

AUGUST 2022

SALISBURY

the magazine

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Happy hundred

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FEATURES

26 IN THE WOODS

Cherry Treesort provides
plenty of excitement

36 SERVICE STARS

Salisbury Rotary Club
looks back over century

42 CIVICS CLASS

The Civitan Club of Salisbury
celebrates 100 years

46 TURNING BACK THE PAGE

Second Saturday Bookshop
a second chance for books

On the cover: Tom Childress at Shuford Stadium on the Catawba College campus. (Sean Meyers photo)

On this page: Maggie Blackwell and her great-grandchildren explore the Cherry Treesort property. (Wayne Hinshaw photo)



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DEPARTMENTS

THE ARTS

14 Artistic expression

Salisbury Sculpture Show adds creative flair

SPORT

20 School spirit

Tom Childress' passion for Catawba has improved college

14



IN EVERY ISSUE

- Editor's Letter** p.8
- Through the Lens** p.10
- Bookish** p.11
- Rowan Original** p.12
- The Scene** p.56
- Local Colors** p.62

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Ace Hardware..... 19	The Elements 55	Putnam's Carpet. 19	TMR Realty..... 35
Ralph Baker's Shoes..... 5	F&M Bank..... 7	Queen City Appliances 64	Tom's Carpet 34
Bare Furniture..... 4	Godley's Garden Center 19	Rowan-Kannapolis ABC 40	Trinity Oaks..... 32
Bargain Store Furniture 19	Kathy Griffin Century 21..... 9	Sink Farm Equipment..... 63	Windsor Gallery 35
Barnhardt Jewelers..... 41	Historic Salisbury Foundation . 18	Steam Way Cleaning 19	Yatawara Gynecology..... 40
Baxter Consultants..... 19	Landis Plumbing..... 55	Steven's Country Store..... 41	Melissa Yates/Lantern Realty . . 55
Blue Bay 33	Lantern Realty 34	Still Waters Restoration 19	
Cozart Lumber 19	Powles Staton..... 2	Stout Heating and Air 45	



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The lazy days of summer

I love summertime in North Carolina. We have fabulous vacation options with the beach and mountains both close by.

My son Andrew and I took a trip to the beach in May. It was our last hoorah before he started his Big Boy Job the next week. He likes it. So far, so good.

My husband went on a mission trip in June, and so Deacon — our white Lab puppy — and I took a trip to the mountains with our friend Sharon Deal. Fortuitously, Sharon is a Dog Person. Her daughters Amanda and Laura — I went all through school with Amanda — have dogs. Deacon did pretty well. She loved lounging out on the breezy deck, and even put her face in the water for the first time when we played in a cool mountain stream. Proud Dog Mom moment! Somewhere, I am sure my mom (not a Dog Person) is rolling her eyes.

Whether or not you are a Dog Person, I hope you will enjoy this issue of *Salisbury the Magazine*. Lots of good stuff. So sit — and read for a spell.

Check out Andy Mooney's photo of the Spin Doctors during their performance at the Cheerwine Festival — back after a two-year pandemic pause. (More photos in Scene.)

Local author Margaret Basinger returns this month with a review of "Fight Night." You'll no doubt fall in love with this multi-generational family of strong women.

Speaking of strong women, you'll also get to meet Brianna Caraccio, this month's Rowan Original. For the past year and a half, she's been manager of Main Street Marketplace. Brianna loves the fact that she's making a difference in her hometown.

Mike London sat down with Tom Childress, who has been a Rowan County fixture



Public Library.

Maggie Blackwell and her Hubby took their great-grandchildren to Treehouse Resort in China Grove for an adventure — and what a grand adventure it was. Read about their stay through a child's eyes.

Also in Scene, Jiggy with the Piggy returns to Downtown Kannapolis after a two-year pandemic pause. Check out the sights — but unfortunately not the smells! — of this fun event.

Enjoy your summer, and I'll see you next month!

— Susan Shinn Turner
Editor, *Salisbury the Magazine*

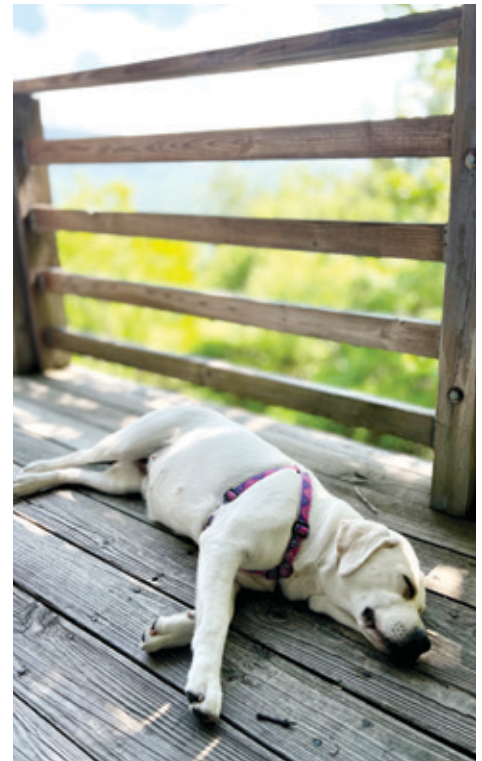
for years, whether it's serving at Catawba College or fundraising for other high-profile campaigns around town or at his church. "Don't say no," Tom often says. "Just think about it."

That's when he knows he's got you.

This summer marks the 14th year of the Salisbury Sculpture Show. Ed and Susan Norvell always host a reception for the visiting artists, and this year was no exception. As an added bonus, the show has its own podcast, so not only can you see the 21 sculptures around town, you can learn about them in the artists' own words. (See Scene for more photos.)

Two local organizations are celebrating their 100th anniversaries in 2022. Congratulations to the Rotary Club and the Civitan Club. Elizabeth Cook and Bill Bucher, respectively, write about these fine groups. (More Rotary photos in Scene.)

B.J. Connor, an avid reader, brings us a story on the Second Saturday Book Store, open — you guessed it — on the second Saturday of each month. Learn about this fascinating shop run faithfully by the Friends of Rowan



Deacon the Lab enjoys a shady spot while hanging out in the mountains.

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THROUGH THE LENS by Andy Mooney



Spin Doctors' lead singer Chris Barron and guitarist Eric Schenkman perform during the Cheerwine Festival in May. To submit a photo for Through the Lens, send a high-resolution photo to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com. Photos must be vertical orientation.

‘Fight Night’ examines multigenerational female relationships

Some traits are inherited — passed through the genes. I would just like to tell you, as I write my very first book review — having been in at least two book clubs for more than 50 years — that the ability to write a book review is not genetic. My parents, Belle and Dick Banks, both reviewed books. Daddy was the book review editor for the *Charlotte Observer* for 40 years. Momma did what she called “book talks” for the North Mecklenburg Recreation Department for at least 10 years and had quite a following both in the Huntersville/Davidson area and here in Salisbury. Many people came to hear her talks just to hear her salty — absolutely embarrassing to me! — jokes.

But for me, the idea of writing a review is daunting. I was allowed to choose any book I wanted to share with you. I chose “Fight Night,” because months after I have read the book, I can remember the plot and the characters. That is rare for me these days! I will tell you straight out that if you know me, I am the role model for the grandmother in the novel.

Here goes! I am joining the family book reviewers.

“Fight Night,” Canadian author Miriam Toews’ latest novel, is filled with strong, memorable women characters. In “Fight Night,” as in her previous novels, “All My Puny Sorrows” and “Women Talking,” Toews examines multigenerational female relationships, this time focusing on a Toronto family. The daughter, mother, grandmother, and child in utero are characterized so strongly that they are unlikely to be forgotten.

The novel opens with Swiv, a precocious and quirky 9-year-old being suspended from school for fighting. Her mother, Mooshie, an out-of-work actress in her third trimester of a late-in-life pregnancy, has enlisted the help of her 83-year-old mother, Elvira, to look after her daughter as she auditions and goes to rehearsals. Elvira is dying of cancer but is trying to hold on until the

birth of Gord, Mooshie’s baby. The caregiving goes both ways. Swiv helps Elvira with her basic needs. Elvira teaches her granddaughter how to fight and survive.

Swiv tells the family’s story as they await the arrival of the baby. Of all the child narrators in literary fiction, Scout in “To Kill a Mockingbird” by Harper Lee stands out as the most memorable. Swiv gives her a run for her money. As Swiv narrates, she is joined by the voices of other family members — some dead and some not yet born.

These voices, especially that of Elvira, express numerous themes — suicide, mental illness — in playful language that disguises the seriousness of the issues. Swiv’s father has left her, her mother’s behavior is erratic to say the least, and she fears that she will inherit the mental illness that is so

much a part of her heredity. In Elvira, though, Swiv sees an optimistic vision of adulthood. Elvira is full of joy even as her body is deteriorating. She has the wisdom of age but the fun-loving joy of childhood. She is a survivor and this is her chief lesson for Swiv.

When Swiv asks her grandmother why her own mother seems to be losing her mind, Elvira tells her that Mooshie became decimated when Elvira’s mother, with whom she was extremely close, died. Elvira says Mooshie is fighting. “She was fighting, fighting. She was fighting on the inside. Sometimes when we fight ... sometimes we’re fighting in not quite the right way ... we need to adjust our game. But still, the main thing is we’re fighting ... your mom’s a fighter. We’re all fighters. We’re a family of fighters.”

