

March 2025 STM.indd 1 2/10/25 11:11 AM



March 2025 STM.indd 2 2/10/25 11:11 AM

CONTENTS

ADMINISTRATIVE

John Carr — Publisher

john.carr@salisburythemagazine.com

Maggie Blackwell - Editor

maggie.blackwell@salisburythemagazine.com

Andy Mooney — Creative director andy. mooney @salisbury the magazine. 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, Brian Holiday, Mary-Louise Hooper, Sean Mevers, Dr. Robert Winter, Brenda Zimmerman

On the web:

www.salisburythemagazine.com

On Facebook:

www.facebook.com/salisburythemagazine

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12 Flying the flag for ag

FFA prepares the next generation for the future of agriculture

20 Mobile home

New book by Mark Wineka and Ed Clement chronicles move of Crawford House in 1976

28 Hangin' around

Fine Frame Gallery celebrates 30 years of preserving treasures in Salisbury

DEPARTMENTS

Editor's Letter p.6 Bookish p.7 Through the Lens p.8 Now at Waterworks p.40 The Scene p.44 Local Colors p.46

Rowan Original p.10

On the cover: Bruce and Jackie Wilson of Fine Frame Gallery are celebrating their 30th year in business in downtown Salisbury. (Sean Meyers photo)

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS

Accelerate Therapy	Blue Bay Seafood18	Godley's Garden Center43	Rowan EDC15	Trinity Oaks25
and Performance33	Bostian Retirement19	Cathy Griffin/Ashlee Fippin —	Rowan-Kannapolis ABC36	Windsor Gallery37
Ace Hardware43	Carolina Pipe Cleaning26	C215	Sink Farm Equipment47	Yatawara39
Ralph Baker's Shoes4	Carter Law Group33	Lil' Shavers35	Stout Heating and Air36	Melissa Yates —
Bare Furniture2	Discount Boat and	Osterhus Outdoors24, 43	TMR Realty37	Lantern Realty38
Barnhardt Jewelers34	RV Storage38	Monica Poole35	Tom's Carpet Care43	
Baxter Consulting38	F&M Bank48	Putnam's Carpet43	Town of Granite Quarry34	

March 2025 STM.indd 3 2/10/25 11:11 AM





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March 2025 STM.indd 5 2/10/25 11:11 AM

Marching forward

he month January got its name from the Roman god Janus, who had two faces: one to look back at last year and one to look forward to the coming year.

I've always felt March needs a similar icon, with one face to look back at the long, dark days of winter and one to look forward to spring. March is the month when snowdrops, crocuses and jonquils bloom. It's also the

month we had a terrible ice storm in 2003. It's an in-between month.

Our March issue does lots of looking back. Our Rowan Original, Dr. Nilous Avery II, pastor of Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church, delayed his retirement date when it fell during Covid. He still serves as pastor there today. Avery is a fi ecracker personality and one cannot help but smile in his presence.

Mark Wineka, the original editor of this magazine and long-term writer for the Salisbury Post, wrote a book about moving a house a mile away in 1976. His book is chock-full of names and personalities from our area, both past and present. While it's ostensibly a book about a house move, Wineka and "co-publisher" Ed Clement took pains to add history stories dating to the very beginning of Salisbury. It's a great read.

It was a real challenge to write a story about a book and about writing the book without giving spoilers from it. I think we pulled it off. Here's the main spoiler: the house made it to its destination on South Fulton Street.

South Rowan High School has always had a great reputation for its agricultural education. The student group of future farmers is now simply called, "FFA." You'll have to read the article to discover why the letters no longer stand for anything. The FFA Alumni Association in Row-



an County is especially busy and has won state and national awards for their service to the students. Members include former Ag students, parents of current Ag students, and parents of Ag students who graduated years ago. Brenda Zimmerman brought us both the story and the photos for this piece.

The eternally upbeat Bruce Wilson and wife Jackie celebrate 30 years of Fine Frame Gallery on South Main Street in Salisbury. In the story, they

recall incredible pieces they've framed or reconstructed – often recalling the exact dimensions!

The Waterworks piece this month celebrates three paintings by French artist Pierre Bonnard. Their story this month ran a bit long due to explaining three pieces and we couldn't cut a word, as the analysis was so fascinating. I invite you to study the paintings, read the story and then look at the paintings again. I bet you'll see them in a whole new light.

Our Bookish is by Margaret Basinger, who reviewed Signal Fires by Dani Shapiro. This, too, involves looking backward and forward. Basinger's reviews always inspire me to read the book; check it out and see if it has the same effect on ou.

Happy March to you! May the snowdrops, crocuses and jonquils bring a smile to your face as you realize, "Oh yes! Spring will come again!"



— Maggie Blackwell Editor, Salisbury the Magazine

6 SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

March 2025 STM.indd 6 2/10/25 11:11 AM

'Signal Fires' a story about love, life and death

t is a summer night in 1985 on Division Street. Thee inebriated teenagers, a brother, a sister and the sister's friend, decide to take a joyride in the family car. Speeding and swerving all over the road, they crash into a big oak tree right near the siblings' home. Although her younger brother was driving, the sister takes the blame for the wreck that kills her friend and the two of them swear that this will be a secret they will never tell. This secret has terrible ramifications for their futures.

Thus begins Dani Shapiro's first book of fiction in fifteen years, Signal Fires, a book about intergenerational relationships, love, life and death. Shapiro spins a yarn that goes back and forth between two families and the emotional ties that bind them. Her writing is beautifully descriptive



MARGARET BASINGER

yet easy to follow. Meg Wolitzer, author of Th Interestings, calls Signal Fires "a haunting, moving, propulsive exploration of family secrets." Signal Fires is about cruelty that one can suffe from a parent and the love that one can receive from a veritable stranger.

The plot continues years later on the same street. The Shenkmanns, a young couple expecting a baby boy, are overwhelmed when the wife goes into premature labor. The baby is coming so fast that the birth will be taking place on their kitchen floo . The wife's cries of pain are loud and piercing, causing the Wilifs across the street to feel the need to help. Luckily, the neighbor is a medical doctor. Dr. Wilif assess-

es the young mother's condition, sees that her umbilical cord is wrapped around the baby's neck, and saves both mother and child. The parents decide to give their baby boy a strange name because he had such a strange arrival. They name him Waldo. This is not the last time these families will be united in a memorable event.

