TOPSAIL TIMES

TOPSAIL ISLAND, HOLLY RIDGE, HAMPSTEAD AND SNEADS FERRY

19th May, 2023 | American-Owned. Free Press. | Volume III, Issue 10 | FREE!

North Carolina Voter ID Requirement Restored

North Carolina now belongs to a group of 37 states that require identification when voting.

Here is the timeline of how it came to be:

~ In 2013, NC House Bill 589 was signed into law by Governor McCrory, which required photo identification when voting. A state Driver's License, state issued ID Card, military ID or passport were forms of approved ID.

~ In September 2013, the US Dept. of Justice sued the state claiming that the new law discriminated against minorities.

~ On July 29, 2016 the US Court of Appeals claimed the ID requirement was racially discriminatory and struck it down.

~ On November 6, 2018 the majority of voters in North Carolina voted to approve Voter Identification when voting. A vote of "Yes" supported the requirement that voters would need to show a photo ID to vote in person. 55% of the voters that day said "Yes" which included 2,049,121 North Carolina voters.

The change would require a person voting in person to provide a photo identification.

~ On December 5th and 6th of 2018, the NC General Assembly voted to approve SB 824 (Senate Bill) which provided the types of approved identification.

~ On December 14, 2018, Governor Roy Cooper chose to ignore the will of the people and vetoed SB 824.

~ On December 18, 2018 the state Senate voted to override the Governor's veto.

~ On August 6, 2018 (before the election) the NAACP sued the NC General Assembly to remove the Voter ID amendment from the ballot in November.

~ On February 22, 2019 NC Judge Collings ruled in favor of the NAACP, striking down the voter identification amendment after the election.

~ On September 15, 2020, the court of appeals reversed Judge Collins ruling.

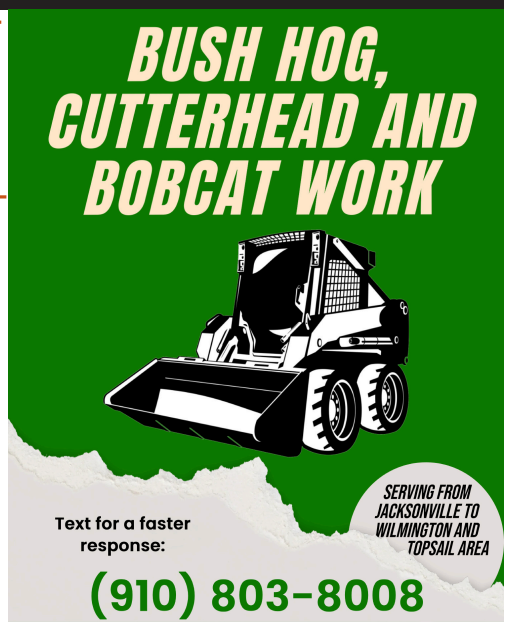
~ On December 2, 2020, a U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversed the 2019 blocking of the Voter ID law.

~ On September 17, 2021, 3 Superior Court judges voted 2-1 that the voter law was unconstitutional.

~ On June 23, 2022, the Supreme Court ruled 8-1 in favor of Senator Phillip Berger and other senators who supported the Voter identification law and challenged the Superior Court ruling.

~ On April 28, 2023, the North Carolina Supreme Court reversed the lower courts rulings and put the Voter ID requirement back into effect. Voter identification will be required this fall for elections.

A person who does not have a photo ID can get a state ID card at a North Carolina DMV.



A Crew Of Pirates Invaded Soundside Park In The Early Afternoon Of April 29th

These pirates arrived with the Topsail Star Pirate Ship and brought with them bags of Treasure Trail Mix, maps, coloring sheets, jewelry and eye-patches for the young pirates-in-training.

300 participants helped the crew to find treasure that was scattered about the Park. The young pirates-in-training who rose to the challenge discovered all the loot within 15 minutes!

You may have encountered this crew before at the Mardi Gras Parade in Oak Island or at The Cotton Exchange in Wilmington earlier this March.

The crew consists of Captain Salty Beard (owner of the Topsail Star), Pearl Bones, Mad Bones Marie, Mr. Smee, Rusty Buckles, Blackbeard, Navigator (also known as Master Gunner), Short Finger, Lady Angelique, and Nonner, who are all a part of the Wilmington Harbor Enhancement Trust (WHET) non-profit organization.

WHET is most well known for the Tall Ship Replicas that frequent the downtown Wilmington Docks and the Feast of the Pirate festival, which will be held for it's 96th anniversary September 16th at the Brunswick Riverwalk Park in Belville, NC.

Visit the team's website here: www.whetinc.org

or their Facebook page here: www.facebook.com/WilmingtonHarborEnhancementTrust/

To learn more about their mission and where they will be setting sail to next!

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Berthadale (Harvey) Best, 91, of Surf City, NC, went home to be with the Lord on Monday, May 1, 2023 at her home. Born in Rillton, PA on Tuesday, December 15, 1931 to the late Don Mooney and Florence (Harvey) Mooney, she was the first born of seven. She was the widow of Thomas Don Best, Sr. who was the love of her life.

Berthadale had an accomplished career in Real Estate as a Broker and Appraiser, having worked for ERA Bryson and Associates and Kinco Real Estate and Building Company; she also served as a former President of the NC Board of Realtors. Alongside her husband, she ran Sands Tavern and Game Room in Surf City where she became famous for her wontons with hot mustard sauce.

Berthadale was an avid puzzle worker who enjoyed challenging herself with puzzles that had 2000+ pieces, working on them for hours at a time. She also had a love for playing bingo and macramé sewing. Her faith was important to her, she was a member of the Church of God Church in Holly Ridge, NC.

Left to cherish her memory is her daughter, Dale Best and her husband, Luther Van Deusen of Surf City; son, Thomas D. Best, Jr. and his wife, Hester of Strawberry Plains, TN; grandchildren, Courtney Campbell of Sneads Ferry, Tristen King and his wife, Rachel of Green Cove Springs, FL,
and Samantha Lowenthal and her husband, Duncan of Soddy Daisy, TN; great-grandchildren, Ty King, Leo King, and Audrey Lowenthal; sister, Patty Hendricks of TN; niece, Berthadale "Bert" Holt, who has her namesake; and her beloved dog, Sugar.

In addition to her husband and parents, she was preceded in death by her sisters, Florence Fitzpatrick and Dorothy Myer; brothers, Robert Harvey and Chuck Harvey; niece, Robin; and her dog-daughter, Mya.

A Celebration of Life service will be held on Monday, June 5, 2023 at 5:30 at the Church of God , located at 1011 East Ocean Rd Holly Ridge NC 28445.

