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the magazine

PUBLISHER - Greg Anderson
greg.anderson@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITOR - Mark Wineka
mark.wineka@salisburythemagazine.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR - Andy Mooney
andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com

PHOTOGRAPHY DIRECTOR - Jon C. Lakey
jon.lakey@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITORIAL

Josh Bergeron
josh.bergeron@salisburythemagazine.com

Elizabeth Cook
elizabeth.cook@salisburythemagazine.com

Scott Jenkins
scott.jenkins@salisburythemagazine.com

Deirdre Parker Smith
deirdre.smith@salisburythemagazine.com

Amanda Raymond
amanda.raymond@salisburythemagazine.com

Rebecca Rider
rebecca.rider@salisburythemagazine.com

Shavonne Walker
shavonne.walker@salisburythemagazine.com

ADVERTISING

Joel Honeycutt
joel.honeycutt@salisburythemagazine.com

Karen Hurst
karen.hurst@salisburythemagazine.com

Malynda Peeler
malynda.peeler@salisburythemagazine.com

Shanna Pruett
shanna.pruett@salisburythemagazine.com

Jason Slusser
jason.slusser@salisburythemagazine.com

PRODUCTION

Director - Sharon Jackson
sharon.jackson@salisburythemagazine.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS
Susan Baker
susan.baker@salisburythemagazine.com

Lisa Jean Humphrey
lisa.humphrey@salisburythemagazine.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Alanna Ansbro, Michael Bitzer,
Wayne Hinshaw, Laurie Willis

Project Manager - Len Clark
len.clark@salisburythemagazine.com

On the web:
www.salisburythemagazine.com

On Facebook:
www.facebook.com/salisburythemagazine

To subscribe, contact
sales@salisburythemagazine.com

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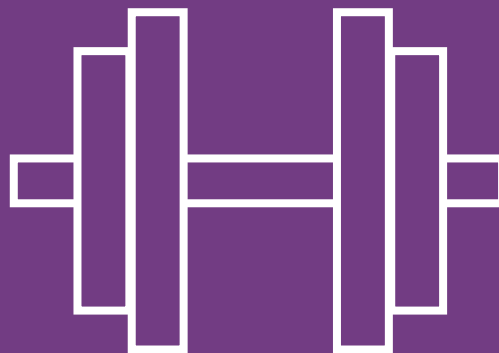
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FEATURES

..... October 2016

34

Temperance Mary's house

HSF, Livingstone tackle
their first Monroe
Street transformation.

by ELIZABETH
COOK

44

Show stoppers

Hard work is the secret
behind Salisbury natives
Jack and Lisa Towell's
championship horse farm.

by MARK WINEKA

54

Mother of invention

'Tweet' reaps the reward
of Shirley Ramsey's love.

by WAYNE HINSHAW



On this page: A window in an upstairs bathroom features colored glass in the 1907 Lynch-Nicholson House at 624 W. Monroe St. **On the cover:** Maurice Kimble is a member of the drumline in Livingstone College's Blue Thunder Marching Band.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey.

IN EVERY ISSUE

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| Editor's Letter p.7 | Rowan Originals p.12 | Salisbury's the Place p.82 |
| Bookish p.9 | Events Calendar p.70 | |
| Through the Lens p.11 | The Scene p.72 | |



THE ARTS

14 Blue Thunder
Livingstone's marching band strives for bold sound, big numbers.

FOOD

20 Horn of plenty
There's a lot more to Two Pigs Farm than the porkers.

AT HOME

28 Letting in the light
New kitchen brings historic house up to date.



WELLNESS

60 In the swim
Rowan Aquatic Club builds fun, character into competition.

REMINISCE

65 A guiding light
After 150 years, First Calvary Baptist remains a vital cog on the East End.

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Angela's 31
 Anne/Roland Furniture..... 26
 Bangkok Downtown..... 25
 Bare Furniture..... 23
 Barnhardt Jewelers..... 56
 Beltone..... 59
 Cabarus Eye Center 31
 Carolina Golf Mart 69
 Carolina Women's Health..... 53
 CHS Primary Care..... 83
 Courtyard Marriott..... 68
 DC Chem Dry..... 61
 Distinctive Naturescapes 67
 Downtown Salisbury..... 40
 Dr. Melanie Marshall, DDS..... 67
 Embellish Boutique 55
 F&M Bank..... 39
 Fisher Co., JA..... 31
 Food Lion..... 8
 Godley's Garden Center 26
 Hearing Solutions of NC 27
 Landis Plumbing & Heating..... 68
 Laurels of Salisbury..... 57
 Lexington Medical Center 84
 Lora Belle Baby 67
 Medicine Shoppe..... 43
 Mykonos Grill 25
 NC Transportation Museum..... 52
 Novant Health 4
 Novant Health 19
 Old Courthouse Theatre 31
 Old Stone Winery..... 69
 Par 3 Life, Health & Medicare 63
 Pinocchios of Spencer 25
 Powles Staton Funeral Home..... 2
 Premier Federal Credit Union 24
 Renew Skincare 69
 Rowan Animal Clinic..... 63
 Rowan County Parks 10
 Rowan/Kannapolis ABC Board..... 38
 Salisbury Emporium 69
 Salisbury Motor 3
 Salisbury Motor/AutoXpress 42
 Salisbury Pediatrics 56
 Salisbury Wine Shop..... 25
 Southern Images 26
 Stout's Heating & AC..... 57
 The Floor Pavilion..... 31
 The Forum of Salisbury 68
 Tilley Harley-Davidson 61
 Tom's Carpet Care 68
 Transit Damaged Freight 51
 Trinity Oaks..... 41
 Viva Wellness Boutique 31
 Walmart Stores..... 49
 Wife for Hire..... 59
 Windsor Gallery 63

Heading into fall with a lot of horsepower

It's the nature of our business, but photographer Jon Lakey and I often find ourselves on pretty cool assignments. Not too long ago we drove to Camden, S.C., and spent an afternoon at Finally Farm.

This full-service, championship horse farm, headed by Jack and Lisa Towell and daughter Liza Towell Boyd, has strong Salisbury ties. The Towells grew up in Salisbury and first met as youngsters riding horses at the Hidden Hut Stables off N.C. 150. There's a residential subdivision named Hidden Hut in that same area today.

The couple still travel back to Salisbury to visit Lisa's mom, Lib Taylor, but they are otherwise consumed by the horse business, at which they have been highly successful. As you'll see from the Finally Farm story in this issue, their accomplishments are rooted in families that nourished their love of horses, which ultimately became their life's work.

Among horse people, Finally Farm has a great reputation, and that has led to its doing business with the rich and famous — the families of people such as rock icon Bruce Springsteen, former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, NASCAR driver Jeff Burton and former Charlotte Bobcats owner Robert Johnson.

"Along the way, we get to meet these people," Lisa Towell told us.

Thanks to riding and training horses, Liza Towell Boyd is good friends with singer John Mellencamp's daughter, Teddi, and was one of 11 bridesmaids at her Indiana wedding.

The Towells attended Teddi's wedding, a big affair with 290 guests and an outdoor ceremony on Mellencamp's sprawling lakeside property.

A grand treat came at the reception when Mellencamp and his band played an entire set. Lisa Towell said it wasn't long before the lake next to Mellencamp's residence was filled with boats enjoying the music, as were the Towells.

"We had our own free John Mellencamp concert," Lisa said.

In a way, this entire issue has a musical beat to it, thanks to Laurie D. Willis' story on the Blue Thunder band at Livingstone College. The band has a strong tradition and an enthusiastic, second-year director in Anthony Jones, who gave Lakey behind-the-



scenes access to the band's practices, meetings and performances.

Autumn means it's time for Historic Salisbury Foundation's OctoberTour, and one of the sites on the tour is an example of preservation in progress. Livingstone College and the foundation have formed a partnership to save several West Monroe Street houses. Elizabeth Cook and Lakey introduce us to the first stabilization project, whose original owner had roots in the temperance movement.

Cook and Lakey also teamed up in another home feature — a visit to the beautifully remodeled kitchen of Clay and Martha Smith. You'll be envious. Foods that eventually wind up in your kitchen could come from the Two Pigs Farm of siblings Yorke and Chase Reynolds. In her visit to the farm, Deirdre Parker Smith shows us how Yorke and Chase take their goal of living off the land seriously.

The recent Summer Olympics made us think of swimming, so it's appropriate to catch up with the Rowan Aquatic Club at the Hurley Family YMCA. For three decades, the club has played a monster role in competitive swimming for both young and old.

First Calvary Baptist Church is celebrating its 150th year — a good time to look back at the church's rich history. It began as Dixonville Baptist Church right after the Civil War.

I think you'll enjoy photographer Wayne Hinshaw's story about a bird named "Tweet" and the woman who saved him. Because an important election is looming, Catawba College political guru Dr. Michael Bitzer shares insights on just how divided things are.

Rick Eldridge, the only executive director Ruffy-Holmes Senior Center has ever had, is this issue's Rowan Original. Rick plans to retire in 2017, but promises he won't be put out to pasture. As you can see, everything comes back to horses. S

Mark Wineka,
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

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A little magical realism as the nights grow longer

For fall, let's slip into more magical realism with authors known for their style and ability to tackle real and not-so-real subjects.

"The Wonder: A Novel," by Emma Donoghue, is about an English nurse called to watch over 11-year-old Anna O'Donnell, whose parents claim she has not eaten in four months, a frequent claim in the Ireland of that era.

Nurse Lib Wright advocates the scientific principles of Florence Nightingale and disdains the Irish superstitions and claims of miracles. Yet she and Anna bond, and Lib discovers the child is ill.

Irish Times writer William Byrne blames Lib's native England for the devastating potato famine and decries how repression has made the Irish a backward people. Neither the child's parents, nor the committee investigating the claims will listen to Lib as she desperately tries to tell them how sick Anna is.

Throw in a romance between the no-nonsense nurse and the journalist and a tentative happy ending, and Donoghue's skills with historical fiction are again on full display. The book has been called a psychological thriller, pitting all the seductions of fundamentalism against sense and love.

Donoghue is the author of the bestselling novel "Room."

Alice Hoffman's new novel, "Faithful," is "full of people — flawed, scarred, scared — discovering how to punish themselves less and connect with others more," says Kirkus

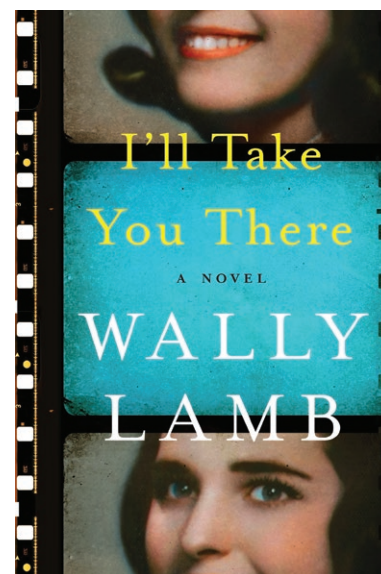
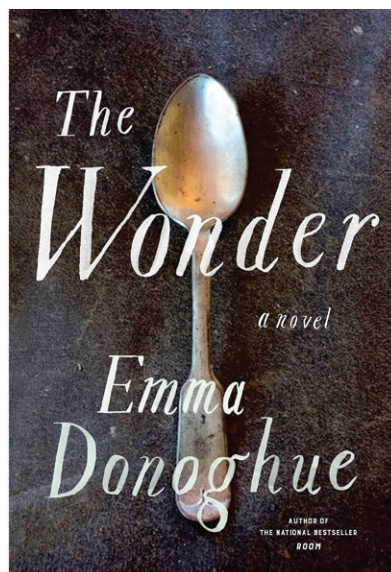
Reviews.

Hoffman writes of two friends, Shelby and Helene, who are in a horrific car accident that has left Helene permanently damaged. She's beset by pilgrims who believe touching her hand can cure them.

Shelby suffers from survivor's guilt and withdraws to her parents' basement, shaves her head, skips college and starts cutting herself. But Hoffman creates quirky characters who can bring Shelby back to functionality, including a man who sends her hand-drawn postcards with get-well messages and riddles.

In a touching turn, Shelby's mother gently guides her daughter back so that by the time Hoffman's external intervention arrives, Shelby is well along the path to forgiving herself and putting tragedy into perspective. Her character is endearing and familiar to anyone who survived the teen years and to mothers with daughters.

For an entirely new experience, try Wally Lamb's "I'll Take You There," which will be released first as an app for iPad and iPhone



by Metabook, complete with a full cast audio version, music, video and images. Two days later, it will be released on paper, with the other versions also available separately.

