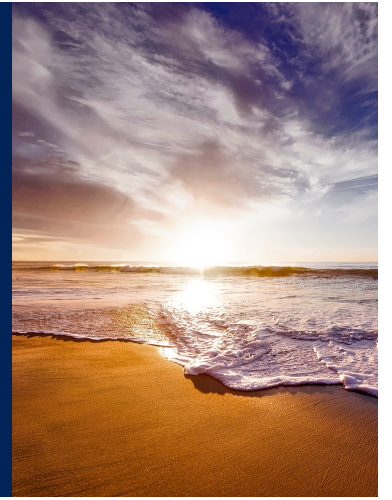




TOPSAIL TIMES

TOPSAIL ISLAND, HOLLY RIDGE, HAMPSTEAD AND SNEADS FERRY



● **7th October, 2022** ● **American-Owned. Free Press.** ● **Volume II, Issue 21** **FREE!**

Pender County School Bond On Ballot For November

Pender County school bond for \$178 million dollars will be on the ballot this November 8th.

If the bond is approved by the voters, the funds will be used for the following:

1. A new middle school for grades 6-8. Location has not been determined but it will most likely be on the Hwy 210 corridor. This school will be designed for 1200 students.
2. A new elementary school for grades K-5. This school will be designed for 800 students
3. Topsail Middle School will be renovated and will be for 9th grade students only.
4. Rocky Point Elementary School will have an addition built.
5. Burgaw Middle School will have their cafeteria rebuilt.
6. A Central Services structure will be built.
7. An 8 Bay maintenance building will be constructed.

On the Pender County Schools website it states that the tax rate increase for residents will be between .05 and .11

cents per \$100 dollars of assessed tax value. This estimate will most likely change once interest rates are included. Some other groups have estimated that tax increase could be as high as .15 or higher.

An estimated \$97,000,000 (97 million dollars) in interest will be generated by this loan and the repayment of that interest will come from the taxpayers.

Citizens have been voicing concerns regarding the lack of adding another high school in the county. Currently there are four high schools, eight elementary schools and five middle schools in Pender County which is 800 square miles in size.

It is estimated that the Pender County School system currently has 10,000 students enrolled and by 2030, it is estimated that the count will increase to 10,788. Based on current levels of construction, that number may be low.

"My children are already in packed classrooms and every day when I drive home I see more and more subdivisions being built. Where are all those kids

going to school? I don't understand." Mary White is not alone in her frustration.

The proposed bond does not include the operating costs of the new buildings. The proposed construction schedule is stretched over five years, with the schools being constructed first and the Central services building and

maintenance bays being constructed at the end.

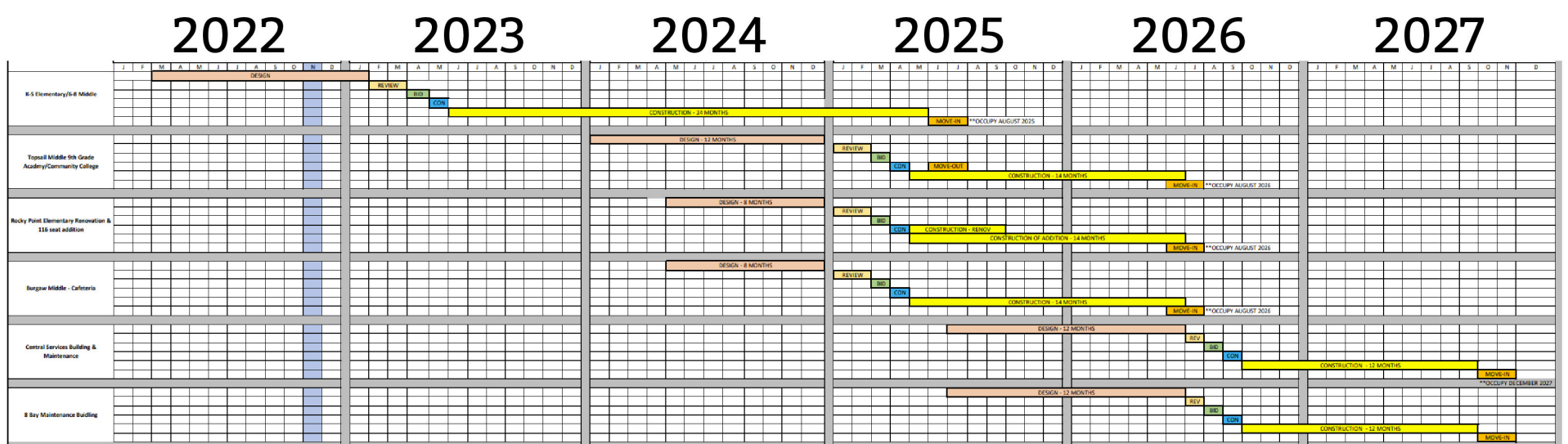
Interested in more information? The Pender County Schools website has lots of information and the answers to common questions. Be an informed voter and find out all the information you can. www.pender.k12.nc.us/page/bond-referendum

BOND REFERENDUM COST



Building	Sq. Feet	Cost/Sq. Ft.	Cost	Scheduled Bid	Inflation %	Inflation Cost	FF&E Cost	Misc. Fees	Building & Site Dev. Cost
12,00 Student 6-8 Middle School	144,000	\$385	\$55,440,000	April 2023	0%	N/A	\$5,544,000	\$6,652,800	\$67,636,800
800 Student K-5 Elementary School	96,000	\$375	\$36,000,000	April 2023	0%	N/A	\$3,600,000	\$4,320,000	\$43,920,000
								Sub. Total:	\$111,556,800
Topsail Middle Renovation	111,009	\$130	\$14,431,170	March 2025	12%	\$1,731,740	\$4,273,847	\$2,164,676	\$22,601,432
Rocky Point Elementary Add 116 Seats - 4 classrooms	2,426	\$375	\$909,750	February 2024	12%	\$109,170	\$90,975	\$109,170	\$1,219,065
Burgaw Middle Rebuild Cafeteria	10,000	\$300	\$3,000,000	February 2024	12%	\$360,000	\$462,000	\$450,000	\$4,272,000
New Central Services Complex									
Central Services Building/Maint.	50,000	\$300	\$15,000,000	April 2024	18%	\$2,700,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,800,000	\$21,000,000
8 Bay Transportation Dept./ Bus Garage	28,800	\$410	\$11,808,000	April 2024	18%	\$2,125,440	\$1,416,960	\$1,771,200	\$17,121,600
								Sub. Total:	\$38,121,600
								GRANT TOTAL	\$177,770,897

