

Draft Westside budget includes dues increase

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



A two percent increase in homeowner's dues, a more than six percent increase in lot owner's dues, and a number of fee increases are all part of the Seven Lakes West Finance Committee's 2013-2014 budget.

The increased income is needed in order to maintain the current level of funding going into the community's reserves, said Finance Director Don Friert, who present-

ed the budget during a Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA] Town Hall meeting on the budget held on Tuesday, December 18.

If the Finance Committee's budget is approved by landowners at the Annual Meeting in March, owners of improved lots will see their dues increase from \$930 to \$948. Unimproved lots will see an increase from \$726 to \$774.

Currently, there are 972 improved lots in the community and 724 unimproved lots. Dues payments will gen-

erate an estimated \$1.5 million in revenue for the community.

Unimproved lots are on a seven-year schedule of required dues increases aimed at bringing the dues on all lots — improved or unimproved — into parity. By 2020, all lot owners will pay the same amount in dues, ultimately adding \$125,000 in income to the budget.

"That gives us an important reserve builder," said Friert.

Developer lots are contractually exempted from paying (See "Budget," p. 19)

Vest named interim manager

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



In a special meeting on Monday, December 10 the Moore County Board of Commissioners unanimously appointed Wayne Vest to serve as Interim County Manager.

Vest currently serves as the County's Tax Administrator, and will serve in both

capacities until a County Manager is hired.

Commissioner Craig Kennedy told *The Times* that the process of hiring a new County manager — which has not yet started — could take as long as six months.

However, Kennedy added, the Commissioners do have a template to follow in the hiring process that was developed by the late James Westbrook. An experienced local government administrator,

Westbrook had been appointed Interim County Manager, but was killed in a traffic accident the afternoon of his second day on the job.

Conducting the hiring process in-house, rather than hiring outside consultants to manage the search, will save taxpayers \$25,000, Kennedy said.

Vest will immediately

(See "Commissioners," p. 26)



Wayne Vest

Merry Christmas!



Alyssa Blondin and Rio help the folks at Seven Lakes Stables get into the Christmas spirit.

Council creates fund for debt repayment

by Ellen Marcus
Times Reporter



December has been a busy month for the Foxfire Village Clerk's Office; residents have only three weeks left to pay property taxes before the New Year.

During the Village Council's regular Tuesday, December 12 meeting, Councilwoman Leslie Frusco said, "Nice reminder letters were sent out to residents who had not paid their taxes. As of January 5th, they will become past due and start collecting interest."

Frusco credited Deputy Finance Officer and Tax collector Sharon Sanchez for her help in neatly wrapping up another "clean" Village Audit Report.

The completed Audit Report has been distributed to the Village Council for review. "Thanks to Sharon for spearheading and dealing with the day to day aspects of the audit," said Frusco.

Fund Established for Loan Repayment

The annual payment for the Woodland Circle Loan is due in April. The Council will be tapping two different (See "Foxfire," p. 27)

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West End Presbyterians celebrate centennial

by Ann Chase

West End Presbyterian Church

On a sunny November day, West End Presbyterian Church celebrated the 100th anniversary of its founding.

On November 17, 1912, twenty-three Presbyterians, seeking a church closer to home, were approved by the Fayetteville Presbytery to form a new church to be named West End. On that day 100 years later, nearly

three hundred people gathered to mark this historic event. Included in that number were more than 50 descendants of the charter families who were recognized during the program when the charter was read. Remembrances and reflections of the past and a look toward the future focused on the fine music program, leadership by both volunteers and staff over the years and an active and energetic mission program.

This was the culminating event of a year long celebration at the church, kicked off in the fall of 2011 with the publication of the Cen-

tennial Cuisine cookbook. Other publications included a Centennial Church Directory and an historical booklet that was given to all families and guests at the celebration. A major project undertaken by the Centennial Celebration Team was the creation of three large historical panels depicting the history of the church over the past century which will be a permanent display.

During the year 2012, several events took place. The first service in the sanctuary was held on March 25, 1922. That date fell on a Sunday in 2012 as well and charter and early family descendants

shared with the congregation a special worship service and luncheon as stories from the early days were told.

In April, an historical tour, "Tracing our Roots" was held. Following a presentation on the history of this area, participants took a narrated walking tour of old West End followed by a trip to Jackson Springs and Bensalem Presbyterian Churches where the charter members had previously held memberships. The tour ended at the Old Scottish Burial Grounds to view the gravestones of the Scots who settled in Moore County in the 1700s.

In October, the Centennial Team partnered with the Mission Team and the Deacons to host a Stop Hunger Now packaging event. More than

80 children and adults of all ages, ranging from preschoolers to 80 somethings, participated in this intergenerational mission program. In less than two hours, 16,000 rice based meal packages were assembled to be distributed world-wide to support school feeding programs and crisis relief. It was an amazing experience for all.

This centennial year at West End Presbyterian Church was one of celebration and blessings all year long.

CONTRIBUTORS AND ADVERTISERS

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

Our voice telephone number is 910-673-0111.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

Deadline	Issue
Fri, Jan 4	Fri, Jan 11
Fri, Jan 18	Fri, Jan 25
Fri, Feb 1	Fri, Feb 8
Fri, Feb 15	Fri, Feb 22
Fri, Mar 1	Fri, Mar 8
Fri, Mar 15	Fri, Mar 22
Thu, Mar 28*	Fri, Apr 5
Fri, Apr 12	Fri, Apr 19
Fri, Apr 26	Fri, May 3
Fri, May 10	Fri, May 17
Thu, May 23*	Fri, May 31
Fri, Jun 7	Fri, Jun 14
Fri, Jun 21	Fri, Jun 28
Fri, Jul 5	Fri, Jul 12
Fri, Jul 19	Fri, Jul 26
Fri, Aug 2	Fri, Aug 9
Fri, Aug 16	Fri, Aug 23
Fri, Aug 30	Fri, Sep 6
Fri, Sep 13	Fri, Sep 20
Fri, Sep 27	Fri, Oct 4
Fri, Oct 11	Fri, Oct 18
Fri, Oct 25	Fri, Nov 1
Fri, Nov 8	Fri, Nov 15
Thu, Nov 21*	Fri, Nov 29
Fri, Dec 6	Fri, Dec 13
Thu, Dec 19*	Fri, Dec 27

*Early publication or deadline due to holiday.

There's an extra week in January!

Well, not really. But *The Times* is taking an extra week between issues. Our next edition will be published on Friday, January 11; the deadline for ad copy and news is Friday, January 4.

Why the extra week? Our normal every-other week publication schedule, every few years, requires a little adjustment to make our publication dates line up properly with the holidays. And this is one of those years.

You'll find our publication dates and deadlines in the box at left. Happy New Year!



Edward Jones

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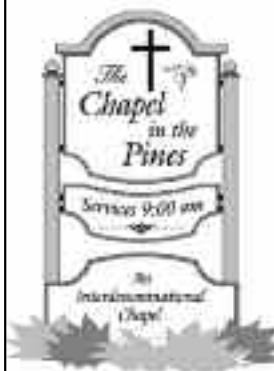
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Three Westside candidates for three seats

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



Three candidates have been nominated to stand for election as Directors of the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association [SLWLA] in March. The expected departure of President Mick Herdrich, Secretary Jane Sessler, and Treasurer Don Friert will create three openings on the Board.

Brian Benjamin, Dale Erickson, and Chuck Watkins were recommended to the Board by the Nominating Committee, Secretary Sessler announced during the Board's Tuesday, December 11 meeting. Board members voted unanimously to accept those nominations.

According to a profile prepared by the Nominating Committee, Benjamin, a native of New York State, moved to Seven Lakes West in 2008. Often traveling for his sales job, Benjamin enjoys golfing, boating, and his backyard pool. When asked why he decided to run for the Board, Benjamin said Seven Lakes West is such a good place to live, and "everyone has a responsibility for making it work."

Erickson, who frequently attends SLWLA Board Work Sessions, has lived in the community since 2003, but is originally from North Dakota. He told the Nominating Committee that he would, if elected, like to participate in the creation of a cohesive community vision that can serve as the basis for strategic planning. Erickson said he was motivated to stand for election because of the difficulty the Nominating Committee had in attracting candidates. "It's my turn to show how much I value this community," he said.

Watkins, a native North Carolinian, moved to Seven Lakes West in 2011. Having served on other home owners association's boards, he noted that it is important to ensure that the community's infrastructure can meet the needs

of a growing population. Watkins describes himself as open-minded, a team leader, and a good listener.

The SLWLA Bylaws provide for additional candidates to have their names placed on the Annual Meeting ballot by submitting a petition signed by at least three percent of the members entitled to vote at least sixty days prior to the Annual Meeting, which falls on the third Sunday of March.

Safety and Security Director Ed Cockman was appointed as the new chair of the Nominating Committee during Tuesday's meeting.

Board Drops Morning Work Session

During Tuesday's meeting, the Board unanimously approved dropping its morning Work Session, traditionally held on the second Tuesday of the month. As a result, beginning in February, the Board will meet only once each month, on the second Tuesday evening.

Sessler, who proposed the change, said there often isn't

enough business in a given month to fill up the agenda for a single Board meeting, making two full Board meetings a month unnecessary.

Friert pointed out that the current meetings are often only thirty-five minutes long. He added that the Board could always go back to holding two meetings a month if necessary.

The Board will continue to host Town Halls or additional meetings when deemed necessary, said Sessler.

Herdrich said he had received mixed feedback from former SLWLA Presidents on the proposed reduction in the number of meetings. He suggested trying one meeting per month for six months, after which the Board could vote whether or not to make the change permanent.

Herdrich noted that the Board is also considering a reduction in the number of Directors from nine to seven. The Board did not discuss what positions would be eliminated, but will bring that topic up at a future meeting.

Registration of Boats, On or Off the Lake

The Board approved, on first reading, a list of changes to the Lake Auman rules and regulations presented by Lake and Dam Director Bruce Keyser at the recommendation of the Lake Committee. Many of the recommended changes were aimed at bringing Lake Auman rules in line with state rules, Keyser told *The Times*.

Among the changes was a rule that all boats must be registered prior to being docked or used on Lake Auman.

Initially, Keyser's rule change would have required registration of any boat used or docked on Lake Auman, but would have exempted boats owned by residents but not actually used on the lake — for example, a salt-water fishing boat stored in the member's garage.

Trying to find language to accomplish that, Keyser suggested exempting boats from registration as long as they do not come closer than fifty

feet from the lake. However, that language and the proposed exemption sparked an hour-long debate among Board members.

Safety and Security Director Ed Cockman said, "If you have a boat in this community, it should be registered."

Infrastructure Director Jim Pierman asked that two different stickers be distributed for boat owners: One for those who are going to use Lake Auman and one for those who are only storing their boat in the community.

Keyser said the gray area is when people say they do not intend to use their boat on the lake in the coming year, and question why it has to be registered.

"Having been lake director for several years, I know what you're dealing with," said President Herdrich. "But you can't measure intent. I had people tell me they weren't going to use their boat, and I would see them on the lake."

"If it's [boat] here, and it's permanent, I don't care what

(See "Westside," p. 24)

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Veterans present vision of expanded Memorial

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter



Members of the original Moore County Veterans Memorial Committee have developed an ambitious plan to expand the Memorial site and adjacent county-owned property in Carthage into a community park.