Lamb writes of film professor Felix Funicello and the women who influenced his life. It starts when Felix meets the ghost of Lois Weber, former actress, producer and director from the silent film era. She becomes a guiding spirit to Felix, inviting him to revisit scenes from the past, as they are projected onto a movie screen. The book spans generations of Felix's life, and reveals the power of family, the resilience of love, and the enduring magic of movies.

The other women impacting Felix's life are his daughter Aliza, a Gen Y writer; Felix's sister, Frances, with whom he had a difficult relationship; and Verna, a contestant in a beauty pageant in the 1950s. [S](#)

Deirdre Parker Smith is book editor of the Salisbury Post and Salisbury the Magazine.

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Fallen leaves from the maple trees litter the ground in the park across from Rowan Museum's 1819 Utzman-Chambers House on South Jackson Street in Salisbury. The fall of the year is a popular time for photographers of any skill level to practice capturing that perfect fall image. This image from 2014 is actually three different exposures merged together to render detail in the darker areas as well as the bright areas. Photographers refer to this process as HDR (high-dynamic-range).

Young at heart

Rick Eldridge always keeps the senior center moving forward. / *By* MARK WINEKA

Rick Eldridge is in a final countdown — his last year as executive director of the nationally accredited and highly acclaimed Rufty-Holmes Senior Center in Salisbury.

This is news, because Eldridge has been the center's only director since its opening almost 30 years ago. He has stayed in the job long enough to become a senior citizen himself.

"I started here at age 34 and will be 64 when I leave next June," Eldridge says. "It's the only place where anybody still calls me 'young man.' I've certainly had a great opportunity to be around great people who know how to cherish each other and life itself."

Eldridge says serving as director at Rufty-Holmes has helped him in thinking about retirement for a long time.

"I'm not sure how much I might come back (to the center) — we'll see," he says. "I hope to be involved with new and different things in retirement."

Before heading the senior center at its birth in 1987, Eldridge served as assistant superintendent for program services at Piedmont Correctional Center from 1982-87. He had four other positions with the N.C. Division of Prisons in the seven years prior to that.

Eldridge has an affection for Labrador retrievers, the outdoors and history. His family has a cabin in Davidson County, and he helped in the restoration of the Henderson Law Office in Salisbury in the mid 1980s, while serving as chairman of the Rowan County Historic Properties Commission.

At First United Methodist Church, he has chaired the administrative board and the staff-parish relations committee.

A member of the Salisbury Kiwanis Club since 1976, Eldridge has been president, secretary, treasurer and communications director for the club. He was charter president of Rowan Information & Referral and a past chairman and member of the Rowan County Personnel Commission from 1999-2011.

Eldridge, the voice of "Senior Moments" on WSAT AM, was president of the N.C. Association of Aging from 2007-2009 and a N.C. delegate to the 2005 White House Conference on Aging. He is a former delegate and current Accreditation Board member of the National Institute of Senior Centers.



Rick Eldridge, executive director of Rufty Holmes Senior Center.

— *Photo by* Jon C. Lakey.

Born in Guilford County, Eldridge graduated in 1971 from Ledford High School and is a 1975 graduate in behavioral science and human relations from High Point University. He and his wife, Susan, have two grown sons: Stephen, a West Point graduate and Army Bronze Star veteran with a master's degree from Carnegie-Mellon University, and Thomas, a mechanical engineering graduate of N.C. State University who is now a lead engineer for Altec Industries in Osceola, Iowa.

Long before Rick Eldridge heads off for retirement next year, Salisbury the Magazine caught up with this Rowan Original:



How difficult was it for you to make a transition from the Department of Corrections to something that had to be quite different with the senior center?

It was very easy for me, as my role with the prison was to manage programs and services for inmates. With the senior center, the clientele is vastly different, but the work has been similar. It certainly has been a much more positive environment — and more rewarding. Everyone is more appreciative of your efforts, and you don't have to worry about security and safety issues in the same way.

Working in a nonprofit also allows you more freedom to be creative and innovative. I still have a great deal of respect and appreciation for those who work in our prisons. They don't receive the same recognition and appreciation that law enforcement personnel receive, but they have difficult and dangerous public safety jobs, too.

How has Rufty-Holmes Senior Center been able to succeed as it has? What has kept its participation so high through the years?

From the beginning, with the community capital campaign to build the center, many people have been involved in supporting our growth and success. These include our benefactor families, board members, volunteers, participants, staff, local government leaders and business and community partners.

By being a nonprofit, we have been able to benefit from government assistance as well as private support. And our program philosophy of getting participants involved in developing and carrying out many activities provides diversity and keeps things happening, while allowing staff more time to improve operations. We greatly benefit from the many gifts that these folks bring to the organization.

How is the senior center better today than it was when you first started? What are you proudest of?

The building has been enlarged three times, and remodeled even more, doubling the size and resources we have to offer. We became the first senior center in the state to be nationally accredited. (We) are now going through our fourth cycle of that process that has brought about strategic focus and planning, as well as operating under professional standards.

And I've always placed a high value on having Rufty-Holmes be the type of organization the Ruftys and Hurleys can take pride in having their name associated with. The fact that so many other senior centers have sought to learn from our best practices over the years also speaks highly of our reputation for quality.

What's something people probably don't know about you?

My mother died when I was only 5½, and I attended four different elementary schools during grades 1-5 — but I still turned out OK.

Who do you consider one of your mentors and why?

I have many. Certainly my parents provided me with a good Christian foundation. My father taught me that having an honest reputation would be of more value than any material possession I might own. My stepmother taught me to do it right the first time.

Jimmy Hurley inspired me to more fully understand the "joy of giving," and that you don't have to be wealthy to give monetarily to worthy causes, and should. Larry Ford is fond of saying he "raised me from a young pup," and he has always been a positive influence and good source of great advice about many things. Harold Kenerly encouraged me to share my point of view, even if it made some people uncomfortable.

Wiley Lash helped me to understand and appreciate how minorities view issues from a different perspective than mine. Ernest Cress (Rodney Cress' father) taught me humility and the value of common sense and good judgment.

Five words you would use to describe Rowan County:

How about five statements? It's been my hometown for over 40 years. It's the birthplace of our sons. It's been the right size for us. It combines my appreciation for history with that genteel Southern culture. People here are both eccentric and endearing.

What's your pet peeve?

People who talk a lot but don't accomplish anything. I also have a low tolerance for incompetency and bureaucratic red tape.


Name three of your all-time favorite books:

The last book I read completely was probably your book about the Hurleys ("A Family Affair"), or Tom Brokaw's "The Greatest Generation." It's very rare that I read fiction. I don't have the patience to sit still long enough to finish most books. I would rather read periodicals about current events, or research a topic relevant to one of my interests. I think I have read the Salisbury Post every day since I moved here in 1975.

What two foods are always in your fridge or pantry?

Milk and coffee for me, green tea for my wife and peanut butter for the dogs' treats.

What's the best advice you could give a young person today?

Live modestly, so you don't have large debt, can own property, and save for the future. Keep a dog, preferably a Labrador retriever. Listen to your elders and spiritual leaders. Be generous with others. Keep moving forward. As Will Rogers said: "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there." 

Blue Thunder

Livingstone's marching band strives for bold sound, big numbers.

Written by LAURIE D. WILLIS | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY



It's hard to overstate the importance of marching bands at historically black colleges and universities, but suffice it to say they assume a life of their own.

For many, the draw to HBCUs on Saturday afternoons during football season are not necessarily the games, but instead the marching bands playing hits from artists like Earth, Wind & Fire, Michael Jackson, Stevie Wonder, Beyonce and Jay Z. And it isn't uncommon for alumni at different schools to banter all season long about whose band is best.

At some HBCUs, marching bands help boost enrollment and students' reputations. For example, even the nerdiest kid

on campus can become instantly cool by joining the marching band. Likewise, the popularity of the drumline or the student possessing the coveted drum major role often rivals that of the starting quarterback.

Majority institutions take pride in their marching bands — and rightfully so. But there's just not much that compares to the significance of HBCU marching bands.

"They're calling cards for colleges," says Anthony Jones, director of The Livingstone College Blue Thunder Marching Band. "There's no other entity that has as much exposure as the marching band. Some colleges and universities are known for their bands, like Florida A&M University in Tallahassee, Florida, and North Carolina A&T State University in Greensboro. My goal is to ensure that Livingstone's band is eventually known nationwide as well."

Jones, in his second season at Livingstone, stresses to his band members that their primary goal is to graduate. He also emphasizes the importance of "looking the part, dressing the part, showing discipline and producing a sound that combines gospel, R&B, jazz and classical."





He's been a band director for 29 years and came to Livingstone from Harding University High School in Charlotte, where under his direction the band performed during President Barack Obama's first inauguration parade in 2008.

Jones is a native of Orangeburg, S.C., but grew up two hours away in Spartanburg. Years ago, his father, Clarence Jones, was band director at Spartanburg High School and also assistant band director at South Carolina State University, an HBCU in Orangeburg.

Just as coaches know their job security depends on having winning, if not championship, seasons, Jones knows keeping his job means assembling a band that rocks the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association and beyond.

Above: Drum Major Jalen Robinson struts across the stage during the freshman pep rally while the band plays in Varick Auditorium.

Right: Senior trombone player Tonaka Phillips adjusts the tuning on his instrument.



An energetic man who oozes a passion for his job, Jones works diligently to make Livingstone's band the pride of the CIAA. In April, he invited high school students from throughout the country to become Blue Bears for a day. Of the nearly 70 who attended Thunderfest, about 12 are now band members.

Jones realizes there's much more work ahead, and first on his agenda is increasing the band's size. FAMU's renowned band has more than 400 members; A&T's has more than 200. By contrast, Livingstone has 80, a number Jones hopes to increase to 100 this year and significantly higher than that next year.

At an Aug. 15 pep rally for incoming freshmen inside Varick Auditorium, as the horns blew and the drums pulsed, Jones grabbed a microphone and tried to entice students to join the band by offering scholarships. Several expressed an interest in joining after the rally.

Jones says he's grateful for the backing he has received from his supervisor, Dr. DaVaughn L. Miller, chairman of the music and theater department, and from Livingstone College President Dr. Jimmy R. Jenkins Sr.

"I've met some challenges and there are some growing pains, but eventually we'll get it down to a science," Jones says. "I've had so much support from President Jenkins with scholarship dollars to attract more students to the band, and Dr. Miller has been very helpful in getting me to recognize and analyze college situations that I wasn't used to given my high school background. He's been a great mentor, and he has my best interests at heart."

The Bears' season opener was Sept. 3 against Benedict College in Columbia, S.C., and their home opener was Sept. 10 against Edward Waters College. When the band's not practicing or performing, Jones busies himself with recruitment.

He also relies on students like Achauntae Watts, a senior piccolo and flute player from Lynchburg, Va., and Tony Holte, a sophomore trombone player who grew up in Rocky Mount, but lives in Knoxville, Tenn., to



Above: Michael Culp, freshman tuba player, stands at rest during a performance. **Below:** Percussion Instructor Keon Galloway uses a lighter to remove the indentation in a drum head.



encourage their classmates to join.

"I'm really proud to be part of The Blue Thunder Marching Band," says Watts. "I have an indescribable feeling at the beginning of each game, and once we take the field I get an adrenaline rush and feel like I'm in my own world. At the same time, I know I'm out there

to join my colleagues in putting on a dynamic show for Livingstone's alumni and fans."

Holte said he grew up watching A&T's and FAMU's bands perform.

"I saw the leadership they demonstrated, the discipline they had and the confidence they exuded and wanted to be part of some-




Above: Livingstone College Director of Bands Anthony Jones critiques the band's performance during a meeting in the music room. Below: The drumline on the front lawn of Livingstone College.

thing like that one day," Holte said. "I definitely feel like I've achieved that by being a member of The Blue Thunder Marching Band. In fact, being in the band gave me the courage to run for Sophomore Class secretary."

Holte's run for office was successful, and now he's hoping Jones will be successful at increasing the band's numbers.

Needless to say, Jones wants that more than anybody.

"We aim to produce a bold sound that matches the excellence demonstrated by our student-athletes on the playing field," Jones says. "I'm confident the band will continue coming along. All I need are the tools and the people. If you give me that, I'll make it work." 

Laurie D. Willis is assistant director of public relations for Livingstone College and also is a freelance writer and owner of Laurie's Write Touch.





N:

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Yorke Reynolds gives some of the many alpacas a carrot treat at the Two Pigs Farm. Yorke and her brother Chase operate a community supported agriculture farm near Cleveland. The farm raises a variety of animals, such as ducks, chickens, guineas, pigs and cattle. The produce on the farm is grown organically.