BOND REFERENDUM TIMELINE



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DDT
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Hampstead Library

Surf City

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Denny's
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and more on our website

Check out our website for more locations!
www.TopsailTimes.net

Topsail Gun Gal

By Dorothy Royal

Attorney Generals from several states have sent the Presidents and CEO's of Mastercard, Visa and American Express a letter regarding the very concerning action of tracking a customer's purchases when a purchase is made at a gun shop. The problem? First, this is a direct violation of privacy through the consumer protection laws. Second, it is a violation of the rights of law abiding citizens to be punished for making legal purchases. Where does this "big brother" nonsense end?

For those people who think this is "no big deal" what happens when a purchase on your credit card can get you fired from your job or your child refused access to a school or programs? For the large big box stores like that sell sporting goods and firearms this "over-reach" won't apply. The primary business being punished is the small, privately owned shop that sells firearms. The infringement "code" that would be used to track purchases would not be able to differentiate between the purchase of a firearm or an optic or even hunting gear, like clothing. The code would be used to track purchases of a certain amount or larger, yet that amount still hasn't been shared. As firearms can range in price from \$100 to thousands of dollars, it would have to be expected that any amount spent at a shop given the "code" would be used for tracking purchases.

Do you want your credit card company following your purchases? Do you want your credit card company to be able to tell you what you can and cannot

spend your money on? Included in this "code" will be transactions made with debit cards. Tracking money coming directly from your bank account is part of this game too. The answer from every consumer should be a very loud "No".

Want to do something to protect your rights? How about contacting the N.C. Attorney General's office and ask why he didn't sign the letter to protect the rights of North Carolina citizens. You can go right to his website and fill out a contact form and share your concerns. Want to give him a call? Easy to do. (919) 716-6400 is the phone number for constituent concerns.

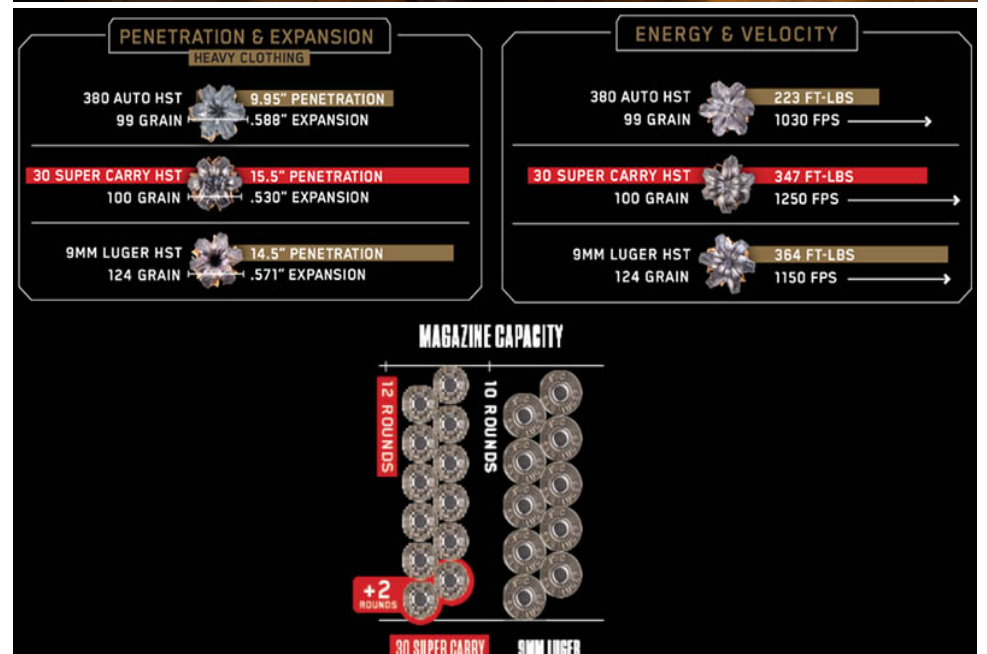
Smith and Wesson has come out with a new version of the Shield 2.0 Plus pistol in 30 Super Carry. This new round is a rimless pistol ammo introduced just this year with great expectations. In order to compete with the very popular 9mm and the .380 ACP, Federal created an ammunition that was smaller but just as powerful and would allow for larger magazine capacity without changing the size of the magazine.

The new S&W Shield Plus pistols will range from \$449-\$579 and will offer buyers a capacity of 13 plus 1.

This new round was designed for the Conceal Carry handgun and self-defense market.

A box of 50 rounds of 30 Super Carry is more than 9mm target and less than .380 target ammo.

Remember knowledge is power and protecting your freedoms is more important than ever.

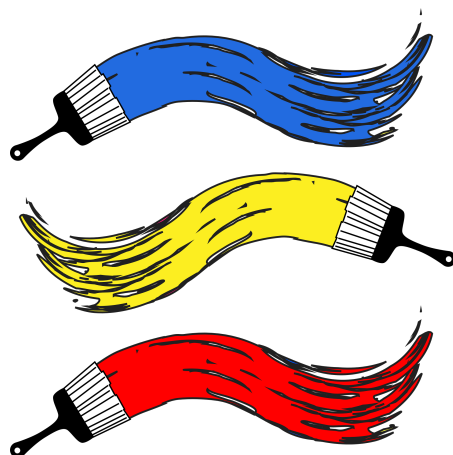


Castle Bay Fall Arts and Crafts Fair

Castle Bay will be holding its Fall Arts and Crafts Fair on October 22, 2022 from 9 am until 1 pm, in the Castle Bay Drive mailboxes field. There are approximately twenty vendors who have committed to participating in this event.

