

Board backs off shrinking stables

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor



Swayed by strong public sentiment against downsizing the herd of horses and ponies at the Northside stables, the Seven Lakes Landowners Association Board of Directors, on Wednesday night, May 30, tabled a motion that would have eliminated three horses, dropping the herd from eight horses to five, while leaving the pony count at three.

Though the Board decided to maintain the herd at its current size, that does not

mean all is stable at the stables. Longtime Stables Manager Karen Reeder has been replaced by an interim manager — news that had filtered through the grapevine to most of the members in attendance at the Open Meeting.

Though the Board did not address that issue directly, President Bob Darr told *The Times* that the plan is to find a full-time replacement for Reeder before Horse Camp starts up this Summer.

Nor does the decision to leave the herd as is indicate (See “Stables,” p. 28)

Board runs afoul of Open Meetings Law

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor



Ignoring the advice of their attorney, the Moore County Board of Commissioners had a wide-ranging closed session discussion on Tuesday, February 7 concerning whether, how, and at what price to sell 1.3 acres of county property as the site for a

new Bojangles’ restaurant in Carthage.

The discussion appears to constitute a clear violation of NC Open Meeting Law. Closed sessions on the matter held on October 18, 2011 and May 15, 2012 may have also run afoul of the statutes. The range of topics discussed in the February 7 Closed Session also appears to stand in contrast to statements (See “Open,” p. 20)

Out in the bean patch



Amy Rozycki of the Seven Lakes Garden Club displays just one of the many baskets raffled off last weekend during the Annual Garden Tour. Westsider Jim Deaton’s extensive fruit and vegetable garden offers an impressive backdrop. Visitors enjoyed six other local gardens. Proceeds from the event will be used toward Seven Lakes beautification projects.

Vietnam Vets oppose Bojangles’ near Memorial

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



More than fifty Moore County citizens attended the Board of Commissioners Tuesday, June 5 meeting to oppose the sale of 1.3 acres of County property near the Veteran’s Memorial in Carthage to the fast food restaurant Bojangles’.

The opponents included more than twenty-five Vietnam veterans, including Moore County Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter

966 President Chuck Spelman, who addressed the Board.

“We have been notified by certain individuals of Moore County that the Carthage War Memorial will no longer be a sacred place where we can come to show our respect,” said Spelman, a resident of Seven Lakes West, “because certain individuals want to locate a fast food restaurant in front of the Memorial.”

In May, it came to light that the Commissioners had discussed the potential sale of the property while meeting

in Closed Session.

Discussions began on the matter in October 2011, when a broker repenting Bojangles’ initially offered \$280,000 for the property. That bid was later raised to \$330,000, with the buyer paying closing costs and a broker’s fee of ten percent.

“Certain individuals feel that a monetary gain is worth more than the lives we lost and the Memorial that has been built in their honor,” said Spelman.

However, Commissioner Nick Picerno said no decision (See “Commissioners,” p.11)

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Guild gets the scoop on BB&T services

by Cheryl Darwell

Seven Lakes Business Guild

Serena Gonzales of BB&T Bank hosted the Seven Lakes Business Guild May 21 meeting and proved that they are a valued member of the community by showcasing many of the enhanced services and benefits available to their clients.

Gonzalez is the Assistant Vice President & Financial Center Leader of BB&T in Seven Lakes. She has fifteen years of experience at the bank and handles business, personal loans, and all types of mortgages. Other members of the BB&T banking family are Greg Martin, Business Services Officer; David Hope, BB&T Work Enhanced Business Programs; Vicki Lefler, Family Risk Manager with BB&T Insurance Services; and Samantha Smith, BB&T Investment Counselor.

BB&T takes a "team approach" to business bank-

ing and has worked on putting together a specific "newcomers package" for local realtors. Lefler also noted that BB&T insurance is the sixth largest provider in the nation and has offered insurance services since 1922.

The Business Guild also discussed signage in the Business Village, noting the growing number of "mini signs" placed along the roadways by various merchants.

It was determined that the Guild has no responsibility to monitor or regulate, but the Guild encourages businesses to be prudent with placement, so as not to dis-

tract from the thousands of dollars spent on landscaping along NC Highway 211.

Vann Joyce researched pricing information for Guild storefront members who would like to have their business names on the Village sign. Space is limited and will be on a first come, first served basis.

The next meeting will be on Monday, June 25 at Sandhills Winery, Greg Hankins Publisher of *The Seven Lakes Times*, will give the first of a two-part presentation on marketing and advertising basics.

Please let the guild know if you would like attend this

free and informative gathering.

Call Cheryl Darwell, SL

Business Guild Secretary, 673-SAIL or CDarwell@CruisePlanners.com



Cenda Hoogerland and Serena Gonzalez of BB&T Seven Lakes.

CONTRIBUTORS AND ADVERTISERS

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Jun 29	Jul 6
Jul 13	Jul 20
Jul 27	Aug 3
Aug 10	Aug 17
Aug 24	Aug 31
Sep 7	Sep 14
Sep 21	Sep 28
Oct 5	Oct 12
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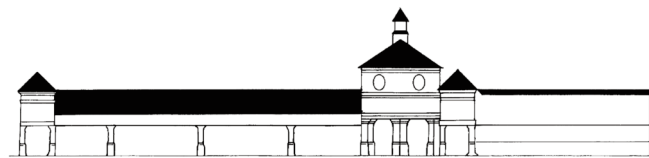
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Draft policy omits mandatory barcodes

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor



Recommended changes to the Seven Lakes Landowners Association [SLLA] access policy stop short of requiring that members purchase barcodes, perhaps reflecting uncertainty among Board members about whether such a policy is enforceable.

Though the Wednesday, May 30 Open Meeting touched on almost every other aspect of Association operations, in the absence of Security Director Steve Ritter, his committee's access policy recommendations were not discussed. Instead, a draft revision to Section 2 of the Rules and Regulations was distributed to landowners who attended the meeting.

The document may be downloaded from *The Times* website.

Highlights of the suggested revisions include:

- Windshield stickers will continue to be issued.
- Barcodes stickers will continue to be available for purchase by residents for a one-time fee, and "All residents should purchase these stickers."
- Both non-resident immediate family members of residents, and residents of Seven Lakes West would be allowed to purchase SLLA barcodes for an

annual fee.

- Clubs that meet in community facilities would be asked to provide a roster of members.
- Seven Lakes Country Club and Seven Lakes Health and Fitness will be able to issue hangtags valid for up to one month to their non-resident guests.
- Residents may request "service passes" good for one month.
- Contractors and landscapers are both required to provide enhanced documentation of vehicles and personnel working in the community, and may be issued hangtags valid for up to six months.

President Bob Darr encouraged landowners to review the proposal, announcing that it would be discussed during the Board's Monday, June 11 Work Session.

Chapman urges cooperation

During Member Comments, former SLLA President Ed Chapman weighed in on the conflict that revised access policies have created between the communities on either side of NC Highway 211.

"While I was on the Board, we had trouble with the West Side," Chapman told the Directors, referring to protracted negotiations over a reciprocal agreement in effect at the time that allowed West-

siders access to Northside amenities based on an annual fee paid by the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA].

"We had a long hassle," Chapman said, "but I found that you can work with the West Side."

Chapman said he and then SLWLA President Bill Mamel met once a month for lunch, to keep the lines of communication open. And the two boards met jointly on an occasional basis.

"We met to keep this community one community," Chapman said. "And we are still one community, but we have this access thing dividing us. There has to be a way to resolve that easily. Get together with the West Side and work out a way to make us one community."

His remarks met with applause from the landowners in attendance.

President's Report

President Darr complimented the staff in the Landowners Office for their work in handling a last minute crush of payments and paperwork that appeared as the May 31 deadline for dues payments

and sticker renewals approached.

"The office staff has slaved over this issue," Darr said. "Things may not have been accomplished in the time you would have liked. There has been a lot of stuff that we haven't been able to get done with the dues all coming in. I applaud them for what they have done. I hope that you all, if you have been inconvenienced, you understand what a terrible job that has been. We are just about through it."

Treasurer's report

Treasurer Conrad Meyer, noting that that Finance Committee met on May 15 in its usual three-to-four hour monthly meeting, reported that the committee has a number of key items on its agenda for the current year, including:

- **Potential Dues Increase.** Meyer said the committee has begun to pull together information that will help the Board decide whether or not to recommend a dues increase for next year. Noting that the last dues increase was devoted strictly to building reserves to pay for road

maintenance, Meyer said, "We haven't had a dues increase for operating expenses for some time. . . . We will be looking at all the major expenditures. Any suggestions about ways to be more efficient are welcome."

• Registration and billing process improvements.

Meyer said that the inrush of paper during the annual registration has been handled more efficiently this year than in the past. The Committee will continue to work on improving the process, including pre-populating registration forms, so that members have less information to fill in. Suggestions for improvement are welcome, Meyer said.

• **Financial Statements.** Meyer said the committee will continue to work on improving the financial statements provided to the Board and membership.

• **Audit.** Even though the audit for Fiscal Year 2011 is not yet finished, it is time to begin the audit for FY2012, which ended April 30. An inventory of capital assets has begun, Meyer said, noting that the committee had found

(See "SLLA," p. 27)

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Lea briefs Vets on sale of tract near Memorial

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



If local Vietnam Veterans have their way, no retail establishment — including the proposed Bojangles' fast food restaurant — will ever be built adjacent to the Moore County Veteran's Memorial in Carthage.

"To me that's sacred ground," said President Chuck Spelman during their Monday, June 4 meeting of Moore County Chapter 966 of the Vietnam Veterans of America.

"As we sit on one of the donated granite benches and pay our respect to those who made the supreme sacrifice — that you and I may be free — during a moment of silence, only to hear 'May I take your order?' I don't think so."

The twenty-two VVA members in attendance at the meeting voted unanimously to oppose the use of the property for any retail establishment.

The Memorial is tucked into a corner of the former Carriage Oaks Shopping Center property, which the County acquired and converted into administrative offices for the Department of Social Services, as well as Planning and related departments. Inscribed with the names of Moore County veterans of all wars, including many who were killed in action, the Memorial fronts onto a large grassy lawn.

Bojangles' has approached the County with an offer to purchase 1.3 acres of that lawn as the site for a restaurant, which would sit alongside an existing Hardee's restaurant that is approximately 500 feet from the Memorial.

Commissioner Lea Opposes Sale

Moore County Commissioner Tim Lea — a veteran of the US Marine Corps and invited guest speaker for the meeting — addressed three concerns he has with placing

a Bojangles' restaurant next to the Memorial.

First, not only is Lea's name on the Memorial wall, but it also holds that of his father, various family members, and friends — some of whom were killed in combat.