Horn of PLENTY

There's a lot more to Two Pigs Farm than the porkers.

Written by DEIRDRE PARKER SMITH

Photography by JON C. LAKEY

The best way to describe what Yorke and Chase Reynolds have at Two Pigs Farm is plenty. They have 80 acres. They have eight cows, 32 alpacas, 150 pigs (and counting — piglets are running around under the trees), sheep, a few guinea fowl, hundreds of chickens and 10 cats.

That's a rough estimate, and doesn't mention the ducks, the visiting goats or whatever else hangs out on the farm that seems on the west end of nowhere. Part of the farm is in Rowan County, part is in Iredell County.

Oh, they have a swamp, an apple orchard, a peach orchard, a field of hibiscus, potatoes, some greens and a whole lot of ideas, too.

"Plans?" Chase responds when you ask what's in the future. "Well, not A plan, but things we'd like to do."

Chase would like to open a true farm-to-fork restaurant. Dinner would be provided by what's on the farm — in season, what meat is fresh. Chase likes the idea of sustainable living, and he's doing everything he can to make it work on the farm.



Above: A single goat jumps on a trash can to reach the top branches of a plant growing in a field. Right: A Jersey cow on the farm.

When the apples are done, the pigs will hang out in the orchard, eat what's on the ground and clean up the weeds. If they'd actually had peaches this year, the sheep would have loved them.

Three-big-eyed Jerseys stare at visitors as if to say, "What have you done for me lately?" They hang out with two kinds of Angus and one Oreo cow — the belted Galloway.

The sheep, too, are very inquisitive. They come out of their pasture looking for food, then turn around en masse and return, disappointed.

The pigs stare with their little piggy eyes, snorting and grunting, snuffling and puffing, except for Wilma, who likes to have her belly rubbed. Scratch her back and she'll pick up two feet and plop on the ground for a rub. She was bottle fed.

A goat follows us on the tour — until the alpacas try to run him off.

The guineas are alarmed and make a huge racket. The ducks are quacking and chattering, traveling in a little group, stopping

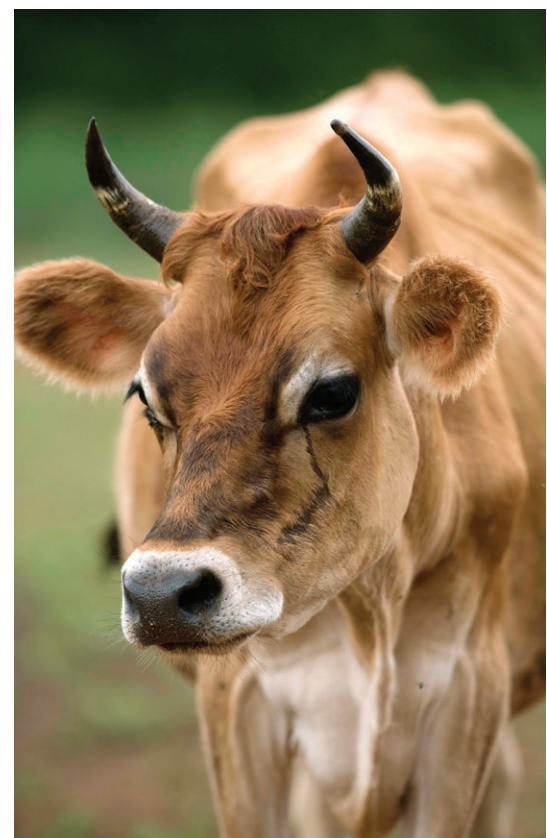
by baby pools along the way to have some water.

It's like you walked into a Disney movie.

The first animals the brother and sister bought were a herd of alpacas someone wanted to get rid of. "I forced Yorke to stay in a tent with a gun with the alpacas at first," Chase says. Yorke laughs. "Yeah, that was fun."

They both started on different paths, and Yorke is branching out again. Chase was a mechanical engineering major, right in time for a recession, which meant no job in his field. York was a chemical engineering major. "Most of the classes before me had a 90 percent placement. Mine was like 40."

Chase did some other things involving hard physical labor, and then they thought, hey, we've got a farm, let's do something





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with that.

They've never looked back. Yorke is studying to be an osteopath, a doctor who focuses on total body health and works on the muscles and bones.

She's at Edward Via College of Osteopathic Medicine-Carolinas Campus in Spartanburg and doing a rotation at a hospital in Florence, S.C., during the week. She comes back to Salisbury every weekend to work on the farm and go to the Salisbury Farmers Market. Chase goes to the Davidson Market.

It's been a learn-as-you-grow operation.

Chase says they've done lots of research on what to offer and Yorke says a lot of trial and error went into that.

At some point, Yorke says, they decide, "OK, we've made all the mistakes we're going to make for this year."

Almost everything had a mistake involved, Chase says, like the spacing of the trees in the orchard, where the trees should have been a

little farther part to allow for permaculture, allowing other things to grow along with the trees. It's the best use of the landscape. "We try to apply scientific methods," he says.

When they got chickens, they had never killed one before. Chase believes if you eat chicken, you should have to kill one, just so you know what's involved. Their one luxury with the chickens is a mechanical plucker. "I said I ain't going to do that all the time," Yorke laughs. "It takes forever."

They added the pigs just two years ago. The name of the farm doesn't refer to the pork. Rather, it's an old joke between them.

Chase, without a job, took a year to hike the Appalachian Trail. It got to be a joke that the only time he called was when he was eating. "Pig," Yorke would say. They would photograph and text each other what they were eating, so ... Two Pigs.

Their pig collection started out as mostly Berkshire pigs, a heritage breed regaining

popularity. Then they got some Old Spot and Tamworth pigs, which have more fat-marbled meat. They've cross-bred some of them to get a good meat flavor.

"We want to split into special pigs and more normal pigs, for different things," Chase says.

Just then, a cat jumps up on a plastic container. "We have some feral cats, too. We catch them, have them spayed or neutered and get their shots" and then let them go. A group hangs around Chase and Yorke, looking for attention.

With all those animals, the threat of predators seems pretty serious. But the alpacas somehow have scared them away.

"Raccoons are our biggest threat," Chase says.

There are two reasons they try to do everything at the farm. "Animals and plants have to co-exist," Chase says. "This way we don't need fertilizer or pesticides."

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The pigs are pasture-raised on the farm and are rotated to other pastures to add nutrients to the soil with their droppings.

In summer, their busiest time, they process three pigs a week and their numerous chickens produce 35-40 dozen eggs a day. Their mother, Mikell Reynolds, is in charge of the chickens.

Chase, leading the tour of the farm says, "You can't tell how much we've done, but it's a lot, clearing the land, planting, etc."

He makes sure that the animals eat non-GMO (genetically modified organisms) food. They are operating as an organic farm but haven't gotten their official designation yet.

They grow organic potatoes with seed that costs five times more than normal. "Potatoes absorb everything," Chase said. So he wants to keep them clean. The variety they grow has more omega 3s than many potatoes.

He can finish the pigs on potatoes. "The early Americans took their pigs to the mountains to eat chestnuts," so it's along those lines.

The rage may be grass-fed beef, but you can't do that with pigs. They have to have grain. Chickens are the same way. They can eat grass, but they need grain.

While summer is their busiest time, even January is "no longer slow," Chase says.

They are always processing meat, using Cruse Meat Processing in Concord to butcher and package the meat. They do the poultry on the farm. Yorke likes to experiment with chicken recipes — this summer she did a garlic chicken sausage that was very good.

Their bestsellers are chicken breasts, pork chops and familiar cuts. When they run out of the standards, they can suggest something different to customers, who usually try the item and like it. Yorke sometimes looks at people who can't decide and encourages them to try something new.

The pigs used to get the whey from Fading D Farms' cheesemaking, but now there are too many of them. They do drink some of the water buffalo milk, though.

In the practice of permaculture, Chase moves the animals around to benefit the farm. Pig droppings have a lot of phosphorous, which is good for the potatoes.

The pigs generally weigh between 250 and 300 pounds. "That gives



Chase Reynolds walks along a road on the farm after checking on the animals.

you 225 to 250 pounds of meat,” Chase says. A pig has to weigh over 100 pounds to have good fat marbling, which makes the meat juicy and tender.

They are growing hibiscus with seed from Trinidad, since they learned about a man raising meat chickens on hibiscus. Evelyn Medina of Mean Mug also wants the hibiscus to make tea, and Andy Maben of New Sarum Brewery wants to make beer with it.

Six beehives help ensure the plants are all pollinated — more of that permaculture working out.

They have a saw mill, too, which Chase has used to help his friend Aaron Goss, who is building Carolina Malt House nearby to provide supplies for area craft breweries.

They rely on Sam Murphy from New Zealand to shear the alpacas. They send the fiber to the New England Alpaca Fiber Pool, a place that manufactures exclusively U.S. products.

Yorke says alpaca wool is better than sheep’s wool. “It wicks away moisture, it’s five times warmer than other wool, it’s a hollow fiber, so it’s light. It has no barbs, which sheep wool has and what makes people itch, and no lanolin, which some people are also allergic to. ... You can also make lighter weight garments because it’s so warm.”

Plus, Yorke says, “Alpacas are really sweet. That’s why I liked them in the first place.” 



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letting in the LIGHT

New kitchen brings historic house up to date.

Written by ELIZABETH COOK | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY



Left: Hidden fixtures light the countertops. Middle: Drawer pulls of polished nickel add a classic detail. Right: The microwave oven is tucked in the island. Opposite: A once-dark kitchen brightened up with new cabinets, Salinas white granite countertops and white oak flooring.



Clay and Martha Smith recently had the kitchen in their Victorian-era house completely remodeled. Below: Pressed-tin ceiling tiles, the only holdover from an earlier renovation, came from the Yadkin Hotel.

Clay and Martha Smith finished a kitchen makeover in their Salisbury home in June, and now Clay is threatening to get a barstool that reclines. “I want to hang out in the kitchen all the time,” he says.

Looking around the fresh space, it’s easy to understand why.

First, some background: Martha was the project’s instigator. The Smiths have lived in their Victorian-era South Fulton Street home for 35 years. The cabinets they installed when they restored the home were crafted from her grandfather’s walnut trees.

As time went by, though, the room seemed to close in. The dark brown cabinets became — well, too dark.

“Just one day it hit me,” Martha says. It was time for a change.

The Smiths consulted an architect and a draftsman as they explored ways to open up and brighten the small room. Load-bearing walls seemed to hem it in. Finally, Clay and a contractor figured out how to make it work — a doorway moved here, a beam installed there — and the puzzle was solved.



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AT HOME / *smiths' new kitchen*

The result in this Victorian-era home is a light-filled space with a modern layout and traditional style.

New cabinets were installed and painted nearly white with a light gray wash, a thousand shades lighter than the walnut cabinets. Deep, egg-and-dart molding on the upper cabinets lends an air of elegance.

One glass-front cabinet serves as the focal point of the room. Behind the gothic-style grid, shelves display the Smiths' crystal; their delicate ivory china, decorated with tiny bouquets; as well as a tea set from Japan that Clay's aunt gave them.

Lighting underneath and on top of the upper cabinets illuminates countertops and brightens the room.

In the center sits a large island they once thought the small kitchen could never accommodate. Moving two load-bearing walls created the space they needed. If the kitchen is the heart of the home, activity around the kitchen island is the heartbeat.

Perched on bar stools, the Smiths eat most of their meals here, read the morning paper and keep an eye on the flat-screen TV above the refrigerator.

Salem, one of three cats in the household, likes to watch birds from a stool placed at the side window nearby.

A byproduct of moving the wall was new space for a butler's pantry — a small counter that provides a perfect place to serve lemonade.

In the full pantry just a step away, baskets with chalkboard labels line the shelves. "Before, we just threw stuff in and shut the door," Martha says. Now it's pretty enough to leave the door open.

The island and counters are topped with slabs of Salinas white granite, snowy white stone with gray speckles. Over the island hangs an industrial-style wrought iron light fixture with old-fashioned Edison-style bulbs.

The mosaic tile backsplash in bluish gray has a cracked-glaze effect. The white oak floor



has a gray chemical stain. Once beige, the walls are now Sea Salt, a very light green with a hint of gray.

Yellow accents — a plate here, a pitcher there — lend a splash of color. New plantation shutters filter the sunlight.

Several practical elements have been

worked into the new cabinetry: Lazy Susan shelving in a corner, a knife drawer, pullout shelving, a place to stow trash and recyclables — "all the bells and whistles we've never had," Martha says.

