

March 2016

# SALISBURY

the magazine

## Salisbury STEAK

A NEW TAKE

*Discover creative ways  
to serve up classic entrée*

## Friendly skies

*Rowan Airport sees  
plenty of action*

NASCAR ROYALTY  
*Donnie, Bobby Allison*

A WARM HEARTH  
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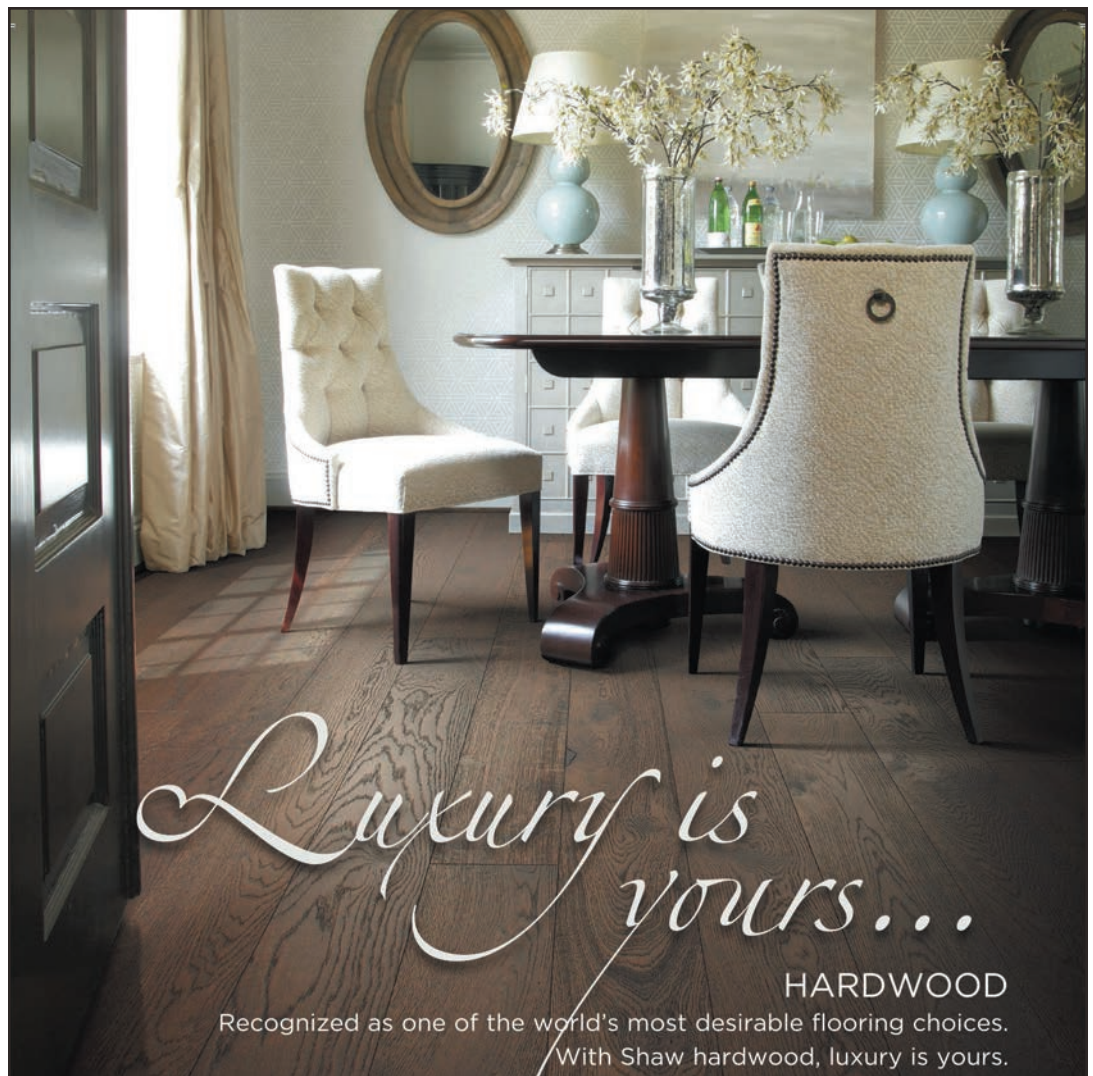
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Donnie, Bobby Allison

by **BEN WHITE**

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## Friendly skies

56 Over the years, the  
Rowan County  
Airport has changed  
significantly

by **JOSH BERGERON**

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### On this page

Rick Basco, from Charlotte, keeps his OneX experimental aircraft in a hangar at Rowan County Airport.

### On the cover

Chris Moore, chef at Emma's of Salisbury, takes a traditional approach to Salisbury steak — a beef patty covered with gravy and topped with lightly grilled onions.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey

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# Steak-ing out our place in history

I don't know about you, but my first exposure to Salisbury steak was when it was served to me as the entrée in one of those frozen TV dinners that seemed so pervasive — at least around my house — in the 1960s.

After the dinners had finished their required time in the oven, we pulled back the aluminum foil to reveal a compartmentalized buffet of ground beef and gravy, mashed potatoes and maybe a dessert like apple cobbler.

If you didn't give it a few minutes to cool down, you likely burned the roof of your mouth with the first bite of hamburger or potatoes. Man, those were the days.

It just didn't seem right for any magazine with "Salisbury" in its masthead to go too long before addressing Salisbury steak, especially given the oft-told legend that the name derives from our very town. In this issue, Deirdre Parker Smith straightens out the history on Salisbury steak before describing the fresh takes two local chefs and a caterer give this classic dish of ground beef, gravy and onions.

Which leads to a pet peeve of mine. Why hasn't a local restaurant ever "steaked" a claim to Salisbury steak and made itself the home of the original? Just leave the real debate to historians. With the right kind of marketing, an ambitious Salisbury restaurant could make itself a destination point — THE place for Salisbury steak.

Feel free to take this idea and run with it. No charge.

With the Easter holiday right around the corner, this issue of Salisbury the Magazine accompanied artist James Donaldson as he took a nostalgic look at some of the religious murals he painted in four different locations. For Donaldson, the journey helped put his whole artistic career in perspective.

If you ever wondered how legendary brothers Donnie and Bobby Allison — once members of racing's famed "Alabama Gang" — settled here, veteran NASCAR writer Ben White has the inside story. As we head into a new NASCAR season, you'll also want to read Donnie Allison's recounting of his wild 1979 Daytona 500 finish with Cale Yarborough.

Josh Bergeron and photographer Jon Lakey spent considerable time at the Rowan County Airport, and their report offers



insights into all that's happening at one of the most important pieces of Rowan's future. Likewise, Emily Ford explains the importance of Duke University's MURDOCK Study to the future of precision medicine, and we meet three Rowan Countians who are among the 12,000 people who have enrolled in the Kannapolis-based study so far.

Before winter exits completely, Elizabeth Cook writes about fireplaces and how they are still an important element of many people's homes. Our new "Rowan Originals" series continues by including a quick visit with Kaye Brown Hirst, executive director of the Rowan Museum. Our former "History" department, now called "Reminisce," tells the 1964 political connection between Salisburians Ben Martin and Mary Miller James.

There's a lot to digest, so, please, don't burn the roof of your mouth when diving in.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Wineka". The signature is stylized and cursive.

**Mark Wineka,**  
*Editor, Salisbury the Magazine*



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## ■ FEEDBACK



### THE WINTER ISSUE

**T**he local pets article (“Fur-ensic Science,” Winter issue) made my day. I love the cats.

And your magazine is the best. Came across a photo of one of my favorite professors when I was at Livingstone College. He is the Rev. William Turner. He and his family are the best. ... (Overall) the photos are stunning and clear.

— **Lillia Jane Steele**  
*via Facebook*

This is the most beautiful and informative magazine! The photography is so enticing. I could just dive right into that coconut cake in the Holiday issue. The Santa cover reminds me of the Victorian Spirit of Christmas Present, as described by Dickens.

— **Kathy Stevens**  
*via Facebook*

Love this magazine! Be sure to check out Salisbury the Magazine on Facebook and pick up a copy at the Salisbury Post! Beautiful and informative magazine covering Salisbury/Rowan County!

— **Vivian Pennington Hopkins**  
*Gold Hill*

**Correction:** An article in the Winter 2015-2016 edition of Salisbury the Magazine stated that Bread Riot was responsible for a local farm school. That was an incorrect statement. The local farm school is run by the Cooperative Extension Office.

### TALK TO US

Salisbury the Magazine welcomes your comments. Email Editor Mark Wineka at [mark.wineka@salisburythemagazine.com](mailto:mark.wineka@salisburythemagazine.com), or write to Salisbury the Magazine, P.O. Box 4639, Salisbury, NC 28145. Letters chosen for publication may be edited for length and clarity. Comments on Salisbury the Magazine’s Facebook page also are welcome.

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The North Carolina mountains are known for beautiful waterfalls that mesmerize photographers armed with tripods to draw out their shutter speeds and render the crashing water into a milky smooth texture. When the conditions are right, Rowan County can offer a slight glimpse into the same effect. Large rocks that line the ditches all across Rowan County become very short waterfalls when several inches of rain falls. The natural shape of the rocks and flowing cascade stand in sharp contrast to the man-made circular opening to a culvert that passes under a dirt road off Bringle Ferry Road.

# Poignance, profiteers & punches to the heart

I'm completely intrigued by the descriptions and reviews of "Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of a Fist," by Sunil Yapa. It has nothing to do with anatomy, and much to do with emotion.

It all takes place in one afternoon, in November 1999 at the protests of the meeting of the World Trade Organization in Seattle. Perhaps you forgot or never heard about the violent protests that erupted there. Yapa's character young Victor is caught up in what happens, as is his estranged father, the police chief. The author also tells the stories of two non-violent protestors, two police officers and a cool and elegant Sri Lankan financial minister who's trying to get out of the mess for a meeting with the president.

Reviewers say it's a tough read, but beautifully written, reminiscent of Colum McCann's "Let the Great World Spin."

The Washington Post calls it a "fantastic debut novel" and says Yapa's re-creation "arrives like a punch in the chest."

For something more introspective, Elizabeth Strout has a new book, "My



Name is Lucy Barton." If you didn't read "Olive Kitteridge" or "The Burgess Boys," both excellent, pick this one up. The San Francisco Chronicle writes, "Strout has a magnificent gift for humanizing characters," and that's exactly what makes her novels unforgettable.

This book is about Lucy Barton, recovering from what should have been a simple operation. Her mother, to whom she has not spoken for many years, comes to see her. Their time together reveals volumes about Lucy's life, from her troubled family to her love for her daughters and her hope

to become a writer.

The short book may be just the thing for these dark days, when poignance seems the right mood.

For serious non-fiction, I suggest "The Profiteers: Bechtel and the Men Who Built the World," by Sally Denton. Maybe you haven't heard of Bechtel, but you've heard of its projects — the Hoover Dam, the Channel Tunnel. It was the company that hauled away the wreckage of the World Trade Center and was hired to rebuild Iraq.

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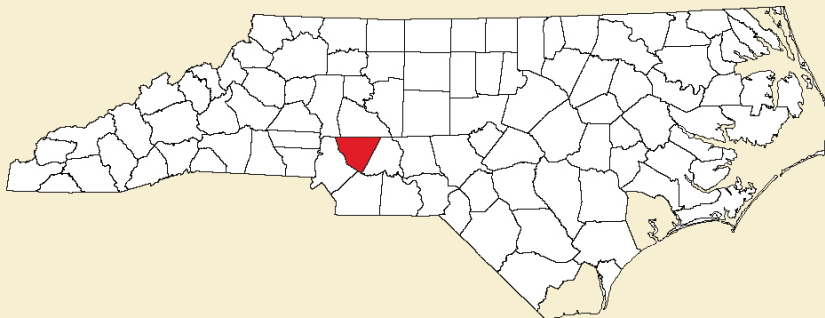
Kirkus Reviews calls the book taut and page-turning. Author Denton writes that the firm is "either a brilliant triumph or an iconic symbol of grotesque capitalism."

