our Seven Lakes Shell Station if he would consider stocking this paper on Sundays only.

This was not an inconsequential request on my part for in addition to the cost of the paper itself, I estimate that over this period of time I have probably driven 8320 miles and spent \$695

for gas just to enjoy this paper and its various sections (business, travel, arts and leisure, travel, week in review etc.) to say nothing of the magazine section's crossword puzzle which I start and allow my wife to complete.

Well, I "screwed up my courage," took the "bull by the horn," and e-mailed Randy Merritt, a gentleman whom I had never met, asking whether he would consider stocking the Sunday New York Times in the Shell Station. Within an hour I received a response via e-mail to the effect that on Sunday, I would have my "Times" and that I wouldn't have to drive into Olmstead Village to get it.

I want to thank Randy and in

so doing inform the "Seven Lakes Times" readership that the Sunday New York Times is now available at our local Shell Station.

*Ron Erskine
Seven Lakes North*

Fletcher

(Continued from page 21)

two years ago, with all of the false rumors; it would have been more advantageous for anyone with a concern like this to have verified the facts before sending up an alarm signal. Time and resources are required to respond to rumors and I have been contacted by two Seven Lakes' employees plus a board member since the end of January regarding this matter. The board member had to give up personal time on a weekend and of course, the employees are being paid out of our dues.

If this does not clear things up enough, rather than sending threatening letters to the board, why not simply voice the concern? In the seven plus years since we moved here, the board and staff have always proven themselves to listen to reason. I would have no trouble replacing the gate with a permanent fence line if that is what the community wants. All one has to do is ask.

*John Fletcher
Seven Lakes North*

Harry sez:

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Many Building Lots Available!

Salary freeze is a necessary first step

Dear Editor:

The Seven Lakes Landowners Association budget review meeting resulted in a proposal of what amounts to a freeze in pay for our employees for the next fiscal year. While some may consider this a draconian measure, I view this as a necessary first step in achieving fiscal responsibility.

It is unfortunate that this may unfairly deny someone a raise when his or her job description and job performance merits a raise.

What do I mean by this statement? The market should determine the "value" of certain jobs. If janitors make \$8.00 an hour in the open market in this area, then we should not be giving a raise to a janitor that is currently making \$12.00 an hour regardless of the quality of his work or the number of years he has been employed. But, if he makes \$7.50 an hour and is doing a good job, he should be given a raise. We should pay slightly above market when we have a valued quality employee.

From my view, some of our workers will not get deserved raises because we must get control of our overall employee

cost. Thus, I said this is the first required step. This step should be followed with further evaluation so in the future we may be fair to those employees that deserve pay increases.

Each job should be evaluated based on three major criteria: 1. Do we need this position? 2. Are we paying at or near "mar-

ket value" for the jobs we do need? 3) Is the person currently doing the job the best we can find for the job?

My personal view is that our "Chiefs" to "Indians" ratio has us top heavy in cost. During the last fourteen months, Company Police has been eliminated, the security contract with the Seven

Lakes West has been terminated, and the day-to-day operation of our gates has been moved to a private contractor.

Each of these three areas required management time that is no longer needed. Yet, we still have the same amount of management and pay the high salaries associated with it.

Railroads paid "firemen" to ride on trains long after coal was not used in firing the steam

driven locomotives. Hopefully our community will demand better from our Board so deserving employees will not face another year without "merit evaluation" of their job and pay levels. Equally important, with the savings we can start the process of building our reserves without dues increases or assessments.

D. Alan Shaw
Seven Lakes South

Letters to the Editor



Good Morning, February

You have beckoned to us as you trod with frozen feet, to say, "Good morning." We have such short winters, that our conscious selves relax and we "welcome you" once again.

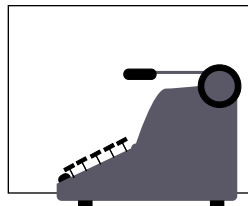
directness, and deep respect for our country and our flag. Yes, dear February, you are wonderful.

And as the solar system plods on, while we doze, we keep one eye open as March is on your heels.

St. Valentine ties it all up in rib-

Your Turn

Betty Stemmer
Seven Lakes North



Famous presidents are born who exude courage, stalwart

bons, bows, and sweetness – but mostly with love.

Get your event in The Times!

Got a great get-together? Serving up some savory stew? Need a volunteer of two?

Put it in The Times' What's When Calendar.

We're always happy to help non-profits promote their events. See page 2 for contact info and deadlines.

We invite you to come worship with us

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Real Estate

By SANDY STEWART

REALTOR

LET THERE BE LIGHT

You telephone rings. It is your REALTOR saying that he is coming right over with a prospect. You hang up the phone. What's the next thing you do? Turn on every light in the house. Why?

Because you want to give the prospect the best image you can of the comfort, beauty and livability you are offering. In other words, you want to sell a home not a house. And full illumination is the best way to give your home that "lived-in" look. Furniture and rugs and fixtures take on a warm glow from the proper lighting. Here are a few bright ideas:

Turn on every lamp in the living room, bedrooms and family room. Be careful about turning on the over-

head lights in these rooms for it could be harsh and make the room look uninviting. Turn on every light in a storage room or closet. Go all out in illuminating the kitchen - the cheerier the better. Brighten up the bathroom too - but carefully choose the right wattage for bulbs by the mirror, pick the most flattering one. Remember, it's just as important to have lights on in the afternoon as it is for a night-time showing.

...

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E-mail: sandys@ac.net.
I'm here to help!

Do it for love! Spay Day USA is Feb. 27

Dear Editor:

One of the best things a responsible pet owner can do for a cat or dog is to have her or him spayed or neutered. Spaying greatly reduces the change of breast cancer and prevents various reproductive tract disorders, while neutering eliminates the risk of various testicular diseases. In addition, pets that have been spayed or neutered are less likely to roam, which

means they are less likely to get in fights with other animals, get hit by cars, or be abused by cruel people. Finally, pets who are spayed or neutered do not add to the heartbreaking tragedy of overpopulation where these animals fall victim to the three to four million homeless cats and dogs each year that are euthanized.

The Humane Society of the United States wants everyone to

“Do It For Love” and take part in the thirteenth annual Spay Day USA on February 27. To volunteer or have an animal altered, Moore County resident’s may call 947-2631 for more information. Moore Humane Society has made arrangements with

participating veterinary clinics to sponsor spays and neutering on Spay Day USA asking only for a nominal donation of \$25.00 to the Moore Humane Society.

You can learn more about the importance of this day by logging onto the national website of

www.SpayDayUSA.org. Together, we can ensure that every companion animal enjoys a long, happy, and healthy life in a loving home.

Gary C. Kunce
President
Moore Humane Society

A vote for Stephan

Dear Editor:

In March, the residents of Seven Lakes North and South will be voting for new members of the Landowners Board.

At the top of the list of nominees is Donna Stephan. She is thoughtful, intelligent, energetic, and has the ability to make the North and South sides of Seven Lakes the best they can be.

Since building a home here with husband Bob in 1991,

Donna has served on the Community Standards Committee and recently became a member of the Architectural Review Committee. Her experience with Boards include five years on the Moore County Literacy Board; two of which she served as President.

She deserves your vote and you won't be disappointed.

Nancy and Paul Hartung
Seven Lakes South

Budget review?

