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Cover photo:
"Oak Island crab walk"
By Cheryl L. Serra

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The last time I addressed the growth of St. James Plantation (SJP) in *Cat-Tales* was in March of 2016. I also included summary data on growth in last year’s Annual Meeting and in some of the Open Information Meetings, which we conduct on a monthly basis.

Most of the data included in this article come directly from our Property & Member Database (PMD). Data relative to forecast growth are my best understanding of the Developer’s future plans.

"If the current rate of 190 new home starts continues over the next few years, ‘build out’ could occur as early as 2027-2028."

**CURRENT PROPERTY STATUS:** There are currently 4,849 properties listed in PMD, of which 4,787 properties are residential units – single family or condos. Of these properties, 3,233 are improved (homes built), and 1,554 are unimproved properties. The improved property number also includes 325 condo units. Individual property owners have title to 4,506 properties – more than 94 percent of all properties. The Developer currently has title to 187, or four percent, of these properties, primarily in the new neighborhoods opened in the last two years. Individual builders own 94 properties purchased from the Developer to build and then sell each house and lot as a unit.

All properties in PMD are assigned to one of 54 separate neighborhoods. In some cases, a neighborhood is defined as a set of condo units such as Marsh Winds. Some neighborhoods are large, such as Members Club West with 350 houses, and some are small, such as Moss Hammock III with only 17 properties. Of the 54 neighborhoods, 34 are more than 95 percent sold out. All but six of the newest neighborhoods are more than 50 percent sold out. A good example of rapid growth is The Grove neighborhood, which is more than 70 percent sold out just two years after opening the area. There are only two existing neighborhoods where the Developer still owns more than 50 percent of the properties.

The construction of new homes continues at a very good rate. We have seen approximately 1,000 new home starts over the past six years. Over the past four years, we have averaged approximately 190 new home starts per year. There are currently more than 175 homes under construction within SJP, including individual builder-owned properties.

**FORECAST GROWTH:** In addition to the current 4,787 residential properties in PMD, there are plans to add another 350-400 buildable properties, including single family and multifamily units. The most recent addition to SJP is a new area off Oceanic called Oceanic Bay consisting of 48 lots.

With the completion of all planned expansion, there will be approximately 5,100 residential units within SJP at final “build out.” This means we are approximately 92 percent “sold out.” If we maintain the current rate of sales, I believe Developer lots will effectively be “sold out” by 2022.

With 3,233 completed homes and 175 under construction, we are approximately 66 percent “built out.” If the current rate of 190 new home starts continues over the next few years, “build out” could occur as early as 2027-2028.
In last month’s *Cat-Tales*, I mentioned that we have added a wage contingency fund to this year’s budget, pending the results of a pay and classification study. The Town of St. James (TOSJ) has only four full-time and two part-time employees, and we have tried to pay salaries that are comparable to similar positions in nearby towns.

But St. James is different from other towns. Many functions that would ordinarily be considered town responsibilities reside with the POA. Also, as a small town, some TOSJ employees have responsibilities that would require two or more employees in another town. For example, our TOSJ administrator is also our Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) administrator, our budget officer and our town clerk. These functions would be assigned elsewhere to separate employees that would report to the town administrator. This creates a challenge when ensuring the wages we pay our employees are appropriate.

We have contracted with a consultant, the Management and Personnel Services Group, to perform a pay and classification study for TOSJ. Representatives from the company will interview our employees, review their job descriptions, compare the data to that of similar towns and make recommendations for revisions to our job descriptions.

They will also recommend an appropriate salary schedule for each position. The study will be completed by early July, with the results and recommendations to be presented at our July 11 regular meeting. Since we won’t get the consultant’s recommendations until we are in the next fiscal year, the contingency fund we added to the budget will allow us to adjust where appropriate.

Funds to cover the cost of the community center hosting TOSJ elections are also in our budget. In November, residents will elect three new town council members to fill seats currently held by Bruce Maxwell, Wayne Deutscher and me. Council terms are four years and begin the first Tuesday in December following the election.

If you have an interest in running for office, or would like more information about the responsibilities and time commitment, I’m sure that any member of council will be happy to talk to you. Of course, we’re looking for residents who will consider the needs of the TOSJ as a whole, rather than focusing on their neighborhoods or personal issues. You can file to run for office from noon, July 7 to noon, July 21 at the town office.

On another topic, if you have a dog, be sure it’s on a leash any time it’s off your property. The Sheriff’s deputy who regularly patrols St. James is not giving out warnings. Carrying the leash but letting the dog walk free does not comply with the animal control ordinance and will earn you a citation and fine.