Some of the items that will be displayed include: Hand-painted shells, copper jewelry, yard art, Christmas Ornaments, watercolor art and Greeting Cards, woodworking, ceramic jewelry, copper sculptures, PVC birds, Fairy Hair, wire trees and tree of life rings, charcuterie boards, beach art, photography, and more. The Castle Bay Social Committee is requesting all attendees bring a food item to donate to the 4Cs Food Bank.

For additional information, please contact Dawn Spoonhour at dawn.spoonhour@Yahoo.com or Anne DeLorenzo at delorann17@gmail.com



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\$80 per person | Limited space!

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November 12th

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Fashion Statements

By Becky Borneman

Recently I visited a boutique in another beach town. I was hit coming in and out by a kids gymnastics group who was raising money. The kids ranged in ages 5 to 10. I slipped by them the first time but coming out was a different story. They cornered me asking for a donation which I was happy to do but thought... don't I get a handstand or something for that donation? Don't get me wrong, I couldn't do a handstand if my life depended on it. I would give myself 2 black eyes if you get my drift. But what happened to singing for your supper?

On the drive home I couldn't help but think about how we raised money for things when I was young. Car washes and bake sales and lemonade stands.

Good old fashioned lemonade stands. Heck, at 7 years old I was out in the neighborhood selling girl scout cookies door to door. My mom had us trained to be little Amway people early. Once I hit up the neighborhood, my grandma would take me to her office, the capitol building. 22 floors high and I hit every one of them peddling the girl scout cookies. And sometimes we would time it right and Senate or House of Representatives would be in session and they would add to the orders. Our dining room smelled like a cookie factory when the cookie boxes were delivered.

Then I went on to Young Actor's Theater for a couple of years. With each show that was put on we were tasked with selling ads for the program that would be distributed at each performance.

My mom sat me down at the kitchen bar and gave me phone book, told me to turn to the yellow pages and start calling. I just started cold calling places and told them what I was doing and what I was looking for and for \$25 each I think I got about 20 ads.

But I cannot forget the funniest thing I ever remember making and selling. My great grandmother lived in a nice retirement apartment complex and she taught me how to needlepoint using those plastic forms. She taught how to make just one thing. A cigarette holder. Looking back it was the ugliest thing ever but served a purpose. I was so proud of the first one I completed. And so was my great grandma. So proud in fact that she toured me around door-to-door showing it off and taking orders. She took her cut out of the sale of course.

I needle-pointed my fingers off until all orders were done. That's probably what kept me from ever smoking!!

Well times have changed and things are different from the olden days but the concept is still the same. When I see young kids raising money for what they're doing and working at it, it brings back fun memories. So if you see kiddos out there hustling for their cause, consider giving to them. They're earning it!



Check out some of our new inventory!

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Al-Anon Meetings

Hampstead Meeting Spots:

TUESDAY 7:00 PM

Hampstead United Methodist Church
15395 US-17, Hampstead, NC, 28443

THURSDAY 7:00PM

at Barlow Vista and every second Thursday is a Newcomer meeting

<https://wilmingtonncal-anon.org>



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Sea Turtle Hospital News



By Karen Sota

With nesting season officially over there are no more visits by turtle mamas until next year. From now on hatchlings and our rehabilitated patients are outbound and headed to their preferred wintering waters.

Recently four turtles were released after undergoing complete examinations by Dr. Harms and the four fourth-year vet students who spent a few weeks with us. Each student was assigned several turtles as their case studies and did everything from help us with food prep, cleaning and treatments to blood draws and radiographs. In two instances they provided a beauty treatment for Snooki and Lennie. In the ocean Snooki and Lennie would be chowing down on crustaceans that would keep their beaks from overgrowing. But since we do not have a regular supply of oysters, clams, conch and other crunchy stuff their beak can get big and raggedy. So how do you fix that? A PVC pipe to keep their mouth open (without biting us) and a Dremel with a grinding bit to smooth out the edges of their beaks. It probably annoys them but does not hurt them in any way.

After every turtle in our hospital was examined from beak to tail scute and scale three greens, Bittersweet, Eggplant and Key Lime Pearl and one Kemp's, Antique Gray were handed their swimming papers.

It's tradition that we let the vet students be the ones who get to release their patients. On a bright and sunny Thursday, we loaded everybody into our van and headed to a nearby beach access where only a handful of visitors were enjoying their day. By the time we unloaded the last turtle from the van the beach had filled up with about a hundred people who seemed to materialize out of thin air. There is no denying that these critters possess some kind of magic that instinctively draws people to them.

Our volunteers carried the lucky turtles up and down the rows for a final photo op before the three greens were handed off to the vet students who carried them into the surf and set them free. Antique Gray was lowered to the sand where she looked around for a final farewell before putting her flippers into gear and heading for the waves. She was a stunningly beautiful Kemp's, and her coloring was quite unusual. She was truly antique gray.

Although our patient load is lighter, typical for this time of year, we still have a few more turtles who just missed the cut but should be ready to go before we close for tours in mid-October. Check our Facebook page in the coming weeks for any updates on their release.

Hospital tours ending soon. During September we will be open Thursday through Saturday from 11 AM – 2 PM.

October 1st through the 15th tours are Friday and Saturday from 11 AM – 2 PM. You must schedule and purchase your tickets in advance for a specific day and time through our website,

www.seaturtlehospital.org

We will be closed October 16th through November 30th for an extensive renovation of our Sea Turtle Bay area and other facility upgrades.