To know Berthadale was to know her witty and sarcastic sense of humor, she was a straight shooter with a flirty personality. She will be forever missed by all who loved and knew her.

To express condolences or to share a memory, please do so at www.coastalcremations.com.

Coastal Cremations of Jacksonville is serving the family.

Carol Stanley, 71, of Surf City, died May 9, 2023.
Coastal Cremations and Funeral Care of Jacksonville is serving the family.

Constance Paschall, 74, of Sneads Ferry, died May 10, 2023.
Coastal Cremations and Funeral Care of Jacksonville is serving the family.

PENDER COUNTY
OPIOID PREVENTION TASK FORCE
IS ASKING FOR YOUR INPUT!

COMMUNITY MEETINGS ARE SCHEDULED FOR:

May 22nd - Surf City Council Chambers
214 W. Florence Way Hampstead, NC 28443

May 24th - Hampstead Annex
15060 Hwy 17, Hampstead, NC 28443

June 1st - Cooperative Extension Office
801 S Walker St, Burgaw, NC 28425

Meetings will be held from 6:00 p.m.- 7:30 p.m.

This will be an opportunity to discuss Opioid Use in Pender County and get input from Pender residents on ways to prevent Opioid Use in Pender County.

For further information, contact Health Educators at the Pender County Health Department
910-259-0619

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Range Rovers And 30 Year Old Men Need To Be Banned

By Dorothy Royal

A group of immigrants were waiting at a bus stop in Texas when a man driving a Range Rover plowed into them, killing 8 and injuring several others. Some witnesses reported that after the massacre he screamed out cursing their mothers and for them to leave his country. It was not clear if the driver lost control of the vehicle or if his intentions were just evil. The 34-year-old man has now been charged with manslaughter and has a $3.4 million dollar bond. No one clearly knows if this was intentional, but it is a fact that he was driving a grey Range Rover. Clearly this vehicle must be banned.

Not far from this terrible event, another tragedy unfolded when a 33-year-old man who lived with his parents and had been discharged from the army for "mental issues" shot and killed 7 innocent people outside an affluent mall in Texas. Reports of him being associated with white supremacy media sites fill most of the reports. The confusion lies in why he would pick an affluent mall as his target area.

The father of a nine-year-old boy, who was killed along with his mother by his 38-year-old neighbor, has come forward to correct some misunderstandings regarding that fatal night (in Texas). After several phone calls to local police regarding excessive noise from the neighbor shooting his firearm, the man decided to approach his neighbor and asked him to move to the other side of his property since a baby was trying to sleep. Apparently, it was not uncommon for the men in this community to drink and shoot guns, even late at night. In an act of pure evil, the neighbor came after the man, shooting and killing several people in the home before taking off. After four days the man was found and arrested. People all over the United States live in communities that are more in tuned with their beliefs and customs, but I still find getting drunk and shooting guns at night an odd custom, and not a good one.

North Carolina recently enacted a law that would allow law abiding citizens to purchase a handgun with an on-site background check (done by an FFL – Federally licensed firearm dealer) at time of purchase instead of requiring a paper permit issued by a County Sheriff's office. The Governor vetoed the Bill but that was overridden. The new law went into effect and the increase in sales for many gun shops was immediate. Buyers who had postponed purchases due to the hassle of getting a permit were out to buy.

Now the NC House and Senate are working towards a Constitutional Carry Bill, similar to the one that became law in Florida in April. Florida became the 26th State to have a Constitutional Carry law, which means that more than half of all the United States have Constitutional Carry laws.

If North Carolina were to have Constitutional Carry what does that mean for a Conceal Carry Permit holder and would that option still be available. The answer is yes, the option of getting a North Carolina Conceal Carry Permit would still exist and would be strongly recommended for anyone who wishes to travel. Currently the NC Conceal permit is good in 37 other states. The North Carolina Conceal Carry Permit would also eliminate the onsite background check requirement which can take as little as a few minutes up to hours (or even days) depending on the demand on the system and results.

As a gun owner, education is always key. Whether a person is buying their first firearm or has a long history with hunting, target shooting or training, it is always beneficial to take a safety class. I suggest taking different classes from different instructors. No two people teach the same information. You will learn something new each time. Gun classes can be designed for private groups (like your office staff) or for a "Girls Day at the range".

Getting all your information about guns and gun safety from Hollywood is a mistake. A firearm that holds 30 rounds does not fire thousands of rounds at one time – like in the movies. No one should be firing a weapon without hearing protection (very rarely seen on TV). People don't go around dropping magazines since they usually cost $30-$50 dollars each! No one is going to shoot a bunch of .45 caliber rounds in close proximity to another person and then whisper to the person next to them and still be able to hear (without hearing protection).

Shooting firearms can be loud, messy and requires complete concentration. I want everyone who owns a firearm to have as much training and practice as they can afford, know how to safely clear, maintain and store a firearm, and to feel comfortable asking for help when needed.

Owning and operating a firearm is a big responsibility.

Remember knowledge is power, Range Rovers need to be banned, and learning more about something important to you is always a good thing.

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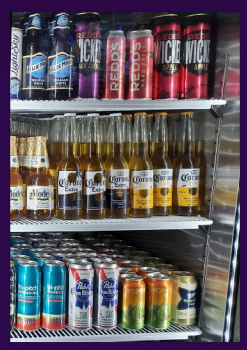

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Let Me " Sell " You A Story

By Becky Borneman

For as long as I can remember, I wanted to have a store of my own. I played store growing up, was always wanting to help sell things and was interested in the whole process really. From ordering items, to receiving them, to selling them. It fascinated me. I was intrigued by fabric when I was young too. Several times a year my mom or grandma would take me to JoAnn Fabrics and we would pick out a pattern of a dress or romper or something that we liked and then we would look at the aisles and aisles of fabrics. We would select the ones we wanted and the store clerk would take the bolt of fabric to the big, huge table in the middle of the store and cut what we needed with heavy, black handled scissors. I would LOVE watching her do this, I don't know why.

Then we would go to our friend Debbie's house where she would measure us. And magically, two weeks later...the clothing appeared. I loved how it fit and was made just for me.

Now selling things...this came to me early too. My grandma would sit every Sunday in the parish hall tending the bake sale. She would always contribute a candy called divinity. People would scoop that treat up first by the trayful! They loved her candy! But she had me up front and center at that table taking money as she sold the baked goods. Afterwards she would have me count it and have it all facing one direction and put in an envelope for the church. My other grandma would have me walk with her every year in the March of Dimes walk-a-thon. And she had me go door to door raising my own money for the walk.

