

APRIL 2024

SALISBURY

the magazine

Hungry hogs

CATAWBA RESEARCHES,
CONTROLS BOAR
POPULATION

Divine Nine

ROWAN HAS RICH HISTORY
OF BLACK GREEK LETTER
ORGANIZATIONS


PUTTING DOWN ROOTS

*Plant exchange offers
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ADMINISTRATIVE

PUBLISHER

John Carr

john.carr@salisburythemagazine.com

EDITOR

Maggie Blackwell

maggie.blackwell@salisburythemagazine.com

CREATIVE DIRECTOR

Andy Mooney

andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com

ADVERTISING

Dennis Davidson

dennis.davidson@salisburythemagazine.com

Brendan Hill

brendan.hill@salisburythemagazine.com

Randy Perdue

randy.perdue@salisburythemagazine.com

Amy Williams

amy.williams@salisburythemagazine.com

PRODUCTION

Susan Baker

susan.baker@salisburythemagazine.com

CONTRIBUTORS

Margaret Basinger, Tim Coffey,
Zelia Frick, Sean Meyers,
Pete Prunkl

On the web:

www.salisburythemagazine.com

On Facebook:

www.facebook.com/salisburythemagazine

To subscribe

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

Salisbury the Magazine

P.O. Box 4639

Salisbury, NC 28145-4639

Published 9 times / year



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On the cover: Marleigh Adams opened Roots Plant Exchange in downtown Salisbury last year to rave reviews. (Sean Meyers photo)

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It's April, and things are blooming

This month's Rowan Original is Karen South Jones, a community leader who has worked to make our area better for our young people. Karen, a former School Board Member, serves as Executive Director for Youth Services Bureau, a non-profit that works to keep young people drug free and out of the judicial system. She'll celebrate her 25th anniversary with the organization later this year, but that's not the crux of the story. It's her pluck and determination that sets her apart, as you will read. She walks ten to twelve miles a day after work. You may have seen her about town, head up, headphones on, striding "like Eisenhower going to battle," as her husband has said. She's a personal friend of mine, and she inspires me every day. I hope the story inspires you, too.

The Bookish by Margaret Basinger looks at "The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning" by Margaret Magnusson, and it's not nearly as macabre as it sounds. Basinger says the processes suggested are simpler and more manageable than the recent classic by Marie Kondo, "Tidying Up."

ROOTS Plant Exchange in downtown Salisbury has been around just a year this month, and owner Marleigh Adams says response to her shop has exceeded all her expectations. She offers a wide variety of healthy, happy plants in a cool, upbeat environment — all while offering wine slushies or mimosas.

Rowan County was recently added to the list of areas



threatened by wild boars. While they don't typically pose a threat to people, they can wreak havoc on crops, causing farmers to lose profits. Writer Pete Prunkl and photographer Sean Meyers accompanied Catawba professors and interns on a wild boar hunt and share what they learned in the process.

Black Greek Letter Organizations, or the Divine Nine, are thriving in our area. All nine nationally-chartered clubs have active members in our area. We met with representatives from the five fraternities and four sororities to

learn why they enjoy membership and what they do for our community. They shared stories of brotherhood and sisterhood that reminded me of days long ago — when we looked out for one another and took the time to uplift those coming behind us. I had only marginally been aware of the BGLO's and truly enjoyed learning more about them.

It's April! Things are blooming! Head outside and go on a walk ... and then come back in and read your Salisbury the Magazine.

Maggie

— Maggie Blackwell
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine



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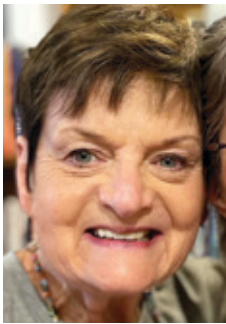


Zelia Frick captured an artistic picture of an American Lady butterfly on a limelight hydrangea tree.

To submit a photo for Through the Lens, send a high-resolution photo to andy.mooney@salisburythemagazine.com. Vertical orientation is required.

“The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning”

Ah, April! Flowers, warmer temperatures, baseball and growth and renewal. But instead of spring cleaning we can now opt for dostagning or death cleaning. Wow! Doesn't that sound scary? But in her delightful guidebook, “The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning,” author, Margareta Magnusson introduces us to the Swedish concept of dostagning, “removing unnecessary things and making your home nice and orderly when you think the time is closer when we will leave the planet.”



by
MARGARET
BASINGER

While none of us is in any hurry to leave the planet, one does not need to be on death's door to find this book helpful. Many of us have been left with the arduous task of removing our relatives' beloved possessions from their homes after they have passed on. Possessions that were precious to them sometimes have ended up at yard sales or even the dumpster. We swear that we will not leave our “death cleaning” to others. Light-hearted and humorously written, Magnusson's advice for the sorting, sifting, and disposing of “stuff” is beneficial to people of all ages. The decluttering

she describes feels softer and easier than Marie Kondo's better-known self-help book, “The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up.”

Many of my generation, the Baby Boomers, are opting to leave their multi-bedroomed, family homes for smaller dwellings. Magnusson's book offers a step-by-step timeline which makes the act of getting rid of belongings more palatable.

