



## New Bern High Bears Win State Championship



Pictures taken on game day in Kenan Stadium by J Shine-Wright Photography. Check out her website for more photos at [jshinewright.com](http://jshinewright.com)

New Bern Bears celebrated their 16-0 season with a 40-28 win against Greensboro Grimsley in the NCHSAA 4-A state championship game in Kenan Stadium on Dec. 9, 2022.

The City of New Bern hosted a parade and fans lined the downtown streets to celebrate the team's win on on Dec. 13. The Bears were also recognized by the city and county and numerous groups throughout our community.

## New Bern Board of Aldermen Approve Salary Increase, Employees Still Underpaid



Department Heads chat prior to Sept 13. Board of Aldermen meeting in the back of the courtroom.

By Wendy Card

The City of New Bern hired Piedmont Triad Regional Council (PTRC) to conduct a market salary study of their workforce in February 2022 and it continued through until this the first week in December. The study compared the city's pay scale with benchmark cities that included Clayton, Craven County, Goldsboro, Greenville, Havelock, Jacksonville, Kinston, Morehead City, Pitt County, Rocky Mount, Statesville, Wake County, Washington, Wilmington, Wilson, and Greenville Util. Com.

During the Nov. 3 Board of Aldermen (BOA) Retreat, City Manager Foster Hughes told the board that 460 employees are underpaid. He said the cost of the full implementation would be a "total of \$1.7 million over the next six months. Over the course of a year, the following year, it would be approximately \$3.6 million." The alternate would be an incremental increase. He said was "5% or 7.5%...the first six months it would overall be about \$825,000 for the course of a year. It would be just under \$1.7 million with a 7.5% increase." He stated, "For six months, \$1.2 million dollars. For the course of a year just under \$2.5 million. Even if we did the 5% or 7.5%, we're still behind in the market. We're always going to be playing catch up."

See page 5

## Craven County Undergoes Tax Appraisal Process

By Wendy Card

Craven County Tax Administrator Leslie Young and staff held educational town hall sessions about the revaluation process at eight locations from Oct. 17 to Nov. 14, 2022.

The county also produced a video of the tax administrator describing the revaluation process that can be found on [youtube.com/@cravencountync9989](https://youtube.com/@cravencountync9989).

Young described, "A revaluation is a mass appraisal process that is used to reappraise all real estate to its current market value as of Jan. 1 of the revaluation year. It's important because real estate values change independently and at different rates. That can create inequities in the tax base the revaluation is critical in assuring that all properties are appraised at their current fair market value."

The revaluation process is required by NC General Statute. The tax administrator said it must be completed. She said, "...at minimum every eight years or maximum every year." The last re-evaluation was conducted in 2016.

See page 5

## Empowering Words



By Deedra Durocher

There is no question that words can be powerful and the message they convey can be either negative or positive. Here in New Bern, there are empowering words, written not on paper but on wooden studs on the walls to build an incredibly special house.

See page 4

## Mike's Jewelers expands and moves to new location



Mike's Jewelers welcomes customers in new location.

By Tina Adkins

A New Bern business has moved to a new location after more than 64 years of serving customers in downtown New Bern.

Mike's Jewelers has relocated to 1801 S. Glenburnie Road.

Owner Bruce Price said his father was a watchmaker and started the business as a small jewelry repair shop.

Price said he chose to relocate for a number of reasons.

"The downtown environment is changing," Price said. "It used to be more of a retail environment now it's more of an entertainment environment with the restaurants and bars. It's not as conducive to retail as it used to be."

See page 5

## New Specialty Store Carries Hot Sauces to Self Defense Products



Orlando and Tracy Torres inside the Angry Chihuahua.

By Tina Adkins

A new store has opened in New Bern catering to those who love the outdoors as well as a variety of goods for everyone.

Orlando and Tracy Torres have opened Angry Chihuahua at 3315 Dr. M.L.K. Jr Blvd. in the McCarthy Crossing Shopping Center.

"We're a one stop specialty shop but we're just a different kind of store," Tracy Torres said. "We have a little bit of everything for everyone." The store has 16 feet of different brands and flavors of hot sauce.

"We have everything from mild that doesn't register to some of the hottest hot sauce in the world," said Orlando Torres. "We also offer an array of healthy gourmet products."

Along with the hot sauce, the store sells food, many of which are non-chemical, non-GMO, fructose sugar-free products for those with different food allergies or making healthier food choices for health reasons.

Tracy Torres said they are not a health food store and does not want to promote it as such.

"We have candy and I love my candy but some of our products are a healthier version of some of the stuff you get in the grocery store," she said.

The store also sells kitchen knives, accessories and self-defense items such as pepper spray, stun guns and walking canes and sticks are also available.

See page 2



## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### Meet Big Jim Kohler



Joanne Friedman

Jim Kohler playing at The City Laundry in Nov. 2018

Jim Kohler arrived in New Bern in December 2010. He moved from Huntington, Long Island, where he grew up. His household was Irish Catholic, and Jim was the youngest of four. His dad was an engineer and his mother was a nurse. Jim worked at various jobs since the age of 12 including landscaping and at a Deli. He says the only “real” job he had was selling janitorial supplies for 11 years.

Jim came from a very athletic family, and he loved baseball. He was given some scholarships to play baseball, but he chose to go to Oklahoma State College.

He also had a great love for music and some friends from High School started teaching him guitar which he had plenty of time to practice after he got caught being at his brother-in-law’s bachelor party and was grounded at age 16. Turned out that Jim did not go to many classes at college and mostly played music. He left after one semester, headed home to learn more music and be with his newborn son.

Jim considers himself “self-taught” when it comes to music. He would listen to Duane Allman play the BB King Medley and practice that over and over. He says, “I didn’t have the patience or skill to steal what I heard...so I kept making things up”. He listened to Jimi Hendrix, Stevie Ray Vaughn, Howlin’ Wolf, Muddy Waters and Led Zeppelin. He saw Son Seals on TV and he fell in love with his music right away. Jim’s first band did typical 80’s music but soon he got deeper into the blues. Jim started his first blues band in 1989, The Jim Kohler band. He says about music, “I’ll listen to anything...as long as its heartfelt or I think its sincere.” His band would rent studio space to work on original songs, “just making noise until something made sense”.

Jim’s wife Kathleen came into the picture in 1990 when the band was looking for a female singer. He says it was “love at first sight for me”. They were friends for two years until Kathleen became divorced. They have now been married for 28 years.

Jim says his biggest accomplishment is playing with his idol, Son Seals. After he found out that Son had been shot in the face by his wife, he said to Kathleen “if this is going to be his kind of lifestyle, I should probably go see him one time.” So they headed to Chicago. Kathleen started talking to the band and the manager and found out they needed an East Coast band for his tour. Jim sent in a video and got the job. So for the last five years of Son Seals’ life Jim was his East Coast band leader and guitar player.

