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Volume 25 Number 6

Seven Lakes, North Carolina 27376

January 22, 2010

## SLLA selects Talis as manager

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

Talis Management Group has been selected to manage the Seven Lakes Landowners Association [SLLA] and a formal three-year contract was signed before a packed room of residents during a Special Meeting held Thursday, January 14.

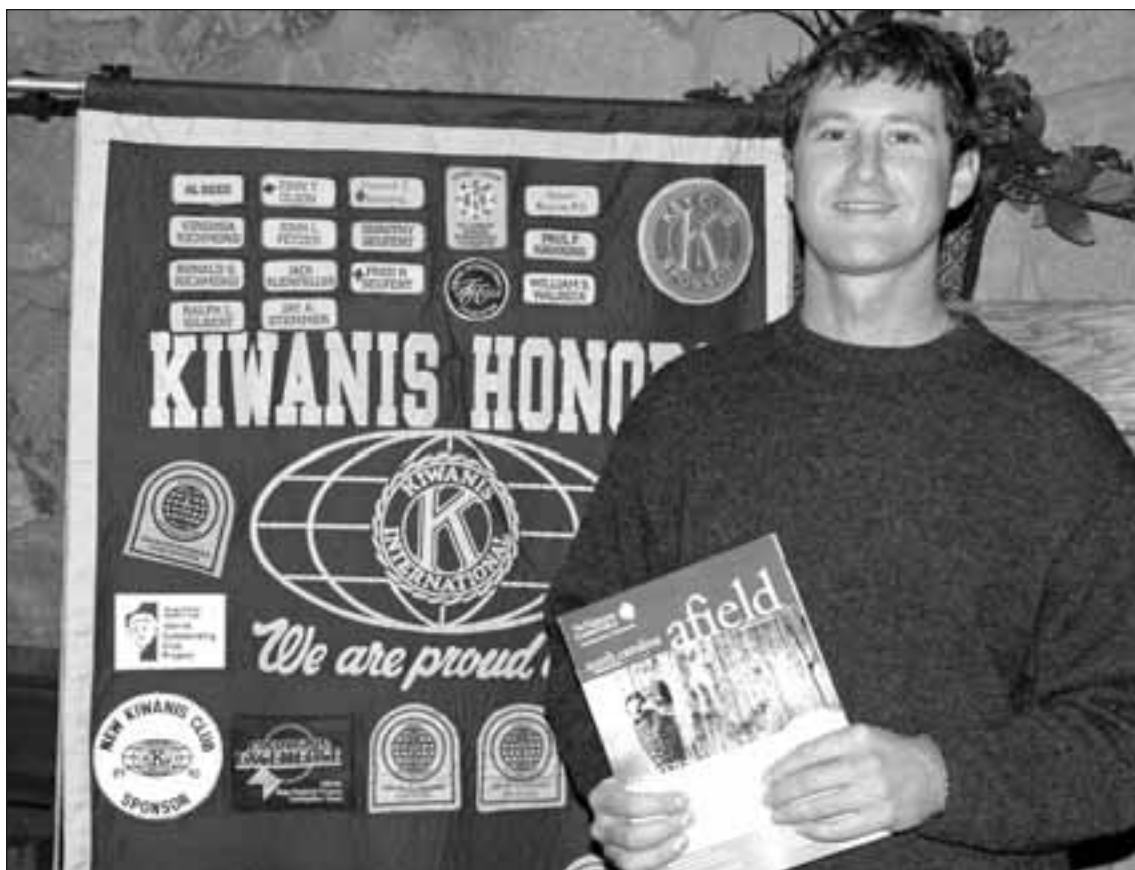
On a roll call vote, the Board approved the contract with Talis 5-0. Director Bud Shaver was unable to attend the meeting and did not vote; however, President Randy Zielsdorf said that in Board discussions, Shaver had recommended approval for Talis. Director Gary Caulk also did not vote — choosing to abstain to avoid any potential conflict of interest because his wife, Debbie Caulk, is an employee of SLLA.

New SLLA Community Manager Alina Cochran will take the helm on February 1, and was on hand at the meeting to greet landowners and answer questions, along with Talis President Vince Matal and John McInerney, a vice president and regional manager for the firm.

Founded in 1991 by a merger of Ross Taylor Management and Southlantic Management, Talis is a full service property management firm based in Raleigh, providing services to 140 associations throughout the Triangle area of North Carolina.

If at any time either Talis or SLLA decide they do not want to continue the relationship, the contract includes the option to cancel with sixty days notice.

(See "Talis," p. 28)



**Ryan Elton**, Director of the Sandhills Nature Conservancy, was the guest speaker at Seven Lakes Kiwanis recently. See story on page 2.

## Foxfire approves annexation pact in split vote

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

Replicating a vote taken two days earlier, the Foxfire Village Council approved in a three-to-two vote a twenty-year annexation agreement with the Village of Pinehurst during a special meeting held Thursday afternoon, January 14. Councilmen Vic Koos and Ed Lauer, along with Mayor George Erickson, voted in favor of the pact, which lays out the parcels that will be available for annexation by one village, but not the other. Coun-

cilwomen Leslie Frusco and Page Coker voted against the deal.

"Again, I am against it," Coker said, in the only comment made before Lauer's motion to approve passed.

Though a dozen citizens attended the meeting, no public comment was allowed.

The agreement requires each village to give the other sixty days notice prior to any annexation. It includes a termination clause, with a required five year notice, and can be modified by

a subsequent agreement between the villages.

Thursday's vote was necessary because the proposed agreement failed to obtain approval by a supermajority during the regular Foxfire Village Council meeting on Tuesday, January 12. Concern over the proposed annexation agreement drew a standing room crowd that evening and, during a heated discussion period, one resident was escorted from the room.

The large crowd — and controversy — was in marked con-

trast to the relatively benign previous Council discussions on the agreement. A special work session called in November to go over details was sparsely attended, and only a handful of residents spoke at two public hearings on the proposal held in December.

The opposition was mainly focused on two points: that Foxfire is giving up too much prime commercial property along NC Highway 211, and that rural residents between the two villages have not been given notice or

enough opportunity for input.

### In the works for months

Negotiations on the twenty-year annexation agreement began eight months ago, with Erickson and Lauer representing Foxfire, and were first reported by *The Times* in our June 12, 2009 issue; however, several residents of the outlying affected areas only just recently become aware of the discussion.

Prior to final negotiations with  
(See "Agreement," p. 13)

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# Nature Conservancy Director at Kiwanis

by Frank Krohn,  
Seven Lakes Kiwanis

On Tuesday, January 12, Seven Lakes Kiwanis welcomed Ryan Elton of The Nature Conservancy, an International organization devoted to land protection

and preservation for plants and animals.

Elton is the Sandhills Director, but The Conservancy is active in thirty-four key environmental sites around the world. He spent several weeks last summer working in Africa to assist the natives in saving their land from the destruction of trees, in particular, but also helping in the reduction of animal poaching. Teach-

ing the poachers how to make a living by using productive and conservation methods of farming instead of killing the animals was one of his major duties.

In North Carolina, The Conservancy has been very active in purchasing large parcels of land, especially along the coastal plain, where there are concerns about the oyster population, and the problems also being created

by the rising level of sea water. Elton is now very busy, in a partnership with the military, to protect the Red Cockaded Woodpecker, and to protect and advance the health and population of the Longleaf Pines in the Sandhills.

At a time when our land and indigenous animals are being put in jeopardy around the world,

it was good to hear that organizations like the Nature Conservancy are very active in their efforts to combat the ravages to nature tha man has caused, and is continuing to cause.

The Seven Lakes Kiwanis meets every Tuesday at the Seven Lakes County Club at noon, visitors are always welcome.

## CONTRIBUTORS AND ADVERTISERS

Articles or advertisements submitted to *The Times* should include the name and telephone number of the author. Articles may be dropped off at the *Seven Lakes Times* offices at 4307 Seven Lakes Plaza, mailed to P.O. Box 602, West End, NC 27376, faxed to 888-806-2572, or e-mailed to mail@sevenlakestimes.net.

Our voice telephone number is 910-673-0111.

## PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Issue Deadline

Feb. 5	Jan. 29
Feb. 19	Feb. 12
Mar. 5	Feb. 26
Mar. 19	Mar. 12
Apr. 2	Mar. 26
Apr. 16	Apr. 9
Apr. 30	Apr. 23
May 14	May 7
May 28	May 21
June 11	June 4
June 25	June 18
July 9*	July 1*
July 23	July 16
Aug. 6	July 30
Aug. 20	Aug. 13
Sept. 3	Aug. 27
Sept. 17	Sept. 10
Oct. 1	Sept. 24
Oct. 15	Oct. 8
Oct. 29	Oct. 22
Nov. 12	Nov. 5
Nov. 23*	Nov. 18*
Dec. 10	Dec. 3
Dec. 22*	Dec. 16*

\*Early publication or deadline due to holiday.

## Southsider charged

Robert Wesley Quinn Jr., 61, of 146 East Devonshire Ave. in Seven Lakes South was charged on January 5 by Moore County Sheriff's investigators with misdemeanor larceny, misdemeanor possession of stolen property, six counts of forgery, and six counts of uttering a forged instrument.

The charges stem from a December 16 complaint filed

by Elizabeth Quinn of Seven Lakes South that several of her checks had been forged and passed at a bank in West End.

Robert Quinn, Jr. was placed in the Moore County Detention Center under a \$3,500.00 secured bond and was given a first court appearance of January 27 in District Court, Carthage.

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# Westside Board confident on dues increase

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

Fireworks, the community swimming pool, and holiday decorations — and proposed expenses and policies for each in the next fiscal year — generated extensive discussion during Tuesday, January 12, Work Session of the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA] Board of Directors.

Despite some criticism and plenty of questions, President Ron Shepherd said that he has been heartened by the number of emails and positive phone calls he's received regarding the budget that have far outweighed any negative comments.

"I feel we are on the right track," said Shepard, and he also made mention of a recent editorial in *The Times* discussing the upcoming — often volatile — electoral 'Silly Season.'

"The editor was obviously talking about somebody else!" exclaimed Shepard.

## Fireworks will continue

Westside resident Claire Czupryna recommended a dol-

lar for dollar matching program of donations rather than complete elimination of the fireworks display. She proposed, via email that was distributed to the Board, that \$7,000 in funding be reinstated in the budget, and that the remaining \$7,000 necessary for the display would be raised through private donations. Czupryna said she would take on the job of organizing a committee to fundraise.

Other cost-saving suggestions included shortening the time of the display by a third, looking at the [less expensive] contractor used by the Seven Lakes Landowners Association [SLLA], or resuming the alternate schedule of holding displays between the North and West Side.

However, after going around the table, Director John Goodman made a motion to approve the matching program suggested by Czupryna. All donations will be held and not cashed until a final determination is made whether or not to hold the display.

## New pool policies

Another proposed budget deci-

sion that has drawn plenty of interest is removing the diving board — and thus the requirement to employ lifeguards — from the SLWLA pool.

"I have a problem with the elimination of the diving board. From personal observation in each visit, I saw the board was the most attractive feature," Gerhard Hergenbahn said. "It took a lot of time to add the board to the plan — we fought to have it added and it cost more money but in a quality community we have to pay more."

Security Director John Hoffmann responded that the number one accident at public and private pools is diving injuries — both with or without a board.

"There is no comparison. Head injuries are the number one hazard in a swimming pool. It's more than just money: it [the proposed decision] is all about liability. If there are no lifeguards, you cannot have a diving board."

Westsider Pat Patulo asked if there had been any reported diving accidents in the three

years since the pool opened: the answer was no. She then shared that in the nineteen years of owning a private pool in New Jersey, that she had never had an accident.

However, it is the proposed budget cut that would completely eliminate lifeguards that prompted Patulo's strongest criticism.

"I don't see how you can take away lifeguards with or without a diving board. I truly believe that lifeguards are not something that should be considered an expense," she said.

Hoffmann cited that that there are plenty of hotel pools operating safely in the United States without lifeguards.

Director Mick Herdrich said that lifeguard salaries account for \$15,000-\$20,000 plus SLWLA pays approximately \$10,000 more for liability.

"If we have lifeguards, we have more liability than without them. And we only need one accident and the cost is prohibitive," warned Herdrich.

He also clarified that the new

pool guest policy allows each homeowner to bring in four guests — friend or relative — and that the policy does not prohibit children under sixteen years of age unattended, as was previously reported in *The Times*. Herdrich said the proposed restriction states that children fourteen and over may visit unattended; however, the minimum age is sixteen years for unattended visitors who are supervising or babysitting other guests.

