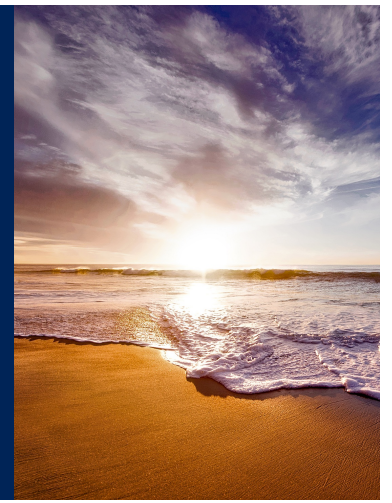




TOPSAIL TIMES

TOPSAIL ISLAND, HOLLY RIDGE, HAMPSTEAD AND SNEADS FERRY



● 21st October, 2022

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● Volume II, Issue 22

FREE!

Holly Ridge Fiasco

At the Holly Ridge regular town meeting on Tuesday, October 11th, an item was on the agenda that raised some concern within the members of the community.

Wesley Wooten, of Currie, North Carolina, had requested that a text change be considered for the Town Zoning regulations.

5. Public Hearings

A. Possible Approval of a Proposed Text Amendment of the Holly Ridge Zoning Ordinance to amend Section 7-4-12 to set a minimum area of 100 acres for outdoor firing ranges and Section 7-3-26 to remove the requirement for special use permits for outdoor firing ranges within the Rural Agricultural Zoning District.

Recommendation: Action to approve a proposed Text Amendment of the Holly Ridge Zoning Ordinance to amend Section 7-4-12 to set a minimum area of 100 acres for outdoor firing ranges and Section 7-3-26 to remove the requirement for special use permits for outdoor firing ranges within the Rural Agricultural Zoning District.

Mr. Wooten is not currently listed as a property owner in the Holly Ridge city limits or ETJ and does not operate a business or reside in the city limits or ETJ of Holly Ridge.

The instructions given by Nate Rhue, the current Holly Ridge Community Development Director, were clear. The text amendment being considered did not involve any current property, annexation or re-zoning of any property. The text amendment, if changed, would affect the current corporate town limits and the ETJ.

During the presentation by Mr. Rhue, Councilman Greg Hines asked the Mayor if he could ask Mr. Wooten questions on behalf of the property he plans to develop in the future. Even though the instructions for the text amendment

change given by Mr. Rhue stated that no property, annexation or re-zoning was being considered for this change, Councilman Hines felt the need to include Mr. Wooten's comments.

Mr. Wooten proceeded to state that he was a resident of Currie in Pender County and his family had property in Hampstead. He then stated that he had purchased a farm with environmental issues because it was a hog farm 2 miles west of town on Highway 50. Mr. Wooten was stopped by the town manager who requested that the Mayor move into public hearing. Mr. Wooten, who was listed as 3rd to speak on the sign-up sheet was moved to the first position by the Mayor.

Mr. Wooten stated that he purchased the land and was willing to remediate the environmental issues as it has a current hog lagoon. He stated that he was in the sewer business and had intended to use the land as a spray field. He then discussed how the area was in need of an outdoor shooting range and stated that after speaking with Heather (Town Manager) and Nate (Community Development Director) that an outdoor range would be an asset to the town of Holly Ridge. He stated he wanted to do skeet, trap and self-defense training and to have a clubhouse.

When asked by Councilman Greg Hines why he chose 100 acres as the amount of land required for the text amendment, he stated that it was a recommendation from when he met with Nate, the Holly Ridge Community Development Director and the Holly Ridge police chief.

Even though Mr. Wooten was speaking during the public comment section, no 3 minute timer was set for him and he was allowed to exceed that time limit without penalty. Mr. Wooten spoke for approximately 5 minutes and when finished speaking, the Mayor requested that he remain on standby for any additional questions.

Area residents that voiced their concerns included:

Guy Royal, an area resident and business owner, was very concerned about the restrictive wording of the amendment and the issue it created by not allowing anyone with less than 100 acres from having an outdoor firing range. He stated that several area residents had private ranges on their property and he felt this possible ruling was very unfair. He stated that he has been to gun ranges all over the state and that there was absolutely no need for this to be 100 acres or more and that requirement would only hurt the individual. He stated, if this was approved, it would give Mr. Wooten a monopoly and this does not benefit Holly Ridge residents. "The only monopoly you need in America is a better product. Don't hurt everybody else in town. Just build a great gun range and I'll be the first one to sign up."

Max Sholar, Holly Ridge resident and business owner spoke next. He stated that there is no need to require a 100 acres. He had been approached in the past by people who wanted to put a gun range on his property and though he hasn't decided to do it yet, he shouldn't be punished for having less than a 100 acres. He currently has a 40 acre tract and 80 acre tract of land and shouldn't be restricted from using his land.