And, to end on a happy note: Maxwell Drive has been open for two months. I think anyone who lives in this neck of the woods will agree that it was worth the wait. By the way, did you know that Maxwell Drive is in Oak Island?
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Training St. James firefighters

By Jim Carey

Your St. James Fire Department (SJFD) is involved in training all year round. This is true of all SJFD specialties, including firefighters, emergency medical technicians and fire police. Since we’re called upon to perform without regard to weather, we train the same way — although not always happily in the rain or the grueling heat of the North Carolina summer.

One of our objectives is to make the training as lifelike as possible. To that end, one of our lieutenants recently attended a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new training facility at Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point (MOTSU). We have trained at MOTSU before, but we hadn’t laid eyes on this new facility — a $3.7 million training officer’s dream.

Our hardy lieutenant engaged one of the managers and expressed his admiration for the training facility. He said SJFD would be honored to train with the facility’s professional firefighters. The lieutenant hoped they had an outreach training program and he wanted to get SJFD involved.

Lo and behold, MOTSU said yes. As a result, the SJFD has been training on a semi-regular basis at the facility.

SJFD fire fighters have had extremely realistic training experiences at the MOTSU facility. Sometimes it has been difficult to discern whether it’s training or an actual firefighting event. We’ve been involved in controlling fires in totally dark rooms, simulating some fire situations.

To gain confidence in their personal protective equipment (PPE), the firefighters go inside an enclosed, airtight room with blazing wood pallets providing the fire. The temperature in the room reaches 700 degrees Fahrenheit with zero oxygen. When the flames extinguish because of the lack of air supply, the MOTSU trainer opens the door, and the flames find new life.

This exercise results in our firefighters’ increased confidence in the PPE ability to protect them from burns. They also realize their self-contained breathing apparatus, or SCBA, will provide a life-giving air supply. With this renewed confidence, the trainees return to the fire and extinguish it.

The lieutenant went on to explain that we have a very active firefighting force (MOTSU knew that) and that we train at least twice a week, with some sub-specialties undergoing an additional day or two of training monthly. The clincher was that he would dearly love to set up a training schedule using the MOTSU facility.

We’re hoping to continue this relationship with MOTSU. The facility is great and the training is spot on.

If you’re interested in joining the SJFD, you can just stop by the fire house or call using the non-emergency number 253-9990 and chat with Chief John Dahill or Harry Einbinder.
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BY C.L. SMITH CONSTRUCTION, INC.
Quite frequently, the Property Owners’ Association (POA) office receives calls from frantic property owners who report workers digging in their front yards. When we tell them that the area where the workers are digging is owned by the POA, we are often met with doubt and denial.

A brief explanation of a right of way (ROW) may be helpful to ensure our mutual understanding.

When a neighborhood is planned for development, the planner reserves corridors of property for road construction. Generally, these corridors are 40-60 feet wide. Roads are eventually constructed in these corridors, usually down the center, but sometimes offset a little to preserve a specimen tree or natural drainage way. With roads in St. James averaging about 22 feet wide, 15-20 feet on each side of the road remains unpaved, but still part of the ROW. Following road construction, these corridors are deeded to the POA and become POA property.

"An easement grants an entity access to another owner's property with certain conditions and restrictions."

A ROW has many constructive uses. The electric company buries power lines and installs transformers, and the water company puts the sewer and water lines in them. Cable TV and internet lines run underground in the ROW, and the space is used to install sidewalks, fire hydrants, mailboxes and streetlights. Without the ROW, these companies would face the impossible task of repeatedly getting permission from individual owners to enter their yards to do repairs and maintain their services.

For these companies to utilize the POA ROW, a legal agreement known as a utility easement is negotiated. An easement grants an entity access to another owner’s property with certain conditions and restrictions. Some easements are perpetual and some have defined terms. Easement agreements protect both the property owner and the grantee.

Property owners generally landscape the ROW area between their lot line and the paved surface of the road. This is desirable and provides continuity from the house to the road. If a drainage swale exists in the ROW, POA regulations require adjacent property owners to maintain their swale and retain the proper slope needed to facilitate drainage.

Several current projects are underway that involve construction in the ROW. All three cable companies are upgrading portions of their systems, burying fiber-optic cable. This work involves boring and digging, and, at some point, will occur in front of your home. Remember the contractors are working on POA property with the required permissions. We will work to ensure the property is restored to a reasonable condition.

Editor’s Note: Dan Davis is the POA community manager.
Tired of your slow-running computer?
Part two  By Chris Nicholas

In the May issue of *Cat-Tales*, we discussed the pros and cons of autostart programs that serve a useful purpose but also may slow down your computer. We also talked about a workaround for Apple computers.

This month, we’ll discuss how to work with autostart programs that operate with Windows software.

How you should disable such startup programs depends on the version of Windows you’re using. If you use Windows 7 or earlier, you can use the built-in MSConfig tool. If you’re using Windows 8 or Windows 10, you’ll find a new startup manager in the Windows Task Manager. This tool also informs you how long each program takes to start when you log in, showing you which programs are really slowing down your startup time.

