

HOLIDAY 2021

SALISBURY

the magazine

'Tis the season

- *Certain keepsakes just mean Christmas*
- *Five stories dust off memories of seasons past*
- *Artist's creativity shines through for her friends*
- *Gift store at St. John's Lutheran has you covered*
- *New author scores with book on parents and Christmases past*

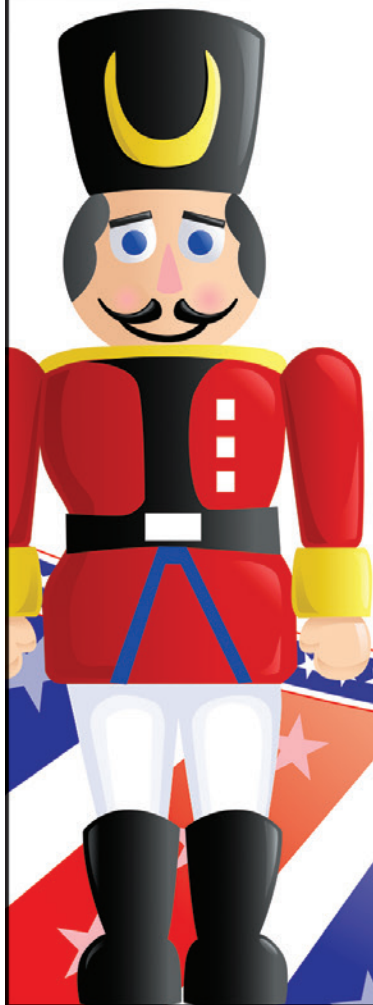


OPERATION Toy Soldier.com



Operation Toy Soldier is a nationwide not-for-profit program that supports our military and their families. Please help North Carolina military families by donating new and unwrapped toys.

**NEW TOYS CAN BE DROPPED
OFF AT POWLES STATON
FUNERAL HOME AND
CAROLINA CREMATION**



POWLES STATON
FUNERAL HOME

913 West Main Street
Rockwell, NC 28138
(704) 279-7241
PowlesFuneralHome.com

Carolina
CREMATION

650 Industrial Ave • Salisbury
(704) 636-1515
8517 Davis Lake Pkwy D3 • Charlotte
(980) 237-1731
CarolinaCremation.com

Proud Provider of



SALISBURY

the magazine

PUBLISHER-John Carr
john.carr@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITOR-Mark Wineka
mark.wineka@salisburythemagazine.com

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

EDITORIAL

Natalie Anderson
natalie.anderson@salisburythemagazine.com

Josh Bergeron
josh.bergeron@salisburythemagazine.com

Carl Blankenship
carl.blankenship@salisburythemagazine.com

Mike London
mike.london@salisburythemagazine.com

Ben Stansell
ben.stansell@salisburythemagazine.com

ADVERTISING

Malynda Peeler
malynda.peeler@salisburythemagazine.com

Dennis Davidson
dennis.davidson@salisburythemagazine.com

Jason Slusser
jason.slusser@salisburythemagazine.com

Ryan Courtney
ryan.courtney@salisburypost.com

PRODUCTION

Susan Baker
susan.baker@salisburythemagazine.com

Lisa Jean Humphrey
lisa.humphrey@salisburythemagazine.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Diana Cummings, Jon C. Lakey,
Susan Linn, Genevieve A. Martin,
Sean Meyers, Kris Mueller,
Theresa Parker Pierce,
Deirdre Parker Smith, Patti Safrit,
Susan Shinn Turner

On the web:
www.salisburythemagazine.com

On Facebook:
www.facebook.com/salisburythemagazine

To subscribe
call 704-797-4213 or online at
salisburythemagazine.com

Salisbury the Magazine
P.O. Box 4639
Salisbury, NC 28145-4639

Value \$3.99
Published 9 times / year

THE VALCAROL MISSIONS ESCAPE ROOM

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY!

*"...beautiful and immersive...
a game we'll always remember.."*

*"A highlight of our trip...
easily one of the best escape rooms
we've ever been to."*



325 McGill Ave, Suite 108 | **Concord** | 704-960-0529
Book Your ESCAPE Today TheValcarolMissions.com



Bell Tower Green Ornament

\$24.99

Made in the USA
Etched Solid Brass

Made exclusively for

Stitchin' Post Gifts



104 S. Main St., Salisbury 704-637-0708 Open Monday-Saturday 10am-5:30pm

Bare FURNITURE CO.



simplyamish

1660 N. Main St. China Grove, NC 28023 • 704 857-2619 • BareFurnitureCo.com

FEATURES

42 SENTIMENTAL VALUES

Certain keepsakes just mean Christmas

by MARK WINEKA

52 CHRISTMAS VIGNETTES

Five stories dust off memories of seasons past

***On the cover:** Salisbury artist Janice Ruffy printed this card, 'The Joy of Sharing,' in 2016, in memory of her friend Cathy Kiser.*

***On this page:** A woman carrying water is part of the town of Bethlehem, which Celeste Ward puts up every Christmas.*

(Jon C. Lakey photos)



DEPARTMENTS



INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Ace Hardware 39

Alexander, Karen 29

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist 68

AutoXpress 14

Bare Furniture 4

Barnhardt Jewelers 63

Blue Bay Seafood 13

Butler, Paxton 21

Cabarrus Eye Center 63

Carolina Cremation 2

Cozart Lumber 39

Davis & Davis 15

Elements Counseling, The 65

F&M Bank 23

Godley's Garden Center . . 11, 39

Griffin, Cathy (Century 21) . . . 41

Historic Salisbury Foundation . 65

Landis Plumbing Inc. 65

McCansless, Jan (author) 64

Planet Fitness 40

Rowan-Kannapolis ABC Board 51

Salisbury Motor Company 67

Steven's Country Store & Butcher Shop 31

Stitchin Post 3

Stout Heating & Air 64

TDF Furniture 38

TMR Realty 50

Tom's Carpet Care 39

Trinity Oaks 30

Valcarol Missions Escape Room 3

Windsor Gallery 29

Wright, Susan (author) 40

Yatawara Wellness 51

Yates, Melissa (Lantern Realty) 65

24

BOOKISH
8 Belle, Chuck and Margaret
With new book, Basinger brings back memories of her parents, Christmases past

FAITH
16 Presents of mind
St. John's Lutheran's gift store has thoughtful offerings for the season

THE ARTS
24 Calling cards
Artist Janice Ruffy has something in the mail for her friends

AT HOME
32 Right side of the tracks
From their East Bank Street home, Joe and Terry Ramsbotham enjoy passing trains — and the holidays



32



58

VETERANS
58 Friendly fire
Every Tuesday is Veterans Day at the Frontier Coffee Shop



16

Editor's Letter p.7 | Salisbury's the Place p.66

And now, for a parting gift

I've had some interesting correspondence over the past few days.

This particular morning, I received an email from Karen Leonard, who included a picture of herself with Davidson College Basketball Coach Bob McKillop. He was holding a copy of *Salisbury the Magazine's* October issue.

That edition happened to have our feature story on McKillop. He was smiling in the picture Karen sent me, so I think he survived our intrusion into his life. He also mentioned, according to Karen, that he loved *Salisbury the Magazine* as a whole.

Did I mention McKillop is a class act?

The Davidson coach also seems to be a reason our humble publication got into the hands of former N.C. Gov. Jim Martin. Phil Kirk, the well-known Rowan Countian and onetime chief of staff for Martin, gave the governor a copy of the October issue when he saw him recently at Sandhills Community College.

Kirk said Martin looked forward to reading the McKillop piece and the magazine altogether, because it included our story about the 200th anniversary of First Presbyterian Church.

Martin's father was a Presbyterian minister, and he also is good friends with McKillop, going back to their days when Martin was a professor at Davidson.

Kirk, who lives down East, said he had spent a recent day reading the October issue from the rocking chair on his front porch. Afterward, he emailed George, K.C. and John Ramsay in Raleigh to let them know about the First Presbyterian story.

The Ramsays are in the Kiwanis Club of Raleigh with Kirk, and their late architect father designed the present First Presbyterian Church, of which they would have fond memories.

An additional email I received this particular week came from a reader, another former *Salisburian*, who wanted me to make sure his next magazine could be delivered to his winter home in Florida. He had been receiving it at his summer place in Blowing Rock.

I share this stuff with you, in part, to gloat and likewise provide evidence that *Salisbury the Magazine* has wide appeal. Indeed, many of our subscribers, such as Kirk and the man in Florida, are past *Salisburians* who have relocated but still want to feel connected to this place we call home.

But these notes also remind me that my run as editor of *Salisbury the Magazine* is coming to an end. This is my last issue, as I head into



full retirement, take advantage of Medicare and anticipate the arrival of grandchild No. 5.

As everyone likes to say on these occasions, it was a good run — and one that will continue, I anticipate, for many years to come. We started in September 2015, and after 57 issues, 400-plus stories and tens of thousands of photographs, I think we established something good, and you'll be excited about issues to come.

All the credit goes to loyal readers and advertisers who sustain us. Meanwhile, I'm quite proud of the writers, photographers, designers and sales folks who put the magazine together. We operate on a shoestring budget, but somehow they make the magazine look a lot richer.

I'm happy this Holiday issue is the one on which I depart. You'll see it relies a lot on readers and old friends who have been year-round presents under the tree to the life of this publication.

Yes, this edition is heavy on Christmas. But I like to think of it as a Thanksgiving issue. From my own rocking chair on the porch, I give you thanks.

Mark Wineka,
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine



Margaret Basinger's book, 'Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck' uses her mom's newspaper columns on Christmas as a jumping-off point for her own memories. Basinger wrote her book by hand on legal pads, and it was keyed into a computer later.

Unwrapping Christmas

Basinger shares holiday memories of Belle and Chuck

WRITTEN BY DEIRDRE PARKER SMITH

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY



Margaret's parents, Belle and Chuck.

When one of your favorite teachers of all time asks for help with a project, you say “Yes!” immediately.

When you hear a tinge of doubt in her voice about the value and contents of the project, you say, “Of course we can do this!”

When Margaret Basinger, my ninth-grade English teacher at Knox Junior High, contacted me in late July 2020 about a collection of her mother’s newspaper columns and her own reflections, it was the beginning of a joy-filled process.

“I found this collection of Christmas columns, and as I read, I thought, that just isn’t how I remember it,” Margaret says. “I couldn’t tell Mama, so I just decided one day to write down how I remembered it.”

She had no goal; she thought she’d just put something together for her sons, John and Robert. She had down time in 2012 and 2013 due to two neck surgeries. She had done a few responses to the columns and put it away.

“When the pandemic hit, I was going through my many piles and found this project I started and ... just got to work.”

The result is the recently published book, “Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck.”

Belle is Belle Banks, Margaret’s mother, who wrote columns for the Mecklenburg Gazette, which closed in 1986. Her father was Dick Banks, the Charlotte Observer’s arts critic for many years.

That tinge of doubt was real. “I was always intimidated about my writing because of their wonderful writing skills. I’d probably written 1,000 letters of recommendation when I was a school counselor, but never in my whole life ever sat down to write a piece of fiction or nonfiction.”

She never tried to write because “I have my parents in my head saying ‘if you had just done



Well-known retired educator Margaret Basinger brings us her book ‘Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck’ for the holiday.

this’ or ‘maybe you should try it this way.’ In reality, they never, ever criticized my writing.”

But she “never thought it would become a published book.”

“Here is where you came in,” Margaret told me. “I saw this collection of things, mother’s writings and my writings and this totally unrelated thing about the accident, and as I was writing it, I thought, ‘Who is my audience here? Is it just John and Robert or could it be a bigger

audience?’ Then I knew I was going to have to have help.