Dear Editor:

Seven Lakes West Landowners recently received a Proposed Budget for 2007/2008 and a ballot to vote on the budget and for three candidates to be Board Directors.

My first thought was, why vote on the budget? The SLWLA Bylaws (Article VII, Section 9d) states ‘... in the event a majority of those Members voting reject the proposed budget, the Treasurer and Directors shall immediately review the budget.’ This puts the Board in complete control over approving the budget.

What if a majority did reject the budget. What kind of ‘review’ do you think this Board would do?

Under the present leadership, the Board would most likely perform the ‘review’ in a closed Working Session and the budget would stand as proposed.

To change the Bylaws to be more specific in the event a majority rejects the budget would take several months.

However, we can change the makeup of the Board next month by voting for James Haggard, Kathy Kirst and Ed Tuton.

These three candidates are more than qualified and will include Association Members in addressing community issues.

Eddie J. Jackson
Seven Lakes West

Seven Lakes EMS Phone Book

Get your copy of the new 2007 EMS Seven Lakes Phone Directory at the Seven Lakes North Landowners Office or the West Side Community Center.

The cost is only \$6. Proceeds from the directory benefit the Seven Lakes Volunteer EMS.



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Lot 4208 - SOLD! - \$55,000

Lot 5128 - SOLD! - \$35,000

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Community must face problems head-on

This community desperately needs to heal, but not by ignoring serious problems. In order to go forward we must address the problems and then focus on the work to be accomplished.

New leadership is needed on the SLWLA Board to address problems and focus on responsible development in the best interest of the entire Seven Lakes West community. The SLWLA Board needs to become professionally oriented and productive. Several members of our board have presented their views in this newspaper, and, since I will serve on the board for another two years, the community deserves to know my stand.

I have been on many boards throughout my career as a psychologist and I am disappointed at the level of dysfunction I have encountered on this one. Board members who disagree with the status quo or who attempt to discuss alternatives have endured harassment, name-calling, shouting, and sometimes foul and explicitly degrading language. Betty Milligan's letter to the editor is correct on all counts. It is not hearsay.

After voicing my opinion at a public meeting last October, I was called into a closed meeting under false pretenses to be told, among other things, "we don't air our dirty laundry." If the board were doing things right, there would be no dirty laundry.

I could write a novel about our board that would sound like "Lord of the Flies." However, it is now important to focus on key issues facing SLWLA and not be caught up in the present negative atmosphere. Those issues include:

Leadership- Autocratic management style is outdated and not appropriate for our community. The task of the board is not to handle day-to-day problems but to provide leadership, support, and direction for the community manager and paid staff. Meetings need to be conducted in an orderly manner. A code of conduct is needed as well as strong leadership and vision. We need leaders who are not surrounded by controversy and distrust. Our community is growing in complexity, and requires leaders who have the ability and

knowledge to deal with diverse issues and outside agencies.

Communication – There is communication to the community after decisions are made, often in "Executive Sessions." However, the community frequently does not have

audits of association books. The reluctance of some members of the current board to do so has fed into community suspicion. Yearly reviews, while cheap, cannot take the place of audits. Our reserves have been declining

over the past five years and need to be built to deal with expenses that we know are coming, not to mention contingencies. If

we continue to drain our reserves, there will be limited funds for required maintenance of our dam or roads. Alternatives should be considered and decisions made for best utilizing our financial resources.

Long Range Planning – Volunteers have put a lot of work into identifying components for achievement of the stated community vision. Rather than dragging our feet, we should have a

plan for implementation and initiate action to achieve that vision. Responsible development is critical to our quality of life and for protection of property values.

In sum, we have a great place to live and a community of won-

derful neighbors. Lake Auman, Beacon Ridge Country Club, and our Community Center all need to be recognized as key assets of our community and

(See "Fewkes," p. 26)



Your Turn

Mary Anne Fewkes
SLWLA Board

its opinions considered, or even hear about important issues, early enough to have input. This has led to a very destructive atmosphere of suspicion. We need open work sessions and improved input mechanisms such as utilization of the neighborhood representatives, issue forums, etc.

Fiscal Responsibility – We need to have regular certified


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113 Clay Circle, Seven Lakes West
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 82, 83, 84, 85 **4 FOR \$120,000**
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 198, 199 . . . **UNDER CONTRACT. . . \$7500 EACH**

Westside incivility unworthy of community

Dear Editor:
 As a person who seeks to avoid conflict at all costs, I find it difficult to write this letter. I am appalled at the tenor of the assaults on the character of current and past Board members. I dislike the lack of civility that I see, and I don't think it is worthy of our community – a community people have chosen because “it just felt good.” Obviously good people can disagree. I would not want to live in a community where everyone thinks alike, and no one has a variant thought. There are, however, better ways to get ideas across than by the use of personal attacks. We are currently choosing very qualified people, friends and neighbors, to represent all of our interests as members of the Westside Landowners Board. We have a representative form of government incorporated into our covenants. This means our Board Members, with our input, must make the hard decisions required to run our Association. We may not always agree with the decisions they are called on to make, but they deserve our respect, even when we don't agree. I hope everyone will pull together at the end of this election to maintain the special character of Seven Lakes West, the community we have all chosen to live in.

*Mary Price
 Seven Lakes West*

Ballot errors cause concern

Dear Editor:
 About a week ago, I received an envelope from the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association with information pertaining to the election of new board members. The letter mentioned that there were six candidates running for office while the profiles included suggested only four. Also included was a ballot and no return envelopes with which to send in the vote. Additional instructions suggesting the date for reading of the ballots was March 18 and on another page noted that the ballots have to be received before 2:00 pm, March 28. This letter began with greetings and ended up Sincerely James Meikle, President. I am assuming the president would either formulate or edit all correspondence that he would sign. After alerting the administration office of the errors I received another packet which included the same letter of instructions corrected with sticky tapes and two envelopes with which to return my ballot. When I spoke to the office personnel they informed me that a postcard is being printed with the corrections and will be mailed

to all Seven Lakes West Landowners. I understand this oversight will cost the association in excess of \$500.00. Noting the inability to present corrections and failing to send the proper envelopes I am wondering how the ballot counting is to be conducted. Hopefully an independent group will be present to assist.

*Michael Keenan
 Seven Lakes West*

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Postpone election

Dear Editor:
 The problems with the ballot for the SLWLA Board election threatens the validity of the process. The instructions list two deadline dates which leads to confusion that could mean some ballots would not be in by the intended deadline. Apparently, some mailings did not include the white envelope; others were missing the small manila envelope. Then there's the matter of the proxy ballot offered to absentee landowners naming a specific Board member to cast that vote as a default option. Because of the current controversy surrounding recent Board actions, we would like to see the election delayed, re-thought, and carried out in a more thoughtful and fair manner.

*Ed and Nelda Cockman
 Seven Lakes West*

Fewkes

(Continued from page 25)
 managed accordingly. We must not allow intimidation, secrecy, and short-term thinking to cripple our efforts. To move forward, we need knowledgeable leaders committed to openness, civility, and the interests of the community. The three candidates, James Haggard, Kathy Kirst, and Ed Tuton have my support. All three would bring a vision to the board of openness, respect, and good management. They might not always vote unanimously, but each one has the integrity to vote what they feel is in the best interest of our community. The problems which all of us face in this wonderful community are readily identifiable, and certainly can be corrected by a Board of Directors that functions like a team, has a well-articulated vision, understands their mission, and always decides in the best interest of our physical environment and of the landowners.