Unlike day-to-day cleaning, it is a “permanent form of organization that makes your everyday life run more smoothly.” Cleaning out a lifetime of accumulations sounds daunting, but Magnusson, who claims her age is somewhere between 80 and 100, gives a very doable timeline. Start with big items first. Give them to family, friends, an auctioneer, or charity, she suggests. Cookbooks, books, cookware, linens, collections, clothes you haven't worn in

a while can all go! Photos and letters should be sorted last. They carry emotional context and bog you down as they evoke memories both happy and sad. If you do this death cleaning now you will feel a real sense of “lightness” now to be rid of things you do not need and it will someday make your loved ones incredibly happy.

Some special things that are private to you and have special meaning can be kept in a small box labeled THROW AWAY. This box is to be destroyed at the time of your death. No one should look at its contents.

If this small book brings you joy, consider reading Magnusson's second book, “The Swedish Art of Aging Exuberantly” which is equally well-written and entertaining.

Two light-hearted, instructional, enjoyable reads. **S**



“The Gentle Art of Swedish Death Cleaning,” by Margareta Magnusson

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A great foreshadowing to Karen South Jones' adult life is her internship in Washington, DC. She worked in a bank in the summer during college and just hated it. One night, her mother asked, "Why don't you go upstairs to Congressman Bill Hefner's office and ask Ginny if they have any opportunities?"

Turned out, they did. The LBJ internship offered two paid openings at a thousand bucks for six weeks. Karen says that was a lot of money at the time. She applied. The decision would be announced in four months — so for four months, she typed and mailed a letter every week, asking if they had made a decision. And every week in return, she received a typed letter thanking her for her interest and assuring her they would let her know as soon as they had decided.

"To this day, she says, "I believe they said, 'Oh my God, give this girl the internship and get her off our back!'"

The twinkle in her eye and the self-deprecating humor are trademark KSJ. But the overarching tenacity has carried her well through her life.

She says she caught "Potomac Fever." Long before the six weeks was over, she knew she didn't want to go back home. So, she wrote a letter to fellow Salisburian and perfect stranger Elizabeth Dole at the Federal Trade Commission and said, "I'm here all summer; do you have any openings?" It was truly a cold call, she says: not only did she not know Mrs. Dole, her family did not know her, either. Mrs. Dole, nonetheless, got in touch and invited Karen to meet her at her office. After chatting for a bit, Mrs. Dole offered her a job for the rest of the summer while an employee was away on leave of absence.

"There was nothing in it for her," Karen says. "To this day, I am overwhelmed by her kindness and welcoming to a kid she had no obligation



walking the WALK

*Staying active has been life-changing
for Karen South Jones*

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL

PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS

to help. But she gave me that chance. Thanks to that summer, I decided I'm going back as soon as I graduate. And I did — with no job and not a lot of money. I lived in a women's boarding house and it was great."

She says her mother's friends said they couldn't believe she let her go to Washington. Her reply: "Oh honey, there was no 'letting.'"

"And I got those opportunities because I was naive," she says. "What could go wrong? I knew I would find a job; it may take a while but I could work temporarily. I had excellent typing skills, thanks to Miss Jean McCombs at East High. It just never occurred to me I couldn't make it."

Late in 2019, Karen saw a photograph and did not recognize herself. She had gained weight; she was not exercising; she was drinking too much. "Not because I was a connoisseur," she laughs. "I bought my wine by the box." In the photo she was sitting alone at a party, looking at her phone.

On seeing the photograph, she determined to quit drinking on January 1, 2020. In hindsight, she says, it was not the best time. COVID came in March. Her sister was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma in June and passed away in August. So, she started walking. She has good walking opportunities at home and at work. She walked more and more. It became her therapy. The weight started falling off. She started feeling better about herself. She'd participated in a Susan G. Komen Walk for the Cure in the past and signed up for one in Boston in 2021. Then it was cancelled. So, she kept walking.

In late 2021, she wondered about other long-distance walks and bought a book. One of the walks mentioned in the book was the Coast-to-Coast walk across England, a total of 192 miles.

She was sitting in the living room with husband Mike one night and said, "I think I know what I'm going to do next. I'm going to walk across England." About 30 minutes later she had her flights booked and tour group arranged.

She kept walking. She added hiking to get hill experience in and never looked back.

"The walk," she says, "was transformative. It changed how I felt about myself. About my



physical ability, my emotional stamina, my ability to function alone in a new country with people I had never met before. It was great. No matter what I do in the future, the Coast-to-Coast will be the bar that was set."

She says over the two-week adventure, each walker had the opportunity to walk with each of the others for a bit and learn about them, what motivated them, their tragedies, their successes. It's a special bond, she says.

They start the walk by taking a stone from the Irish Sea. At the end of the walk, they all throw their stones in the North Sea. She says that moment was amazing.

The group still stay in touch; they have a chat group on WhatsApp and catch up regularly, sharing how they're doing and what their next steps may be.

Her next step was hiking around an Alp the very next summer. The Tour du Mont Blanc is a steep hike of switchbacks around the Mont Blanc, taking hikers through Switzerland, Italy and France.

The camaraderie, she says, was just not the same. The group was divided into roughly two subgroups: the "mountain goats" as she calls them, and the plodders. Karen was a plodder.