After his dad passed away, in 2010 Jim decided that his children needed to be with their only grandparents (Kathleen’s parents) who were retired and living in New Bern. While house hunting, Jim had his guitar with him and asked around at Applebee’s if there is any music that night. Someone pointed him to Milligan’s Bar where he met musicians Wick Wickline (Bi-Polar Express) and Ed Procnhet. He sat in for the night and Jim and Wick are still friends. That’s convinced him to move to New Bern. He started playing at Milligan’s on Sundays to “try to get his name out there”. Jim thinks it might have been Wick who first called him Big Jim...that has stuck with him. So, Jim and Kathleen bought a house and were ready to move. They found out that their house had been flooded seven times before they bought it, so Jim decided to come down alone and get the house elevated. Seven months later the family moved down, which included their two children, Caitriona, 11 and Magmus, 10. Jim also has another child, JP (James Patrick), 36. JP says about his father, “he grew up and I hung around”. The family got here just in time for hurricane Irene, which displaced them for four years. They had to stay with various people and move into their house while it was still being renovated.

Seven months later the family moved down, which included their two children, Caitriona, 11 and Magmus, 10. Jim also has another child, JP (James Patrick), 36. JP says about his father, “he grew up and I hung around”. The family got here just in time for hurricane Irene, which displaced them for four years. They had to stay with various people and move into their house while it was still being renovated.

After working in Walmart and Pizza Hut, Jim was able to quit those jobs and concentrate on his music. He now plays steady jobs around town “literally within two miles of each...it’s something special, it’s not lost on me. I appreciate it.”

Jim recently played at the King Biscuit Blues Festival in Helena, Arkansas. This is something he has been dreaming about. He is working on a CD in a local studio and hoping to release the songs as digital first.

Jim ended this interview with great sincerity by saying how much he loves and appreciates New Bern.

By Joanne Friedman, Manager of the “New Bern Music Calendar” Facebook Page.



### 30 Years Later by Jan Francoeur and Carol Tokarski

Sunrise Charleston by Jan Francoeur



by Mairin Gwyn Narron

Craven Arts Council and Gallery is proud to host 30 Years Later, an exhibition of the work of Jan Francoeur and Carol Tokarski in the Main Gallery at Bank of the Arts through January.

Carol Tokarski and Jan Francoeur served as arts administrators in New Bern for many years in addition to working towards their own artistic pursuits.

Jan Francoeur owned and operated Carolina Creations from 1989 to 2017. Carol Tokarski worked in nonprofit arts administration for decades, including serving as Executive Director at Craven Arts Council and Gallery for 13 years.

Tokarski and Francoeur went to the same small college in Michigan, but did not know each other well until both moved to New Bern in 1989 and connected. Shortly after moving to New Bern they had a joint exhibition at the Banks of the Arts and now 30 years later, they’re exhibiting at the Bank of the Arts once again.

Francoeur’s work in 30 Years Later is all about observations and painting what she loves such as gardens, architecture, travel and New Bern. This past year she experimented with a new medium, oil painting. Tokarski’s work focuses on utilizing rich colors and smooth blending to create energy and motion. She finds inspiration in nature, specifically her backyard where she paints the natural patterns she observes.

**Questions or Comments?**  
Send us an email at [info@newbernow.com](mailto:info@newbernow.com)  
Call 252-259-6853 or visit [NewBernNow.com](http://NewBernNow.com)

### New Bern High student performs at Atlanta fashion show

By Tina Adkins

Skyla Benjamin-Karcher, a 15-year-old sophomore at New Bern High School recently had the opportunity to do something many people only get to dream about.

During Thanksgiving weekend, she modeled at the No Mercy Fashion Show held at the Dawn Event Center in Atlanta with several of her family members in attendance. Although she was the youngest model in the show, she was selected to do the show’s grand finale as the showstopper, an experience she said will last a lifetime.

The teenager began her modeling career in July as a participant in the Valentina Wilson Teen Fashion Academy and in August she was crowned Miss Teen Fashion Academy at the pageant held at Craven Community College.

According to their Facebook page, the academy strives to instill poise and self-esteem in girls ages 13 - 19. *See page 3*

### New Specialty Store Carries Hot Sauces to Self Defense Products

*Continued from page one*

Additionally, they have a several brands of pet foods and accessories and conceal carry bags such as Cameleon Bags by Smith & Wesson, lady conceal bags, Montana West Bags and Roma Leathers Inc.

“We focus on small batch made goods. All our products are from different places around that country, small businesses that make small batch products,” Tracy Torres said. Basically, its small businesses helping small businesses through all this craziness.”

The couple have been in business for more than 26 years, but this is there first physical location. They operated via online, gun shows and local and regional events traveling anywhere from Pennsylvania to Georgia.

They moved to New Bern about three years ago sharing that their love of rescuing puppies played a huge part in their decision to stop traveling and find a permanent home.

“We began rescuing more puppies and the kids were gone,” Orlando Torres said. “We wanted to be able to spend more time at home and with the puppies.” They currently have eight rescue dogs and have had as many as 16 at one time.

We have found a community that we love,” Tracy Torres. “We plan to live the rest of our lives here. We love New Bern.”

The store is open seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. Call 252-631-2166.

### New Bern High student performs at Atlanta fashion show



Courtesy Photo

Skyla Benjamin-Karcher striking a pose.

*Continued from page 2*

“I really enjoyed the academy,” Benjamin-Karcher said. “She taught us how to walk along with a lot of other things. The pageant was my first-time walking and I won!”

Patricia Benjamin-Karcher said she is a very proud parent.

Since the pageant, her daughter has received many offers to model locally and has been invited to model with actress Vivica Fox according to the mother.

“We did not accept the offer because they wanted us to sign a contract,” she said. “I didn’t think it was a good idea at the time, but she has done some modeling for some of the local boutiques and clothing stores in New Bern serving as a brand promoter.”

Patricia Benjamin-Karcher said due to her daughter’s pictures being shared on several social media websites, she has been contacted by several promoters who are interested in having her daughter model in various shows in North Carolina and other states.

“Different opportunities are just opening up for her,” she said. “She was recently invited to attend New York Fashion Week and another show in Raleigh. It’s something that she wants to do, and I support her 100 percent.”

She said her daughter has remained humble and is still a tomboy.

“The minute she is done walking or whatever they need her to do, she immediately begins taking off her lashes, taking off this and taking off that and goes back to being the same old Skyla!”

### Death Notices:

December 11 – Sarah Agnes Toler, 91, Pollockville; December 10 – James Hudson, Sr., New Bern; December 9 – Valerie Gibbs Thomas, 65, New Bern; Thomas Oliver Davis, Jr., 30, New Bern; December 8 – Lt. Col. Charles Edward Daniels, Jr. (USMC), Ret. 89, New Bern; Kenneth Gene Garriss, 80, New Bern; Gene Perry McIlwean, 83, New Bern; December 6 – Ruby Sawyer, 92, Bayboro; Angela Maurice Wansley, 65, New Bern; December 5 – Alice Wallace Forrest, 94, Cove City; Mary Ludinia Blunt, 101, New Bern; Gayle Pauline Carlos, 85, Havelock; Lynn Tate Hughes, 57, New Bern; December 4 – Mary Lee Lipford Crosson, 77, Vanceboro; David Earl Williams, 71, New Bern; December 3 – Loretta Jean Minniti, 77, Blounts Creek; Katrina McClammy, 59, New Bern; December 2 – Cheryl Antoinette Dixon, 46, New Bern; Doctor Bruce Jones Jr., 71, Havelock



#### New Bern Now Navigator

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## OUTDOORS AND RECREATION

### Neuse Named “River of the Year”

*Watershed a success — and a work in progress*

By Vail Stewart Rumley

Fifty years ago, the Neuse River and its tributaries were in trouble. Polluted by textile mills and other manufacturing, sewage, runoff from both cities and farms, the Clean Water Act came to the Neuse watershed’s rescue, spurring the long process of cleaning up the river and its tributaries.