“And your name and your name only came to mind. I thought you could probably use some money, plus I remembered what a good student you were. And then you took it far beyond that expectation when you started talking about how to publish it. ... Finding a way to publish it was beyond my realm.”

Margaret first thought she could take it to a local printer after I edited it and make 25 copies to give to friends.

Knowing several people who had published their work on Amazon, I thought that would be



*Above: Margaret's Basinger and her mother, Belle Banks. (Submitted photo)
 Left: An example of the columns Belle Banks wrote for the Mecklenburg Gazette.*



*Above: Belle Banks with Margaret, left, and Torrance at Cedar Grove. (Submitted photo).
 Left: 'I love, love, love Christmas,' Margaret Basinger says.*



Left: Most everything on her tree reminds Margaret of her parents and family.



Right: A Christmas wreath hangs on the wall underneath the staircase.



Tidings of Peace, Comfort & Joy

From all of us to all of you, go our
very best wishes for a bright and beautiful
Christmas season filled with love,
friendship, health and happiness.

Luke 2-10

*Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid,
for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy
which will be to all people."*



Godley's
GARDEN
CENTER
& NURSERY, INC.

2281 Statesville Blvd.
Salisbury, NC 28147
704-638-0082



The cover of Margaret Basinger's new book, "Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck."



Above: The top of Margaret's tree holds an angel she made in elementary school. Below: Basinger poses with Deirdre Parker Smith at a book signing at South Main Book Company. Parker Smith edited the book.

the perfect solution for this book. We could publish it as a paperback and an ebook; it would be printed on demand, instead of spending a lot of money to print just a few copies.

"From then on, it was Katie bar the door!" Margaret says.

She wrote the whole thing by hand. Husband Dale Basinger, also a longtime educator and coach, helped type it into a computer, as did her sons.

With the continuing pandemic hanging over everything, we moved her planned November book signing to August at South Main Book Company. The paperback went live on Amazon the last week of July 2021. Authors can order up to 999 books at the printing cost.

First we ordered 50, then more, then waited nervously because the second batch was taking so long to arrive, and showing up as seven books or 12 books, and not the whole order.

At the last minute, we had 72 copies of the book. We sold 57 at the first signing. The two-hour event was non-stop, except for about two minutes when we had a sip of coffee. Her friends came out, all right, including other former students.

Seeing her light up with each familiar face was worth every bit of work that went into the book. "The signings have brought me so much joy," Margaret says.

Because of the long-term injuries from her fall, she takes her time writing in each book, and had spent untold hours inscribing each with a Christmas message. She personalized the books at the signing. It was a long, busy two hours, and it was wonderful.



When we started on the book, Margaret had written the story of her 2002 accident — she fell 25 feet off a ladder while preparing for Rowan County’s 250Fest — complete with details of her rehab and recovery. I thought it was a great story, told well; she wasn’t sure it belonged in a book about Christmas. I figured a lot of people who knew her did not know the whole story. First, we moved the story to the end, but that didn’t feel right, then she wanted it taken out, but finally, I convinced her it would draw people right in to the book and it makes a spectacular introduction.

“I have always been a background person,” Margaret says, “so putting myself out there, ‘Here I am. This is all about me,’ that was uncomfortable for me. Plus, I don’t define myself by my injury.”

Then we picked the sweetest of Belle’s columns, and things began to fall into place.

“I love, love, love Christmas,” Margaret says. “And there was a pile of Christmas columns that was manageable. It evolved from just responding to branching out and adding what we do (for Christmas) because I think I have a nice timeline for people. ... Just stay ahead, be proactive, get it done before Dec. 1 so you can spend more time with the true reason of the season.”

Basinger goes through some of her mom’s old newspaper columns.



Two Locations to Serve You
2050 Statesville Blvd. 1007 East Innes St.
704-639-9500 704-633-9585

DELICIOUS SEAFOOD & Your Favorite Entrees

DAILY SPECIALS

- Senior Citizen Discounts •
- Children’s Menu • Healthy Choices

Voted Best Seafood!

2016 ROCCO gold PROFFER’S CHOICE AWARDS Salisbury Post
 2017 ROCCO gold PROFFER’S CHOICE AWARDS Salisbury Post
 2018 ROCCO gold PROFFER’S CHOICE AWARDS Salisbury Post
 2020 ROCCO gold PROFFER’S CHOICE AWARDS Salisbury Post

No Personal Checks
 VISA MasterCard DISCOVER AMERICAN EXPRESS

www.bluebay-seafood.com

BOOKISH

She also shared some of her and her friends' favorite recipes, including the irresistible slow cooker chocolate candy, which she has provided at both signings. The second one was at the Saleeby-Fisher (East Rowan) YMCA, with another good turnout.

"It has been worth any work I put into this book to have the pleasure of seeing people at these signings," Margaret says. The signings have meant so much to me, to see friends, even the people I don't know, who have interest."

That has been the best part, along with the collaboration that brought us closer together and solidified our friendship — a merry Christmas all year.


Margaret has two more book signings planned: Nov. 13, she'll sign "Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck" from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at the Second Saturday Bookshop at West End Plaza. She'll sign again at South Main Book Company, 110 S. Main St., Salisbury, on Nov. 20, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Only cash and checks are being accepted. Look for updates on Facebook at Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck.

The book is available at South Main Book Company and on Amazon. The Kindle edition will be available Dec. 1. 

Deirdre Parker Smith is a freelance writer and editor living in Spencer who loves Christmas, too.

Dale and Margaret Basinger, seated, with sons John, left, and Robert, in front of one of their Christmas trees.




AUTOXPRESS
A DIVISION OF SALISBURY MOTOR COMPANY

AutoXpress For All Your Vehicle Wants And Needs

NC State Inspections, paintless dent removal,
window tinting, oil changes, vehicle maintenance
for all makes and models and much more

1501 West Innes Street
Salisbury, NC 28144
(704) 754-5333

www.salisburymotorcompany.com/autoxpress

Happy Holidays



DAVIS & DAVIS
ATTORNEYS AT LAW, P.C.

215 North Main Street
Salisbury
704-639-1900





Above: Shoppers peruse through the offering at the Seasons Gifts shop at St. John's Lutheran Church. Below left: Coffee mugs made by church member Cheryl Goins. Below right: The gift shop offers gifts that are fair trade and environmentally conscious.





Scented Ella B. candles are among some of the brand names.

Present perfect

St. John's store stocks gifts that bring you joy

WRITTEN BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS

Tucked into a corner of the Faith Center at St. John's Lutheran Church is Seasons Gifts.

Since it's in a church, it's a bit different from your average gift shop. All profits go to support the congregation's Senior Seasons ministry. The shop opened in 2015, the same year as the Faith Center.

"We didn't have cabinets or shelving, but we opened," says Sherry Mason Brown, one of two buyers with Kimberly Lentz.

In the beginning, the Seasons Gifts team envisioned the shop to be like a Bible book store, since there was no longer one in downtown Salisbury. They visited gift shops in seven different Charlotte churches and were quickly told that people buy books on Amazon. The churches gave advice on popular items.

"Christ Episcopal and Myers Park Methodist have really been partners in helping us," Sherry says.

"I was on staff at the time the gift shop opened," Kim says, "and I discovered I was



Pens crafted by church member Darrell Blackwelder are made from Jerusalem olive wood.



Karen McElveen, left, and Kim Lentz work the shop during a Sunday morning.

having trouble finding gifts for confirmations and baptisms. Since the Bible book store downtown had closed, I remember that being an element in the discussion — where to buy faith-based gifts.”

“Beyond religious gifts, we wanted to find things that bring you joy,” Sherry says. “And we selected card lines and product lines that are environmentally conscious. We try to partner with companies who have a mission, who give their proceeds to a greater good.”

Like all businesses, Seasons Gifts was affected by the pandemic, and more recently by the delta variant. The shop is staffed by volunteers, many of whom were apprehensive about coming in.

“We were starting to get traction,” Sherry says, “and right as things were building up, we had to lock the doors. Everybody’s gotten out of the rhythm.”

So Sherry and Kim are working on online shopping. They’ve also had success with Facebook Live shows. These events have yielded customers from as far away as Philadelphia and Charleston, Sherry says. “Our items are really unique and high-quality.”

They also offer personal shopping.

“Customers can call and we can meet them here at their convenience,” Sherry says, or she can do shopping without their even coming in.

“We do have a lot of repeat business,” Sherry adds. “One of our busiest sales days is Saturdays, and we aren’t even open on Saturdays. But with per-





Top: Sandi Melton looks over a row of merchandise. Above: A Christmas tote bag for dog lovers. Left: Jewelry is part of the shop's inventory.



sonal shopping, you can come in and take your time, and not worry about being around others.”

The shop is currently open Sunday mornings from 9 to 11, and Sherry hopes to add Tuesday-Thursday hours back to the schedule soon.

“We are going to have a market hut at the Winterfest in Spencer,” Kim adds. That event will take place the first two weekends in December.

The buyers have thoughtfully chosen all of the inventory. They’ve especially looked for fair-trade, sustainable, and women-owned businesses. They always carry jewelry and women’s purses and tote bags, and add scarves in the cooler months.

Not only are the ladies buyers, they’re customers, too.

“We try to have varied price points,” Sherry explains, “but we are not a discount store.”

Some of their favorite items include Open the Joy activity boxes for children. For every box purchased, a box is donated to a children’s hospital.

The line of Positively Green greeting cards has



Glass ornaments are available for the holidays.

proven popular, as have a line of Missions pottery from Lexington and St. John’s mugs made by member Cheryl Goins, owner of Pottery 101.

Darrell Blackwelder, another St. John’s member, has recently made a line of pens made from olive wood, something new to the shop. Freddie

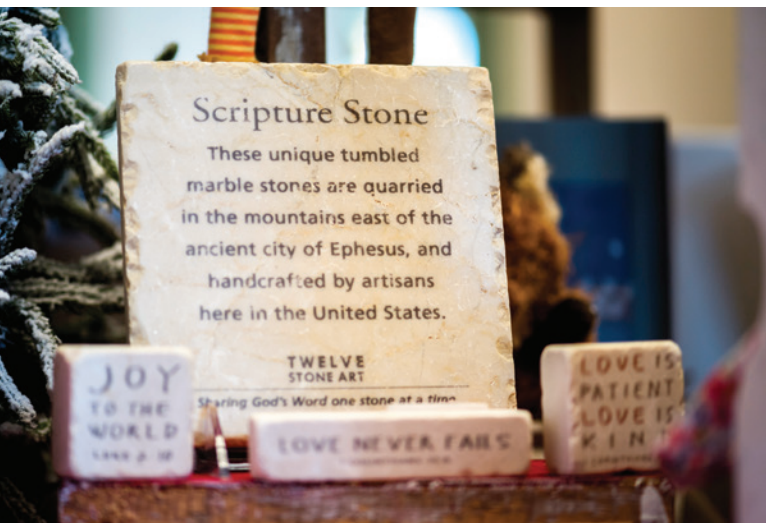


Paxton
BUTLER
for
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

*Happy
Holidays*

**PAID FOR BY PAXTON BUTLER
FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY**





Above: Scripture stones can be purchased for the holiday season.

Below: Darrell Blackwelder made the pens, using olive wood from Jerusalem.



Eller, a member who lives out of town, still makes his hand-held wooden prayer crosses.

The shop also carries eeboo children's games and puzzles.

"Our hottest item of all in the eeboo line is the playing cards," Kim notes. "They are perfect for little hands."

"Baby and children's items are our biggest category, because we have lots of grandmothers shopping," Sherry adds.

There are baby's first Bibles, and baby's first bonnets, both heirloom quality.