I would be so excited when someone handed me a $20 bill for the fundraiser. Nothing was done online back then...way back then. But we had a big envelope with lines on the front to write donors names and how much they donated and the money was slid into the envelope and turned in the morning of the walk. My grandparents, as well as my parents, instilled the art of selling in my heart.

Their plan backfired a time or two. When I was around 10 years old, my grandma was having a Meet The Candidate get-together at her house. I had a friend with me that. The party was going on in the back yard and we were supposed to direct everyone where to go once they parked and arrived, per grandma's orders. Well, that was a little boring. So I ran inside and found a poster board that had writing on it but was clean and fresh on the back side, hunted down markers next. That's when we decided to write $5 Parking on the sign and hold it up. So we collected $5 from everyone who came that day. We were up to about $60 when my grandma came out from the backyard on fire! She marched right up to us and read the sign and ripped it up and made us publicly apologize to the group in the back yard and offer everyone their money back. Nobody took it back but we didn't get to spend it either. We had to donate it, which was the right thing to do!

I am so fortunate to have had my grandparents and parents guidance along the years. I feel so lucky to be able to say each morning, "I get to go to work". Yes, I HAVE to go to work, but I also GET to go to work. My dream came true with Coral Cottage and I have all of you, my sweet customers and friends to thank for it! Love you all!

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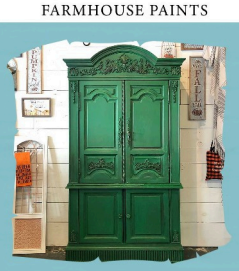

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Wilmington's " Mullet Man " Wins National Pool Championship In Vegas After Vow To Cut Beloved Hair

By Jason Bowman

LAS VEGAS, NV (May 9, 2023) — A local man is $15,000 richer after a recent visit to Sin City. But his good fortune didn't happen in the casino.

Jonathan Neman won the 2023 APA 8-Ball Classic Pool Championship late last month in Las Vegas.

Neman was amongst nearly 6,000 poolplayers throughout North America who attempted to qualify for the American Poolplayers Association's (APA) 8-Ball Classic. He was one of only 860 that advanced to the national finals at the Westgate Las Vegas.

Neman competed in the Red Tier of the 8-Ball Classic and received a cash and prize package worth $15,000 and ultimate bragging rights upon returning home to his local poolroom. The 8-Ball Classic featured five individual tiers, all based on skill level.

The championship match was live-streamed and can be viewed here: 2023 APA Red Tier Final - 8-Ball Classic.

Neman is a member of the local APA League in Wilmington where he plays pool regularly.

After finishing in 3rd Place at the event in 2021, Neman made a vow to his fellow league members that if he made it back to Vegas, and won the event, he would cut off his beloved "mullet."

True to his word, Neman will have his hair cut at a public ceremony on May 20 at Breaktime Billiards (127 S. College Rd.) in Wilmington, and will donate the hair to Locks of Love.

"I've been growing it for nearly 4 years, getting it permed every 6 months, and everyone loves it! But I swore if I made it to Vegas again, and won it all this time around, the hair would come off," said Neman.

The 8-Ball Classic, held April 26 – 28, was part of the APA's Poolplayer Championships which featured 12 divisions of competition, more than 3,000 total players and more than $800,000 in prize money.

The APA, based in Lake Saint Louis, Mo., sanctions the world's largest amateur pool league, known as the APA Pool League throughout the United States, and as the Canadian Pool League in Canada. Nearly 250,000 members compete in weekly 8-Ball and 9-Ball League play.

The APA is generally recognized as the Governing Body of Amateur Pool, having established the official rules, championships, formats and handicap systems for the sport of amateur billiards.

The APA produces four major tournaments—the APA World Pool Championships, the APA Poolplayer Championships, the APA Junior Championships and the U.S. Amateur Championship—that, together, pay out nearly $2 Million in cash and prizes annually!

The APA and its championships are sponsored by Aramith, Action Cues, Diamond Billiard Products and PoolDawg.com.

For more information on the American Poolplayers Association, visit poolplayers.com.

Honoring Distinguished Alumni And Educators With A Wall Of Fame On June 13

BURGAW – Pender Education Partnership (PEP), a non-profit foundation established to enhance educational opportunities and assist public school educators, will join with the Pender County Board of Education to induct six new members of the Pender County Wall of Fame.

William Henry Jordan, June McGlohan Robbins, and Mary Lee Faison are honored educators inductees. Outstanding alumni for induction to the Wall of Fame are Jeffrey Rivenbark, John Bradley Knight, and the late Mary Louise Batts.

"Pender Education Partnership and Pender County Board of Education is pleased to announce the second class of Wall of Fame inductees," said Tammie Parris, president of Pender Education Partnership (PEP).

"Pender County Schools has been blessed with outstanding educators throughout the years. Our school system has produced many outstanding alumni who have gone on to careers that impacted our community, our state, and our nation," said Parris. "We are happy to announce the induction of Jeff Rivenbark, Brad Knight, Mary Louise Batts, William Jordan, June Robbins, and Mary Lee Faison."

"Our honored educators are special to us because they are also alumni," noted Parris.

The Wall of Fame will be displayed at the Pender County Schools Board of Education building. Each year PEP will solicit the community for nominations. A selection committee will review the nominations and present at least one alumni recommendation and one educator recommendation to PEP.

"Pender Education Partnership believes this is an opportunity to shine the spotlight on outstanding alumni and educators who have made an impact on public education," said Parris. "Our Wall of Fame is an example to our current students that dreams can be obtained."

Pender Education Partnership is a 501 (c) 3 foundation that provides educator mini-grants and senior scholarships. For more information visit their webpage, www.pendereducationpartnership.org or Facebook page or contact a board member.

