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Patriot Act lands Chatham man in Kafkaesque hell

By Deborah R. Meyer

In 1997 Amber Harmon went to Havana for the XIV International Festival of Students and Youth. A passionate student of Latin American Studies at Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington, Harmon felt a strong pull to Cuba. The very first day her delegation, Global Exchange out of San Francisco, which included 150 Americans, participated in a parade. "It was very emotional. I could see the Cubans' emotions. They don't have any resentment towards Americans but towards our policies. The people are welcoming and open. It touched me," Harmon said.

On Harmon's second day, she met her husband-to-be. "Juan Manuel Reyes-Alonso was responsible for the bus I was on. I just thought he was a hottie and found a way to approach him because some of my stuff had gotten lost after the parade," she said.

The next day the two left the group and Reyes-Alonso taught Amber about Havana through his eyes. Perhaps it was because July in Havana is so hot. Perhaps it was because Reyes-Alonso had a way with words. Perhaps it was because destiny does not consider politics. Whatever the reason, when Harmon left after her 10-day journey, she had Reyes-Alonso's heart in her pocket. He had hers in his.

Reyes-Alonso, who is now 36 years



Juan Manuel Reyes-Alonso has been jailed and faces deportation to Cuba — and a possible death sentence — because he failed to fill out a form required by the Patriot Act. At right, he and wife Amber Harmon enjoyed kayaking during happier times.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF AMBER HARMON

old, grew up in Cuba. Born of parents from Cuba's countryside, Reyes-Alonso spent his youth in Havana, becoming a military student at the age of 13. "He loves Cuba. He grew up in the Caribbean with its crystal clear waters and won't go swimming in a lake because you can't see the bottom. He loves the Cuban music, the Cuban culture, food, and her history to a certain extent. He went to high school and then to the University of Havana," said Harmon.

From 1989-1994, Reyes-Alonso



received training at the Superior Institute of Intelligence during which time he was an Operative Officer Assistant in the Technical Department of Investigations. From 1994 until 1997 he was a Cuban Intelligence Officer for the Ministry of the Interior. According to his wife, this organization is similar to the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the United States. Harmon said that in November of 1997, Reyes-Alonso was forced to quit his position because of their relationship and forbidden to emigrate. In February of 1998, Harmon returned to Cuba. "I thought if things don't work out between us at least I get to see the country again," Harmon said. Despite the mountain of

obstacles that were solidly in the path of their being together, they started filing papers, making requests for Reyes-Alonso to emigrate from Cuba on a fiancé visa.

It wasn't to be.

In August of 2000, Reyes-Alonso escaped from Cuba and made his way to Nicaragua and immediately made his presence known there to the country's officials and to the U.S. Embassy. One week later, with assistance from many, including the now vice-presidential candidate John Edwards' office, Reyes-Alonso was admitted to the United States and came to settle in Pittsboro. He welcomed the chance to become a Chathamite.

On September 11, 2000, Harmon and Reyes-Alonso were married in

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Jordan-Ellis works for a better Chatham

Margaret Jordan-Ellis is an energetic, effervescent octogenarian.

© PHOTO BY JOHN SHILLITO



By Judy Hogan

When Margaret Jordan-Ellis was a little girl, her father used to say: "Here comes Margaret, scratching. She's full of fleas and ideas."

She was born in Sanford, but her paternal grandfather, Marion Jasper Jordan, lived in Gulf, where she lives now, in an "early American primitive" house he had built in 1890 of Chatham County woods: ash, walnut, red oak, white oak, and heart pine. She was there often as a child, riding just behind her grandfather in his Studebaker on a little seat that folded out. She went around with him to visit his tenants, barns, office. He had 1000 acres, farmed cotton and tobacco, and raised cattle.

She married and moved to New Albany, Indiana, just across the Ohio River from Louisville, Ky. Margaret loved the view from their porch out over

the Ohio River and its valley, the beautiful patchwork quilt of farmland. Then she learned that one of the largest utility companies in the country, which already had a power plant on the Ohio in a nearby town, wanted to build another one in New Albany. It was to be 300 feet high and produce electricity from soft coal.

So she wrote a petition and got her elves to help her collect signatures to keep the power plant away. She had just gotten her father-in-law's signature when his lawyer and friend, who was also the lawyer for the powerful power company, came over for a chat with him. When the lawyer left, her beloved father-in-law said he wanted his name off the petition. Margaret's efforts to persuade him to leave it on failed. He argued that the new plant would bring jobs and lower taxes.

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WOMEN OF CHATHAM

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Forum to focus on water issues

Chatham Citizens For Effective Communities, Friends of the Rocky River and other Chatham citizens groups are holding a forum titled, "Citizens Forum on Chatham's Future: WATER, County at the Crossroads" on Thursday, October 21 at 7 p.m. at Central Carolina Community College in Pittsboro. Citizens from across the county are urged to attend.

CCEC and FORR organized this meeting in response to citizen's concerns. Citizens who voted for water bonds in two districts in July as well as citizens in northwest Chatham who will be voting a second time on Nov. 2 still have questions that have not been adequately addressed. Other citizens feel frustrated that the county has changed Public Works Directors too frequently, there are problems with water treatment, and the present water pipes are splitting. These unsolved problems hang heavily over a system that is about to be expanded dramatically.

One of the citizens in Chatham that has been the most involved in water issues over time is Ray Greenlaw. He has served on the Water Advisory Committee since 1988. He said in an interview recently that he would like to see citizens become better informed and be more interactive with county government in planning for our needs for water in the future. This forum will be a good first step to fulfilling that vision.

For more information, go to Chatham Citizens For Effective Communities website at www.chatham-citizens.org. To get on an E-mail list for updates and meetings contact us at info@chathamcitizens.org.

—Mary Bastin

Woof-A-Palooza succeeds for animals

Chatham Animal Rescue and Education, Inc. (C.A.R.E.) held its Third Annual Woof-A-Palooza dog



Who let the dogs out? Chatham Animal Rescue and Education Inc., and the dogs enjoyed their walk, as well as a bath and bobbing for tennis balls.

walk fundraiser on Saturday, September 18 in Pittsboro at Central Carolina Community College — and this year's event raised about \$6,000. The one-mile dog walk raises money to support the expenses of over 100 cats and dogs in volunteer foster homes. The animals of C.A.R.E. are rescued from the Chatham County Animal Shelter or the local community and live in volunteer foster homes until they are adopted by a permanent, loving home. Over 50 animal lovers participated on Saturday morning ignoring the rain from Hurricane Ivan. There was a choice of three prizes for the top three walkers that brought in the most pledges and donations. They won their choice of a 20" Color TV donated by Wal-

Mart, a framed 11 x 14 Pet Portrait donated by Moment's Portraiture or a long weekend getaway to Topsail Beach donated by James and Angela Nemeth. The top fundraiser was Dorasue Burns who raised over \$1,200.

C.A.R.E. has been making a difference in the lives of animals for almost 30 years. Chatham Animal Rescue and Education was originally founded in 1975 as Chatham Humane Society. Without the financial support of generous corporate sponsors, individual pledges and volunteers, they would not be able to save the lives of animals in Chatham County. Please visit their website at www.chathamanimal-rescue.org if you would like more information. Donations can be

mailed to C.A.R.E., P.O. Box 610, Pittsboro, NC 27312.

The next fundraiser for C.A.R.E. is the Second Annual Burrito Bash at the General Store Café on Monday, February 7, 2005 at 6 p.m.

—Karen McMaster

briefs

Cambridge Hills open for business

Cambridge Hills Independent Living is opening the doors to its new independent apartments for seniors. Located in the heart of Pittsboro at 25 Rectory St., the building has been completely refurbished and offers apartments on a month-to-month lease with no buy-in fee.

Services for seniors include three meals a day, activity calendar, local transportation, housekeeping and linen service. The apartments each feature a refrigerator, microwave and individual heating and air controls. Two full kitchens are available, as is resident laundry.

Anyone interested is welcome to tour the home and can do so by calling 545-0149.

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Chatham County Line is a community newspaper serving all of Chatham County as well as the southern part of Orange. Our mission is to inform our community by providing a forum "where all voices are heard." We seek all views and ideas about our community, and we report on important matters — including our cultural life — comprehensively and in depth. Our commitment is to create the best-written, best-edited and most stylish community newspaper anywhere. Chatham County Line is published five times a year: Winter/Spring, Spring, Summer, Fall and Fall/Winter.

Editor & Publisher
Julian Sereno

Designer
Kelly Prelipp Lojk

Web site design
UniqueOrn.com

Chatham County Line is wholly owned by Avanti Media Consultants, LLC.
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Street Fair offers Halloween fun

The Pittsboro Street Fair will be held on Saturday, October 30 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Hanks Street. Come dressed in your best Halloween costume! The costume judging will take place at 1 p.m. at the new Performance Stage sponsored by Chatham Arts. Visit over 100 booths of art, crafts, baked goods and great food. On the main stage behind First Citizens Bank several bands will appear including The Bigtime Party Band, The Bluegrass Experience, The Sanfordairs, Harmonica Bob and Near Blind James. There will be rides and games for children, a petting zoo, pony rides, and a clown will make animal balloons. Rain date is Sunday, October 31 from 1 to 6 p.m.