The store carries a line of custom-made candles from Ella B. in Charlotte. The ladies chose three different scents with three different Bible verses. The candles come pre-wrapped and ready for giving.

In time for Winterfest, the ladies will be getting in a variety of glass and porcelain Christmas ornaments, as well as Moravian stars and Moravian cookies.

For Christmas, the shop will also carry ornaments as well as birdseed wreaths in the shapes of Santa, snowmen, and gingerbread men.

And they carry a super cute line of German plush toys called Sigikid — complete with masks for each.

If you'd like to shop at Seasons Gifts, call or text Sherry Mason Brown at 704-754-0331 or Kimberly Lentz at 704-798-6830. **S**



Church member Freddie Eller makes the wooden prayer crosses.

Susan Shinn Turner is a freelance writer living in Raleigh.



OUR STRENGTH, YOUR SUCCESS

What does it mean to be strong? At F&M Bank, we believe strength lies in the ability to perform at our best every day—even during the tough times. We've done this for 112 years simply because it's the right thing to do. And it looks like people have noticed.

F&M Bank and its employees have been honored as:

- Best Bank for **10 years in a row**
- a “Best Places to Work” for two years in a row
- Best Investment Firm/Financial Advisor:
F&M Investment Services
- Best Mortgage Company
- Best Teller for five years in a row

We're grateful for the kudos. More importantly, we believe it speaks to the kind of strength you can continue to count on.

fmbnc.com

Member FDIC



THE ARTS



Artist Janice Ruffy at her home in Countryside Estates.



Above: On this card, Rudolph and Santa had an important discussion. Right: Ruffy's brushes.





Children are often subjects in the cards.

Greetings, friends

For artist Janice Rufty, Christmas is in the cards

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY

If you're a friend of Janice Rufty's — and she has plenty of them — you've come to look forward to the Christmas cards she sends out every year.

They're special because you know the effort Janice put into the cards, a tradition she started back in 2009. She didn't go to the store and buy a box of ready-made holiday cards. Neither did she order them off Amazon and have them delivered to her house.

No, Janice's cards are her own works of art — a watercolor depicting a holiday scene from her imagination or a particular reference. Inside the card, she usually writes a personal note. On the back, she pens the date and a title for her artwork.

"I'm not a computer person," Janice says. "I want my cards to look homemade, handmade."

A spoiler alert to her friends: A jolly Santa dominates this year's card, titled "Rejoice and Celebrate for You Are Loved."

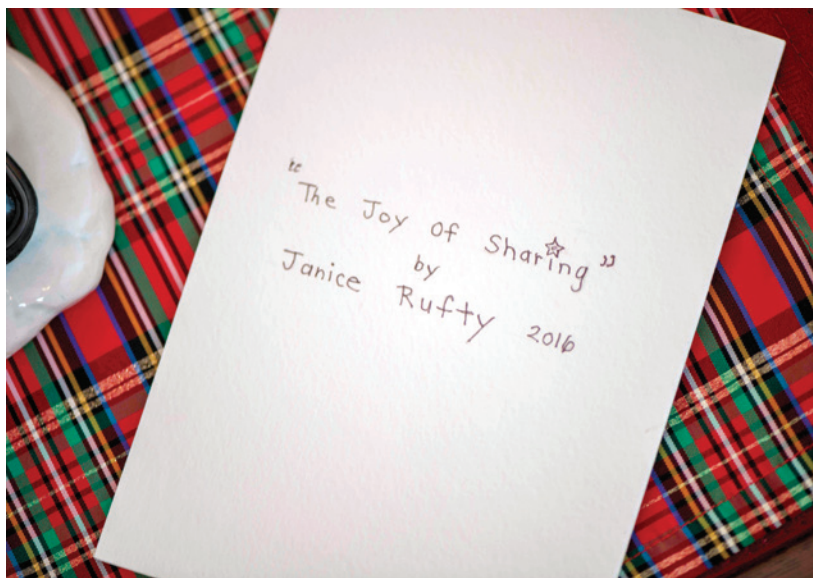
After Janice's 2020 card included a boy with a mask, appropriate for the year dominated by the pandemic, she thought 2021 should have a bit brighter image.

"I just wanted to be happy this year, to rejoice and be loved," she says.

Her 2018 card depicted a conversation of sorts between Santa and Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer of story and song. She titled



On her dining room table, Ruffy spreads out some of the many watercolor cards she has sent to friends over various seasons and celebrations.



Ruffy likes to date and title her cards on the back.

it, “Me, do what?”

Sandra Cody collects cards Janice has sent her, and even has one framed on a wall at her home in The Gables.

“I look forward to it,” says Cody, a longtime friend and fellow graduate of A.L. Brown High in Kannapolis. “I show it to all my friends here in the neighborhood.”

Painting scenes on cards wasn’t exactly a new idea for Janice. She and her college roommate at Lenoir-Rhyne, Camille Troutman, kept up a Christmas tradition for 30 years — from 1965 to 1995 — of exchanging the same two cards they each had painted for the other in 1965.

Janice had painted a snow scene on her card; Camille’s card depicted a tableau from the Orient.

The tradition ended after 1995 because Janice lost the card Camille had sent her that year.

“I was so embarrassed,” Janice says, “and it was the one she had painted.”

Camille died in recent years after coping for some time with Alzheimer’s.



Before she delved into watercolors and cards, Rufty painted wooden eggs.

In 2009, when Janice started her new Christmas card tradition, she titled that first effort “The Guardian Angel of Quilters,” in honor of husband Eddie’s quilting cousin, Florine Rufty.

Janice paints her cards in an extra bedroom she likes to call her “messy room.”

“He (Eddie) kind of leaves me alone when I’m in there,” she says.

Her 2015 card, “Peace to All,” an angel statue with poinsettias, was inspired by a small angel statue still sitting on one of her living room tables.

The 2016 card, “The Joy of Sharing,” was in memory of Cathy Kiser and is maybe Janice’s favorite of all her Christmas cards.

For the cards she wants to send and share with friends, she takes her original and has copies made — up to 30 for Christmas — at the Salisbury Staples or Office Depot stores.

“I pester my friends with them,” Janice says. “... Sandra Cody encourages me, and I get a lot of calls from friends once I send them out.”

Janice says her hardest decision every Christmas is decid-



Above: The figurine to the left served as inspiration for this Christmas card.



Left: Last year’s card reflected the year when the pandemic took root.

“I just wanted to be happy this year, to rejoice and be loved.”

ing what dominant colors to go with.

“Usually, now, I just paint card size,” Janice says. “It’s easier for me to paint small.”

She deviated once from painting an actual card size for the original. In 2017, her “Joy, Love, Peace” card was based on her much bigger watercolor of a girl with bubbles. She reduced that painting for her cards that year.

A perfectionist, Janice has at least one Christmas card scene that she didn’t send out. She points to a painting of a Santa’s toy in a window that just didn’t pass the test of her critical eye.

“He was my reject,” she says.

Since childhood, through college and over a whole career as a teacher, the artist in Janice Sloop Ruffy has always bubbled to the surface. In retirement especially, her painting skills have flourished, as she has transitioned from painting wood and wooden eggs, to personal greeting cards, including the Christmas ones.

Janice grew up in Kannapolis. Her father sold Singer sewing machines and was part-owner in a downtown Kannapolis movie theater called The Main. Her mother sold antiques and first worked for collector Ruby Adams, who lived in Granite Quarry, not far from the Countryside Estates subdivision where Janice lives today.

Janice took art classes in high school and college. What she considered one of her modern art pieces graced the wall of A.L. Brown High School’s cafeteria for several years.

Janice taught for 35 years in the public schools, including three years in Hamlet and the rest in Kannapolis, where many kids knew her as a second-grade teacher.

“I’ve always liked to draw,” Janice says. “I didn’t have time, and now that I’m retired, I still don’t have time.”

As a kid, Janice and her sister, Norma, first used the oils that came in paint-by-number



At her home, Janice Ruffy displays some of the cards she has painted over the years.

30 years, the couple lived in White Oak Acres and for the past 15 years in Countryside Estates, tucked nicely on the edge of Granite Quarry and next to the Salisbury city limits.

kits. “I think we were good — at least we thought we were,” Janice says, chuckling.

She attended Lenoir-Rhyne College after A.L. Brown High School. She was living in Kannapolis in 1969 when she married Eddie. For

In the subdivision, Janice has many friends, including artists Doris Trexler and Catherine Sonderberg, who both did a lot to encourage her art.

“They inspire me to keep painting,” Janice

says.

As an elementary school teacher, Janice incorporated art in her classes whenever possible. The assignments and classwork on her chalkboards and white boards also included many illustrations.

“I inspired a lot of children to be artists,” Janice says.

She didn't get back into painting as a hobby for herself until falling into the tole painting that was more widely popular in the 1980s. By 2000, she delved into the intricate painting of wooden eggs and gave them as gifts to friends as Christmas ornaments or Easter eggs. She even sold a few to coworkers in Kannapolis.

It was after the Ruftys moved to Countryside Estates that she started watercolors and concentrating on cards — again, things she did for pleasure and items she wanted to give to friends.

For help in what was an entirely new medium for her, Janice took a class offered by longtime art teacher Frank Saunders, who got her started with an inexpensive watercolor kit and encouraged the use of vibrant colors.

Don't think Janice's watercolor cards are limited to Christmas.

For birthdays of friends, Janice paints personalized, one-of-a-kind cards. Cody is one of the recipients of those birthday cards, and she makes them part of her Janice Rufty collection.

Rufty holds her 2021 card, titled 'Rejoice and Celebrate for You Are Loved!' (Mark Wineka photo)



Thankful Tree

★
love
peace hope
Community Care
tradition 36 years BOB
neighbors rainbows KEALY music
loyalty FRIENDS snow TOMMY
chocolate ATLAS gingerbread
FAITHFUL FRIENDS laughter toys books
KADEN kindness KIM health JIM sunshine
memories knowledge CIVITAN owls KIRSTEN
determination carols stockings
HOLIDAY HAPPINESS
FAMILY

Holiday charms for that special someone

Windsor Gallery
JEWELERS

1810 W Innes St, Salisbury
704.633.7115
www.windsorgalleryjewelers.com

Leadership

Service

Re-Elect
KAREN ALEXANDER

FOR MAYOR

Nov. 2nd
Early voting ~ Oct. 14-30

Dedication

Integrity

Paid for by Alexander for Mayor

THE ARTS

“She’s a sweet, sweet lady,” Cody says.

On her dining room table, Janice spreads out examples of other cards she paints through the year.

“I walk in the rain a lot in the neighborhood,” Janice says, pointing to her “Singin’ in the Rain” card.

Another card depicts a bunny lying in the grass, and Janice reports, “This was my Easter one this year.” Another card features a neighbor’s zinnias; another, orange day lilies with a monarch butterfly. Still another has a hearty hibiscus plant providing a home for a bug.

“Every year Japanese beetles eat them up,” Janice complains. She titled that card “Beauty and the Pest.”

A card, from start to finish, usually takes Janice about two hours.

One of her seasonal cards for autumn shows a young girl wearing a scarf with leaves flying all around.

“It was just a fall card, something for fall,” she explains.

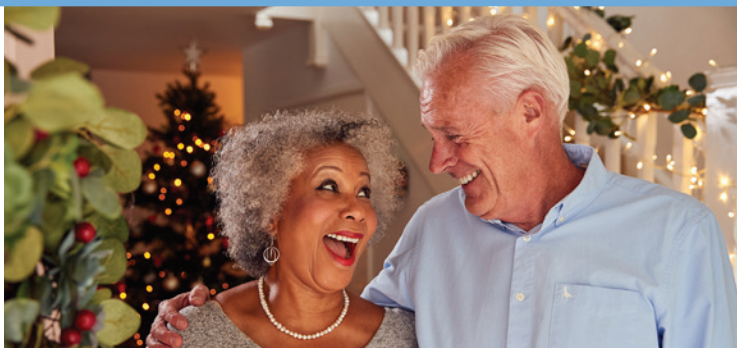
And suddenly, Janice Ruffy has a faraway look in her eye, as if she’s thinking of her next card and another friend. **S**



Some examples of cards Ruffy has done not related to Christmas.