More years pass and we see that Waldo is as unusual as his name. He is not the son his father had hoped for. Miserable at sports, Waldo is a brilliant boy who marvels at the beauty of the world and has an innate ability to find connections in everything. Waldo is never happier than when he looks at the night sky through his Stargazer, an instrument through which he can view the constellations.

One night Waldo and his across-the-street neighbor, Dr. Wilif, now re-



tired with a wife who is in assisted living with dementia, sit down together under the tainted oak tree and spend some magical time together under the nighttime sky. At last Waldo has found someone who will listen attentively as he shares his love of the stars and his belief that everything is connected, past, present and future. The relationship they begin that night will weave itself through the rest of this inspiring, poignant novel.

Shapiro's characterizations of Dr. Wilif and Waldo are memorable. Her descriptions of the heavens and Waldo's vast vocabulary of the stars and their constellations reveal the serious research she did to create these unforgettable lovers of our universe.

Her celestial descriptions bring to mind another fine book, Bewilderment by Richard Powers. Although Powers' book is political, emphasizing his belief in the damage man is bringing upon the Earth, he too describes a strong relationship between a man and a boy and their obsession with the sky. The fictional universes Power's creates are just as believable and mystical as Shapiro's real one.

Two excellent authors. Two wonderful books. S

March 2025 STM.indd 7 2/10/25 11:11 AM





March 2025 STM.indd 9 2/10/25 11:11 AM



Dr. Nilous Avery lives life to the fullest

STORY: MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY: SEAN MEYERS

that make us lively. My parents loved helping others and I love it, too."

Dr. Nilous M. Avery II serves as pastor at Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Salisbury. He's a generational pastor: his great-great-great-grandfather, Harry Blacknall Crews, came to this country as an infant and worked as a slave. Upon emancipation, he

love life," he says. "I love the things

has produced a pastor.

Born and educated in Asheville, Avery attended Shaw University, getting his degree in Divinity, as his father had. He earned his Doctor of Ministry at Hood Theological Seminary; Dr. Albert Aymer recruited him. He served as a teacher, then administrator, in the Asheville schools until he was called by Mt. Zion in 1992.

Initially, Avery planned to retire at 30 years

with the church — but COVID intervened, making it a poor time to leave. He has stayed on. Although he's had several invitations to go elsewhere, nothing has "called" him. He plans to reassess in two years.

Like his ministry, his call to serve others also came from family role models. When Avery was an infant, his mother saw a diapered baby barefoot in the snow. She found the mother and returned the baby to her. This experience

SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

10

helped to start a church. Every generation since

March 2025 STM.indd 10 2/10/25 11:11 AM



inspired her to start keeping babies in her home. Eventually her business grew to a brick-and-mortar daycare center. Today Avery's sister runs the daycare. His face beams with pride as he says it's the oldest Black daycare center in Asheville, with three locations. Although the daycare center was originally called Hill Street Daycare, his sister renamed it to CWA Daycare, honoring her mother by using her initials.

Avery is a handsome, diminutive man, always clad in crisp, professional clothing and classic footwear. He compensates for his size when he preaches, speaking from the heart, encouraging others to "Amen" or "Yes, yes," as he speaks. When he reaches the culmination of his lesson, he often stands on his toes or even jumps from the ground a bit to punctuate his words.

Aside from serving as pastor for a church with 450 members, Avery is amazingly busy. He serves on boards for Hood Theological Seminary and Shaw Divinity School as well as the University; he serves on the Woodson Foundation, the Salisbury Community Development Corporation Board and the Salisbury Police Chief's Citizens Advisory Board. He recently served as the president of his church's State Convention for four years, representing

March 2025 STM.indd 11



a half million members. He's a widely sought speaker for churches, revivals and conferences.

"I love to go speak," he says. He and his wife Nicole often go a day before or stay a couple of days afterwards to explore a new town.

Six historically Black theological institutions have formed a collaborative; Hood and Shaw are both members. The Lilly Foundation grants money to the six institutions to serve the community at large. Avery is involved with the collaborative and often writes for them.

He relaxes by walking. He walks outside when he can; for inclement days, he has a

treadmill at home. He loves to travel; it clears his mind. He gets completely away, with no schedule. He enjoys the freedom to wake up when he wakes up.

He's highly involved with his family, enjoying commencements for nieces and nephews. Avery says the excitement of the young people, the thrill of first-time graduates and seeing n-tionally known speakers all make it gratifying for him.

His ministry, he says, has allowed him to see many national figu es. His favorite experience was meeting Michelle Obama at the denomination's state convention. The officer were allowed to have conversations with her.

His parents, he says, were civil rights pioneers. When the local A&P in Asheville wouldn't hire Blacks in higher positions, Avery's dad led a boycott of the store. The family stayed in a hotel for a couple of weeks when his dad received a death threat. Today photos of his mom and dad are in the Civil Rights Museum.

Avery's father's name was also Nilous. His mother, Avery's grandmother, had two cousins named Eulo and Nilo. When she named her children, she added "us" to the end, creating the names, Eulous and Nilous.

A treasured memory is staying with his elderly dad for two weeks following surgery. His dad died two weeks later. He had been a mentor to Avery — the reason he entered the ministry — and those two weeks were precious.

Avery's maternal grandparents were farmers with 13 children. His grandfather had a mule and a cart. He worked for a man named Graham Dean. When he was a child, Avery and six cousins spent summers with the grandparents. The boys hopped on the cart to go dig tobacco and pick beans; the girls worked in the garden or plucked chickens. They slept on pallets on the floor with the doors open for cross breezes. His grandmother made them cool pops to eat. They had plenty of pork during hog season. He remembers one other chore with a wry smile: cleaning the bathhouse.

"Those summers are my happiest childhood memory," he says. \boxed{S}

2/10/25 11:11 AM



March 2025 STM.indd 12 2/10/25 11:11 AM



Row after row of recognition awards for the SRHS FFA are evidence of the strength of the program which could not exist without the support of the FFA Alumni and Supporters. David Overcash noted plaques, trophies and scholarships for outstanding students and their work are funded by the FFA alumni.

FLACING THE FLACING THAC

FFA prepares the next generation for the future of agriculture

STORY AND PHOTOS BY BRENDA ZIMMERMAN



o the average person, agriculture consists of growing crops or raising cattle. Modern-day Agri-business goes far beyond those basics. Students in Rowan County have an excellent opportunity to learn Agri-business and leadership skills. Fifty years ago, local businesses and former Future Farmers of America students wanted to put their experiences and knowledge to work to benefit the students coming in with an interest in various career paths that included many aspects of farming.