Christina Asbury, area resident and local realtor who specializes in land spoke about the importance and why special use permits are in place and was emphasizing the importance of keeping that requirement. She also felt that a 100 acre requirement was not necessary and was not an NRA requirement. She went into detail to explain how zoning ordinances already dictate setbacks and uses and that the special use permit is a valuable tool to ensure everything is done properly for the welfare of the community and its members. She questioned how many properties would

be considered non-conforming if this was passed and if any of those people had been notified. She was stopped by the mayor for running out of time during her 3 minute allotment. Ms. Asbury also brought up the point that there are very few parcels in the Holly Ridge area that would comply with the requirement of a 100 acres or more, and that there are no parcels within the city limits therefore only making this ruling a benefit of the few.

Mr. Wooten was allowed to speak again after being called up by Councilman Greg Hines regarding the acreage requirement. Mr. Wooten stated that he didn't care about the acreage requirement and was planning on developing a commercial range open to the public and that this should not affect the private property owner who wants to shoot on their property. Mr. Wooten stated that in regards to the special use permit, based on the location of the property and that it is currently not part of the town, he couldn't do it that way and wanted a guarantee that his investment would be secure. Again Mr. Wooten's comments during the public forum were not timed, as the other speakers were.

Ken Bradshaw, an area resident, stated that he is not a fan of knee jerk reactions, and based on the number of people attending the meeting for this issue, he agrees that it does not need to be voted on tonight and more information needs to be shared with the people before a decision is made.

Councilwoman Pam Hall raised concerns regarding the removal of the special use permit. She stated that she was not opposed to his venue of a firing range but felt that keeping the requirement should be a necessity. She mentioned that Ms. Asbury raised some important points as to why special use permits are required. ...

Continued on page 3



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Topsail Times

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www.TopsailTimes.net

Holly Ridge Fiasco Continued

Continued from page 1

Councilwoman Hall said that she didn't see any reason why this parcel of land would not be given a special use permit if the application was made. She also noted that Onslow County would require a special use permit for this use if he was not annexed into Holly Ridge. Councilwoman Hall then stated that she would not vote for this text amendment change as it was written. Councilwoman Hall also addressed the concern regarding 100 acres may not be a perfect square and that the person may not be able to put a range directly in the middle and that the range could be placed in the narrowest area, close to a development. Her concern was that 100 acres was not a magic number and that by removing the special use permit process this may be detrimental to a neighboring property.

The Mayor asked for clarification regarding the text amendment as it was written, confirming that as written, all outdoor firing ranges must be a minimum of 100 acres. Nate Rhue, the Community Development Director agreed with the Mayor, but incorrectly stated that all ranges would have to have a minimum of 100 square feet or more.

Councilman Greg Hines stated that apparently Mr. Wooten does not want to do this project and invest any money unless he can be guaranteed a special use permit, which the council is unable to guarantee prior to an application.

Councilman Dexter Sholar stated, "Well, I don't want to play the lottery without winning it either, but sometimes you do."

Councilwoman Hall stated that starting any business is a leap of faith and that there are no guarantees for success.

Upon completion of the discussion, the Mayor read the amendment aloud and Greg Hines called for a vote. Dexter Sholar seconded the motion. Councilman Hines voted in favor of the text amendment change. Both Councilwoman Hall and Councilman Sholar voted no. Councilwomen Stanley and Bragg both voted yes. Councilman Sholar is seen turning to ask both Councilwomen Stanley and Bragg if they understood what they just voted for. With 3 votes of yes, the amendment was approved to the disbelief of those in attendance.

At the end of the meeting, Holly Ridge resident Belinda Sholar approached the podium and asked for clarification. She asked if she had 20 acres of land, could she still apply for a range with a special use permit. Councilman Hines said she could and was soon corrected by Councilman Sholar, who stated that she now needed 100 acres or more. Councilman Hines disagreed and asked to have the amendment re-read to him. He was told it had just been read aloud by the Mayor and he asked to hear it again. He was then told by the Community Development Director that he in fact voted for the amendment as it was written originally. Even though there had been a discussion to change the proposed amount of land required, it had not been formally changed prior to the vote. At no time before the vote had Councilman Hines, Councilwoman Stanley or Councilwoman Bragg asked for the amendment to be formally changed.

The town manager asked the town attorney if the amendment could be revisited after realizing that certain council members may have been confused about what they had voted for. The Community Development Director believed there was a way for the town council to propose a text amendment that would not require a 12 month waiting period.