The Smiths take no credit for pulling together all these details. Project manager and



decorator Angie Liles of Statesville was indispensable, Martha says, right down to choosing the color of the tile grout.

They did pick out the new stainless steel appliances, including a pro-style stove with gas burners and — the best part, Clay says — a large oven. Martha does a lot of cooking around the holidays, but Clay fixes dinner most of the time.

That means lots of fish, since Clay likes to go saltwater fishing. A successful outing at Emerald Isle or Morehead City can yield mackerel, mahi-mahi, whiting, puppy drum and more. Martha is a pescetarian — a vegetarian who eats fish — so salad and fish are dinner staples.

The kitchen project came about during a whirlwind year for the Smiths that also included weddings for daughters Allison and Shelley.

“Two weddings and a kitchen in 13 months,” Martha says, “I think that’s pretty good.”

Indeed it is, good enough to take a deep breath and relax — or shop around for a barstool recliner. **S**

Top left: Baskets with chalkboard labels organize the pantry. **Top:** A pull-out spray faucet eases clean up at the sink. **Above:** Every knife has its place in this drawer. **Opposite:** Pans and cooking ingredients like olive oil are easily accessible when Clay prepares to cook on the stove.



Temperance Mary's house

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written by elizabeth cook

photography by jon c. lakey





Top: Steve Cobb replaces the bricks around a basement window. Above: A staircase to the second floor in the front entry way. Left: Upstairs room near an area that had damage from a leaky roof. Opposite: The round porch is one of the most interesting features of a house of angles and shapes.



The weathered house at 624 W. Monroe St. looks out upon the world through Romanesque arches on a circular front porch. The house behind the porch is small — petite, even — topped by a steep, cross-gabled roof whose new tin shingles shimmer in the sun.

Almost like a beacon.

This was the home of Mary Alice Lynch, a shining representative of Livingstone College's early mission. The historically black college was founded in 1882, just 17 years after the end of the Civil War. Like first President J.C. Price, Lynch wanted a better life for her students.

Officially, she was an instructor and librarian. Unofficially, she was much more, according to local historian Reginald Brown.

"She was a moral leader of the Livingstone family during the college's early days," writes Brown, "who, along with

Price, envisioned temperate, ex-chattel slaves, their descendants and free people of color building strong Christian families beyond the influence of alcohol."

Built in 1907 as a home for Miss Lynch and her mother, Maria Lynch, the house will be on Historic Salisbury Foundation's OctoberTour Oct. 8 and 9 as a restoration in progress. It is the first of six houses being stabilized and renovated under a partnership between Historic Salisbury Foundation and Livingstone College.

Other houses may have been grander, but this house



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was as upright and tidy as Miss Lynch. She led Livingstone's Young Women's Christian Temperance Union, reputed to be the most well-organized "colored" union in the South, according to Brown.

Members did more than denounce alcohol. They took box lunches to inmates at the county jail, and carried literature, hymnals and Bibles to the poor house.

Sadly, Miss Lynch died in her quaint house in September 1928, a victim of accidental gas asphyxiation. She was 68, never married, and left no close family.

The house became the residence of Frederick D. White, a Livingstone College dean, and later of John W. Nicholson, chairman of the Price High School science department. The building changed hands several times, landing in the hands of the college in 1997.

Opposite: Doug Black of Historic Salisbury Foundation has been working on the 1907 Lynch-Nicholson House at 624 W. Monroe St. This house was built for Mary Alice Lynch, an instructor and librarian at Livingstone College.

The structure housed students for several years.

Fast forward to 2016. Since February, Doug Black has led a crew of volunteers in reclaiming Miss Lynch's house — now called the Lynch-Nicholson House — from invading vines, unforgiving weather and advancing age.

Throughout the summer, they worked on the windows, removing each window frame, piece by piece, replacing boards damaged by water or termites, priming and caulking and

putting it all back together again.

Steve Cobb, a Cannon School math teacher by trade, measured the diagonal of the last window opening one hot August day. "This is geometry, baby," he said.

Cobb worked his way through college by flipping houses with a friend, and he takes on projects like this when school is out. During the one-week winter term Cannon School holds, he teaches woodworking 101 to show students the practical applications for geometry.

Window work involves a lot of angles.

Another volunteer, Richard Dietrich, "can scrape a window frame to perfection," Black said.

The house is uninhabitable at the moment. Even in this state, though, it has features that will intrigue visitors. An opening in the

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stairwell wall shows where a stained glass window will be replaced. Three small decorative windows — each a yellow diamond shape within a square of fuchsia— adorn the second floor.

Left: Steve Cobb puts a level on a window frame for a basement.

Opposite: An exterior wall in one of the first floor rooms is angled out.

has its original coal-burning fireplace.

All the trim, doors and decorative pieces are being saved where possible.

“Our job is to stabilize,” Black said, “and stabilize means exactly that — stop it

The ground floor holds two big rooms and what was once a kitchen; the second floor has three bedrooms and a bathroom. The “south parlor,” as Black refers to one of the first-floor rooms,

where she’s at — because everything is in the process of falling apart.”

Evidence of this can be seen in a rear corner of the kitchen. Water came in through a leak on the second floor, cascaded down and rotted the wood all the way down one side of the house, leaving a hole. You can stand in the kitchen, look up and see daylight on the second floor.

This house can be livable again, Black said.

“It’s 110 years old and didn’t have the best maintenance, but it is reasonably solid,” he said. “If we didn’t think it was sound, we wouldn’t have restored it.”

The house is considered architecturally important because of its unique design. At its perch near the Livingstone campus, it acts as a gateway to the West End neighborhood.



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“This was Historic Salisbury’s effort to do something for the West End,” Black said. Historic Salisbury provides supplies, with the help of the Robertson Family Foundation. Volunteers do the stabilizing work outside; a contractor will be paid to do the rest.

Once the six Livingstone houses are renovated and successfully marketed, West Monroe Street should perk up, according to Black.

“Will that turn around the West End? No, but it will help. It’s all about helping.”

Perhaps then the house at 624 W. Monroe St. — freshly painted and landscaped, with a new family taking ownership — really will be a beacon, showing the way to neighborhood revitalization. That would be in keeping with the reforming spirit of Mary Alice Lynch.

Left: The basement door has a shingled wooden awning to offer some protection from the rain.

Right: Steve Cobb uses a miter saw to trim a piece of wood.

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Tamera Berkowitz takes the horses out to exercise them in the ring at Finally Farm in Camden, S.C.



Show stoppers

Hard work is the secret behind Salisbury natives Jack and Lisa Towell's championship horse farm.

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY

AMDEN, S.C. — At Finally Farm, Jack Towell never seems to rest. He's on his cellphone laying out weekend logistics for a show, meeting with turf specialists, moving through the barns, mowing the grounds or checking on a workout in the show ring.

Lisa Towell says her husband is a control freak. "Jack really likes to be hands on," she says, understating the obvious.





Above: Jack and Lisa Towell own Finally Farm, a full-service horse farm, in Camden, S.C. Right: A groom brushes a horse in one of the four barns. Below: Jack holds one of many racks of handmade bits that go to every show. Opposite: Jack Towell follows behind his daughter, Liza Boyd, and Like I Said.





Jack is good at understating things, too. He'll tell you the Finally Farm operation is mainly daughter Liza's now, but you get the impression he always will be a head trainer with her and a major sounding board. More than anything, his work ethic — and the many accomplishments built on that foundation — led to his induction this spring into the National Show Hunter Hall of Fame.

"I'm lucky," says Jack, 63. "I do exactly what I want to do."

Jack and Lisa Towell have had an amazing journey from their childhood in Salisbury, N.C., to the establishment of their championship horse farm in Camden, the center of hunt and horse country in South Carolina. They met for the first time while riding horses as kids at the old Hidden Hut Stables off N.C. 150 outside of Salisbury.

After many years of working for others in the horse business and saying things such as, "When we finally have our own farm, we'll do things this way," they founded their first "Finally Farm" in Waxhaw, N.C., in 1982, then

later reestablished it in Camden in 1989.

Horses naturally became a family passion. All three of the Towells' children and son-in-law Blake Boyd are in the horse business.

Liza Towell Boyd, 37, and Hardin Towell, 28, are champion riders and first-class trainers. Ned Towell, 34, does printing for horse shows and sells promotional products to them, though other businesses buy his wares, too. Blake Boyd sells equine insurance for The EMO Agency, which is made up of horse people who ride, compete and fox hunt.

Jack Towell has been wearing an EMO ball cap for 30 years, making it his trademark look.

Finally Farm boards, trains, sells and shows horses. The farm employs two riders and five grooms, but shows often require some additional hands. The 17-acre farm makes for a picturesque scene. A parade of beech trees lead to the main barn. The cupolas on top of the barns light up at night, and the Towells' handsome country home is close enough to where they can hear what the horses are doing at all times.

Owners from all over the country — some of them rich and famous — do business with Finally Farm and send horses here to board and train. Over three decades, Finally Farm riders and horses have won Horse of the Year titles, Grand Prix events and Hunter Championships to establish the farm as one of the top hunter/jumper stables in the Southeast.

Jack Towell has trained more than 75 champions and reserve champions at the indoor shows — basically, the year-end finals. He has won in every division.

Finally Farm and Jack Towell have had the privilege of training two great hunters: Monday Morning and Brunello, both ridden by Liza. "That's like a racehorse trainer having two Triple Crown winners," Lisa Towell explains.

Just this year, Brunello was chosen as a Breyer Horse model, a distinction reserved for only the most accomplished champions. "He's a rock star," Lisa says. "We just hang out with him."

Brunello and Liza Boyd are a legendary pair

in show hunter circles.

Liza rode Brunello to three consecutive USHJA International Hunter Derby championships from 2013-2015. They missed taking the 2012 title by a whisker, a quarter of a point.

Before she turned professional in high school, Liza also was a champion junior rider, being named Overall World Champion Hunter Rider three times and capturing the Best Child Rider award at the Washington International Horse Show a record four times. Monday Morning won enough money in one class, The Palm Beach Spectacular, to pay for Liza's first year at the College of Charleston in 1997.

Monday Morning, who has been the subject of books, was sold to a producer of a network morning show and is still living today at more than 30 years old.



Lisa and Jack Towell with their daughter, Liza, and the horse Like I Said.

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Above: One of the horses in a stall reacts to seeing a barn employee with feed. Above right: Lisa Towell holds a photograph of her and Jack cutting cake on their wedding day. Right: The three-time U.S Hunter Jumper Association International Champion team of Liza Towell Boyd and Brunello clear another jump.



Photo courtesy of Finally Farm

Hardin Towell also is building a reputation as a top rider. Based in Wellington, Fla., he works as the private trainer for Bill Gates' daughter, Jennifer, and there are certain horses in the stable that only he rides. As a rider, he is ranked in the top 10 in the country — the riders ahead of him competed in the recent Olympics, Lisa says. He also ranks 36th in the world in FEI show jumping standings, competing internationally and showing in two World Cup Finals. The Towells often have to watch him online, competing in places such as Sweden, Paris and Shanghai.

Much of the competitive fire of the children comes from their father.

The last thing Jack likes to say to Liza before she takes off on another pressure-packed ride is a line from actor Kevin Costner's "Robin Hood" movie: "Make the shot when it counts."

Boyd wears those words on a necklace, and they have served her well.

"Lisa has an incredible eye" for placing her horse at the right distance from a jump, Lisa says, so it makes every jump look the same. She believes her daughter also has been a significant role model for young riders.

"A defeat only made her better, it didn't slow her down," Jack Towell adds, describing Liza as having a passive-aggressive nature, "like Gandhi."



Jack Towell attended Wiley Elementary, Knox Junior High and Salisbury High,

graduating in 1971. A daughter of Ed and Lib Taylor, Lisa was a year behind him, attending Frank B. John and Overton elementary schools, Knox Junior High and Salisbury High.

Ned Towell, Jack's dad, taught distributive education at Salisbury High. His mom, Rachel, was a nurse at the VA Medical Center. They were both from Mooresville originally.

Jack's first horse was Preacher Red. Lisa's grandfather, Ernest Hardin, a onetime mayor of Salisbury, bought her a horse named Puzzle. It was those horses they rode as youngsters at the Hidden Hut Stables.

When Hidden Hut Stables closed, Ned Towell decided to rent the property and offer lessons there. He bought books on horsemanship and learned and taught from them. For training purposes, his bible became Gordon Wright's "Learning to Ride, Hunt, and Show." Jack would ride his horse in circles around his father, and Ned Towell would bark out instructions from the passages he was reading.