"The Alps are not the Smokies or the Blue Ridge," she says. "The Alps are so steep! On the switchbacks, my Apple watch kept asking me, 'Are you done with your workout?' and I would say, 'No, you little ****.'"

She sings praises to Ester Marsh, who got her started early on a leg program to save her knees. The ascents are bad, she says, but the de-

scents will kill your knees. Thanks to Marsh's training, Karen was the only hiker with no knee issues from the descent.

"I don't know how you could doubt the existence of a higher power in either environment," she says. "To look out and see the beauty and majesty, created by glaciers and the passage of time."

This year at age 67, she's headed to explore the Channel Islands, only 69 miles total. It's more of a vacation, she says, than a trek. The longest days will be 10 to 12 miles, the same distance she walks daily here in Salisbury after work. They'll be

exploring the islands, the only part of England occupied by the Germans. They'll see the German watch posts and an underground hospital.


For her day job Karen serves as Executive Director of Youth Services Bureau, a local non-profit that engages the community in creating conditions that will lead to the prevention and reduction of substance use by young people in order that they may build healthy, safe and successful lives. She's passionate about the work and, as you might imagine, is resourceful and tenacious in acquiring grants to help our community's young people.

She meets monthly with all the county's School Resource Officers to explore alternatives for students who get in trouble, such as restorative justice and trauma-informed practices.

She served on Rowan-Salisbury School Board for two terms. Today she serves on ten boards, commissions and committees, serving as chair or president on some.

For the sake of space, we've left out stories of her working for the Washington Post on the National News desk, working as a speechwriter for President Reagan, working in the Treasury Department and flying on Air Force One.

"Growing up in this community gave me roots but it gave me wings. Being here has been so rewarding. It feels good to give back to it — to try to make it a place our young people want to return to."

She'll celebrate 25 years in her role at Youth Services Bureau and hints that retirement may not be too far off. Working or not, though, she'll still be walking. Give her a wave. 



From left, Catawba students Tobias Mielke, Brian Kaelo and Dr. Erin Witalison remove vials of swine blood to be tested for diseases.

HUNGRY HOGS

run wild

Catawba Pig Project researches and controls boar population

STORY : PETE PRUNKL | PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS

Dr. Luke Dollar spreads deer corn across an area set up for swine trapping.



The pigs at the center of the Catawba College Pig Project are not as cute as Porky, Pippa or Piglet. Instead, these big, hairy, non-native beasts devour everything in their path from corn, hay and soybeans to birds, turtle eggs and grasshoppers. These second cousins to Hogzilla go by several names — feral hogs, wild pigs, feral swine, wild boars — and unless there is a camera recording their feeding and congregating, they travel undetected. Few people realize that there are large families of wild hogs rooting around Rowan County's Second Creek and a mere three miles from the Catawba campus.

Wild hogs are eating and multiplying machines. At one year of age, feral sows can have a litter of three to eight, and two to three additional litters in the next 18 months. To top off their skill set, these beady eyed, thick necked, short legged oinkers are intelligent, resourceful and adaptable survivors. The wild pigs in Rowan County and throughout the Southeast descended from herds brought here by early European explorers before there was a United States. Like the wild horses at Currituck, feral hogs have been part of our landscape for over 500 years.

Many hunters in North Carolina consider wild hogs their second favorite prey after white-tailed deer. These sportsmen see a 185 lb. porker as big game barbecue. "I was one of those hunters," said Dr. Luke Dollar, professor and chair of the environment and sustainability department. That was until he dissected the heart, lungs and kidneys of a hog he shot and discovered lung worms and other parasites that can cause disease in livestock and humans. "It opened my eyes to a lot of the diseases these hogs carry," said Dollar.

Department of Agriculture biologists play a central role in Catawba's Pig Project, a

A remote camera is set up along an area of The Point in anticipation of getting photographs of feral swines.





three-year program funded by a grant from the North Carolina Attorney General's office. The project gives students hands-on, practical experience in wild hog management and research. State biologists schedule most of the tasks assigned to seven college students — Brian Kaelo, Tobias Mielke, Nate Bruce, Matt Peeler, William Mayfield, Cameron Hensley and Josh Warstler. These young men are the foot-soldiers — the grunts — of the Pig Project. In addition to Dollar, Catawba College faculty colleagues who advise, assist and find funding for the students are biologists Dr. Andrew Jacobson, Dr. Erin Witalison and Dr. Jay Bolin.

Photographer Sean Myers and I recently accompanied the Pig Project team on some of their typical activities.

Our first stop was a Catawba College research lab. A state biologist and five of the seven students arrived at Witalison's lab at 6:30 p.m. with 45 vials of blood and lung swabs from recently terminated wild hogs. They needed Witalison's large centrifuge to turn clotted blood into serum that would be tested by the



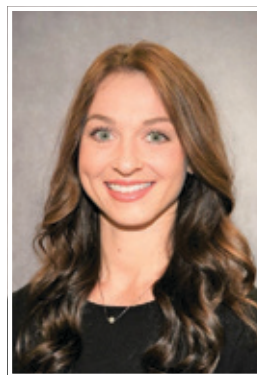


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Dr. Erin Witalison places swine blood samples in a centrifuge to be tested for diseases.