Nests are still hatching, and we are still admitting larger turtles for various illnesses and injuries so please continue to be our additional eyes for any hatchlings or turtles in distress of any kind. With nests hatching all over the island it would be easy to miss one of the little guys who didn't hear the alarm clock and leave the nest with his siblings. If you find a hatchling on the beach carefully pick it up and put it in a

small container with some sand and a small amount of water - barely cover the flippers. With this continuing heat it's important that the little critter not bake in the sun for hours. Then call our Director of Beach Operations, Terry Meyer at: 910-470-2880. If she is not available, you may call the hospital during operating hours: 910-329-0222. We will take the information and one of our area coordinators will meet you to retrieve the hatchling and refer it to us for follow-up. The State of NC hotline for stranded, sick and injured turtles is 252-241-7367. The state number picks up 24/7. All conservation work for endangered sea turtle at KBSTRRC and on Topsail Island is authorized by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, ES Permit 22ST05.



Kemp's Antique Gray headed home



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Vet students release 3 greens

The Public Is Invited To Attend Our First Annual Fall Festival At The Gardens Of Southeastern North Carolina On Saturday, October 22, 2022

The Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina is a non-profit company dedicated to improving lives, cultivating inspiration, offering a variety of experiences, creating jobs, and generating income for the community.

The public is invited to join us on October 22nd, 2022 at the Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina for our first annual Fall Festival! Doors open at 10:00 AM and cost of admission is FREE! The Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina is located at 985 Johnson Nursery Road in Willard, NC.

Bring the whole family and experience the excitement of taking a covered wagon ride to a real pumpkin patch, where you can pick your own pumpkin straight off the vine. Big, small, bumpy, smooth, white, orange, green or blue - we're growing a pumpkin or gourd that everyone will love! Several selfie stations will be placed throughout The Gardens where you can take fun fall photos.

Children will love painting their pumpkins, playing in the bubble garden, face painting, make-and-take crafts and more.

Shop the vast offering of mums, flowers, shrubs, trees and garden decor at the Garden Center at Johnson Nursery and peruse dozens of locally-owned businesses from candle makers, home decor, wreaths and flower arrangements, knitted animals and more.

Walk the beautiful grounds at the Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina and use our QR codes with your smartphone to learn more about a plant in the landscape. Head over to the Event Tent to grab a cold beer or glass of wine at our fully stocked cash bar and appease your stomach with fresh made-to-order pizza from the Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina's brick-fired oven. Several food and beverage trucks will be onsite to satisfy your cravings. The Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina is located at Johnson Nursery in beautiful Willard, NC. We believe there is great value in showcasing new introductions along with well-known plants resulting in acres of beautiful display gardens. Added to this excitement is the gift of a native hardwood forest, culminating in almost

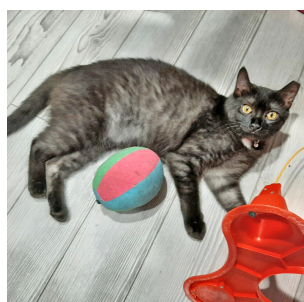
300 acres of property allowing us to dream even bigger, bringing events and specialty gardens to the public. The Fall Festival at The Gardens of Southeastern North Carolina is sure to become a family tradition for many years to come.



F.U.R.R

FELINE URGENT RESCUE AND REHAB

Adopt. Donate. Volunteer.



Preppie

I was living under a prep school and was too scared to come out much. Finally, I was rescued by FURR and have been meowing with joy ever since. I am the sweetest little 9-month-old girl

with very unique soft fur. I am black with a silver undercoat! I love being with people and I never knew it could be so great to be loved, fed regularly and safe. You will fall in love with me at the first meeting. I'm fully vetted, spayed, microchipped and ready to go.



Jhett

I'm the cutest one in the family, but my siblings don't agree. Any way you look at it, all three of us kittens are adorable, striped Tabbies with lots of white. We are ready to go and have had all of our vet work done. We are healthy, happy, bouncy and fun! At least come play with us because we love visitors. We

live in south Burgaw with our foster mom. My sister and brother are named Brie and Ash. We were living in the woods at a fast food place until we were rescued by FURR and our foster mom!



Jax

I am so lucky that a good Samaritan saved me with FURR's help. I was living outside in the woods at a Bojangles. I am Jax, a very sweet silver Tabby boy who is 6-months-old. I am already litter-trained, vaccinated, neutered and good with

other cats. I went through a lot on my own in the woods as a little kitten. Now, it's time for me to find my forever family. Come meet me and fall in love!



Max

I had been living outside in the woods near a Bojangles. Luckily, a good Samaritan saved me and got me to FURR. My name is Max and I'm an

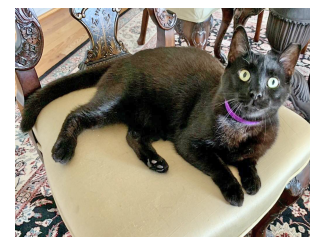
adorable black girl who is just 6-months-old. I had a horribly injured tail that had to be amputated, but I'm doing great and look quite cute with my stub. I'm litter-trained, spayed, vaccinated and good with other cats. I hope you'll come visit me soon so we can start loving each other.



Perch

I can't believe I'm still homeless! I am a Russian Blue mix with a white spot on my chest. Although I am a little shy with new folks, I warm up quickly to

someone giving me love and attention. My fur is so soft and I hardly shed at all. I'd prefer a quiet household where I can curl up on the couch and watch TV. I am such a gentle and docile 9-month-old kitty. If you love the look and softness of a Russian Blue, please come visit me. I know you will want to take me home!



Carbon

I am literally a once-in-a-lifetime cat. I am 3-years young and my owners are leaving the country. They really loved me a lot, but they couldn't take me

with them so I had to come back to FURR. I am the most gentle, laid-back kitty ever! I would love a family to dote over me. My fur is silky smooth and soft and I love to be petted, rubbed and brushed! I will greet you at the door and I'm not timid at all. In fact, I love to talk and tell you all about my thoughts. I hope to be adopted really soon, so hurry up and come meet me!

