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■ **Rally 'round the library. Page 3.**



CCO passes; Briar Chapel II looms

By Robert N. Eby

On April 19 the Chatham County Board of Commissioners adopted the heatedly discussed Compact Community Ordinance (CCO), culminating some 22 months of effort. The final vote was 3 to 2, with Commissioners Atwater and Pollard voting against adoption. A major point of disagreement among the Commissioners was a Waiver provision, which was added in late December by

County Attorney Bob Gunn and his partner Paul Messick. Atwater had consistently called for removal of the Waiver and Pollard tried, without success, to amend the wording of the Waiver, which gives the Commissioners broad discretion in following the terms of the CCO.

The CCO will apply to a designated area in northeast Chatham, which encompasses land owned by Newland Communities, a San Diego-based developer. An earlier Newland pro-

posal for a development in this area, Briar Chapel, was denied by the Commissioners in 2002.

Even as adopted, however, the CCO is not without controversy. The specific wording designating the area for a CCO does not include some 30 acres east of 15-501, which are owned by Newland. In the week proceeding the Commissioners' meeting, a flurry of activity by the County Staff and Attorney produced suggested changes in the CCO that would have

added this acreage to the qualified area. The Commissioners, apparently trying to avoid any last minute changes in the CCO that might have protracted the time before adoption, decided to ignore these suggestions. They adopted a version that had been presented for the Public Hearing about a month earlier.

Mitch Barron, project manager for Newland, has indicated that a new CCO continued on page 3.

Johnson's burgers win raves for almost 60 years

By Julian Sereno

Where can you buy the best burger in the state? According to the Charlotte Observer, look no farther than Siler City, where Johnson's has been grinding them, grilling them and then serving them up the same way since it opened in 1946.

Only open for lunch, from 10 to 2, the restaurant bustles, with a slew of cooks preparing food behind the counter, among them second and third generation members of the Johnson family. Diners quickly fill the tables and counter spots; sometimes its Standing Room Only.

The burgers (\$2.50), each three to three-and-a-half ounces, are arranged neatly on the griddle and cooked in batches. The buns are laden with the toppings specified by the diner, then the burgers are laid on top, the buns closed, and they are served up on wax paper. The traditional Southern cheeseburger, with mustard, chili, onions and slaw, is magnificent, rich and juicy, messy but

deeply satisfying. Many patrons ordered two.

Claxton Johnson, who began working at the restaurant when he was 5 or 6, has run it full time since the death of his father in 1985. He does everything the way his parents did, which includes trimming and then grinding all the meat. Each burger is handmade fresh every day. So are the toppings. The tea he serves is made from Lipton loose leaf, "just like your grandmother made," he said.

Why does he prepare the food exactly the way his parents did? "If it ain't broke, don't fix it," he said with a smile. Testament to this wisdom is borne by the boxes of newspaper clippings praising his restaurant that sit in his kitchen, along with his meat grinder, scale and refrigerator filled with huge, beautiful hunks of beef.

An even stronger testament are the crowds of faithful regulars who throng his restaurant, enjoying burgers prepared the same way for nearly 60 years.

Claxton Johnson grills burgers just like his daddy when they opened their restaurant in 1946.

PHOTO BY JULIAN SERENO



Master in his studio: Graham Fox, Chef de Cuisine at Fearington House, puts the finishing touches on some dinner rolls in the restaurant's kitchen. Behind him is a gas range with 20 burners.

PHOTO BY JULIAN SERENO

Fearington's 5 diamonds sparkle with each bite

By Julian Sereno

Only one restaurant in North Carolina, or South Carolina for that matter, has earned the Mobil Travel Guide's 5-Diamond rating. It's also the only restaurant in either Carolina to earn the endorsement of the Relais & Chateaux guide to the best restaurants and hotels on earth. Zagat rates it at 98. The restaurant – surprise surprise – is Fearington House, and it's located right here in Chatham County.

The prix fixe dinner menu (\$75 per person) offers choices in appetizers, first plates, second plates and dessert. But the dinner itself is more nuanced and complex, with even more courses, all providing surprise and delight.

Dinner engendered a glowing, warm feeling that began with the first bite. As my wife and I each sipped a glass of Champagne, the waiter presented us with three kinds of freshly baked bread – sour dough, flaky dinner rolls and sun dried tomato and Parmesan rolls. The bread was heavenly, the butter sublime.

A pre-appetizer came next, three delicacies, each a mouthful or two, including salmon, crème fraiche and beets, a white asparagus salad, and a perfect morsel of lamb over lentils, the latter served in an Asian soup spoon.

Roasted yellow pepper soup came next. The flavor was full, and the texture delightful; a creamy soup with still-crunchy yellow peppers. As we FEARRINGTON continued on page 9.

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Haw River spruced up, ready for party

About 175 volunteers joined together to clean up trash from stream banks and islands at 13 sites along the Haw River, from Alamance County down to Jordan Lake, plus two tributaries — Robeson Creek in Pittsboro and Morgan Creek in Chapel Hill, on March 13. The results were impressive. By the end of the day, 320 bags of trash, 54 tires and tons of other junk had been hauled out of the water.

The annual Haw River Clean-up has been taking place for 14 years. "A lot of the worst places, like bridge crossings, have actually gotten better over the years, with teams finding less trash" said Haw River Assembly organizer Elaine Chiosso. "But the amount of trash that comes down the river in storms and gets stuck on the islands is as bad as ever."

Paddlers in canoes worked with on-shore team members to clean up some really bad trash 'reefs' and logjams. Members of the Carolina Canoe Club, led by Bob Bruekner, worked their way down river in canoes from Bynum to the Highway 64 bridge in Chatham County. Along the way they found some pretty strange trash, including a dirt bike out on one of the islands, a dog house, half a boat and lots of 'lost' items from bridge and road construction sites.

Other sites were cleaned up by teams from Alamance County Community College, students from Aldern Academy, the Morgan Creek Valley Alliance, the Pittsboro Stream Steward project, the Army Corps of Engineers, and neighborhood and community groups.

The Weird Trash Award went to the Robeson Creek team for a mysterious optical projection kit and a copy of a 1905 birth certificate from Trenton NJ! Other trash found by teams included an old Blenheim Ginger Ale sign, fishing tackle, all kinds of game balls, chairs, buckets, lumber and wire. As always, most of the trash was empty soda bottles and cans.

"This trash causes a real hazard to both water quality and the animals who live in the river. Some of it is dangerous to swimmers and paddlers as well, and it's just plain awful to look at," said Chiosso. The Haw River Assembly, a grassroots river protection group, works year-round to fight pollution, and to educate citizens how they can help keep water



Paddlers worked with crews on the shore during the annual Haw River Clean-Up.

© PHOTO BY JOHN SHILLITO

clean.

The Haw River Assembly invites everyone to enjoy the Haw at the Haw River Festival in Bynum on Saturday, May 8. The festival features music, art, stories, puppets, and environmental awareness and activities. Try river monitoring with Cynthia Crossen down at Bynum Beach, or even take a hike along the new Haw River State Natural Area.

The Festival runs from 1-6 p.m. at the old Bynum Bridge, with a short ceremony at 3:30 celebrating the new Natural Area.

Historical program is of grave interest

The Chatham County Historical Association will present a program on the history of graveyards. The speaker will be John W. Clauser, Jr. who manages a private consulting firm "Of Grave Concerns" specializing in cemetery recording and preservation. The program will be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, May 16 in the sanctuary of the historic St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in downtown Pittsboro. In conjunction with Historic Preservation Week, May 15 - May 22, As part of the program there will be a walk through St. Bartholomew's Cemetery with Mr. Clauser. The earliest recorded burial in the cemetery is 1830. The cemetery includes some of the prominent people of Pittsboro and others such as John Owen, Governor of North Carolina, and Abraham Renscher, Territorial Governor of New Mexico.