"It concerns me greatly at this point that we're looking to do something potentially that may desecrate that sacred ground," Lea said.

Secondly, the 1.3 acres in question was initially purchased by the County in order to consolidate the Department of Social Services there. Lea indicated that the County may need the acreage in the future for expansion.

"I don't think it [Bojangles'] needs to go next to a memorial like this," said Lea, who explained that it is common practice to place administrative buildings next to memorial sites — not fast food establishments — which is done in both Raleigh and Washington DC.

Thirdly, Lea said that selling the property to Bojangles' has been on the table since October of 2011 in closed session. It only came to light in Open Session that these discussions had been taking place.

"What cannot be discussed in closed session is if you are selling a piece of property," said Lea, "because that asset, that piece of property, belongs to you, the taxpayer."

According to Lea, three

areas dealing with the sale of property that should not be discussed in closed session include a specific buyer, property location, and the price.

"All five Commissioners, including me, discussed this in closed session," said Lea. "So we are all guilty of having violated Open Meetings law."

The Seven Lakes Times has requested the release of the minutes of any closed session in which the matter was discussed, as well as the release of public records relating to the proposed sale. However, releasing those minutes is a decision only the Commissioners can make. The agenda for the Board's Tuesday, June 5 meeting includes a potential vote on releasing the minutes. The County has not yet responded to *The Times'* public records request.

Vets Consider Trying to Purchase the Property

Spelman presented two

options that Chapter 966 and other veteran's organizations might have to protect the Memorial. One is to try and raise the money and purchase the land outright so that no establishment can ever be built on it.

"I'd go after it in a heartbeat," said Spelman. "A lot of people don't know this is going on. This is something to me that has been kept under the table to a point."

"Is it feasible to think the Veteran's Organization — if we involve the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars — could possibly raise enough funds to purchase a piece or property like that?" asked member Bill Keith.

Although Lea could not reveal what Bojangles' had offered for the property, since that would be a violation of

(See "Memorial," p. 26)



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35 Years with 7 Lakes VFD

by Laura Douglass
Times Reporter

The Seven Lakes community has seen a lot of change over the years.

Roads and dams were constructed, hundreds of houses were built, and thousands of new residents have come to call this place "home."

But it has always been home for West End native Eddie Thomas, who is celebrating his thirty-fifth year of service with the Seven Lakes Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department.

"It was quieter," is how he describes those early years, when his father, former Chief Don Thomas, joined with a few other founding members to establish the station.

"It was all new," Thomas said. "We started in 1975, and acquired our first truck in 1976. I joined as a volunteer in 1977, as soon as I turned eighteen and met the age requirement."

"There was a learning curve

for everybody," he explained. "No one had ever been in an organization like this. We had to learn everything from how to go in and put out a house fire to how to operate a piece of fire apparatus."

The one truck department grew with the community, as did the station house, which was expanded and later torn down and completely rebuilt. Today, Seven Lakes Fire & Rescue has an impressive fleet of three front-line pumper trucks, a tanker truck, a mobile air supply unit, a medium rescue vehicle, two small equipment trucks, and a boat.

A volunteer since his first day with the department, Thomas currently serves as Deputy Chief.

"It is still fun to be a volunteer: I wouldn't be here if it wasn't," he said. "I enjoy the camaraderie and the interaction with people. I like to be a help — and that is the way it has been for thir-

ty-five years."

Besides his own desire to serve the community, Thomas said another thing that has not changed over the years is the importance of clearly marking all properties. Recalling the tragic fire that consumed the West End Scout Lodge in 2009, Thomas said Moore County's 911 system had trouble identifying where the structure was located.

"It was fortunate that I knew exactly where it was," he said. "I drive by it every day. But there was difficulty behind the scenes with making sure everybody was going to the correct location."

(See "Thomas," p. 26)



Seven Lakes Volunteer Fire & Rescue Deputy Chief Eddie Thomas

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Gail Scott has sold her way to ten Mary Kay cars

by Laura Douglass
Times Reporter

It is not pink. But Westsider Gail Scott's new car carries the distinguished markings of a beauty icon: Mary Kay.

As a successful eighteen-year veteran Independent Sales Director for the \$3 billion dollar worldwide empire, this is not Scott's first trip to the rodeo, as they say. In fact, the shiny new black Chevy Equinox she received in March is the tenth Mary Kay car she has earned.

"Truly, I love what I do. Face it, makeup is fun!" exclaimed Scott. "I like helping women to look their best. And I have a passion for helping other women to be at home with their families, but also easing the financial burden that today's market presents."

Scott's own foray into a home business began inauspiciously.

"I went to a makeover party and realized I could make a little extra money on the side," she said. "After watching the consultant, I thought: I can do that too."

Within a few weeks, Scott realized she could earn much more and resigned from her regular job to focus solely on Mary Kay. In February 1998, Scott was promoted to Independent Sales Director, a position that represents the top two percent of consultants.

It is in this role that Scott has flourished, as she assumed responsibility for training and encouraging other women in the business. Currently, Scott trains and mentors approximately 130 women nationwide — including one consultant as far away as Alaska. But through texting, email, and Facebook, she explained, that contact is seamless.

"It's like they live right next door. All of this technology has made it easier than ever to work a home business," she said.

In October 2011, Scott's husband, Dan, accepted a

job in Rockingham, and she simply picked up her computer and was immediately back in business at her new home in Seven Lakes West.

"What I love about my job is that I can be an at-home mom and homeschool my son, but also travel with my husband and still have my own career. Because having a career is important. I can contribute to my family's income and that has a big impact on how our family lives."

And that positive impact is especially evident in her driveway.

"The cars have been great. It is nice to always drive a

new car with the latest technology installed. It is a huge financial benefit, but it is also a lot of fun for my family to go and pick up a new car every two years," she said. "The day it comes is always a big surprise."

Scott earned her first Mary Kay car only a year into the business: a red Pontiac Grand Am. Since then the family has enjoyed a Pontiac Grand Prix, a Saturn Vue, two Chevy Equinox, and, of course, a Cadillac.

Mary Kay Ash herself drove a pink Cadillac and made the vehicle nearly as famous as her own brand. She found-

(See "Scott," p. 26)



Westsider Gail Scott and her tenth Mary Kay car.

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Bright Meadow helps teach African teachers

by Laura Douglass
Times Reporter

An early learning phonics program in use at Bright Meadow Christian Preschool since 2010 will soon be

brightening the future for hundreds of children in Uganda and Rwanda.

Eagle Springs resident Janna Ptak, the daughter of Bright Meadow owners

Shirley and Michael Ptak, will introduce the highly successful Zoo-Phonics curriculum to teachers of eighteen schools while on a mission trip to Africa this June.

"I am very excited," Jana Ptak told *The Times*. "This is my first mission trip and my first time out of the country. But this is my heart. I feel called to this work. Some girls dream of mansions, but I dream of a hut in Africa, and sleeping on the floor. This is what God wants me to do."

Ptak hopes to pursue a career in international adoptions or child care management; but, for now, she will be the youngest member of the mission team and the only non-professional. She will be joined by two teachers from Grace Christian School in Sanford and the school's principal, Bill Carver, who also serves as International

Director of Schools for Watchmen International, a UK-based registered charity.

A former student at Grace Christian, Ptak moved to the Seven Lakes area in 1995 and is currently home-schooled and a dual-enrollment college student. After being invited to accompany Principal Carver on his annual trip to Africa, she contacted the Zoo-Phonics organization hoping to secure a few donated goods.

Ptak was thrilled by their immediate response.

Developed over thirty years ago, the primary purpose of Zoo-Phonics was to bring English to Third World countries, so that children could learn to read the Bible. The program is already in use in other African nations, but not Uganda. After receiving Ptak's request, the company's president jumped at the opportunity to provide a gen-

erous gift of materials for all eighteen schools in Carver's service area, including laminated posters, nature cards, and flashcards.

Zoo-Phonics is best described as a multi-sensory, integrated curriculum that incorporates whole body movements. Each letter of the alphabet corresponds to a specific animal character and represents a specific phonics sound. Rather than learning the letter, the child is first introduced to the sound it makes and a song, both of which help to reduce letter confusion.

The program was introduced with much success at Bright Meadow in 2010, and Janna Ptak knows every song and nuance, having tutored at the preschool for over a year. She is looking forward to using that expertise during her two-week trip.

(See "Bright Meadow," p. 15)



Janna Ptak puts a group of attentive three-year-olds through their Zoo-Phonics paces.



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Gloria and Bob Williams on their wedding day in 1962.

Williams celebrate 50th

Bob and Gloria (Eidam) Williams celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on Saturday, May 26.

They met when they were teenagers in Westmont, New Jersey and married on May 26, 1962. They purchased their first home in Oaklyn, New Jersey. In 1968, they moved to Medford, New Jersey where they lived until 1998. The Williams' then retired to Seven Lakes West, built a home and have been active members of the community.

They have two children, Angela and Robert who reside in Pennsylvania. Bob and Gloria are also proud grandparents to five grand children.

Angela and Robert arranged a surprise 50th Anniversary

celebration for their parents. They were wisked away in a chauffeured driven classic car to an exclusive restaurant

for a special candle light dinner, music and an evening filled with much love and happiness.

'PAPA' at the Sunrise

A tribute to Ernest Hemingway, the film 'PAPA' won the NY Film Festival Award as The Best Historical Drama Feature and will be released on a limited national basis.

The Arts Council of Moore County will have special screening of the film at The Sunrise Theatre on Tuesday, June 12 at a 2 pm matinee and a 7 pm evening showing.

Ticket prices are \$10 gen-

eral admission, \$8 for Seniors, Students & Military.

Tickets are available in advance at The Arts Council located at 482 Connecticut Ave. Southern Pines or phone 692-4356. Tickets will also be available at the theatre box office on the day of the screening.

PAPA is the creation of Seven Laker Jordan Rhodes, who has played the role of "Papa" in the stage and screen versions.

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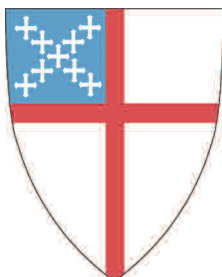
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Intercessory Prayer

& Healing Service - 11:00 am

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Lions' Vision Van in Seven Lakes Saturday

Area residents will be offered free eye screening when the North Carolina Lions' Club Vision Van visits.

"See the 21st Century" Vision Van in Seven Lakes on Saturday, June 9. The Vision Van will be in the Seven Lakes Food Lion parking lot from 9 am to 3 pm. Residents of all ages are welcome, but persons under 18 must have a parent or

guardians provide written consent for the screening.