Denton is an investigative journalist with a number of nonfiction works to her credit, including "The Plots Against the President" and "The Money and the Power." S

*Among her other jobs with the newspaper, Deirdre Parker Smith is book editor of the Salisbury Post.*

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Kaye Brown Hirst, executive director of Rowan Museum Inc., at the German Christmas Celebration at the Old Stone House. Photo by Jon C. Lakey.

# Historical figure

Rowan Museum Executive Director  
Kaye Brown Hirst never seems to stop

**K**aye Brown Hirst has become as synonymous with Rowan Museum Inc. as Babe Ruth with the Yankees or Andy Griffith with Mayberry.

For more than 19 years, Hirst has served as the enthusiastic executive director of Rowan Museum, headquartered in the 1854 county courthouse building at 202 N. Main St., Salisbury. But you're just as likely to see her in 18th century attire stirring pots over open fires at the Old Stone House in Granite Quarry.

Her museum duties are plenty. She's responsible for day-to-day operations, managing three historical sites, payroll,

a newsletter, membership, public relations, grant writing, collections management, exhibits and educational programs, including some of the best summer history camps in the state.

She has a knack for inspiring her staff, board members and volunteers and has always been a go-to person for reporters' questions on local history.

A Rowan County native and graduate of East Rowan High School, Hirst earned her bachelor's degree from Lenoir-Rhyne and a master's degree from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Most people don't know she was once executive director of the United Arts Council, a former Health Department worker and a vice president and controller for Pioneer Manufacturing from 1986-1996.

Among her multitude of community leadership roles, Hirst has been heavily involved with the Tar Heel Girls State Commission for 28 years and was the four-year chairperson of Rowan 250 Fest.

Hirst has announced she will be retiring from Rowan Museum Inc., probably in May or June, but she intends to handle all of the museum's special events at least for a year. She says it's "hard to walk away cold turkey."

Salisbury the Magazine recently caught up with this Rowan Original:

**Q. What's one thing people probably don't know about you?**

That I have a degree in theatre administration in scene and costume design and construction. Also, that I sew very well. I make lots of costumes for the Old Stone House. I also love doing 1,000- or 2,000-piece jigsaw puzzles. It's mindless and very relaxing, late at night or early in the

morning. And I do a lot of floral arranging, especially in the warm season from my garden. I keep Organ Lutheran Church in altar flowers.

**Q. Your best or one of your favorite childhood memories?**

Just playing outside and growing up on a nursery. Playing in the dirt — piles of dirt and sand, always — hence the reason I have a great green thumb.

**Q. Who do you consider one of your greatest mentors or influences and why?**

I learned a lot from Susan Waller, former director of the museum. And I attended a lot of seminars and workshops and networked with a lot of other museum directors after I took the job.

**Q. What's a big misconception about Rowan Museum and what it is?**

That we are county-owned and that everything should be free. We actually don't charge for admission. We just have a contribution box if visitors would like to drop something in it. (Because the museum) is a private, nonprofit, I am always writing grants and asking for money.

**Q. What's your personal pet peeve?**

Folks trashing the community, the museum yard and garden, the roads and highways. It irritates me greatly!

**Q. What's one of the more recent books you've read, and what did you think of it?**

Not a recent book, but I got into a discussion recently with some folks at church about the building of all the great cathedrals in Europe in early centuries and how it was accomplished, and I advised them to read "Pillars of the Earth" by Ken Follett. Recently, I have read Grisham, Coben, Childs, Sparks and others. I love to read. I always worried I would marry someone who did not like to read. Shouldn't have worried about that. Ed's just like me when it comes to reading.


**Q. What is a TV show or movie you would recommend to someone?**

I watch the news — CBS and WBTV. Occasionally, I pick up "Jeopardy" and "Wheel of Fortune." And we watch the later shows — "Law & Order" and "CSI" shows, for example. Mostly I read.

**Q. Two foods that are always in your fridge or pantry?**

Caffeine-free Diet Mountain Dew and fresh veggies. I love to garden.

**Q. What's the best advice you can give a young person today?**

Go as far as you can with your education and stay involved or get involved by volunteering in the community. Get some great experience and career direction that way. 



Salisbury artist James Donaldson revisited some of his murals that he painted for several churches and Livingstone College. Donaldson stands next to the mural at Soldiers Memorial AME Zion Church in Salisbury. Some of the murals Donaldson had not seen for decades.



# Divine inspiration

An artist revisits places where he gave honor to God

Written by MARK WINEKA | Photography by JON C. LAKEY

James Donaldson hasn't seen his painting at New Zion Missionary Baptist Church for more than 13 years. As he strolls into the sanctuary, his eyes immediately are drawn to the back wall above the baptismal font.

"Wow, wow," Donaldson says. "Look at that. That's amazing. I'm moved by it because I didn't do that — that is divine-inspired. I was just a vessel."

Back in 2002, the church elders asked Donaldson to paint John's baptism of Jesus. They said they wanted the painting to include a sense of the Holy Spirit. Donaldson went home, sketched out his scene in charcoals and brought it back to the elders for inspection.

"I wanted something that said 'peace' when people came into the church,"



Donaldson painted four scenes depicting the life of Christ at the W.J. Walls Heritage Hall on the Livingstone College campus in 1970.

Donaldson says, and the elders liked what they saw.

Over the weeks to come, Donaldson strived for luminosity, underpainting his scene in middle tones and grays before applying the final bright colors in acrylic. Looking at it now, Donaldson likes the feeling of simplicity and the motion in the painting. He also senses a

beckoning to it, a call.

"When something is divinely inspired, it's better, because the Muse just guides the artist," Donaldson says. "After you're done, you ask yourself, 'Where does this come from?'"

Donaldson, a well-known Salisbury artist for more than 40 years, recently went on a nostalgic trip — one in which

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Above: A younger Donaldson is captured in a black and white framed photograph on top of the television in his living room at his Salisbury home. Opposite: Donaldson stands in the choir loft in front of his painting at New Zion Missionary Baptist Church.

he didn't have to travel too far. He visited four different places in which he had painted religious murals. The locations included New Zion Missionary Baptist off Dunn's Mountain Road, Antioch Missionary Baptist Church in Granite Quarry, Soldiers Memorial AME Zion Church in Salisbury and Livingstone College's Heritage Hall, also known as the Bishop W.J. Walls Center.

At each stop, the 71-year-old Donaldson, a retired public school teacher, displays a sense of wonderment, as though painting on these walls had been a kind of out-of-body experience for him.

"I'm highly religious," Donaldson says. "I trust in God. It is giving honor to him. That's where I get my strength from every day."

The Christian Heritage Room at Livingstone's W.J. Walls Center contains four different snapshot-type scenes on one wall: Joseph and Mary with baby Jesus, Judas' betrayal of Jesus, Jesus carrying the cross and Jesus resurrected.

Donaldson notes how he gave Judas a sense of smallness because "he had to have a small mind." Donaldson also pressed his Judas figure against Jesus, trying to show him acting like a friend before the ultimate betrayal.

Donaldson is a 1966 graduate of Livingstone, and he painted these scenes on the Christian Heritage Room wall when the building opened in 1970. Heritage Hall is empty and closed these days, and Donaldson had to find a college official with a key to let him in.

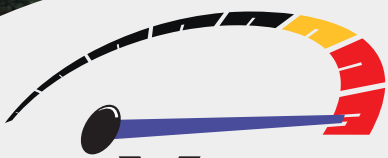
It didn't dampen his enthusiasm in seeing these oil paintings again. They allow him to think back to the man and artist he was 45 years ago and how he has changed since then.

"They say you subconsciously paint into pictures people



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■ THE ARTS



Donaldson holds up one of his more recent paintings.

you know,” Donaldson says, looking back at the wall. “I like the expressions, the seriousness of it.”

Maybe it’s fitting that the first piece of art Donaldson ever sold was a Madonna and child he had painted to hang on his apartment door for Christmas. A woman drove by, saw it, knocked on the door and asked if she could buy the painting.

Acceptance is always the biggest thing for an artist, and it’s something Donaldson has always believed.

“I haven’t made myself an artist — people have,” he says. “I’m just James Donaldson, that’s all.”

In 1982, Donaldson painted

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his first baptismal mural — this one for Antioch Baptist, and again it was John's baptism of Jesus.

"It's strange how my style comes through all the murals," Donaldson said, seeing this much larger mural for the first time in 30-plus years. "It's a revelation for me to see the work I did after all these years. I really, really appreciate it, because if I did it today, it would be completely different."

Donaldson says his art is more linear now, simpler and vibrant. "There's nothing linear about this at all," he says.

During his visit to Antioch with the Rev. Rickey Johnson, Willie Jackson, chairman of the deacon board, walks in, and he remembers clearly when Donaldson was painting the mural in 1982.

"I sat back here, watching," Jackson said, motioning to a pew. "It came out good."

Donaldson's mural at Soldiers Memorial AME Zion, painted in the overflow room right behind the sanctuary in 2005, tried to incorporate the ideas of reclamation, renewal and restoration — three strong concepts as Christians head toward the Easter holiday.


Donaldson included portrayals of the family unit, historical elements of slavery, a couple of important members of the congregation, depictions of the needy and elderly, cracks in a brick foundation, a diabolical figure and a beckoning Christ.

"I have never put this much in a mural before," Donaldson says.

The Rev. Dr. David McLean, pastor of Soldiers Memorial, says a Christian symbols class from Hood Theological Seminary comes every semester to study and talk about Donaldson's painting.

Donaldson inspects it closely and can't help but notice it doesn't have as much luminosity as his earlier works.

"It was a joy for me to go back and connect with people I haven't seen in years," Donaldson says after his nostalgic journey is complete. He also reconnected with his former self, getting a glimpse of the man and artist he used to be, embracing the sense he will continue to grow and change.

"Well," he says, "that's the way I was at the moment — and that's a good thing." 

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■ FOOD

# Salisbury steak

*A new take*

Local chefs take a walk on the wild side with classic entrée

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



Morgan Ridge Vineyards & Brewhouse Chef Jason Nain takes the challenge to come up with a new take on Salisbury Steak. Nain fills a dish with his meatball-style Salisbury steak, perfect for watching sporting events.

# W

Who invented Salisbury steak? And what's in it, besides hamburger?

Well, we asked that question, then we asked some local chefs to come up with their own version of Salisbury steak.