Trinity Oaks, an Active Senior Continuing Care Retirement Community

- 24-Hour Security
- Club Style & Outdoor Dining
- Fitness Center
- Hair Salon
- Housekeeping
- Indoor Heated Pool
- Library
- Lifelong Learning
- Local Transportation
- Maintenance Free
- On & Off-Site Activities
- Pet Friendly

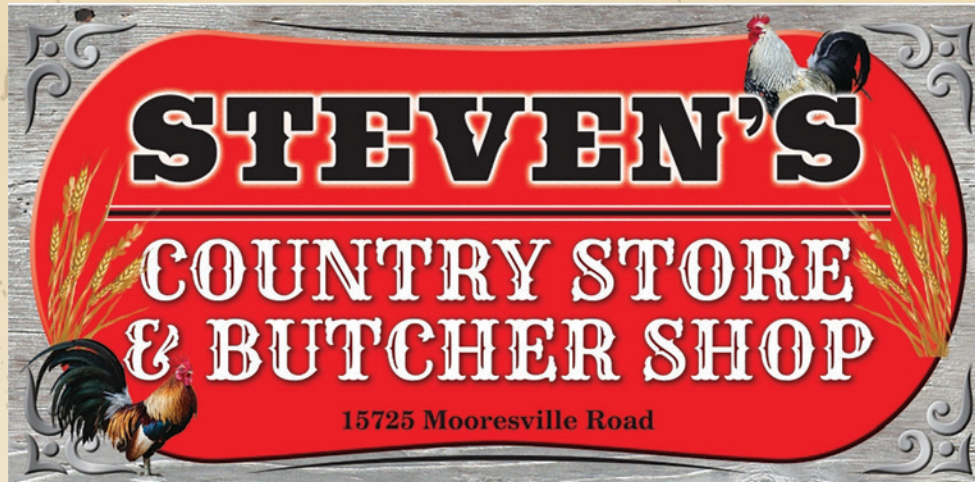


SMILING FACES & FRIENDSHIPS AROUND





704-603-9202 • trinityoaks.net • 728 Klumac Road • Salisbury, NC 28144







Enjoy your shopping this
Christmas Season at
Steven's Country Store

Gift Boxes and Gift Baskets

Ornaments  Christmas Flags  Hand Towels

Snowmen  Christmas Candles  Old Fashion Candy

Foothills Country Ham  Filet Mignon  Custom Bows

December 18 - 10 AM - 3 PM Tasty Moonshine BBQ Sauce



Come visit
with Santa at
the country store
December 4th
from 12pm until 4pm

*Merry Christmas
and Christmas Blessing To You!*



James 1:17 *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadow*

15725 Mooresville Road - Mooresville, NC - 704-660-0971

Monday - Friday 8 AM - 5 PM and Saturday 8 AM - 4 PM

AT HOME



The House of Ramsbotham

Couple find their home for all seasons on East Bank Street

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA | PHOTOGRAPHY BY JON C. LAKEY



Left: Joe and Terry Ramsbotham. **Right:** The Ramsbothams take turns hiding this tiny ceramic fox from each other.

Joe and Terry Ramsbotham have a game they play inside their home at 305 E. Bank St. that, for lack of a better title, could be called “Hide the Fox.”

The couple take turns hiding a tiny ceramic fox from each other, and during the holidays, it’s likely to be secreted among the decorations, which are plentiful.

There’s one important rule to the game: “You have to be able to see it,” Terry explains as her eyes scan the dining room, where the dry sink, tables and cabinets are awash in everything Christmas, making her search more difficult. “The rule is you have to be able to stand here and see it. If you find it, we’ll give you a cookie.”

Terry finally gives up, and Joe points to the fox peering at her from the chimney of a ceramic holiday house.

“Oh, my goodness,” she complains to Joe. “That’s not even fair.”

You could say the Ramsbothams’ East Bank Street house is a hidden gem itself. The two-story weatherboarded frame structure, dating to circa 1885, is tucked 10 steps below street level and immediately adjacent and above the north-south railroad tracks, within throwing distance of the Bank Street bridge.

A gable shows off some of the decorative woodwork. In back, the top of the main chimney promises to be a future repair project.





Their lot would have been part of the Salisbury Confederate Prison property, or at least on its western fringes. Labeled by historians as the Heilig-Wright House, the Victorian-Gothic home is considered a “contributing” structure in the Brooklyn-South Square Historic District.

Above: *The Heilig-Wright House at 305 E. Bank St. dates to about 1885. Left:* *The couple also devote a holiday table to shoreline scenes.*

“This house is why we’re in Salisbury,” Joe says. “I just think Salisbury is such a neat place. The architecture is amazing — and the history.”

The house is painted a deep red with white trim, sort of perfect for Christmas, as are the fireplaces in virtually every room of the 2,000-square-foot home. There have been plenty of projects since they bought the time-worn residence about three years ago.

Besides new paint outside, they repainted everything inside, except for two bedrooms. The chimneys have needed repair, and the gas furnace went out last year, so that became another significant expense. They have kept or replaced in spots the exterior millwork — medallions and brackets that enhance porch columns, eaves, windows and the steep gables.

The couple also bought a front door more in keeping with the house.

As they continue loving this place, the Ramsbothams simply seem to be a perfect fit here.

A retired teacher, having worked many years in Davie County public schools, Joe works a part-time interpretive job at the N.C. Transportation Museum and helps every season with Polar Express. At the museum, he sells tickets, leads tours and operates the turntable at the Round House.

Terry, a commercial artist, forged a second career at Old Salem. She was a sugar baker at the 1807 Winkler Bakery, then its manager. She also served as director of historic footways and gardens and considers herself “an honorary Moravian.” You can see many of the Moravian influences in her baking and decorating, including the Moravian star serving as the couple’s



Terry Ramsbotham has all varieties of Santas, including these wooden ones tucked neatly on a shelf.

Christmas tree topper.

Together, the Ramsbothams also have established a business called Wooden Ram Cookery, billing themselves as period-correct food historians, demonstrators and caterers.

On weekends, they travel to various historic sites, mostly in North and South Carolina, and they feed a curious public or often find themselves cooking in period costumes for history re-enactors who are on the grounds with them.

“A lot of places we cook are battlefields,” Joe says.

At Christmas, the smells of Moravian cakes, cookies, cheese stars and gingerbread spread from their large kitchen at the Heilig-Wright House. The aroma permeates every room, into which Terry likes to put other Christmas touches.

“They have done a fantastic job of decorating their house for Christmas — and even put up a tree for the trains that go by!” neighbor Anne Lyles said in 2020. “They have just lived there a couple years and have done wonderful things for the house and the Brooklyn-South Square neighborhood.”

Terry says she is a compulsive collector, bashfully acknowledging that even with all her decorations last year, “I’ve hidden a lot from you. I love Christmas. We just take out stuff that we love.”

As with many homes, the decorations have meaning or stories attached to them, such as a Nativity from Joe’s mom.



Above: The home’s staircase looking down toward the Christmas tree in the living room.

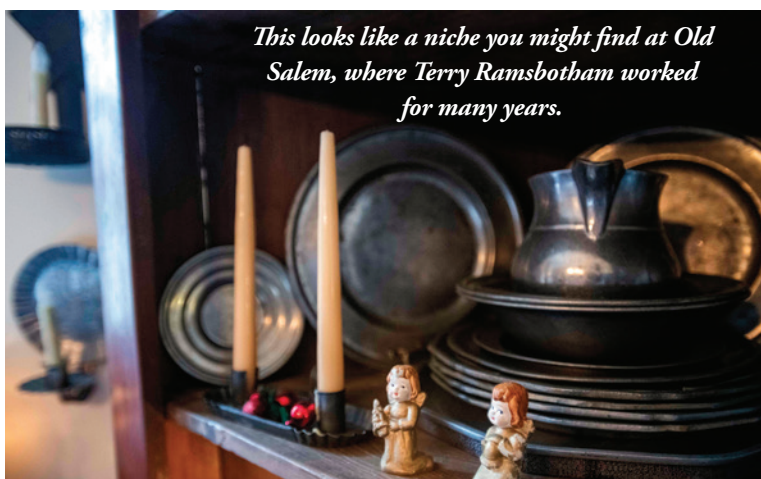


Left: A nice Santa mug for hot cocoa.

AT HOME



A red bed frame fits in well with the holiday.



This looks like a niche you might find at Old Salem, where Terry Ramsbotham worked for many years.



This handsome Santa has a feline friend.



A Moravian star sits atop the tree in the living room.



Garland frames in some of the dining room decorations.



Above: Last year, the Ramsbothams' small but mighty tree, at left, brought a little Christmas to passing trains. Left: A Santa relaxes, checks his list.

For Terry, the holidays especially stir memories of her oldest son, who died 15 years ago. Last year, she says, was the first holiday “I finally got my mojo back. All of these Santas remind me of Jacob.”

She has Santas of every size and material spread throughout the house. In addition, the couple set the dining room table with Christmas dishes passed down from a great aunt.

“I have a dish problem, too,” Terry says.

Also in the dining room, a table near a window holds a seaside display with boats and light-houses decorated for the season. The room’s dry sink and cabinets are filled with holiday treasures. Terry puts a lot of thought into what goes where.

“Just setting it on the shelf and calling it done is not going to get it,” she says. “Next year, I want a totally Victorian tree for the Victorian room.”

With its late 19th century design, the house offers many wondrous rooms and pleasant nooks, such as the small library on the landing at the top of the stairs.

Terry is always looking for new Santas and more old dishes and china to add to the Christmas decor.

“A friend of mine said I need an intervention,” she says.

Will decorating the little evergreen along



The upstairs landing doubles as a library.

the railroad tracks for passing trains become a Christmas tradition for the couple?

“We have new plans,” Terry promises for this year. “It’s a secret.”

During the economic downturn in 2008, Bank of America foreclosed on the Ramsbothams’ farm in Davie County. A decade later, they

were living in Cooleemee and looking again to buy a house.

“We always liked Salisbury,” Terry says. “We came here a lot.”

“The history didn’t hurt, either,” Joe says.

During their house search, something about this place on East Bank Street caught their eyes. “Hey, you want to look at it?” Joe asked Terry.

“I saw it, and I said, ‘That’s going to be where we live,’” Terry recalls, patting her heart. “Some



LEXINGTON

1604 S MAIN ST, LEXINGTON, NC
HOURS: MON-THURS/SAT
9-5:30PM & FRI 9-7PM



**PRICES 50-95%
OFF RETAIL**

WWW.TDFFURNITURE.COM



CLEARANCE

8397 OLD SALISBURY RD,
LINWOOD, NC
HOURS: MON-SAT 9-5:30PM

Get Inspired!

BRING THE
BEAUTY OF THE INDOORS OUTSIDE
WITH **WOLF HOME PRODUCTS®**




Explore Wolf Decking, Railing,
Outdoor Cabinetry and so much more...

COZART
Your Project Partner
Rockwell
<http://www.cozartlumber.com/>

Showroom
PRODUCT SELECTION
& BUYING GUIDE

Your Home & Garden
HEADQUARTERS

Shop wagonloads of plants, flowers
and all the gardening aids to nurture
your yard's growth potential.