The national FFA Alumni Association was established in 1971. The South Rowan FFA Alumni Chapter was established 50 years ago to support and mentor students interested in diverse career paths. It has grown from a handful of members in 1975 to a current membership of 270. The group has been recognized at national levels for their outstanding work at least 30 times over the years, sometimes ranking 4th in the nation for their accomplishments. The local chapter has earned the national Thee Star Gold honor which recognizes excellence in a variety of areas.

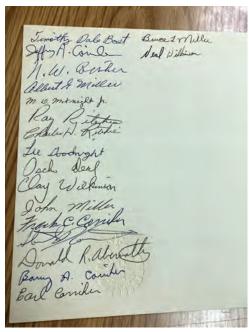
FFA started as Future Farmers of America. Over the years, the national nomenclature was reduced to three letters. As a marketing and public image upgrade as well as to reflect the di ersity that includes not only agriculture but the many aspects of Agri-business the three letters "FFA" and "FFA Alumni" are the modern names for the groups.

14 SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

March 2025 STM.indd 14 2/10/25 11:11 AM



March 2025 STM indd 15 2/10/25 11:11 AM



The original cha ter for the local chapter.
Signatures of those present at the time of the
May 15, 1975, charter include current members
Bruce Miller and Neal Wilkinson. Wilkinson's
late brother Clay signed as well. Many original
surnames such as Miller and Corriber continue to
be on the roster today.

Members do not have to have been FFA students to be a member of the association. In fact, parents of students, former students and community leaders often join because they also believe in the future of agriculture. Members are often the children and grandchildren of members, which creates a generational fl w.

According to retired South Rowan High School (SRHS) teacher Bruce Miller, FFA Alumni chapters are active in all 50 states as well as Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. FFA Alumni Chapters exist in 23 of the 25 largest cities in the United States. North Carolina ranks 5th in the nation for membership. Th 2000 chapters in the US claim a membership of three quarters of a million. North Carolina has 87 FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapters with over 9000 members.

I BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE OF AGRI-CULTURE is emblazoned on the wall of David Overcash's classroom at SRHS. Overcash is a veteran teacher and this is at the core of what



Osco Deal (facing) and Lee Goodnight working at Farmer's Day in China Grove. Quantities from 60 to 130 freezers of four fla ors are made each year. All proceeds go to fund FFA and FFA Alumni and Supporters programs.

happens in his program. Twenty-fi e percent of the current student population at SRHS is enrolled in one or more of the classes that are offe ed in the agriculture curriculum.

The "classroom" is not limited to the four walls covered in awards. It includes a greenhouse, a barn, livestock and gardens on site. Active learning is available largely because of the help provided by the local FFA Alumni. One important contribution is the Land Lab. Alumni drove the purchase and development of

property adjacent to the campus for the use of student education and hands-on experiences.

Neal Wilkinson has been a member since he graduated from high school in 1975. Current member Bruce Miller was his teacher and instilled the importance of supporting the school program. As an office and member at large, he acknowledges that the alumni group exists to fund items and programs that may fall through the cracks of the usual financial channels

This chapter has purchased needed equip-

16



Country ham, strawberry jam, local honey and spice packages are all produced through the SRHS Agriculture Education Program. The jam is result of planting, nurturing, harvesting and processing strawberries grown on campus with the help of Happy Farms in China Grove. The hon y is processed with the help of Happy Farms in China Grove. The count y Alexander's Country Ham is prepared with student involvement through an SAE program. The spice and salt collection i purchased and marketed through an FFA driven fundraiser. Production and sales of all these products is supported by the FFA Alumni Chapter with funds being put back into the program.

ment for the school's ongoing program such as a tractor, a van and a bus. In addition to material purchases, members of the group raise funds for Career Development Events (CDE) for students. This includes conferences, camps and scholarships focused on leadership skill development and additional educational opportunities.

The alumni group supports Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) that is individualized and allows students to work on an active farm either with crops or livestock. Rowan County has the largest Experimental Research Station in the state, which offers many opportunities for students to have hands-on training and experience beyond the perimeters of the classroom.

The group also supports all fundraisers for the FFA at the school. This includes everything from providing seed money for projects to hands-on work cranking out four signature fla ors of ice-cream at China Grove's Farmer's Day: vanilla, chocolate, strawberry and peach.





MARCH 2025 17



Bruce Miller talked about the ongoing expenses of having a program that takes advantage of opportunities that allow students a broad view of life in many areas of Agri-business. It is no longer a matter of planting and harvesting or taking hogs to market. The contemporary farmer must understand all the elements of maximizing the potential of the land: how to process crops and meat, marketing, the mechanics of farm equipment, transportation and effecti e use of technology. Tha 's where this 501-C3 chapter helps by providing funds for speakers, conference attendees and advanced educational programs beyond the school. FFA Alumni provide individual mentorship and guidance in connecting with local business for career options and valuable enhancement of education opportunities.

Alumni members also make themselves available to judge FFA leadership competitions such as prepared public speaking, extemporaneous public speaking and parliamentary procedure. These events are on local, state and national levels and are a part of building leadership skills. Alumni





SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

March 2025 STM.indd 18

members also have a speaker's board that offer support by making presentations to groups and classes at SRHS.

Joshua Bledsoe of North Carolina State University is the State Agricultural Education Leader and State FFA Advisor. He acknowledges this milestone for the local alumni group: "The South Rowan FFA Alumni Chapter truly exemplifie the mission of FFA Alumni by actively supporting the local agricultural education program and FFA activities. Th ough advocacy, student mentorship, teacher assistance, and generous contributions of time, skills and financial resources, this nationally recognized and award-winning alumni chapter demonstrates unwavering commitment to fostering agricultural education and leadership development. I genuinely appreciate all they do for students and congratulate them on this milestone anniversary."

The work of the alumni chapter is evident in the success of SRHS students and graduates. Over 25 graduates have taught Agriculture Education; fi e currently teach in high schools. Though the years 16 students have served as state FFA officer



Wilkinson notes that even if farming is not a long-term career choice "the skills acquired through FFA are essential to any career. Leadership skills, management skills, respect, critical thinking, and teamwork are always important tools."

South Rowan FFA member George Crenshaw

reflects on what the p ogram has meant to him.