Goodman said, personally, he was in favor of the diving board and lifeguards.

"Our quality of life is gradually diminishing because of liability. If this comes up next year, I would still support the diving board and lifeguards. When we keep running away, we are diminishing our lives because of these measures and it is a shame."

## Holiday Decorating

President Ron Shepherd addressed a letter that was recently published in *The Times*

(See "Westside," p. 26)

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# SLLA discusses expectations of management

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

Meeting in Work Session on Monday, January 11, the SLLA Board clarified their expectations of new management including a lengthy discussion on whether the new manager should be required to participate in community activities 'outside the gates.'

"As their time opens up and is available, I think we should give them a list of activities they should be aware of," Director Sally Kindsvatter said.

Treasurer Denny Galford agreed, noting that it is important for the Community Manager to understand the area so that Seven Lakes will remain competitive, especially as new subdivision developments come online.

Director Kent Droppers suggested the new manager, as well as other community managers, should be encouraged to attend meetings of the Greater Seven Lakes Community Council, "To build those bridges. They'll have interface and get to know each other."

Droppers also recommended forming a Board subgroup that would meet monthly with the new Community Manager to provide feedback and performance evaluation.

Galford concurred, "The most important factor for the Board of Directors is to process — to evaluate the new Community Manager. This has been our shortcoming over all the years."

In a related conversation, the Board continued a discussion on improving committee continuity from year to year, director to director.

Zielsdorf said he sees continuity in committees as a task for both directors and the manager.

"If management is doing their job, they should provide the bulk of continuity between one board to the next," he said.

## System of Governance

One component of the overall SLLA management search process has been a study of the system of governance, with recommendations for the future. Of specific concern was the historical pattern of committees overstepping their advisory role

and pressuring the manager to make decisions.

Treasurer Galford distributed proposed changes to the Bylaws for discussion, which included a summary narrative of the expected roles of the Board and the Manager [The Times was not provided with a copy of the proposed changes].

Kindsvatter opposed the lengthy document presented, stating instead that minor revisions to the existing Bylaws with the addition of the summary would satisfy the need. In particular, she recommended substituting the word "oversight," in the many places where the words "control" and "manage" are used in the Bylaws.

Galford argued they could write and rewrite, but that what it comes down to is the attitude of the board.

"Each board has to decide whether they want to be controlling or for oversight. All we can do is spell out to the Board of Directors a recommendation and hope future boards will want to be oversight," said Galford.

Droppers suggested the summary description would be more prominent and carry more weight if it was moved to the Forward section of the Bylaws: a recom-

mendation that met with unanimous approval of the Board.

Zielsdorf suggested continuing the discussion at the February Work Session and asked Kindsvatter to identify each Bylaw where she would recommend substituting 'oversight' for other board actions, such as control or manage.

## Committee Meetings, Open or Closed?

Picking up on a suggestion made during the December Open Meeting, Zielsdorf opened a discussion of whether or not residents should be able to attend committee meetings.

"Clearly things come up at Public Comment that could be better addressed at the committee level, but I do not agree there should be an open invitation to meetings — particularly Community Standards and ARB may be discussing issues private to a landowner," Zielsdorf said.

[Public Comment is a standard agenda item that provides a set period during each Open Meeting when members of the community may directly address the Board.]

Director Bud Shaver, who heads up the Maintenance Committee, said he has no problem

if residents want to attend his committee's meetings and that if something private arises, he would call a Closed Session.

"I would rather people come to committee meetings with a problem, than come to Public Comment," he said.

Caulk agreed, "Anyone should be able to attend any meeting — not participate, but attend. They are all members of the community."

Zielsdorf suggested that discretion should be left to the individual committee chair.

After going around the table, Droppers recommended tabling the discussion until the February Work Session when the Board will hold a more in-depth conversation on improving communication, to include a discussion on better ways to utilize the SLLA web presence and/or a community newsletter.

## Shaver will seek re-election

Director Bud Shaver announced he will run for another term on the Board. Since the

(See "SLLA," p. 28)

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# East Side dam repairs a quandry for Foxfire

The eastside dam — and whether Foxfire Village could be forced to close Forest Lake Drive where it traverses the dam — were discussed at the Tuesday, January 12 meeting of the Village Council.

"That dam leaks and needs repair and just to find out what needs to be done is \$30,000," said Councilman Vic Koos. "We're not going to pay it because the dam is privately-owned, but we do have permission to put a road on top. We are not going to repair a road on a faulty dam."

Koos suggested that, if the dam is labeled unsafe, the Village may have no choice but to close the road.

Tom Collins reported that Forest Lake Drive will be inspected at the end of January. He said that, even if the decision is made to close the road, Foxfire will still be on the hook for some additional costs.

"Dam plans indicate there is a road on top of the dam," Collins explained. "The dam top was designed to be impervious. If we close the road crossing the dam, we have to replace it with an impervious cap."

Collins said he anticipates the dam will not meet state specifications, and the owner will be given the option to drain the water or to bring the dam into regulation.

"This is not just going to affect

a portion of Foxfire, it will affect a lot," Collins said.

Expanding on the topic of potential future infrastructure costs, Koos warned that Foxfire must be cautious moving forward with annexation requests.

"Assuming we'll annex property in the future — too many don't realize how much it costs to annex. My interest is in roads. If the roads are all beat up, I'd vote against annexation," said Koos. "We're not talking hundreds, we're talking about thousands of dollars."

He continued, "We have enough financial problems with roads in Foxfire without assuming someone else's financial problems. By wanting to add on different areas in the future, we'll get to the point, if we're not careful, of having to raise taxes."

## Woodland Circle Extension

Cold weather conditions and unexpected issues with the water line have further delayed work at the Woodland Circle Extension project.

"The weather's been atrocious and they haven't been able to complete sub-grade preparation because of the frozen ground," reported Collins. "On the water line, everyone thought it was moving along well, but because of workmanship we had problems with leaks."

Collins said problem spots

along the water line have been identified and will be corrected. He anticipates forty more clear-weather working days will be necessary to complete the project, including fine grading, stone, paving, landscaping, and installation of permanent erosion control.

However, in addition to problems with the new roadbed, Collins reported an existing half mile stretch of Woodland Circle had been badly damaged by the construction process. \$60,000 had been set aside to remediate damage caused by the use of heavy machinery along that stretch of roadway, but, Collins explained, the damage was worse than had been predicted. He recommended a full engi-

neered report, including drilling sections of the road to access the condition of the sub-grade, rather than simply patching the damaged area.

"I don't want to halfway do something," said Collins. "Paving that section will last twenty-five years. If we just patch and overlay, you get no warranty, so we'd be gambling."

## PARTF Grant

For the third consecutive year, Foxfire Village is submitting a grant application to the NC Parks and Recreation Trust Fund [PARTF]; however, this time around, the Council is hoping chances of success will improve with the addition of a five-year, \$1,593,196 Capital Improvement

Plan [CIP].

Providing a broad overview of the CIP recommendations, Mayor George Erickson said the plan prioritized the long-requested pool improvements in the first year. The second year included work at the Village Green Park; the third year recommended work at Lake McKenzie and the old beach property; the fourth year included adding a playground to the east side; and the fifth year recommended construction of a community center at the Village Green.

Erickson said inclusion of the CIP will increase the point tally on the grant application — and that the Village would only be committed to the first year CIP

(See "Foxfire," p. 14)

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# MCS lays out attendance area for new school

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

West End Elementary students and staff can expect to see overcrowded conditions improve next Fall; however some residents — especially those residing west of NC Hwy 5 — may be surprised to find themselves redistricted into a brand new school.

"These things are not just easily done. There is much planning that has to go before the process and there's much planning and rearranging during the process," Deputy Superintendent Dr. Larry Upchurch said when presented the proposed redistricting lines for West Pine Elementary to the Board of Education on Thursday, January 7.

A planned public hearing on the proposed districts has not yet been scheduled, but Upchurch anticipated the location of these lines will be finalized in March.

In the current draft of the plan, all elementary-aged children within the greater Seven Lakes area — Seven Lakes West, North & South communities, along with McLendon Hills and points northeast and west — will continue to feed into West End Elementary. Children living in Foxfire, Taylortown, and Jackson Springs, basically all areas east of the NC 73 - Hwy 211 intersection will be redistricted to the new West Pine Elementary.

The plan calls for three hundred fifteen students from Pine-

hurst Elementary and one hundred twenty students from West End Elementary to be relocated to the new school. Students enrolled at Academy Heights Elementary, a year-round school located in Taylortown, will not be affected by the change.

Factors that determined the location of the proposed lines include attaining the target population number to fill the new school; the distance to and from school for students; respecting natural boundaries when possible; keeping entire communities within one school district; and demographic and social economic status of students.

Schools Superintendent Dr. Susan Purser said that the length of some roads and, in some cases, the lack of a safe turnaround point for buses, also had an impact on the decision-making process.

"We started with a small circle around each school and expanded it until we reached [target] numbers. We tried to not separate communities," said Upchurch. "We are trying to reduce overcrowding . . . to get rid of mobile units and have room for physical growth."

He said the transportation department is looking at alternatives, including a drop-off shuttle site, which could limit excessive bus riding time.

"We are looking at how to minimize stops but still protect children. We do not want them walk-

ing a lot of distance from home to [the bus] stop," said Upchurch.

The actual boundaries proposed for West Pine Elementary are NC Hwy 15-501 north at Doubs Chapel Road, extending south to the Pinehurst Traffic Circle, west on Hwy 211 to Beulah Hill Road, north on Hwy 5 to Lake Hills Road, then right to Hoffman Road, with Richmond County serving as the western boundary. From Hoffman Road, the line angles northwest to Eagle Branch Road, east to Flowers Road, south to Currie Mill Road, southeast to NC 73 crossing Hwy 211, and northeast to Carthage Road and east to Doubs Chapel.

A map of the area is available on the MCS and *The Times'* websites.

During an update of the Facilities Master Plan, Upchurch

reported that ninety percent of masonry work at West Pine Elementary was complete. Preliminary paving is complete, a lift station has been installed, and roof work continues. The school,

which is scheduled to open in Fall 2010, will have a total capacity of 550 students. Seth Powers, the current principal of Highfalls Elementary, will lead the school.

## Mardi Gras at SLCC

Seven Lakes Country Club is celebrating Mardi Gras on February 20.

You do not have to be a member to attend. The cocktail hour begins at 5:30 pm. At 6:30 pm. enjoy a delicious New Orleans buffet of Bourbon Chicken, Shrimp & Sausage Jambalaya, Rice Pilaf/Roasted Potatoes, Creole Green Beans, Louisiana Seven Layer Salad and Bread Pudding or King Cake for dessert.

Music starts at 7 pm and will be provided by DJ Chad Beane.

Reservations for members will be taken in person on January 25, from 10:30 am to 11:30 am and call in reservations taken after 11:30 am. Nonmembers may call in starting February 1, by calling 673-1100. The all-inclusive price for members is \$28 and \$33 for nonmembers. Hosts are Ronny & Al Hann.



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# Commissioners briefed on NC 211 widening

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

Acquisition of private property along Hwy 211 is underway and the long-awaited road widening project is anticipated to commence in June or July 2011, with completion expected in 2012.

Reporting for the NC-Department of Transportation, John 'JT' Blade, laid out this timetable during an informational presentation to the Moore County Board

of Commissioners on Wednesday, January 13.

Tate provided maps of the \$31 million dollar project and a broad overview; however, as a right-of-way agent rather than an engineer, he was unable to answer many of the questions presented.

The seven-plus mile stretch of roadway from NC Hwy 73 West in West End to the Pinehurst traffic circle will be expanded to a divided four-lane highway with landscaped medians and cross-over points.

"Our top down view — how it will look at the end of the day — is two lanes each way spanning twenty-four feet, with a one to three foot median," said Tate.

The plan calls for two lanes to enter the traffic circle, but with one lane remaining dedicated to Hwy 2 East traffic — a less traveled

option — there should be little improvement to the existing traffic snag at that location.

"From my observation, probably ninety-five percent or more of traffic on 211 entering the circle is headed for 15-501 or Hwy 2 towards the airport. I'm wondering what will be done to avoid a backup of cars — backups that now extend to Page Road," said Bill Price, a Seven Lakes West resident present at the meeting.