"The book says do this, the book says do that," Jack says, recalling how he would try to perform the move his father was describing.

Jack says his parents couldn't have been more supportive of his early love for horses.

His father learned enough to teach beginning lessons for new riders, and the stables helped to pay for Jack's riding in shows.

"I learned pretty early about dollars and horses," Jack says.

The day he turned 16, his father tossed him the keys to the truck and told him he had to pay for and get to shows on his own.

Jack was in his father's distributive education program, a curriculum that allowed him as a senior to leave school at lunch and go to work at the stables. Still in high school, Jack formed his own business, Yellow Gate Stables, and leased several local barns through the years. By 17, he was a hunter/jumper trainer. He also attended blacksmith school, and by the time he and Lisa were married, Jack was training and shoeing horses, while also enrolled at Catawba College. He says he majored in business — and getting out of school.

Jack's first attempt at going to Catawba College didn't go well. He lasted about half of a quarter before leaving for Florida and the horse show circuit there. He later landed a trainer's job at Ingleside Stables in Lincoln County — what he considers "a real good break." All of a sudden he was training national champion-caliber horses.

Lisa attended Converse College because the S.C. school allowed the boarding of horses.



Finally Farm's office with some of its stables.

Jack bought her Cracklin' Rosie when she was a sophomore, and the couple would spend weekends together riding in shows. Jack and Lisa married in 1976. An older student by then, Jack had returned to Catawba College and didn't graduate until 1979, the year Lisa was born. Jack was late getting to his botany lab at school that particular day, Lisa remembers.

Lisa taught school at Rockwell Elementary. Jack trained horses, continued blacksmithing,

attended college full-time, and he still made enough money to support them.

"We ended up saving Lisa's paycheck every month," Jack says.

After he graduated from Catawba, Jack was given the chance to run the Abernathy (Chevrolet) barn in Lincolnton, while selling dual-wheel trucks and horse trailers on the side. Though he kept riding through the years, Jack found he was better at training horses and other riders. Training became his

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A photo of Jack and Lisa Towell with their son Hardin Towell at a horse show. Hardin is ranked among the top 10 riders in the country.

real passion and life's work.

The Towells had enough money saved by 1982 to buy an 85-acre farm in Waxhaw, which in those days seemed as though it was “the middle of nowhere,” Lisa says. Their farm offered riding, training, grooming and blacksmithing. Lisa fashioned the logo for Finally Farm they still use today.

The Towells purchased their first house thanks to the proceeds of selling a good horse, Better Than Better.

After she started having children, Lisa gave up riding, and much of her attention and Jack's went to Lisa as she became a champion junior rider. To supplement their income, Jack also started judging horse shows. It really helped his career in the horse business, he says today.

The Towells weren't quite satisfied in Waxhaw. They kept the farm and leased it along with their house. For a time, they headed to Florida, but they eventually moved back to Salisbury and rented the Kern Farm until their current property became available in Camden.

They leased the place for a year before buying it. Middle son Ned used to love to go on fox hunts in Camden, and Finally Farm sits on the edge of the hunt country.

“Camden is such a horse town,” Lisa says, describing how school officials were understanding when the children had to be gone for long periods of time on the horse show circuit. When that happened, the Towells relied on tutors.



Reflecting the kind of restless work ethic he has, Jack told the Practical Horseman magazine earlier this year that his personal record was preparing 21 horses before 8 a.m. — all by himself. No matter what kind of show, Jack likes to win, and that sometimes makes it harder for him to relax, at shows or on the farm.

At least two weekends a month, sometimes more, Finally Farm goes into the travel mode, taking horses and its decades of experience to shows up and down the East Coast. In the winter, the family members are off to Florida for extended periods, and they go to Europe regularly to buy hors-



Jack and Lisa's granddaughter Elle Boyd with her pony Otis.

es. Europeans breed horses to jump. "Now that's all we use," Jack says.


Brunello was German-bred and bought from a breeder in Belgium. "He's not warm and fuzzy," says Liza, a half owner of the gelding. "He's all business." The new horse to watch at Finally Farm seems to be Pony Lane Farm's Like I Said.

Liza says Like I Said has a desire to win like Brunello's. She rode the mare to victory a few months ago at the \$25,000 USHJA International Hunter Derby at Devon (Pa.).

Liza's young daughters, Elle and Adeline, already are showing an interest in horses. Elle, 6, walks into the office for a bottle of water before going back to grooming her ponies, Otis and Petunia.

Lisa and Jack plan to build a new house someday across the road beyond the practice ring. After that happens, Liza and her family can live in the other house near the barns.

"One thing I left out was, Jack and I eloped," Lisa says.

She and Jack married at Ingleside and went to a horse show the same day. Their wonderful journey to Finally Farm was off and running. 

To follow the Towells, their shows and horses, visit the Finally Farm website at towellfinallyfarm.com.



Tamara Berkowitz exercises 'Ballerina' in the ring.

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Mother of invention

'Tweet' reaps the reward of Shirley Ramsey's love.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY WAYNE HINSHAW

Editor's note: *Many of us, at least once in our lives, have tried to rescue an orphan of nature and nourish it to maturity. Here is one woman's story, only this one is well documented with photographs.*

Standing in her back yard on Welder Street in East Spencer, Shirley Ramsey said, "It's what I figured he was going to do. I think he will come back when he gets hungry, but he knows how to find his own food."

Pausing and looking high in the top of a giant oak tree, a neighbor's yard away, Shirley continued, "I'll come out every hour or so and call 'Tweet,' to see if he will come back."

Looking sad, but feeling confident that she had done a good job of raising Tweet, she walked back into the house.

Let me explain. I have just told you the end of the story, and now I need to explain how we arrived here after a few months of letting things play out.

Two months before this, Shirley was working at her computer when her little Chihuahua, Mickey, came into the room and dropped her a surprise. She had left the door open for Mickey and he made the best of the opportunity to go outside and bring back a prize.

Mickey dropped a naked baby bird on Shirley's bean bag chair. That little pink bird with no feathers was hollering while Mickey sat and stared at him. "I grabbed him (the bird) up and started looking for something to put him in," Shirley said.



Above: Feeding baby Tweet was a big issue. Shirley Ramsey fed him mushy cat and turtle food, crickets and noodles. Opposite: Tweet 'talks' to Shirley Ramsey, asking to be fed.



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“I had a baby catbird three years ago. I found him in the middle of the road on Correll Street. When I picked him up, he was pink, naked and looked like a prehistoric rat.”

This new baby bird couldn't stand up and his legs wobbled, but he was making a fuss for food.

Shirley told me about the bird in late May at her work at Christo's Restaurant when he already was eight days old and growing feathers.

It is common for a bird or animal in nature to come to recognize a person as being his parent, as they come to depend on the person for food. It is called imprinting.

“The bird wanted food every 15 minutes at first,” Shirley told me. “When I feed him at 11 p.m., he starts hollering again about 6 a.m. At first, I fed him with little tweezers so I could push the food down his throat, but now I use my fingers.”

When asked if “Bird” was a nice song bird, Shirley said, “He hasn't had his



Above: The 10-day-old bird has just grown feathers but still has the fuzz on top of his head. Left: On Tweet's final day before his release, he sat on Shirley Ramsey's head in her living room.

singing lessons yet. He sounds horrible hollering.”


Shirley eventually decided that “Bird” was not a good name for the recent addi-



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tion to her household, so she chose to call him "Tweet."

Tweet was fed a combination of reptile food (from Shirley's pet turtle) and cat food (from her cat). She added in some raw chicken liver and even tried some boiled eggs. She soaked the pellet foods in water to "make it mushy" and water so Tweet could swallow it.

As Tweet grew, Shirley decided he needed to learn to scratch in the dirt and look for his own food. She remembered when she raised chickens, the mother hens would scratch in the dirt and show the chicks how it was done.

Shirley had her 30-year-old son sleep on the sofa so he could listen for Tweet's cry for food when she was away. Laughing, Shirley said, "My son said that bird hollers like he is on steroids."


Eating at Christo's a few times a week, I would always ask Shirley, "How's the bird doing?"

Her response: "That bird is driving me crazy. He is always squawking, wanting me to feed him. Oh, he's flying really good now, but he won't eat unless I put the food in his mouth."

"I fixed up a room for him. I took the mattress off the bed and put a plastic air mattress on the bed that I could clean and took down the curtains. He can get in and out of his cage whenever he wants. It is a post bed, so he will fly up and sit on top of the railing."



Shirley lifts baby Tweet up and down, trying to strengthen his wings so he could fly.



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Above: Ten-week-old Tweet eats a blueberry. **Right:** Shirley lifts her dog Mickey up to see the baby bird in his aquarium. Mickey rescued the newborn bird. **Below right:** Shirley sits Tweet down and he runs to her.



When Shirley opened the door to Tweet's room, he would fly over and get on the floor with his wings spread out, running toward her. He would squawk, squawk, squawk until he was fed, Shirley said.

Demonstrating with her arms spread wide and bending at the waist up and down, Shirley darted across the restaurant screeching like the bird. When she stopped, she was laughing as hysterically as I.

"He thinks he is supposed to sit on my shoulder as I walk around the house," Shirley complained. "I can't get any work done with that bird always wanting to sit on my shoulder."

Shirley continued her story: "I put food in there with him, but he won't even try to eat on his own. He just throws his head back and opens his mouth and waits for me to put the food in. He will eat whatever I put in, but he will not eat on his own."

"I fed him some crickets. I stuck a cricket in his mouth, and he ate it. When I put some live crickets in the cage so he could eat on his own, he started squawking. He was scared to death of the crickets and would run from them. I had to get them out of the cage."



“I would love to let him go free outside, but I don’t think he knows how to get his food and eat yet. I’m afraid if I released him he would fly up in the top of a tree, throw his mouth open and start squawking for me to feed him. I can’t climb up in a tree to feed him.”


Shirley did some research and discovered that some birds have to be fed by the mother bird for up to 10 weeks. They will fly around in the trees, but the mother will still take food to them and put it in their mouths.

We never did decide what type of bird Tweet might be. First, we thought he was in the sparrow family, but then he developed features like a brown thrasher with a specked breast and a long slender beak, but he was still too young to be entirely brown in color.

Now, back to the beginning of this story. After about 10 weeks, the day arrived when Shirley was sure Tweet could fly away and get his own food. She fed him a good breakfast of noodles, crickets and turtle food, said her goodbyes and walked him to the yard.

When he was released, Tweet first turned and sat on her chest, looking her in the eyes, then he flew skyward and away.

Shirley felt like any good mother does, when her baby flies the coop for the first time. A feeling of being happy to know you have done your best to prepare Tweet, yet sad for him to depart.

I do hope that he will come back and visit and maybe bring his family. 

Wayne Hinshaw is the retired chief photographer of the Salisbury Post.



Outside for the first time and ready to be released, Tweet sat and looked into Shirley’s eyes for a few seconds then flew high and away.

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In the swim

Rowan Aquatic Club builds fun, character into competition.

Written by MARK WINEKA | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY

Phyllis Steimel and daughter Mary Jo Agner are in the pool ready for practice at the Hurley Family YMCA at 5:45 a.m., before most of us are even reaching for the “snooze” button on our alarm clocks.

Thanks to the Rowan Aquatic Club, which Steimel founded in 1983, this is their routine three days a week. The mother and daughter practice with other RAC-Y swimmers before Mary Jo heads off to work. On some weekends, they also travel together to swim at meets for Masters swimmers.

Phyllis is 78, and Mary Jo has grown children, so they are proof of something you always hear from swimming enthusiasts — it’s a lifetime sport.

“My mom used to tell me that when I was 10 years old,” Mary Jo says.

In September 1982, when Phyllis Steimel’s surgeon husband retired after 22 years with the Navy, they moved from Camp Lejeune to Salisbury. Phyllis quickly realized there was no swimming club and no competitive swimming here at all — for her or Mary Jo.

None of the Rowan County high schools had a swim team. At Salisbury High, Mary Jo was even told swimming was not a sport. Having coached a youth swim club at Camp Lejeune for three years, Steimel approached Linda Rusher Bost about creating a competitive swimming program at the old Salisbury YMCA on North Fulton Street. By January 1983, Steimel had established the Rowan Aquatic Club.

About 20 to 25 kids started in the program, and while wins in the earliest years were few and far between, the RAC-Y swimmers soon started securing both individual medals and team championships.

Mary Jo Agner, left, and her mother, Phyllis Steimel, pose for a portrait on the splash pad at the Hurley YMCA.