On the 50th anniversary of the Clean Water Act, the Neuse River is prime example of the successes available through this groundbreaking, water-saving legislation. It’s also a testament to the challenges that remain, as well, which is why American Rivers has selected the Neuse as its River of the Year.



Vail Stewart Rumley

Neuse Riverkeeper Samantha Krop cleans out a Trash Trout, a litter-trapping device Sound Rivers installed earlier this year on a New Bern creek.

On Oct. 17., clean-water advocates, state and federal legislators joined North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Elizabeth Biser and EPA Administrator Michael Regan on the banks of the Neuse River at Goldsboro, as American Rivers President Tom Kiernan made the River of the Year announcement.

“River of the Year is a celebration of the value an iconic American river provides to the communities that depend on it. The Neuse River has been at the forefront of restoration efforts that have their roots in the federal Clean Water Act, as well as showing the continuing need for the Clean Water Act to be refined, to deliver on the promise of clean water for communities of color that have faced systemic environmental injustice and continue to bear the brunt of river pollution and increased flooding,” said Peter Raabe, director of American Rivers’ southeast region.

It took more than two decades to make it happen, but in 1997, North Carolina’s Environmental Management Commission declared the Neuse River “nutrient sensitive waters” and adopted a plan to dramatically reduce the amount of pollution flowing into the river.

At the time, the nutrient management strategy was hailed as “a landmark piece of basinwide water-quality planning.”

“What drove all of those rules and resulted in a pretty massive nutrient reduction in the Neuse watershed was the Clean Water Act. The nutrient rules were state rules, but they were borne out of the Clean Water Act because the state was failing to meet the federal standards,” said Sound Rivers’ Neuse Riverkeeper Samantha Krop. “There were significant investments to wastewater treatments plants, particularly in large cities.”

While there have been successes over the decades, the Clean Water Act has not lived up to its full potential in the Neuse River watershed, according to Sound Rivers’ Riverkeepers — the CAFO (concentrated animal feeding operation) industry has thrived, and, in some places, polluted groundwater, surface water and air quality, negatively impacting the health of a rural communities.

“We are still failing massively in that low-income and communities of color continue to bear the brunt of pollution and flooding that’s exacerbated by climate change,” Krop said. “States and the federal government have fairly broad authority to fix that. They have the ability to address this situation, but they don’t in any meaningful way.”

While the Clean Water Act requires waterbodies to meet the use they’re intended for, what’s not taken into consideration is cumulative impacts, such as non-point sources of pollution — stormwater runoff, sewage spills caused by flooding, aging infrastructure or both combined, spills of animal waste from CAFOs into local waterways.

“Things like that are hard to catch and hard to assess because they’re so disparate,” Krop said. “We are not addressing the cumulative impacts and that’s where the law falls — they fail at looking at all of it together.”

According to Krop, the Neuse shows both what’s possible with strong federal clean-water safeguards and how those safeguards must do a better job to create a just, equitable, climate-resilient future for the millions who rely on the river for drinking water, water to fish in and water to swim in.

Founded in 1980-81, Sound Rivers is one of the oldest grassroots conservation organizations in North Carolina. Sound Rivers monitors and protects two watersheds, covering nearly a quarter of the state. With Riverkeepers on the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico rivers, Sound Rivers’ mission is to preserve the waterways’ health and the health of the people who rely on them through science-based advocacy and environmental justice. For more information, visit [soundrivers.org](http://soundrivers.org).



### Senior Games Have Been Sanctioned as Official Qualifying Site for State Finals

By Andrew Kendall

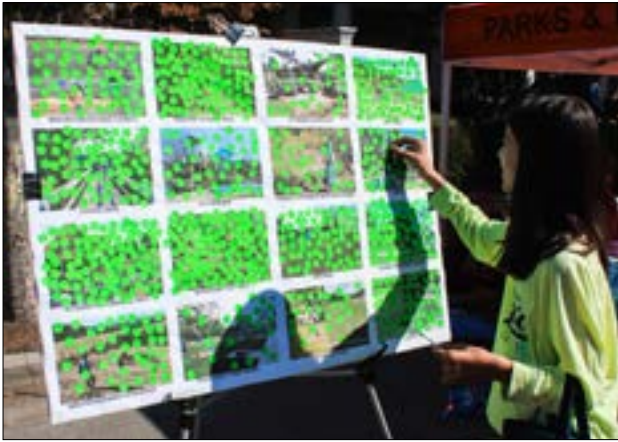
North Carolina Senior Games, Inc. is pleased to announce that the Neuse River Senior Games has been sanctioned as an official qualifying site for State Finals 2023.

The Neuse River Senior Games will be held in New Bern, North Carolina on April 24 – May 3, 2023.

The Neuse River Senior Games will be offering competition in many sports and art activities, such as bocce, cycling, golf, swimming, track & field, team sports, tournament sports, painting, pottery, poetry and more!

For volunteer, sponsorship, or registration information, contact Craven County Recreation & Parks, 252-636-6606.

### What’s in Parks and Recreation Master Plan?



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

Resident providing input during MumFest.

By Wendy Card

New Bern Parks & Recreation has been working on a master plan. The public input survey is now closed.

McGill Associates in partnership with Parks and Recreation gave people dots to place on a survey board identifying what they were interested in.

Topics included: Non-Motorized Boat Launch, Walking/Jogging Trail, Outdoor Classroom, Bike Trail, Fishing Dock, Playground, Fitness Stations/Fitness Par Course, Camping, Outdoor Performance Area, Adventure Play Area, Dog Park, Splash Pad/Spray Ground, Non-Programmed Open Space, Traditional Yard Games, Athletic Fields and a Skate Park.

According to a press release from Kari Warren, director of parks and recreation, “This input will ensure New Bern’s recreation facilities, parks, and programs will continue to meet residents’ and visitors’ needs over the next 10 years.”

“The last Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Master Plan was completed in 2013...it is time to create an updated version. Part of that process includes opportunities for the public to provide feedback...as well as an evaluation of feasible options, an assessment of current and future needs, and prioritization of goals and objectives.”



Laura Gammons

“The arts have an ability to open our minds so that we might see possible solutions to creative problems. Art has also been shown to increase our levels of dopamine, which is why I believe it is so important to bring art into your home. When a person finds a piece of art that they connect with it frees something in them that encourages personal growth.” - Laura Gammons

Laura Gammons is the featured artist during the month of December at Carolina Creations located at 317-A Pollock St.



December  
Calendar of Events

16: Discovering Tryon Palace: Traditions of Christmas Past, 10:30 a.m. at Tryon Palace, 529 S. Front St. Call 252-639-3524.

16 – 17: Elf The Musical, 7:30 p.m. at the Masonic Theatre, 514 Hancock St. Presented by RiverTowne Players.

17: Candlelight 2022 at Tryon Palace, 4:30 – 8:30 p.m., 610 Pollock St.

17-18: Sanctuary Choir and Orchestra Christmas Concert, 6 p.m., Tabernacle Baptist Church, 616 Broad St.

17: Wreaths Across America, 11 a.m., New Bern National Cemetery, 1711 National Ave.

17: Blood Drive Benefitting CCHS, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Flea Market, Colonial Capital Humane Society, 2302 Trent Road.