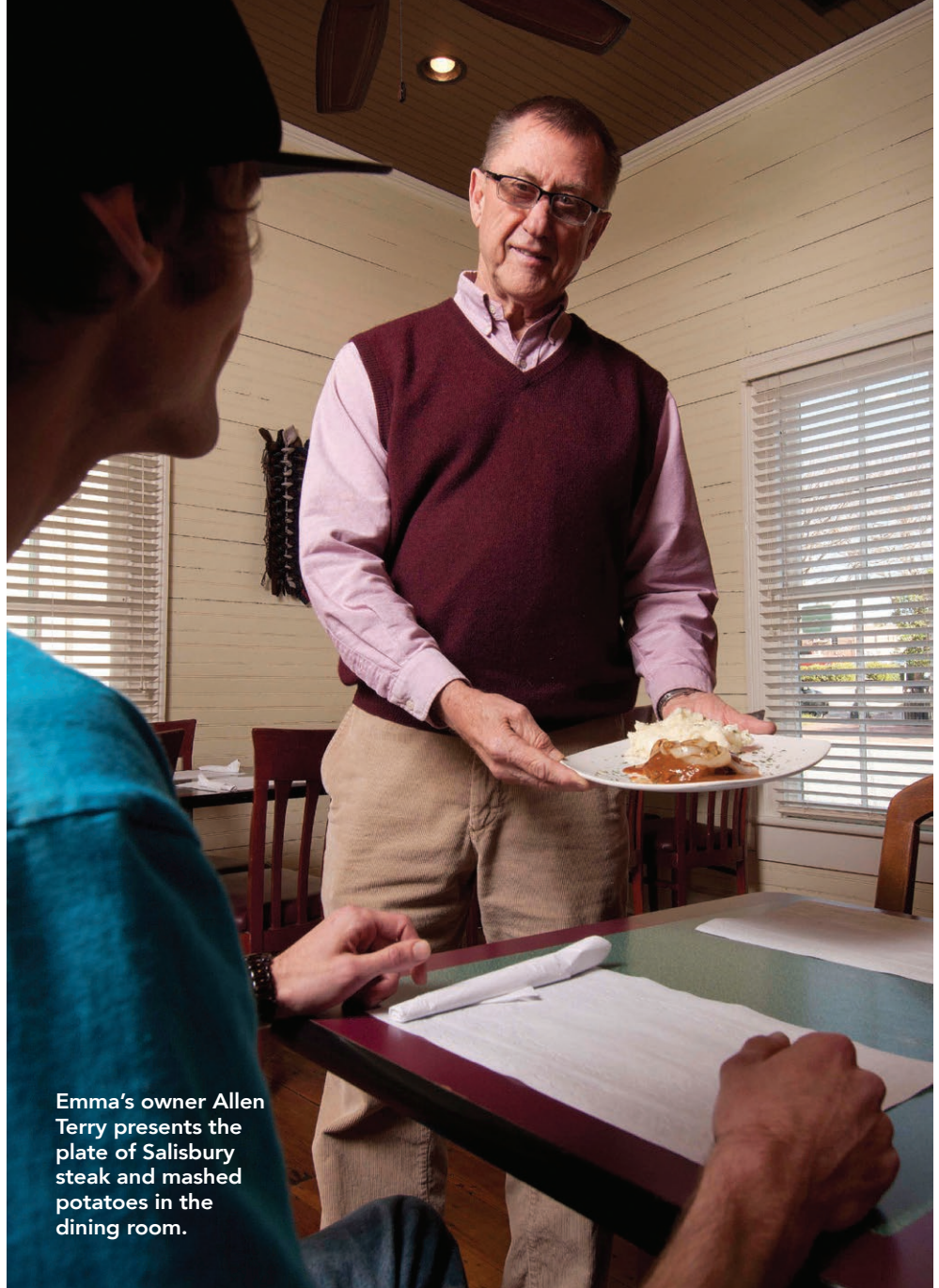
Several plates and numerous pounds later, we have the nearly definitive, almost authentic answers.

Research shows the term was first recorded in 1897, but came into full usage during World War I when Americans wanted a different name for hamburger, a German word. Remember freedom fries?

Dr. J.H. Salisbury, 1823-1905, was born in New York, not Salisbury, England, as some stories claim. He believed vegetables and starchy food created poisonous substances in the digestive system and were responsible for disease. He created Salisbury steak for his patients, whom he urged to eat more beef. He used it as a remedy for Union soldiers suffering diarrhea during the Civil War. His recipe was minced (chopped) beef, onions, salt and pepper.

Over time, Salisbury, N.C., has claimed the dish as its own, though it's not served regularly anywhere these days.

The local legend sounded great: On the train which traveled regularly between Asheville and Salisbury, a passenger ordered a steak. But the chef had none, so he created a substitute with chopped beef, bread crumbs and tomato sauce (some legends



Emma's owner Allen Terry presents the plate of Salisbury steak and mashed potatoes in the dining room.

add onions). When the passenger liked the dish, he asked what it was called. The chef looked out the window and saw the sign for Salisbury. Voila!

Great story, and Salisburians through the decades have tried to make it true. In 1983, the former White Packing Co. asked for exclusive rights to the name, but the U.S. Department of Agriculture declined.

Now, we're reinventing it all over again and trying to stick to the origins of the dish.

Two chefs and a well-known caterer

shared their recipes. One nods to tradition, but takes a different spin, one improves on tradition and the other created her own twist, while still keeping it a comfort food.

## SALISBURY STEAKBALLS

Chef Jason Nain at Morgan Ridge Brewhouse and Vineyard enjoys creating new recipes. He was excited about the chance to put his mark on Salisbury steak. He made two changes, but kept to the spirit of the dish. The steak became meatballs, ideal

## ■ FOOD

food for a March Madness party.

He made Salisbury steak more Salisbury, too, by turning the brown gravy into a super sauce. He added Cheerwine, Morgan Ridge beer and other ingredients.

And, oh, that sauce. It's so good you'll be putting it on cocktail wienies, chicken wings, French fries, pork chops ...

Chef Jason walked us through the quick, easy process. He begins by slicing a large yellow onion and browning it with just a drizzle of oil.

"The bigger the pan, the faster they caramelize," he says. "Sprinkle it with kosher salt and that draws out the liquid and pulls out the sugars so the onions caramelize faster."

Less than 10 minutes later, the onions are brown and he deglazes the pan with about a half cup of beer. It adds flavor and releases the tasty brown bits on the bottom of the pan.

He cools the onions a bit, then chops them fine. Now it's time to mix up the meatballs — or, Salisbury steak.

Simply add the onions, kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

**Debbie Suggs' traditional Salisbury Steak and gravy with homemade mashed potatoes, green beans and corn.**



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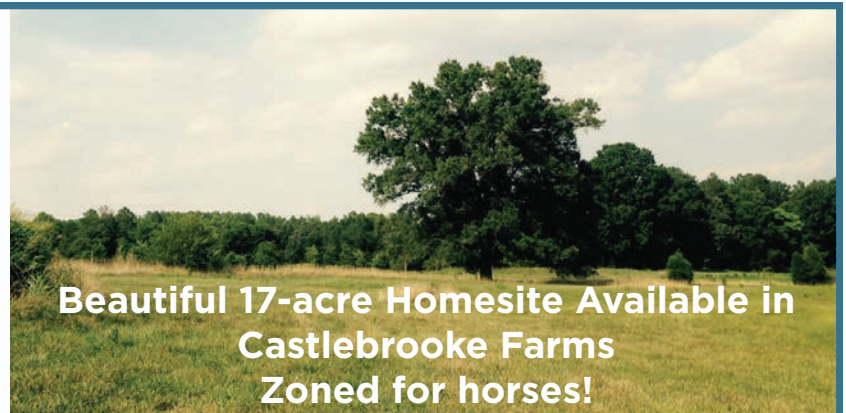


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to the meat and mix it gently. Jason uses a scoop and makes evenly-sized meatballs.

“You can cook these on a baking sheet or in a casserole dish or you can put them in your Crockpot,” he says. “Make sure you coat the casserole or baking sheet well with cooking spray so the meatballs won’t stick.”

He cooks the meat in the oven for 10-12 minutes at a high temperature, so they brown. Brown is the chief feature of Salisbury steak.

“If you’re worried about the grease on the baking sheet, just drain the meatballs on paper towels before adding them to the sauce.”

On to the sauce. “I had to have the brown gravy, so that’s what I started with, and then I thought of the sauce I made for the cocktail wienies” at the employee Christmas party, “and I added the grape jelly and the salsa. To make it more Salisbury, I added the Cheerwine, and then from us (Morgan Ridge), I added the Riverdance



Chris Moore, chef at Emma’s of Salisbury, takes a traditional approach to Salisbury steak. Beef patty covered with gravy, topped with lightly grilled onions and fresh mashed potatoes.



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Morgan Ridge Vineyards & Brewery Chef Jason Nain fills a dish with his meat-ball-style Salisbury steak.

Red ale to give the sauce depth.

Mix it all in a saucepan and bring it to a boil so the flavors blend.

“This is how you thicken it,” he says, mixing cornstarch with a little cold water. “The water always has to be cold or the cornstarch will just clump up.” He adds it slowly,

stirring constantly, until the sauce is shiny and coats the back of a spoon.

“You know what else the cornstarch does? It keeps your ingredients mixed in with the sauce or soup or whatever. They don’t all sink to the bottom.”

The cooked meatballs and sauce go into a baking dish,

which he covers.

He cooks it in a 400-degree oven for about 30 minutes. If adding it all to a slow cooker, let it cook about an hour for the flavors to blend. A longer cooking time will allow the sauce to soften the meatballs a bit.

He serves them in a decorative bowl — “You like my pig? You can pig out on these things,” and sprinkles it with chopped green onion.

“As an appetizer, this is enough for 15-20 people,” he figures. And you can do it for just under \$20. Perfect for any event with that crazy Salisbury gravy.

### SALISBURY STEAK MEATBALL APPETIZERS

- 2 pounds ground chuck, 85/15 fat content
- 1 very large yellow onion
- 1 Tbsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. black pepper
- ½ cup beer
- Salt

For the sauce:

- 12 ounce jar or 1½ cups brown gravy
- 2 cups salsa or a 16-ounce jar
- 12 ounces or 1½ cups grape jelly
- 1 cup Cheerwine
- 1 cup beer (your preference)
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 3-4 green onions, sliced, for garnish

Slice onion into half moons and drizzle a large skillet with vegetable oil over medium high heat. Add onion and sprinkle with salt to taste. When onions are nearly caramelized, add ½ cup beer and deglaze the pan. Allow the liquid to evaporate, then remove pan from heat. Allow onions to cool slightly.

Mix ground chuck, onions, 1 tablespoon kosher salt and 1 tablespoon ground black pepper lightly. Using a 1-inch scoop, form meatballs and place on a baking tray or in



a casserole dish that has been coated with non-stick spray. Bake at 400 degrees for 10-12 minutes.

Using a large saucepan, combine the gravy, salsa, grape jelly, Cheerwine and beer. Mix well and set over medium-high heat to bring to a boil to blend flavors. Mix 2 tablespoons cornstarch with some cold water and slowly add to sauce until it reaches a silky consistency.

Remove meatballs from oven, drain on paper towels, if desired. Place meatballs in a baking dish, cover with sauce and bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes.

Serve Salisbury steak meatballs with a sprinkling of green onions over the top.

### BRINGING BACK A CLASSIC?

At Emma’s, owner Allen Terry wasn’t too sure about the idea — like many restaurants, he does not serve Salisbury steak, but he accepted the challenge, and with chef

Chris Moore and sous chef Cody Taylor, came up with a simple recipe.

It turned out so well, Allen is thinking about adding it to his menu — maybe as a special. Served with a creamy mountain of mashed potatoes, it’s a rib-sticking comfort food dish.

Like chef Jason’s recipe, the one from Emma’s is based on the tradition of beef, onions and gravy. And the ingredients are available in your pantry, so it’s easy to put together for dinner — no need for long cooking.

Chef Chris uses 73/27 ground beef, French onion soup, bread crumbs, salt and pepper for his patty, which he cooked on a flat-top grill for about 10 minutes.

The gravy gets French onion soup, too, and to top it all off, mellow grilled onions.

Bread crumbs lighten the beef, as well as an egg. The soup, Chris and Allen agree, gives the dish extra flavor and makes it taste beefier. It’s a can of Campbell’s French onion soup, which also adds salt to the

**Grape jelly, brown gravy, Cheerwine soft drink, salsa and beer are simmered together to make Chef Jason Nain’s sauce.**

■ FOOD

finished dish.

The gravy is a combination of the soup, a little flour, some condiments and just a little water.

After the patties brown, they go into the gravy to simmer for 20 minutes. While it simmers, Chris grills the onions until softened and slightly brown.

When the Salisbury steak hits the plate, next to a cloud of mashed potatoes, the drooling begins.

Allen looks at it and says, "Maybe we'll bring that back. Let the customers taste it. We can call it the New South Salisbury Steak and we could say we are the home of the Salisbury steak."

The wheels are turning in Allen's head, he's making plans, developing a strategy.

One bite of the tender patty, topped with

aromatic onions and zesty gravy and you'll be knocking on Emma's door, asking, "When are you going to make Salisbury steak?"