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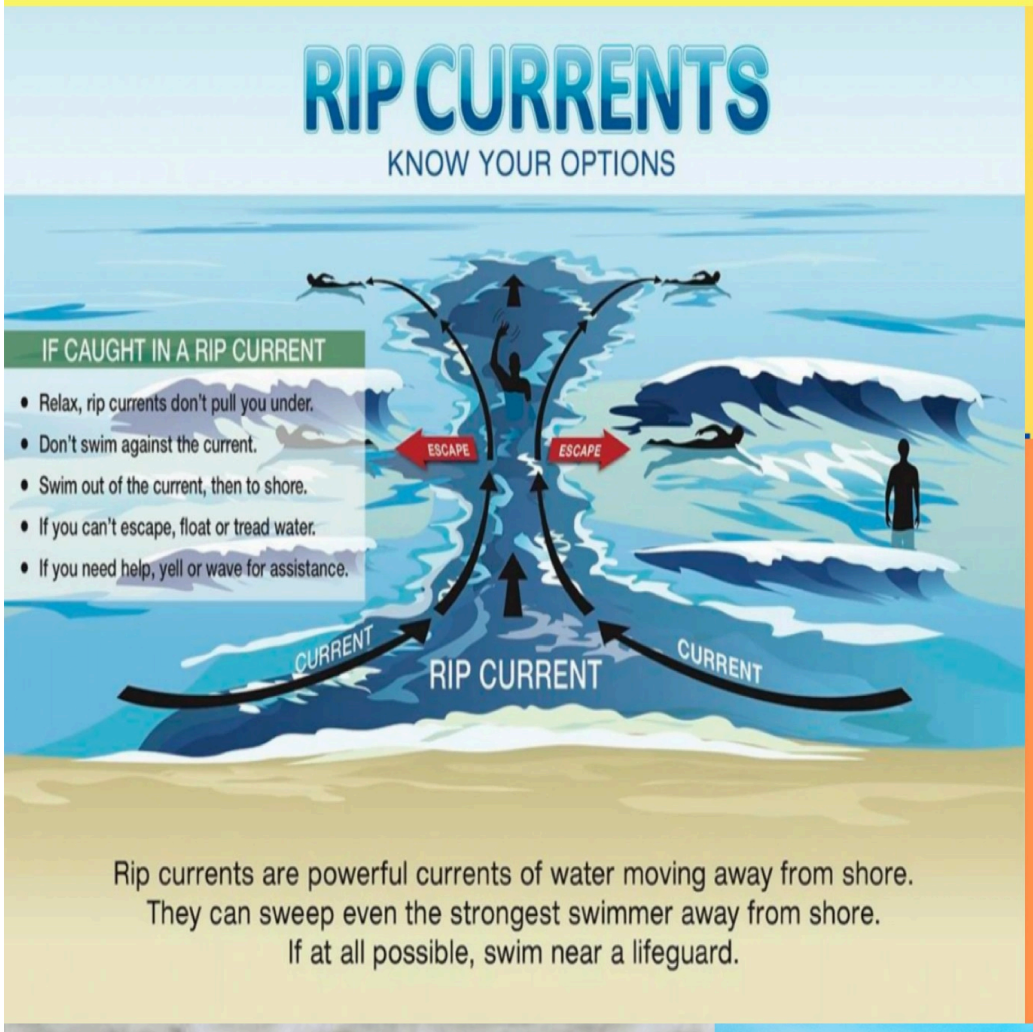

Rip currents are powerful currents of water moving away from shore. They can sweep even the strongest swimmer away from shore. If at all possible, swim near a lifeguard.

SWIM SAFE!

Follow the Surf City Fire Department Facebook page for daily rip current information! Check weather, never swim alone, and stay aware!

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LOOK AT ACCESS FLAGS AND MAKE SURE OF YOUR LOCATION: IT SHOULD READ "SURF CITY" AND THE ACCESS NUMBER. This information will give rescue teams your exact location and ensure a quicker response.

IF YOU ARE NOT AT A FLAGGED BEACH ACCESS: please look at the house directly behind you or read the access number posted where you entered the beach!

WE STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT YOU DO NOT ENTER THE WATER TO RESCUE ANYONE WITHOUT A PROPER

Sea Turtle Hospital News

By Star Sota

May is already shaping up to be a busy month for us, and the first turtle mama hasn't even set a flipper on Topsail yet. In case you're visiting or are new to the area, May 1st was the official first day of turtle nesting season. We know there are moms out there just waiting for the right moment to literally start "digging in" to lay their nests. No nests or tracks have been reported as of this writing but wouldn't it be great if we have our first verified nest on Mother's Day – flippers crossed. I'll have more info on nesting etiquette as the season progresses.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, or rather at our local piers and beaches, the early arrivals continue to take advantage of tasty snacks that are just dangling out in front of them. Kemp's are notorious for a cheap date with a shrimp but this year it's the greens that are surprising us. In general, pier or beach caught turtles are short term roomers with us with most of them coming in with visible hooks that can be carefully removed by our Director, Kathy Z. If an in-house radiograph shows a hook somewhere else in our patient they have an office visit with our vet, Dr. Harms at CMAST in Morehead City where the hook(s) are removed either with specialized equipment or surgical intervention. Sometimes he recommends just letting time, and the hook pass through naturally.

A good example of what to do if you happen to find a turtle at the end of your hook is recently admitted "Sodalite." This cute, chubby little green was caught off a local pier, and when she arrived we were happy to see they had handled her perfectly. She had a small (not stainless steel, thankfully) hook snagged at the corner of her mouth, with the shrimp still attached. They left the hook, leader and line in place, cutting the line long enough that we could still see it and keep it outside of the turtle. And she wasn't banged up from being hauled through the air. A big thank you to SeaView Pier for assisting in this rescue.

Kathy was able to remove the hook once we convinced Sodalite to open her mouth wide enough to insert the bite block. She clearly was proud of her catch and didn't want to let her lunch go to waste. Her physical exam, radiograph and bloodwork were excellent and after a hearty breakfast she was released the next morning.

May tours are Thursday through Sunday from 11 AM – 2 PM. We will not be open Memorial Day weekend. Tickets must be purchased in advance through our website www.seaturtlehospital.org. You can visit the gift shop during those hours without taking the tour. Please note that utility and road work Charlie Medlin Dr. will continue for the next two months and delays in getting to the hospital are very likely. Please plan accordingly to arrive on time for your scheduled tour.

In addition to hooked and debilitated turtles keep your eyes peeled for nesting mothers and turtle tracks. Our Topsail Turtle Project volunteers will be out every morning at the crack of dawn looking for that first set of tracks. If you come across any sick, injured or nesting turtles immediately call our Director of Beach Operations, Terry Meyer at: 910-470-2880. If she is not available, call the hospital during operating hours: 910-329-0222. 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 23ST05NCWildlife Resources Commission, ES Permit 23ST05.

Sodalite upon arrival at the hospital (above) | Sodalite Hook Removal (below)

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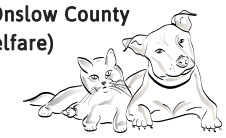
The Case Against Pet Ownership

By DottyAnn Harding
President of OCPAW (Onslow County Partners for Animal Welfare)



The internet depicts images filled with dogs and cats happily chasing toys, running with a ball, and playing with children in the midst of their happy families. Yes, some 250 million of them, one just about for every person reinforcing the ancient human-animal bond of love, friendship, companionship, hope, and joy.

Sadly, this is not the true story and outcome for many of these animals who end up tethered to a rope or chain to an outside doghouse, in an outdoor kennel 24/7, in a shelter, or; euthanized. There are 920,000 dogs and cats in America that are euthanized every year. I don't believe that this result was ever the intention of any dog or cat owner that once welcomed these animals into their hearts and home, stating they are part of their family.