17: Cattery Adoption Open House, 3 p.m., Colonial Capital Humane Society. Call 252-633-0146.

17: 16th Annual Santa Paws on Parade, 8:30 a.m., Corner of S. Front St. and Craven St.

17: Mimosas and Mutts and Blood Drive, 10:00 a.m., The Garage, 1209 US Highway 70 East.

18: Advent Lessons and Carols at Christ Episcopal Church, 5:30 p.m., 320 Pollock St.

18: The Polar Express, 4 p.m., New Song United Methodist Church, 521 W. Grantham Rd.

22: North Carolina Symphony - Holiday Pops, 7:30 p.m., Riverfront Convention Center.

Visit the New Bern Farmer's Market every Saturday, 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. at 421 S. Front St.

Beary Merry Events updates their own calendar at bearymerryevents.com

Visit NewBernNow.com for an updated list of events.



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

"Joy Bench" in Memory of Karen Wilkes at Creekside Park



Questions or Comments?  
Send us an email at [info@newbernnow.com](mailto:info@newbernnow.com)  
Call 252-259-6853 or visit [NewBernNow.com](http://NewBernNow.com)

COMMUNITY NOTES

**ATLANTIC DANCE THEATRE** (ADT), as part of its Building Young Lives initiative, brings joyous, active, educational dance performances to area schools. During the past 2 years, 30 such programs were presented featuring outstanding guest professional dancers.

We are also pleased to partner with other nonprofits such as The Filling Station for their annual summer dance camp. Coming this Feb. 24 and 25, 2023: ADT partners with the Lifetime Learning Center at Craven Community College to present N.C.'s professional company CAROLINA BALLET.

ADT is proud to bring dance programming to our vibrant arts community! Visit [AtlanticDanceTheatre.org](http://AtlanticDanceTheatre.org). - By Elizabeth Pope, executive director

**NEW BERN CIVITAN CLUB'S** purpose is to serve the community by filling human needs that are not being met by other organizations or by individual efforts with main focus on the developmentally disabled population.

Several fundraisers are held throughout the year and the profits are donated to local charities.

Meetings are held the second Friday of each month at noon and the fourth Thursday of the month at 5:30 pm at Paula's restaurant.

Meetings are open - so join us. Check out our website - [NewBernCivitanClub.org](http://NewBernCivitanClub.org) - By Maureen Comer

**LAUNDRY OF LOVE NEW BERN** provides for the laundry expenses of local families facing economic hardship. We provide for the basic human necessity of clean laundry and bedding in order to increase the health and dignity of our neighbors.

We host events on the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month from 5:30 - 8 pm at Broad Street Laundry where we cover the expense of operating washing machines and dryers, as well as providing free detergent, fabric softener, bleach, dryer sheets and laundry bags.

Since December of 2021 we've served 482 families and washed 4,139 loads of laundry. For details, email [laundryloveofnewbern@gmail.com](mailto:laundryloveofnewbern@gmail.com). - By Elizabeth Voegtlin, director of operations

**CRAVEN CONCERTS** is a 501(c)(3) organization that brings live music to the New Bern area. We are currently in our 39th year.

Our mission is to also bring musical education to the Craven County Schools. We have provided musical instruments to students who would otherwise not be able to afford an instrument. We have provided an Opera for elementary students for many years.

Our concerts are held in the Orringer Auditorium on the Campus of Craven Community College.

Visit our website at [www.cravenconcertsinc.org](http://www.cravenconcertsinc.org), or call us at 252-637-1119. - Penny Sullivan

**NEW BERN HISTORICAL SOCIETY** "The mission of the New Bern Historical Society is to celebrate and promote New Bern and its heritage through events and education. We have an active calendar of educational events, storytelling programs, speaker presentations, tours, and social gatherings. Membership has grown to over 1000 with hundreds of volunteers contributing to our programs each year."

Visit [newbernhistorical.org](http://newbernhistorical.org). - Marissa Moore, programs director

Free Turkeys  
'gobbled up'



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

David Clark sitting on the tailgate of his pickup truck loaded with free turkeys.

By Wendy Card

The weekend before thanksgiving David and Lillian Clark drove into a parking lot in the Five Points neighborhood of New Bern with a pickup truck load of free turkeys. Within minutes, people came out of nowhere, expressed their gratitude and before long, truck was empty.

David Clark said, "They have spent the last 12 years handing out turkeys for Thanksgiving to those in need. They initially started with only three turkeys."

He continued, "The next year we did 10, then 30. Now we are giving out 100 turkeys to anyone who needs one and we always do it the weekend before Thanksgiving."

The turkeys were given out at the corner of Broad and Fleet streets in New Bern.

"We look for locations where we feel people are in need," David Clark said. "We have been at this location for the past six years. We see many of the same people and they have shown us a lot of support and appreciation."

David Clark is the assistant pastor at St. Peter Baptist Church in Aurora where he has been a member since 2009.

**BERNE LODGE NO. 724 A. F. & A. M.** is one of several Masonic Lodges in New Bern.

Freemasonry is a fraternal order tracing its roots back to medieval Europe. Today, we are engineers, educators, law enforcement officers, firefighters, doctors, lawyers, business owners, military, factory workers, farmers. Freemasonry welcomes men from all walks of life who believe in God, are of lawful age, good report, and well recommended.

Our charities are the Masonic Home for Children at Oxford, WhiteStone: A Masonic & Eastern Star Retirement Home, and a sundry of others to include the Craven Community College Foundation and other local efforts. For more information: Facebook.com/BerneLodge724 - By Aaron L. Clark

**ABUNDANT LIFE COMMUNITY SERVICES** (ALCS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the well-being of the underserved population through stabilized living conditions, education, and advocacy. Our mission is to develop the highest quality of life for all people by providing opportunities for personal and economic independence. Located in the Greater Duffyfield Community, ALCS offers cost-free programs such as The Resource Hub. The Hub, established in a centralized location, offers mental health services, food/nutrition, substance abuse education/recovery, temporary transitional housing, employment assistance, and many other supportive services.

For details, call Hazel B. Royal, executive director at 252-616-1818.

Empowering  
Words

*Continued from page one*

Borrowing from a Habitat for Humanity tradition, the nonprofit Tried By Fire, Inc. invited grant agency representatives, donors, neighbors, volunteers, contractors, community leaders, clergy, elected officials, and supporters to "Sign-A-Stud" over the last year of construction of this four-bedroom house at 524 Roundtree Street.

My Sister's House  
"Where your past doesn't matter"

My Sister's House represents an empowering facility as a transitional home for post-incarcerated women who need a safe, supportive place to live while they return to their community. Once the walls are closed in with sheetrock, the words remain. "Over a hundred messages have been shared throughout the house," said Bonita Simmons, Executive Director. "Some are inspirational, some simple prayers, some words of wisdom, but all heart-felt, leaving encouraging and empowering messages for our guests. We look forward to explaining to women who will stay here that they are surrounded by the love and prayers of the community that has built this house for them. It is like a community hug."

**THE TRYON CIVITAN CLUB** is a service organization whose members volunteer in our community to make a difference to those less fortunate. We sponsor monthly bingo for seniors in a local nursing home and host an annual party for children with developmental disabilities. We support a variety of local non-profits including Coastal Women's Shelter, Special Olympics, RCS, MERCI Clinic and Twin Rivers YMCA amongst others!