CHECK OUR WEBSITE TO SEE CATS AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION

www.catfurr.org

Terry Schultz, Founder & President



864-483-2444
PO Box 1430 · Hampstead NC 28443

THE HUMC PUMPKIN PATCH IS BACK

Clear off the hearth, sweep the stoop, and sharpen the carving knives: the annual "Pumpkin Patch" at Hampstead United Methodist Church (HUMC) is returning soon. Festivities will kick off with a "Pumpkin Toss" on Saturday October 1 at 9am – volunteers in the community are needed, assembly-line style, to help unload the semi-truck that holds thousands of pumpkins. A second truck will be dropping off another load of pumpkins on Saturday, October 15 at 9am, so there will be two chances to participate in the Pumpkin Toss.

The Pumpkin Patch will be open through October 31, welcoming patrons Monday through Saturday, 10 to 7pm, and Sunday, 11am to 7pm.

Located off of Highway 17 in central Hampstead beside the Dunkin Donuts, the Pumpkin Patch is set up on HUMC's sprawling front lawn, under the beautiful live Southern Oak trees that form a canopy

over the patch.

Lights in the trees and fun things for kids to do ensure a magical Fall adventure for all. There are plenty of places for selfies and photo ops for the entire family, not to mention picnic tables to socialize and enjoy the atmosphere, and each year brings new enhancements and creative adornments.

Pulling together HUMC's annual Pumpkin Patch requires a small army of nationwide contributors. The process starts with pumpkins harvested directly from the fields of the Navajo Nation in New Mexico, which helps with their 48% unemployment rate. The pumpkins are quickly trucked across the country in a 40-foot semi-truck to the church parking lot, where the Pumpkin Toss volunteers take over.

Each Pumpkin Toss involves over a hundred volunteers off-loading, sizing, and positioning the entire truckload of over 3,000 pumpkins for sale. It takes about 3

hours. These volunteers are not all HUMC members, as with every year, the "all are welcome" community event attracts community members, students from the Topsail High School, baseball and football teams, scouting organizations, and Marine volunteers from Camp Lejeune. The Church is honored by and welcomes all the volunteers.

Your pumpkin purchase money is well spent. All the net proceeds from the Pumpkin Patch sale goes to the youth group at HUMC. The youth group will first tithe 10% to the church, then 10% to a charity determined by the youth group (such as United Methodist Home for Children and Habitat for Humanity), and the balance is kept by the youth group. The funds enable each youth to be able to go on conference events, mission trips and special occasions, and youth members who

work the patch accumulate "pumpkin bucks" as an additional means of providing funds to the group. It is the largest fundraiser of the year for the youth group.

There cannot be a more complete and memorable fundraiser than this Pumpkin Patch partnership with the Navajo Indian Reservation, HUMC, and the Hampstead community. So many people benefit from and enjoy the event with the sale of each pumpkin. Besides the second Pumpkin Toss taking place on October 15, that evening there will be Teacher and Staff Appreciation Night with cider, games, live music and more fun as we honor the hard work being done to nurture growth in our young people.

The Pumpkin Patch has a Facebook page, "HUMC Pumpkin Patch" which posts pictures and announcements. Also find information on <https://www.facebook.com/HampsteadUMC/>

The PATCH IS BACK!

**Hampstead United Methodist Church's
Pumpkin Patch**

Oct 1 – Pumpkin Toss (9am) and Opening

Oct 15 – Second Pumpkin Toss (9am)

Oct 16 – Teacher & Staff Appreciation Night (5-7)

Featuring AllTunedUp with Dale Lee and friends

Hours of Operation:
Mon – Sat 10am – 7pm Sundays 11am-7pm

HUMC is located at 15395 US Hwy 17 N,
Hampstead, NC 28443

Check [facebook.com/HampsteadUMC/](https://www.facebook.com/HampsteadUMC/) for updates and to keep in touch

For more information, call the church at (910) 270-4648



Ghost Walk Tickets On Sale Now

BURGAW – Tickets are on sale now for the award-winning Ghost Walk of Pender's Past, a haunting tour around Burgaw's historic cemetery. Tickets may be purchased online at <https://ghostwalkofpenderspast.ticketleap.com/ghostwalkofpenderspast>

Tickets may also be ordered via phone with a credit card by calling 910-259-1278. Tickets are \$15 per adult; admission for students ages 5-17 are \$10 each. Children ages 4 and under are admitted free with a paid adult.

The Ghost Walk of Pender's Past returns Oct. 21-22 with tours starting at 6 p.m. Each year the ghost walk is a sell-out event. Tickets are limited.

"We encourage visitors to purchase tickets in advance," said Tammy Proctor, Pender County tourism director. "We hate to turn people away." "We love sharing Pender County's supernatural history," said Stephanie Key, art director of the

ghost walk. "You never know what haunts you'll discover."

The Ghost Walk of Pender's Past is a collaborative effort of volunteers from Pender County Historical Society, Historical Society of Topsail Island, Pender Arts Council, Moores Creek National Battlefield, the Town of Burgaw, the Pender County Library, Pender County Schools, and Pender County Tourism.

"Ghost Walk is the recipient of two national awards from the National Association of Counties and Southeastern Travel Society," said Key. "We have wonderful volunteers who make this annual event possible."

For more information contact the Pender County Tourism Office at 910-259-1278



GHOST WALK OF PENDER'S PAST

OCTOBER 21ST & 22ND

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Autumn Comes To Topsail



Dolphins At Play Off Topsail Beach



Ring Around The Sun Before Hurricane Ian



Rocket Over Holly Ridge



REELHOUSEWIVES
Of Topsail Island

RHOTI NEW DATE

Surf City Soundside Park | Event begins at 8am



The Reel Housewives of Topsail Island annual bike ride will be held on Saturday, October 29, 2022. It will start and finish at the Surf City Soundside Park. The event begins at 8:00 AM... this will include opening ceremony and you can also register during this time if you have not already done so. The actual bike ride will begin at 9:00am. We will leave from the park and head North.

www.reelhousewivesoftopsailisland.com

The Blue Run III

By Carol Ann Ross

The Third Installment of a Short Story

Land was a different world. He had given up trying to explain the difference between being on the ocean and being on land. But he knew there was one. Sighing heavily, he continued to study the coastline.