**NEW SOUTH SALISBURY STEAK**

- 1 (10½ ounce) can French onion soup
- 1½ pounds ground beef
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- 1 egg
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper or to taste
- 1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 1-3 tsp. Worcestershire sauce (to taste)
- ½ tsp. mustard powder
- ¼ cup water
- 1 large onion

Add the bread crumbs and ¼ cup French onion soup to the beef, with salt and pepper. Add the egg, slightly beaten, and mix gently. Form into six patties and cook in a frying pan or on a grill about 10 minutes. Mix the remaining French onion soup, flour, ketchup, Worcestershire, salt and pepper, dry mustard and water together in a pot and bring to a boil. Add cooked patties and allow to simmer about 20 minutes. Slice onion into rings and cook in a little bit of oil until softened and beginning to brown. Set aside and keep warm. Remove patties from gravy and put on a plate with extra gravy. Top with onions. Serve with mashed potatoes or rice.



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## TURNING GRAVY INTO SAUCE

Debbie Suggs has been catering for years. She does lunch for the Salisbury Rotary Club on Tuesdays, caters for class reunions, for events at the N.C. Transportation Museum — all over.

She makes good, traditional Southern food, so we asked for her Salisbury steak recipe. She surprised us with enough food to feed everyone in the office.

“I don’t make Salisbury steak,” she told us. “I make country-style steak. Cook it to death until it’s tender. But I could do a Salisbury steak.”

So she looked at her recipes, got some ideas, and created something completely different and completely delicious.

Debbie is used to cooking for a crowd, so her recipe is huge, but you’ll get the idea of what makes it so good. She serves it with authentic, buttery mashed potatoes and a side of green beans and corn. And a biscuit. And she brought a spice cake, topped with butterscotch pudding and whipped cream.

Debbie started out with 10 pounds of ground beef, a can of Progresso French onion soup, two packets of Lipton’s onion soup mix and what makes her version unique — she added basil pesto from a tube she found at the grocery store, and some teriyaki sauce. She rolled her patties, more like round balls, in House of Autry chicken breading, and cooked the patties in a huge frying pan.

“That House of Autry makes anything taste good, and I needed a little bit of flour for the gravy,” Debbie said.

She cooked mushrooms, celery, onions and green pepper in with the patties, then added about a cup of white wine. “I used chardonnay because that’s what I had,” then she added beef broth and another can of French onion soup and for her large number of servings, a pint of heavy cream.

With the Salisbury steaks she made the sauce — “I couldn’t call it gravy, it has so many things in it” — and left the beef in the pan at a low temperature, so the two could simmer for an hour.

“But if you don’t have a big pan, you can simmer it together in the oven, uncovered, at a lower temperature so it doesn’t dry out.

“Sometimes all you want with it is a biscuit, because it’s so rich and filling.”

Tasting all those variations was a tough job, but we’ll be fine after a nap. **S**



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■ AT HOME

# Home *is where the* hearth *is*

Warm up to a fireplace,  
even without a fire

*Written by* ELIZABETH COOK

*Photography by* JON C. LAKEY

Fred and Bonnie Corriher  
keep the thermostat low in  
their home in Salisbury to  
have every reason possible  
to use their fireplace.

## A fireplace makes a room.

**F**or some people, a fireplace makes a home.

And then there are those who make their own fireplaces.

Step into Traci and Seamus Donaldson's home on Confederate Avenue, and your eyes immediately go to the Carrara marble fireplace and mantel stretching from floor to ceiling.

The white marble expanse dominates the entrance hall and hints at the scale and beauty in the rest of the historic house. But the Donaldsons strive to make it homey.

Daughter Kate, 6, demonstrates how to open the wrought-iron doors to the large firebox. When Seamus builds a fire in it — usually around Christmas — it quickly heats up the large hall. “It will run you out of the room,” Traci says, “even when it is cold.”

The Donaldson home was built in 1929 for entrepreneur and industrialist Walter McCannless. Davyd Foard Hood's book, “The Architecture of Rowan County,” calls the house a “Renaissance Revival brick mansion whose grandeur is unrivaled in Rowan County.”

The house's six fireplaces are key to that grandeur. The entrance hall is but one example. In the library, a dark marble fireplace and mantel has heavy veins of white and creates a dramatic effect against the room's dark, textured walls. In the adjoining room, another white Carrara marble fireplace has intricate, classical details. In room after room, the fireplaces set the aesthetic tone.



Kate Donaldson loves the fireplace in the front room of her Salisbury home. As she explains to her parents, Seamus and Traci Donaldson, that's the one Santa Claus comes down.

### SOURCE OF WARMTH

Aesthetics were not the very top priority to Bonnie and Fred Corriher when they were looking for a house near Catawba College, where Fred graduated and formerly served as president.

“I had only two requirements: shade trees and a working fireplace,” says Fred.

They found what they were looking for on Brenner Avenue

“We spend most of our evening here,” says Fred, standing in the living room.

The Corrihers keep the thermostat at 64 degrees throughout the house in the winter. Just before it's time for Bonnie to get home each evening from her job as a nurse, Fred warms up the living room with a hearty fire.

His method is precise. Newspapers go on the grate first, two sheets rolled up diagonally and twisted in the middle to hold them together. Kindling comes next; wine connoisseur Fred is partial to broken-up wine crates and other bits of wood. Large



pinecones picked up on Catawba's campus go on next.

Fred tops it all off with small pieces of firewood and lights the newspapers at either end of the pile and in the middle.

Soon large flames jump up, throwing off crackling sounds and heat. Within a few minutes, the fire settles down to a mellow level and the room is toasty.

Several of the Corrihers' Christmas cards show the family gathered around a fireplace. "A fire was a given at our house," Fred says.

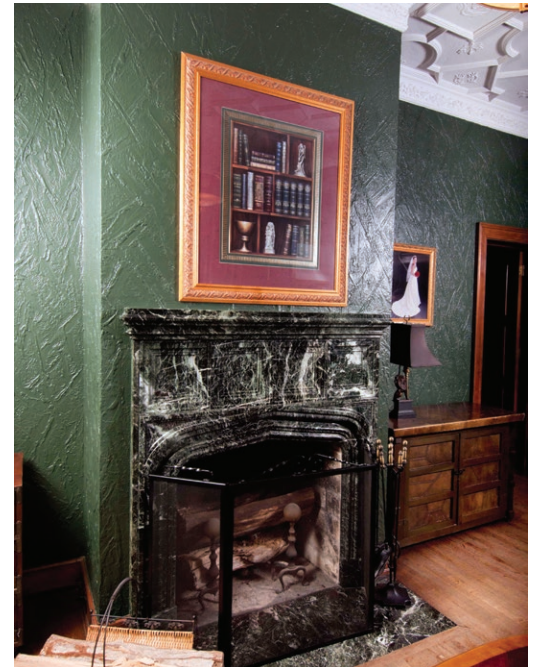
"It just makes me feel homey. It's a source of warmth, literally and figuratively."

**Right: One of the fireplaces in Seamus and Traci Donaldson's home. Below: Fred and Bonnie Corriher enjoy a roaring fire at home.**

### STONEMASON'S ARTISTRY

Tim Arey of Yost Farm Road cares more about building a fireplace than building fires.


A third generation stonemason, Tim returned to the craft after he retired from the city of Salisbury's Street Department in 2011. One of his first retirement projects was a basement fireplace built of Tennessee crab orchard sandstone.



■ AT HOME



He worked on it off and on for a year, dry stacking stones to fit perfectly together for the half-moon opening, mantel and hearth. He uses many of the techniques used by his grandfather, Joseph Calvin Arey Sr., almost a century ago, and handed down to Tim's father, J.C. Arey Jr.

Tim has never built a fire in this fireplace and could not if he wanted to. It is plumbed for ventless gas logs and has no flue and chimney. But it does have great attention to detail. For example, electrical outlets in the mantel hide behind stones that can smoothly slide in and out. For Tim, the fireplace is all about the art of stonemasonry. "I went to great detail getting certain things a certain way," he says. In that sense, the fireplace functions perfectly — even without a fire. 



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Third-generation stone mason Tim Arey built this stone fireplace and mantel in his basement in his spare time. The fireplace, made of Tennessee crab orchard sandstone, actually does not have a flue and chimney and is plumbed for ventless gas logs.



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# 12,000 and counting

Duke's MURDOCK Study in Kannapolis will provide major contribution to 'precision medicine'

*Written by* EMILY FORD

With its iconic dome, the David H. Murdock Institute stands as the centerpiece of the North Carolina Research Campus. Eight universities study health, nutrition and agriculture at the campus, including Duke University, which runs the MURDOCK Study. Photo by Chad Mitchell Photography.



SPEED  
LIMIT  
25



Duke University cardiologist Dr. Kristin Newby, the lead scientist for the MURDOCK Study, stands on the steps of the Core Lab with David H. Murdock, developer of the North Carolina Research Campus.

*Photo by Chad Mitchell Photography*

With more than 12,000 participants, Duke University's MURDOCK Study at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis has become one of the most unique studies of its kind.

In the coming decade, L. Kristin Newby, MD, MHS, a Duke cardiologist and the principal investigator for the MURDOCK Study, expects Duke's work in Kannapolis to make major contributions to precision medicine and the discovery and development of new treatments and their targeted use.

Duke has expanded into a second office in Kannapolis, and the MURDOCK Study has entered a new phase of collaboration and data analyses. Researchers from Duke and other institutions are using the nearly 450,000 biological samples stored in Kannapolis, as well as health information provided

each year by participants in their annual follow-up form, to help understand the fundamental underpinnings of health and disease.

Precision medicine is making headlines as the future of health care. But just what is it?

"What this means," Newby said, "is that we are moving from a population-based, one-size-fits-all approach to a more sub-segmented treatment or prevention strategy focused on smaller groups of individuals and their genetic make-up and other factors."

The MURDOCK Study is helping to advance the promise of precision

medicine — the concept that doctors will know how to use a person's genetic, clinical, social and environmental characteristics to tailor prevention and treatment strategies to that patient's unique characteristics and needs.

After enrolling the first participant in 2009, the MURDOCK Study has steadily developed both its database and infrastructure, including a clinical research team of more than 30 employees in Kannapolis. Today, researchers are initiating analyses with the clinical data and biological samples that have been collected, often using additional resources at the North Carolina Research Campus including the services and state-of-the-art instrumentation of the David H. Murdock Research Institute in the Core Laboratory Building, the dome-topped campus centerpiece.



Duke University has more than 30 employees in Kannapolis working on the MURDOCK Study and related health projects at the North Carolina Research Campus.

## When Teri Boger's chance came, 'I enrolled immediately'

ROCKWELL—For several years, Teri Boger could not join Duke's MURDOCK Study.

Boger lives in Rockwell, where she was born and raised. During the early years of the study, Rockwell was not included in the geographic recruitment area. When the boundary was expanded, Boger was thrilled to learn that people living in Rockwell's ZIP code were eligible to join.

"I enrolled immediately," she said.

A staff assistant in corporate risk management for Carolinas Medical Center-NorthEast for the past 10 years, Boger said she learned about the MURDOCK Study from Duke employees who were enrolling participants at the hospital.

"I just thought it was unique and a really great opportunity to make a difference," she said. "There are not



many places around here where you can participate in clinical research."

As a mother, Boger said she felt compelled to join the MURDOCK Study to help researchers try to find ways to improve the health of future generations.

"I thought it would be interesting to see what Duke can do with data that would potentially impact my child or

other children in the future," she said. "I'm hoping this will help people stay healthy."

The MURDOCK Study is a longitudinal study. While participants provide blood and urine samples only once, they are asked to update their health information every year so researchers can see how their health changes over time.

Boger said she completes her annual follow-up form every year as soon as it arrives. Thanks to her dedication and a little luck, she won the MURDOCK Study's quarterly Follow-Up Raffle recently and a Kindle Fire tablet.

"I fill out my follow-up form every year because I feel like researchers need to know what's going on with my health," she said. "If I skip a year, your data may not be accurate, and I believe in accuracy."

■ WELLNESS

More than a dozen ongoing studies are using MURDOCK Study assets, including multiple sclerosis, physical function and healthy aging, memory and cognitive health, type 2 diabetes, prostate cancer and male fertility. Collaborators are also using the MURDOCK Study infrastructure to help answer other questions connected to the development of precision medicine, including the use of electronic medical records.