However, in actuality, they are not family, as here in NC, as in many other states, they are deemed property, which you can dispose of. In addition, they mostly lack legal rights and few enforceable laws to protect them. So now, if your dog or cat becomes too much of a problem, they can be surrendered to a veterinarian to be euthanized. Recently, our organization was contacted by a veterinarian with this exact situation, but this dog was fortunate in that a couple saw his plight and wanted to adopt him.

"The New Work of Dogs," a book by Jon Katz, enlightens the reader to understand what has happened in our modern society. Years passed, and our country was more rural. Dogs were out running around, rarely walked on a leash, and ate table scraps. It wasn't until TV and computers captured the nation's attention that folks spent more time inside than out. Our lives became more complex, divorce rates shot up, people moved away from their communities, the workplace changed, and folks didn't communicate well with each other. They come home from work and usually watch tv or are on their computers.

An Industry Was Born

I believe an industry is making profits that bring more problems to our animals than helping. Toys that we try to comfort our animals during the stress of being alone can become later found blocking the intestines. Clothing, bedding, treats, entire large stores entirely devoted to providing these items for us to purchase....this has become an enormous business. Rawhides that offer no nutritional benefit and possibly detrimental effects as they can be lodged within the bodies of our unsupervised animals. The biggest offender is the pet food that we fed them. I submitted an article regarding the problem of providing overly processed foods to this paper in the past and the consequences it brings to the health of our pets. But this is a problematic aspect to convince people of because we are a nation of people who love to eat processed foods.

So where are all these unwanted companion animals coming from? I believe most are from people making uninformed decisions about personal responsibility, which encompasses understanding the pros and cons of different breeds, their temperament, and if they will be a good fit for their family, including small children and other dogs. Realizing the lifestyle changes that could involve sudden relocation or illness, including being overwhelmed with personal and financial problems. People do not realize the amount of time required to provide the necessary exercise, food, and the proper health care which can be expensive.

We can't predict the future, but reviewing the different scenarios that could occur in your life and not making an impulse decision could prevent a lot of future heartbreak.

Our organization was involved in many cases in which older people get a sizeable energetic puppy that becomes unmanageable, or someone gives a pet as a gift to someone that doesn't want that commitment or the most frequent idea of **getting a pet for the kids**.

Is Your Pet Bored?

Scientists have set up cameras to see what pets do all day when left alone. There seems to be a lot of whining, barking, yawning, sleeping, and howling, which are signs of anxiety and frustration. There is also restlessness, risk-taking, and looking for a chance to escape. So it's unacceptable to work all day and go out to dinner before coming home, leaving your companion animal alone for that extended period of time.

It would be best to consider having a fish as your pet; statistically speaking, fish are as popular as dogs for pets. But, then, they're still excited to see you, as they know they are going to be fed.

They noted that many pets adopted during the pandemic are now under increasing stress as their owners have returned to work. When our organization was trying to find a home for an animal, understanding the family dynamics was crucial as we did not want to set the animal up for failure.

So, we asked the questions and visited the home as we would have liked the best outcome for everyone involved.

Possible Solution

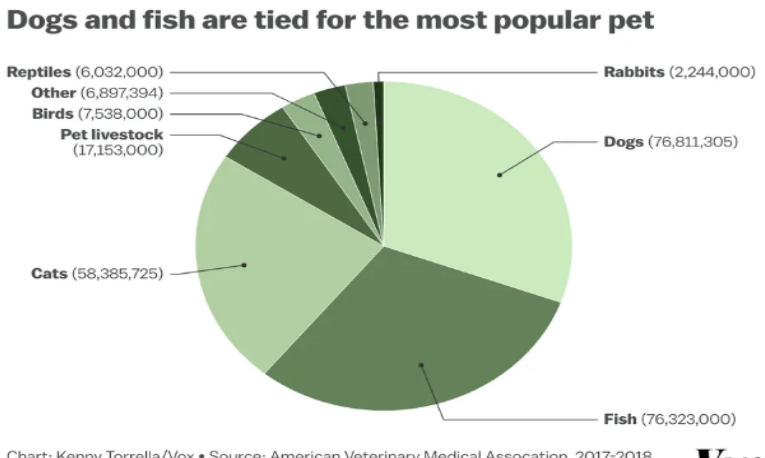
~ Elimination of Puppy Mills

~ Low-Cost spay/neuter programs (PawsAbility through OCPAW)

~ Adopt from your local shelter

~ Licensing with mandatory spay/neuter requirements with given exceptions to licensed AKC breeders.

~ Educational programs in schools that relate to animal welfare and care.



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Onslow County Partners for Animal Welfare, Inc
OCPAW
Animal Welfare Liaison

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Coastal Common Sense

By Kim McGahey

When Clark Kent emerged from the phone booth, he promised to serve truth, justice and the American way. When my grandmother promised me there were no nighttime monsters in her guest bedroom closet, I took that as the truth and trusted her. But today the nagging question in our culture remains what is the truth and who can we trust to tell it?

Unfortunately, our society has evolved, some say digressed, into a place where there are many truths - yours, mine and ours. This thinking is the product of a Godless culture that embraces moral relativism and its incendiary offspring of no absolute right and wrong, selfish ambition at any cost and the resulting divisive identity politics affecting every facet of our lives.

With no absolute right and wrong to guide our personal and commercial behavior and negate the sinful tendencies of our human nature, we are left rudderless to navigate whatever social winds blow us around. If someone says killing babies and old people is acceptable, we have no moral guardrails to refute such heinous acts. If perverse sexual lifestyles show up on beer can labels we have no guidelines to tell us that's wrong. We fear being negatively labeled by those few who are controlling the microphone.

A lack of absolute right and wrong means there is no real truth. Truth then becomes whatever you want it to be; whatever serves your purpose at the moment. Lack of enduring truth enables us to behave in any way that is expedient to our profit motive, prurient moral desires or political narrative.

Without truth to guide our actions, selfish ambition becomes the accepted, and even the honored way to act. Getting ahead with all the outward signs of affluence and critical peer acclaim becomes the ultimate meaning of life to be attained by whatever surreptitious means are available. The ends justify the means and shady characters like George Soros and Jeffrey Epstein become public icons.

Once the absence of truth becomes pervasive in a culture with no absolute right or wrong and where selfish ambition is the priority, then it's only a matter of time before a Godless theorist like Saul Alinsky and a smooth talking devil like Barack Obama surface to take us to the next darker levels of identity politics.

