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● **December 2023** ● **American-Owned. Free Press.** ● **Volume III, Issue 21** **FREE!**

December Events



Image provided by Everett-Karen Smith

Dec 1st - 31st	Lake Linda Christmas Lights
Dec 2nd	Atkinson Christmas Parade and Pender Historical Society Home Tour
Dec 8th	Christmas Twinkle Light Hike w/ Mrs. Clause
Dec 9th	Burgaw's 75th Annual Christmas Parade and Topsail Chamber Flotilla & Christmas Market in Surf City
Dec 11th	Burgaw's Brightest Light Decorating Contest
Dec 16th	Town of Burgaw Breakfast with Santa Christmas on the Square Gingerbread House Display
Dec 31st	Burgaw's New Year's Eve Blueberry Drop

Breaking News

Pender County Clerk's office is currently under investigation after a request was filed with the SBI from the District Attorney's office in October regarding allegations of embezzlement. It was reported that Pender County Clerk's office had been served with warrants by the SBI on Tuesday, November 28th, and may have involved multiple locations. This investigation is ongoing. More information will be provided as it comes available. In an unrelated story, District Attorney Ben David (New Hanover and Pender County) announced that he will be leaving his office in September 2024, weeks before the next election, to allow someone to be appointed to take his position.

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**TOPSAIL
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NEWSPAPER**



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To Brace Or Not To Brace, That Is The Question.

By Dorothy Royal

In my opinion, this is round 2 of the Federal Court System telling the ATF that they have overstepped their boundaries. First, of course, was the bump-fire stock restriction that was overturned.

Now in a Texas court decision in early November, a Federal Court Judge put a halt to ATF enforcing a rule that would restrict ownership of the "pistol brace" accessory. How many pistol brace accessories are currently in the United States? ATF estimates the number to be around 3 million but a congressional research report claims the number is closer to 10 – 40 million. The pistol brace accessory was designed to allow a person to hold a firearm with one hand and was originally created to assist people who were disabled and benefitted from the added stability of the brace.

ATF had previously approved the device and it was legally on the market in the United States for almost a decade before ATF changed its mind after possibly being pressured by the current administration. ATF reversed its approval and with little notice, announced that all owners of the accessory had four choices or would be considered felons. 1) Register the firearm with ATF as an SBR (short barreled rifle). 2) Destroy the firearm the accessory was attached to. 3) Turn the firearm over to authorities or 4) Remove the accessory,

which in most cases made the firearm suddenly compliant. The brace, which is a non moving piece of plastic that does not change the function of any firearm, suddenly became a politically motivated "bad guy".

Out of the estimated 40,000,000 brace owners, only 250,000 chose to register their accessories. There are no recorded amounts of any citizen turning over their firearms to authorities or destroying them based on the new ATF ruling. Can you say, "Americans are refusing to comply with an unconstitutional compliance?"

As the holidays are upon us it is only fair to suggest gift ideas. My favorite gift for that person who wants to learn about target shooting, who likes to hunt or just wants to go the range to sight in a scope is a gift certificate. A gift certificate from any local gun shop may give the recipient an opportunity to take a class (like beginner safety or a Conceal Carry Class) or to purchase some ammunition. Firearms, like many other items, are very specific to a person's level of experience and likes. Just because one person likes to shoot skeet does not mean that is what their friend or family member likes. A good holster, a new locking hardcase or gun safe might be more in order. A gift certificate says, "I really want you to have something that is important to you,"



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RAFFLE	 <p>MSRP \$1,021.00</p>	<p>1911 Stainless II .45ACP</p> <p>Raffle Ticket \$10.00</p> <p>Only 100 tickets to be sold!</p> <p><i>Raffle will be drawn when all tickets are sold. Do not need to be present to win.</i></p> <p><small>* Must be 21 years or older and able to pass an NC background check to claim prize. Failure to do so within 30 days will forfeit prize.</small></p>	RAFFLE
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Please Tell Me I Am Not Alone

By Becky Borneman

Each night after dinner, we settle in to watch a little TV before going to bed. You'd think it would be relaxing and easy, but it's not. I call it...the stand off.

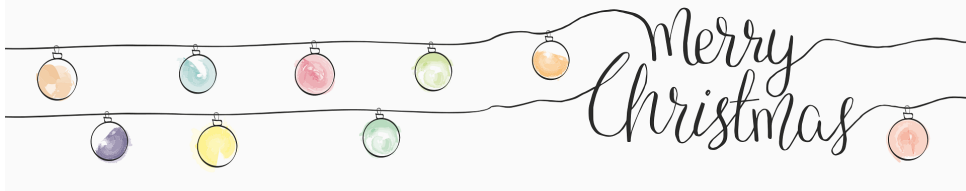
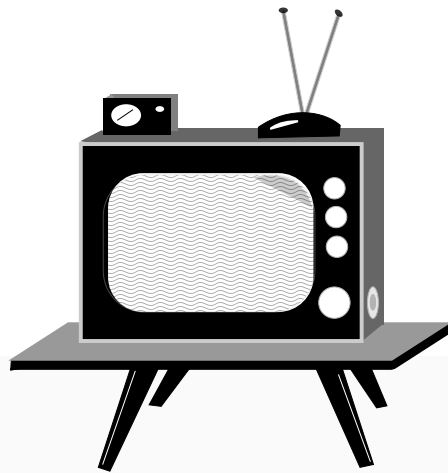
The simple fact of the matter is, we like to watch totally different things. So we begin the obligatory words, "what would you like to watch?" "oh whatever is fine". Now let me tell you what just happened there. First, I ask what he wants to watch hoping he'll say exactly what I want to watch. Second, he answers with a lie because he doesn't want to watch what I want to watch.

Then we pull up the menu and start scrolling. I start praying we will bypass Homestead Rescue and Alaskan Bush People or God forbid Alaska: The Last Frontier. I hope he suddenly says he wants to watch a show of true culture...the Real Housewives reunion of wherever or Sister Wives or 90 Day Fiance. You know, something wholesome.

Thanksgiving night we had great TV time. We watched Planes, Trains & Automobiles and then National

Lampoon's Christmas Vacation. Even though we know how each movie ends and could quote most of it, it's still a fun tradition to watch them. Then the Willy Wonka movie came on, that is where I draw the line! NO NO NO! So we ended up watching reruns of Young Sheldon, or as Jeff calls it, Little Shelton. I cannot make this up y'all.

But most times we settle on Wheel of Fortune. The only problem with this is how competitive we both are and if we get the puzzle first we shout it out and cheer for our self in victory. Usually that is me, but he gets a puzzle from time to time. BL__S H_S H__ RT.



Community Comes Together For 'A Hometown Holiday'

In collaboration with Untitled Theatre Productions, Pender County Parks and Recreation presents "A Hometown Holiday" at the Hampstead Annex.