But the new Commissioner-appointed Veterans Memorial Advisory Committee continues to focus narrowly on the current Memorial site itself, instead of considering the adjacent County-owned property that has been the focus of controversy.

Members of a Site Plan Subcommittee of the Advisory Committee met on Monday morning, December 17.

The meeting took up the question of whether the current Memorial Site could accommodate the number of additional veterans names that might be added over the next few decades.

What wasn't on the agenda was the the adjacent 3.5 acres of County-owned property that has been the focus of debate since May, when the Commissioners revealed an offer by Bojangles' Restaurants to purchase 1.3 acres of the tract for a new restaurant.

Representatives of the original Veteran's Memorial Committee — a volunteer group that raised the money to pay for the Memorial — presented a professionally-designed plan for the entire property that included an amphitheater, public restrooms, walking trails, and a reflection pond.

But they were told by County representatives that their proposal was a matter for the full Advisory Committee to review, rather than being taken up by the Site Plan Subcommittee.

And so the Site Plan Subcommittee focused instead on determining whether the current Memorial has enough room for another 14,000 Veterans' names.

Sizing the Memorial

One hurdle in trying to predict the future space needs of the Memorial is determining how much it will grow over the next five decades. The sub-committee generously estimated that a total of 14,000 names will need to be added through the installation of new granite slabs by 2062.

The current granite markers include 8,000 names, but the records of an estimated 3,200 additional veterans names are under seal in the Register of Deeds office, so that those names cannot be added at this time.

In trying to acquire names of additional veterans, Ruby Hendrick, who chairs the original Memorial Committee,

(See "Memorial," p. 21)



Landscape Architect Vince Zucchini's plan for an expanded Veteran's Memorial in Carthage.



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Westsidiers donate 23 bikes to 'Project Santa'

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter

It started out when Westsider Debbie Giovanni donated three bicycles to "Project Santa." It ended up with a truckload of twenty-three

bikes donated to the cause from residents in Seven Lakes West.

"I was told their [Project Santa] donation supply was low this year," said Giovanni, "So, I thought let me see

what I can do."

Project Santa was started over thirty years ago by Earl Wright, of Southern Pines, who collects slightly used bikes and refurbishes them to distribute to needy families

in Moore County on Christmas morning.

Last year, Wright collected 475 bikes. This year, his goal is 600 bikes — but he told *The Times* that, as of December 7, he had only half that number.

Giovanni first used the Seven Lakes West Families Facebook Page to get the word out to residents about Project Santa. She then enlisted the aid of Seven Lakes West Landowners Association's Secretary Jane Sessler, who put the information in the community

newsletter. Within four days, Westsidiers had donated twenty-three bikes.

Community Manager Jeanette Mendence gave the okay for bikes to be dropped off at the West Side Park Community Center.

Giovanni told *The Times* that it was truly a community collaboration — involving the staff, the Board, and the residents — to get the bikes to Project Santa early enough to be readied for Christmas.

"I wanted people to see that we are doing positive things

(See "Santa," p. 6)



Debbie Giovanni organized a Seven Lakes West Drive that netted twenty-three bicycles for Project Santa. Earl Wright and David Graham of Project Santa will make needed repairs to the bikes and then distribute them to needy children.



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In memory of . . .

Ronald Julian Mertz, 73, of Greensboro, GA, and formerly of Seven Lakes West, died Friday, December 7, at his residence after a courageous battle with cancer.

Mr. Mertz was born in Calumet City, Illinois, and was the son of the late Julian John Mertz and Emily Diane Paluch Mertz.

He graduated from Marquette University in Milwaukee, Wisconsin and married the former Karen Louise McMahon.

He retired in 2001 from Union 76 Oil Company after 37 years holding various marketing positions within the organization. During his working career, the family lived in Schaumburg, IL; Alpharetta, GA; La Canada Flintridge, CA; Trophy Club, TX and Seven Lakes, NC. He was a member of Christ Our King and Savior Catholic Church.

Mr. Mertz proudly served his country in the Army Reserves. He enjoyed many years with the Rotary Club serving as President, a member of the Friends of the Library and a Trustee for the Greene County Library and member and Past President of Lake Oconee Anglers.

Santa

(Continued from page 5)

in Seven Lakes West," said Giovanni.

Already thinking about next year, Giovanni said, "If your kids get new bikes this year for Christmas, give their old ones away."

Helping Wright pick up the bicycles was one of his "elves," David Graham, who also refurbishes the bikes with paint, new chains, and other minor repairs.

The donated bikes will be distributed on December 25 outside of BO's Grocery Store in Southern Pines.

Project Santa collects bikes up until December 23 — and continues to collect them throughout the year. Anyone interested in donating a bike can contact Wright at 910-639-9506 or 910-639-4048.

During his time in Seven Lakes, Mr. Mertz served on the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association Board and was a member of the Lake Auman Sport Club.

In addition to his wife, Karen Louise Mertz, of Greensboro, GA, he is survived by a daughter, Nicole West and her husband Jeffery Allan of Alpharetta, GA; sister, Judith Hurdle and her husband Neil of Valparaiso, IN; and his brother Timothy Mertz of Munster, IN.

Memorial Services were held on Saturday, December 15 at Reynolds Plantation Pavilion, 3310 Linger Longer Road, Greensboro, GA 30642 with Dr. David Key officiating.

Memorials may be made to the GCSU Foundation, "The Ron Mertz Fund" GCSU Foundation, Campus Box 96, Milledgeville, GA 31061.

McCommons Funeral Home, 109 W. Broad St., Greensboro, GA, is in charge of arrangements.

Bette Thomas Goudey, 86 of Seven Lakes died Thursday, December 6 at Penick Village, Southern Pines.

Mrs. Goudey was born in Asheville, NC, daughter of the late George Washington Thomas and Eleanor Elizabeth Thomas.

A memorial service was held on Thursday December 13 at the West End Presbyterian Church with the Rev. Larry Lyons officiating. Interment followed the service in the church columbarium.

Mrs. Goudey received her Bachelor's from Coker College, SC. She later obtained

a Master's in Education from New York University.

She volunteered as an EMT for over 20 years with the Randolph County Rescue Squad in New Jersey. Her education and EMT skills allowed her the ability to teach swimming and first aid to many during her lifetime. She worked aboard various tanker ships teaching CPR and lifesaving skills to those out at sea for many days and months at a time.

Mrs. Goudey was preceded in death by her husband Gordon Melvin Goudey.

Survivors include her son, G. Thomas Goudey and wife Martha R. of Mebane; daughter, Lorna Goudey Hodge of Raleigh; and two grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made in memory of Bette Goudey to: FirstHealth Hospice and Palliative Care, 150 Applecross Road, Pinehurst, NC 28374.

Tutors needed

The Moore County Literacy Council is in need of tutors for their site at St. Mary Magdalene Church in Seven Lakes.

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Getting water to Edgewood & Murdocksville

by Ellen Marcus
Times Reporter



When talk in Moore County turns to water, the conversation is mostly about where to find more — how to boost the County's overall supply of water to meet the population growth expected over the next ten, twenty, or thirty years.

But Public Utilities Director Randy Gould and his staff also face the challenge of bringing water to smaller communities — often in the rural parts of the county — that lack an adequate water supply, yet lie outside the current boundaries of the county's water system.

Work is underway to try to serve two such communities — Edgewood Terrace in West End, and Murdocksville, which lies between West End and Eastwood — where homeowners have reported that their wells are low and running dry.

But bringing county water to rural homes is a lengthy, tedious, and expensive process.

Bringing Water to Edgewood Terrace

Residents of Edgewood Terrace submitted a petition to be added to the County water system in June. The community of three-dozen lots lies west of the railroad tracks and NC Highway 211, a half-mile south of the stoplight in West End.

After documentation was received to establish Edgewood Terrace's need, Moore County applied for a grant through the North Carolina Rural Economic Development Center requesting that the state cover ninety percent of the cost of extending the county water system to serve the community.

A community in neighboring Lee County had received a ninety percent grant. But Moore County is wealthier than Lee County, a "tier three county" in the state's economic development rubrics. As a result, the Rural Center was willing to provide a grant to cover only half of the cost, which means either the county or the landowners must cover the other half.

Landowners in a particular

area can speed up the process by funding the project through a "special assessment," Gould explained.

"If a community wanted water immediately, it would require them conducting their own special assessment and paying for their own water," he told *The Times*. "In order for property owners to gain approval they would have to present a petition signed by landowners representing sixty-seven of the property value. Under the special assessment, all property owners that benefited from the [water] line would have to pay, whether or not they hooked up," said Gould.

If landowners do not have funds available to pay for the water line extension, then everyone in the area could

be levied a "special assessment" — a set amount that would be billed by the Tax Department over a number of years in order to pay for the line.

If community members feel that they cannot afford that assessment, they can request help from the County, which would attempt to acquire grants or simply allocate funds to pay for the extension.

That's what has happened in Edgewood Terrace. Even with fifty-percent of the cost of extending water mains covered by a Rural Center grant, the cost per property owner was just too high.

So, Public Utilities will pick up the other half of the \$83,000 tab, assuming that meets with Commissioner

approval. Gould told *The Times* he expects that question to appear on the agenda for the January 3 Board of Commissioners meeting, when he will propose a new policy that recognizes the value of adding customers to the County water system.

He explained that new customers mean new revenues from tap fees and water rates. Over time, those revenues can pay for the County's investment in extending water lines to unserved areas.

Still, all of that cost and effort just gets a county water main running down the street in front of an individual property owner's house. In order to tap into that line, the homeowner will have to pay a tap fee — as much as

(See "Water," p. 21)

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Mrs. Martin comes to Seven Lakes from Richmond Family Medicine, where she had been a provider since March 2008. Her approach to wellness and the special needs of women define her as a practitioner and keep her patients, even those living in Rockingham, coming back. As a new resident of Seven Lakes, where she now lives with her husband and two sons, she provides the community with an excellent nurse practitioner.





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Greens for the winter — and the New Year

by Ellen Marcus
Times Reporter

Driving the back roads of Moore County on a cool crisp day, you'll often catch a glimpse of winter garden in a side yard. A "salad patch," the locals call it.

Hearty collards, peppery mustard greens, turnips, green onions, and beets thrive in the damp but mild Carolina Winter. And a pot of greens simmering on the back burner is a winter staple in the South. The fresh sharp aroma laced with pork and peppered vinegar warms from the inside out.

Wayne Greene's patch of dark jade collards stands out against the brown winter landscape. It isn't much of a garden, but it's just enough. Winter gardens tend to themselves. The only challenge planting enough to have a little left over for the kitchen, after the deer, rabbits, and other critters have their share. Wayne's wife, Angela, thinks he plants the garden as much for the wildlife as for the kitchen.

The Greenes own fifty mostly-forested acres in Jackson Springs, sharing it with their

three horses: Duke, Oozie and Outlaw.

Wayne just shot his first deer of the season. Fresh venison, with sides of sweet potatoes, greens, beets, and cornbread costs just pennies a plate, but is both nutritious and delicious.

