

MAY 2024

SALISBURY

the magazine



LAUNDRY LOVE

*Project provides
a free opportunity
for clean clothes*

Piece of Pi


LIBRARY CELEBRATES ANNUAL
EVENT WITH RECIPE SWAP

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On the cover: Ashley and Lori Yang, Bianca Munoz and Jatana Jernigan are volunteers that help at the laundromat for the monthly Laundry Love project.

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May you enjoy the season

There's a scene in my newest favorite movie, "Marcel the Shell with Shoes On," where a bee crashes into the ground in the garden and lies on her back, waving her feet in the air. Nana Connie, standing nearby, drily observes, "She's had a little too much, eh, nectar. *Vino fio e*, right, Franny?"

That's what May is, isn't it? So much to soak up and enjoy. The flowers, the breezes, the fresh smell of rain, opening the door in the morning to hear the birds chatter and sitting outside at twilight to hear them settle down for the night. Like Franny, I'm almost intoxicated by it all.

This May we bring you a book that's all about community (which, by the way, is the theme of the movie).

Susan Shinn Turner brings us the story of the Rose Triangle at West Innes Street and Old West Innes Street. It was started by community-minded folks who have provided us that lovely glimpse with their planting, tending and pruning. It's a small cadre of rose lovers and they're ready for a new generation of rose-lovers to step in. Could it be you?

Sydney Smith Hamrick shares the story of Pi Day at Rowan Public Library's West Branch. Library patrons gathered there to share recipes – and live tastings – of their favorite pies, ranging from Buttermilk Pie to Quiche, a savory entrée pie. The patrons of West Branch have shared several of these make-it-and-take-it events and Pi Day was their most recent. Along with the recipes and samples, patrons shared stories of family and tradition. It's almost pioneer-esque in the way they share, isn't it? And maybe we need more of that in our fast-paced world.

Our community's latest gift of love for the less fortunate is Laundry Love Salisbury, the brainchild of 17-year-old Ashley Yang. Laundry Love is a once-a-month opportunity for anyone to come wash and dry their laundry, free of charge, no questions asked. Although she started the project to bolster her college resumé, she



has come to care for the people who make use of the opportunity. She's passionate about continuing to refine the processes to make the service even better for them.

Sydney Smith Hamrick reviews "The Power of What If," by Alisha Fernandez Miranda. On the eve of her turning 40 while working as CEO of a successful venture, Miranda found herself exhausted and wonders what life might have been like if she had explored other options for her career. So, with the mostly-support of her husband and eight-year-old twins, she hires herself out as a free intern in a series of fields: theater, art and

fitness. Hamrick's review was so positive I chose to read the book myself. You'll have to read it, too, to see how Miranda navigates internships during COVID.

Our Rowan Original this month is the ever-charming and delightful Teresa Moore-Mitchell, our own local diva and classical/operatic singer. She's traveled the world sharing her gifts and gives us a behind-the-scenes peek at what that's like firsthand. She wanted her photo taken at Salisbury High, where the choir director plucked her from the orchestra, where she played violin. It was the first of the thousands of classic pieces she's sung. She sings arias as well, in Latin, Italian or French. Yet she beams love and humility to all she meets.

Let's add the magazine to the panoply of pleasures at hand, so that, like Franny, we can become intoxicated on *vino fio e*, eh?

Maggie

— Maggie Blackwell
Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

What's on Your

**WISH
LIST?**

This Spring?



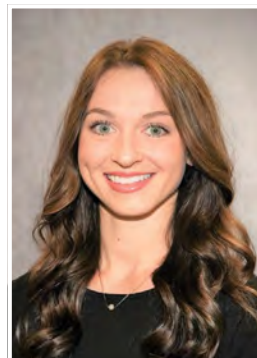
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THROUGH THE LENS by David Powell



David Powell captured an eastern screech owl in a tree.

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

The Power of “What If”

I really enjoy my professional life as a librarian but occasionally, I wonder what could have happened if I veered off onto another career pathway. I’m happy enough now, but I wonder “what if” sometimes. What if I’d studied something else in college, or what if I’d accepted the first job I was offered instead of waiting for other opportunities.

Alisha Fernandez Miranda, in her 2023 memoir “My What if Year,” recounts her experiences doing exactly that – taking a full year to step away from her existing career and explore the beauty and mystery of all the “what ifs” in her own life. Miranda makes the decision to temporarily pause her successful career as the CEO of a high-powered consulting firm to spend time exploring four different professional fields: theater, fitness, art brokerage and hospitality.

Miranda explains that her top reason for making this abrupt 180-degree turn in her life is because she realized how overworked and stressed she was. As a wife and mother of young twins with a busy home life, she was also pushing herself incredibly hard in her professional ventures. Over time, her constantly packed schedule and never-ending list of tasks felt crushing and suffocating. Though she and her husband found a lot of financial success, she realized money wasn’t everything – she simply felt miserable and unhappy, no matter what her bank account looked like.

In 2019, Miranda realized she had two main (albeit broad) options: she could continue slogging away through her hyper-demanding career, or she could do things differently. She began to imagine what “different” could look like for her and she found herself daydreaming about career pathways she always wanted to explore but never really had the opportunity to try. Eventually, she narrowed down her top choices and began cold-calling potential new employers with the desire to assist anywhere within their organizations for free.

Something I personally appreciated about Miranda’s experience was her willingness to start at the very bottom rung of

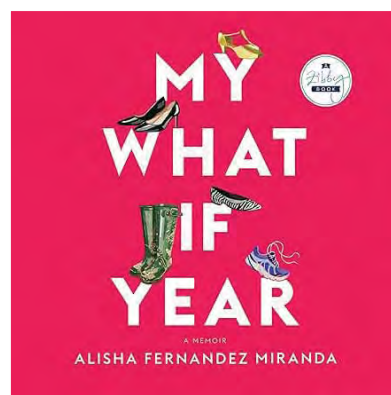
these new professional ladders. Though she’s incredibly educated, experienced and successful, Miranda realized that the skills she already possessed didn’t immediately qualify her to start in more challenging or appealing positions. In fact, every opportunity she accepted – from fancy hotel restaurant server to Broadway theater intern – required her to accept beginner’s level positions with no pay. The former CEO quickly realized that many of her existing skills were highly transferable to these other ventures but there was still a lot for her to learn. One of my favorite anecdotes Miranda recounts in her memoir is the moment she almost dropped a painting valued at £15,000 when collecting it from Sotheby’s London Showroom for one of her internship bosses. I’ve jammed a few copiers at work but cracking a huge, one-of-a-kind, £15,000 work of art – can you imagine?

