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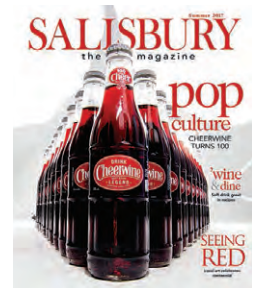
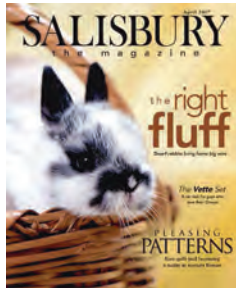
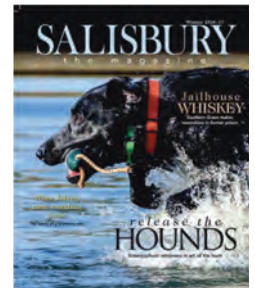
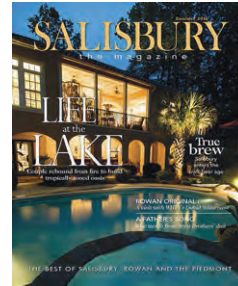
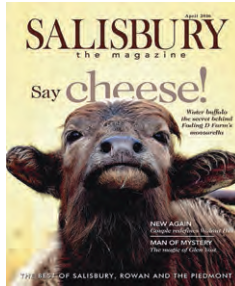
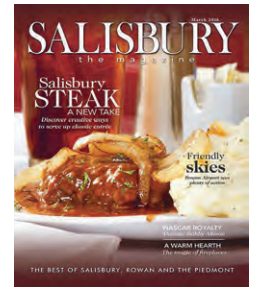
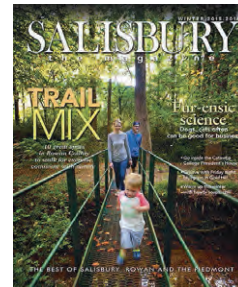
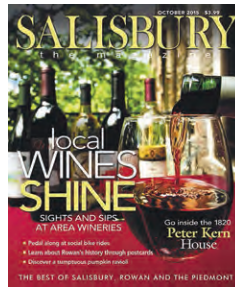
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Staying on track

The Deals keep their restored miniature train rolling

by MARK WINEKA

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Full steam ahead

After 40 years, N.C. Transportation Museum turns a corner

by MARK WINEKA

On this page: William and Judy Deal take their restored 1950 miniature train for a ride around their property.

On the cover: A locomotive steams up the track at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey



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No thanks to this windbag, Spencer Shops became a museum

Back in 1981, when I was a young, foolish reporter, I found myself collecting details one evening about a storm that ripped through Spencer and tore off considerable portions of a new Back Shop roof at Spencer Shops.

Then, we still referred to the site as Spencer Shops and not the N.C. Transportation Museum, because a museum really wasn't there yet — just the dreams of one. Though Southern Railway had donated four acres and three buildings to the state in September 1977, then more acres and more buildings in 1979, the first transportation museum exhibit wouldn't be in place until 1983.

The Back Shop was one of the reasons why. It took virtually all of a \$1.25 million state appropriation to the site one year to pay for a new Back Shop roof. And typical of the many challenges the transportation museum has faced over its 40 years, here comes a storm that rips off the new roof, which had been completed only a month before.

The next day, if I remember correctly, I wrote how “an apparent mini-tornado” tore off sections of the new roof. I took a lot of grief from my colleagues at the newspaper for that turn of phrase, as though I had officially made myself a meteorologist and at the same time hedged my bet by calling the so-called tornado “apparent” and “mini.”

To this day, I like to call any high winds I confront an apparent mini-tornado.

It has taken a multitude of heroes working like a tornado through the past 40 years to keep the vision and dream of the N.C. Transportation Museum on track. If I tried to list all their names, I know I would leave out too many important people.

But think of all the folks who lobbied



Raleigh for money; who secured beautiful locomotives, cars, automobiles, trucks and airplanes for display; who cleaned up buildings and land; who served as volunteers; who worked on restoring locomotives; who organized all the events and exhibits; and who kept the history of Spencer Shops alive.

If you visit the N.C. Transportation Museum today and know how far it has come since those early years, it will blow you away like a tornado.

This issue featuring the museum site, which used to be Southern Railway's largest locomotive repair facility, is a good time to talk about a much smaller railroad and the miniature train William and Judy Deal take care of and ride at their home in Lexington.

The miniature train has close ties to Rowan County. It once starred in the early 1950s as the main playground attraction at the Hitching Post Drive-In Theatre in Salisbury. Not many people have a train looping around their home, but the Deals do, and you'll be amazed at their personal working-on-the-railroad story.

Have your knee replaced and go home the same day? Dr. Matthew Bullock of Salis-

bury Orthopaedics has started offering some of his patients exactly that option, and the magazine talks with him and his first two “same-day” success stories.

Shavonne Walker tells us about Adrian Smith, who shares his considerable musical talents with Piedmont Players, Lee Street theatre and Cornerstone Church, among others. Elizabeth Cook takes us inside the residence and “Back Home” shop of Sandy and John Hickman in the historic village section of Gold Hill.

And speaking of historic, Jody and Maggie Blackwell have taken on the restoration of an architecturally handsome 1913 church building in Salisbury in hopes of making it a music venue called “Beacon Hall.” Jessica Coates gives us the rundown.

We also drop in for a brief Q&A with Elaine Spalding, president of the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce. And Krista Woolly, executive director of the Community Care Clinic, writes a beautiful “Salisbury's the Place” column.

September means teachers are back in school, but it's nice to know Cindy Adkins and her daughter, Lydia, never stop making their fruit jams, jellies and butters. Deirdre Parker Smith sheds light on how these teachers spread their love.

A sticky situation? Apparently. S

Mark Wineka,
Editor, *Salisbury the Magazine*

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Great Family Entertainment

Let's get serious for a moment

School will be back in session soon, and those breezy beach reads will be finished, stored away.

What comes next? Lots. Fall is the time when "serious" books are released, and there's an incredible variety to come.

Holly Goddard Jones, whose book, "The Next Time You See Me," was featured in the 2013 Summer Reading Challenge, has a new novel, "The Salt Line," described as a literary spin on the dystopian genre.

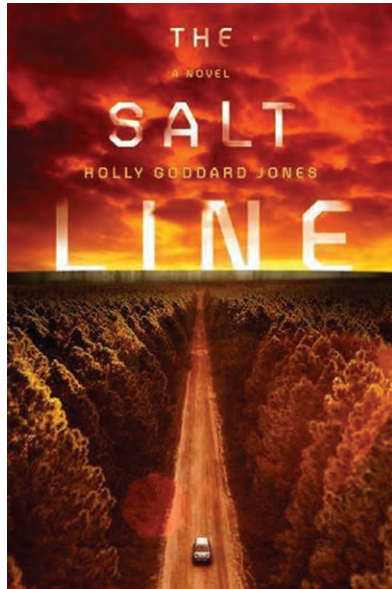
Sometime in the future, the U.S borders have receded behind a salt line—a line of scorched earth that protects its people from deadly disease-carrying ticks. Not hard to imagine tick-borne diseases here.

Those inside the zone live in fear, for the most part, but adrenaline junkies want to cross the line to see what's left of nature.

The group Jones imagines find themselves at the mercy of the ticks and at

the center of a murderous plot by outer zone survivors determined to protect their existence.

Judging by a sample chapter, this is a creepy work, with vivid descriptions of what can happen to the victims. Just the thing if you're in an



apocalyptic mood.

To go along with the PBS series, "The Vietnam War," filmmaker Ken Burns and Geoffrey C. Ward have written the companion book.

For a generation with vague recollections of this unfortunate conflict, for those who never heard the death tolls repeated on television, and even for those who were there, this is a time that still haunts America.

Beyond the questions of right and wrong and about our involvement in the war, the series and this book explore perspectives from all sides, both in America and Vietnam.

"Rather than taking sides, the book seeks to understand why the war happened the way it did, and to clarify its complicated legacy. Beautifully written and richly illustrated, this

is a tour de force that is certain to launch a new national conversation," a description of the book reads.

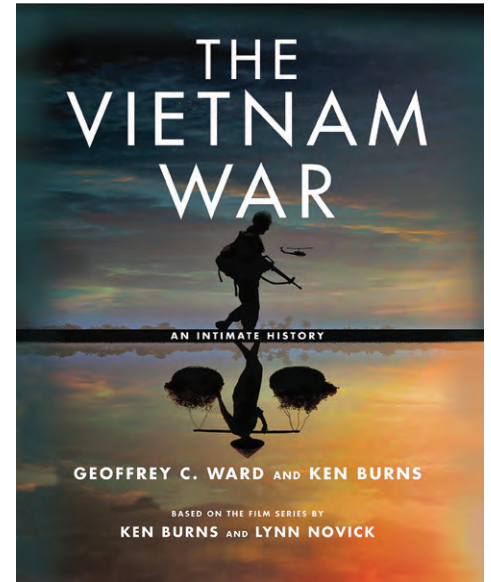
Burns had dealt with "The Civil War," "The Roosevelts" and more historical topics thoroughly and without judgment.

For anyone looking for a moving tale of father and son, there's "An Odyssey: A Father, A Son and an Epic," by Daniel Mendelsohn.

Mendelsohn, author of "The Lost," recounts his and his father's reading

and reliving Homer's epic masterpiece.

The father, Jay, is an 81-year-old taking his son Daniel's seminar on the "Odyssey" at Bard College. Jay is a retired research scientist who sees the world in mathematical terms, but he



and his son find themselves on an adventure "as profoundly emotional as it is intellectual. For Jay, ... this return to the classroom is his 'one last chance' to learn the great literature he'd neglected in his youth—and, even more, a final opportunity to more fully understand his son, a writer and classicist," the description reads.

But as father and son explore the work, somewhat uncomfortably at times, Jay challenges his son's interpretations and they go on a Mediterranean journey to retrace the voyages. It's soon obvious both have much to learn. Father and son begin to understand each other better.

As this intricately woven memoir builds to its wrenching climax, Mendelsohn's narrative comes to echo the "Odyssey" itself, with its timeless themes of deception and recognition, marriage and children, the pleasures of travel and the meaning of home. The book has been called the renowned author-scholar's "most triumphant entwining yet of personal narrative and literary exploration." **S**

THROUGH THE LENS // by jon c. lakey



The large yellow supply hose from a Granite Quarry fire truck slowly drains out the clean water that was taken in from a nearby hydrant. The water fans out across the edge of the sidewalk and reflects the blue sky and reflects the blue sky.



Executive session

Chamber head Elaine Spalding makes the most of every day.

Elaine Spalding, president of the Rowan Chamber of Commerce, takes on life as though she just drank a six-pack of energy drinks.

She enthusiastically oversees a Chamber of 824 members. The organization has one of the largest market shares and highest retention rates for a Chamber its size.

Some of the more popular Chamber services — and you will see Spalding at the heart of all of these activities — include education and workforce development, Leadership Rowan, trips to Raleigh and Washington, D.C., candidate forums, an annual Trade Show, Business After Hours mixers, the Power in Partnership breakfast series, Dragon Boat Festivals, a Minority Business Council, Young Professionals, Women in Business and Ambassadors' ribbon-cutting services.

Spalding came from the Chamber president's job in Paducah, Kentucky, where she turned the organization around, leading it from the brink of bankruptcy when she first arrived to its being the Chamber of the Year in 2011.

Spalding grew up in Elizabethtown, Kentucky, as one of four kids. Her father, the late Charles S. Spalding, worked at the Fort Knox Army Base as a machinist in the Armored Tank Division. There is a tank named for him in Elizabethtown's American Legion Park.

Her mother was a teacher and librarian.