A feral swine hoof imprint in the mud at The Point property.



Addison Davis, who owns property at The Point, looks over swine traps with Dr. Luke Dollar.



A drone is used at The Point property to detect swine movements and locations.



Vials of swine blood are collected and checked for diseases.



Students and faculty set up a swine trap at The Point property.

Department of Agriculture for various diseases. Catawba College's centrifuge is larger and more efficient than field-based devices.

One of the analyses is for African Swine Fever, a highly contagious disease with no cure. ASF has the potential of shuttering North Carolina's pig farms and eliminating our domestic pig exports. The disease has never been detected in the United States, but it is in the Dominican Republic and "it's the biggest threat to the North Carolina pork industry," said Dollar. Altogether, the Department of Agriculture tests for 15 diseases in wild hogs.

The next day, the team and Dollar traveled to two sites where landowners had reported wild hog activity. To check on the size and composition of the groups, the team had already installed cameras at the sites. These high-tech, remote cameras send photos and real-time video directly

to Dollar's cell phone. In the 1990s, modified point-and-shoot cameras were the height of technology. Hungry hogs were photographed on 35-milimeter film that had to be manually replaced after 36 pig portraits. As expected, the landowner's observations proved correct. A large group of hogs, referred to as a sounder and numbering 20-25, spent a good part of the previous week rooting for food at both sites.

The next step was trapping all the wild hogs caught on camera. The emphasis was on "all." Missing even one pig meant the crop destruction problem would continue.

Trapping is a process, not a single event. The traps used this time are appropriately named Pig Brigs. The brig is a vinyl-coated net 30 feet across mounted in a circle on steel posts. Inside the circle the team distributed 400 pounds of corn, the perfect bait to attract hungry hogs. The team

then raised the net to what was called "conditioning mode," a height that provided an open, unencumbered space for the hogs to explore, root and eat to their hearts' content. Over the next week, the team returned to the site, added more corn and gradually lowered the net. At its lowest point, the "catch mode," the net will slide over the hogs as they enter the ring, a pleasant experience akin to scratching their backs. Once inside, with the net "doorway" completely on the ground, the hogs could not easily nose their way out.

What happens next is governed by North Carolina law. It is illegal to remove wild hogs from a trap alive. They are killed, their blood and lungs analyzed for diseases and the carcasses taken to a landfill. Before disposal, the carcasses are divided into samples for further research.

Jacobson and the Pig Project team are testing

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Senior Tobias Mielke unloads a large bag of deer corn for the swine traps.



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*Above: Student Tobias Mielke prepares a drone for flight.
Left: Addison Davis discusses issues he is having with swines at The Point property.*

a new level of hog observation. Jacobson's specialties are geographic information systems technology and drones, those high-flying spies in the sky. The Pig Project wants to try drones equipped with thermal cameras as a substitute for stationary cameras. Specially equipped drones can see through tree cover and high grass, but "we are still working out the kinks with the thermal sensors and interpreting the output," said Jacobson.

One direct result of wild pig management is satisfied farmers. Robin Mason and her family farm 1,500 acres of corn, soybeans and hay in Rowan, Davie and Iredell counties. "State biologists and the students have put a dent in the pig population. We lost a third of our crops to hogs. It's been a great help to have people who are committed to getting the job done," she said. Bobby Waller, who farms 2200 acres in western Rowan County, was able to plant corn for the first time in seven years thanks to efforts like the Pig Project. "It's unreal what pigs can do," said Waller. "On one of my farms, pigs ate every bit of the corn on 72 of the 97 acres. Just to keep hogs at the present level, you must kill 70% of them each year and that is not happening. People don't understand how bad wild hogs are."

Thanks to the Catawba College Pig Project, more of us understand, but as Billy Waller noted, more needs to be done. Luke Dollar hopes to keep the Pig Project alive beyond the end of the three-year grant. He wants to expand Catawba College's hog management and research efforts to other river basins and to a larger cadre of students. More Pig Projects means fewer pig problems. **S**



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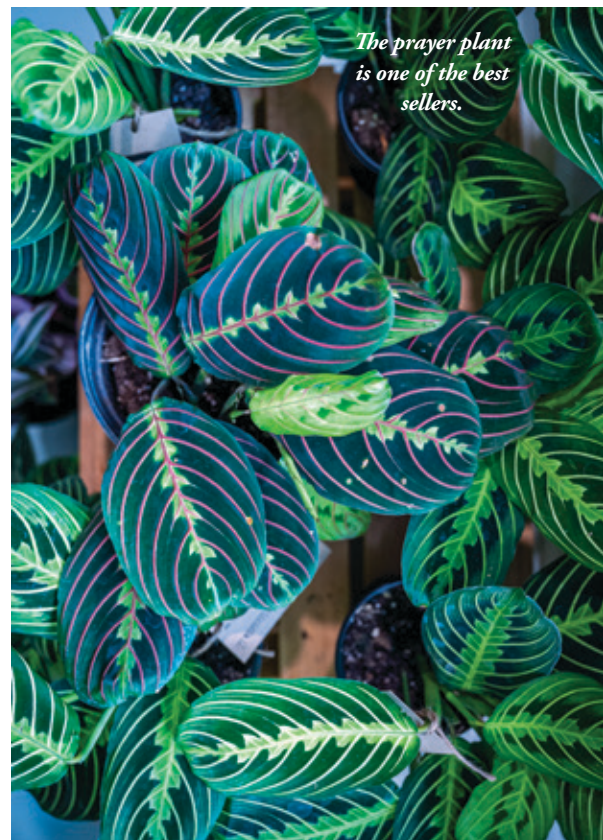


Marleigh Adams opened Roots Plant Exchange in downtown Salisbury last year to rave reviews.

putting down ROOTS

Plant exchange offers a unique experience

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL
PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS



The prayer plant is one of the best sellers.