With familiar Christmas characters and the joyful sounds of Christmas, "A Hometown Holiday" will surely warm your heart and make you feel full of the holiday spirit. It will be a great time, so get ready to smile, cheer, and maybe even sing a little. It will be merry fun for the entire family and features local performers singing and dancing in the holidays.

Much in the spirit of "It's a Wonderful Life," the community and volunteers came together to make this production possible. Pender County Parks and Recreation held a meeting where over 100 community members supported a community performing arts program. The community was excited and interested and began identifying what they could do to work together to make this happen.

It is the first time Hampstead Annex has held a production of this scale.

"We are excited to expand our program offerings to the community," said Parks and Recreation Director Zach White. "One of our goals is to bring additional arts and theatre programs to Pender County."

The show is directed by the founder of Untitled Theatre Productions, Emily Graham, a local actress. Graham started working with Jaime Alberti, a youth minister from a neighborhood church, to secure spaces for rehearsals. The women thought there was a lot of excellent untapped talent in Pender County. In addition, much of the cast and chorus are volunteers from the community. The script was written by Pender County residents Steve Campbell and Jaime Lang, the music director. The choreography is by Katie Auletti-Smith, an instructor from a local dance and tumbling studio.

"This is a dream come true to see this come together, and I can't wait for everyone to see it," said Graham.

"We are grateful for the community coming together and making this production possible," said White.

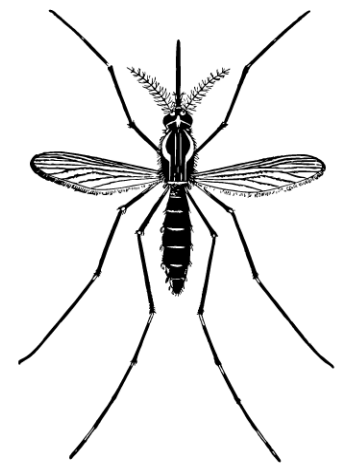
Come to support the theater and see "A Hometown Holiday" to support the exceptional volunteers on December 15, 16, and 17th. The performances will be at 7:30 p.m. on December 15 and 16, and a matinee show will be on Sunday, December 17, at 3:30 p.m. at the Hampstead Annex in Hampstead. Tickets are \$15. Ages three and under get in free. You can purchase tickets online at Pender County Parks and Recreation website.

Hurry up and get your tickets now before they are all gone! Don't miss out on this fantastic opportunity to be a part of something truly magical.



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Coastal Common Sense

By Kim McGahey

Patriotic Americans are watching Joe Biden dismantle all the positive accomplishments that made America great again during the Trump years in office. Conventional wisdom would say that Biden's senile incompetence is guiding his lack of leadership on all fronts.

But his policy directives that are destroying our country are an intentional attempt to implement what Barack Obama called for in order to "fundamentally transform America". We are seeing the negative consequences of that globalist political ideology unfold before our very eyes.

This is no accident, even though Biden's cabinet gives all the appearances of a rudderless ship. Mayorkas at Homeland InSecurity insists publicly that our southern border is secure, while in reality he is doing everything in his power to fulfill his job description allowing hundreds of thousands of unvetted immigrants to cross that border. His slight of hand is eagerly embraced by a complicit liberal media even though Democrat mayors around the country are now protesting the sanctuary city model that got them elected.

Austin at the Department of Defense seems more intent on implementing an equity agenda into our military than actually accomplishing military

preparedness in a world increasingly hostile to American foreign interests. Unfortunately, Navy sailors having pride parades will not keep the Chinese from invading Taiwan.

Yellen at Treasury insists that Bidenomics has the economy cooking and that Americans are better off now than in the past decade, despite Everyman's confirmation to the contrary. Earnings are down and inflation is up making it harder than ever for middle America to get ahead of the grocery bill. Incomes for women, blacks and hispanics have fallen way below records set under Trump policies, yet the liberal propaganda HQ at the New York Times and Washington Post would have you believe otherwise. Nothing to see here, move along.

The cancellation of the Keystone Pipeline and the resulting staggering job losses was just one example of how the Department of Energy has crippled our economy by prioritizing and then subsidizing climate change while trying to eliminate our dependence on efficient fossil fuels. Windmills and solar panels are great until the wind doesn't blow and the sun doesn't shine like in most of the country most of the time.

Then there's the Department of InJustice that has done everything in its considerable power to weaponize its vast resources in a concerted effort to affect purely partisan prosecutions against political opponents while letting their team get away with all kinds of bad stuff.

This is the tyrannical third world dictator control that they predicted Trump would commit, but never did.

News flash: Trump didn't politicize his cabinet against his opponents and he didn't take us to the brink of World War III like the current administration has done. For my money, I'd rather have a barking pit bull in the White House who puts America first instead of a cream puff that falls upstairs putting America last.



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Lake Linda's Christmas Lights