Mr. Clauser is recently retired after 27 years with the Office of State Archaeology in the N.C. Department of Cultural Resources. From 1984 to 2003, he reported on over 50 family cemeteries throughout North Carolina. This involved surveying cemeteries, locating and mapping marked and unmarked graves,

recording marker inscriptions, and making recommendations for marking of cemeteries. In 1998, he was the chair of the Society for Historic Archaeology Public Session annual meeting.

The Chatham County Historical Association welcomes members and non-members to this program. Following the program, light refreshments will be served in the parish hall. St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church is located at 204 West Salisbury Street in Pittsboro. Parking is available in front of the church. For more information, phone 919-542-5649. — Cindy Edwards

Merchants' Assoc. sponsors First Sunday

First Sunday is a new monthly celebration held every first Sunday of the month in downtown Pittsboro from noon until 5 p.m. There will be local artists and craftspeople displaying on the sidewalks, music by area musicians, plants and flowers for sale, and sidewalk sales by the local shops. This event is sponsored by the newly formed Pittsboro Merchants' Association.

The special event for May's First Sunday was an art opening and reception for Tamara Mulanix at New Horizons Trading Company at 52 Hillsboro Street. Mulanix is a Chatham County resident who works in steel and her art ranges from large public art sculpture to functional art for the home. Visitors also viewed the classic cars from The Circle City Cruisers of Pittsboro. About 20 restored cars lined the streets of Pittsboro. Xeno Yuzna performed New Age music.

Other merchants will be hosting special events. The General Store Cafe will be serving brunch on First Sundays and will also offer a gardening series with Ginny Gregory on

those Sundays. The Scoreboard Restaurant will be offering ice cream sundaes and cold drinks for a hot Sunday afternoon. Elizabeth's Italian Restaurant will also be open.

This event will take place the First Sunday of each month (except July 4). Check for participating shops, artists, musicians at <http://upzone.home.mindspring.com/FirstSunday.htm> or call 542.5649.

— Cindy Edwards

briefs

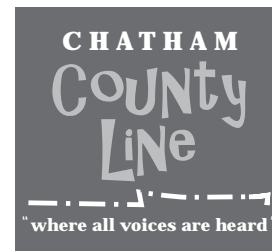
Teams form for Race for the Cure

The 8th Annual NC Triangle Komen Race for the Cure will be run at Meredith College in Raleigh on Saturday, June 12. The Race raises funds to find a cure for breast cancer. Last year's Race involved 17,000 participants and raised more than \$700,000.

The 5K Open/Recreational Event, open to all at all paces, begins at 8 a.m. Participants, sponsors and teams are all invited — the deadline for team registration is Wednesday, May 19.

Fearrington Village is sponsoring a team — Galloway Gals and Guys — for

BRIEFS continued on page 12.



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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 five times a year: Winter/Spring, Spring, Summer, Fall and Fall/Winter.

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Pittsboro Memorial Library is treasure in need of help



By Marjorie Hudson

As I write this, I am hoping for news that the countywide children's librarian position will be unfrozen. If it is, thousands of children in Chatham County will have a librarian who can focus on services to them, and parents will have great cause for celebration.

A great library can take on the role of community center, soap box, public forum, research center, cultural center, and archive. It is a place where children and seniors and moms and dads find cool respite on a hot summer day, where there are up-to-date postings about community activities and librarians who can answer almost any question you might have. Access to reading materials and library services are free to all. A great library helps keep democracy alive in our society. It provides access to reliable information about government, politics, history, and the future.

In my role as president of the Friends of the Pittsboro Memorial Library, I have learned what a truly

great library we have in Pittsboro, and how amazingly dedicated the staff and volunteers are. I have also done some research about this library's needs, history, and future. What I learned was surprising—even shocking. The needs are far greater than I thought—far greater than most people think.

WE NEED NEW LIBRARIES IN CHATHAM COUNTY

Here are some of the surprising facts I've learned about the Pittsboro Memorial Library (PML). Sources are the Central Carolina Regional Library, the State Library System, the 2001 Library Facilities Study, and the Chatham County website.

- PML's "service population" is at least 25,800 people, from Moncure to Governors Club.

- PML should have 13 full time staff behind the desk for the population it serves. It has 3.

- PML has about a third of the space it needs for the population it

serves.

- Chatham is one of the fastest growing counties in the state—and in the country.

- PML was built entirely with private funds.

- PML is a county library funded by Chatham and managed by a regional manager in Burlington. It currently receives no Pittsboro town funds.

- Folks in North Chatham often pay a \$50 fee to use the Chapel Hill Library. They focus their shopping in Chapel Hill as a result.

- A 2001 county study recommended a new library for North Chatham, along with expansion or new construction for libraries in Pittsboro, Siler City, and Goldston.

- Goldston is the only library to achieve these goals—thanks mostly to leadership from the town and local Friends group.

- Many of our surrounding counties have had successful library bonds in recent years. Chatham has never had a library bond.

HOW CAN I HELP?

If you use the Pittsboro Memorial Library, join the Friends and volunteer for a committee. Stay informed by reading the newsletter and newspaper articles. Talk to your commissioners and town board. **Tell them you want excellent libraries that are fully staffed and funded**, and that you want them to address this issue in next year's budget.

Check our website for updates and participate in community discussions about the future of the library. www.beachsite.com/friends

Marjorie Hudson is a novelist and contributor to Chatham County Line.

CCO

continued from page 1.

proposal will be filed before the end of May and will contain 2,389 living units, including 89 apartments.

Following the terms of the CCO, the County will then have consultants do a "peer review" of the various impact assessments (Fiscal, Transportation and Environmental) that Newland is required to provide. A Public Hearing will be held on the proposal, but only after citizens have had at least 30 days to study the proposal, including the peer reviews. The next available dates for Public Hearings are in July and September. The Commissioners could also schedule a special Public Hearing on a date of their choice.

How or whether the 30 acres east of 15-501 will be included in the new proposal for Briar Chapel will be followed with intense interest by area citizens.

Recent census data show that Chatham has grown by more than 12 percent from mid-2000 to mid-2003. Almost none of the influx moved into the recently approved large developments, which include the Preserve, Buck Mountain, Powell Place, and the Homestead. With the expected approval of Briar Chapel, there will be about 5,000 new homes on the market. Demand will determine how quickly they are built and sold. When these developments are complete, well over 10,000 new residents will call Chatham County home and Briar Chapel will be as large as Siler City.

Robert N. Eby writes about development for Chatham County Line. He has followed the Chatham County development scene closely and actively. He moved to Chatham County in 1995 after retiring from his profession as a chemical engineer.

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Theater couple settles in Chatham; takes the show on the road

By Mary Bastin

Elisabeth Lewis Corley and Joseph Megel are on an exciting new adventure, building a classic modern house on Harlands Creek off U.S. 64. The architect, Frank Harmon of Raleigh, positioned the two-level house against the woods and into the meadow, to allow plenty of soft, defused light to grace its inviting rooms. Builder Frank Cole is working to build their dreams into the beautiful Chatham landscape.

With careers in the theater in New York and across the country, Elisabeth and Joseph have found they can get to RDU and commute to work wherever they need to be. Of course, there's a story behind how they got to Chatham. When Elisabeth's father, Bob Corley, completed his second tour of duty in Vietnam, he came to UNC to graduate school. He bought acreage on Harlands Creek and built a lovely log getaway he and the family have enjoyed since 1973.