Wayne, a soft-spoken, thoughtful man, said what he likes most about his home is "quietness." Wayne works for Lee Electric, a job that often takes him to the scene of natural disasters. He has traveled with his crew as far as Louisiana to help restore power.

The sandy path to the Greenes' winter garden borders the pasture where Outlaw grazes.

"I grew up on a farm," Wayne said. "I've gardened, I reckon, all my life. I was raised until I was eight on Currie Mill Road. We had cows, pigs, chickens, corn, and garden stuff."

"The collards will stay all winter," he added. "I usually try to have cabbage, too." But he has waited too late to plant cabbage, and "toward the end of the year, it's hard to get anything to grow."

Cooking greens requires more work than growing them. Wayne explained the traditional way to cook greens and beets: "Collards are boiled down in water a couple of times and then cooked with some bacon. Beets — take them, cut them up, add some sugar, and boil them down. Mustard Greens are boiled down and then fried."

Wayne said Angela is a good cook, and noted that he particularly appreciates her homemade soup.

Angela and Wayne are both early risers. New Year's Day is no exception. Like many Southerners, Angela will start the New Year off right, cooking for luck. She will get up before light to put on the Black Eye Peas — "pennies in the pot, they bring good luck" — start the collards — "green backs, put money in your pocket."

"I never have cooked hog jowl," Angela said, admitting

to a lapse of tradition in her New Year's meal. But she is confident that cooking pork chop or ham will bring as much luck as hog jowl.

At dusk, the remnants of the blue sky fade into the softness of winter. The Greenes stand together, quiet

and content with their lot — a testament that a life of hard work only needs to be balanced with a little luck.

Peace and quiet, a warm house, horses for company, a patch of collards, and fresh venison for supper.



Collard, beets, & radishes, among the classic ingredients for a Sandhills "salad patch."

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Setting a Southern table on New Year's Day

by Ellen Marcus
Times Reporter

My father always said, "Work on New Year's Day and have work for the rest of the year." If he had January 1 off from his job, then he spent the daylight hours outside splitting wood, feeding the animals, or clearing the fence line.

In the kitchen, it's a southern tradition to eat "poor man's" food on New Year's Day. The saying goes: "Eat poor the first day of the year; eat rich for the rest of the year."

But the Southern New Year's table isn't really so much about eating "poor," as about eating seasonally available foods: winter greens, black-eyed peas, cornbread, and sweet potatoes.

Black-eyed peas, also called cow peas, are thought to have been introduced to America by African slaves who worked the rice plantations. And those hearty legumes, along with the rice, form the base of "Hoppin' John," a traditional New Year dish.

Hoppin' John is a rich bean dish made of black-eyed peas simmered with spicy

sausages, ham hocks, or fat-back, rice, and, occasionally, tomato sauce. It's traditional to put a copper penny in the pot and that penny will bring good luck to who ever finds it.

Hearty greens & cabbage, the perfect complement to Hoppin' John, are Southern winter crops, and, on the New Year's table, they symbolize of "green" cash.

Superstitious or not, it's a

delicious way to welcome in the new year!

Hoppin' John

2 cups dried black-eyed peas
8 cups of cold water
½ lb ground venison
½ ground pork sausage
1 medium onion, chopped
1 stalk of celery, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, chopped
1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
4 cups pea broth

2 cups uncooked long-grain white rice
3 TB of rendered bacon fat
Coarse salt and black pepper to taste

Before preparing rinse dried beans and sort. Soak, rinse, and drain dried black-eyed peas. Place black-eyed peas in a large soup pot over medium-high heat and cover with cold water; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; cover and let stand 1 to 2 hours. Drain and rinse beans.

Using the same large soup pot, over medium-high heat,

add soaked black-eyed peas and red pepper. Add water to cover peas and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer gently for 1 1/2 to 2 hours or until the peas are just firm (do not boil as the beans will burst).

Sauté chopped vegetables until tender in rendered fat. Add sausage and brown. Pour in Rice and lightly toast. Add 4 cups of pea broth and 3 cups of drained cooked peas and gently stir. Cover and cook 20 to 25 minutes or
(See "New Year's," p. 20)



Good Luck foods — Find the penny in your Hoppin' John for luck, eat New Year's greens and have plenty of cash all year.

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Local vets have mission to help military families

by Stacy Naughton
Times Reporter

Helping meet the needs of military families is the top priority for Vietnam Veterans of America [VVA] Chapter 966 this Holiday Season.

Chapter Members pooled the \$5,700 in donations they have received throughout the year and put them to good use helping needy families at Fort Bragg and in Moore County.

Spearheading the initiative was Chapter 966 President retired Major Chuck Spelman, along with retired Lieutenant Colonel Bill Carl and his wife, Sandi Carl.

The Times toured the Soldier Family Assistance Center at Fort Bragg with Spelman and the Carls at on Thursday, December 13.

With the help of the facility's Outreach Coordinator, Tony Pugh, the Carls interviewed five families that were in need of help this holiday season.

Their needs varied from help with utility bills, to new tires for a truck in order to pass inspection, to furniture for a six-week old baby.

"The Army is doing a lot for these families," said Sandi Carl, "But, it's not enough."

With the donated funds — plus some additional help from the wider Seven Lakes and Moore County community — VVA 966 was able to cover all of the families needs and more.

John and Melissa Kirst of Seven Lakes West donated baby furniture.

Spelman was able to obtain new tires for one family at a generously discounted price from Bill Smith Ford in Southern Pines.

The donated cash — which is collected at restaurant fundraisers hosted by VVA 966 throughout the year — was divided among the military families.

Monetary donations were also given by retired Lieutenant Colonel MaryAnn O'Connor and her father, retired Colonel Hugh O'Connor, both members of the Veteran of Foreign Wars [VFW] in Southern Pines.

"It's a bigger blessing to

give than receive," said Spelman. He and Carl are using Chapter donations to help five Moore County military families with food and home repairs.

Sandi Carl told *The Times*

that her husband is always collecting donations, whether it is furniture or extra building materials, which he sets aside. When the need arises to help out a family, Carl goes to his stockpile of goods

to see what he has on hand.

Soldier Family Assistance Center

On the day *The Times* toured Fort Bragg's Soldier Family Assistance Center, four Fort Bragg families had coincidentally arrived to thank the VVA Chapter for their help.

The Carls brought along a Christmas toy for one of the children — and a box of food for the soldiers.

Grateful for the donated

baby furniture, one family showed off pictures of it set up at home.

Outreach Coordinator Pugh told *The Times* that the Assistance Center helps families of soldiers injured in Afghanistan or Iraq transition back into either the military or civilian life.

How long a soldier stays at the 260-room facility is determined on a case by case basis.

"It depends on injury or

(See "VVA," p. 20)



VVA Chapter 966 President Chuck Spelman visits Ft. Bragg's Soldier Family Assistance Center with Bill & Sandi Carl.

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Feeling Good is the Fun of It!

Quilters give to FirstHealth Cancer CARE Fund

On November 20, the Sandhills Quilters Guild held their monthly meeting at the First Baptist Church in Southern Pines.

This meeting was very special to everyone as they were able to present Debbie McGahey, of the Cancer Care Fund, a check for \$2500. These monies came from a silent auction project the Guild holds at each quilt show.

This past September, the Guild held their fifth Quilting In the Pines show and the silent auction was well stocked with items made by guild members.

Prior to the quilt show, the Guild voted on a fund or charity to receive the full proceeds, and this year the Cancer Care Fund was chosen. The Guild was delighted that McGahey was able to attend the meeting.

The Sandhills Quilters Guild also made and presented 25 quilts to be used at the Clara McLean House in Pinehurst. Other ongoing

projects include quilts for Habitat for Humanity, Quilts of Valor, comfort quilts for nursing homes and children, and quilts for Friend to Friend.

At this same meeting, the Guild also installed their officers for 2013. 2012 marked the Sandhills Quilters Guild's 30th anniversary and they will finish up their year with a special luncheon to be held at the resort in Pinehurst.

The Guild has over 120 members and they are always ready to add more members. The Guild meets the third Tuesday of each month at the First Baptist Church, Southern Pines. The meetings start at 9:30 am and generally finishes up around 11:30 am, depending on programs and classes.

Visitors are always welcome.



Marion Cornell, silent auction coordinator; Joan DeBruin, cochair of the Quilt Show; Debbie McGahey of the Cancer Care Fund; and Lynette Crosby cochair of the Quilt Show.

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Holy Communion - 9:30 am
Children's Chapel - 9:45 am
Adult Christian Education - 10:45 am

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Santa pays visit to Seven Lakes West

by Rosemary Weber
SLWLA Events Director

On Sunday, December 9, Santa arrived at Seven Lakes West on the West End Fire Truck through the back gate up the driveway to the Community Center with over 50 excited children awaiting his arrival.

Christmas wishes were given to Santa and pictures were taken with the children,

then they participated in gingerbread cookie decorating and refreshments were served. It was a great time for all ages.

A special thank you goes out to the West End Fire Department for their efforts in transporting Santa and giving the children memories for a life time of seeing Santa arrive on a fire truck in their community.



Santa was greeted by plenty of fans at Seven Lakes West's Christmas Party.

Congrats, Graduate!

Kayla Nicole Gielda
James Madison
University
Harrisonburg, Virginia



Kayla Nicole Gielda is the daughter of Steve and Sherry Gielda of Clifton, VA. She is the granddaughter of Larry & Brenda Yates of Seven Lakes South.

Kayla graduated on December 15, with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Hospitality and Tourism Management.

She will be employed at the W Hotel in Washington, DC, a 4-star hotel across from the White House.



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New book tells early history of Seven Lakes

by Greg Hankins
Times Editor

The story of Seven Lakes has attracted a number of historians over the years.

Ray Pardue put together a comprehensive history of Seven Lakes Country Club that was serialized in this newspaper several years ago. Rollin Tomberlin wrote some historical sketches, also for *The Times*. Bill Kirkpatrick, Joe Piper, and Ollie Gossard also did some digging and writing, though their efforts may not have been published to date.

What's been missing, until now, is a real insider's view — a history of Seven Lakes from someone who was there at the beginning, who had a seat, so to speak, at the creation.

To fill that need comes Ann O. Bass of Sanford, and her self-published *Seven Lakes: A Place in the Sun*. The 161-page book tells the story of Fred Lawrence, an ambitious and successful insurance salesman from Sanford who bought a few hundred acres of Moore County scrub land and invented Seven Lakes.

Bass was there at the very

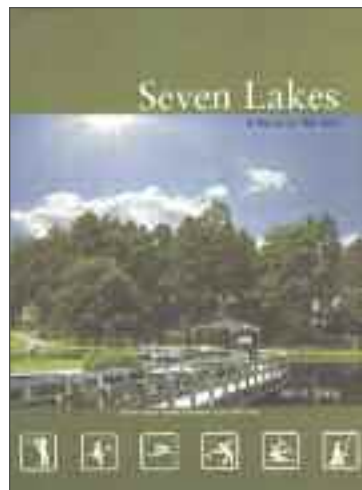
beginning. She met Lawrence when they were in high school. She was married to Joe Cline, one of Lawrence's best friends and closest business partners. She was a passenger in the car when Lawrence first brought his wife Mary Edna and his friend and partner Joe Cline down to look at a sandy patch of land near West End.