For more information, contact Cindy Edwards at 542-5649.



Governor's Club hosts volunteer fair

You are invited to "The First Annual Governors Club Community Volunteer Fair," to be held on Wednesday, October 27, 2004, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Clubhouse Ballroom. This is an open invitation to all those interested in volunteering their time with local organizations. When you come, in the gate, simply tell the guard you are attending the "Volunteer Fair."

We are inviting the entire United Way list of Chatham organizations, as well as any organizations suggested by a resident volunteer who wants to sponsor them. The United Way list of Chatham groups number more than 50. The only criterion for participation is that they must be actively seeking volunteers.



Millworker's final run in Pittsboro

If you still haven't seen "Millworker," named one of the top Triangle theater picks of 2003, here is your last chance. Final showings of the play, featuring live music and oral histories of N.C. textile millworkers, will be shown in Pittsboro Oct. 29-31 at the historic old Chatham Mill label plant on U.S. 15-501. Performances are at 8 p.m. on Oct. 29-30 and 3 p.m. on Oct. 31.

General admission tickets (\$14) are available through Chatham Arts at 919.542.0394, www.chathamarts.org. Part of the proceeds will benefit the non-profit local arts council.

The critically acclaimed grassroots production features poignant, humorous, painful and fascinating real-life accounts of the lives of early North Carolina textile workers, combined with traditional music performed live by the Bluegrass Experience's Tommy Edwards, singer/songwriter Alice Zincone, Big Medicine's Jim Collier, The Shelby's Virginia Ryan, fiddler-extraordinaire Al McCanness, and others. Not recommended for children under 12.

Writers Network to host fall conference

Acclaimed novelist, poet, and non-fiction author Reynolds Price will keynote the 20th Annual Fall Conference of the NC Writers' Network, October 29 - 31, 2004 at the Sheraton Imperial Hotel in Durham. Actor, award-winning playwright, and screenwriter Samm-Art Williams will give the Saturday night keynote. Both are North Carolina natives.

Sarah Dessen, Judy Goldman, Sebastian Matthews, Paul Ferguson and Michael Chitwood are among dozens of other professional authors on this year's faculty. Editors and agents from New York will also be on board. A \$250 fee covers lunch and dinner on Saturday, admission to all readings, tuition for five classes, open mic sessions, performances, and more. The non-member rate is \$350. Discounted hotel room rates are available to conference attendees.

For more information, contact NCWN, P.O. Box 954, Carrboro, NC 27510. Telephone: 919.967.9540. E-mail: mail@ncwriters.org. Website: www.ncwriters.org.

Orange Arts grants deadline

The Orange County Arts Commission announces a Tuesday, November 23, 2004 deadline for receipt of grant applications for the fall cycle. Arts grants are available to

nonprofit organizations, schools and individual artists.

Fall applications must be received by 5 p.m. at the Orange County Arts Commission office located at 110 E. King Street in Hillsborough (this is not a "postmarked by" deadline).

Applications are available at the Arts Commission office, at all Orange County Public Libraries, and online in both PDF and MS Word Document formats for downloading (www.artsorange.org).

Volunteers needed for tax season

Like to crunch numbers? RSVP-VITA is seeking any age adult volunteers, including Spanish interpreters, to help prepare taxes for eligible clients at sites in Orange and Chatham counties. (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance is a FREE IRS service.) Flexible schedules consist of 4-hour shifts.

Orientation for new VITA volunteers is in the fall. Federal and state tax preparation training will be held early January 2005. Additional training will target computerized tax preparation. Trained tax volunteers provide the VITA tax service from February 1 to April 15. To volunteer, call the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Orange County 968-2054 or rsvp@co.orange.nc.us.

Got briefs? Fax your news to 919.932.2602 or email us at chathamcoline@mindspring.com

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Why I'm engaged in grassroots politics

By Judy Hogan

The word politics comes from the Greek word polis, city or city-state, coming to mean one's community. The politics I want to discuss means: "The affairs or activities of those who are engaged in controlling or seeking to control a government." I like Chatham County politics because we can still do issue-oriented or "clean" politics, and I have engaged in them since I moved to Moncure six years ago. Before I bought my land, I learned of serious environmental risks such as the low-level nuclear waste dump planned for near Moncure. I worked on such issues and saw that citizens here work together to effect change.

Six years later the low-level dump is gone: Progress Energy will stop shipping high-level nuclear waste to Shearon Harris in 2005; and, with the help of Southeast Chatham Citizens Advisory Council, under the leadership of Mike Cross, the industries here are putting in new equipment, which will drastically reduce the dangerous air pollution that has plagued Moncure for 12 years.

Issue-oriented politics take time, require patience and ingenuity, can't be hurried along with rhetoric. Sometimes it's hard to wait until larger numbers of people see the problems for

themselves. It is so tempting to rely on abstractions and oversimplified slogans in order to get people on "our side."

But, being a poet, I know I can't rely on abstractions. I must be specific. My feelings must pass to other people with an image or a detail. I ask my reader to share my experience rather than a summary of it. A poet learns: effective communication is a two-way street.

As I have worked to make my county a better place, three things have happened.

1) I learned to know my neighbors. They are not surprised now when I come to their homes with a petition or information about candidates running for office. They ask me to explain about the new water lines. When they barbecue, they bring me a plate. They advise me about my chickens and feed them when I'm out of town. I take them flowers and eggs.

2) I learned that County Commissioners have a lot of power. Their work is increasingly complex and technical. The Board of Education also influences tremendously the way our schools are run, what the morale is like for students and teachers, and how effectively the county budget for education is spent.

3) I also found that generally, our elected leaders listened to citizens. When they failed to, they stirred anger.

Citizens in Chatham expect to have their elected officials and the employees they hire (county manager, lawyers, and school superintendent) responsive to their concerns. They expect to be heard and their opinions, especially experts opinion (with specifics like the details and images of a good poem), treated with respect. They expect their Commissioners and Board of Education to learn from them. They expect a two-way street.

There are communities indifferent or disillusioned, which have ceased to expect any good from their leaders, where cynicism thrives like weeds in an abandoned field. But not in Chatham. I've just been getting to know many, many people as I worked with Chatham Coalition to elect Mike Cross and Patrick Barnes for the Democratic candidates for Commissioner, and Norman Clark and Holly Duncan to the Board of Education. Many citizens are very well-informed, eager to learn more, and to participate. It isn't enough for them to be told "development," "no development," or "slow development." They want to know exactly how a particular compact community, shopping center, or subdivision will impact their lives and their children's lives, the schools, the traffic, the environment, and the county budget. Will it raise

their taxes because property values go up even if the percentage is kept low? If a regional landfill would bring the county money, they want to know who will pay the cost of such a landfill when it fails in 20-30 years and the county has to clean it up? They want to know why subdivision developers aren't required to put in athletic fields and playgrounds? Why is a new school built and immediately the roof leaks? Why are so many schools using trailers for classrooms?

This is the politics I love. It is more engaging, more long-term, much harder. We have to talk to each other, bridge our diversity, listen to each other. We don't assume we know what the voters want. We ask them. It means incredible and patient struggle as we work for win-win solutions.

Then we choose those who govern us, based on their stands and knowledge about the issues. It means our leaders have credibility and will listen to us. We trust them, and they trust us. It means we are all part of the same community. Then the grass grows well because the roots are happy.

Judy Hogan is Volunteer Coordinator for Chatham Coalition. She is a published poet, free lance writer, and she teaches writing classes in Chatham, Durham, and Chapel Hill.

When money is tight, should you consider a reverse mortgage?

By Robert E. Altier

A Reverse Mortgage not only helps you stay in your home, but uses the equity you have earned to give you more financial independence—for a special event, an unexpected bill or to supplement your income—whatever your need.

What is a Reverse Mortgage? When your retirement income may not be enough to cover all your expenses, a Reverse Mortgage can give you additional financial freedom. By tapping into the equity you have already earned,

Neighbor to Neighbor

the Reverse Mortgage lets older homeowners borrow against the value of your home. Unlike a traditional mortgage, you don't make regular mortgage payments. Instead you receive payments to use as you wish.

Whether you want a lump sum for a particular expense, a line of credit or regular payments to supplement your income, there are several payment plans that may be suited to you.

Whatever payment plan you select initially, you have the option to change your plan at any time, and as many times as you wish. A Reverse Mortgage lender, or the state agencies described below, can explain all the plans that are available for you.

Are you eligible for a Reverse Mortgage? If you (and any co-borrower)

are age 62 or older, and either own your home outright or have a low outstanding mortgage balance, a Reverse Mortgage could be right for you. Since you would be applying for a unique type of loan, the first step is to attend a special orientation session. During this session, conducted by state-approved Senior Assistance Agencies, you will learn about the Reverse Mortgage as well as other ideas and options to assist in your financial planning. Your family members are invited and encouraged to attend these sessions with you. There is absolutely no obligation to proceed further after you attend one of these orientations. I can provide a list of the agencies and their phone numbers in your area. Scheduling an orientation with an agency can be handled over the phone.