Ashley Dunham

Many additional studies are in the pipeline. There are more than 20 proposals under development with investigators and potential collaborators for new research opportunities using MURDOCK Study resources—the Kannapolis team and the clinical information and samples contributed by participants. Possible studies include COPD, diabetes, obesity, chronic kidney disease, prostate cancer, atrial fibrillation, nutrition and smoking.

“We are doing great research. It’s important, and we also see the economic value of the MURDOCK Study and Duke’s related work



in Kannapolis,” said Ashley Dunham, PhD, the translational population research director for the Duke Translational Research Institute who helped start the MURDOCK Study. “We offer a career option

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for people trained in clinical research who otherwise may not be able to find a job in this area. Most of the people we hire are local.”

Dunham, who lives in Salisbury, was one of the first people Duke hired in Kannapolis after launching the study in 2008.

In March 2007, Dr. Rob Califf, nominated to be the new FDA commissioner and a world-renowned leader in cardiology and clinical research, led a visionary team at Duke in the proposal of the MURDOCK Study. Six months later, North Carolina Research Campus founder and developer David H. Murdock donated \$35 million to Duke to establish the study.

MURDOCK stands for Measurement to Understand the Reclassification of Disease Of Cabarrus/Kannapolis, an acronym Califf created in honor of Murdock’s gift.

Newby, considered among the best academic cardiologists in the United States, took over leadership of the MURDOCK Study in January 2015 when Califf left Duke for the FDA. Newby was an integral designer of the MURDOCK Study and led one of the first projects focused on reclassifying cardiovascular disease during

**Duke University employee Micki Roseman processes blood and urine samples in a mobile lab set up at a MURDOCK Study mass enrollment event in Kannapolis in 2015.**



## Frenches think their participation could help down the road

LANDIS—John French was repeatedly hospitalized as a child for mumps, measles, chicken pox and other ailments. He remembers living in an oxygen tent and missing months of kindergarten and first grade.

He eventually regained his health but shudders when he thinks about all of the environmental hazards common at the time. He remembers banging on the pipes in his basement to make it “snow.”

“It was asbestos,” he said.

French and his wife Linda, who live in Landis, are keenly interested in health and medicine, a result of French’s four-way bypass heart surgery in 2013. The couple changed their lifestyle significantly. They exercise daily, and John



French boasts about the delicious low-fat, low-cholesterol, low-sodium meals his wife prepares.

“That just goes hand-in-hand with the MURDOCK Study. We’re concerned about our health,” he said. “Ten years

ago, I would not be talking like this. I would just go to McDonald’s.”

As part of their commitment to good health, the Frenches joined Duke University’s MURDOCK Study last year when enrollment expanded to include the Landis and China Grove ZIP codes 28088 and 28023.

“I’m way healthier and more active than my parents ever were,” Linda French said.

They have family histories of cardiovascular disease and cancer and believe their biological samples and annual health information could be valuable to the MURDOCK Study.

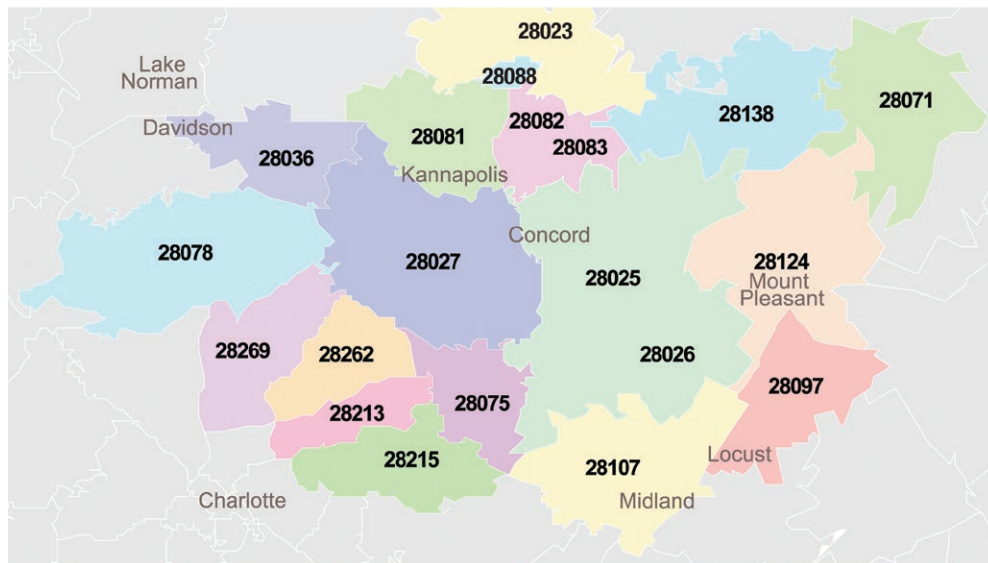
“Maybe there will be a situation where our participation will help, down the road,” John French said.

■ WELLNESS

the initial phase of the study.

The MURDOCK Study continues to recruit adults who lives in a 20-zip code recruitment area that includes Cabarrus County, Kannapolis, China Grove, Landis and other small portions of Rowan, Stanly and Mecklenburg counties. Because the study aims to accurately represent the demographics of the area, recruitment efforts are now focused on men and African Americans, as well as encouraging enrolled participants to fill out their annual follow-up form.

Leonard L. Williams, PhD, who leads N.C. A&T State University's Center for Excellence in Post-Harvest Technologies at the North Carolina Research Campus, recently



Adults living in these 20 ZIP codes are eligible to join Duke University's MURDOCK Study, which especially needs men and African Americans.

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## Iola Parker encourages her friends to join study

CHINA GROVE—After choosing a career 37 years ago that paid her to walk eight miles a day, the first female letter carrier in Rowan County made another choice focused on health as she retired.

Iola Parker joined Duke University's MURDOCK Study.

"I believe in healthy eating, and I'm very interested in healthy aging," said Parker, a China Grove resident who joined the MURDOCK Study as she retired from the U.S. Postal Service in May 2015. "I'm mindful of eating and exercise, and I hope my information will help someone down the line."

Parker got plenty of exercise as a letter carrier, delivering mail to about 550 addresses in China



Grove. She was bitten by a dog once, and sometimes the weather — especially when it was bitterly cold — made her

wonder, "Why am I doing this?"

But overall, the job was a joy, Parker said, and she's still recognized all over town. She began delivering mail when she was 35 years old because she thought it was wonderful to be paid to exercise, and she felt she would earn the same wage from the government as her male counterparts.

In the past year, Parker's had both knees replaced, but she and her husband, Wendell Parker, still walk three miles a day. Parker is a staunch advocate for the MURDOCK Study and encourages friends to join. She recently won a \$50 prize in the study's quarterly Refer-A-Friend Raffle after she referred her husband and he enrolled.

enrolled.

As an African-American male, Williams said he wanted to contribute to the understanding of why biomarkers for certain cancers such as colon-rectal or prostate cancer are higher among African-American males, as well as the importance of finding viable solutions to improving both the detection and survival rate.




Leonard L. Williams

"I am grateful to the work of the researchers and staff of the MURDOCK study and look forward to the scientific breakthroughs as a result of this study," he said. "I had an uncle who passed from a heart attack, a massive heart attack a couple of years ago. He never visited the doctor in over 10 years. I believe it could

have been prevented."

Adults who live in the 20-zip code recruitment area are eligible to join Duke University's MURDOCK Study. Participants update their health information every year and give a one-time donation of about 3 tablespoons each of blood and urine.

The study especially needs men and African Americans. Participants are compensated. To start the enrollment process, call 704-250-6851, email [murdock-study@duke.edu](mailto:murdock-study@duke.edu) or visit [www.murdock-study.org](http://www.murdock-study.org). 

*Emily Ford is communications specialist for Duke Translational Research Institute and the MURDOCK Study.*

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NASCAR great Donnie Allison poses for a photo in his home in Rowan County.

*Photo by Wayne Hinshaw.*

DONNIE AND BOBBY ALLISON

# Racing Royalty

Written by **Ben White**

Fate, business  
drew NASCAR's  
legendary brothers  
to the Piedmont

# T

The names of iconic sports figures are synonymous with the games they loved. Their legendary accomplishments on the field, court or track forever paint mental pictures that are simply unforgettable in the mind's eye.

When NASCAR legends from the 1960s, '70s and '80s are listed, Bobby and Donnie Allison join Richard Petty, David Pearson and Cale Yarborough as names most often mentioned with reverence.

Many years have passed since Bobby Allison, 78, and Donnie Allison, 76, turned 200-mile per hour laps around superspeedways such as Daytona or Talladega. At the height of their storied careers, they drove Sprint Cup (then Winston Cup Grand National) Chevrolets, Buicks, Fords and Dodges to a total of 95 victories. Bobby, a 2011 NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee, won 85 Cup races as well as the 1983 Cup championship. Donnie, the winner of 10 Cup races,

was inducted into the International Motorsports Hall of Fame in 2009.

Both men still remain heavily involved in the sport and continue to enjoy a strong fan following. These days, the Allisons call Salisbury and Mooresville home, having settled here long ago amid the large contingent of NASCAR race shops in the Charlotte area.

There's a real possibility race fans in Salisbury will notice either Bobby or Donnie dining out at a local seafood or barbecue restaurant on Friday nights. Donnie has lived here with Pat, his wife of 55 years, for more than two decades and wouldn't want to be anywhere else.

"I own a farm and a house in

Hueytown, Alabama, and business property there and I wasn't planning on buying here," Donnie said. "But I have to tell you, you cannot find a better place to live than Salisbury, North Carolina, and Rowan County. The country areas and everything about the city and downtown suit me. It has everything you could possibly want.

"If you want to travel to a big city, Charlotte is only 45 minutes to an hour away. But I tell people all over the place that if you can't live in the mountains of North Carolina, Rowan County is the place to live. It has the nicest landscape all around."

Donnie calls the move here a twist of fate, prompted by the need



for a lot of square footage to house a very successful racing venture created by sons Kenny, Ronald and Donald.

After several years of building and selling both Cup and Xfinity (then Busch) Series cars, Allison's sons formed Allison Brothers Race Cars in 1994 and built 750 cars for Charlotte Motor Speedway's Legends Car (600 Racing) program.

To meet their need for space, they purchased a building on U.S. 70 in Barber Junction owned by former Cup crew chief Bill Ingle.

When the 600 Racing contract expired, Kenny Allison began designing a tubular chassis with a fiberglass body and Mazda B-2200 truck engine. This legacy car is a three-quarter-sized replica of a Sprint Cup

**Drivers Bobby Allison and brother Donnie Allison chat before the Daytona 500 race on Feb. 18, 1973, at the Daytona International Speedway in Daytona Beach, Fla.**

*Photo by Dozier Moble/Getty Images.*

## Spotlight

car with a standard Mazda five-speed transmission, and today the Allison Legacy Race Series features 18 races throughout the year at tracks in North and South Carolina.

The series offers a professional to intermediate racing program, attracting old and new drivers, with or without experience. It has proven to be a valuable stepping stone for many drivers looking to further a racing career.

Bobby and Donnie Allison's long, successful journey into NASCAR began in the late 1950s on short tracks near their home in Miami, Fla. While still attending school, an uncle took Bobby to a short track race at the local fairgrounds, and he was instantly hooked.

While in his teens, Donnie had other

hobbies and was excellent at everything he attempted, especially roller skating. He wanted no part of driving race cars until a friend in his neighborhood bought a dirt track car — a black-and-white 1940 Ford — and they hauled it to the Hialeah (Fla.) Speedway for practice runs.

“This was 1957 and I didn’t go to races like my brothers did,” Donnie said. “I went roller skating every Wednesday and Saturday nights. That was my deal.

“... He goes out, comes back in and said, ‘Well, how did it do?’ I said, ‘Well, I could drive it better than that.’”

And Donnie lived up to his boast.

Later that day they towed the car back to the home of Allison's parents. “He unhooked it and gave that car to me,” Donnie said. “That’s the gospel truth as to how all that started.”