Landscape Design
Trees - Shrubs - Perennials - Annuals
Pavers - Stone - Mulch
Bagged & Bulk Products - Garden Tools
Water Features - Garden Decor



**Godley's
GARDEN
CENTER
& NURSERY, INC.**

Monday - Saturday • 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Closed on Sunday

2281 STATESVILLE BLVD., SALISBURY, NC 704-638-0082
godleysgardencenter.com

ACE

**Hardware
of Rockwell**

The *helpful* place.

Traeger, Green Egg
and Weber Grills

Mon.-Fri. 8-6; Sat. 8-5, Sun. 1-5
229 East Main St.
Rockwell, NC
704.279.5269

Salisbury's Best Choice
for Highest Quality

**FLOOR &
UPHOLSTERY CARE**

Commercial and Residential **1st Place**

Professional Steam Cleaning • Carpet - Tile
Upholstery - Wood • Oriental Rugs
(Pick-Up/Delivery available)

FREE ESTIMATES
SENIOR DISCOUNT **704-633-7030**



Since 1981

**TOM'S
CARPET
CARE**
SALISBURY, NC

Local HOME IMPROVEMENT Services

talk to you, some don't. I don't know why, it just did. I said to Joe, 'We will live in this house.' "

But after their first visit with a real estate agent some four-and-a-half years ago, Joe and Terry recognized the asking price was more than they could afford.

"We looked and looked at other houses, but nothing would do," Terry says.

Finally, they'll tell you, the couple circled around to the East Bank Street house and submitted a low-ball offer. It was accepted.

"With great joy, we now live here every day," Terry says.

Some aspects of the house required some getting used to — such as all the passing trains. It took about a month until they stopped jumping up and running to the windows every time a train rumbled by.

"We call this the train room," Terry says of

an upstairs bedroom. "It will sway the top of the house. It will shake you a little bit, but we don't really recognize it."

George H. Heilig is thought to have built this house between 1883-1885, after he purchased the lot from Reuben J. Holmes. In turn, Heilig sold the house to local grocers H.M. and R. Lee Wright in 1890.

According to the National Register of Historic Places nomination for the district, the house was sold four different times between 1890 and 1893, because of the Wrights' financial troubles.

Henry M. Wright, manager of the Wright family grocery business, became the sole owner in 1893 and occupied the home into the late 1920s. For many decades afterward, it became a rental property.

"It has gone through a lot of hands," Terry

says. "It was pretty abused for a long time."

The historic district nomination said the following in its description for the house: "It features an unusual Victorian-Gothic character not found elsewhere in the district, characterized by a steep gable end roof with extremely steep projecting front and rear gables."

Terry, 68, knows only that this is the first house that ever seemed built for her. She and Joe think it's an idyllic spot, with the passing trains, white picket fence, the flowers and herbs often in bloom and the roses growing on their antique gate trellis from New Orleans.

"We enjoy sitting on the porch and watching the people go back and forth," Terry adds. "I just like how simple it is."

A passing train sounds its whistle, probably in appreciation for the trackside Christmas tree. Or maybe the engineer spotted that fox. **S**



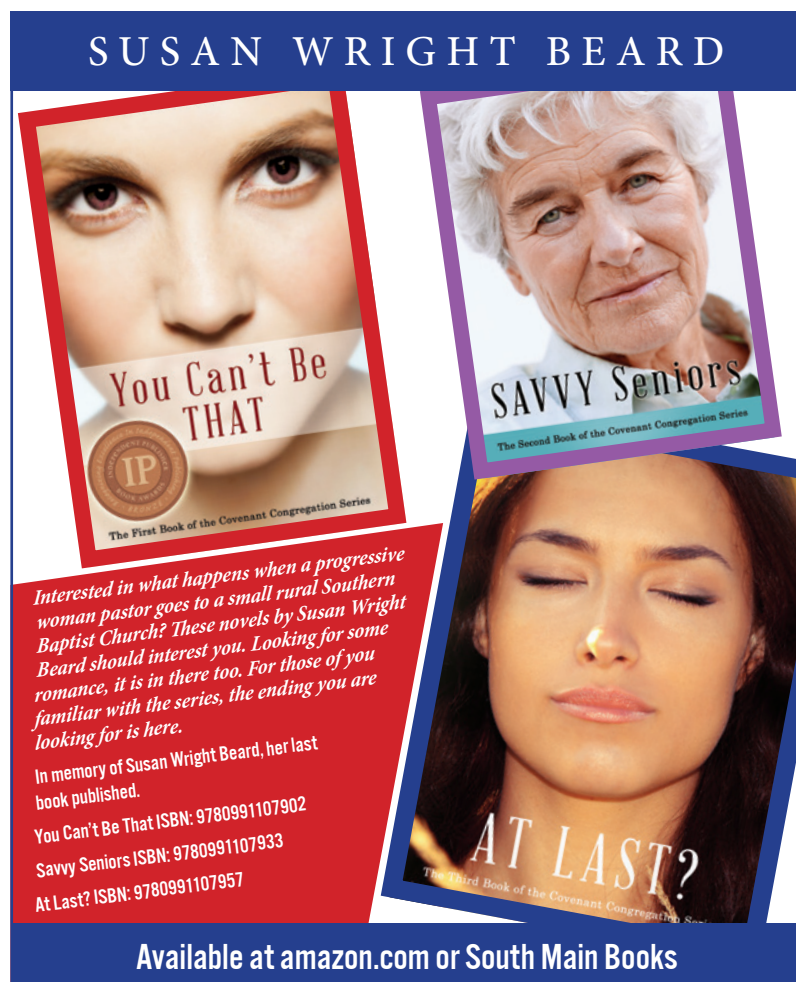
SALISBURY
JOIN ONLINE TODAY!
 for just
\$1 DOWN
 ANY MEMBERSHIP
 NO COMMITMENT

<p>PF Classic \$10 a month 1st month for FREE Promo Code SALISBURY10</p>	<p>PF Black Card® \$24.99 a month 1st month for FREE Promo Code SALISBURYBC</p>
---	--

super spacious - tons of equipment - squeaky clean

join **ONLINE** at planetfitness.com

*Included with Membership. Must be 18 years old, or 13 with parent/guardian. Home club only. Billed monthly to a checking account or credit card. Checking only may apply. Commitment and state and local taxes may apply. Subject to \$39 annual fee. Offer available at participating locations only. Planet Fitness locations are independently owned and operated. © 2021, PFI, LLC.



SUSAN WRIGHT BEARD

You Can't Be THAT
 The First Book of the Covenant Congregation Series

SAVVY Seniors
 The Second Book of the Covenant Congregation Series

AT LAST?
 The Third Book of the Covenant Congregation Series

Interested in what happens when a progressive woman pastor goes to a small rural Southern Baptist Church? These novels by Susan Wright Beard should interest you. Looking for some romance, it is in there too. For those of you familiar with the series, the ending you are looking for is here.

In memory of Susan Wright Beard, her last book published.

You Can't Be That ISBN: 9780991107902
Savvy Seniors ISBN: 9780991107933
At Last? ISBN: 9780991107957

Available at amazon.com or South Main Books



**THERE IS NO PLACE
LIKE HOME FOR THE**

Holidays



**CATHY
GRIFFIN**
BROKER
704-213-2464
c21cathy@bellsouth.net

Cathy is #1 in the state & #9 in the nation among Century 21 agents. Born and raised in Rowan County.



**ASHLEE M.
FLIPPIN**
BROKER
704-267-3371
c21ashlee@gmail.com

GIVE US A JINGLE IF YOU OR SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS LOOKING TO BUY OR SELL

21 Century 21
Towne & Country

**474 Jake Alexander Blvd., West
Salisbury, NC • 704-637-7721**



Jacqui Watson stands near the church and creche made by her late father. It was a gift to Jacqui's grandmother.

Sentimental **VALUABLES**

No matter how big or small, it
wouldn't be Christmas without certain
keepsakes

WRITTEN BY MARK WINEKA



From left: An angel's view of the baby Jesus in Celeste Ward's Nativity scene (Jon C. Lakey photo); Dressed as an elf herself, Cindy Noell holds a bowl that now carries an oft-broken, but treasured elf that originally belonged to her grandmother, Ethel Evans, who bought it at a five-and-dime store. The elf passed on to Cindy's late mother, Rachel E. Peeler, and now belongs to Cindy. (Mark Wineka photo); Bill Noell shows the black-and-white photograph of himself, as a 5- or 6-year-old, while he was holding the Coca-Cola Santa he had just received from the manager of the Salisbury bottling plant. Bill is now in his 60s, but he makes sure the Coca-Cola Santa is displayed each year. (Mark Wineka photo)

Editor's note: Those who celebrate Christmas often have decorative displays holding emotional weight, if you know the stories behind them. What follows are some examples.

The Christmas before he died at age 28, Jacqui Watson's father, Charles George Smith, made a rustic church and creche for his mother.

The family lived in Pennsylvania then. Jacqui was only nine weeks old when her dad died in 1959.

For most of her life, Jacqui never knew the creche made of wood existed. Through various marriages and migrations, the handmade Christmas treasure passed down from her grandmother Evelyn and ended up with Jacqui's half-brother, Gary, who lived in California.

Gary and Jacqui hardly ever saw each other or communicated. When he died several years back, the church and creche were being readied to be thrown out when Gary's widow, Marydawn, contacted Jacqui, thinking she might like to have the Christmas artifacts.

"The creche was built by your father, Charles Smith, as a gift to his mother," Marydawn said in a letter to Jacqui. "It was

built during a leave from the Navy submarine, the USS Sablefish. Charles drew up the plans for the creche while he was on the Sablefish. The hand-drawn design was found in a notebook he kept while on board: 1953-1954. Gary was 2-3 years old. The wood pieces came from Portage, Pa."

Jacqui was intrigued — and thrilled. Jacqui was hearing for the first time about something her father, a man she never got to know, made for her grandmother. And it was a Christmas gift to Evelyn as well. She will always be grateful to Marydawn for reaching out to her.

One day, the items came neatly packaged for protection in two huge boxes from California.

"I've only had it three, maybe four years." Jacqui said in 2020, looking at the display of the church and creche in her dining room. "It's pretty cool, you know. I love the church with the stained-glass windows. It's really pretty at night."

Jacqui's husband, Phil, couldn't wait for the Christmas season last year to put up the pieces. It's something that really has come to mean Christmas for them.



Mark and Patty Shuping always top their tree with this 'Christmas Around the World' angel they bought in 1988, the year they were engaged. (Jon C. Lakey photo)



Alisa Myers Mason says her grandmother made this Santa, sleigh and reindeer long before Alisa was born. 'When she passed away, it was the first thing I asked for,' Alisa says. (Submitted photo)

“He was like a kid,” Jacqui said.

• • •

Patty and Mark Shuping have been putting the same “Christmas Around the World” angel on top of their tree since 1988, the year they were engaged.

Once their three boys were old enough, Christian, Jonathon and Steven started taking turns putting the angel on top. “It’s just one of my things,” Patty says of the tradition.

Another holiday ritual: The family always goes to Laurel Springs and brings back a tree from the N.C. mountains for their house in eastern Rowan County.

Decorating the tree becomes a family affair. Last year was the first that two of the boys’ girlfriends helped in directing them where to put all the ornaments, which mean a lot to the Shupings year after year.

But none means more to Patty and Mark than that angel on top.

• • •

Last year, Len Clark made something he thinks is “destined to become a memento of the year of isolation.”

Len continues: “I bought a new wheelbarrow and planned to make a project of the old one for me and my grandsons; re-



One of the first things Peggy Wilson brings out at Christmas is this Nativity, made by her son, Tim, when he was a kid in Sunday School. The figures have fragile eggshell faces and cardboard toilet paper rolls for bodies. (Jon C. Lakey photo)

cycling it, using stuff lying around the house. Unfortunately, the virus kept them from visiting, so it turned out to be a solo assignment — a pity because all five have infinitely more artistic talent than yours truly.”