Tryon Civitans meet twice a month at La Casetta: on the second Tuesday at 5:30 p.m and on the fourth Tuesday at 1 p.m. Guests are welcome to attend one meeting for free. - By Pat Drake

INTERFAITH REFUGEE MINISTRY

People fleeing war and persecution come to eastern North Carolina through the U.S. Refugee Admissions program. When they arrive, Interfaith Refugee Ministry and volunteers assist them with food, housing and employment as well as English lessons. It is expected that they will be self-sufficient through employment within four to six months after arrival. Over the 30 years we have worked here, the nationalities may have changed, but the stories remain the same. Arriving refugees seek freedom, peace and a place to raise their families in safety. New Bern and surrounding communities have provided welcome and hope to refugees from all over the world. We welcome volunteers!

See our website [helpingrefugees.org](http://helpingrefugees.org) - By Susan S. Husson, exective director



Mike's Jewelers expands  
and moves to new  
location

*Continued from page one*

Price also said he has a daughter and son who are coming up in the business and wanted something more suitable for the long term.

"The old location was built in the 1900's," he said. "Our new location was built in 1996. It's bigger and nicer."

Price said having their own private parking is also a plus. "Many of our customers are over 50 and they appreciate being able to get out of their cars and do business versus having to walk two or three blocks to get to the store," he said. "We like this part of town a lot. If I went around New Bern looking for where to put a jewelry store, I don't think I could actually pinpoint a better spot than this one. We're very happy here."

Price said they are still very much a jewelry repair shop.

"My dad started it as a repair shop and that has been the backbone of our business," he said. "Now, we're a full-scale jewelry store, but repairs are still the primary thing that we do."

Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday. They are closed on Sunday.

Craven County Undergoes  
Tax Appraisal Process



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

Craeberne Forest Subdivision

*Continued from page one*

Residents will receive reappraisal notices the week of Feb. 27, 2023. Young emphasized, "In order to submit an appeal notice, the bottom two-thirds section of the form is divided by a perforated line...complete that section." Return signed appeal forms to the Craven County Tax Assessor at P.O. Box 1128 in New Bern, NC 28563 on or before May 22, 2023.

Young said, "while submitting an appeal, please include any or all of the following comparable recent sales as of or prior to January 1 2023. Pictures reflecting the condition of your property, a recent fee appraisal or a market analysis, these are helpful examples in assisting the appraiser in reviewing your appraised value. The appraiser will review your appeal and verify the property card information."

If you don't agree with the appraiser's review, you can appeal to the Craven County Board of Equalization. You may appeal their decision. Young stated, "the written notification will be explanatory of the steps for you to choose to appeal to the property tax commission."

Leslie Young said, "Your property taxes may, increase, decrease or remain the same." And tax rates will be approved by the Craven County Board of Commissioners and will become effective July 2023.

Questions? Call 252-636-6640 you can or email [revaluation2023@cravencountync.gov](mailto:revaluation2023@cravencountync.gov).



J Shine-Wright Photography

New Bern High Bears Fans



New Bern Board of Aldermen Approve Salary  
Increase, Employees Still Underpaid

*Continued from page one*

Human Resource Director Sonya Hayes said, "There are some positions that were identified that it's recommended that they move up by one grade which equates to a 5% increase...some that were recommended to move up by two grades that would be 10% and some three grades which is 15%."

According to PTRC's report dated Dec. 5, recommendations were to "Adopt recommendations in Paragraphs A and B of their market salary study: \$2,804,292; 25% FICA, Retirement, etc. \$701,073; with a Funding Requirement of \$3,505,365."

City Manager Foster Hughes provided a breakdown in the classification pay plan. "There are 203 position titles...like a police office, recreation program coordinator..." He continued, "As of today that represents 460 employees. 55 of those positions and titles are recommended to advance one pay grade representing 80 employees. One hundred and twenty-two position titles are recommended to advance two pay grades and are 261 employees. And twenty-four of those positions and titles are recommended to advance three pay grades, that affects 117 employees. Two positions are recommended to decrease one pay grade and that affects two employees."

Hughes continued, "The City of New Bern recommends implementing this as a two-step process. The first step would be basically a 66% implementation plan...with the check date of Jan. 13, 2023. What that would include is a one grade advance of 3% annual salary increase that would affect 80 employees. The second-grade advance would be a 6% annual salary increase, that would affect 261 employees. The three-grade advance would be a 10% increase. That would affect 117 employees. Employees assigned to a position that would decrease by one grade would receive a 1% bonus. Total implementation cost is approximately \$1.15M for six months ending June 30, 2023 for one year to fund the 66% would be \$2.3M. Proposed funding would come from the general and enterprise funds. Step two would look at funding the balance during the 23-24 budget process."

Employees and their supporters filled the benches, listening to the discussion. Members of the board voiced their opinions on the importance of paying employees. At one point, Alderman Barbara Best asked if the employees understood what was being proposed and someone in the audience shouted, "We disagree."

Based on the city's recommendation, they committed 66% to be effective in January 2023. The BOA amended the classification of the pay plan with a target date of July 1 for the rest of the implementation. Members of the board emphasized it was a target date, they could not obligate funds at this time. The motion passed unanimously. Alderman Johnnie Ray Kinsey was absent.

The city manager's salary was not included in the Market Salary Study. According to a press release (PR), when Hughes was hired dated Sept. 16, 2021, he received a "salary of 165,000 a year plus a \$500 a month vehicle allowance and also ask Mr. Hughes to work as quickly as possible to locate an assistant city manager." Another PR dated Oct. 13, 2021, "The Assistant City Manager was hired the following month, "Mr. Williams' annual salary will be \$135,000." Marvin Williams was the Havelock Chief of Police before assuming the position.

During new business, Alderman Bob Brinson announced the board previously discussed giving the city manager a bonus for his work in a closed session. The board unanimously approved a bonus of \$12,000 for Foster Hughes.

The city has not responded with comments. It's unknown at this time how much the city paid for PTRC's Market Salary Study.

Tisdale House to be Moved

By Wendy Card

The Tisdale House is located where the new Stanley White Recreation Center will be constructed.

Originally the house was free for the taking, the new owner would have to move it. New Bern Preservation Foundation (NBPF) wanted to ensure the house was properly restored so the city sold the parcel on Rhem Avenue, to the NBPF for \$45,000, who will vet prospective owners and ensure the house is moved to Rhem Avenue

The new owner must relocate the house by Feb. 15, 2023.



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

Tisdale house located at 1312 Broad St.



Stamikia Wallace

Members of the New Bern High School Bears Football Team.



Elaine Rouse for New Bern Now

Temple B'nai Sholem Hanukkah Live Window Display at Carolina Creations



HISTORY

Battlefield Park for History Buffs and Nature Lovers alike

One of the most endangered Civil War Battlefields in the country, the 33-acre New Bern Battlefield Park is now the cornerstone of Civil War tourism in Craven County and Eastern North Carolina. This historic jewel, one of the many coordinated efforts focused on the restoration and preservation of New Bern's historic assets, began in the 1970's. The New Bern Historical Society's goal of restoring and preserving this long-forgotten historic site and Civil War history is a story of leadership, commitment and community support.