Roots offers a variety of rare and hard-to-find plants as well as wine and mimosa slushies.



Javin Lane tends to a plant in the store.



You can tell there's something different when you first walk into ROOTS Plant Exchange. The music is new, the lighting is uplifting and — the plants! Front and center is a monstera that truly lives up to her name: she's a monster. Big, bright and happy, she could easily sing, "Feed Me, Leroy," from the Little Shop of Horrors. Owner Marleigh Adams says she's priced her at \$800, mostly because she doesn't want to sell her.

On the north wall near the entrance, a dozen or so propagation jars line the wall with little rootlings getting started. They are all part of the "leave a cutting, take a cutting" program. If you've started a little rootling of your own, you can bring it in and trade it for one on the wall.

If this is a different way of doing business, that's intentional. Marleigh says she tried to make the shop as different as possible from the standard downtown businesses. "When I was in college," she says, "the plant truck always had a line. I wanted to be like that. I wanted to bring something super-aesthetic to Salisbury, something positive."

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Marleigh says it's a family business. Her family has invested, both financially and with sweat equity. Her brother helped her build the shelves. Her dad and niece painted the floors. The name, Roots, came from her grandmother. She likes it. It's simple and says all that needs said.

Her location on the Salisbury square is just ideal, she says. "Downtown is just like a little Hallmark movie and everyone is a Hallmark character." Next door neighbor Bruce Wilson at Fine Frame Gallery often brings in customers to see the plants.

In warmer weather, Roots offers wine slushies in three flavors — including Cheerwine, as well as mimosas. She offers free Wi-Fi and has com-

“Downtown is just like a little Hallmark movie and everyone is a Hallmark character.”

fortable seating — all encouraging customers to stay a while and see what she has to offer. The shop is part of the social drinking district.

Soon she'll offer classes in building terrariums, general plant knowledge and propagation. She will also offer paint & pot nights.

To date, business has exceeded her expecta-

tions. Facebook plant groups mention her often and that's brought in customers from as far as Harmony and Monroe.

While more common plants, the best sellers like prayer plants, are up front, with more exotics like monkey tail, night-blooming cereus and exotic hoyo are in the back. Marleigh's own favorite are the polka-dot begonias.

She's tried to stock as many gift items as plant items, so if non-plant people come in, there's something for them, too.

ROOTS Plant Exchange is located at 107 South Main Street, Salisbury. Hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Phone is 704-267-2033. **S**



Clockwise from top left: Javin Lane holds a polka dot begonia, another favorite among customers; Neon and Joy Pothos plants sprout from the planter; The tropical Alocasia Jacklyn plant offers natural beauty in its leaves; the store offers gifts as well.

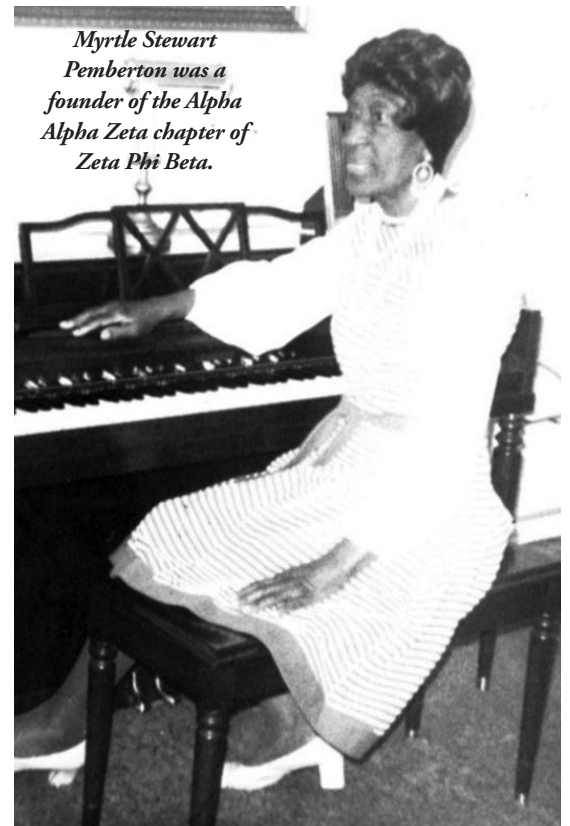


*Iota Phi Theta
strolling.*

DIVINE NINE

*Rowan County has rich history
of Black Greek Letter Organizations*

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL
SUBMITTED PHOTOS



*Myrtle Stewart
Pemberton was a
founder of the Alpha
Alpha Zeta chapter of
Zeta Phi Beta.*

Alpha Kappa Alpha
at Founders Day in
2024.





