

CCCC Creative Writing Program takes off

by Mary L. Barnard

Every semester, seasoned veterans serve up a refreshing variety of writing classes at Central Carolina Community College (CCCC), Pittsboro campus in their Creative Writing Program (CWP). Our instructors hail from UNC-Chapel Hill, Clemson, Alamance Community College and they all have hands-on experience with writing as part of their career paths. In the more casual confines of continuing education, the CWP has been nurturing writers of all skill levels since the program started in 2009.

Our students head north from Sanford, south from Durham and Chapel Hill, west from Raleigh and east from Siler City to attend evening classes and Saturday workshops. They have been exposed to many writing genres: fiction, non-fiction, poetry, memoir, speculative fiction, etc. Some classes offerings, such as Modifiers: Adjectives and Adverbs, Diving into the Image, or Strategies for a Writing Life continue to be of interest to all writers who want to invigorate their language and make the most of their skills. The very reasonable fees make these courses accessible to most writers: \$50-60 for a two day workshop and \$120 for a six-eight week class.

But let's give our students a chance to tell about their experiences with the CWP instructors.

From Sims Cheek Poindexter: I took Karen Pullen's writing class about four years ago, and it inspired me to be diligent about recording my thoughts. Since then I have published through Chapel Hill Press an inspirational book, *Whispers From God* (April 2016) and have a second cookbook, *Welcome To My Kitchen Again*, coming out in mid-September. *Whispers From God* is available online from chapelhillpress.com and also at Virlies and S & T's in Pittsboro as well as The Carpenter's Shop in Sanford. The cookbook is a sequel to *Welcome To My Kitchen*, which was published in 2006. Both the cookbooks will be available at billsims@nc.rr.com.

I am in the process of writing a story of my mother and father's sojourn in West Virginia,

based on his time there building a bridge over the river in the New River Gorge. I am also seriously compiling my life's story and have compiled a small volume of my poetry.

In addition to being inspired by Karen, I made many great friends in the class, and for several years a small group of us met monthly to discuss/critique our writing. That group was also inspiring, but due to health problems among the members, we have not met since the spring.

After being in Karen's class, I also led a writing group at my church in Goldston, and through those efforts, three of us have published books. LaVerne Thornton published *You Ain't Moses*, and Tim Tron published *Bruecke To Heaven*, the story of his Waldensian heritage. So, as you can see, the course I took at CCCC had long-reaching effects!

Thank you for all you do to promote writing in Chatham County. As a former English instructor at CCCC, I am delighted that the college is sponsoring this effort.

And from Mary L. Barnard: From the very first class taught by Judy Hogan in 2009, I have taken classes almost every session at CCCC in Pittsboro. The quality of the instructors is off the charts from their knowledge of writing, literature and its place in the world to their accessibility; including classes their students have suggested which show up on the CCCC program as Saturday workshops

or evening classes. Many of our instructors are published authors themselves.

As a poet, I have found a wide variety of classes for my genre during every session: fall, spring and summer. Also, some classes are relevant to all writing genres, such as: "Unlock Your Imagination" and "Be the Bamboo," both Saturday workshops.

Three students were the first to complete 120 hours in creative writing classes, including the requirements for a mentored workshop, publication paths and revision. Al Copeland, Bonnie Korta and I had the honor of receiving the first program certificates.

If you decide to try a class or workshop, and we hope you do, you will join a community of writers and writing instructors who support, sympathize and share all that it means to sharpen your skills as a writer: the ups and downs, the doubts, the triumphs, the days when words flow and the days they do not, where ideas come from, how to maximize your creativity, what are your best resources, how to revise and edit, who are your readers, the how's about publication.

CCCC even offers two or three open mic events where you can work on your presentation skills. The results of a recent student survey point to the directions the CWP program will be taking in the future. Stay tuned!

Check out our class offerings, meet our instructors, and learn how to earn a certificate

at <http://www.cccc.edu/ece/personal-interests/creative-writing/> or just search Creative Writing at CCCC.

Mary L. Barnard is a CWP Board Member.

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Chatham Park continues to move forward with a new UNC medical center, a new UNC hospice center and retail opportunities that are coming in 2017.

Come visit us at our new headquarters across from Northwood High School and see the progress at Chatham Park.

As Chatham Park moves forward, we will continue to provide answers to questions we have received from members of the community.

Below is a cross section of common questions with our answers.

Q: When will the first retail center open in Chatham Park and what will it include?

A: Chatham Park's first retail center is planned to open the fall of 2017. Plans

presently call for a hotel, a grocery store, residential space, and local specialty restaurants. A movie theater is also anticipated in the near future.

Q: Will Chatham Park have high speed internet?

A: Yes. Chatham Park is currently in discussions with internet providers who would serve the community with broadband speeds of one gigabyte per residential unit and ten gigabytes per business.

Q: How many schools will Chatham Park include?

A: Chatham Park will donate up to ten school sites approved by Chatham County to house both public and private schools. The ten school sites proposed are based on actual student projections, and the exact locations of these sites will be shown in the Small Area Plan.

Q: When will the first school open in Chatham Park?

A: Thales Academy, a private K-12 school, will be the first school to open in Chatham

Park and is planned to open for classes in the fall of 2018.

Q: When will the trails throughout Chatham Park be built?

A: Trails and greenways will be built as the surrounding neighborhoods are constructed. The plans for these trails will be shown in the Small Area Plan.

Q: When and where will parks in Chatham Park be built?

A: As with trails and greenways, parks will be built along with the surrounding neighborhoods. The plans for these parks and greenways will be shown in the Small Area Plan.

Q: Will Chatham Park include a solar farm?

A: Yes. Currently, Strata Solar has a lease for a 20 MW solar farm.

Q: Will native, drought-tolerant plants be incorporated into the landscaping in Chatham Park?

A: Yes.