Shortly he noticed a few fisherman on the beach. He thought he could hear the laughter and squeals from the children running along the shore near them. It looked like they were with their families and were having a picnic.

He and his family had done that at times. It was always fun. His mother and sisters gathered driftwood for a fire and he and his dad caught fish. The girls played in waves and dug holes to make sandcastles.

He and his father cleaned the fish and then his mother and the older of the children helped cook them up.

When the fish were ready to eat, the family would sit on a blanket from home and enjoy the day's catch along with some corn bread and coleslaw his mother had packed in a basket. Ira recalled those times with fondness as he waved back to the people on shore.

Moving back to his spot against the gunwale, Ira drowsed a few seconds before pushing on the throttle to move the boat ahead. It purred gently as the boat glided gradually northward.

How long was it before again in some hazy dream Ira heard the words "Well done." The sarcastic tone was undeniable. Could that be? he thought.

Then all at once the whirl of lines filled the air, the sound jolted the youth to his feet.

Slipping on the now slimy sole of the boat, Ira caught his balance as he grabbed the gunwale and pulled himself erect.

Instantly he scolded himself for not rinsing down the deck with sea water. And thought back to the words he'd heard-or had he? *Well done?* How many times had his father chided him for forgetting something important? Ira belted a laugh, loud and raucous. "Okay, Daddy. I hear you."

Enthusiastically Ira grabbed a pole as it whirled, reeled it in, whipped the spoon from the blue's mouth and cast the fish into a box.

He let the line out, stepped to another pole, reeled, tore the spoon from the fish's mouth and cast it into a box. Again and again, he moved methodically about the poles, his legs balancing the rock of the boat with the movement of the ocean as if they were one. He reeled in another line, took the fish, threw it in the box—he had found the rhythm.

Pleased with himself as he worked, he found even more pleasure when he found on the end of a line a grouper. Just as quickly and without missing a beat, he threw the fish into a bucket near the bow of the boat.

There was no time to even think about time and before he knew it two more crate boxes were filled to overflowing.

The sun sat hazily on the western sky. A chop had developed and the poles stood still, lines all reeled in, with no bend or sound except the clickety-click of the spoon hitting the pole intermittently. Ira licked his lips. They were salty. Once again he rested against the gunwale. He breathed a deep sigh of contentment. It had been a good day.

He reached into a cooler, pulled out a bottle of Pepsi Cola and popped the cap against the gunwale. He studied the marks from previous bottle openings of

he and his father and exhaled a long breath.

The cola tingled his throat as he tilted his head back to drink its contents. Tossing the bottle overboard, Ira watched it fill with water and sink. The haze of the day belied the depth and though he could have sworn he was in a good twenty feet, Ira could see the sandy bottom below.

A few small fish darted about. He watched a bigger one fast behind it.

"Always a bigger fish out there somewhere." He laughed to himself.

Still studying the water, he spotted a whelk. It was a fine whelk, somewhat pink with strands of blue running through it. He thought of Gale's request.

Should I? he thought. Grabbing the lip of the gunwale Ira pulled himself up and over and into the cool October water.

He was not prepared for the chill that swallowed his body but he ignored it as he swam down and down toward the shell. How far can this be? he wondered. Now, it seemed so far away. Still he persisted in reaching the shell with his arms stretched and straining to touch it. He could feel the cold. It was not biting cold, but he was starting to feel it in his bones, in his groin.

Finally his outstretched finger wrapped around the whelk. He closed his eyes for a moment; he caught a scent, perhaps it ran through his mind. But the scent was there nonetheless. It was his father's. Ira swept his body to turn and move upward toward the light.

As he pulled the boat around the stand of oaks, the wooden dock came into view. Sure enough, Gale sat swinging her legs from the side, her bare toes toyed with the shadowy water below. Already her face beamed a smile,

leaning back on her elbows she laughed loud and hard. "I knew it, I knew it!" she shouted. "I knew you'd come back with lots and lots of fish."

"How do you know I've got lots and lots of fish, miss smarty pants?" Ira called as he pulled the boat closer to the dock. "I can smell 'em, brother."

"Well, can you smell this?" He tossed the whelk near to where Gale stood. Picking it up, she poked at the white meat still inside. "Momma cooks this really good—makes real good fritters with it."

Ira nodded. "Sure does."

"It's really pretty, Ira. Thank you for the shell, it'll be so pretty on my window sill." Ira nodded again as he began stacking the boxes of blue fish onto the dock.

Gale watched as he pushed one box next to the other. She noticed the long line of blood along his arm.

Studying his fingers she saw too where the skin was torn and had left dried blood stains. She touched a finger to the bloodied arm and then to her lips, "It's salty—it runs in your veins doesn't it?" Ira casually looked at his blood stained hands and arms, "Ha! Those blue devils will tear a hunk out of you, if they can. They don't want to die either."

"That's what Daddy always said. That salt water ran in your blood just like his." The girl pulled a crate box close to the cleaning table on the dock and reached in to grab a blue fish. Placing the thin blade beneath the pectoral fin, Gale pulled the knife hard against the body of the fish, the head separated neatly and she pushed it into the water below, then slid the blade along the pelvic fin. "I've got salt water in my veins too."

Beautify the Outside of Your Home ... The Marian Way!

By Marian Taylor

October's weather is perfect to clean, declutter and organize your outdoor areas. Downsize and eliminate the excess on and under the deck, the porch, the storage shed and the pool area. This includes any parts of the garage where you store outdoor equipment, tools, and supplies.

The best way to declutter and organize is to remove everything from the storage areas and put them into piles of trash, donate, and keep.

Items to eliminate:

- Broken or rusty garden tools
- Excess yard tools and equipment that you no longer use
- Lawn furniture and cushions that you no longer use
- Old potting soil, lawn chemicals, outdated seed packets

- Broken flowerpots or planters that you no longer use
- Excess and broken garden statues and yard decorations

Store items, so that they are neat, tidy, easily accessible, and stored safely so they aren't a tripping or a safety hazard.