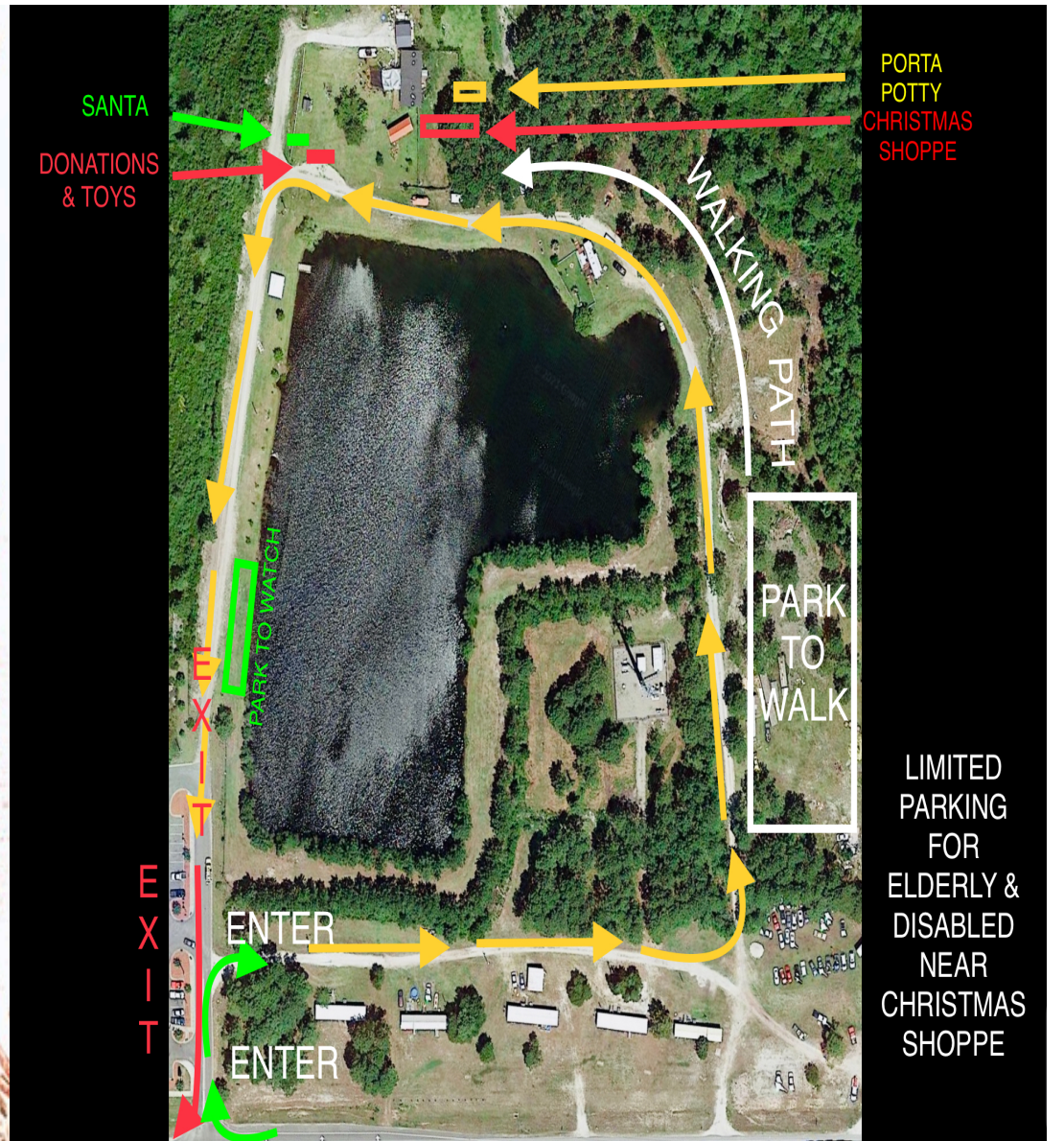


Aerial Photographer Jeremy Morse and family

Lake Linda's
Christmas Lights
Week of November 26-December 2

	Lights	Santa	Store
Sunday 11/26	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00
Monday 11/27	5:30-10:00	At North Pole	<u>CLOSED</u>
Tuesday 11/28	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	<u>CLOSED</u>
Wednesday 11/29	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00
Thursday 11/30	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:00
Friday 12/1	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:30
Saturday 12/2	5:30-10:00	6:00-8:00	6:00-8:30

STORE MAY CLOSE IN BAD WEATHER



The Origins Of Rudolph The Red-Nose Reindeer

By Dotty Harding

As the holiday season of 1938 came to Chicago, Bob May wasn't feeling much comfort or joy. A 34-year-old ad writer for Montgomery Ward, May was exhausted and nearly broke. His wife, Evelyn, was bedridden, on the losing end of a two-year battle with cancer. This left Bob to look after their four-year old-daughter, Barbara.

One night, Barbara asked her father, "Why isn't my mommy like everybody else's mommy?" As he struggled to answer his daughter's question, Bob remembered the pain of his own childhood. A small, sickly boy, he was constantly picked on and called names. But he wanted to give his daughter hope, and show her that being different was nothing to be ashamed of. More than that, he wanted her to know that he loved her and would always take care of her. So he began to spin a tale about a reindeer with a bright red nose who found a special place on Santa's team. Barbara loved the story so much that she made her father tell it every night before bedtime. As he did, it grew more elaborate. Because he couldn't afford to buy his daughter a gift for Christmas, Bob decided to turn the story into a homemade picture book.

In early December, Bob's wife died. Though he was heartbroken, he kept

working on the book for his daughter. A few days before Christmas, he reluctantly attended a company party at Montgomery Ward. His co-workers encouraged him to share the story he'd written. After he read it, there was a standing ovation. Everyone wanted copies of their own. Montgomery Ward bought the rights to the book from their debt-ridden employee. Over the next six years, at Christmas, they gave away six million copies of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer to shoppers. Every major publishing house in the country was making offers to obtain the book. In an incredible display of good will, the head of the department store returned all rights to Bob May. Four years later, Rudolph had made him into a millionaire.

Now remarried with a growing family, May felt blessed by his good fortune. But there was more to come. His brother-in-law, a successful songwriter named Johnny Marks, set the uplifting story to music. The song was pitched to artists from Bing Crosby on down. They all passed. Finally, Marks approached Gene Autry. The cowboy star had scored a holiday hit with "Here Comes Santa Claus" a few years before. Like the others, Autry wasn't impressed with the song about the misfit reindeer. Marks begged him to give it a second listen.

Autry played it for his wife, Ina. She was so touched by the line "They wouldn't let poor Rudolph play in any reindeer games" that she insisted her husband record the tune.

Within a few years, it had become the second best-selling Christmas song ever, right behind "White Christmas." Since then, Rudolph has come to life in TV specials, cartoons, movies, toys, games, coloring books, greeting cards and even a Ringling Bros. circus act. The little red-nosed reindeer dreamed up by Bob May and immortalized in song by Johnny Marks has come to symbolize Christmas as much as Santa Claus, evergreen trees and presents. As the last line of the song says, "He'll go down in history."



Coconut Bonbons



¼ cup butter
 1 pound confectioners' sugar
 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
 2 cups flaked coconut
 9 (1-ounce) squares semisweet chocolate
 2 tablespoons shortening

Mix butter, confectioners' sugar, and sweetened condensed milk together in a medium bowl; mix in coconut. Roll dough into 1 inch balls; refrigerate until set, about 1 hour. Melt chocolate and shortening over a double boiler, stirring occasionally until smooth. Remove from heat when melted, and stir to make sure the shortening is fully incorporated. Use toothpicks to hold the balls and dip them in the melted chocolate. Set on wax paper to dry.

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Local Author Rodney Dillman Releases Historical Fiction Novel

In a remarkable addition to the literary scene, Topsail's own Rodney Dillman has penned a stirring historical fiction novel, "Flowers Are Better Than Bullets," now gracing the shelves of local and online bookstores.

Set against the tumultuous backdrop of the late 1960s and early 1970s, Dillman's novel explores the depths of human emotion during one of America's most turbulent times. The story centers around Johnny, a young man from the small town of Lima, Ohio, who embarks on a journey of self-discovery and love at Kent State University. As he navigates through an era marked by the Vietnam War and profound social change, Johnny's path crosses with Katie, a fervent advocate for peace. Their story unfolds amidst the fiery anti-war demonstrations, culminating in the tragic and historic events at Kent State University.

"Flowers Are Better Than Bullets" is not just a tale of love and war; it's a tribute to the indomitable human spirit and the power of standing up for one's beliefs. Rodney Dillman masterfully captures the essence of the era, weaving a narrative that is as educational as it is emotionally resonant.