Toews spends the first part of her book developing her characters. The second part describes the airplane trip Elvira plans to visit her neph-

ews in Fresno. Swiv will come along as caretaker. The description of the two of them in the Toronto Airport is laugh-out-loud funny. Elvira’s diuretic kicks in as they are waiting to board the plane and she has to go NOW! The bathroom is way down the hall so Swiv takes one of the nearby wheelchairs, settles Elvira in it, stuffs their luggage between her grandmother’s legs and they take off. When a man in an airport uniform tells them they are not authorized to take the wheelchair, Elvira gives him the finger and tells Swiv to start running. The first bathroom they see is the men’s room. Elvira says she can’t wait any longer so Swiv pushes the wheelchair to the nearest stall. After she has found relief, Elvira chats it up with all of the men around her. Although Swiv is embarrassed, she is used

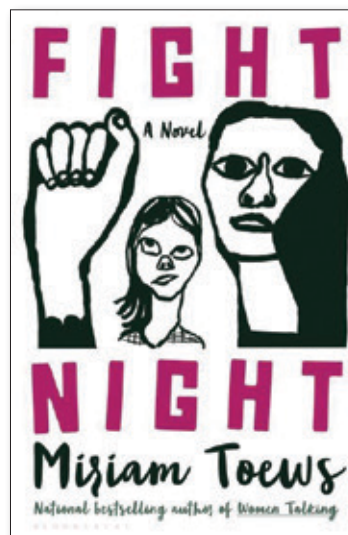
to her grandmother’s gregarious personality.

Women readers of a certain age are going to see their mothers and themselves in Toews’ characterization of Elvira. Her behaviors cause Swiv to roll her eyes just as most young people would. Elvira’s determination to find joy in her every interaction make her both memorable and lovable.

The last part of the book brings tears of sadness and of joy. The conclusion of “Fight Night” is beautiful, happy, and sad all at once. All of the women are fighting their hardest as they experience life, death, and the prayer for positive days ahead.

“Fight Night” was a knock-down, drag-out of a book. A book that will evoke all of your emotions. I loved it.

Retired educator Margaret Basinger is the author of “’Tis the Season with Belle and Chuck.” She lives in Rockwell. [S]



Making a difference

Brianna Caraccio serves as manager of Main Street Marketplace

BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER

Brianna Caraccio calls herself a hometown girl from China Grove. She grew up here and has returned to serve as manager of Main Street Marketplace. Brianna, 25, will marry her fiancé, Sergio Ossorio, 30, on Sept. 4 in Stanton, Va., a good place for their extended families to gather. Engaged since 2018, they are a “Covid couple,” having planned to marry in 2020.

How long have you lived in China Grove? Tell me about your family and of course your fiancé.

I grew up in China Grove. I’ve lived here the majority of my life. I went to Salem College, UNC-Asheville after that, and moved around a little bit. Sergio and I moved back a year and a half ago. My whole family is still here in the area. My mom, Jennifer, still teaches at Corriher-Lipe Middle School, and my dad, Frank, still has his restaurant, Not Just Frank’s, in downtown Concord. Sergio teaches English at A.L. Brown High School. We moved back for this job. It’s my dream job.

How did you get involved with the Marketplace? What is your degree in and from where? What other life experiences — such as going to Africa — contributed to your wanting to work there?

About two years ago, I was introduced to the market through Hope Oliphant, the executive director. She gave me a tour of the organization and everything they were doing to impact the community in a sustainable way that really aligned with my life experiences.



Brianna Caraccio, fiancé Sergio Ossorio and Storm. (Brianna Caraccio Photography photo)

I wanted to have a career that would benefit more than just me. I grew up in the church and I've done a lot of mission trips and work days, but I felt there was something missing.

After my freshman year of college, I did an internship with a non-profit organization called Freedom Global, which works to alleviate poverty in Kenya through sustainable solutions. That was the first time I had seen a sustainable organization that was partnering with individuals in a community to create solutions.

After that, I transferred from Salem College to UNC-Asheville, and majored in economics and Africana studies, and took classes in non-profit management.

Through my studies, I focused on food insecurity and analyzing food prices. I worked with a non-profit that offered mobile food markets. All of that came together when I decided I wanted to be a market manager. When Hope told me they were looking for a manager for the market, it was too aligned not to pursue.

Tell me how the Marketplace has evolved over the years to its current model (it now grows hydroponic lettuce) to be more sustainable.

Main Street Marketplace was created as a food pantry to address the crisis in our community when the mills closed. Over the years, we saw the same individuals returning. And we weren't seeing any progression. In 2014, Hope and Anne Corriher, then the executive director, started Getting Ahead classes, which offer a space to build community, build relationships, find out what resources people have and what they need to get ahead and make their own lives sustainable.

The marketplace has had more than 120 graduates, and half require no further assistance.

If someone has never visited the Marketplace, what would you say to encourage them to come?

I would ask, "Do you know where your food comes from?" "Have you ever looked at your grocery bill and said, 'Wow, that's too much!'"

There's something for everyone here, whether you're passionate about mental health or recovery, agriculture and sustainability, food insecurity and nutrition, or just needing less expensive groceries. A tiered system enables people to pay



Brianna Caraccio at Main Street Marketplace. (Susan Shinn Turner photo)

what they can afford. This is a way you can make an impact on the community you're part of. Who doesn't want to do that? When you know better, you do better.

What are the future plans for the Marketplace? Please include the Meeting Place, too.

Our future plans stem from the participants in our Getting Ahead class. Anything we do is in direction relation to what we're hearing from the class.

We just had a Spanish Getting Ahead class. One of the resources we recognized was the language barrier. We're looking to offer a ESL class in the fall. We're also providing ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) and community resiliency training, both of which help people identify childhood traumas and how to function in daily life.

In the Marketplace, we just launched a food pharmacy program in partnership with Healthy Rowan and practitioners from Salisbury Pediatrics and the Rowan County Health Department. We offer healthy meal kits and recipes. Individuals are given a prescription by their doctors to eat more fruits and vegetables. We are able to fill those prescriptions with our healthy meal kits.

We're also looking to build a bistro in the

coming years, ultimately working toward self-sustainability, but also to provide a healthy meal option for local residents.

What is the most rewarding thing about working there?

Knowing that the work that I do is truly making an impact in our community. So many people go to a job because it's money and there's no heart in it. I feel like my job is directly aligned with what I'm passionate about, and it's directly affecting my hometown. I never thought China Grove would have an organization that's doing sustainable community work. It's so rewarding to be a part of that in the place that I grew up.

How do you like living in downtown Kannapolis?

I definitely enjoy it. I feel privileged to live there. When I grew up it was a ghost town. It's a little surreal. I get to walk my dog every morning. I get to hear the birds, and I know the shop owners by name, which is really cool. It feels right for us right now. It's growing at a very fast pace, so there's pros and cons with that. Sergio walks to school and he loves that.

What do you enjoy doing away from work, especially in the downtown Kannapolis area?

What are some of your hobbies?

We love the coffee shop across the street, Editions Coffee Shop and Book Store. We've been to a couple of ballgames. We like the brewery and the restaurants.

I have my own photography business, Brianna Caraccio Photography. I specialize in couples, portraits, weddings, and family sessions. If I'm not spending time with Sergio or our dog, Storm — a Plott hound, we think — I'm doing something with photography.

I love reading, cooking, and listening to podcasts. I'm always a learner.

What are two items you always keep in the fridge?

Hummus and some sort of berry. Strawberries and blueberries are both easy to snack on.

What advice would you give the Brianna Caraccio of the future?

Be present in the moment. Trust your intuition. Go for it! **[S]**



*'La Femme' by Wayne Vaughn
beside the Salisbury Farmer's
Market Pavilion on East Kerr
Street is part of the 2022
Salisbury Sculpture Show.*

Expression exposition

The 2022 sculpture show displays artists' creativity

WRITTEN BY SUSAN SHINN TURNER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDY MOONEY



'Hill Climb' by Jim Collins at the corner of Fulton and Innes streets.



'Out of the Box' by Richard Pitts is behind Waterworks Visual Arts Center on North Lee Street.

This time of year brings wonderful additions to the public art world. The 14th annual Salisbury Sculpture show is under way.

Barbara Perry chairs the city's Public Arts Commission, formerly a committee, according to Alyssa Nelson, the city's urban planner and staff liaison.

"It's a big deal for us to be a commission now," she noted.

The majority of the 21 pieces were installed the day of the opening reception, held May 13 at the South Fulton Street home of Ed and Susan Norvell.

"This is our favorite party of the year," Norvell said. "Getting to know the artists is fascinating. I love the mix of people."

The crowd of 90 gathered on the Norvell's front lawn included artists, commission members, City Council members, Salisbury Appearance Commission members, donors, and owners of host sites.

"Public art brings joy," said Norvell, who serves as the commission vice chair. "It's here for a year, and if you don't like it, it goes away. But a lot of pieces have found a home in Salisbury."