This \$250,000 state-of-the-art mobile screening unit will provide screening for visual acuity and a variety of eye diseases and disorders.

Some of these maladies can have serious consequences and often provide no warning symptoms. Early detection is the mission of the van and may prevent the

loss of sight.

The Vision Van is owned and operated by the Lions of North Carolina through the North Carolina Lions Foundation. It travels throughout the state visiting communities at the request of local Lions Clubs. The Seven Lakes Lions Club is sponsoring this screening.

The van was purchased in June 1999 with funds raised by individual clubs and grants from Lions Clubs International and the Kate B. Reynolds Foundation. Assistance in equipping the vehicle was provided by the Duke Eye Center.

Since June 1999, more than 78,000 North Carolina

residents have been screened and more than 41,000 have been recommended for follow up eye care. In addition, more than 71,000 school children have been screened in their

schools.

This is where your generous contributions to your local Lions Club campaigns are used. The Lion's Club thanks you for helping others.



The Lions Vision Van will visit Seven Lakes on Saturday, June 9.

Marines honor Flag Day

The Marine Corps League, Sandhills Area Detachment #1001, is hosting a Red, White, and Blue picnic on Saturday, June 16 from 11:30 am to 2 pm, at Reservoir Park in Southern Pines to celebrate Flag Day.

Hamburgers, hot dogs, and soft drinks will be served to past and present Marines, their families, and FMF Navy Corpsmen.

This is a great opportunity for Marines in the Sandhills area to catch up with old friends and to make new ones. Once a Marine. . . Always a Marine!

If you are or ever were a Marine, there is no charge. Just call 910-295-2218 to say you'll be there for or for more information. Every Marine – past or present – is welcome.

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Commissioners

(Continued from front page)

has been made to sell the land to Bojangles'.

"I just hope you have not had your emotions riled prematurely," said Picerno. "We were simply putting it in as part of our discussion of our future vision of what the County may look like . . . As far as I know, this Board has not made any decision to sell that property."

Whether premature or not, it was clear that emotions have been riled, as explained by US Navy veteran Michael Gast, who told the Commissioners how he felt when he learned that a Bojangles' might be built next to the Memorial.

"I felt that this was showing a great disgrace toward service men and women who sacrificed their lives for the freedom that you and I enjoy on a daily basis," Gast said.

This view point was echoed by Seven Lakes West Resident Joe Kristek, founder of VVA Chapter 966 and current State President for the VVA of North Carolina.

"To think about looking out in the park into the grassy area and seeing some

type of facility . . . I think would be a slap in face to the Veterans of this County," Kristek said.

Commissioner Picerno was quick to explain how talks with Bojangles' came about.

"We did not go seek Bojangles' — they approached the Board back in October," said Picerno, "It may be possible, it may be something we might want to do, but nobody ever put in there that we were actually going to sell the property."

Veteran Jim Crawford told the Board, "If you allow Bojangles' to build on this site you should expect and get the same amount of respect as you are showing the Veterans — and, in my opinion, that is none at all."

Commissioner Tim Lea, who spoke of his personal opposition to the sale at a Monday, June 4 meeting of VVA Chapter 966 told those in attendance: "Maybe the Board has not taken official action concerning this issue; but this Board has been addressing it, in three separate closed sessions since last October."

"So we didn't just bring

this to the table," explained Lea, "This has been something we have been working on."

During Tuesday's meeting the Commissioners agreed to release the minutes from Closed Sessions in October, February, and May in which the Bojangles' offer was discussed.

However, a motion by Lea to include any supporting documents, as well as the audio recordings of the Closed Sessions, died for lack of a second from any of the other Board members.

"I think you are here at the right time," said Lea, "because

politicians have a tendency to make decisions when people are sometimes not aware of the total consequences, and you are having to deal with it after the fact."

Representing the League of Women Voters of Moore County, Carolyn Mealing told the Board: "We must not forget them nor lessen their sacrifices by selling County property in close proximity to the Memorial for a purpose that would diminish the Memorial's very reason for being."

David Berger of the Marine Corp League asked the Commissioners to think of a way

of enhancing the Memorial instead of placing a Bojangles' next to it.

The Board took no action on the sale of the property during the meeting.

Board Approves Budget

In a four-to-one vote, with Commissioner Lea opposed, the Board adopted a Fiscal Year 2012-2013 budget that includes \$84.9 million in General Fund expenditures.

County Manager Cary McSwain presented the budget to the Board, explaining that it represents a decrease from \$93 million in 2011 —

(See "Commissioners," p. 13)

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Commissioners

(Continued from page 11)

a reduction of \$8 million.

During a budget workshop in May, the Commissioners had asked McSwain to to reduce spending in the budget by \$1.3 million, by eliminating some vacant positions and other cost-cutting measures.

"I'd like to thank [staff] for responding to our budget workshop and reducing the full time employees [FTE] back down to last year's levels," said Picerno, "and reducing our spending back to get it constant to last year's."

After questioning the total amount of compensation paid to County employees, including salary, benefits, retire-

ment, and the Cost Of Living Allowance increase for the year, Lea voted against the proposed budget.

Lea told *The Times* there were two reasons he didn't approve of the budget. First, he does not support longevity pay — a \$600,000 expense that is based solely on the number of years the employee has worked for Moore County.

"Pay should be based on performance," said Lea.

Secondly, he felt the cuts to employee health benefits were "too severe." Deductibles in the health insurance provided to County employees is being raised from \$500 to

(See "Commissioners," p. 14)

WEE rallies around Blaise

Ten-year old Blaise McNair, a fifth grade student at West End Elementary,

was recently diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor. His parents, Tony and

Linda McNair, are asking the community to lift him up in prayer.

Linda would also like to personally thank her clients at The Nail Boutique, located behind the post office in West End, and express her appreciation for their support over the last ten years. Her shop will remain closed so that she can spend as much time as possible caring for Blaise.

Donations may be offered to Tony or Linda McNair at their account with the State Employees' Credit Union, visit any branch location or mail to: SECU, PO Box 599, Southern Pines, NC 28388; or to the Blaise McNair Benefit account at the BB&T Bank branch in Seven Lakes.



Blaise McNair surrounded by classmates

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Commissioners

(Continued from page 13)

\$1,250 for an individual — and to \$2,500 for families. “Our employees are our most valuable asset,” explained Lea.

The adopted budget does include a 1.5 percent cost of living increase which will begin in January and will be applied to only half of the FY2013 budget year.

“Despite the increase in our personnel benefits,” explained McSwain, “the fact that we have dollar for dollar the very same amount means we have cut back significantly and in other places.”

Commissioner Craig Kennedy thanked the staff for making it “easy” to adopt the budget.

“If we keep on this way,” said Picerno, “maybe next year we can reduce the tax rate — that would be our hope.” This year the tax levy remains the same as last year’s.

The Moore County School Board and Superintendent Dr. Aaron Spence attended the meeting. MCS’s request for \$26 million is fully funded in the adopted budget. McSwain thanked the School Board and Spence for keeping their budget request the same as last year’s.

VIPER Funding Approved

The Board approved a request by Public Safety staff to spend \$5.2 million to fund the FCC-mandated narrowbanding requirement and install the VIPER system to improve emergency communications.

Assistant County Manager Ken Larking presented the Board with three options for funding the VIPER system. The Board ultimately approved the least expensive version, Option 1, which had also won the recommendation of the staff.

However, Commissioner Lea noted that the recommendation was made due to budget constraints, not because it was in the best interest of the County.

“To me we are building a world class communication system for the County,” said Commissioner Kennedy.

“Let’s fix it right the first time and not do a patch.”

After a five-minute recess, the staff changed their recommendation to the second least expensive option, Option 3, which would provide better coverage in the Robbins area.

The Board rescinded their

previous vote and approved the staff recommendation, which includes \$318,000 in trade-in value for the current radios used by public safety. Motorola is willing to pay \$318 per radio traded in for the new VIPER radios.

The difference in price

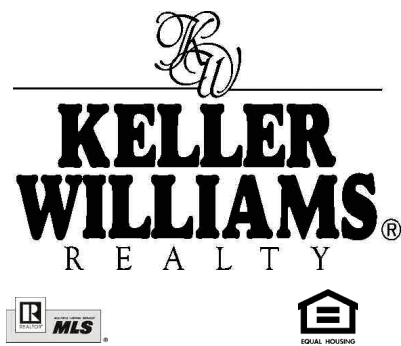
between option one and three is \$174,000, which will be made up through the radio trade-ins.

The money to pay for the VIPER installation comes from a combination of \$4.6 million in Advanced Life Support and general funds, \$565

in E-911 funds, along with some grants.

In other Public Safety-related matters, the Board also approved a Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update which would include Chatham, Lee, and Harnett Counties as

(See “Commissioners,” p. 15)



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163 MORRIS • LK AUMAN WATERFRONT



3 BD+ BONUS, EASTERN EXPOSURE! - \$557,000

105 DOUGLAS DR • 7LW



UNDER CONTRACT!

3BR+BONUS, DBL LOT \$275,000

607 JACKSON SPRINGS RD



29 ACRES & 2 ACRE POND - \$375,000

140 MORRIS DR • 7LW



3 BED + BONUS, ALL BRICK - \$310,000

406 LONGLEAF DRIVE • 7LW



4 BD + 3BA NEAR BACK GATE • \$295,000

2 WATERFRONT LOTS • LAKE AUMAN



1 PENDING! ONLY 1 LEFT!

GREAT VIEWS, NEAR BACK GATE • \$175,000 EA

143 OWENS CIRCLE • LAKE AUMAN



UNDER CONTRACT!

WATERFRONT LOT - \$209,000

123 ANDREWS DR • 7LW



AMAZING WATERFRONT - \$750,000

108 SMATHERS • 7LW



NEAR MARINA! MANY UPGRADES! \$275,000

112 DOGWOOD LN • 7LN



3BD/ 2 BA ON ALMOST 1 ACRE! - \$129,500

110 DORSET DR • 7LS



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119 ANDREWS DR • LAKE AUMAN



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168 SIMMONS DR • LAKE AUMAN



3 BR, ALL BRICK, NEW KITCHEN - \$684,000

141 WERTZ • LAKE AUMAN!



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129 HARRELL RD • 7LW



3 BED + DEN, SPACIOUS, GREAT VIEWS! - \$548,500

113 LONGLEAF • 7LW



4BR + BONUS - \$289,000

121 PINENEEDLE • 7LN



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148 MORRIS DRIVE • 7LW



POOL!

3BR+2 BONUS RMS • \$329,900

Commissioners

(Continued from page 14)

requested by Public Safety Director Scot Brooks.

