

August 2017

SALISBURY

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man of STEEL

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makes his mark in the NFL

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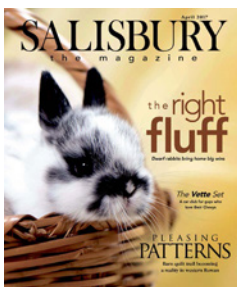
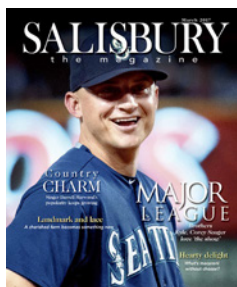
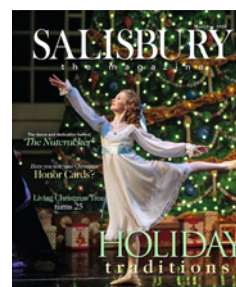
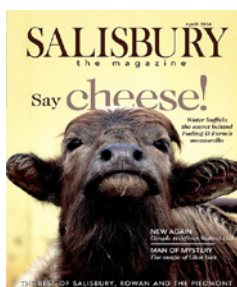
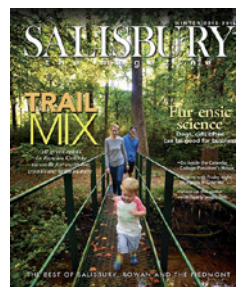
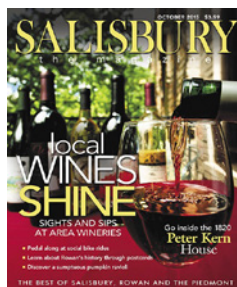
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FEATURES

..... August 2017

On this page: Trey Felton, 4, finds a feather in the chicken coop at Yadkin Path Montessori School.

— Photo by Kristi Craven

36

Kinesthetic learning

Yadkin Path
Montessori gets
kids moving

by **ANDIE
FOLEY**

48

No quit

Javon Hargrave is
now sacking QBs
for the Steelers

by **DAVID
SHAW**

On the cover: Former North Rowan High School
standout Javon Hargrave is making a big impact on
the defensive line of the Pittsburgh Steelers.

— Photo by Jon C. Lakey

DEPARTMENTS



IN EVERY ISSUE

Editor's Letter p.7 | Bookish p.9 | Through the Lens p.10 | Rowan Original p.12

Events Calendar p.70 | The Scene p.72 | Salisbury's the Place p.82



FOOD

- 14 **Worldly wise**
Country club chef
has the chops.

THE ARTS

- 18 **True colors**
Alee Johnson finds her
calling as a painter.

AT HOME

- 26 **Love story**
Spencer home a tale of
craft, music, preservation.



WELLNESS

- 58 **Soothing soaps**
When goat's milk
comes in handy.

REMINISCE

- 64 **Scout's honor**
The legendary Jack Kepley
is always prepared.



INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Bare Furniture.....	4
Barnhardt Jewelers.....	54
Carolina Golf Mart.....	69
Carolina Healthcare.....	83
Cathy Griffin – Century 21.....	53
Courtyard Marriott.....	69
Critters.....	23
Dan Nicholas Park.....	8
DC Chem Dry.....	56
Distinctive Landscapes.....	68
Downtown Salisbury.....	29
Embellish.....	68
Godley's Garden Center.....	57
Granite Knitwear.....	46
Hearing Solutions.....	41
J.A. Fisher Construction.....	44
Landis Plumbing.....	69
Lazy 5 Vets.....	30
Meals on Wheels.....	55
Medicine Shoppe.....	31
Natural Health In You.....	54
NC Transportation Museum.....	45
North Hills Christian School.....	63
Novant Health.....	19, 25
Old Courthouse Theatre.....	44
Organ Lutheran Church.....	63
Par 3 Insurance.....	63
Powles Staton.....	2
Ralph Bakers Shoes.....	53
Ritchie's Steamway.....	61
Rowan Animal Clinic.....	62
Rowan/Kannapolis ABC Board.....	34
Salisbury Emporium.....	23
Salisbury Orthopaedic.....	84
Salisbury Wine Shop.....	23
Caniche.....	23
Candy Shoppe on Main.....	23
South Main Book Company.....	23
Stout Heating.....	62
The Gables.....	57
The Laurels.....	62
Tom's Carpet Care.....	63
Transit Damage Freight Furniture.....	47
Trinity at Home.....	52
Trinity Oaks.....	35
Viva Boutique.....	44
Windsor Gallery.....	55
Yatawara.....	52

A balance of power comes from the young and old

I can't help but talk about this month's issue of Salisbury the Magazine without thinking of words such as juxtaposition, symmetry and balance.

On one end of the balanced scale is Jack Kepley. If you've ever met Jack, you've seen the light in his eye, the spring in his step and the attitude that says, "Men, we can accomplish this if we pull together." The "men" he would be talking to would be Boy Scouts.

For 80 years — yes, 80 — Kepley has been involved in Scouting, first, as a Scout, then as an adult leader. Kepley was raised in the Chestnut Hill area off South Main Street. His troop — Troop 448 — grew out of Coburn United Methodist Church, where Kepley has attended his whole life. Even at age 93, Kepley remains dedicated to his troop and church.

Scouting was the calling for Kepley, and the story in this issue cannot come close to listing all the accolades he has received or the things he has accomplished with the Boy Scouts of America. Kepley definitely found his niche, and he is juxtaposed in this issue with four young people who are trying to establish themselves in careers they also have a passion for.

Javon Hargrave, a standout athlete at North Rowan High School, is coming up on his second year with the National Football League's Pittsburgh Steelers. Writer David Shaw shows us how Javon's path toward terrorizing quarterbacks in the NFL wasn't an easy one, but Hargrave had an inner resolve to persevere.

Too many times, as you'll see, people have made the mistake of underestimating Hargrave.



This month's Rowan Original is Lewis Young, who is beginning his first season as a trainer for the Los Angeles (formerly San Diego) Chargers. Where will Young be 10 years from now? That's hard to predict, but this first important job out of graduate school at Virginia Tech will go a long way in setting Young's course.

As with Young, Alec Johnson is a 2011 graduate of Salisbury High School. She is now honing her considerable talents as a painter in Richmond, Va., though she keeps a close working connection with her hometown here. Susan Shinn Turner introduces us to this vivacious artist who we'll probably be hearing a lot of for years to come.

While Hargrave, Young and Johnson are still in their early 20s, Devlin Cathey, the new executive chef at the Country Club of Salisbury, is an old man at 36. Cathey, you will find, has not wasted his years up to now, nor resisted opportunities to cook in places ranging from super yachts to African game reserves.


There's a balance here, Kepley on one side,

and these young talents on the other. The one thing they have in common is Salisbury, whether it was a starting point, a current landing spot or a lifetime home. That's sort of nice.

Our August issue also will introduce you to Mary and Forrest Clanton, who have taken on the rejuvenation of a grand old house in Spencer. Elizabeth Cook brings you their story. And if you've ever wondered how the Montessori approach to education and child development works, writer Andie Foley tells us about Yadkin Path Montessori, founded not too long ago by Myra Tannehill.

Deirdre Parker Smith reveals how goat's milk is an important ingredient in the soothing soaps made by Bobbie Killian and her mother, Pat. Goat on a rope? No, not quite.

You'll also want to read this month's "Salisbury's the Place" column, written by Catawba College President Brien Lewis. As always, so many of the great images with these August stories come from photography director Jon Lakey, assisted this summer by photographic intern Kristi Craven.

So there's a little bit of football, a little bit of educational stuff heading into another season, another school year. I hope your summer has been a good, balanced one. 

Mark Wineka,
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

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Great Family Entertainment

From potlikker to pot shots, make it through August with these offerings

The Dog Days of summer are upon us. If you need an escape from the typical heat, humidity and cries of boredom, these books may be the key to letting off some steam.

This book was published in May, but it's a subject that gets richer each season.

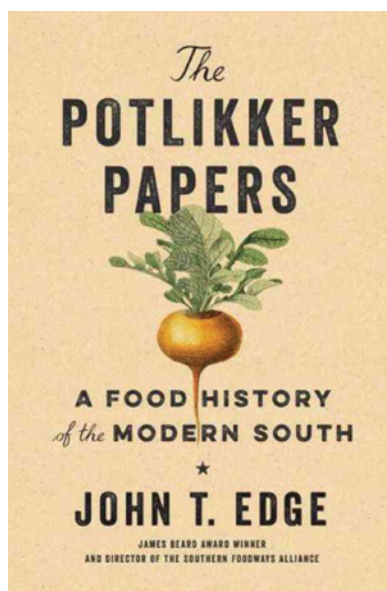
"The Potlikker Papers: A Food History of the Modern South," by John T. Edge, is a history book that speaks to our stomachs. Edge, director of the Southern Foodways Alliance, writes about how Southerners shaped America's culinary identity, and how race relations impacted Southern food culture over six decades.

Potlikker, in case you didn't know, is the broth from a pot of greens, and it was the sustenance of many of the enslaved, full of nutrients wrung from the greens.

Today, potlikker is embraced and celebrated. So, too, with Southern food, once a battleground of racial tension.

Edge traces the history of the gentrification of such foods as potlikker, the back-to-the-land movement, the rise of fast foods modeled on rural staples and the artisanal renaissance of those humble ingredients.

He profiles Southern food figures such as Fannie Lou Hamer, Colonel Sanders, Mahalia



Jackson, Edna Lewis, Paul Prudhomme, Craig Claiborne and Sean Brock.

But if you do all your cooking in your head, this next book may be more to your liking. Margo Livesey's "The Hidden Machinery: Essays on Writing" could be the "write" recipe.

Livesey is a New York Times bestselling author who offers a masterclass for readers and those who want to write. She discusses the inner workings of fiction and considers how stories and novels can benefit from paying close attention to great works of literature and our own experiences.

The essays range from navigating through oceans of research, creating characters that walk off the page to how famous novelists came to write their works.

It's handy, authors and teachers of literature say, to keep nearby, with Livesey's useful information about great writers and her own experience of fiction's inner workings.


And now for something completely different, to quote the incomparable comedy team Monty Python.

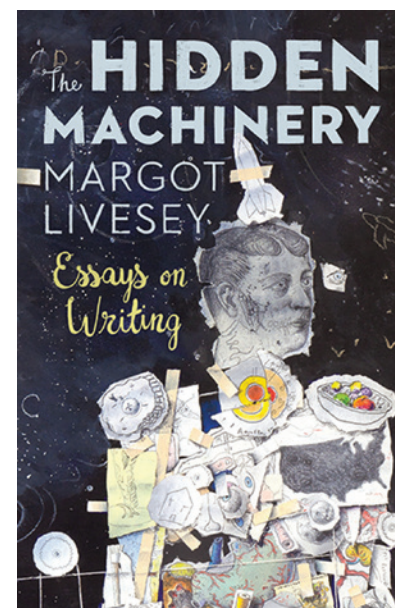
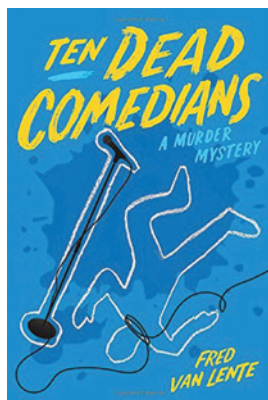
It's Fred Van Lente's "Ten Dead Comedians," a darkly clever take on Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None" ("Ten Little Indians" was the movie).

In this case, nine comedians are invited to the island retreat of a legendary Hollywood comedian, only to find there's no one there. The comedians include a former late-night TV host, a washed-up improv instructor, a wealthy "blue collar" comic and a past-her-prime Vegas icon. Do they sound familiar?

Without cell phone signal or a host, they are murdered one by one, but why? And by whom?

Early readers say it is a blast, just the thing for those hot August nights.

So there you have it, instruction, construction and destruction. Sounds like a perfect summer project. 