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Time for a change in Seven Lakes West

Dear Editor:

My wife and I have lived in Seven Lakes West since 1994 and have helped elect many Board members. We have always felt that the board should represent the residents on the West Side and not take the position that they have been elected to make decisions for us.

For the most part, past boards have worked together regarding community issues and had respect for each others opinions and for the community's desires.

Articles published in *The Times*, written by many highly respected residents in our community question the behavior, intentions, and politics of some members of the current Board. The behavior and language of some members of the current Board has been reported to be outrageous in closed Board work sessions. There is no excuse for bad language because of disagreements in dealing with community issues.

All meetings should be conducted in a professional and dignified manner. We applaud a difference of opinion by board members.

We don't want a group of 'yes' people on the Board. We want Board members who have to provide well, thought-out, researched programs for the residents of our community. We also expect the board to respect the decisions of the community and not take it upon themselves to go against the will of the community.

Apparently, an appointment was made to the ARC position on the Board based a personal friendship. There certainly is more than one qualified resident to fill this position. And all of them should have been interviewed for the position. It is not the first time an appointment has been made and all qualified residents did not have have an equal opportunity to apply for the position.

Why have we lost so many devoted Board members; some resigning for personal reasons, some leaving because they had been excluded from information and discussions preventing them from fulfilling their responsibility? It is with regret that we read of Betty Milligan's decision to

withdraw her name from the list of candidates. Betty's performance as Community Recreation Director has been exemplary. She has certainly scheduled many activities that have encour-

aged community involvement, and community spirit. One must wonder what could have occurred that forced a Board member so devoted to the community to feel that her efforts in the future

would be fruitless. The President of our Board is not interested in the desires of the community.

At a community Board meeting it was obvious by a show of hands that the majority of those in attendance did not want the board to sign the agreement giving the Wildlife Commission any jurisdiction of Lake Auman.

Our president decided that the Board should go against the wishes of the community. It appears that he has lost the respect of past members of the Board, the community, and certainly control of behavior at

closed Board meeting.

We are completely in agreement with the article written by Gerhard Hergenbahn in his letter to *The Times* in the January 19 issue.

Open Board meetings would certainly put a damper on inappropriate and disrespectful behavior and also provide residents with information on issues before final decisions are made.

We urge our community to consider all that has been published in the last few weeks and to vote wisely.

Jerry and Priscilla Snee
Seven Lakes West

Editor's note —

About your letters

We at *The Seven Lakes Times* are very gratified that so many of you have chosen our newspaper as the vehicle in which to express your thoughts, hopes and concerns about the upcoming elections.

Providing a forum for this community is one of our primary missions.

Like Mary Price, whose letter appears on Page 26, we are concerned that the tenor of some of the letters you have submitted may risk doing longer term damage than their authors intend.

We, too, would encourage you to remember that we are

all neighbors here, not paid pundits sitting across some "Cross-fire" table, paid to inflict maximum damage with our verbal thrusts and parries.


Beyond that concern is a practical matter: length.

The Snee's letter that appears on this page is roughly 550 words. That's plenty long.

Michael Keenan's letter on page 26 is less than 250 words, and gets his point across nicely.

We want you to continue to use us as a community forum. We encourage you to mind your length, and your manners.

— Greg Hankins, Editor



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Westside election presents critical choice

Dear Editor:

To all Westside property owners: Why this is important . . . Now!

We all want our property to increase in value as the market grows. Subsequently, we must have a strong interest, and concern, in what is happening now with the upcoming election of three positions on the Seven Lakes West Landowners board.

I recognize serving in any capacity on our homeowners board or its committees is a volunteer position. I respect and appreciate earnest volunteers on our behalf. These are our neighbors. All comments are related to effectiveness keen to our issues.

The election is officially March 18 but the critical time is now since all home and land owners have received their ballots and could cast them . . . or offer a proxy . . . at any time up to March 18. And when you realize that only half of the lots in SLW are built on, that means that more than half of the ballots could be cast by absentee owners who may not be in tune with current Westside happenings.

There are four candidates to fill three board positions. One of those candidates is Jim Meikle, current Board President. There were six candidates but two withdrew because of existing board dissension and acrimony over recent handling of key issues by the board.

One of those key issues championed by President Meikle is the "agreement" to give-in to the NC Wildlife Commission, against the desire of the majority of concerned residents. This "agreement" compels us to run our lake, our most significant asset, as if it were a public body of water, thus giving up the private lake status we enjoyed and subjecting our lake to possible subsequent state involvement. We also agreed to hire our own compliance officer to fine us if necessary if we didn't register our Lake Auman boat with the state and obtain fishing licensed to fish in our private lake.

That deal will cost us an additional \$8,000 to 10,000/year . . . plus boat and equipment necessary . . . plus \$40,000 in directly related attorney fees. Some on the board suggested we first go to our state representatives for

help with the thought that we could avoid attorney expenses. We didn't do that. The state gets the money and we foot the bills to assure that happens. We drive a hard bargain . . . not!

Particularly worrying is the resistance to a financial audit going back five years as has been advocated more than once in open board meetings. The 2007 revenue budget is above one million dollars! A current proposal is for a one year audit. Our last audit certification was five years ago, and I don't know if a certification is the same as a full audit. But in any case, it has been five years. With all the growth and change, there is no definitive feeling of knowing where or how all the money is going.

President Meikle advised that a \$35 increase in dues is requested for next year, which raises the question of why?

As homeowners increase in number, so does our revenue, while some of our reserves for important contingencies such as dam, road, and lake have decreased. With our community growing and becoming more complex, we need a full basis of understanding of how dollars

are spent.

The latest key issue is the appointment of Bill Mamel, former SLWLA Board President who already served six years on the board, to fill the spot of board member Mike Finney who resigned his position last month. Prior to that, Bill Parker also resigned reportedly over derision on the board. Many homeowners and candidates for election to the board felt that Dale Erickson, a board candidate, was very qualified for the role and he volunteered to step into that position.

Many homeowners expressed the opinion that, with six candidates (at that time), the position could have been filled with the election of four, instead of three candidates, or the outright appointment of Erickson instead of reaching to the past for an old friend of Meikle. When Mamel was chosen, Erickson withdrew his candidacy.

Subsequently, board member Betty Milligan, who is responsible for all of the social events progress and beautification of our properties, unhappy with the board direction under Meikle and the voting block that seemed to be forming with the appoint-

ment of Bill Mamel, withdrew her name for re-election.

One thing is certain...this board, under Jim Meikle's leadership, has made few happy. There are reports of private board session name-calling and incivility, public comment at board meetings of significant unhappiness with the proceedings, and unrest. Calls for open work sessions have been rejected.

The dissatisfaction with the resolution of the issues at hand, and in general and the lack of confidence in the forward thinking of the board as represented by President Meikle is dangerous to our future.

Not being one who knows everything board related, I, as a homeowner know only one thing I must do for protection of my pri-

mary asset, my home. If there is dissent and the board is split into voting blocks, change the board. We must vote for three new . . . and very qualified . . . board candidates and not vote for the re-election of Jim Meikle, the only sitting board member running for re-election. You have a vested interest in Seven Lakes West. You should be informed in any way you can. Reading *The Seven Lakes Times* is a must as well as any other way you gather information.