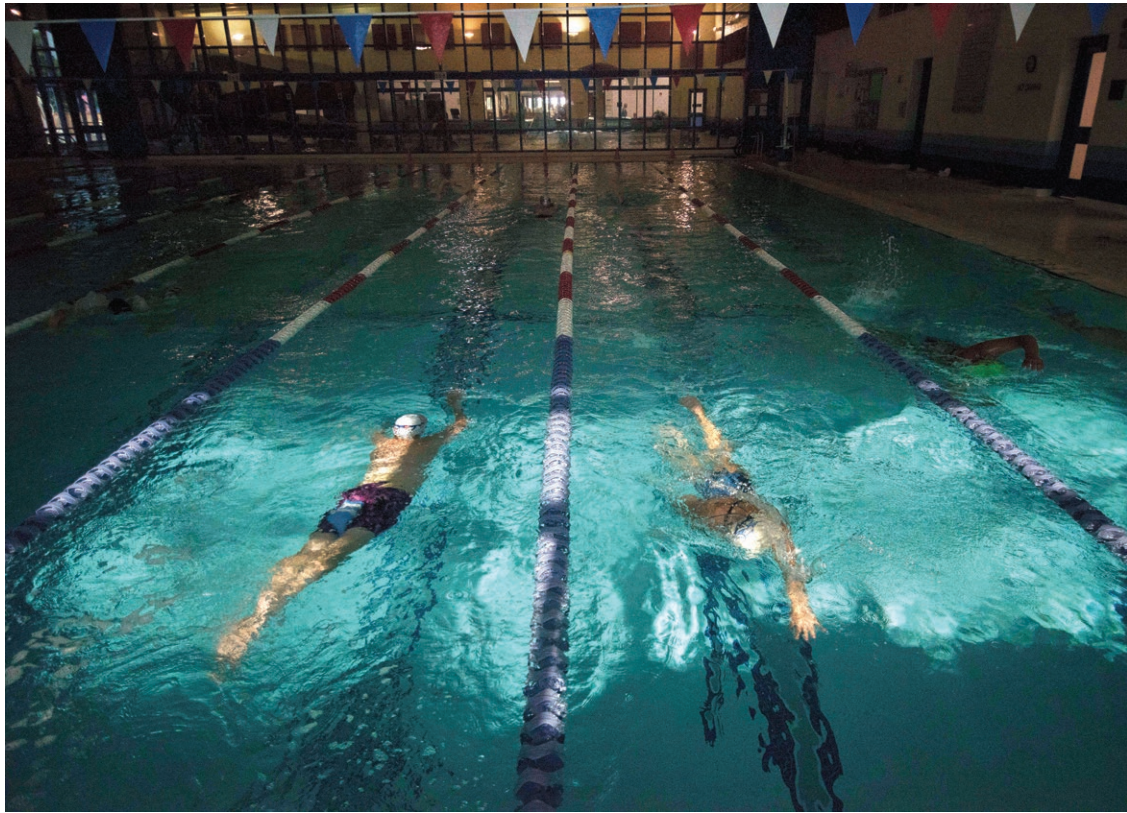
“I think we started something,” Steimel says, greatly understating Rowan Aquatic Club’s impact on local swimming over the past three decades.

The club has trained boys and girls who went on to become successful Division I swimmers and coaches. Interest in swimming created by RAC-Y led to the establishment of high school swim teams and even state championship moments at Salisbury, that school where it once wasn’t considered a sport.

At the recent Olympics in Brazil, swimmer Ryan Held’s coach was former RAC-Y member Todd DeSorbo, an associate head coach for the swimming and diving program at N.C. State University.

Today, the Rowan Aquatic Club continues its strong partnership with the YMCA, whose new facility has eight 25-yard lanes for prac-

Matt Epley and Lyndsy Neigel make several trips across the Hurley YMCA’s pool during practice.



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tices and meets. RAC-Y provides competitive swim training and practice for youth 5 to 18 and adult programming for ages 19 to 80. The new swim season for youth kicked off Aug. 29; the first home meet, Sept. 24.

Hannah Hawkins, a 37-year-old native of England, serves as full-time coach for RAC-Y. She took over in mid season last spring, and her first goal has been to keep everybody excited about swimming, nurture the family atmosphere and help in club members' development as swimmers.

Hawkins says the club, aided greatly by parents and other volunteers, is taking "a fresh look at what we do, who we are and how we best do what we do."

"I'm real excited about what the future holds for us here," she adds. "We can help a lot of kids, if we do this right."

RAC-Y has about 35 youth swimmers at the moment, and with the Master swimmers, total enrollment is close to 50.

"I think we can easily support 80 kids and 20 Masters," Hawkins says.

The regular practices for youth swimmers are 4-8 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 4-7 p.m. every Friday. A typical practice starts with shooting the breeze on the pool deck before Hawkins relays the focus for the day. She tries to give the swimmers a new idea or a new drill at every practice. She also likes to leave them with a quote or teaching phrase to remember.

The swimmers practice their strokes and go through their sprint, distance and individual medley workouts. The kids tend to specialize as they get older, Hawkins says. The ends of practices often have fun things for the swimmers to do together.

"Every practice has a plan," Hawkins says.

The club holds Friday night relays every month — fun events where an 18 year-old swimmer might find himself on the same team as 5-year-old. This past year, the relays on Friday were combined with one of the swimmer's school projects in which food was



RAC-Y head coach Hannah Hawkins (back) instructs swimmers (from left) Lauren Evans, Lyndsy Neigel and Chris Kafitz on dive techniques.

brought in for delivery to Rowan Helping Ministries.

RAC-Y stresses the values of social responsibility, youth development, respect, honesty and caring. Academic awards are given out with the swimming honors at the RAC-Y annual banquet. The Diane Ruffy Hall Memorial Award recognizes, for example, a swimmer who displays perseverance and community service.

"Yes, it's about fast swimming," Hawkins says of RAC-Y's ultimate goals, "but it's also about the important things in life."

Membership in RAC-Y costs \$50 a month and up, and swimmers compete in YMCA and USA meets, depending on their abilities. There can be upwards of 25 meets a year, but it all depends on what best suits the child.

Some kids swim in every meet. Others pick and choose according to schedules and

what's best for them.

"We've got kids knocking on the door of qualifying for YMCA Nationals," Hawkins says. Likewise, one of RAC-Y's main goals is to bring kids in to learn swimming and have a great overall experience. It's a real high for Hawkins to teach kids to float for the first time, as much as it is to see them shave seconds off their times in big meets.

Hawkins encourages RAC-Y members to be involved in other sports. "Some of our best swimmers now are 15 years old who did other stuff," Hawkins says. She thinks other activities help in making a more rounded individual.

"I don't want anybody to look back on their teenage years and say, 'I was a slave to swimming,'" Hawkins says.

Once a kid realizes swimming is his or her passion, it becomes much easier, but Hawkins takes a lot of pride in not shoving it down their throats.

"Their drive at this age amazes me," says parent Stephanie Kafitz, who helps with practices on occasion.

Hawkins stresses that kids don't have to start at 5 years old to become successful swimmers. A lot of students in high school can still benefit from swimming with RAC-Y, she says, and they are able to improve and develop quickly with the right training.

Maris Wainwright, a seventh-grader at West Rowan Middle School, says she once was a diehard soccer player. But now her goal is to swim in the Olympics. She swims in as many meets as she can.

Maris Wainwright gulps some air as she swims.

"I like getting to hang out with all my swim friends," Wainwright says of all the practices. "We work, but we also go to the splash pool and stretch, or have a game of water polo." She especially likes the relays at the end of practice.

Christopher Kafitz, 11, a Knox Middle



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School sixth-grader, says, “I like just coming here and having fun. I like doing the strokes. ... I try everything. It’s very hard work. It’s a sport you got to be into and you’ve got to stick to.”

Amy Gonzalez, 10, has been swimming for two years. She says swimming helps her to focus athletically. “It’s fun here,” she adds. “I’ve grown so much since I started.”

Patrice Jones, 20, swam with RAC-Y for five years. She and her two siblings, also RAC-Y members, were being home-schooled. They would do their lessons in the morning and come to the RAC-Y afternoon practices on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursday and Fridays.

“As we tried it out, we liked it,” Jones says. She began moving quickly up the various competitive levels. Within two years, she was on the club’s national team. “You have to be dedicated,” Jones says.

She feels as though the experience has given her an important lifetime skill, and this past summer, it also led to a job as a lifeguard

at the Y.

The Hurley YMCA will be host for the Phyllis Steimel Invitational Nov. 4-6. It’s a big YMCA meet with teams coming in from places such as Hickory, Concord, Greensboro, Winston-Salem and Burlington.

When a swim meet is named for you, it’s a good indication you’re a legend, and in local swim circles, Phyllis Steimel fits that descrip-

tion. She first retired as coach at RAC-Y’s annual banquet in the summer of 1991, after the club captured its fourth straight Western Carolina Swim Association title.

But she was brought out of retirement twice to fill coaching vacancies in 1993 and 2003.

In the early 1990s, Steimel was selected twice as Coach of the Year by the N.C. Swimming Coaches Association.

Mary Jo Agner, Phyllis’ swimming daughter, went on to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and was a member of its swim team for three years.

She came back to Salisbury to work as a physical therapist at Rowan Memorial Hospital (now Novant Health Rowan). Mary Jo’s children started swimming with RAC-Y when they were 4 and kept participating into high school. Mary Jo also served as a RAC-Y assistant coach and volunteer for 11 years.

Because her mother wanted her to swim, Mary Jo was part of the Rowan Aquatic Club in its infancy at the old YMCA. “The lifeguard was cute,” she reminds her mother.

Mary Jo married that lifeguard, Tim Agner, several years later, proving the adage one more time: Swimming is a lifetime sport. **S**

Above: Rodney Hawkins Jr. practices in a lane. Right: Emma Milem gives some pointers to the younger swimmers during practice.





The Rev. Leamon E. Brown, below, is head pastor at First Calvary Baptist Church, which has a distinctive A-frame design. — Photos by Jon C. Lakey.

A guiding light

After 150 years, First Calvary Baptist remains a vital cog on the East End. / By MARK WINEKA

As a boy living close by, William Peoples became fascinated with the construction of First Calvary Baptist Church and its A-frame design. He stopped regularly to chat with the workers, and he remembers telling them at one point they were installing the pews too close together.

Today it's hard to believe the "new" First Calvary Baptist Church at 400 S. Long St., Salisbury, is almost 50 years old. A lifelong member, Peoples thinks First Calvary Baptist became the blueprint for other "modern" black churches of its day. He says Gethsemane, New Zion and Dorsett's Chapel churches all have similar styles.

First Calvary Baptist Church, birthed 150 years ago as Dixonville Baptist Church, has been a guiding light since its founding. It is considered the oldest Baptist church in western North Carolina, and its history is entwined with respected religious leaders, education, urban renewal and Salisbury's "East End."

First Calvary Baptist sponsored the first Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. events in Salisbury, and the church and its congregation helped considerably in making the city's transition toward integration go smoother.

From a child's point of view, Peoples says, the church was the heart of old Dixonville. It always seemed to be having some kind of





Left: Before he founded Mount Zion Baptist Church, as referenced in this state historical marker, the Rev. Harry Cowan founded the Rowan Baptist Association and Dixonville Baptist Church (today's First Calvary Baptist Church) in 1866. — Photo by Mark Wineka. Right: The former First Calvary Baptist Church, which faced East Horah Street near Railroad Street, served the congregation from 1910, when the Rev. A.S. Croom was pastor, until a new church was built during the city's urban renewal efforts in the 1960s. — Submitted photo

service or activity that he and other children were attending.

"The mindset was to keep you busy and keep you out of trouble," Peoples says. "I just remember a huge overflow of kids."

To the Rev. Leamon Brown and his congregation, it's a miracle their cherished church stands on land that once was next to the Salisbury Confederate Prison. Think of it: The church was organized in those days after the Civil War when its members, who had previously been slaves and considered "property," were newly free.

If it's not a miracle, then it's "a profound statement from God," Brown says.

"We've been so blessed, that He would say, 'Put a church here at 400 South Long Street,'" Brown adds.

The city landscape around the church and the church itself changed drastically with the urban renewal project approved on Jan. 31,

1963. During this time, the congregation purchased 5 acres for construction of today's church, its two-level educational wing and a parsonage. When the Rev. Theodore Walker assumed the position as pastor in 1965, he joined a congregation ready to launch a new building program to replace the 1910 church, razed as part of the urban renewal.

The groundbreaking was held July 10, 1966, and the new fully furnished \$100,000 church was dedicated July 30, 1967. A new parsonage was dedicated on March 3, 1974. On Nov. 20, 1979, the "annex" was dedicated, and on May 28, 1989, the mortgage was burned on the annex. Today, the church's most recent parsonage has been converted into a resource center with computers and a library.