"She used to throw things at us if we used Kentucky slang or incorrect grammar," Spalding says. "We came from a large extended family — Mom from 11 siblings and Dad from seven. I have 100 first cousins. Yes — we are Catholic."

Both of Elaine's parents died when they were 56. Her older brother — Elaine is the second oldest — died at 57.

"I'm now 59," Spalding says. "I believe that every day is a blessing and should be lived with joy and a grateful heart."



— Photo by Jon C. Lakey

Salisbury the Magazine caught up with this Rowan Original before she left on a summer vacation:

Q. I'm assuming most girls and young women don't immediately aspire to be a Chamber of Commerce president. What dreams or vocations did you have in mind early in your career?

I wanted to be a reporter like you, Mark. Seriously, I went to Murray State University — double major in journalism/speech. Paid for my own college education — always had two or three part-time jobs. Worked on the paper and was editor of the yearbook. However, an internship took me to San Antonio, Texas, where I met some Chamber people and was offered a job there. It was

the best combination of my writing/speaking skills and doing something good for the community.

What's the biggest misconception people have of what the Chamber is and what it does?

Chambers are NOT part of City Hall or county government — we do NOT receive tax dollars. We are a not-for-profit (501 c-6) private business advocacy organization. Chambers have valuable member benefits and work to maintain a healthy business climate. We can take strong stands on business advocacy issues and are the voice of the business community.

What are some of the biggest positives Rowan County has going for it from a business perspective?

History of entrepreneurial firms — like Food Lion, Cheerwine, Integro and many more. That strong sense of free enterprise and the pride of owning your own business. Rowan County's new brand says it all: "Be An Original!"

Since arriving here in 2013, what has been the biggest negative you've tried to combat or an attitude you've tried to change?

We have experienced a significant turnaround in positive attitudes with newly elected officials and business leaders getting more involved in the Chamber and other community organizations. The initial Community Forum in March of 2014 was a turning point for Salisbury and Rowan County. I thank Paul Fisher and Pete Teague for their leadership in that initiative. Greg Edds recently led the new Growing Rowan forum, and I'm very excited about that grass-roots movement to get more people involved in areas like entrepreneurial development.

You've accomplished a lot at the Chamber in the past four years. What are a couple of the

highlights for you?

Thank you! We were a finalist for a national award last year and came in runner-up for Chamber of the Year. Dari Caldwell went with us to Savannah, Georgia, for the competition, and I was honored to have her with us. Dari served as chair of the board in 2015 — the year we qualified for the award. We've been blessed with great volunteer leaders as our chairs of the board since I've been here — Cindy Hart, Mark Seifel, Dari Caldwell, Ted Goins and this year, Tim Norris.

I think I remember you going on a kind of "listening tour" and visiting with Chamber members after you first arrived here. What's the main thing you learned on that tour?

Yes — I visited with all our top investors and several of the small and medium-sized firms. They wanted the Chamber to be more involved in helping to improve education, be a strong business advocacy organization and provide valuable member benefits and services. The business community is very pleased with the hiring of Dr. Lynn Moody, superintendent at Rowan-Salisbury Schools, and proud of the school system's accomplishments to date.

You are an energetic person. What's the secret to that energy and enthusiasm, and are you a lot different at home?

Thanks — we have a fantastic staff and wonderful volunteers that help us accomplish all we do at the Chamber. We could not do it without them. I do believe in having a good balance with work and time with my husband and dog. On the weekends, we like to kayak, hike and get out in nature. Although, I do sometimes come in on the weekends to get caught up on writing projects.

I love to swim — used to be a lifeguard. We enjoy traveling internationally and learning about the different cultures prior to the trip. Keyth is a foodie and we both like to try a variety of foods and new experiences.

Husband Keyth Kahrs is a talented artist. How much input or criticism are you allowed during his painting process?

Keyth is part of the Rail Walk Studios & Gallery. He is the most talented artist I have ever met, and I never critique his work. Keyth does beautiful landscape paintings and has won several awards in nationally recognized art show competitions and publications. Buy local art!

This is probably difficult for you, but give me your three favorite books:

I usually have two or three books on the night stand. Since moving to North Carolina, I've really gotten into John Hart's books. Just finished "Redemption Road."

"Ya Ya Sisterhood" — best book club discussion we ever had!

"7 Habits of Highly Successful People" — I go back to it time and again; helps me focus on the important things.

Your three favorite movies?

"Twelve Angry Men" — great study of relationships and power; "Beaches" — because it always reminds me of my best friend; "Big Night" — Italian restaurant's last night. (It) always makes me hungry!

If you've had a mentor in your life, who was it and why?

My mother — she was a strong woman and mentor to many of my friends.

Two foods always in your fridge or pantry?

Yogurt and blueberries.

If you could give a bit of good advice today to a much younger Elaine Spalding just starting out, what would it be?

Nothing — you lived your life just the way it was meant to be lived. [S](#)

Teachers Can, Too

Mother-daughter team
have a sweet little business.

Written by DEIRDRE PARKER SMITH

Photography by JON C. LAKEY

Cindy Adkins hates the phrase, “Those who can, do. Those who can’t, teach.” She and her daughter Lydia both teach, and they can, and they do.

different, but it was a tradition on both sides,” Cindy says. Mike’s family is from West Virginia.

Then they branched out to cinnamon apple butter, using Red Hot candies for flavor and color.

Lydia likes the old-fashioned apple butter, but her brother, Navy veteran Nick Adkins, prefers the cinnamon.

“Everywhere he’s been deployed, we’ve sent him apple butter,” Cindy says, so Nick brags about their “world famous apple butter” because he has been all over

Teachers Can, Too is the name of Cindy and Lydia’s after-school business, creating and selling fruit jams, jellies and butters.

“I have canned all my life,” Cindy says. “I grew up on a farm in Kentucky, and we canned everything.”

Mother and daughter started with apple butter, a recipe that isn’t fussy. It was an instant hit when they gave it to family and friends.

Both Cindy’s family and her husband Mike’s family made apple butter. “The recipes were







the world.

“People kept telling us we should sell it,” says Lydia, who teaches history and psychology at North Rowan High School, where she was named Teacher of the Year.

Cindy used her background as a business, marketing and multimedia teacher at East Rowan High School to study setting up a small business.

Lydia Adkins, left, and her mother Cindy stir the pots on the range as they mix up a batch of blackberries and Cheerwine soft drink to make jelly and jam.

Their kitchen is certified by the state, as is the well water they use for the jams, and their jelly has been tested by the Department of Agriculture. No small feat, considering they have to test every flavor, and it costs \$100 for each test.

But they’ve got it down to a science and can cook up a batch of deliciousness like that, mother and daughter moving around each other, going step-by-step to get from fruit to gleaming jar of jam.

“And now we use this to teach our students,” Cindy points out. “We tell them about small businesses and about what’s required, and my classes love making jam.”

On this summer day, Cindy and Lydia are going to test 4-ounce jars for the first time. They want to make 200 small jars of jam and jelly for favors at Lydia’s Aug. 11 wedding to Daniel Allen.

They had made apple butter for treats at the groom’s shower.

One of Lydia’s colors is deep purple, so the blackberry jam is the perfect match. They’re also making their new top seller, Centennial Jelly, made with Cheer-

FOOD



Above: Cindy Adkins mixes sugar into fresh blackberries before cooking. Left: Lydia Adkins ladles blackberry jam through a funnel into an 8-ounce jar. Below: With Lydia in the background, Cindy pours Cheerwine from a bowl to a pitcher to get rid of bubbles. Bottom: A finished jar of blackberry jam to be used as a wedding favor.



wine. They made some for the centennial celebration after getting a note from the Farmer's Market suggesting each vendor have a Cheerwine-related product.

"We thought we might sell a few jars," Cindy remembers. "We sold 60 that day, and we had to make 100 more jars."

The key is getting rid of all the bubbles first. They pour a two-liter bottle into a large metal bowl and stir. And stir. And stir. Then they pour it from bowl to pitcher, pitcher to bowl, and stir.

They have no plans to make any other soda jelly. This is enough, and it's perfect. It is the exact color of Cheerwine and tastes just like it, minus the bubbles. It just takes longer to set than fruit jams.

All of the fruit they use is local — except for the apples. They go to the mountains to get enough apples for their butters. They have a friend who

grows blackberries. They bought all the peaches they could last summer and froze them. They have blueberries on their property and get some from local growers.

It's not hard to find strawberries in Rowan County, and this year, they got rhubarb for a strawberry-rhubarb jam Cindy remembers from Kentucky.

Next up — figs, because people request fig jam and Lydia's fiancé's family gave them some figs. "That's not one I knew so much, but it's very popular here," Cindy says.

A man asked them at the Salisbury-Rowan Farmer's Market if they made muscadine jelly. "We said no and he said he'd supply us with all the muscadines if we'd make it for him," Cindy says.

Making jelly requires pots, bowls, measuring cups, jars, lids, spoons, ladles and more. "I'd nev-



er used a funnel,” to fill the jars, Cindy says, but husband Mike bought one and it was a revelation. He also got an apple peeling attachment for their stand mixer which saves heaps of time.

Cindy’s favorite part of jelly making, besides the pleasure of doing something with her hands, is hearing how much people like it when they taste it. “I like the instant feedback. ... you know, as a teacher, no student ever comes up and says, ‘That was a great lesson today.’ In fact most of what we hear are complaints, so this is a nice reward. ... Plus, we’re with kids all day. It’s nice to have some adult conversation.”

Not all their recipes have been successful. “We’ve tasted some stuff and had to throw it out in the field behind the house,” Cindy says.

Cindy hopes to retire from teaching in three years. She’s going to do more old-fashioned things. Friends have suggested that Teachers Can, Too go commercial, but Cindy and Lydia agree, doing it this way is more rewarding.

Don’t limit yourself to toast and biscuits, they advise. “Mike likes the jams on ice cream,” Cindy says, and they can be delicious fillings in plain cakes.

Their flavors are apple butter, cinnamon apple butter, strawberry jam, strawberry rhubarb jam, peach jam, blueberry jam, blackberry jam, fig jam, Centennial Jelly and coming soon, muscadine jelly.

You can find the jams at the Farmer’s Market, Salisbury Emporium and Better Loafing bakery.

The recipes are secret, but they offered this one that uses their fig jam:

TEACHERS CAN (AND BAKE) FIG CAKE

Cake:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp. nutmeg
- 1 tsp. allspice
- 1 tsp. cinnamon
- 1 tsp. salt



- 3 large eggs
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 cup canola oil
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 Tbsp. hot water
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 half pint jar of Teacher’s Can, Too Fig Jam
- 1 cup chopped walnuts (optional)

Glaze:

- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp. cornstarch
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 Tbsp. light corn syrup
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- ½ cup of fresh chopped figs

Preheat the oven to 350. Grease and flour a Bundt or tube pan.

Put the flour, nutmeg, allspice, cinnamon and salt into a small mixing bowl.


Add the eggs to a large mixing bowl and mix

with a beater until foamy. Continue mixing and add in the sugar and beat for 3 minutes. Slowly add the oil to the mixing bowl and continue beating. Add half of the flour mixture, then buttermilk, and then last half of the flour mixture, beat until mixture is smooth. Set the large mixing bowl to the side.

In the small mixing bowl stir together the baking soda and water. On low speed, beat the soda water, vanilla, Teachers Can, Too Fig Jam and walnuts (if desired) into the batter in the large mixing bowl.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake in the oven for 1 hour. Test with a toothpick to make sure the cake is done. Let the cake cool.

For the glaze, place all the ingredients for the glaze in a large pan, except for the vanilla and figs. Bring the mixture to a boil over medium heat and cook while stirring for 10 minutes. The glaze should become thick and opaque in color.