Councilman Sholar appeared visibly frustrated and stated that he would have a text change prepared for the next meeting.

After completion of the meeting, the 3 council people that voted yes were contacted by the Topsail Times Newspaper for comments.

When asked why he called for a vote on the text amendment, Councilman Greg Hines stated, "I wanted to give the man his range," When asked if he was working on a text amendment to allow gun ranges with less than 100 acres with a special use permit, he said he was not. His plan was to leave that up to Councilman Dexter Sholar. He stated that he voted for what he voted for.

Councilwoman Caroline Stanley stated that she was confused about what she was voting for. She stated that since the meeting however, she would be working with the other council members toward amending the text to include smaller parcels of land not requiring a special use permit for a gun range. She stated that Mr. Wooten had mentioned that he would be building a multi-million dollar gun range on his property with a gift shop, clubhouse and possibly a strip mall. She was asked if she had seen a plan for the property that included those

items and she said she had not.

When Councilwoman Rena Bragg was contacted for a comment she stated that she was currently dealing with a back injury and was unable to talk due to the pain medication she was taking. It is not known when the back injury occurred.

When the Onslow County planning department was contacted to see if Mr. Wooten had previously made a request to have the special use permit requirement removed from an outdoor firing range application in the county, we were told he had not. The planning department did not show any record of Mr. Wooten contacting them in regards to his property. As of this time, the property Mr. Wooten owns is in the county and is not in the city limits or ETJ of Holly Ridge nor has it been annexed in. There is currently no application on file for the annexation.

The Onslow County planning department confirmed that a Special Use Permit would be required if Mr. Wooten submitted an application for an outdoor gun range in Onslow County.

Update: Topsail Times Newspaper was notified by the Town Manager and Community Development Director that a new text amendment would be on the November 8th agenda and would be up for public comment at the December 13th meeting.

The Town of Holly Ridge records their Town Council Meetings, which occur on the second Tuesday of each month. In case you missed this meeting, you can view the recording here:

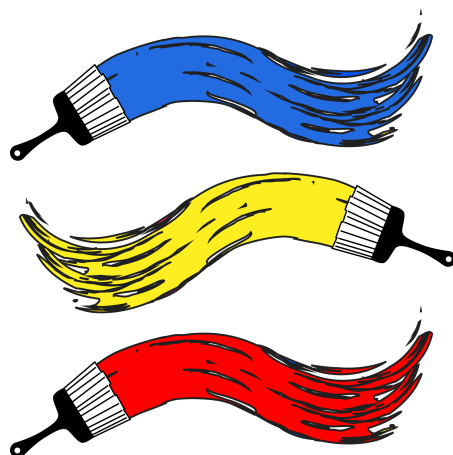
<https://vimeo.com/759453518>

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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Fair Is Fair Little Brother

By Becky Borneman

It was so good to have my parents visit from Tallahassee. We packed a lot into the short week they were here. It all started when they surprised me with their new ride. They traded in their good old trusty "Harvey the RV" for "Winnie the Winnebago" and drove her up the 600 miles to visit.

The first night started with a lecture to my dad about pushing his socks down. The knee socks look for men went out of style in... um... was it ever in style? He has the true Florida tourist look down regarding socks and he is a native Floridian for crap's sake. But we got past that hurdle and off we go.

It's funny after moving away how you realize things when you go back, or in this case when they come to you.

Little things that you forgot drove you crazy come back full force. Getting to know their rhythm as a retired couple. When I moved away they were both working. Now they're together 24/7. It was a fun week. And I did not breathe a sigh of relief when they left. Nope. Not one little bit.

Every now and then I get an SOS call from my brother who lives in Tallahassee too and picks up the slack on things that I can't do living up here. So midweek I thought I would give him a call when I had a minute to myself. I called him on FaceTime and he answered the phone... "What do you want?" I honestly thought something was wrong. He continued... "Why are you calling me? My mother in law is in Italy, my parents are with you. I'm on vacation!" I realized nothing was wrong.

The little jerk was kicked back at my parents house in their swimming pool with a cocktail floating around on my mothers pink flamingo float. He was living the high life. I could see the plastic umbrella swirling around in his drink. And I knew I heard Jimmy Buffett music playing in the background.

Then I realized, he is just acting out because he misses them so much. So I came up with a solution. I am six years older than my brother. And after giving it a lot of thought I think, fair is fair. Once my parents need full time care, I'm going to defer them to my sweet brother for the first six years since I got them alone for the first six years of my life. I saw the color drain out of his face as I relayed my plan and thought how overwhelmed with thanks he must be for me to offer that to him.

He was so excited (devastated) by my offer (threat). He has hardly spoken to me since that call. I'm sure he is still excited about the news I delivered.

