

CHATHAM County Line

where all voices are heard



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FREE ~ GRATIS

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Consider adopting a pet companion rather than acquiring one from a breeder. At press time, the above animals, as well as the ones pictured on page 9 are all in need of new life-saving homes. From the left: Clooney, Cody, Payton, Parker, and Dixon.

Support Chatham Animal Services

By Valerie Broadway

When I came to Chatham County in 1979 the county dog pound was located in a small area behind the school bus garage, next to the fairgrounds in Pittsboro. The pound consisted of a small number of fenced runs on a concrete slab. The only shelter it offered was a roof. Dogs suffered, and sometimes died, during cold and hot weather. There were no accommodations for cats, and upon arrival they were immediately placed in the leaky gas chamber. The only time I saw statistics for the Chatham Pound; one dog was adopted out in the entire year.

In the early 1990s, County Commissioners finally approved funds to build the shelter that is still in use today. At the time the facility was state-of-the-art; it even included heated floors in the dog runs. The building also could house cats. A new

gas chamber was installed, but several years ago it was replaced with what is considered a more humane procedure, euthanasia by injection.

Chatham County's Animal Shelter is located off of Highway 64 about five miles west of Pittsboro on Renaissance Road (formerly, Landfill Road). The shelter has 20 dog runs, a large open cat room where the cats are loose, and an additional 20 cat cages.

Often people vilify shelter staff, especially those who have the job of euthanizing animals. The reality is most shelter employees have to turn off their feelings, as best they can, and do the job that most people couldn't. Shelter employees tend to be responsible and loving pet owners, who likely have never

Attend the next Animal Services Stakeholders Meeting
Thursday, April 30, 6-8 p.m.
Conference Room, Community Library, Pittsboro

allowed their dogs and cats to add to the pet population. Yet, they regularly look into the innocent, sweet, or frightened faces of someone else's unwanted animals and make the seemingly impossible decisions as to whose time is up today.

Let's face it; working in an animal shelter is both physically and mentally draining; especially when you love animals.

ANIMAL CONTINUED, PAGE 9

Growing heirloom tomatoes and bringing them to market

By Adrienne Bashista

When Adrian Thorn lost his full-time job in the hospitality industry seven years ago, he figured the time was right to try and do something he'd always enjoyed: make a living from growing and selling vegetables. His dad, Wayne, owned acreage in Siler City that was once used as a large and productive home garden, and he wanted to see it become productive again. A partnership was formed, and Brae-Burn farm was born.

Adrian grows all kinds of seasonal vegetables, fruits, and nuts, but he specializes in heirloom



tomatoes. He's sold thousands of pounds of multiple heirloom varieties each season to local restaurants including Oakleaf, Angelina's Kitchen, the Sienna, Fearrington, and many others, as well as to specialty groceries like Weaver Street and the Chatham Marketplace. Heirloom tomatoes don't handle well, he explains, so the fact that smaller groceries like Weaver Street and the Marketplace buy from him has ensured as few people handle them as possible, preserving their integrity and ensuring that they are as fresh as possible.

He's excited to be at the Chatham Mills Farmers' Market as it is a way that he can sell all the other products he grows. The tomato season is intense, but short, so selling at the Farmers' Market is a chance to diversify his sales.

One of the items that they are introducing to the Farmers' Market is chestnuts. His father planted three chestnut trees 30 or so years ago but it was only recently that they realized how many nuts the trees actually produced. In the process of growing his tomato business Adrian fenced in the five acres in production, which kept the deer from freely feeding on the nuts as they had done in the past. Once the deer were kept away, they realized that the trees produced enormous amounts of nuts. "The trees are all hybrids," Adrian explains. "They're American chestnuts crossed with Asian varieties, so that they have immunity from the chestnut blight. They each produce a different nut, since they're each crossed with a different variety." Chestnut trees also bloom prolifically in spring, so that should help the bees that they've just added to the farm.

In the next year or so Adrian and his dad hope to make Brae-burn a certified organic farm, as all of their practices have been organic up to this point. When the farm was a large family garden, Adrian's father felt strongly that no synthetic pesticides or fertilizers be used, and Adrian has carried on this tradition with his farm.

Adrian and his girlfriend, Lacey Monte, will be at the Chatham Mills Farmers' Market weekly with their produce, nuts, and crafts.

The Chatham Mills Farmers' Market happens on Saturday mornings on the lawn of the historic Chatham Mills Building in Pittsboro, North Carolina. Spring, summer, and fall hours are 8 a.m.-1 p.m., winter market (starting in November) is 10-1. chathamillsfarmersmarket.com

One of Adrienne Bashista's many hats is manager of the Chatham Mills Farmers' Market: chathamillsfarmersmarket.com. You can contact her at cmfmanager@gmail.com

Thorn shows off one of his huge heirloom organic tomatoes.

PHOTO BY ADRIENNE BASHISTA

Passion for paddling

By Joe Jacob

If you have never canoed or kayaked, what are you waiting for? Why do other people go paddling and you don't?

In the 1980s President Ronald Reagan created the Commission on Outdoor Recreation Resources. The purpose of the Commission was to survey and record how and how much Americans were using the outdoors for recreation. The

final report documented that over 20 percent of all Americans had canoed, kayaked and/or rafted at least once in their lives and that 5 percent owned a paddle craft. It seems that much of our youth is introduced to paddling through scouting, church camps, city and county recreation programs, conservation organizations, paddling clubs and local outfitters.

I got my start on a floating telephone pole in the Mississippi River. I grew up in New Orleans four blocks from the river. To

get to the river, I had to cross a railroad switching yard, climb over the levee and wade through a forested wetland between the levee and river. At night I would listen to the sound of tug boats as they moved barges and ships up and down the river. When the river was at flood stage, I could stand in our street and see ships passing by our neighborhood that were taller

PADDLING CONTINUED, PAGE 4