What is the maximum amount you can borrow? The loan amount is based on a formula that factors in the age of the

youngest borrower, the interest rate and the maximum mortgage amount. That is determined by reviewing the appraised value of your home and the maximum principal amount for your loan type on a one-family residence in your area.

Will a Reverse Mortgage affect your other income or benefits? Social Security and Medicare Benefits are not based on your assets and so, a Reverse Mortgage payment will not affect them. If you receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), there may be some limitations. Therefore, it is recommended that you consult a benefits specialist at your local Administration on Aging, or your Social Security Benefits office.

Can you be forced to sell or vacate your home? As long as you occupy the property as your principal residence, you cannot be forced to sell or vacate. Even if the total of your Reverse Mortgage payments (plus interest and mortgage insurance premiums) exceeds the value of the property, or if the fixed term of your loan has expired, your home remains your property.

Will your heirs owe anything if you pass away or go into a care facility? Your heirs may keep the home and simply repay the Reverse Mortgage loan balance, or they may sell the home and repay the loan with the proceeds. Even if, at that time, the loan balance exceeds the value of your property, your heirs will owe no more than the value of the property. Special insurance will cover the difference, and no additional financial claims may be made against your heirs or estate.

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Robert E. Altier is a mortgage loan officer with RBC Centura, robert.altier@rbc.com

Local gardens' exotic tropicals inspire an 'AD gardener'

By Ginny Gregory



I had a chance to see the Sarah P. Duke Gardens with new eyes the other day. After many years away from this wonderful garden, I was so totally thrilled by what I saw that I was exploding with plant combinations and texture descriptions as Julian and I worked at a client's house. I was saying that we really should go over and soak in the tapes-try work of this garden before frost melted the show. She later had a call from one of "The Gardening Girls" (we are four) who wanted us to go to a garden walk at the Arboretum about "Shade Trees" so — we decided to take an adventure day off first to the J.C. Raulston Arboretum and then to Duke Gardens. Since it is fall and we are all wicked busy, we worked til 12 and then rendezvoused at the General Store Café only to pack into Nancy's Explorer and hit the garden trail.

If you love tropical plants and you don't live in zones 8 to zone 10, then you are an "A D G (attention deficit gardener)." I confess, I am that gardener. This is a huge admission among "serious" gardeners. I think there should be support groups for us. We can safely say that at the tropical gardens at the J.C. Raulston Arboretum and the terrace gardens of the Sarah P. Duke Gardens.

At the J.C. Raulston Arboretum, my "Gardening Girls" and I attended a "Shade Trees Walk" led by Todd Lasseigne. As we approached the new arboretum buildings, I was swept away with the tropical display that started at the street planting and ended with a huge sloped bed display. I was the only one near hysterics over the tropicals. I have such enormous respect for the life long work of J. C. Raulston. We in North Carolina are the richer in all respects because of this drive and passion. It is not just

the building that is new. The new energy by Bob Lyons, arboretum director and his love affair with tropicals ...blew me away. Well, we had come to look at trees, which I also adore. But I was the one who had to be gently reminded by our guide that it was trees that were the focus. As we walked the grounds and talked about the mighty trees, my eyes kept zipping to the side trying to cop a mere glimpse of the vibrant color of the tropicals. What is it? I love the shape of trees, the texture of the various bark, the fact that they can live (some of them) longer than I can. They can create magnificent canopies not to mention the color show in the fall. The Arboretum is mostly thought of as a trees and shrubs garden collection, but the "out of context tropicals" seemed so perfect. It is the action of the garden that drives me. Why plant an every day annual when you can spend just a little bit more and have color and form that rocks your world? We just get used to the same old thing and don't like to chance new choices. It's like going to the same restaurant and ordering the same thing each time.

Can there be room for tropicals in the traditional garden? YES!

When we "girls" later moved over to the Sara P. Duke terraced gardens, it all fell into place. Honestly, I could barely wrap my mind around the very formal terraced gardens, which offer such historical architectural form, framework and the outrageously flamboyant "Victorian" tropical display. I almost expired with glee. The creativity and lush wonder was so nourishing. Yes, there was the traditional form. Yes, there was the perfect vista view. And yes, there were perfectly balanced, multilayered terraced garden display all in TROPICALS. I felt the halleluiah chorus coming on!

As I was writing about, I realized that I yearn for the color of the tropicals in my own garden and yet eagerly await the change of guard that comes with fall. What is this about? It's

about permission. Fall offers permission for the "A D Gardener" to slow down, observe and be fed by the serene change of the season. With the first 40-degree night tropicals melt, they will be gone and with a sigh of



relief, the natural wave of fall takes over. It is the extreme change that I adore. It makes fall all the more pungent. It's contrast at its greatest.

Everything in the garden really does have fall color, it's often subtle. Most perennials turn yellow and need to be cut back, but then there is that long lasting groundcover, plumbago, that gives us those unique pure blue flowers with the red leaves of fall. Sassafras, a minor tree in the garden world offers fall red leaf color equal to the sugar maples of New England. The callicarpa (beautyberry) that has looked like a

scrappy shrub all year is outstanding as it shows off its clean, sharp autumnal purple berries. The perennial fall chrysanthemum "Ryan's Pink", "Apricot" or "Venus" are herbaceous shrubs waiting to get on stage with their color show. The fall blooming anemones, from mauve pink to pristine white, are all waving in the crisp breeze. It is the dramatic sequence that fills my heart with hope.

Hope that natives and hybrids, annuals and tropicals, dwarfs conifers and redwoods can all live together with patience, understanding and respect. I am hopeful that gardens will be created that can be tended, that we keep our environment healthy so that our children's children will know the wonder of "Hearts a Bustin'" throughout the woods.

Be loud, be proud all you "A D Gardeners". The hope of our world communal garden is at stake. We need the traditional framework for our gardens, but we must not fear new energy, new plants with strong definition that offer a vibrant means in which to experience the beauty not only in our own gardens, but the gardens worldwide.

Until next season, I remain a proud A D Gardener.

Ginny Gregory is the owner and creative energy behind "Beyond The Pail...Creating Gardens and Beyond". www.beyondthepail.net

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Whigs restored 2-party rule to county and state

The term Whig originally referred to the American revolutionaries who were fighting the Crown. In September of 1781 the notorious local Tory, David Fanning, led 1,100 men to attack Hillsboro, a center of discontent and also the capital of North Carolina. There they killed 15 Whigs and captured more than 200 others including the Governor and other prominent military and civilian officials.

Whig militiamen tried to free the prisoners at Landey's Mill on Cane Creek but ran out of ammunition and lost over one hundred men. There were two local Whigs of importance among the dead, Col. John Lutterhell of Haw River and Major John Nall of Bear Creek. The Whig hero of the battle, Col. Robert Mebane was murdered some time later in what is now Williams Township, and his killer, a Tory named Henry Hightower was captured and hanged.

The term Whig was revived again in 1834 when a coalition of diverse groups, all opposed to some of President Andrew Jackson's policies, formed the Whig Party. Jackson himself was elected by a broad coalition of conflicting interest groups and was frequently involved in fights not only with his opponents but also with diverse factions among his supporters.

For many years since North Carolina had joined the Union, the Jeffersonian Republican party controlled the state's political scene, and the Eastern end of the state controlled the Republicans. They favored a strict interpretation of the Constitution, states rights, feared the influence of any federal internal improvements, and rigid economic controls. In the election campaign of 1824 they backed William Harris Crawford, but dissidents in the Republican Party formed a People's Party which backed Andrew Jackson.

The People's Party, much to the dismay of the Republicans, carried North Carolina in the 1824 election, with heavy support from the western end of the state which favored federally financed internal improvements, constitutional reform, a reform of party machinery and the exclusion of slavery above 36° 30'. Chatham, Randolph and Guilford Counties, supported Crawford, the Republican. The election of 1824 had Jackson winning a plurality of popular and electoral votes, but none of the five candidates had a majority. This situation threw the election into the House of Representatives which chose John Quincy Adams as President.

Jackson spent the next four years polishing his image and in 1828 he was elected, winning a clear majority in the Electoral College, and he was re-elected in 1832. During these two terms he gradually fell out of favor with the West and the Sound region of North Carolina because of his opposition to federally financed internal improvements, his devotion to state's rights, and his obsession with economy.

In 1834 a group of diverse factions, all opposed to Jackson's policies and forceful attitude, formed the Whig party. Lacking in unity, except for common antagonism toward Jackson, the new party was comprised of proponents and opponents of protective tariffs, federal aid to state projects, the right of states to nullify unpopular federal laws, and national banks. The following year the Whig party was established in North Carolina and managed to elect seven of the state's thirteen congressmen and a fairly good minority in the General Assembly. The formation of the North Carolina Whig Party put a stumbling block in

CHATHAM'S HISTORICAL HERITAGE

by Fred J. Vatter



the ability of the conservative plantation holders in the East to dominate the state's role in national and state politics.

Soon the Jackson backers dropped the various names they were known by and became known as Democrats. The Whig-Democrat split restored the two party system to North Carolina.

A Chatham County resident from Pittsboro, Abraham Rencher, served in Congress from 1821 to 1834 under the National Republican banner, but in 1836 he ran again as a Whig and was elected. After his tenure in Congress, Rencher served as Minister to Portugal and Governor of New Mexico. He and his wife Louisa are buried in St. Bartholomew's Churchyard in Pittsboro.