Tate's response, that concerns such as Price's would be taken back to the engineers in the NC-DOT office in Aberdeen for review, drew frustration from the small public assembly.

"It boggles my mind that this has not been taken into consideration," said Pinewild resident Ralph Redmond. "That circle has been a problem for I don't

know how long."

Price also questioned Tate on the proposed road design at West End.

"How will you handle traffic flow on 211 from four lanes to two lanes? Why stop at 73 and not extend [four lanes] to Seven Lakes? A lot of traffic coming east and south originates there," said Price.

Representing the Save Our Sandhills [SOS] organization, West End resident Ruth Stolting expressed concern that future projects must be considered in road planning.

"Pine Forest Development, Stonehill Pines, and Dormie Club — all will have a tremendous impact," said Stolting, estimating that the three new major

subdivisions total combined traffic flow could add approximately 21,000 cars per day onto NC Hwy 211 headed towards the circle.

"I don't know whether the answer to the problem is in the double lanes presented. I'm concerned you'll get people on these four lanes stuck at either end," said Stolting. "Maybe instead it should be looked at how to get the traffic around. Maybe we need a different kind of connector — maybe this is not really solving the problem."

Tate said the proposed plan was not set in stone and that ideas, recommendations, or inquiries should be directed to NCDOT's Division 8 office in Aberdeen, at 944-2344.

## Donations for Haiti Relief

On Tuesday, January 12 a disaster struck the capital of Haiti and surrounding areas where 2 million people live. Red Cross staff on the ground report collapsing buildings and aftershocks that have forced terrified people into the streets. The people of Haiti need our help.

Immediately, The American Red Cross pledged \$200,000 in relief services, and increased it by January 13 \$1 million - to provide food, water and other relief to people impacted by this earthquake, knowing the first 48 hours are absolutely critical to save lives.

Please make a donation now to the International Response Fund to help victims of countless crises like the earthquake in Haiti. Your gift will provide immediate relief and long-term support through supplies, technical assistance and other support to help those in need.

Your donation of any size could help save the day by providing food, water, temporary shelter, medical services and emotional support to someone in need.

Help provide hope amidst destruction and give the gift that saves the day: american.redcross.org/haiti

If you prefer to donate by phone, call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767) or 1-800-257-7575 (Spanish). Mailed donations may be sent to the American Red Cross International Response Fund, P.O. Box 37243, Washington D.C. 20013.

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# School funding approved . . . sort of

by Greg Hankins  
Times Editor

Moore County's Board of Commissioners approved on Tuesday night funding for classroom smartboards and information technology [IT] improvements in the schools, but the schools didn't get precisely the money they had asked for.

Picking up in their January 19 meeting an item tabled two weeks earlier, the Commissioners looked at several sources for the \$500,000 Moore County Schools [MCS] was requesting, \$340,000 for smartboards in the middle schools and \$160,000 for other IT initiatives.

MCS had asked for \$192,000 in bond interest and \$308,000 in bond premium. The former is interest that has accrued on school bond proceeds that have yet to be spent and so are invested in interest-bearing accounts. None of the commissioners suggested any problem with the schools using these funds, since the bonds were approved by the voters and sold to fund school

initiatives.

But the bond premium is a different matter. The county gets these funds when an investor buying the school bonds pays more than face value for them. Commissioner Nick Picerno told *The Times* that there can be tax advantages in that sort of transaction, but the key point is that, unlike the bond interest, the bond premium must eventually be repaid by the county to the bond holder.

The bond interest is a bonus the county receives for investing bond funds wisely. The bond premium is a debt that must be repaid with tax dollars. Because of this, Picerno questioned using the bond premium money to fund school initiatives, suggesting that it instead "go back to the taxpayers" — i.e., be used to pay off the indebtedness.

His fellow commissioners agreed unanimously, approving MCS' request for funds, but building a total of \$375,000 in funding that included bond interest and state refunds of sales taxes

paid on items purchased for the schools. That was \$125,000 short of the total the schools asked for, but the commissioners indicated that any additional interest that accrues on the invested bond proceeds through the end of the fiscal year can also be used for the smartboard and IT initiatives.

## Local ABC Control supported

Also on Tuesday night, the Board unanimously approved a letter to Governor Beverly Perdue, NC House Speaker Joe Hackney and NC Senate President Pro Tempore Marc Basnight strongly supporting continued local control of alcoholic beverage sales. Recent scandals involving the compensation paid ABC managers in the Wilmington area and liquor-company-funded dinner parties for Charlotte-area ABC officials have many state leaders and legislators calling for reform of the state's ABC system, which relies on local boards in each county to man-

age alcohol sales. Some have called for the privatization of liquor sales, allowing private companies to run retail outlets, as is the pattern in South Carolina, for example.


Moore County ABC Board Chairman John Garner of Seven Lakes West told the Commissioners that the local operation has none of the problems of the big-city ABC Boards getting all of the headlines. "It is and should be a very strictly-controlled situation," Garner said.

Unlike a father and son team of New Hanover County execs who were reportedly paid a total

of \$400,000 last year, Garner said Moore County ABC's General Manager Pam Smith makes \$54,000 to manage an \$8 million operation. ABC Board member Thomas Kees explained that the Board had researched salary levels across the state and developed a system of salary ranges for various types of employees.

Because the local board runs the county's four liquor stores, the county, the sheriff's department, and local non-profits all benefit, Garner said. In FY2009, the board provided \$433,00 to the county, \$156,00 to the Sheriff's

(See "Commissioners," p. 29)



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# Women of 7 Lakes learn about 'Aging in place'

by Laura Douglass,  
Times Reporter

'Aging in place' is a term used to describe the conscientious decision by a homeowner to extend the number of advanced age years spent in their own home, rather than relocating to

an assisted living or nursing facility or to the care of relatives. As an option of choice for many, aging in place is gaining in popularity.

On Thursday, January 7 the Women of Seven Lakes welcomed two local experts in the

'aging in place' field, Chad McGlothlin of Comfort Keepers in Southern Pines and Bill Reaves of Bill Reaves Construction in Seven Lakes, to address a packed room of interested residents.

McGlothlin said that the projected population increase to 71 million citizens over the age of 65, by 2030, will put strain on our nation's ability to care for the elderly.

"Dynamics are changing and it will be more difficult to gain assistance from family. What we already see is that often the responsibility [of care] is falling to the spouse," said McGlothlin, noting that it is vitally important for caregivers to protect their own health in addition to giving care.

McGlothlin recommended forming a plan for aging now, not later.

"Do your research, talk to your neighbors and friends," McGlothlin said. "Distressed or hurried decisions can often be more

costly."

While most plan for college, retirement, weddings and babies, he said that many will neglect planning for the aging process.

McGlothlin explained that there are three primary options to consider for in-home care: independent – that is, privately hiring services or a caregiver, using a registry or database of certified caregivers, or contracting with an employment-based agency.

There are pros and cons to each and costs must be taken into account, but the overall expense of remaining in your home – even with paid assistance – is less than one would expect to pay for assisted living, and significantly less than at a skilled nursing facility, McGlothlin said.

Westside resident Bill Reaves told the crowd that not only is he the only certified 'Aging in Place Specialist' building contractor within 100 miles but that he also is in the same demographic as many who are facing these deci-

sions.

"I'm a baby boomer. We are twenty-eight percent of the population but we own forty-eight percent of the homes. These issues affect me," said Reaves.

He joked that he disliked the aging in place term, preferring to call the trend a "progressive lifestyle."

Reaves explained that there are many choices that can make your home safer and easier to navigate for elderly occupants. Modifications mentioned during the meeting included zero-step entry, no sill showers, eliminating unnecessary doors, widening hallways and doors, and installing grab bars in the bathroom.


"Most homes can be remodeled and adapted and most houses that are twenty to thirty years old could use a bathroom update anyway," said Reaves.

He estimated that there would be no additional cost to a new construction home to include

(See "Aging," p. 12)



**Bill Reaves of Bill Reaves Construction and Chad McGlothlin of Comfort Keepers.**




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*This is an eight-week program held on Monday evenings from 6:30 to 9 p.m. The program includes an initial individual assessment, group therapy, classroom materials, follow-up assessment and a one-day workshop from 9:30 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Saturday, March 20. Space is limited.*

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# It's time to get out those pruning sheers

It's another New Year for gardening in the Sandhills. Let's start off by making a few comments about the weather since it is directly associated with gardening.

The Winter thus far has been colder than normal. According to meteorologists there were twenty consecutive days during late December and early January when temperatures were below normal. This could cause a positive effect for plant growth, which means most plants are dormant, also the cold weather might reduce and lessen on-coming insect, disease, and nematode infestations this season.

The holiday season is over and many of us have been complacent with cleaning up and getting ready for Springtime which is just around the corner.

Every year many people ask questions about pruning woody ornamentals. Most of the dormant, leafless ones can be pruned. Early Spring flowering ornamentals plants and trees, such as azaleas, camellias, dogwood, quince, forsythia, etc, should not be pruned. These may be pruned if desired and necessary after blooming – the rule of thumb is to prune following flowering unless there are dead plant parts that should be removed.

Grapevines and fruit trees should be pruned as soon as possible.

Some complain their indoor

plants haven't done well this Winter during the cold weather. My wife, Mary, suggests a few houseplant reminders:

Some plants don't adjust from outdoor to indoor conditions too readily. Give your individual plants the proper amount of water. Don't overwater. A good investment is to purchase a water

meter. Plants spaced together will release more humidity and give off more oxygen, thereby improving transpiration. Light is important for the health of the plant. Those requiring high light should be placed three to four feet from windows facing east, south and west. Those requiring medium light, place six to eight feet from windows facing south, east and west. Those needing low light should be placed away from the windows in hallways, or in the center of the room. Also select plants that are environmentally-suited to the temperature situation in your home.

I have been asked to comment regarding vegetable gardening rotation, preparation, and management. Gardening rotation is a problem where land space is limited for many of us in Seven Lakes and other development areas in Moore County. In fact, vegetables produce better if gar-

den spots are moved every three to four years. This rotation helps break the cycle of diseases, insects, and nematode infestations. If one cannot move the garden location, the next best alternative is to move the individual vegetable plantings around in a different spot every year.

Now is the time to clean up your site till or spade up the garden area several times. Thoroughly mixing into the soil organic matter, lime, rotten leaves, and dried decomposed manure. The amount should be determined by a soil test analysis. As a general recommendation, use twenty to twenty-five pounds dolomitic limestone, ten to fifteen pounds of dry dehydrated manure, and twelve pounds of bone meal per 1,000 square feet of cultivated soil.

## Other January reminders:

It's time to make plans for laying out gardening and landscaping tasks for the coming

season.

If you have neglected planting those shrubs and trees you intended to earlier, go ahead and do it now.

January is a good time to plant Spring flowering bulbs. When planting, add a small handful mixture of finely ground bone meal and dolomitic limestone. When the crown sprouts emerge from the soil, add a tablespoon of bulb booster fertilizer.

Fertilize your pansies now and again when needed with liquid or granular fertilizer.

Control Winter pesky weeds in your lawn, such as chick weed and dandelions, wild onions, garlic, and hen bit. Get a broadleaf herbicide labeled to kill these weeds.

Suggested vegetable plantings for January: hardy dwarf, sugar, and edible podded peas, onion sets and plants, asparagus crowns, and rhubarb plants.



## Gardening in the Sandhills

Jim Caudill

# Would You Trade 30 Days For A Life of 'No Regrets?'

## What if you had one month to live?

Join Seven Lakes Baptist Church as they begin a compelling journey based on the best-selling book by Kerry & Chris Shook: *One Month to Live*. Rather than going through life "playing it safe" or doing "the minimum" to get by, SLBC is convinced that embracing our time on earth as a limited resource has incredible power to liberate us. For most of us, if we knew we only had one month to live, we would live our lives differently. We would be more authentic about who we are and more deliberate about how we spend the time we have. But such a contrast begs the question: *What keeps us from living this way now?*



"No matter how much this idea makes you squirm, it's a fact. No matter who you are, how young or old, what measure of success you've attained, or where you live, mortality remains the great equalizer. With each tick of the clock, a moment of your life is behind you. Even as you read this paragraph, seconds pass that you can never regain. Your days are numbered, and each one that passes is gone forever."

— Kerry Shook

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January 17th – "Live Passionately"

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January 31st – "Learn Humbly"

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# West End student wins peace poster contest

On January 15, Eligah Cole a seventh grade student at West Pine Middle School, took the second step to becoming an internationally recognized artist by winning both the local and state competition sponsored by the Seven Lakes Lions Club.