In an effort to concentrate and retain political power in the hands of a few self-righteous elites, they use the absence of truth to create jealousy and fear among disparate social groups. They use race, gender, income and ethnicity to divide us. Degenerate Hollywood stars and irresponsible professional athletes are worshiped as unholy cultural role models and anyone who doesn't emulate them is ostracized from the social in-group. See Colin Kappenick, LeBron James or Madonna.

The COVID-19 Coronaphobia ushered in hate among opposing political factions and subsequently funneled trillions of dollars of government control to settle those disputes through greater dependency on the state. Fear and loathing filled the vacuum where truth was missing and allowed deceitful bureaucrats to subvert medical science with political science. And the masses trusted the elites allowing identity politics to separate us into rival groups engaged in tribal warfare across the country. See Tony Fauci.

Pontius Pilate cynically asked what is truth, and Jesus trustfully answered that His message was the truth, the light and the way. The only real truth we can trust is the gospel message. It's the foundation that absolute right and wrong is built on. It's the cornerstone for the golden rule that should guide all our personal relationships and commercial dealings. And it's the beacon on the hill that can fairly enlighten the governance of a truly civilized society.

Without the gospel message to show us the real truth, Clark Kent stays in the phone booth and the monsters come out of my grandmother's bedroom closet.

Onslow County Sheriff's Office

Junior Citizens' Law Enforcement Academy

Thursdays 6pm to 9pm
June 15 to July 20, 2023
717 Court Street, Jacksonville
Students, Age 14-17

The Onslow County Sheriff's Office will be hosting our 2nd Annual Junior Citizens' Academy for residents, ages 14 to 17. The academy will meet each Thursday from 6pm to 9pm beginning June 15, 2023 for a period of six weeks, graduating on July 20 2023. Thursday training sessions will include:

- Jail Tour
- Drug Culture Awareness
- DWI and Drug Detection
- Drones in Law Enforcement
- Evidence Collection (Crime Scene Investigation)
- Canine Demonstration
- Fire-arms Simulator and Video Immersion Training
- When given a controlled scenario and role players, students will respond to a scene acting as the responding deputy sheriff and determine the nature of the call, the appropriate action needed to resolve the call and the proper procedures within the law.

Interested students must complete an application for enrollment and a handwritten essay with no less than 200 words describing their personal interest in law enforcement.
Contact Captain Bruce Dixon at 989-4007
Bruce_Dixon@onslowcountync.gov for an application and enrollment

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Fire At Herring's Outdoor Sports

My daughter came in last night and said to call 911 the building next door was on fire. It was just a small area of the building at first but quickly spread as me, Ethan and Ariana were trying to put it out while waiting for SCFD. It was NOT Herring's Outdoor Sports main store. Herring's Outdoor Sports did NOT burn down. However their building they use for rental storage, that they put a lot of time and effort to make look nice for our neighborhood, did. Not sure if they determined what caused the fire as of yet but it started near the area of the newly installed electrical box. Again, not sure if they determined the cause yet. The box was inspected after installation.

Two houses directly next to the building received damage as they caught My daughter came in last night and said to call 911 the building next door was on fire. It was just a small area of the building at first but quickly spread as me, Ethan and Ariana were trying to put it out while waiting for SCFD. It was NOT Herring's Outdoor Sports main store. Herring's Outdoor Sports did NOT burn down. However their building they use for rental storage, that they put a lot of time and effort to make look nice for our neighborhood, did. Not sure if they determined what caused the fire as of yet but it started near the area of the newly installed electrical box. Again, not sure if they determined the cause yet. The box was inspected after installation.

Two houses directly next to the building received damage as they caught on fire but Surf City Fire Department quickly put them out before anything structural was damaged. Mainly heat damage to the sides and attic damage from water. But they were double roofs so the flat roof under the old house came in handy. The blue house got very little damage from the heat only.

All in all everyone is okay and it could obviously have been much much worse.

I hope people come and support Herring's as they lost a lot of inventory inside the building and a lot of time and money trying to beautify that old building. They are as local as they get and support so many local programs with a huge heart. So please show them support and frequent their store if possible.

A big shout out to Surf City Fire for keeping the damage isolated.

- Daniel Blevins
Facebook

Many of you may know, Thursday at 10:15pm, there was a fire. While the fire did not hit our main store building, it did burn down our shed with all our rentals. We took a big hit that night as it was a new building full of our rentals, but thankfully no one got hurt!!

All this to say, you all really showed up for us yesterday and we are so very grateful!! We want to thank our wonderful neighbors for calling 911 and trying to get the fire out as well as all of your prayers and support!!

We love our community and appreciate all those who have reached out.

- Herring's Outdoor Sports
Facebook

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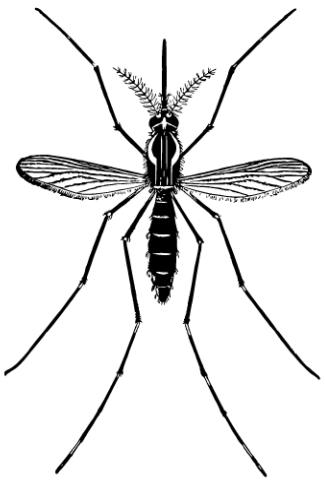

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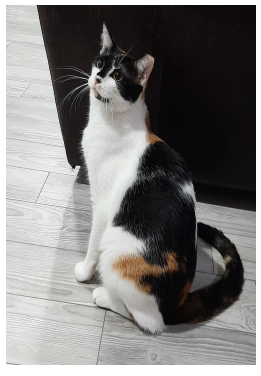
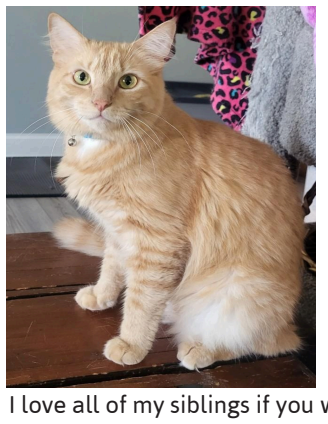
Red Fish

I am "RED FISH"! You know what they say about red tabby boy cats...we are the very BEST & LOYAL kitties of all! The volunteers love me because I am so kind. I don't have a mean bone in my body & I love other cats. My shyness is getting better all the time, but if you pet me a lot & talk sweet to me, I will purrrrr up a storm! Please come & visit me soon! I've been waiting a while & I don't understand? I'm definitely worth a meet & greet!



