

## BRIEF

### Siler City Christmas Parade

The Siler City Christmas Parade will take place in downtown Siler City on Thursday, December 7 at 7 p.m. "Here We Come a Caroling" is the theme for this year's Christmas Parade. The parade will travel down S. Chatham, take a right onto Beaver Street to S. Birch Street, a left onto W. Raleigh Street to Park Shopping Center (Maxway) and will disperse from here.

All parade participants are required to complete parade entries forms. All entries must go through the Chatham Chamber of Commerce office. Parade entry forms can be downloaded from the Chamber's website home page at [www.ccucc.net](http://www.ccucc.net). Forms can also be picked up at the Chatham Chamber of Commerce, located at 531 E. 3rd Street, Siler City. If the Chamber office is closed, entry forms will be placed outside the Chamber office door. Completed entry forms can be placed in the Chamber's mailbox beside their office door. Push in the mailbox flap and drop your forms and entry fee to the bottom of the mailbox.

For more information or for entry submission, contact the Chamber office by phone at 919.742.3333 or by email at [info@ccucc.net](mailto:info@ccucc.net). Entries should be submitted by Tuesday, December 4. Cash prizes will be given to the top three judged floats.

Be sure to join us for some excitement in the courtyard on Chatham Avenue before and after the parade:

Siler City Merchant Association's annual Tree Lighting at 6:30 p.m.

"The Hangout Worship Band" will perform onstage before and after the parade (sponsored by the Siler City Merchant's Association and the Hangout Band)

Santa will visit with children in the courtyard right after the parade.

## DISPATCH

### Pittsboro's First Holiday Wine Crawl

Three Pittsboro purveyors of wine have teamed up to provide a little light on a dark December Friday night. You've heard of pub crawls. Pittsboro doesn't have a lot of pubs. Down in Moncure there is an annual "Trail Crawl." Pittsboro's trails don't have a lot of places to visit. But there is wine in Pittsboro, and on December 15th there will be the first ever Pittsboro Holiday Wine and Dine—which is basically a Wine Crawl. Festivities begin at the tasting room of the Fair Game Beverage Company, Pittsboro's local winery and distillery located at the Plant—behind State Employee's Credit Union at 193 Lorax Lane.

Participants will be able to taste and buy wines and spirits made from North Carolina agricultural products, and to tour the distillery. Holiday Wine and Dine ticket holders will get a free drink.

Fair Game is North Carolina's 13th legal

distillery, the only one to be certified as a B Corporation, and one of only two distillers in NC with women distilling their products. The Fair game portion of the crawl runs from 4–6 p.m.

The party then moves to Vino!! Wine Shop, which is upstairs above City Tap. Vino's entrance is on Salisbury St. Vino!! is locally owned by Anna, who has been curating Pittsboro's wine choices for many years. Anna will be offering wine tastings from 5–7 p.m., and is offering Wine and Dine ticket holders a \$6 discount on bottles of wines tasted.

The crawl concludes at Chatham Marketplace in the historic Chatham Mill. As Pittsboro's only Coop grocery store, Chatham Marketplace will be offering free tastings of Jones von Drehle wines. Wine and Dine ticket holders will be offered a free glass of wine. They will also be serving a holiday

Farm-to-Table hot bar catered by Sweeties Catering.

For the younger crowd, Chatham Marketplace will be serving popcorn and showing the movie ELF at 4:30 p.m. and 6:15 p.m. in the event space across the hall from their store. Movie and popcorn are free, courtesy of a local Santa.

Tickets for Wine and Dine are only \$12 each (an \$18 value) and can be purchased at [pittsborowineanddine.eventbrite.com](http://pittsborowineanddine.eventbrite.com).

This 1st Annual Pittsboro Holiday Wine Crawl is a fun, self-directed tour. Participants are welcome to move from place to place in any order, with or without a ticket, or drop in on any one or more of the establishments as they see wish.

The only rule is that they have a good time, find themselves in the holiday spirit, and in the enjoyment of living in this marvelous community.

## The Oldest Continuously Observed Veterans Day in America

The Treaty of Versailles that ended World War I, known as the Great War, was signed officially 28 June 1919. It also ended America's participation in that conflict. However, fighting between the Allied nations and Germany had ceased seven months earlier. The armistice was declared on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918. Gen. John J. Pershing reputedly had it placed at that time because he was a member of the Elks, who gave special meaning to the eleventh hour.

The commemoration was originally called "Armistice Day" and was made a legal holiday in 1938. In 1954, it became "Veterans Day" and honors American veterans of all wars.