When Elisabeth and Joseph were both living in New York and were starting a serious relationship, she had to tell him she had another love, the North Carolina Piedmont. A trip to the



Elisabeth Corley and Joseph Megel (with Elisabeth's father, Bob Corley) are excited to see their new home taking shape on Harlands Creek.

cabin for a week together was a kind of test to see how he would feel in the setting. Her family's roots were in South Carolina and Georgia, but his were in Ohio. She needn't have worried, he loves it too! So the marriage was sealed.

Elisabeth says she is drawn to Piedmont hills with their rolling softness that "invites you in." The diffused light here adds a warm glow to the

atmosphere. This is in stark contrast to the light you see in New York where light comes in shards – sharp angles dividing shadow from shafts of light between buildings. Her speech reflects her artistry with words. In addition to her career as an actor, she writes poetry and screenplays. One of the screenplays she is currently developing, "Okefenokee" by John David Allen and Elisabeth, will be made into a movie in 2005 with John David Allen directing. The action/adventure film will be shot in Georgia at the actual location at Okefenokee Swamp. Elisabeth and Joseph will be working together as consultants on the project.

She is also working on a screenplay based on a play, "Vanishing Marion", by Jeanmarie Williams. Another screenplay she is developing is from Jim Grimsley's novel, *Winterbirds*. Her experience as an actress helps her get into a story in a personal way. And in many ways, Elisabeth and Joseph blend their artistic talents into each other's work.

Joseph is a director, writer and screenplay consultant. Currently, his directing skills are focused on a sequel to his Off-Broadway success, "Men On

The Verge of a His-Panic Breakdown", a new comedy entitled "Men on the Verge II – The Self Esteem Files", to be performed in Tucson, Chicago and Phoenix. In June he will be directing readings for the Streetsigns Center for Literature and Performance in Chapel Hill, including a play by Andrea Stolowitz from Duke. The public readings will be in UNC's Swain Hall.

He is involved in several other projects in New York, Chicago and Mill Mountain in Roanoke, Virginia. Somehow between all this he teaches "Acting for the Camera" at NC A&T in Greensboro. Elisabeth and Joseph are hoping for a revival of North Carolina filmmaking. Many people they know are seeing film as a promising industry for the state's future. Now that would be the best of all worlds for these two – living in their new house and working near home full time! Please say "hello" when you see them in Chatham and welcome these gifted new neighbors to our arts community.

Mary Bastin is a writer, artist and environmental advocate who loves Chatham County's diversity.

Spring in Blue Moon Garden

By Ginny Gregory

When I look out my window at The Blue Moon Garden, my home garden, I see sticks. I mean there is a touch of evergreen here and there, but primarily it is sticks. I love sticks. I am southern to the bone and know that spring will eventually come. That belief is reflected in the fact that I have many deciduous shrubs. Action in the garden comes from these very sticks.

Transplanted gardeners do not understand this phenomenon. They have much less faith due to their lack of history with this part of the gardening world. I have received many calls throughout my career from "Doubters." "It's dead, just come and remove it...or...Just come and put another whatever it is in." Often it is the infamous *Clethera*. I love the fragrance of the honey white flower, but even I find my patience running thin with this "I'm taking my time" shrub". If you know that it will take forever to flush out ... that its nature is a bit scrappy ... that it will ever so gently travel and that the fragrance will remind you of maple syrup when it hits pancakes ... if you know all of that and can live with it, well it is for you.

That's why I love my sticks. They are all about action. It starts with a tiny green bump, then a mini leaf then ... watch out ... spring is on a roll. There is an explosion of color. In the south, you are in for the most incredible show on earth.

I am looking out at my garden now as I write and I see two topiaries left over from a container garden topiary show. They are *Encore azaleas* (which ... those who know me know I am not fond of but...). They are now perched in huge zinc containers and they are beginning to bloom a beautiful coral color. The first to bloom honeysuckle ... orange and red is exploding. Behind it are my most cherished and loved deciduous azaleas that are blooming orange and soft lemon on this side of the terraced garden and hot pink to pale pink on the other side of the garden. Since The Blue Moon has terraced hills and lots of garden

space, all colors are allowed and adored.

In the burgundy department, my 'Wine and Roses' weigelia is popping with hot rose-colored flowers. Fabulous accent to the leaves! The barberry is reaching to the sky. Its stiff arms unfolding leaves as I write with lemon yellow blooms soon to come. The Bloodgood Japanese maple is two toned as the new leaves begin to creep out. The Plum Passion nandinas are reinventing the whole idea of the southern nandina, as the new growth is red wine colored. The smoke trees are really working on believing it is spring and the *lorepetulums* are showing that fuchsia and burgundy really do go together.

Dotted everywhere is chartreuse... Gold Flame spiraeas, golden barberries, "Rubidor" Weigelia with hot fuchsia/red blooms with shocking chartreuse leaves, as a back drop *Driftwood* colored honeysuckle blooms; golden variegated honeysuckle and variegated *katsura* vine are covering the lattice around the screened porch. "Jackmanii" clematis has climbed all the way from the bottom terrace, up the lattice and is at the floor of the screened porch. Now that is a brave soul. Jack is first dark purple to appear in the garden.

The flagstone landings are covered with the blue /lavender of *mazus* and the chartreuse of *Creeping Jenny*. The *Firewitch dianthus* is creating hot pink accents along the path. And my *viburnum chorus* has begun... first the *macrophyllum*, going from lime green to clean ivory, *opulus* is filled with small pale ivory puffs all over the shrub, "Marseii" is presenting herself with arms stretched out almost in a WELCOME stance and now "Summer Snowflake" is beginning to show how it got its name.

But the question I have really been mulling over is... how do they know? How do the sticks know it is time? How do the vines, shrubs, trees, perennials



Have faith in those late-budding plants!

... the garden as a whole know that it is time to wake up? Time to start the magic of spring. There are all kinds of scientific reasons to answer that question, but the way I see it, spring is our gift. We made it through the cold and dark of winter to see this magical, musical act begin. The birds feel it as the waves of breeze flow through the woods.

That's it! That's how they know. The wind starts the whole show. Then the birds sing and nest, the buds begin budding then foliage completely, the hummers begin to enjoy the first bits of nectar in the honeysuckle vine, the butterflies swoop and dive playfully reminding us to lighten up and enjoy the moment.

Neighbor's bees swarm from their hive only to land on a bent tree ... as an undulating mass too remarkable to even put into words and then they move on as unexpectedly as they appeared.

Spring is so unexpected and yet we are always hopefully expecting this gift each year just as small children expect balloons at birthday parties.

I would not want to ever enjoy spring anywhere but here. The color, the movement, the drama... heavenly! The way I figure it ... I got about 40 more springs and I'm going to have coffee every morning I can on this Blue Moon screened porch (pollen and all). As I drink my coffee I will drink in the beauty of my garden, because in a blink of an eye it is summer and THAT is a whole "mother story."

Enjoy the wren song this spring.

Ginny Gregory is the owner and creative energy behind "Beyond The Pail...Creating Gardens and Beyond." She offers garden consultations, garden design and installation and lectures, demonstrations and garden related events across the state.

For more information, please check www.beyondthepail.net

The Combat Arena

By Khalil Abdullah

Far more than the lure of wholesome, lovingly cooked food, desserts and candy have always had a vice grip on the minds of young children. Yes, I meant vice. I saw this genetically encoded syndrome at work when I observed my eldest grandson at home one afternoon after school. All of almost 8 years old, he is a finicky eater with peculiar culinary habits like, "can I have mustard on my mashed potatoes?" I happened to spy his narrow frame crouched beside the off-limits-to-children cache of by-permission-only desserts. In his slender fingers he covetously clutched America's most cherished children's nectar: Kool-Aid. "My precious, my precious," I could almost hear him say. "You are busted!" I heard myself shout. He, of course, had no context for "busted," but my tone conveyed all he needed to know about having Kool-Aid, at least until after his homework was finished.