Cole's poster was among more than 350,000 entries submitted worldwide in the annual Lions International Peace Poster Contest. Lions Clubs International sponsored the program to emphasize the importance of world peace to young people everywhere.

"The use of the doves of peace in my poster defines peace while flying within the universe," the 13-year-old from West End said. The poster was selected by William Byers, Jr., Professor of Art at Brevard College in Brevard, NC for its originality, artistic merit and portrayal of the contest theme, "The Power of Peace."

Seven Lakes Lions Club President Howard Pierce said "He was impressed by the expression and creativity of the students at West Pine Middle School. It is obvious that these young people have strong ideas about what peace means to them. I'm so proud that we were able to provide them with the opportunity to

share their visions."

"Cole's poster has advanced through the district and multiple district levels of competition and he is waiting a judging at the international level if he is to be declared the international grand prize winner," District Governor Dan Bourdeau of the Western Harnett Lions Club said.

One international grand prize winner and 23 merit award winners will be selected. The grand prize includes a cash award of \$2,500, plus a trip for the winner and two family members to an awards ceremony at Lions Day with the United Nations. The 23 merit award winners will each receive a certificate and a cash

award of \$500.

"Our club is cheering for Eligah Cole as his poster advances in the competition, and we hope that his vision will ultimately be shared with others around the world," Seven Lakes Lions Club President, Pierce said.

Locally, Cole and two other students will be honored for their

participation by the Seven Lakes Lions Club at a dinner in March.

Since 1917 Lions clubs have aided the blind and visually impaired and made a strong commitment to community service and serving youth throughout the world.



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**104 RUNNING BROOK**  
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Waterfront on Sequoia  
Breathtaking Views!  
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## REDUCED!

**121 CALLIS CIRCLE**  
SEVEN LAKES WEST  
Waterfront on Lake Auman with breathtaking views! 3 BR, 3.5 BA, several bonus rms, screened porch, spacious, lots of storage, many wonderful features! **\$599,000**



## REDUCED!

**117 BERKSHIRE COURT**  
SEVEN LAKES SOUTH  
3 Bed, 2 Bath with Fantastic Golf Views!! All brick home with many recent updates, screened porch, bargain priced!  
**\$159,000**



**122 SMATHERS DRIVE**  
SEVEN LAKES WEST  
3BR, 3.5BA, plus bonus room!  
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SEVEN LAKES WEST  
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**111 SEMINOLE COURT**  
SEVEN LAKES NORTH  
3 bedroom plus bonus, granite, hardwoods, private lot!  
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**119 HARWICH**  
SEVEN LAKES SOUTH  
3BR, 2BA, golf front! Pond View! Private and serene setting!  
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**119 LONGLEAF DR., SL WEST**  
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## Aging

(Continued from page 10)

aging in place type designs, and that the expense to upgrade existing construction would be less than the cost to move into an assisted living facility.

Reaves also noted that many changes, such as widening doors and halls, actually increase the value of the home.

During a lengthy question and answer period, a key concern for many was transportation.

McGlothlin said transportation was one of the many companion and assistive care services Comfort Keepers provided, and The Rev. Frank Stark said The Chapel in the Pines has an outreach ministry that provides transportation for doctor appointments.

The Women of Seven Lakes meets the first Thursday of the month. Visitors and guests are always welcome.

# Agreement

(Continued from front page)

Pinehurst, the map was revised to move the Lake Diamond subdivision — a rurally located, thirty-home lake community — into the area open to annexation by Foxfire. That change was the result of an appeal by Lake Diamond resident Richard Shearer and Chris Nelsen, the president of the community's property owner's association. In December, the Lake Diamond representatives approached the Foxfire Council and asked that Lake Diamond be brought into the potential Foxfire annexation area — a request that was supported by Pinehurst — and the map was duly amended.

The revised agreement extends Foxfire's reserved area north from the Foxfire Village center to Hwy 211 and then west to NC Hwy 73W; east beyond the Stonehill Pines development to encompass Lake Diamond, and south beyond Roseland Road. The area reserved for Pinehurst heads north from Roseland

Road, skirting east of Lake Diamond, Stonehill Pines, and the existing Foxfire Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction [ETJ], and ultimately crosses over NC Hwy 211 from near Ellis Road all the way to NC Hwy 73E in West End: an area that includes nearly all of the 1,800 acre Pine Forest Development — a major subdivision and resort complex currently under review by the Moore County Planning Board.

## Sufficient public notice?

Rural resident Amy McDonald said, at this point, all she has heard about is the controversy. She asked the Council how word of the agreement had been disseminated and whether they felt that residents along Foxfire Road had been adequately notified.

Erickson and Lauer responded that the agreement was discussed at several meetings and included in the minutes, posted on the Foxfire Village website, reported in *The Times*, and that

legal notices were placed in *The Pilot*, as required by law.

Individual letters to residents are not required and were not sent, but several owners of large affected properties were contacted independently, including a meeting with representatives of the Pine Forest Development.

"They told us they preferred to stay in the county, some said they'd rather be with Pinehurst and we worked with Lake Diamond and the Wilson's. You can only do so much," said Lauer.

The Wilson property is an 800-acre rural tract located along Hoffman Road and Hwy 211, north of Stonehill Pines. Currently the property is under Moore County zoning but, as originally proposed by Pinehurst,

the property had been included in their jurisdiction for potential annexation. The Wilson family made a formal request to be included in the Foxfire Extra-Territorial Jurisdiction [ETJ] instead, and an agreement between the county and Foxfire is under attorney review. Erickson said the request must be approved by the Moore County Board of Commissioners before a public hearing would be held in Foxfire, anticipated for February or March of this year.

Councilwoman Coker said that she is disappointed that public notice in a newspaper is the only requirement by law but encouraged residents to stay current and read the legal notice section regularly.

"It is up to us as individual citizens to look for that information," she said.

## Move to table fails

Opposed to the agreement, Coker recommended tabling the discussion on Tuesday, January 12, until the Pinewild lawsuit was settled: her motion died without a second.

"I don't see why we're rushing into this at this time. We're not representing the people here -- there is no benefit for Foxfire," she argued. "This agreement works to Pinehurst's advantage, it buys them time."

Lauer responded that the annexation agreement has nothing to do with Pinehurst's attempt

(See "Agreement," p. 14)

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## Agreement

(Continued from page 13)

to forcibly annex the Pinewild development or the lawsuit that action has spawned.

"Their [Pinehurst] ETJ already extends almost to every border on these proposed map areas," Lauer said.

Unlike Foxfire, which must go to Moore County to request an extension to its ETJ — as in the case of the Wilson property — the Pinehurst ETJ automatically extends two miles beyond its corporate limit.

"We're dealing with too many opinions not based on fact," said Lauer. "If you look at the ETJ as it exists now, we're right up against each other as we stand. I saw this agreement as a way

of ensuring some boundaries around us as a small community. I moved here from Pinehurst, I owned land in Pinewild. My feeling is, all I want to do is preserve our way of life out here."

Lauer said that Stonehill Pines will take at least fifteen more years to develop, and that the Pine Forest Development would take at least that long.

Land north of Hwy 211 was not included in areas that Foxfire might annex because "it is outside of our reach."

"To be perfectly frank, we don't have the infrastructure, nor will we ever be able to provide them the services they will require, unless they come to us voluntarily like Stonehill," said Lauer. "We

don't have a source of water to supply a development of that size. As for railroad access [referring to the commercial property Foxfire would control on Hwy 211], there has always been talk of access from two different roads — 211 and Hoffman."

Koos agreed, "What has been unfair is criticism of this Council, by one in particular, that we are trying to jam this down everyone's throat."

His remarks incited an open argument with Parks and Recreation Chairman Olsen, who was ultimately asked to leave the meeting.

Attempting to restore order, Erickson called the question, forcing a vote, and then announced the Village attorney's recommendation that the 3-2 split vote would require a second

vote, which was held in the Special Meeting on Thursday, January 13. The vote remained 3-2 and the agreement was approved.

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## Foxfire

(Continued from page 5)

projects.

"[Implementation in] the rest of the years would be based solely on the Village's budget and capability," Erickson said.

A public hearing on the revised PARTF grant application will be held Tuesday, January 19 at 7:30 pm.

### Public Safety

In April 2009, the NC General Assembly passed an amendment that allows municipalities to regulate golf cart operation.

Councilwoman Page Coker said that while she personally is not in favor of additional restrictions, that she did agree with Foxfire Police Chief Mike Campbell's assessment that the Village should update the ordinances on golf carts.

Any changes would be for safety reasons, explained Coker, and as fair as possible. She also proposed a one-time \$5 fee for inspection and sticker.

In addition, work continues on updating the Open Burning permit ordinance.

Any new or amended ordinances will be available for review at the Village offices and a public hearing will be scheduled prior to approval.

### Zoning

Two new housing plans were submitted in January: a potentially good sign for Village growth, compared to only five or six plans submitted in 2009.

Mayor Erickson reported that one plan had been approved and the other required a change to the garage.

Without a Zoning Administrator on staff, members of the Appearance Committee had been asked to assist with applications, but Erickson explained that, because of liability insurance concerns, the NC League of Municipalities has recommended only staff and Council members should approve building plans.

### Public Comment

With agenda items and public comment periods heating up — especially over the recently approved annexation agreement with the Village of Pinehurst — Councilwoman Coker recommended moving the Public Comment portion to the beginning of each meeting, rather than at the end as historically held.

She also suggested adopting the protocol used by the Moore County Board of Commissioners, limiting time per speaker but that allowing for residents to "give" their time to another speaker. This process allows a designated spokesperson a large enough chunk of time to adequately express a position.

"I welcome your input and want you to be involved in all council decisions," Coker said. "Don't feel that we don't hear or don't listen just because a vote may not go your way. You have to speak up."

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# In memory of . . .

**Jack Lee Myrick, Sr.**, 81 of West End, died Sunday January 17 at his home. Mr. Myrick was born in Guilford County, the son of the late Corbett Myrick and Eliza Williams Myrick.

Funeral services were held Wednesday, January 20, at Faith Baptist Church, West End. The Rev. Tony Connor and Rev. Ralph Lee Clayton officiated. Burial followed in Piney Grove Cemetery, Robbins.

Mr. Myrick served in the US Army during the Korean War. He was cofounder of the US Complete Shooting Dog Association.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Charles Myrick and two sisters, Jewel Boone and Joyce Allred.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Ruby Clayton Myrick of the home; his sons, Jack Lee Myrick, Jr. of Kentucky; Zeb Corbett Myrick of West End; John Clayton Myrick of West End; David Leon Myrick of Robbins; his brothers, Clarence and Vernon Myrick both of Robbins and Bobby Myrick of Star; seven grandchildren.

Memorial donations can be made in memory of Jack Myrick to Faith Baptist Church Building Fund, PO Box 190 West End, NC 27376

Boles Funeral Home of Seven Lakes assisted the family.

**Mildred McMillan Gentry**, 86, of Laurinburg, died Wednesday, January 6. Funeral services were held Saturday, January 9, at Trinity United Methodist Church in Red Springs, officiated by the Rev. Diana Killian and the Rev. William Gentry. Burial followed in Philadelphus Presbyterian Church cemetery.

Mrs. Gentry was born in Robeson County, the daughter of the late Walter Peyton and Rose

Elizabeth Jones McMillan.

She is survived by her husband of sixty-seven years, Hansford Gentry; a son, Peyton Gentry and his wife, Martha, of Seven Lakes West; three daughters, Carol Reavis and her husband,

Bill of Charlotte; Susan Gaston and her husband, Bill of Marco Island, FL; and Janis Bracey and her husband, Gordon of Rowland; a brother, Bobby McMillan, of Red Springs; fifteen grandchildren and thirty great-grand-

children.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice, PO Box 1033, Laurinburg, NC 28353; to the American Cancer Society, 930 Wellness Drive, #B, Greenville, NC 27834; or to

Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Association Inc., 919 North Michigan Ave., Suite 1100, Chicago, IL 60611-1676.

McDougald Funeral Home and Crematorium of Laurinburg assisted the family.

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FRIDAY, JANUARY 22

• **Moore Co. Red Cross** – 10 am - 2:30 pm, American Red Cross Blood Donation Site, Douglass Community Center, 1185 W. Pennsylvania Ave., Southern Pines. Appt call 692-8571.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 23

• **Drop-In Wine Tasting** – 1 - 5 pm at Sandhills Winery. At least five types or varietals to educate your palate. Located in Seven Lakes Plaza, next to Peking Wok.