THROUGH THE LENS // by jon c. lakey





The old saying goes, 'Red at night, sailor's delight,' and it seems fitting here as the sun breaks through clouds toward the end of a day. Early-evening rains that break up just before dusk are sometimes a gift for photographers who can capture a glorious image even in an otherwise uninteresting parking lot. Such was the case one spring evening in the parking lot near the Tinseltown movie theaters.

Charging ahead

Look for athletic trainer Lewis Young on NFL sidelines this season.

When he graduated in May with a master's degree from Virginia Tech, Salisbury native Lewis Young already knew he would be working on the sports medicine staff of the San Diego Chargers.

To be more precise, it's really the Los Angeles Chargers. The National Football League approved the Chargers' move to LA for the 2017 football season.

"I'll actually be helping the organization move to Los Angeles in July before training camp," said Young, who left for San Diego in May after a week at his parents' home in Salisbury. "We're going to play in the intimate StubHub center for the next two years and I think it's going to be a really cool place to play football."

You'll notice Lewis is already referring to the Chargers organization as "we." He developed the same devotion to Virginia Tech, where he was a graduate assistant for the sports medicine department and was assigned to the Hokies football team.

Young accompanied the Hokies to the Belk Bowl this past football season. Also at Virginia Tech, he participated in what he considers a cutting-edge concussion study in which players' helmets were outfitted with sensors to measure and collect head-collision data.

Young, 24, is a graduate of Salisbury High School. He played tennis at both Salisbury High and Roanoke College, where he received his undergraduate degree. He also spent a summer as a sports medicine intern with the DC United soccer team in Washington.

Young is the son of Michael and Diane Young. Salisbury the Magazine caught up with this Rowan Original during the week before he left for the West Coast:



— Photo by Jon C. Lakey

Q. If you were describing for someone else what it was like to grow up in Salisbury, what are a couple of things you probably would mention?

I'm always very proud to say I'm from Salisbury, I had a great time growing up in this unique small town. I would definitely mention a couple of key things like Cheerwine, Hap's Grill and Friday night football at Salisbury High School. These three things are unique to Salisbury and are some of what I always look forward to when I return home to visit family and friends.

What drew you to Roanoke College and why did that prove to be a good fit for you?

When I was looking at schools, obviously tennis was a big factor, but I understood that tennis wasn't going to be my complete life in college. I definitely think Roanoke proved to be a good fit for me because while it's a phenomenal school academically, I realized that it would provide other opportunities like competitive athletics, a stunning setting in the Roanoke Valley and a great sense of community. I made friends at Roanoke and experiences that I will carry with me for the rest of my life, and ultimately it was a fantastic fit.

By the same token, why did you choose Virginia Tech for your graduate studies, and are you forever now a Hokies fan?

I applied to be a sports medicine graduate assistant at several big schools, but ultimately Virginia Tech was where I wanted to be. The sense of family I found in the staff when I interviewed at Virginia Tech, on top of being able to work with some of the best teams in the ACC, made this a unique experience I couldn't pass up.

I am forever a Hokies Fan, and will always cherish the memories I had being a part of Virginia Tech Football.

At Virginia Tech, what key things did you take away from the concussion study funded by the Department of Defense and NCAA?

Concussion research is still relatively new, but we were able to make great strides in what we found while I was here at Virginia Tech. As far as from a preventative standpoint, our concussion numbers were lower in the past two years after a big push for neck and shoulder strengthening that helps stabilize the skull. Ultimately, after looking at the way we're testing and manufacturing our helmets, the game is safer now than it was 10 or 20 years ago.

We still have a long way to go however. The blood, bio-marker and helmet sensor research we're doing at Virginia Tech will hopefully grow

to other schools, and we should be able to get some really good data to continue to make changes to the sport of football and other contact sports as well.

Describe the process you went through to land a job with the San Diego Chargers. Have you actually been to San Diego yet?

I've never been to California, or even past Colorado for that matter, but I'm extremely excited to get out there and begin working with the Chargers and their staff. As far as the process to get the job, I met with a couple of NFL scouts during our training camp when they were scouting our players at Virginia Tech and that's when I became really interested in going on to the NFL.

I sent my resumé to about seven teams and the Chargers were the first one to get back to me after the season. When the Chargers offered me first, I was excited and relieved since they seemed like a great staff to be with. I'm extremely humbled and blessed to be able to join an organization like the Chargers.

What do you think some of your duties will be with the Chargers?

Well, I'll be working my butt off that's for sure. I definitely will be a part of practice and game hydration, which is the stereotypical duty people think of for an athletic trainer. On top of that, I'll be working on preventative taping and bracing for the guys, as well as game-day coverage for injuries, preventative rehabilitation and post-injury rehabilitation.

The team had an injury bug last season, and I'll be in charge of making sure we don't catch that bug again this season.

Do you ever picture yourself returning to Salisbury to live and, if so, what would it take? What would Salisbury have to offer you or other young peo-

ple to make it a more attractive place to live?

I could definitely come back to Salisbury to live if there was more job opportunity for sports medicine. There just isn't much need for athletic trainers in Salisbury right now. I think in general there isn't much need for the young entrepreneur in Salisbury, so there would just need to be more to offer young people to make it more attractive of a place to live for our generation.

What hobbies do you pursue beyond tennis?

Being in the mountains of Southwest Virginia and Blacksburg, I do a lot of hiking in my spare time. I haven't picked up my racquets in a while, which I definitely miss.

What's one of your pet peeves?

A major pet peeve of mine is when somebody responds to a question with "Ummm ..." or "Uhhh ..."

Five words you would use to describe Salisbury ...

Home. Friendly. Small. Passionate. Proud.

Two foods always in your fridge or pantry?

Chicken and rice.

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

My advice to any young person is to get yourself out of your comfort zone. This will challenge you and expose you to more strain, but the end result is better experience and adaptability to any situation. By doing this, you will also open the door to better opportunities. [S](#)

An accent on quality

Executive chef brings world of experience to Salisbury Country Club.

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

There's something adventuresome about Devlin Cathey.

Sporting a cleanly shaven dome and an accent betraying his South African roots, Cathey has lived and worked on super yachts, African game reserves and in an English boutique hotel. Food is his artistic canvas. He has launched high-end catering companies and run his own gastro-pubs, restaurants and coffee bar.

Cathey, 36, has a decent golf game and still finds anything to do with rugby terribly satisfying. You wonder if he wasn't a recent candidate for the world's most interesting man.

So how does someone with this kind of resumé become executive chef for the Country Club of Salisbury? It comes down to family.

He and his wife, Cara, have a young brood, 2-year-old Kyla and 1-year-old Braedyn, and they came to North Carolina from Florida to set down some roots. Devlin has gone quickly from preparing meals on yachts to cooking for the genteel population of a small Southern town and several of its civic clubs.

Cathey started as the country club's first executive chef in September 2016, and he discovered he would

**Devlin Cathey
is the new
executive chef
at Salisbury
Country Club.**
— Photo by
Jon C. Lakey



have to make a lot of changes, with the food and approach.

“Once I saw what was going on, I knew it wasn’t going to happen overnight,” Cathey says. “We have seen huge, positive changes, and we are very excited about what the future will bring. ... I’m hoping to get to the point it’s a five-day-a-week job.”

Besides adding food and beverage director to his job description, Cathey has established new menus with variety.

“When you’re a chef, if it’s easy, you’re doing it wrong,” Cathey says.

There are reasonably priced lunch specials and an otherwise wide-ranging a la carte menu for dinner.

A starter in the main dining room might include spinach and goat cheese spring rolls or curried potato and coconut soup. For the main course, try roasted rack of lamb with rosemary red wine sauce or pecan-crusted trout with lemon tomato salsa.

Desserts such as Mississippi mud brownies or chocolate torta caprese with vanilla bean ice cream cap off a meal, or you could go with a pecan peach cobbler.

Downstairs in The Grill Room, members can find all the traditional salads, wings, burgers, sandwiches and wraps, but they also dig into satisfying entrees such as Carolina catfish, eggplant parmigiana, fried calamari, shrimp and steak.

Cathey goes with weekly specials in The Grill Room: Wednesdays are fried chicken night; Thursdays, beer and burger night, Fridays, family night with a kids buffet; Saturdays, steak and ribs night; and Sundays, a 11 a.m.-2 p.m. brunch.

With all this going on, Cathey and his staff — he has nine in the kitchen and 25 to 30 total when you count serving staff — also provide meals for various book clubs; the English Speaking Union; civic clubs such as Kiwanis, Civitan and Rowan Rotary; and events in general.

“I pay huge attention to detail,” Cathey says.

Cathey wants the food experience to leave patrons with the feeling they are getting some-



Above: During the time he was executive chef for a game reserve in South Africa, Devlin Cathey, left, discusses with a game ranger and his general manager the Easter feast Cathey put together for a safari in the bush. **Below:** This was one of the yachts Chef Devlin Cathey worked on. You can see many of the ‘toys,’ such as a helicopter, jet skis, a jet pack, sea scooters and a slide into the water.

— Submitted photos

thing special at the club beyond golf, tennis and the swimming pool.

“It’s a menu for the members — good food at a good price,” he says.

Elizabeth Norvell, who joined the club in

2009 with her husband, Owen, says Cathey has brought improved, diversified menus to the club, better communications and an adaptability for special functions.

“I think he’s the best thing that has hap-



FOOD

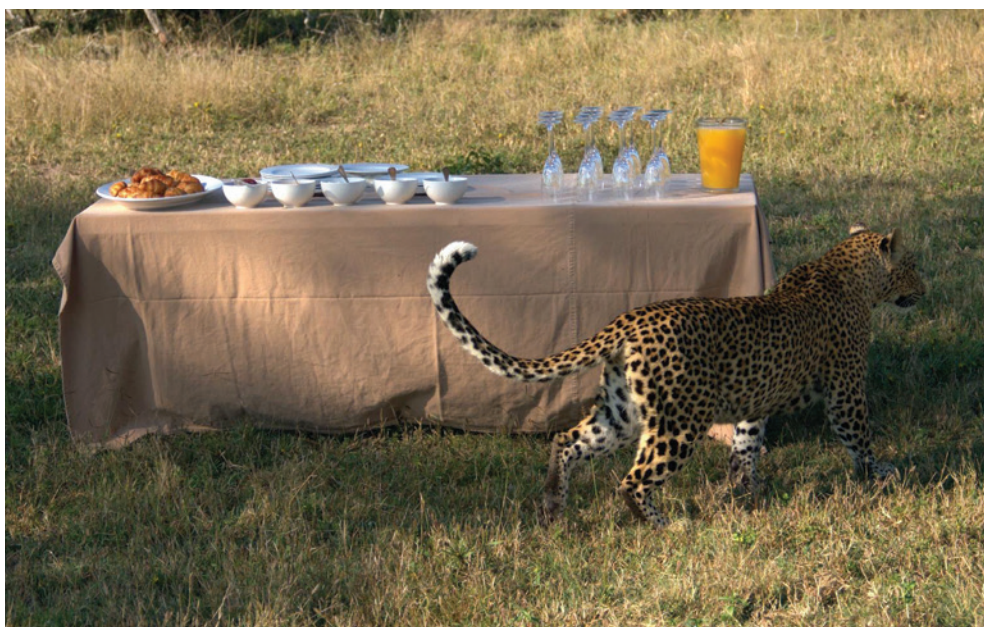


Above: Cathey enjoys playing at the Salisbury Country Club's golf course. — Photo by Jon C. Lakey
Right: Cathey says he was in the middle of 'setting up a bush breakfast experience for our guests when we were joined by a curious and possibly hungry leopard.' — Photo courtesy of Devlin Cathey

pened to the club since we've been here," Norvell says. "The food is better. The staff is happier."

Cathey grew up in South Africa and was managing a restaurant by the time he was 18. He moved to England in his early 20s (his mother was British), and his first real experience in preparing food for a lot of people came as duty manager of a 17-room boutique hotel, the Dovecliff Hall Hotel in Staffordshire, which specialized in functions and events.

Beyond his managerial duties, Cathey stud-



ied the Swiss Institute curriculum of cooking under the hotel's executive chef. If you have solid training in sauces, fats, oils and proteins, Cathey says, you can adapt the fundamentals to any cuisine.