Among delectable recipes and the fond memories they bring, food conjures in my mind a much more menacing environment – the arena of mental combat. As those who have encountered young children will attest, they reach an age early on when they realize that they have power, the power to say "no." This initial phase is popularly known as the "terrible twos," a euphemism for the formidable test of wills that ensues between them and adults. I'm witnessing this period of development and its subsequent permutations in my grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. Children don't really outgrow this phase, in my opinion; they just learn how to modulate variations and forms of "no." After all, in war, timing is everything.

I candidly admit that mealtime was not always the most joyous occasion in my pre-pubescent years. Certain foods invariably forced tabletop showdowns with my grandmother. She, having survived America's Depression, would have none of it, as in, "You cannot get up from the table until you eat your Brussels sprouts." And so we would begin a long dance of brinkmanship as the clock moved forward into the evening.

When I visited my great aunts in Mobile, Alabama during summer months, I could employ another option. There was a German shepherd named Huskie and a black and white cat, Kentucky. Huskie was confined to the spacious backyard, but under a fierce sun, he would seek shade beneath the house, raised on concrete blocks to avert flash floods, or laze under the pecan trees that yielded the large box of eponymous nuts that my great aunts dutifully shipped to us northerners each year. Kentucky, on the

other hand, really lived in the streets of Mobile. I'm sure he frequented the well-stocked fish markets and wharfs of Mobile Bay, the same ones where we could purchase a pound of sumptuously large shrimp for twenty-five cents. Having developed a taste for chopped calf kidney, Kentucky would deign to drop by the homestead for mealtime in expectation of his favorite treat. His domestic feeding post near the kitchen was more proximate to the dining area than the

tree, so was often able on the occasions I needed to slide some under the table into his omnivorous waiting grasp.

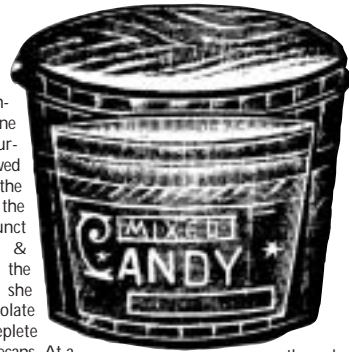
Back home in Washington, I had neither dog nor cat, so there were no discrete handoffs to dispose of the evidence of an unfinished serving. And, being the only child in my early years, there were no siblings with whom I could make a dinner pact: "you eat my Brussels sprouts, I'll eat your offending food group."

For the record, my grandmother was an excellent cook. Usually, she made things from "scratch," especially pies, cakes, biscuits, and all matter of pastries. Next to the most delicious fried chicken under any season's sun, I vividly remember the melt-in-your-mouth moistness of her coconut cake, prepared at least once a year on my birthday. Cracking the coconut, draining its "milk" into the bowl to be mixed with the batter and icing, and shredding the coconut by hand using an old-fashioned metal hand grater was our annual ritual.

Her favorite candy was marzipan,

the green rich almond paste succored in a chocolate log roll. When shopping downtown, this was the one extravagant purchase she allowed herself from the candy shop of the now defunct Woodward & Lothrop store. But, the fudge! Ah, the fudge she oaked, a rich thick chocolate incarnation, sometimes replete with those same Alabama pecans. At a recent send-off dinner party for a former colleague who was heading west, the conversation turned to food and dessert. "Does anyone make fudge?" I asked casually. No takers.

I've yet to offer fudge to my grandchildren, but I know they'll savor it as the mere thought of candy emanates an irresistible allure. Nor have my younger brother's children experienced fudge, but they too are prone to sinister candy-induced behaviors, particularly his second oldest daughter. I wasn't



there, but I heard the story. After clambering into the back seat of her mother's van during an after-school pick up, my niece heard the distinct sound of a cellophane wrapper being unpeeled in the driver's seat. To her mother, she says, in the deepest and most assertive alto voice a 6-year old can muster, "hand over the candy and nobody gets hurt."

Khalil Abdullah is a Washington, D.C.-based writer, editor, and business development consultant.



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RECEIVED

Steamboat travel to Chatham a washout

Early on, settlers in the area that is now Chatham County found themselves isolated from the denser population centers nearer the coast. Their connections were via a series of Native American trading paths and, later on, via rudimentary roads that were frequently impassable. These conditions made the cost of getting farm products to market and bringing in tools and supplies prohibitive. In 1780 the Rev. Francis Asbury, a circuit riding Methodist preacher, wrote in his journal, "In general I walk my horse: as the rides are so long and bad roads." Some 54 years later the Hillsborough Recorder reported that a correspondent had seen many wagoners returning from Fayetteville with broken down horses, and because of the bad condition of the roads it was sometimes necessary to leave a part of the load on the way.

It is no wonder that some folk, after looking at early maps of the region showing a network of connecting rivers running from Chatham down through Fayetteville and Wilmington, began to dream of water transportation. Fayetteville was near the end of navigable waters on the Cape Fear River, with rapids, small waterfalls and shallows frequently encountered beyond that point.

In 1792 the North Carolina legislature passed an act to establish a company whose mission was to facilitate the navigation of the Cape Fear River from Fayetteville to the confluence of the Haw and Deep Rivers. The resulting "Cape Fear Company" apparently made some sketches and plans, but did not have the resources to carry them out.

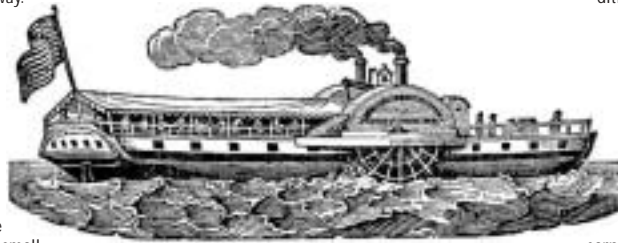
Four years later, in 1796, the Deep and Haw River Company was chartered to improve navigation of the Cape Fear, Deep and Haw Rivers. In 1800 Col. George Lucas of Chatham, a director of the company, traveled from Wilmington to Haywood in a small, probably flat bottomed boat. The trip took eleven days through almost constant rain. No mention was made in his letter to a Raleigh newspaper concerning the crew or means of propulsion, but they probably pushed the boat along with poles. Col. Lucas felt that improving the river would cost a lot more than his fellow directors suspected, but that the benefits to Chatham would be well worth the expense.

CHATHAM'S Historical Heritage

by Fred J. Vatter



An amendment in 1815 expanded the charter of the company, increasing its authorized capital from \$8,000.00 to \$100,000.00 and changing its name to the Cape Fear Navigation Company. It concentrated on clearing the channel below Fayetteville and by 1818 boats began making regular trips between that city and Wilmington. Attempts to improve the navigation upriver from Fayetteville were not very successful, but occasionally high water enabled small boats to reach Haywood. By 1834 the Cape Fear Navigation Company announced that it would relinquish all claims to the river above Fayetteville to any company that would be willing to improve it.



Fifteen years later, in 1849, the Cape Fear and Deep River Navigation Company was created with the ambitious intention of enabling steamboats to travel from Randolph County, through Chatham and downstream to Fayetteville, a trip of over 100 miles. The company was headquartered in Pittsboro. Its capital from private subscriptions was not to exceed \$200,000.00 but the state of North Carolina was authorized to subscribe to the company's shares up to \$80,000.00. The Cape Fear and Deep River Navigation Company was also directed to study the feasibility of connecting the Deep and Yadkin Rivers by either a canal or a portage railroad for transporting flat boats between the rivers. Nothing came of this plan but the proposed portage railroad appeared on the company's seal.