At points in her memoir, I struggled to relate directly to Miranda (oh, to be able to step away from your job for an entire year to explore new interests...what a dream). Ultimately, I found her experiences both endearing and interesting. Though I would suspect most of us can’t afford to jet off to a different country for a new unpaid internship with little notice, I do believe most of us can relate to feeling the excitement of a first day at a new job, the hope that comes along with a fresh start, and the anxiety that accompanied everything during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

I highly recommend this memoir to people who are working, raising families, exploring a potential career change, trying to achieve a good work-life balance, struggling to find joy in their day-to-day routines or any combination of those experiences. Though I suspect some aspects of Miranda’s life aren’t as relatable to the average person, so many of them are. Her writing style is conversational and endearing, as if you’re reading about her adventures like they are messages from a friend. If you are looking for a memoir that’s inspirational and funny, look no further. **S**



by
SYDNEY
SMITH
HAMRICK



Classical singer and college professor Teresa Moore-Mitchell lights up a room as soon as she enters. She sings with choirs or solo and has traveled extensively to perform overseas. We managed to squeeze into her tightly packed schedule to learn more about her.

Q: Can you tell us a little about your growing-up years?

I was born in Thomasville because my mother wanted her parents' help with a new baby but we promptly moved here to Salisbury. We first lived next door to McLaughlin's Store at my aunt's home. In my younger years, a couple from Jersey City helped raise me – actually birth to high school, because my mother and father worked. Her name was "Ma Bessie" White. She raised some of the Peeler family as well. It's one of my favorite places in Jersey City; they were strong Christian people. I heard about Christ there all the time.

Q: Did you sing in the choir in school?

Well, that's a story. I played violin in the orchestra. We were planning a concert and Mrs. Cindy Pribble asked if someone would sing, "I Wonder as I Wander," and no one responded. Well, here I was in the orchestra and finally I raised my hand and said, "I'll sing it." She had me come to her office and sing scales. She would play a key and I would sing the note. The higher she got, the higher I got. The higher I got, the bigger her eyes got. Afterwards she asked, "Why are you not in my choir?"

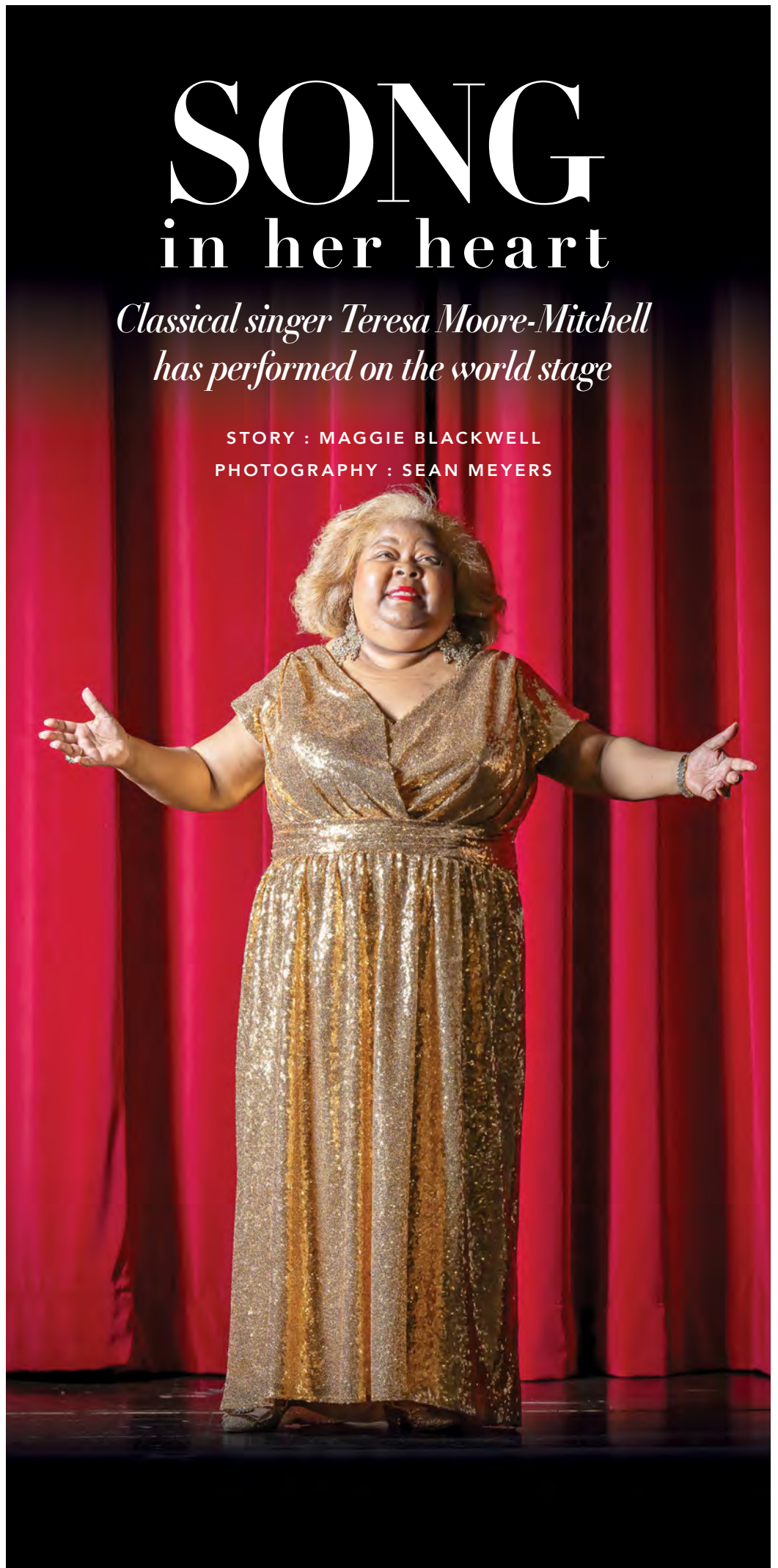
So, my first real performance was on stage at Salisbury High School. A little old lady came up afterward, took my hands in hers and told me to continue to sing, to sing for the glory of God. I don't remember anyone from the performance but her. I wish I had asked her name. It blessed me for her to say that to me.