Now all jokes aside, I have to say it was the best visit I've had with my parents up here. I am so lucky to have grown up with parents who worked so hard to provide for my brother and I we both always knew were loved. Never a doubt. As I get older I realize what a gift it is to be able to say that. And I'd be honored to care for my parents one day...

6 years later!



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Sea Turtle Hospital News



By Karen Sota

The last nest laid on Topsail has hatched and hopefully a good portion of those babies made it out to the Sargasso Sea where they'll spend the next year or so. Our recent admits have been victims of entanglements with fishing gear, mostly nets, and boat strikes. Some will be with us over the winter but thankfully most of them are short-timers that we will release soon along with several patients already given their swimming papers by Dr. Harms.

We're getting ready to close to the public to complete major renovations in our main area, Sea Turtle Bay. But you can't safely do that kind of work if there are turtles swimming around with contractors on lifts replacing lights and refinishing the floor. Our remaining patients must be relocated to other parts of the hospital for about six weeks. Not a problem; we have the space and most of them are small. Lennie, our permanent resident, will have her tank moved into Sick Bay. The others will join her and if it gets jam-packed, we have two other turtle-friendly areas. That leaves one noticeably big challenge: Snooki.

This very special loggerhead lady tops three hundred pounds and lives in the largest tank we could get through our doors. But we have two issues with her tank: it won't go through any other doors, and it also needs some touch-up work

done before we move it back into Sea Turtle Bay. (Note: if you know how to make fiberglass look good again and can help us out let's talk!) Luckily the therapy pool in Sick Bay is almost the same size as Snooki's tank so we'll be moving her very, very carefully into that pool. But how, you ask.

Over the past month several of our staff have been spending time in the water with Snooki, getting her used to "company" and being closely handled by people. After some initial side-eye and a look of general amusement she decided they were there to entertain her, a new toy (in some cases toys) to play with. Soon we'll introduce the sling that will fit under her and hope that she's receptive to that. The plan is that when the day of the move arrives she will be used to not only swimming onto the sling but also comfortable with "her people." Then it's a matter of pure muscle to get her onto the turtle taxi, down the hall and into the therapy pool. That's the plan and we hope Snooki will be on board, literally, when the day comes.

You will soon be hearing about an exciting addition to our hospital, a new education building open year-round where Snooki will have a queen-sized pool all to herself. Working title is "Snooki's House" and it will be our first major capital fund-raising campaign since we built the current hospital. More in the next year about our plans.

With fewer visitors to the island and our Topsail Turtle Project volunteers officially off-duty until next May we rely increasingly on our locals, anglers and boaters to notify us about any turtle in distress. If you see a turtle that's been injured or stranded 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 send trained volunteers to retrieve the turtle. 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 turtles at KBSTRRC and on Topsail Island is authorized by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, ES Permit 22ST05.

Hospital tours end October 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 facility improvements. You can still visit our gift shop and adopt a turtle on-line at our website.



Director Kathy Z. in the tank with "Snooki."



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There will be security cameras around the facility. We are located just 1/2 mile from the high rise bridge in Surf City, next to Salty Turtle on Hwy 50. For more info, call 910-620-2106.



Some people make the world a little bit more interesting. Mermaid Mary is one of those people.

It was certainly a spellbinding evening on July 23 at Swingbridge Nutrition in Surf City.

Crystal ball, palm and tarot readings were offered for those who participated.

I had a chance to speak with some of the participants and Mary after the readings were completed.

Everyone who participated seemed pleased. Some received guidance for a problem they were facing but it was certainly fun for all the folks who came in for a mystical experience.

Speaking with Mary after the event I asked what people seemed most concerned with when they came in for a reading.

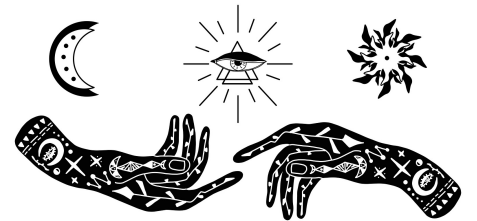
Mary who certainly does seem to have a spiritual empathy and understanding of those who speak with her said that most people are seeking guidance. The most prevalent concerns being those dealing with money, relationships, and health.

Mary has always known that she is gifted with discernment and perception regarding the people and world surrounding her. She knew from childhood that she had a gift.

As I spoke with Mary, her gifts became evident. She is what my Granny called an old soul. Her thoughtfulness and compassion are without judgment. That is the epitome of kindness.

I decided to have a reading, something I have never done. I will never reveal my questions or the answers. I'm leaving those for the mystical realm and Mermaid Mary.