- Group and store small garden tools in a bucket or basket so that you can carry them while gardening.
- Store heavy items like bags of soil and mulch down low on the ground or shelf.
- Hang and store long handled equipment such as shovels, rakes, and brooms.
- Service the lawn mower for winter storage and service the snow blower for winter use, making sure they are easily accessible for the season.
- Winterize your grill, patio furniture, planters, and statues.

Scrub, power wash and hose the outside areas to maintain the outdoor appearance.

- Scrub soffits, doors, deck/patio, windows, screens, trim
- Remove cobwebs and schedule bug and pest control
- Sweep driveway, walkways, and sidewalks
- Scrub or replace garbage and recycle can



Marian Taylor is the creator of The Marian Way. Her mission is to support people in living a simple, and beautiful lifestyle. As a professional downsizer and relocation specialist for 10+ years she knows firsthand as to what it takes to help people let go of their "excess", with her time-tested tools, tips, and solutions. Send questions or comments to: Marian@TheMarianWay.com

Our Beautiful Ocean

By Jessica Blackburn

I've seen the ocean in its many moods: the calm smooth almost glass like appearance; the rough, angry waves that come crashing in during a storm; the playful waves that ripple back and forth on the beach and glitter in the sunlight; the ocean at night, with the moon light shining on it in the distance. All just waiting for you to come and explore it.

Whatever mood the ocean is in, it never ceases to amaze me at its beauty, wonder and its limitless mysteries it holds.

Once you've seen the sunrise or even sunset cascading its magnificent colors over the endless ocean, you will be drawn to it for the rest of your life.

The ocean shares itself in many ways. It, through time, places a deposit of itself on the shore, for us to come and sift through to find special treasures to place in jewelry, in art or in a jar to remind us of our stay. It captivates us as we sit on our porches and listen to the waves crash against the shore. It provides a vast array of delicacies. It brings family enjoyment as we step on a boat or ship and take a cruise on her.

The ocean is far too large for me to wrap my head around, no body of water can compare to the ocean. It is immeasurably vast. There are parts of the ocean where no ship has ever sailed, depths no human has ever seen nor explored. It is mysterious and intriguing and that is why I love it so much.

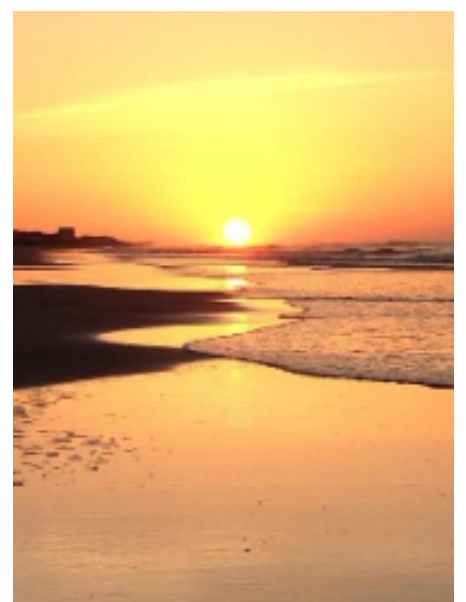
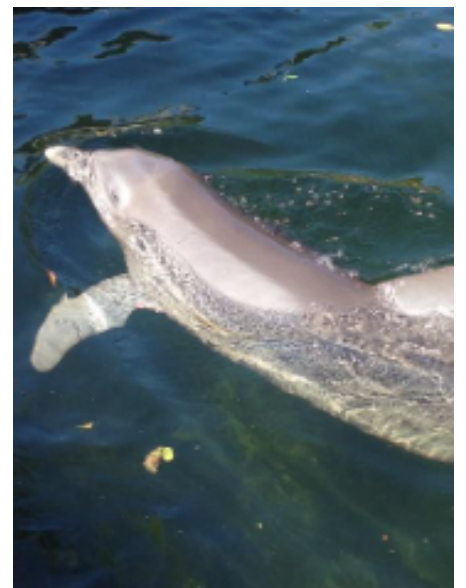
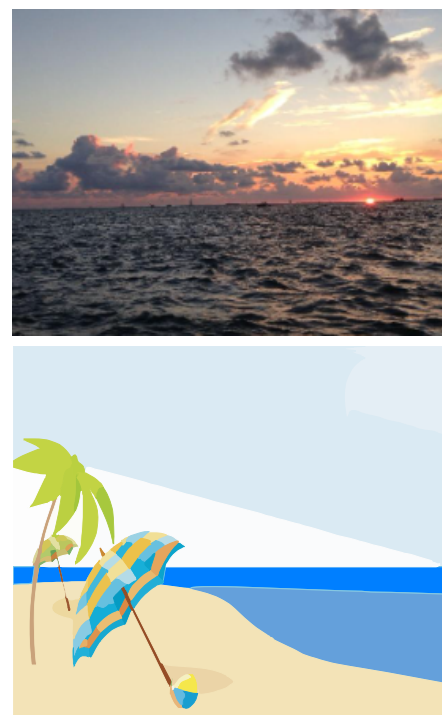
Standing on the shore, looking out to see miles of ocean, I am in awe of how large it is, and how tiny I am. It leaves me speechless.

I have found a deep respect for the ocean. It could kill you in seconds if you don't respect its mass, its power, its ability to do things you can't imagine. It could overtake you before you even realize what hit you. Never underestimate the power of those gentle, peaceful waves. What lies beneath the waters can be dangerous.

What does lie beneath the surface of the ocean? A whole other world. A life completely different from our own. The Ocean floor covers more than half of the earth's surface. Many of it has yet to be discovered. Deep Coral reefs, underwater volcanoes and caverns teeming with life. Did you know the Earth's Largest waterfall is actually underwater? It is in the Denmark Strait. Colder water tumbles over a huge drop in the ocean floor, 11,500 feet. The Largest land waterfall is only 3,212 feet. In this world you will find sea creatures of all different shapes and sizes. Some transparent, others teaming with color. Some not so pretty with lights on their heads. I have one very special sea creature I can never get enough of and that would be the dolphin. I was privileged to see them up close when I chartered a boat with some friends out in the Keys. These beautiful creatures swam next to the boat, playing and just enjoying life.