We will vote for an end to all of this derision. We will vote for fresh faces. We will vote for Jim Haggard, Kathy Kirst, and Ed Tuton, all with desired skills, experience and eagerness to serve.

*Jerry & Kathy Constantino
Seven Lakes West*

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Best solution? SLWLA board should resign.

Dear Editor:

On Thursday, February 8, I emailed the following to Jim Meikle, with copies emailed to Hugh Beckwith, Ray MacKay, and Virgil Reid.

Although I do not expect to receive any response, I would like to have the Seven Lakes West Homeowners read the contents of the email that was sent. Many SLWLA members have offered their comments to *The Times* stating their feelings concerning the mess that we now have with respect to the leadership of the SLWLA Board.

This is an opportunity for the SLWLA membership to choose new leaders. We have excellent candidates in Ed Tuton, Kathy Kirst, and Jim Haggard. Please use your voting privilege wisely!

Text of email sent:

You and your "cronies" have got

to go. It is a disgrace to see how badly the leadership has become under your regime. You, Hugh Beckwith, Ray MacKay, and Virgil Reid have seen fit to transform the Board into your own little "club," with very little regard to the input and concerns that have been submitted to the Board by various homeowners, interest groups, and/or clubs over the last year or so.

The SLWLA Board has seen many good Board Members pass in and out of the organization as if it had a revolving door. Why is this? I believe it is because of your inept and underhanded leadership style, coupled with the "good ole boy" mentality of those mentioned above.

Let's recap some of this:

For quite a long time, requests have been made to have more open meetings to no avail.

For well over a year virtually

nothing was done regarding the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission and our apparent commitment to keep Lake Auman a private lake, or, at the very least, too little has been done too late.

What used to be a common practice was that of an outside audit of our Annual Statements of Income and Expenses. It has been many years since an audit has taken place, and as of this date, I believe that even a one year past review is not a done deal. This is unacceptable.

Under past Treasurer's accounting principles, General Funds were broken down by project content, and not co-mingled into one Miscellaneous Fund, as is now the case. Good luck in trying to see any audit trail.

Our infra-structure "guru" seems to have his own priorities that may not fully express the

interests of the landowners. It is nice that Ray has seen fit to have his own street so nicely redone when our main roads are less than perfect in places. Also, let me refer you to what I would title "Mackay's Folly"—the relatively new exit road that virtually is a few thousand feet that leads nowhere—why there? and why so upscale? It does look good, but, how many decades before all other roads will look even half that good?

The only dignified and civil way out of this mess is to get you all to resign. I realize that Virgil is in his last months, however I

felt compelled to include him in my list.

My intent here is not to be vindictive or overly negative, but, to try to be as factual as possible without being privy to all the information, which, I might add should all be public knowledge anyway. To that end I apologize if I possibly did not hit everything perfectly in my list of shortcomings.

I sincerely hope that you and the other Board Members listed above take this request seriously.

Terry L. Card
Seven Lakes West

West Side needs fresh air

Dear Editor:

Thanks to your complete coverage and the detailed letters to the editor which you have printed, I feel I have a good understanding of the mess the Westside community finds itself in.

This letter is difficult for me to write as I have friends on the Board and its committees as well as friends and neighbors who appear extremely qualified and wish to be on the Board.

Without rehashing the arguments I feel the situation which we find ourselves in is intolerable and an embarrassment.

I think the only solution is to elect new people who can start out with a clean slate, put in the necessary checks and balances, and conduct open meetings where all can participate.

I also feel that an independent audit of our books at this point is mandatory along with an independent counting of the ballots. If these are done we should have much less suspicion of the motives of any individual on the board.

We should not let our association become another Washington, DC, where partisan politics is more important than the good of our community.

It would also probably be for the best if the President steps aside to help accomplish this.

I know he has worked hard during his term in office but we sorely need some fresh air at this

point that doesn't bring any old baggage along.

Larry Greenberg
Seven Lakes West



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Take a good hard look at what's going on

Dear Editor:

We have lived in Seven Lakes West for a little over two years. Our feeling was that we had landed in Paradise – sunny days, lovely neighbors, and an active and friendly community. We could retire in peace.

Then we began to hear about the Fish and Game Commission. We thought that the Board would fight tooth and nail to keep this a private lake and, therefore, a private community. We were appalled at the Board's signing of that agreement against the wishes of the majority of the landowners. This has a direct impact on property values in Seven Lakes West, whether you live on the lake, view the lake, or

visit the lake.

We attended the General Meeting and Candidate's Night in January because we thought we needed to see and hear what was going on before we voted for new board members. There had been rumblings that there was trouble in Paradise. Since we have both held positions of financial responsibility, we were again appalled that an association with income over a million dollars, some of it ours, had not had an audit in five years. Apparently those on the Board who had been against an audit did bow to the ground swell of indignation and voted for one for this fiscal year. That leaves four years still unexam-

ined.

In addition, apparently all decisions concerning our community are made behind closed doors with no one made aware of how these decisions were reached and who spoke for or against them. I am aware that the sunshine law regarding open meetings does not apply to private communities, but what acceptable reason can the Board have for keeping us, the landowners, in the dark? How many issues have been brought to the landowners only to have their wishes disregarded in closed meetings?

The final call to action came with the arrival of the February 2 edition of the *Times*. Not only

were there several letters from members of the community, but also disturbing statements made by Board members who have felt forced to resign in the last few years. References to a "lack of civility" in meetings and a "voting block" mentality have led us to believe it is time to get involved, if only to speak to other landowners who have also been blissfully unaware of what is happening in and to our community.

I would urge every landowner on the West Side to read and re-read every article in the February 2nd issue of *The Times*. If you no longer have your copy, go to www.sevenlaketimestimes.net. We owe it to ourselves, our community and our investment to take a good hard look at what is going on, and to vote accordingly.

Johanna and Tom Moran
Seven Lakes West

Vote for a change on board

Dear Editor:

Members of the SLWLA ought to be disgusted with some of the recent actions of the ruling clique on their board. We've had board members resign because they just can't stomach it anymore.

The latest outrage is the appointment of Bill Mamel to fill a vacancy on the board. The logical and fair thing to do would have been for the board to name one of the people who had stepped forward and volunteered as candidates for the board.

But this appointment was a transparent and cynical move by the ruling clique to try to maintain its control of the board and to re-elect Jim Meikle as President of the Board. I have nothing bad to say about Mamel. He is simply being used by the ruling clique in an attempt to frustrate the will of the landowners.

I hope you will talk to some of the board members who have recently resigned about their experience on the board before you cast your ballot this year.

This is your chance to send a message to the ruling clique that you've had enough – especially of the arrogant behavior of Jim Meikle, the leader of the

ruling clique.

Vote for Jim Haggard, Ed Tuton, and Kathy Kirst, all good people and good candidates. Don't vote for Meikle. He needs to be shown that election to the board is an opportunity to serve and not a mandate to rule.