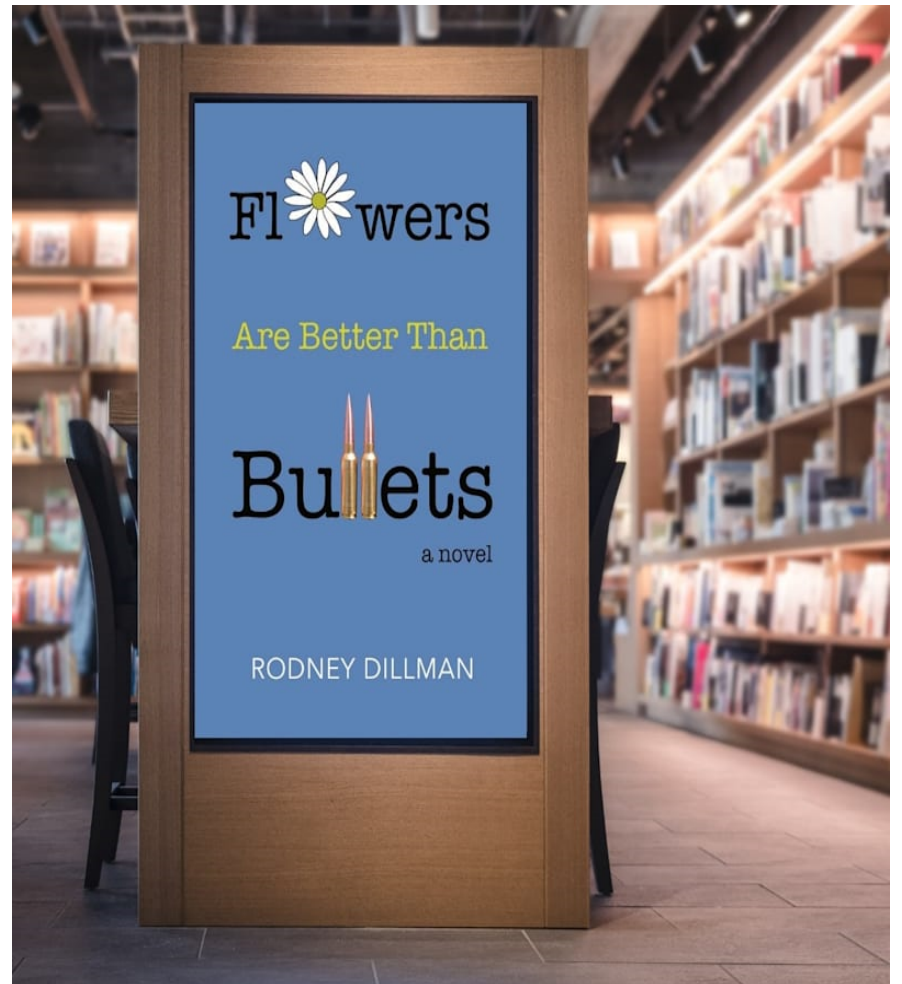
This novel is a must-read for those who cherish historical accuracy blended with compelling storytelling. It's a poignant reminder of the sacrifices made in the name of peace and the enduring strength of love in times of turmoil.

Residents of Topsail Beach and beyond can find "Flowers Are Better Than Bullets" at the Quarter Moon Bookstore, a beloved local hub for literature enthusiasts. The novel is also available for readers worldwide through Amazon, in various formats including e-book, paperback, and hardback.

Rodney Dillman's work is a testament to the rich storytelling tradition of our community and is sure to leave a lasting impression on its readers. Don't miss the opportunity to dive into this captivating narrative by one of Topsail's own talents.

"Flowers Are Better Than Bullets" is more than a novel; it's a journey through a pivotal time in our history, told through the lens of characters who feel as real as the events that shaped their lives.

For more information: Visit the author's website at www.rodneydillman.com or the Quarter Moon Bookstore in Topsail Beach, NC. You can also find the book on Amazon.



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<p>DON'T LIFT BULKY LOADS ALONE</p> <p>Don't lift bulky or heavy loads alone. Doing so puts great stress on your low back muscles and spine.</p>	<p>DON'T TWIST WHEN LIFTING</p> <p>Don't twist when lifting, lowering, or carrying any load as this increases your risk of back injury.</p>	<p>DON'T USE YOUR BACK</p> <p>Don't lift the load with your rear end high and your lead low. Use your leg muscles, not your weaker low back muscles.</p>	<p>DON'T LIFT HEAVY LOADS</p> <p>Don't lift heavy loads when you can use equipment. It is less work and less stress on your low back.</p>

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<p>SCISSOR FORCE is a cutting force.</p>	<p>BENDING FORCE is a pushing force.</p>
<p>CENTRIFUGAL FORCE is an outward force from a spinning object.</p>	<p>TORSION is a twisting force.</p>

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Community Updates

Night In Bethlehem Returns To Hampstead

When you travel through Hampstead on Highway 17, you can almost feel yourself moving towards a busier and faster future. You can't help it. The frantic pace is palpable and it's hard to pull yourself out of that rushing current of progress as you maneuver through traffic.

While busy roads and development propel us forward, there is a way to slow down and go back to a quieter time this holiday season.

Hampstead United Methodist Church's upcoming special event, A Night in Bethlehem, allows visitors one night of time travel. On Saturday, December 16th from 6-9 PM, the church grounds will be

transformed into a Bethlehem street scene with stalls showcasing various period activities and establishments, including a Welcome Tent, Scribe Shop, Leather Shop, Pottery Shop, Food Tasting Tent, and King Herod's Tent. Converse with Jews and Romans in full historical costume as you meander through the shops and let yourself imagine what life was like over two thousand years ago. The showcase will culminate in a full living nativity scene, complete with all the storied witnesses to the birth of Jesus.

This event is free and open to the entire community. Please dress appropriately as activities will be held

outdoors.

In case of inclement weather, the rain date is Sunday, December 17th from 6-9 PM.

Visit HUMC's Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/HampsteadUMC/> for updates and other programs taking place.



Christmas Tree Lighting Kicks Off Holidays At Hampstead Kiwanis Park

Pender County Parks and Recreation is celebrating the most wonderful time of the year and kicking off the holiday season with the 3rd Annual Tree Lighting ceremony at Hampstead Kiwanis Park on Friday, December 1, at 5:30 p.m. A local choir and soloists will lead the holiday music at 5:45 p.m.

The Hampstead Tree Lighting is a festive celebration that ushers in the holiday season with captivating lights, music, and community spirit. The Hampstead community gathers to spread joy and happiness with food

trucks, a chance of real snow, and festive activities, creating cherished memories and setting the tone for the holiday season.