Each local government is required to have such a plan in place as a result of the

Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. Moore County's plan expires in 2015.

Fracking Resolution

The Board approved a resolution, requested by Commissioner Picerno and presented by County Attorney Misty Leland, asking the General Assembly "to include in any statewide hydraulic fracturing legislation provisions permitting local governments the authority to regulate fracking in its jurisdiction due to water concerns which can be unique to each jurisdiction."

"This is not a statement on fracking one way or another," said Picerno. "But I think our Board should have some form of input about whether fracking is allowed or not in our County."

Public Works

The Board approved the following public works projects during their Tuesday, June 5 meeting:

- A request to purchase a 2006 613C CAT Wheel Tractor Scraper in an amount not to exceed \$93,000 for the Moore County Landfill.
- A request to reject all Requests For Proposal for grinding and hauling services at the Moore County Landfill, due to the lowest bidders being "neither responsive nor responsible." The County will continue to work under their current contract with Simmons and Simmons Management Inc.
- Water Pollution Control Plant Policies, Standards,

and Specifications, as requested by Gould. This would be a guide applicable to any private Water Pollution Control Plant facility in the County, for example, the plant proposed for the Pine Forest development.

Refinancing

After hearing a presentation by Davenport and Associates about the County's bond indebtedness, the Board approved the pay off of four bonds and refinancing of other bonds at a lower interest rate.

Davenport will present additional information about this option at the Board's Tuesday, June 19 meeting.

Bright Meadow

(Continued from page 7)

Busy with preparations, she said one of the first things that surprised her was how far behind the African children are in basic academic skills.

"We will be working with teachers, showing them lessons that we use here for three-year olds, but they are working with much older students," Ptak explained. "But their class sizes are so much bigger, you can understand why they are so far behind American children."

There are no desks in the Ugandan classrooms. There are also no pencils or chalk, no electricity, and there are no photocopiers, she said. Instead Ptak was told that standard classrooms in Uganda are not much more than a series of benches holding up to 80 children.

Another hurdle she was told to anticipate is the cultural barrier of teaching adults — who will then be teaching children — about diverse animals and climates that they have never been exposed to.

"Our children know about penguins because of television, books, and zoos," said Ptak. "Such things don't exist there. The teachers will first have to introduce the students to five animals they've never even heard of using the Zoo-Phonics nature cards, before they can begin to understand the phonics."

An initial step towards this learning process for the African teachers was preparing a videotape of a typical lesson, as taught on a daily basis at Bright Meadow. Both the three-year old classroom led by Ashley St. Onge and the four-year old classroom led by Carrie Tapley participated in filming. While in Uganda, Ptak will use a solar-charged laptop to present that video, in addition to offering her own hands-on

instruction.

"They wanted to see how the curriculum is taught and the progression of learning from the early part of the program to the more advanced skills," explained Shirley Ptak. "I am just so thrilled for Janna since this is her heart for a career. I am just ecstatic!"

For more information on the mission in Uganda, visit <http://www.watchmeninternational.com>. Bright Meadow Christian Preschool and Kool Kids After-School can be reached at 673-6789.

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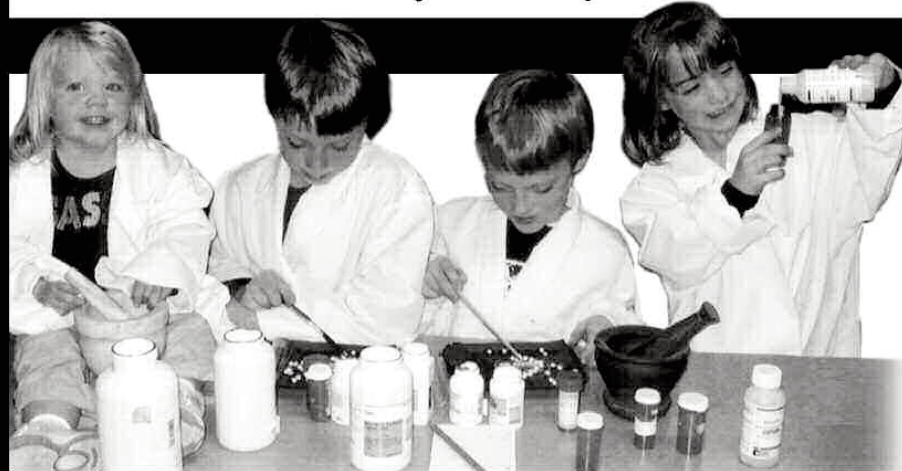
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910-215-DRUG(3784)

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Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00am - 6:00pm
Sat 1:30pm - 5:00pm



Congratulations to The Class of 2012



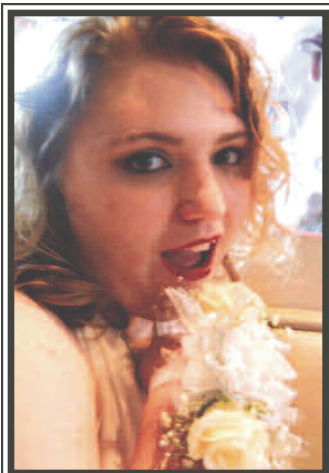
**Katelyn Grace
Burton**

Pinecrest High School
Southern Pines, NC

Katelyn is the granddaughter of Judy and Bill Seldomridge of West End.

She was a member of Yearbook Committee, FBLA, and the Pinecrest Softball team.

She will be attending the University of North Carolina - Wilmington in the Spring.

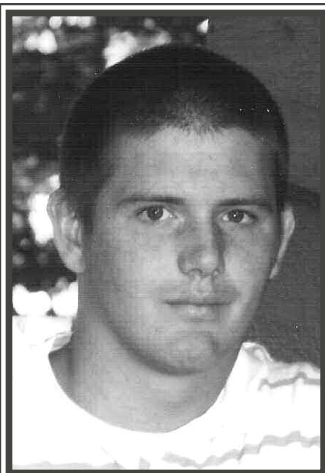


**Megan Ann
Chriscoe**

North Moore High School
Robbins, NC

Megan is the daughter of Richard Chriscoe and Stacey Poitras of Eagle Springs.

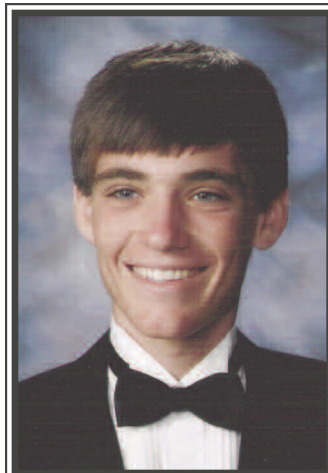
She will pursue a Masters Degree from Western Carolina University in the Fall majoring in Art and Theater.



Thomas Guy

Asheboro High School
Asheboro, NC

Thomas is the son of Steve and Lisa Guy of Asheboro. His grandparents are Joanne and Tom Guy and Mary and Tom Snead, all of Seven Lakes. He was a member of the Football and Track team, Habitat Teen Board and works at Chick Fil-a. He will attend UNC-Chapel Hill.



**Graham Armstrong
Pearson**

Grimsley High School
Greensboro, NC

Graham is the grandson of Tom and Joanne Guy of Seven Lakes.

He received a International Baccalaureate diploma and Service Leadership diploma and was a tennis player.

Graham will attend North Carolina State University.



**John Logan
Williams**

Pinecrest High School
Southern Pines, NC

John is the son of Doug and Jeanne Williams of West End. He is the grandson of Harold and Nellie Williams of Aberdeen and Fred and Carol Monroe of Southern Pines.

He will be attending North Carolina State University School of Engineering.

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Congratulations to The Class of 2012



**Michael Carl
Wilson, Jr.**

Pinecrest High School
Southern Pines, NC

Michael is the son of Mike and Nancy Wilson of Seven Lakes West. He is the grandson of Bill & Charlotte Graham of Seven Lakes North and Mr. & Mrs. Peter Luzzi of Avon, CT and the late Charles & Virginia Wilson of Seven Lakes North. He will attend Sandhills Community College.



**Joseph Andrew
Guy**

University of North Carolina-
Chapel Hill
Chapel Hill, NC

Joseph is the grandson of Tom and Mary Snead and Tom and Joanne Guy all of Seven Lakes.

He was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity.

He will continue post graduate studies at Campbell University.

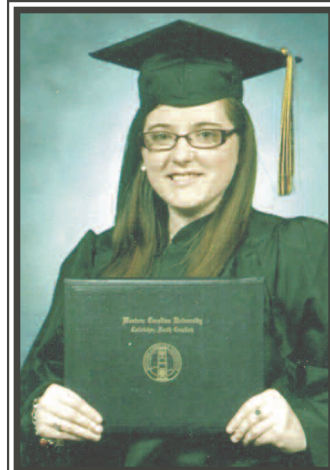


**Katherine Haley
Pearson**

University of South Carolina
South Carolina

Katherine is the granddaughter of Tom and Joanne Guy of Seven Lakes. She received a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications and Public Relations.

Katherine will be working at a Dude ranch in Creede, Colorado and then continue post graduate studies.



**Tiffany Marie
Wenerd**

Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC

Tiffany is the daughter of Michael & Barbara Wenerd of Treasure Lake, PA, and the granddaughter of Joseph Piper & the late Beatrice Gina Piper of Seven Lakes West. She graduated magna cum laude with a BS in Education. Tiffany will teach at West Lee Middle School, Sanford.

League Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the League of Women Voters of Moore County (LWVMC) will be held on Tuesday, June 19. The luncheon meeting will be held in the Table on the Green Restaurant, inside Midland Country Club, 2206 Midland Road, Southern Pines. Check in time is 11:30; the meeting will start at 11:45 am. The meeting is open to the public as well as League members.

T.J. Leavell, the Administrative Director of the LWV of North Carolina, will do a presentation on social media, called 'Social Media will Solve All of Your Problems.'

Prior reservation is required. Call to reserve 910-944-9611 by June 15.

Self Defense Classes

Seven Lakes West residents are invited to attend a Self Defense Class on Monday, June 11 at 6:30 pm.

Sgt. Tom Brady and Officer Steven Clark of the Moore County School Police will be conducting a two hour class at West Side Community Center.

This class is to learn to defend against a single unarmed attacker and other circumstances that could arise and how to protect yourself from harm. The class is open to all women and men regardless of age or physical condition.

This class is expected to fill up quickly; please reserve your spot by calling the Community Center or emailing Rosemary Weber rosemaryw@7lakeswest.com.

(This event is for Seven Lakes West Residents.)