'Key Hole Flutter Archway' by Jim Gallucci is on the campus of RCCC. (Susan Shinn Turner photo)

THE ARTS



*'Blooming Cubes' by Hanna Jubran is in the Castlewood community, off Jake Alexander Boulevard.
(Susan Shinn Turner photo)*



“Blooming Cubes” by Hanna Jubran is on display at Castlewood, a first for the neighborhood.

Jackie Crane from their homeowners association contacted Nelson, and “we went from there and selected a piece,” said Lorna Rash-Keene, who lives with husband Ken at Castlewood. “We’re excited about it. It’s different.”

Artists Carl Billingsley of Greensboro, Bob Cook of Vero Beach, Fla., and Matt Amante from Greenville attended the reception.

“We’ll be back next year,” Cook noted.

Eric Feinstein of New York created the show’s podcast,

Above right: *'Two Wheeled Freedom' by Jason Morris is beside New Sarum Brewery on Depot Street.*

Right: *'Bonsai Bench' by Matt Amante is at the Rowan Public Library near the corner of West Fisher and South Jackson streets.*





available on the free app Otocast, available from the App Store. (Search for Salisbury, or scroll down to the eighth show on the list.)

“It’s like being on a tour with the artists,” said Feinstein, who was on hand for the opening reception.

The app provides a narration, photograph, directions and text for each sculpture.

Feinstein contacted Nelson about providing the podcast for the show, and has done so for the past five years. He creates guides for shows all over the country. There are similar shows in Cary, Apex, Sanford, and Greenville, and Van Wyck, North Charleston, Hilton Head and Clemson in South Carolina. In all, Feinstein has created 110 shows nationwide.

“I never get to meet the artists,” he said. “For me, this is really fun.” **S**

Clockwise from top left: ‘Storm Tree’ by Dean Leary is at the corner of North Church and West Council streets; ‘Circumstantial Evidence’ by Roger Martin is on the campus of Horizons Unlimited; ‘The Point’ by Jordan Parah is at the corner of North Lee and East Kerr streets.



Above: 'High Rise' by Charles Pilkey is beside the Salisbury Station on Depot Street. Below: 'Adrift' by Richard Conn is between Waterworks Visual Arts Center and Easy Street.



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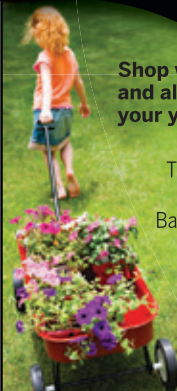
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SPORT

*Tom Childress at
Shuford Stadium on
the Catawba College
campus.*





Tom Childress shares a moment with Dan Neely during a recent workout. Childress works out six days a week at the YMCA.

‘An extra-good man’

Tom Childress poured heart and soul into making Catawba a better school

WRITTEN BY MIKE LONDON | PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



Before Sam Moir, legendary former Catawba College men's basketball coach, died Oct. 20, 2018, he entrusted one last mission to Tom Childress, his right-hand man.

Namely — get Dave Robbins elected to the North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame.

Robbins played for Moir at Catawba and was Childress' teammate in the 1960s.

Robbins' college coaching career was nothing short of incredible — three national championships, 713 wins — but he'd accomplished his feats in Division II, away from the bright lights and ESPN cameras. Plus, he'd accumulated all of those victories out of state at Virginia Union University, and he'd hung up his whistle in 2008. Those national titles had happened at the HBCU school back in 1980, 1992 and 2005.

Out of sight, out of mind.

N.C. Hall of Fame committee voters had forgotten Robbins, a native of Gaston County, or they had chosen to ignore him.

But Moir wouldn't let Robbins be overlooked. Neither would Childress.

In January 2022, the long overdue call to the Hall of Fame came

for the 79-year-old Robbins. Childress won a long, quiet, behind-the-scenes fight to get it done. He also made certain Catawba had a full table for Robbins' induction ceremonies in April.

Childress is the person who people turned to for a long time when something needed to get done for Catawba. Robbins was just the latest example.

Need a new building? Need a library? Need a field house? Need \$50 million? Call Tom Childress.

While he was a stellar college basketball coach in his own right, Childress, who celebrated his 80th birthday on June 13, is neither tall nor intimidating nor threatening.

He's not a bully. What he does is project an overwhelming vibe of decency and integrity. If Childress asked you to write a check to Catawba (or Pfeiffer) it not only meant that you had the means to write it, it also meant that it must be the right thing to do.

"Just a class act," Catawba supporter Bob Setzer said. "Tom's demeanor, the way he always treats people the way they should be treated — he's an extra-good man. He never high-pressured anyone, but it was really hard to say no to him."

Childress' story starts in Mount Airy.

Basketball was important to boys growing up in Mount Airy,

where Moir coached a powerhouse program at the local high school.

In 1960, Childress' senior year, Mount Airy High's Granite Bears went 25-0 and won the 3A state championship. That undefeated season led to Moir being hired to bring some of that Mount Airy magic down to Catawba.

Mount Airy was so good in 1960 that Childress and state championship Mike Cooke became the first high school teammates to play together in the East-West All-Star Game in Greensboro.

Moir wasn't able to recruit Cooke. Cooke chose North Carolina and had the distinction of playing on Dean Smith's first bunch of Tar Heels in 1961-62.

But Moir was able to recruit Childress, who made a natural progression at Catawba. He paid some dues as a freshman and sophomore guard for the Indians before shining for Moir as a junior and senior.

As important as anything that happened on the court, Childress met Catawba student Judy Hollar, who was a year younger. She would become Judy Childress and the mother of his four children.

"I like to tell people I met my wife going to the library," Childress said. "Well, at least Judy was going to the library. I don't recall where I was headed, but definitely not the library."

After graduating from Catawba, Childress coached three seasons at East Surry High, not far from his roots.

While he was teaching and coaching high school ball, his dream was getting his foot in the door as a college coach. Opportunity knocked one night when Appalachian State head coach Bob Light came to speak at the East Surry athletic banquet.

Light and Childress hit it off.

Childress took a leap of faith, moving to Boone to work for the ASU Mountaineers as

an underpaid graduate assistant. He already had one child, and he's still not sure how they made it. There was a lot of sweat and a lot of prayer, but his foot was in the door.

It worked out. Childress earned a master's degree and was elevated to full-time assistant by Light after that first year.

Childress was 27 in 1969 when he got his chance to be a college head coach. The offer came from a legend — Pfeiffer AD Joe Ferebee. Ferebee had spoken to Moir and Light, and both offered glowing recommendations of Childress.

"Pfeiffer offered me the job, but it wasn't a routine decision because there was almost nothing there in Misenheimer," Childress said. "Old gym, one bank and one restaurant."

He took the job. He remembers losing his Pfeiffer debut to Erskine, but he also remembers winning the next two against Carolinas Conference opponents High Point and Presby-



Tom and Judy Childress leave St. John's Lutheran Church on June 19. (Susan Shinn Turner photo)



Tom Childress gets a warm greeting from Catawba football alum Earl McMillon during a recent workout at the Y.



terian. He was on his way.

Much of it is a blur now, but there were a lot of wins. Part of Childress' journey was mentoring a promising assistant coach named John Lentz.

Childress' best team was the 1979 squad that was ranked 15th in NAIA. He was Carolinas Conference Coach of the Year in 1975, 1977, 1979 and 1982 and District 26 Coach of the Year for 1982. He coached Pfeiffer basketball until 1983.

They could and should make a movie about his final game — coaching against Moir in Catawba's Goodman Gym.

In 1977, Childress' duties at Pfeiffer expanded to AD. He had coaching adventures in tennis, swimming, golf and cross country, as well as basketball.

He handled the AD chores until 1990. He served in an era when Pfeiffer's varsity sports programs expanded from nine teams to 14. Softball and field hockey fields were constructed. A tennis complex was built. In 1989, he added the role of dean of admissions to an already full plate.

Childress' next stop was a return to Catawba, where he continued to wear multiple hats. He had some athletic department responsibilities, but he also served as dean of admissions and became vice president of external relations. That meant marketing Catawba to the world and attracting students. There was some success. Ca-

tawba's incoming freshman class jumped from 219 in 1990 to 294 in 1992. Childress' coaching background helped him build a solid management team, and they went to work.

"We had good people — no way I could have accomplished anything without them." Childress said. "And those were good days. At a small college, you get to know just about every student's name — and their major. And at least half of our students were athletes."

“He was the face of Catawba in the community for a long time.”

— BOB SETZER

In the summer of 1993, Childress bounced back over to Pfeiffer, where he had been offered a position that made him second-in-command at the school. His job title was senior vice president for institutional development. His task was raising funds.

He returned to Catawba in 1995 to serve as AD, but his role shifted quickly to senior vice

president of development. He built up the Chiefs Club and directed fundraising efforts. He proved to be the perfect man for the job, and it proved to be the perfect job for him. He did it for 19 years.

"He was the face of Catawba in the community for a long time," Setzer said. "He was that guy who connected Catawba, with the alumni, with the community and potential donors. He had a positive relationship with people like the Hurleys, the Stanbacks, the Rendlemans, and that was huge for Catawba. Every person who came in contact with Tom loved him."

Starting in 1997, Childress and the late Newton Fowler spearheaded the most ambitious fundraising and development campaign that had ever taken place at Catawba — and raised \$56.5 million. There were a handful of million-dollar donors, which helped, but volume was critical. At least 4,000 businesses and individuals gave.