Cathey began making breakfast for up to 34 guests. Meanwhile, he also was learning the business — stocking orders, training staff and helping guests.

Cathey stayed with the hotel until it was sold. A friend on his rugby club owned a pub, and he asked Cathey to run a restaurant side to it. They called their joint business "Monk's Bridge."

Cathey says the gastro-pub did well, specializing in Sunday lunches and being a place to have burgers and sandwiches while watching soccer games. But by December 2008, Cathey left his business and returned to South Africa to help his mother. Cathey's stepfather had been stricken with cancer.

During this time, Cathey finished his three-year higher diploma in culinary studies from the Swiss Institute of Hospitality. He eventually moved to Cape Town, South Africa, and helped in launching Smoke Cuisine and Stir Food, two high-end catering companies that specialized in weddings, private parties and corporate functions for up to 1,000 people.

After his stepfather's death, his mother moved to Cape Town. She and Devlin took over a 60-seat restaurant and coffee shop. He eventually couldn't do both, so Cathey left the catering businesses. He describes the restaurant/coffee bar as one of the low points of his career.

"I never enjoyed it from the beginning," he says.

By September 2011, mother and son quit the restaurant. His mom moved to England, and Devlin spent about four months traveling throughout South Africa.

The travels led to connections. He became an executive chef for three different five-star lodges on the Sabi Sands Game Preserve, the No. 1 site in the world for seeing leopards.



Serving for a period as an executive chef on super yachts, Devlin Cathey posed for this photograph while cruising away from Highbourne Cay, a part of the Exuma Islands in the Bahamas. — Submitted photo

Patrons went on photographic safaris, and the lodges catered for 36 guests daily.

Cathey and his staff provided early-morning snacks, a full breakfast, a three-course lunch, high tea and a four-course dinner. There also would be outdoor breakfasts and dinners under the stars. It wasn't unusual, Cathey says, to see a leopard come up to the breakfast table to smell the croissants and orange juice.

Love would steer Cathey to the United States. He and Cara had dated in school in South Africa in 1997-98 before she emigrated to Fort Lauderdale, Fla., with her family. The couple rekindled their romance when Cara visited South Africa in 2013.

To make a complicated story brief, Devlin wanted to be with Cara in Florida. Working off a tourist visa while he started the application process toward becoming a permanent resident, Cathey served as an executive chef on super yachts traveling the East Coast of the United States and to the Bahamas and Virgin Islands.

He and Cara married in Florida in 2014.

She was a head banquet chef for the Marriott in Fort Lauderdale. "She loves the baking side of things," Devlin says. He tells her there are two kinds of chefs in the world — pastry chefs and real chefs. The comment usually leads to Cara's giving him a good punch.

A visit to see friends in Concord led to the Catheys considering a move to North Carolina. They liked the weather, the schools, and housing was more affordable. "The yachting thing was just not going to work," adds Devlin, who could be gone months at a time.

Cathey had an interview for a chef's job at Oak Park in Salisbury when the country club's general manager sent him a message the same day expressing an interest in his talents.

Cathey liked the club, its golf course and Salisbury in general. "My wife loves it here," Devlin says. In January, the couple bought a house in Forest Hills.

So far, Cathey has managed to golf about 10 rounds at the Country Club's Donald Ross-designed course. He is still looking for a rugby team. **S**

Brush fire

Extrovert Alee Johnson has figured it out — she's a painter.



Written by SUSAN SHINN TURNER | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY



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N ■ **NOVANT**[®]
HEALTH



Alee Johnson sets up her easel in Hurley Park to paint in plein air style.

It's impossible to be in a bad mood around Alee Johnson. The effervescent 24-year-old loves to meet people, and she loves, loves, loves to talk about art. She's sold her work since high school, but now she's officially a full-time artist, living and working in Richmond, Va.

The Salisbury native and 2011 graduate of Salisbury High School chose Richmond because of its huge arts scene. She graduated from Washington and Lee University in 2015 and took a popular "gap year" to travel and figure out what she really wanted to do. Her de-

gree is in English and studio art, and she worked several internships to finance a trip to Australia with a classmate. After visiting classmates in Richmond, she fell in love with the city, moved there, and jumped in as a full-time artist in July 2016.

"With my internships, I was trying not be an artist," Alee explains. "I was trying to diversify myself, and did, like, a billion internships."

Those included internships at The Visual Arts Center of Richmond, with an ad agency, and in the fund-raising department of the Nature Conservan-

cy.

Then came the trip abroad.

"I never took a semester abroad as a double major," Alee says. "I'm obsessed with travel, and I have a friend from school whose mom is



German. Europeans are big proponents of the gap year. We took time to travel and we funded it ourselves.”

Along with her internships, Alee also worked as a nanny in Salisbury. Another friend from school had parents who invited them to work at the Hanson Bay Wildlife Sanctuary on Kangaroo Island. Alee worked there for a month, then “couch surfed” another couple of months across Australia. All the while, she had the support of her parents, Lee and Tricia Johnson.

“They knew I was actively figuring out what I wanted to do,” Alee admits. “I just didn’t know yet.”

About two-thirds of the way through the trip, Alee discovered friends in Richmond needed a roommate. Maybe this is a sign, she thought. Her family was all for it. The rebellious middle child, she says, she didn’t go to Carolina like her parents and two sisters, Brooke, 26, and Ann Rollins, 20.

“I’m the only right-brained person in my family,” Alee says. “I’m so bad at science.”

Washington and Lee wasn’t even on her radar, until a high school friend recommended she check it out as she was looking for art schools.

It was love at first sight.

“It’s a magical campus,” Alee gushes. “It’s one of the most beautiful campuses I’ve ever seen. As an artist, that got me. It just fit me like a glove.”

In the same way, she wants to mold her artist career into the perfect fit. An extrovert by nature, she actively seeks guidance from experienced artists. Longtime artist Jim Taylor had only been in Salisbury a couple of years when he met Alee, still a high school student, eager to learn.

“She was thinking about going to art school,” Jim remembers. “I told her, ‘You gotta practice art all the time. That’s the key.’”

“This gal’s really got it.”

Alee spent about a month studying with Jim, and one day he arrived at his studio to discover she’d cleaned it up.

“I was always impressed that she could take ideas that I passed on,” he says. “I gave her some pretty sophisticated problems, and she went with it. To me, it’s about taking risks. Once you get a little bit of skill, you gotta try some things. She’s on that path — gaining experience.”



Johnson’s paintings ‘Chessie Trail,’ above, and ‘On Ibis Wings,’ below.

“I was afraid it would be a lonely career,” Alee says, but so far, it hasn’t been. She has her own room to paint in the house she shares.



THE ARTS



“My roommates are amazing. They let me do that.”

Being outgoing, Alee has found live event painting an intriguing assignment. After all, she can meet people, and talk while she works.

“It’s worth the exhaustion afterward,” she says.

She calls the service an untapped resource. “I want to seize it while I can.”

That’s one reason she loves live event painting, as well as painting en plein air. A favorite subject is Spring Island, S.C., where her grandparents have a home.

“It’s just been a really special place for our family,” she says.

She spent a week last summer on Spring Island and painted every day. She’s quite proud, especially, of an impressionistic painting of white ibises roosting near sunset. She had to work quickly, she says, to capture the light and the image.

She calls painting en plein air a great practice. “For me, I can get caught up in working

in the details. It’s more about the experience of being outdoors and in nature and capturing something. It’s as much a spiritual exercise to me as it is artistic.”

She seeks to create community through her art. “It’s not just you and your studio, alone all

day, every day. My art is driven by interaction. I love to share my art with people.”

Alee participated in shows at Spring Island in February and Hilton Head in March and April. For the second show, she produced several large landscapes.

Johnson’s painting, ‘The Remarkables’ shows mountains reflected in a lake.



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'Seeking Peace,' above. Alee Johnson painted the scene at the Weisler-Norvell wedding, left.

"Sky and water imagery is really a source of inspiration to me," she says.

Alee is building an inventory in two main areas: abstract and landscapes. She acknowledges, however, that about 60 to 70 percent of her current business is commissions. She's painted homes, campus buildings, landscapes and pet portraits. One of her best sellers is a 4-inch by 5-inch trio of paintings — perhaps of the client's alma mater or special locations for a couple that can be given as a wedding gift.

Her large-scale landscapes, 30 inches by 40 inches, also sell well. And they're fun.

"I paint with big strokes," she says. "There's something really freeing about that. It just makes for a more powerful painting."

As far as selling and marketing her art, she says, "There is no formula, and no one will give you one. It's about how you value your work."

Alee has always been entrepreneurial minded, and has fashioned her own system of doing business. "I'm still learning as far as logistics, but I value the advice of my parents and other small business owners."

Alee works a couple of days a week as a graphic designer in a "super flexible" job —



she often gets to do custom artwork for invitations. "It's a great feeder for what I'm doing."

Alee doesn't have a particular work schedule when it comes to painting, she says. "If you are an entrepreneur and you have your business, it's your lifestyle. You don't have a regular schedule."

"For me, I can get caught up in working in the details. It's more about the experience of being outdoors and in nature and capturing something. It's as much a spiritual exercise to me as it is artistic."

Alee Johnson, on painting in plein air

Alee works a lot of weekends, but she's an early riser, too, she says. She wants to be done with her work when her roommates are, for social time and time to go run or work out. She loves to hike and be out in nature.

But in the studio, she admits, "If I'm not


invested in something, I can't produce a good piece. I have to be creatively present."

She figures she has two choices as far as a job. To have a career that allows you the kind of lifestyle you want, or to have a job in which she feels valued and happy every day. She chose the latter. Even in Richmond, she feels the influence of Salisbury.

"Growing up in a small town has made me who I am, and given me the confidence to take on what I have," she says. "I have a whole community of supporters, friends, family and mentors."

Two others include Bruce and Jackie Wilson, owners of Fine Frame Gallery, whom she calls her "art parents." They still frame most of her work.

"Watching her grow as an artist has been so much fun," says the always enthusiastic Bruce. "She is not afraid to get out there and push herself and market herself. The sky's the limit for her."

To hire Alee or learn more about her work, visit www.artbyalee.com. 

Susan Shinn Turner is a freelance writer living in Raleigh.

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N ■ **NOVANT**
HEALTH

Forrest and Marie Clanton received kudos earlier this year from Historic Salisbury Foundation for the outside renovation of their Carolina Avenue home in Spencer.

The pretty Victorian is painted sky blue with white trim. Touches of red accent the porch brackets, window trim and roofline. The front steps now have a hand-turned railing that matches the porch.

The real story, though, lies inside.

It's a story of craftsmanship and music and preservation and — most of all — a love story.

Marie, raised in New England, came to North Carolina by way of Nashville, Tenn., where she lived for nine years. Her memoir, "It Started with a Dare," describes a 20-year country music career that took her up and down the East Coast and into Canada.


By 1990, she'd had enough of life on the road. Eventually, she migrated to North Carolina to get away from Northern winters and be near one of her brothers.

So it was that Marie was working at the Marathon Restaurant in Kannapolis several years ago when she noticed the kind man who showed up for breakfast every day.

Every. Day.

That was Forrest, coming in after working third shift in Concord. He'd grown up in the area, served in the military and then returned home. Captivated by the twinkle he saw in Marie's eyes, he'd stretch out his breakfast by drinking so much coffee that he couldn't go to sleep for hours once he got home.





Marie & Forrest Clanton
relax in the living room
of their historic home on
South Carolina Avenue in
Spencer.

A love shared

Clantons' Victorian home has 'a going to Grandma's' feel.

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



The Clantons recently won one of Historic Salisbury's Preservation Awards for the exterior renovation of their Spencer home.

AT HOME

They married in 1993, living for awhile at Forrest's place on High Rock Lake. To say they're close is an understatement. When they opened envelopes on their 10th anniversary, they found they'd bought each other the exact same card.

They saw the Kritzer-Hatley House at 403 S. Carolina Ave. posted on the advertising website Forrest was operating at the time, High Rock Swap Shop. Marie had been thinking it would be nice to live in an area where she could walk to shops and offices.