Take the pan off the stove and stir in the vanilla. Allow the glaze to cool to room temperature and stir in the fresh chopped figs. Lightly pour the glaze over the cooled cake. 

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HEALTH



Striking the right note

Adrian Smith is the man behind the music.

Written by SHAVONNE WALKER

Photography by JON C. LAKEY

As a 5-year-old, Adrian Smith learned about rhythm after his father bought him a \$1,000 drum set, much to his mother's dismay. But it was the ever-popular piano lesson song, "Heart and Soul," that was the launching pad for this local musician.

Smith has been the musical director at Cornerstone Church for 10 years, as well as for productions at Piedmont Players and Lee Street theaters. He also has served as the director of music for the annual Citywide Revival Choir for two years and orchestrated the music for a December anniversary tribute to Livingstone College President Jimmy Jenkins.

His father played guitar, and his mother played piano, but neither ever performed professionally. Smith grew up listening to an eclectic mix of musicians including Al Jarreau, Prince, Michael Jackson, Little Cedric and the Hailey Singers, whose members would later form the R&B group K-Ci & JoJo.

THE ARTS



Above: Adrian Smith and Tameka Brown rehearse for Piedmont Players Theatre's Tony Award-winning 'Ain't Misbehavin.'

His mother, who regularly went to church, would give Smith a look if he didn't play "church music." Adrian would appease his mother by playing a little bit of gospel singer Walter Hawkins, but not too far behind would be songs from Prince.

When he's not composing, performing and scouting/hiring musicians for local theater productions, Smith teaches English at North Rowan High School. He began in late 2016 as a substitute and was later asked to stay on until the end of the year.

His first foray into the theater world was when he accompanied his chorus teacher's performance in a regional theater production. After that time, Smith said he thought he'd love to do more, but it took years before he would begin doing theater full-time.

Smith learned to read sheet music in seventh grade when he began playing the alto saxophone, an instrument he played by ear for two years prior. Smith would play at church events. When he was 9, Smith wrote his first song.

He studied classical piano while a student at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte and composed a song in his sophomore year for his former high school, E.E. Smith in Fayetteville. He once went home to visit and heard his song being played by the school marching band while at a football game. The composition was a compilation of "Reasons" by Earth, Wind & Fire and "I'll Make Love to You" by Boyz II Men.

Smith has had various opportunities to play bass guitar or piano, including when he briefly served as music minister for a Long Street church. Still in his early 20s, he filled in as



music director at a Charlotte mega church for a couple of weeks. He would later go on tour with Adrian Green & the Diplomats for Christ.

Smith often is asked how he balances playing both Christian music and secular music for theater productions. His answer is simple — music is music.

"I believe in good music," Smith said.

In theater productions, "You walk in and say what are we going to make of this?" he added.

Smith said he appreciates that Piedmont

Players Director Reid Leonard and Lee Street Artistic Director Craig Kolkebeck both have music degrees, but in most cases, they leave the music to him.

Smith previously worked with Charlotte theaters for a number of years. But it was a 2011 production of "Hair-spray" at Piedmont Players Theatre that began his participation in local theater. Smith was asked to help with that production and split the role of vocal director with Jenny Carroll.

After "Hairspray," he was asked to participate as vocal director for "Dream Girls," but was hesitant because he didn't want to infringe upon the job Carroll had always done. Since "Hairspray," Smith has taken on the roles of vocal and music director of many more productions, including "The Color Purple," "Ain't Misbehavin'," "Reefer Madness," "Sister Act" and "Rocky Horror Picture Show."

Smith and his wife, Kiyana, have four children — Kadrian, 13; Diamond, 22; Danielle, 11; and Kenton, 1. How does a man with a wife, four

children, a teaching job, full-time theater and church work, as well as the occasional wedding thrown in, ever sleep? He doesn't.

Smith admits he doesn't sleep very much and his mind is always thinking about music or his family and the next thing he has to get done.

"You just take your quiet moments when you are alone," he said.

His quiet moments are few and far between, but this piano man always has music on his mind. **S**

A two-story home with a balcony, chandeliers, and a kitchen. The balcony has a railing with a white and blue patterned cloth. The kitchen has a wooden island and a dark refrigerator. The dining area has a wooden table and chairs. The living area has a large rug and a wooden cabinet. The ceiling has dark wood beams and a large chandelier. The stairs have a wooden handrail and a green railing. The overall style is rustic and cozy.

Gold rush

A home and its village weave their way into couple's hearts.

Written by ELIZABETH COOK | Photography by JON C. LAKEY



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HEALTH



When she retired from teaching Latin in Tennessee, Sandy Hickman gravitated toward the scene of her fondest memories, Mount Pleasant, North Carolina.

chairs, and kids just appeared,” Sandy says. “In the field next door, where the fire station is today, we climbed a huge magnolia tree, played baseball, hide and seek, had foot races.

“We had the best time and never had to go farther than a hop and a skip to have it.”

Every time they went back, they didn’t want to leave.

After Sandy’s mother, Madelynne Ritchie Peurifoy, died in 2007, the family went to Mount Pleasant for her buri-

Then she visited the historic Village of Gold Hill just up the road — and decided to make new memories.

Gold Hill has a way of changing people’s minds.

Sandy grew up in Silver Spring, Maryland, spending part of each summer in her mother’s hometown, Mount Pleasant. Sandy’s cousin, Sharon, came along, and their families all piled into their grandmother’s house on Main Street. Mittie Hahn Ritchie was known as “Miss Mitt” to the folks around Mount Pleasant.

“We sat on the front porch in old rocking

John and Sandy Hickman relax on the porch of their home in Gold Hill. The house is only a few years old but fits right in with the styles of the surrounding buildings, many of which were moved to the community from other areas of Rowan County. The open floor plan home is eight feet away from a store that Sandy operates as a retail business.



Above: Sandy's shop, Back Home, started out as the builder's woodworking shop, but now features pottery, vintage items, home decor, florals and more. Right: The open and inviting kitchen of the Hickmans' house is perfect for entertaining friends and family.



al. Sandy's nostalgia for the old days sprang up anew.

"This is where I want to be," she told her husband, John, and the search for a house began — first online and then in person.

One day Sandy and a Realtor looked at two houses in Mount Pleasant, but the listings didn't have enough land for Sandy. So they drove about 12 miles to look around Gold Hill. As they ate lunch on the porch of Miss Ruby's, they spotted a man coming out of a workshop behind the restaurant.

Sandy recognized the house beside the workshop as one she and John had seen listed on oldhouses.com and ruled out; it was too close to the restaurant, they thought.

When Sandy saw the house in person, though, she knew she had struck gold. The house was even more beautiful in person than it was online.

Soon she was calling John back home.

"You have to come look at this house," she said.



Before the California Gold Rush of 1849, prospectors made their way to North Carolina to search for gold.

It started in Cabarrus County, after 12-year-old Conrad Reed discovered a 17-pound gold

nugget in a creek at his father's farm. The year was 1799 and, unfamiliar with gold nuggets, the family used the odd find as a door stop for several years.

Conrad's father, John Reed, eventually wised up and went on to establish the Reed Gold Mine.

In Rowan County, the first discovery of



Coffee in Sandy's shop comes from the Caribbean island of Roatan — where son Travis is a missionary — and helps raise money for needs there.

gold at Gold Hill came in 1824. By the 1840s, the area had grown into a bustling town. Col. George Barnhardt, son-in-law of John Reed, was its first mayor.

The Barnhardt Gold Mine became one of the largest producers of gold in the South. The Earnhardt family across the street opened the Earnhardt/Randolph Gold Mine. Between the two, the mines produced gold valued at \$7 million to \$9 million.

The California gold rush stole all the attention, but work continued at the Carolina gold mines until the beginning of the Civil War.

People in Gold Hill got a different kind of gold fever in the late 20th century.

Darius Hedrick of High Point got the urge to fix up his grandfather's 150-year-old house in the heart of the town. Then he restored Mauney's store next door, and a vision for reviving the old mining town took shape and spread. He and others created the village by moving and restoring many of the historic buildings that make up the cluster of Gold Hill businesses.

Eventually the village on St. Stephens Church Road evolved into a 70-acre historic theme park, with two mines, several miles of hiking/biking/equestrian trails, a regulation

Story continues on page 30.



Top: Terry Wilber, who built the house in 2002, designed it with a welcoming front porch. Above: Large windows in the sunroom on the back of the house are perfect for taking in sunsets. Right: A quilt made by Sandy's grandmother lies on the bed in the guest room.



Clockwise from right: Sandy places a bowl on the breakfast room table, not far from a display of daughter Camille's pottery, including a piece with a photo of Sandy's parents embedded in it; The cupboard that Terry Wilber built for the dining area came with the house and was a big draw, Sandy says; The master bath has pedestal sinks and a claw foot tub; A miniature cabin built by Sandy's son Seth is on display in her shop — but not for sale.



AT HOME

size softball field and soccer fields, playground and picnic areas.

And, for a time, a woodworking shop.

■ ■ ■

The man Sandy Hickman saw coming out of the workshop in Gold Hill was Terry Wilber, builder and woodworker. Though the house fit the 19th-century style of the Gold Hill village, he built it in 2001-02.

That was when Wilber caught the Gold Hill bug from his friend, Hedrick. Restoration work was Wilber's profession, and Hedrick suggested he open a woodworking shop in the village. It would add a new dimension to visitors' understanding of 19th century life.

Wilber's wife said if he built a woodworking shop, he'd have to build her a house too. So he did.

Wilber designed the house. He and his wife wanted an open floor plan for entertaining. Porches were important, too — a friendly front porch to connect the house to the village, and a back porch where they could look out on farmland and sunsets.

Wilber describes the structure as a saltbox house with a Charleston porch on the back. He put in yellow pine floors and cypress banisters. "I used the old-style moldings to give it that feel from the past."

In the woodworking shop he built beside the house, Wilber did his work the way it would have been done in the 1840s. "People used to come in and watch me do restoration work," he says.

When the Wilbers decided to move back to Salisbury, the Hickmans proved to be the perfect buyers. They fully embraced the house — someday preservationists may call it the 2002 Wilber-Hickman House. And the Hickmans embraced Gold Hill.

■ ■ ■

Tucked behind Montgomery Store and the restaurant building, the Hickmans' house sits on an unpaved street called, literally, "Back Street."

From the front porch, you enter the house



The guest bedroom doorway offers a view of the den hearth.

to find an open space that includes the dining area, kitchen and den — the kind of space people create on home improvement shows by tearing out walls.

A stairway leads to the master suite upstairs, whose balcony looks out on the verdant back yard. Inside, a handrail across the loft-like area is a perfect spot for displaying Sandy's grandmother's quilts.

Back on the first floor, a guest room opens off the den area.

And across the back of the house, the large windows of the sunroom offer a view of exactly what Sandy wanted at her new home — open green space, beds of flowers and, at the end of the day, a clear view of the setting sun.

John had planned on slowing down in his coal industry job after they bought the house in 2009. At first he just came to Gold Hill on weekends.

"It was so peaceful and nice here. I didn't want to leave," he says. So he retired, too.

That's what happens to everyone who comes to Gold Hill, Sandy says. After living at a hectic pace, constantly in fifth gear, they come to this quaint village and realize there is an alter-

native.

"Everyone comes here for peace of mind," John says.

The sense of community is palpable. With 17 residences and 10 shops, the Village of Gold Hill is tight-knit.

"Everybody knows everybody," Sandy says. "There are no secrets in Gold Hill."

■ ■ ■

The structure next door — Wilber's former woodworking shop and garage — came with the house. The shop wasn't on the Hickmans' wish list, but if it was part of the deal, so be it.