Omega Psi Phi

Rowan County is rich in many things and among them are the robust memberships in Black Greek Letter Organizations (BGLO), better known as the Divine Nine. Our small area has representation in each of the nine sororities and fraternities. Of the nine, four are sororities and five are fraternities. The organizations typically have both undergraduate and graduate chapters. Most often, the members of the graduate chapter mentor their local undergraduates. We took some time with graduate representatives of each organization to learn more about these historic clubs and their cultures.

All but one of the organizations were chartered at Howard University during a time when people of color were not welcomed into pre-existing White sororities and fraternities. While all the clubs are somewhat different, they all share an aspiration to serve their communities and mentor the generations to follow them.

- **Sigma Gamma Rho, Inc.** was chartered in 1922 at Butler University in Indianapolis. Its founders were seven black women trying to get an education at a predominantly



Iota Phi Theta's Royal and Christina Grantham



Zeta Phi Beta wearing blue scarves



Alpha Kappa Alpha at MLK Day in 2024.



Iota Phi Theta's Lonnie C. Spruill Jr.



Alpha Kappa Alpha chapter picture in 2023.



Zeta Phi Beta's Ruth M. Gore

white university. Tiffany McConeyhead says it was the courage of these women that led her to choose Sigma Gamma Rho as her sorority. She says while attending Winston-Salem State University, the Greek life advisor encouraged her to study all the sororities before choosing hers, because joining a sorority is a longtime commitment. Sigma Gamma Rho colors are blue and gold. The local chapter has 24 members.

Today McConeyhead serves as the advisor for the undergrad chapter at Livingstone. She says some newer students are leery of Greek life because of stories of hazing, but hazing has been strictly banned and "I'm not losing my letters for anyone." Some SRO sisters of note are Hattie McDaniel, Fantasia and McLyte.

• **Zeta Phi Beta Sorority, Inc.** was chartered in 1920. Member Crystal Kelly says her sorority is set apart by being community-conscious and action-oriented. The local group has 30 members and they focus on an annual Debutante Ball, where they award scholarships to local recipients.

Zeta Phi Beta is the only sorority with formal ties to a fraternity: Phi Beta Sigma. This relationship is spelled out in their constitutions. Kelly says local educator Elizabeth Duncan Koontz, who was appointed as Secretary of Education by Richard Nixon, was a "Zeta."

• **Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.** was chartered in 1913; its colors are red and white. Its mission statement says it is an organization of college educated wom-



Members of Omega Psi Phi prepare some art for their Founders Day.

en committed to the constructive development of its members and to public service with a primary focus on the Black community.

Local Chapter President Deirdre Davis is quite proud her sorority is the only with sisters who participated in the suffrage movement in the 1920s. The sorority has 128 members locally and over 350,000 internationally. Among local notable members are former Mayor of Granite Quarry Mary Ponds; former school board member Kay Wright Norman and Alicia Byrd-Clark, the first Black chair of RSS School Board. Nationally, the sisterhood includes Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson; Betty Shabazz, widow of Malcolm X; and Keisha Lance Bottoms, former Mayor of Atlanta.

Davis has been a member for 25 years and says, "I've always wanted to be a member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. since my middle school years. We are more than a sisterhood; we use empowerment to effect social change and public policy through social action, promoting academic excellence through scholarship, and assisting/providing community support through service!"



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• **Alpha Kappa Alpha, Inc.** was chartered in 1908, making them the first Black Greek sorority. AKA colors are pink and green and the local chapter has 89 members. Alisa Russell has been a member for 18 years and says the sisterhood has a framework based on community needs. They volunteer extensively with Rowan Helping Ministries, work through the Department of Social Services to feed families at Thanksgiving and work with those struggling through domestic violence.

Locally, School Board member Willie Jean Kennedy, Lillian Morgan and Sarah Lightner are their “golden” sorors, indicating 50 years of membership. Jewell Holland is a “pearl” member, indicating 65 years of membership. On the national level, U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris is a soror. Former first lady of Livingstone College Faleesa Moore-Jenkins as well as current first lady of the college, Jacqueline Davis, are sisters in the sorority.

Russell says, “I enjoy being a member because I love service. I felt the AKA mission of helping others and cultivating youth lined up with my values. Also, we mentor collegiate sorors.”

They raise money for scholarships by holding a “Fashionetta,” which they plan January through June, teaching etiquette and social skills to likeminded individuals.



Alpha Kappa Alpha worked at Rowan Helping Ministries on MLK Day.

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Members of Omega Psi Phi fulfill their community service at Rowan Helping Ministries.

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Zeta Phi Beta's Elizabeth Duncan Koontz.

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Iota Phi Theta at 2023 Regionals.

- **Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.** was chartered in 1906 with the mission, “First of all, servants of all, we transcend all.” This was the first Black collegiate fraternity in America. Notable members have included Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jesse Owens, Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall and Lionel Richie.

The local chapter has 58 members. They strongly encourage their community to vote; they partner with Big Brothers and Big Sisters and the Boy Scouts. Their colors are black and gold.

- **Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.** was founded in 1914. The local chapter has over 60 members. Local members Dennis Rivers and Edward Brown say their mission is to serve and uplift the community, particularly young men.