Joe Doster
Seven Lakes West

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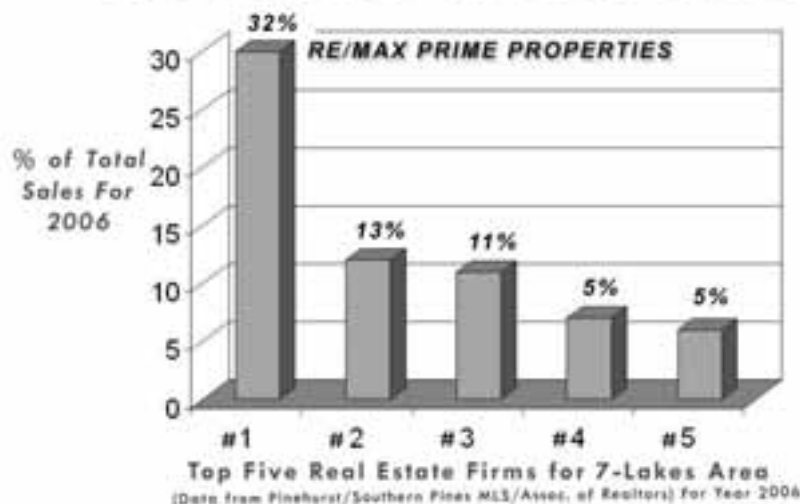


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More openness needed in 7 Lakes West

Dear Editor:

Why do people volunteer to serve on the Board of Directors of SLWLA? One would hope the motive would be noble, such as: to contribute to the common good or to effect change for the better. Sometimes, however, as I believe is true of some members of our current Board, the motive for running and then stacking the Board with like-minded members is to ensure that the less intelligent are guided by the enlightened few.

To our detriment, I believe this has happened to our current Board as evidenced by frequent block voting by the same narrow majority to ensure passage of their initiatives and failure of minority positions. This block of Board members has willingly created a situation that allows them to control every vote except full-Membership votes.

They often ignore reasoned ideas, presentations, research, alternatives, and solutions from committees, study groups, and individuals; and refuse to share information with the Membership that may jeopardize the block's desired outcome. They plot group strategy to ensure the block's desired outcome, while avoiding open discussion within the Board and with the Membership. Each of these actions

has a negative impact on achieving the best results for the many challenges we face. When ideas other than those of this block of voters are not welcome or

Letters to the Editor

even worse are suppressed, the community suffers.

I believe Seven Lakes West is suffering right now under the current Board's lack of reasoned and fair leadership, and by what appears to be intentional block voting.

This is not to say that positive things have not happened; the Board usually spends a portion of each General Meeting patting itself on the back. Sometimes it even praises its work that has gone against the majority of the Membership, or has cost far more than originally estimated.

I think we understand when a well-intentioned, well-researched, and well-executed task does not result in a complete success; but we don't understand no-bid or sole-source contracts for large amounts. We don't under-

stand un-receipted purchases, cash purchases, Board members with credit cards, or undocumented actions at our expense. We don't understand anything but full and open disclosure of Board actions on our behalf. We want reasonably frequent full audits. Seldom have we been faced with a real need for emergency no-bid spending.

As we face challenges in the near-, mid-, and long-term, we need a Board of Directors that has the sense to seek out ideas of the many knowledgeable, talented, capable, and willing people of Seven Lakes West.

Let us into Board meetings like other associations in Moore County, so we can contribute. We promise to behave, even if you may chose not to; we promise to follow meeting protocol like Robert's Rules, even though you may chose not to; we promise not to waste your time arguing beyond reasonable spirited discussion, even though you may chose to; we promise to treat you and others present with respect, even when we disagree completely, even though you may chose not to; and we

promise to encourage all our neighbors to participate in this fair and open process.

Looking into the future, I suspect we will incur some major expenses like repaving approximately twenty-eight miles of roads. The cost will be enormous, well over \$10 million.

I am confident many major expenses have been envisioned by our Long-Range Planning Committee and brought to the current Board's attention along with their staggering costs, but the Membership has not heard or seen any results of their work published by the Board, so that we comment or make input.

We watch the Seven Lakes Business Guild and the Small Area Planning Committees hard at work, making progress and impacting the community. Where is Seven Lakes West going? May we find out? May we make suggestions? May we participate? May we vote? We have wonderful volunteer Area Reps that solicit and make great suggestions; when will we hear from them?

I ask the Board to honestly reflect on its motives and perform-

ance over the past two years. Has it served Association members' best interests? Has it done so with the right motivation, for the right reasons?

I am of the opinion that the current Board has excluded from the democratic process some of its own members; it has not had fair, open work sessions with respectful debate; and in so doing, its leadership and those influencing its leadership have not exercised the intelligence they seem to believe they possess and that I and others do not. If members of the Board disagree, I look forward to open, respectful discussion.

Finally, I ask all SLWLA members to carefully consider your three choices for the Board. I believe it to be in the community's best interest to vote for three new highly qualified candidates – Haggard, Kirst, and Tuton, and not our current President.

I also warn against voting by proxy, which amounts to automatic vote for the status quo.

John Hoffmann
Seven Lakes West

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Time to change course of community

Dear Editor:

It's that time of the year again, pre-spring in Seven Lakes, which also coincides with the annual Seven Lakes West Landowners Association Board of Elections. You can tell, not only by the birds or the crocus, but also by the very informative, yet some might say inflammatory, "Letters to the Editor" that have appeared in the recent issues of *The Seven Lakes Times*.

I have always been a proponent of open Board work sessions and also of the entire membership voting on "significant" issues. I believe in the majority rules. I think most people do. Apparently our Board views it different-

ly.

Had the Board listened to its membership during that period of time when they asked for our input, Diquat would never have been placed in our lake. Had the Board listened again, we would never have signed the agreement with the NCWRC, agreeing to their demands at our expense.

It is said, "actions speak louder than words." I can only conclude from the "actions" of the majority of the Board that the recent appointment of Bill Mamel to the Board is what can be referred to as a "power play." A move made by the current President of the Board to insure con-

tinuity for a majority vote. That is the logic of a certain group on the Board that has brought us to where we are today. There is no meaningful explanation as to why the Board could not have waited until elections to replace Finney on the Board and as Chair of the ARC. That is why we must have change.

There are several Board Members who fulfill their commitment to the community openly, with participation in, and solicitation of the community. That is what we, as a community, deserve. Those Board Members who don't want our input need to be replaced. And the time is now. With the election

right around the corner, we can vote them out. We can do away with the all too numerous "Executive Sessions" and the associated cloud of suspicion they create. We can have open Board work sessions.

A review of the past year will help in your decision making. Remember to look at the budget increase, this at a time when growth should more than cover all increases in operating expense. One can easily conclude that it demonstrates the cavalier attitude by some Board Members as to how they spend our money. Again, "actions speak louder than words."

I would like to openly state that I will be voting for Jim Haggard, Kathy Kirst, and Ed Tuton. I firmly believe that they are honorable, capable, and qualified to fulfill the objectives as they stated on Candidates Night. Let us vote for those who we feel will listen to the community and vote on issues according to the majority of our community.

By voting for and supporting

these three candidates, I truly believe we can bring our community together again and be confident that our best interests and concerns are actually being addressed. By placing these three candidates; Haggard, Kirst and Tuton on the Board, I believe that the discord and disrespect toward our Association Members will disappear, and harmony and respect will prevail. In addition, with responsible attitudes toward our monies and budget we will bring our accounts back into the black and fortify our reserves.

To this, I put my name, and now it's time for all of you to come forward and place your X on the candidates of your choice. Look at the facts and not the rhetoric. If we don't initiate change now we just might sink the ship. You have three life preservers out there; Haggard, Kirst, and Tuton. Change the course of our community.