Mermaid Mary will be available for tarot, oracle, palm and crystal ball readings on **October 29th** from 5pm to 8pm at Swingbridge Nutrition in Surf City.



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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

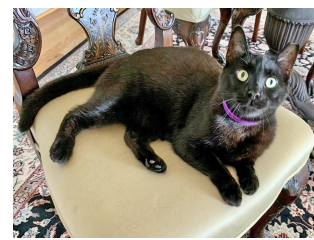
adorable black girl who is just 6-months-old. I had a horribly injured tail that had to be amputated, but I'm doing great and look quite cute with my stub. I'm litter-trained, spayed, vaccinated and good with other cats. I hope you'll come visit me soon so we can start loving each other.



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!

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Terry Schultz, Founder & President



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Celebrating Our 1 Year Anniversary!

● 22nd October, 2021 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume I, Issue 1 FREE!

Local Elections Ahead!

● 5th November, 2021 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume I, Issue 2 FREE!

Topsail Area Community Mourns the Loss of Two Men in Holly Ridge Plane Crash

● 19th November, 2021 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume I, Issue 3 FREE!

Holly Ridge is Recognized as the 2nd Fastest Growing Area in North Carolina

● 3rd December, 2021 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume I, Issue 4 FREE!

Did You Know This About Christmas?

● 17th December, 2021 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume I, Issue 5 FREE!

Ladies and Gentlemen, There's a New Chief in Town

● 1st January, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 1 FREE!

22 Changes for 2022

● 14th January, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 2 FREE!

Help Wanted

● 28th January, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 3 FREE!

January 2022 Ice Storm

● 11th February, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 4 FREE!

→ Love is in the Air

● 25th February, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 5 FREE!

Murder in Hampstead Rocks Community

● 11th March, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 6 FREE!



Russian Actions and Inflation are a Bad Combination For America



● 25th March, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 7 FREE!

Concerns Regarding the 2022 Onslow County Tax Re-evaluation Have Residents Upset

● 8th April, 2022 ● American-Owned. Free Press. ● Volume II, Issue 8 FREE!

Local Sheriff's Races Are Heating Up

● 22nd April, 2022

● American-Owned. Free Press.

● Volume II, Issue 9

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EARLY VOTING FOR PRIMARY STARTS THURSDAY, APRIL 28TH.

● 6th May, 2022

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● Volume II, Issue 10

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Is Rapid Growth Destroying Our Quality of Life?

● 20th May, 2022

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Blizzard Apartments in Surf City Lost to Fire

● 3rd June, 2022

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Failure Was Not An Option

● 17th June, 2022

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Will Paid Parking Harm Topsail Island's Family Appeal?

● 1st July, 2022

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New Subdivision Planned For Surf City To Connect To Hwy 17

● 15th July, 2022

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Hemp Products Now Permanently Legalized in North Carolina

● 29th July, 2022

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Lightning Strikes Affect Area Homes And Businesses

● 12th August, 2022

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Holly Shelter Liberty Festival

● 26th August, 2022

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Holly Shelter Game Lands Fire

● 9th September, 2022

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Armed Robbery And Murder Shocks Surf City

● 23rd September, 2022

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Remembering Hurricanes Bertha And Fran 1996

● 7th October, 2022

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● Volume II, Issue 21

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Pender County School Bond On Ballot For November

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

Why Having A Dog Or Cat Helps Your Mental Health

By Dotty Ann Harding

I have seen how important companion animals are to those in military life, as sometimes they are young people, some of whom are away from family and friends for the first time. Their pets play a significant role in their daily activities and social interactions. I see them actively engaged or sitting quietly on a bench or bench, watching the sunset together. They are so willing to sit beside you and listen as you pour out your hopes, dreams, and fears that perhaps you would not openly share with others.... ending with, do you want to go for a walk!

When I am out and about with my dog, GoGee, I am approached many times by other folks and the conversation always begins about her. So I have the opportunity to engage in social conversations that never would have happened, meet new people, and make new friends, as there is a common unspoken bond with those who have a pet that makes conversation so easy.

Sometimes it is hard to believe the joy I feel just sharing the happiness of life, with so little effort with her, and of course, a couple of treats never hurts. Her biggest thrill is being my wing-girl riding in the car. The longer the journey, the better. And the training we have received from Sandra Harknett, Purrfect Pooches, helps, as she is so well behaved she goes most places with me.

At times it's challenging to get out of my own way when I am stressed about something or have a deadline looming. So having a pet dependent on me for their needs allows me to refocus on what actually needs to be done, redirect my attention so I can accomplish the goals of helping others. As a result, my pets are a considerable asset.