The young couple selling the house had started renovations. They'd also had two babies. "I think they didn't realize how much of a project it was going to be," Forrest says.

He and Marie fell in love with the house, built around 1907. They were drawn to the Victorian design and saw great potential. "I just envisioned how it could be restored," Forrest says.

"I wish I had grown up in a house like this, I



The sunny kitchen has metal cabinets from years gone by.



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AT HOME



The Clantons lightened the dining room walls.

think that's the allure of it," Marie says. "It has a real 'going to Grandma's house' feel."

So in 2006 they took the leap. They bought the house with a total restoration in mind, and they've been chipping away at it ever since. After more than a decade, they say they still have a long way to go.

What they have created, though, is a comfortable home full of stories to tell and future projects to tackle.

Just inside the front door, the front room on the right is being used as an office and will eventually be a parlor.

Next down the hallway comes the dining room. They lightened the dark walls with cream-colored paint. A rustic fireplace believed to be from Germany is a focal point.

The next large room is what they're using as the den, a cozy space that opens to their bedroom and the kitchen.

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The sunny yellow kitchen looks like a page out of time. The sink and cabinets date back to the 1940s or '50s but still serve the Clantons' needs well.

The only truly "new" area of the house is the bathroom off the kitchen. As Forrest reached for a towel one June day in 2016, a huge limb from one of their trees crashed through the ceiling and "hit me flat," he says.

Marie heard the crash.

"It sounded like the whole house was coming down," she says.

They rebuilt the bathroom, making it one large open space instead of two small ones. The claw-foot tub and a sink set in an old dresser capture the early 20th-century feel.

Marie says she and Forrest took the house on as



'This is my recovery,' says Forrest about restoring an old mantel.

Story continues on page 34.



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Clockwise from upper left: Some light fixtures are original to the house. A new bathroom was built after a falling tree destroyed the old one. A guest bedroom has large windows. Fresh banana bread cools on the stove. The wide hallway runs from the front door to the den.





Clockwise from upper left:
Furnishings and pictures
match the house's turn-of-
the-century feel. Brackets
on the porches pop with red
paint. French doors open
from the hallway to the
dining room. Forrest turns
the pages of a Bible that
belonged to grandfather
Duncan Clanton.



AT HOME



Family photos and candles decorate the mantel in the den.

a 30-year project. Health problems slowed Forrest's work on the house at first. Doctors replaced his aorta with an artificial one, and he started building up his strength again.

"This is my recovery," Forrest says, pointing to a large mantelpiece lying on the floor of an upstairs bedroom. Taken out of one of the first floor rooms, the mantel has been stripped and is a work in progress.

They started out using one of the three upstairs bedrooms as the master. When Forrest had his operation, they moved their bedroom to the first floor.

Marie has three sons, eight grands, one great-grandchild and another on they way. When family visits, they have plenty of room for everyone to spread out. And they have countless mementos and antiques to take in.

The house — restoring and furnishing it — has become the Clantons' hobby. They like to travel, driving to New England to visit her family and hunt for items to fit their antique style.

"We're not golfers," Marie says. "It's kind of what we do."

They have family treasures, too, such as the worn, old Bible and lectern that belonged to Forrest's grandfather, Duncan Clanton. A large crucifix leans on the wall nearby.

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Assorted building materials are on hand, also.

"He never throws anything away," Marie says.


Marie has been known to hold on to a few items. On the wall in an upstairs bedroom is a copy of her first album, "Marie Norway and Friends," produced in 1976.

Marie works in the Spencer Doll and Toy Museum. She's not a doll collector, she says, but a Barbie in period costume perfectly fits a small table in the dining room.

Projects on their to-do list, which is part wish list, include adding a screened porch behind the kitchen. Forrest has some spindles he wants to use from a house that was being torn down. "There's just so much to do," he says.

Mayor Jim Gobbel let the Clantons know he had nominated them for a 2017 Preservation Award from Historic Salisbury Foundation, so it wasn't a surprise, exactly.

They take it as encouragement. The exterior renovation is complete and even earned an award. Now they'll keep plugging away at the work still to go inside.

"We're not doing this for awards," Forrest says. "It's nice, but we're doing it because we love the house." 



The Clantons' many-angled roofline is evident from the back, where you can also see a bedroom door to nowhere.



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A young child with light brown hair, wearing a white t-shirt with a colorful ice cream cone pattern and blue jeans, is standing in a garden. The child is looking down at something in their hands. They are surrounded by tall green plants, possibly sunflowers, which are supported by a wire mesh fence. The background shows more greenery and a wooden fence.

LEARNING BY DOING

Montessori school fosters young innovators.

Written by ANDIE FOLEY | *Photography by* KRISTI CRAVEN



From left, 2-year-olds Stella Franzese, Jameson Quick and Stellan Studer look at a lady bug in their garden at Yadkin Path Montessori.

W

With an expansive campus that boasts an outdoor amphitheater, picnic shelter and pond, Yadkin Path Montessori Childcare and School seems, at first glance, the perfect location for fleeting summertime memories.

In truth, the association is natural. The school is tucked away just out of sight on Bringle Ferry Road, at the exact location of the former Kiwanis summer health camps.

Yet, staff at Yadkin Path spend much more time with their enrollees than a few passing weeks during our warmest months. True to its name, the organization offers year-round childcare and education to children aged six weeks to six years.

This education is as unique and refreshing as the school's nature-based and scenic locale: young learners at Yadkin Path Montessori are privy to a child-driven, hands-on method of education proven to result in resilient, self-motivated behaviors later in life.

Montessori education was developed at the turn of the 20th century by Dr. Maria Montessori, and it is characterized by an emphasis on independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's natural development.

Educators in this method are trained to follow a child's direction and interest, making them independent and active participants in their education from an early age. Teachers will introduce and explain new activities, but children are free to choose their own tasks during their three-hour workday.



Myra Tannehill, left, and her husband, Dean Hamilton, stand in front of Yadkin Path Montessori School in Salisbury.





Above: William Betancourt, 4, plays with items from the Indian Basket. **Left:** Ellery Garner, 2, washes her dishes.



Classrooms are separated by age and certain developmental markers. The infant class is for those six weeks to children steady on their feet. The toddler class contains those steady on their feet until their third birthday, and the primary class welcomes 3- to 6-year-olds.

Myra Tannehill, director and founder of Yadkin Path, says it was her prior experience with a Montessori school in Virginia, coupled with a need to find daycare for her own son, that prompted her to start the school.

“My niece attended Montessori preschool in Richmond and I thought it was amazing: the light pouring onto the classroom floor and inviting work shelves, her joy in learning and her social skills,” she said. “I thought Rowan County would benefit from a Montessori school — another option for parents



Stellan Studer, 2, plays with blocks.

looking for care for their children. I wanted it for my son.”

Tannehill has made great strides in replicating this warm and welcoming learning environment at Yadkin Path. Each of the school’s three current classrooms are filled with opportunities for enrollees to learn and experiment. The shelves are lined with boxes, trays and bags – each containing activities with educational relevance.

There’s the wooden coin box in the infant classroom, teaching object permanence. The toddler classroom has trays with tongs, an extension of fine motor skills. Even the instruments in the primary classroom help expose and familiarize students with concepts of math as learners ring and shake and march in a counted rhythm.

Something you won’t see much of? Modern, plastic toys. Most of the school work at Yadkin Path incorporates practical, real world items the children are sure to encounter for years to come: from napkin rings to measuring cups.

Story continues on page 44.

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Above: Jessica Randolph, the toddler community lead teacher, helps Maggie Baines, 1, put away the toy she was done playing with. Below right: Emma Sewell, 5, shows off a bracelet she made. Left: Kids' boots line the outside of the school.





Clockwise from above: Katy Baines prepares squash for lunch that the kids helped grow in their garden; Snowball is one of the goats the school takes care of; Kids learn using 3D shapes; Trey Felton, 4, left, and J.P. Hamilton, 4, play with trucks in the mud.



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Gardening equipment sits outside where the kids learn how to tend their garden at the school.

"Everything that we do is about them learning by doing. Kinesthetic learning," said Tannehill.

Tannehill has a background in education, having worked as a college professor with an education specialist degree from Appalachian State University. Therein, she confidently contests that children don't learn while passively sitting and listening.

"It's proven that learning through your hands creates channels in your brain — architecture in your brain. If (children) are sitting, they may be passively absorbing some things but they're not really learning.

"This is the prime time. Their brain is over-large and this is the prime time to build all those synapses that they'll have the rest of their lives."

Tannehill named Yadkin Path Montessori in recognition of the school's

location as well as its focus on developing assertive, confident, and engaged learners. She noted how Salisbury evolved due to the conjunction of two native American trading paths: one of which, the Yadkin Trading Path. The Yadkin River, located close to Yadkin Path's campus, was similarly a huge venue of commerce, with Bringle's Ferry taking people across the river.

"Montessori is about following the child on his or her path of unfolding, so I named the school Yadkin Path. It honors history, geography, and the Montessori method."

While learning by doing in a child-led environment could sound like a recipe for chaos, the reality may be surprising. Classrooms at Yadkin Path are calm and quiet, with learners displaying a sur-

Carolyn Hochstedler, the infant environment lead teacher, plays with Ella Williams, middle, and Rocco Franzese.





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prising level of patience as they wait for their turn with the teacher — in this setting, called a guide.

“The children who come through the school (from the beginning) know patience when they come in here,” said Dean Hamilton, Tannehill’s husband, as he stood outside the primary classroom. Hamilton played a vital role in the school’s creation, not the least of which being his work renovating the site’s buildings.

“They don’t have to have the teacher’s attention. You can have one teacher with 25 students, but the students are patient and wait for this one-on-one lesson to finish, then they can have their one-on-one time.”

Tannehill credits routine lessons in grace and courtesy for fostering this patience in her students, but the benefits of a Montessori education far exceed an early developed capacity for turn-taking. Montessori learners prove to be resilient, self-disciplined, self-reliant and motivated innovators and experimenters.

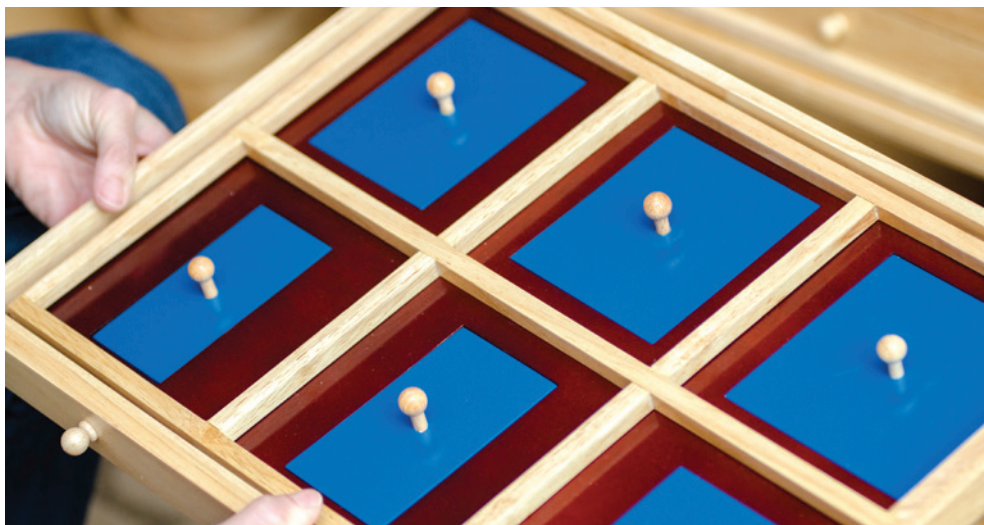
Many prominent names in today’s technology-driven world got their start under this educational method: Larry Page and Sergey Brin, the founders of Google, for example.

“Some of the greatest minds of society right now are Montessori children. They’ve turned out the way they are because they had the freedom to try things out and explore without adults hovering,” said Tannehill.