By the early 1960s, the Allison's were making a living by winning races and championships all around Florida. Bigger race purses lay west in Alabama so they moved to Hueytown near Birmingham and created the “Alabama Gang” moniker

they’ve been famous for throughout their careers.

NASCAR’s prominent Grand National

**Former NASCAR driver Donnie Allison stands in the garage area during practice for the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Bojangles’ Southern 500 at Darlington Raceway on Sept. 4, 2015, in Darlington, S.C.**

*Photo by Jerry Markland/Getty Images.*





division (today's Sprint Cup Series) was their next big step. Bobby's first start there came in 1961 at Daytona while for Donnie, Charlotte Motor Speedway was his first in 1966. Their dream to make it in NASCAR's premier series had finally come true.

It all seems a blur looking back now. After his final start in 1988, Donnie had racked up some impressive statistics.

Amazingly, in only two career Indianapolis 500 starts in 1970 and '71, he finished fourth and sixth. In NASCAR races, Donnie Allison started 242 Cup events and logged 78 top-fives and 18 pole positions. In 115 races — nearly half of the Cup events he entered — he finished in the top 10.

"I don't say too much about that because I don't want to pat myself on the back too much," Donnie said with a laugh. "But honestly speaking, I don't know of anybody that has a better record of (consistent finishes) than I've got. I guess those records are pretty substantial, but this is the first time I've ever talked about it."

In praise of his brother, Bobby added, "Of any other driver, Donnie was my biggest nemesis, even more so than Richard Petty or Darrell Waltrip. If he was there racing me for position or for the lead, I had my hands full. He was so determined to be up front and win. If he had run all of the Cup races each year, I'm sure he would have won championships.

"Donnie chose to run the special events mostly on the superspeedways and had some other activities that occupied his time. But he was happy with that arrangement during his career. I'm not sure if now he maybe wishes he would have run more races. The record he has

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for the number of races he ran is incredibly impressive.”

Donnie and Bobby Allison were major players in one of the most famous Daytona 500s ever. While battling with Cale Yarborough on the final lap of the 1979 event for the lead, Donnie Allison and Yarborough made heavy contact on the backstretch, sending their cars hard into the third-turn wall.

Richard Petty went on to record his sixth career Daytona 500 victory, while Donnie, Bobby and Yarborough were left on the

track to physically fight it out in front of a shocked national television audience. Those watching were trapped in their homes by a deep, unforgiving snowstorm that covered the entire Eastern Seaboard. With only three major television networks to choose from in those days, millions of fans tuned to that exciting but tough, competitive world of NASCAR. Professional stock car racing had arrived.

“I couldn’t have kept it from happening

because it was going to happen, either there or at the other end of the race track,” Donnie said. “I thought if it happened off of turn four, at least we’d get to the start/finish line. Unless I was stuck in the wall, I was going to hold the gas pedal down until I got there.

“Whenever have you seen a wreck coming off of the second turn of the Daytona 500 between

the leader and the second-place driver? It just doesn’t happen. I really burned myself

**Donnie Allison’s fireplace has dozens of his racing and fishing trophies and awards from his career.**

*Photo by Wayne Hinshaw.*

# Spotlight

“I don’t say too much about that because I don’t want to pat myself on the back too much,” Donnie said with a laugh. “But honestly speaking, I don’t know of anybody that has a better record of (consistent finishes) than I’ve got. I guess those records are pretty substantial, but this is the first time I’ve ever talked about it.”

a lot of times for letting it happen like that. Why did I look up in the mirror in the middle of the corner? I never did that. I thought, ‘No way, buddy. You’ve got all the room in the world on the outside. You’re not coming down underneath me. I’m not going into turn three on the outside.’ I didn’t run him into the apron. He hit me before we ever got to the apron.

“People can say all they want, but what

happened that day after that race at Daytona was the biggest thing that ever happened in NASCAR. That was the crown blow.”

Bobby Allison was a three-time Daytona 500 winner and a four-time winner of the Southern 500 at Darlington (S.C.) Raceway. Donnie isn’t completely sure why wins at those tracks eluded him.

“There were three times I should have won the Daytona 500,” he said. “For some

reason or another, the good Lord didn’t want me to win that race. It was the same at Darlington, where I should have won five races there in a row. Each time I had the fastest car and something happened. I just have to accept it and go on.”

For Donnie, the loss of the 1979 Daytona 500 somehow made good, competitive rides dwindle. There were a few more mediocre stints before a near fatal crash at



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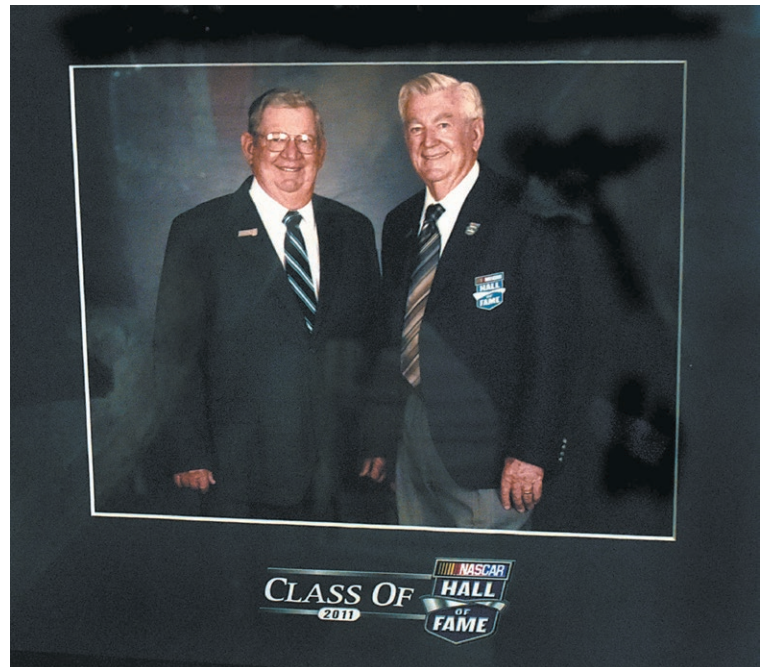


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Clockwise from top: A model of a Ford Torino race car that Donnie Allison once drove at Talladega. His 1970 Most Popular Driver award is behind the model; NASCAR drivers Donnie and Bobby Allison pose for a photo during the 2011 NASCAR Hall of Fame inductions in Charlotte; A model of the Hawaiian Tropic car that Donnie Allison once drove; Donnie Allison reflects on his career.

Photos by Wayne Hinshaw

# Spotlight

Charlotte in May of 1981 in effect ended his career. His final Cup start came in August 1988 at Michigan in a race won by his nephew Davey Allison, the eldest son of Bobby.

Bobby's family has faced some deeply painful losses, most recently the death of wife, Judy Allison, after complications from surgery on Dec. 18, 2015. Davey Allison won an additional 18 races during his Cup career before losing his life in a helicopter crash on July 13, 1993. Just eleven months earlier, younger brother Clifford Allison died in a crash during a practice session at Michigan on Aug. 12, 1992.

Donnie has spent much of the past two decades consulting and advising with

numerous drivers and teams, working with four-time Cup champion Jeff Gordon, as well as three-time Cup champion Tony Stewart, Regan Smith, Joey Logano, Trevor Bayne and Brian Vickers.

"The first person Tony thanked after his very first Cup win at Richmond in September of 1999 was me," Donnie said. "I thought that was pretty neat. He didn't have to do that. You don't make a race car driver out of anybody. You can't tell somebody how to drive a race car. You can tell them things to assist them with driving a race car. I have a very good feel for that."

The Allison family continues to make its marks in stock car racing. Davey's son Robbie Allison, as well as cousins Taylor Stricklin (son of former Cup driver Hut

Stricklin and Donnie's daughter Pam) and Justin Allison (son of Kenny Allison) continue to build their driving careers on tracks around Salisbury and Nashville, Tenn., respectively.

"We contributed our whole lives to racing in NASCAR," Donnie says. "I had my first NASCAR license in 1960 and have had one every year since. The Allisons in general have been good for NASCAR. On the other hand, NASCAR has been good for us and has given us the opportunity to do what we did. We should never forget that." S

*Ben White, an award-winning writer and author, has covered NASCAR for many motorsports publications over the past 35 years.*

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A photograph of a blue and white biplane, likely a Stearman, parked in a hangar. The plane is the central focus, with its upper wing and fuselage visible. The hangar's interior is dimly lit, with light coming from the left, casting shadows on the floor and the plane's body. The background shows the corrugated metal walls of the hangar.

# FRIENDLY SKIES

From cow pasture  
to economic  
development tool,  
the Rowan County  
Airport has changed  
significantly

Written by **Josh Bergeron**  
Photography by **Jon C. Lakey**

**J**.K. Dorsett probably would have a difficult time identifying the 125 acres he farmed in 1927. Close to 90 years later, this land south of Salisbury encompassing the Rowan County Airport looks completely different.

Hangars, both large and small, fill a wide swath of flat land. Small aircraft and Army or Navy cadets were once the most common sight at the Rowan County Airport. Today, planes of various shapes and sizes take off from its 5,500-foot runway. Hobbyists who build or buy their own small aircraft still represent the majority of planes based at the airport, but corporate and private jets have become increasingly common.

After community leaders bought Dorsett's farm, they would add an additional 41 acres from R.M. Leonard. Rowan residents soon were attending in large numbers to witness aerial shows — hundreds of people gathering in open fields to watch small aircraft flip and fly



around.

One man is the figure behind much of the airport's initial development. Clay Swaim, whose name adorns the airport's original hangar, took over operation of the airport in the 1940s. When he took control, the runway was little more than dirt and grass and contained a few potholes. He paved the runway not long into his tenure.

Elected leaders honored Swaim by dedicating the airport as Swaim Field on Nov. 13, 1977.

Fast forward nearly 40 years. Small two- to six-passenger airplanes remain the most common. Dozens of the planes fill small hangars. A club of aircraft enthusiasts regularly draws 70 or more people to its events, and BOSS Aircraft Refinishers — the business that rents

the largest amount of total space at the airport — makes its profits by repairing and painting the small planes.

If there's a single symbol of the community surrounding the Rowan County Airport, it's the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1083. The club is a community of pilots and aircraft enthusiasts who regularly meet for casual cookouts, help one another build or fix planes and organize an annual summer camp for aspiring pilots or curious kids.

During a recent Saturday cookout, a number of pilots flew or drove in from other cities. Hardly deterred by cold weather, the pilots enjoyed a mid-morning meal together, chatted about the latest personal news and, of course, talked



aviation. As aviation enthusiasts, many couldn't help also strolling outside to catch a glimpse of the line of aircraft that had flown in for the day.

During the recent cookout, Rock Hill resident Dina Ramirez and her 8-month-old daughter, Nayeli, were among the many who flew in for lunch. It was Nayeli's first time in an airplane.

"We're just a group of people that like having fun and airplanes is what brings us together," said local EAA member Bob Poole. "You don't really get tired of flying."

EAA members joke that they all have "Type A" personalities. At some point,

many are destined to spend a year or more building their own airplane. Nearly every time, it's a sharply more cost-effective choice than purchasing an airplane. Building a plane costs about as much as a relatively inexpensive car. Purchasing a plane equates to buying a high-priced house.

When EAA members gathered on the recent Saturday for a cookout, Charlotte resident Rick Basco spent some of his time putting finishing touches on his self-built aircraft. Basco said he probably

wouldn't paint the aircraft. Its exterior was a shiny metal that shone like a diamond. He spent more than two years building the aircraft, which he started just before retirement from Cesna.

"It was just a project I had my eye on and decided to take it on," Basco said. "It was something I enjoyed doing."

Some EAA members joke that their planes are like second wives because of the amount of time they require to maintain.