They hold blood drives through the American Red Cross, donate coats to Rowan Helping Ministries, and hold a Turkey Drive at Thanksgiving.

Local notable members include Dr. Anthony Davis, President of Livingstone College, the late Mayor Wiley Lash and Dr. Andrew Whitted, a key figure in the AME Zion Church.

Like all the other fraternities, Rivers and Brown joke that their fraternity is the greatest. This seems to be a friendly rivalry among the brotherhoods while at the same time they support and care for each other.

- **Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity, Inc.** was founded in 1914. The mission is, “Culture for service and service for humanity.” The local chapter has 16 members.

Damein Greatheart says their service falls into three categories: Bigger, Better Bossing – tax awareness; Social Action – March of Dimes and Education — Adopt-a-School.

Greatheart says he loves giving back to the community and promoting events to help local people. “I grew up in a church household and

the service spoke to me and my upbringing. I knew when football was over, I had to have something else. While I’m a Phi Beta Sigma, I have respect for every organization. A Kappa is helping me do my PhD thesis.”

- **Iota Phi Theta Fraternity, Inc.** was founded in 1963 during the Civil Rights Movement, making it the youngest BGLO. The colors are charcoal, brown and gilded gold. Their mission is “to build upon the leverage of our unique bond of brotherhood, through fellowship, meaningful community service and professional and social networking.

Christopher Cross, Royal Grantham and Brandon McNair are members of the local chapter, with a total membership of 12. Chris says, “Our founders were non-traditional college students, military with families, who wanted something different from the other four organizations.” When he first started, there was not a



Alpha Kappa Alpha at Founders Day.



Omega Psi Phi celebrated Omega day.



Zeta Phi Beta's Ida Duncan



Salisbury Police Major Corey Brooks and Dennis Rivers received Humanitarian Awards from Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

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chapter on the Livingstone campus; he had to research online. I'm the first of my family to be Greek and the first to go to college. I knew if I join this, I could be in the history books and develop it as our organization wants."

After 20 years of membership, he is the N.C. State Director for the organization. They also chartered an alumni chapter in Charlotte.

The beauty of belonging for Grantham is that the Divine Nine is a family. "You find brothers and sisters who cross the threshold between being members to being considered family — it goes further than Greek letters. There was a time my wife was in the hospital and members from all organizations were calling to see what they could do to help."

• **Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc.** was founded in 1911. Its colors are crimson and crème. While there's no alumni chapter locally, there is an active undergrad chapter on the Livingstone campus.

All of those interviewed said they were encouraged to do their research and select their clubs very carefully. They filled the room with enthusiasm and professionalism. While exchanging barbs about whose group is best, the overall spirit was one of brotherhood and sisterhood, and each group is encouraging the undergrad chapters to carry on their torches of service. 

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From left: ShirI Hull, Rochelle Kirkwood, Ed Hull

Waterwork's Oyster Roast

Waterworks Visual Arts Center held its annual Oyster Roast fundraiser with great attendance. Roastgoers enjoyed oysters, crab, barbecue, ice cream, bourbon, wine, beer and of course Cheerwine.

— Photos by Tim Coffey



Father and daughter, Bill Graham and Caroline Weiker



From left: John and Pamela Sofley, Elaine Spalding and Keyth Kabrs



*Sitting, from left: Cathi and Greg Brandt, Jason Owen and Aaliyah Gaines, Krystal Owen.
Standing, from left, Vicki and Max Dry and Jay Owen*



Craige and Terri Myers



*Mayor Pro-Tem Tamara Sheffield, left,
and Mayor Karen Alexander*



*From left: Joe Robinson,
Laura Isenhour,
Ruth Clement,
Reese Overby,
Cameron Walker, Matt Collins*



Erika Hernandez Castano and Hugo Correa



Linda Alexander and Carl Stokes



Rep. Harry Warren, left, enjoys his Cold Stone ice cream while visiting with John Sofley.



Standing, from left: Ben Smith, Lindsey Smith, Kyle Davis, Sierra Davis, Jason Haywood and Tom Crouch. Seated, from left: Faith Bradshaw, Kim Davis and Jackie Crouch



Something for everyone.



Jamie Boykin and Alexandra Trozzi take in the new exhibit.



Bourbon Bar Duo Greg Shields, left, and Donny Clement



Jeanette and Doug Lassiter visit with Leigh and Jay Wagner.



Presenting Sponsor Suzanne Casey hosted family and friends. From left, Lee and Mona Lisa Wallace, Vickie Wallace, Suzanne Casey, Bryce Beard, Valinda Isenhower



From left: Dr. Dennis Wilson, Marva Wilson, Lucho Hunte and Deleika Wilson



From left: Tatum Shirley, Madelynn Castor, Nicole Smith, Traci George and Andrea Davis



Jordan Adkins, Bud and Betty Mickle and Kadie Adkins



From left: Mandy Osterbus Mills, Bryan Mills, Eric Osterbus, Jarad Osterbus (in the back), Jodi Osterbus, Brittany Osterbus, Vickie Mills Lewis, Cyndi Osterbus.