Bob Kieling
Seven Lakes West

Chance to make a change

Dear Editor:

It would appear that the Westside Board has sunk to a new low. It's a shame that we would have to resort to writing to the paper but somehow we need to get the word to all landowners on the Westside that we have a problem with our current board.

I don't know who the culprits are but if the current president of the board can't control the meetings then he should not be in charge.

Going into Executive Session for other than personnel or legal issues is a no-no. Going into Executive Session to harass, intimidate, and bully other members of the board so it's not reported in the minutes is a no-no.

Anyone on the board guilty of such tactics should be ashamed of themselves. If you can't be civil to accomplish your goals than maybe you shouldn't be on the board. Your actions have cost the board several good people over the last few years. Enough is enough.

I was impressed with Kathy, Jim, and Ed's resumes and their answers to questions at the candidate's night. Let's give them the chance to make a change.

I'm voting "no" on the budget

because I don't believe the information provided with the ballot in anyway justifies the increase in dues.

Max Foley
Seven Lakes West



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New vision needed in Seven Lakes West

Dear Editor:

We have just recently moved, in September 2006, to the beautiful Seven Lakes West community. In moving we have also purchased the home of our dreams in what we felt would be a neighborhood of dreams to follow. What we are finding in our new move is a neighborhood torn apart by the apparent leadership of our homeowners Board of Directors.

We are seeing a Board that appears to be stubborn, tremendously arrogant, and where agreements and policies are signed behind locked doors. It is our opinion that the recent actions of our current Board leadership

has created an environment of neighbor vs. neighbor, golf buddy vs. golf buddy, as well as a divided populace where mistrust and animosity is prevalent.

It is extremely difficult to comprehend and understand the logic behind the Board's actions and agreements over the past few months. The agreement with the NCWRC was clearly decided without any consideration given to the majority of homeowners that opposed the Board's position on this matter.

The body language and defiant attitude displayed by some Board members that evening was just plain embarrassing. We, my wife and I, have been on

many Board of Directors, both corporate and civil, and without reservation have never seen a "railroad job" like that decision.

The lack of fiscal audits during this Board's tenure is equally as interesting. Audits are a prudent necessity for any entity that controls assets of a million dollars per annum. One would think that careful planning and review of Board expenditures should be a strength of this Board rather than an aversion!

As homeowners, we should demand a yearly audit, it only makes good sense. We have the right to documentation as to where our money has been

spent.

It is our opinion that the closed door appointment of Bill Mamel to the Board of Directors is clearly an indication of trying to keep the "good ole boy" voting block in place should Jim Meikle be re-elected. Once again, this represents a brazen and defiant attitude to keep the current Board's leadership voting block intact.

Jim Meikle certainly appears to be a shrewd politico, and the appointment of Mamel only suggests the desire to Meikle to continue running a Board that will not listen to us, the homeowners!

In summary, the Seven Lakes West community needs to move forward with a new vision and

direction on our homeowner's Board. A time for meaningful change is now.

Let's stop the neighbor vs. neighbor mentality and move forward together with three newly elected Board members. We ask that you vote for Kathy Kirst, Ed Tuton, and Jim Haggard to provide leadership that our neighborhood certainly needs.

Our opinion is not one that applies to all current Board members, we have many newly-found friends on the Board, this represents our shared observations of its leadership.

Larry and Kristie Elliott
Seven Lakes West

Lakeway beautification deserves funding

Dear Editor:

I would like to thank those members of the Westside Board who have supported the Lakeway Mall project. But at the same time, I am disappointed that it is not included in the next fiscal year's budget.

Since serving on the SLW Beautification Committee for several years, I am aware of

how diligently the members and volunteers worked several years ago to begin the drainage and landscaping project for Lakeway. At that time, Beautification was under the direction of Board Member Paul Kirst.

On two occasions while representing the Beautification Committee, Betty Milligan, Roger Brooke, and I met with the Board

to discuss the appearance of the areas. We encouraged the Board to include Beautification in the budget for projects, presented a donation plan, and asked for permission to begin a campaign to encourage property owners to get involved through donations and volunteering. The Board agreed.

Because of the dedicated

efforts of hard-working individuals, letters were sent to all property owners requesting donations. Through these successful efforts and wonderful volunteer support, the improvement of the roadsides along Lakeway's entrance and exit were brought about and enhanced. Also, the trees planted last year in the Lakeway area were purchased

with donations from 2002.

Therefore, the birth of the now lovely Lakeway Mall began some years ago, not just in the last couple of years. So please Board, don't take away our funding.

Jo Kenney
Seven Lakes West

Civic Group

(Continued from page 2)

mandated to do" — that is, fund the various building projects facing the county.

County Manager McSwain, who spent 16 years as County Administrator in Richmond County, South Carolina, which includes the capital city of Columbia, is also looking to expand Moore County's share of million of dollars of federal, state, foundation, and corporate grants that are available to local government.

McSwain said the county will soon hire one or more grant writers to help exploit this revenue source, which typically makes funds available for specific, targeted purposes — like putting more police officers on the street.

Water

During another segment of the meeting, Dennis Roberts briefed Civic Group members on the status of county efforts to bring more water to Seven Lakes.

The news was mixed. The county is making good progress

upgrading the water line that connects Pinehurst and Seven Lakes and is adding two new wells in Pinehurst to increase the overall supply to both systems, Roberts reported.

However, a third prong of the project — installing new pumps to push more Pinehurst water to Seven Lakes — has been pushed back to February 2008. That makes it less than crystal clear how much additional water, if any, the county will be able to provide to Seven Lakes during the Summer 2007 irrigation season.

Roberts said the county's Water Quality Manager, Ben Vaughn, told him it may be possible to install a new impeller or a temporary pump to increase the flow, if needed. McSwain had noted earlier in the meeting that the county's Public Works Director, Marcus Jones, has resigned, though McSwain said his departure should not affect county utility operations.

Roberts said water consumption data for January 2007 show Seven Lakes using 15 percent more water this year than last.

If that trend holds into the summer months, restrictions on water use may be likely. Last summer the county asked for voluntary conservation; the water system was running at near capacity in the heat of July.

In response to questioning from Civic Group members, Commissioner Lea said there are longer-term opportunities to bring additional water to Seven Lakes by tying into either the Robbins water system or the Montgomery County system, at Candor. The current estimated cost of running a line from Robbins is \$5 million, Lea said; a pipe to Candor would be somewhat less expensive.

Lea said the county ultimately needs to ensure that it has adequate water to meet future needs by tying its water system to those of a number of neighboring coun-

ties that have ample supply, including Richmond and Montgomery County, as well as Harnett County, which is already tapped by the East Moore Water District.

Civic cooperation

In a brief review of the Civic Group's activities over the past year, President Dave Kinney said the group finds itself more and more working with other organizations to accomplish its mission.

The Civic Group has teamed up with the Seven Lakes West End Business Guild to secure ownership of the streets in the business village, with the goal of turning them over to the North Carolina Department of Transportation [NCDOT]. Testing of the streets is underway to see whether they meet state standards. So far, Kinney said, the results are not promising, but the testing process is only one-third completed.

The Guild and Civic Group

have also teamed up for the Village Tomorrow project, which is working to define a vision for the development of the business village. Three committees are working on land use issues, signage, and building standards/landscaping. The results of their efforts, expected in May, will serve as an input to the county-led Small Area Planning process for Area A, which includes Seven Lakes and West End.

Civic Group members have also been involved in the Moore County Summit.