Long-needed renovations as well as new construction took place. The sound of jackhammers was ever-present on campus.

In the spring of 2000, Childress was honored with the Trustee Award for his mighty fundraising contributions to Catawba.

"I didn't raise the \$56 million," Childress said modestly. "We raised it. When you get an award like that, you wish 50 more people could stand up there with you."

From 2004-08, a new endowment campaign



raised \$40 million. A third campaign added \$10 million in 2009-10.

That's more than \$100 million.

All four of Tom and Judy's four children competed at the college level, and now 12 grandchildren have made or are making their own impact in the sports world. That includes Michael Childress, a Division I golfer at Richmond, and Bryson Childress, a D-I basketball player at High Point. Bryson played for coach Tubby Smith, who once played for High Point against his grandfather's Pfeiffer teams.

Bryson, who starred at North Stanly High, played in the 2019 East-West All-Star Game, making it three Childress generations in that prestigious game. Bryson's father, Paul Childress, played in the 1986 game, while his uncle, Paul Childress, played in the all-star affair in 1989.

Cooke, Childress' Mount Airy teammate from that 1960 All-Star game, was in Greensboro and sat with Tom to watch Bryson play in it 59 years later. It was a surreal moment and a reminder that life moves in a circle.

Childress is grateful for all of it.

When he was 50, he had open-heart surgery and his story could have ended on the operating table 30 years ago. Faced with his own mortality, that's when he first started to consider what his legacy would be. He wanted it to be a life of service.

His good works continue. Even in retirement, his efforts with his church — St. John's Lutheran

— keep him busy. He was a longtime usher at the 8:30 a.m. service, and has led successful annual stewardship campaigns for the 1,100-member congregation.

"After that," he said, "you let someone else have a chance."

He's served a five-year term on the church's Benevolent Foundation board, the fifth as president. He's also been involved with the church's efforts for estate planning.

He and his wife support Rowan Helping Ministries, in giving money and time. They have packed backpacks for the Food for Thought program, and serve supper once a year in December. With so many St. John's members who are willing to help, you only have to volunteer once or twice a year.

Childress makes sure to give something back every day.

When he graduated from Catawba in 1964, Childress didn't have much in the way of finances, but he still made a small gift to Catawba.

He's never stopped.

"I knew I owed Catawba a lot and I owed a great deal to Coach Moir for the basketball scholarship that changed my life," Childress said.

His relationship with Moir was a close one until Moir's death.

In 2001, Childress and his wife established an endowed scholarship at Catawba that honors Childress' late parents. It is earmarked for a

student with financial need from Surry County.

When he retired officially from Catawba in 2014, 50 years after he graduated, Childress was the recipient of the O.B. Michael Distinguished Alumnus Award, which goes to the Catawba graduate who has made the most outstanding contribution to the school or society.

Childress is a member of four halls of fame — Surry County, Mount Airy, Catawba and Pfeiffer.

"I had two long careers, first in athletics, and then administration," Childress said. "I was fortunate. I never had a day where I felt like I was going in to work. I was just going to a school that I loved."

Pfeiffer, his workplace while his children were growing up, will always be near and dear to him, but Catawba always will be home.

He poured heart and soul into making Catawba a better school.

"There was a time I saw Tom have a parking-lot conversation with a business owner," Setzer said. "They must have talked for 45 minutes. When Tom was done talking, she wrote a check to Catawba right there on the hood of her car. That's Tom Childress."

So what's the key to successful fundraising?

"Two things," Childress said. "Believe in what you are raising funds for, and, as in athletics, work as a team."

He's a man who still gets things done, and a man who is still hard to say no to. **S**



Maggie Blackwell and the children sit around the fire pit roasting marshmallows and eating s'mores. Can't be much better than that.



Left: Aria, 4, enjoyed swinging in a swing that was attached to bottom of the treehouse. She had 'Bunny Rabbit' in her lap. Right: August, 6, shows his art to Maggie. He has another sibling that was too young to come and can't talk yet but can draw a lot of lines or marks. August drew a lot of green lines to communicate with the sibling.

BABES *in the* WOODS

Cherry Treesort provides plenty of excitement for overnight visit with great-grandchildren

WRITTEN BY MAGGIE BLACKWELL
PHOTOGRAPHY BY WAYNE HINSHAW



Late in the afternoon, the crew went on a walk around the property and discovered a tree of birdhouses.



In the dark sporting a headlight, August found a big rock he liked while still clutching his teddy bear.

I can totally justify taking two vehicles and a utility trailer for the 20-minute trip from Salisbury to Cherry Treesort in China Grove.

We took two of our great-grandchildren, August, 6, and Aria, 4, both of whom are still in car seats. We packed cornhole; clothing; rain gear and boots; “stuffies” — their stuffed animals — and Aria’s blankie; a cooler with two meals, snacks and juice; a box of dry food and the waffle iron; board games; books and firewood. I had bought the kids matching pajamas with trees printed on them.

Did we overpack? Maybe. But we used everything we took.

I’d read about the place a few years ago, but I forgot about it until recently, when a friend recommended it. She’d been a few years back and had a delightful time. So I called Trent Cherry, the creator and owner, and made reservations for an overnight visit.

I spent a great deal of time in trees as a kid, whether in neighbors’ treehouses or just lying on a good stout branch. Those were peaceful hours, watching leaves move against the sunny Alabama sky and listening to their susurrant. I realize now





Maggie lets her great-grandchildren draw their artwork at the bottom of the steps to the treehouse.



Inside the treehouse, August and Aria eat a favorite meal, macaroni and cheese.

it was a healthy escape from an often-chaotic home. To this day if I have a headache or a hard time falling asleep, I picture the leaves moving against a blue sky.

We made a big deal of the trip, only telling the children that we were going for a Big Adventure. A week ahead, I posted a sign on the refrigerator: Big Adventure — next Monday — August, Aria, Papaw & Nana. The children were allowed to ask any “Yes” or “No” questions.

They have a pretty normal environment for kids these days, so they asked, is there a playground, is there a water slide, are there cartoon characters there, are there rides? No, no, no, and no.

The children were excited as we set out, but not as excited as I. Hubby often teases me about being nine years old, and he’s right. I was beside myself.

On trips when kids ask, “How long?” I always frame the answer in Scooby-Doo’s. You know how long it takes to watch Scooby Doo? Well, we are two Scooby-Doo’s away.

August is enthralled with treehouses, his Nana’s boy for sure. As we began to turn off the paved road into the Cherry property, he shrieked from the back seat: “It’s a TREEHOUSE?!!” His excitement brought tears to my eyes.

The children had opened every door of the house and been through the

August enjoys a game of cornhole on the treehouse porch while Aria plays with the bags on the floor. It was now time for a clothes change to matching pajamas.





Inside the treehouse, Aria climbed the ladder to the upstairs bedroom to join Maggie on the bed.



Cherry Treesort is a 27-acre woods with seven treehouses and two Hobbit Houses. Trent Cherry started the property in 2016 and it's grown over time. It is located at 1920 Flat Rock Road, China Grove. The website is www.cherrytreesort.com. Owner Trent Cherry has a "very unique build" starting in late summer that he says will be like nothing anyone has ever seen. Stay tuned to the website for a big reveal.



Mimi and Papa's Hobbit House.

whole thing before Hubby and I even carried the first load up the stairs. The inside was not primitive at all, but like a finished house, with upholstered furniture and a rug. Cut branches were used for cabinet pulls and a coat rack. Cow art graced every wall. Miniature metal pickup trucks reminded us we were, in fact, in Rowan County. It was, well, nice. The kitchenette had a microwave, dorm fridge, and sink. The bathroom had a flushing john, lavatory, and a sparkling clean shower. Accessories like hand soap, plastic cutlery — even a Keurig — were provided. Hubby deemed the structure, “Well built — very well built,” high praise from a taciturn man.

Our treehouse featured a long covered porch on two sides of the house. The weather was bleak, drizzly, and chilly, so we set up our corn-hole on the porch under roof. It turned out to

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Aria runs on ahead of Maggie on the trail.



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be a lifesaver. When we discovered we'd left the cornhole beanbags at home — and I'd forgotten an egg for the waffles, Hubby gamely headed back to the house for them.

In his absence, we set out to explore. A creek bisects the property and there are several bridges across it. Handrails are crafted from more cut, stripped branches. Cherry has planted several surprises along the pathways: a random giant chair, a tree with 12 birdhouses, metal sculpture on the hobbit house portals.

The children alternately ran ahead and dawdled behind. I'm not sure they've ever in their lives had the freedom to run wild in the woods, and they were thrilled. It was a rare pleasure to watch them have a rare pleasure of their own. Aria found a pile of sand and plopped down to play with it. Regardless of anything else we might find to interest her, she only wanted to play in the sand. We

shrugged and let her enjoy.

I'd packed a manila envelope for each child to decorate and fill with finds from nature. They collected sweetgum balls, leaves and rocks.

The family played cornhole as I microwaved paper plates of mac and cheese I'd prepared at home. We ate on the porch. As darkness fell, Hubby started a fire. Cherry's daughter Molly has prepared s'more kits which are stored in the refrigerator, available for a nominal fee on the honor system.