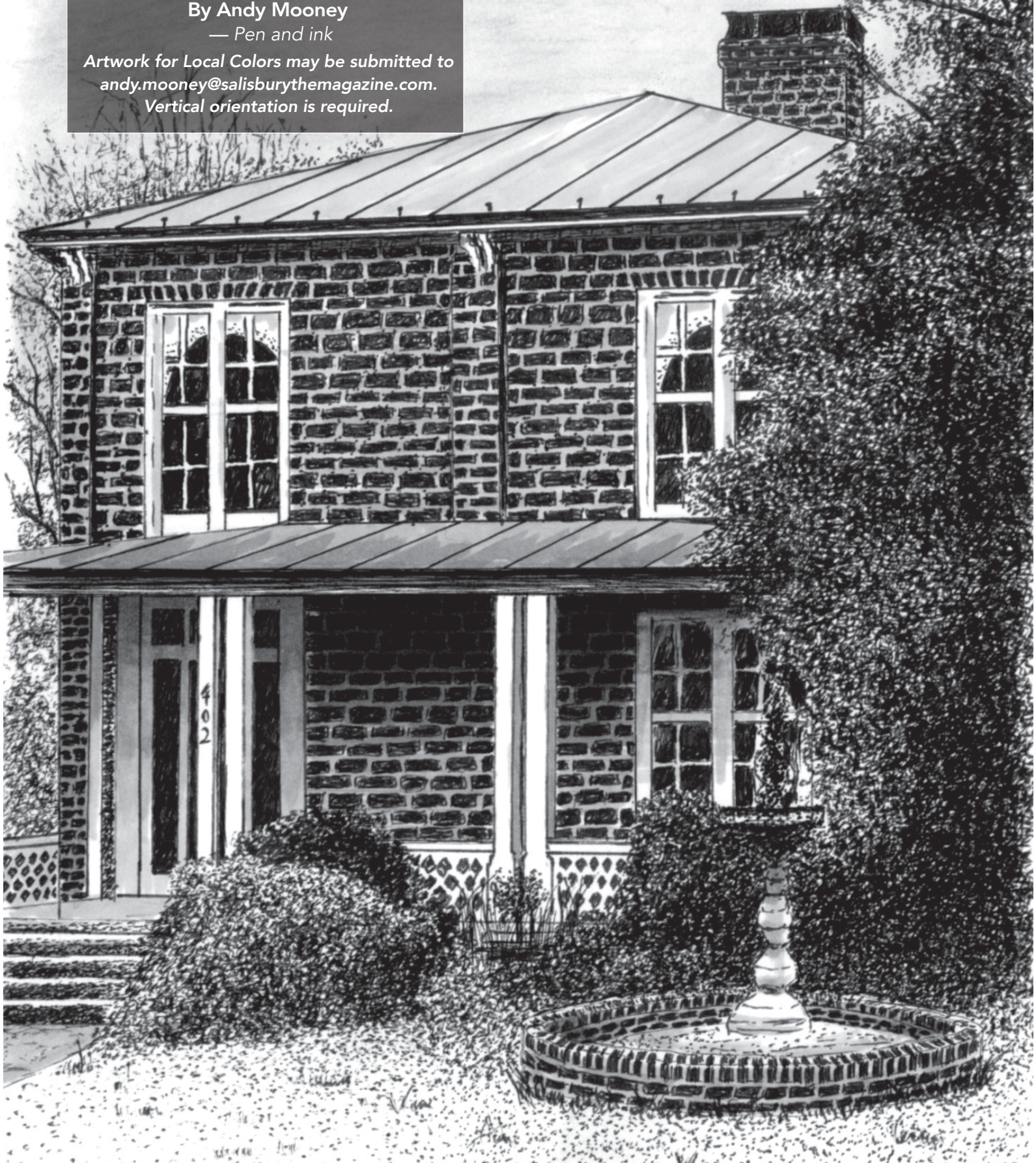


From left: Jeremy Ferden, Taylor Durham (standing), Brad Durham, Megan Ferden, Otis Pless (behind), Graham Lyerly and Stephanie Pless.

“CRAWFORD
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— Pen and ink

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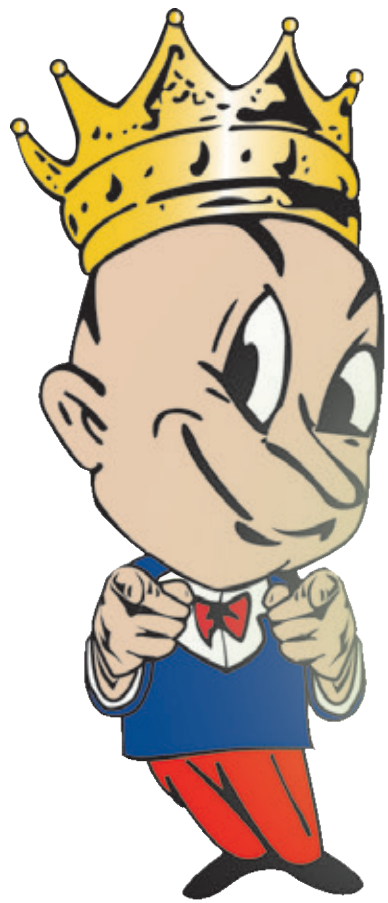
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