And, most importantly, Bass was Fred Lawrence's accountant — and, ultimately, the Chief Financial Officer of Longleaf, Inc., the development company at the center of Lawrence's Seven Lakes development.

That gives the story Bass tells a particular perspective. The book focuses on Lawrence's biography and on the financial challenges he faced in creating Seven Lakes — financial challenges that eventually sunk Longleaf, Inc. and bought Lawrence time in prison on federal contempt charges.

The seeds of Lawrence's financial problems were sown early, in Bass's telling, when he discovered that he could create companies and bring in investors without worrying

about expensive filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission [SEC] — as long as he limited the number of investors to fewer than twenty-five.



As dam building, and road building, and golf course building became a bottomless pit demanding more and more cash, and an in-house sales office failed to provide sufficient revenue, that model for attracting investors mushroomed into literally dozens of companies. There were sixty-four separate Lawrence

companies involved in the development of Seven Lakes, attracting 2,200 investments from an estimated 1,500 families.

Eventually, all of that investment activity attracted the attention of the SEC and, later, its state counterpart. The last half of Bass's book is devoted to lengthy excerpts from the transcripts of Lawrence's trial on charges brought by state regulators.

Despite that unhappy ending, Bass paints a glowing picture of Lawrence, describing him not only as a visionary, but as a man whose troubles largely resulted from an overwhelming desire to keep everyone — his investors, his business partners, and his employees — happy.

It is a very flattering portrait of the founder of Seven Lakes.

The book begins with a biographical sketch of Lawrence, and then a history of the early days of Seven Lakes, often told in the form of conversations between

Lawrence and Bass. The author told *The Times* that she not only has an excellent memory, but that she kept extensive contemporaneous notes.

For those familiar with the early days of Seven Lakes, Bass's book helpfully fills in many details. For those who have never heard the story of how the community began, it will be an eye-opening read.

Seven Lakes: A Place in the Sun is by no means a comprehensive history of Seven Lakes, nor does it pretend to be. But it is a fascinating insider's look at how a community of 5,000 folks came to occupy this stretch of the Sandhills.

The initial run of *Seven Lakes* is available by mail order, directly from the author. The price is \$25, plus \$5.75 to cover sales tax and shipping, for a total of \$30.75.

A check for that amount, along with an address for return mailing, may be sent to Annocon Publishing Co., 2406 Overbrook Lane, Sanford, NC 27330.

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Early Stage Alzheimer's Support Group

The Chapel in the Pines will be offering a support group intended for individuals who are in the early stages of Alzheimer's disease. It will be an 8 week program focused on providing support, resources and education.

The program will include Mild to Moderate cognitive decline – early-stage Alzheimer's.

Most friends, family or co-workers begin to notice the difficulties in the early stages

faster than family members. During a person's medical interview, doctors may be able to detect problems in memory or concentration.

Some of the common early stage difficulties include:

- Noticeable problems coming up with the right word or name
- Trouble remembering names when introduced to new people
- Having noticeably greater difficulty performing tasks

in social or work settings

- Forgetting material that one has just read
- Losing or misplacing a valuable object
- Forgetfulness of recent events
- Impaired ability to perform challenging mental arithmetic – for example, counting backward from 100 by 7s
- Greater difficulty performing complex tasks, such as planning dinner for

guests, paying bills or managing finances

- Forgetfulness about one's own personal history
- Becoming moody or withdrawn, especially in socially or mentally challenging situations
- Increasing trouble with planning or organizing

The facilitator's for the program will be the Rev. Fran Stark and Amy Natt, M.S.

The program will be held Wednesday, January 9, 2 pm to 3 pm.

There will be eight sessions through February 27. There is no cost for participation.

For more information or to register for the group, contact Fran at 910-673-5493 or email amyn@agingoutreachservices.com

The support will be held at the Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines, 581 Seven Lakes Drive.

All information is confidential when shared within a support group.

Chapel Lunch Bunch to host Marc Chagall Scholar

All single seniors are invited to attend the Seven Lakes Lunch Bunch for luncheon at the Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines Joralemon Fellowship Hall on Wednesday, January 23 at noon. There is no cost to attend. To make reservations for lunch and if transportation is needed please call Fran Stark 673-5493.

Following lunch Vivian Jacobson, author and lecturer will give a talk on the The Biblical Windows of the St. Stephan Church in Mainz, Germany.

The windows were designed by Chagall for the apse of the church in 1973 as a sign of love, peace, hope and reconciliation for France and Germany, and for Christians and Jews. Use of projected images illustrates each section of the windows. The lecture contains a detailed analysis of the artwork as it coincides with Chagall's passion for the Bible.

Jacobson had the privilege of working with Chagall during the last eleven years of his life that, interestingly enough were considered among his most productive.

Since 1978, Jacobson has lectured on her experiences with the man whose works as a consummate artist continues to touch the lives of individuals.

Jacobson will have her

book *Sharing Chagall: A Memoir* available for purchase.

Anyone who would like to join us to hear the lecture is invited to join the the group following lunch at 12:30 pm.

This project is made pos-

sible by a grant from the North Carolina Humanities Council, a statewide nonprofit and affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

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'Talking Turkey' at English Speaking Union

Dr. Henry P. (Phil) Williams' extensive international experience will be evident when he appears on Wednesday, January 9, at the English-Speaking Union's first program for 2013.

Williams has worked professionally in France, Greece, Italy and Turkey and is proficient in their languages. Having lived in Turkey for six years, he is considered a scholar on its history and its critical importance to American policy today.

The expression, "to talk turkey," was first recorded in 1824. Meaning to skip

the pleasantries and get to the point; or to speak plainly, the familiar expression will apply to a highly insightful presentation regarding Turkey's growing world stature.

Because of the corruption, inefficiency and intrigue that characterized Turkish administration and politics in the late 1800s, Turkey was described as "the sick man of Europe" as it neared the end of the existence of the Ottoman Empire and subsequent loss of wars and territory.

But, in the 21st century,

it is far from "sick." Just as America, NATO, the European Union, and the Middle East have changed dramatically since the Cold War, so Turkey is redefining itself to respond to domestic and regional changes.

Kemal Ataturk, the country's president in the 1920s is remembered as the man who brought about the country's secularization and modernization during that period. However, his famous phrase, "Peace at Home. Peace Abroad." has a different flavor today.

Dr. Williams has earned degrees from Culver Military Academy, the University of Virginia, the University of Edinburgh, Scotland, and the University of Florence, Italy, including a doctorate from The Fletcher School (a joint Tufts and Harvard program) in International Law & Diplomacy.

After several years on Wall Street, Bankers Trust sent him to Istanbul, Turkey's

largest city, where he launched Turkey's first investment bank in 1988.

He is a National Board Member of the English-Speaking Union and past president of the Charlottesville Branch. He currently serves as State President of the Virginia Society, Sons of the American Revolution and is also a longtime board member of the Amer-

ican Friends of Turkey.

Williams presently operates a consulting business and lectures on subjects ranging from the Middle East and American History to Port wine.

For information regarding membership in the E-SU Sandhills Branch and the January program, contact Hope Price at (910) 692-7727 or Hopewp@AOL.com.

Introduction to Organics at 7 Lakes Garden Club

The Seven Lakes Garden Club will meet on Thursday, January 10 at 2:00 pm.

The guest speaker will be Rita Caperna. Caperna will discuss everything you need to know to set up and maintain an organic garden and how to preserve your harvest.

There will be free samples and light refreshments. Bring your enthusiasm, questions, & neighbors.

Novice to experts – all are welcome. Door prize! Free raffle! The Garden Club meets at the Chapel in The Pines, 581 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.



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Soup and Packaged Dinner Calendar for January

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
December 31	January 1	2	3	4
	CLOSED Happy New Year!	Chicken Alphabet Soup Baked Spaghetti Dinner	Beef Vegetable Soup ♥ Sweet Bourbon Salmon Dinner ♥	Manhattan Clam Chowder ♥ Pork with Apples Dinner
7	8	9	10	11
CLOSED	Goldie's Chili Chicken Pot Pie Dinner	Broccoli Cheddar Soup Herb-Roasted Turkey Dinner	Crab & Shrimp Bisque Spice Crusted Tilapia Dinner	Corn Chowder Beef Enchiladas Dinner ♥
14	15	16	17	18
New Hours!	Navy Bean Soup ♥ Shepherd's Pie Dinner	Mushroom & Wild Rice Soup ♥ Chicken with Artichokes Dinner ♥	Curried Carrot Soup ♥ Shrimp Creole Dinner ♥	Shrimp & Sausage Gumbo Beef Stroganoff Dinner
21	22	23	24	25
Tuesday - Friday 11:00 - 6:30 pm	Split Pea with Ham Soup Turkey Meatloaf Dinner ♥	Tomato Basil Soup ♥ Pot Roast Dinner	Chicken Dumpling Soup Herb-Crusted Salmon Dinner ♥	New England Clam Chowder Southwest Pork Tenderloin Dinner ♥
28	29	30	31	February 1
	Broccoli Spinach Soup ♥ Italian Meatloaf Dinner	Black Bean Soup Eggplant Parmesan Dinner	Beef Barley Soup ♥ Shrimp Stroganoff Dinner	Lentil Soup ♥ Chinese Pepper Steak Dinner ♥

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We wish everyone all the best for the Holidays and the coming New Year.

Thanks again from all of us at Goldie's Gourmet –

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 21

- **Winter Begins**
- **"Blue Christmas" Worship Service** – 5 pm, at The Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines with communion. Come and join in for prayers, Scripture, and music that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn and for those who struggle with the holidays – and that God's Word comes to shine light into darkness. Everyone is welcome. Contact Fran Stark 673-5493.
- **Candlelight Vigil** – 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm, St. Joseph of the Pines invites the community to a Candlelight Vigil to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness at the Downtown Park, Southern Pines. Please bring donations of new or gently used, coats, blankets, mittens, hats, sweaters, scarves, jackets, gently used socks, sweatshirts, shirts, and gloves. Children sizes are also needed. All items will be distributed this Winter. www.iamthefaceofthehomeless.org
- **Paul Murphy and Family Holiday Concert** – 7:30 pm, Christmas carols and popular holiday tunes will fill the air at Sunrise Theater when The Murphy Family takes the stage for a holiday concert. Murphy will be joined by his wife

and children to present a Christmas concert featuring a potpourri of music. Tickets: \$20 for VIP seats (first six rows), \$15 for general admission and \$10 for children 12 and under. Tickets online at www.sunrisetheater.com or at the administrative office at (910) 692-



8501,
also

sold at the door while supplies last. All proceeds will support the Sunrise Theater Digital Cinema Campaign. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 22

- **Turkey Shoot** - Come to Alec Creek Farm in Jackson Springs for a Turkey Shoot held every Saturday night at 7 pm. Win a turkey, ham, slab of bacon or cash. All proceeds benefit Sandhills Animal Rescue League to rescue and rehab stray and abandoned pets. Join the fun and support the animals. Alec Creek Farm, 396 Thomas Road, Jackson Springs. 910-974-4468 or 910-638-1921.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 23

- **St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am, Holy Communion. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes 673-3838.
- **Eagle Springs Baptist Church** – 6 pm, Christmas program. The church will have refreshments and treat bags to hand out afterward the service. Eagle Springs Baptist Church, 460 Eagle Springs Road, Eagle Springs.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 24

- **Christmas Eve**
- **Seven Lakes Chapel in the Pines** – 5 pm, Christmas Eve service will be Candles, Carols and Communion. The choir will sing several anthems and solos. Reverend Welch will have a brief message, followed by Communion.
- **McDonalds Chapel Presbyterian Church** – 7 pm, Christmas Eve service with communion. 1374 Foxfire Rd, Foxfire.
- **WEUMC Christmas Eve Service** – 8 pm, Come and experience the mystery of incarnation with everyone at West End United Methodist Church. Holy Communion will be served. Please join in as the church

prepares for the birth of the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

- **St. Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9 pm, Christmas Eve Eucharist. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes 673-3838.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 25

- **Christmas Day**
- **St. Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am, Holy Eucharist. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes 673-3838.
- **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. Reverend Carol Burgess. All are welcome.