Throughout most of its existence the company was plagued by both physical and financial difficulties. By the end of 1856 there were 13 dams and 14 locks on the Cape Fear River and six dams and

eight locks on the Deep River. The commencement of coal mining on the Deep River's south bank, just a few miles east of the present Gulf community, generated optimism among the directors. A town was built on Dowd's Mill on the Deep River and was named Carbondon, reflecting the hope of a busy port handling coal shipments. The eventual competition from railroads was still about six years away.

Unfortunately, all of these navigation projects were short-lived because of the same frequent flooding which caused the Jordan Lake and Dam project to be constructed in the 1970s and 1980s. Work on the bases of locks and dams could only be performed during seasonally low water. Some locks were 20 feet high, but flood waters sometimes covered them to a depth of 10 feet and once to 20 feet. The wooden locks deteriorated rapidly and had to be continuously repaired and rebuilt when conditions permitted. The on-again off-again work schedules hampered the company's ability to attract workers, who preferred steady work on the plank roads and railroads. In desperation, the company bought 40 slaves in 1855 at a cost of \$38,141.00.

Nevertheless, the system never had a steady period of uninterrupted operation and could not earn sufficient income from tolls to finance its operation. In 1859 there was a forced sale of the company's assets by creditors. The State of North Carolina bought the Cape Fear and Deep River Navigation Company to protect its investment, but the system was neglected during the Civil War, and in 1873 any saleable assets were put up for public auction.

The relatively few successful passages through the system, mostly by a company owned steamer, the "John H. Haughton" had been written up in the Wilmington and Fayetteville newspapers quoting letters from Chatham sources, apparently to overcome distrust and renew enthusiasm for the enterprise. However, in the struggle between man and nature for control of the river, nature was the winner.

Today only a few place names such as Lockville, Carbondon and Haywood are left to remind us of ambitious plans which faded away.

Fred J. Vatter is past president of the Chatham County Historical Society, an organization for which he is also a board member and museum curator.

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CHATHAM COUNTY LINE RACK LOCATIONS

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Lynn Schloetzer loves her work

By Judy Hogan

"If you're happy," Lynn Schloetzer, employee of Pittsboro Farm and Garden store, tells me, "it flows out to other people." I spoke with her on a cold gray April day. In the huge warehouse baby ducks and chicks were warmed by their heat lamps against the chill air. Out in front bedding plants, vegetables and flowers wait for the Chatham gardeners and farmers who hit the store last weekend and lowered the inventory to the point that owner Lorelei Phillips went to pick up more. Yancy King, the other owner, is often the person who delivers large farm orders.

Lynn is ready for the wide base of customers who come looking for hay, feed, and supplies for goats, horses, cows, llamas, dogs, cats, chickens, ducks, inside and wild birds, even monkeys.

She has worked at this store on U.S. 64, just east of Pittsboro, for a year, but she worked for years at similar feed and garden stores in Sanford and Southern Pines. She laughs at how she got into the business. She'd been going into Bartlett Milling in Sanford to buy supplies for her horses, and one day the owner said, "Don't you want a job?" It turned out that they needed a new employee. Lynn doesn't understand why they wanted her. She had been a stay-at-home mom for awhile. But she tried it, and it fit her like "a foot going into a shoe."

When that store closed, the owner recommended her to the Westbrook Brokerage in Southern Pines, and he took her on immediately. She found that she had to get used to that clientele, many of whom were very wealthy. At first she felt inferior. But one day a customer said to her, "We all put our britches on the same way." From that time it was smooth sailing.

Lynn enjoys her work, her life, and radiates that enjoyment. She has also

WOMEN OF CHATHAM

discovered over the years that she has a talent for cranky or difficult customers. She is often asked to wait on them. She doesn't quite understand what she has or what she does, but usually she can calm them down. "It's just there." She does think that we should all spend some time doing retail work to help us imagine the feelings of that clerk behind the counter, whose dog may have died that day but who still has to have a smile for the customer and who often works non-stop.

Lynn has never been in a job she hated. She has worked on a horse-breeding farm, in banking, as a bookkeeper, and owned her own ceramic shop. She says that the morale among the employees at Farm and Garden is high. They tease each other a lot and enjoy making the store a place people want to come back to—all year round. The owners have increased their offerings to include work clothes, boots, jewelry, and gifts. They are working with the organic farmers to have more of the products they use.

Although she was born in Illinois and lived near Fort Worth, Texas, Lynn has always fit in. She thinks it's her love of horses. She has four. "I'll always have a horse." She and her husband also have chickens, a black lab named Jordy, and two rabbits for their granddaughter, Rosemary, about whom Lynn loves to talk. She has so much fun spending the day with this child, who believes, at age 6, that Granny knows everything and wants to learn it all as fast as possible. They often cook together, making cookies or breakfast. Rosemary does as much as possible herself.

Pittsboro Farm and Garden is a family-owned business, and Lynn, though not related, adds to that feeling of family you have when you're in the store. It doesn't take her long to tune into what people are like on the inside, and that's clearly what's important to her, not their clothes, accents, how rich or poor they are. If



Schloetzer has never been in a job she hated. She has worked on a horse-breeding farm, in banking, as a bookkeeper, and owned her own ceramic shop. She now keeps customers happy at the Pittsboro Farm and Garden store.

© PHOTO BY JOHN SHILLITO

you're solemn-faced though, she will try to get you to smile.

People coming in the store, Lynn says, talk a lot these days about how they want to keep Pittsboro a small town with "mom and pop" businesses. They don't want to see the big chain discount stores coming in. The tradition of the customer's loyalty to the business, and vice versa, is one she believes in. She'll advise customers to buy something that costs less if it's more appropriate for them. It's not surprising that this, in turn,

inspires a strong loyalty to the store. She knows that people enjoy coming in, and likes to keep them smiling.

"Taking care of customers is like being a mother," she says. Or perhaps like being a grandmother!

Pittsboro Farm and Garden is located at 1103 East Street. 542-2454.

Judy Hogan is a regular contributor to Chatham County Line. She buys chicken feed from Pittsboro Farm and Garden. She lives in Moncure, near Jordan Lake Dam.



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Black and white mixed



Rocky River Tales
by Maggie Wilson

If inconstancy is the heart's neighbor, the soul will not fail to find it bitter. Blame and praise alike befall when a dauntless man's spirit is black-and-white-mixed like the magpie's plumage. Yet he may see blessedness after all, for both colors have a share in him, the color of heaven and the color of hell.

— From *Parzival* by
Wolfram Von Eschenbach

This is my current lesson: to learn that everything — every person, thing, event — is black and white mixed. There is nothing all black or all white, nothing hopelessly evil or perfectly pure. This knowledge has changed my life.

For a long time now I've been having trouble with the concept of evil, of anything being unredeemably bad. In my writings I have no villains, no one who is to blame for all the wrongs in the life of a pure-hearted hero. Everyone in my stories has virtues and vices, light and dark, good and bad. Everyone one is black and white mixed.

I have a new teacher, too, for this lesson, a pair of them, actually, great dark winged ones who fly between me and the sun, startling me out of my oblivion when their shadows suddenly swoop over me.

Turkey Vultures, or TVs, as we call them here, with no little irony. Up until recently Turkey Vultures had the same reputation with us as the dreaded talking box does, as Vultures do in a lot of the world, as disgusting, carcass-eating, ungainly low-life scum.

Yes, Vultures have a bad rep but with my new black-and-white-mixed vision I see now the beauty, the majesty of these graceful beings, soaring, gliding through the crystal blue sky. And, oh, what I wouldn't do to be able to join them.

Their earthly task, on the other hand, seems a gruesome one but in fact it's vitally important. Nature may not clean the way humans do but she has a

process that works, and has for millions of years. There is no garbage in Nature. All dead things are valuable as food, building material, compost. Nothing is wasted, nothing thrown away. There's no place to throw away to — the whole Earth is Nature's home.