After that, I sang at churches and choirs. Mrs. Pribble taught us so much. We did not stick to one genre of music – and the songs were not always what we liked. But she wanted to show us we could sing anything and could do languages. Mrs. Pribble always called us her sisters and brothers and today, I call my students sisters and brothers.

SONG in her heart

*Classical singer Teresa Moore-Mitchell
has performed on the world stage*

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL
PHOTOGRAPHY : SEAN MEYERS



Mrs. Pribble took us to sing in Las Vegas and Los Angeles. I was just 17 and had never flown. Fanny Butler (the late educator) and her husband chaperoned. We sang show tunes. She took us to our first real concert: Alabama and the Oak Ridge Boys. She had no idea what she was starting for me! We went on to represent high school choral programs at educational conferences.

I had planned to go to Appalachian State and then I was in a car accident. I didn't know the damage it had done to my body. The physician said that my injuries would hurt more with the cold and altitude — I needed to stay closer to home. So, Mrs. Pribble told me I needed to go to Pfeiffer. She helped me get scholarships. It was the best thing that ever happened to me. I earned my music degree at Pfeiffer and a master's at UNC-Greensboro in vocal/opera performance.

Mrs. Pribble is conducting the Stanley Chorale soon and we are surprising her with other former students all attending. We want to honor her.

Q: Where do you work today?

I've worked at Livingstone College for 15 years but I always help schools that have a need. I taught part time at Pfeiffer and helped at Winston-Salem State 2005-2008. They just called saying a professor has had to leave to care for his parents so I'll be helping them again. I teach at Bennett College online.

Between classes, rehearsals and evening classes, I might work from 9:00 or 10:00 in the morning to 7:30 at night. Winston-Salem State is one night a week and Bennett College is in the evening.

Q: Tell us about your travels!

My first big trip was Greece. I had raised most of the money to go, but I still lacked \$3,000. Well, my grandmother's first cousin, Mary Jane Redd, was Julian and Wyndham Robertson's housekeeper, and as I got older and got into opera and classical, she told Julian about me. She said he was going to help me. Then his secretary called me to say Julian was coming from New Zealand to New York to write a check to help me, and she wanted to know how much I owed. He paid the entire balance! I will always be grateful.

Greece was wonderful. We were 50 people from all over the world: Russia, Israel, Cuba,

U.S., all over. We applied through a competitive process and we were chosen. There were intensive workshops, language classes and opera scenes to practice. We started in Athens for three weeks. After that, the islands of Poros, Petros, Syros, Mykonos and Patmos. I met Sean Connery! He was at the Church of 100 Doors. I asked for a selfie and he said, "Actually I'm here to pray."

It was my first time to be in an environment focused on opera and language so intensively — and quick! I made lifelong friends.

Another major thing: I noticed a young lady sitting beside me. She came from money. She lived next door to David Letterman. She had attended several of our programs. She said, "I notice you're never nervous. I want that."

I told her, "Let me tell you about a man named Jesus. I did not have the money to come here but my community gave me money to come. I didn't have it but the Lord made a way for me to come. When I get in front of people, they are not going to judge me. I am the character; they will miss any mistakes I make. I decided when I get on stage, I will honor God with what I do. It's not for the people to judge; it's for Him. If I make a mistake, He is still going to love me. She learned more and more about God over the trip and wound up accepting Christ. I gave her my Bible.

It was my first time overseas. I had not been away from my family before. Coming back, I knew my plans. Since then, I have traveled to Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Texas, Minnesota, Chicago, Louisiana, Canada, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, Ohio, Delaware, Georgia, Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, South Carolina, Cuba (Gerry Hurley paid for that trip), Germany, Italy, Austria, Greece, Jamaica, Puerto Rico and France.

I have every intention of doing a solo concert at the American University in Paris next year. I met a young woman who lives in Germany and comes to visit her father at Trinity Oaks. She's a music agent! In 2020, she found a sponsor for me to go sing in Germany, but then everything shut down for Covid. She's invited me to come back to Germany and I plan to go to Paris on that trip.

Q: Have you had a best moment in your career?

Any time I know that my gift has blessed

someone is the best moment. I sang at Camp Darby in Pisa, Italy during Desert Storm. A Salisbury resident was over the base and he asked me to come sing. Just knowing I could take their minds off the war for a few minutes, was a blessing. Even if it's just for a few minutes of my singing, to bless them and bring peace and comfort and hope for a peaceful tomorrow.

Q: How do you prepare for a recital?

You must work on a song and know it well enough that it becomes an extension of yourself so whatever your character is, your audience sees that. That's what I love about opera: I can step in those shoes and deal with those issues.

If I'm preparing a student for a recital, they may have Italian art songs and some Italian arias, then French or German art songs and French arias, then oratorio arias, then other genres they like such as jazz or gospel, and end with spirituals.

Q: What's your biggest regret?

I was never able to have children, so I consider my students my children. Other than that, I'd say that I've tried several times to move away but I've always been called back to Salisbury. I told a student I want her to get away and move to NYC for three or six months. Doors open when you do that. I hate I did not buy a place in Paris that I could go back and forth. Enjoy the music, the culture, the language and soak it up.

Q: Who has been your biggest inspiration?

I'd have to say it's my mother. I don't make decisions without talking to God and my mother. Because my mother is my best friend, I have always gone to her with everything. She cares enough about me that she will tell me the truth, even if I don't like it. I go to her before my friends. I trust she will not share anything.

Q: What does the future hold for you?

I'm a lyric soprano... as with all sopranos, that may change. When I was younger, they would say my voice wasn't old enough for some roles. I plan to teach six or seven more years. I still want to concertize world-wide as much as possible. Watch for me at Pops at the Post. I'll be singing, "Summertime," from Porgy and Bess. **S**



piece of the **PI**



Pies are lined up on the table during the Salisbury Rowan Public Library's Pie Day recipe swap.