• **Super Bowl Party and Other Hearty Dishes for the Season** – at 1 pm, with Carmela Chase and Marjorie Nurnberg at Seven Lakes West Side Park Community Center. A sample of the featured recipes include: Hearty Potato and Cheddar with Bacon Soup, Spicy Hot Wings with Blue Cheese Sauce, Jambalaya, and other dishes and desserts that can be made ahead, easily and quickly. Everyone will partake in tasting of all the dishes and receive copies of the recipes. Program sponsored by West Side Community Activities Committee. Cost \$12.50 per person. For infor-

mation and to register for the program, call 673-5314.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 24

• **Mary Wayne Watson, PhD.** – 2 pm, Dr. Watson is a lecturer, writer, and English professor at Nash Community College. She will present a program on the Scottish culture and customs of the Sandhills. Watson is



a native of Scotland County, the niece of a legendary North Carolina poet Charles McNeill. This program is free and open to the public. Held at First Baptist Church, 200 E. New York Ave., Southern Pines. Project is made possible by a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, and is sponsored by the non-prof-

it Moore County Historical Association. For details, call (910) 692-2051, weekdays between 1 and 4 pm.

MONDAY, JANUARY 25

• **Sandhills Natural History Society** – 7 pm, at Weymouth Woods Auditorium, 1024 Ft. Bragg Rd., Southern Pines. *Spotted Turtles*, writer, illustrator and educator, Bob Palmatier will talk about his many years of research and observations on spotted turtles. Visitors welcome. Call 910-692-2167 for more information or online at [www.sandhillsnature.org](http://www.sandhillsnature.org).

TUESDAY, JANUARY 26

• **Penick Village** – 1:30 - 6 pm, American Red Cross Blood Donation Site, First Bank, North Building, Emmanuel Episcopal Ch., 100 E. Rhode Island Ave., Southern Pines. Appt. call 692-8571.

• **Windows XP Level 1 Class** – at West End Elementary, on Tuesday and Thursday, 6 - 8 pm, through February 23. Corinne Walls will be the instructor for this class. Class includes information on virus

protection, creating folders, moving files, computer maintenance, control panel options, printing, basic word processing, creating CDs and much more. Call Sandhills Community College Continuing Education Department to register, 910-692-3766.

• **Seven Lakes West Landowners Association General Meeting** – 7:00 pm, West Side Park Community Center Great Room.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27

• **Sandhills Cycle Center** – 1:30 - 6 pm, American Red Cross Blood Donation Site, On the bus, 7540 Hwy 15-501 North, Pinehurst. Appt. call 692-8571.

• **Seven Lakes Landowners Association Open Meeting** – 7:30 pm, Seven Lakes North Clubhouse.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 28

• **Standard First Aid Review** – 6:30 - 8:30 pm, \*Prerequisite: Participant should hold current or recently expired certification in the review subject. 115 E. Pennsylvania Ave., Southern Pines. Fees must be paid in advance. Class size is limited. Fees are nonrefundable, but they may be applied to another course. 692-8571

• **Save Our Sandhills hosts guest speaker Dr. Stephen Hall** – 7 pm, he will speak on "Insects and Habitats That Are of Special Conservation Concern in the North Carolina Sandhills." Dr. Hall, an Invertebrate Zoologist with the NC Natural Heritage Program, conducts studies of insects associated with specialized habitats. Meeting held at the Southern Pines Civic Club, corner of Ashe Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, Southern Pines; refreshments.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29

• **"Born to Run"** – Sponsored by the Foundation of FirstHealth Promise of Hope Lecture. registration at 5 pm; program at 5:30 pm. Program features writer/runner Chris McDougall. Held at Pinecrest High School Auditorium. For reservations, call the Foundation of FirstHealth at (910) 695-7510.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 30

• **Adult/Infant/Child CPR/AED** – 8 am - 1:30 pm, Red Cross Introductory Certification Course. Certification fee \$55. 115 E. Pennsylvania Ave., Southern Pines. Fees must be paid in advance. Class size is limited. Fees are nonrefundable, but they may be



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Turkey Meatloaf Dinner ♥	Chicken Tetrazzini Dinner	Smothered Pork Chops Dinner	Bourbon Salmon Dinner ♥	Beef Stroganoff Dinner ♥
8 Tomato Basil Soup ♥	9 Cream of Broccoli Soup	10 Curried Chicken Soup	11 Beef Vegetable Soup ♥	12 Shrimp & Sausage Gumbo
Salisbury Steak Dinner	Chicken with Artichokes Dinner ♥	Pot Roast Dinner	Tilapia Scampi-Style Dinner ♥	Pork with Cranberry Merlot Dinner ♥
15 Split Pea with Ham Soup	16 White Bean Chicken Chili	17 Minestrone Soup ♥	18 Mushroom with Wild Rice Soup	19 Manhattan Clam Chowder ♥
Ginger Beef Stir Fry Dinner ♥	Chicken Pot Pie Dinner	Eggplant Parmesan Dinner	Crab Cakes Dinner ♥	Beef Enchiladas Dinner ♥
22 Curried Carrot Soup ♥	23 Black Bean Soup	24 Mexican Meatball Soup ♥	25 Creamy Chicken Alphabet Soup	26 Potato Leek Soup ♥
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- **Drop-In Wine Tasting** – 1 - 5 pm at Sandhills Winery. At least five types or varietals to educate your palate. Located in Seven Lakes Plaza, next to Peking Wok.
- **Morgan Sills** – 7 pm, Manhattan cabaret and concert entertainer, writer, actor, and producer will present a program of Broadway legend Oscar Hammerstein's lyrics at Weymouth Center for the Arts and Humanities, 555 E. Connecticut Ave., Southern Pines. He will be accompanied by a pianist and bassist. This is his second appearance at Weymouth for a fundraiser. Proceeds from ticket sales will be used for Weymouth's non-profit programs in the arts and cultural events for the community. For tickets and other information, call the Weymouth Center between 10 am and 2:30 pm weekdays at (910) 692-6261.

### SUNDAY, JANUARY 31

- **Information Session and Tour** – Theater in the O'Neal School Activities Center. Families who are interested in learning more about The O'Neal School are invited to an Information Session and Tour of The O'Neal School 2 pm to 4 pm. The headmaster, division

directors, teachers, admissions staff and volunteer parents will be available to give information and answer questions. [www.ONealSchool.org](http://www.ONealSchool.org). Call Admissions Director, Alice Droppers for more information: (910) 692-6920 ext. 103 [adroppers@oneal.school.org](mailto:adroppers@oneal.school.org)

- **Women of Seven Lakes Social & Community Mixer** – 4 pm to 6 pm, Northside Club House. This is a great opportunity to visit with old friends and meet your new neighbors. Newcomers are especially encouraged to attend. There will be plenty of delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts, the event is BYOB. Tickets are \$5 and will be available by calling Ginny Heerema at 673-5150.

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1

- **Moore County Literacy Council - Orientation** – 1 - 2 pm. This are workshops for volunteers who would like to become adult tutors. Volunteers are required to attend Orientation prior to a training session. Tutor Training will continue on February 8, 11, 15 and 18, 1 pm - 4 pm. The twelve hour workshops will be held at Emmanuel Youth House, 385 E Indiana, Southern Pines. Donations will be accepted to defray the cost of materials. Register one the

week prior to the session. Registrations may be made by phone, (910)692-5954 or e-mail, [pammclc@nc.rr.com](mailto:pammclc@nc.rr.com).

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2

- **Groundhog Day**
- **College Club Luncheon** – 11:30 am, Amy Jo Wood, Marketing Director of Our State Magazine, will be the guest speaker. The meeting will be at Pinewild Country Club. Cost of the luncheon is \$15. For further information, contact Katharine Bozarth, vice president/membership chairman at (910) 255-6286.
- **Glenn Miller Orchestra®** – 7:30 pm, In Concert in the Robert E. Lee Auditorium at Pinecrest High School, 250 Voit Gilmore Road, Southern Pines. All Tickets purchased in advance only \$20, Tickets purchased at the door \$25. Tickets available to purchase from Whelan Realty on Seven Lakes Drive. \*Event sponsored by Pinecrest High School Band\* The Miller Sound Lives!

### THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 4

- **Say Be Mine With Wine Valentine Tasting** – 5:00 to 8:00 at Sandhills Winery. Located in Seven Lakes Plaza next to Peking Wok. Reservations preferred

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 8

- **Seven Lakes Landowners Association Work Session** – 8:30 am, Conference Room.
- **Bingo Night At Our Lady Of The Americas** – 7 pm, Early Bird Bingo; and 7:30 pm, Regular Bingo. Located at 298 Farmers Market Road, off Hwy 211 (Exxon Station), just east of Hwy 220 near Candor. Doors open at 6:30 pm. For more information, 974-3051.

### TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9

- **Seven Lakes West Landowners Association Work Session** – 9 am, West Side Park Community Center.

### WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 10

- **American Red Cross Blood Drive** – 1 to 6 pm, at Seven Lakes North Club House. Call 692-8571 for earlier drives.

- **Wells Fargo Advisors** – 4 pm- 4:50 pm, Smart investment strategy can help you make the most of market advances and limit your risk during market declines. This is a Free seminar – Weathering Market Volatility – Held at Seven Lakes West Community Center, Longleaf Drive, Seven Lakes. Presented by Robert J. Wagler, CPA, CRPC, Financial Advisor. Snack served. Seating is limited. To R.S.V.P., call Carolyn Crider at 800.7275221 or [carolyn.crider@wfadvisors.com](mailto:carolyn.crider@wfadvisors.com)

### MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15

- **President's Day**

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## Digitally divided . . .

Tick-tock, tick-tock.

"Wow, that's neat but how do you turn it off?" asked my little engineer.

The 'it' being his grandfather's old travel alarm clock which my nine-year old had figured out how to wind-up. Amused, I explained that this primitive time-keeping device did not have an off switch – or even batteries.

This surprised and intrigued our modern-day hero, unleashing a fury of new questions.

"It winds? Where does it wind too? Why does it make that sound? What do you mean it'll tick for a whole day?"

Digital divide is probably the

most succinct way to define such daily conversations between this xbox 360-kid and his Gen X mom.

So, what I want to know is when did I become a cultural relic and why didn't I get the memo?

Earlier this year we had a similar winding-as-novelty act experience when Darling Hubby purchased a brand new, but stripped down pick-up truck. Climbing aboard, Jack wanted to know what those knobbed handles on the door were for.

Let's just say we had to peel the kids off the pavement from their hysterical giggles, and now – two months later – they still

think it's a riot to wind the glass up and down, up and down.

Isn't it odd how we become so quickly accustomed to strides for-



### Laura's Learning Curve

Laura Douglass

ward in technology that we hardly notice them? My clocks don't tick and my van is accessible by the touch of a button. Cue Staples, 'That was easy.' And no, I

never think about it.

Actually, I've decided technology is not all that different from watching children grow: so

slow that it's imperceptible and then one day, bam! None of their pants fit.

I'm not alone.

A few months ago I shared a few reserved giggles alongside the usually staid Moore County Planning Board. A communications consultant was attempting to

explain the evolution of cellular towers, and he brought a few visual aids.

His first artifact – one of those huge telephone-in-a-bag sets – drew embarrassed groans of recognition from the room. Moving through the years, the phones became smaller and lighter and he concluded with today's Blue Tooth.

Is it just me or do these folks always look like they're talking to the Mothership?

"Beam me up, dude. There's no intelligent life here . . . Hey, what's that ticking sound?"

## Westside needs dues hike – and sharp pencil

Dear Editor:

Living in Seven Lakes West, my wife and I have seen many changes in our community and have watched with interest and concern decisions made by board members. These decisions influence the present, future, and the long-range efforts of our community and will determine the future of our most important investment, our properties.

Seven Lakes West's future is my wife's and my major concern. We appreciate the fact that this board is taking a good look at what we need long-range, especially reserves or lack of. We are down over 26 percent from 2002. Yes, an increase in dues

will be necessary to return the reserves to an acceptable level especially since our community is getting older and growing, therefore, more and more needs must be met. Two examples are roads and drainage. Paving roads is very expensive and controlling water without proper infrastructure is as well.

While the dues increase will affect almost all property owners' except developers, it will also bring those who have bought undeveloped as well as sub-standard lots for the purpose of enjoying the lake, Johnson Point, West Side Park, and other amenities, into paying their share of dues to maintain our Community. This is fair because res-

idents here pay substantially more.