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 26

- **Kwanzaa Begins**
- **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. Rev. Dr. Won Namkoong will lead this session in the WEUMC Fellowship Hall.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 27

- **The Village Chapel of Pinehurst** – 10 - 10:30 am,

new weekly prayer service with Communion, in the Sanctuary, followed by a Bible study led by the Rev. Dr. John Jacobs from 10:45-noon in the Youth Room. All are welcome to attend. The Village Chapel located on the Village Green, 10 Azalea Road, Pinehurst.

- **Bread of Life Ministry** – West End United Methodist Church, 11 am until 1 pm. Ministry is for seniors (widows, widowers, and the elderly). A time of fellowship and devotion and a meal provided at \$5.
- **Sandhills Winery Wine Tasting** – 5:30 pm to 8 pm. 1057 Seven Lakes Drive. (910) 673-2949. www.sandhillswinery.com
- **Sunflx at the Sunrise** – 7:30 pm, *Cloud Atlas*. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 29

- **Sunflx at the Sunrise** – 2:30 & 7:30 pm, *Cloud Atlas*. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.
- **Turkey Shoot** - Come to Alec Creek Farm in Jackson Springs for a Turkey Shoot held every Saturday night at 7 pm. Win a turkey, ham, slab of bacon or cash. Proceeds benefit Sandhills Animal Rescue League. Come join the fun and sup-

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port the animals. Alec Creek Farm, 396 Thomas Road, Jackson Springs. 910-974-4468 or 910-638-1921.

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 30

- **St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am, Lessons and Carols Service. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes 673-3838.
- **Sunflix at the Sunrise** – 2:30 & 7:30 pm, *Cloud Atlas*. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.
- **The Rooster's Wife** – 6:45 pm, doors open at 6 pm, Poplar Knight Spot. Music guest tonight *The Gibson Brothers*. Rooster's Wife. 114 Knight St., Aberdeen, www.theroosterswife.org (910) 944-7502.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 31

- **New Year's Eve**
- **Faith Baptist Church in West End – New Year's Eve Service** – 6:30 pm to 10 pm, Impact Ministries praise and worship service. The service incorporates praise and worship music, drama skits, and focuses on presenting the Gospel. The focus is to "IMPACT" the community through the teens and young adults. Faith Baptist Church, 2180 Carthage Rd, West End. www.fbcwestend.com

TUESDAY, JANUARY 1

- **New Year's Day**
- **Weymouth Woods First Day Hike 2013** – 2 Ways to Ring in the New Year – Naturally! **8 am**, Bird walk, Meet at Weymouth Woods Visitor Center or at **2 pm**, Hike to the Old Growth Long Leaf Pine. Meet at Weymouth Woods Visitor Center and Car pool 4 Miles to the Boyd Tract. Hikes approximately 1.5 miles. *No Dogs, Please*. Hikes are Free and Open to the Public. (910) 692-2167 www.ncparks.gov
- **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.

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 2

- **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. Rev. Dr. Won Namkoong will lead this

session in the WEUMC Fellowship Hall.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 3

- **Bread of Life Ministry** – West End United Methodist Church, 11 am until 1 pm. Ministry is for seniors (widows, widowers, and the elderly). Fellowship and devotion and a meal at \$5.
- **Gallery at Seven Lakes** – 1 - 4 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Women of Seven Lakes** – meeting, 2 pm, at the Chapel in the Pines Fellowship Hall. Their guest speaker will be Dr Kate Shattenkirk of Southern Pines Aesthetics and Laser Institute. Dr Shattenkirk will speak on the new advances in laser therapy. Chapel in The Pines, 581 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes.
- **Moore County Board of Commissioners** – 5 pm, at the Historic Courthouse, Carthage.
- **Sandhills Winery Wine Tasting** – 5:30 pm to 8 pm. 1057 Seven Lakes Drive. (910) 673-2949. www.sandhillswinery.com
- **Sunflix at the Sunrise** – 7:30 pm, "Skyfall" Sunrise

Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.

FRIDAY, JANUARY 4

- **Sunflix at the Sunrise** – 7:30 pm, "Skyfall" Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 5

- **'Met Opera - Berlioz's Les Troyens' at the Sunrise** – in HD, at 12 noon. The Met offers a rare opportunity to witness Berlioz's vast epic. Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.
- **Turkey Shoot** - Alec Creek Farm in Jackson Springs 7 pm. Win prizes. Proceeds benefit Sandhills Animal Alec Creek Farm, 396 Thomas Road, Jackson

Springs. 910-974-4468 or 910-638-1921.

- **Sunflix at the Sunrise** – 7:30 pm, "Skyfall" Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 6

- **St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church** – 9:30 am, Holy Communion. 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes 673-3838.
- **Sunflix at the Sunrise** – 2:30 pm & 7:30 pm, "Skyfall" Sunrise Theater, 250 NW Broad Street, Southern Pines (910) 692-3611.

MONDAY, JANUARY 7

- **Weight Watchers Meeting** – 5 pm-6 pm, at St. Mary Magdalene Episcopal Church, 1145 Seven Lakes Drive, Seven Lakes. Group leader Rachel Carr.

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Holiday tips for pet safety

The holidays can be a fun time for our four-legged friends, but they can also be a dangerous time.

Here are a few tips for keeping your cat or dog safe, courtesy of Sandhills Animal Rescue League.

Cookies and candies are always fun to give and receive, but not a good treat for animals — especially if they contain chocolate. Be sure to keep those treats out of pets' reach.

Poinsettias are a common sight during the holidays, but what many people don't know is that ingesting the leaves can be fatal to pets.

Tinsel is a great finishing touch to any Christmas tree; but, if an animal eats the shiny strands, tinsel can get

caught in their intestines and become life threatening.

Products used to **de-ice walkways** can cause serious irritation to your pet's paws. Next time you purchase a de-icer, be sure to look for a pet-friendly brand.

Decorating for the holidays is a time-honored tradition. When hanging lights or placing small decorations around the house, make sure they are high enough, so your family pet can't reach them.

Looking for a unique gift? Think about donating a bag of dog or cat food to your local shelter in honor of a friend or family member.

Have a friend or child who needs a new pet? Think of giving a Pet Adoption Cer-

tificate instead of an actual animal. After the holidays, shelters see an increase in the number of animals returned that were given as a gift.

Don't forget about all the wild critters that share our world this holiday season. During Winter wild birds have a harder time finding food to eat. Putting out feeders will keep the birds happy and full all Winter long.

The folks at Sandhills Animal Rescue League wish you and your pets a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

To learn more about SARL, call Lou Atkins at 910-974-4468 or 910-638-1921.

NC Symphony presents Beethoven's Fourth

The North Carolina Symphony Brings Fine Music to Moore County. The symphony will be performing at Pinecrest High School's Lee Auditorium, just off Highway 15/501, Southern Pines.

The next concert will be held on Thursday, January 24 at 8 pm. The music will be *Beethoven's Fourth Symphony*.

The orchestra consists of sixty-six professional musicians with extraordinary musical background and training.

Buy tickets: Online; by phone toll free 877-627-6724 or 919-733-2750; in

person at the Arts Council of Moore County, Campbell house, 482 E. Connecticut Avenue, Southern Pines, 910-692-2787; or in person, the night of the concert, at Lee Auditorium, Pinecrest High School.

Purchase tickets for the whole season, or for one concert. Single ticket \$18 and on up depending on seat location. Students \$10 at the door. Details about pricing are on the website. Most of the concerts are preceded by a talk or an interview with a member of the orchestra. www.ncsymphony.org

Pauley series in 26th year

The Ruth Pauley Lecture Series celebrates its twenty-sixth year with lectures that range from the coast of North Carolina to the villages of Afghanistan.

"From Soldier to Survivor: One Man's Life Changing Event" is the topic of Green Beret MSG Mark Vomund's January 23, 2013 talk. He will discuss his challenges after being wounded by an improvised explosive device (IED) in Kandahar, Afghanistan. His story is one of courage, tenacity, perseverance.

Dana Beach will offer us a view of "Coastal Conservation" in his April 4, 2013 lecture. Beach is the Executive Director of the Coastal Conservation League and is author of "Coastal Sprawl: the Impact of Development on Aquatic Ecosystems".

All Ruth Pauley lectures will be in Owens Auditorium on the Sandhills Community College campus in Pinehurst. Programs begin at 7:30 pm. Lectures are free and open to the public.

The Ruth Pauley Lecture Series is sponsored by Sand-

hills Community College, the Moore County League of Women Voters, the Sandhills Branch of the American Association of University Women, and the Moore County Schools. For additional information call 910-245-3132.



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Budget

(Continued from front page)

dues, explained SLWLA Legal Director Jack Stevens.

Replenishing Reserve Funds

This year began with a \$1 million balance in the West Side's reserve fund. By the end of the fiscal year — in April 2013 — it is expected to have a balance of \$500,000.

"This year, in particular, there were some significant capital improvements that were required," Freiert said, "and that has put an extra burden on our reserve funds. We also have a forecast of decline in our investment income — primarily because the capital expenditures took reserve funds, so it's lowering our investment funds."

Freiert told *The Times* that, although money was put into the reserve fund throughout the year, there were over \$900,000 in expenses during the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

Some expenses were unforeseen, such as the \$300,000 that went to repair the Longleaf Pond Dam #3.

Although the new mailbox was a budgeted item, it added another \$350,000 in expenses for the year.

"It's roughly half of what it started with," Freiert said of the reserve fund balance, "and a very uncomfortable position, as far as the Finance Committee is concerned, because things happen and can happen and things can be significant in terms of cost."

Freiert said he doesn't expect the reserve fund to rebuild to last year's level until 2018; but in order to accomplish that, action has to be taken now.

The Finance Committee has requested that \$300,000 slowly be added back bit by bit to the reserve fund.

Next year's proposed budget will capture 1/3 of that amount and put an extra \$100,000 into the reserve fund, leaving a projected balance of \$572,000 by April of 2014.

"I would like to see us put as much discipline in that reserve and that reserve allo-

cation to maintain that," said Westsider and Board candidate Dale Erickson, "so we really watch our costs throughout these next twelve months."