Library celebrates annual event with recipe swap

STORY : **SYDNEY SMITH HAMRICK** | PHOTOGRAPHY : **SEAN MEYERS**



Lyndsey Maloney samples a piece of coconut pie.



It's Pi Day!
Once per season, a very special kind of activity happens at Rowan Public Library. Members of the community gather to talk, laugh, swap recipes and — most importantly — eat delicious food together. Back in 2022, former RPL West Branch Supervisor and current Adult Services Supervisor Lyndsey Maloney found a way to combine community, good food and culinary literacy by starting a series of recipe swap programs at the library.

The seasonal recipe swaps are themed around different food categories and occasions. Previous recipe swaps included desserts, crock pot favorites, game day snacks, heritage dishes, and salads. People are invited to submit recipes that fit a broad definition of the swap's theme, ensuring a rich variety of dishes for participants to sample. At the swaps, participants get to try each recipe and take home hard copies so they can make their favorites on their own. The most current recipe swap held on March 9, themed around pies in honor of "Pi Day," didn't disappoint — seven different pies, ranging from sweet to savory, were available for folks to sample.

At the Pie Day Recipe Swap, Laura Mowry submitted a recipe





*Gretchen Witt
explains how her
grandmother
would measure out
ingredients.*



for a lemon yellow squash pie that you would never know contained a whole cup of grated squash. “I like this recipe because we always end up with so much squash each year, and you don’t want it to go to waste,” Laura explained. “This is a nice way to use it up a little differently, since the pie is so sweet.” Like Laura’s, other recipes weren’t just delicious — they were also economical or served a specific function within their households.

Another fabulous recipe that doubled as a functional dish was Lyndsey Maloney’s impossible buttermilk pie. She told the group that the reason the recipe found its way into her repertoire was out of necessity, though it ended up becoming a hit among her family. Because her husband showed signs of food allergies to premade baking mixes and other common baking ingredients, she tried to find a recipe that would be tasty and safe for him to enjoy, especially at celebrations where many of the food choices contained ingredients he couldn’t have. She stumbled upon the impossible buttermilk pie recipe, which calls for sugar, buttermilk, eggs, vanilla, butter, and baking mix (which she found a way to make herself to avoid the preservatives triggering her husband’s allergy). As simple as the recipe is, the flavor is anything but — the pie is sweet and smooth in a way that feels downright luxurious.

Some other sweet pie staples made it on the sampling menu at the recipe swap, including a cherry cheesecake



*A cherry pie awaits
a tasting.*



A quiche pie is cut.





pie, an old-fashioned apple pie, an old-fashioned coconut pie, and an impossible buttermilk pie. More wonderful than the pies themselves were the family ties and interesting tales that accompanied them.

“That apple pie is one I make all the time, usually for holidays” Amy Epley, another participant, told the other swappers. Many of the recipes were tied to specific holidays and celebrations, with swappers exclaiming that it “just wouldn’t feel like that time of the year” without one of those pies on the table. Beyond Amy’s family’s ravings for the apple pie, it’s important to note the official popularity of her recipe: not only did one flavor of her apple pie win first place at the annual Glory Days celebration in Fayetteville, North Carolina...but her other apple pie variety took home second place, too.

Gregory Hill, who brought an old-fashioned coconut pie, said the recipe was a seasonal favorite in his family that has been passed down through different generations. “A lot of the recipes in our family are seasonal, and now I associate certain times of the year with certain dishes,” Gregory explained. The old-fashioned coconut pie was rich and delicious, with a hint of tropical sweetness that certainly suggested spring was right around the corner.

On the other end of the pie flavor spectrum, Gretchen Witt prepared a Quiche Lorraine that was the epitome of savory, filled with eggs, onion, cheese, and bacon. “This recipe is really a living recipe,” Gretchen said of her pie choice. “The basic construct stays the same, but since the recipe is versatile, you can swap out ingredients to suit your tastes or



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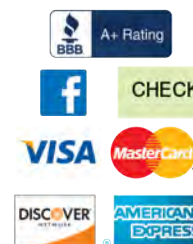
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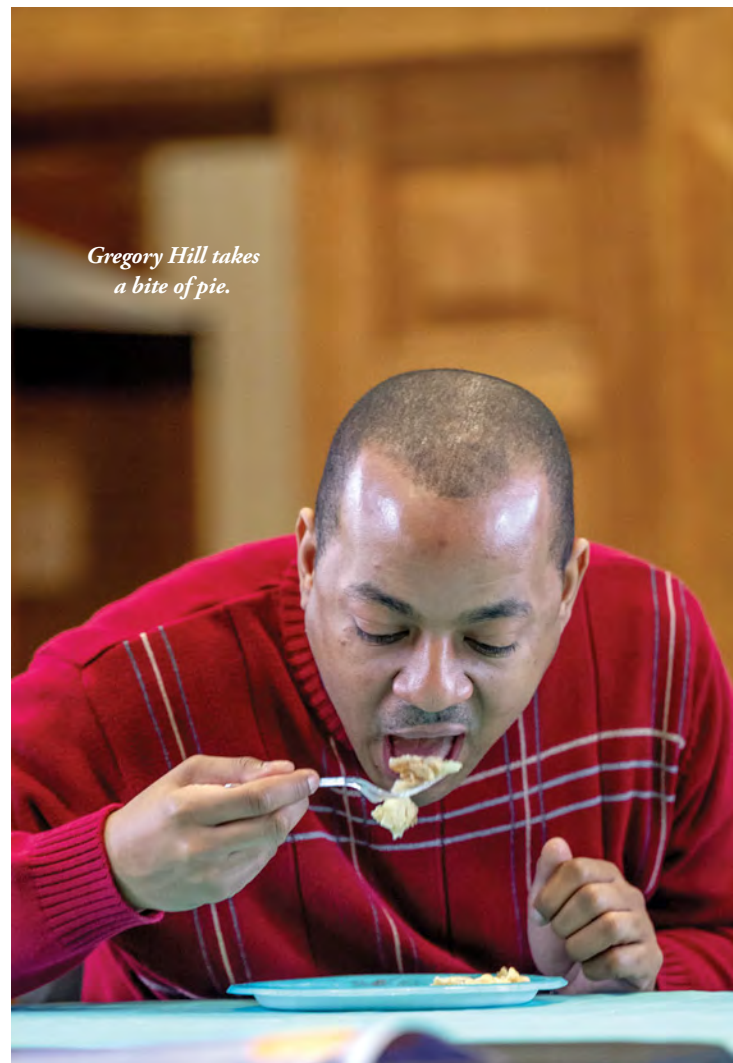
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Gregory Hill takes a bite of pie.

what you have on hand.” Gretchen explained that the recipe is a favorite in her family, though depending on who is making it, no two Quiche Lorraines end up the same.