"Th ough my four years of participating in FFA, the South Rowan Alumni has supported me. They want nothing but the best for the students and their future. They are the backbone of our program. They contribute funding for a variety of competitions and experiences. Alumni are mentors and available to support individual students with opportunities. South FFA is both lucky and very proud to have this level of strong support from our community."

On February 22, FFA and FFA Alumni and Supporters gathered at Concordia Lutheran Church to celebrate the 50 years of work that has gone into the local community. This Golden Anniversary event included speakers, food and fellowship, as well as an opportunity to join the South Rowan FFA Alumni and Supporters Chapter. This milestone emphasized the need for the community to always affir the statement "I believe in the future of agriculture."

For additional information about membership opportunities, contact David Overcash at overcadm@rss.k12.nc.us. \boxed{S}







Salisbury Post file phot

MOBILE HOME

New book by Mark Wineka and Ed Clement chronicles move of Crawford House in 1976

STORY: MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY: SEAN MEYERS



f you're new to the Salisbury area, you need to read "A Drive Across Town" to learn about the local history and the many players who helped Salisbury become, well, Salisbury. If you've been here a while, you need to read it to recall the beloved city fathers and mothers who brought us along the way, many of whom are no longer with us.

"A Drive Across Town" is about the adventure of moving a brick-and-mortar, two-story, 250-ton home from its original site on East Innes Street, where Wendy's is today, to the cor-

ner of South Fulton and West Horah, easily recognized by the fountain in the front yard. The Crawford home's bricks were hand-pressed, of course, as it was built in 1869. Interior walls are 12 inches thick. Its fi e fi eplaces share two chimneys. As one can imagine, it wasn't as simple as moving the half-homes we see on the interstate, pulled by a semi.

It sounds like a simple book. Okay, they moved the house from point A to point B. But Wineka makes the entire project a story, weaving in the battle facing Ed Clement as he, under Wendy's deadline, gathered people and money and resources

March 2025 STM.indd 22 2/10/25 11:11 AM



Salisbury Post file phot

to move the house. All utilities had to sign off or participate to clear the way for a two-story house to move where power lines hung. It's an amazing story.

He says one can read it on three levels. The house move was really interesting, wrought with challenges all along the way. That story alone was enough, he says. But Clement wanted to use the story to unfold the history of Salisbury: time travel, as it were. So, he says, one can read the house move and the primer on Salisbury history. In addition, it describes how, in the early, days, preservation was not a given. By today, we see what preservation can mean to a town. In 1976, when the house was moved, Historic Salisbury Foundation was only four years old. People told Clement he was standing in the way of progress. (And square hamburgers!) He said, "No, I'm getting out of the way of progress." So, Salisbury kept the now-156-year-old house and got their square hamburgers as well.

Wineka used the Salisbury Post's morgue extensively. If you didn't grow up in the newspaper world, here's the picture. Somewhere close to the beginning of newspaper evolution, an employee at the paper — all newspapers — carefully cut out every article and placed each one in a folder for that topic. As small as Salisbury is, the Post's morgue encompasses two rooms with probably 50 fi e-drawer file cabinets, all alpha-



MARCH 2025 23





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The house makes its way d wn West Innes street in two pieces as seen from the roof of the Salisbury Post building. (Salisbury Post file photo

betized, each with hundreds of file folders, each folder with maybe one article, maybe many. Some topics have multiple folders — say, the school system or City Council while the Rose Society may just have one folder.

Morgues died out (pun intended) when newspapers went digital and with them, the jobs of populating the folders. Luckily the Crawford house was moved in prime morgue time so Wineka had a wealth of articles to draw from.

"I always, from the beginning, saw the book as a joint project," he says. "Ed and I would meet in the Steele House in afternoons for a couple of hours. He had points written down for the meetings. I had an idea for the back cover but he had a much better idea. It was his idea to put quotes in the beginning of the chapter."

Neither Clement nor Wineka could tell how many hours they spent together working on the book, but each looks at the ground, shaking his head, acknowledging there's no way to calculate all those hours.

"The thing I cherish most is the many afternoons I spent with Ed Clem-



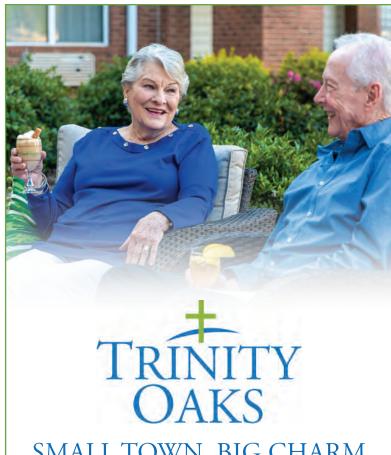
Ed Clement looks on during the move in 1976. (Salisbury Post file photo

ent," Wineka says. "Similarly, when I wrote about the Salisbury Post, I spent afternoons with Jimmy Hurley. Between Ralph Ketner, Jimmy Hurley, Paul Fisher and Ed Clement, I've been blessed with some really valuable time."

If you know Clement, you know he is a pretty direct fellow, one who says what he means and means what he says. In authoring the forward to the book, however, he writes exquisitely about what preservation is and how vital it is to the livability of Salisbury — "If only we can keep it." As Wineka says, "If I could tell anyone something about the book, it would be, 'read the forward.' He (Clement) spells out how vital preservation is."

Wineka took some author's liberty, as he notes at the end, to include some people who may not have been there. He included anecdotes that really did happen as well as some that might or might not have happened.

He takes the time to include Clement's credentials as a highly esteemed



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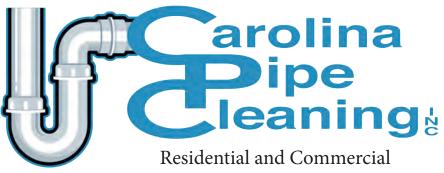
Trinity Oaks is an affiliate of Lutheran Services Carolinas in Salisbury, NC.

MARCH 2025 25

March 2025 STM.indd 25 2/10/25 11:11 AM



Mark
Wineka
speaks
to the
January
meeting of
the Rowan
Museum
History
Club.



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preservation pioneer, respected at both the state and national levels. At one point, he says, someone put up a poster reading, "Clement's Folly," and Clement proudly posed with it for a photograph.

You couldn't find a less self-aggrandizing author than Mark Wineka. He's all bashful and, "ah, shucks," but not in a fake way. He knows he's a solid writer but takes very little credit for the book, recognizing the people who made his writing into a book.