"There's basically three levers we have to pull," said Freiert, "revenue, expense and reserve — How much we put in and how much we take out at any given time. Once again we have focused on all three of those for the coming year."

Fees increasing as well

One way the proposed budget would bring in revenue is not only by increasing dues, but also by increasing amenity-related fees. It has been four years since there has been a change to the SLWLA amenity fee structure, Freiert said.

Some increases in the proposed budget include:

- Boat Registration from \$25 to \$50.
- Johnson Point slip rental increases from \$700 to \$800.

- Mailbox prices from \$20 to \$25.
- Rental fees for spaces in the storage lot on Longleaf will increase by \$25 for a single, double, or a triple space.
- Johnson Point lot fees will increase from \$75 to \$100 for sail boats.

The rental fees for Johnson Point canoe and kayak racks will remain unchanged, at \$75.

For the first time ever, there will be a lot combination fee of \$2,000. Currently, there

is no charge for landowners who want to combine two lots into one. Freiert explained that, once two lots are combined, the landowners pays dues on only a single lot, instead of two lots, costing the Association income from that point forward.

Operating Expenses Cut

Continuing the focus on rebuilding reserves on the expense side of the lever, the Finance Committee's budget also proposes to cut operating

(See "Budget," p. 20)

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4 BED + BONUS! – \$275,000

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227 LONGLEAF DRIVE • 7LW



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UNDER CONTRACT!

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105 LEEWOOD CT • 7LW



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116 JAMES DR • 7LW



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129 HARRELL RD • 7LW



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108 CARDINAL DRIVE • 7LN



2 BED + DEN, EX. CONDITION – \$136,300

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Budget

(Continued from page 19)

expenses by \$12,000, a 1.2 percent decrease that will bring total operating expenses to just under one million dollars.

Operating expenses in all areas except for Recreation and West Side Park will decrease next year.

Anticipated expenditures for next year include:

- \$10,000 to Lake Auman
 - \$350,000 to road improvements
 - \$115,000 to capital projects
 - \$25,000 to the Long Range Planning Bank
 - \$20,000 to Long Range Planning Master Reserve
- The Long Range Planning Bank is a fund set up to buy land around or within the

community in order to expand the common area.

"We had several opportunities in the last year that have come up that might have made sense for the community to look hard at," said Freiert. "And we simply walked away from them because there was no money."

The Long Range Planning

Master Plan was proposed by the Long Range Planning Committee this year to create a "road map" for Seven Lakes West, at a cost of \$40,000.

One of the biggest objections leveled against the plan by landowners was that there was no money set aside for it. The Finance Committee has allocated \$20,000, in the budget, in case the community decides to move forward with the planning process.

"The good news is: the major items we know we have been planning on for several years now, that is behind

us," said Freiert, "The problem is the unknown."

Thirty people attended Tuesday night's town hall meeting. The Board is expected to vote on the budget during their first work session of the new year on January 8.

The community will vote on the budget at the Annual Meeting in March. A copy of the proposed budget, as well as Freiert's presentation from the Town hall meeting, is available on the SLWLA website.

VVA

(Continued from page 10)

illness," said Pugh. "Some are here ninety days; some are here a year or longer."

The facility offers a wide range of services: financial counseling, child care, help finding civilian employment, and assistance for soldiers who want to use post-911 GI Bill benefits to further their education.

Everything except for medical appointments are offered

at the facility; those still have to be done at Womack Hospital on base.

The Assistance Center offers housing for soldiers who are utilizing its services. Each suite is large enough for two soldiers, offering two bathrooms, two bedrooms, and a small kitchen and common area.

The Fisher House, also located on Fort Bragg, allows soldiers' families to stay close

by-without having to pay for a hotel — when room is available.

To donate to or volunteer at the Soldier Family Assistance center, contact Pugh at 910-643-6674 or email anthony.c.pugh.civ@mail.mil

Those interested in donating to the efforts of West End VVA Chapter 966 contact may contact Spelman at 910-975-1905 or email Maj03@earthlink.net.

New Year's table

(Continued from page 9)

until rice is tender and liquid is absorbed. Remove from heat and season to taste with salt and pepper.

If done correctly the peas will not be mushy, the rice will be fluffy and the dish will be loose and the consistency of a thick soup.

Makes 12 servings

Sautéed Greens in Peppered Vinegar

Rinse and chop a large bunch of Turnip Greens

Heat 2 TB of cooking oil or Bacon Drippings in a cast iron skillet on medium High Heat.

Throw in well drained greens and sauté until tender 10 to 15 minutes (stir frequently)

Sprinkle with coarse salt, pepper and Peppered Vinegar,

reduce the heat and cover 10 minutes with tight fitting lid.



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Memorial

(Continued from page 4)

found that, due to the sensitive information contained in these records — such as social security numbers — the files cannot be released for at least forty years.

Hendrick told *The Times* that she has been personally responsible for processing the paperwork for every single name currently listed at the Memorial.

During Monday's Subcom-

mittee meeting, Social Services Director John Benton made a motion, which the subcommittee approved, authorizing Hendrick to send out an official request that the records be unsealed in an effort to update the Memorial.

"The reason for the request is to get to the bottom of this and serve our Veterans," said committee member Robert Hayter.

Moving on to the space required to add the additional names expected over the next five decades, the Subcommittee determined that the land on which the Memorial currently sits could house the additional fourteen granite slabs needed for the 22,000 total names expected by 2062.

"We have got lots of Veterans, and we want to leave a place for them," said Hayter.

Landscaper Quincy Edgerton from North Carolina Marble and Granite — the original designer of the Memorial — was also at the meeting. Edgerton's blueprints included only the land on which the Memorial currently sits, and included the additional granite slabs for the names of future Veterans.

What About Additional Land?

Though the current space is adequate to hold the anticipated number of names, the objective of the original Memorial Committee — as well as representatives of a wide range of veterans groups that have addressed the Commissioners on the subject since May — has been to protect the wider area surrounding the Memorial from encroachment by commercial development, like the proposed Bojangles' restaurant.

Taking the initiative to develop a site plan that would protect the Memorial, the original Memorial Committee sought the advice of Pinehurst landscaper, Vince Zucchini.

Zucchini, who volunteered his time and resources, drew

up a landscaping plan that encompassed the entire 3.5 acres of County-owned property adjacent to the Memorial.

The plans provide for an amphitheater, public restrooms, walking trails, dedicated parking, a reflection pond, and a large grassy park area.

Zucchini's plans would reroute a 300-foot section of Carriage Oaks Drive that currently runs in front of the Memorial so that it instead passes behind, and then runs between the Memorial and the Moore County Social Services building.

"When we look at removing that road, we have a whole other can of worms to open," said Benton, noting that the Town of Carthage would have to approve such a change.

Water

(Continued from page 7)

\$1,900 — as well as paying a plumber to run a water line from the meter to the house.

Starting the Process in Murdocksville

As the process of bringing water to Edgewood Terrace moves toward a successful conclusion, a similar process is just getting started for residents along Murdocksville Road and Beulah Hill Church Road.

Those residents presented a water petition in September and held their first community meeting at the Culdee Presbyterian Church on Thursday, December 6, with more than seventy in attendance. It's a larger community, and covers a much larger area, than Edgewood Terrace.


Murdocksville is still in its initial fact-finding stage, determining who wants and needs water. Several homes are in immediate need of water.

Three steps must be taken before water can be made available. The first is identifying and mapping the service area. The second is obtaining documentation of whose wells are running dry and any other what issues they are having. The final step is determining what funding is available.


"It's a big area," Gould told *The Times*. "We will do a cost estimate once we get the area defined, and then we will look at the funding sources. We then go back to the citi-

zens and tell them what the next step in the process is."

Regardless of how immediate the need, there is no quick fix. Even after all the preliminaries, and the funding is in place, the water lines still need to be laid.



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Is Christmas just a myth?

Question: This time of the year, I receive numerous questions about the nativity stories in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. Among these was a question about whether Joseph could possibly have been the biological father of Jesus, if Jesus was without sin.

Another person raised a question about all the fuss over Pope Benedict's new book that dismisses many of the contemporary beliefs and practices that surround the telling of the birth of Jesus. "What difference does it make since the whole story is just a myth?" asks the

questioner.

Response: Let me try to respond to both of these questioners and to the con-



Ask the
'Rev'
Rev. Don Welch

cerns of many rational folks who still find Christmas meaningful.

Is Christmas "just a myth," or is it a historical fact that has been mythologized over

the centuries. There is general agreement among believers and skeptics alike that Jesus was a historical person and

that he lived during the first century of what we now call the Common Era.

If Jesus lived, he had to have been born to two parents. This is no myth; but, as this story was passed through oral tradition over several generations, it began to take on mythic characteristics.

Mark, the earliest-written of the Gospels, says nothing about Jesus' birth, but begins the story with Jesus' baptism when he hears a voice from heaven saying: "You are my son, The Beloved; with you I am well pleased." This gospel was written over three decades after Jesus' death.

Matthew and *Luke*, written two decades later, follow *Mark's* outline of Jesus' ministry, but add material from their own sources that include two separate and conflicting accounts of Jesus' birth. The fourth Gospel, *John*, never mentions Jesus' birth, but implies in its pro-

logue that Jesus had an existence with God even before he was born.

The accounts of Jesus' birth, found in two of the four gospels, have given the church beliefs that Jesus was born to a virgin named Mary; that Joseph had no sexual relations with Mary; that Jesus of Nazareth was actually born in Bethlehem; that angels announced his birth to shepherds; that Wise men traveled from the East following a moving star; and that Herod the King tried to kill the newborn Jesus, causing Mary and Joseph to flee

(See "Christmas," p. 24)

Myth-busting, Christmas-style

There are many myths surrounding Christmas that do not align with Scripture, so I thought that I would write to try to clear up some of these myths. After all, if we are going to believe something, we should know and understand the factual truth of the story and know what we are celebrating.

Myth #1 – Jesus was born on December 25th of the year 1 A.D.

Christmas is an annual holiday, celebrated on the

twenty-fifth day of December by millions to commemorate the birth of Christ Jesus. Many consider it to be one of the most holy days of the year, and I can attest that it is one of three times that they many folks will attend church each year. (The others being Easter and Mother's Day.)

Were you aware that Christians in the New Testament did not celebrate the birth of Jesus as an annual observance? Did you know that most Protestant churches

did not begin celebrating Christmas until the nineteenth century?

So, how did the yearly observance of Jesus' birth get started?

Sextus Julius Africanus popularized the idea that Jesus was born on December 25 in his *Chronographiai*, a reference book written in 221 A.D.

He based this on the assumption that Jesus died on March 25. Since Jewish tradition held that prophets died on the same day as their conception, adding nine months, Jesus would have been born on December 25.

We falsely assume that it was year one, since A.D. stands for the Latin phrase *Anno Domini*, meaning the year of our Lord. It was originally stated as *Anno Domini (Jesu) Christi*, or "in the year of our Lord Jesus Christ." The *Anno Domini* dating system was devised by Dionysius

Exiguus in 525 A.D. to replace the Diocletian era that had been used in an old Easter table. Dionysius started his calendar with the wrong date. We know that Jesus was born when Joseph and Mary

told today in popular Christmas songs. They were "wise men," which means they were astronomers. And there were not just three, but probably a great many of them. They didn't show up at the manger, but arrived many days or even months after Jesus had been born.