Between anecdotes about family recipes, participants really got down to the root of why Lyndsey Maloney enjoys hosting these recipe swaps at the library so much – they increase culinary literacy and make community members more food-aware. Many folks associate literacy skills with books and reading but being literate stretches far beyond navigating text on a page. There are many ways a person can be literate, and the recipe swaps allow food and culinary literacy to take center stage.

“Culinary literacy, or food literacy, is one of the newer literacies but easily one of the most important,” Lyndsey explained. “Food-literate people know where their food comes from and how to make food for themselves or for their families from scratch. By providing recipes and encouraging folks to read and discuss recipes at the program, we are encouraging this type of literacy among our participants.”

As a librarian, Lyndsey enjoys seeing recipe swap participants try new foods with each other and share physical copies of the recipes among themselves. Not only does it create a great way for people to connect with their neighbors and try interesting new recipes, but it also helps people get the information they need to be successful with the recipes from the home chefs themselves. For example, it isn’t unusual for participants to ask each other where to find specific ingredients or what to do if they run into a specific problem while preparing a recipe from the swap. This kind of information-sharing is a direct line of knowledge that helps build

stronger culinary literacy and awareness among the swappers. Every time participants teach each other new information about recipes, ingredients, and food preparation, they are expanding food literacy within the group.

Besides the great food and great knowledge shared at the swap, people also shared real stories about the way these pie recipes traveled through their families and reminded them of great memories with loved ones. Gretchen recalled asking her grandmother to share some of her favorite recipes with her. Rather than telling her to write down specific instructions, her grandmother asked her to hold out her hand to “feel” how much sugar, flour, or salt a recipe required.

The Pie Day Recipe Swap ended up being a lot more than an opportunity to sample delicious home cooking — everyone left the swap with new information and community connections. Everyone enjoyed the pies, and more importantly, everyone learned how similar we all really are. Every recipe was accompanied by many stories of quirky relatives, holiday parties gone awry, unorthodox cooking methods, and the “correct” ways to pronounce certain words (is it pea-can or peh-kahn? The verdict was still out at the end of the swap).

Folks interested in participating in future recipe swaps at Rowan Public Library can reach out to librarian Lyndsey Maloney, who is excited to expand these programs and continue to offer more culinary literacy opportunities in the future. Lyndsey plans to host another swap this summer themed around the upcoming Summer Reading Program’s theme, “Adventure Begins at Your Library.”

IMPOSSIBLE BUTTERMILK PIE


Ingredients:

- 1 ½ c white sugar
- 1 c buttermilk
- 3 large eggs
- ½ c baking mix such as Bisquick
- ⅓ c butter, melted
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Directions:

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Grease a 9-inch pie plate.
2. Beat together sugar, buttermilk, eggs, baking mix, melted butter and vanilla in a large bowl until smooth. Pour mixture into the prepared pie plate.
3. Bake in the preheated oven until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean (about 30 minutes). Cool for 5 minutes.

No baking mix on hand? You can make your own!
Combine and mix the following then use as directed.

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon butter 



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*Mayor Karen Alexander
and Rowan Rose Society
President Sara Hill
at the Triangle Rose
Garden Rededication
Ceremony May 2016.
(Jack Page photo)*



Beautifying the **CITY**

*Rowan Rose Society needs help
to keep garden blooming*

STORY : **SUSAN SHINN TURNER**

SUBMITTED PHOTOS



Rowan Rose Society members Carolyn Alexander and Susie Lee demonstrate proper pruning techniques. (Sara Schladensky photo)



Exhibitors use creative tricks to prepare the roses for the show.

The year 1976 signified not only our country's bicentennial celebration — it was also the start of the Rowan Rose Society's Triangle Garden.

At the time, the late John Lowery was supervisor of the county's Department of Social Services. When he looked out his office window, he didn't like what he saw: an unattractive triangle of county land, situated between Old West Innes Street and what was called "New" West Innes Street. The small plot of land faced the city cemetery, and behind it was Summersett Funeral Home.

Being a member of Rowan Rose Society — founded 20 years earlier — Lowery thought the space would make an excellent rose garden.

He was right.

After a go-ahead from the county manager, the land was prepared and the rose garden was born. Its ribbon-cutting took place that summer.

All through the years, members of the Rowan Rose Society have faithfully tended the garden, doing everything



Triangle Rose Garden received landscape of the month from the Salisbury community appearance commission in September 2022.



you have to do to take care of the beautiful but high-maintenance flowers: pruning, watering, spraying, deadheading, clean-up, applying lime and fertilizing.

Rowan Rose Society treasurer Leslie Lee puts the finishing touches on one of her arrangements for exhibit in the Rowan Rose Show in May 2023.

“It’s really hard work,” says President Sara Hill.

In 2023, the city designated the garden as an urban treasure.

Summersett has been a strong supporter of the garden from its inception, providing electricity when needed and storage of equipment, according to Jack Page, a society member and co-owner of The Perfect Rose. “They keep a watch on it, too.”

Page notes that the garden is not a cutting garden.

“We call it a drive-by display garden,” he says.

Page and Robert Myers, his husband and business partner, joined the Rowan Rose Society around 2001. Myers is now vice president, while Page is president of the Charlotte Rose Society.

Myers and his rose technicians serve clients from Winston-Salem to Columbia. He’s also served as a judge for national and international rose shows through the World Federation of Rose Societies.

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*Rowan Rose Society Rose Show
May 2023 at the Salisbury
Civic Center.*

As you might expect, some things have changed for the society since 1976.

“Like other organizations,” Page says, “our members are getting older. We have 250-plus rose bushes. That is a huge rose garden and a major effort to maintain.”