"I consider Ed a co-publisher. He was equally as invested as I in this process. Elizabeth Cook read it closely and was so much help. Deirdre (Parker-Smith) was instrumental in the whole thing. I couldn't have done it without Deirdre and Andy (Mooney, who helped design the cover and drew the map and house drawing inside)."

Clement, likewise, had words of praise for Wineka. "Mark did a wonderful job combining preservation and history; he told the story of the 1970s in Salisbury. I think the move was a metaphor for preservation. It showed the extremes people will go to for preservation. It added to the culture and economy of the town.

"Preservation looks forward and leaves a legacy for generations to come. Mark has been in Salisbury a long time and has made great contributions. The Salisbury Post covered the house move in an interesting and comprehensive way. In a way they provided a model for how you cover an ongoing event."

Clement and Wineka started work on the book in 2022 and completed it in September 2024. Wineka says the book is as much Clement's as it is his. To this day, however, Clement declines to sign the book for individuals who ask.

The e's something about men who don't need to take credit. The 're confident in their abilities and that's enough for them. Two greats, Wineka and Clement, both humble in their own ways, who wrote a history of our town. We are lucky to have them. Enjoy the book. S



STORY: MAGGIE BLACKWELL | PHOTOGRAPHY: SEAN MEYERS

March 2025 STM.indd 28 2/10/25 11:11 AM



From Left, Dan
Overcash, Jackie
Wilson, Bruce Wilson,
Sandra Rackley, Tori
Muñoz, Kyle Wilson.
Fine Frame Gallery
is celebrating its 30th
year in business in
downtown Salisbury.

March 2025 STM.indd 29 2/10/25 11:11 AM



Local artwork hangs on the walls at Fine Frame Gallery.

his year, the ever-avuncular Bruce Wilson and wife Jackie celebrate 30 years in business at their South Main Street location in Salisbury. They are also creeping up on 50 years in business altogether, adding their almost 20 years in Charlotte.

Bruce started in the business in order to frame his own artwork. When he sold an old car to make rent, his roommate told him, "You need to get a real job, man."

So, he did. He started selling his frames from the trunk of his car; in 1978, he opened ArtAspects across from Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte; wife Jackie joined him the next year. Bruce borrowed \$2,000 on a signature note from the bank to get started. He used it to turn on the utilities with \$500 going for their VW van Rosebud.

"Rosebud always made people smile," Wilson says. "We delivered works as far as Greenville, S.C., and took her to annual framing conventions."

"I didn't know in 1975 when I started in framing, that it was a career," he smiles.

The 're proud to carry the initials, CFP after their names: Certified Picture Framers. They certified the very first year the professional organization started. He recently learned the database for the professional organization doesn't go back as far as his and

Jackie's certifications

Eventually a family friend drove them to Salisbury, showing them the burgeoning downtown, City Park and the mid-century modern homes near Overton Elementary School. They wound up buying one of those MCM homes, one designed by John Ramsey, formerly owned by Bill Stanback. They restored that home and loved it for decades. They downsized about 10 years ago.

Bruce sentimentally shares keepsakes from Kluttz & Randleman Dry Goods, an early tenant in his building. He has photos of salesclerks and upstairs, he can see the remains of a hole through which the manager would keep tabs on sales downstairs. He's proud his building has been a retail location for 140 years.

Fine Frame employs seven people and they work together like a family. In fact, mat specialist Tori Muños worked while pregnant with her son; today he plays at a table in the workroom while his mom works. He has literally grown up at Fine Frame.

Son Kyle Wilson works there, as well, sometimes bringing in his 18-year-old son, adding to the family atmosphere.

Bruce loves working downtown. He and Jackie always visit new businesses to welcome them.

"My friends who visit are taken by the fact this is a real downtown," he says. "Owners run their own businesses. Quality is

March 2025 STM.indd 30 2/10/25 11:11 AM

30





Bruce Wilson holds a 19th Century portrait that is having its frame reconditioned.

An old frame hangs on the

upstairs wall

that shows scars

from previous

fi es in the

building.



high because the owners are hands-on. The e are great people here — I'm often referred to as the Mayor of Downtown."

One thing that sets Fine Frame Gallery apart from most other framers is their dedication to local artists. Bruce shows pieces of local art for sale, often giving artists a reception at night with hors d'oeuvres. It's important to the Wilsons to support local artists by giving them a venue to

show their work. He mentioned one artist in particular who had just surpassed the \$100,000 mark in his database.

The Wilsons say they never know what's going to come through the door. "In this business," Bruce says, "people bring us something they care about. We create the frame to make it something to treasure."

One unusual job involved framing a Baleen whale tooth. Bruce still remembers it was 98 inches long and 14 inches high. It had hair on the end, like horsehair. The hair allowed small items to exit the whale's mouth as it gulped great quantities of water to find food. The customer had lived with an

Eskimo tribe for a year and they had allowed him to participate in the whale hunt.

In contrast, another customer brought her frameable item wrapped in a napkin. Inside was a small, nondescript rock. It was the first gift her oung son had brought her.

Another customer had opened a marina. On the first day, a crane moving boats dropped a quarter at his feet. Feeling that the quarter was a good omen, he brought it in for framing.

They framed an archaeological find: a Peruvian cape made of parrot feathers, estimated 1,500 years old. Attached to the cape were the weaving tools used to make it.

They framed dueling pistols f om Normandy, France.

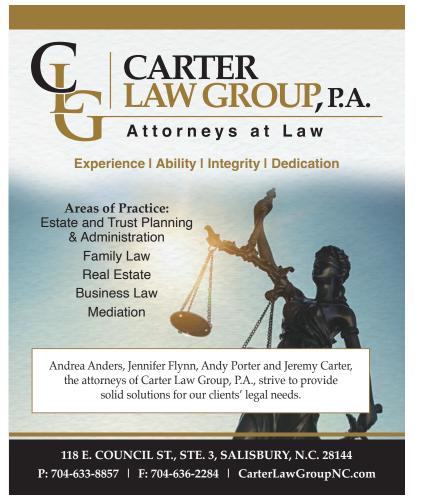
Because the Wilsons have built a reputation for making do, rebuilding, historically reconstructing, they've had the opportunity to work on some pieces that had nothing to do with

March 2025 STM.indd 32 2/10/25 11:12 AM



Dan Overcash builds a picture frame in the upstairs working space at Fine Frame Gallery.