"This has become an annual holiday tradition that the community looks forward to kicking off the holiday season each year," Zach White, Pender County Parks and Recreation director, said.

As part of the celebration, the Pender County Parks and Recreation Department, Pender County Tourism, and Pender County Library will host children's activities, including cookies,

storytelling, photos with Santa, crafts, and a community carol sing-along.

Admission to the event is free and open to the public.

Food trucks are available with food and hot chocolate for purchase.

For more information, visit the Pender County Parks and Recreation website.



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- D. R. Royal

Pets As Presents, A Good Idea Or Not?

By Dorothy Royal

What little girl didn't ask for a pony for Christmas? What young boy didn't want a dog at his side when out trekking through the woods after school? Yes, these all sound like images from a time long ago, but the idea is the same. Pets are an important part of our lives in the United States and because of that, sometimes pets fall into the "present trap".

Animal shelters will tell you how they spike in numbers after the holidays are over and the "cute little fluffy ball of love" grows up to eat shoes, scratch the furniture or better yet, bark at the neighbors. Once a present becomes a nuisance, it tends to get ignored or abandoned.

Thinking about getting a puppy for Christmas? Dogs require more attention than cats, and a bit more room for large dogs. With more and more people living closer and closer it's not so easy to keep big dogs happy. Fenced in yards are great until the dog starts to dig out or bark (especially when the owner is not home). Most towns, including Surf City, have leash laws that require a dog owner

to keep the animal secured on their property or on a leash (not to exceed 20 feet long) to make sure they have control of their animal. A loose dog can become a neighborhood nuisance, not to mention a hazard to drivers.

How about a nice kitten for Christmas? Just be aware that the little fluffy kitten will train YOU before you know it. Nothing will remain on shelves, Christmas trees become a full-size play center and if you use a computer, without a doubt, it will require ALL of your attention when you start to type. The best thing is a cardboard box can entertain them for a while.

Want to get your child a pony for Christmas? Well, let me tell you, they require just as much attention and cost as a full sized horse and they are not "dogs" you can keep in your back yard. Horses of all sizes can kick, bite and break through fencing. Vet bills can be expensive as well as good quality feed and hay. There are better options like offering your child riding lessons at an established stable. Let them learn the real responsibilities of ownership before making the leap.

Owning a pet is a responsibility that may span decades.

Dogs and cats can live to be 20 years old, horses can live to be 40 years old and parrots can live to be 50 years old! That's a real commitment, no matter who you are. If you want to buy someone a pet but don't expect a long commitment, how about changing gears and getting them a nice pet rock. Remember those? They didn't make a mess, they didn't make noise or smell bad. They just were. Yes, a pet rock – now there is a gift that needs to make a comeback.



Surf City Sec. 3-3. Dogs running at large prohibited.

(a) It shall be unlawful for any owner of a dog to permit the dog to run at large or be off the premises of its owner and not under the restraint of a competent person. Restraint of a competent person shall be a leash in the physical control of such person and not exceed twenty (20) feet in length. Having a trained dog under voice command will not be considered as a restraint.

(b) Upon an animal control officer's observation of a dog running at large or off the premises of its owner and not under the control of a competent person, the officer may, at his discretion, impound the dog or return it to its owner.

(c) Upon the animal control officer's receipt of a complaint that a dog is running at large or is off the premises of its owner and not under the control of a competent person, the officer shall investigate the complaint and, upon a finding that there is probable cause that a violation has occurred, the officer may issue a citation or a warning or take any other action provided for by this chapter or any state law as the circumstances may require.

A Surf City police officer is considered animal control.

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North Star Song

By Laurie Yoder Colitz



It is the
Soul season
That believes
In each Christmas
With trees
That glisten
In beauty and hope
From the North Star song...
Each year my Christmas wish
Is for world peace.
Yet too many hands are
Born into evil,
And take lives for their god,
Robbing children of a chance
For a sky of goodwill
To fly.
When will the world
Harmonize,
Feed each other's hunger
So we all can be truly free
To live, love, and grow grace
On any land...
How beautiful
To believe in miracles,
With hearts everywhere
Around you,
Who
understand.

Past Christmas

By Dee Dee Paliotti LLOYD

I lean my head back and close my eyes,
Memories of past Christmases are so close by.
There's the Christmas when I got my first bike,
There was never a present I didn't like.
Mom and Dad sitting in his recliner chair
Watching us kids with the Santa gifts they put there.
Then the Christmas I found out the hard way,
What! No Santa! What did you say?
Now, even older, this time with my own kids
Trying to do with them the things I did.
There were times we chopped down our Christmas tree
Handmade ornaments and hung so carefully.
Wrapped the gifts until the paper was gone,
Used the tubes as swords to get our "Bruce Lee" on.
Falling on the floor, holding our guts,
It would always happen, no if, ands, or butts.
Now my kids have kids of their own,
It's hard to believe how fast they have grown.
Making their own memories with each passing year,
For these are the ones that they will hold dear.
So now it's Christmas again as I put up my tree,
All the past memories are coming back to me.
I close my eyes like I haven't a care,
Only to see Mom sitting with Dad on his recliner chair.



3rd Annual

January 1st

Shrimp Dip 2024

North Topsail Beach, NC

The Shrimp Dip is an annual "polar plunge" event held January 1 of each year in North Topsail Beach. Participants meet on the beach at 10am at the public access across from Beach Bum's and run into the water at noon.

The Shrimp Dip is hosted by the Rotary Club of Sneads Ferry and sponsored by local businesses. Each year a local nonprofit organization that supports individuals with disabilities is chosen to receive funds raised through t-shirt sales and direct donations. This year's recipients are Able Buddies NC of Onslow and Pender County.

Beach Bum's Pizza Bar & Grill hosts the after-party and donates a portion of their food sales to the cause.

There is no registration or fee to participate in this event. Just show up at the beach and join in on the fun!

POC: Davonna Thomas, theshrimpidipntb@gmail.com, 910-467-7489

BICYCLE DRIVE

City Cafe is collecting NEW bicycles for the Holly Ridge Hometown Christmas event on December 2nd at the Community Center.

City Cafe challenges all businesses and citizens to participate to make a Christmas to remember for the children!

We are also grateful for monetary donations that will be used to purchase bicycles!

Donations will be accepted until noon on Saturday, 12/2

TIAR Golf Tournament Press Release and Pictures

The Topsail Island Association of Realtors held their 10th Annual Charity Golf Tournament on October 26 at North Shore Golf Course. The annual tournament during the previous 10 years has raised over \$30,000 for local charities. This year's tournament was the largest on record. The tournament had sixteen four-person super ball teams, playing for cash prizes and the chance to win a new golf cart for a whole in one on the par three 12th hole. Unfortunately, no one won the cart this year, but looking forward to another opportunity next year. This year's proceeds went to the Folkstone Food Bank in Sneads Ferry, who helps provide food for needy families in the area. They will also be providing a Thanksgiving packet to anyone who would not be able to have a Thanksgiving meal without the packet.