Thank you also for the vote to eliminate the annual fireworks display, which this year would be \$14,500 for 20 minutes. For several years now on the fourth of July, we have burned over \$10,000 each year for a 20-to-25-minute display. Multiply that times five years and one will see that \$50,000 for less than two hours of entertainment is expensive. This \$50,000 would look good sitting in the bank under reserves for roads. I really don't think that any resident here would take \$14,500 cash, set fire to it, and for 20 minutes, watch it burn.

However, I do feel that there are areas of the budget that can be evaluated more closely or eliminated:

- \$3000 labor to decorate/remove decorations at Christmas time
- \$15,000 for an unnecessary guardrail
- Hiring individual for set up and tear down functions at Westside Park (weddings, parties, etc...). Why not add a fee to function through deposit/not our responsibility
- Evaluate closely what is being spent for grounds maintenance (blowing leaves off streets, litter pick up, etc.)

throughout the year

To the property owners here on the West Side, read Kathy Kirst's letter as well as Ron Shepherd's comments in the January Community Newsletter — excellent information to absorb.

Again, an increase in dues will not be any fun, many of us will need to tighten our belts, and the dues will affect some more than others (my wife and I included), but we live in a community that must be maintained. Betty and I had rather pay along the way — if the money is spent wisely and I do mean wisely —

than to have a large one-time special assessment. Property owners also need the assurance that once reserve levels are met, they will *not* be depleted-as in the past-by frivolous spending.

Again, SLWLA Board, Betty and I are looking forward to the time we have reserves that are strong — which will be the insurance for our Community's future.

Dr. Ronnie R. Milligan  
Seven Lakes West

[Betty Milligan is a former member of the SLWLA Board of Directors.]

### SEVEN LAKES TIMES

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### Letters to the Editor

**Your letters  
welcome  
here . . .**

The Times welcomes letters from our readers, and we print most all we get. We'd be grateful if you'd hold the length to 300 words or less.

We prefer letters delivered by e-mail, but you can also feel free to fax, mail, or drop your letter in the drop box by our office door at 4307 Seven Lakes Plaza in the business village. See the box at left for our addresses and fax number.

# 'Big government' takeover in 7 Lakes West

Dear Editor:

I was shocked and disappointed to learn of the exorbitant dues increase that has been approved by members of the SLWLA Board. I just purchased a home here in 2005 and then a vacant lot in 2006, because I thought it was a great investment in a great community. How things have changed since then!

Instead of paying my annual dues to friends and neighbors while passing through the various stations to instantly get my decals and pool passes, last year with the new CAS Management Team in charge, I had to mail in my payment a full month earlier and then did not receive my boat decals for two months because the "boat person" only worked certain days and "had a stack to sort through." So much for the efficiency of our newly contracted association management company.

Now, the Board wants to charge me an additional \$255 for my developed lot and an additional \$295 dollars for my vacant lot every year, and exactly what am I getting in return for this investment?

They decided to cancel the gorgeous and well attended 4th of July annual fireworks display, get rid of lifeguards, and remove the diving board. I must admit I liked it out here much better in the past. Charge an assessment to property owners when emergencies arise, in the meantime prudently spend and save the

money we have entrusted to you!

Operating Budgets are supposed to be balanced and "zeroed out" each year with reasonable reserves being set aside. This budget is an outrage and I hope the community will wake up before it is too late.

Do not ratify this recommendation! How demeaning to say they will soften the blow of the steep increase by taking the money from the Westside Property owners in monthly installments.

You are still taking the same amount of money from our pockets! Do you think we are "Sheeple" instead of People, and will blindly follow your recommendations and not even notice our money disappearing

if you do it gradually while our amenities slowly disappear? And how do you justify making owners of vacant lots pay the same amount as those who have improved their lots?

Many of those people live out of state and never use the guard gates or roads or mail house but bought the land so they might eventually build in what used to be a paradise over here on the West Side. I pay full price each year for my vacant lot and yet, I receive no extra car decals or pool passes, I get nothing extra, but I know the money is needed to support the community so I pay it gladly. It is simply not fair to charge the same amount to vacant lot owners as those with developed lots as they do not receive the same

level of enjoyment of the area since they have no residence here and limited time spent on the premises.

Sadly, the current board and the hired community management association are "killing the golden goose" by these thoughtless and reckless recommendations. It is also irrelevant for Community Manager Joan Frost to state that "Of all the communities we manage, you have tremendous amenities for a very low rate."

Yes, we know that. It's a big part of why many of us invested in living out here in the first place. Thanks a lot for removing that as

one of the previously enjoyed perks.

Lots of residents used to enjoy taking part in making this a lovely and happy community on a voluntary basis, but the future is looking stark indeed as a situation reminiscent of the Big Government takeover in Washington, DC appears to be happening right here in Moore County.

Kind of like the Health Care Reform bill, more money out of your pocket for diminished level of services, whether you like it or not.

Speak Out with your Vote!

LeAnne Purvis  
Seven Lakes West

## Taste of Town returns

The Women of Seven Lakes will be holding its Sixth Annual "Taste of the Town" on Monday, March 22, at the West Side Park Community Center from 5 to 7 pm.

Several restaurants, including some community favorites and some new restaurants will feature their culinary specialties this year. Wine, beer, and coffee are included.

A raffle will be held with many gift certificates from area restaurants throughout the evening.

In addition, a special and

separate Wine Tasting by Sandhills Winery, owned by Leslie & Bob Rose, will be held prior to the event.

Tickets are \$20 each for the Taste of the Town event, and \$10 each for the special Wine Tasting. Proceeds will benefit local charities.

Tickets for both the Taste of the Town and the Wine Tasting will be sold Thursday, February 5, during the general meeting of the Women of Seven Lakes.

Contact Lois Ann Eisel at 400-3094 for tickets.



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If you would like to get to know her better, stop by the shelter and let Cricket introduce herself.

For more information about adopting Cricket, please contact Moore Humane Society at 947-2631 or visit [www.moorehumane.org](http://www.moorehumane.org).



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# Vote for fiscally responsible SLWLA directors

Dear Editor:

Voting on the SLWLA Proposed Budget is not important since the Board creates and approves it. What is important is voting for fiscal responsible Board Candidates.

Each year the SLWLA Board presents a Proposed Budget for

the next fiscal year to the members for ratification. The budget is ratified unless a majority of all lot owners rejects the budget. (Per North Carolina Planned Community Act.)

Using last years figures, 1705 lots, equals 1705 eligible votes. It would require 853 'No' votes to

reject the budget. (Should this miracle happen, the last budget ratified will continue until lot owners ratify a subsequent budget.)

The total votes cast last year was 655. Therefore, even if all 655 voted 'NO' it would still be ratified according to the Planned

Community Act.

The Association's By-laws gives member's votes some meaning. It states: 'in the event a majority of those Members voting reject the propose budget, the Treasurer and Directors shall immediately review the budget.' This 'review' process is

not defined. It would, however, be 'reviewed' by the new Board consisting of the three Directors just elected plus the six that approved the budget in the first place. This puts the Board in complete control over establishing and approving the budget.

Should a review be necessary, I hope that the newly elected Directors would insist on a process that includes a means to determine the concerns of those that voted to reject the budget and to seriously consider any recommendations presented.

Since the Board has complete control over the budget, I ask, why vote on the budget? The important thing is to vote for Board Candidates that will be fiscal responsible. With the proposed dues increase of thirty-six percent it appears that fiscal responsibility is certainly lacking.

Eddie J. Jackson  
Seven Lakes West

## Westside budget deserves support

Dear Residents and Property Owners of Seven Lakes West:

We must not let saving a few dollars today cause us to lose thousands of dollars in the future.

This letter is in support of the current board's proposed budget. For the past several years, this community has been enjoying an unrealistic dues structure due to an agreement made while combining the neighborhoods within in Seven Lakes West.

Now that "parity" has been reached, we must take the steps necessary to catch up on the losses to our reserves which has occurred over the past several years. As the cost of main-

taining our growing and aging infrastructure has increased, our income has lagged horribly. This has put our home values in jeopardy.

These board members are to be commended for taking a long-range look at where our community should be in comparison with other current and planned communities. Also this board has taken a "plan ahead" approach to the future needs of our residents, such as a second manned gate and the possibility of reopening the damn road.

For most of our residents, their home in SLW is a major

investment. We must do all we can to preserve, and possibly increase, our home values and this budget is a step in the right direction.

Short sighted thinking and penny pinching will cost us all in the long run. If you are interest-

ed in protecting your investment and preserving your way of life here in SLW, please show your support for this budget proposal and for this board.

Nancy and Ron Workman  
Seven Lakes West

### Mind your letter length!

Association elections and annual meetings mean *The Times* will receive a large number of Letters to the Editor for the next few issues. If you've a mind to write, please try to limit the length of your letter to 300 words.

## Beyond silly

Dear Editor:

Just for the record there are more than a couple of people on the West side who think the dues increase is Silly, it is also criminal, disgusting and Wrong!

Get real People . . . Lots of

folks here are on a declining fixed income. If you want the money to last longer quite spending it on projects that are not needed or that are over priced!

Jim Bernicken  
Seven Lakes West



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# Westside dues: too much for too little

Dear Editor:

A thirty-six percent dues increase in a recession and the United States is bankrupt: no cost of living increase for us seniors and those on Social Security disability.

You all are out of compliance especially when you have continued to stack restrictions after restrictions on us. We have to pay extra for guests/family at the pool – we pay for this pool, there should not be an extra charge. Now you want to charge a non-refundable fee for homeowners to use the community center for a function – that extra \$100 each year charged to each of us is more than enough cost. We have no fitness room, TV room – a gathering place to meet and socialize daily: it's to house CAS and Board meetings. There is nothing there for us!

The extra \$150 fee for new homeowners is outrageous – we pay CAS's high salaries, their bonuses, etc. It only takes a few minutes to input new information on a new family and it sure does-

n't cost \$100 for a bar code and sticker. You're making it very difficult for those of us forced to sell our homes.

For two years now, I have been investigating other communities similar to ours. Just over the southern border our neighbors in South Carolina – for \$70-\$80 a month in association fees – the homeowners receive weekly trash pick-up, Time Warner Cable with 100+ channels, water and sewer paid for and street lights, sidewalks on every street, beautiful pool with no restrictions or added costs for guests, the pool is open twenty-four hours – twelve months, all residents have a key to unlock the pool gate, community center is open to use for \$50 fee and is completely refundable, fifteen foot right-of-way is kept up with grass and completely maintained, security drives around just to be sure there is no vandalism. If you decide to make a structure change to property, get a building permit from the county if needed and take it to the

community office. It is stamped-approved without a fee or a hard time. The common area, park and recreation area is highly maintained – top notch upkeep. No one is driving around and taking photos of you and your property and citing each other. These communities have lakes, ponds with fountains and lights on at night. Many of these communities are smaller than us – but growing.

Seven Lakes West and North & South, the Board, and now CAS has mismanaged and drained the homeowners. Over the years our family-oriented community has turned into a controlled, dictated neighborhood, etc. The Board has continued over the years to hire companies to work in here who don't care about us – it's only the paycheck they care about.

Voting new board members in – they promise so much for us and turn out fake! We were fine before [former General Manag-

er] Tony [Robertson] and then CAS came on-board. We represented ourselves. Denise was fabulous in the office and still is. Let's put this community back to what we used to be – the majority of us are on fixed incomes, not all of us are rich like many in here. Many of us have to live on \$10,000 or less a year! We didn't need Tony – and his hands were tied – the Board and homeowners had the say.

In all honesty we don't need CAS. If we can't do this and cut back on expenses – it's then time to let the county in, so we

get our roads done properly, the fifteen foot right-of-ways kept up, the dam maintained, the police patrolling, and then we won't have to pay off-duty officers \$30 an hour! And best of all, no more association fees – and with our county taxes we pay for now we'll receive the benefits we pay for.

And where and how did CAS come up with \$20 for volunteers? Minimum wage is only \$7.25 an hour. CAS is living nicely off of communities like us.

*Diane Evans  
Seven Lakes West*

## Glenn Miller Orchestra

Join The World Famous Glenn Miller Orchestra® in concert on Tuesday, February 2, at 7:30 pm in the Robert E. Lee Auditorium at Pinecrest High School, 250 Voit Gilmore Road, Southern Pines.