The Whigs strongly favored public schools, a special school for the deaf and mute, a hospital for the insane, state aid to internal improvements, a national bank, protective tariffs, and revisions of the North

the working class, the yeoman farmers, and the underprivileged classes. The party's emphasis on education, humane treatment of the sick and poor, and absence of a pro-slavery stance, may have attracted votes from western Chatham's significant Quaker population.

Cotton was Chatham's most important crop, cultivated mainly by slave labor, but the slaveholders were far fewer in numbers than the small farmers, Quakers, and tradesmen who outvoted the Democrats locally and in national elections. The Chatham vote was carried by the Whig candidate for governor in every election between 1836 and 1854. Chatham also voted for the Whig candidate for President from 1832 to 1852, and the Whigs not only carried North Carolina in Presidential elections between 1840 and 1852, but also accounted for one half or more of the State's Congressional delegations during the same period.

In 1848 Charles Manly, a Chatham native who practiced law in Pittsboro but lived in Raleigh, was elected Governor on the Whig ticket, beating Democrat David S. Reid by less than 1,000 votes. Reid had surprised Manly in a public debate by calling for free suffrage and Manly committed his party against it. This stance by Manly did some damage, and even in his native Chatham he received 935 votes against a surprising 781 for Reid. Two years later Reid defeated Manly by almost 3,000 votes statewide, even though Manly took Chatham by 312 votes. There were no Whig governors after Manly.

In 1857 the Democrats' free suffrage bill was approved by the electorate, with Chatham voting for approval, 1047 to 735. The bill ended the freehold qualification for voting for senators, and apportioned the state senators as well as legislators on the same population basis as in federal elections, with slaves counting as three-fifths.

The debates over slavery and the question of extending it into the southwestern territory acquired in the Mexican War caused a division in the national political parties. The Northern anti-slavery groups united in the new Republican party. Many Whigs flirted briefly with the Know-Nothing or American party, which after six years took on the Whig name in 1860.

The conservative element of the Democratic party and the Whigs resisted the call for secession by the radical wing of the Democrats. An election was held in February 1861 to let the people decide whether or not to call a convention to consider secession, and they voted not to do so. In Chatham 283 votes were for the convention and 1,795 were cast against it.

The voters' opinions changed after the battle over Fort Sumpter and Lincoln's call for troops. Party quarrels were forgotten and a new convention, assembled May 20, 1861, subsequently voted to secede and ratified the Provisional Constitution of the Confederate States of America. Once this happened, party lines were set aside and people of all sides of the political spectrum concentrated on the war effort. The Whigs were no longer a factor in North Carolina politics, but during their existence they had broken the grip of the Eastern plantation class and restored a two party system to North Carolina.

Major sources for this column were: "The Presidency of Andrew Jackson" by Donald B. Cole and "Chatham County 1771-1971" by Hadley, Horton, Strowd.

Fred J. Vatter is past president of the Chatham County Historical Society, an organization for which he is also a board member and museum curator.



In 1835, Chatham's Whigs drew most of their backing from the working class, the yeoman farmers, and the underprivileged classes.

Carolina Constitution of 1776.

In November 1833 the State Assembly recommended that the North Carolina Constitution be revised either by legislative amendment or by a "people's convention." The East favored the legislative amendment procedure while Chatham County and the West wanted a convention. The deadlock resulted in the matter being dropped.

Finally in January 1835, strongly pushed by Gov. David L. Swain and the growing power of the Whigs, a bill was passed calling for a referendum on the question of holding a convention. The call for a convention won by a margin of 5,856, in spite of objections by the privileged classes in the east. The convention was held in July 1835 and produced a revised Constitution.

The new Constitution called for popular election of the governor for a two-year term, the assembly would meet bi-annually instead of annually, the North Carolina Senate was to consist of 50 members and the House of Commons of 120 members. The members of the lower House were to be elected according to federal population figures, with each county guaranteed at least one, but the Senators were to be elected by districts according to the amount of state taxes paid. Free Negroes were disfranchised, and religious qualifications for office-holders and special representation in the legislature by larger boroughs was abolished. The Western end of the state overwhelmingly ratified the work of the convention, overcoming a nearly total vote against it in the East. Chatham County citizens voted for approval, with 556 for and 200 against.

Chatham's Whigs drew most of their backing from

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Co-ops nurture communities

By Melissa Frey

One helped fund an ethanol plant in North Dakota that added \$50 million to the local economy. Another formed a recycling program in Arizona that now includes 100 businesses and was cited as the best in the state. A third, in Massachusetts, donates 10 percent of its profits to causes including human rights, the environment, child development and the homeless.

What are they? Three of the nation's more than 40,000 cooperative businesses. A sometimes overlooked but thriving economic sector, co-ops come in all shapes and sizes. They operate in virtually every industry and range in size from small storefronts to Fortune 500 companies.

Co-ops are owned and democratically controlled by their members/owners, the people who use their services or buy their goods. Co-ops return surplus revenues to members/owners proportionate to their use of the cooperative; they are motivated by service to their owners rather than by profit to distant stakeholders. For this reason, they show an uncommon loyalty and commitment to the communities in which those members live and work. In fact, concern for community is one of the seven principles under which all co-ops operate.

Every day, while serving four in 10 Americans, co-ops demonstrate this concern by providing services and generating hundreds of thousands of jobs and billions in income for these communities. Not surprisingly, this kind of community commitment engenders a strong preference for co-ops. Research shows people prefer shopping at a store they know is co-op—they trust co-ops more.

Here in Chatham, two new co-ops, Chatham Marketplace and Piedmont Biofuels, are just establishing themselves to be able to live up to the co-op standard of commitment to community. Chatham Marketplace, Your Local Co-op Grocery, is poised to join the 300 other retail food



Leif Forer is co-founder of Piedmont Biofuels. He makes fuel, sells fuel, and teaches others how to do the same at Central Carolina Community College in Pittsboro.

co-ops across the country that serve 400,000 owners and generate sales exceeding \$700 million. Chatham Marketplace looks forward to contributing to the health and well-being of both the people and the land in Chatham County. Visit www.chathammarketplace.com to get involved.

Piedmont Biofuels is busy making biodiesel out of waste vegetable oil at its facility on the Pittsboro-Moncure Rd. Over a dozen "worker members" routinely fill up on homemade fuel that they have played a role in creating. Other members are buying "store-bought" biodiesel from the coop's tank truck that makes deliveries of B100 (100 percent biodiesel) around the Triangle. For more information on Piedmont Biofuel's, including a copy of its coop membership agreement, go to www.biofuels.coop.

October is the month set aside to recognize the special nature and accomplishments of the nation's cooperative businesses. This year, observances are focusing specifically on co-ops' commitments to their communities.

To be sure, investor-owned businesses generate jobs and make charitable contributions in their communities as well. But for co-ops it's more personal. Communities are not just where they work, it's why they work. Providing for the community, on a number of levels, is a critical part of what co-ops do and why they do it.

Melissa Frey is a driving force behind Chatham Marketplace, Your Local Co-op Grocery.

JORDAN-ELLIS

continued from page 1.

The power plant went in, blocking the beautiful view, and soon soot began to rain down on that valley. In the middle of the night the plant would blow all the soot out of the stacks, and it would float like a big black pancake over to Louisville and then circle back around to New Albany, where it would float down onto cars, porches, and clothes hung out to dry. Black soot covered everything. Only a few coal truck drivers had been hired, and taxes went up.

Margaret called her elves together again and asked them to collect vials of soot. She learned from an engineer who worked for the plant that the system that was supposed to filter out the soot had cracked. Margaret persisted, and because the plant was polluting the air in two states, it became a federal case. They won, and the plant had to replace their filtering system. Calls of congratulations came in from everywhere.

In the early 90s, living back in Gulf, she was able to get a \$32,000 grant for Chatham County from the N.C. Department of Transportation to produce a signed bike route with a county map showing points of interest. We're the only county in the area except for Moore that has county-wide bicycle routes and a map. I see these cyclists stopping for snacks at Ray's in Moncure. To be eligible to enter the Tour de France, cyclists must accumulate patches from having been in other races. We have the Tour de Lee/Chatham. Margaret arranged a patch for those contestants with a picture of the camel-backed bridge over the Deep River at Gulf. Thanks to Margaret we have this Travel and Tourism Event.

For years it was very costly to make long distance calls between Chatham and Lee Counties. Margaret worked with two telephone companies, Alltel and Sprint, to get direct line service between the two counties. She made presen-

tations before the N.C. Utilities Commission. With the support of local schools and business leaders, this direct line service was approved. It has saved hundreds of dollars for businesses, schools, colleges, hospitals, as well as for local residents.

Her current passion is to create in Chatham a one-of-a-kind recreational Mecca in central N.C., and to encourage small recreation businesses, e.g., those related to boating, fishing, bicycles, and art. "We should use our great assets — our rivers, lakes, and rolling farmland. If we're not careful, we'll turn our rivers into sewer pits. If we get so populated, we will kill the goose that has been laying golden eggs — Governor's Club and Ferrington. Those folks came to get away from crowded cities. All this new residential development that has been approved is like a death march. There will be too much demand on our county services."