What looks like waste to us, like totally inedible garbage, is what the Vulture thrives on, as do others on Nature's sanitation crew — rodents, ants, you name them, all the way down to the tiny microbes. Just like those trees and branches knocked down in storms that seem wasted to me if I don't make firewood out of them, it's all a matter of perspective. Dead wood is food or homes for some creatures, or eventually decays into the soil that the forest needs to survive.

Humans could learn a lot from the Vultures and all the fine upstanding members of Mother Nature's cleanup team. Recycling? Nature's got that down pat — everything is reused. Imagine what the Vultures might think of humans, if they had time for such trivialities: Look at them, Fred. They leave stuff rotting and stinking, contaminating the earth, their own home, instead of using it for what it was designed for. And putting perfectly good food into those big hard boxes

where no one can get at it to eat it and use it — how selfish and shortsighted can you get?

Just think what we're missing by not participating wholeheartedly in Nature's recycling program. To be voluntarily, no enthusiastically! committed to the magical cycle of the food chain. To finally give back, completely, after our three score and ten years of taking; to go back to the way of doing and knowing, believing, that this is the right way, the honest way of a truly natural animal; to face our fears of death and dying, and to see regeneration as the ultimate recycling.

Can we learn not only to see the white in the things we think are black, and the black in the things we think are white, but to appreciate that mix? Can we learn to respect Vultures and all of Nature's creatures for the wonderful work they do to keep the Earth alive? And can we begin to learn from our fellow creatures that we must give back, in equal portion, what we take from the Earth, or sooner or later, there will be no Earth?

Maggie Wilson is an artist and writer living in her dream house in Chatham. Her website is www.maggiwilson.com

chatham writers' corner with Marjorie Hudson



The combination of summery weather and bad news in Iraq has a strange effect on me. I've dug out my "sixties novel," now in submission, to bring a scene to life on these pages. The novel is set in 1972, and it is the story of a fifteen-year-old runaway girl, Cat Jamieson, and her father, a cop and a Vietnam vet.

—Marjorie

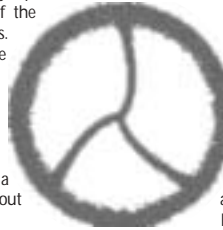
Frank Jamieson
August 1972

He has been wondering for a week why the body shop has not called. They must have come by and loaded up the Firebird two weeks ago, to bang out the one big dent in the rear fender and finally, finally

spray a triple coat of cherry red. Flames in yellow. A classic color combination. An antidote to those crusty, tin can VW vans out there, peace signs painted all over the nose—"the track of the chicken"—draft dodgers and druggies.

Every night he has come home thinking, well, it will be done soon. And it has given him a strange satisfaction, as if everything will be okay after all, and he will find his daughter and make her straighten up and fly right and he will get sober and get a promotion if only the Firebird comes out right.

promise he made each time he went by, "you will be one good thing in my life."



So when he got the call and it was the body shop and they said they were sorry they were so late coming by, they got delayed, and did he choose some other shop or was there someplace else they should pick it up, he is stumped for a minute. Then a black flood of dread fills his stomach. If the Firebird is gone, he thinks, then what about my life? Who took my life away?

He picks up the phone and calls in a stolen vehicle report. In less than fifteen minutes he gets a call back.

His car was spotted in the river ten days ago, not far from his house, looks like someone shot it off the cliff with the windows open. Does he want to pay for hauling it out? Yes, dammit, he does. And this is how he finds out there is blood on his dream car, and three strands of long frizzy blonde hair caught in the door, and could be someone drowned but they have not checked because there have been no missing persons in TORYTOWN, New York, this month.

Except Cat, he does not say, and I didn't call her in.

Excerpt from *GONE FOREVER, BE BACK SOON*, by Marjorie Hudson ©2004. All rights reserved.

Emma's Search for Grace
a novel
by Maggie Wilson

Emma Grace Edwards
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by Marjorie Hudson

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happenings

Every Tuesday at 4 p.m. Local farmers sell their finest produce at the **Fearrington Farmers Market**. Located next to the Administration Building - call 919.542.4000.

Every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. McIntyre's Fine Books & Bookends is pleased to announce **PRE-SCHOOL STORYTIME**. For more information, call Sarah at 919.542.3030.

Every Saturday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Fearrington Grocery Co. will feature a free **wine tasting**. Call 545-5717.

Thursday, May 13 at 7 p.m. **Kristin Ohlson**, author of the critically acclaimed *Stalking the Divine: Contemplating Faith With The Poor Clares*. Call the bookstore for details, (919) 542-3030.

Thursday, May 13 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. **Spring Floral Seminar**. Back by popular demand! Join Fearrington Floral Designer Bill Pressley and Vietri's Frances Gravelly to discover the latest in Spring Floral trends and tabletop design. The Spring Floral Seminar will be held in the Barn. Bill will design fabulous arrangements to compliment Vietri's table settings. Pick up tips for Afternoon Tea Garden Parties, July 4th BBQ's, Beach Parties and Showers for all occasions. Package includes: Continental Breakfast, Morning Floral Demonstration and Tabletop Seminar, presentation of Fearrington Village's Gift Registry, 3 course lunch at the Fearrington House, a demonstration by Fearrington House Chef Graham Fox, and a Question & Answer session with Bill & Frances. Reservations can be made in person at Dovecote: A Home & Garden Shop or by calling 919.542.1145.

Thursday, May 13 from 4:30 p.m. to 5:15p.m. Music in the Air presents the **Joe Izzo Jazz Quartet**. Drums, saxophone, guitar and bass, played by well-known jazz musicians of the area, including Maylin Horde and Kevin van Sant. Call the Market for details, 919.542.5505.

Friday, May 14 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30p.m. **Saludos Compay** will bring their jazz-laced Latin rhythms to the Market Cafe once again. Singer/songwriter Pablo Valencia sings original songs as well as time-honored favorites from all over Cuba, and Central and South America. Intricately woven rhythms are supplied by percussionist Chuck Nolan and keyboardist Erich Lieth adds inventive improvisations. Call the Market for details, 919.542.5505.

Saturday, May 15 at 11 a.m. Local author **John May** will discuss his new novel, *Poe and Fanny*. In one tumultuous year, Edgar Allan Poe founded *The Raven*, was embraced by the New York literati, published his own magazine, and had a dalliance with the renowned Frances Sargent Osgood. Although 1845 should have been the crowning year of Poe's life, by the end of it he was disgraced and reviled. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Sunday, May 16 at 2 p.m. **Walter Turner**, historian at the North Carolina Transportation Museum in Spencer, will join us to share his new book, *Paving Tobacco Road: A Century of Progress by the North Carolina Department of Transportation*. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Saturday, May 22 at 11 a.m. Award-winning historian **Timothy B. Iyson** will join us to discuss his look at Oxford, NC in *Blood Done Sign My Name*. This true crime narrative delves the events of May 11, 1970, when Henry Marrow, a 23-year-old black veteran, walked into a cross-roads store owned by Robert Teel, a rough man with a criminal record and ties to the Ku Klux Klan, and came out running. Teel and two of his sons chased Marrow and killed him in public as he pleaded for his life. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Sunday, May 23 at 2 p.m. Balladeer **Sheila Kay Adams** shares her new novel, *My Old True Love*, based on the ballads of England, Scotland, and Ireland. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Thursday, May 27 from 7 p.m. to 7:45p.m. Music in the Air at Fearrington presents **The Durham Savoyards**. They will sing a selection of those wonderful Gilbert & Sullivan favorites.

Friday, May 28 from 5:30p.m. to 7:30p.m. **Peggy Hayes**, accompanied by **Greg Brink**, keyboardist and **Tony Galliani**, bass will perform at the Market Cafe, singing warm jazz standards and soulful blues. For more information call the Market at 919. 542.5505.