MARCH 2025 33

March 2025 STM.indd 33 2/10/25 11:12 AM



frames.

Beth Dixon's contractor Al Wilson brought in the charred remains of the original mantel from the Fulton-Mock-Blackmer House. It was six and a half feet by six feet.

It took the Fine Frame team a year to restore and rebuild it.

An old
photograph
hangs in the
upstairs work
space and has
become mascot
of sort for Fine
Frame Gallery.

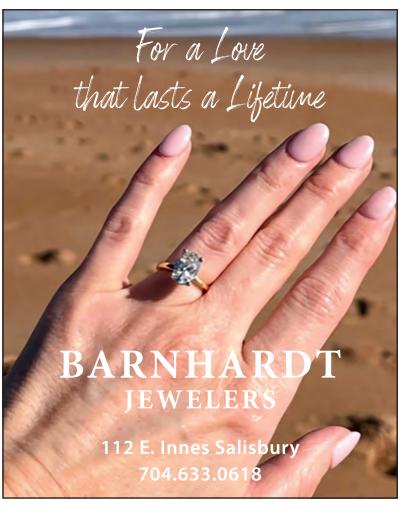
A friend had a dragster built to look like Grandpa Munster's casket. When a piece of trim got knocked off, his wife simply told him, "Take it to Bruce." True to form, Bruce was able to replicate it perfectly and make it whole again.

"We've had people cry when we unveil their pieces," Bruce says. "After 9/11, we received a twisted piece of I-beam. We created a box with the piece of steel below a photo of the fi efighter raising the flag ab ve the rubble — all in one frame."

Bruce cautions customers to treat their artifacts as they would their grandmother: not in the basement or attic — and certainly not in the barn. If it's under the bed or in a closet, bring it out from time to time for some fresh air.

Of course, in addition to all the exciting and unique pieces, the business frames certificates for doctors and lawyers; keys to the city and proclamations for local governments.

Back in the workroom, several pieces are in process. The e's a black-and-white series of photos of a baby from the 1920s. The e's a large photo of a woman in the





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March 2025 STM.indd 34 2/10/25 11:12 AM



Tori Muñoz works on a frame for a relief map in the back shop of Fine Frame Gallery.



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MARCH 2025 35



An old wall painting will be repaired and framed for a customer.

early 1900s; it was "colorized" by the photographer at that time with pastels.

On the workbench is a customer's cherished toy holster and two cap guns, along with a photo of him wearing them in the 1950s. Bruce has conditioned the leather and cleaned the guns. He's sourced "blanks" to place in the bullet slots. It's all under fluo escent light to kill any organisms that may have crept in while it was in storage for 75 years.

Bruce says there's a certain happiness quotient of being downtown and working with his customers; making things so they live beyond our generation.

"People don't think it's so important but to each customer, it is," he says.

Jackie, who is known for her dry wit, puts it simply: "We hang around in the finest homes and businesses" \boxed{S}



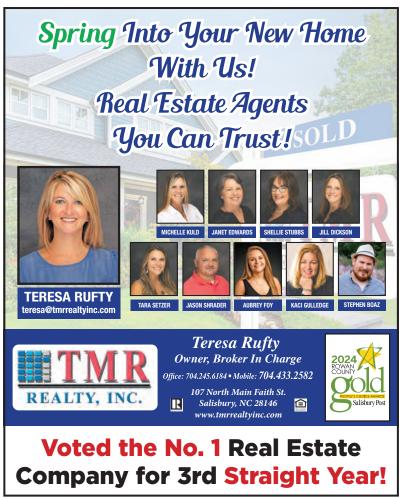


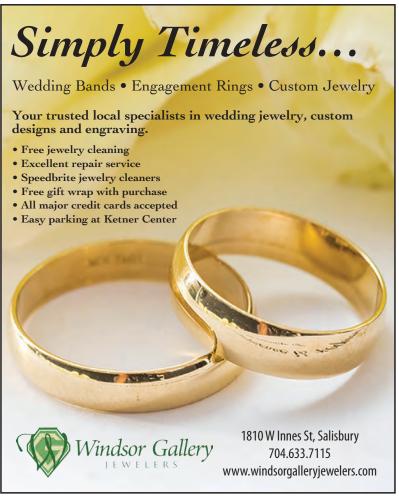
SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

36

March 2025 STM.indd 36 2/10/25 11:12 AM

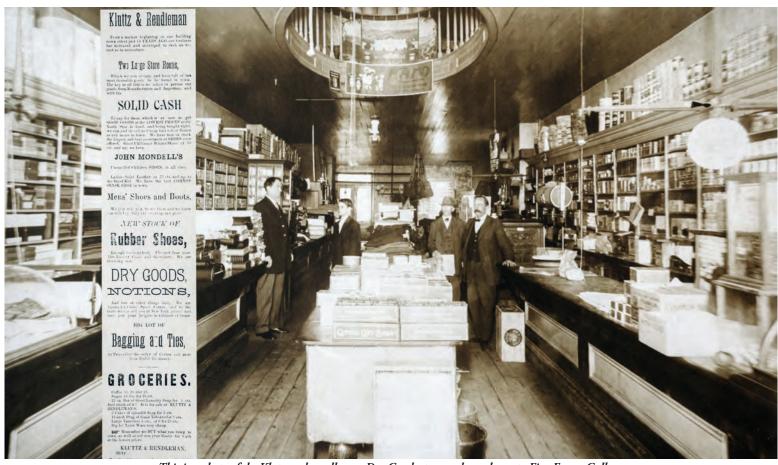






MARCH 2025 37

March 2025 STM.indd 37 2/10/25 11:12 AM



This is a photo of the Klutz and endleman Dry Goods store and now home to Fine Frame Gallery.



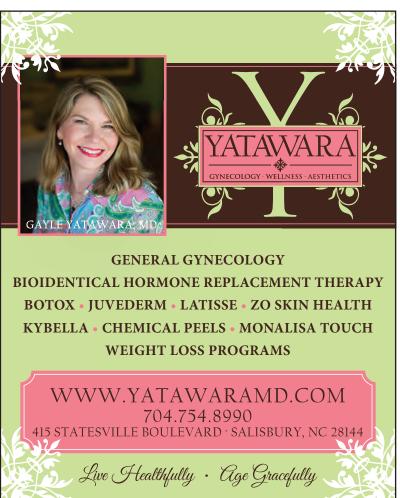




SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

March 2025 STM.indd 38 2/10/25 11:12 AM







MARCH 2025 39

MODERN MASTERPIECES

Now on display at Waterworks

Pierre Bonnard

By Dr. Robert Winter

ierre Bonnard (1867-1947) was born near Paris, France, in 1867 and grew up between the capital and his family home in southeastern France.