Margaret offers this advice to others: "Read books, be aware of what's going on in the world. Stop depending on TV for information."

When you are next in the History Museum in Raleigh, check out the section on Health and Healing to read more about Margaret Jordan-Ellis and Mt. Vernon Springs here in Chatham.

Judy Hogan lives near the Tour de Moncure, a bicycle route in southeastern Chatham that offers visits to artist studios and country stores. She is a published poet and freelance writer.



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Walking the boundaries of my prison

Watching a small flying, stinging creature
trapped inside the window screen
walking the boundaries of his prison,
walking the boundaries of his prison.

I too can fly, I too can sting,
I too am walking the boundaries of
my prison.

I can walk and walk
I can fly, I can go anywhere on this
earth

and never be free,
always be in this prison
prison of this planet
this life
this existence
of this body
of this mind,
this ego.
There are so many kinds of prisons—
prisons of habit, of memory,
of training,
prisons of proud ancestral traits
handed down from one generation to
the next
with the family jewels—
we are this
we are not that
(and ever more shall be so).



Rocky River Tales
by Maggie Wilson

Sometimes someone shows us the
way out
offers a key
opens the very door in front of us,
and still we cannot walk out
cannot be free.
The mind is
a prison we cannot see
cannot know the boundaries of
because we are in it
and blind to its limitations.
We are, each of us,
standing, not near, not on the edge,
but in the very center of paradise,
a heaven of unlimited

freedom and grace
all within us
and yet
all we can see are the prison walls
the dark dungeon
of a sad and frightened little self
trying to accommodate a limitless
magical soul—
an impossible task
only slightly more daunting
than breaking out of the prison.
How? How did we get to be this way?
Why?
No matter what we believe
about the nature of God,
of the Divine, of reality,
if we stop for even a moment and
ponder the simple miracle
of our own bodies
mysteriously conceived, born, grown,
living—
a complete whole
requiring very little from us
to stay alive,
how can we then not see,
not believe
that we are part of a miracle,
and through that window of belief
see this paradise that surrounds and
fills us?

How indeed? How indeed. . .

How did ones so huge learn to be so
small—
ones so free, learn to feel so
trapped—
ones made of love, learn hate—
ones formed of wisdom, learn igno-
rance?
And more important, how can we
learn,
may remember, where we really came
from
and become loving once more?

One step at a time,
walking the boundaries of our prisons
walking a little farther each time—
shifting the walls,
expanding the mind,
stretching the ego,
walking,
walking the boundaries of my prison.

*Maggie Wilson is an artist and writer
living in her dream house in Chatham.
Her website is
www.maggiwilson.com*

The Kite Runner: This Year's Community Read

Chatham
Writer's
Corner

by Marjorie Hudson



My current favorite book opens with the following
line: *I became what I am today at the age of twelve, on a
frigid overcast day in the winter of 1975.*

Who of us can pinpoint the moment when we
became who we are today? If you can, it is not because
something wonderful happened — it is more likely
that what deeply changed you was shocking, trauma-
tizing, terrifying — enough to break your heart and
maybe even nag your conscience for the rest of your
life.

The Kite Runner, the novel by Khaled Hosseini that
this first line is taken from, teaches much about the
human spirit — about the love between boyhood
friends, the power of betrayal, the life of the exile, and
the possibility of redemption for past sins. What
makes this story so different from that of other great
American novels is that a good part of it takes place in

Afghanistan, and when the setting
changes to California, the characters
live the particularly dislocated lives
of new immigrants who have lost
everything.

In the end, that is one of the things
that makes this an especially American
story. We are a nation of people whose
ancestors, one way or another —
native, slave, or immigrant — lost
everything to become Americans. We
are more a nation of immigrants than
ever. It is instructive, at a time when we
are at war, to learn about some of the
history of the places where we are war-
ring. Afghanistan is one of them.

Since reading this book I have
learned a few things. In Afghanistan, the
burka is called the chadri: the people are called
Afghans, and the capital city, Kabul, rhymes with cob-
ble. I've cooked a spinach and yogurt dish that I can't
yet pronounce and I'm looking forward to trying
naan—the ubiquitous Afghan flat bread.

I've read a few other books about Afghanistan late-
ly — some of them are on display at the library. That's
because I'm gearing up for this year's Friends of the
Pittsboro Memorial Library Community Read — a cele-
bration of Afghan culture through books, starting
with *The Kite Runner*. If you want to read more, or
learn more, check at the Pittsboro library, McIntyre's
Books in Ferrington, or the Friends website:
www.beachsite.com/friends



There will be events starting in
October and ending with a grand
finale April 2. The author will be at
the Ferrington Barn.

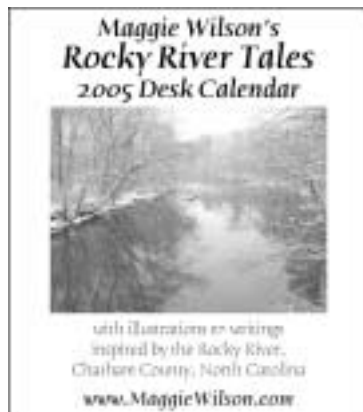
Upcoming Community Read Events

Book Club Invitational.
October 24, 4- 5 p.m. at
McIntyre's Books: The
Community Read Committee will
talk about *The Kite Runner* and
related recommended reading for
adults and children. Free book
club kits with Afghan recipes.

November 16: Carl Earnst
speaks on his award-winning book:

*Following Mohammed: Rethinking Islam in the Modern
World.* 7:30 p.m. at Pittsboro Library Meeting Room.
December 6: Library Book Club Discussion: *The
Bookseller of Kabul.* 7-8:30 pm at Library Meeting Room.
January 3: Library Book Club discusses *The Kite
Runner.* 7-8:30 pm at Library Meeting Room.

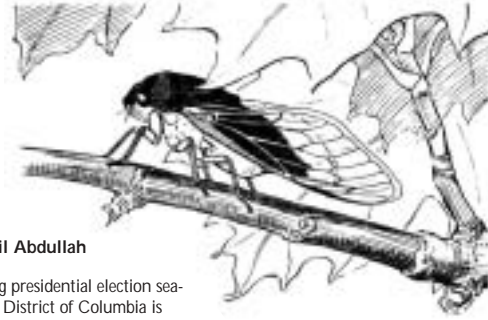
Look for news of other events: Burrto
Bash, Kite-Making Workshops, A Discussion of
Muslim Culture in America, an Afghan Feast at the
Senior Center, Art Displays, and other activities in
coming months. The Community Read is sponsored
by the Friends of the Pittsboro Memorial Library
with help from partners McIntyre's Fine Books and
ChathamArts.



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Of words & wings



By Khalil Abdullah

During presidential election seasons, the District of Columbia is abuzz with a volume of political punditry matched in its intensity by the once-every-17-year hum of the recently departed cicadas. Like cicadas, rumors, innuendos, distortions and obfuscation swirl into view, stretching beyond the edge of the infotainment horizon and seeping into the edges of our consciousness with far more insidious effect. For a brief period, each waking morning this summer was a living testament to the pre-programming of the cicadas' ancient genetic alarm clock. Similarly, the days approaching quadrennial Novembers bring Washingtonians an almost audible angst.

Pundit, derived from Sanskrit, was once a term conveying seasoned judgment and scholarship. Today it is nearly synonymous with court jester. In fairness, "the ravenous maw of the insatiable media" is now axiomatic, and thus someone must fill the available time on cable channels, over-the-air networks, radio talk shows, and print media. The result is predictable. Rational discourse and sane analysis, when they appear at all, are evanescent. Strident voices have become the most coveted; they produce ratings or boost newsstand sales. Like reactions to the raucous sounds of the cicada, today's punditry evokes near catatonic awe of the sheer egocentrism it takes to generate such unintelligible cacophony.

It is a strange time in America. While the public discourse does include critical discussions, the unfinished business of other eras takes on larger dimensions as we burrow deeper into the millennium. Poverty is back, but certainly not in fashion. No one has declared war on it, perhaps because the last declared war on poverty required so much energy, time, resources, and, most uncomfortably, interaction with poor people. Besides, we apparently lost that war, or simply lost our collective will to fight it.

Today's politicians allude to poverty, but more likely their reference is to a chart, a graph, or press release. Poor folks are more often portrayed as an abstraction, as if statistics have no direct connection to lives lived or to neighbors and communities. The escape from poverty is celebrated, but we have put in place a system where this feat is realized by few, and only then by the strongest or most driven.

It is normal for a society to salute its champions. We applaud those who go the extra mile, who make the extra effort, who excel despite obstacles. It

is human to cherish those who push the limits of their potential. Often, we are willing to overlook their flaws because the significance of their accomplishments holds so much more value to us than the annoyance of their imperfections. We venerate athletes regularly; we glorify celebrities a little more grudgingly, but, increasingly, we exalt the wealthy to altars of worship and thus conspire in perpetuating a culture of covetous fawning.

Experience teaches us that the society which provides for its weakest members is likely to be the healthiest, the most humane, and closer than any other to fulfilling humanitarian ideals. If we accept the premise that only exceptional talent or good fortune will be rewarded in America, we will bequeath to our children a divided country with a desperate future.