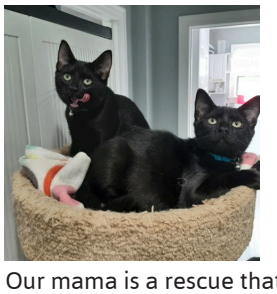
Shrimp

Aren't calico cats colorful! I think so because I am one! Look at my silky soft fur with multiple colors! I was a rescued kitty from Hampstead, along with a LOT of my brothers & sisters. We were born outside in a really tough situation and FURR saved us! I am a very quiet and small kitty. I would LOVE for someone to pet and rub me all day! I love treats too (kitty cookies) and I will come running at the shake of that box! I am fully vetted and MORE than ready to go! Please come meet me soon!



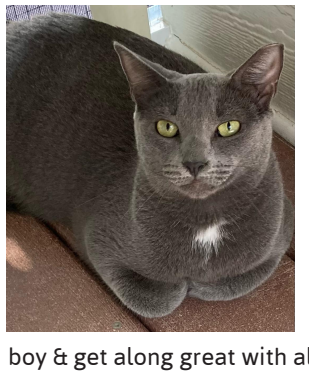
Roughy

I am a GORGEOUS long haired orange tabby boy & my fur is soooo soft! FURR rescued me from a fish place & I was skin & bones. Now I am fat & happy but still a little shy....but all I need is a little reassurance and love, and I will be the "bestest" kitty ever! I love all of my siblings if you want a couple of cats! Please give me a chance to show you what an amazing cat I can be! I'm only a little over a year old!



Battlet Teens

We were born at the rescue and can't wait for our new FAMILY! We are SUPER funny, playful, soft, loving and totally entertaining! We come with all of our vet work and would love to meet you! Our mama is a rescue that was saved by FURR and was about to POP with us babies! She is sweet & beautiful also and her name is "MAMA BATTLET"! You won't find kittens more adorable than us! Better hurry! One of us has already been adopted!!!



Perch

I look just like a full blooded Russian Blue cat, but I assure you, I was another homeless rescued cat that FURR saved! If you like that SOFT blue/gray coat & my big white spot on my chest, then you'll like me! I am a very sweet boy & get along great with all the other kitties! Stop by & feel my velour fur & get to know me! I'm only a little over a year old!

Shells

I am SHELLS! I'm pretty laid back for a young kitten & the volunteers LOVE to rub my soft fur! I am not only super soft, but I am such a unique color! Light gray tortie girls are few & far between, so come see me soon. I have a great demeanor and I get along great with other cats. I am just adorable!!!

CHECK OUR WEBSITE TO SEE CATS AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION

www.catfurr.org

864-483-2444

Ocean Fest Wins Prestigious " Event Of The Year " State-Wide Festival Award

By Jody Fletcher

SURF CITY, NC — February 6, 2023

Ocean Fest came home the big winner at the ShowFest 2023 awards banquet hosted on January 30 by the North Carolina Association of Festival & Events (NCF&E) in Charlotte. The nonprofit Surf City-based eco/surf/arts/music festival was awarded top honors in the annual industry excellence awards program including the coveted Event of the Year award, Best Community Outreach Program, and Director of the Year for the festival's director Mark Anders.

"It's such a huge honor for Ocean Fest to be awarded Event of the Year for the entire State of North Carolina," says Mark Anders, Executive Director of Ocean Fest. "Our festival is just three years old, so these awards are a testament to the hard work and dedication of our volunteers as well as the solid support of our sponsors and the local community."

The NCF&E is a nonprofit organization celebrating and supporting the festival and event industry, and is represented by nearly 200 festivals and events throughout the State. Ocean Fest also received the Sponsor of the Year award for its partnership with New Belgium Brewing Company, as well as the Best Merchandise award. In 2022, Ocean Fest previously received the Rising Star Award, given to the best up-and-coming festival in the State.

ABOUT OCEAN FEST

Founded in 2019, Ocean Fest is a nonprofit two-day eco/surf/arts/live music festival to benefit the ocean. The mission is to celebrate and protect Mother Ocean while educating the community about ways we can better protect our precious marine environments and raising money for like-minded eco nonprofits. The event is held the second weekend of every October in downtown Surf City, NC.
www.theoceanfest.org

OCTOBER 13 & 14, 2023
Downtown Surf City, NC

The mission of Ocean Fest is to celebrate and protect Mother Ocean while supporting other likeminded nonprofit organizations.

The Festival

Ocean Fest is a free community event which includes a talented live music lineup, eco exhibitors, vintage surf contest, adaptive surf experience for wounded military veterans, 5K beach race, arts & crafts vendors, beer gardens, and more. The event encompasses nearly three city blocks and hosts thousands of festival goers each year.

Although our primary focus is on the annual event, the organization works throughout the year to mobilize our coastal community to better protect Mother Ocean through beach/coast cleanups, pop-up events, and our ongoing annual sponsorship of the Topsail Island chapter of Ocean Friendly Establishments.

1% FOR THE PLANET ncgreentravel Platinum Transparency 2023 Candid.

Ocean Fest, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Tax ID#: 87-2990341

info@theoceanfest.org // 910-742-0632
2761 NC HWY 210 E
Suite G #173
Hampstead, NC 28443

Giving Back

Since our founding in 2019, Ocean Fest has made meaningful monetary donations to fellow nonprofits including: Oceana, NC Coastal Federation, Plastic Ocean Project, Surfrider Foundation, NC Save Our Seas/No Drill North Carolina, Karen Beasley Sea TurtleRescue, North Carolina Aquariums, Coastal Carolina Riverwatch, and more.

Notable

- 2022 "Event of the Year," NC Association of Festivals and Events.
- 2022 "Best Green Initiative," Southeast Festivals & Event Association.
- We are a proud nonprofit partner of 1 Percent for the Planet.
- The NC Department of Environmental Quality awarded Ocean Fest its the highest eco rating.

theoceanfest.org // @theoceanfestorg

Rabies Warning From Pender County Health Department

Pender County Health Department has confirmed a second case of rabies since March in the Rocky Point area.

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the nervous system of mammals. The virus can be transmitted through a bite or by contact with the tissue in your nose, mouth, and eyes. Symptoms of the disease may occur from 2 weeks to 6 months after exposure. Rabies is fatal once symptoms occur. In Pender County, rabies has also been found in raccoons, bats, skunks, and foxes.

In the warmer months, we spend more time outdoors. To protect yourself, your family, and your pets from exposure to rabies:

~ Do not feed or attract wildlife. Some changes in behavior that are common in rabid animals: nocturnal animals that are seen during the day, animals that are not afraid of humans, become aggressive, and attack other animals or people for no reason may have paralysis of the limbs or throat or lying down.

~ If you find a raccoon or other wild animal in your yard during the daytime and the animal appears to be either sick or aggressive, **do not touch or attempt to control the animal.** Call Animal Control at 910-259-1349, and report the animal immediately.