During his adulthood, he lived in Paris, Normandy and the south of France, near the Mediterranean, in the city of Le Cannet, where he died in 1947.

Bonnard was a leading figu e in the transition from Impressionism to Modernism.

He painted landscapes, urban scenes, portraits and intimate domestic scenes, where the backgrounds, colors, and painting style, usually took precedence over the subject.

Echoes of Toulouse-Lautrec with his new lithographic techniques using flat colors, along with the attraction to Japanese prints, influence the art of Bonnard at least in their first works around 1891.

But it is later, during the first quarter of the twentieth century that there's a search for the truth in art from several young artists who found themselves in frank opposition to the until-then imposed classical and academic conventions. Among those who were trying to find its source was Pierre Bonnard, a young introspective talent whose first works would begin to express a new reality of nature.

Bonnard abandons his father's desire for him to be a lawyer to instead pursue his passion for painting. In doing so, he established his own pictorial "laws" and objectives. His art presents a vision of a profound reality of man himself freely immersing his creativity in what nature was suggesting.

The phenomenal Robertson collection, impeccably exhibited at the Waterworks Visual Arts Center in Salisbury, North Carolina, includes three works by Pierre Bonnard that never cease to astonish viewers with the ecstatic power he brings to the depiction of humble everyday scenes that transcend the physical and take us



"Mimosas" by Pierre Bonnard, 1915

into the realm of the metaphysical.

The first work, "Mimosas" (1915), introduces us to the beginnings of Abstractionism. With textured surfaces created by varied brushstrokes, Bonnard's "Mimosas" presents a domestic space amidst competing patterns reminiscent of post-Impressionistic nuances.

Both of his closest friends, Paul Sérusier and Paul Gauguin, appear to be influential as this painting merges figu e and ground into a masterful combination.

Bonnard attained status and notoriety as part of the Nabis – a group of young artists who took their name from a Hebrew word meaning "prophet" or "redeemer" and who viewed Paul Gauguin as their Messiah. The e was a Symbolist, mystical streak to some of Bonnard's friends whose aspirations and pictorial aims soon matched his own expectations.

Drawing from several contemporary artists close to him, one could detect in this painting some Neo-Impressionist explorations found in Paul Cézanne's work. Pierre Bonnard's "Mimosas" accuses a certain "Cézannian" use of space, color, and composition sectioning background planes to create a unified support for the subject.

The e is a hallucinatory, dream-like dimension to this painting, an inner life of dramatic proportions, constantly molded onto the canvas. Every detail seems to be filled with meaning, a meaning that could only be unveiled within the expressive elements themselves.

The second work in the exhibit "Paysage, entrée de Maison" (1927) is relevant to Bonnard's desire to emotionally show an ideal home at "Le Cannet" where perhaps he and his muse, mistress, and later wife, Marthe de Meligny, would enjoy the quietness of their new phase of life.

SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

40

The e is supernatural force pressing against the calm appearance of this work. Striking patterns of varied hues and values give a kaleidoscopic look pushing forms, textures, and planes into strange dissonant combinations.

It's a view of the world seen through Bonnard's temperament that rejected all sense of stability, yet living the most sedentary of lives. Two silhouetted figu es at the entrance enigmatically seem to represent Pierre and Marthe, purposely failing the disclosure of their features.

Still influenced by the new attitude of the "Nabis," Bonnard extended their intelligent spiritual intimacy "beyond the window" and out into the exterior. It portrays a small section of nature, but enough to express nature as a whole, where subtle nuances of delicate values are rhythmically intertwined with a delirium of bold colors. An aspiration to inner spirituality, in essence, a resurgence of a quasi-post-romantic spirit, perhaps even a sort of Da'vincian "workings of the mind and condition of the spirit."

The third painting of the exhibit is "Paysage: a la Maison Rouge" (1942).

As Bonnard matured, he learned to exalt a new reality of light and color allowing all the action to develop in his mind, offering an insight into the deepest recesses of his subconscious.

In this painting Pierre Bonnard opens all his senses, listening and absorbing nature: an ode to nature where shapes are blended, proportions and distance confounded.

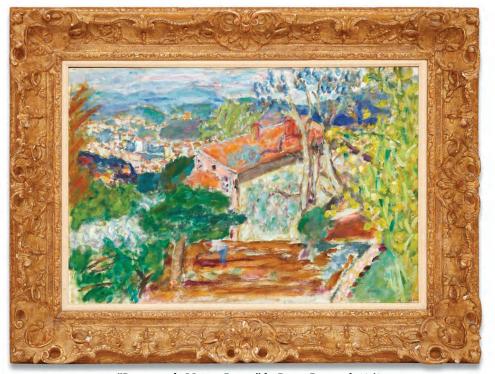
In a notebook of 1942, Bonnard noted his impressions of the exuberance of the French Riviera. "I have all my subjects at hand. I'm going to see them. I take notes. And then I go home. And then before painting, I think, I dream."

"Paysage: a la Maison Rouge" welcomes the viewer into the painter's world, his love for nature, the landscape and the light of southern France.

He explores all the pictorial resources available to him through his house at "Le Bosquet". The views of the surrounding land-



"Paysage, Entree de Maison" by Pierre Bonnard, 1927



"Paysage, a la Maison Rouge," by Pierre Bonnard, 1942

scapes, the orange-red roofs, the view of the mountains all under the incomparable Mediterranean sunlight.

A bent over figu e is faintly discernible in the lower left of the canvas, timidly acknowledging Bonnard's undisturbed and yet voluntary presence, blended in muted tonal shades. Even in this minute allusion to a human being he is rejecting conventional ideas, since he believed that any reference to likeness may betray psychological connotations. Similarly, in "Paysage: entrée de Maison," shadows are treated as planes, and people as mere insinuations of non-detailed images.

Once more Pierre Bonnard excites all our senses by covering the entire canvas with bold touches of brilliant color, synthesizing the mastery of Henri Matisse, Paul Gauguin, and André Derain into his own color symphony, and thus, transforming the whole landscape into a quasi-abstract organic metaphor.