Henry Leonidas Stevens, Jr., 1896-1971, jurist, Veterans' leader, and soldier, was born in Warsaw, North Carolina, in Duplin County. He organized and was elected commander of the Charles R. Gavin American Legion Post and established the Veterans Day Parade. He also served as commander of the district organization and, in 1925, was elected state commander. Under his leadership, the highest membership to that time was achieved. In addition, the Legion completed its quota for the National Five Million Dollar Legion Endowment Fund and cleared the State Department of all debts. Stevens turned over to his successor a cash balance of \$2,500. In September 1931, at the American Legion's national convention in Detroit, he was elected national commander by acclamation after an incomplete roll call showed him to be far ahead of the sixteen opposing candidates. During this period, he began many new programs to benefit veterans. As a result of his employment efforts, for example, over one million jobs were found for deserving veterans during the Great Depression years of 1932-33. He was the youngest man and the first Southerner and came from the most humble beginnings of any man elected national commander up to that time. [That last seems a bit strange to me since he was from a prominent family, attended UNC, and completed a law degree at Harvard!] In 1932, President Hoover appointed him to deliver to the French government a panoramic painting of the funeral



cortege of Marshal Ferdinand Foch, supreme Allied commander during World War I. Judge Stevens presented the gift to the president of France after giving an address in French at the Palace of Versailles. During his life, he was the personal guest of a number of international leaders and US Presidents. Governor Terry Sanford appointed him an emergency judge of the North Carolina Superior Court for life in 1963. Among his many honors, including international recognitions, were the American Legion Bronze Medallion for 50 years of service and its Citation of Appreciation. He was the first North Carolinian to appear on the cover of Time Magazine. As National Commander of the American Legion, he performed in a film and received an offer of a contract to make movies.

Warsaw is my hometown and holds the record for the oldest continuous, consecutive observance of Armistice Day/Veterans Day in the country. In 2016, this became the Official Veterans Day Parade of North Carolina. Its 97th Celebration was November 4 and is always held the first Saturday before November 11th.

The Parade, as you would expect, honors present and past servicemen. It is put on in rain, snow, hail, or sleet and continued, as we have seen, during the Great Depression. Interestingly, it claims to ignore politics. Its overriding and special theme each year is this: "If You Love Your Freedom, Thank a Veteran."

On the other hand, the focus changes annually and may be a particular war or particular branch of the military. Once the focus for the current year is decided, the Grand Marshal is chosen. As an example, in 2011, the focus was The 30th Division/Brigade of the North Carolina National Guard (known as "Old Hickory"), and the grand marshals were native Duplin County non-commissioned military. The Parade itself is always the main attraction,

but today, many of those attending find the military flyover its highpoint, and helicopter rides are offered.

The average attendance is 10,000; the population of Warsaw is c. 3000. Now, activities often associated with the main event are a golf tournament, community-wide church service, Masonic pancake breakfast, sidewalk sale, a VFW Memorial Service at Veterans Park, BBQ dinner, and an open house at the Duplin County Veterans Memorial Museum. Festivities continue throughout the evening, and this year's events included "Music for every taste starting at 2 p.m." When I was a child, I loved the parade, of course, but was drawn to the Carnival that arrived unfaillingly every year with a Gypsy fortune teller, clowns (good guys then), rides, cotton candy, candy apples, and the like. One of the main characters in my first novel is the Gypsy Queen.

Warsaw is the hometown of Gen. Dan K. McNeill, Commander of NATO's International Security and Assistance Force in Afghanistan, and I am still trying to get him to find the time to come to The Village At Brookwood (TVAB) to speak. Our parents were friends, and I have edited a book that includes the story of the loss of Dan's youngest brother in Vietnam.

Obviously, I am proud of Warsaw and its honoring of veterans. I continue to edit the Duplin County Historical Journal. But I have personal memories, too. My sixteenth birthday party was held at Warsaw's American Legion Hut. After my husband Emory and I met at a football game in the ninth grade as a result of his deliberately leaning back against my legs in the bleachers, we arranged to meet at the Legion Hut dance that followed.

By the way, the full-page ad in The Duplin Times for this year's event invited visitors to Warsaw's restaurants and businesses but added: "NO PETS PLEASE, SERVICE ANIMALS ONLY." Already, at TVAB, we have decided that, at the 2018 Veterans Day Celebration, we will have a Warfare Dog visit. The earliest use of dogs in battle is c. 600 B.C. The

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Chatham County Line is a community newspaper serving all of Chatham County as well as the southern part of Orange. Our mission is to inform our community by providing a forum "where all voices are heard." We seek all views and ideas about our community, and we report on important matters — including our cultural life — comprehensively and in-depth. Our commitment is to create the best-written, best-edited and most stylish community newspaper anywhere. Chatham County Line is published ten times a year.

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