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FRIDAY, JUNE 8

- **Casual Friday at SLCC** – 5-9 pm, Buffet 5-6:30, \$10. Chicken fingers, tater tots, salad, rolls & dessert. Food, games & socializing.

SATURDAY, JUNE 9

- **Weymouth Woods Bird Walk** – 8 am. Many species of birds that winter in the tropics spend the summer and nest in the Sandhills. Join the Ranger for a 2 mile hike. Visitor Center, 1024 Ft. Bragg Rd. Southern Pines, 910-692-2167.
- **4th Annual Woof Woof Open** – at Longleaf Golf and Country Club, Southern Pines. Shotgun start: 8:30 am, Lunch immediately following play. Format Woof - Woof Step Aside Scramble. Men, Women or Mixed. \$75/person. Proceeds Benefit Pooch Park in the Pines.
- **Farmers Market at Sandhills Winery** – 9 am - 12 pm, local produce and handcrafts. 1057 Seven Lakes Drive. (910) 673-2949. www.sandhillswinery.com
- **Seven Lakes Lions Club Free Eye Screening** – 9 am to 3 pm, visit the Vision Van in Seven Lakes, in the Seven Lakes Food Lion parking lot. The mobile screening unit will provide screening for visual acuity and a variety of eye diseases and disorders.
- **Veterans VA Mobile Unit to Visit** – 10 am to 4 pm, in the Aberdeen, Walmart Parking Lot. Services on site: Individual and group counseling for Veterans and families, Family counseling, Bereavement counseling, Military sexual trauma counseling, Outreach and education, Substance abuse assessment, Employment assessment, VBA benefits explanation. Contact Chuck Spelman, President of VVA Chapter 966, 910-975-1095 or maj03@earthlink.net VVA Chapter 966 sponsoring the mobile unit.
- **Bark Bark Open 9 Hole – Disc Golf Tournament** – at Longleaf Golf and Country Club, Southern Pines. Shotgun Start at 10:30 am.
- **Elliott's Provision Co.**

Free Cooking Demo – 12 pm - 2 pm. *Pantry Basics*. Ever wonder why food in the restaurant is so difficult to replicate in the home kitchen? Learn some of the secrets to pantry basics. 905 Linden Road Pinehurst, Call (910) 295-3663.

SUNDAY, JUNE 10

- **St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am, Holy Communion. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive,



- **Weymouth Woods Hair-streak Hunt** – 3 pm, Hair-streaks are small, fast flying butterflies. 1 mile hike. Visitor Center, 1024 Ft. Bragg Rd. Southern Pines, 910-692-2167.
- **Gospel Singing** – 4 pm, Join West End United Methodist for a great evening as they worship in Song and Praise. This year's concert will be in memory of Bonnie Pasko. The evening will end with a traditional ice cream social in the Fellowship Hall. West End United Methodist Church, 4015 NC Highway 73, West End, 673-1371.
- **The Rooster's Wife** – 6:45 pm, doors open at 6 pm, in the gallery of Poplar

Knight Spot. Music guests: *Twangtown Troubadours, and Tres Chicas*. Buy tickets online. Rooster's Wife. 114 Knight St., Aberdeen, www.theroosterswife.org (910)944-7502.

MONDAY, JUNE 11

- **Seven Lakes Landowners Association** – 9 am, work session. Seven Lakes North Clubhouse Game Room. Open to all landowners.

- **Seven Lakes Artists Group** – 1 pm, meets every Monday at Seven Lakes Northside Clubhouse. All Local artists are

welcome.

- **Weight Watchers Meeting** – 5 pm-6 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Self Defense Class** – 6:30 pm, Sgt. Tom Brady & Officer Steven Clark of the Moore County School Police will be conducting a 2 hour "Self Defense" class at West Side Community Center. Class open to all women and men. Wear loose comfortable clothing, and bring a hand towel or dish towel to be used during the demonstrations. No charge. Call West Side Community Center or Rosemary Weber rosemaryw@7lakeswest.com (This event is for Seven Lakes West Residents.)
- **Sandhills Photography**

Club – 7-9 pm, meeting at Christ Fellowship Church, Midland & Pee Dee Rd, Southern Pines. "Nature Competition." Frank Pierce of Eye Candy Gallery will be the judge. Photographs should be images of nature, wildlife, plants, natural landscapes or seascapes. Guests welcome. sandhill-photoclub.org

TUESDAY, JUNE 12

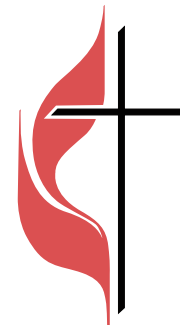
- **Seven Lakes West Landowners Association** – 9 am, work session. West Side Park Community Center. Open to all landowners.
- **Hearing Loss** – 10 am, The staff of Audiology of the Sandhills will be at the Senior Enrichment Center. Call 215-0900 to reserve a seat. Senior Enrichment Center, 8040 NC Highway 15-501, Pinehurst.
- **Healing Service** – 11 am, St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church. 1145 Seven Lakes Dr., Seven Lakes. Intercessory prayers for the sick & trouble, those in

harms way, traveling, bereaved or deceased. All are welcome.

- **PAPA "The man, the myth, the legend"** - 2 pm and 7 pm showing. A Tribute to Ernest Hemingway film showing. Arts Council of Moore County special screening of the film at The Sunrise Theatre. Ticket: \$10 general, \$8 for Seniors, Students & Military. Tickets 692-4356 and at the theatre box office on the day of the screening. PAPA is the creation of Seven Laker Jordan Rhodes, who has played the role of "Papa" in the stage and screen versions. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines.
- **Foxfire Village Council** – 7 pm, meeting. At Foxfire Village Hall. Open to community and public.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13

- **Women & Finance: The Peace that Comes from Financial Understanding** – 10 am, 6 session interactive financial education



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course for women by Brianna Dillon, Financial Advisor Raymond James. Class size limited. 215-0900 to register. Senior Enrichment Center, 8040 NC Highway 15-501, Pinehurst.

- **Gallery at Seven Lakes** – 1 - 4 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Rosary at Chapel in the Pines** – 7 pm, at the Chapel in the Pines. Coordinator Virginia Heerema, 673-5150. Seven Lakes.
- **Welcome Home Bible Study** – 7 pm, West End United Methodist Church. Bible Study. The Rev. Dr. Won Namkoong will lead at WEUMC Fellowship Hall.

THURSDAY, JUNE 14

- **Flag Day**
- **Bread of Life Ministry** – West End United Methodist Church, 11 am to 1 pm. Ministry is for seniors (widows, widowers, and elderly). Fellowship and devotion and meal for \$5.
- **Gallery at Seven Lakes** – 1 - 4 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Sandhills Winery Wine Tasting** – 5:30 pm to 8 pm. 1057 Seven Lakes Drive. (910) 673-2949. www.sandhillswinery.com

FRIDAY, JUNE 15

- **Casual Friday at SLCC** – 5-9 pm. Buffet 5-6:30. \$10. Pasta Primavera, salad, rolls & dessert. Food, games & socializing.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16

- **Farmers Market at Sandhills Winery** – 9 am - 12 pm, local produce and handcrafts. 1057 Seven Lakes Drive. (910) 673-2949. www.sandhillswinery.com
- **Sonderfan Art Exhibit for Building Fund** – 9 am to 3 pm, join Magda Sonderfan as she puts her Art Paintings on Exhibit. Entrance to exhibit is *Free*, but please come and make a monetary donation to support the building project of West End United Methodist Church. Exhibit held in the church Fellowship Hall, 4015 NC Highway 73, West End.
- **Sandhills Marines Celebrate Flag Day** – 11:30 am to 2 pm, a Red, White, and Blue picnic at Reservoir Park, Southern Pines. Hamburgers, hot dogs, and soft drinks will be served. No charge. Call 910-295-2218 for more information. Every Marine – past or present – is welcome.
- **Elliott's Provision Co. Free Cooking Demo** – 12 pm - 2 pm. *Steak*: Forget about the neckties, give Dad what he really wants this year. Local beef producers including Hilltop Angus and Cane Creek will provide grass-fed beef. 905 Linden Road, Pinehurst, (910) 255-0665.

SUNDAY, JUNE 17

- **Father's Day**
- **St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am,

Holy Communion. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive,

- **Weymouth Woods Amazing Adaptations** – 3 pm. Short hike. Learn about amazing plants and animals in the Sandhills. Visitor Center, 1024 Ft. Bragg Rd. Southern Pines, 910-692-2167.
- **Elliott's on Linden Dining in the Field** – 6 pm, Farm Chef Dinner to benefit Sandhills Children's Center. Cost is \$125. Tickets purchased in advance at Elliott's. Entertainment provided by Court Stewart Group. (910) 295-36623.
- **The Rooster's Wife** – 6:45 pm, doors open at 6 pm, in the gallery of Poplar Knight Spot. Music guest John Cowan. Buy your tickets online. The Rooster's Wife. 114 Knight St., Aberdeen, www.theroosterswife.org (910)944-7502.

MONDAY, JUNE 18

- **Seven Lakes Artists Group** – 1 pm, meets every Monday at Seven Lakes Northside Clubhouse. All Local artists are welcome.
- **Weight Watchers Meeting** – 5 pm-6 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.

TUESDAY, JUNE 19

- **Healing Service** – 11 am, St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church. 1145 Seven Lakes Dr., Seven Lakes. Intercessory prayers for the sick & trouble, those in harms way, traveling, bereaved or deceased.
- **League of Women Voters of Moore County (LWVMC)** – Check-in 11:30 am; meeting 11:45 am, Table on the Green Restaurant, Midland Country Club, 2206 Midland Road, Southern Pines. T.J. Leavell, the Administrative Director of the LWV of NC, will give a presentation on social media. Reservation required 910-944-9611. Cost is \$12.
- **Moore County Board of**

Commissioners – 6:00 pm, at the Historic Courthouse, Carthage.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20

- **Summer Begins**
- **Understanding Social Security** – 10 am, Tammy Parker, Claims Representative with the Social Security Administration will be available to discuss benefits. 215-0900 to reserve. Senior Enrichment Center, 8040 NC Highway 15-501, Pinehurst.
- **Gallery at Seven Lakes** – 1 - 4 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Rosary at Chapel in the Pines** – 7 pm, at the Chapel in the Pines.

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Open Meeting

(Continued from front page)

later made to the press by members of the Board concerning the nature of the Bojangles' Closed Sessions.