Len apologizes for the following poem he wrote to accompany what he created, but here goes:

On the first day of Christmas my grandsons absent when
The covid kept us apart

On the second day of Christmas this project's down to Len
And my poetry's as bad as my art

So
Two cans of paint,
Two mason jars,
Two trash bags,
Two Santa Hats, (joined together)
Two white gloves,
Two rubber boots,
Plenty of tape,
And a wheelbarrow falling apart.

A postscript from Len: “It’s even more creepy at night.”



Dari Caldwell has a collection of jeweled ornaments that her mother made in the early 1970s while she was recovering from surgery. The deconstructed costume jewelry came from her mother and aunt. (Submitted photo)



Don and Karen Coggins of Woodleaf Road make sure this wreath goes up every year in honor of their late friend, Eddie Myers. (Submitted photo)



Len Clark made this Santa out of an old wheelbarrow. He thinks he'll bring it out every year now, as a reminder of 2020. (Submitted photo)

• • •

Peggy Wilson associates part of Christmas with eggs — the half dozen hard-boiled eggshells making up a Nativity that her son, Tim, crafted when he was in Sunday School decades ago.

Len Clark made this Santa out of an old wheelbarrow. He thinks he'll bring it out every year now, as a reminder of 2020. (Submitted photo)

It holds a cherished place on Peggy and Bob Wilson's mantel. "It's probably about the first thing I put up because I know he'll look for it," Peggy says of Tim, who is long grown and lives in eastern North Carolina near New Bern.

The eggshell Nativity, which Peggy has taken great pains to preserve all these years, was a project of Sunday school teacher Sandra Swanson, "who was very, very crafty," she says.

What keeps the fragile eggs mounted on cardboard rolls from toppling over?

"Not much," Peggy reports, crossing her fingers.

• • •

Cindy Noell — yes, that's her Christmas-worthy name — has a ceramic elf that belonged to her grandmother, Ethel Evans.

Ethel bought it at the old Woolworth's dime store on Main Street in Salisbury. "It has to be about 60 years old," Cindy says, giving her best estimate.

"My mother (Rachel Evans Peeler) had it for years, now it is mine. When the elf was put up, it was Christmas."

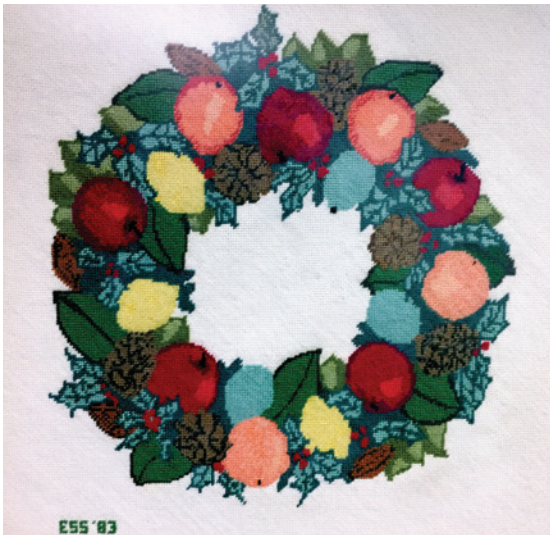
The elf has survived many falls off shelves through the years, but thanks to Cindy's dad, George Peeler, he's still around. "My dad was real good at gluing," Cindy says.

Now, when Cindy brings out the elf at Christmas, she finds a safer, waist-high table and hopes for no more tumbles. She places it by a picture of her late mother.

You might guess from their name, but Cindy and



Celeste Ward's residents of Bethlehem tend to their daily chores. (Jon C. Lakey photo)



***Above:** Pam Fisher, who lives at Trinity Oaks, treasures this needlepoint wreath made in 1983 by her late mother, Elizabeth 'Lib' South Storie. 'The wreath helps bring her home to me,' Pam says. (Submitted photo). **Right:** The Coca-Cola Santa Bill Noell is holding is more than 60 years old. He received it as a kid, as pictured in the photograph in his other hand. You might see the leg lamp behind Bill to the right. That's another story but, yes, it is like the one Ralphie's dad received in the oft-watched holiday movie, 'A Christmas Story.'*





*A scene in Jacqui Watson's
creche, made by her father,
(Jon C. Lakey photo)*

Bill Noell go big at Christmas with their decorations. “As you can see,” Cindy says, looking around their Salisbury home, “we are elf people.”

Bill has a couple of cherished holiday items of his own. Not many folks have a replica of the fishnet-stockinged leg lamp — the one made famous by Ralphie’s family in the movie “A Christmas Story.” Bill does.

He also is proud of a old Coca-Cola Santa he received as a young boy. The Santa is displayed on a wooden Coke crate, and it came from Bill Webb Sr., who was the Coca-Cola bottling plant’s manager and the Noells’ across-the-street neighbor when Bill’s family lived on Heilig Avenue.

Bill still has a black-and-white photo of himself holding this same Santa when he was 5 or 6.

“The grandkids get to look at it, but they

don’t get to play with it,” Bill says.

•••

Instead of a dollhouse, Celeste Ward builds a Bethlehem every Christmas.

And central to her Bethlehem is a Fontanini Nativity set, the first pieces of which Celeste purchased in 1972. Based in Bagni Di Lucca, Italy, Fontanini has been a family-owned company since 1908.

Celeste says she started with a creche and holy family, three kings and two donkeys. Over the years, it has grown to roughly 100 pieces.

During her various travels, she researched gift shops, and most of her pieces have come from Williamsburg, Virginia; North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; and Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Celeste says the majority of her figures also are limited edition or “retired,” and she keeps a detailed inventory of the collection for when the time comes to pass it down to her

two grandchildren.

“This is something I started for myself,” Celeste says, taking in her beautiful Bethlehem. “I don’t know, it’s just my thing. It’s nice to bring it out, and it’s more important for me to have this up than a Christmas tree.”

Her original 5-inch scale figures from the 1970s were hand-cast ceramic clay. But now they come only in a resin polymer. In the early days, she bought individual elements for \$8.99. Now they run \$25 to \$30 each, Celeste says.

“They’re usually straight from Fontanini and they seldom go on sale,” Celeste says.

When her grandson was young, he helped in setting up the town, and he also had the honor of placing baby Jesus in the manger as the final piece.

One year, the family cat stole baby Jesus, found later under a couch.

All the Fontanini figures have names and are



A resident of Trinity Oaks, Patricia 'Pat' Nelson says one of her favorite things is to bring out a ceramic Advent tree. Every day in Advent, she places a corresponding gold coin on the tree from an accompanying book. A story goes with each coin, leading up to the Nativity at Christmas. (Submitted photo)



Held together by Scotch tape and the survivor of 65 holidays, this angel still tops off the Christmas tree of Margaret Basinger. She made the construction paper angel as a third-grader in 1955. (Submitted photo)



Made decades ago in Sunday School by their son, Tim, the figures in Bob and Peggy Wilson's Nativity have eggshell faces and cardboard toilet paper rolls for bodies. (Jon C. Lakey photo)

Mark and Patty Shuping always top their tree with this 'Christmas Around the World' angel they bought in 1988, the year they were engaged. (Jon C. Lakey photo)



Every year, Carol Aycoth hangs all of the stockings her Aunt Mabel knitted for each member of Carol's family. In advance of Christmas 2019, Mabel knitted her last stocking — one for Carol's granddaughter Eva. Mabel died in February 2020 at age 95. (Submitted photo)





Left: Many years ago, Dari Caldwell bought this blue nutcracker for \$5 at a yard sale in White Plains, New York. She refurbished it, and her nutcracker collection was off and running. (Submitted photo) *Right:* Shepherds care for their flock in Celeste Ward's Nativity scene. (Jon C. Lakey photo)



pictured in a lush “Nativity Stories” book or catalog, which Celeste has. Characters such as Samson and St. Francis of Assisi are in the book, leading Celeste to conclude, “They’ve taken some liberties.”

She likes the tax collectors registering everyone coming into her Bethlehem. And “Bethany” is another favorite as she harvests fruits and carries a jug for water toward the well.

Celeste has added various things such as buildings, angels, villagers, stone walls and more animals, as long as things are to the same scale.

She has picked up extra pieces over time through Godley’s Garden Center, Tractor Supply and Hobby Lobby.

“There’s a lot of interesting things you can do with it,” Celeste says. “It has been fun, and it’s been meaningful.”

...

In brief, here are some other sentimental treasures or tributes Salisbury the Magazine readers make sure are part of their Christmases:

Alisa Myers Mason: “For me, it is a Santa, his sleigh and reindeer made by my grandmother many, many years ago. I have old family pictures of it in her house before I was ever born. When she passed away, it was the first thing I asked for.

“She so loved the Christmas season and was ‘very persnickety’ — her words — about her decorations being just so. For our family, it’s not Christmas until this goes on the table in our foyer.”

Margaret Basinger: “When I was in the third grade (1955), I drew and sparkled an angel on plain old construction paper. It hung as the tree topper on my parents’ tree with lots of Scotch tape for support. Now it adorns one of my two trees.”

From Our Homes to Yours!

We Wish You a Merry Christmas and Blessings Always!

 TERESA RUFTY	 MECHELLE KULD	 MONICA ROANE	 JILL DICKSON	 JANET EDWARDS
 JONAH MARSH	 SHELLIE STUBBS	 JASON SHRADER	 TARA WOOD	 LANDEN CAVIN

LISTING

SELLING

BUYING



TMR
REALTY, INC.

Teresa Rufty
Owner, Broker In Charge
Office: 704.245.6184 • Mobile: 704.433.2582
131 E. Innes St., Suite 305,
Salisbury, NC 28144
www.tmrrealtync.com



2019 Roco Gold
PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARD
Salisbury Post
1st Place

Don and Karen Coggins: The couple display a special Christmas wreath outside their Woodleaf Road home. For many years, this same wreath graced the home of Eddie and Diana Myers.

“Eddie passed in 2005 after a fulfilling 36-year career as vice president of Student Services with Rowan-Cabarrus Community College,” Don Coggins says. “He taught our daughter, Kaitlyn, how to swim in their pool and was a good friend.

“After his passing, we wanted to continue the holiday spirit by displaying the wreath on our front doorway each year in honor of his memory.”

Carol Aycoth: “I hang the stockings my Aunt Mabel knitted for each member of our family. She even knitted one for our newest granddaughter, Eva, last Christmas (2019) before my aunt passed away in February

2020 at age 95.”

Patricia “Pat” Nelson: “I have a white ceramic Advent tree. Every day in Advent, I place a gold coin on it. A story goes with each coin until the Nativity on Christmas.”

Pam Fisher: “When I moved to Trinity Oaks in Salisbury from my home in Boone, I just had room for a few seasonal decorations. I brought only those things that I love, including a needlepoint wreath that my mother made in 1983. She died in 1999, and I miss her every day, especially at Christmas. This wreath helps bring her home to me.

“She was Elizabeth “Lib” South Storie. She and my dad, James M. Storie, were co-editors of the 1942 Appalachian State annual and were responsible for the photo and name for App’s Mountaineer mascot Yosef, which is a contraction of ‘You, your-

self,’ meant to represent all App students.”

Dari Caldwell: Retired as head of Novant Health Rowan Medical Center, Caldwell says she has a number of special Christmas items, including a collection of jeweled ornaments her mother made in the early 1970s, while she was recovering from surgery.

“She used deconstructed costume jewelry of her own and from my aunt. They are just beautiful, and I am so glad to have them,” Caldwell says.