Where is there room for the common man or woman to flourish in a "reality show" milieu that panders to the evisceration of human dignity? In our ridicule of the illiterate while knowing full well that intelligence is unrelated? In the criminalization of personal poverty but the encouragement of tactical corporate bankruptcies? In the election of representatives who find the perks of holding public office more enticing than honoring oaths to the voters who put them there? Of course, not all politicians are rich, and having money is certainly not a crime. However, a leader's willingness to look the other way – indeed, willingness to be paid to look the other way while the country slowly implodes – borders on treason. Yet, the drone of spin persists and the body politic continues to shrink in sensory overload from the banal buzz of obtuse partisanship.

Within the early moments of the first cicada week, my grandson had observed that the cicada is a slow-moving creature, large enough for a small set of quick hands to hold without harming it. On a bright Sunday morning, I watched as he sprinted across the front yard and easily cupped a cicada between his palms. He listened briefly with rapt fascination. Then, between thumb and forefinger, he let it fly away. Instinctively, he knew when it was time to let the cicada go.

Khalil Abdullah is a Washington, D.C.-based writer, editor, and business development consultant.

happenings

Every Tuesday from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. **Farmers' Market at Ferrington.** Local farmers sell their finest produce at the Ferrington Farmers Market every Tuesday from 4 p.m. Located next to the Administration Building, 542-4000. www.ferrington.com

Every Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. **Pre-School Storytime at McIntyre's.** Call Sarah at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Every Saturday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. **Wine Tasting** The Ferrington Grocery Co. will feature a free wine tasting every Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m. 545.5717. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, October 16 at 11 a.m. **Emily Herring Wilson** will join us to discuss her new book, *No One Gardens Alone: A Life of Elizabeth Lawrence*. This is the first biography of the renowned Southern gardening writer. For details, call McIntyre's 542.3030. www.ferrington.com.

Sunday, October 17 at 2 p.m. Author and Ferrington resident **Louise Hawes** joins us to read from her latest young adult novel, *Vanishing Point*. This is the story of Lavinia Fontana, one of the most famous women painters of the Italian Renaissance and her struggle to deal with quests, complications, hope and catastrophe as she comes of age in Bologna of the 1600's. Call McIntyre's for details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Tuesday, October 19 at 12 p.m. Join us for a special luncheon and the opportunity to meet and discuss moral issues with **Randy Cohen**. Mr. Cohen writes "The Ethicist" a weekly column for the *New York Times Magazine*. He is also the ethics columnist for the *Times of London*. *The Good, the Bad and the Difference*, a book based upon the column, was recently published in paperback by Broadway Books. The luncheon will be followed by a discussion mediated by Mr. Cohen. www.ferrington.com. The luncheon is \$15, including entree and beverage. Space for the luncheon is limited, please call McIntyre's for reservations and details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Friday, October 22, 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. **The Boys from Carolina** a local 5 piece Bluegrass band that includes the Dobro, Mandolin, Bass, Banjo, Guitar, and outstanding vocal harmony will be performing once again, back by popular demand. 542.2121. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, October 23 at 11 a.m. Esteemed author **Louis D. Rubin, Jr.** returns to McIntyre's to read from his new novel, *Surfaces of a Diamond*. This delightfully subtle second novel about Omar Kohn of Charleston, South Carolina, recalls his fifteenth summer. Contact McIntyre's for details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, October 23 from 1 to 3 p.m. **Cheese tasting** at the Ferrington Grocery Company. Join the FGC staff with David Artiques from Elodie Farms in Rougemont, NC. David makes organic, artisanal goat cheese in both sweet and savory varieties. The Ferrington House Assistant Sommelier will be on hand to provide wine suggestions to pair with the cheese. 545.5717. www.ferrington.com

Sunday, October 24 at 2 p.m. Join artist **Robert F. Irwin** as he delves into his new prospectus, *Robert F. Irwin, 40 Years*. This book chronicles Irwin's 40 year path of self-discovery, portrayed through his paintings. By sharing this journey, Irwin demonstrates that the production of his art is anything but a solitary experience. Through his work, the reader meets his family, his teachers, colleagues and even his students from the State of North Carolina Central Prison. Call McIntyre's for details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Sunday, October 24 and Monday 25. **Holiday Treats with Chef de Cuisine Graham Fox.** Celebrate the Holidays with a Cooking Class lead by Ferrington House Chef de Cuisine Graham Fox. Create seasonal treats including Crab Tart; Chanterelle and Celery Root and Chestnut Salad; Roasted Squab with Huckleberry Sauce; Muddled wine; and Traditional English Christmas Pudding. Ferrington House Cooking Class students meet on the Sunday evening for cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and a short discussion with the Chef before enjoying dinner at the Ferrington House Restaurant. On the Monday, following a gourmet breakfast, students head to the kitchen for a short talk followed by a morning of hands-on instruction. The cooking retreats at Ferrington includes overnight accommodation, afternoon English tea, wine and hors d'oeuvres reception, dinner at the Ferrington House Restaurant, full gourmet breakfast, all handouts, and cooking instruction with the Ferrington House chefs. The rates for the cooking package, depending on the choice of accommodations, range from \$415 - \$625 plus tax. Call 542.2121 or e-mail house@ferrington.com for further information or reservations. www.ferrington.com

Friday, October 29 through Sunday 31. **Pumpkin Display.** Dozens of elaborately carved jack-o-lanterns will be on display throughout Ferrington Village. The jack-o-lanterns, intricately carved by the Ferrington gardening staff, will be lit each evening from sundown until 10 p.m. and are displayed throughout the village center. Join us for

outdoor music, mulled cider and Fall treats from 6-8 p.m. on Friday 29 and Saturday 30. The jack-o-lantern display is free and open to the public.

Friday, October 29 and Saturday, October 30 at 7 p.m. **Spooky Story Time** at McIntyre's. Vampires, ghosts, things that go BUMP in the night. The McIntyre's staff will be presenting stories to thrill and scare...so beware! All ages welcome. 542.3030.

Friday, October 29 and Saturday, October 30 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Outdoor Concert on the Village Green. Join local bluegrass band **Guilty Pleasures** as they entertain the ghosts and goblins with a free concert in the village center. For more information call 542.2121. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, October 30 at 11 a.m. **Peter Perret**, conductor of the Winston-Salem Symphony, and **Janet Fox** will discuss their book, *A Well-Tempered Mind: Using Music to Help Children Listen and Learn*. Perret wondered if placing a woodwind quintet in a poorly performing elementary school might help students academically. He decided to try, and the result was an eyebrow-raising jump in the children's test scores. Perret and Fox describe this innovative program for first- through third-graders at two elementary schools in Winston-Salem. Call McIntyre's for details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, October 30 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Special Tasting at the Ferrington Grocery Company. Add some spice to your life as the Ferrington Grocery Company welcomes **Pluto Richards**, the founder of Pluto's Jamaican Seasonings. Pluto will be featuring some of his fiery, certified organic Jerk Sauces. Call 545.5717 for details. www.ferrington.com

Thursday, November 4 from 7:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Come out and support **McIntyre's Open Mike Night**, hosted by the inimitable Peter Mock. Bring something you're working on or a favorite passage to read from and sit back...enjoy. Call Pete at the bookstore for details. (919) 542-3030. www.ferrington.com

Friday, November 5 from 5 p.m. - 7 p.m. Come join **Harmony Keeney** and **Mark Wells**, a duo of jazz vocalist and keyboardist, at the Market Cafe as they entertain with songs of Gershwin, Rogers & Hart, Cole Porter and many others. For more information call 542.2121. www.ferrington.com

Saturday, November 6 at 11 a.m. We are excited to host botanist **Bobby J. Ward**, who will discuss his latest book *The Plant Hunter's Garden: The New Explorers and Their Discoveries*. Many gardeners are vaguely aware of the "greats" of plant exploration but hardly any know of the contemporary ones who introduce new plants to nurseries all the time. Ward profiles thirty-two of today's more prolific plant hunters, from the Czech Republic to the Rocky Mountains. Ward asked each of the hunters to choose the very best treasures from their years of collecting. Call McIntyre's for details at 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Sunday, November 7 at 2 p.m. Come join **Ellen Elizabeth Hunter**, as she reads from the third book in her North Carolina mystery series, *Murder on the Ghost Walk*. McIntyre's. 542.3030. www.ferrington.com

Thursday, November 11 from 9 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. **Holiday Entertaining Seminar.** Prepare for the holiday season with a morning of demonstrations and holiday party tips from Ferrington Village's Floral Designer Bill Pressley, Executive Chef Graham Fox and Sommelier Nicolas Roulier. Bill's magical designs will transform your home into the showcase of the season. Chef Fox will share recipes and tips for creating sumptuous holiday treats. To complete the perfect holiday party our sommelier will make recommendations for sparkling wines and champagnes. Join us for a fun-filled day that will make the planning as pleasurable as the party itself. The seminar package is \$95. Reservations can be made by calling 542.2121 or e-mail house@ferrington.com.

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Northwood band wins national grant

By Beth Snider

Through The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation, Northwood's band program has been awarded a national grant that has enabled the band to purchase a Ross Marimba. Northwood High School is the first public school in the state of North Carolina to receive one of the prestigious awards from this organization.