When I sit on the beach and wiggle my toes in the sand, I bask in the beauty of that big blue ocean and remember the memories I have made with my friends and family and dream about this deep vast ocean. Its depths I may never see in real life. Oh, I may see it in pictures and movies but actually putting on a diving suit and jumping in, that is for the more adventurous people. I will just take in the sights and dream.

I enjoy my fresh ocean air. Hearing the birds singing and listening to the waves crash. That is the most peaceful sound on earth.



Know NC Gun Laws And Rules

1. A person must be 18 years of age to purchase a long gun that includes rifles and shotguns. A photo ID and a background check is required by any NC gun shop before transferring this weapon to a buyer. If a person is 21 or older, and has a NC Conceal & Carry permit, then no additional background check is required.
2. A person must be 21 years of age or older to purchase a handgun. In order to purchase a handgun, the NC resident must have a photo ID and a NC Purchase Permit or NC Conceal Carry permit.
3. A person who holds a Conceal & Carry permit from another state may legally carry concealed in NC but cannot purchase and leave with the handgun in NC.
4. A person who is 18 through 20 years of age may obtain a purchase permit from their sheriff's office to purchase or receive a handgun from a private person such as a family member. These permits are not valid to purchase from a licensed FFL gun dealer.
5. A person on vacation may purchase a handgun and it will be shipped to a gun dealer in their state for pickup.
6. Any person may ship a firearm as long as a copy of their photo ID is included in the box and it MUST be received by an FFL. It is against the law in all states to ship firearms to a private person.
7. Both a NC purchase permit and conceal carry permit are good for 5 years. A conceal carry permit is renewed every 5 years for a fee. If the conceal carry has not expired, no additional classes are required.
8. A NC purchase permit can not exceed 5 dollars in cost and there is no limit to the number of permits a person can get.
9. Before travelling out of state with a firearm, make sure you know every state's laws that you will travel through. Call local gun shops in those states.
10. Firearms must be locked and out of reach of children and any one who is not allowed to access them.
11. 99% of all firearms are semi-automatic which means one pull of a trigger per bullet.
12. Full auto weapons require extensive paperwork, fees and background checks. Full auto weapons are very expensive.
13. It is legal to hunt in Pender County with a suppressed firearm.
14. A silencer or suppresser does not make the gun 100% quiet but does dampen the noise.
15. A person may not fire a firearm within city limits and should check with their local county for firearm regulations.

Ten Rules of Safe Gun Handling

1. Always keep the muzzle pointed in a safe direction and away from people. Never point your gun at anything you don't intend to shoot.
2. Firearms should be unloaded when not in use. Always make sure the magazine is out of the gun and no live round is in the chamber.
3. Don't rely on your gun's "safety". Always treat a gun as if it could fire at anytime.
4. Be sure of your target and what is beyond it. A pile of dirt or clay will not let a bullet travel through. A wooden target will not stop a bullet.
5. Use correct ammunition. Avoid reloaded ammo unless you personally know where it came from and trust that person.
6. If your gun fails to fire when the trigger is pulled, handle with great care! Keep gun pointed at a safe direction and unload firearm.
7. Always wear eye and ear protection when shooting.
8. Be sure the barrel is clear of obstructions before shooting.
9. Clean your gun and inspect it regularly.
10. Learn all you can about the functions of your firearm and check for manufacturer recalls.



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Simply Homemade Recipes

Fall Salad
With Cranberry Vinaigrette



2 red Anjou pears
1/2 cup toasted walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup crumbled Gorgonzola cheese

1/2 cup cider vinegar
1/4 cup cranberries
1/4 cup olive oil
2 teaspoons white sugar
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
1 pinch freshly ground black pepper
2 heads romaine lettuce - rinsed, dried, and torn into bite-size pieces
2 medium heads Belgian endive - washed, dried and chopped

In a saucepan, combine vinegar and cranberries. Cook over medium heat until cranberries soften. Remove from heat; add olive oil, sugar, salt and pepper. Place in blender and mix until smooth. Refrigerate until chilled. Core and julienne one pear, core and dice the other. In a large bowl, combine the Romaine lettuce, endive, diced pears, walnuts and Gorgonzola. Toss and drizzle with enough dressing to coat. Divide among salad plates and garnish with julienned pear. Top with any additional walnuts as well.



1/2 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup chili powder
1 tablespoon dried parsley
2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons ground black pepper
2 teaspoons ground cumin
2 teaspoons onion powder

1 teaspoon smoked paprika
2 racks baby back ribs, membranes removed
1 cup water
1/2 cup apple cider vinegar
1 (12 ounce) bottle barbeque sauce (such as Sweet Baby Ray's®)

Mix brown sugar, chili powder, parsley, salt, garlic powder, black pepper, cumin, onion powder, and paprika in a bowl using a fork, breaking up any large clumps. Rub spice mixture over both sides of the ribs. Place a steam rack inside a multi-functional pressure cooker (such as Instant Pot®). Pour water and cider vinegar into the bottom of the pot. Lower ribs into the pot by curving them around the edge. Close and lock the lid. Select high pressure according to manufacturer's instructions; set timer for 25 minutes. Allow 10 to 15 minutes for pressure to build. Release pressure carefully using the quick-release method according to manufacturer's instructions, about 5 minutes. Unlock and remove lid. Set oven rack about 6 inches from the heat source and preheat the oven's broiler. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil; place ribs on the foil. Top with barbeque sauce. Broil ribs until sauce is bubbling, about 3 minutes.

Photos and recipes courtesy of AllRecipes.com

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If you would like more information, please call Feline Urgent Rescue and Rehab at 864-483-2444 or email adoptafurrcat@gmail.com. Terry is my foster mom and personal assistant and she'll be happy to help arrange a time for us to meet.

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