So should we celebrate Christmas? Absolutely! It doesn't matter what day of the week or what year Jesus was born.

What matters is that He came into the world to save people from our sinful condition. If anything is worth celebrating, it is that God gave us the greatest gift ever given, the gift of salvation through Jesus Christ.

Just be careful to make sure that the stories about Jesus are not mixed with the fanciful stories of Santa Claus and other mystical creatures. Jesus was a real person who changed real history, not a figment of someone's imagination.

Try to be factual when telling the real Christmas Story.

Merry Christmas!



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went to Bethlehem to register for the tax that Quirinius, the governor of Syria ordered. We now know that this happened somewhere between 4 and 6 B.C.

The truth is that no one really knows what day, month or year Jesus was born.

Myth #2 – The myths about the wise men.

In Matthew 2, we are told that wise men came from the East to Jerusalem looking for the one who was born King of the Jews. These men were not Kings, as we are

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A farewell for a good friend

There's really not much of use that you can write about the death of a friend.

One day he is there. The next day there is this hole in your life where your friend used to fit.

You wind up like a jigsaw puzzle left unfinished on the card table, because someone knocked a piece on the floor, the dog thought it looked more or less edible, and now there's a big hole in the blue black sky of Van Gogh's *Starry Night*.

I used to wake up every morning just itching to find out what was in the morning papers. I'd feed the cats, put on the coffee, pull on my sweats, climb on my stationary bike, and fire up my iPhone, searching carefully through emailed headlines from the New York Times and the Washington Post, Politico and ProPublica, looking for the perfect article to email to my friend Ron Mertz.

I wanted something new, something thoughtful, some piece of trenchant analysis or in-depth reporting too solid to dismiss — but just far enough left of center to get his hackles rising and his adrenaline pumping.

If I chose wisely — and he wasn't off fishing for smallmouths on the New River or chasing big brown trout in the tailwaters below some Tennessee dam — we might have the fodder for a day-long battle of political wits.

I lost Ron a couple of weeks

ago. Actually, a lot of folks lost Ron, because Ron was the kind of guy that had a lot of friends. What took him was extremely aggressive colon cancer, after a long battle.

Most of the time, all that battle language we wrap around cancer is little more than a cliché. But, in Ron's case, it really was a battle. His daughter Nicole even got the family "Battle Mode" T-shirts when they were facing Ron's initial surgery. That surgery was incredibly extensive. Still, the doctors didn't get all the cancer.

So Ron, with his wife Karen by his side, battled through chemotherapy and complications and incredible pain. All the while, he maintained his sense of humor and his love of life, and Karen kept friends and family posted with regular email updates.

A few weeks ago, Ron realized the battle was nearing its end, and asked for Hospice.

I got to know Ron when he served on the Seven Lakes West Landowners Association Board of Directors — and as a regular patron of The Coffee Scene, a coffee shop Karen started in the Business Village. But Ron and I really

became friends after the Mertzes left Seven Lakes for Reynolds Plantation, down south of Atlanta.

Digging Deeper

Greg Hankins



Ron and I never fished together, never played a round of golf together. I never sat at his poker table — in fact, we spent precious little time talking face to face, and we rarely, if ever, spoke on the phone. Yet I consider Ron one of the half-dozen closest friends I've had in my life.

How is that possible?

It was those emails I sent out every morning. Unless, of course, Ron beat me to the punch and plopped some factoid from Fox News, some editorial excess from the Wall Street Journal, or some propaganda from the American Petroleum Institute in my inbox before I could peruse *The Times* and *The Post*.

Ron and I exchanged emails, often multiple emails each day, over a number of

years, debating the national political and policy issues of the day. These were not the jokes or screeds that your Uncle Henry emails you and 250 of his closest friends, but genuine debate and dialogue between two folks who respected each other, but disagreed about almost everything.

As Ron battled cancer, he had less time to fight about politics, so our correspondence thinned out over the past year. And then it stopped.

I'm not sure exactly what Ron got out of our years-long correspondence.

What I got was smarter. Our daily debates challenged me to read more widely, probe more deeply, understand more fully. I'll always be grateful for that.

I still start my morning with those emailed headlines from *The Times* and *The Post*. I'll admit, some of the relish has gone out of it.

But I never open up one of those emails without thinking, for just a moment, of my good friend, and the fun we had.

And, no matter how bad the morning's headlines are, that memory of Ron always make me smile.

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Westside meeting

(Continued from page 3)

your intent is," said ARC Director Dan Blue, adding that all boats should be registered.

Community Manager Jeanette Mendence said a boat is no different than a car. "Whether you drive it once a year, never, or every day, it has to be registered," she said.

Keyser amended his motion to require the registration of all boats owned by Seven Lakes West residents.

Also a matter of considerable discussion was how to ensure that those using Lake Auman have read the boating rules and regulations. Every year, when a registration sticker for a boat is picked up, the owner has to sign off that they have read the Lake Auman Rules and Regulations.

Events Director Rosemary Weber suggested holding a mandatory meeting to go over this information with boat owners.

"A lot of people are not aware of these rules, and we are going to give them a sticker?" asked Weber.

Pierman disagreed, saying "It is their responsibility" to read the rules and regulations "not the Board's."

"The key to me is safety," said Keyser. "I want this lake to be safe for anybody that's out there."

New state regulations require that boat operators under the age of 26 must have an NC Boating Safety

Certification. Keyser and Weber will be putting together classes aimed at helping younger boaters (or any interested resident) achieve that certification. Residents will continue to be asked to certify that they have read the lake rules when they pick up their sticker.

The Lake Committee recommended dropping "no wake" from the current rule that sets a 5 MPH no wake zone within 150 feet of shore. Keyser explained that the US

Coast Guard definition of "no wake" is somewhat confusing, and the Committee noted that different types of boats create varying sizes of wake. However, the Board declined to change that language.

Most of the rules changes requested by Keyser were corrections of grammar or clarifications of previous rules and regulations.

The second vote on the amended Lake Auman rules and regulations will take
(See "Westside," p. 25)

Christmas

(Continued from page 22)

with him to Egypt.

To all this, Christians over the years added sheep and cattle, camels and donkeys, and determined that the Magi were three in number. (None of these were in Bible, but most are in every Nativity Scene today.)

Many Christians assert that believing in these stories — and especially in the virginity of Mary — are necessary to keep Jesus from original sin, which is presumed to be passed genetically from generation to generation through the "sinful" act of

sex.

After the church discovered that women as well as men contributed to the genetic make-up of a child, it became necessary to add the dogma of the immaculate conception of Mary in her mother's womb. Some people confuse this with the dogma of the virgin birth, but they are two separate dogmas based on a non-Biblical belief that we all are born sinners because of Adam's sin and that only a sinless savior can rescue us from sin's consequence, death. I tend to believe in "original blessing" rather than

"original sin," and that sex is one of God's great gifts to humanity.

Does this disbelief destroy Christmas for me? No way! Every character in the Christmas stories has a truth to teach us; from the obedience of Mary and the faithfulness of Joseph to the song of the angels and the elaborate gifts

of the Magi to the infant Jesus. I can read the scriptures and sing the carols; light the candles and tell the stories.

I am still a Christmas Child and I love everything about the season. I do not have to suspend reason to believe that the true meaning of Christmas is wrapped in the

word Immanuel, which means "God is with us." I wish for all readers a meaningful Advent and Christmas.

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



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Westside meeting

(Continued from page 24)

place at the Board's next meeting on January 8. If approved, the changes will go into effect after that vote.

The proposed amendments can be viewed on the community website.

Big projects drive up expenses for November

November was a busy month financially for the community, reported Freiert.

Unusual cash disbursements for the month went to Sheffield Surveys for \$2,000; Coastal Products Unlimited for new mail boxes, \$24,000; Bill Reeves Construction Company for work on the mailhouse, \$93,500; Atkins Infrastructure for completion of work at the lower pond dam, \$205,000; Busby and Company for accounting work, \$7,300; and additional dance floor work for the Community Center Great room, \$2100. The balance of expenses for the month was in the normal operating range at \$76,000.

Based on the extra funding required in November and the prospect of additional mailhouse work, a Wells Fargo CD for \$85,000 was sold on December 5, and the proceeds will be placed in the Association's checking account, Freiert said.

As construction progresses on the mailhouse, Freiert

explained, additional CDs will be sold as required.

ARC Simplifies Removal of Dead Trees

The Board unanimously approved a change to rule 3.03 of the Architectural Standards as requested by Architectural Review Committee Director Dan Blue.

The new language will make it easier to keep manageable records on a project underway in the community. Currently, builders are required to submit 24 x 36 inch plans for project review. The change will require smaller 8.5 x 11 inch copies of the plan for reference as well.

ARC has also implemented an easier application process for requesting the removal of a dead tree from a resident's lot, Blue reported. A removal request will require only a picture of the tree and a plat map indicating where the tree is located.

The process will be "less burdensome" said Blue, adding it can be immediately approved if the requirements are met.

In other ARC news Blue explained that new projects in the community "remain flat," with forty-one underway for the month of November.

Christmas Events are a Hit

The SLWLA Christmas Party on December 7 was

attended by over two hundred residents, reported Events Director Rosemary Weber.

Events for the day included a tree lighting by Fran Fellingham in honor of her late husband Joe Fellingham. Westsider Sandi Carl led the group in a moment of silence for those lost at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Food for the event was provided by Midland Bistro and music by Chad Sine. Those in attendance helped to donate four large boxes of gifts for the Toys for Tots program, Weber said.

On Sunday, December 9, Santa arrived in Seven Lakes West on the West End Fire Truck, with fifty children in attendance. The event included gingerbread cookie decorating and refreshments.

Already looking forward to next year, the Events Committee is planning an "American Band Stand Revival" for February 9.

Communications Report

Given that the community's rules and regulation handbook is changed throughout the year, Secretary Jane Sessler asked, "What is the future of the printed document?"

Up-to-date rules and regulations are posted on the community's website, she noted, urging residents to refer to the website when

looking for the most current information.

In another effort aimed at enhancing the flow of community information, the new mailhouse will be outfitted with an electronic marquee that can be updated at any time through a wifi connection Sessler said.

She added that the use of an electronic marquee will make things "more streamlined" and will "take care of some of the glitches we have had in the past."

Whether or not the current manually-updated marquee will remain part of the entranceway has not been determined.

In other communication news, Sessler thanked Westsider Debbie Giovanni for spearheading the collection of twenty-three bicycles for "Project Santa," which delivers the bikes to underprivileged children.

"It was a worthy cause," said Sessler. "I would like to

(See "Westside," p. 26)

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Westside meeting

(Continued from page 25)

incorporate it yearly in our holiday events."

The Newcomers Committee will host a Welcoming Party for new residents to the community.

Infrastructure Report

Infrastructure Director Jim Pierman said guard rails at the Carriage Park Dam are taking longer than expected to finish due to wiring and water pipe issues.

"It's gone a little slower than what we thought," said Pierman, adding that it will look nice and be much safer when complete.

Road paving and patching are on the schedule for this

week, Pierman reported, aimed at remedying erosion and storm water control problems throughout the community. The work is expected to take no more than three days, he added, noting that the repairs are contingent on suitable weather.