David Elam with Intracoastal Realty served as the chairman of this year's

tournament for the first time. During the TIAR general meeting and Thanksgiving Celebration on November 16th, he said while presenting the check for \$5,538 to Yvonne Saunders, head of the Folkstone Food Bank, "May this contribution contribute to the well-being of those facing food insecurity, and may it serve as a small gesture of solidarity and compassion. We are grateful for the important work you do, and we hope this donation helps make a positive impact. Thank you for your tireless efforts in creating a better, more nourished community for all."

Elam went on to say, "Thank you to all the local realtors and related vendors who volunteered, got prizes, and participated in this year's tournament. A special thanks to all our sponsors, who helped make this year's tournament our most successful ever! A special thanks to Susan Duncan with Pirate Realty and

chairperson of our Special Events Committee, to Carol Myers with Myer's Realty and TIAR President, and Aileen Green and Arlene McMillian with the Topsail Island Association of Realtors.

If you would like to participate, volunteer, or sponsor next year's

tournament please contact David Elam delam@intracoastalrealty.com, 910-777-9072, or the Topsail Island Association of Realtors info@topsailislandrealtors.com, 910-329-1406.



Pictures From Left to Right:

Yvonne Saunders - Folkstone Food Bank, David Elam - Golf Tournament Chairman, Susan Duncan - Special Events Chairperson, Carol Myers - TIAR President

North Carolina 2023 Field Hockey National Champions Bobblehead Unveiled

This morning, the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum unveiled an officially licensed, limited-edition bobblehead commemorating the North Carolina Tar Heels' 2023 Women's Field Hockey Division I National Championship. The bobblehead features Rameses, the mascot of the Tar Heels, holding a field hockey stick and standing on the official 2023 Field Hockey National Championship logo. The special edition bobblehead, which is the first Field Hockey National Championship Bobblehead, is being produced by the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum, an official licensee of the University of North Carolina.

Proudly wearing the school colors and holding a field hockey stick, the Rameses bobblehead is giving the No. 1 sign on a base featuring the official 2023 North Carolina Field Hockey National Champions logo. Each bobblehead is individually numbered to 2,023 and they are available exclusively through the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum's Online Store. The bobbleheads, which are expected to ship in March, are \$40 each plus a flat-rate shipping charge of \$8 per order.

The top-ranked North Carolina field hockey team captured the 11th national title in program history, and the fifth in the last six years, with a thrilling 2-1 victory over Northwestern in a penalty shootout in the championship of the NCAA Tournament on Sunday, November 19th at Karen Shelton Stadium in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. With the victory, first

-year UNC head coach Erin Matson became the youngest college head coach to win a national championship. In her five years as a player, the 23-year-old won four national titles. "I don't know how to put it into words," Matson said. "I don't know what more you'd want in a national championship matchup than tied at the end of regulation, two overtimes, sudden death shootout - just a phenomenal atmosphere."

Sophomore Ryleigh Heck tallied the game-winner in sudden death for the Tar Heels after the teams both went 2-for-5 in the shootout. Prior to Heck's winning shot, UNC goalkeeper Maddie Kahn turned away Northwestern's first attempt, setting the stage for Heck. Kahn was named the Most Outstanding Player and was joined on the All-Tournament team by Heck, freshman Charly Bruder, who scored UNC's first goal in the third quarter, and senior Katie Dixon. Attendance for the championship match was announced at 3,200, the largest crowd in UNC program history. The Tar Heels finished the season with an 18-3 record.

The Tar Heels Field Hockey team has made national headlines with the team being led to a National Championship by 23-year-old first-year head coach Erin Matson, who was hired in January just weeks after finishing her UNC playing career. She is believed to be the youngest Division I coach in the NCAA and is the most decorated player in the program's history.

She's a four-time National Champion and the leading scorer in ACC history and NCAA Tournament play.

"The Tar Heels field hockey team made national headlines with their remarkable story and capped it off with a thrilling win in the National Championship game," National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum co-founder and CEO Phil Sklar said. "Bobbleheads are the ultimate way to celebrate a team's championship, and this bobblehead will be the perfect way for fans of the Tar Heels to commemorate this very special UNC field hockey team's title."

About the National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum:

The National Bobblehead Hall of Fame and Museum, which is located at 170 S. 1st St. in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, opened to the public on February 1st, 2019.

The HOF and Museum also produces high quality, customized bobbleheads for retail sale as well as organizations, individuals, and teams across the country. Visit us online and on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.



Shuckin' Shack Raises \$80K For The Leukemia And Lymphoma Society With Second Annual Fresh & Raw Tour

The oyster bar nearly doubled its impact compared to its inaugural live music tour in 2022, traveling to 16 cities in just four weeks.

WILMINGTON, NC – After a month-long community party that spanned 16 cities and 3,500 miles, Shuckin' Shack, the oyster bar franchise, is celebrating \$80,000 raised for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS). Its 2023 Fresh & Raw Tour, presented in partnership with Truist, was a major hit, spotlighting Barrett Baber, a country rockstar who took off after appearing on NBC's *The Voice*, and Taylor Goyette, an up-and-coming Nashville artist with a raw, soulful sound. This dynamic duo, paired with Shuckin' Shack's fresh oysters and cold beer, made for the perfect community get-together benefitting a great cause.

"In the hospitality business, people seek places where they feel welcomed and served. They seek an experience that makes them feel like they belong there. We believe that a big part of that belonging is our desire to get involved with the communities where we have restaurants," said Jonathan Weathington, CEO of Shuckin' Shack. "For us, that community extends beyond city limits and restaurant walls. When we're talking about a community of people affected by cancer, we're extending our reach beyond any geographics. We don't use Fresh & Raw as a publicity stunt, we truly don't make any money off of it. Fresh & Raw is for our customers and their families - giving them a place to come and celebrate life and togetherness, all for the benefit of seeking cures for terrible diseases."

Fundraising for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society is incredibly important for the Shuckin' Shack network as Co-Founder Matt Piccinin is a survivor of Leukemia, largely thanks to the funds raised by the Society that empower further research and treatments for Leukemia patients.

The Fresh & Raw Tour created an opportunity for the entire system to raise money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society in a fun way. Rather than focusing on how many people were in attendance or ways the system could increase its own revenue thanks to the tour, the team funneled its energy toward increasing its impact for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and local communities.

"I'm so glad I had the pleasure to be able to join my friend and co-writer Barrett Baber for the Fresh & Raw Tour at Shuckin' Shack Oyster Bars," said Goyette.