Saturday, May 29 at 11 a.m. Young adult author and local favorite **Sarah Dessen** will be here to read from her new book, *The Truth About Forever*. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Sunday, May 30 at 2 p.m. **Janet Lembke** will discuss her new book *The Quality of Life: Living Well, Dying Well on Sunday*, May 30th at 2p.m. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Monday, May 31 at 11 a.m. **Marc Haddon** will kick off



his U.S. tour for the paperback release of the hit novel *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Friday, June 4 from 5:30 – 7:30p.m. **Harmony Keeney and Mark Wells**, a duo of jazz vocalist and keyboardist, entertain with the songs of Gershwin, Rogers & Hart, Cole Porter and many others. Call the Market for details, 919.542.5505.

Friday, June 4 at 7 p.m. **Tim Cautreaux** will read from his novel *The Clearing*. A top Booksense pick, and one of Sarah's top five favorites from 2003. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Thursday, June 10 from 7-7:45p.m. Music in the Air at Fearrington presents **Brass on the Slide**. Look for our tent in the Village.

Saturday, June 12th at 11 a.m. North Carolina author and psychotherapist **Les Rhodes** shares her experiences with Parkinson's Disease and her book *Into the Dark for Gold*, an insightful collection of connected essays dealing with her condition and spiritual transformation. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Sunday, June 13 at 2 p.m. Celebrate the publication of *Wordworks*, an anthology by members of **The Writers' Group of the Triad**. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

Saturday, June 19 at 11 a.m. **Martin Clark**, author of *Many Aspects of Mobile Home Living*, will be reading from his new novel, *Plain Heathen Mischief*. For details call McIntyre's 919.542.3030.

FEARRINGTON

continued from page 1.

finished our Champagne, a bottle of Pinot Noir from Oregon, arrived.

After that came our appetizer course. For me, it was Jumbo Lump Crab Meat with a Horseradish Potato Salad, Tomato Marmalade and a Baby Herb Salad. Each flavor was delicate, to enhance the crab; nothing overwhelmed it.

The Second Course arrived next: a little tower with Glazed Potato and Cauliflower Puree on the bottom, a Braised Ox-Tail oozing beef broth in the middle, and Poached Lobster topping it off. Each component of the plate was perfectly cooked, and each complimented the other perfectly. I wished it would never end.

The Main Course, Parsley Crusted Saddle of Lamb with Morels, Minted Fingerling Potatoes, Fava Beans and a Black Olive Lamb Jus, was beyond delicious. The lamb

was sliced, each piece surrounded in parsley and arrayed like a fan in a bed of Jus.

Dessert was Hot Chocolate Soufflé with Chocolate Sauce, and coffee. The souffle and sauce were rich and strong, but not sweet – the whipped cream supplied the sweet.

Each course was as beautiful to behold as it was delicious to devour – from an artist's palette to my palate. And while the sense of sublime that accompanied each mouthful ended with dessert, the glow did not. An indescribable sense of well being emanating from my stomach lasted all night and into the next day.

Disclosure: Our dinner at Fearrington House was freeloader nirvana: dinner was on them, except for drinks, tax, and tip, all of which are tax deductible. Otherwise, the total tab for two would have been \$287.

Julian Sereno is editor and publisher of Chatham County Line.

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Eating locally-grown food makes for win-win-win situation

By Melissa Frey

Local, sustainable food systems provide several advantages over conventional and global markets. Buying locally strengthens regional economies, supports family farms, provides "fresh-from-the-field" foods for consumers, protects the environment, preserves the local landscape, and fosters a sense of community.

Buying local food strengthens our regional economy.

Purchasing food that was produced locally and buying products from locally owned businesses keeps economic resources in our area. It keeps our money circulating within our region amongst people we know and care about. Buying local food also supports family farmers in our community, some of whom have farmed the land for generations.

Local grower and Chatham Marketplace owner, Laurie Heise, is looking forward to Chatham Marketplace providing an additional market for her vegetables as well as the meat, eggs, dairy, fruit, flowers, and health and beauty aids grown



Neighbor to Neighbor

and produced by other area folks. Supporting local farms helps retain and create jobs for our region. Growing and marketing sustainable foods results in a strong local economy that can help insulate

our region from national and global recessions.

Chatham Marketplace owner and farmer Harry LeBlanc reports that "farms contribute much more in property taxes than they consume in local services." Farms and residential development require \$.34 and \$1.17 in services, respectively, for every dollar in property tax they generate. Clearly, retaining a good portion of our county's farmland benefits our local government's budget and helps keep taxes lower for residential owners.

Buying local, sustainable food provides us with diverse, high-quality, fresh foods.

Locally produced, sustainable food is fresher and more nutritious than conventional products grown far away and shipped in trucks for several days. Buying local allows us to know who made/grew a product, how it was produced, and exactly where it was produced. We can know and ask questions of our veggie, fruit, dairy, and meat farmer. Local flavor is real and refreshing. Small, sustainable farmers who know their local ecosystem and know the varieties that perform best in their climate and soils, are able to grow and preserve the literally thousands

of fruit, vegetable, and grain varieties that exist. Buying local can help bring back the look, feel, and taste of all the amazing variety the land has to offer!

Buying local preserves the natural environment.

By supporting local, sustainable agriculture, we protect our region's farmland and ecosystems, and hence our food security, from urban sprawl and development.

"Chatham Marketplace and its support of the local agricultural community has "the potential to forge stronger ties between urban, suburban, and rural people. The outcome could be more interest in protecting open space and farm land," said Laufie.

Buying local food also conserves natural resources. Sixty years ago most families consumed food produced within a 200-mile radius of their homes. Now we regularly consume food produced thousands of miles away. It is far more environmentally responsible to grow and consume food that can be grown much closer to us. Then, we benefit from a fresher, more nutrient-packed food as well.

How to get back to buying local

■ Eat seasonally. We can gradually re-adjust our diets to eat fresh foods that coincide with the growing seasons in our region.

■ Put your money where your mouth is. The old saying is true that you get what you pay for. Although the massive buying power and low

prices of chain stores can be enticing in the short-term, we must be willing to pay for the real and fair cost of quality, local items now lest we pay more dearly for global agribusiness' environmental, health, and social degradation later.

Chatham Marketplace will help! Together, we can provide a demand and outlet for our locally, sustainably produced foods.

Chatham Marketplace will provide you with seasonal meal ideas and recipes — and help relieve you of the January bell pepper dependency! We will also offer many in-store food demonstrations to spark your cooking imaginations. And together, we will journey back to a secure, local food economy, enlivening the rich agricultural heritage in our midst!

Laurie reminds us that "this is a critical time in the development of Chatham County — we can go the Cary way, or we can create something unique and wonderful here — a local economy that supports farmers, artists, local industry of all kinds. Buying an ownership share in Chatham Marketplace is one step among many that people can take, but it's a very important one."

In addition to sourcing from local, sustainable growers, Chatham Marketplace is looking forward to working with a new regional distribution network based in Mebane dealing with certified organic foods.

Melissa Frey has been a driving force behind Chatham Marketplace, Your Local Co-op Grocery. For more information, click on www.chathammarketplace.com.

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Feeding others

By the Rev. Bertha Thomas



The Bible records that God spoke living creatures into existence. He created man from the dust of the earth, made woman from a rib taken from man. He also spoke food, both solid and liquid, into existence. Food must be consumed to be beneficial.

He placed man and woman in a garden of food. He caused water to

come upon the earth. So they had both solid food and liquid. The credit for food must go back to the love of God the Father, who, in his wisdom, created a mixture of foods for his new creatures. God knew that man and woman would not be content to consume the same diet every meal. I thank him for creating such a variety.