Caldwell also treasures a vintage Santa from the 1940s — “it was the first in my Santa collection, which now fills my staircase”; a nativity scene that Caldwell hand-painted in 1983; and a nutcracker she bought for \$5 at a yard sale in White Plains, New York, and refurbished. “It was my first nutcracker and started my collection,” Caldwell says. **S**

YATAWARA
GYNECOLOGY · WELLNESS · AESTHETICS

GENERAL GYNECOLOGY
BIOIDENTICAL HORMONE REPLACEMENT THERAPY
BOTOX · JUVEDERM · LATISSE · ZO SKIN HEALTH
KYBELLA · CHEMICAL PEELS · JANE IREDALE
MONALISA TOUCH · NUTRITIONAL SUPPLEMENTS

WWW.YATAWARAMD.COM
704.754.8990
415 STATESVILLE BOULEVARD · SALISBURY, NC 28144

Live Healthfully · Age Gracefully

Decisions = Destiny

Rowan-Kannapolis ABC Board
Safer Communities. Stronger Knowledge.

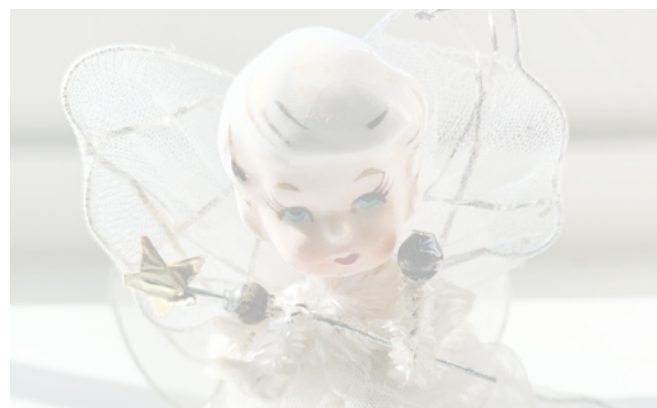
Together We Care.

GAMEPLAN FOR LIFE

Proactively we do programs to teach our community that: **“The preparation for the game of the life does not include the practice of underage drinking”** ~ Terry Osborne



Christmas
VIGNETTES



'Precious' angel is now even more treasured

BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER

For as long as I can remember, Momma has had a tiny angel, just a couple of inches tall.

For years, the little angel found a place on our big Christmas tree. Later, she was the top-per for a tabletop tree in Momma and Daddy's kitchen at Castlewood townhouses. Now, she has a place on the bureau in the bedroom of their apartment. And she stays there year-round.

I asked her earlier this year exactly where the angel came from.

"Isn't it precious?" she said.

Yes, it is.

It turns out that the angel was on the very first Christmas present Daddy gave Momma in December 1961.

"He gave me a bottle of perfume, but I don't remember what the perfume was," she said.

"It was Chanel No. 5," Daddy said, helpfully.

"Oh, yes, that's right," Momma said.

But why did she keep it all these years, I wondered. You have to understand: My mother doesn't keep anything. She is the exact opposite of a pack rat.

"It was just so typical of the person he is," Momma said. "I just loved it."

Momma and Daddy married May 16, 1964, and celebrated their 57th anniversary this year. Marrying Daddy, she said, was the smartest thing she ever did. He thinks the same thing — vice versa.

Aren't they precious?

Addendum: I wrote this piece for the magazine earlier this year, as you often have to write ahead for upcoming issues. Daddy left us in August. He lived 94 years, and, as he was often fond of saying, "It was a good run." I know that Momma will treasure the little angel the rest of her life, even as she will treasure the wonderful memories she



Cora Shinn's angel.

made with Daddy.

Merry Christmas to all!

Susan Shinn Turner, who grew up in Rowan County, is a freelance writer living in Raleigh.

The living Nativity: I took my role as an angel seriously

BY THERESA PARKER PIERCE

My favorite Christmas memory was being part of a living Nativity scene at Spilman Baptist Church in Kinston, North Carolina.

The living Nativity of Spilman Church was epic! Everyone in town rode slowly by and many families filled the church yard to take a closer look. That is what they told us, but to tell you the truth, I was always in the spotlight and could not see the record crowds. You see, every year for as long as I could remember, I was an angel, literally.

As a small child, I was an angel next to Mary the mother of Jesus, portrayed by my momma. I remember trying not to laugh as the donkey kept trying to eat my momma's scarf while my dad swatted his efforts.

It was only as I grew that I rose to the roof where we crawled precarious ladders to position ourselves as angels who appeared to hover over the lowly manger. When the "Hallelujah" melody belted out, it was our angelic responsibility to raise our arms for the entire chorus. It felt like an eternity. Our arms ached, but we did not dare to let them drop. We took our duty very seriously. Even our Sunday School teachers reminded us that our ministry mattered. And it did!

I was fortunate to grow up across the street from the church, what I believe to be divine intervention. My best friend and I got to watch the men of the church build the Nativity set from the ground up. We watched farmers deliver sheep and a live donkey.

I must interject that there was slight disdain on our part because the portrayal of Christ's



Members of Maupin Avenue Presbyterian Church participate in a living Nativity scene last year during a Fulton Heights neighborhood recognition of Christmas.

birth took up the space where we usually played kickball, but only for two weeks. We were children with limited space for our daily play. I choose to think God understood our childlike innocence.

We, the children, worked in 30-minute shifts as angels and shepherds. When our hands felt like they might freeze, we changed places with opposing actors. Just when our hands started to thaw, we were offered hot chocolate and cookies. The chocolate burned our tongues, but the marshmallows had to be eaten before they lost their foam. We traded burned tongues for frozen hands for about three hours and loved every minute of it.

I vividly remember how the wise men rotated bringing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The shepherds kneeled with their sheep. The manger was the spotlight and I remember worshipping in my own childlike way.

"And He shall reign forever and ever."

What a privilege it was, at such an impressionable age, to portray one of the angels who witnessed the birth of Jesus.

Since her retirement as a teacher, Theresa Parker Pierce of Salisbury has been honing her writing skills with the Blue Ridge Mountains Christian Writers Conference. She wrote this particular piece for Word Weavers International.

With kindness, friendship, the people of Salisbury were gifts of silver

BY DIANA CUMMINGS



When Diana Cummings was new to Salisbury and didn't have many worldly possessions, not to mention Christmas decorations, new friends Tom Wolpert and Joe Lancione provided her these silver balls, which continue to be her most prized Christmas possession.

I moved to Salisbury at a very low point in my life. I was introduced to many kind and caring people here through theater and music and was fortunate to find employment that allowed me to stay for the full experience.

Part of my job was to get renters for some property the theater owned. That was how I met Joe Lancione and Tom Wolpert who were also new to Salisbury.

I made downtown Salisbury my home in a 650-square-foot apartment; I bought a sofa and a bed. My life was in walking distance. Joe and Tom opened a cute shop downtown — A Step in Time — and it became a place to gather, so we did. We tipped our wine glasses and enjoyed the company.

Living alone in a small space, I had no intentions of putting up a tree — I didn't have anything to put on one. Tom saw this and made it possible for me to get these beautiful silver balls. He even found a big bowl I could borrow to display them in, and he came by that little apartment to see how they looked.



Diana Cummings' friends Joe Lancione, left, and Tom Wolpert with a giant giraffe, one of many interesting pieces at their former Salisbury shop, A Step in Time. (Submitted photos)

I didn't feel alone.

The people of Salisbury took me in, kept me warm and helped me begin again. It took a village to make me strong again. The silver balls represent the healing, the kindness of others and hope for the future.

Diana Cummings has recently married a high school sweetheart and this year has also retired from the city of Salisbury's planning department, where she was a familiar face to the public.

‘The cake’: Mr. Dawsey delivered something special every Christmas Eve

BY GENEVIEVE A. MARTIN

Growing up in Eastern North Carolina, I found summers more exciting than winters. Nearby lakes and the beach made for fun times, but there was a lull in winter. School activities occupied most of our hours, and the tedium of winter was broken by the promise of Christmas.

Yes, Christmas was coming! Every year, Daddy, emboldened and excited, would make the annual trek down to the “hillside” that bordered the Cape Fear River to select just the “perfect” cedar for our Christmas tree. As soon as Daddy returned, my sisters and I eagerly sought the treasured ornaments and garland. Ragged and worn from many years of use, we thought they were beautiful.

In a little while, the tree was decorated. The sisters — and the tree — were all aglow!

Daddy was a supervisor for the state highway department. In the 1950s, fast-food restaurants were sparse or non-existent, so it was necessary for a cook to travel along with the road work crew to provide meals. A “camp car” served as a kitchen. My daddy was very fond of Mr. Dawsey, the cook, as he had been a faithful employee cooking delicious meals for the work crew for many years.

While many youngsters wait for the promise of Christmas and Santa, we more eagerly anticipated “the cake.” Yes, the cake. Every Christmas Eve, without fail, Mr. Dawsey came to our home to deliver the most delicious Japanese fruitcake that ever was made.



Genevieve Martin did this watercolor showing the excitement she and her sisters and mother felt when the Japanese fruit cake made its appearance on Christmas Eve.

To this day, if I close my eyes, I am able to see this beautiful 9-inch, white textured sculpture. The contrast between the snowy white coconut frosting and the sparkling red cherries atop the cake was striking.

The cake was not to be cut until Christmas Day. Waiting was agony! Dreaming of a delicious slice featuring a golden layer, a brown cinnamon layer and another all separated by flavorful lemon curd was all we could do.

The gift of “the cake” was, indeed, so special to our whole family. Looking forward to

the delicious confection was a large part of our Christmas. Evidence of the important role it played is shown by a long-ago remark made by our older sister, who came home from Washington to celebrate the holiday.

Coming into the house, she did not ask, “Has Santa arrived?” but “Has Dawsey been here?”

Genevieve Martin is a retired arts educator who moved to Salisbury for its focus on the arts and to be near grandchildren.

The ‘tater shed’ held a relic full of meaning

BY PATTI SAFRIT

My grandparents were Delmar and Viola “Polly” Goodman, who were married Aug. 3, 1929.

There was once an article written — I believe Rose Post did it — about “The Hardware Man.” That was my grandpa, who worked at Salisbury Hardware, then Fisher-Thompson Hardware and finally Bernhardt Hardware.

He and “Mawmaw” lived on a family farm off Stokes Ferry Road, about 15 miles from Salisbury.

Some 30 years ago, my sister Robin and I were poking around in one of the old buildings known as the “tater shed,” a structure where they would spread potatoes to dry after picking them up and storing them for the winter.

No taters were there at the time, as it had become a place to put things you didn’t know where else to put, but didn’t really want to get rid of.

Robin and I had a blast finding all kinds of jugs (that had once held Coca-Cola syrup), medicine bottles, old farm implements and the such, including the old pull plow used to dig up those potatoes!

So it was there that one of us picked up a kind of small wooden box with a really weird alteration to it. Something had been added to the inside bottom of the box, and two unusual slats attached across the top.

Well, we thought and thought on what in the world it was and finally decided we’d go ask Mawmaw. We found her in the kitchen, and we



This box served as the homemade tree stand for Patti Safrit’s grandparents during their first Christmas as a married couple — in 1929. (Submitted photo)

produced the box.

Her response was, “Oh, my! Get rid of that ole thing!”

Okay, so that really made us need to find out what it was. She told us that the first Christmas they were married, they didn’t have anything — it was 1929 after all, and the stock market crash had occurred just a few months after their wedding and a few months prior to Christmas.

She explained that on Christmas Eve, Pawpaw had gone into the woods and cut down a little cedar tree for them to decorate. The little box we found was the tree stand he made to put it in.

Once Mawmaw assured us she didn’t want the

box, Robin and I drew straws to see who got it, and I won.