Kinney announced that Dale Erickson had resigned from the Civic Group board and would be replaced by Ray MacKay, a Westsider with many years of transportation experience in the New York State Thruway Authority. MacKay also serves on the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association board and is a member of the Area A Small Area Plan Steering Committee.

Salary freeze

(Continued from front page)

man said "it really chaps me that we expect so much out of our employees, and that we're willing to spend money on things that really aren't working all that well."

Praising the work of SLLA employees, Richmond said "they deserve a cost of living increase just like anyone else."

"From what I have heard, I'd agree with Jeff's sentiment on the freezing of salaries," Nuti said. "To me that is totally unacceptable, if we look at the other things that we have spent money on." "The employees are an amenity," Nuti said. "We are going to nickel and dime them to death here."

Truesdell defended the cuts by pointing to an hike in landowners dues implemented in March 2005, an increase of \$60,000. "The suggestions Steve and I have put forward represent 40 percent of that dues increase," Truesdell said. "I agree that we do have excellent employees. But at some point we're going to

have to take the hard line."

In addition to freezing employees' salaries at current levels, Truesdell and Hudson recommended eliminating an Association match of employee contributions to a retirement savings account. All of the Association's full-time employees participate in the program, which began in January of 2000.

The SLLA matches dollar for dollar employee contributions to the plan, up to a maximum of three percent of each employee's salary. Eliminating this program will save \$9,290 in fiscal year 2007 - 2008.

The association has no other retirement plan for its employees.

Truesdell and Hudson are also proposing a change in the automobile allowance for Community Manager Fulcher and Assistant Community Manager Chad Beane. The revenue-neutral change will move from a flat rate allowance to a mileage-based system.

Finally, on the revenue side

of the ledger, Hudson and Truesdell are proposing an increase in the rental fees for boat slips at Sequoia Point-- a \$100 increase, to \$500, for full season renters, and a \$50 increase for part-year renters.

Arguing for the cuts in salary and benefits, Hudson noted that Fulcher's budget projects an increase of \$14,000 in employee health insurance premiums. "So that's \$11,000 more that the landowners will be paying this year," he said. "That's one thing we took into consideration."

The association will not be increasing the percentage of health insurance premiums that employees must contribute, Truesdell noted. However, he said that he expected that percentage to be upped from 20 percent to 25 percent next year, and to be increased by five percentage points per year each year thereafter until, ultimately, the employees are paying half the cost of their health insurance premiums.

Like many employers, the SLLA has been attempting to shift a greater portion of health insurance costs onto its employees over the past few years.

In the early 1990s, the SLLA paid 100 percent of the cost of employee health coverage. At that time, the SLLA health plan had a modest deductible of around \$100.

In the mid-90s the board discovered that it could significantly reduce its health insurance premiums by accepting a plan with a higher deductible. Rather than shift the cost of that higher deductible onto employees, board members voted to cover all but \$100 of the increased deductible, thereby making to change more or less neutral for employees.

Over the years, successive boards have continued to increase the deductible on the employee policy in order to hold down premiums, to the point that it has reached \$5,000. But, until recently, the Association has covered the bulk of any deductible paid by employees.

In the spring of 2005, the SLLA Board voted to freeze its contributions to each employee's health insurance premiums at the then current premium of \$442 per month. Employees would be expected to dig into their own pockets for any premium cost above that level.

In September of that year, the SLLA health plan was shifted from Blue Cross Blue Shield to a new provider and the premium dropped \$60, to \$383 per month, which meant, under the agreement, the association was still paying the full premium for each employee.

Despite the reduced expense, in late 2005 or early 2006 the board voted to change the deal for employees once again, and required that each employee pay 20 percent of the cost of their health insurance premium. On top of that increase, they voted to require employees to cover the full cost of their deductible — which could total \$5,000.

In September of 2006, when the policy renewed, that premium jumped to \$491 per employee per month. As a result each of the employees participating in the plan now pays \$80 or \$90 dollars per month toward their pre-

mium.

The association has twelve full time employees. Eleven of those employees participate in the health insurance plan.

The net result of these past changes to the health insurance plan is that every full-time employee experienced a decrease in their take-home pay last year, Fulcher told *The Times*.

Fulcher is budgeting a fifteen percent increase in health insurance premiums when the plan renews in September of 2007. That means that both the association and its employees will be facing an increase in their share of health insurance premium costs in the coming fiscal year. That increase, combined with a salary freeze, means further reductions in SLLA employees' take-home pay.

SLLA health insurance premiums have risen rapidly in part because of the longevity of its employees. The average service of the twelve full-time association employees is fifteen years or more; the most veteran member of the staff has been with the community for twenty-two years.

That length of service is paralleled by an increasing average age of SLLA employees: half of the twelve full-time hours are over the age of fifty. Health insurance companies base their group rates on the age of the employees covered by the plan.

Asked in an interview on Monday whether the proposed salary freeze and benefit cuts were demoralizing to association employees, Fulcher said "Yes, very much. I'm hearing it now — I hear all the time from my employees now."

The SLLA board is expected to finalize the fiscal year 2007-2008 budget in its General Session on Wednesday evening, February 28. The board has a work session scheduled for 7:30 pm on Thursday, February 22, at 7:30 pm.

A special drop-in session on the budget will be held from 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm on February 22, when board members and the Community Manager will be available to answer landowners questions and take suggestion on the budget.

All of these sessions will be held in the North Clubhouse.

Foxfire Council

(Continued from page 10)

are several ongoing initiatives looking primarily to future needs. There are also several administrative issues going on which will not effect water use or rates — specifically the Village is looking into a new software billing system. The current software is outdated and technical support is no longer available.

Code Red: Assistant Village Clerk Lisa Kivett was appointed to Deputy Clerk and sworn into that office. This will give her the signatory authority and ability to serve as Village Clerk at any meeting, in case Janice Thomas is unavailable.

Reporting on the Code Red system, Kivett stated that this emergency phone call system

had been used eleven times since it was purchased in July 2006. The calls, to each of the 296 residents of Foxfire, were made to remind residents of eight general meetings, two committee meetings, and one special meeting. Thus far, the Code Red system has not been needed for an emergency notification.

Residents were encouraged to keep the Village Clerk's office up-to-date with their current home and cellular telephone numbers.

Mayor's Report: Mayor Erickson discussed the Woodland Circle extension proposed road. S&ME of Greensboro has been contracted to perform soil testing. Twenty-three samples will be taken, including two from wet areas, which will result in the involvement of state and federal environmental agencies.

The samples will be taken to a depth of fifteen to twenty feet. After the soil report is complete, two or three engineering bids will be requested.

At the end of the meeting, new Councilman Lauer was invited to continue Joe Harsany's tradition and conclude the session with a motion to adjourn.

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Class size is limited to twenty

ty students and the cost is \$35 which includes an official Kubotan Key chain and certification card.

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Seven Lakes Times

February 16, 2007

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7 LAKES SOUTH GOLF FRONT – 5BR/3.5BA, hardwood & new carpets, bonus room, enclosed Carolina Rm, large eat-in kitchen, formal dining, formal living, gas burning fireplace, Master w/walk-in shower, jacuzzi tub, fireplace, with private sitting area overlooking green. A/C in workshop, 2-car garage, attic storage. Green and pond views. 4500 sq. ft home, w/handicap access. 910-603-4746.