"It was a heartwarming experience being able to lift the spirits of so many people affected by such a horrible disease and raise so much money for a wonderful cause.

I really enjoyed getting to know some folks and getting to hear their personal stories. Being able to do all that while playing music was just the cherry on top."

"As a songwriter, it's always a pleasure to get the opportunity to play original songs in new cities for new people," added Baber. "The fact that we raised so much money for such a great cause makes it even more special. It was a tour I'll never forget."

The last stop of the tour, in Carolina Beach, North Carolina, punctuated the entire experience perfectly and really highlighted the power of the Shuckin' Shack system, its leadership team, its guests and its partners.

Though the Carolina Beach Shack technically has just 35 seats, there were 500 people in attendance for the Fresh & Raw Tour, meaning the crowd — and great vibes — spilled out into the parking lot and street.

"This tour meant way more to attendees than just a live music series, and the overflowing Carolina Beach event is a perfect illustration of this," said Darren Keeler, Vice President of Marketing. "There was live music, cold beer and fresh oysters, but the guests were here to raise money for LLS and come together as a community. We heard moving personal stories at every stop of the tour as we spoke to attendees who felt deeply connected to the cause, and the privilege to support these people and their communities is one of the biggest honors of the tour."

One of the most memorable guests was Lynn Bridges, a two-time non-

hodgkin survivor who was also diagnosed with Leukemia in 2021 but has been in remission for over a year now. Bridges loved visiting her local Shuckin' Shack for meals, but when she learned of the Fresh & Raw Tour, she was excited to attend. Having survived both lymphoma and leukemia, any opportunity to support the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society is something she's interested in. After attending the first event at Surf City, NC and having a great time, she decided to go to the Wilmington and Carolina Beach, NC events, too.

"From the very first day, Taylor and Barrett were so welcoming and warm to everyone. I went and thanked them for their contributions after the first event, then I met Darren. We all took pictures and talked and cried together," said Bridges. "Everyone just made me feel so warm and welcomed. The staff of Shuckin' Shack is the most wonderful staff I've ever met. They really make you feel like they care about you and want you to enjoy your time. It was that great experience that led me to Wilmington." Again, at the Wilmington and Carolina Beach locations, Bridges had a great time, shared her story and connected with other survivors and community members in support of a cause incredibly close to her own heart.

"I can't tell you how uplifting all of this was for me. These people were complete

strangers, but they made me feel so comfortable," she explained. "I may never see some of these staff members again, but the way they reached out to me made me feel that they were with me 100%. It really warmed my and my husband's hearts. I'll never forget those three days."

"People like Lynn are the reason why we are so committed to doing this tour every year and continuing to contribute to the culture and connection of the communities we enter," added Keeler. "We're already looking forward to the next round of concerts, delicious seafood, an even bigger fundraising goal and A Good Shuckin' Time at Fresh & Raw 2024."

ABOUT SHUCKIN' SHACK:

Shuckin' Shack Oyster Bar grew out of a vision for a local establishment that would appeal to families of all ages. A place where friends and family can enjoy fresh, delicious meals and creative cocktails in an environment that exudes relaxation. Shuckin' Shack offers its guests a "lifestyle experience" in addition to exceptional seafood. The brand started as a 900-square-foot shack in Carolina Beach, North Carolina, in 2007 and began franchising in 2014. Today, Shuckin' Shack has grown to 18 locations across six states. To learn more about Shuckin' Shack, visit <http://www.theshuckinshack.com>.

SHUCKIN' SHACK OYSTER BAR



"A Good Shuckin' Time!"



Greater Topsail Art Association

By Sabine Murray

Once again, a great meeting! Thank you for all who came and participated. For starters, we will be skipping a meeting in December, due to the busy holiday season. Our next meeting will be on Wednesday evening, January 17th, at 7pm at ArtExposure Gallery, Hampstead. Please see below for more details on the upcoming meeting.

Here are the highlights of what was covered:

- New exhibit opportunities for GTAA members are starting to pop up for us!

1. Berkshire Hathaway Home Solutions of Wilmington (on Market Street, between Front and Water) has offered us a month in 2024 to exhibit as a group show. I will get more info on which month, but opening night will be on a Fourth Friday Art Walk downtown. Berkshire Hathaway is located in an historic building, with beautiful brick wall space and gallery wire for hanging. We would have about 20 feet of wall space to cover on each side. More details to come once we get closer.

If you are interested, and were not at the meeting to sign up, please email me back.

2. Ellen Elder, owner of ArtExposure, has graciously agreed to begin having "Pop-Up" exhibits at the gallery for us starting in 2024.

There will be a fee - more to come on that. The space for the exhibits is in the center of the gallery, using rolling walls that can accommodate quite a few pieces. This opens up the possibility of two artists - maybe three - who may not have a lot of inventory sharing a month (and any expenses). In addition to the venue, ArtExposure will provide marketing and advertising. Participating artists will be responsible for organizing an opening on the day or evening of their choice.

Again, if you are interested and were not at the meeting to sign up, please email me back and include whether or not you want a solo show or joint. Also indicate if there are any months in which you cannot participate.

3. It's suggested to join the Wilmington Art Association, as they have some great opportunities for exhibits as well. Their website is <https://wilmingtongallery.org> - just click the JOIN tab and follow the instructions. Membership has its benefits including getting their newsletter.

The WAA has one very big exhibit each year - The annual Spring Art Show and Sale which is the official art show of the Azalea Festival each year, and held at the Hanna Block Cultural Arts Center. Membership now will also allow you to submit a piece of artwork to be

considered for the 2024 Spring Show poster - Deadline for this is December 5, 2023 to have your art considered.

The WAA also has a month long exhibit each year at the Aces Gallery on Front Street, hosted by the New Hanover Arts Council. You would be able to participate.

The WAA has a relationship with Gallery Citrine in that the gallery will host WAA member exhibits. More info on how that will happen in 2024 to come.

- Information on grants and exhibition opportunities for artists:

1. Check out ArtworkArchive.com - free two week trial period when you create an account. Thereafter, \$8/mo for apprentice (up to 100 images), \$16/mo for professional (500 pcs) There are listings for grants and exhibition opportunities. The software itself allows you to inventory your work, keep track of sales, scheduling, income, etc.

2. Check out FineArtAmerica.com, especially if you do not yet have a website. A free account allows up to 25 images to be uploaded, a paid subscription is \$30 for unlimited uploads and includes a personal website. FAA markets your work for reproduction as prints, on canvas, paper, as well as on other marketable items like mugs, blankets, phone cases and much more.

You'll need a PayPal account and to set up your account and collections of your artwork. The do all the work, including shipping - and you get your commission directly deposited to your PP account.

3. Subscribe to Juried Art Services (free) and they will notify you of upcoming competitions and exhibits via email. You can create portfolios, keep track of your applications, and view your acceptance notifications there.