Work is planned for a number of locations, including the entrance of Beacon Ridge Country Club and near the following intersections: James Drive and Morris Drive; Blackstone Court, Winston Drive, and Otter Drive; and McCracken Drive and Otter Drive.

A fire hydrant will be installed at Wertz Drive and James Drive.

All roads will remain open during the repairs.

Other Business

Other business conducted during the SLWLA Board's Tuesday, December 11 meeting included:

- During member comments, Westsider Dale Erickson praised the Board for all they do for the community.
- Westsider John Hoffmann asked during member comments that an update on the Safety and Security's roving patrol and speed control be given at the Board's next meeting.
- Hoffmann also asked that the Board consider a four way stop at the entrance to West Side Park and Longleaf Drive, especially given the likely increase in traffic resulting from the location of the new mailhouse in the West Side Park area.
- Community Manager Jeanette Mendence said West Side Park playground

equipment is being repaired.

- The yard waste will be closed on December 22, 26 and 29 due to the holidays.
- A new speaker system with an iPod docking station will be installed in the Community Center Great Room, Mendence said. In addition, new "user friendly" cordless microphones have been ordered.

- The Board approved the appointment of Don Smith to the Safety and Security Committee.
- President Herdrich extended his condolences to the family of Ron Mertz, a former SLWLA Director who died on December 7. Mertz served as President of the Lake Auman Sports Club, and was very active overall in the Seven Lakes West community, Herdrich said.

Commissioners

(Continued from front page)

assume his role as Interim County Manager and will be compensated at a rate equal to the compensation of retired County Manager Cary McSwain.

After a ten minute closed session, the Commissioners voted 4-0 to appoint Vest to the position. Commissioner Jimmy Melton was absent from Monday's meeting.

Digester Cleaning Contract Re-Awarded

During the Board's Monday Special Meeting, the Commissioners also revised a contract for the cleaning of the digester system in the Water Pollution Control Plant — part of an on-going expansion of the sewer plant.

On Monday, December 3, the Board awarded the digester cleaning contract to McGill Environmental Systems.

However, Public Works Director Randy Gould reported that, after meeting with the company, it was determined they could not handle the project. Gould asked that it be awarded to the next lowest bidder.

The Board voted unanimously to award the contract to Bio-Nomic Services, Inc. for \$205,000, with a \$50,000 contingency.

Gould told *The Times* that

the contingency was needed because the final price of the project could depend on the amount of sludge found in the digester.

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Candlelight Vigil

St. Joseph of the Pines invites the community to a Candlelight Vigil to bring attention to the tragedy of homelessness on Friday, December 21, 5:30 pm to 6:15 pm at the Downtown Park, Southern Pines.

Please bring new or gently used, coats, blankets, mittens, hats, sweaters, scarves, jackets, gently used socks, sweatshirts, shirts, and gloves. Children sizes are also needed. All items will be distributed this Winter to neighbors in need. www.iamthefaceofthehomeless.org

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Foxfire Council

(Continued from front page)

funds, taking \$173,526 from the general fund and \$14,905 from the water fund.

To make sure the Village has the resources to make future payments on the \$1,747,345 loan; the Council unanimously passed two budget amendments that will create an assigned fund for future debt repayment.

"After many discussions with the council members, it has been decided that we would like to assign certain funds to certain projects," said Frusco. For example, the recent sale of two village lots on an unused well site was welcome income that can be devoted to future loan payments.

The first amendment allows the transfer of \$35,928 from a recent land sale from the Water Fund to the General Fund. A second amendment was passed to transfer the \$35,928 from the General Fund to the new Assigned for Future Debt fund.

Stonehill Pines Extension

Councilman Steve Durham reported that Stonehill Pines has requested an extension of the date that they are required to begin construction of the planned community.

Durham explained that the date would be extended to December 31, 2013.

Both Frusco and Mayor George Erickson sought assurances that the only thing that would change were the dates, and that all other aspects would stay the same. Durham assured them that the date was relative to commencing construction only.

Erickson said he has remained in contact with Stonehill Pines Representative Rick Robison: "Every few weeks we talk. They have deeded over to the county well sites off of Linden Road. They have not gone away, and things are still moving. It is the matter of the money to start construction."

Repaving Schedule Depends on the Weather

Frusco brought to the council's attention that *The Seven Lakes Times* had incor-

rectly reported that Woodland Circle was to be repaved. In fact, it is Wildwood Drive that is scheduled for repaving.

The council will soon receive road repair estimates. Councilman Vic Koos will ride along with the paving contractor, "We will drive around and look at everything, and he will give me an estimate of cost."

A separate paving company will be providing estimates on crack-sealing, Koos said.

"I just want the public to know the time frame that we are really looking at," he added. "The earliest we could start is January. Work is limited by the weather. The company told me, if they get a good day in January, they will do it."

Improper Disposal of Yard Debris

Koos said that there have been a number of recent reports of hired landscapers and handymen blowing leaves and refuse onto other lots, particularly unoccupied lots.

"I think the council should look in to this," Koos said, while encouraging residents: "If you hire someone to clean

up your yard, please inform them that they have to bag refuse and carry it away — not blow it onto someone else's lot."

Mayor's Report

Mayor Erickson attended the Triangle J Council of Government monthly meeting. He said, that he was surprised when he was asked to chair the next meeting. "Hopefully, it is a one time chair," he said. "We shall see. One thing I like about these meetings is that we have had some excellent speakers."

The Council unanimously reappointed Erickson as delegate and Councilman Mick McCue as alternate to the Triangle J COG appointments for 2013.

Pineland Preserve Update

More information is needed before the Village agrees to accept the streets in Pineland Preserve, according to Erickson, who talked with Developer Pete Mace.

Mace informed Erickson that he had contacted his attorney, Neil Smith, about two streets in Pineland Pre-

serve that have drainage issues, and they are working together to obtain easements in two specific areas.

Downsizing Planning & Zoning Proposed

Currently, Foxfire ordinances require nine members on the Village's Planning and Zoning Board requires, and it has been difficult to find nine individuals willing to serve. McCue brought to the board's attention that it would be possible to reduce the size of the board.

"We have talked about this on numerous occasions," he said. "Our code requires nine on our zoning and planning board, but currently we have five. The state requires a minimum of three. After speaking to attorney Michael Brough,

he suggested reducing the size of the board to five. If there was a vacant seat, the quorum would be three and if two were absent the quorum would be 2."

The council decided to table voting on the motion in order to allow public comment on the proposal prior to the January Council meeting.

Brown Golf Management

Brown Golf Management — the new owner of Foxfire Resort & Golf — recently gave a presentation in Whispering Pines with more than 200 people in attendance from surrounding communities.

Councilmen Erickson and McCue attended the meeting.

Currently, Brown controls
(See "Foxfire," p. 28)

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Foxfire Council

(Continued from page 27)

eleven courses: owning seven and managing four others in Pennsylvania, Florida, South Carolina, and North Carolina. According to Erickson, the company's goal is, over the next few years, to end up with thirty courses under their control.

"Because of the economy, they can get these courses with pennies on the dollars," said Erickson. "Everything is debt free; everything has been paid for."

The council discussed meeting with Brown. "We should try to schedule a special meeting or invite someone to the next work session," advised Erickson.

Councilmen Durham and McCue agreed that the council members themselves should meet prior to meeting with Brown and prepare an agenda of what they would like to discuss.

Erickson said, at one time, the owner of the golf club had provided a regular report to the council. And the council would meet with club owners. "Maybe it is something that we might want to revive

in some fashion," said Erickson.

Unexpected Gift

Wayne and Marilyn Chalker presented the Foxfire Police Department with an impressive collection of law enforcement badges from all over the world.

The Chalkers moved to Foxfire from Maine five years ago. Wayne, who had worked in law enforcement, explained that like most fireman and policemen it was necessary to work a second job and he became a licensed electrician in Maine.

After retiring to North Carolina, Chalker passed the North Carolina requirements and opened Ridge Electric.

Chalker received the US Congressional Award for the apprehension of heavily

armed bank robbers, while working for the Nassau County Long Island Law Enforcement. He has worked all over the world, including more than ten years with an international team guarding the border from Bosnia and Romania. He also worked with an Austrian Customs and a German Commando Unit.

Chalker presented the Village Police Department with a large wall cabinet displaying mounted law enforcement badges from all over the world. "Over the years, I had collected some patches and decided to make a little display," he explained. "The top ones are federal US law enforcement, state, county, and a couple of universities. Over the years, I worked with a lot of these officers with

different agencies. If you look close, these each represent a province in Germany, and each province has a unique feature to designate it."

"This probably is worth a little money here," said Chalker pointing out one badge.


"But, I figured I would let the guys have it. When we went down to Georgia for the Olympics, they made custom patches for all federal officers working the Olympics."

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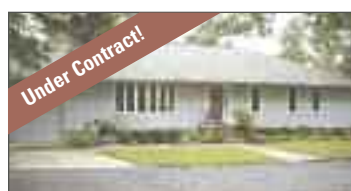
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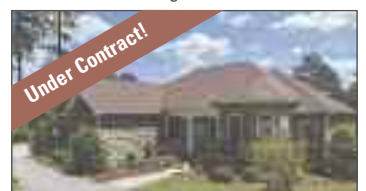
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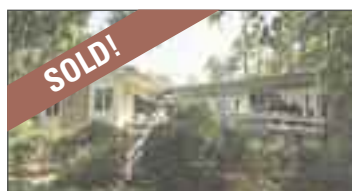
Seven Lakes West \$349,900
Custom with views of Lake Auman
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www.104LawrenceOverlook.com



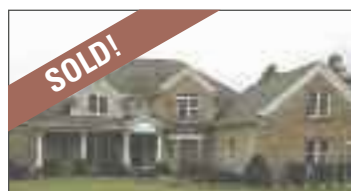
Seven Lakes North \$319,000
Unique & Welcoming Water Front Home
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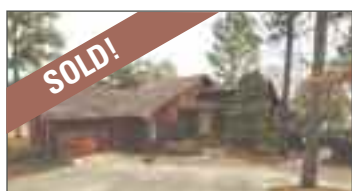
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Adorable open plan home on Lake Sequoia!
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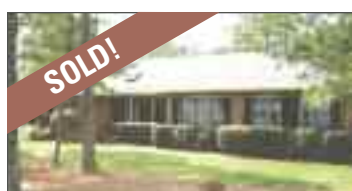
Seven Lakes West \$399,000
Gorgeous family home on almost an acre!
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www.130LamplighterLane.com



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Darling waterfront home w/open floorplan
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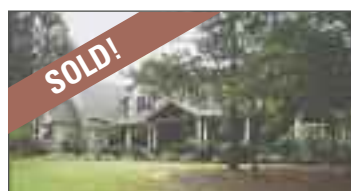
Seven Lakes West \$449,000
Custom Lake Auman Water Front
3 BR / 2 BA Code 846
www.102LawrenceOverlook.com



Seven Lakes North \$199,000
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3 BR / 2.5 BA Code 768
www.212FiretreeLane.com



Seven Lakes West \$625,000
Elegant Water Front - Breathtaking Views
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