Basco was making tweaks to his plane inside of one of the airport's many

**Rick Basco, from Charlotte, keeps his OneX experimental aircraft in a hangar at Rowan County Airport. Here, he prep the plane he built in his home garage for a flight.**

T-hangars. He was using a hangar owned by Jack Neubacher, who leads the local EAA. Empty hangars are relatively hard to come by for those looking to locate their plane at the airport. Briefly, county leaders considered building more T-hangars for private plane owners. Instead, they went with a large, 15,000-foot hangar. The

goal, county leaders say, is to attract larger corporate-owned aircraft.

The focus by county leaders on corporate aircraft recruitment hasn't changed the majority composition of the airplane owners at the airport. Based on employees, the largest business at the Rowan County Airport will soon be Strategic Moves LLC,

a management and charter company. When you figure total space rented, BOSS Aircraft Refinishers is likely the largest at the airport, according to company owner Bill Lucey and Airport Director Thad Howell.

Lucey said he aims to service 50 to 100 aircraft per year. His market is an 18-state



Rick Kirby, from Rock Hill, S.C., taxis his Piper Arrow to a parking spot at the Rowan County Airport. Rick and his wife, Pam, daughter-in-law Dina Ramirez and 8-month-old granddaughter, Nayeli, took advantage of the clear skies to come to Salisbury for the Experimental Aircraft Association Chapter 1083's monthly cookout for pilots and family members.

radius surrounding North Carolina. He has nine employees. Routinely, his company receives business from New York, Lucey said.

Inside the Rowan County Airport's original hangar — the one with Clay Swaim's name painted on top — Lucey keeps a number of aircraft that are being

renovated. In a hangar several hundred yards away, Lucey has a paint shop for aircraft. Similar to what's required for cars in North Carolina, his company also conducts annual inspections on aircraft.

"You can fly ugly, but you can't fly broke," he said.

On a recent January day, Lucey's hangar

for renovations was filled with five small airplanes — all capable of holding a few passengers. In his paint shop sat a plane destined for one of the most complex designs Lucey's company had ever created. Its owner requested his plane be painted with a rainbow of ribbons that appeared to be waving in the wind.



Unfortunately, the wind outside the paint shop was too strong for painting. Lucey said strong wind from outside can occasionally blow bits of dust into the paint shop. So BOSS Aircraft Refinishers doesn't paint aircraft when the weather is windy.

"An airplane is one of the bigger purchases a person can make, and we want to make sure we do it right," Lucey said.

Despite the significant presence of the small aircraft, Airport Director Thad Howell says the overall composition of landings and takeoffs at the airport is mixed. On the opposite side of the coun-

**A sample paint scheme that BOSS Aircraft Refinishers will apply to the exterior of an RV7 homebuilt aircraft.**



— Continued on page 66.



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Clockwise from top: BOSS Aircraft Refinishers makes its home base at the Rowan County Airport; BOSS owner Bill Lucey; A 1975 Cessna 177 aircraft waits in the BOSS hangar for painting; Benjamin Hoar works next to a 1964 Beechcraft Baron in the mechanical shop at the Rowan County airport. BOSS offers services that include airframe repairs, painting, engine work and interior refinishing.



Left: The large maintenance hanger attached to the terminal at the Rowan County Airport.



Right: The Rowan County Airport is busy during a recent EAA event. Left: The local Rowan County EAA Chapter 1083 President Jack Neubacher talks with aerobatic pilot Larry Macon before a flight.

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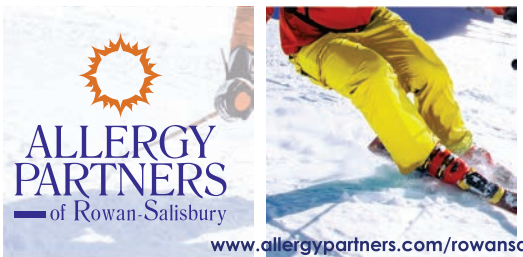


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Larry Macon's aerobatic Pitts biplane is housed at the Rowan County Airport.

ty-operated facilities sits a National Guard Armory. Although corporate jets flew into the Rowan County Airport previously, Howell said the number has increased since the 2008 economic recession.

"In terms of our inventory, we do have a lot more of the small, private aircraft but we get a little bit of everything," Howell said.

He said it's not uncommon to see a corporate jet landing or small aircraft that are conducting training.

Rowan County is labeled a general

aviation airport, and is likely to stay that way for the foreseeable future, but Rowan County leaders hope to bring in valuable multi-million-dollar jets and boost the number of businesses. County Commissioners Chairman Greg Edds has said bringing valuable planes into the airport could boost tax revenue without requiring significant services, such as schools.

"If we are able to attract more expensive planes here, we will be able to create the infrastructure that would allow for aviation-related industry to sprout," Edds

said.

At the same time, county leaders can't forget the airport's roots, according to Edds.

"A lot of other communities will forget their general aviation community that really helped put them on the map, and that's something we never want to do," he said.

Continuing, he said a group of future county leaders may run out of land, if the airport continues growing at the pace current commissioners hope to see. S



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# Twist of fate

Salisburians realize how closely their lives intersected  
in 1964 presidential race

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



Longtime photographer Ben Martin, originally from Salisbury, joins Sydney Sides who has been looking for old copies of Time and Life magazines that featured some of Martin's photographs. Along the way Sides discovered that Mary Miller James was actually at an event that Martin was photographing in 1964.

## ■ REMINISCE

T

Today in Salisbury, Mary Miller James and Ben Martin live just blocks away from one another.

They had no idea how closely their lives were connected a half century earlier when James was a high school senior in Washington, D.C., and Martin was a Time magazine photographer.

You see, James' father, Congressman Bill Miller of upstate New York, was the vice presidential running mate of Barry Goldwater, the Republican nominee for president.

Martin was assigned by Time to cover the Goldwater campaign that year.

Years later, after his biggest magazine assignments were over, Martin returned to his native Salisbury. James and her husband, Will, intrigued by Salisbury's small-town, historic character, relocated here about 11 years ago.

Now flash forward to 2016, and meet a young college sophomore named Sydney Sides. As a high school intern at the Salisbury Post, Sydney had become fascinated with the photographic exploits of Martin and a career in which his work appeared on the pages of Time, Life, People, Sports Illustrated, Fortune, National Geographic and more.

Martin had taken photographs of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Duke Ellington, President Kennedy, Fidel Castro, Nikita



Photographer Ben Martin looks through a July 24, 1964, issue of Time magazine, with his photo of Republican presidential candidate Barry Goldwater on the cover.

Khrushchev, Marilyn Monroe, Mickey Mantle and Arthur Rubinstein, to name a few. He captured lasting images of President Kennedy's funeral.

As an intern, Sides asked permission to write a newspaper story on Martin, and it led to three months of work and a four-hour interview with Martin.

"We'll call it stalking," Sydney said, guessing she also called Martin "500 times." The pair have become good friends ever since, leading Sydney's devoted grandmother — local historian Susan Sides — to start collecting for Sydney magazine covers which Martin had shot.

It led to Susan Sides' procurement of a July 24, 1964, Time magazine, whose cover was a Ben Martin photograph of Goldwater. When she and Sydney looked inside the same magazine, they stopped at a black-and-white photograph of Bill Miller, his wife, Stephanie, and their daughters, Mary and Libby, waving to the GOP convention

crowd in San Francisco.

They realized how Martin and James, two Salisburyans heavily involved with Historic Salisbury Foundation, were also intertwined in history during that 1964 election year.

"We were both just fascinated," Sydney told the pair when they all got together at James' house one afternoon over the holidays. "We would never have thought you were connected."

In an aside to Martin, Sydney added, "What are the odds of all the covers you have done, she (Susan Sides) would grab that one?"

For the record, Martin did not take the black-and-white photo of the Miller family inside that Time issue. In fact, Martin and James have tried to figure out whether their paths ever crossed in 1964, except maybe at the Cow Palace in San Francisco, where the GOP Convention was held. It's unlikely.

"I never covered Bill," Martin said. "I was strictly Goldwater."

To cover more ground, Goldwater and Miller almost always campaigned separately that fall. The Goldwater-Miller ticket went on to lose the general election by a landslide margin to incumbent President Lyndon B. Johnson and his running mate, Hubert Humphrey.

Martin has archivist Mary Jane Fowler going through his 1964 Goldwater pictures again, just in case there's a Goldwater event he covered that also includes an appearance by Miller and, possibly, Mary Miller James.

They haven't found anything yet.

Martin recalled that during the 1964 campaign, Goldwater's people wanted to use the cover photo he shot for *Time* in all of their campaign posters. *Time* ultimately gave that permission.

Bill Miller had a substantial, if under-appreciated career. He was one of many assistant prosecutors at the Nuremberg Trials after World War II. He was a New York congressman for 14 years, the Republican Congressional Campaign chairman and the Republican National chairman, besides being the vice presidential nominee.

For his day, Miller could have been described as a moderate, flexible conservative. James has said her father loved the irony of Ronald Reagan, who espoused similar values to those of the Goldwater-Miller ticket on his way to winning a landslide victory only 16 years later.

Bill Miller died in 1983. "We so wish he were around to talk about the state of the Republican Party today," James said.

Some people might remember Miller from one of those old American Express Card commercials in 1974 in which he said, "Do You Know Me?" Years later, Libby Miller Fitzgerald, Mary's sister,



**The *Time* Magazine photo of Bill Miller and his family.**

wrote a book about their father titled, "Bill Miller: Do You Know Me?"

The Miller girls' mother, Stephanie, lives today in Charlotte. She is 93.

Being the granddaughter of Susan Sides, whose passion for history never wanes, "I've learned history since I was a baby," Sydney said, describing how she particularly loves Salisbury's connection to other famous people such as George Washington, Andrew Jackson and Elizabeth and Bob Dole.

When it came time for her high school senior prom pictures, she arranged to have

them taken in what was then the charred interior of the Blackmer House, once home to noted Salisbury actor Sidney Blackmer.

On the coffee table in front of them, Sydney had spread three *Time* magazines and one *Life*, all of which have cover photographs taken by Martin. One of them was a Sept. 4, 1964, cover of the Democratic ticket, Johnson and Humphrey.

"I've heard so many, many of your stories," Sydney told Martin, "and it's still hard for me to understand the magnitude of what you've done."

Before Sydney and Ben left that day, Mary showed them some of the incredible photographs, cartoons and other artifacts of her father's political career she has hanging in a downstairs hallway.

"That's Barry and Dad," she said, lingering over one in particular.

As she led Sydney through some of the others, Martin grabbed his camera and started taking pictures. Finally, after all these years, he had his own shot of Bill Miller's daughter. **S**

# March 2016

Upcoming events in Salisbury-Rowan and the region



March is filled with Easter-related activities, including Easter egg hunts. Photo by David Purtell.

■ **Feb. 25-27 and March 3-5**  
**The Parchman Hour**

• *Lee Street theatre* •

Songs and stories of the 1961 Freedom Riders. 7:30 p.m., Lee Street theatre, 329 N Lee St. For more information: leestreet.org, or 704-310-5507.

■ **Feb. 27, 29, March 1**  
**Day of All Days**

• *Rowan Public Library, Rockwell* •

Celebrate Dr. Seuss. Feb. 27, 10 a.m.-noon; Feb. 29 and March 1, 4 and 5 p.m.

■ **March 2**  
**Game and Card Party**

• *Salisbury Civic Center* •

Sponsored by Salisbury-Rowan Newcomers, the Game and Card Party is a charity event to benefit Food for Thought.

■ **March 4**  
**Day of All Days**

• *Rowan Public Library, South Rowan* •

Celebrate Dr. Seuss, 2-3 p.m.

■ **March 8**  
**Meals on Wheels BBQ**

• *First Presbyterian Church* •

A fundraiser for Meals on Wheels, 11 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Dinners \$8, dine-in or take-out, prepared by College Barbecue. More information: mowrowan@charlotte.twcbc.com

■ **March 10-19**  
**Cabaret**

• *Meroney Theater* •

Piedmont Players presents the 1966 Broadway hit at The Meroney Theater, 213 S.



Guests listen to Kaye Hirst in the old Organ Lutheran Church as part of last year's Historic Salisbury Foundation Second Annual Sacred Places Tour. Photo by Wayne Hinshaw.