After s'mores, Hubby gave each child a headlamp and encouraged them to use them in the dark. Our cabin faced an elliptical field with a road around it, and the children walked all the way around the ellipse — then again, and again. We had set a ground rule that they could explore anywhere they wanted — as long as they could see us (more importantly, we could see them). They were

thrilled with the freedom — in the dark! — and kept going. We didn't want a battle with bedtime, so we let them go.

Thanks to the fresh air and plenty of exercise, bedtime didn't take long. We played games, read a book or two and they rolled over to go to sleep. I always rub their backs until they fall asleep, and it only took a moment.

We awoke to rain and once again, the cornhole was handy as I prepared breakfast. Aria found a giant mud puddle near the house and there was no reason to keep her out of it. We were in enchanted territory.

The ride home was quiet until I asked the children what they'd liked best about our Big Adventure. Aria liked the puddles. August replied, "I just liked having special time with you and Papaw." Those ten words made all the preparation well worth the trouble.

We'll be back. **S**



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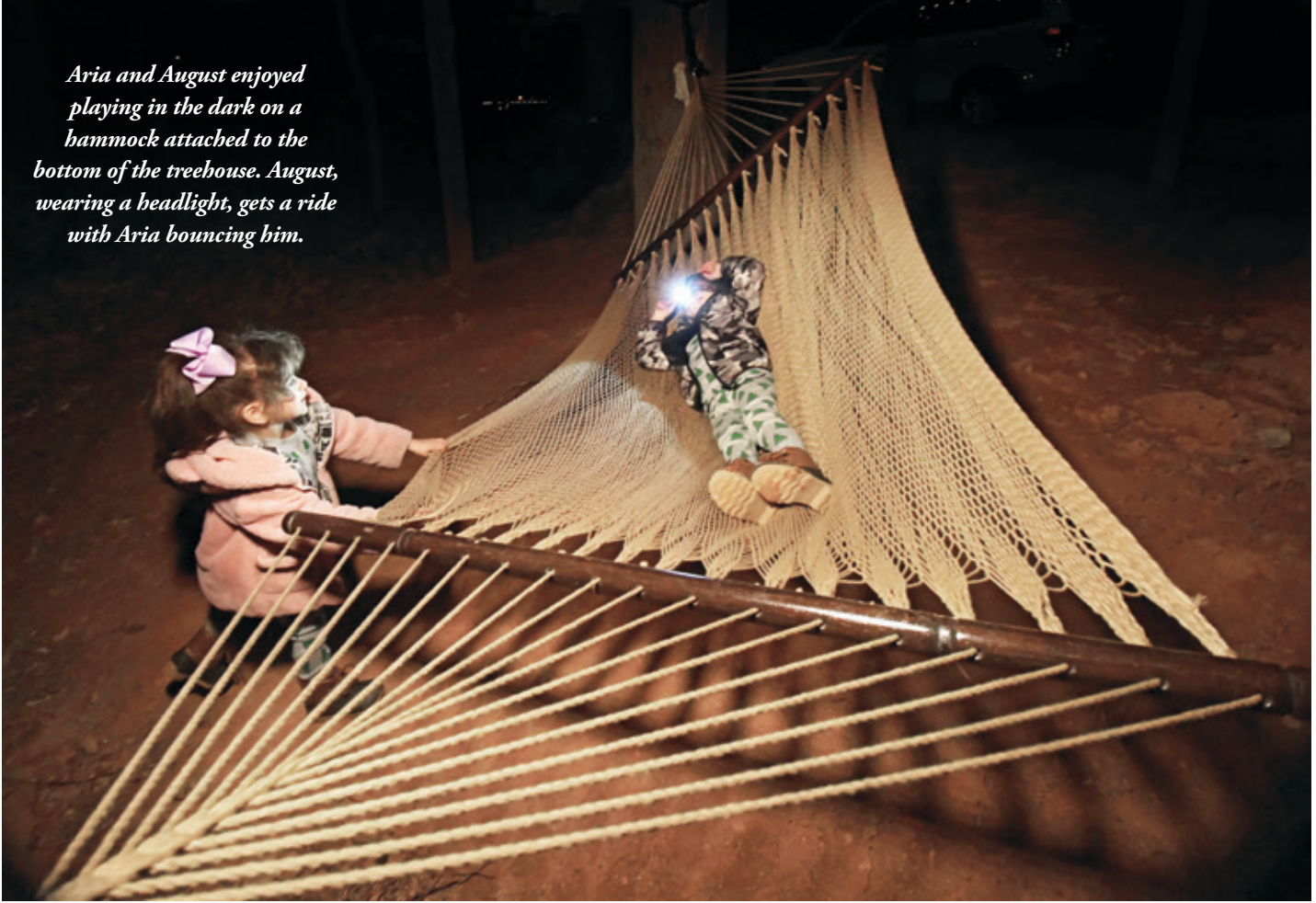
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Aria and August enjoyed playing in the dark on a hammock attached to the bottom of the treehouse. August, wearing a headlight, gets a ride with Aria bouncing him.



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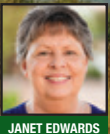
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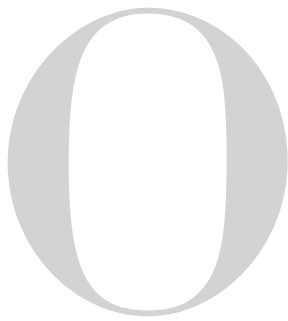
above self

Salisbury Rotary Club celebrates
centennial milestone

WRITTEN BY ELIZABETH G. COOK



Above: Current Salisbury Rotary Club members pose for a photo. (Nancy Shirley photo) **Opposite:** Former Rotary Club of Salisbury presidents Elaine Spalding (left) and Steve Fisher (right) presented Bryan Beatty, the son of late O.K. Beatty, with posthumous membership after a racial incident in the 1970s interfered with his father's invitation to join the club. O.K. Beatty would have been the first Black member of the club. Bryan Beatty was also awarded a Paul Harris Fellow award for his father, which is granted to those who have donations under their names. (Natalie Anderson photo)



On May 14, 2022, Salisbury Rotary Club members gathered for a centennial toast on the Country Club lawn.

The fact that a pandemic had delayed the celebration for two years seemed to make the moment that much sweeter.

F&M Bank CEO Steve Fisher, club president in 2020, shared what Rotary had meant to him: a place to have lunch with his dad, to observe the actions of community leaders, to develop friends, and more.



Steve Fisher

"I have been fortunate," Fisher said, "to walk into a place where Democrats, Republicans, independents, liberals, MAGAs and ultra-MAGAs come together, embrace our flag, pray together, share a meal together, share ideas and always agree on one thing: the need to make our world and our community a better place. Together."

Charter members might not get the



An aerial view of Boyden High School, which is now Salisbury High School. (Salisbury Post file photo)



MAGA reference to Donald Trump’s Make America Great Again. But they would recognize the determination to work toward a better world and community. Together.

That “service above self” is what Paul Harris had in mind when he and three friends formed the first Rotary Club in Chicago in 1905. Fifteen years later, it was the common bond among the 21 charter members of the Salisbury club.

The men came together May 15, 1920, to hear Superintendent T. Wingate Andrews’ plea for help to replace Ellis Street High School. They formed the Salisbury Rotary and pushed a \$500,000 bond issue to build Salisbury High.

In 1925, club members helped raise a \$150,000 endowment to relocate Catawba College from Newton to Salisbury.

Education is the group’s top priority. Since the club started awarding scholarships in 1988, it has given more than \$527,000 to 414 students.

Several members are descendants of members, and one fam-

ily can boast four generations: Don Clement Sr., club president in 1929; Don Clement Jr., president in 1960; and now Donnie Clement and son Don-Don Clement, all of Salisbury Motor Co.

Presidents of Catawba, Livingstone, Rowan-Cabarrus Community College and Hood Seminary are members, as well as leaders of the Rowan-Salisbury Schools, Salisbury Academy and North Hills Christian School. They sit among bankers, doctors, judges, lawyers, entrepreneurs, car dealers, nonprofit leaders, philanthropists, and others.

Members expect meetings to begin promptly — 12:30 p.m. Tuesday — and to last no more than an hour. Speakers are

warned that people will leave after the 60th minute ticks by.

Meals were long served by the women of the Charity League, originally the King’s Daughters, who used proceeds to support local causes. Boxed lunches replaced family-style meals after COVID-19 emerged. Charity League members oversee the meal, but a tradition is fading away.

Small American flags line the edge of the Patriots Concourse and Memorial near City Park. The club built the Patriots Concourse in 2011. (Josh Bergeron photo)



***Above:** In 2016, Kania Osby, 8, laces her new shoes as her grandmother Linda Madison looks on. The third grader was among about 90 children who were invited to attend Happy Feet, a shoe giveaway event, sponsored by the Salisbury Rotary Club. The club obtained a matching grant from the Rotary International Foundation. (Shavonne Potts photo) **Below left:** Fireworks celebrate the club's 100th anniversary. (Nancy Shirley photo) **Below right:** In 1925, club members helped raise a \$150,000 endowment to relocate Catawba College from Newton to Salisbury. (Andy Mooney photo)*



The all-male, all-white roster of the club's first 70 years has slowly changed. The first two women came on board in 1990. Now about a fourth of the 126 members are female.