The society now has about 20 on the roll, but usually around eight attend meetings, Page says, including himself and Myers.

The group is small but mighty. “That describes us beautifully,” Hill says.

She’s been a rose society member for 15 years, she says, “but there’s still lots to know.”

Hill has 60 rose bushes in her own garden and began attending meetings with two friends.

“I’m the only one who stuck with it,” she notes. “I like the competition and the shows and I love doing arrangements.”

“At its creation, society members were assigned one month to work the garden,” Page explains, “but it has just gotten to be too

much.”

Hill is working with the city to apply for grants for the garden. She’d also like for the city to get involved with the garden.

“We do everything and it’s costly,” she says.

Ben and Frances Agner, who were the garden’s chairpersons for 18 years, have “passed along the pruning shears.”

“My wife grew roses and I started helping her and going to the rose society meetings with her,” he says. “It takes a whole lot of work but if you keep up with it, it isn’t too bad.”

The Agners have 175 rose bushes at their home, but at 89, Agner says, “If one dies, I don’t try to replace it.”

Page notes that the late Clyde Harriss, owner of Greendale Nursery, was still pruning roses at 92.

And, Page says, “The cost of maintaining the garden is more than our society can easily provide.”

Members hope that this year’s Rose Show,

set for 1-5 p.m. May 11 at the Civic Center, will spur interest in raising funds and garner volunteers to keep the garden going.

“If I’ve got some pretty roses, I’ll show something,” Agner notes.

The society hopes to raise \$35,000 over the next five years to support the garden and the rose show. Page has set up a GoFundMe page under Rowan Rose Society Triangle Garden and Rose Show.

“I would like to get the public and the business community in Salisbury to get involved,” Page says. “It is a community garden, and we do want to make it a city and county and community project.”

Still, Hill says, the effort is worth it.


“People call me and I’ve had so many comments thanking us for beautifying the city,” she says. **S**

Freelance writer Susan Shinn Turner lives in Raleigh.

Roses from the Triangle
Rose Garden.




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*Rowan Rose Society
Triangle Garden in
bloom.*

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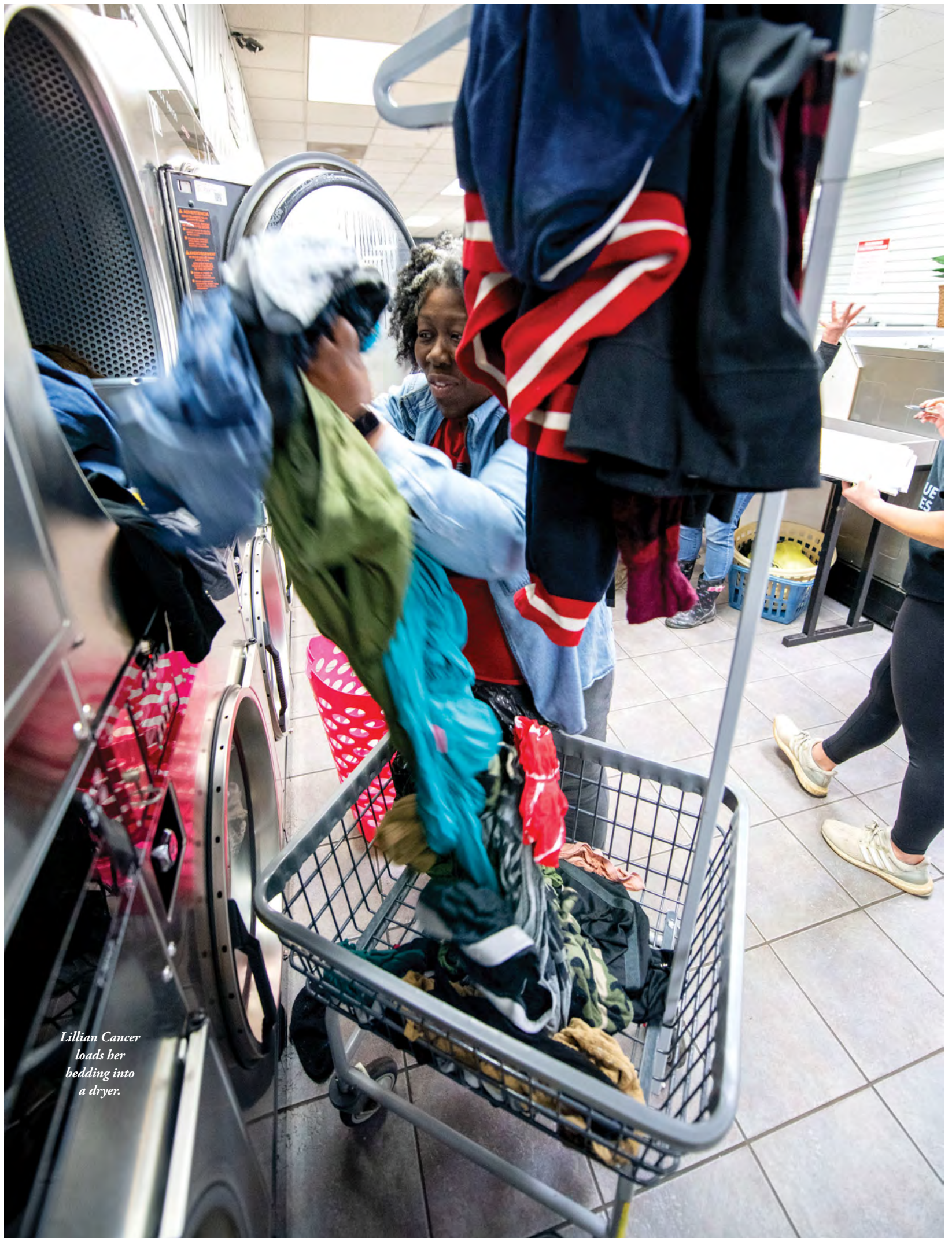


Amanda Wise uses her detergent before starting her washer during the monthly Laundry Love.

DETERGENT and DIGNITY

Laundry Love provides a free opportunity for clean clothes

STORY : MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY : JON C. LAKEY



*Lillian Cancer
loads her
bedding into
a dryer.*



Program founder Ashley Yang keeps track of the participants using the dryers.