During the church's homecoming in 1977, Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., father of the slain civil rights leader, spoke at First Calvary

Baptist, and about 600 people attended.

"The world is full of hate — racial hatred," King Sr. said that day, July 31, 1977. "But I'm never going to stoop low enough to hate anybody. I'm going on. ... I have faith in man. I'm every man's brother, no matter the color of his skin, or the texture of his hair. And I don't have time to argue about it. I got a job to do."



Older members of First Calvary Baptist still have fond memories of the 1910 church building that preceded their distinctive A-frame structure. The official address of the 1910 church was 101 Concord Road, but the brick edifice with a steeple at one end generally faced today's East Horah Street.

This church was still Dixonville Baptist Church until the official name change to First Calvary in 1926. "It was always the hub of the community," member Shirley Johnson says.

"It was always very vibrant. I just loved the old stained glass windows and the bell tower. It was special, there was a warmth there."

Deanna Martin and others remember the big shade trees on the property and how the old church sat at the top of a small hill rising from the railroad tracks.

"I felt as though I lived down here," Martin says, sitting in the annex.

Beatrice Brown, the pastor's wife, grew up as a member of First Calvary. She recalls the smell of cedar, the dark cherry wood of the old sanctuary and floors creaking with her steps.

The choir assembled on the right side of the altar, Deaconesses sat on the same level. A balcony overlooked the main seating, and the baptismal pool was built into the floor. At baptisms, deaconesses would be waiting next to the pool with towels. There was a fireplace in the back behind the pastor's and visitors' seating to get warm afterward.

As a child, Gloria Thomas and her siblings would travel to church with their grandmother and always be among the first families to arrive. When it was cold, they all hovered around a radiator in back.

"Those are great memories in that old church," Thomas says.



The Rev. Theodore D. Walker Sr. turns over some dirt during the 1966 ground-breaking for a new First Calvary Baptist Church. The completed church was dedicated July 30, 1967. — Submitted photo

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Through the years, church historians have given at least two accounts of how First Calvary Baptist was founded. One says Dixonville Baptist Church was organized under a “brush arbor” by the Revs. Harry Cowan and Zuck Haughton. The second account says the Rowan Baptist Association was formed first, along with the church, in an old Confederate hospital.



Rev. Harry Cowan

A third, fuller version comes from historian Betty Dan Spencer, who authored “Remembering Dixonville and East End.” She wrote that the Association of Friends of Philadelphia and Its Vicinity for the Relief of Colored Freemen — an organization founded by Philadelphia Quakers in 1863 — bought an acre of land from Charles Emery for \$145 in 1866, and the Friends set up a school for the education of former slaves on the property.

“In 1866, the Rev. Harry Cowan founded the first African-American Baptist church in Salisbury,” Spencer wrote. “The general consensus is that the church services were held in the Friends’ school, and that the church was always known as the Dixonville Baptist Church.”

Spencer theorizes that “Dixonville” owes its name to a George Dick-

son who had bought land in this area from Joseph Horah. But Dickson otherwise remains a mysterious figure. Spencer’s research never found evidence supporting a church history that says the lot was donated by the Association of Friends of Philadelphia, “under the leadership of Dixon.”

However the church came to be in 1866, there’s no doubting Cowan’s contributions to Baptist history in North Carolina. A former slave, Cowan was the first moderator of the Rowan Baptist Association and became known as the “Father of North Carolina Baptists.” He was Dixonville Baptist Church’s first pastor from 1866-68, and he would go on to found Mount Zion Baptist in Salisbury and many other churches in the area.

As did Cowan, several other pastors of Dixonville Baptist (First Calvary) also became moderators of the Rowan Baptist Association. In addition, Dixonville Baptist Church had a strong connection to early education efforts for blacks in North Carolina.



In 1881, the State Legislature directed the State Board of Education to establish “not less than four colored normal schools.” Salisbury was chosen to represent the west, and the State Colored Normal School of Salisbury — a teachers’ school — opened for the first time on Aug. 17,

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1881, at Dixonville Baptist Church.

It continued until 1900 or 1903, depending on the histories you read. The Rev. John O. Crosby, pastor of Dixonville Baptist, was appointed principal of the school, and he served from 1881-92 and from 1897-1903. In between, Crosby was president of A&T State College.

Piedmont Institute, formerly the Rowan Normal and Industrial School, then opened on property adjoining and belonging to Dixonville Baptist. The Rev. David W. Montgomery and the Rev. A.S. Croom, both pastors of Dixonville Baptist, served as the school's principals. Spencer's book says the last references to Piedmont Institute were in the 1923-24 and 1926-27 city directories.

Pastor Brown grew up in Anniston, Ala., and he followed his sister's lead and came to Salisbury to attend Livingstone College. He began going to church at First Calvary Baptist, where he met Beatrice. The couple married in 1976.

Brown was actually a member of the First Calvary gospel choir before he became the church's assistant pastor from 1978-80, its interim pastor from 1980-83 and its head pastor since 1983 — the longest serving in First Calvary's history.

Some of member John Peoples' fondest memories involve playing baseball for the First Calvary Baptist Church team coached by Charles

McGee, a great mentor to youth. McGee's Little League team won championships four years in a row in the Optimist League.

Church families at First Calvary go back four and five generations, and the congregation is trying to flesh out those family trees for history's sake. The oldest member today is Serlena McKinney, 102, who served on the Deaconess Board into her 90s.

Over the years, the congregation has awarded more than \$50,000 in college scholarships, given in honor of Joseph E. Anderson, a principal and educator in Rowan-Salisbury Schools.

The church also awards \$1,000 scholarships in the name of Frank and Rebecca Kelly.

During this sesquicentennial year, First Calvary has held a Community Day and picnic, a choir concert, youth revival and special services, including an appearance by the Rev. Michael Long of Reidsville, moderator of Rowan Baptist Association. The association now has 100 member churches.

And it all started with a tiny church "under a brush arbor."



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WELCOME AUTUMN

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Al Wilson, standing at the front door, tells the history of the Fulton-Mock-Blackmer House during last year's October-Tour. This year's event is Oct.8-9.
— Photo by Wayne Hinshaw

October 2016

Upcoming events in the Salisbury-Rowan area

OCTOBER 1 Rowan County Fair (last day)

• *Rowan County Fairgrounds*

Wrapping up a week of fun, the fair includes rides, a petting zoo, livestock and exhibits. Go to www.rowancountyfair.net for information.

OCTOBER 1-2 'Day Out with Thomas — Ready, Set, Go Tour'

• *N.C. Transportation Museum*

Enjoy a train ride with Thomas, meet Sir Topham Hatt and much more. For more information, go to www.nctrans.org, or call 704-636-2889.

OCTOBER 1-2 Autumn Jubilee

• *Dan Nicholas Park*

10 a.m.-6 p.m. Spread out over the county's 450-acre park will be more than 180 craft-

ers from all over the Southeast. Music, food and lots of activities for children also will be offered. Call 704-216-7803 for information.

OCTOBER 2 'Exit the King'

• *Catawba College*

2:30 p.m. in the Florence Busby Corriher Theatre on campus. Shows also are at 7:30 p.m. Sept. 29 and 30. Tickets: adults, \$8; students, \$6. For ticket information: call 704-637-4481, or go to www.catawba.edu/theatretix.

OCTOBER 6 OctoberTour Patrons' Party

• *Salisbury Station*

6:30 p.m. Ticketed event. Historic Salisbury Foundation, For more information: 704-636-0103, or historicsalisbury.org.

OCT. 6-9, 12-15 'Peter and the Starcatcher'

• *Meroney Theater*

7:30 p.m. shows each date except for 2:30 p.m. Oct. 9. The Tony-winning play upends the century-old story of how a miserable orphan comes to be The Boy Who Would Not Grow Up (a.k.a. Peter Pan). From marauding pirates and jungle tyrants to unwilling comrades and unlikely heroes, Peter and the Starcatcher playfully explores the depths of greed and despair and the bonds of friendship, duty and love. Box office: 704-633-5471.

OCTOBER 8 Fish Fry Fundraiser to benefit Austin Mowry

• *Grace Lutheran Church*

4 p.m. until. Event will benefit 3-year-old Austin Mowry, who has T Cell Lymphoblastic Lymphoma. Fundraiser includes raffles,

tractor show from noon-4 p.m., hot dogs and live music. Dine in or carry out. Church is located at 3020 Grace Church Rd, Salisbury. For more information, call 704-857-8641.

OCTOBER 8-9 OctoberTour

• *Salisbury*

10:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Oct. 8 and noon-5:30 p.m. Oct. 9. Ticket for the event is good for both days. Enjoy exclusive tours of private homes, including the Elizabeth Hanford Dole house on South Fulton Street. Also offered are lunches, a living history encampment and a full weekend of musical entertainment. At the end of the day, relax with a glass of wine and artwork created by North Carolina's Plein Air Artists. For more information: www.october-tour.com, or 704-636-0103.

OCTOBER 8 Granite Quarry Fiddlers Convention

• *East Rowan High School*

6:30 p.m. For more information, contact Lanny Merrell, Granite Quarry Civitan Club, 704-213-1992.

OCTOBER 8 VAEA Hero 5K

• *Hefner VA Medical Center*

Run sponsored by the Veterans Administration Employees Association. For more information, go to salisburyrowanrunners.org

OCTOBER 10 Business After Hours

• *David Post Law Firm*

5-7 p.m. Rowan County Chamber of Commerce event. For more information, contact cdeese@rowanchamber.com, or 704-633-4221.

OCTOBER 13 'Integrating American Legion Baseball'

• *Salisbury Civic Center*

7 p.m. Monthly meeting topic of Rowan Museum's History Club. The Civic Center is located at 315 S. Martin Luther King Jr. Ave.

OCT. 13-15, 20-22 'Mitch Albom's Tuesdays with Morrie'

• *Lee Street theatre*

Shows nightly. Based on the book "Tuesdays with Morrie" about a successful sports columnist and his Tuesday meetings with an old professor he hasn't seen in 16 years. The acts include their talks, flashbacks and allusions to contemporary events. For more information, go to www.leestreet.org, or call 704-310-5507.

OCTOBER 15 Autumn Craft Show

• *Salisbury Civic Center*

10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$35 cost to indoor vendors, and \$25 for outdoor vendors. For more information: 704-216-2708, or salisburync.gov.

OCTOBER 15 Big Chili Cook-Off

• *F&M Trolley Barn*

6:30-11 p.m. This eighth annual event benefits the Waterworks Visual Arts Center. Teams cook up their best chili and compete during this fundraiser. Diners attending choose the chili they like best. For more information: 704-636-1882, or waterworks.org.

OCTOBER 15 Antique Auto Show

• *N.C. Transportation Museum*

9 a.m.-3 p.m. Sponsored by the Furnitureland Chapter of the Antique Auto Club of America. The show features antique cars of all makes and models. Free to spectators.

OCTOBER 23 Spooky Sprint 5K

• *Catawba College*

Sponsored by Rowan Rotary. Go to salisburyrowanrunners.org for more information.

OCT. 25-27, 29-30 'Radium Girls'

• *Catawba College*

Shows at 7:30 p.m. in Hedrick Theatre Oct. 25-27 and 29; 2:30 p.m., Oct. 30. Tickets: adults, \$12; students, \$10. For ticket information: call 704-637-4481, or go to

www.catawba.edu/theatretix.

OCTOBER 29 Halloween Fun Fest

• *Salisbury Post parking lot*

3-6 p.m. \$5 per person. Go to 704-216-2708 or salisburync.gov for more information.

OCTOBER 29 Trick or Treat in the Village Shops

• *Gold Hill*

Village merchants will be dressed in costume to greet the trick-or-treaters in the Gold Hill shops. A safe and enjoyable evening. For more information, go to goldhillnc.com.

OCTOBER 29 Park Ghost Walk

• *Gold Hill*

Guided ghost walks and hayrides through the Gold Hill Mines Historic Park. Includes stops at the 19th century gold mines, Gold Hill Jail, Gold Hill Pond and Powder House. Docents at each site will recount ghostly tales and hauntings from Gold Hill's history. Meet with paranormal investigators who have encountered unexplained occurrences and sightings on numerous investigations at Gold Hill. For more information: goldhillnc.com

OCTOBER 29 Brunswick Stew

• *Lions' Den, Cleveland*

10 a.m.-3 p.m. Eat in or take out. The Cleveland Lions' Den is located on Cemetery Street. Call 704-278-0661, or contact hew-clem@bellsouth.net for more information.