The fierce battle on March 14, 1862 between Union and Confederate forces ended in a major victory for the Federal Army and New Bern's occupation for the duration of the Civil War. The battle took place in an area now privately developed, and on a long-forgotten swampy, overgrown tract, five miles from New Bern. Within the heavily overgrown wooded area, the original breastworks and earthen redans occupied by the 26th and 33rd North Carolina Regiment were in pristine condition. In the 1950's, Weyerhaeuser Real Estate Company acquired this 24-acquire tract and chose not to develop it due to its historic significance.



Ed Bearss, Jim Sugg, Mark Mangum and Susan Moffat-Thomas cut ribbon in January 2009

In the 1960's, the American Civil War Centennial led to a renewed interest by New Bernians to restore the battlefield, but the cost stymied the project. Interest in restoring the battlefield materialized in 1989 when the Historical Society organized the Battle of New Bern Park Committee with the goal of acquiring the Weyerhaeuser tract.

Development of a master plan was critically needed to move forward. Battlefield Steering Committee chairman, Mark Mangum, in his many visits to other Civil War sites, met Pat Hart, LandscapeArchitect, Kimley-Horn and Associates, who agreed to develop an initial master plan. Pat Hart and the Civil War Battlefield Committee, completed the New Bern Battlefield Park Master Plan in 2004 and schematic designs providing the vision, foundation and momentum to acquire funding for the park's on-going restoration.

To gain access to the site, a roadway was graveled and over the course of the year, bringing their own personal construction equipment, tractors and chainsaws, hundreds of volunteers began clearing the trails through the densely wooded battlefield. Thousands of hours of volunteer time and labor continued to be contributed by volunteers and local businesses for construction of trails, bridges, and overlook platforms.

Patrons, organizations and garden clubs donated construction funds for a Visitor Center, flagpoles, lighting, display cannon and signage identifying plant life throughout the Battlefield.

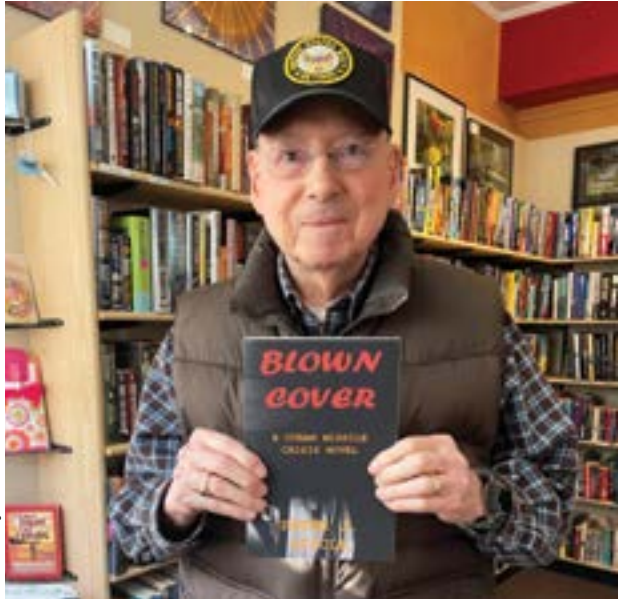
In 1993, the Society learned the U.S. Committee on Civil War Sites was scheduling public hearings to define a list of endangered civil war sites and the Civil War Advisory Commission was holding a public hearing in Wilmington, NC. Not on the agenda, armed with resolutions of support, we went to the meeting hoping the Committee would allow us to present our case, which they did.

Ed Bearss listened to us, made a trip to New Bern the next day, and following his examination of the site, the Battlefield was added to the list of 383 endangered Civil War. In 1996, Weyerhaeuser deeded this tract to the Civil War Trust, who then deeded the tract to the Society in January 2000. Hart completed a History Walk Master Plan in 2015. Thirty-five interpretive panels place the battle in its historical context, relates the battlefield to other New Bern and regional Civil War sites. A Gateway Plaza with a 20 foot in diameter concrete color-coded ground map and signage orients visitors, providing an overview of the battle and a starting point for guided and self-guided tours.

Owned by the Society, the operation and preservation of the Park's hallowed grounds, is on-going, and is solely supported by members and visitor donations.

By Susan Moffat-Thomas, New Bern Historical Society Emeritus Board Member

New Bern Autor Peter Azole releases new novel, “BLOWN COVER”



Courtesy Photo

Pete displaying his book at The Next Chapter Books and Art.

By Peter Azole  
“BLOWN COVER; A Cuban Crisis Novel” is the eighth of Pete's Navy historical fiction novels was released in November 2022 on Amazon. Signed copies of all eight novels are available at The Next Chapter Books & Art on Front Street. The back cover of BLOWN COVER reads: “The Navy and the CIA desperately needed unique, critical intelligence about hints of Soviet anti-ship and ballistic missile threats being brought to Cuba.

Putting a radio-intercept operator into Cuba was one way to gain insights, otherwise unavailable, into Soviet activities there. U.S. Navy Communications Technician First Class Salvador Conte had a long list of skills to pull it off, and he volunteered without hesitation.

Salvador quickly learned that it was an arduous mission and became exhaustively challenging, especially when his future in Cuba teetered on the worst outcomes. The risks to his life became all too real!

Come along on this mission and share his experience. It remains to be seen whether he will survive.”

Pete is a retired U.S. Navy cryptology specialist officer. He has called New Bern home since 2005.

Letter from the Editor

When I asked people what they thought about New Bern Now creating a local print newspaper, many thought I had lost my mind. It was the same look and response I received when I launched NewBernNow.com almost 14 years ago. Others were excited because it was something new and voiced their concerns that there isn't enough local news.

For those of you reading this who haven't heard of New Bern Now, I welcome you to visit NewBernNow.com as it's our “home base”. People send us information via email and it's published as an article and/or on the calendar. The article is then shared on our social media platforms and in the New Bern Bulletin – our daily news email (Monday – Friday). We also have a local radio show with the Podsquad, focusing on the people, places, events, and happenings in New Bern and surrounding towns. We published a magazine, the Ledger, for ten years, but stopped due to COVID. The cost of paper had increased, especially the high gloss magazine.

Times have changed and so have we. That's why we are launching the newspaper. We will wait for a response from members of the greater New Bern area to decide on how often it will be printed. Please know that we are a small, veteran owned business that does not have the staff or funding that corporate owned newspapers have. We are trying to do the best we can with what we have.

We appreciate everyone who have supported us over the years, whether by sending us your news and announcements, advertising, or subscribing so we can pay the bills. We couldn't do what we do without you.

Please know that we do not have a proofreader but welcome your input as this was our first go at a broadsheet newspaper. It's been an experience to say the least. We hope you will look past any typos as we were down to the wire and Adams Publishing Group were very patient with us as we've had to reschedule two print jobs.

We truly want to hear your feedback in order for us to improve.

Kind regards,  
Wendy Card, owner/editor

AROUND TOWN



Wendy Card for New Bern Now

NC Wildlife Officer Ryan Biggerstaff and Intern Dawson Virgo taking a preparing for the day.



Elaine Rouse for New Bern Now

Coastal United Soccer Live Window Display at The Four C's.



Courtesy Photo

Construction on City Hall Elevator Annex and painting project.



Dr. Bobbi Kotrba, DVM  
Dr. Lauren Ferebee, DVM  
Dr. Tanya Osler, DVM  
Dr. Levi Ceminara, DVM  
Dr. Melanie Gurkin, DVM

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Craig Powell Photography



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Colonial Capital Humane Society Live Window Display at Michaela Rose Watson's Studio M

AROUND TOWN

Senior city staff continue to resign

By Wendy Card

At least nine department heads and senior staff left the City of New Bern since 2021.