Dianne Scott joined in 1993, when she moved to Salisbury to lead Rowan Helping Ministries. She became the first female club president in 2009-2010.



Dianne Scott

Dr. Vergel Lattimore, president of Hood Theological Seminary, would have been the club's first Black president; his wife's illness prevented him from taking office last year. Ted Goins of Lutheran Services Carolinas stepped up.

Lattimore co-chaired a Diversity, Equity and

Inclusion Committee with RCCC President Dr. Carol Spalding. One outcome was to honor the late O.K. Beatty, whom Fred Stanback nominated for membership in the 1970s.

Beatty, who taught and later was interim president at Livingstone, was the first Black person elected to City Council and as mayor pro tem. He was set to become the first Black Salisbury Rotarian until racial tensions arose at a local restaurant. Beatty's membership was rescinded before it began.

Stanback brought the matter to the new committee's attention, and on Sept. 14, 2021, Beatty was posthumously accepted into membership



Vergel Lattimore

and awarded a Paul Harris fellowship. Son Bryan accepted the honors.

Lattimore says acknowledging and correcting the episode was meaningful. "It says something about the Salisbury Rotary and its growth and maturation."

In the months since, the club has recruited more people of color — now about 10 percent of the membership — and each meeting includes a diversity moment to raise awareness.

Early club projects included establishing a boys' camp at Badin Lake, holding cattle shows to bolster farmers, raising funds for a Salvation Army bus.

More recently, the club has taken veterans on Honor Flights to Washington, D.C., collected Coins for Alzheimer's Research Trust, provided shoes for hundreds of local third-graders, raised \$100,000 for Bell Tower Green and — another

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signature cause — supported Rotary International's drive to end polio around the world.

Reid Leonard, former owner of Vogue Cleaners, was president of the club in 1964-65, when membership first reached 100. Now 95, he's seen the club through many changes.

But he found the usual willingness to help a good cause when, in 2011, he suggested that the club build the Patriot's Concourse at City Park. Now flags for all branches of the Armed Forces fly above the corner, and panels list names of Rowan men killed in World War I, World War II and the Vietnam War.

Leonard's initial concern about raising money for the project proved unfounded; members

stepped up. "It was the easiest thing I ever did." They did it. Together.

Retired CPA Pete Teague, now special assistant for community development at Livingstone, became club president in late June. He predicts civic clubs will fall into two categories: those with a sense of mission and purpose and those without.



Pete Teague

"Those without will flounder and probably eventually fade away," Teague says. "... I believe Salisbury Rotary will continue to develop our sense of mission and purpose, and we will thrive." **S**

Rotarian Elizabeth G. Cook is former editor of The Salisbury Post.

“Those without (a sense of mission and purpose) will flounder and probably eventually fade away”

— PETE TEAGUE

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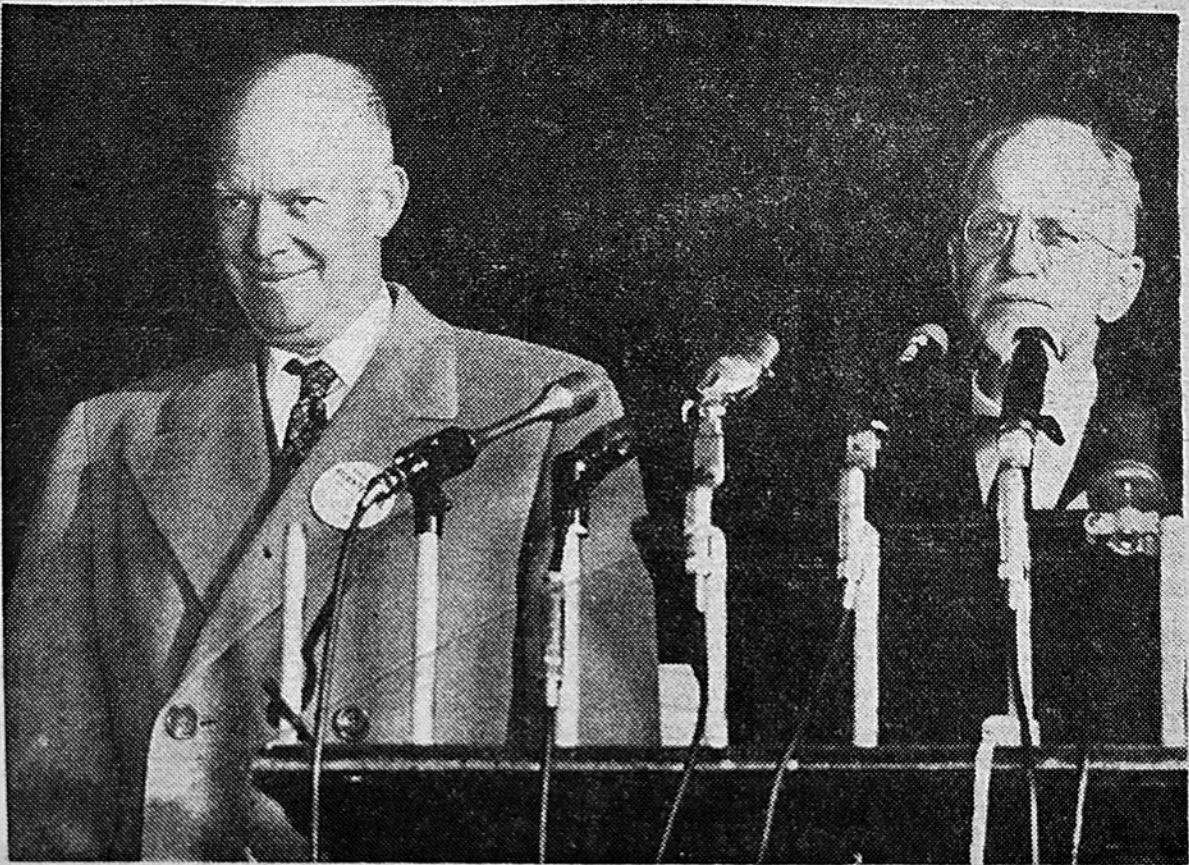


Salisbury
Civitan's
Spaghetti
Feast in 2018.
(Submitted
photo)

CIVIC *improvement*

The Civitan Club of Salisbury has worked
for betterment of city for 100 years

WRITTEN BY BILL BUCHER JR.



PRESIDENT GREETES ROWAN THRONG

The famous Eisenhower smile spreads across the President's face as a throng of 15,000 cheers his arrival at Catawba College stadium in Salisbury. The President is shown here with James H. McKenzie, general chair-

man of the Rowan County Bicentennial Committee. His 15-minute address late yesterday afternoon climaxed the Bicentennial celebration. (Observer Staff Photo—Dumbell.)

Charlotte Observer April 17, 1953

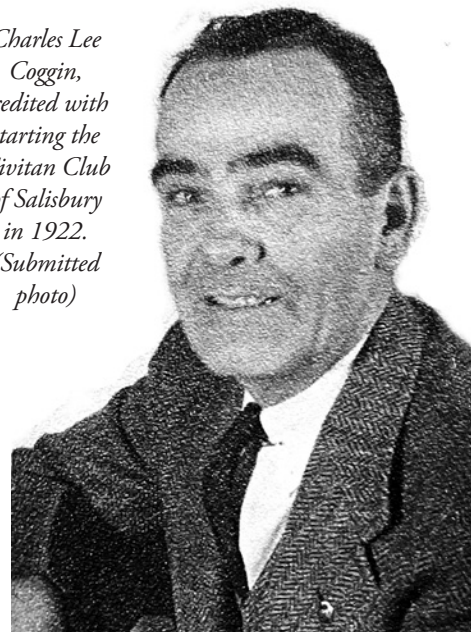
As The Great War in Europe ended in 1918, our country's soldiers returned home to a hero's welcome after defeating Germany and the Central Powers. Many of these young men had fought from muddy French trenches under horrendous conditions, and they came back with a new appreciation for the small towns and communities across America from whence they had come.

Their families happily welcomed their sons back with formal social events and parties, and

they tended to form close-knit groups not unlike extended families, with friendships that would last a lifetime.

In July of 1922, Charles Lee Coggin, a 32-year-old Salisbury lawyer and World War I veteran, rented out the dining room of the swank Yadkin Hotel and invited about 25 of his closest friends to a formal luncheon. Most of those invited were World War veterans and many of them were younger than 26, just starting out careers as lawyers, bookkeepers, insurance salesmen, and storekeepers. Coggin was a well known local orator and natural leader. He had earned his law degree at UNC just before World War I and had served throughout the war as an officer instructor at two camps in South Carolina.

Charles Lee Coggin, credited with starting the Civitan Club of Salisbury in 1922. (Submitted photo)





Civitan Wayne Hayworth officiates the 'Lighting of the Torch' at the 2018 Special Olympics.

Coggin gave an impassioned speech describing the problems that he saw in the town of Salisbury and the surrounding area — problems such as poverty, lack of educational opportunities, lack of recreational facilities and poor street sanitation. He then proposed that the group start a Civitan Club similar to one started just four years earlier in Birmingham, Alabama, to address problems such as these. Those present agreed to the plan, and they obtained their Civitan Club charter on August 15, 1922.

The club elected Salisbury lawyer William E. Hennessee as its first president, and Coggin became the new club's first vice president. Coggin later became the only member in the club's history to serve two terms as president.