As Tannehill speaks of her own learners, the difference in Yadkin Path’s method versus a more traditional setting becomes clear. She told of a youngster named Stella, whose passion for



Above: Jameson Quick, 2, helps Jessica Randolph, the toddler community lead teacher, pour dressing on his salad. Below: Children learn geometry with a puzzle.



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Above: Myra Tannehill demonstrates how the cylinders of a puzzle only fit into one hole so children can figure it out by themselves and learn independently. Below: Children use boards with rough cursive letters on them so that they can feel the alphabet.



Merle Hutchens, 1, plays with toys at Yadkin Path Montessori.

fashion was apparent even during her days in the infant classroom. In response, her teacher created work catered to her interests: a tray of different shoes to match.

The task, as all at Yadkin Path, was pressure-free. Tannehill's staff isn't trying to make

sure each child reaches a certain milestone by a specific time. They're creating engaging learning experiences that captivate, encourage and challenge. The director explains:

"(Our children) are already developed people. We're not molding them or fixing them or

growing them. It's like the idea of a seed. It has its own being in it, it just needs to naturally grow." **S**

Andie Foley is a freelance writer who lives in Statesville.



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Redemption ROAD

Steelers' Javon Hargrave would never
take 'no' for an answer.

Written by DAVID SHAW

Photography by JON C. LAKEY







Above: North Rowan High School football standout Javon Hargrave sits in his bedroom of his family's Laurel Street home. Below left: Trophies, photos and memorabilia from Hargrave's career. Below right: Hargrave's Pittsburgh Steelers jersey.



T

There is a story in Javon Hargrave's eyes, one that is worth a listen.

It begins not at the beginning, but somewhere in the middle, in a cramped, wood-paneled bedroom inside his family's well-kept Laurel Street home. Hargrave pensively cradles his chin with his left hand and recalls the darkness of autumn 2011, when the can't-miss football prospect out of North Rowan High School was about to do just that.

"It was terrible. I just stayed in my room, wondering if I was ever going to play football again," he says now. "I couldn't get into college. That whole period, well, I was alone with my thoughts. None of it was fun."

Just a minute here. We all remember Hargrave as the dirt-eating defensive end who terrorized opposing quarterbacks for three-plus varsity seasons. The same guy who made running backs run for cover, who set a Rowan County record with 18 career fumble recoveries, who spent his Friday nights burnishing credentials for a bigger and brighter future. The lovable, polite-as-an-altar-boy model student who was going to make us proud simply to know him.

And none of it was fun to him? Pull up a chair.

The Javon Hargrave who started 16 games for the Pittsburgh Steelers last season, the one who made a national splash by sacking New England's Tom Brady in the AFC championship game last January, has been through a lot. At 24, he's already felt the depths of depression, the hollowness

of disappointing his coaches at South Carolina State, as well as the rapture of scoring an NFL touchdown. It's a tale that meshes brains with brawn, business with pleasure, discontent with ringing endorsement.

"He's got a good story," says Tim Bates, the father figure in Hargrave's life and pastor at Statesville's Cavalry Presbyterian Church. "Let him tell you. As a boy Javon was always happy, but always competitive. He wouldn't take 'no' for an answer, wouldn't quit on anything. Whether it was hide-and-seek in the neighborhood or the last piece of chicken, he was right there. Through it all, he never lost his joyfulness."

Now consider that it almost never happened. For the better part of four months, Hargrave and his bruised ego were holed up in that 10-by-12-foot bedroom, waiting for a phone call from a prospective college coach willing to take a chance on a borderline student who wasn't proficient at test-taking.



"To be honest, I must have taken the ACT 30 times," he says. "Lots of schools were interested, but no one was offering. I couldn't get that score."

North Rowan's Javon Hargrave (32) tackles Richmond High School's Laron Ellerbe (11). Hargrave was voted defensive MVP at the completion of the 63rd Annual East-West All Star Football game in Greensboro on July 20, 2011.

Bates, an assistant coach for North Rowan's boys basketball team, fills in some of the blanks.

"Javon fell one credit short of being eligible for college," he explains. "He had 17 on his ACT and he needed 18. On one final exam at North, he got an 84 and needed an 85. We went crazy, but that's how he was. Testing gave him anxiety. From August until December that year after high school, it was a really dark period for him. He didn't want to come out of his room."

Yet Hargrave — disappointed but determined,

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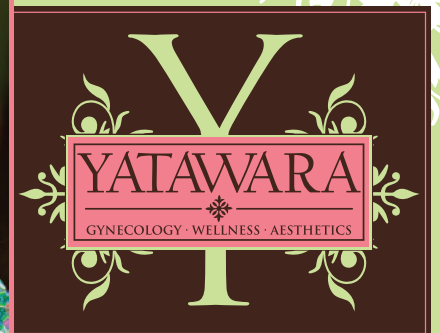


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the kid who wouldn't take 'no' for an answer — soldiered on. He studied. He read. He took a required online course, only to discover he'd completed only half of it. "My future," he recalls, "looked pretty shaky. My friends were all off at school or working. I was sitting at home, out of shape, feeling down."

The waiting, Tom Petty famously advised us, can be the hardest part. And that pall of sorrow finally lifted just before Christmas, when Hargrave learned he'd made the grade and met all of the NCAA's stringent requirements. Catawba College was initially interested, but its deadline had long passed. When S.C. State called with a confirmed offer and instructions to start classes in January of 2012, he responded with boyish enthusiasm. "They told me, 'We'll see you in two days,'" he says, flashing that magazine-cover smile of his. "I was so happy I went jumping down the street."

Of course, more hurdles loomed. Following a brief celebratory period, reality again slapped Hargrave in the face. On the first day of winter conditioning in Orangeburg, his outlook was considerably harnessed. Life in the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference was tough, particularly for a small-town, out-of-shape kid competing with fierce, Division I-FCS recruits.

"It was my 19th birthday," he remembers. "And I hadn't been working out. I'd been at home, taking these tests and eating. So at the first practice my back locked up. I started cramping, laying on the field. Everybody was laughing at me. My D-line coach was apologizing to the staff. I heard him say, 'I'm sorry. I thought he was the one.' They looked and saw me laid out with nothing left in me."

Javon Hargrave works out at The Forum on Jan. 5, 2015.



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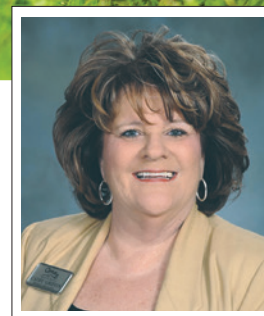
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Not the best first impression, but again Hargrave persevered. He yawned in the face of adversity, recalibrated his options and got better, rather than bitter.

"When the pads went on, I was ready," he says. "I wasn't in the best shape, but I knew how to play football. By spring ball I was out there killing. I knew I had found my way."

Post-season awards began to accrue. In 2012 Hargrave was a freshman all-American and earned the appropriate nickname "Gravedigger." A year later he regressed, but still wound up on the MEAC's all-conference second team. "That's the year that changed me," he says. "It said I wasn't good enough yet."

As both a junior and senior Hargrave was all-American and the country's FCS Defensive Player of the Year — a distinction that put him on radar screens across the NFL. He was projected as a third- or fourth-round draft pick,

but never expected the Steelers to grab him with the 89th overall selection.

"I went to Pittsburgh for a visit before the draft," Hargrave says. "They wanted to get to know me. They took me around the facility, introduced me to the GM, Coach T., the position coach. They liked my athleticism and speed, but I didn't think they would pick me. Washington seemed more interested. I remember I was nervous the whole time. I didn't know where I was going, where this new life would begin. It made me think about everything that had happened."

■ ■ ■

Let's pause for a moment, hit the rewind button and return to the beginning. It's a Thursday night in late August 2007 and Hargrave is an unknown, apple-cheeked freshman defensive end at North Rowan, trying to fit

in while trying to stand out. His future is in basketball, or so he believes, until he turns his one-and-only junior varsity football game into a one-man sideshow. Listen to Rodney Goodine, North's longtime defensive coordinator:

"Against Carson, right? I was there," he says, his eyes the size of dinner plates. "What a game Javon had! There was one particular play where he burst through the line with his arms and hands up, running like a truck, and there was no one that could stop him. I looked over at Coach (Tremayne) Gilmore and said, 'That's the last jayvee game he'll ever play.' He had that get-up-and-go, which caught us all by surprise. He hadn't shown us that fire. It was like, 'Bam! Where did all that come from?'"

It was a defining, signature moment for Hargrave, who has blossomed into a 6-foot-1, 310-pound nose tackle for the Steelers. Armed with sudden potential and rising-star luster, he

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Javon Hargrave and Tim Bates unwrap a photo of Hargrave's first NFL touchdown, a fumble recovery in the end zone against the Cleveland Browns.

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Elijah Bates, Javon Hargrave and Tim Bates wave their 'Terrible Towels.'



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switched paths and never looked back.

"Nobody had ever said anything about me until that game," he says. "From then on it was, 'Let's see what he can do. Let him show us.'"

■ ■ ■

Now we know.

Fast-forward to last Jan. 22. Hargrave, who previously recovered an end zone fumble in Cleveland for his first professional touchdown, is staring down New England left guard Joe Thuney, the All-American out of North Carolina State. It's barely four minutes into the AFC championship game in Foxboro, Mass., and the Patriots are threatening to extend a 3-0 lead. "I just wanted to make a play and get us

off the field," Hargrave recalls.

So he did. Hargrave and his ham-hock forearms made a play that was beamed across the stadium Jumbotron and flatscreens nationwide, all the way back to Laurel Street. On third-and-long, he tossed Thuney aside, barged uninvited into the New England backfield and sacked Mr. Tom Brady for a 10-yard loss.

"I had a move in my head, a little bob-and-weave," Hargrave says with a knowing, sideways glance. "But when I tried to do it, (Thuney) sealed me off. So I literally threw him out of my way. When Tom saw me, he tried to take off running, only I was determined. As soon as I got close I knew I had him. He actually fell down once he realized he wasn't getting away from me."

The rest is history. New England went on to a convincing victory and, two weeks later, a dramatic Super Bowl triumph. Meanwhile Hargrave, fully aware that tomorrow is doomed to become yesterday, finished his rookie season with promise and a lifelong souvenir — a personal, multi-faced tale of redemption.

"Do you think people will like it?" he questions while distributing post-interview Terrible Towels to a handful of new acquaintances.

Not to worry. Years from now, when the shoulders ache and the knees have worn, Javon Hargrave will have an even better story to tell. It'll be worth a listen. S

Writer David Shaw often covers sports for the Salisbury Post.

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Above: Bobbie Killian, left, hopes to expand her part-time soap making into a full-time operation. Bobbie's mother Pat, right, helps out in making the soaps and manning the retail booths at markets and festivals. Opposite: The finished product.

Rub-a-dub-dub

Goat's milk serves as main ingredient in their soothing soaps.

Written by DEIRDRE PARKER SMITH | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY



“Splish, splash I was takin’ a bath, long about a Saturday night.”
 Can’t help but remember that Bobby Darin song when you see the bathing beauty in the tub on a bar of The Soap Shack’s goat’s milk soap.

A frequent vendor at Salisbury-Rowan’s Farmer’s Market, The Soap Shack’s products are made on a former farm out Cleveland way. If you visit the shack, the goats will baaa at you, and the baby pygmy goats will want to play and be petted.

Bobbie Killian and her mother, Pat, share duties making and selling soap. Bobbie is the creator and Pat is the friendly face you’ll see at the market and some craft shows.

Bobbie works two jobs, and soap making is her third. She got interested in soap making as a way to relax after working 12-hour shifts. She needed a way to unwind.

Pat works at Freightliner.

Pat grew up on a farm just a mile down the road from

where she now lives, land her father used to farm. She remembers milking cows as a child, but using a machine. Goats are milked by hand, for the most part.

The older goats are shyer and like to run around a bit. Pat hasn’t cut off their horns, so they can protect themselves. Three outside dogs who are experts at barking help keep any varmints away.