I learned later that man should not live by bread alone but also by the Word of God. This is food, too, for our existence. We choose not in this instance but must use whatever He provides. This food promotes our growth, both mental and spiritual. The spiritual food we consume should have real nutritional value.

We obtain this kind of food in many ways—from books, friends, doctors, ministers, music, exercise, and from whatever gives us peace within. We feed others by our actions, the tone of our voice. Kindness is an



Man cannot live by bread alone.

especially nourishing food.

We should ask ourselves often whether the food we share with others has true value. In order for food to be nourishing, it must be seasoned well with the right ingredients. Many of us are food servers, but we must keep trying, not stop our work. There are a host of hungry souls looking for a good food shop.

The Rev. Bertha Thomas lives in Moncure, where she grows vegetables and flowers. She serves as Associate Minister of the Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church.

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Reclaiming Chatham's future for its people

By Judy Hogan

Chatham County will be a place that cooperatively controls its own destiny to assure the state of well-being desired by all of our people, while proudly preserving diverse cultural heritages and the County's rural character. —Chatham County Land Use Plan, 2001

Chatham County is at a crossroads. True, human life, communal and individual, is always at crossroads. We keep having to make hard choices. I moved to Moncure because I could afford to buy a small home, land for a garden, orchard, chickens, plus a few acres of woods to enjoy. Other newcomers who have moved here in the last 25 years feel the same way. They love our gently rolling farmlands, lively rivers, forests, wildlife, and getting to know the old-timers, whose families often go back to large plantations in the east or to small farms in the west.

We are so diverse, and I have delighted in celebrating in this paper the many different Chatham women who give freely of their talents, friendliness, humor, and extraordinary service. All the old-timers I've met love living here, too. Some have returned after living elsewhere, and declare Chatham is the best place to live in the world. I agree.

Another thing I have loved about Chatham until recently was that our Board of Commissioners (BOC) was responsive to our concerns. Since January 2004, for reasons that aren't entirely clear to me, they have suddenly, with the exception of Bob Atwater, become much less so. Most people I know are very unhappy with both the BOC and the Board of Education (BOE).

As citizens in a democracy, we have the privilege of speaking out, writing letters, attending open meetings, and forming grassroots organizations to work on our county's problems. Concerns about having a strong and effective Compact Community Ordinance led in 2003 to the creation of Chatham Citizens for Effective Communities (CCEC). Chatham Citizens United (CCU) formed in 2003 when Cary began steps to annex the eastern part of Chatham between Jordan Lake and the Wake border. Southeast Chatham Citizens Advisory Council (SCCAC) began in 2001, following the BOC's consideration of Waste Industries' proposal to site a regional landfill on 800 acres it owns in Moncure. People decided not to be blind-sided again.

The Haw River Assembly has worked since the early 80's to protect the Haw's watershed through river watches, programs for children, alerts about developments that might impair the Haw or Jordan Lake (The Homestead development, recently approved by the BOC is a case in point). The Friends of the Rocky River (FORR) want to protect it from

water quality deterioration. The development of the county-owned land in Siler City may adversely impact the Rocky, if care is not taken. A group in Siler City is forming to prevent a construction landfill on Airport Road there. Another group claims the proposed 15-501 corridor improvement plan for a north-south bypass around Pittsboro isn't necessary. Current roads are quite adequate.

All these citizen groups emerged as people saw the quality of their lives threatened. Large-scale residential developments tend to raise, not lower taxes; will strain already overwhelmed county services, and generally do not to pay for themselves.

In order to elect the most respon-



sive possible leaders on BOC and BOE, we now have a new political action committee (PAC), Chatham Coalition, set up in March to work specifically on the election July 20, when we will select two Democratic Commissioner candidates (Districts 1 and 2—Atwater and Pollard) and two new school Board members (Districts 1 and 2—currently held by Cadle Cooper and Ernest Dark, Jr).

We of Chatham Coalition are supporting these grassroots citizen groups and focusing the election on their issues, rather than on ideological and party affiliations or anything that would tend to divide us.

We will be sending questionnaires to all candidates and carefully selecting those we feel will work for the best interests of us all.

Our goals: to promote open government, including respecting citizen board input; plan for our future: use the County's Strategic Plan (1997) and the Land Use Plan (2001), formulated by our citizens and adopted by the BOC; foster environmentally friendly economic growth, especially encouraging small businesses; and ensure quality education for all of our children by the best use of available resources.

The Coalition will continue to work with our endorsed candidates after the election and to prepare for the 2006 election, when Carl Outz, Tommy Emerson, and Bunkey Morgan will be facing the voters.

For more information:

www.chathamcoalition.org
chathamcoalition@direcway.com
542-1264
PO Box 303, Bynum, NC 27228.

Judy Hogan is a regular contributor to Chatham County Line and secretary for Chatham Coalition. She is a published writer and writing teacher and lives in Moncure.

Social Security — let the buck stop here

By Don Lein

Social Security now represents an unfunded liability in the U. S. budget of over \$7 trillion. Clearly, we need to do something to reform it. Bill Clinton indicated there were limited ways to make the program fiscally sound; raise taxes, decrease benefits, or obtain a higher rate of return through private investment. In a recent poll 62 percent of all voters, and 61 percent of African Americans and Hispanics, were in favor of individual private investment accounts. Why the resistance to change?

Let's look at Social Security's origins and some of its results. FDR at its outset labeled it "insurance" and referred to the taxes paid as "premiums". Black's Law Dictionary refers to Social Security as "a comprehensive welfare plan", which it is, since it embodies none of the indicia of an insurance program. An amendment was offered to the original bill that would have made it optional. Senator LaFollette of Wisconsin opined that this would "encourage competition" and "ultimately condemn and destroy it". FDR wanted a mandatory program in that each taxpayer would feel they had "a legal, moral and political right to collect their pension" with the result that "no damn politician can ever scrap my social security system". FDR further commented on the economic soundness of the taxes by saying, "these taxes were never about economics. They were politics all the way through."

With respect to the underlying economics of the program, Congress was warned in hearings that the program was not funded properly and simply passed the economic burden of funding the program onto future generations. Despite FDR's claim to the contrary, the Supreme Court ruled that no one has a contractual right to specific Social Security benefits.

Social Security has had some, presumably unforeseen by FDR's "Brain Trust", deleterious results. Milton

Friedman observed that the rich pay less into the system (shorter working careers), but live longer (better medical care) which has resulted in a huge transfer of wealth from the poor to the rich. A Rand Corp. study in 1996 estimated that an average of \$10,000 has been transferred from every black worker to whites as a result of Social Security. The rate of return for black males has been negative for the last four decades. Even today, a study has indicated that an average 24-year-old black male will pay in \$13,400 more than he will receive in benefits. Thus, we have not only an economically flawed system, but a grossly unjust system.

Congress had enough warning when they passed this bill that the program was economically unsound and they were passing on the economic burden to future generations. One expects they believed that we would have enough common sense and courage to correct this flawed program. A study contemporaneous with the passage of this bill of more than 600,000 people aged 65 and higher in New York State found that only 4 percent were dependent on organized private charity or public assistance. Has Social Security allowed us to progress or regress?

Let the buck stop here!! Let's not listen to the politicians who try to obfuscate by talking about "contracts" and "obligations" to seniors. Let's not listen to special interest groups (including some who purportedly represent seniors) who for their own purposes want to foster dependence upon ever-expanding government programs. We've lived with this welfare program for 70 years. Bill Clinton signed a welfare reform plan and it is having outstanding results. Let's have the moral and political courage to reform this one as well and stop passing the buck to our children and grandchildren.

Don Lein retired to Chatham County. He serves on a number of boards that deal with senior citizen issues.

Make your VOICE HEARD!

Write to Editor, Chatham County Line

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