Now that at-first-unwanted building is Sandy's shop, Back Home, stocked with an eclectic mix of home decor, vintage items and more. It's open four days a week: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Thursday-Saturday and 1-5 p.m. on Sunday

When she first opened the shop, Sandy put items left over from her aunt's estate on the shelves. As she sold them, she bought more merchandise.

Daughter Camille is an artist with pottery. Her work is on many a surface in the Hickman's house and can also be found on sale in

the shop. “She’s very creative and talented and energetic,” Sandy says.

Five years ago, Sandy started going to the High Point Furniture Market, and more recently she took the plunge into the massive Atlanta market. She describes three buildings of 19 floors each, with showrooms on every floor. “It’s overwhelming,” she says. “I only spend what we’ve made.” That takes about four hours.

“She’s a professional shopper, always has been,” John says.

Sandy says she likes to support small companies that give back to their communities or a cause, like Rising Tide, whose scarves are made by artisans in Nepal and northern India.

There are cast-iron lanterns, satinware dessert cups, faux cotton-boll trees, real lavender, soy candles, scarves, headbands, purses and so much more.

Clever, rustic-looking signs, for instance: “Here in the South ... we don’t hide crazy. We parade it on the front porch and give it sweet tea.”

“You can’t compete with Kohl’s or Target, so you have to have things they can’t find anywhere else,” Sandy says.

There’s also Island Roast coffee from the Caribbean island of Roatan, where son Travis lives, and an intricate model of an old cabin — sorry, it’s not for sale — made by son Seth. (You can, however, buy the miniature beach chairs he made from popsicle sticks.)

When the Hickmans decided to open the shop, Sandy says John sort of took over cooking dinner. “I came out the winner on that arrangement,” she says.

Both of them have come out winners in finding a place to call home. Learning the retail trade was not what the Hickmans en-

visioned when they moved to Gold Hill. Life has a way of presenting unexpected opportunities, says Sandy.

“I never planned on teaching Latin, and I certainly never planned on teaching AP Latin,” she says.

Her nostalgia for Mount Pleasant will always be there — the kindness of the people, the sheer fun of playing outdoors all day and sleeping like a log at night, with a loving family surrounding her and a grandmother who had very little but would always share a bottle of Coke or a silver dollar.

But Gold Hill has made its way into her heart, too, with its close neighbors and green pastures and golden sunsets.

She never planned to be a shop owner, but here she is. She and John have put down roots in Gold Hill. And they wouldn’t want to be anywhere else. **S**



Explore Downtown

September 1 • **1st Friday Shop Dine Stroll**

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October 6 • **Buskers Bash**

October 14-15 • **OctoberTour**

November 3 • **1st Friday Shop Dine Stroll**

November 24 • **Holiday Night Out**

November 25 • **Santa and the Grinch at the Bell Tower**

December 1 • **1st Friday Shop Dine Stroll**

December 16 • **Santa and the Grinch with Antique Fire Trucks**



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WORKING ON THE RAILROAD

William and Judy Deal have returned 'The Hitching Post
Southerner' to its original glory.


Written by
MARK WINEKA

Photography by
JON C. LAKEY

William Deal of Lexington takes his restored miniature train out for a ride. The Deals built a 1,100-foot track around their home for the one-fifth scale model of an F-3 locomotive.







William and Judy Deal haven't spent their retirement years traveling across the country in a motor home, cruising High Rock Lake in a boat or languishing at some vacation home in the mountains.

They have a railroad — specifically, the “Hitching Post Southern Railway.”

The 1,100 feet of track for their railroad loops around their house, located in a Lexington subdivision. They have bridges, crossing signals, a brief shade tree tunnel, a gazebo boarding stop and a long, gleaming building on a side rail to house the engine, two coaches and observation car.

The train is about 65 feet long. It's a smooth ride, depending on a vacuum throttle and brakes — and track William constantly maintains.

When the Deals give the final directions to their house, they like to say it's the first house on the left with a train track across the driveway.

“It's the best train ride in the neighborhood,” William says.

The Deals bought this miniature train in 1995. “The Hitching Post Southerner” originally was an amusement ride at a Salisbury drive-in by the same name. The couple have spent the past 20-plus years restoring the train and building their railroad.

“Different people have different hobbies,” Judy says. “Our hobby's at home.”

Come Sept. 24, the Deals will be hosts for a Faithful Friends Animal Sanctuary fundraiser, during which a limited number of Faithful Friends supporters will enjoy riding The Hitching Post Southerner.

The train has many connections to Faithful Friends and the Deals. The couple's cat, Missy, came from the Salisbury sanctuary. The Deals volunteer once a month at Faithful Friends, and the animal sanctuary sits on the same property where the Hitching Post Drive-In once stood.

When the miniature train debuted at the drive-in on Aug. 27, 1950, the Salisbury Post called it “the newest thing to hit the entertainment world in Rowan County.” The newspaper also described it as “the first installation in the Carolinas of an authentic miniature.”

The train became Hitching Post owner Joseph W. Mitchell's pride and joy, and he didn't allow anyone else to sit in the engineer's seat as the train made a 1,000-foot loop around the children's playground. Twice around constituted one ride.

At full capacity, the train cars can hold 36 children or 18 adults.

“It's an attraction that all age groups can ride,” William says.

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The train travels about 8 mph on 16-inch-gauge track. The 2,200-pound engine represents a one-fifth scale model of the F-3 General Motors diesel locomotive that was a workhorse for Southern Railway. The engine's pre-war green-and-white paint scheme also mimics the familiar SR design.

The junior-sized trains became popular in amusement parks, public parks and playgrounds in the early 1950s. In a Sept. 12, 1953, article, Business Week noted most of these trains were being produced by the Miniature Train Co. of Rensselaer, Indiana. The same company built Joseph Mitchell's train, now owned by the Deals.

Deal has determined he has the 21st G-16 model made by the Miniature Train Co.

In 1953, the Indiana company was making 75 to 100 trains a year and had sold more than 500 since the end of World War II. "A lot of steam behind the sales stems from the fact that the company is forever dreaming up new uses for its products," the Business Week story said. "One idea was to set up the trains in drive-in theaters to keep the kiddies occupied — and pull in extra revenue — while customers wait for darkness to settle down so the film can start."

William Deal did his own extensive research on the number and fate of G-16 miniature trains such as his that were running in North Carolina

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from 1950-55. He found that 23 of these miniature trains were in operation across the state during that time period, including one at City Park in Salisbury.

The Salisbury Jaycees bought the City Park train in 1955. It was removed in the mid 1970s and relocated to the Rowan County Fairgrounds, then to Dan Nicholas Park where it remains today.

This advertisement ran in the Salisbury Evening Post in advance of The Hitching Post Southerner's debut as a miniature train on Aug. 27, 1950, at the Hitching Post Drive-In Theatre south of Salisbury.

Deal has determined that 11 miniature trains in North Carolina are still operating and available to the public, including the Dan Nicholas train and one in Kannapolis' Village Park. As far as he knows, Deal is one of the few men in the state — maybe the only one — owning and operating a private miniature train.

William Deal has always held a fascination for trains. His grandfather and father worked for the railroad. His other grandfather would take him to the Salisbury depot to watch the big trains arrive, though

the massive machinery scared him as a 4-year-old.

So his grandfather thought William might prefer the miniature train at City Park instead. Deal fell in love with the Jaycees' train — "I was just dumbfounded" — and declared then he would own a miniature train someday.

"Things come and go," Deal says. "That never went."

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Top: The miniature train engine weighs about a ton. Above: A look at the engine's instrument panel. Below: The hand-pushed gauge measures the width of the track. Left: The Deals approach the crossing sign where their train crosses the driveway.



Through the years, William shared his boyhood declaration with Judy, and it was Judy who spotted a G-16 miniature train as they were driving through Tarboro one day on the way to a vacation at the Outer Banks.

The engine body and two cars were buried partly underground in a spot along U.S. 64. The next year, when they drove through Tarboro again, the Deals stopped, made some inquiries and were directed to the maintenance office for the city's recreation department.

Deal ended up buying that train. He connected with Bryan Jedinak in Bedford, Ohio, who provided some needed components and know-how. At his home, not the one the couple live in now, Deal laid a small section of track and erected a storage build-

William Deal found The Hitching Post Southerner intact but in pretty bad condition in 1995 after it had been in storage for about 40 years.

— Photo courtesy of William Deal



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ing for the train, which he eventually sold to a man in Cornelius.

Connie Mitchell Clark transferred ownership of her late father's Hitching Post train in 1995 with the understanding that the Deals would preserve the train in a manner that would honor the memory of her father and mother.

"She knew we would love that train like her daddy did," William says.

Joseph Mitchell, who died in 1969, actually had taken The Hitching Post Southerner off the tracks in the mid 1950s. For 40 years it was stored in a building that by 1995 barely kept out the elements.

"It was kind of rough," Deal says of the train, "but it was complete. I had never seen one before that was totally original like that."

When Deal moved the train to his Lexington home and set it on the track he already had built for the old Tarboro train, he discovered

the engine was "totally seized up." "I'm someone who had never tuned up a lawn mower," Deal says.

Deal reached out to Jedinak in Ohio for advice. Deal then replaced the ignition component, used massive amounts of Marvel Oil and pumped out the old gasoline and replaced it with new fuel.

"It fired off the first time I tried it," Deal says, still surprised to this day.

The train could only go forward on his 30 feet of track, and Deal jokes he made Judy push him back. When they moved to their new home in 1999, the Deals built 90 feet of track and a new building to hold the train.

The Deals also had bought two lots in the subdivision because they knew they were going to have a train running around their house in the future. They had the deed restrictions amended to allow the train, but because of other subdivision constraints, zoning restric-

tions and liability concerns, they do not operate the train for the public.

Deal retired as Lexington fire chief in 2005. By 2007, after he had done much of the site preparation himself, Deal hired Crafton Railroad Co. of Andalusia, Illinois, to install the track. When the final section was laid, he called Judy, who was working then for Davidson County Social Services.

"I came home for the first ride," she says.

Over the past three years, The Hitching Post Southerner has undergone a full mechanical and cosmetic restoration. The engine and wheel sets for the coaches were sent to Jedinak in Ohio in the fall of 2014 and came back in May 2015. The coaches were restored by Barry Owen in Lexington.

"We couldn't have done it without him," Deal says of Jedinak. "... He did everything stem to stern."

In February of this year, all components of



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the train were back with the Deals and under one roof. Meanwhile, William says he will spend the rest of his life working on the track, making repairs and improvements.

“That train track is my craft,” he says, estimating the couple have trucked in 80 tons of gravel for the beautifully landscaped site over the years.


Among other things, Judy has lifted her share of heavy track, set rivets on all the windows and helped with lettering. She says their private railroad has been a wonderful, shared experience.

“We’ve snarled at each other sometimes,” William laughs.

William says he had the dream, and Judy told him at various times whether it would work financially. In fact, William had business cards printed up for the railroad that identify him as co-owner and chief executive officer and Judy as co-owner and chief financial officer.

“I couldn’t have done it without her,” William says.

The little boy in William Deal has never faded away. He has built a massive model train layout in his basement, and he and Judy go all out with an extensive Christmas theme for the train village over the holidays.

“I just like small trains, and that’s what this is,” William says of the Hitching Post Railroad. “This is probably as big as I go on small trains.” 



Judy switches the track.

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RIGHT ON TRACK

With 40 years under its belt, N.C. Transportation Museum
goes full steam ahead.



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

It's an old adage, one filled with enlightening contradiction, but you could say the N.C. Transportation Museum in Spencer has spent the past 40 years becoming an overnight success.

Above all, the museum is a survivor. A multitude of heroes have fought through the years just to keep it open and viable. The museum has shown it can take all kinds of punches, but the true believers in its mission — one conducted over 60 acres, including 11 major buildings — repeatedly picked this fighter up and made it better.