The Caveat: Be Prepared and Aware

Some folks can suddenly find themselves in a situation they did not anticipate, even though the circumstances that brought them to the same point vary. Deployment, divorce, relocation due to employment, the list goes on. What they are facing is NOW WHAT!!! Their pet is not allowed to accompany them, their new home doesn't allow them to have pets, it involves a family member's pet, and the owner has become ill and can no longer take care of them. The main problem in helping anyone in this situation is the time factor. When the time factor is short, finding a new home for the animals needing one remains tough.

Any rescue can repeat many of these same stories, which is sad and disheartening. But unfortunately, the reality is that too many companion animals in need of assistance find themselves out of time. Sometimes desperate people do desperate things, hoping that someone would see their dog or cat and help them.

There is a long waiting list of animals to get accepted into the Onslow County Animal Shelter; usually, it's months long. And many rescues are filled. So try to have a backup plan for these contingencies in your pocket, and remember having the time to put your plan into action will provide a better outcome. So be aware and understand the complexities of your current situation to help you make the best decision for all involved. And please note that many rescues and shelters desperately need fosters to help extend the time needed to find animals in their care a new home.

<https://www.pawprintsmagazine.com/> is published every month and is filled with animals of all shapes and sizes

needing homes.

GoGee, the dog I mentioned in this article, was a dog I adopted from the shelter with only a day left to live, as her time was up, and at the time, she was ill. I couldn't leave her, so here she is with me nine years later. There are so many like her.....

You can make a huge difference!



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Simple Lifestyle Solutions... The Marian Way

By Marian Taylor

It's not too soon to start your plans for family gatherings for the holiday season. Whether you will be the host or the house guest it is important to have great manners especially when you are family so that you will have fabulous memories and lots of fun!

Be a gracious guest... The Marian Way

1. Be sure to RSVP. The time to RSVP is as soon as you receive the invitation. Don't overstay your welcome. Make your visit short and sweet; no more than 3 nights.

2. Keep your personal belongings to a minimum. You don't need to bring your entire closet or home with you.

3. Clean up after yourself by keeping your area neat and tidy. Make the bed, wipe down the bathroom, hang wet towels.

4. Help or pitch in during mealtime by offering to set the table, clear the table, or load the dishwasher.

5. If traveling with children or pets be sure to clean up after them.

6. Be respectful and courteous by following the house rules regarding removing shoes in the house, eating in designated rooms other than the kitchen, and being mindful of when it's time for lights out.

7. Offer to share in the food costs or send a gift card to their local grocer with a thank you note.

Be a gracious host... The Marian Way

1. Let your guests know when you would like them to arrive as well as how long they can stay.

2. Give your guests an idea of planned activities so they can plan what clothing to bring.

3. Ask your guests what their favorite foods are and if they have special dietary needs and restrictions. Stock your kitchen and bar with your guests' favorites.

4. Prepare the guest room by removing clutter and make the bed with fresh comfortable linens and pillows. Provide extra blankets, dresser, and closet space for their clothes.

5. Clean and sanitize the bathroom so that it is immaculate and stocked with clean towels, toilet paper, and essential toiletries such as soap, shower gel, toothpaste, shampoo, and conditioner.

6. Provide the Wi-Fi code and TV channels.

7. Let your guests know when mealtime is especially breakfast. Set-up the coffee area so that the first up can brew their coffee.



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

"Save Our Fisheries" Campaign Raises Public Awareness of Coastal Resource Decline in North Carolina

RALEIGH, N.C. (Sept. 14, 2022) – For more than 30 years, political influence from private interests has dominated marine fisheries management policy in North Carolina and allowed the state's coastal fisheries resources to be overexploited for profit, driving those resources into chronic decline.

The state is currently attempting to defend itself in court. Now, it will also have to answer to millions of North Carolinians for whom the state is required to hold public resources in trust.

Coastal Conservation Association of North Carolina (CCA NC), the non-profit organization dedicated to the responsible stewardship of the state's marine and estuarine resources, has launched a public campaign to raise awareness about the long-running demise of North Carolina's coastal fisheries.

"Save Our Fisheries" holds the state of North Carolina accountable for decades of mismanagement that have severely degraded the health and viability of once-abundant fish stocks within its renowned coastal sounds and estuarine waters. The campaign will leverage creative content, media outreach and storytelling across print, broadcast and digital channels to publicly share the urgency of the crisis and consolidate broad-based, grassroots demand for policy reforms.

"The State of North Carolina is solely responsible for the misguided policies that led to this moment," said CCA NC

Executive Director David Sneed. "This campaign gives a needed voice to all citizens of North Carolina to ensure that outdated and inequitable marine fisheries management practices are reformed, critical fish stocks are rebuilt, and our coastal fisheries are restored to health and abundance."