~ To protect your pets, keep your pets in your yard or indoors, and **their rabies vaccinations current**. A current vaccination is required by law. If your unvaccinated pet comes in contact with a rabid animal, your pet will be impounded and will be "put to sleep."

~ If your dog or cat fights with a wild animal, such as a raccoon, or a stray dog or cat, call animal control. If the attacking wild animal is captured it will be tested for rabies. All dogs or cats that bite a person will be under observation for 10 days.

~ If your pet is bitten by a potentially rabid animal use gloves to handle the the pet, or cover the pet with a cloth or towel, and keep children away from the pet. Take the pet to your veterinarian.

~ If you are bitten by a stray dog, cat, or wild animal, you should immediately wash the area where you were bitten with soap and warm water for at least 15 minutes. Secondly, contact your family doctor or go to the nearest emergency room. Some bites may require you to take an antibiotic. All bites require an updated Tetanus. Your doctor will call Animal Control and the incident will be investigated by an Animal Control Officer.

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Food Lion Unveils Remodel Of Nearly 30 Wilmington-Area Stores; Invests In Local Food Bank To Nourish Neighbors

With a capital investment exceeding $50 million, Food Lion is unveiling remodeled stores in Wilmington, NC, that feature a new, easier shopping experience for customers.

On May 10, Food Lion held ribbon-cutting events in the Wilmington area at 24 stores, with five more to follow soon. The investment includes remodeling the stores, providing eCommerce at every store through pickup and/or home delivery options, training and developing associates to provide the best customer experience and giving back to local communities. While renovating and refreshing its look, the redesign reflects Food Lion's continued commitment to the towns and cities it serves, providing an easy, fresh and affordable shopping experience.

"Food Lion has been a proud neighbor in the Wilmington community for 40 years," said Meg Ham, President, Food Lion. "From a brand-new look and feel to more convenient grab-and-go items to make any meal easier, each store has made big changes with our customers in mind. We remain committed to keeping our prices low every day, offering great promotions and other opportunities to save. We are excited for our neighbors to experience the enhancements we have made just for them."

Inspired by feedback from customers and associates, all stores now feature self-checkout lanes and are refreshed with new decor reflecting an enhanced shopping experience.

Two dozen stores will open to the public on May 10, following a ribbon-cutting ceremony at 7:45 a.m. Afterward, the first 100 customers in line will receive a mystery gift card valued up to $250, free reusable shopping bag and trunk organizer.

Remodeled stores include new features for easy, fresh and affordable shopping

Store upgrades include an extensive product assortment with a specific focus on a variety of affordable and easy meal solutions that are ready-to-eat, ready-to-cook or ready-to-heat. Customers will also have more healthy options and a large selection of organic, gluten-free and plant-based items to choose from including Nature's Promise, Food Lion's affordable brand of wholesome and organic products made with no artificial flavors, preservatives or synthetic colors.

Food Lion's enhancements also include offering convenience for shoppers with Food Lion To Go grocery pickup or home delivery service. Online orders may be placed on the Food Lion To Go website or the Food Lion To Go app. The convenient service allows customers to place an order with the click of a button while experiencing the same low prices and fresh food items they receive in the store.

Demonstrating care to its neighbors and communities with a commitment to sustainability, Food Lion's enhanced stores feature energy-efficient overhead LED lighting and refrigerated cases with doors. The modern solutions impart ambiance, enhance fresh product assortment and reduce energy costs, helping reduce Food Lion's environmental footprint.

Through its Local Goodness program, Food Lion stores offer a wide variety of regional products sourced from local growers or manufacturers, serving customers in a more meaningful way with products that are the heart and soul of the community. A list of additional North Carolina-based suppliers that may be featured in the store can be found online.

Learn more about the hours of operation, specific services each store offers, and the weekly ad flyer with special celebratory pricing for these stores.

Food Lion Feeds supports food banks to diversify capacities and service

Working in partnership to help address food insecurity, Food Lion has also contributed $500,000 through its hunger-relief platform, Food Lion Feeds, to support the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Wilmington. The investment supports the 3,000-square-foot commercial kitchen, the first commercial kitchen operated by the nonprofit organization.

"With the cost of so many of the things we buy every day increasing, we need the support from our retail donors. Food Lion has been an incredible partner to food banks across their footprint," said Beth Gaglione, Branch Director for the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina at Wilmington. "The Food Bank has been able to build a state-of-the-art new facility in Wilmington with an amazing commercial kitchen thanks to Food Lion Feeds. Now we need to fill it with nutritious, healthy food to meet the need of our community. We know we can count on our friends at Food Lion."

In addition to expanded meal production, the community kitchen will offer an opportunity for culinary arts workforce development, providing qualified individuals from low-to-moderate-income families to gain sought-after skills and find immediate job opportunities, thereby stabilizing their households and working to achieve self-sufficiency.

Food Lion Feeds also provided another $32,500 to support 13 partner feeding agencies with the purchase of refrigerators and freezers. By investing in this opportunity for agency-related capacity building,

Food Lion Feeds is helping to address critical needs in providing food to neighbors facing hunger.

Additionally, each Food Lion store regularly donates unsold, edible food that might otherwise go to waste to local feeding agencies to support neighbors in need throughout the year. Food Lion was the first grocery retailer in the country to establish a food rescue program with Feeding America®, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, more than 20 years ago. In 2022, the nearly 30 Wilmington-area stores provided approximately 1.9 million pounds through food rescue to the Food Bank of Central & Eastern North Carolina.

Through Food Lion Feeds, Food Lion has helped to provide more than 1 billion meals to individuals and families since 2014 and has committed to donate 1.5 billion meals by 2025. For more information on Food Lion Feeds' commitment to fight hunger, visit foodlion.com/feeds.

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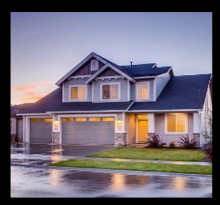

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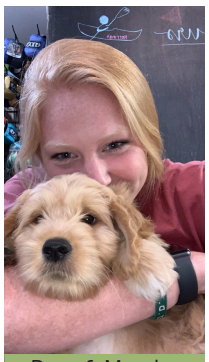
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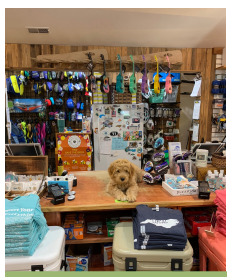
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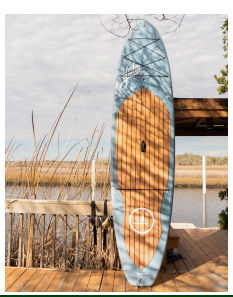

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