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# Westsiders need long-term financial plan

*To the Editor  
and Westside Board:*

Why such a drastic dues increase in the worst economic time in most of our lifetimes? And a year where there will be no income increase from social security, other federal retirement recipient's and many others personal retirement saving have been reduced dramatically. At last count a third or more of the property owners live on their retirement income.

There is no question that rebuilding the reserves for the dam and roads is a necessity but the membership needs to see the Association's "road map" for the future. What can we expect next year and the following years?

There is no long range financial plan presented with show the immediate necessity for such a large increase. Is it 36 percent for the next umpteen years?

Remember, we took about ten years to build the dam reserve that supported the 2009 remediation project.

Guidance for maximum yearly dues increase lies in the original Beacon Ridge and Morganwood covenants, each prepared by different developers. Beacon Ridge's max was 12 percent and Morganwood's max was 10 percent without membership approval. While a maximum cap is no longer in the Covenants, common sense should prevail.

A large membership vote rejecting of this coming year's budget, which could happen as it is presently drafted, may result in no increase at all for coming year.

Blaming the proposed dues increase on the Merger Plans is a cop out. These plans were adopted by a super majority of

the Association's membership during the 2003-2004 budget year to eliminate the four different "political" subdivisions that existed in Seven Lakes West and made the Master Association unnecessary to bring unity and efficiency to our community, which they did.

What the membership needs is long range financial plan that identifies our future revenue needs for the years ahead so we can all understand, not what appears to be a "knee jerk reaction" without a reasonable plan. If need be, urgent capital improvements could be funded by the "Special Assessment" provisions of our covenants, which do not permanently add to the dues structure but which accomplish the project needed.

## A Few Specific Questions:

- None of the Association's governing document allows the Association to make improvement to private property. Why is fencing for the Parkwood subdivision in the budget?
- The Property Transfer Fee, which the voters of Moore County denied the County to impose a couple of years back, and the Association Board rejected our Management Company to collect last years seems at best, very, very excessive! Why now in this year with a cry for 36 percent dues increase?

• Why more land at NC 73 Gate area and why now with the proposed 36 percent dues increase? This gate is currently used by only about 33 percent of our home owners and a public use gate closer to the greater Pinehurst area would only put more wear and tear by construction, vendors and service vehicles on Longleaf Drive, between Gateway Drive and Lakeway Drive, of which seventy five percent is the oldest portion of Longleaf Drive. We already own 2.62 acres at this entrance and I note that our NC 211 Gate entrance occupies less than one acre. This purchase would give us five times the land area at Gateway Drive than is on Lakeway Drive for access and that Gate House.

Also, has anyone taken into consideration the cost of widen-

ing and turning lanes on NC 73 at Gateway Drive that a public use entrance would require and that the Association would have to pay?

By the way, looking at the Colton's Corner lots, once a subdivision is covenanted only the membership, by a super majority, has the authority to change the covenants. During the 1990s a group of concerned Seven Lakes West property owners fought the Developer and won this right in court.

Hopefully these questions and the many others posed will be answered at our January 26 meeting.

Ray MacKay  
Seven Lakes West  
[McKay is a former member  
of the SLWLA Board of  
Directors.]

## Goodbye fireworks

*Dear Editor:*

We want to thank the Seven Lakes West Board of Directors for taking the fireworks out of the 2010-11 budget.

We appreciate them taking a stand by removing an item that does not need to be funded (\$14,500) when our Community's needs are many and resources are limited.

If fireworks are really important to some, a Fourth of July Fireworks Fund could be formed by volunteers and contributions made.

Thanks to you again, Seven Lakes West Board.

Gene and Maxine Pickens  
Seven Lakes West

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# Unresponsive Board seeks dues increase

Dear Editor:

In anticipation of the upcoming rule change requiring a bar code to gain access to Seven Lakes West, I went to the West Side business office in late September to obtain one for my second vehicle, which I have had for 20 years but use sparingly. I was told there would be a \$20

fee. Since I did not have any cash on me at the time I left. But as I thought about it, I felt that a home owner should not be charged a fee to gain access to their residence.

I looked up the Seven Lakes Rules and sure enough, on page 5 found the following: "Entry Device: Homeowners, lot owners,

and renters shall be issued up to three (3) entry devices for their own personal vehicles (one for each personal vehicle garaged in Seven Lakes West) without paying an additional fee."

I then sent an e-mail to Ron Shepard on October 4th for a clarification. When three weeks went by without a response, I

sent him a second request. Again, no response. So, on November 11th, I e-mailed John Hoffman. John at least had the courtesy to respond, but did not answer my question, saying he would take it up with the board. Hearing nothing, I e-mailed my area rep Mike Shapiro in late November. Mike was very helpful and after an exchange of e-mails, he forwarded me a response from Patti Cleary (not a board member) on December 5th stating they would probably grant me an exception. I have heard nothing since, however I am not looking for an exception, just an answer to a simple question.

Are home owners entitled to "up to three (3) entry devices without an additional fee," or will there be a charge to gain entrance to the community?

I doubt that I am the only one, who for whatever reason elected not to have a bar code affixed on a vehicle when that system went into effect three years ago. Believe me it is not about a \$20 fee. I would not be pursuing this for so long and now going public, if it were not for the arrogant lack of response from the board, especially president Ron Shepard.

Now, this same board wants me to pay an additional 36% in homeowner's dues. Why should I do that when they can't even respond to a simple question over a four month period?

In my opinion, they have become a detached mini bureaucracy, more than willing to spend other people's money without regard for their concerns.

Sam Demme  
Seven Lakes West

## Waiting for happiness . . .

Aren't we all, in some ways, the same?

With the same basic urges, hopes, fears, though in differing forms, degrees, depth and emphasis?

Life is, in a sense, the greatest of all mysteries. Most of us are pulled along, often by unob-

servable influences, but manage to offset setbacks with our emotional resources and can, in the long run, maintain a pretty even keel.

Perhaps one of the wisest decisions we can make is to not set happiness as a goal with a special framework, by simply let it evolve though helped along by spiritually uplifting events in our lives.

Life is something like a scale: sensitive to weight put up it, but with the elasticity to return to a normal posi-

tion.

What a gift life is! And how grateful we should be that life gives us the opportunity to achieve and maintain the happiness that should be at the core of our very existence.

Our thanks should be overflowing.



### Mason's Musings

Mason Gould

## Cabaret Singer Sills returns to Weymouth

Enjoy such epic hits as "Oklahoma," "South Pacific," and "The Sound of Music," and others of 20th century Broadway legend Oscar Hammerstein on Saturday, January 30, when concert and cabaret artist Morgan Sills returns home to perform at Weymouth Center for Arts & Humanities with his own creation, "Morgan Sills Sings Oscar Hammerstein's Lyrics."

Sills is a Manhattan-based performer who grew up in Southern Pines and has been in New York for a number of years pursuing a career in show business.

He has studied acting, comedy, and music with Tony Award-winning coaches.

A 2:00 pm matinee and a 7:00 pm evening performance will be held on Saturday, January 30. A reception will fol-

low the evening performance to allow the audience to meet the artist.

The show is to raise funds for non-profit Weymouth's programs. Seating is limited.

Matinee tickets are \$30 and evening performances, \$45 for members of Weymouth, \$55 for non-members.

For tickets, reservations and other information, call Weymouth Center weekdays 10 am to 2:30 pm at (910) 692-6261.

The program is supported in part by the Arts Council of Moore County, with funds from the Grassroots Arts Program of the North Carolina Arts Council, a state agency, the Moore County Community Foundation and the North Carolina Community Foundation.

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# SLLA need directors ready for culture change

Dear Editor:

As *Times* Editor Greg Hankins pointed out it in his "Digging Deeper" article on page 21 of the last issue, this is the Seven Lakes' "Silly Season." It's in January that candidates for the board step forward, community

issues are addressed and letters to the editor abound. Some of these may give prospective residents second thoughts about moving to our great community, but I've been here since 1995 and have no regrets. Seven Lakes is a wonderful place to which to

retire or to raise a family. It's such a community however, in part because its members do feel free to speak up if they feel the need to do so. It's in this context that this letter is written.

To its great credit, our SLLA board has taken one giant step

in the right direction by changing our management structure. While yet to be clarified to the satisfaction of our membership, significant savings in administrative costs should be the result. Fortunately, The board also recognizes the need for a culture change, the need to establish policy, and offer guidance and oversight rather than micro-manage. It is unfortunate however, that still lacking on the part of some board members is a willingness to listen, to respond, to accept transparency as a given, and to grant the member his or her "right to know."

This leads me to Don Truesdell's candidacy. Nothing will convince me that he could adapt

to these changes. In all likelihood, we'll be subjected to more than one self-serving statement designed to embellish his past contributions as a board member. Take them with a "grain of salt" and don't allow them to obscure the fact that his attitude and behavior while on past boards contributed in large measure to what *The Times'* Editor correctly described as "one of the most tempestuous periods ever."

So much for this "silly season" soliloquy! Let's elect three candidates who will accept the premise that "transparency" is a must and our "right to know" a mandate!

Ron Erskine  
Seven Lakes North

## Village needs orderly civic participation

Dear Editor:

Well, they say governing is hard, and that was certainly the case last night at the Foxfire Village Council meeting. The Annexation Agreement between Pinehurst and Foxfire has ruffled a lot of feathers and brought residents and nearby property owners out in force.

The main gripe of the citizens is that they were not aware of what was going on until much too late in the process. I happen to agree that the process was flawed and that the Council did not adequately inform the public and solicit input. A one hour public hearing on this issue was hardly adequate to "hear out" the public and it was too late in the process to allow the Council to use what they might have learned from public input in the

negotiations with Pinehurst.

The Council also missed the opportunity to educate and inform residents of their reasoning for entering into the agreement before it appeared a fait accompli. The need for the agreement, particularly right now, is still an unsolved puzzle for many residents.

But, our volunteer Mayor and Council members deserve respect and help from the citizens through constructive participation, not unruly and out of order conduct.

Last night, several members of the audience spoke out of

order and one had to be removed when he became too confrontational. Let me tell you, when we were being "lectured" by a Councilman as to things we better "keep in mind," I was not at all happy either, but the Council must be given their voice just as we are demanding that the Council give us ours.

So let's keep ourselves informed, attend meetings, and help make our local government better through orderly civil participation.

E. M. McCue III  
Foxfire Village


## Literacy Council Training

The Moore County Literacy Council offers twelve hour workshops for volunteers who would like to become adult tutors. Volunteers are required to attend an Orientation prior to a training session.

All sessions will be at Emmanuel Youth House, 385 E Indiana, Southern Pines.

Orientation: Monday, February 1, 1 – 2 pm, and Tutor Training: February 8, 11, 15 and 18, 1 – 4 pm. Donations will be accepted to defray the cost of materials.

Please register one week prior to the session, by phone, (910)692-5954 or e-mail, pammclc@nc.rr.com.



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# Westside Board

(Continued from page 3)

criticizing the Board's decision to eliminate volunteers for holiday decorating tasks in favor of hiring a professional contractor.

"The simple answer is no. We are not eliminating volunteers . . . volunteers that have been decorating the community for Christmas have simply burned themselves out and would like a rest," Shepard read from a prepared statement. "So a line item was suggested and created for decorating. Whether or not these funds are used will depend upon finding volunteers."

He concluded by inviting the letter writer to step forward, recruit fellow volunteers, and manage the SLWLA Christmas decorations for next year.

Director Karen Milligan, who oversees Community Activities, said while her volunteer team spent many, many hours decorating Westside Park Community Center and other areas, that she considered decorations a facility-based function.

"This is not an activity which my committee feels responsible for providing," said Milligan. "Decorating should be done under CAS to coordinate and facilitate."

## Volunteer Coordinator

Hoffmann said that the community was built on volunteerism but that he supported Milligan's position — that is, that the community cannot go forward simply counting on leaders and volunteers to pop up at opportune times.

"I don't want to single out activities or recreation and I don't want to have a line item for one volunteer activity and not others," said Hoffman.

He recommended that what the community needs is a Volunteer Coordinator who could oversee and detail volunteers to all the various opportunities, including boat patrol, beautification, holiday decorations, etc.

"The coordinator would get the word out of needs and have volunteers in place in advance of that need," explained Hoffmann.

Milligan agreed: "We have all of these clubs and things going on. That is a real selling point for this community."

## Resident's Handbook

Director Ed Tuton distributed copies of the newly updated resident's handbook to the Board for

review and comment and thanked Betsy Mikula and Mary Price for their hard work.