Still, however, a strong attachment to a post-Impressionist

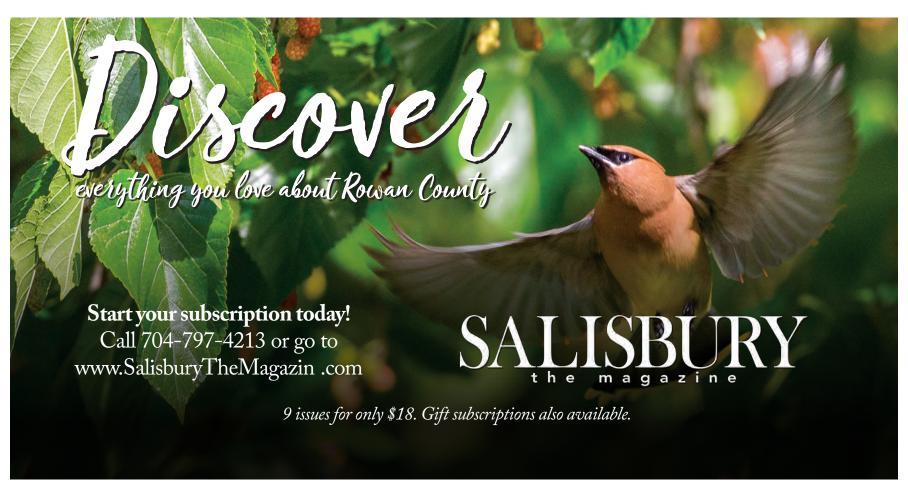
palette is somewhat detected, where shapes are isolated with fla planes of color and brush strokes emphasize an uncontrollable desire to imply movement suggesting an intense visionary experience

Indeed, the works he made during the final two decades of his life are considered by many to be Bonnard's masterpieces. A unique tribute to the history of art for their unquestionable aesthetic richness.

Detached from academic reality, Bonnard's genius made an indelible impression to new generations of modern art.

His art gave us a synthesis of a new idea of nature, painting a "poetry of nature" newly discovered in every stroke of his brush and translated into a language of personal emotions.

Dr. Robert Winter is Professor Emeritus of Lenoir-Rhyne University in Hickory.



SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE

42

March 2025 STM.indd 42 2/10/25 11:12 AM

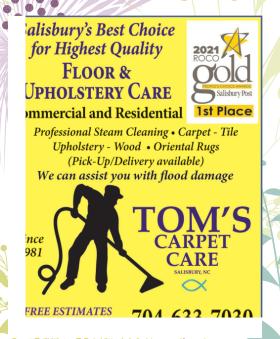
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From left, back row: Kim Pierce, Donna Roper, Mark Wells, MJ Mee, Erin Weingartner. Front row: Leslie Cataldo and Amy Smith.



The dedicated aterworkers. From left, front row: Jackie Black, Audrey Andrews, Lynnette Taylor. Back row: Hope Holmes, Anne Scott Clement, Emily Seaford

Waterworks Oyster Roast

Waterworks celebrated its 19th Oyster Roast on January 25 in the F&M Trolley Barn. The Oyster Roast is a major fundraiser to support the ongoing educational and outreach programs of the arts center.

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Waterworks is free and accessible to all six days a week.

— Tim Coffey photo



Left: Paula Troxler, Ann Cline, Katie Troxler and Marie Leonard-Hampton

Right: Brooke and Craig Beasley, Danny and Kala Powell (sponsors), and Melissa Beasley.



14 SALISBURY THE MAGAZINE





Above: Bud and Betty Mickle kick off the dancing

Left: Vickie Wallace, Daniel Wallace, Victor Wallace, Mona Wallace, Nash and Valinda Isenhower, Suzanne Casey (sponsor) and Bryce Beard.



Corey and Laretta Angle, Tonyan and Antoine Schofield and r. Latonya Taliferro



The Clement Clan always pitch in..

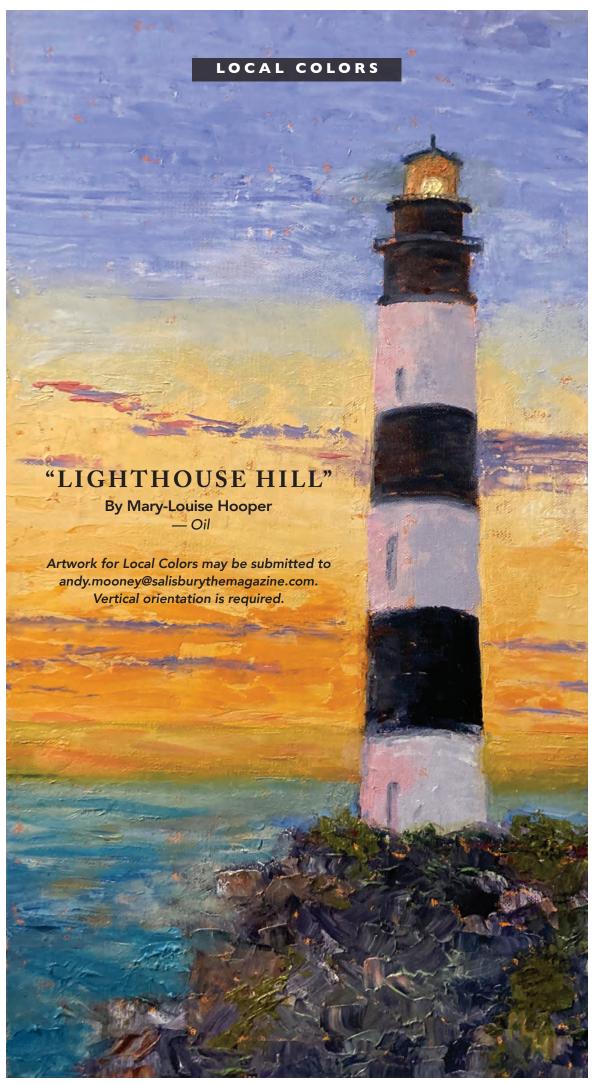


Left: Thank ou Oxford + Lee — Preston Tadlock, Karlee Eagle, Shellie Stubbs.

Right: Marlene Owen, Teresa Andrews and Barry McDonald



MARCH 2025 45



March 2025 STM.indd 46 2/10/25 11:12 AM



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