Main St. For information on tickets and times, call 704-633-5471, or visit piedmontplayers.com

■ **March 10**  
**Dolly Madison's Scarlet Dress**

• *Rowan Museum* •  
A program of the Rowan Museum's History Club, 7 p.m., 202 N. Main St., Salisbury.

■ **March 12**  
**Cleveland Lions Club Breakfast**

• *Lions' Den, Cleveland* •  
7-10 a.m., Cemetery Street, Cleveland. Supports visually- and hearing-impaired research and services. Call 704-278-0661, or contact Elaine Hewitt at hewclem@bellsouth.net.

■ **March 12**  
**St. Patrick's Day 5K**

• *Salisbury* •  
9 a.m. start. Go to salisburyrowanrunners.org for more information.

■ **March 12**  
**Rowan Reading Rendezvous**

• *Rowan Public Library* •  
Meet local, regional and national authors from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Books for sale. Proceeds benefit Friends of Rowan Public Library. The library is located at 201 W. Fisher St., Salisbury.

■ **March 12**  
**Remembrance**

• *Catawba College* •  
The Salisbury Symphony performs at 7:30 p.m. at the college's Keppel Auditorium. Go to salburysymphony.org for more information.

■ **March 17**  
**Power in Partnership**

• *Millbridge Ruritan* •  
7:30 a.m. A Chamber of Commerce salute to agribusiness. For more information, contact cdeese@rowanchamber.com, or call 704-633-4221.

■ **March 17**  
**Dollar-a-Day Boys!**

• *Rowan Public Library* •  
2 p.m., 201 W. Fisher St., Salisbury. A Bill

Jamerson music and storytelling program about the Civilian Conservation Corps.

■ **March 19**  
**Egg Hunt and Community Fun Day**

• *Kelsey-Scott Park* •  
Free event, Salisbury Recreation, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. For more information, call 704-216-2708, or visit salisburync.gov

■ **March 19**  
**Sacred Places Tour**

• *Western Rowan County* •  
The Sacred Places Tour will be held from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., taking in western Rowan County churches and cemeteries. It is a ticketed event, sponsored by Historic Salisbury Foundation. For more information, call 704-636-0103, or visit historic Salisbury.org.

■ **March 26**  
**Easter Egg Hunt**

• *Gold Hill* •  
The Easter Egg Hunt will be part of Springfest at Historic Gold Hill. For more information, go to goldhillnc.com

■ **March 29**  
**Free concert**

• *Rowan Public Library* •  
Darrell Connor and the Country Music Legends Band perform from 7-9 p.m. at the library, 201 W. Fisher St. Admission is free.

■ **March 30-April 2**  
**Woyzeck**

• *Catawba College* •  
7:30 nightly, Florence Busby Corriher Theatre, Catawba College.



Above: Stephanie Muff demonstrates a spinning wheel in the main house. Right: The German Christmas Celebration at the Old Stone House.



# OLD STONE HOUSE

## *Christmas*

Rowan Museum held its annual German Christmas Celebration at the Old Stone House at the beginning of the new year. The museum decorates the 1766 house of Michael Braun as it would have been in the Revolutionary War days, relying on natural greenery, dried flowers, herbs, fruits and berries. Guides are in period costumes, and visitors see examples of skills, customs and crafts of that long-ago era.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey



Above: Jerry Brown enjoys the German Christmas Celebration at the Old Stone House.

Left: Robbie Cochran fires his flint lock musket. Right: The old bodger Steve Martin lets Edward Tezlaf take a try at the foot-powered lathe.





# BIG BAND BASH

In celebration of what would have been singer Frank Sinatra's 100th birthday only weeks earlier, the Salisbury Symphony created "A Salute to Sinatra" as the theme for its 15th Big Band Bash in January. Co-chairs for the event held at Catawba College were Andrea Anders and Michael Bitzer.

— Photos by Susan Shinn



Trish and Tim Proper pose for a photo at Salisbury Symphony's Big Band Bash.



Top: Carrie Poole, left, with event co-chairs Michael Bitzer and his wife, Andrea Anders. Above left: Jenny Hubbard and Bethany Sinnott. Above right: Jill and Jack Connery.

Top: Missie and Greg Alcorn with Rick Anderson McCombs. Above: Bob and Peggy Wilson.



Leslie Hayes, Gabrielle Bell, Freddy Cuthbertson and Desiree Ellis pose for a photo at the Bell Tower New Year's event,



Harley and Deborah Hirst celebrate the new year.

# NEW YEAR'S

*at the Bell Tower*

In a four-hour event organized by the city's Parks and Recreation Department, Salisburians ushered in the new year at Bell Tower Park, located at the corner of West Innes and South Jackson streets. The night included live music; free hot chocolate, coffee and snacks; outdoor games; a live video feed from Times Square; and the Fire Department's ringing of a fire bell at midnight.

— Photos by Jon C. Lakey



Above: Salisbury Mayor Pro Tem Maggie Blackwell poses for a photo with her husband, Jody. Right: Kim and Kyle Davis enjoy the new year's celebration at the Bell Tower.



Above: Clyde came dressed up as Scrooge for the event. Left: Eleanor Qadirah and Ruth Kennerly celebrate the new year.



Left: Chandler Mays, Greysen Pressley, Glen Pressley, Tracy Pressley and Trent Pressley pose in front of the Bell Tower. Right: Angie Simmons, Sheila Dobson, Vickie Grant and Vivian Vess pose for a photo during the Bell Tower celebration.





Outside Unity Presbyterian Church in Woodleaf, the Cleveland Fire Department's ladder truck was used to suspend the giant tomato, which was dropped at midnight to welcome 2016.

# Tomato DROP

What is fast becoming a tradition — the Woodleaf Tomato Drop — welcomed in 2016 in an event held on the grounds of Unity Presbyterian Church. A crowd of roughly 225 were entertained with music, food and socializing from 9 p.m. until the giant, inflated tomato was dropped at midnight after being suspended from a Cleveland ladder truck.

— Photos by Patti Safrit



Darrell Connor, Colton Sherrill and Lucas Safrit get together for a tune before the drop.



Above: John Goodson enjoys the event. Left: The Hazy Ridge Bluegrass Band performs before the Woodleaf Tomato Drop.



Above: Jimmy Moore helps in preparations for the tomato drop. Above right: For a year, Meredith Hutchinson is considered the "mayor of Woodleaf," thanks to a contest she won during the summer tomato festival. Right: Mahaley Mays is all aglow.



Above: Mildred Perrell and Becky Wetmore visit during the festivities. Right: Sandra Goodson and Suzanne Goodson pose for a photo.



Last fall, Duke University's MURDOCK Study held a Community Appreciation Event at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis. The community and MURDOCK Study participants are being invited back Sept. 24 for the Duke Dash 5K & Healthfest, the third annual MURDOCK Study public event. See a story about the MURDOCK Study in this issue's Wellness section.

— Photos by Emily Ford



Libby Mabrey, Loyd Oliphant, Kristy Rogers and Myra Donahue at the MURDOCK Community Appreciation Event at the North Carolina Research Campus in Kannapolis.

# MURDOCK

## Community Appreciation Event



Above: Micki Roseman hangs out with Cash. Right: Ava Callender and Laurene Callender enjoy the festivities.





Caret Cruz, Blanca Cruz, Lorenzo Cruz Jr. and Lorenzo Cruz Sr. pose for a photo at the MURDOCK Study Community Appreciation Event.



Left: Tony Nunes and Walt Jakubek. Middle: Sujan Singh and Abha Singh. Right: Ritchie Elkins and Jennifer Woodford.



Left: Leah Bouk, Caitlin Beam and Annie Beam pose for a photo during the event. Right: Back row: Tori Cousar, Betty Rhyne and Eleana Whitaker; middle: Taylor Cousar; front: Troy Cousar.





Walter Leather and Ralph Ketner



Bart Bartholomew, Ralph Ketner and Betty Bartholomew

# Ralph Ketner

## *speaks at Oak Park*

Food Lion co-founder Ralph Ketner gave a talk at the Oak Park Retirement Community, and residents and guests also received the DVD "Lessons in Leadership." Underwritten by Food Lion, the 50-minute film features stories and advice from Ketner and the people he touched throughout his career as a grocer.

— Submitted photos



Above: Hall Steele, Ralph Ketner and Ronnie Steele. Left: Anne Hollifield, Ralph Ketner and Herman Snelling. Right: Ralph Ketner and Helen Wooten





# Path to Lincoln School sign dedication

A large crowd attended the Dixonville-Lincoln Memorial Project Task Force's dedication of a new sign, "The Path to Lincoln School," in memory of Freddie "Jake" Evans. The sign stands at an entrance to the Dixonville Cemetery off Old Concord Road. A luncheon followed in the fellowship hall of First Calvary Baptist Church, where the Evans family members were honored guests. Evans died in 2015.

— Photos by Mark Wineka



Carol Waller, Lynn Rivens and Wanda Monroe.



Above: Raemi Evans, right, attended the reception at First Calvary Baptist Church after a new sign was dedicated at Dixonville Cemetery in honor of her late husband, Freddie 'Jake' Evans. Behind her is a grandson, Fredrick Evans. Right: The New 'Path to Lincoln School' sign at Dixonville Cemetery was dedicated in memory of Freddie 'Jake' Evans.



Left: Linda Davis and Eleanor Qadirah. Middle: Dr. Jimmy Jenkins, president of Livingstone College, and Deedee Wright. Right: Gloria and William Tugman.

# Moving to the big city

I remember the first night I spent as a resident of Salisbury. It was early December of 1979. That afternoon, I had packed a few belongings, loaded up some of my remaining furniture and some clothes, and left the metropolis of Faith for my new home on Mahaley Avenue near Knox Middle School. Yes, the six-mile journey left me totally exhausted, but there I was in my first apartment. I had flown from the nest. I was on my own and free to seek my destiny.

It was evening now, and I had just returned from a Christmas concert I recorded for broadcast on WSTP during the Christmas season.

I made myself at home in my new dwelling, an upstairs one-bedroom apartment with a tiny kitchen. Through the floor, I could faintly hear a conversation taking place between my downstairs neighbors, Salisbury Post columnist Homer Lucas and his wife, Doris.

I often read Homer's musings in the Post, so it immediately occurred to me that I was living above a Salisbury celebrity. I don't think Homer ever actually knew my name. I once heard him refer to me as "that kid who works at the radio station and lives upstairs."

I grew to appreciate the Lucases as neighbors for many reasons. They were home a lot, so not much happened in the neighborhood that escaped their notice. They would alert me to suspicious visitors or problems in the building.

They were also rather cold-natured,

which came in handy during the winter. They would crank their heat up so high in that downstairs apartment that I rarely had to use mine. I stayed toasty warm in my upstairs nest with little cost, thanks to a simple law of physics.

I loved my new life in Salisbury. I lived three minutes away from my job, was within walking distance of the nearest grocery store, and if I fell down a flight of steps and broke my leg, the hospital was two minutes away by ambulance.

My rent was a manageable \$175 a month. My power bills ranged from \$12 in the winter to a stiff \$25 in the summer, thanks to a window air-conditioner that always seemed to have a bird's nest in it. A week's groceries ran around \$25, and cable TV in those days cost a whopping \$6 a month.

Of course, these were 1979 expenses paid with 1979 dollars.

The only downside to that apartment was the occasional noise. Its close proximity to the hospital meant that I experienced the joy of hearing every passing ambulance at all hours.

I left my modest home two years later for a lovely townhouse condo in Wiltshire Village. I caved in to the notion that I needed more space and a slightly more appealing bachelor pad.

From an expense standpoint, I quickly regretted the decision. My first power bill skyrocketed to \$110, thanks to a cold winter snap ...

... and the fact that the Lucas family was no longer around to keep me warm. S



by  
**KENT  
BERNHARDT**

*Kent Bernhardt, production coordinator for Performance Racing Network, also is well-known locally as a radio personality, actor, singer and contributor to the Salisbury Post.*



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