New Bern Now (NBN) asked Colleen Roberts, the city's public information officer (PIO) for the start and end dates of senior staff through Aug 5. She provided the information on Sept. 8. The following list does not include people who left after that.

Daryl Nelson, the streets superintendent, resigned the end of Nov. 2022.

Name	Position	Start	End
Mark Stephens	City Manager	6/14/2014	5/14/2021
Jeff Ruggieri	Director Development Services	4/19/2012	2/4/2022
Amanda Ohlensehlen	Economic and Community Development Manager		3/4/2022
Mary Hogan	Director of Finance	2/23/2022	7/2/2021
Michael Horton	Parks Superintendent	11/18/2018	8/20/2021
Toussaint Summers	Chief of Police	10/10/2011	3/19/2021
Matthew Montayne	Director of Public Works	3/29/2015	4/23/2021
Alfred Cablay	Director of Public Works	1/24/2022	8/5/2022

City Manager Foster Hughes asked the Board of Aldermen (BOA) to remove the requirement for department heads to live within eight miles of City Hall, except for the police chief and fire chief during the Oct. 11 meeting.

After the city changed the residency requirement, NBN asked Roberts where department heads and interims lived. She responded, “Pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 160A-168, an employee's address is not public record”. A public record search revealed Warren lives in Emerald Isle which is located at least 50 miles away from City Hall.

During the Nov. 22 BOA meeting, Hughes announced Kari Warren was selected as the new director of Parks and Recreation. She held the interim director position for the past year. Her starting salary is \$111,868.

Hughes told the board they conducted a two-month national search and Warren was selected out of 96 applicants. The PIO noted there were 93 applicants.

George Chiles to Director of Public Works, a position that he filled twice, most recently since July 2022. According to the public information office, twenty-two applicants were considered. His salary will be \$123,334.

Jessica “Jessie” Rhue was hired as the Director of Development Services. Her first day on the job will be Jan. 3, 2023. Her salary will be \$128,000.

Is the BOA evaluating why senior staff are resigning to prevent further vacancies?

The city has not responded for a request for comment.

Craven County Courthouse Annex to be rebuilt



Courtesy Photo

Concept drawing is what the new entrance to the courthouse will look like on Craven Street.

By Wendy Card

Craven County was awarded \$5 million from the State Capital and Infrastructure Fund Grant for repairs and renovation work at the Craven County Courthouse.

The courthouse sustained damage from flooding during Hurricane Florence in 2018. The rebuild project is to renovate the old sheriff's office and jail which is located on Craven Street. The building is attached to the historic courthouse and the renovations are on the annex only.

The building will provide ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) accessibility to the courthouse. Assistant County Manager Gene Hodges said, “A new secured covered area will be provided for transport of inmates for court related activities.”

Assistant City Manager Gene Hodges explained the basement was inundated with over nine feet of water which flooded major infrastructure and building systems that need to operate the building.

Craven County Plans to Purchase of Sudan Shriners Temple and Property



Tina Adkins for New Bern Now

Sudan Shriners Temple and Complex.

By Wendy Card

The Sudan Shriners Temple received extensive damage from Hurricane Florence in 2018. The Shriners decided to sell the property. A purchase agreement between the Shriners and the Craven County Board of Commissioners (BOC) for the property was added to the Dec. 5 meeting agenda. County Manager Jack Veit described the property “immediately adjacent to our building”, referring to the Craven County Administration building and the “court complex across the street from the edge of our building where the parking lot begins all the way to the river will be the property in question as discussed during negotiations.”

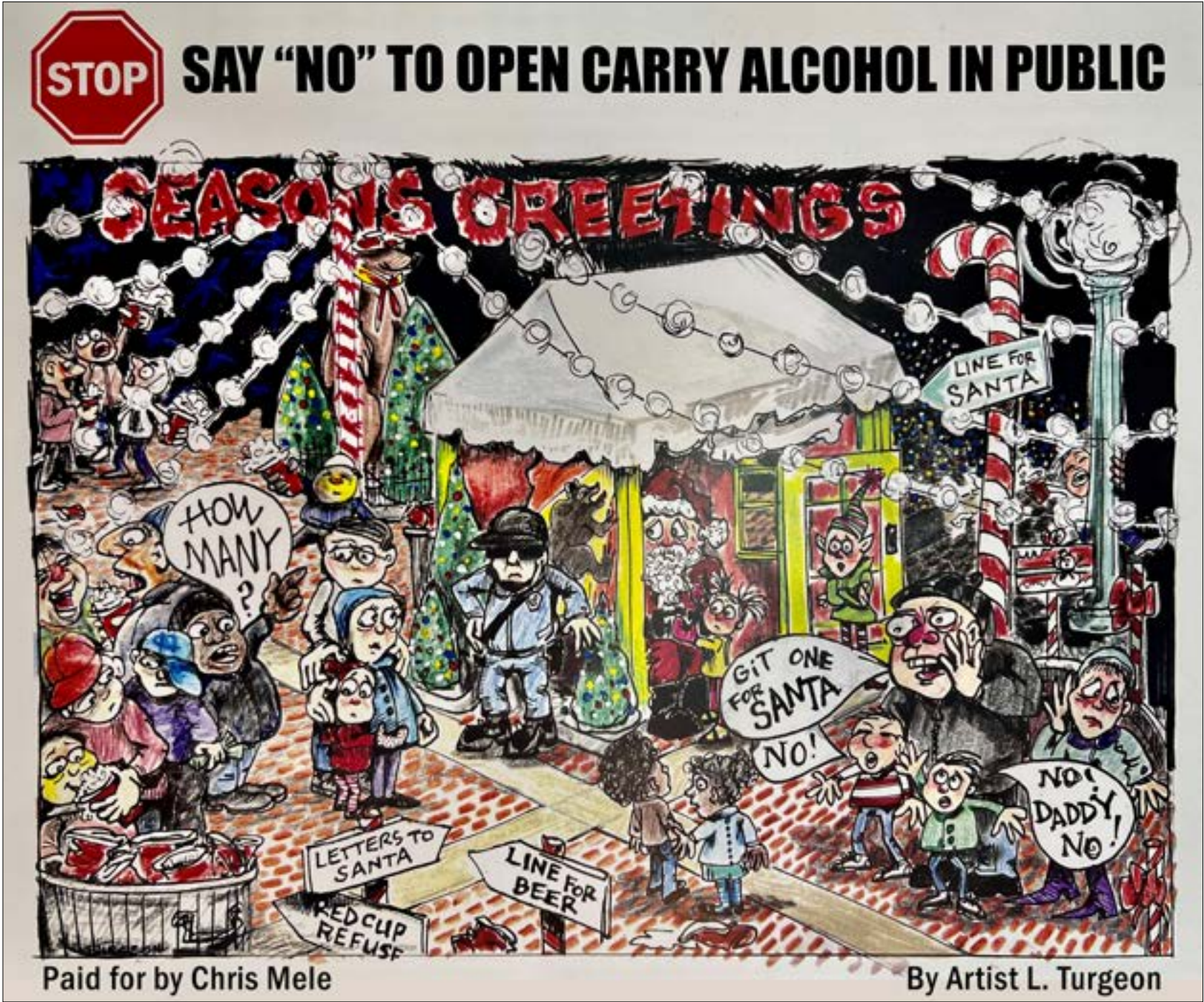
Veit noted the reason for the purchase is, “to ensure adequate parking for the Craven County judicial system and Craven County government activities, but most importantly, provide a footprint for future growth for Craven County in downtown New Bern.”