"Wednesday, September 1, we received our marimba, which was obtained through Pearson Music. This instrument, which will be used for many years to come, will feature prominently in this year's Paul Simon show," said Eugene Cottrell, the Northwood band director.

The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation supports music education through the donation of new and refurbished musical instruments to school and community music programs and individual students nationwide. Within the grant, there is a category called The Melody Program, which allows schools to apply for funding for musical instruments that are beyond their reaches financially.

Marjorie Rohrbach, the grant writer and a Northwood Band mom explained, "It seemed to me that the NHS band program was a perfect candidate. As we collected the facts and figures required



The Northwood Marching Chargers perform for students at Perry Harrison on September 30 as they also celebrate receiving honors from The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation.

by the Foundation, I felt that it was important to emphasize the tremendous growth that Mr. Cottrell has been able to achieve in the program, the subsequent success attained by the Marching Chargers, the diversity of the Booster Club fundraising projects, and the philosophical if not financial support from the school community."

In addition, The Northwood Band

Program has been selected by The Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation as an exemplary model band program for other bands across the nation that need a framework for building a program. The national representative will visit Northwood on October 15.

"I would like to give a special thank you to all of the parents, students and administrative personnel who have

helped us reach this nationally recognized level of excellence over the past five years and to those who will continue to take us to new heights and great experiences in the years to come," said Cottrell.

Beth Snider is Public Relations/Community Schools Coordinator for Chatham County Schools.

PATRIOT

continued from page 1.

the Ralph Pendergraph Gardens at the Chapel Hill Police Department by a justice of the peace. While the pair adjusted to being married to someone they barely knew, Reyes-Alonso adjusted to life in America. "The biggest thing I noticed is that we would go to the grocery store and it would take Juan Manuel 10 minutes to pick out toothpaste," said Harmon. He didn't start speaking English for a year and he mourned having to leave his 9-year-old son in Cuba. He took a job at Fearington doing landscaping work and started volunteering at UNC Hospitals translating for Spanish-speaking patients. "He was happy," Harmon said.

He worked at Lowes Foods from June 2001 to July 2003 as a seafood and meat clerk and in April of 2003 took a job at the Pediatrics Outpatient Clinic at UNC Hospital scheduling appointments, processing patients and providing translation to Spanish-speaking patients. In December 2003, he became an interpreter providing translation between Spanish-speaking patients and their health care providers and financial counselors and reviewing and updating biographic and insurance data.

With meticulous help from Harmon, Reyes-Alonso worked hard to conform to all of the intricate, tedious and lengthy administrative processes that are laid out by the government for immigrants to follow. Reyes-Alonso spoke at every meeting, wrote an every form about his former occupation as an intelligence officer. Harmon said he hid nothing from the

government, from her, from his new country. He was a wide-open book to be read freely in any language, Harmon said.

In July 2003, government officials drove to their home in Pittsboro and took Reyes-Alonso to Raleigh, where they accused him of being a spy. He denied it. They let him go.

On September 2, 2004, at 8 a.m. Reyes-Alonso was arrested by agents of the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) as he made his way to work. The charge, as quoted from the news release the ICE provided is this:

"Reyes, who first received intelligence training in June 1994 under the command of the Cuban Directorate of Intelligence, failed to disclose this activity as required by the Foreign Agent Registration Act. When he applied to become a conditional resident of the United States, he again failed to disclose his activities. This man had extensive training and a long career as a Cuban Intelligence officer," said Atlanta Special Agent-in-Charge Ken Smith, who oversees ICE law-enforcement in Raleigh. "Failing to disclose foreign intelligence activities is a violation of the law. It's that simple."

Since September 2, Reyes-Alonso has been kept in jail, first in Winston-Salem, then in Charlotte, now in Weatherproof, Louisiana. He's been denied bail. According to ICE, Reyes is being held solely on the charge that he failed to register with the Attorney General for receiving intelligence training in Cuba. "Until his arrest, my husband and I were unaware of the existence of this law, which Juan Manuel's lawyer refers to as a 'gotcha law.' Had he known, Juan Manuel

would have complied without hesitation. My husband never hid his training or work in intelligence from the authorities of the United States. Even in his initial application for a fiancé visa he submitted a detailed report of that history to the State Department. He took and passed a polygraph for the Central Intelligence Agency in 2001. I interviewed with the Federal Bureau of Investigation about his history in May 1998, and he detailed his history to the FBI in 2001. None of these agencies informed him of the requirement to register with the Attorney General."

Harmon, a horticulture student at N.C. State, has stepped back from all but one class to work on the release of her husband. She is reading and learning as much as possible about the Patriot Act and how it affects people. "When it was first written, it sounded like something sketchy, but I never thought it would affect my life. I want to understand more about it so I can use it in his defense. This is not just about Juan Manuel. It's happening to many people since September 11," Harmon said. "I've been asking him to talk to the people he is in a cell with and ask who is there because of the Patriot Act. He had been wanting to go to law school, and this has made him more determined. He wants to help people who don't have people who can help them."

Harmon said she is still smiling as she goes to school, and as she works at her job at Fearington Village, but the world just doesn't look the same to her anymore. She wants her husband home and feels that the government could at least let him out on bail. "They could have let him be

home and work again. They're going to bankrupt the families they are doing this to," Harmon said.

What Harmon, Reyes-Alonso and all of their supporters fear is that ultimately, Reyes-Alonso will be deported to Cuba. "He says they will kill him if he is sent back, but I don't think that they can send him back. In the Universal Declaration of Human Rights you can't return someone to where they will be persecuted or killed," Harmon said.

As this article goes to press, Reyes-Alonso's lawyer has filed a habeas corpus petition to the federal court. The petition asks the federal court to release Reyes-Alonso because INS is detaining him illegally as his immigration status is legal.

What are the possible outcomes? "As far as I understand, he can be released, with or without bond, or the judge can say no. It may take a week after the hearing, scheduled for September 30th, for the judge to review the case," said Harmon. "If the judge says no, then Juan Manuel's lawyer, Charles Kuck, will request that the deportation hearing, which is currently scheduled for January 18, 2005, take place as soon as possible. Then we fight the deportation. If Immigration proves he is deportable, Kuck has a few more ideas to keep him here."

She prays that soon all will be back to normal again on their five-acre piece of joy and heaven in Pittsboro where they can continue to pursue their vision of the American dream. But until that happens, Harmon will not give up the fight.

Deborah R. Meyer is a writer who lives in Chatham County.



ILLUSTRATION BY CARL GRANATH

Handicapping Elections

A Tale of Two Politicians

By Don Lein

There are two outstanding politicians that are primary players in this fall's presidential election. One is hailed by the media as more convincing than the "Great Communicator", more intelligent than the entire faculty of Harvard, more charismatic than a bevy of Hollywood notables and, of course, loaded with gravitas. The second one, by comparison, is looked upon as something of a boob — all he has ever been capable of is winning elections by margins not thought possible. One might even say he is "Misunderestimated". Of course, we're talking about Dubya.

George W. Bush came upon the national scene and had to initially compete with that intellectual giant, Al Gore, who, incidentally, flunked out of divinity school. Finding someone with the intellectual capacity to flunk out of divinity school must have been a challenge, not dissimilar from trying to find a dugong or an Amsterdam albatross. Nonetheless the media and savants had their joke about the lightweight from Texas until he won. If any of the media had cared to check on his record, instead of ridiculing him, they would have seen that he had a remarkable ability to attract votes, particularly from groups and areas where Republicans had not been strong in the past. In the current race some political pundits are suggesting he is angling to bring back to the voting booths four million social conservatives who sat out the last election, as well as retain those votes he garnered in 2000. Bush has been remarkable in being able to reach constituencies not normally Republican (Reagan Democrats, among others) and he has the power and stature of the incumbency.

The other political operative referred to above is the de facto head of the Democrat Party, William Jefferson Clinton. Self-absorbed and, when he contains his satirical preoccupation, a very effective strategic politician. Now that the doors of the Presidency are closed to him, he naturally turns to the second most capable person in the U. S. for the job and that is Hillary. However, the Clintons recognize the formidable task of unseating Bush and would prefer to run in 2008, and she cannot afford to run much later because of age. Aye, there's the rub. If Kerry wins with a photogenic and charismatic Vice-President, the only way Hillary gets to the White House over the next decade or more is as a guest. Against this backdrop consider the fact that Clinton went in for his elective surgery after the Republican Convention. While there he called Kerry and talked to him for 90 minutes and "someone" to Kerry's chagrin, leaked the conversation to the press. As a result of this conversation several Clintonistas (James Carville, Paul Begala, et al.) were taken on by Kerry to "help" his campaign. If you believe that these Clintonistas are going to do anything that will harm Hillary's chances of being the Democratic nominee for president in 2008, I have a bridge for you that runs from Brooklyn Heights to Manhattan.

