

A Great Day to Fiesta!

With at least 600 people attending, this year's 5th Annual Hispanic Heritage Fiesta held on September 16th in Siler City was a huge success. The weather was beautiful, the costumes were colorful, and the food so delicious that the pupusa stand was never without a line of people waiting for a treat. Organized by The Hispanic Liaison, in collaboration with six other community organizations and many volunteers, Fiesta offered 38 area agencies, craftspeople and businesses the opportunity to reach out to and celebrate Chatham County's diversity. Aside from the wonderful dances and great live music, Fiesta also featured an art exhibit by Peruvian born painter Renzo Ortega and a Parade of Traditional Costumes led by giant puppets from the Folkloric Group Flor y Canto. The event was animated by MC Walter Gomez and the guest speaker for the opening celebration was Rep. Robert Reives. Fiesta would not have been possible without the generous support of many business sponsors and over 50 volunteers.

Save the date for next year's Fiesta on Saturday, September 15! The Liaison is a direct service and advocacy organization based in Siler City that serves the Latinx community in the rural central Piedmont. Readers can learn more and support the Liaison's work by visiting: www.hispanicliaison.org. Here's just a sample of the festivities!

— Nora Haenn and Ilana Dubester



Giant puppets, part of the folkloric group Flor y Canto's, tower over Siler City's downtown as they lead the Parade of Traditional Costumes.

Titeres gigantes del grupo folklórico Flor y Canto llegaron hasta las alturas de los edificios mientras que encabezaron el Desfile de Trajes Tradicionales.

PHOTO BY: VINCE SANABRIA

Seeking The Hook

BY LOU LIPSITZ

with its barbed point digging
into the soft palate behind my lower teeth
I am dragged along the mud and rock-strewn
bottom for forty feet, then pulled up
drawn toward the light as I twist and
yank my head side to side and the hook
lodges deeper in my mouth I taste
the blood a silent cry goes up through
my skull and it is all so quick I see
the surface a hand the light overwhelms
me, and I lunge a last time with the hook
ripping across my lips and I'm free
suddenly falling back gasping through
air then slipping beneath the surface
into the dim, green sweetness and
the flesh of my mouth throbbing water
flowing through me and yet slowly
beyond thought or even the will
to survive, I feel myself turn and
go back seeking the hook and it
is there again, waiting for me,
rigid and tiny, the hidden barb
like a beautiful lie, too powerful
for me to resist, so that later when
they lift me up, strip me, tear my guts
out and present me cooked and
spread open, I will believe I am being
honored like a new king.

ELECTIONS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ever elected to the Town Board of Pittsboro and its first African-American woman. Commissioner Baldwin has served three terms and this would be her fourth. Be assured, one learns a whole lot on an elected board over 12 years. Her knowledge and understanding of the board, town government, and old and new Pittsboro is invaluable and is a stabilizing influence on the operations of Town government.

Commissioner Michael Fiocco has served on the Town Board since 2009 and is running for his third term. If you attend town meetings, he is the board member who almost always has a clarifying change to the minutes, has taken a red pen to many items in the agenda, and who asks specific questions of staff and guests at the meetings. Commissioner Fiocco always strikes

me as one of the most consistently engaged people in the room. He is a former UNC varsity soccer player who certainly brings that energy and focus to his service on the Town Board. Commissioner Fiocco is a tireless advocate for downtown Pittsboro, smart growth, town and county and regional cooperation, investment in public infrastructure and effective planning. He has taken the lead on solutions for our drinking water, wastewater, and a new Town Hall with parking in downtown Pittsboro. Commissioner Fiocco's work experience as a planner, eight years of experience on the Town Board and his willingness to work non-stop on behalf of the citizens of Pittsboro makes him a vital asset that Pittsboro needs for another four years.

I will be at the Board of Elections at 8 a.m. on October 19th to proudly cast my vote. I hope to see you there as well.

Lesley Landis is a graphic designer.

DEVELOPMENT

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

swamp land, another type of wetland, for residential development. Each time, owners of the wetlands pursued their legal rights as property owners to do whatever they wanted with their land if somehow it was not outlawed by existing laws and regulations. They often got around the Clean Water Act by agreeing to mitigate their impact by purchasing wetlands elsewhere for protection or reclaiming wetlands that had already been altered. Every time they got their approval, they and the people who approved their actions, put people in harms way for it was those very areas that flooded during Hurricane Katrina.

Although barrier islands are not wetlands, they owe their existence to tides and currents. They are nothing more than shifting sand that has temporarily been vegetated until the next storm surge washes over them and changes their configuration. Take for example the barrier islands off the coast of Alabama and Mississippi where I did research. Of the four

islands off the coast of Mississippi, Cat, Ship, Horn and Petit Bois and the one island off the coast of Alabama, Dauphin, only the Mississippi islands are undeveloped and protected as federally designated wilderness. Hurricanes change the Mississippi islands as do annual winter storms, but there is no loss of life or property. On Dauphin Island, it has been a different story. On the Florida Keys, it has been a dramatically different story.

Do you see the social pattern? Developing where we know human-made structures are going to be lost and having a private and federal insurance system that rewards both developers and buyers for building where they should not pass the cost of their behavior on to everyone. Wouldn't it make more sense to leave wetlands and islands undeveloped and pass the savings on to everyone?

Joe Jacob, a Chatham resident for more than 30 years and a marine biologist by training, is president of The Haw River Canoe & Kayak Co., www.hawrivercanoe.com, 336.260.6465. He worked for The Nature Conservancy for 20 years and served as Director of Science for TNC's Southeast Region.



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