In keeping with the express purpose of encouraging the growth and development of new leadership in the community, our remarkable club has had 103 different club presidents over the past 100 years.

The Civitan Club of Salisbury has grown over the years to more than 100 members, and continues to enjoy a reputation as being a club of friends and a club of leaders. Our members have included city councilmen, county commissioners, a city manager, members of municipal boards, school superintendents, a postmaster, state legislators, members of state commissions, and a member of the U.S. Congress.

The Junior Civitan Club at Rowan County Early College meets in 2014.



We have had a college president, deans, professors and trustees, engineers, business executives, teachers, merchants, ministers, bankers, insurance representatives, and others from almost every part of our social, political, religious, economic and educational community. Three of the five current Rowan County commissioners are members of our club.

One of our club's more remarkable accomplishments was bringing newly elected President Dwight D. Eisenhower to Salisbury to celebrate Rowan County's Bicentennial in 1953. The chairman of the committee was the popular Civitan and Postmaster James H. McKenzie Jr., and two of the remaining four members of the steering committee were also Civitans.

An estimated 50,000 people attended the Bicentennial parade through downtown Salisbury that year, and some 15,000 people packed the Catawba College stadium to hear Eisenhower give a 15-minute speech, which was widely reported in the national news media by reporters who were in shock over the president's insistence that he personally visit such a small community.

Once an exclusively male club, the Civitan Club of Salisbury opened to female members and began actively recruiting them in the early 2000s.

Today, close to half of our club members are female, and among them are Realtors, restaurateurs, retirees, and businesswomen, all with the same desire that our founding members had — to be an active part of bringing solutions to the problems of our community.

Like other Civitan Clubs across the nation, our club has sponsored numerous Junior Civitan Clubs like that started recently at North Rowan High School. Good citizenship, a value that

is a big part of being a Civitan, is promoted and

encouraged in clubs in schools across the nation. Our club offers \$15,000 in scholarships annually to local high school and college students involved in charitable activities.

The Civitan Club remains one of the most active civic organizations in Salisbury. Before the COVID pandemic, our trademark fundraising event was the annual "Spaghetti Feast" at the Salisbury Civic Center, and if you have attended the annual 'Tis The Season holiday parade in Spencer and Salisbury, you've seen our Civitans lining up floats and directing traffic. We provide officials for Special Olympics events, and we sponsor charitable




Civitan John Sofley takes food orders at the Annual Softball Tournament in 2018.

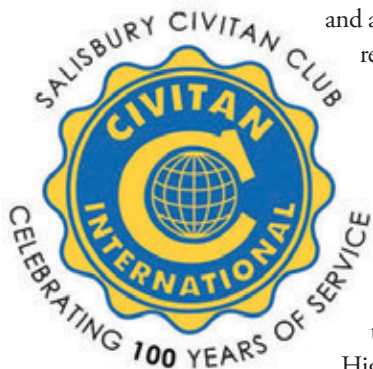
organizations such as Saving Grace Farms and Victory Junction Camps.

The Civitan Club here in Salisbury was recently recognized as being the third largest Civitan Club in the nation. While community civic clubs in general may not be as popular as they once were, the Civitan Club of Salisbury enjoys a vibrant, active rela-

tionship with the community and continues to attract members who want to do more to help their neighbors and friends. It is our hope that we will celebrate at least another 100 years of service to the Salisbury community and beyond.

Visit salisburycivitan.org for more information about the Civitan Club of Salisbury. 

Bill Bucher Jr. is a member of the Civitan Club of Salisbury.






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Book shoppers line up outside the store. The bookshop, located in the West End Plaza and open on the second Saturday of each month, offers used books for sale with sales benefiting the Rowan Public Library.

another
CHANCE



Second Saturday Bookshop
a win-win for book lovers,
Friends of Rowan Public Library

WRITTEN BY B.J. CONNOR
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SEAN MEYERS



If you want to get a bargain on books and help the library, head to West End Plaza on the second Saturday of the month. If you want prime selection, join the line of people waiting about 9:30 a.m. outside the Second Saturday Bookshop. Regulars may carry tote bags or even a plastic crate. And for good reason — they're on a treasure hunt!

The bookshop is a labor of love by the Friends of Rowan Public Library, selling donated books and other materials to benefit the library. Hardbacks are \$2; audiobooks, CDs, and DVDs are \$1. The bookshop also sells items such as puzzles and comics (priced as marked), figurines of readers — humans, bunnies, bears, mice, etc. — for \$2, vinyl record albums, and sheet music. Blue dot books are half price.

In March, Brad Garrigues was first in line and has been to

each sale. A retired jeans distributor, Garrigues pastors a church in New London.

“Every once in a while, I find a nugget. I donate very little. I’m hoping some preacher will retire and dump his library. At last count, I had 3,350 books. My goal was to get under 2,000. My kids bug me to downsize. I tell them, ‘If Mom goes before me, I’ll clean the house out real good. If I go first, my apologies.’”

For Second Saturday, “I bring a flashlight and my glasses. You have to be prepared. Especially when you’re crawling around on the floor of used bookstores.”

Andrea Brown is a regular. Does she always find something? “Yes, that’s the problem.”

“I’m a reader,” said Brown, a member of Carolina Artists. “My mother, Padie Brown, was a reader.” Years ago, when the library limit was 25 books per person, if Brown didn’t check out her 25,



Above: Cindy Coleman of Troutman is a regular at the bookshop and uses a scanner to get information about each book. *Below:* Volunteer April Everett organizes books during a recent Saturday.





Sadie Nettles, left, sits and reads a book as her brother, Henry, and sister Cordie browse through the children's books.



her mother would fill out the allotment. "That would last us about two weeks. She got me into Westerns, romances, mysteries."

Cindy Coleman drove from Troutman. "I try to come at least every other month. I really like Sandra Brown, Nora Roberts, J. K. Rowling. I've read all of the Stephanie Plummer series and Janet Evanovich." Coleman buys books her brother-in-law recommends, like Tara Westover's "Educated."

A shopper gathers an armful of books.

Susan Vanderwell is a regular as well. She likes Westerns, and buys paperbacks for a friend.

Amber Barnhardt, another regular, looks for children's hardbacks. "I'm a book hoarder. I actually have a stack to bring next month."

There were about 30 customers perusing the shelves by 10:08 a.m.

Some newcomers seemed dazzled by the number of categories, such as sports, travel, religion, philosophy, drama, biography, poetry, bestselling non-fiction, world history, military history, Civil War, American history, art, science fiction, Christian romance, parenting, psychology, young adult, nature, dogs & cats, gardening, reference, coffee table, humor, business, writing, North Carolina authors, and a sign saying "Classics (Books you should have read in high school)."

Best-selling authors include Sue Grafton, John Grisham, Tom Clancy, Lee Child, and Mary Higgins Clark. Christian authors include Billy Graham and Max Lucado.

There's even a "rare books" section, prices as marked, such as a six-volume set of 1917 Mark Twain collectible books for \$75.

Jennifer Hubbard, president of Friends of Rowan Public Library, evaluates donations. Her sister maintains an eBay site for children's books.

Volunteer Cyndii Owen, who has also sold on eBay, said, "I happen to know enough



Nathaniel Pressley collects books to buy.

to keep special items aside.” She said that book dealers (resellers) could make a profit on rare books, because the bookshop doesn’t ask top dollar.

A woman asked Owen, “Can I give you some books?”

Owen replied, “We would love some books!”

Eyeing the titles, Owen said, “You’ve got some that are going to be very popular, too.”

Kate Wright, a member of Friends of RPL, said, “I don’t keep books much because my house is little and it helps the library.” Is she a voracious reader? “Oh yeah! I have a couple going all the time.”

Another regular, Sandra Sullivan, is an English teacher who teaches Advanced Placement Literature at Salisbury High School. Sullivan said, “This is where I build my Free Choice reading. I can add some contemporary titles and diversity.”

John Nettles was at the bookshop with his children Henry, 13, Cordie, 8, and Sadie, 6. Sadie, sitting on the floor of the children’s section, absorbed in a book, said, “I just like to read the books, even if we don’t end up buying them.” Is the family at the bookshop every time it’s open? Nettles said, “Pretty much. We have more books at home than we have bookshelf space.”

Kerri Corbitt studied a tableful of magazines about decorating with antiques. “I’ve decorated with antiques for years. I came with my book club last month, and found antique books. I just flipped out.” She plans to come every month now. “It’s a good cause and they’ve got some great books here.”

Nancy Oslin and her sister pored over cookbooks, discussing a buttermilk pie recipe. Oslin said, “This is my first time here and I love it! I have about 150 cookbooks — it’s a collection. I like regional and star chefs and vintage cookbooks.”

Brothers Noel and Angel Magana-Granados, both students at Row-

Visitors look through the racks on a recent Saturday morning.





Angel Magana Granados, left, and his brother Noel, look over a few books to purchase.

an-Cabarrus Community College, had a stack of finds, including a hardback political memoir, original retail price \$35 or more. Noel likes whatever catches his eye, including short stories, fantasy, and fiction like “No Longer Human” by Japanese author Osamu Dazai.

Angel echoed, “Anything that catches my eye.”