OCTOBER 29 Music at the Mural

• *Downtown Salisbury*

The summer outdoor concert series ends with Big Daddy Love performing. Bring your lawn chair to the East Fisher Street mural so you can kick back and relax, or watch from the roof of Go Burrito! Call 704-216-PLAY for more information. [S](#)



A large turnout was on hand for the annual Rowan County Chamber of Commerce Dragon Boat Festival held at High Rock Lake July 30.

Dragon BOAT festival

The Rowan County Chamber of Commerce held its third annual dragon boat races at High Rock Lake, and an estimated 3,000 people attended to cheer on or participate with the 25 teams. Each team included 20 rowers, and teams were generally sponsored by local businesses and organizations.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey



The Anchor Downs Community team was called Anchors Up and won its division.



Above: Robert Allison, from Cary, helps steer one of the boats. Right: Rodney Arey takes a photo of the Power Curbers Power Paddlers team.



Left: Miriam Figueroa and Lisa Bame with the Senior Games Boomer Power team. Right: The F&M Bank Strokes of Genius wait to get into their boat.



Above: County Commissioners Chairman Greg Edds (center) poses with friends Russell and Lisa Wippenbeck and their children Kasey (10) and Leah (6). Left: Team captain Josh Bergeron (right) for the Salisbury Post Gnus talks strategy during a break in the action.



Participants have to crawl under the strings on the obstacle course during the Big Muddy Challenge at Patterson Farm.



Some of the mothers of baseball players on the Kannapolis Cannons team pose for a photo during the muddy challenge.

MUDDY MESS

Patterson Farm held its second Big Muddy Challenge, a 2.5-mile course for family and friends who ran as teams up, down, over and through 14 mud-filled, watery obstacles, which left them caked in the red clay of western Rowan County. More than 1,500 people of all ages participated.

— Photos by Wayne Hinshaw



Families get covered in red mud after taking part in the Big Muddy Challenge at Patterson Farm.



Above: Jodi Burris from Kannapolis slides down into a big mud puddle. Right: This family gathered at the Big Muddy Challenge for a family reunion. The lady on the left stepping through the cords is Lisa Watson from Jonesboro, Arkansas. The other family members are from Holden Beach and Calabash.



A family from Greensboro gathered at the Big Muddy Challenge for the event.



Above: Chris Rice and Heather Lloyd on the front left get loose and ready for the Big Mud Challenge. Right: At the end of the Big Muddy Challenge, Greyson Kerr from Troutman, gets the mud washed from his face with a water hose.





'OLYMPIC' c a m p a i g n

The Rowan County Chamber of Commerce kicked off its Total Resource "Olympics" Campaign at the new Morgan Ridge Railway Brewery & Eatery in Salisbury. The event was co-sponsored by the Walser Technology Group.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Top: A good-sized crowd came out for the Chamber's Total Resource Campaign kickoff, and those attending also got a sneak peek at the Morgan Ridge Railwalk & Eatery, which set its grand opening for Oct. 8. Above: Cindy Hart, Kim Love, Kristen Trexler and Tara Ludwig. Right: Mark Seifel, Jennifer Silvia, Suzanne Jones and Mary Lou Lipscomb.



Left: Barbara Garwood and Mary Ann Johnson. Right: Amy Fesperman, Robin Goins, Irene Beyer and Dave Goren.



Left: Jim Behmer, Jeff Kiker and Terri Spry. Right: Elaine Howle, Bettina Dickert, Nathan Dickert and Cyndi Osterhus.



Top: Elizabeth Sippel and Bonnie Link. Above: Paula Bohland, Tim Proper and Bobby Lucas. Right: Campaign Chairman Tim Norris, left, greets Wendy Roueche, captain for Team Rio. Others, from left, are Nicole Holmes Matangira, Sherry Boyd, Gary Blabon and Wendy Barnhardt.





Above: Salisbury artist Phyllis Steimel and daughter Beth Barger of Apex. Right: Carolina Artists members Carolyn Blackman, Doris Trexler, Genevieve Martin and Celeste Ward. Below: Kathy Collins of Charlotte with Salisburians Barbara Duffy, Sharon Forthofer and Lee Toth.



Plein Air Paint Out

The N.C. Open Plein Air Paint Out attracted 46 artists to a three-day competition in Rowan County that culminated in an artist reception at the F&M Trolley Barn in Salisbury. The reception included a wet painting sale and awards. Artists painted at locations throughout Rowan County during the three days.

— Photos Mark Wineka



Above: Devin Nelson, Nick Dunn, Denise Nelson, Patty Mauney and Cathy Benfield Matthews. Above left: Ari Ferro of Raleigh, Scott Boyle of Bessemer City and James E. Taylor of Salisbury. Left: Artists Paul Keysar of Charlotte and Jeremy Sams of Archdale.



Left: One of the displays showed the 1944 Gray Lady uniform that belonged to American Red Cross volunteer Ruby Little Graham (1918-2010) of Rockwell. Right: Mary Sue Leonard and former executive directors Judy Banish and Evelyn McMahon.



Doris Faggart, David Ellis, Trey Collier and Ronnie Clement

Red Cross

100th birthday

The American Red Cross celebrated its 100th anniversary in Salisbury/Rowan County with a reception and dinner at the train depot. The chapter in Salisbury is the third oldest Red Cross organization in North Carolina behind Wilmington and Asheville. It was organized June 30, 1916, and the charter was approved July 21, 1916.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Left: Nancy Shirley, Theresa Jones and Sheila Crunkleton. Middle: Pat Whitley and Aaron Kaklamanos. Right: The Rev. Dr. Mark Conforti, Reid Leonard and Danny Hunt



Left: Theresa and Andrew Pitner celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary by attending Salisbury's Summer Sip. Right: Left to right: Carissa Lyerly, Amy Morrison and Lori Litton seek some shade during the event.

Summer Sip

In its second year, the two-Day Summer Sip in downtown Salisbury featured more than 30 N.C. craft breweries, including local favorites New Sarum and Morgan Ridge. On the second day, a large crowd of craft beer enthusiasts turned out to the area next to New Sarum to go booth to booth, sampling the beers on tap. Downtown Salisbury Inc. was host for Summer Sip.

— Photos by Rebecca Rider



Above: Left to right: Michelle Menees, Matt Menees, Michael Mollinedo and Traci Lamer sip and sit during the hot afternoon at Summer Sip in downtown Salisbury. Left: Brittani Meadows plays Jenga during the event. Right: Rick Godby with the Salisbury Home Brewer's club works to lower the temperature on a German hefeweizen he and other members brewed.





Above: Patti Safrit serves tomato-decorated cupcakes at the 10th annual Woodleaf Tomato Festival. Right: Talton Correll, Gabriela Rosero, Briley Morrison and Alexander McAdams compete in the tomato eating contest for children.



Painting the town **RED**

Unity Presbyterian Church celebrated its 10th Annual Woodleaf Tomato Festival this year. The day included dancing, music, a parade, tomato-eating contest, fried green tomatoes, tomato sandwiches, an election for Woodleaf “mayor,” pageantry and crafts.

— Photos by Wayne Hinshaw



Lynn Shumaker, Mary Madden and Kim Fleming in a food booth.



Above: Mothers hold their daughters for the Little ‘Mater Sprouts contest. The babies are Elizabeth Yowler, McKinley Lang, Scarlett Wicker and Alec Blackwell. Lang was selected the winner. Right: Nelson Everhardt, left, Reita Smyre, center, and Nikki Everhardt, right, enjoy the festival. The Everhardts are from Charlotte.



The great election divide

Much has been made of the striking polarization of our politics, and this year's presidential campaign has exacerbated the partisan divisions at the national, state and local levels.

Two key lessons are playing out in Rowan County as they do nationally and in the state.

The first key lesson: like in the nation and our state, polarization exists locally. The accompanying map of Rowan County and its voting precincts are designed around a partisan voting index.

This index averages the 2008 and 2012 performances of both major party presidential candidates and compares those performances against the statewide average for each candidate. So, if a candidate received 65 percent in a precinct, but only got 50 percent statewide, that precinct would be a

15 plus precinct, indicating a strong leaning towards one party over the other.

With this index, each precinct can be classified as a strong (more than 10 points difference between the two parties, deep reds and blues), lean precinct (between 3 to 10 points difference, light reds and blues), and toss-up precinct (less than 3 points difference between the two parties, or green).

Three county precincts—Cleveland, Sumner, and East Kannapolis—indicate a competitive nature in their past two presidential election performances. Many of the precincts in Rowan County, however, are strong in their political behavior to one party over the other.

Our political parties aren't the only groups that have "sorted" themselves into like-minded associations, but it's also us—the voters—who have done so as well.

The second notable aspect of our national and state politics that plays out locally is the urban/rural divide. In looking at the city of Salisbury, for example, the deep blues contrast to the surrounding deep reds in the rest of the county's presidential index.

In fact, in comparing the August voter registration pool numbers, while the county's party registration is 40 percent Republican, 31 percent Democratic, and 28 percent unaffiliated,

Salisbury's party registration is 40 percent Democratic, 32 percent Republican, and 28 percent unaffiliated: mirror images of each other when it comes to partisan affiliation.

Another key lesson is the generational shift occurring in the nation, state, and locally. The growth of millennials (those born after 1980) to the aging of baby boomers (those born between 1945 to 1965) will be the next great tectonic shift and challenge for society.

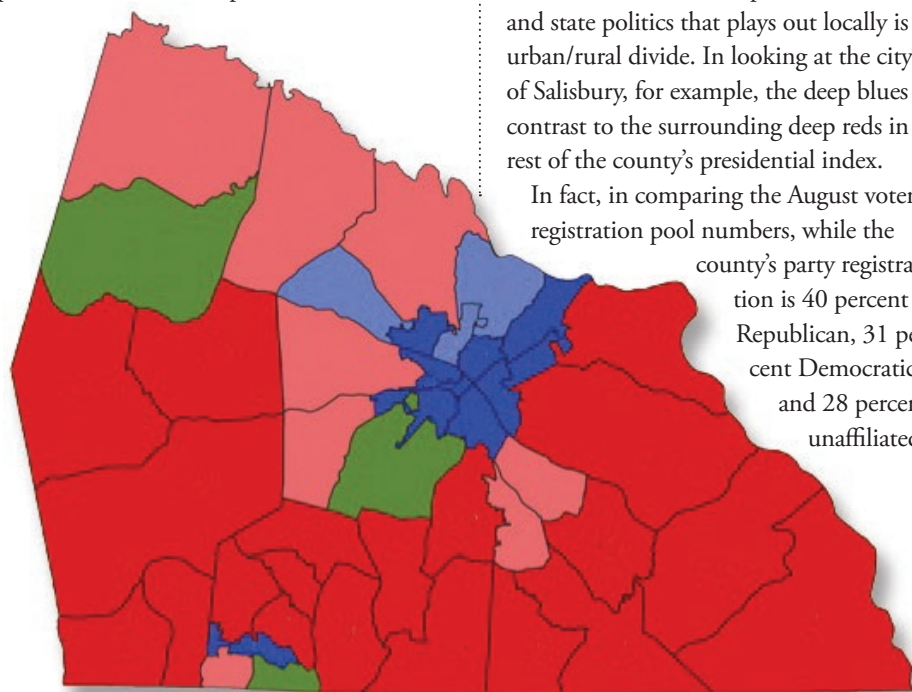
While baby boomers command a plurality in the state (34 percent) and county (37 percent), millennials (currently 30 percent of statewide voters) may tie baby boomers in their statewide registration numbers by November, and these younger voters are decidedly against the Republicans.

Within Rowan County, baby boomers are 44 percent Republican, 32 percent Democratic and 24 percent unaffiliated. Millennials, who are 27 percent of the county, are 38 percent unaffiliated, 32 percent Republican and 30 percent Democratic. The significant dropoff in millennial Republican registration figures from the overall county figures mirrors the state numbers: while registered Republicans are 30 percent of the state voter pool, only 25 percent of statewide millennials registered with the GOP.

These great divides—urban versus rural, baby boomers versus millennials—are among the key dynamics shaping this election. But how these divides play out, and more importantly, how the nation, state and even local politics respond to who wins and who loses this November, will be the true test of whether our society can bridge these divides.

In terms of predictions, however, I'm not sure that any of these lessons will be learned. **S**

Dr. J. Michael Bitzer is provost and professor of politics and history at Catawba College.



This map of Rowan County shows the strong Republican precincts (red), strong Democratic precincts (blue), Republican-leaning districts (light red), Democratic-leaning (light blue), and competitive precincts (green).



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