Bobbie works at a doctor’s office during the week and for Rowan County on weekends. When she worked at an urgent care facility, she starting looking for something to make as a stress reliever. That relief has now turned into a business and something she really enjoys.

At first she gave the soap away, since it was just a hobby, and Pat used the end pieces.



Above: Bobbie and Pat head to their building where they make the soap. Right: Cutting the loaf into individual bars.

"I'd never used handmade soap before," Pat said. "I always used Ivory, but now it goes into the Good Samaritan boxes."

The soap was a popular Christmas gift, too, so Bobbie decided, around 2008, she would make and sell the soap. Their first big show was the Brushy Mountain Apple Festival in North Wilkesboro, which brings in about 100,000 people for one Saturday in October.

They've added the Lexington Barbecue Festival, Southern Charm at Tanglewood, Shelton Vineyards in the spring and fall, Christmas in Davidson, Jiggy with the Piggy in Kannapolis and the Davie County Christmas craft show.

"We did Farmer's Day once," Pat said. "It seemed like half the people there were selling soap, and then it started raining."





“The Barbecue Festival was so crowded, we couldn’t even walk over to the trash can, and we had to be there at 3:30 a.m.” Life on the road can be tough.

Bobbie is a quiet person, while her mother Pat is talkative and has never met a stranger. Bobbie says she’s shy and Pat is the people person.

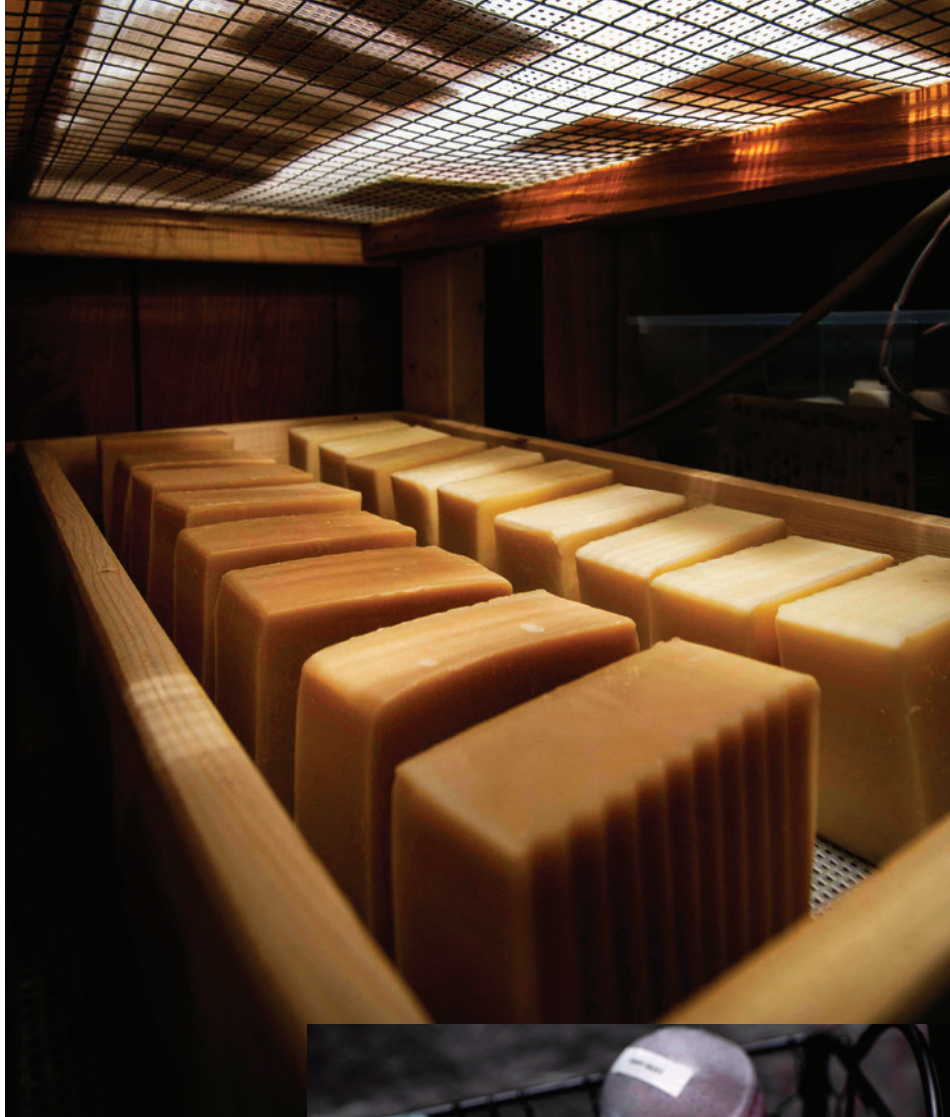
“I may not know names, but I know the faces,” Pat says. She remembers what people like.

Bobbie and Pat did first-hand market research, going around and smelling soaps, making notes of what they liked or disliked. Bobbie first made a cherry almond that was popular for Christmas. At first she stuck with mostly single scents, but has since started experimenting, with her latest a vanilla lavender.

After soap, she started to make lotion, using some of the same scents. In the beginning, she filled bottles with a funnel. She finally got a filler, which speeds up production.

She also makes soy candles that can be used as lotion as the soy wax melts. The warm liquid is soothing to aching joints, and the temperature is not as hot as a regular wax candle.

Two years ago, Bobbie started making bath bombs, fizzy balls that soften the skin as you soak. She uses a small air compressor to make the bombs. “They last about 10 minutes or so (fizzing) and then it lingers in the water and softens it. She’s also trying solid bubble bath bombs, which kids love.



Above left: The Soap Shack also makes liquid soaps, including dog shampoo.
Above: The individual bars cure.
Right: Bath bombs.





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"But be careful with a whirlpool tub," Pat warns. "It will overflow with bubbles."

Using Dead Sea salts, Bobbie makes bath salts that she scents and colors.

And then there's the laundry soap, which includes ground-up soap bars and other ingredients.

The most popular soaps, at least for now, are Johnny Appleseed, which smells just like fresh cut apples and has a pretty combination of red and cream colors. Cherry almond is always popular, along with 5 O'Clock Somewhere, Butt Naked and Energy.

Bobbie makes a pine tar soap which helps with psoriasis, eczema, poison oak and ivy, acne and insect bites.

All the soaps are made with goat's milk, olive oil, coconut oil, palm oil, vitamin E oil, mango butter, cocoa butter and shea butter,



all to moisturize and protect skin. Bobbie even makes a soap that's perfect for washing dogs, tested on their own indoor and outdoor dogs.

Men buy the soap as gifts for their wives, and Bobbie makes a shaving soap with extra glycerin that's popular.

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the 10-12-year-old crowd, love the bath bombs.


Bobbie makes soap in the former pool shed on the property. Now, it IS The Soap Shack. It smells good inside, very clean, and she has neatly organized all of her ingredients. She created her own drying racks, using a fan above and below for the soap to cure, which takes 24-48 hours depending on the humidity. The soap is made in loaves, and Pat's in charge of cutting it by hand.

"She cuts straighter than I can," Bobbie says. They have a simple tool for cutting, and Pat uses a tape measure. Their bars are larger now than at first, about an inch and a half thick, and they last at least four weeks, depending on how much you use it.

Bobbie had a stamp made for her logo,

a pony-tailed young woman sitting in a claw-foot tub. The soap has to be just right to use the stamp without cracking the bar, and the loaf has to be just right to cut, not too dry, not too soft. Pat uses one of her late husband's rubber mallets to make the impression.

Bobbie also sells soap at various stores around the area. Cauble Creek Vineyards sells select items — Pat and Cauble Creek owner William "Biff" Yost were in school together.

Josh's Farmers Market in Mooresville has the soap, as does Key City Antique Mall in North Wilkesboro, Front Porch Pickin' Vintage Emporium in Troy, Mount Gilead Antiques and Design Center in Mount Gilead and Raven's Unique Finds in Greensboro. 





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Jack-of-all-Scouts

To this day, Kepley stays prepared.

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



Jack Kepley has been in the Boy Scouts for most of his life, 80 years to be exact. Kepley is now Scoutmaster emeritus of Troop 448, where he has been his whole career.

Jack Kepley cuts a sharp figure in the Scout meeting room, especially with his broad-rimmed, creased campaign hat from earlier days. He resembles a retired state trooper.

"This is the hat I like," Kepley says. "I wish we still wore them."

Kepley is standing in the middle of a building named for him. Now 93, Kepley has been involved as a Boy Scout and Scoutmaster of Troop 448 for 80 years. That's eight decades as a registered member of the Boy Scouts of America.

He is, to put it plainly, a legend. He has touched

the lives of more than 700 kids through the years, and 139 have become Eagle Scouts. "I've worked with every one of them," Kepley says, looking up and down the list of engraved names.

Now considered Scoutmaster emeritus, Kepley still attends all the Troop 448 meetings in the building between Coburn United Methodist Church and South Main Street. He joined the

church-sponsored troop on his 13th birthday, Feb. 15, 1937, so he could hang out with his friends Jim Tarleton, Jack Russell and Paul Greenway. His parents gave him 50 cents to join.

Kepley has been a Scout ever since, though the BSA took a back seat during World War II when Kepley was an Army gunner in an anti-tank platoon. He was among the men who stormed beach after beach



Above: Kepley makes his way to the Scout building. Below: A photo of Kepley in his younger years, along with a pin from his troop, the Thunderbirds.

in a Pacific campaign that included Leyte, Luzon, Bataan and Mindanao.

"There's something about that generation," says Al Wilson, today's Scoutmaster for Troop 448. "They're committed."

Wilson says it's one thing — one form of commitment — to risk your life for your country. It's another thing to dedicate your life to the long, slow slog of community service. Wilson considers Kepley a true hero for both reasons.

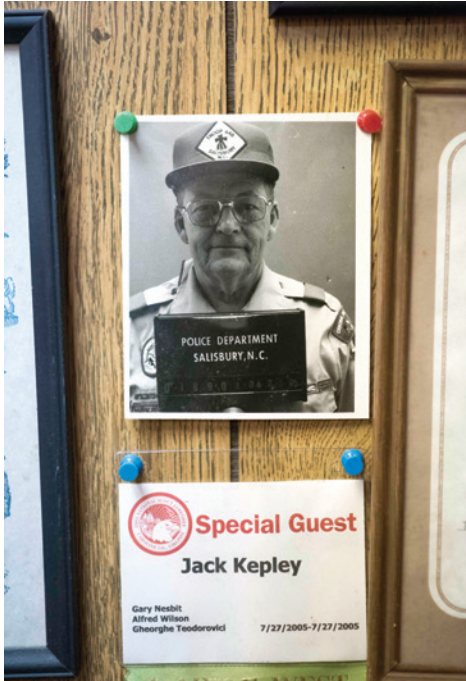
Kepley's call wasn't the ministry, it was Scouting.

"This is my life," he says, looking around the Scout building, "because I've been in it 80 years."

The walls and shelves hold all manner of flags, banners, trophies, ribbons, coffee mugs and manuals. Most have a story connected to Kepley. Mounted canoe paddles commemorate river trips. Maps show Appalachian Trail sections Kepley and his Scouts have hiked in North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia.



REMINISCE



Left: In 1985, when Troop 448 was touring the Salisbury Police Department, Kepley stepped up to have his photo taken to help with the demonstration. Middle: The Boy Scouts of America flag. Right: Kepley ties his neckerchief with a wooden Indian chief slide that he carved and painted himself. Below: Kepley stands at attention during a recent troop meeting.

Photographs document trips to National Jamborees, Washington, D.C., Camp Barnhardt, Philmont and even Wales.

Kepley talks about the time he and his Scouts were treated to a private tour of Air Force One, on the same plane that carried the body of President John F. Kennedy home after his assassination in 1963.

Kepley pokes his head into a supply room: “They’re building Pinewood Derby cars now,” he reports. In the classroom next to the Scout meeting room, Kepley sheepishly acknowledges that all of the merit badges filling the walls are his. His wife wanted them out of the house when they did some remodeling.