A detailed summary of the February 7 session, prepared by Clerk to the Board Laura Williams from an audio tape recording of the Closed Session, reveals that the Commissioners debated not merely the technical aspects of how to sell the property, but also:

- The appropriate price for the 1.3 acres, part of a grassy space that lies between a Hardee's Restaurant and the Veteran's Memorial in the former Carriage Oaks Shopping Center;
- Whether to counter an offer put forward by Bojangles';
- Whether the county should retain the property; and whether to wait until a study of county space needs was complete before making any decision about the property;
- What impact the sale and restaurant location would have on the nearby Veteran's Memorial, and whether the Veteran's Memorial would need to be moved to another location.

The Bojangles' offer

What can be learned about the substance of the proposed

transaction from the released minutes is that a broker representing Bojangles' approached County Manager Cary McSwain in October of 2011 with an offer to purchase 1.3 acres adjacent to Hardee's for \$280,000, on which the County would pay a ten percent broker's fee.

The Board appears to have reflected that offer, and later proposed a price of \$500,000, with the buyer paying the broker's fee. The County Manager presented that offer to the broker, and Bojangles' responded with an offer of \$330,000 and agreed to pay closing costs and the broker's fee. That is where the matter sat on May 1, according to a confidential memo prepared by McSwain and released to *The Times* under a public records request.

Board ignored County Attorney's warnings

Attorney Mike Tadych of Stevens Martin Vaughn & Tadych, PLLC, a Raleigh firm that specializes in Open Meetings and Public Records issues, after reviewing the minutes of each of the Closed Sessions, told *The Times* via email that elements of the conversation in each of the Closed Sessions properly belonged in open session.

Noting that it would have been proper for the Board to

enter Closed Session to obtain advice from the County Attorney on the procedures that should be followed, Tadych said the discussion in each case strayed far from those bounds, over the objections of County Attorney Misty Randall Leland.

"It's sort of shocking that it appears that the County Attorney regularly and properly advised the Commission that the bulk of their discussions about the potential sale of property should not be held in closed session," Tadych wrote, "and she was repeatedly ignored or disregarded as the discussions continued."

The Closed Sessions

According to the official minutes of the October 17 Closed Session, part of a set of three released by a vote of the Board on Tuesday, June 5, the purpose stated for entering this closed session was the negotiation of real property acquisition, under NC General Statute 143-318.11(a) (5). While the statutes do allow a closed session for the "acquisition" of real property, they do not provide for a closed session for the sale or "disposition" of county property.

Local Government Authority David Lawrence, of the NC School of Government,

in his book *Open Meetings Law* state flatly that "There is no authorization for discussing property disposition in closed session."

When the potential for a

sale of the property to Bojangles' was made public in the Board's Tuesday, May 15 meeting, Commissioner Tim Lea said the Board had dis-

(See "Open," p. 21)



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117 Oxford Ct., SLSouth
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104 Sunset Way, SLN
This well-maintained all brick home has location, quality construction and maintenance-free living plus large rooms throughout with split bedroom plan and 2-car garage. Beautifully updated kitchen with granite countertops and brand new refrigerator. Tile flooring in bathrooms and kitchen and Pergo laminate in Great room and entry. Home sits on a private fenced back yard.
Call Elizabeth Childers . . . \$179,900

103 Dennis Circle – Seven Lakes West, Lot 4274R
Near back gate, corner of Dennis and Longleaf. 25 acre flat buildable lot
Call Ann Benton . . . \$119,000

139 Beacon Ridge Drive, Lot 6044, Seven Lakes West
Prime Golf Front Lot on Beacon Ridge 18th Fairway. Flat lot sits above road level. Walking distance to Club House, Tennis Courts and Club Pool.
Call Ann Benton . . . \$44,000

128 Vanore Road, SL West – Lot 4207 Sec. Blackwood
Large sloping timbered lot across the street from Lake Auman. Lot near front gate entrance.
Call Ann Benton . . . \$59,000

102 Donnell Pt – Lot 4283, Seven Lakes
Large corner lot at Dennis and Donnell Pt with large water views.
Call Ann Benton . . . \$62,500

111 Dubose Drive Seven Lakes West, Lot 5161 Westwood Sec
Wonderful building lot on cul-de-sac surrounded by beautiful homes. Lot slopes away from the street lending itself a walk-out lower level.
Call Ann Benton . . . \$34,000

124 Vanore Rd – Lot 4209, Seven Lakes West
Large sloping timbered lot across the street from Lake Auman. Lot near front gate entrance.
Call Ann Benton . . . \$42,000

147 Otter Drive, Seven Lakes West – Lot 4173
Good building lot across the street from Lake Auman. Located near the recreation facilities and the main gate.
Call Pete Garner . . . \$19,500

122 Lawrence Overlook - Seven Lakes West Lot 4188
Wonderful homesite with great views of Lake Auman. Lot sits high above road on cul-de-sac street surrounded by beautiful homes. Close to front gate and community center.
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Open Meeting

(Continued from page 22)

cussed the matter in Closed Session, and later told *The Times* it had been discussed in three Closed Sessions.

Commissioner Nick Picerno told *The Times* after the May 15 meeting that the Closed Session discussions focused on consultations with the County Attorney on the process, rather than the terms, of the offer and thus were within the bounds of Open Meeting law.

Interviewed on the same matter by John Lentz of the *Southern Pines Pilot*, Chairman Larry Caddell was reported by that newspaper to have said, "We discussed it with the county attorney, and she told us to talk about it in open session, and that's what we did. As I've said many times before, I never go against the county attorney's advice."

Yet, according to the Closed Session minutes just released, the Board of Commissioners in October 2011 discussed an initial offer from Bojangles', including price, location, the need for a survey, impact on future space needs of the Department of Social Services (which is located in the adjacent former shopping center), and whether the County should ask Bojangles' to purchase property near the Health Department and swap that for the parcel near the Veteran's Memorial.

All five of the Commissioners appear to have been active participants in the Closed Session discussions.

According to the detailed

summary of the February 7 Closed Session, that meeting opened with County Attorney Misty Leland distributing a breakdown of three different procedures available to the Commissioners for the sale of the property. When the discussion immediately moved to the question of whether to sell rather than how to sell, Leland "said this was not supposed to be discussed in closed session."

According to the Clerk's notes, "No one acknowledged her statement." And the con-

versation on price and negotiating strategy continues from that point across two pages of single-spaced text.

The third Closed Session on the matter, on May 15, again began as a discussion of process options and how the staff should proceed, but quickly turned to the question of what constituted a fair price, whether a space allocation study needed to be completed before the offer was considered, the value of other property in the vicinity, what the County could do

with the money if it sold the property, whether Commissioner Melton should be designated as the Board's negotiator in the transaction while keeping those negotiations private, and, finally, whether the Board had already spent far too much time discussing the matter in Closed Session and should bring it into the open.

It was in fact brought into the open in the May 15 Commissioners meeting and attracted significant public input during the June 5

meeting, with a number of veterans asking the Board not to sell the property, because of the impact a retail business would have on the atmosphere surrounding the Veteran's Memorial.

The Times has requested the release of the audio tapes of the Closed Sessions, now that the minutes of those sessions have been unsealed. The Board routinely makes audio recordings of its open meetings available on the County website, and will soon provide video, as well.

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Astronomy, Hawaiian style

I tried to get excited about watching Venus streak across the setting sun. After all, this event only happens twice in a lifetime and won't be seen again until 2117.

In geek speak it's known as "the transit of Venus." I just called it boring.

You see, that streaking part was a tad exaggerated: it was actually a six-hour trip. Blame the enormous size difference between these two celestial objects; but, for me at least, the highlight was watching rocket scientists attempt to fill that time with meaningful discussion.

My favorite segment on NASA TV [No, I am not making that up!] was filmed on

top of Mauna Kea, Hawaii. A reluctant-looking grad student wearing a tie-dyed Earth shirt and grasping directional signs reading east and west slowly rotated

under a PhD in a knit, skull cap holding a sign that read "sun."

A second grad student had the even more thankless job of wearing a "Venus" sign pinned to her shirt as she bobbed and weaved back and forth on command.

I guess there's never a

multi-dimensional computer model or a second grade science project around when you really need one?

I learned a little bit about



Laura's Learning Curve

Laura Douglass

astronomy from this comic game of cosmic charades, but a whole lot more about high altitude attire on the island. Who knew you would need a winter coat, shades, and tie-dye when standing

on the top of a volcano?

I probably should have checked in first with Darling Hubby. He's actually been up there . . . well, sort of. Though since he was just an undergraduate studying geology at Haleakala National Park, he wasn't forced to wear hippie threads and bow to academic servitude in the name of science: at least, I don't think so.

What he did get was an all-expense paid trip to Hawaii. Not too shabby for a part-time rock hound from the frozen north.

As for me, I minored in biology and never even made it out of the basement lab on campus. What I got was

the opportunity to peer at a few hundred slides of spiky and menacing-looking bacteria.

Frustrated once again, this time by the slow-motion arc of Venus, I decided a change in wardrobe might be necessary for any worthwhile scientific discovery. Luckily these days I have two shining stars much closer to home so I simply borrowed some tie-dye from my offspring.

Little darling, it feels like years since it's been here.

Here comes the sun, and I say, it's all right.

So, how do you read the Bible?

Question: When I read your column I am disturbed that you do not believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God and is inerrant and free of contradictions. Why then do you even read the Bible if you don't believe it is true?

Response: I believe the Bible contains the word of God, but that it was written by fallible human beings who were limited in their knowledge of the earth and uni-

verse simply by the time in history when they lived and wrote. Consequently, while the Bible contains great spiritual truths, it cannot be considered a scientifically and historically accurate piece of literature.

I take the Bible seriously, and that is the reason I cannot accept it literally. The Bible is not one book but many books written over a period of a thousand years. Before many of the stories

were written, they existed in the oral traditions of the Hebrew people, and, in the case of the New Testament, the oral tradition of first cen-

the particular book, chapter or passage I am studying.

First, what did this passage mean to the person(s) who wrote it and to the people for whom it was written? Serious

Christian scholars have spent the last two hundred years pondering these questions as they read

helpful to people when it was written or first read, but has no meaning for us today.

Thirdly, after I have worked my way through the first two questions, I can ask how this eternal truth can apply to our lives today. If I ask this third question before asking the first two, I have not been faithful to the serious study that the Bible requires and deserves, and I am likely to make wrong assumptions about what the Bible actually teaches.

Unfortunately, this type of study is prevalent in a lot of our churches today.

One thing is clear to me as a follower of Jesus of Nazareth: if in my studies I find a God who sanctions hate and exclusivity, I have not found the God revealed to me and to the world in Jesus the Christ.