Today, you can't help but sense the museum has turned some kind of corner. Its future seems bright, not iffy. Stakeholders — staff, volunteers and a hard-working foundation — have proved they can sustain the transportation museum, even during times when state support is a challenge.

Meanwhile, there's a businesslike, entrepreneurial approach to how this place functions and brings people in.

"We're in the entertainment business," says Kelly Alexander, executive director of the museum and chief operating officer of the N.C. Transportation Museum Foundation. "... We have to make the site come to life. We're not just a museum where people come and read labels."



Earlier this year, rail fans came to the museum to see the restored Texas steam locomotive on the left, and they also enjoyed a close-up look at the Lehigh Valley Coal 126, middle, and the well-known Class J 611.





Above: Monty Brown, a volunteer, leads a group of 20 visitors around the North Carolina Transportation Museum late in the evening. The Legends by Lantern tour is a 90-minute walking tour around the grounds after regular operating hours that is a mixture of historical facts and old ghost stories. Below: The Bob Julian Roundhouse at night.

Over the past five years, critical turning points came with events linked to rail history, and museum officials realized there was no better place for these experiences than on the site of what used to be Southern Railway's Spencer Shops.

In 2012, the museum served as host for the Norfolk Southern Heritage Unit, followed two years later by the "Streamliners at Spencer."

"These two events put us on the map as far as rail fans go," says Mark Brown, information and communications specialist for the museum.

The Norfolk Southern Heritage fleet featured 20 locomotives in the original color schemes of railroad companies dating back to the early 1800s. Each locomotive represented a rail company preceding Norfolk Southern.

Organizers billed it as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for rail enthusiasts, and the N.C. Transportation Museum was one of the few locations in the country big enough to host an event with 20



Story continues on page 52.



Above: Volunteer conductor Charlie Davis speaks to visitors. Right: Vincent Owens uses an acetylene torch to cut the rivets off of a panel on the back of a coach car under restoration. Below: The Back Shop is a popular place for events. Left: A 1935 Ford convertible Highway Patrol car.





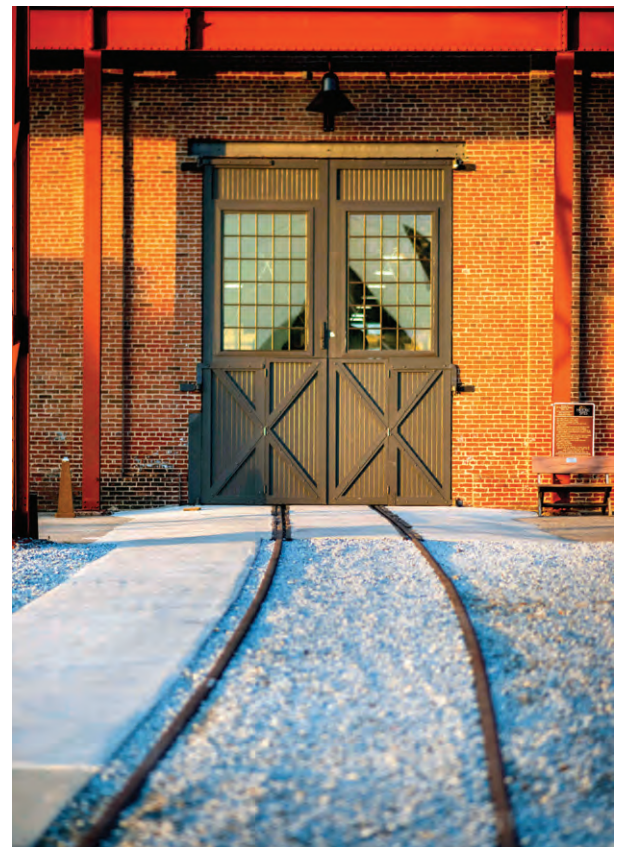


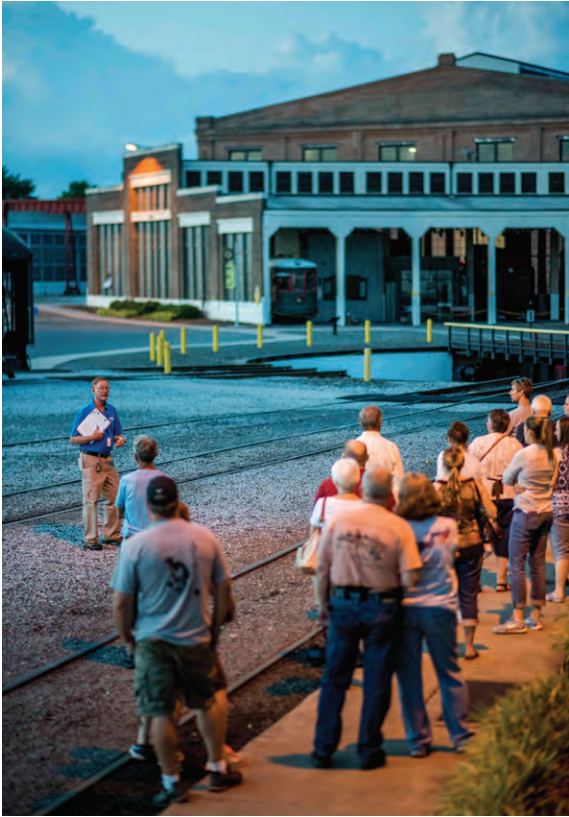
Above: Carpenter Walt Lyman has been working on the interior of a coach car that will be used for future events such as the popular Polar Express. Below: Tractors on display in the Back Shop during the Rowan County Chamber of Commerce Business After Hours mixer.





Above: Volunteer Jim Morrison stands near the 1978 Plymouth Fury used by the N.C. State Highway Patrol. Below left: Visitors tour the roundhouse.





Above; The Legends by Lantern tour explores the roundhouse and turntable. Below: The rafters of the Back Shop.





locomotives on display side by side, thanks to its 37-stall Bob Julian Roundhouse.

The heritage gathering also offered photographers a special “Family Portrait” night shoot.

Tickets for the Norfolk Southern Heritage Unit sold immediately, and people came from 30 different states and several foreign countries. “It was a huge success,” Brown says.

The 2014 Streamliners event was promoted as “three days of rail fan nirvana.” The museum became the temporary home for 26 streamliner locomotives built in the 1930s through the 1950s. It was the largest gathering ever of these historic locomotives in one place.

The museum took advantage of its capability to provide different groupings of the locomotives for photographs, offer train rides, give cab tours and feature the locomotives on the turntable in front of the roundhouse.



The success of those two events was a good reminder to museum officials that the for-

The Class J 611 locomotive steams into the N.C. Transportation Museum’s yard.

mer Spencer Shops site is a rail museum first: “That’s our history, that’s who we are,” Alexander says. “That’s the easy part for us to interpret.”

But Alexander and others also realized they had to think bigger and be host for many other events that brought people to the site, created a buzz and encouraged people to visit again. Not that it hadn’t happened in the past.

“Day Out with Thomas” has been a hit at the museum for 22 years, going through highs and lows in attendance, depending on how popular the Thomas the Tank character and brand are at the time.

But the museum also relies heavily on events such as Polar Express, the Easter Bunny Express, Rail Days, National Train Day, car shows, fire truck festivals, tractor shows, camps and campouts, rail excursions, movie productions, visiting exhibits and, most recently,

events in the Back Shop.

“All of them right now are critical to our survival,” Brown says.

The Polar Express, which is virtually a community effort and quite demanding on staff, has become the museum’s biggest yearly offering, taking in 20 different days and 120 shows.

“We are making memories for families,” says a proud Alexander, who says she is still emotional and uplifted whenever she hears the musical score. “It’s important to us. We have to do it right.”

Thanks to volunteers, the museum offers train rides around the large site from June to September — four rides a day Tuesday to Saturday and three rides a day on Sunday.

The museum has an impressive stock of 40 restored locomotives and rail cars. Elsewhere, the “Bumper to Bumper” exhibit highlights classic cars and trucks. “Wagons, Wheels and Wings” covers many other forms of transportation in the state’s history.

Traveling exhibits such as “How the West



Sandy Alexander and Eddie Mooneyham work on the Norfolk & Western Class J 611 locomotive.



The last governor limo, a Cadillac Fleetwood, sits on display in the Back Shop.



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(western North Carolina) Was Won” find a comfortable landing spot in the expansive roundhouse.

The museum also has built a reputation for its ability to house restorations of locomotives such as Norfolk’s 611 and The Texas, which was brought here from the Atlanta History Center. Many times, visitors can see restorations in progress.

“It’s important for us to be an economic driver,” Alexander says.

In 2016, the museum generated \$11 million in economic benefits to Rowan County.



These first 40 years haven’t been a smooth ride. “It really hasn’t,” Alexander says. “Our story has not been an easy story, but we continue to have success.”

The museum was a project born of high

hopes in 1977, but typical of how it would fight for decades for state attention and funding, the museum stumbled out of the starting gate. Its first exhibit, “People, Places and Times,” wasn’t opened to the public until 1983.

The enormity of the Spencer Shops footprint was overwhelming. In addition, the transportation museum and N.C. Zoo were being established about the same time. Legislators in Raleigh saw themselves pouring money into the zoo and were leery of funneling the same kind of funds into a transportation museum.

“The story of the North Carolina Transportation Museum at historic Spencer Shops is a story of great promise and potential, delayed implementation, and success due to dedicated persistence,” historian Kevin Cherry wrote in 2002 for the museum’s 25th anniversary.

Those words still apply today.

It’s hard to imagine there were days, not too

long ago, when stakeholders in the museum feared it might be close to closing. Alexander says all the news about the museum seemed to be negative — there were extreme staff cuts, significant decreases in state funding, visitations were down and the museum was charging admission for the first time.

“That was a very scary time for everyone,” she says.

The museum went from 18 full-time state employees to five. Add in three staff members from the N.C. Transportation Museum Foundation, an important fund-raising arm, and there were essentially eight employees left to keep the museum running.

A \$1.3 million yearly state appropriation sank to \$300,000. Alexander and foundation president Roy Johnson were spending weeks in Raleigh lobbying legislators on the museum’s behalf. “We had to do whatever we had to do

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to keep it open,” Alexander says, giving huge credit to the foundation.



A turning point in the museum’s fate came when staff, foundation members and volunteers changed their collective mindset about what the museum is and what it should be. The economic times forced them into operating the museum as a business, becoming more entrepreneurial and forming critical partnerships.

They created and scheduled events that make the museum a destination point from across the state and region. They made a trip to the museum a more visceral experience, where roving hosts interacted with visitors, who had more chances to watch videos and touch and feel things.

Alexander says another significant develop-

ment was the naming of Kevin Cherry, deputy secretary of the then N.C. Department of Cultural Resources, as the museum’s interim director.

Cherry’s interest and love for the museum began when he was a history librarian at Rowan Public Library and wrote occasional columns for the Salisbury Post. Later, he would write that definitive history of the museum’s first 25 years.

Cherry represented a key link to Raleigh, and “he had ownership” in the museum, Alexander says. “He could take the story of what this place was and take that vision on a daily basis to the folks in Raleigh.”

Alexander says Cherry also demonstrated an ability to look at challenges and find positive responses. Beyond that, she says, he was a team builder who brought the museum staff, foundation and the dedicated volunteers together.

“Now it’s one group of people,” Brown says.

The museum has become 90 percent self-sustaining. The foundation assists with fundraising for preservation projects and educational programs. It helps with museum memberships, grant writing, general fundraising, train and turntable rides, the Polar Express and Day Out With Thomas.

Volunteers run the on-site train, give guided tours, greet visitors, restore old rail equipment, maintain antique autos, work special events and help in the gift shop.