Joan Frost said residents may bring in their old books for updating and that any extra copies may be returned to the office.

In the future, the Board discussed their goal of distributing CD copies of the handbook to residents, rather than the current costlier option of hardcover binders.

## Security

Hoffmann reported he received estimates on the proposed anti-climb device that will be installed on the communications tower. He explained the device would have to be custom-made because of the triangular shape of the tower.

In addition, he recommended approval of a contract with ESC Electrical for what he described as "a viable solution" to mitigate lightning strike damage to the back gate security system.

He said the \$4,500 cost to update the system was minor when compared to the approximately \$20,000 in damage repairs the Association has incurred in the last two years.

Hoffmann also said he is reviewing the policy of hiring off-duty Sheriff's deputies to provide additional patrol time and said he was exploring ways to get more coverage at less cost.

He reported the cameras at the back gate have questionable effectiveness, and that upgrading to a camera with license-recognition capability would be costly.

Fencing is also costly, said Hoffmann, and he said that areas deemed the highest priority was between the Pinnacles and the business district.

"We're looking at value gained and the cost trade-off. In a tight budget, we may have to postpone," cautioned Hoffmann.

He reported Neighborhood Watch patrol hours were holding steady with twenty-four volunteers. He said he was working closely with neighborhood representatives to encourage neighbors to watch out for each other.

## Architectural Review

Director Adam Wimberly reported that a request for documentation on manufactured homes policy was submitted. He said that language in the ARC restric-

(See "Westside," p. 27)

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# Westside Board

(Continued from page 26)

tions clearly state such structures are not permitted, but he proposed that more specific language clarifying the ban should be drafted.

He also reported that a request to install a dock on the pond near the Pinnacles was unanimously denied by ARC; however, an appeal by the homeowner was likely.

In addition, Wimberly said the committee determined a study was needed regarding undeveloped lots used as septic fields — sometimes for multiple homes.

"There are some interesting issues including over using the Association right-of-way," he said. Wimberly, John Goodman, and Gerhard Hergenbahn agreed to pursue the matter further.

## Lake & Dam Committees

Herdrich reported that he has not received final approval of the Lake Auman dam remediation from state engineers. He said engineer Dan Marks is pleased with conditions and will continue to monitor the dam and the piezometers for the next six months.

He said he is also looking at a low cost - low tech solution at the boat ramp that would reduce or eliminate the six to eight inch drop that occurs when lake levels are low.

## Infrastructure

Five to six bidders responded to a request to remove trees from the back of the Lakeway Mall dam, John Goodman reported. He anticipated an award would be made by the end of the week.

He also reported that storm drainage culvert pipes throughout the community running under the road — draining from high areas to low — have rusted through on the bottom.

"Some corrosion is so severe that the [road] bedding is eroding away," said Goodman.

He recommended emergency replacement was needed at eleven locations identified along Longleaf Drive. The Board approved the motion and each of the eleven locations will be bid on an individual basis. The cost is expected to range from \$5,000 to \$15,000 for each location.

Goodman said that, for this type of work, there is only contractor with the reputation and experience to do the job: Atkin-

son Construction. He recommended eliminating any engineering design work as unnecessary since the project is a replacement, and suggested digging out some of the road bed and base for repaving.

"This work will last much longer than fifteen years with a better pipe than the current galvanized metal," said Goodman.

Shepard supported the project, "Infrastructure needs do not go away, they do not depend on the economy. When looking at reserves and how to spend money, this is one of the priorities."

Two new subcommittees on infrastructure are being formed and volunteers are needed for both.

The Roads and Storm Drainage Committee will meet on Wednesday, January 27 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at WSPCC.

A Landscaping Committee will meet on Monday, January 25 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm at WSPCC.

To volunteer, or if you have questions, contact Director Goodman at 400-5131.

## Legal

Director Silberhorn reported

a contract had been forwarded to developer Ron Myers regarding back gate land acquisition. He recommended further discussion during Executive Session and placing the proposal on the agenda for the January 26 General Meeting.

He also reported that he had researched whether the community's legal documents prescribed a set ratio for the dues paid on developed, versus undeveloped, lots.

"I've read all the covenants and like all urban legends, it comes from a bit of truth," said Silberhorn.

He said that Beacon Ridge covenants did include a ratio established mathematically.

The dues levels laid out in the proposed 2010-2011 budget do not run afoul of that ratio,, Silberhorn said."

"We are not violating the spirit of the concept of the covenants," he said, but he warned that a future Board of Directors may not want to go beyond the established percentage.

"We should not increase the ratio willy nilly without further definition of developed versus

undeveloped," he said, alluding to a brief discussion of whether a septic lot could be defined as developed.

## Other Business

In other business on Tuesday, January 12, the SLWLA Board of Directors:

Declined a request by the Moore County tax office to provide a list of SLWLA boat registrations. "It is not the SLWLA's job to monitor that [information] for the county," said Shepard.

Approved revised language to clarify the approved new bar code policy. In simple terms, up to three bar code stickers will be issued to a property owner for a set fee, currently \$20, and are vehicle specific and non-tran-

ferable.

Appointed Jim Johnson to serve on the Judicial Panel. He replaces the late Gus Danielson.

Appointed Director Karen Milligan to chair the 2011 Nominating Committee.

Heard from Frost that Wingfield Properties, owner of Beacon Ridge Country Club, is actively bringing its account up-to-date. Currently, they owe \$11,000, which Frost anticipates will be paid within four months.

Was introduced to Alecia Bryant, the new CAS administrative assistant. Frost reported that Katie Patnode has been assigned to a management position in another CAS community.

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# Talis

(Continued from front page)

## Why Talis?

Director Kent Droppers presented an overview of the management search and selection process, aptly titled "The Long and Winding Road." He explained how the Board had explored a dual-path process over the past year, looking at individual manager candidates to lead the community, as well as at management companies. Droppers said, during the decision-making process, there had been Board support for each option; however, the majority leaned towards hiring a company.

He explained that the Board has identified many things that must be accomplished over the next two years to take the community to the next level — and a competitive position with new area subdivisions.

Talis was selected because they were "the best fit with Seven Lakes," said Droppers. "They had a willingness to work with us and be flexible to structure man-

agement. They listened real hard to what we had to say."

## At what cost?

Management expenses are projected to increase \$21,952 as a direct result of hiring Talis, Droppers reported. However, using the firm's purchasing power and knowledge base, Droppers

said he anticipates much of that difference will be made up in savings in other areas of the budget.

"They manage a lot of communities and they know how to do this very well. I think there are savings to be had, not defined today, but I think we will find them together," said Droppers.



**New SLLA Community Manager Alina Cochran with Board President Randy Zielsdorf.**

# SLLA

(Continued from page 4)

nomination period has closed, per SLLA Bylaws, Shaver must submit a petition signed by at least fifty residents at the January 27 Open Meeting.

"As many of you know, I have not been operating on all cylinders. But now that the doctor has found the cause, I'm running pretty well. I'm back to my omeryself."

In a charming display of camaraderie, his fellow directors ticked off the decreasing number of votes he still needs as each pledged their support of Shaver's petition.

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He continued, "We will pay them to have a manager on-site, office staff, roving patrol — it is not terribly different than what we have today. Part of what we're paying for is accounting and expertise at headquarters."

The additional \$22,000 in management expenses represents approximately 1.8% of the entire budget.

Responding to financial concerns raised during Public Comment, Treasurer Denny Galford said the additional costs could be absorbed by the current budget and that he did not anticipate any dues increase would be necessary.

## Management structure

Alina Cochran will work out of the Seven Lakes office four to four and half days each week: the fifth day will be spent working on SLLA finances and strategic planning using resources at the Talis Management Group headquarters office in Raleigh.

Cochran has over seven year

of management experience and joined Talis in January 2008. Her most recent position was managing Carolina Lakes — a large lake, golf and residential community near Sanford. She has a degree in management information systems from the Romanian-American University in Bucharest, and settled in the United States ten years ago. Cochran earned the Certified Manager of Community Associations® (CMCA®) certification in April 2006 and the Association Management Specialist® (AMS®) designation in November 2007 from the Community Associations Institute (CAI).

All SLLA employees — including administrative staff, maintenance, and Roving Security Patrol — will continue in their positions with the Association but will be employees of Talis, serving under Cochran.

Accounting tasks will be centralized on sophisticated software programs at Talis in Raleigh,

(See "Talis," p. 29)



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# Talis

which will free up Debbie Caulk to take on her new role as Operations Assistant.

In this position, Caulk will “keep things running smoothly,” picking up the administration tasks that had previously distributed between the previous manager and assistant manager, Dalton Fulcher and Chad Beane.

“She’ll be doing the duty stuff that makes the trains run on

time — the critical stuff that she knows the ins and outs,” Droppers explained during a follow-up telephone interview with *The Times*. “We don’t want to lose the tribal knowledge she has. Debbie’s a good fit and she knows what is going on.”

With accounting tasks removed and Caulk running much of the day-to-day mechanics of the Association, Droppers said Cochran’s primary role will be

planning and getting out into the community — meeting with residents. Cochran will also oversee the recreation program.

Droppers reiterated the Board’s role is not to run the community but to set policy.

“We have aging infrastructure and the community could use some sprucing up. The curbing project was a good use of money but there are a lot of those types of things we need to look at,” said Droppers. “How do we polish this community? How do we increase the value of everyone’s home? These are the types of questions that Talis will be looking at.”

Director Sally Kindsvatter agreed, and, during a comment period set aside for the Board, read from a prepared statement.

“New management means a new way of doing things — the status quo just doesn’t work anymore. It isn’t just the look of Seven Lakes that is old and tired: it is the lack of innovation,

foresight and planning that puts us at risk,” said Kindsvatter. “A management company will provide education and development of our staff . . . have state of the art accounting and information system . . . It will have total professional support.”

During the follow-up interview, Droppers told *The Times* he felt the majority of property owners agree that the community needs a new direction with more proactive management.

“Many came up after the meeting with a little ‘Missouri’ — a now show me attitude,” said Droppers. “This is perfectly legitimate and even the Board is doing that. We’ve done a lot of research, but the proof is in the pudding. They need to do the things they said the could do and the reason we hired them.”

“We are putting some bread upon the water, fully expecting through better management and planning that we will save a lot

of money that can be redirected to things we need done,” Droppers said.

Zielsdorf also spoke with *The Times* and addressed some of the financial concerns raised.

“We’ve got Chad’s [salary] pulled out, yet there was an increase, but we’re still paying Dalton his consulting fee,” said Zielsdorf. “I expect Talis will find cost savings — I would be shocked if we find they don’t pay for themselves.”

He asked residents to be patient and give Talis an opportunity to prove themselves.

“We’ve been living under one way for twenty-three years. It is time to make a change and give these folks a chance,” said Zielsdorf. “They manage over a hundred communities and know what they are doing. I expect they’ll have to be in place for at least a year before we see significant changes.”

# Commissioners

(Continued from page 9)

Office for law enforcement services, \$309,000 to the Moore County towns that have ABC stores, \$72,000 to alcohol rehab programs, and over \$2 million to the state.

The 13.28 percent profit margin of the Moore County ABC operation ranks it seventh in the state, Garner added. “We manage our system with the highest of standards and efficiency,” he said.

**Other business**

In other business on Tuesday night, the Commissioners:

- Approved, on the recommendation of consultants Davenport & Company, Wells Fargo Securities as lead underwriter and BB&T Capital Markets as secondary underwriter for the sale of securities in late spring or early summer to fund the county’s construction of a new jail, public safety building, and government center.
- Approved a preliminary engineering report on a \$3.2 million project that will connect the Town of Vass with the county’s Addor Wastewater treatment plant. The report will be used to make application to the US Department of Agriculture’s Rural development office for \$2.2 million in grants and loans to help fund the project.
- Authorized the submission of a preliminary engineering report for Phase 3 of the East Moore Water District to USDA - Rural Development as part of a funding request for the project.
- Approved the \$124,000 purchase of eight replacement vehicles from Bill Smith Ford and Phillips Ford.
- Authorized Public Utilities

to seek federal stimulus funds to help pay for the replacement of an antiquated and inefficient health system in the county’s health department.

- Heard from West End resident Bob Stolting that a rezoning request for the Pine Forest development, expected to come before the Board in February, will impact a longleaf pine forest that is of national significance.



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**393 Longleaf Drive, SL West**  
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**124 Vanore Road, SL West • 130 Vanore Road, SL West**  
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# CLASSIFIEDS

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