Kepley has never stopped to count how many badges he has. Among his favorites are obscure badges from when he was attending Camp Uwharrie as a Scout in the late 1930s. They remind Kepley that Troop 448 had the best patrol in camp.

“The memories are more important than anything else,” he says.

A U.S. flag on display was one that flew over



the Capitol in 2012 and was presented to Kepley.

Asked to name all the honors that adorn his uniform shirt, Kepley starts ticking off things

such as the Silver Beaver Award, the District Award of Merit, the National Eagle Scouts’ Scoutmaster Award, and then he stops.

“Gosh, now I’ve forgotten what these all

REMINISCE



stand for,” he says.

It’s understandable. Kepley might be one the most decorated Scout leaders in the state and nation. In 2010, on its 100th anniversary, Boy Scouts of America chose one person from each council in the country to be inducted into its National Hall of Leadership, Kepley was the choice from the Central N.C. Council. His induction occurred at a ceremony on the National Mall on July 25, 2010.

“He has no equal in our program,” Marny

Hendrick said of Kepley at a Sapona District recognition dinner in 2016.

That same year, Kepley was selected as one of 10 national finalists for the Glenn Shepard Excellence in Leadership Award. To put this in perspective, there were some 2,000 nominations from 43 states and six countries.

The award recognizes individuals for exemplary leadership, a commitment to excellence and inspiring others to achieve great things.

Kepley wears an Indian head neckerchief

slide that he carved and painted himself. An accomplished woodworker, Kepley has made the slides for all of his assistants through the years, carving them out of North Carolina basswood.

“Each one is different, because I always give my pattern away,” he says.

Kepley served as Troop 448’s Scoutmaster for 41 years before handing things over to Wilson in 1992. It just gave Kepley more time to spend as a staff member at Camp Barnhardt.



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He was the Camp Barnhardt director in 1995 and 1996.

As Scoutmaster, Kepley always believed in giving his guys a specific time to be ready. It wouldn't be 5 a.m., for example. Rather, Kepley would say be ready to go by 4:48 a.m.

His Scouts never traveled anywhere without their uniforms. He told them if they didn't look like Scouts, they wouldn't act like Scouts. He believed in discipline and came to rely heavily on dependable assistant leaders.

The other adults often told the Troop 448 Scouts, "Whatever you do, don't make Jack mad." Kepley once said he had to pitch a fit twice a year to keep his reputation going.

As a Scout himself, Kepley liked cooking, camping, hiking, making things and having fun with his buddies. He enjoyed earning badges, but he and other Scouts of his day weren't as consumed with advancement.

It's hard to believe, but Kepley himself is not an Eagle Scout — he never advanced in rank past second class. For that reason, "I don't like to tell the boys that I did it all, or learned it all," he says.

Kepley has served on the Central N.C. Council board. For 10 years, he was an inspector of Scout camps in North and South Carolina, working to verify their compliance with about 75 BSA standards.

Kepley is especially proud of the intensive Wood Badge training he has taken that led him to being an instructor in Wood Badge courses at Camp Barnhardt.

Before he became part of the staff, Kepley went to Camp Barnhardt with his own Scouts for 40 summers. He missed one year, when his wife was sick, and it took five adults to fill in. "I decided then, I had been cheating them out of the opportunity," Kepley says with a smile.

After World War II, Kepley lived and worked in Gaston County and was a Scoutmaster in Cramerton for more than two years. He returned to Rowan County — he had grown up in the Chestnut Hill area off South Main Street — and earned his business degree from Catawba College in 1949, the same year he married Grace.

Jack and Grace have known each other since the second grade.

"She knew I was a Scoutmaster when she married me, so she didn't complain," Jack says.

The couple had three children. While Kepley was devoting his free time to family and Scouting, he also was starting and managing his insurance business, restoring a couple of houses, staying heavily involved in Coburn United Methodist Church and the American Legion, and doing anything and everything with wood.

He has been an auxiliary policeman and a Sunday School teacher. He's a licensed tree farmer, which helps in managing the acreage the Kepley family owns off Bringle Ferry Road. Many Troop 448 Scouts have explored and camped out on the Kepley farm.

Because of his devotion to the community, Kepley has been a Lions Club Man of the Year, the Civitan Club's Citizen of the Year and the Salisbury-Rowan Insurance Women's Boss of the Year.

He often is asked his secret to being so healthy and full of life at 93. "Join the Boy Scouts," he answers.

There is something Kepley has always told Wilson and other Scouts of Troop 448: Leave the world a little better place than you found it.

"And he certainly has set an example of that," Wilson says. "He still is my Scoutmaster." **S**



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Dale and Michael Koontz shop for tomatoes at the Wetmore Farms booth during last year's Woodleaf Tomato Festival. This year's event is Aug. 19.
— Photo by Wayne Hinshaw.

JULY 27-29 & AUGUST 2-5 "Tom, Dick, and Harry"

• *Meroney Theater*

Piedmont Players. Performances begin at 7:30 each night. In this comedy about three brothers, Tom and his wife are about to adopt a baby. His brothers are anxious to help make a good impression on the woman from the agency who has arrived to check on the home and lifestyle of the prospective parents. Unfortunately, things do not go as planned. For more information: www.piedmontplayers.com or 704-633-5471.

AUGUST 5 Summer Sip Beer Crawl

• *Downtown Salisbury*

5-9 p.m. Taste local craft beer with friends and family while eating and shopping local. For more information: downtownsalisburync.com or 704-637-7814.

August 2017

Upcoming events in the Salisbury-Rowan area

AUGUST 5

All Ford Show

• *N.C. Transportation Museum*

8 a.m.-1 p.m. This car show is open to all Fords and all Ford orphans. The largest of the museum's car shows, the event continues to grow each year, usually featuring more than 100 cars. Register your vehicle by calling 704-636-2889 ext. 268.

AUGUST 5

Movies in the Park

• *City Park lawn*

Enjoy a night under the stars watching hit film, "Minions!" Opening entertainment will start at 8 p.m. and the movie will begin at 9 p.m. Don't forget your blanket or chair. Concessions will be available. For more information: 704-638-5295.

AUGUST 7-11

Colonial Camp Session II

• *Rowan Museum*

9 a.m.-2 p.m. each day. Elementary school-aged campers will explore the history of Rowan County by visiting local historic sites. Participants will have the opportunity to cre-

ate a journal, practice quill writing, cook over an open fire, dip candles, make paper and more. Call 704-633-5496 to register. Cost: \$150. Rowan Museum is located at 202 N. Main St., Salisbury.

AUGUST 10 **Thursdays on Main**

• *Veterans Park, Kannapolis*

The Tim Clark Band will give a free musical performance from 6-9 p.m. For more information: 704-920-4399.

AUGUST 12 **Concerts in the Park**

• *Village Park, Kannapolis*

7-10 p.m., Enjoy a free concert by Diamond Rio, complete with fireworks at the end. Bring blankets and lawn chairs to relax and enjoy the music. Concessions available. For more information: 704-920-4349.

AUGUST 12 **All GM Show**

• *N.C. Transportation Museum*

One week after the Fords are highlighted, GM vehicle owners get their chance. Come see this collection of Chevys, Buicks, GMCs and Cadillacs in this museum-run show. Register your vehicle by calling 704-636-2889 ext. 268.

AUGUST 19 **Legends By Lantern Tours**

• *N.C. Transportation Museum*

Enjoy a nighttime walking tour of the museum, exploring the historic structures of Spencer Shops. Legends by Lantern tours will feature tellings of N.C. railroad legends and tales of Spencer Shops that defy reason and logical explanation. Tours are 90 minutes.

AUGUST 19 **Woodleaf Tomato Festival**

• *Unity Presbyterian Church*

9 a.m.-4 p.m. Celebrating 110 years of Woodleaf tomatoes. For more information: 704-278-4248 or woodleaftomatofestival@yahoo.com.



Darrell Harwood and his band perform at Nashville Nights on New Year's Eve. Harwood will be in concert Aug. 19 at Morgan Ridge Vineyard. — Photo by Jon C. Lakey.

AUGUST 19 **Historic Gold Hill Summer Cruise In**

• *Historic Gold Hill*

Love classic and antique cars, street rods and cycles, or have one to showcase? Come out to the Historic Village of Gold Hill for the Summer Cruise In from 1-7 p.m. For more information: historicgoldhill.com/events or 704-267-9439.

AUGUST 19 **Kannapolis Wine Festival**

• *Laureate Center*

2-6 p.m. Local vineyards, wineries and breweries will be sharing their selections, beer included. There also will be food, arts, crafts and local products for sale. For more information: www.kannapolisnc.gov/Community/ Calendar or 704-920-4349.

AUGUST 19 **Darrell Harwood in Concert**

• *Morgan Ridge Vineyard*

The concert begins at 6 p.m. This will be a fun night to enjoy good music, delicious food and local wine and beer. For more information: www.morganridgevineyard.com/ or 704-639-0911.

AUGUST 20 **Blankets and Bluegrass**

• *Dr. Josephus Hall House*

6-8 p.m. Sponsored by Historic Salisbury Foundation. The Hall House is located at 226 S. Jackson St. Bring your own picnic, beer or wine and enjoy the best bluegrass musicians in Rowan County. This event is free.

AUGUST 24 **History on Tap**

• *121 Ridge Ave., Salisbury*

6-8 p.m. Join Historic Salisbury Foundation for the last of its summer History on Tap series, with "The History of 121 Ridge Avenue." This will be an exciting chance to check out a restoration in progress and find out what new business is planning on moving in. The event includes a tour and two tickets for New Sarum beer that you may enjoy while meeting new people or catching up with old friends. This event is free, but donations are welcome.

AUG. 24 - SEPT. 2 **"Dixie Swim Club"**

• *Lee Street theatre*

Five unforgettable women, free from husbands, kids and jobs, meet at the same beach cottage on North Carolina's Outer Banks to catch up, laugh and meddle in each other's lives over a period of 33 years. For more information: www.leestreet.org or 704-310-5507.



Marla Lyerly serves free Cheerwine on North Main Street.



Above: Erlene and Raymond Crotts. Below: Antonio and Dawn Rangel relax on one of the many Cheerwine benches on Easy Street.



Above: Jane Polkinghorne, Rose O'Toole and Alyssa Behnke, all from Charlotte, enjoy the shade on Easy Street. Below: Aaliyah Rosales samples the Rocky Top BBQ.



Cheerwine, the soft drink first produced in Salisbury in 1917, celebrated its 100th year with a huge birthday party in downtown Salisbury. Thousands attended the event, which featured free Cheerwine and live music throughout the day, a people's barbecue competition, a children's fun zone and shows, Cheerwine merchandise for sale, a Cheerwine exhibit at the Rowan Museum, a beer garden and more.

— Photos by Wayne Hinshaw

Cheerwine

Centennial Celebration



Rose Mary Thomason and Caroline Meyers



Clockwise from top right: Katie Misenheimer and 14-month-old Hadley from Salisbury; Iris and Steve LeCheminant of Lake Tahoe, Nev., show off their Cheerwine portrait; At right, Tracy Kluttz and son Ryan of Salisbury try some barbecue with their Cheerwine; Mayor Karen Alexander declares Cheerwine Day and presents a key to the city and a resolution in honor of the 100-year-old soft drink to President and CEO Cliff Ritchie; Kelly Moser and Chloe Saunders from Winston-Salem; Rick Regan and his wife; The crowd on North Main Street was shoulder-to-shoulder for much of the day.





Above: Melissa, Jason and Hadley Bryan. Right: Michael Gobbel, Paula Gobbel, Jamie Gobbel, Jim Gobbel, Stan Gobbel, Dely Higgins, Teresa Brannon, Marla Gobbel, Amie Lamanno and David Lamanno.



Ryan, Brynn, Shirley and Tom Disseler

Music echoed through downtown Salisbury as the Salisbury Symphony performed at the annual Pops at the Post concert, next to the Salisbury Post. Former NASCAR driver Kyle Petty was the guest performer, and “luck” was Maestro David Hagy’s theme. The Salisbury Swing Band performed before the Symphony’s nighttime performance.