They are asked to commit at least 50 hours a year. “In those really lean times they kept us propped up,” Alexander says.

Today, 110 active volunteers at the museum are logging 32,000 volunteer hours a year. They literally keep the trains going and represent all walks of life — from auto mechanics to several people who have doctorate degrees.

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SEPTEMBER 2017 ■ 57



Meanwhile, the paid staff is back up to 15 full-time state and foundation employees. Alexander says an emphasis for both staff and volunteers is on customer service.



One thing that makes the future brighter for the N.C. Transportation Museum is the availability of the Back Shop. The enormous structure is three stories high, two football fields long and 100,000 square feet under one roof.

The Back Shop is available for events, rentals and the housing of major exhibits. Once the largest industrial building in North Carolina, it possesses an inherent “wow factor” that Alexander thinks will serve it well.

The museum held a soft opening for the Back Shop in March with Salisbury Academy’s Bloom fundraiser. “We saw quickly how flexi-

ble that space was going to be,” Alexander says.

To mark the 40th anniversary, the museum plans to be offering a commemorative print, well before the Christmas gift season. The Arcadia publishing firm also is doing a book in color featuring a lot of the current rolling stock at the museum.

Despite its recent successes, no one at the museum has become complacent, taking its iconic sign from the railroad repair facility’s heyday at face value — “Be Careful.”

Securing adequate state funding always will be a problem. After the recession, for example, there was a lot of deferred maintenance, and it’s not easy keeping up with this many buildings over so many acres.

“We’re not letting that stop us from moving forward,” Alexander says. “... We have to be willing to think out of the box. You have to be a risk taker.” **S**

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The Texas steam locomotive was restored at the museum, then sent back to the Atlanta History Center.

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Dr. Matthew Bullock is the only orthopaedic surgeon in the area performing same-day knee replacements.

Joint resolution

Bullock leads Wake Forest Baptist Health into same-day knee replacements.

Written by MARK WINEKA

Photography by JON C. LAKEY

In early April, Eddie Swing walked into Lexington Medical Center ready for his second knee replacement in less than six months.

But this one was going to be a bit different. After the surgery, the 62-year-old Swing had every intention of going home the same day — and he did.

“I walked in,” Swing says. “and I walked out, carrying my walker.”

Before he left the hospital that afternoon, Swing satisfied the therapist he could perform all the basic movements she asked of him. Then, to prove he was mobile, he covered a good distance with a walker and handled going up and down the practice steps.

Swing’s surgeon, Dr. Matthew Bullock of Salisbury Orthopaedics, made sure a therapist and nurse were waiting for Swing in the driveway of his Lexington home when he arrived that afternoon. They helped Swing inside, and made sure he and his wife knew what to expect, how to recognize any post-operative problems and how to manage pain.

Swing also knew Dr. Bullock was always just a telephone call or text message away and that he essentially had an open line of communication to his healthcare team.

WELLNESS



“If they’re a good candidate and all, I sure would recommend it. I think you feel more comfortable (being at home). I think it aids in the healing process, too.”

— *Randy Tysinger, on having a same-day knee replacement*

So began Swing’s recovery in the familiar surroundings of his home. Unlike Swing, most knee- and hip-replacement patients spend an average of two to three nights in the hospital.

Swing’s was the first “same-day” knee replacement Bullock had performed.

“He wanted to do it, and I wanted to do it, and everything went the way we wanted,” Swing says today over the telephone during a sales trip to Florida. “I was tickled I was the first.”

■ ■ ■

Bullock is one of the few surgeons in North Carolina performing same-day knee replacements and the only one affiliated with Wake Forest Baptist Health. A couple of his colleagues at Wake Forest Baptist are doing same-day hip replacements.

Bullock says medical centers in bigger cities have increasingly gone to same-day knee replacements, and he thinks the procedure will become more prevalent in years to come. The economic pressure to make joint replacements less expensive and a changing insurance reimbursement landscape could have something to do with that.

“We’re ahead of the curve,” Bullock says of offering the same-day option. “We’re riding the wave that’s ahead of the big wave.”

Bullock stresses the same-day approach isn’t for everyone, and a lot of screening goes into the process. As a surgeon, he wants a healthy, highly motivated individual. Candidates cannot be dealing, for example, with diabetes or heart issues. Bullock also prefers a younger person, someone in their 50s to mid 60s. It’s equally important for the prospective patient to have a good support system at home.

The advantages include a reduced hospital stay, less of a chance for hospital-borne infections and the recovery benefits of being at home. Bullock thinks patients not only go through a physical recovery but a mental one as well.

Being at home at the start of what usually is a three-month recovery is a bonus. Patients tend to fold faster into their normal routines.

The risks — and this is another reason why not everybody is meant for going home the

same day as the surgery — include the possibility of having post-surgical complications at home and not in the hospital.

You could be miles and precious time away from the hospital vs. just steps away from your floor's nursing station.

Pain management also can be more difficult at home.

Bullock says the only reasons healthy knee-replacement patients with no complications stay two or three nights in the hospital are to receive antibiotics, pain medicine, initial therapy and education.

These are all accomplished with the same-day approach but at an accelerated pace. It takes the concentrated coordination of the anesthesiologist, surgeon, therapist, nurses and social worker.

“Communication is the key,” Bullock says, describing how his work as a surgeon is the same but there's a lot more groundwork laid before the operation and after-



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WELLNESS

ward.

Bullock and the hospital do not consider the same-day knee replacements as outpatient surgery. “The patient is treated as an inpatient,” Bullock says. He or she just happens to be that inpatient at home.



Four weeks after his same-day knee replacement surgery — the second one performed by Bullock — Randy Tysinger was mowing the lawn.

“I’m getting the flexibility back in my knee, and I can straighten it again,” Tysinger says. “I couldn’t ask for a better surgeon, and I couldn’t have asked for a better experience.”

Bullock viewed Tysinger as another perfect candidate for the same-day surgery. He was healthy, not overweight and motivated. Tysinger, who was 61 when the surgery took place, says he has been a serious runner for the past eight years and a cyclist since the early 1980s.

“I’ve always been a very active person,” he says. “I wanted to get back to that again. I think that was one of the driving forces that helped in my recovery.”

The day of the surgery, which occurred in



the morning, Tysinger was home by 4 p.m. Again, Bullock arranged for a physical therapist to help him get into the house and find a comfortable spot.

The hardest part was some of the pain he experienced at home the night of the surgery when the nerve blocks wore off, Tysinger says. But after he managed the discomfort, he was

grateful to be home with his wife, Rhonda.

“One thing about being at home is all I have to do is deal with my germs,” Tysinger says. “In the hospital, you have to deal with everyone else’s germs.”

Tysinger says his Blue Cross/Blue Shield insurance provider balked at first about paying for a same-day procedure. But it was Bullock



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who called him personally the next day to tell him it had been approved.

Tysinger doesn't plan to run again on his new left knee, but he will be biking soon, playing tennis and horsing around with his grandchildren. He waited for a while to return to his job with Shoaf Precast because of the heavy nature of the work.

The company makes concrete septic tanks. Tysinger drives a truck, delivers the tanks and sets them in their holes. Would he recommend the same-day route for other people requiring knee replacements?

"If they're a good candidate and all, I sure would recommend it," Tysinger says. "I think you feel more comfortable (being at home). I think it aids in the healing process, too."

An interesting side note to Bullock's first two same-day knee replacement surgeries was that Swing and Tysinger were childhood friends. "Eddie and I were Boy Scouts together," Tysinger says.

At home, Swing has a full basement that includes an office and shop. He's up and down the steps to the basement 10 to 15 times a day on the weekends. His knees are coping with that pretty well. As part of more routine therapy for his left knee, he rides a recumbent bicycle.

Swing says he has told several people they should see Bullock and his team and discuss the same-day approach for their knee replacement surgery.

"They do a nice job," Swing says. "I can't say enough nice things about them." 



Randy Tysinger, second from right, prepares to leave Lexington Memorial Hospital for home the same day he underwent surgery for a total left knee replacement. He's standing with Dr. Matthew Bullock, nurse Lauren Beam and wife Rhonda. — Photo courtesy of Dr. Matthew Bullock

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Jody Blackwell and his wife, Maggie, recently acquired the former Second Presbyterian Church building on Ridge Avenue. The building was considered for demolition, but the Blackwells decided to purchase the church to renovate it and turn it into a music hall.

Welcome to Beacon Hall

Blackwells are transforming 1913 church into music venue — and more.

Written by JESSICA COATES | *Photography by* JON C. LAKEY



Jody Blackwell feels the vibrations on the stage coming from a Bose speaker.

“I want you to lay your hand on that,” Jody Blackwell said, gesturing toward a wooden molding on the church wall.

Just beneath it — on the church’s carpeted, semi-circular stage — a Bose speaker emitted a beautiful, orchestral melody.

Through outstretched fingers, you could feel the vibrations coming from the 104-year-old wood. They were subtle but powerful, like echoes from long ago.

“Imagine you’re deaf,” he said, his face earnest. “All of this wood is vibrating like a musical instrument.”

When the structure is complete, the building’s main function will be to rever-

berate sounds.

That’s because Jody and his wife, Maggie, are planning to turn this church — located at 121 Ridge Ave., just behind Mean Mug Coffee — into a music venue.

“Jody has a friend who did acoustics for James Taylor for several years and when he walked in, he said, ‘People will want to record here,’” Maggie said.

Maggie said that the venue, which will be named Beacon Hall, will feature music and musicians from every genre.

But that’s not all the building will have.

“We want to have a very simple reading center for small kids before they get to kindergarten, just where kids can understand their ABC’s and 123’s,” Jody said. “It’s that simple.”

That simple and also that difficult. The Blackwells are in the process of applying for 501(c)(3) status for the nonprofit — also to be called Beacon Hall — that will operate in conjunction with the music venue and focus on programs like the reading center.

The Blackwells are also thinking that the venue could have music lessons for disadvantaged youth and could potentially provide another home for the Salisbury Symphony strings programs.

But Jody and Maggie said they are trying not to overcommit themselves.

“You know, you can just keep looking at a building like that and saying, ‘Oh, it

REMINISCE



Maggie and Jody Blackwell stand in the middle of what will become the Beacon Hall music venue.

could be this, oh man, we could do this,” Jody said. “I mean, we’ve had it bombarded to us on ideas that you can do here.”

“But to succeed we have to narrow the focus,” Maggie said.

So far, the couple’s primary focus has been refurbishing the building, taking care to ensure its historic qualities are preserved.

“You know, this church started in 1913 and you think about all of the Sunday morning services, all the weddings, all the funerals, all the special events, all the summer picnics that’s gone on in here ... and I feel honored to get the chance to carry it to the next level, for whatever it is,” Jody said. “And we’re going to make sure that we do it right.”

■ ■ ■

Before he ever thought of creating a music venue, Jody Blackwell was dreaming of purchasing the Ridge Avenue church.

“It’s such a piece of this neighborhood, even though it’s been abandoned for a couple of years. Everyone’s looked at it and said, ‘What a great building,’” Jody said. “And we were actually looking at some other property here in the area and I remember, I’d always tell Margaret, whenever we’d be looking at it I’d say, ‘This is pretty good, but right over there’s the buy.’”

The Blackwells had already known a little about the building before they even considered buying it. One of their neighbors, Vanda Crowell, had spent her entire life in the church — previously known as Second Presbyterian Church — before she passed away in 2016.