Catherine Soderberg, the first customer at checkout, said, “I love the library, and the Second Saturday Bookshop is like a cherry on top. I bought five children’s books paperbacks for my grandkids — two of the books being Newbery Award winners! — for \$2.50! What a deal.”

What are the best-selling categories? Owen said, “Civil War, war books, thrillers, best-sellers like David Baldacci, Stephen King. Our little North Carolina section sells well, and our children’s section sells well. That is a great section, especially for homeschoolers.”

Hubbard is an award-winning author and former English teacher. “I’ve been president of Friends of RPL since 2019,” she said. “I knew when I was approached by the outgoing president, Sammie Hinshaw, that the bookstore was going to be part of my job, but at that time, it was imaginary. I fantasized about making it look like all the cozy bookstores I’ve ever loved. When I saw the space for the first time, an old Radio Shack, I didn’t find it aesthetically appealing—it felt too large and industrial.



Kevin Swisher brings in a box of used books to donate.



Top: Shoppers look through the many boxes of used paperbacks. Above: Colorful Readers' Digest books are packed tightly into a box. Right: Volunteer Cyndii Owen posts a price sheet on the glass wall.



Jennifer Hubbard arranges books before opening the store. She's been president of the Friends of Rowan Public Library since 2019.

I thought, 'How are we ever going to gather enough bookshelves? And books?' Like so many things, it was going to take a village — of volunteers.

"We have 11 volunteer board members, but other people have pitched in, including my husband, Steve Cobb, who built shelves for us, and Mary Ann McCubbin, who scouted the Habitat ReStore daily and who was instrumental in sorting our donations. Along the way, at least a dozen other people have helped with sorting or sales or gift basket making. Melissa Oleen, director of RPL, has been generous enough to lend us staff members to help with all manner of things: organizing stock and hauling it, setting up shelving, recycling, publicity. She's wonderful — she's both practical and visionary — and this was all her idea to begin with!

"I love being part of a good team. I love to read. I love making order out of chaos. When those donations start pouring in on Saturday mornings and it looks as if there won't be enough room for them all, I start to panic, especially when people give us books that I think, 'Why would people hand us stuff that they surely wouldn't pay a dollar for?' But, as Melissa kindly explained to me, we operate a book euthanasia center, as well as a bookshop. Books have limited lifespans, too. As long as my back holds up, I'll be happy to facilitate this opportunity to make money for our library that has been an essential part of my life since I was four years old."

Owen averages 50 to 60 hours a month working on the bookshop and as trea-



A shopper holds an old journal that was for sale in the vintage book section.



surer of the Friends of RPL. She said, “We have people who pay for stuff, donate it back,” essentially renting books. “Once people find out about the bookshop, they come back. For the prices, they can’t beat it. People compliment us on how we have it arranged. It’s easy to find things because of our categories. We still need that oomph to get the word out. I like to pass out extra bookmarks about the bookshop and say, ‘Here, share this with a friend.’”

Because of Covid, the store’s opening date was the second Saturday of August 2020. Owen worked at the circulation desk of the main library, and then as an administrative assistant, retiring September 1, 2021.

Why is Owen so passionate about the Second Saturday Bookshop? “When the library hired me, I was really in need of a job. From 2005, I sometimes worked as many as five part-time jobs. When the library hired me full-time in 2015, it really gave me a boost. And I just think the library is an important institution in our community. The Second Saturday Bookshop is everybody’s pride and joy. It’s definitely mine.”

In the backroom, I met volunteer Susan Rouzer Waller. An avid reader and longtime Friends of RPL member, Waller said that when she was a little girl, “My piano teacher lived right around the corner from the library. I skipped piano lessons and went to the library. My mother wasn’t happy


about that when she found out. I’m a better reader than I am pianist.”

Sorting through donated books to categorize, Waller said, “This is like a treasure hunt.” She said with a laugh, “It keeps me off the street and out of trouble.”

As far as bookshop statistics, Owen said, “We don’t keep track of the number of books — we don’t have time. It’s more of a monetary thing. On average, we clear about \$1,000 or better per month.”

Owen said the bookshop tries to have a theme each month, like sports books half price for March Madness, or a spring cleaning clean-up sale for April.

Friends of RPL individual memberships are \$10. You can join at any library branch, or at Second Saturday Bookshop. The Friends help support initiatives such as the library’s summer reading program and the Friends of RPL Concert Series.

West End Plaza is located at 1935 Jake Alexander Boulevard West. Second Saturday Bookshop hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. 

Freelance writer B.J. Connor lives in Salisbury.





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Above: Parker Reinecker, left, and Hannah Surace of Rowan-Cabarrus Community College. **Right:** Guests gather at the reception. **Below:** Ken and Lorna Keene from the Castlewood neighborhood.



Salisbury Sculpture Show

The threat of rain did not stop around 90 artists, patrons, city officials, and owners of host sites from attending the kick-off reception for the 14th annual Salisbury Sculpture Show on May 13. Held in the front yard of Ed and Susan Norvell's South Fulton Street home, the event ended up having lovely weather.

Some 21 sculptures are on display around the city. (See page 14 for the full article.)

— Photos by Susan Shinn Turner



From left, artists Carl Billingsley, Bob Coon and Matt Amante.



Above: Maggie Blackwell, left, and Susan Shinn Turner. **Left:** Artist Jordan Parah with her sculpture, 'The Point.'



Left: Debbie Barnhardt with Cindy Pruitt. Middle: Dustin Cox and Allison Tipton. Right: Grace, Gayle and Lily Yatawara.



Above: April and Jonathan Weaver

Below: Robin Moser and Kevin Bost enjoy the Cheerwine Festival.



Cheerwine CEO Cliff Ritchie and Kaye Brown Hirst at Rowan Museum Cheerwine exhibit.

Cheerwine Festival

It was a great day to be in Downtown Salisbury on May 21 as the Cheerwine Festival made its in-person return after a two-year COVID hiatus.

The festival has its roots in 2017, the 100th anniversary of the beloved soft drink. Since then, the one-time celebration has turned into an annual event co-hosted by Cheerwine and the City of Salisbury.

At least 60,000 people enjoyed the festival, which featured 35 food vendors, 45 craft vendors, and 10 beer vendors. There was everything Cheerwine — from lager to macaroons to cupcakes to funnel cakes to kettle corn to Cheerwine bacon on a stick.

— Submitted photos



Some 47 teams set up on the lawn between City Hall and the North Carolina Research Campus.



Jeannie Childers, left, of the city's customer service department, and retired educator Ophelia Mitchell were two of the many volunteers who helped out during the festival.

Jiggy with the Piggy

Jiggy with the Piggy returned to Downtown Kannapolis in May after a two-year Covid absence.

Mayor Darrell Hinnant was thrilled to welcome back crowds for the eighth year of the event. (It would have been the 10th year anniversary.)

“People want to come downtown and taste the food these people are cooking,” he said after the cooks’ meeting. “Now we have things for them to do. We have the ballpark and 34 shops and restaurants.”

A cadre of 140 volunteers in purple T-shirts kept the festival running smoothly.

Hinnant also noted that the free summer concert series is now under way at Village Park. Check the 2022 Summer Concert & Movie Series at kannapolisnc.gov.

— Photos by Susan Shinn Turner



Cooks are always on the lookout for that elusive perfect rub.



Jim Turner of Raleigh (husband of Susan Shinn Turner), and a member of the And Also With 'Cue team, meets Mayor Darrell Hinnant following the cooks' meeting.



Tomme Gamewell of Salisbury wore an A.L. Brown cap because that's where his grandchildren attend school. 'I wanted some mojo down here,' he said.



Cigar aficionado David With of Garner, a member of the And Also With 'Cue team, gets another kind of smoke going before competition kicked off.



Street banners could be seen throughout the downtown area.



All varieties of smokers were on hand, such as this Gateway drum smoker.



James and Cortessa Davis coordinated their attire.

Rotary turns 100

The stars aligned on May 14 for the Salisbury Rotary Club to hold its 100th anniversary gala at the Country Club of Salisbury. Established in 1920, the club delayed the celebration two years due to Covid precautions. About 125 members and guests gathered for a champagne toast and speeches on the lawn before sharing a fine meal, dancing and, for a grand finale, fireworks sponsored by F&M Bank. Other major sponsors for the evening included C.S. Bradshaw Construction, New Pointe Realty and Southeast Fleet Services.

— *Photos by Nancy Shirley*



Left: Lesleigh and John Drye

Right: Sue Fisher and Janet Haynes





Figurine of Paul Harris.



Graham and Danielle Corriher, Hunter and Alexandria Fisher



Steve Fisher, along with Judge James Rudolph, left, and Cindy Fink (back to camera), prepares to blow out the candles on the Rotary 100th anniversary cake. F&M sponsored the fireworks at the conclusion of the evening.



Famed trumpet player Joe Robinson of the Joe Robinson jazz band entertained at the Rotary 100th anniversary celebration



Rotary President Cindy Fink, with her date, Dave Thomas, greets Renee Bradshaw.



Left: PJ Ricks and Kandis Johnson

Right: From left, Fred and Alice Stanback, John Wear





‘ENJOY THE JOURNEY’ — THE SALISBURY GREENWAY

By Melissa Graham — Mixed media on deep cradle wood panel

Artwork for Local Colors may be submitted to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com

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Graham

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