SaveOurFisheries.org, a new landing page on the CC NC website, urges citizens to help "turn the tide before it's too late." In-depth information about the crisis is provided, including a link to the lawsuit CCA NC filed against the state in 2020. The lawsuit, which crossed a significant procedural threshold on Sept. 6 when the Court of Appeals unanimously rejected the state's argument for dismissal, focuses on the right of all North Carolina citizens to fish for personal use in public waters. That right, guaranteed in the state's constitution, is being infringed upon by the ongoing depletion of coastal fisheries, compounded by restrictions on public fishing imposed by the state in a last-ditch effort to restore declining stocks.

Rooted in science, the campaign cites the state's own statistics from the N.C. Division of Marine Fisheries, which show that both public and commercial fishing are suffering. Overfished stocks have led to declines in the commercial harvest of striped bass (77%), Southern flounder (81%), spot (84%), croaker (91%) and weakfish (98%). Public fishing has suffered similarly. To stave off collapse of the Southern flounder stock,

a North Carolina staple, the state cut the public fishing season back to just 30 days in September, with anglers limited to one flounder per day.

Despite the precipitous decline in food source fish stocks, the state continues to allow large-scale bottom trawling in critical nursery areas and gillnetting statewide, further impacting resource sustainability. Invisible and lethal to aquatic life such as fish, turtles, birds and marine mammals, gillnets are a mass harvesting gear that has been banned or severely restricted in every southern seafood-producing state except North Carolina. North Carolina is also the only state in the U.S. that holds a federal permit to injure or kill endangered sea turtles with gillnets. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), "gillnetting has been a major source of mortality for all sea turtle species."

"The state must choose – it can continue to pursue fisheries management policies that prioritize maximum resource extraction, or it can take decisive action to preserve and protect our coastal resources from profit-driven overharvesting and waste," explained CCA NC Chairman and Beaufort resident Bert Owens. "Choosing the status quo will perpetuate the irreparable harm to our state's public fisheries resources already occurring, adversely affecting every citizen."

Conceived by the award-winning integrated marketing firm

French/West/Vaughan, "Save Our Fisheries" is aimed at informing a broad spectrum of the public about the growing crisis and its consequences. The logo features a Southern flounder and the tagline, "Reform. Rebuild. Restore." The campaign reinforces that all citizens—including conservation groups, public anglers, consumers, commercial fishermen, seafood dealers, and the recreational fishing industry—will benefit from working with the state and its agencies to prioritize the long-term health and viability of North Carolina's coastal fisheries.

About CCA NC
CCA NC is a community of conservationists and recreational anglers working to promote sound management of public trust marine and estuarine resources and protect them for the enjoyment of current and future generations. CCA NC is affiliated with the Coastal Conservation Association, a national non-profit organization comprised of 17 coastal state chapters spanning the Gulf of Mexico, Pacific and Atlantic seaboard. CCA's strength is drawn from the tens of thousands of recreational saltwater anglers who make up its membership and whose grassroots influence is felt through state capitals, U.S. Congress and, most importantly, in the conservation and restoration of our coastal marine resources. For more information, please visit www.ccanc.org.

Thomas Seafood

By Carol Ann Ross

Long before there was a Thomas Seafood, there was a Thomas Tackle Shop and it was one of the first tackle shops on Topsail Island. It's where I always got my fish heads for crabbing when I was a kid, and it's where I get my seafood now. You see, I trust the owner and have known him my whole life. Good people, the Thomas's- always fair, always hard working. And always with a smile and friendly hello.

The Thomas family has been around from the beginning of Topsail. Arriving in 1948, George Rufus Thomas, his wife, Elvie and their son George, Jr. moved to Sears Landing. The building there at the time, the original Thomas Tackle Shop, was then an Oyster Roast house built by Leroy and J.B. Batts. George and his family were there for a couple of years then moved back to their home in Kinston, where they ran a laundry and farmed. But in 1955, they thought they'd give Topsail another chance and moved back, this time with their new son Doug in tow. They renamed the old Oyster Roast, Thomas Tackle Shop, and while living in the back apartment, set up business for success.

They sold all kinds of local fish and shellfish, including shrimp, which at that time was used mainly for bait. From the docks in the back, boats brought in fresh catches of anything seasonal, running-

from bluefish and flounder to mackerel, snapper, grouper, spots and dolphin. I'm not talking about Flipper when I say dolphin. Flipper is the mammal, the one with the blow hole in the top of his head. The kind of dolphin I'm talking about is what is now called Mahi Mahi. It is a mighty good tasting fish and the Thomas family had plenty of it when it was in season.