7 LAKES SOUTH COUNTRY CLUB GOLF FRONT – 3BR/2BA, with open floor plan, with lake and golf views. 2 car enclosed garage. Fenced yard. Owner will consider lease to own. Call 910-603-4746.

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7 LAKES SOUTH COUNTRY CLUB GOLF FRONT – 3BR/2BA, with open floor plan, w/lake and golf views. 2 car enclosed garage. Fenced yard. Owner will consider lease to own. 910-603-4746.

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- Short & Long Term
- RV & Boat Storage

CLASSIFIEDS

Seven Lakes Times

February 16, 2007

FOR SALE LOTS AND LAND

13+ ACRES MORGANWOOD at Seven Lakes West, horses permitted, cleared, established pastures & nice pond! \$24,900 per acre; **GOLF FRONT - FOXFIRE**, level, cleared building lot, spectacular views, \$38,500 OBO. **40 ACRES** bordering **Pinewild CC**, rolling Bermuda fields, large pond, owner/broker \$11,900 per acre. **TAMMY LYNE, BROKER** 910-235-0208. www.Tammy-Lyne.com or email: MarketValue@Pinehurst.net

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BOATS FOR SALE – Need a boat? Choplin's Got It! Ski-Wakeboard-Deck-Pontoon-Bass and Saltwater Boats. Full service to Seven Lakes area only a few minutes away. Choplin Marine in Sanford. Call 919-776-1004 or www.choplinboats.com

NEW & USED PONTOONS AND SKI BOATS — Call Seven Lakes Marine. 673-1440. *tfn*

TURN YOUR USED BOAT INTO CASH — People are looking to purchase good condition used boats. Let us connect you to the prospective buyers. Call Jeff at 910-673-1440 or Lynn at 910-690-8695.

BOATS FOR SALE

PONTOON, BASS, SKI, DECK & SALTWATER BOATS — Over 250 boats in stock. 33 years in the Marine business. Only 25 minutes from Seven Lakes. Chatlee Boat & Marine, Sanford. Call 919-775-7259.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

BRING BOTTLE WATER QUALITY TO YOUR HOME — Is something wrong with your water? With the touch of your finger, you can have Purified Water. Call DB Services. 910-639-2111 or 910-673-3002 Dan Graham.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

J&L HOME SERVICES — "A Handy Man and More." Interior/Exterior Home Maintenance & Repairs. Call today for Free estimates. Your Seven Lakes Neighbor. Call 673-3927.

CREATIVE CUSTOMWORK — "The Decorator's Workshop" Custom made Window Treatments, Bedding, Cushions, and Slipcovers. All made right here with the attention to detail demanded by the best designers! Pam Wasilewski, 336 MacDougall Drive, Seven Lakes. Call 673-2500.

HORTON'S LAWN SERVICE — Groundskeepers, completed lawn maintenance. Services include mow/vacuum lawns, edge, aerate, fertilize, de-thatch, weed control, trim/prune shrubs, shrub removal, shrub plantings, pine mulch, pine straw sales, leaf removal and tree work. Roof and gutters. Repair gravel driveways, grading. Also available: Interior Home Cleaning and Laundry. Call Rick @910-673-3405 or 910-639-5206.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES — serving Seven Lakes, Foxfire, and Pinehurst w/lawn maintenance & more for residential and commercial customers. Year round service. Mowing, weed eating, picking up debris, blowing. Shrub pruning, limb & tree removal and hauling away. Seeding/sod lawns. Leaf & straw removal. Haul and spread pine straw, bark, soil, gravel and mulch. Aerate, de-thatch, and edge lawns. Weeding of flower beds, planting shrubs. Re-surface gravel driveways. Blow roofs and clean gutters. Pressure washing homes, decks, concrete walks, driveways, & boats. Install driveway curbing and sprinkler systems. Garden tilling. Other odd jobs around the house? You need it done! We will do it! Call John 673-7320 or mobile telephone 910-690-6491.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

"BOB'S HANDYMAN SERVICES, LLC" — to Seven Lakes. I can handle all of your repairs and maintenance items around your home or business. Free estimates provided with reliable and courteous service. Your Seven Lakes neighbor. Fully insured. Call Bob Hamilton at 910-585-0993.

MARY PUPPINS PETSITTING — 673-1519. Visit www.marypuppinspetsitting.com for more info. Specializing in "last minute travel plans."

SHOT GUNS & RIFLES — cleaned and refinished. 910-673-7623. *pd.3.30.07*

TREE SERVICE — ALLEN & SONTREE SERVICE. Topping, trimming, complete removal, clean-up, insured, 24 hour service. Free estimates, senior citizen discounts. Call James M. Allen at 910-974-7629 (Home) or 910-572-6818 (Cell). *tfn 12/7*

ARCHITEXZ — Handyman services for all your home improvements. Minor or major repairs, drywall repairs, roofing repairs, remodeling, minor plumbing or electrical problems, master carpentry skills, design and drawing of house plans. Call today — (910)603-2131.

LOT CLEARING & CONSTRUCTION — Maintenance, hauling, bark, gravel, soil or removal of debris, erosion control. Call Dan Graham at 910-639-2111 or 910-673-3002.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

SEVEN LAKES DENTAL STUDIO — Repairs of dentures, acrylic partials, and relines. Same day service available. All work will be done only through your local dentist. Tom Wasilewski, 336 MacDougall Drive, Seven Lakes. 673-1613.

SEVEN LAKES HOME & PATIO — House and yard upkeep, pine straw & mulching, hedge trimming, power washing your house,

gutter cleaning, painting. Seven Lakes North resident. Call Rich at 638-8081 or Lindsay 638-2387.

PETS FOR ADOPTION

SANDHILLS ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE — If you are thinking about adopting a kitten or puppy, contact Lou Atkins at Sandhills Animal Rescue 974-4468 for information on adopting a new pet for you and your family.

JACK MARONEY, LLC Home Maintenance & Repair 910-673-4479



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Project Linus volunteers will be on hand to show you how easy it is to become a blanketeer. Make a donation, drop off a finished blanket, and get a free cup of coffee from The Coffee Scene. Browse our special selection of quilting books — and register to win one of your very own.

The Mission of Project Linus is to provide love, a sense of security, warmth, and comfort to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need through the gift of new, handmade blankets and afghans, lovingly created by volunteer "blanketeers."



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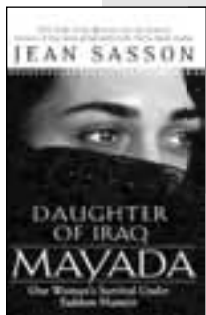
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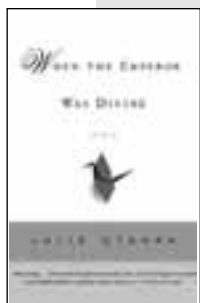


Who's Reading What?

Here are the March Picks of
Local Book Groups.
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Bookies II
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by Jean P. Sasson



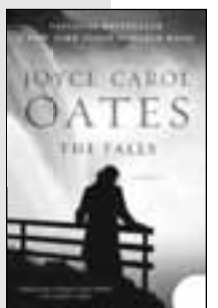
Books West
**WHEN THE
EMPEROR WAS
DIVINE**
by Julie Otsuka



Sandhills Book Club
**THE OTHER
BOLEYN GIRL**
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Gregory



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THE WORST HARD TIME
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**DON'T LET'S GO
TO THE DOGS
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