“What’s funny,” Maggie said, “First Presbyterian Church is less than a mile down the road, right? On the corner of Fulton and Innes Street. This was built to be

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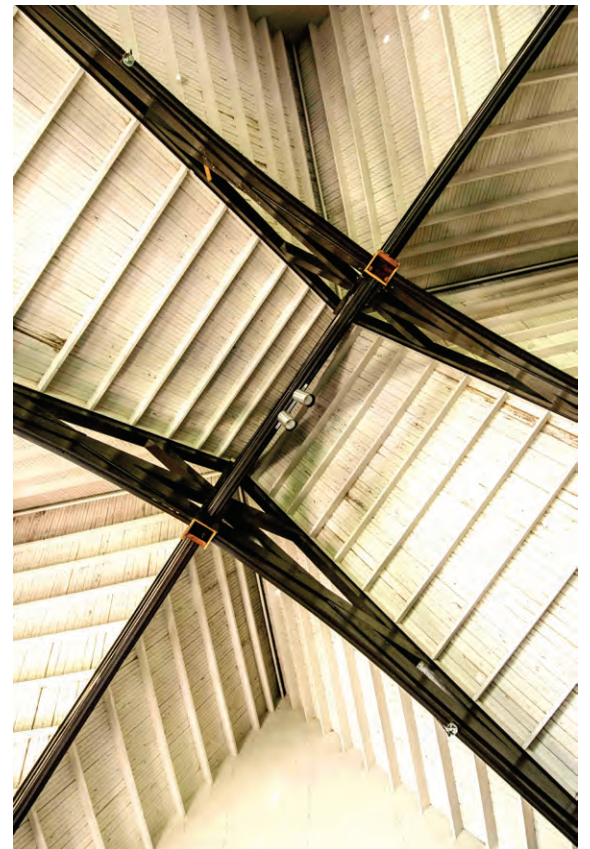
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Jody Blackwell examines a stained glass window that he found covered by drywall in the back of the building. Most of the church's windows were taken by Black Dog Salvage — of HGTV's 'Salvage Dawgs' fame in 2013.



Left: An aerial view of the back part of the church. Jody expects they will keep many of the original elements of the church, including the pews, although he said nothing is set in stone.



Right: A photo taken of the church's vaulted ceiling as it looks from the middle of the main sanctuary.

REMINISCE



Ed Clement, one of the founders of Historic Salisbury Foundation, is shown in the historic church. Maggie and Jody Blackwell invited Clement to see the church and wanted to make sure they had his blessing to renovate it.

Second Presbyterian because First Presbyterian is, quote, ‘so far away.’ But I guess everybody walked then.”



Jody and Maggie have noticed that walking is still a big activity in the Ridge Avenue neighborhood.

“There’s a lot of walkers here, and I’m already just building relationships with a lot of (them),” Jody said.

“We never fail to speak, ‘Hey, how’s it going today?’” Maggie added.

And, now that Jody is at the building nearly every day working, he says the neighbors are getting used to the idea of them being there.

“For the last five weeks, I’ve been up here about every day. And also I’ve gotten to know all of these people that walk up and down the street. And I think that they have come to realize that I’m here to stay. I mean, we talk now and they’ll go up and they’ll tell me not to get too hot in the morning. (They’ll say) ‘Good thing you’re out here early in the morning because it’s cooler, you got too hot yesterday evening.’”

But even as they build relationships with some neighbors, there are still always more to meet.

Devonte Woods, who lives just down the street from the church, dropped by on a warm Wednesday morning to see what the building’s new owners were up to.

“I think it’s a nice idea to bring to the community, just to do something with

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the old building that sat there for many years,” Woods said. “To turn that into something that can be useful for people.”

♦ ♦ ♦

As of mid-July, Maggie and Jody had only owned the building for five weeks.

That meant there still was — and is — a lot to figure out, said Jody, in terms of what the venue and the nonprofit will become.


“We’re in the process of getting our 501(c)(3) turned in,” he said. “Once we get that and really get our whole board of directors together and get a real focus and really start the process, I really think we’re going to transform the inside of that.”

Even though they are still in the early stages, Jody and Maggie have been overwhelmed by the amount of support that they’ve gotten from the community.

“Everybody in town has just said, ‘Whatever you need, please call,’” Maggie said.

“I’m overwhelmed with the, I think, when it really gets started, the support that’s going to happen,” Jody said.

At the end of the day, Jody just wants the building to be a gift he and Maggie give back to the community.

“I want this to be sustaining,” Jody said. “Something that when we’re gone, it’s still going.” 

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1 'Dixie Swim Club'
Aug. 31-Sept. 2: Lee Street theatre
 — 7:30 p.m. This show is about five unforgettable women who 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. As their lives unfold, they increasingly rely on one another, taking this comedy in a poignant and surprising direction. For information about tickets, go to leestreet.org or call 704-310-5507.

1 United Way Sunset Run 5k
Sept. 1: Rowan Public Library — 8 p.m.
 Proceeds benefit Rowan County United Way. Go to salisburyrowanrunners.org for more information.

2 Joe Hall Memorial Breakfast
Sept. 2: Lions' Den, Cemetery Street, Cleveland — 7-10 a.m. Money raised funds two scholarships for West Rowan High School Seniors. For more information: clevelandlions@hughes.net, 704-278-0974, e-club-house.org/sites/clevelandnc/.

2 Music at the Mill
Sept. 2: Main Street, China Grove — 7-9 p.m. Grab a bite to eat and shop downtown on Main Street, then listen to music under the cafe lights at the China Grove Roller Mill. For more information: 704-857-2466.

6 Brown Bag Lunch Jam
Sept. 6: Eastern Gateway Park — Free outdoor concert series at Eastern Gateway Park in downtown Salisbury, noon-1:30 p.m. Four consecutive Wednesdays. The lunch also will be held Sept. 13, Sept. 20 and Sept. 27. For more information: www.salisburync.gov/play.

8 When Nature Inspires Art
Sept. 8: Rail Walk Studios and Gallery
 — Reception, 5:30-7:30 p.m. The gallery is located at 409 N. Lee St. For more information: sforthofer7@gmail.com, 704-469-2781, railwalkstudiosandgallery.com.

9 We Will Raq You VII
Sept. 9: Kannapolis, 401 Laureate Way — 8 p.m.-10 p.m. Coming to Kannapolis for the first time. \$15. Combines pop, rock, hip-hop, and heavy metal music with cabaret, tribal, fusion and theatrical belly dance. Go to



Kathy and Russ Stevens enjoy roasted corn from the West Rowan FFA booth during last year's Rowan County Fair. This year's fair is Sept. 15-23. — Photo by Jon C. Lakey

September 2017

Upcoming events in the Salisbury-Rowan area

ryconcord.weebly.com/tickets.html for more information.

9 Denton Street Festival
Sept. 9: Harrison Park, Denton — 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Food, local crafts and artists, children's games and slides. 336-859-4231.

9 Salisbury Sip Festival
Sept. 9: Downtown Salisbury — Downtown Salisbury's signature craft beer festival. Join in for a day filled with a variety of craft beer, great food and the best music. For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/498447037205685/>

9 Kannapolis Cruise-In
Sept. 9: Downtown Kannapolis — 1-7 p.m. The Kannapolis Cruise-In is an exciting event for car lovers of all ages and brings out hundreds of show cars each time.

15 Biker Blues BBQ Rally
Sept. 15: Tilley Harley-Davidson — 9 a.m. Open to the public, this seventh annual family-oriented event is sanctioned by the Kansas City Barbecue Society and brings together entertainment, motorcycle enthusiasts and barbecue competition. Teams from across North Carolina and other states to compete for the title of grand champion. Entertainment by Nantucket. Tilley Harley-Davidson is located at 653 Bendix Drive. Go to bikerbluesbbqrally.com, or contact gary.moss9@gmail.com, 704-202-8712.

15 Carolina Good Medicine Powwow
Sept. 15: Camp Cabarrus Campground — 4-10 p.m. Native American style arts and crafts. Bring blankets and chairs. Campground is located on 4827 Camp Cabarrus Drive, Kannapolis. For information: www.cabarruspowwow.webs.com.

15 Rowan County Fair
Sept. 15-23: Rowan County Fairgrounds — The weeklong festivities include rides, a petting zoo, livestock, food and exhibits. Go to <http://www.rowancountyfair.net/> for more information, or call 704-640-2326.

16 Germanfest
Sept. 16: Old Stone House — 9 a.m.-4 p.m. To commemorate the 500th Anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, Rowan Museum's Germanfest will be a daylong celebration of the German culture of eastern Rowan County. Volksmarch, a one-mile walk from the Old Stone House to Granite Lake Park, will start at 9 a.m. All ages can participate. Activities at Old Stone House begin at 10 a.m. Experience Colonial beer making, woodworking, candle making, baking, traditional music, and tours of the house. Local churches with German history will be on site sharing their connection to the Protestant Reformation. Enjoy the short nature trails leading to the creek and the Braun family cemetery. Admission: \$5 adults, \$3 students.

23 Gold Hill Founders' Day
Sept. 23: Gold Hill Village — 9 a.m.-6 p.m. 735 St. Stephens Church Road, Gold Hill. The day offers a parade, arts, crafts, Heritage Living Exhibits, gold panning, and Civil War Living History Encampment and Skirmish. All-day entertainment at the amphitheater hosted by the North Carolina Bluegrass Association. For more information: vivian@historicgoldhill.com, 704-267-0439, or historicgoldhill.com.

23 Stand Together Music Festival
Sept. 23: Main Street, China Grove — 2-10 p.m. Darrell Harwood and the Town of China Grove invite you to Stand Together to fight Cancer. Darrell Harwood, Red Dirt Revival, Too Much Sylvia, Carmen Tate and Soakin' Wet will provide entertainment. All proceeds go to the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. For more information: <https://www.facebook.com/events/417572628591524/>.

23 Silver Buckle Charity Ball
Sept. 23: Trinity Oaks — 5-9 p.m. This is a western-themed dinner with dancing and a silent auction to benefit Saving Grace Farm. There will be a live country band, silent auction, catered steak dinner and information

about the organization. This event will be hosted by Trinity Oaks and held in its Special Events Room on the second floor of the main building off Klumac Road. For more information: janna@savinggracefarm.com, 704-209-6577, savinggracefarm.com.

23 Martin Luther's Quincentennial
Sept. 23: St. John's Lutheran Church — 7 p.m. Salisbury Symphony Orchestra, St. John's Choirs, and Symphony Chorus present music based on "A Mighty Fortress" and Mendelssohn's Symphony No. 5 "Reformation." St. John's Lutheran Church, is located on 200 W. Innes St. For more information: salisbury_symphony.org.

26 Carolina Artists September Show
Sept. 26-30: Salisbury Civic Center — Carolina Artists presents its September show. Public view is open 10 a.m.-8 p.m, and a reception is scheduled for Sept. 28 at 7 p.m. The show includes oils, acrylics, watercolor, photography, mixed media, collage and drawing.

28 'Mothers and Sons'
Sept. 28-30, Oct. 5-7: Lee Street theatre — 7:30 p.m. The show portrays a woman who pays an unexpected visit to the New York apartment of her late son's partner, who is now married to another man and has

a young son. Challenged to face how society has changed around her, generations collide as she revisits the past and begins to see the life her son might have led. For ticket information: leestreet.org or call 704-310-5507.

29 Day Out with Thomas
Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Oct. 6-8: N.C. Transportation Museum — "Day Out With Thomas" provides an opportunity for kids to take a ride with their favorite tank engine, Thomas, and his little green friend, Percy. Visitors can meet the railway controller Sir Topham Hatt and have fun in Imagination Station. For more information: <http://www.nctrans.org/Events/Day-Out-With-Thomas-2017/FAQ.aspx> or call 704-636-2889.

30 Star Party
Sept. 30: 6-9 p.m. Fall National Astronomy Day star party with Astronomical Society of Rowan. Information at www.astrow-an.org.