If approved, the sale would be complete after the Shriners general membership meeting in early January 2023.

Included in the purchase agreement, the Shriners would be allowed to use the Riverfront Convention Center of Craven County for free for two days every year for ten years.

Chairman Jason Jones described the thought process of board, “The adjacent parking lot that we have here, without it we cannot exist downtown. Our court system cannot exist downtown. We have an obligation as a county as a board of commissioners, to provide parking, to provide space for our courts. We were faced with the reality that this piece of property was going to be sold. We have been in conversation with the Shriners for many years over this piece of property and it was our understanding for many years that you know they were going to try to work with us so we could retain this parking lot. It came to a point they decided they could not do that...they had to sell all the property together and we respect that.” He continued, “I want you to understand it's a lot of money. We're not going to have to borrow this money, though it's...money that is going to come from fund balance.”

The motion was made to approve the purchase agreement and budget amendment in the amount of \$6 million and it passed unanimously by the former board.



Paid for by Chris Mele

By Artist L. Turgeon



# COMMUNITY NOTES

## Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 886 Thanks the Community for Field of Flags Support



Students from the Cstone Enrichment Program, James City, NC join chapter members of the Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 886 placing flags at Union Point Park in preparation for Veterans Day

By Dobert Owsley

Vietnam Veterans of America, Chapter 886 extends our most sincere thanks and appreciation for the huge outpouring of community support for the 8th Annual Field of Flag recently displayed at Union Point Park. The Field of Flags is the Chapter's signature community Veterans Day event. It is a time and place to honor the service and sacrifice of all veterans that have served or are now serving in the Armed Forces. This year there were 1,076 flags on display. When viewed as a whole, the Field of Flags makes a magnificent statement of veteran and community solidarity and patriotism. The flags standing tall and snapping in a brisk fall breeze were common 12 x 18-inch flags attached to a 30-inch staff. What made each one special was a white tag secured just below the shaft top with information provided by a loved one or friend noting the veteran's name, branch of service, and time of service.

Special thanks to Rick Miller, our chapter activities chairman, Clarence and Shirley Hertzog, the event logistical support coordinators, chapter members that placed the flags, and surveyor Joe Chance for the precise layout of the field array.



Skating on Synthetic Rink in Union Point Park.

## First Ever Synthetic Ice Rink Installed at Union Point Park

By Wendy Card

For the first time ever, people skated during the holiday season at Union Point Park.

The rink was purchased from KwikRink Synthetic Ice and is approximately 60 feet by 40 feet in size.

The rink cost \$41,920. According to the City of New Bern's public information officer, the city paid \$21,920 with Parks and Recreation funds and the New Bern Area Chamber of Commerce and Swiss Bear, Inc. paid \$10,000 each.

Admission will be \$5 to skate for a 45-minute session. This includes skate fitting and rental.

The hours of operation:

Thursdays from 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Fridays from 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Saturdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. and 4 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Sundays from 1 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Check the Parks & Recreation website and Facebook page for other times.



New Bern High School Cheerleaders



Nicole Kohr's Book "Sui Tui's Last Straw"



Navy ROTC in the New Bern Christmas Parade

## Former Board of Aldermen Divide American Rescue Plan Funds Among Wards

Board of Aldermen Project Allocations by Ward for the  
ARP Enabled Funds by Utilizing the Revenue Replacement Standard Allocation

Total ARPA Allocation \$ 6,704,351

	Bengel/Prill	Harris/Royal	Aster	Kinsey	Best	Odham/Brinson	
Ward Allocations & Projects	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Totals
Award Allocation by Ward	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 6,704,351
Allocated/Approved Projects:							
McCotter House-Redev Commission	\$ 116,667	\$ 116,667			\$ 116,667		\$ 350,000
Hancock Street Culvert	\$ 500,000						\$ 500,000
Red Robin/Trent Road Ditch		\$ 230,000					\$ 230,000
Trent Rd Bank Stab		\$ 270,000					\$ 270,000
Racetrack Rd Culvert				\$ 100,000			\$ 100,000
East Rose Culvert					\$ 500,000		\$ 500,000
Sidewalks-Prembroke		\$ 500,725					\$ 500,725
Electronic Speed Limit Signs \$3,500 each	\$ 7,000		\$ 14,560			\$ 7,000	\$ 28,560
NB Memorial Cemetary Shelter						\$ 75,000	\$ 75,000
Union Point Park - Infrastructure Improvements						\$ 100,000	\$ 100,000
Sidewalk Gaps						\$ 200,000	\$ 200,000
Neighborhood signs replaced or improved						\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Riverwalk Fence Upgrade (Convention Ctr to RR Tracks)	\$ 130,000						\$ 130,000
Police Department K9			\$ 10,000			\$ 10,000	\$ 20,000
Fireman's Museum			\$ 2,855				\$ 2,855
Middle & Broad Streets - Light	\$ 350,000						\$ 350,000
Self Contained Breathing Apparatus - 10 Units (Fire Dept)			\$ 75,000				\$ 75,000
Racetrack Road Improvements				\$ 1,017,392			\$ 1,017,392
North Hills Stormwater Related Projects					\$ 500,725		\$ 500,725
Redevelopment Commission Projects (Unspent Funds Bal)		X					\$ -
Subrecipient Grant/Donations (Unspent Funds Bal)	\$ 3,725	X					\$ 3,725
Approved Projects Total:	\$ 1,107,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 102,415	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 394,500	\$ 4,956,482
Allocation Less Approved Projects:	\$ 10,000	\$ 0	\$ 1,014,977	\$ (0)	\$ 0	\$ 722,892	\$ 1,747,869
Projects in Planning/Direction Provided to Seek Estimates (Projects Have Not Been Approved):							
Norfolk Southern Culvert (\$400,000 Pulled) App. 9/13					X		\$ -
Omega Center Donation - On Hold/Allowability	\$ 10,000						\$ 10,000
Union Point Park - Various Improvements						X	\$ -
Other Citywide Projects						X	\$ -
Other Stormwater Projects (Balance of Allocation, if any)					X		\$ -
Total Estimated Potential Projects (Not Approved)	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 10,000
Total Estimated Costs of All Projects:	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 102,415	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 1,117,392	\$ 394,500	\$ 4,966,482
Remaining Balance of Allocation (Allocation Less All Projects Above)	\$ 0	\$ 0	\$ 1,014,977	\$ (0)	\$ 0	\$ 722,892	\$ 1,737,869

For projects that have not yet received a quote, an X is marked in the project's corresponding ward.

The city received \$6,704,351 of American Rescue Plan Act funds last year. The former board made the decision to split \$1,117,392 for each Aldermen to spend the money as they preferred. The spending deadline is Dec. 31, 2024.

Former Alderman Odham included Alderman elect Bob Brinson in the decisions to allocate ARPA funds for Ward 6. At the time, former Aldermen Sabrina Bengel and Jameesha Harris did not ask Aldermen elects Hazel Royal and Rick Prill for input.