Don Welch, minister of The Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines, welcomes your questions and comments at dwelch1@nc.rr.com



Ask the 'Rev'

Rev. Don Welch

tury followers of Jesus. Some of the stories in the bible are fictitious and yet they hold great spiritual truths. Jesus' parables are wonderful examples of works of fiction told to emphasize a truth. Much of the Bible is written as poetry and must often be read as metaphors rather than as historic narratives

I love the Bible and often read it for sheer enjoyment. When I seriously study the Bible or attempt to teach it to others, as I did for many years in several colleges, I ask three questions about

the books of the Bible in their original languages. I rely on their critical scholarship to answer my first question. Often, scholars disagree, and I must delve into the theological background of the individual scholars before deciding which interpretation is nearest to the truth.

Secondly, what eternal truth is embodied in this passage that is as true today as it was two or three thousand years ago? Sometimes the answer is that there is no abiding truth in a passage that may have been very

SEVEN LAKES TIMES

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The 'New' Tolerance – a preposterous idea

As a pastor in today's society, I am constantly bombarded about the need to be tolerant, but do we even know what that entails?

My dictionary defines tolerance as "the ability or willingness to tolerate something, in particular the existence of opinions or behavior that one does not necessarily agree with."

Growing up, I was taught that tolerance was respecting the legitimate rights of others, even those with whom I disagree. I was told that I could learn from different perspectives, and cultures, and I did. I learned from playing sports, living overseas in the military, moving from the North to the South.

I saw a lot of different people with a lot of different values. Traditionally, tolerance values, respects, and accepts these individuals without necessarily approving of or participating in their actions, beliefs, or lifestyles.

It seems to me, however that there is a new tolerance that is shrouded in the garb of traditional tolerance, but it is vastly different. It is founded on the belief that truth is relative to the com-

munity.

Since there are many communities the new tolerance claims many truths. In contrast with traditional tolerance, where everyone has an equal right to believe or say what he thinks is right, the new tolerance states that whatever an individual believes or says is equally true and equally valid.

There is an intrinsic problem with this new tolerance though. It hides the fact that there is absolute truth, (2+2=4). You would not be tolerant with a banker if you deposited \$200 into his bank and your statement said that you had only deposited \$150.

So, what happens when churches address issues like salvation, abortion or any other issue that is divisive?

Proponents of the new tolerance have no problem being intolerant to Christians. They frown upon any belief in absolute truth.

People who teach tolerance of all beliefs almost invariably

oppose biblical Christianity. They cannot tolerate a Christian saying, "Here is what is right and here is what is wrong, according to our belief system, the Bible."



Bound by Grace

Rev. Chris Hrabosky

Jesus never taught tolerance, He taught love, and love makes all the difference. Love is very incompatible

with this new tolerance.

Tolerance avoids offending someone, while love seeks to promote the good of another person. Tolerance says "You must approve of what I do," yet Love responds, "I must do something harder; I will love you even when your behavior offends me."

Tolerance says "You must allow me to have my way." Love responds, "I must do something harder; I will plead with you to follow the right way, because I believe that you are worth the risk."

Tolerance seeks to be inoffensive; love takes risks. Tolerance glorifies division, love

seeks unity. Tolerance costs nothing; love risks everything.

I am thankful for friends and family who love me enough to be intolerant of my bad behavior. A scale calibrated on love instead of tolerance engenders community in the fullest sense.

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Leaving Seven Lakes, with mixed emotions

Dear Editor:

After twelve years, we are leaving Seven Lakes with mixed emotions. We will greatly miss our neighbors on Forest Square. They are a lovely group, who care for and watch out for one another. We will miss the parties and many get togethers we have had over the years, as well as just chatting when seeing them at the mailhouse or one of the local stores.

We will also miss the great service provided by some of the local businesses.

Dan Matthews and his staff at FirstHealth Seven Lakes have provided us with out-

standing medical care. We have never experienced this degree of friendly compassionate treatment. We never felt rushed; he was always taking the time to address any and all concerns. Mike's Tire and Auto has given reliable, prompt, and fair priced service for our autos over the years. Mike and Teresa are an asset to the business community.

Then there is the group at the West End Post Office — Pam, Tonya, Stacey and the others are 180 degrees from the stereotypical post office employee. They are always friendly, greet you by name,

and treat you as neighbors — not just another customer to deal with.

And then there is Food Lion. Although a large chain, the Seven Lakes location is a true neighborhood grocery, with friendly and efficient employees.

What we will not miss is the Seven Lakes West Board of Directors. Over the past four years, in my opinion, they have become divisive and cliquish. The former president Ron Shepard would not even respond to e-mail inquiries. The present board is doing its best to alienate the North South and West.

They have become a mini bureaucracy more self-serving than community-driven. Seven Lakes is no longer the cohesive community it was when we moved there.

Sam Demme
Lebanon TN

Please clean up the poop!

Dear Editor:

I was going for a walk on the Lake Auman Dam on Sunday evening, June 3, around 7:45 pm.

A man with a cream colored golf cart passes me with a beautiful yellow lab in the passenger seat. One minute later, he stops the cart and lets the dog off. The dog proceeds to leave a big pile of "business" in the center of the road.

The guy pulls away and the lab chases him down to the other end of the dam. Then he turns the cart around with the lab back on the cart and proceeds to come back my way. So, I stopped in front of him and asked him if he was going to clean up after his dog. He speeds off faster. Two other ladies that were also walking on the dam, also asked him if he was going to clean up after his dog? He tells them to "Get A Life."

Excuse me, but there are rules, and we don't need ignorant people not following them. It is a shame: we have this beautiful place, and it only takes a few to ruin it. I don't care if he is paying dues. Rules are rules, and common courtesy is expected. It is a shame that this beautiful dog has to have an owner like that. I wish there was some way we could fine

them to the limit. I also don't want to hear how you let the dog out at home before you left.

My husband and I raised four dogs for Guiding Eyes for the Blind. We always made them do their business before they left and also carried a plastic lunch bag and paper bag with us. All they need is a smell of something special to them and whoops,

there it is. It is very easy to put your hand in a little plastic baggie, pick up your dog's stuff, invert the baggie, put into a paper bag and dispose of it as soon as you get back home. There are no excuses for this type of behavior. If you want to own a dog, then take care of it responsibly.

Shirley Kristek
Seven Lakes West



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A picture-perfect day for 7 Lakes Garden Tour

Dear Editor:

Six yards and one local business certainly looked beautiful on a picture perfect day in Seven Lakes last Saturday.

The Seven Lakes Garden

Club would like to thank those who willingly shared their gardens and applaud their creativity.

Close to 100 persons viewed the gardens and supported the themed baskets raffled at each location. People attended from all over Moore County. The Garden Club provides this free event yearly for the whole Seven Lakes

community.

Please think about volunteering your garden for the tour next Spring!

Thanks to all of you who were generous with your time, talent or treasure in helping to bring this event to the community. Many of you are not even members of the Garden Club at this time. We needed everyone's help in

making the tour successful.

The next Garden Club meeting is the second Thursday in September. Please consider joining the club regularly for informational pro-

grams related to gardening in the Sandhills, renewing friendships, and making new acquaintances.

Connie Loy

Garden Tour Chairperson

Habitat & Lowe's host workshop

With the success of the first how-to clinic in April, Habitat for Humanity of the NC Sandhills and Lowe's of Southern Pines will be holding a second "How-To" workshop for up to 20 women on Saturday, June 9, from 10 am to noon.

The workshop will cover 'Framing Walls and Building Components' constructing the pieces that together will become the whole house.

Great job on ramp!

Dear Editor:

Well the men and women of the SLLA have done it again.

I talked to a couple of the board members at the yard waste area in March about getting something done in the boat ramp area.

Because of wear and tear on the boat ramp, it was getting hard to put a boat in the water. And lo' and behold, on May 29, I put my boat in

with no problems.

I looked around and not only the boat ramp was worked on, the parking area, boat storage area, and especially the boat ramp area has been improved. This was good use of our money. Thanks for doing a good job.

By the way, I still think the board and volunteers are paid too much.

William Gross
Seven Lakes North

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Thomas

(Continued from page 5)

Inside the Seven Lakes gates, addresses can often prove just as problematic.

"Having a visible street address is very big in here," he warned. "Not all addresses in Seven Lakes are systematic. If you don't have reflective signage that we can see

at night, it might take a few minutes to find you — when minutes are very valuable."

"In the old days, we would navigate to a house because we knew where other people lived. We would say, 'Okay, go by so-and-so's house and then you will be there,'" Thomas explained. "We have better signage and more markers now, plus we're bet-

ter adapted to the roads, but every time a new address is added we have to readjust."

Luckily, while marked signage has often failed, modern gadgets have filled in some gaps.

"Technology has really helped us," Thomas said, explaining how, in addition to radio communication, Seven Lakes firefighters also

have access to a smart phone application that provides a quick reference map to a call within seconds of the 911 system alert.

As a part of Moore County emergency services, the Seven Lakes squad has a substantial safety net, he said. Standard emergency protocol for a confirmed fire in the community will alert not only Seven Lakes firefighters, but also automatically alert the three surrounding station houses: West End, Eagle Springs, and Eastwood.

"All of that is set in motion with planning," Thomas said. "Eight or nine pieces of apparatus are sent on the first call."

Offering a few more safety tips, he encouraged homeowners to check the batteries in their smoke detectors, to keep the area around electrical panel boxes clear of

any ignitable material, and to store flammable materials in appropriate safe containers.

One helpful policy on both sides of town is that yard debris is removed rather than allowing burning.

"Yes, it is a financial burden on the community having to haul the debris, but it has really cut down on the number of accidents we would have with a fire getting away from somebody," Thomas explained.

Seven Lakes Volunteer Fire & Rescue Department is actively pursuing new members. Training meetings are held at the station house at 7:00 pm on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Interested visitors are welcome to drop by to learn more. In the event of an emergency, please call 911.

Memorial

(Continued from page 4)

closed session law, he said, with enough donations, the property could be purchased by the Chapter.

The second option is, if the property does sell to Bojangles', then a request can be made for some type of vegetation to be planted between the Memorial Site and the fast food restaurant.

"If this isn't something we are going to win," said the Chapter 966 Vice President Dan Conrad, "there should be something that we can ask them to get some privacy."

It is also possible that the County could retain ownership of the property, reserving it for future needs for county office space. The Board at one point had architects develop plans for a County Administration building on the site, but that idea was shelved.

Members of the Chapter 966 organization will attend the Commissioners' Tuesday, June 5 meeting at 6:00 pm to speak against selling the property to Bojangles'.

Spelman has also sent a letter to Bojangles' headquarters protesting locating a restaurant next to the Memorial.

Scott

(Continued from page 6)

ed her beauty empire in Dallas, Texas, in 1963 with the support of her young son and \$5,000 in savings.