30 Music at the Mural
Sept. 30: Salisbury Mural — 8 p.m. Bring your lawn chair and enjoy live music by Knaughty Pine. This is a free concert hosted by Salisbury Parks and Recreation at the mural on West Fisher Street, directly across from Go Burrito! For more information: www.salisburync.gov/PLAY



Thomas the Train stops by the N.C. Transportation Museum during last year's 'Day Out with Thomas' event. Thomas rolls into town again on Sept. 29. — Photo by Wayne Hinshaw.



Crowds gathered to watch the Fourth of July parade in Faith.

Faith Fourth parade

Spectators lined the streets of Faith many rows deep once again this year for the town's Fourth of July Parade, a Rowan County tradition celebrating its 71st year. Beyond the parade, Faith residents and visitors to the town could enjoy the Faith Idol competition, the weeklong amusements and food, a hot dog-eating contest, beauty queens and fireworks.

— Photos by Wayne Hinshaw

The N.C. Society of the Sons of the American Revolution from Catawba Valley Chapter.



Above: Daniel Wiles, 8, wears his flag on his glasses. Right: A unit dressed in WWII uniforms and driving WWII vehicles rolls along in the parade.





Above: A WWII military unit. Right: Veterans wave to the crowd from their trailer.



Nikki Austin and brother Nelson toss candy from a tractor.



Wes and 2-year-old daughter Drew Lyles ride on a tractor.



The A&L Mini Mart Radio Flyer float.



Above: A Scottish bagpipe unit makes its way along the parade route. Right: A crowd finds some shade under a tree.





Above: Jef Lambdin does tricks with blocks. Right: Ella McNeely, 6.



China Grove Farmers Day

Farmers Day 2017 again attracted thousands to downtown China Grove. They browsed around 149 different booths and enjoyed food, drink and live entertainment. Attractions included a chainsaw carver, antique tractors, a milking booth, a late 1800s stagecoach, a large kids zone and misting tents to help visitors beat the heat.

— Photos by Kristi Craven



Mike Gecewicz sells honey.



Right: Nathaniel Howell rides off the stage in a wagon in the Little Mr./Miss Farmers Day pageant in the 0-2 age category.



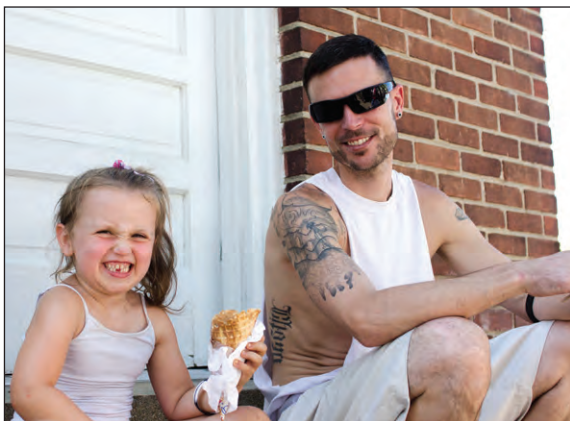
Left: Kids play with bubbles blown by Steve Langley.



Above: Jeremy Sutterlin, 3, chases after bubbles. Right: All the judges and winners of the Mr./Miss Farmers Day Pageant.



Above: Edith Boston eats ice-cream. Right: Solaire Klees, front, and McKinze Grace Sowell, back, wait in line to be called to the stage during the Little Mr./Miss Farmers Day Pageant in the 3-5 age category.



Above: Kaitlyn Ortagus, 4, left, and Russel Ortagus sit on a step and eat ice-cream. Right: Steve Langley makes a giant bubble in his Soap Bubble Circus.



From left: Jeff Brotherton, Donna Brotherton and Gayn Bast.



Clockwise from above: 'Delighted Tobehere' served as MC at the festival; Chloe Cassidy dances on Fisher Street; Entertainer E.M. Shaun dances for the crowd; Cierra Nicole, from Salisbury; Patti O'Furniture from Charleston, S.C., entertains the crowd.



Salisbury PrideFest

The seventh annual Salisbury Pride celebration took place in downtown Salisbury on June 24. The celebration featured Salisbury's gay and straight business community; national supporting businesses; non-profit organizations; service agencies for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning people; and civic groups and churches. The celebration of diversity and inclusion was open to everyone.

— Photos by Wayne Hinshaw



Kenno and his court

A large gathering of friends and family assembled June 4 to honor Kenneth “Kenno” Shoaf on his retirement after 38 years with the Salisbury branch of the YMCA. Mayor Karen Alexander proclaimed it “Kenno Shoaf Day” in the city, and the gymnasium floor at the J.F. Hurley Y was officially designated as “Kenno’s Court.”

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Kenno Shoaf poses with many of his adult family members and friends: Jimmy Shoaf III, Jennifer Shoaf, Donnie Shoaf, June Shoaf, Heath Hager, Tony Hager, Kay Hager, Jason Barber, Jimmy Shoaf Jr., Jean Shoaf, Harold Watson and Tonya Barber.



Left: Bailey Bourn, Lilly Hewett and Melissa Mangum. Middle: Sandy Flowers-Steele and Debbie Martin. Right: Cristyan Cabrera, Ester Marsh and Andrew Burgess.



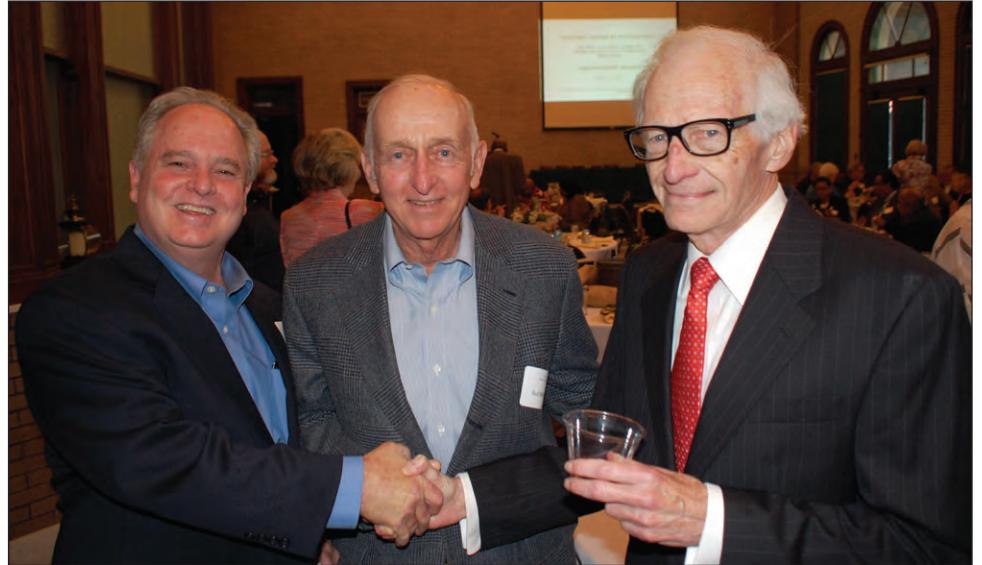
Kenno Shoaf gathers with his great nephews and nieces, including Chase Shoaf, Eden Hager, McKenzie Shoaf, Shane Barber, Kaitlyn Shoaf, Paige Barber and Ben Hager.

Amanda Hesse, Alan Lambert, Jamie Morgan and Richard Reinholz



Lloyd Jones, Tammy Swicegood and Kenny Seagle





Preservation Awards

Historic Salisbury Foundation held its 2017 Preservation Awards dinner at the Salisbury Station and recognized community, commercial, private residential, neighborhood revitalization, education and restoration projects. Many HSF volunteers also were honored.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Clockwise from top: Joe Morris, Bud Mickle and Ed Clement; Alyssa Nelson and Starla Rogers; HSF Executive Director Karen Hobson and J.R. Ayash; Sandy and James Bevels; Jill Stockton and Aimee Hewitt; Elizabeth Cole and David Frame; Brad Hartle and Mike Butler are with Alfred C. Wilson & Co. Builders; HSF board vice president Steve Cobb, left, with Rich and Lindsay Dietrich. Rich was the Doug Black Volunteer of the Year for HSF; Steve and Sherry Beck won a preservation award for their renovation of the Leo Wallace Sr. House at 301 W. Fisher St.





Above: New Executive Director James Harvey speaks with Ed Brown. Below: Host Charlie Bernheim talks with Rick Travis and Jean McCoy.



Babe Nobles talks with Maestro David Hagy.



Symphony party

As chairman of the Salisbury Symphony's 50th anniversary celebration committee, Charlie Bernheim made a special effort in fundraising this season — not only to increase current levels of giving, but to add donors as well. In June, Charlie and his wife, Rachel, hosted a party at their Fulton Street home in appreciation to all high-level donors. It was an evening of good conversation, good food and, of course, good music.

— Photos by Susan Shinn Turner



Above: Nicholas Zerweck pours a glass of wine for Buddy Farnan. Left: Deborah Messinger and Ott Pinkston. Right: Terry Peoples on the electric bass performs with pianist Marc Hoffman.



A new comfort zone

Salisbury's lure of Cheerwine, Hap's and good people were too hard to resist.

Admittedly, in the summer of 2008 when my husband, Rhodes, came home from work one day and said he received a call from “a Franco from Salisbury, North Carolina” regarding a new call, I had NO IDEA where Salisbury was.

Rhodes is a Lutheran pastor and we were very comfortable with our three school-aged kids and dog living and working in the Northern Shenandoah Valley of Virginia — a beautiful place. I told Rhodes to feel free and go down to interview, but the kids and I were really fine where we were.

Before the interview, we checked out the church's website and quickly saw that it was a beautiful physical structure right in the middle of downtown. “Yikes,” I said. Our church in Winchester was out in the county, kind of tucked away nicely.

“You really think our ragtag group could fit into a church like that?” I asked Rhodes.

We'd have to get all new clothes.

So, off Rhodes went in his brand new suit to an interview at the big church in North Carolina. He came back and reported that the people were so nice, genuine, had hearts for the struggling world and, by the way, served vinegar-based barbecue and Cheerwine during the interview — they were just good people. So much so, that he had to take off his new tie.

“Cheerwine!” exclaimed one of the kids. “Where did they get that?” Rhodes quickly pointed out that Salisbury is the home of Cheerwine and the people that make it go to St. John's. The Peeler/Ritchie family — they are good people.

Wow, that's very impressive to a 12-year-old. Cheerwine, you see, had been a family favorite since our kids were very small and was a special treat each time we visited family in the Carolinas.

My father-in-law also chimed in: “Oh, yes!” he said, “We used to drive into the BIG city of Salisbury from Albemarle to go to Luther League activities at St. John's.”

Small, small world, really. He lived only six months after we moved here, but each time he visited, he reconnected with people he knew from his childhood — good people like Pat Epting, Nancy Bowden, Dot Smith and John Bumgarner.

As the call process continued for Rhodes

to become the new senior pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church, my kids quickly realized that Salisbury might possibly be their new home — a scary thought to leave the only town they had known.

On our next visit to Salisbury, this man named Franco and his wife, Brenda, took them to Hap's. Franco and Brenda Goodman are good people — and they know the way to a middle school boy's heart is through his stomach. Nicely played, Goodmans.

Fast forward eight years. Two of our three children have graduated from Salisbury

High School and have moved on to college. Both had terrific experiences at Knox Middle and Salisbury High and would be the first to say that, although moving is hard, they are well-adjusted young men and happy to have “grown up” in a small southern town where people are kind, helpful and look out for one another.

They'd tell you that their experiences in the classroom, on the athletic field, in the band room

and traveling the country and world with their youth group provided for them a foundation to succeed.

Finally, they'd tell you that Salisbury is full of “good people,” and they'd be right. S

Krista Woolly is executive director of the Community Care Clinic in Salisbury.



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