The night sky is dark. The parking lot is filled, illuminated by fluorescent spillage from the laundromat. Inside, people are moving, talking, easing around one another in the crowded space. The e’s happy chatter among what can only be called controlled chaos. The ’re doing their laundry — for free.

More and more people edge inside, carrying baskets, black plastic garbage bags, backpacks, Rubbermaid containers, grocery carts — all filled with dirty laundry. It’s the last Thursday of the month: Laundry Love night.

Laundry Love Salisbury is the brainchild of Ashley Yang, a 17-year-old high school junior who was looking for a way to increase her community involvement for her college application. As she and her mom Lori brainstormed, she mentioned some of her fellow students at school don’t have clean clothes to wear.

“I know that deteriorates their being, their self-confidence” she said.

They got busy scouring the internet for a free laundry model. Mother and daughter located a central Laundry Love that provides advice and support to the 200+ Laundry Loves around the U.S. By affiliating with them, they remain independent in all their decisions (and fundraising) but have access to Zoom meetings and emails with other, more experienced Laundry Loves.

Initially, Lori asked how to market and she was surprised to learn that marketing is never an issue. “You set up,” she was told, “and they will find you.”

She networked, nevertheless, with Community Care Clinic, Terri Hess House and



Family Crisis Center. As a board member of the local United Way, she was able to get an email blast sent to all their agencies.

Tara Allen developed a flyer and Elia Gregorek developed a Spanish version. The flyers were posted at public places like the YMCA and other laundromats.

Laundry Love of Salisbury provides the money and detergent for people in need to wash their clothes, no questions asked, on the last Thursday of the month from six to eight p.m. The location is Campbell's Coin Laundry, 725 Jake Alexander Boulevard West, near Juice Life and Planet Fitness.

The first Laundry Love was created in Ventura, California, when an unhoused man was asked, "How can we come alongside your life in a meaningful way?" His response was, "If I had clean clothes, I think people would treat me like a human being." (Taken from their website.)

That first Laundry Love created a partnership with Earth Breeze, whose small sheets of detergent, much like fabric softener sheets, forego the need for plastic jugs. Today Laundry Loves around the nation can receive Earth Breeze for their clients. The size and portability of the sheets makes all the difference for organizations helping hundreds of people do their laundry.

Our local Laundry Love has four workers: Lori and Ashley, Bianca Muñoz and Jatana Jernigan. When the Yongs put up a Laundry Love Salisbury page on Facebook, Bianca and Jatana messaged Lori, offering to help. She told Ashley, "We have hit the jackpot." Ashley mans the sign-in table, assigning appropriate washers to people based on their needs. Lori, Jatana and Bianca are just a blur as they rush around, helping people, feeding quarters into washers and answering questions. Bianca translates for Hispanic people needing help.

When Jatana first saw the notice on Facebook, she was immediately moved to volunteer. "I was a single mom long ago and wanted to pay back all the kindnesses done for me as best I can."

Bianca was also moved to help as soon as she saw the page. "I'm so glad my Spanish can be of help," she says.



Luis Martinez poses with his washer.



Dryer sheets are placed with the wet clothes for added fragrance.







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Amanda Wise, expecting her sixth child, has come every month since the service began. “It helps us out a lot,” she says, “and every time it’s more organized.” She would normally spend about \$50 every two weeks for laundry. That’s a valuable savings for a large family.

Nikki Oxendine has used the service four times for her family of three. She says she has no laundry facilities at her public housing. “I’m very appreciative,” she says. “I tell them every time. You appreciate it more when you don’t have it.”

A man who preferred not to share his name saw a notice on the bulletin board at the YMCA, where he goes to shower. He says it’s been a real blessing to wash his clothes. He lives on government income and says there’s more month than money in his check.

Laundry Love Central told the Yongs they would just have to get started and there would be lots of trial and error — and that’s certainly been the case. Ashley and Lori had to “learn as they go” at their first Laundry Love in October. Even though they only had two customers, they quickly realized they had lots of organizing to do. The process has refined each month.

Initially they used sticky notes to identify who was using each washer, but the heat caused the sticky notes to fall to the floor. As they considered super-sticky notes, someone had the brilliant idea to use magnets. Today they have white magnets about the size of a “Hello my name is” sticker. They use write-on/wipe off markers to write the person’s name.

There are only two super washers in the facility, and everyone wants to use a super. There’s a spirit of camaraderie, though, and someone with less laundry will compromise with someone who has more so each has