So that is my tradition. When it starts getting close to Christmas, I find a small cedar tree and wedge it through the slats and into the little holder in the base of the box.

And I think of them and their first Christmas. And how much I miss them. It still has a way of warming our hearts.

Patti Safrit, a longtime member of Unity Presbyterian Church and a big promoter of the Woodleaf Tomato Festival, now spends most of her time on the N.C. coast.

VETERANS



Veterans gather in Christiana Lutheran Church's fellowship hall for the Frontier Coffee Shop.



Buddy to buddy

*At Frontier Coffee Shop,
every Tuesday is Veterans Day*

WRITTEN BY KRIS MUELLER
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



For a change of pace one week, veterans met outside Powles Staton Funeral Home in Rockwell for an appreciation lunch. Here, Marine Mike Catus hands out doughnuts for dessert.

It's Tuesday, and local veterans are gathering for the weekly meeting of the Frontier Coffee Shop, which has become a safe haven in their lives since it launched eight years ago at a Salisbury restaurant.

They come to the "coffee shop" meetings from a variety of backgrounds, ages, military branches and years of service. Most were strangers prior to attending a meeting, but already bonded in powerful ways through their pledges to honor and protect our homeland.

Mike Catus and Nick Darconte were Marines assigned to Beirut in 1983 when a suicide bomber destroyed a Marine barracks there, killing more than 200 of their comrades. The two men did not know each other then and would not connect until years later at an event held at Camp Lejeune to commemorate the victims. Once they met, they discovered they live just miles apart in Rowan County. Catus invited Darconte to the coffee shop meetings, and now they are regulars.

Today's gathering has several facets — a social hour at 10 a.m., lunch at 11 a.m., a noon meeting and, most likely, a post-meeting discussion. It may be mid to late afternoon before all 80 or more veterans exit the Christiana Lutheran Church fellowship hall, where they now meet.

Troy Horton, who served with the Navy's amphibious forces, is one of the organizers and greets visitors to help them find a seat.

"Those are the Marines over there in the back corner — you might want to go this other way," Horton says with a big grin.

The Marines are in high spirits today. It is Bernie Sahadi's birthday, and the retired Marine master sergeant and 25-year veteran has brought his wife's popular cupcakes. In a nod to his recently discovered Scottish roots, Sahadi has donned a khaki kilt and is explaining how his Scottish heritage squares with his olive complexion, dark features, and last name. Several perplexed comrades have missed a meeting or two.

The gathering officially begins with the pledge to the flag, punctuated by a rowdy "Oorah" from the back corner



Elaine Nichols, left, and Sandra Smith Czuba, both with the Daughters of the American Revolution, prepare desserts for the crowd.

of the room.

Founded eight years ago by local veterans Tom Harrell and Thelma Luckey, the Frontier Coffee Shop provides a forum for veterans to learn and share information about accessing military benefits, Horton says. But, more importantly, it allows veterans to have fellowship, share experiences and work through tough issues that followed them home after military service.

The group met at Thelma's Down Home Cooking and K&W Cafeteria restaurants in the early years, then suspended meetings due to the pandemic. They spent several months scouting for a new meeting location until Jason Smith, president of the church council at Christiana Lutheran Church, offered use of the church's new fellowship hall. It has now become their new base of operations. Members of the local Daughters of the American Revolution, including Jane Grogan Smith-Steinberg and Sandra Smith Czuba, come weekly to prepare coffee and tea and set up for lunch.

A tour around the fellowship hall reveals much about the group's dynamics and personalities. Laughter permeates many table discussions as veterans find

World War II Army veteran John Cauble, 94, attends the weekly lunches with his nephew.

“The coffee saved his life. That day he talked to me, he was ready to end it all, but I did not know that at the time.”





Above: The American flag is saluted prior to lunch. Below left: As explained through these insignias, Ralph Swinson served in four different military branches and several squadrons over his 21-year career. Below right: Marine Bernie Sahadi celebrates his birthday with cupcakes and a rendition of 'Happy Birthday' during a recent lunch gathering.





*Marine Rexx Shelton arrives
in his convertible with his bull
terrier, Sgt. Shane Dog.*

ways to poke fun at one another.

Sahadi describes the setting as “a community within a community.” Some veterans sit together each week out of comfort, while others move around to mingle with new people. “It’s informal — not structured — and there are no filters,” Sahadi says.

Carl Wilson, his daughter, and a friend have come together today. Now 82, Wilson served in the Army. Military roots run deep in his family. His brother and son served, and his grandson is enlisted. Wilson’s two daughters married into the military.

“I like coming to the meetings and have been coming ever since it was at Thelma’s,” says his daughter, Jackie McClanahan. “Being away from the military now, this is a chance to find out what is going on locally for the veterans and let my son and husband know. I love to hear the speakers — someone always has an answer here if you have a problem. You just have to ask.”

Justan Mounts, director of the Rowan County Veterans Services, attends weekly meetings to help veterans and dependents understand benefits and maneuver through the Veterans Administration system.

“Justan deciphers what the VA pushes out in newsletters,” Horton says. “The wording there can be so complicated, but he gets us answers. When you have a guy like that to very proactively ready the documentation, it takes the workload off of us.”

At another table is the group’s oldest veteran — 99-year-old James Deal. He served in Gen. George Patton’s tank division. Glenn Hoffner, who is “just 96,” still has a sharp sense of humor. He served in World War II on an LST. When asked what that stands for, he quips, “a long, slow target,” as his tablemates begin howling. Hoffner served on a land-





*Always Find the
Perfect Gift*



**BARNHARDT
JEWELERS**

112 E. Innes St Downtown Salisbury 704.633.0618

CABARRUS

EYE CENTER

**TOP
OF THE
CHARTS**

State-of-the-art
cataract surgery
and other eye
surgery close
to home.

- More than 60,000 procedures in over 30 years.
- Area's only surgery center focused Exclusively on eye surgery.
- We have surgery staff with 30+ years of experience. Call for an appointment.

201 LePhillip Court NE | Concord
Eye Surgery & Laser Clinic
500 Lake Concord Rd. | Concord

704-782-1127
www.cabarruseye.com

EYE SURGERY AND LASER CLINIC
ACCREDITED WITH THE AMERICAN ASSOCIATION FOR
ACCREDITATION OF AMBULATORY SURGERY FACILITIES



Ralph Swinson served in four different military branches during his 21-year career. He shows a photograph of the quilt given to him by the Daughters of the American Revolution.

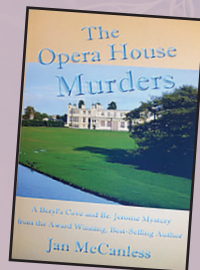
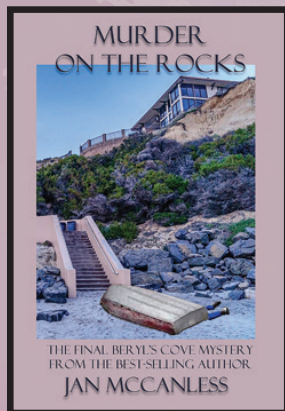
ing ship that transported tanks and troops to foreign shores.

When the Frontier Coffee Shop started, “we were losing 22 (veterans) a day nationally, so it was a suicide prevention thing, too,” Horton says. “It allowed guys to come in, sit down and talk to each other. A lot of the guys just needed to talk, needed somebody to listen.”

“For a lot of fellows, it is therapeutic,” adds Arthur Brown, who served with the Army in Vietnam. “Military veterans need those who understand the military. I think if you have been in combat, it never leaves you. It just doesn’t.”

Horton and Brown know of at least two veterans whose lives were changed after attending a meeting. One veteran opened up to Brown about challenges with post traumatic stress disorder. He disappeared for a year, then returned to tell the rest of his story.

Jan McCanless is an award winning and best selling author. All 17 of her books are best sellers. The last book in the “Beryl’s Cove” series, *Murder on the Rocks*, is now available.



Murder on the Rocks is exclusive at Steven’s Country Store and Butcher Shop.

Visit amazon.com, empower publishing, and from her website www.janmacbooks.com!

TRANE COMFORT SPECIALIST

TRANE
It's Hard To Stop A Trane.™

HIGHLY TRAINED EXPERTS IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.

WE STAND BEHIND EVERY TRANE.

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED COMING AND GOING.

Dependable. Sincere. Stubbornly loyal. However you want to describe us, our mission as your independent Trane Comfort Specialist™ dealer is simple: Deliver reliable year-round comfort you and your family can count on. And because we're stand up guys, you have our attention and support before, during and after every service or installation job. For a positive customer experience that's as unstoppable as a Trane system, call us anytime.



704-633-8095
www.trane.com

Contact us right away, your local Trane Comfort Specialists™ with the reputation for reliability.

© 2017 Trane. All rights reserved.

“The coffee saved his life,” Brown says. “That day he talked to me, he was ready to end it all, but I did not know that at the time.”

For that reason, Sahadi and other leaders check on veterans that might need to talk and engage with new veterans so they will return.

Over the years, many veterans have walked through the doors of the Frontier Coffee Shop. Each time, they leave with lighter loads, buoyed by their comrades and now, their friends.

“This group — all of us need it,” Horton says. **S**

To learn more, check out the group’s Facebook page at Frontier Coffee Shop Rowan County. Kris Mueller is a freelance writer living in Salisbury.



Air Force veteran Mary Owen Noseworthy is one of several women veterans attending each week.



The Elements Counseling

Services, PA

cbaubach@elementscounseling.org
Hours are by appointment only.

Welcome Back

Cindy Baubach, MA, LCMHC
(Licensed Clinical Mental Health Counselor),
and NCC (National Certified Counselor)

704.277.3801 | 103 Dorsett Drive - Suite 200 - Salisbury, NC



Our community **BENEFITS** from the work of



Historic Salisbury Foundation

www.historicsalisbury.org

Historic Salisbury Foundation strengthens our community as we promote sustainability, protect historic properties, improve neighborhoods, increase property values, and build tourism.

How can you participate?
JOIN, VOLUNTEER, GIVE YOUR GIFT




Over 60 years in the business, we understand kitchens & baths.



We also understand what our customers want competitive price, quality products and friendly, professional customer service. Walk-ins welcome. Mon-Fri 8:30-4:30

704-857-BATH
CORNER OF 29 NORTH & OLD BEATTY FORD RD. CHINA GROVE
WWW.LANDISPLUMBING.COM



Melissa Yates
REALTOR®
MLA



LANTERN
REALTY AND DEVELOPMENT
Let Us Guide You Home
105 North Main Suite B
Salisbury, NC 28144

704-239-3835
melissayates4u@gmail.com
lantern-realty.com



‘NORTH MAIN STREET CHRISTMAS, 1960s’

By Susan Linn — Watercolor

Artwork of local scenes for Salisbury's the Place may be submitted to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com
Vertical orientation is preferred.

CELEBRATING 102 YEARS

Salisbury MOTOR COMPANY

Family Owned & Operated Since 1919



Donny Clement III



Bill Sides

EVERYTHING IN CARS, TRUCKS, AND SUVS



**ALL VEHICLES INSPECTED,
SERVICED AND CERTIFIED!**



WeatherTech®
Automotive Accessories

Rowan County's only authorized
WeatherTech Diamond Dealer

Best Pre-owned Car Dealer

700 West Innes Street, Salisbury 704-636-1341

www.SalisburyMotorCompany.com

life-changing **CARE**

Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist combines the brightest minds in medicine to bring you world-class care with a commitment to strengthen the health and wellness of our community. Because when it comes to the health of you and your family, no one should settle for anything short of life-changing.

Wake Forest Baptist Health
is now



Atrium Health
Wake Forest Baptist