Every year, Scott makes a pilgrimage to the Dallas-based corporate headquarters for additional training. In addition, she also attends annual conferences just for directors. This year's event will be held in Hollywood,

"The whole family is looking forward to that trip," she

joked. "I love that these conferences provide a unique opportunity for our family to see different areas and to spend even more time together while I am still accomplishing my career goals."

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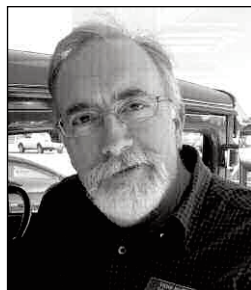
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SLLA Meeting

(Continued from page 3)

several parcels of real estate owned by the Association that had not previously been on the list.

FY2012 expenses come in under budget

The Association ended the 2012 Fiscal Year with \$1.2 million in cash, Community Manager Alina Cochran reported, with more than \$918,000 of that in reserve accounts.

Treasurer Meyer thanked Cochran for not only meeting her budget, but in fact bringing expenses for the year in at \$30,000 under budget. "That's money we will be able to find a use for," Meyer said, adding that, once the FY2012 audit confirms the savings, the cash will be transferred to the Association's reserve accounts.

Manager's Report

Cochran reported that the pool opened on May 26. Barbara Keating, who managed the pool last year, will continue in that role, as well as coach of the Seven Lakes Stingrays Swim Team. Pool hours were emailed to the membership and are posted at the mailhouses.

Water aerobics meet at 8:30 am Monday - Friday at the pool under the supervision of Andrea Schmidt. The Annual Open Water Swim was scheduled for Lake Echo on Friday and Saturday, June 1 and 2.

Noting a personal achievement, Cochran reported that she had attained the Professional Community Association Manager designation from the Community Associations Institute.

Grounds & Maintenance

Cochran reported that the Debris site would be closed June 18-20. Director Chuck Leach explained that a new contractor had been hired to haul debris from the site, and would be reconfiguring the dump areas for improved efficiency. Additional clean-up is also planned during the hiatus.

Reflecting on the just completed discussion on the sta-

bles, Leach noted that the debris site was not, in fact, one of the original SLLA amenities, though it has become a very popular one, which costs the Association \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year to maintain.

Leach said his six-member committee met on May 10 and had already begun, individually and in smaller groups, to tour the Association's infrastructure assessing maintenance needs. So far, they have identified fifty-five items that need attention, Leach said, including siding and shingle replacement, painting, and pressure-washing on a number of structures. He noted that the surfaces of the Association docks also need to be replaced.

The Committee will meet next month with the three-man maintenance team to prioritize the work. Leach said that the responsibilities of maintenance employees, as well as the handling of work orders, has been changed with an eye to improving efficiency.

Lakes & Dams

Lakes and Dams Committee volunteers have performed the first water testing of the season, Director Fentzlaff

reported, "and we got tremendously good numbers. Our lake waters are darned near pristine."

Fentzlaff said the lakes will be tested three more times over the Summer — and additional testing will be done in the event of a large storm that dumps four or five inches of rain in a few hours. The runoff from a storm of that size can significantly increase bacteria in the lake water, he said. He encouraged residents to wait a day after such a storm before swimming in the lakes, in order to allow time for sunlight to kill the bacteria.

Lakefront residents who would like the water around their dock or bulkhead tested can sign up at the office for a \$10 fee, Fentzlaff said.

A subcommittee of Lakes & Dams has developed pumping program that moves water from one lake to another, Fentzlaff said, in order to maintain all the lakes at roughly the same level.

During member comments, Phil Thingstad told the Board that he saw a very large boat being launched at Sequoia, clearly larger than the 23-foot maximum specified in the rules and regulations.

(See "SLLA," p. 28)



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Stables

(Continued from front page)

the stables issue has been resolved once and for all.

"We are going to continue to study this," President Bob Darr said, "to look at numbers and look at finances and look at usage and look at programs and look at whatever. We will before long be coming back with some proposals as relates to that."

Darr suggested that the Board would like to assemble an ad hoc committee of residents "to talk about mar-

keting" and other issues "as it relates to stabilizing the stables to the point where we are providing everything we can within the limits of our funds."

Director Bob Racine pleaded with members concerned about the stables — or other recreation issues — to attend the monthly Recreation Committee meetings, at 9:30 am on the first Wednesday of each month. He pledged to provide the office with an agenda for the committee's

meeting that could be emailed to members. He encouraged those with concerns or suggestions about recreation to email him at bgsu1956@yahoo.com.

Plenty of public support

Eleven members spoke during the public comment segment of the Open Meeting, most expressing strong support for protecting the stables and maintaining the size of the herd. And those members were joined by an equal num-

ber of supporters who chose not to speak.

Phil Thingstad said his grandson, who visits during the Summer and rides everyday, "told me with tearful eyes, 'If you let them get rid of Mindy, I will never forgive you.'" Mindy is one of the ponies at the stables. Sympathetic to the need for "austerity," Thingstad asked the Board, if downsizing the herd were necessary, to handle it through attrition.

Greg Lishawa ran through some stable costs and income streams to argue that the \$8,700 in savings expected from thinning the herd had already been achieved without reducing the number of horses. Recounting a conversation with a native Seven Laker, who fondly remembered rid-

ing horses in his childhood, Lishawa asked, "Do we want to deprive other children of those memories?"

Kathy Lishawa asked the Board to "keep your minds open before you make a vote tonight."

"We wouldn't be here if it wasn't something that we were very passionate about," she said, noting that her family had selected Seven Lakes because of the stables. "I'm sure that other young families chose Seven Lakes because of the stables."

"Those horses are very important to my family," Amy Blondin said, adding that "My daughter spends a lot of time there grooming horses."

Laura Douglass, a member (See "Stables," p. 29)

SLLA Meeting

(Continued from page 27)

"All you have to do is tell them it's 23 feet and they will give you a sticker," the owner told Thingstad. He encouraged the Board to make sure that those issuing boat stickers verify the length of the boat. President Darr assured him the matter would be addressed.

Community Standards

Director Racine reported that the massive influx of registration paperwork in the Landowners Office has delayed the issuance of notices of rules violations. "But we have been out and about checking on violations," he assured the landowners present for the meeting, encouraging them to report any violations they observe.

Architectural Review

Director Fentzlaff reported that the Architectural Review Committee had approved two split rail fences, one new deck, one deck repair, one re-siding, and two roofs.

Long Range Planning

Present Darr said he had received proposals from two paving companies for work on the community's streets, and that the Long Range Planning Committee would be reviewing those proposals in the coming week.

"It very well may be that we will recommend a combination of the companies," Darr added, explaining that a variety of types of patching and repaving are required on different streets, and that each of the companies offered

the lowest price for certain types of repairs.

Other business

In other business during the May 30 Open Meeting, the SLLA Board of Directors:

- Approved the recombination of lots 964 and 965.
- Unanimously approved changes to the lot recombination policy.
- Appointed Dean Charles, Carolyn Follansbee, Jane Lowe, Richard Weber, and Sam Halpin to the Judicial Committee, with Ed Chapman as Chairman.



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Stables

(Continued from page 28)

of the Recreation Committee, opposed the idea of trying to turn the stables into a profit center, by selling rides and lessons to non-residents — an idea that had been floated earlier in the stables debate.

The stables were designed to attract homebuyers to Seven Lakes, she argued, not to be an income producer for the Association. Drawing a comparison to other amenities, she asked whether the board would sell day passes to the lakes to outsiders. "You would not do that," she said. Douglass also noted that Seven Lakes North and South are alone among the residential developments in Western Moore County in offering free trail rides to residents.

"This is the one unique thing that we have," she said.

Girl Scout Kaitlyn York told the Board that she has a little brother who, at five years of age, hasn't yet had a chance to ride the horses — and even younger cousins. "I would like for them have the chance to ride at the stables," she said. "People move here because of the stables . . . I hope you take your time and think about this decision."

Emma Wolf, another Girl Scout, said her family moved to Seven Lakes because of the amenities, adding that she would like her young niece to have the opportunity to ride at the stables when

she is old enough.

Teenager Kayleigh Wachter asked the Board, "If more people would come to the barn, will you leave it alone?"

After Director Bob Racine answered "The more it is used, then the more valuable it is," Wachter provided several ideas about increasing utilization of the stables, including staying open an hour later, so that students have a chance to ride after school.

Saying she had been involved with horses for more than forty years, Sandy Corr told the Board: "I don't think enough research has been done to find out how to cut costs effectively." Noting that the SLLA Stables Facebook page had a question about allowing outside use of the facility, Corr said she felt the associated expenses would swamp any additional revenue.

The stables are "a cost center," she said. "It was designed as a cost center. I don't use the pool, but it is a huge amenity that draws people here. I would never suggest getting rid of the pool."

Director Racine told Corr that the Board had nothing to do with the Stables Facebook page. "It's not there with the permission of any member of the Board," he said.

"The stables need to be left alone," Linda Cristie said. "We definitely need an inde-

pendent study on how we can run it effectively."

"Seven Lakes is so unique because of the amenities — including the horses," Dale Nussman told the Board. "The reduction would save only one percent of the annual budget. So it doesn't make sense. I recommend we go the other way . . . We aren't getting the word out. We have a wonderful resource that folks aren't making use of."

At the conclusion of public comment, former SLLA Director Donna Stephan complimented the crowd on having maintained a civil tone.

Charging for amenities?

Based on comments that President Darr made at the very end of Wednesday night's meeting, the stables debate may be just an appetizer for tough decisions facing the Board and the SLLA community in the coming months.

Darr suggested that at least he, among the Directors, was actively considering the possibility of attaching fees to the use of individual amenities.

"We have been talking about cost of the stables, we have been talking about cost of the pool, we have been talking about cost of lakes — we have been talking . . . about the cost of everything," he said.

Darr then said that he had just heard about a nearby lake community in which "the users of the lakes in that community pay a \$1,000 fee per year to use the lake. We are sitting and wrestling with the costs of the stables, the costs of this and the cost of that . . . in some communities, I do know, that they do fee structures for stuff."

Darr mentioned other communities in which association

members must purchase \$500 pool memberships each swimming season.

"I don't want to shock anybody if we come back one of these days and say we think that we are going to need to charge fees for stuff," Darr said. "There shouldn't be any illusion that everything is going to be just like it is right now, because it can't be."

"We will be coming up with stuff that, I'm sure, is not going to be very palatable to lots of folks. But we have got to get enough money to run this organization, we've got to keep it going, we've got to maintain what we've got."

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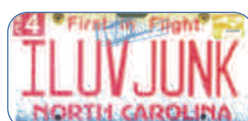
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