Just to the side of Thomas Tackle Shop George kept a menagerie of animals, a zoo, the closest one around for these parts. There were snakes, alligators, monkeys, and at one time, an elephant. It was great entertainment for family vacationers and locals alike.

In 1960 Mr. Thomas built the Blue Marlin Restaurant. It stood right next to the swing bridge overlooking the Intracoastal Waterway and was known as one of the best restaurants on the island. Well, technically, it was just across the bridge, but all the same- the cooks did a really good job cooking up the fresh catch from Thomas Tackle Shop.

George Jr. is fondly remembered by the locals as helping out his family, but we lost him early. Doug, the youngest of the Thomas boys, took over and helped his parents with their businesses. He piloted fishing boats and oystered and brought in catch for the shop. In other words, he did what most fishermen do, he worked his hiney off.

To this day he owns and operates Thomas Seafood.

Though the location of Thomas Seafood is a few hundred yards up the road from the original Thomas Tackle Shop building, you still get the same kind of service- good service, appreciative and friendly. Kudos to Doug, he not only sells local seafood, but you can purchase fresh local vegetables at his place too.

Customers have been going to Thomas's for decades- mothers, fathers, parents and grandparents too. It's kind of a tradition to go to Thomas Seafood. I think Doug has cultivated a loyalty from those long time customers.

There's history at Doug's and often when I go in to buy seafood, there will be a group of folks standing around or sitting just chewing the fat, the local fat. Sometimes they let me join in, I feel privileged to do so. Regardless, the atmosphere is welcoming, friendly and purely down home.

Thank you Doug, and all the others who work at Thomas Seafood.



Boats behind Thomas Seafood



Doug after a long day working on the boat



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SPECIAL NEEDS COMMUNITY OF
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Simply Homemade Recipes

Photos and recipes courtesy of AllRecipes.com

Homemade Shrimp Fried Rice



- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 pound uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup frozen peas and carrots
- 1/2 cup frozen corn
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced, or more to taste
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 4 cups cooked rice
- 3 tablespoons thinly sliced green onions
- 3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce, or more to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon salt, or to taste
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper, or to taste

Heat sesame oil and olive oil in a large nonstick skillet or wok over medium-high heat. Add shrimp and cook until they are bright pink on the outside and the meat is opaque, about 3 minutes, flipping halfway through. Remove shrimp from the skillet using a slotted spoon, allowing oils and cooking juices to remain in the skillet. Place shrimp on a plate and set aside. Add peas and carrots and corn to the skillet and cook, stirring intermittently, until vegetables begin to soften, about 2 minutes. Add garlic; cook and stir for 1 minute. Push vegetables to the side of the skillet, pour eggs into the other side, and cook to scramble, stirring as necessary, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir shrimp, rice, and green onions into the skillet. Drizzle evenly with soy sauce, season with salt and pepper, and stir to combine. Cook until shrimp is reheated through, about 2 minutes.



Fall-Apart Pork Stew

- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder
- 1-1/2 tablespoons seasoned salt
- 1-1/2 tablespoons ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon dried marjoram
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 pounds boneless pork shoulder, cubed
- 1 bunch spinach leaves, washed
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 stalks chopped celery
- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1-1/2 cups beef broth
- 2 (28 ounce) cans stewed tomatoes
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 (15 ounce) cans butter beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 yellow squash, sliced
- 1 zucchini, sliced
- salt and pepper to taste

Toss together the onion powder, parsley, 1 tablespoon garlic powder, seasoned salt, 1 1/2 tablespoons black pepper, marjoram, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a large, resealable plastic bag. Add the cubed pork, toss until well coated, then seal, and refrigerate overnight. Preheat oven to 250 degrees F (120 degrees C). Line a 9x9 inch baking dish with half of the spinach leaves. Pack the marinated pork into the baking dish, and cover with the remaining spinach leaves. Cover the pan with aluminum foil, and bake in the preheated oven for 3 hours, or until the pork is tender. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Whisk in the flour, and cook for 15 minutes, stirring frequently until the flour has toasted. Scrape into a heatproof dish, and set aside. Melt the butter in the pot, and stir in the onions and celery. Cook and stir until the onion has softened and turned translucent, about 10 minutes. Add the mushrooms, and cook until tender; stir the flour mixture back into the pot to coat the vegetables. Pour in the beef broth, stewed tomatoes, cooked pork and spinach, bay leaves, red pepper flakes, and 1 teaspoon garlic powder. Simmer 1 1/2 hours. Stir in the butter beans, yellow squash, and zucchini. Simmer 30 minutes until the vegetables are tender. Season to taste with salt and pepper before serving.

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