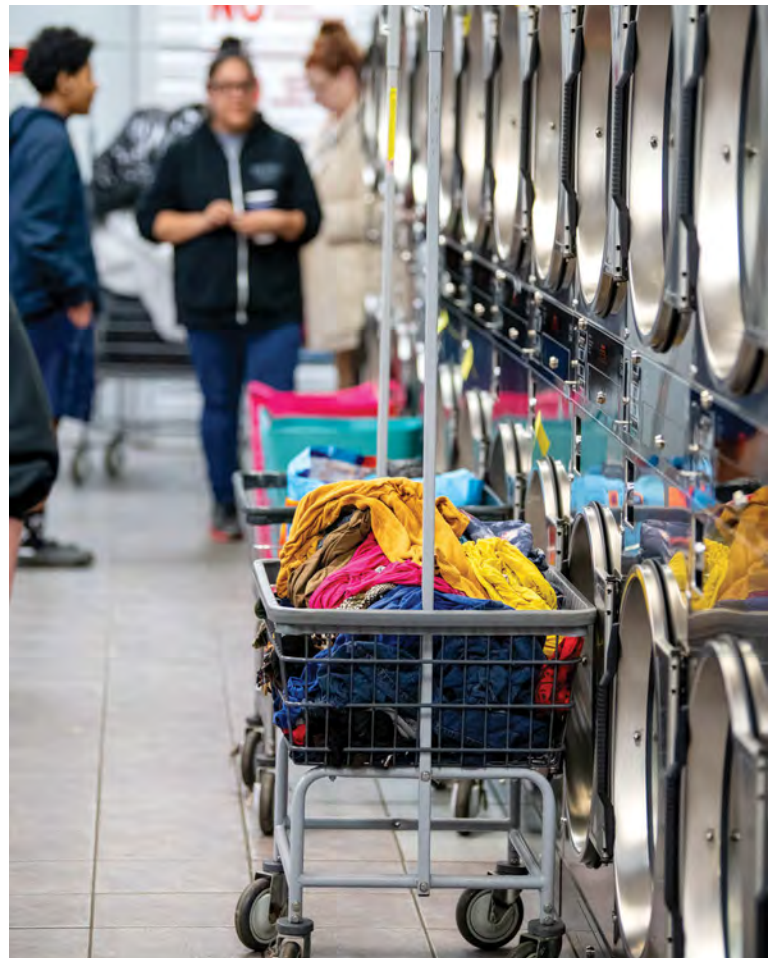
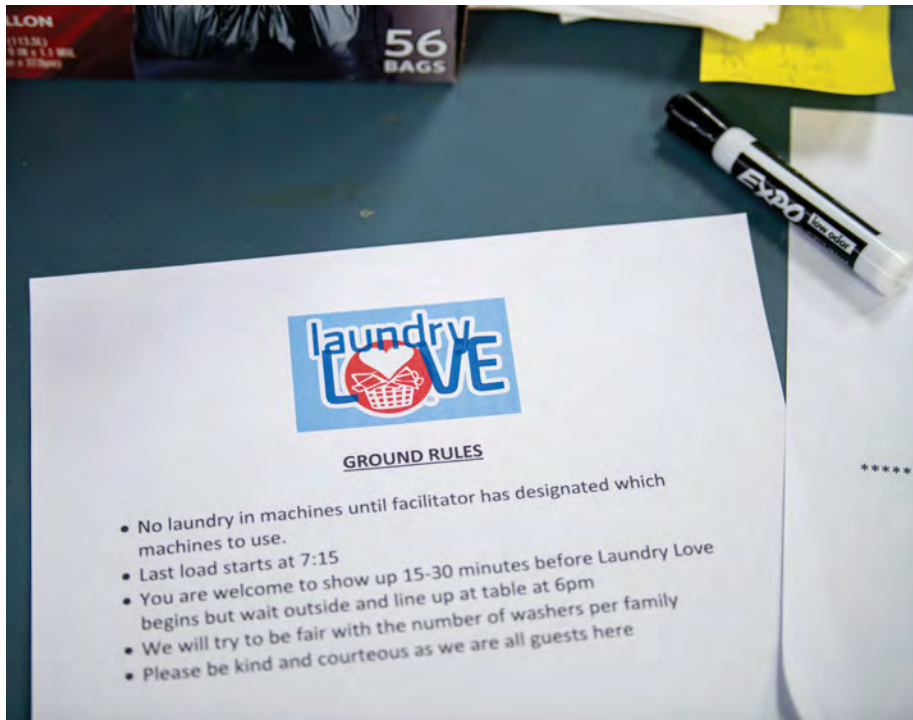
A repurposed shopping cart helps bring totes of laundry to the laundromat.



Emilio Norman feeds quarters into a washer for Stanley.



Amanda Wise (left) watches as volunteer Bianca Munoz drops quarters into the washer.





the right capacity. While laundry is not typically a joyous task, there's a spirit in the room of getting it done, and everyone is upbeat. There's a wait for the rolling buggies to take clean clothes to the dryer, but again, people are patient and thankful for the opportunity to get it done.

Ashley and Lori keep detailed logs of use. They did 146 loads in January and 187 in February. Funding at this point is month-to-month. They're currently spending around \$400 a month and when donations come in, the money is used immediately. They spoke at the Lions Club in January and received \$500 — just over enough for a month.

Lori has attempted to apply for a Robertson grant, but LLS has no 501(c)(3) non-profit status today. Applying for one is a time-intensive process.

Lori says she realizes the need is much greater than what they're meeting. They've considered opening more than once a month, but with Ashley in school and sports, that's a hard balance. Dennis Rivers, the homeless liaison for Salisbury, approached them about coordinating a second site closer to the center of town, but at this point, they don't have the volunteers or funding to consider it.

They also have worries about people who don't have transportation and people who are working in the evening. Some have asked for morning hours.

Lori looks at it all with a caring heart and an attitude of faith. "I'm touched by the gratitude of everyone. And I love how they compromise on the washers. I'm just happy to see it doing so well. It will work out the way it's supposed to. We're going to keep doing what we're doing and God will be in charge."

It's been an eye-opening experience for teen-aged Ashley. "I just

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Lillian Cancer gets a dryer sheet from volunteer Jatana Jernigan (right).



Tammy Hartsell uses a table to fold the dried clothes.

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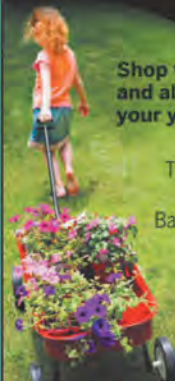
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Lori Yang helps one of the participant families carry their clean laundry out to their car.

never realized how much laundry was necessary,” she said. One man had laundry that was all white. Turned out, he is a painter. “Then it dawned on me, people have to wash their work clothes, too,” she said.

Are they exhausted at the end of the night? The answer is a resounding Yes — mentally and physically. They are super-thankful for the help of Bianca and Jatana.

In a year and a half, Ashley will be at college — and who will run it then? She has thought of that. She has her eyes open on students behind her who may have the initiative to run it their junior and senior years. When the time comes, she can “bequeath” the service to them. They will have the advantage of established processes and a steady customer base.

“I just have the need to give back,” Ashley says. “I have so many things going for me — my housing, my family, my future. I need to give to people who don’t have all that.”

Then she smiles. “Laundry Love = detergent, love and dignity.”

Laundry Love Salisbury gladly accepts donations on Venmo. User name is @laundryloveofsalisbury. 






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— Submitted photos



Delta Sigma Theta members work their Adopt a Street service project.



Officers for Delta Sigma include bottom row, from left: Jessica Wilkerson, corresponding secretary; Lasheka White, chaplain; Deirdre Davis, chapter president; Tameka Brown, vice president; Patricia Cowan, assistant financial secretary. Top row, from left: Brenda Davis, treasurer; Rashele McConnell, parliamentarian; Holly Lawson, assistant treasurer; Delphine McCullough, financial secretary; Jill Dubose, recording secretary



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