— Photos by Mark Wineka

POPS

AT THE

POST



Above: Jim and Dot Gandy. Left: Jo Anne Poplin, Trudy Gale, Sue Pinkston and, in back, Judy Zirt.



Above: Bucky Cline, Ken Barr and Jim Duncan.
Right: Buck and Stacy Lambert, Breeann and Kinsley Johnson, Sierra Lambert and Chris Johnson. Below: Marcia Kirtley and Rick Misner.



Above: Arlene Brown and Monda Griggs. Below: Sarah Brown is sitting in Tim Klaus' 1933 Willys, which had a tailgating spot near the old bank.



Above: Tracey Baird, Lizzy Roy, Jessica Goodman and Shannon McCoy.

Below: Frank Strong, Isaiah Woods and Dominique Bates.





Top left: Zandra Spencer and Carole Simmons. Left: Scottie Webb and Leah Ann Honeycutt. Right: Jacob Stone, Jon-Michael Broyles, Jim Downing and Stuart Wright.

Campbell Golf Classic

The Novant Health Rowan Medical Center Foundation was host for the 19th annual John Campbell Memorial Golf Classic at the Country Club of Salisbury. More than \$150,000 was raised to benefit Cancer Services and a future Cancer Care Center at Novant Health Rowan Medical Center. This year was record-setting in dollars raised and the number of golfers, with 240 players over the course of the day.

— Photos by Anna Moorefield



Charles Whaley, Madison Currin and Brannon Williams



Above: Eugene Dryer, Gene Corry, James Talley and Horace Littlejohn. Right: Meghan Osborne, Hailey Smith and Tracy Alewine.





Standing: Wink Cline and John Kyger; kneeling: Greg Alcorn and Victor Wallace.



This group enjoyed a day of great golf.



Charlie Barr, Curtis Walker and Luke Graeber



Volunteers Mandy Cochrane, Tracy Baird, Emily Graham and Heather Brady



Above: Seamus Donaldson, Clint Robins, Tinsley Merrell and Lucas Merrell.



Right: Drs. Mark Casner, Steve Colwell, Jim Benonis and Ryan Rich.



Brandy Allen and Holly Morgan



Andy McNeely and Jessica Atwater

Salisbury's Westcliffe neighborhood recently celebrated its 40th annual Pig Pickin' Weekend. The four-day party kicked off on a Friday with an ice-cream social and continued Saturday morning with a one-mile run and a 5k race, followed by a noon parade led by Salisbury and Franklin Fire Department engines. A cool-off fire hose dousing was followed by a lawn mower race, horseshoe tournament, children's games, pool parties and a cocktail/dance party. Sunday afternoon started with a volleyball tournament, then the traditional Pig Pickin' Dinner, served after a remembrance of lost military heroes. Monday's sunshine allowed the well-supported golf tournament to be thoroughly enjoyed, as was the ladies pool party.

— Photos by Len Clark



Betty Jo Hardy and Amy Kerr attended the original Westcliffe barbecue in 1978.



Crowds line up for the Pig Pickin' Dinner.

Westcliffe's 40th Annual PIG PICKIN'



Sara Clark won the Westcliffe 5k, and her son, Cooper, won the mile run.



The volleyball teams compete.



The crew is ready to serve: Chefs Ivey and Doug Veitch had help from Dakota Gurganes, Rhiannon Edgell, Harper and Destiny Veitch and Kim, Jacob and Scott Fleming.



Brian and Mary Anne Lenox



Above: Gail and Nick Langdon with Renda and Lipe Barrier. Right: The Westcliffe volleyball champions for 2017: In back, Evan Kerr, Parker and Jimmy Greene, Wesley Porter and Paul Clark; in front, Kelly Porter and Peyton Greene.



Left: Tyler, Kristen and Chay Swift with Kathryn and Parker Laughlin.

Right: Back row; Hunter Finklea, Allison Laubach, Sydney Kelly and Nathan Lambert. Front row: Sally Mountcastle and Elizabeth Laubach.



Above left: Jan Kichefski with Linda and Elizabeth Isbell. Above right: Claire and Mickey Cline traveled from Boone to the Westcliffe celebration, but not in that golf cart behind them. Right: Shela Sapp, 2017 Westcliffe President Dave Joyner and Colleen and Shawn Stephens.

Sculpture SHOW

reception

The Salisbury Public Art Committee held a reception in honor of participating artists who have works in the 2017 Salisbury Sculpture Show. The reception took place at the South Fulton Street home of Ed and Susan Norvell. This year's ninth annual Sculpture Show has 18 pieces done by 12 different sculptors. Positioned throughout Salisbury, the sculptures stay in place for much of the year.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Retired Senior Planner Lynn Raker, sculptor Richard Pitts, Barbara Perry and Diana Moghrabi



Shirl and Ed Hull



Starla Rogers and Bailey Wingler



Above: Paul Woodson, Beth Woodson and Jim Behmer.



Left: Susan Norvell, Lillian Gascoigne and Jenn Selby.



Left: City Planner Alyssa Nelson, Ed Norvell and sculptor David Boyajian.



Right: Dustin Wingler and Eric Osguthorpe.



John Stafford accompanied one of the night's performers, Lillias White.



Lillias White brought her cabaret show to the Meroney Theater for 'Night on the Stage.'

Night on the STAGE

Broadway star and Emmy-award winning actor Lillias White brought her cabaret show to Salisbury for Piedmont Players Theatre's "Night on the Stage," an annual fundraiser which provides operations money for both the Meroney and Norvell theaters. The two-night event at the Meroney included an opening reception, silent auction, dinner by Chef Santos and White's performances. A longtime actor based in Brooklyn, N.Y., White presently appears in the Netflix series, "The Get Down."

— Photos by Susan Shinn Turner and Bob Matthews



Karen Christensen and Ashlyn Keller



From left: Graham and Danielle Corriher; Erle Craven with Becky Bradham, interim director of Downtown Salisbury, Inc.; Cindy Pinkston, Gloria Jennings, Sue Jennings and Teresa Johnston; Dee Woods.

Salisbury has much to offer beyond Exit 76

Over the course of a dozen years, I probably drove past Salisbury on the interstate 200 times — and about a quarter of those times I stopped at Exit 76 for gas, or a coffee or a snack.

Usually being in a hurry to get back on the road, I never ventured farther than that first intersection. If only I had known what I was missing!

When I first began to explore the opportunity of coming to Catawba College, I spent a great deal of time researching the college — but comparatively little finding out about its host community. As a result, when my family and I arrived here five years ago we were continually discovering all sorts of pleasant surprises as we explored our new home.

The range and quality of the experiences available here amazed us. One of the first events I attended was Pops at the Post — what a delightful introduction to this place and its people. We found an excellent symphony, outstanding theatre, a rapidly growing arts scene ... what jewels there were just over the horizon of that interstate exit.

Over the years we have been impressed with and enjoyed productions at Lee Street, the Meroney, and The Norvell. Even more important was encountering the deep sense of commitment to and ownership of these cultural opportunities from the local community. The stories behind the restoration or creation of these spaces and these endeavors

were just as remarkable as what was presented on their stages.

We have also thoroughly enjoyed the “daily living” experiences here. The range of businesses, shops and restaurants in town means it is very rare that we find ourselves looking beyond Salisbury for anything. The proprietors of these establishments quickly became our friends.

Where else but Salisbury would you find the then-mayor seeing a pile of clothes in the back seat of my car and offering to take it down to his dry cleaning establishment to save me the trip? Where else but Salisbury would the owner of Sidewalk Deli offer to leave a cheese-cake we ordered in a cooler on his porch when he knew we wouldn't get to the restaurant in time to collect it?

These are little things but huge examples of neighborly, helpful, warm people that make Salisbury special.

Salisbury is far and away the most philanthropic community we have ever seen. It is not simply the dollar value of the generosity displayed, it is the attitude. I sometimes tease people here that they suffer from “FOMA”


(Fear of Missing Anything!) because they attend and generously sponsor so many events and projects.

People in Salisbury may have their specific favorite causes but that doesn't stop them from lending a hand to many other needs when asked. They do it because they love this special place and they want it to succeed for everyone. This is especially clear when one looks at the outstanding efforts of the Land Trust and dedicated individuals who have worked creatively to preserve and protect our natural environment for present and future generations.

Last but certainly not least, we love that Salisbury is about education. There is a vibrant and evolving local public school system that is on the cutting edge of infusing technology, literacy and learning. There are strong faith-based and other educational options for elementary, middle and high school students. There are four remarkably different and complementary institutions of higher education: RCCC, Livingstone, Hood and our beloved Catawba.

I can't think of another similar sized community that offers such a rich diversity of education and

attracts so many gifted people to teach, study and contribute to the community as a whole.

Hopefully many others will find their way off the interstate to explore and delight in all the Salisbury has to offer. My family and I are so glad that we did. 

Brien Lewis is president of Catawba College.



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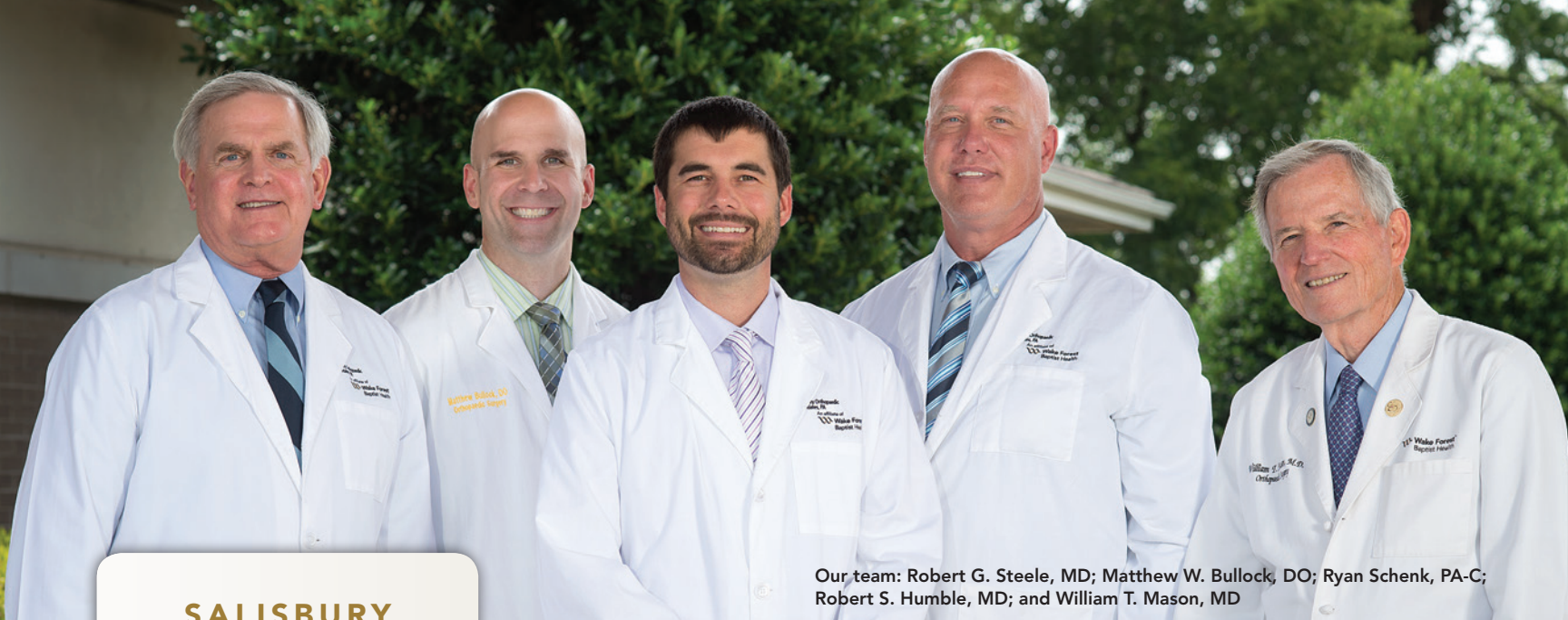
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