4. Grant information from the North Carolina Council for the Arts for 2025 is NOT yet available - and that includes the CARES act program. Once I get notification of anything opening up for the 2024-2025 cycle, I will share that with you. In the meantime, please DO register with ArtworkArchive.com if you can for artist grants other than those in NC. Our Next Meeting is in January, 2024! Again - We will not be having a December meeting. Our January meeting will be on Wednesday evening, January 17, 2024 at 7 pm at ArtExposure.

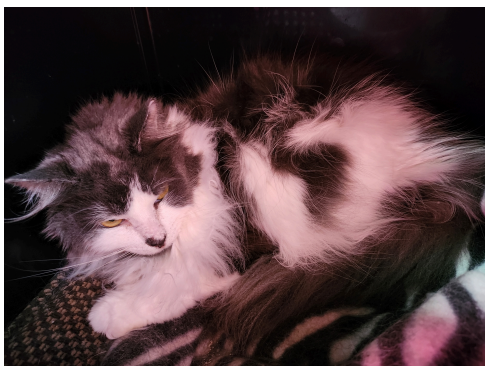
Just returning from a super inspiring calligraphy workshop in Italy, our very own Susan Polizzotto has agreed to do a live demonstration of Japanese calligraphy and may even let US try to do some! So DO NOT MISS this great opportunity to learn all about this amazing art form!

F.U.R.R

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Charlie



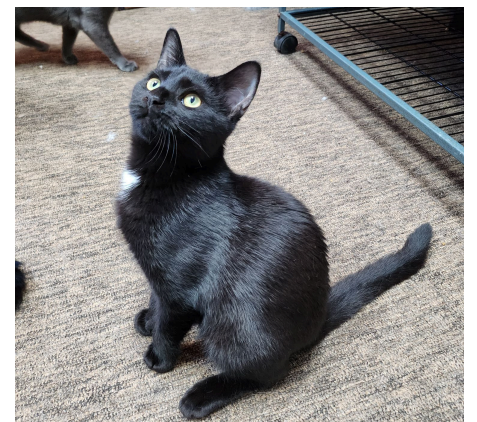
My name is Charlie, but I'm a tiny young lady! People tell me that I am so beautiful that I just can't be real...but I am! My long soft fur makes me look like a fuzzy stuffed animal. I had a very traumatized kitten hood & witnessed my brother getting eaten by a coyote. Thank goodness I made it out of there when FURR saved me. The ordeal has left me very scared, but I'm learning to trust the people who love me. I just want a calm, quiet home where I can be brushed, petted & held! Most of the time I just tuck my little head down by my chest. I do love treats & shaking that jar gets my attention every time! Would you like a little cuddle bug? Come meet me!

Blue Marlin



I am a Russian Blue look a like with a white spot on my chest! My fur is that silky, shiney silvery blue/gray color. My eyes tell you how truly sweet I am! My favorite thing is being scratched behind my ears & on top of my back. Next to that, I'd say kitty treats are my next favorite thing! I was homeless until FURR saved me! My brother, Perch, was also saved & we look like twin Russian Blue kitties! We can't wait to see if Christmas will mean a new home for us! Our paws are crossed for our dream to come true!

Bubbles



My name is Bubbles and I'm a BEAUTIFUL little boy that FURR saved! My best traits are my silky smooth fur & my adorable personality! I have the sweetest little meow & I love to tell everybody what I'm thinking. You just won't find a calmer, more laid back kinda kitty than me! I totally vetted & ready to move on with my life. FURR has prepared me well. I also have 2 sisters: Beaches, who looks just like me and Mermaid who is a tortoise shell. We all three had a rough start in life. Are u the one to change all that for me? For us???

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Give The 'Fit' That Keeps Giving From Club Champion

Don't miss the best sale of the holiday season!

Club Champion has you covered this holiday season with their Black Friday sale! For a limited time only, receive a 20% bonus card when you purchase a Club Champion gift card. Additionally, the leading club fitter is offering \$100 full bag fittings or other fitting types for just \$50 with a purchase — that's a savings of up to 80%. You can take advantage of both offers November 17 through December 4.

Club Champion fits, sells, and builds custom golf clubs using brands like Callaway, TaylorMade, Ping, Titleist, Cobra, Fujikura, Golf Pride, and many more. The company delivers a Tour-level fitting that produces longer, more accurate shots with a nearly 100% satisfaction rate for golfers of any ability level, making a gift card purchase the perfect gift for any golf-enthusiast in your life.

Ranked by Golf Digest as one of the 100 Best Club Fitters 12 years running, Club Champion has a unique coupling system used to combine any head and shaft together, so golfers hit the precise combination to be custom built for them. They are the only fitter in the country to offer 65,000 interchangeable head and shaft combinations at all locations.

Whether the golfer in your life is an avid or casual player, a fitting or gift card to Club Champion can help improve their game this holiday season. Don't miss out on a 20% bonus card on Club Champion gift card purchases, or the \$100 full bag fitting offer. Terms apply. Fitting can be booked and gift cards can be purchased online at clubchampion.com.

About Club Champion

Club Champion is the globe's most prominent name in custom club fitting and building services. Established in 2010, there are now more than 120 Club

Champion locations internationally, including studios in Canada, the UK, and Australia. Each US studio offers golfers access to over 60 brands and more than 65,000 hittable head and shaft combinations. Club Champion has solidified their position at the top of the industry through comprehensive Tour-level fittings, unrivaled club building, and

the use of top-tier technology. The company is headquartered in Willowbrook, IL and boasts more than 400 employees, including hundreds of the most highly trained Master Fitters in the world. For more information about Club Champion, visit clubchampion.com.



New Tanks At The Karen Beasley Sea Turtle Rescue and Rehabilitation Center

Our new tank holds 5000 gallons requiring a whole lotta salt to get started. Swipe to see the picture of its first fill using 1500 pounds of salt! This #SaltwaterSaturday we are thankful for the quality marine salt we purchase from MEI Enterprises!

All conservation work for endangered sea turtles at #KBSTRRC and on Topsail Island is authorized by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, ES Permit 23ST05.

(First image is of two turtle tanks in a large room. One is oval and the other is round. The round one has a window being covered by brown paper. There is an icon that says "swipe". The next picture is an aerial view of a long oval tank. The next picture an aerial view of the round tank which is substantially bigger.)



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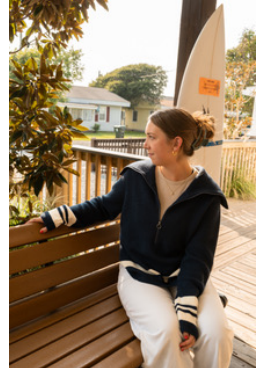
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