Now reports have it that the original campaign staff of Kerry is having problems with the new additions - surprise, surprise. Whether these operatives were encased in the proverbial Trojan Horse remains to be seen. Under any circumstance the Clintons will land on their feet. The major imponderable is that if Bush wins big and improves the Republican position in Congress, will that hasten America's move to the right as Mickelthwait and Wooldridge have posited in their recent book "The Right Nation"? They suggest that it is too late for Hillary's ideas, if not Hillary. According to the Census Bureau, the center of American population is inexorably moving south and west by 3.5 miles every year — away from the northeast and its cherished liberal agenda.

So, we have the two master politicians in this year's presidential election. Who will win? I could say it depends on what you mean by "win", but I expect they both will, by their own criteria.

Don Lein retired to Chatham County. He serves on a number of boards that deal with senior citizen issues.

A vote for gridlock

By Julian Sereno

I'm a big fan of government gridlock. By that I certainly don't mean frozen, incompetent bureaucracies; but rather those periods in history when one major political party controls the White House and the other the Congress. During those halcyon times, neither party can ram through its agenda, and stalemate is the order of the day.

Such was the case during the Reagan Administration, when Congress was controlled by the Democrats. Our country experienced strong economic growth, and internationally, the beginning of the demise of the Soviet Union and victory in the Cold War. All this came about because of the ability of Congress to blunt Administration initiatives and Reagan's willingness to use the veto power to do the same to Congress.

The most recent time our country experienced that balance was during the last six years of the Clinton Administration, which saw unprecedented prosperity and a successful air war against Serbia in which there was not a single American casualty. As a result of the gridlock of that time, a huge budget surplus was used to actually pay down the national debt — the Republicans were unable to give it all to rich people in the form of tax breaks and the Democrats couldn't spend it all on various new government programs.

But woe is unto us when one party controls both branches of government. During my lifetime, during three instances of single party control, our country floundered and blundered and paid for these mistakes for years afterwards.

The first such instance was during the Johnson Administration, when while running for reelection as the peace candidate, LBJ pushed through the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, and shortly after his inauguration, upped the U.S. commitment to defend South Vietnam by sending in over a half-million U.S. troops. The Democrat controlled Congress meekly went along. We all know what

happened. We lost the war and the very subject divides us to this day.

During the Carter Administration, with a Democratic Congress bent on "reform" in the wake of the Watergate scandal and a President who promised "a government as good as the American people," they gave away the store. It was then that the "Misery Index" was born — a compilation of rising unemployment and inflation, which was double digit at the time. When Islamic fundamentalists began the Islamic Revolution in Iran, Carter distanced himself from the Shah of Iran rather than backing him. Carter found the idea of supporting a tyrant abhorrent, and the Shah of Iran certainly was a tyrant, albeit a benign one by Middle Eastern standards. Carter's inaction helped launch something much more dangerous — the rule of the fundamentalist Ayatollahs, who are busy trying to build an atomic bomb as I write these words.

The most recent such period, of course, is the present and these, sadly, are the facts of our current situation. We are mired in a guerilla war in Iraq with no exit strategy and no end in sight. Our annual deficits approach a half a trillion dollars a year, not counting the war, which is off those particular books.

I have no idea what kind of president George W. Bush would have been had he not had a Republican Congress to rubberstamp everything he sent their way, and he, in turn, to sign all of their initiatives into law. But I have no doubt that if he had to deal with a Democratic Congress, or if a few hanging chads had fallen and it was Al Gore dealing with a Republican Congress, our straits would be much less dire, 9/11 and the War on Terror notwithstanding.

Gridlocked government is the only way to keep the most egregious blunders from both sides of the aisle from getting written in stone and enduring our nation for generations.

Julian Sereno is editor and publisher of Chatham County Line.

Beware of NC Amendment One

With North Carolinians' attention focused on national races, state races and county elections, November 2 will be a big day at the polls. Forecasters are suggesting a larger than usual turnout for the state.

Beware what is on the ballot in small print. Amendment One, which returns to our ballots after being soundly defeated in North Carolina in the 80s and 90s, is probably not what you think. North Carolina Realtors and Chambers of Commerce will be spending big dollars to tell you Amendment One is too good to be true. It probably is. The amendment would allow cities and county commissioners to set up special tax districts around private development projects and issue bonds to pay for infrastructure to support these projects. City officials and County Commissioners could authorize the bonds without the citizens voting on it. And should things not work out, who will pay off the bonds? I think you know.

My suggestion? Do your own research before you vote on Amendment One.

—Mary Bastin

Mary Bastin is a citizen of Chatham County and a board member of Chatham Citizens For Effective Communities.

Make your VOICE HEARD!

Write to Editor, Chatham County Line

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or e-mail chathamcoline@mindspring.com

CHATHAM COMUNIDAD

— · · · · ·
bilingual news ~ noticias bilingües



El Vinculo Hispano presento Fiesta Latina – Celebrando Diversidad, una fiesta communal de culturas en Chatham el sabado, 7 agosto en Bray Park en Siler City. Por la quinta fiesta, mas de 5,000 miembros de la comunidad visitaron por la tarde soleada.



El Dia de Patrimonio ocurre en el Seafirth Recreation de lago Jordan el sabado, 2 octubre. Guardabosques y voluntarios presentaron muchos programas, excursiones y discusiones. Servieron barbacoa y limonada.

The Hispanic Liaison hosted Fiesta Latina — Celebrating Diversity, a community celebration of cultures in Chatham, on August 7 at Bray Park in Siler City. For the fifth annual Fiesta, over 5,000 community members came out throughout the sunny afternoon.



Heritage Day took place at Jordan Lake's Seafirth Recreation area Saturday, October 2. N.C. State Rangers and community volunteers put on over a dozen demonstrations, five shows, and several Ranger programs, hikes and discussions. Food, including barbecue and lemonade were served.

© PHOTO BY JOHN SHILLITO

Media bias destroying the news business

The news in the news business lately is there is so little credibility left it is hardly a business anymore. Last year it was the New York Times — and other large papers and television have been self-destructing for years.

Surely no one was caught off guard by recent news that Dan Rather, CBS and its "60 Minutes" had twisted and mangled the truth to support their own political and social ideas. This time they were so obvious and blatant that hundreds — perhaps even thousands of ordinary citizens — saw through their attempt to disguise Microsoft Word as a 1971 IBM typewriter.

This is not new for Rather. Thirty years ago he did a "documentary" that starred six Vietnam "combat" veterans who "exposed" that war. It turned out five of the six never saw combat. Still, Rather got away with it. On their social front, 60 Minutes tried to deify Ben Chavis, the North Carolina minister who was convicted in the Wilmington firebomb riots. Sixty Minutes ran a "political prisoners" piece alleging Chavis was innocent. They backed it up with a white Lutheran minister who said Chavis was inside the minister's church when the firebomb was thrown.

Morey Safer tenderly extracted the minister's excuse that he was afraid of the heated racial atmosphere in Wilmington. I suppose America was supposed to weep. But an editor from the Wilmington newspaper said the minister did not come back to testify because there were several outstanding warrants against him involving little girls in his church.

Media Meditations

by R.L. Taylor

If you forgot, Chavis was paroled, landed a position high in the NAACP and promptly wrote a \$50,000 check to his girlfriend. I don't know where he is today but I doubt if 60 Minutes wants to do a follow up.

In truth, virtually every television news outlet is reeking with bias. The three broadcast television networks, ABC, CBS and NBC and three of the four cable networks, CNN, CNBC and MSNBC, are profoundly liberal. Fox News alone stands as an obvious conservative voice. Major newspapers such as The New York Times, Washington Post, Boston Globe, Los Angeles Times, and Raleigh News and Observer believe the Democratic Party is the salvation of all mankind to the exclusion of all other remedies.

Trying to prove they are fair, networks present "both sides" even on simple issues. That gives the public two talking heads that scream at each other while the viewer is left to believe he is actually seeing something of value. Fox News can always find the good-looking Conservative to out debate a stupid-looking Liberal. On the other side, the three other cable networks merely switch sides, making sure the liberal is handsome or sexy or whatever and the Conservative is mean old ugly Zell Miller

This system merely proves networks are not only poor reporters, they are worse referees because the public is remains confused.

The liberals love the Celebrity format and offer Meryl Streep to assure us John Kerry would be a

delightful president. But they almost fainted when Arnold the Terminator gave the keynote address for the Republican convention.

News is not supposed to be done that way. All news organizations should have the experience, knowledge and judgment to report on and explain the impact of any political or historical event in this country. The trend to get "both sides" is the result of the political correctness craze that has virtually destroyed freedom of expression in America. It is a newsman's duty to report all sides of all issues and dismiss what is worthless. It is his duty to report there are good things and bad things in any proposal and identify the good and the bad. People can understand that.

Newspapers damage themselves with headlines and placement of stories. Some newspapers refuse to publish polls that show Bush is ahead of Kerry. The N. Y. Times can hide a positive Bush story on Page 18B in small type. When one of John Edwards's neighbors wrote an email that he was not friendly, The News and Observer took the opposite approach. It ran a six-column "disaster" headline across the top of one page, shouting something like, "Edwards Neighbors are Talking About Him" as if it were an electric chair offense to dislike John Edwards.

And the paper's editors continue to claim that while they are Democrats, they are fair and unbiased. Yeah. Sure.

R.L. Taylor has been a newsman for more than 50 years. He has also been an advisor to newspapers in Slovakia, Romania and Russia.