**When hardware starts to fail...**

If a computer is slowing down, it has a software problem that can be fixed. Hardware problems usually shouldn’t cause your computer to slow down.

Here are some common components that can fail and the problems their failures may cause:

**Hard drive:** If your hard drive starts failing, files on it may become corrupted. You may see long delays when you attempt to access files or save to the hard drive. Windows may stop booting entirely.

**CPU:** A failing CPU may result in your computer not booting at all. If the CPU is overheating, your computer may blue-screen when it’s under load such as when you’re playing a demanding game or encoding video.

**RAM:** Applications write data to your RAM and use it for short-term storage. If your RAM starts failing, an application may write data to RAM, then later get an incorrect value. This can result in application crashes, blue screens and file corruption.

**Graphics card:** Graphics card errors may result while rendering 3D content or just displaying your desktop. An overheated graphics card may crash your graphics driver or cause your computer to freeze while under load such as when playing demanding 3D games.

**Fans:** If any computer fan fails, components may overheat and you may experience CPU or graphics card problems. Your computer may also shut down abruptly to limit further overheating or damage.

**Motherboard:** Motherboard problems can be extremely tough to diagnose. You may see occasional blue screens or similar problems.

**Power supply:** A malfunctioning power supply is also tough to diagnose. It may deliver too much power to a component, damaging it and causing a malfunction. If the power supply dies completely, your computer won’t power on when you press the power button.

Other common problems such as a computer slowing down are likely to be software problems. It’s also possible that software problems can cause many of the above symptoms — malware that hooks deep into the Windows kernel can cause your computer to blue-screen, for example.

The best way to determine whether you have a software or hardware problem is to restore your computer’s software back to its default state. That means reinstalling Windows or using the refresh or reset feature on Windows 8. When in doubt, back up your files and reinstall Windows.
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The visit season for Operation At Ease (OAE) is well underway. We have already scheduled visits by 15 warrior families over five weekends. Included will be three families from Fort Bragg’s Warrior Transition Battalion and, for the first time, two Marine families from Camp Lejeune’s Wounded Warrior Battalion-East. It’s a special honor to welcome the families from both these units.

A big shout-out goes to the volunteers of the Purple and Patriotic Bow Campaign. What a job they did this year with bow sales. OAE expects to receive nearly $16,000, an increase of more than $1,400 from 2016. Thank you, residents, for supporting this great fundraiser. Many of our visiting families ask about the bows on the mailboxes. They are overwhelmed by the level of support this community shows for these two great causes.

We have a special request for new volunteers to support two favorite activities for the families. We need photographers to provide a digital family photo shoot for each family, with a convenient time and location for the photographer and the family. John Muuss and Ken Haubrich have graciously covered most of the early visits this year, but we need additional photographers. The shoot is a great opportunity to meet the family and express your support. We can set up “ride-along” experience and training.

The second need is for boat owners. Each family can select a boat tour of the Intracoastal Waterway as one of the activities. It only takes a couple of hours of the boat owner’s time, and everyone has a blast.

If you have a camera or a boat, please consider helping out. Contact Penny Chesnut at pchesnut.chesnut7@gmail.com or 910-540-3682.

Have a great summer and thanks for your support to Operation At Ease!
Consider this sentence: The ballerina turned on the faucet. The image inside your mind is of a ballerina reaching out and turning on a faucet, watching the water flow.

But Linda Eyler, POA Communications Committee chair since 2014, knows how to change your mental image. If she adds a comma after the word “turned,” now there’s a ballerina in a pink tutu pirouetting on top of the faucet.

As the comma placement indicates, Linda has no small task. St. James property owners depend on her and the committee members to get those commas right.

Linda came to St. James from space — the space industry to be specific. She knows well that specificity matters, because she developed the algorithms to avoid collisions in space. “When the shuttle went up, you wanted it to avoid satellites,” she says. Eventually, she ended up in the Pentagon, managing space budget and policy.

“What I wrote had to be clear to satellite operators and decision-makers,” Linda says. “When I retired, I wanted to use those skill sets, but with something different, so here I am. I like people, and we have lots of fascinating people here.”

“Writing, the art of communicating thoughts to the mind through the eye, is the great invention of the world...enabling us to converse ... at all distances of time and space.”

- Abraham Lincoln

How do they do it all? “We have incredible volunteers who are dedicated, self-starters and proactive,” Linda said. They are also aware of the community they serve. They strive to showcase multiple events and achievements, as well as provide information and education on day-to-day activities.

Besides the chair, committee members and the functions they support are Amanda Kiel (WUSJ and website), Sherry Hammond (WUSJ), Su Peyton (website), Arthur Hill (Cat-Tales), John Muuss (photography) and Jerry Iverson (POA Board liaison).

One of the challenging aspects of this committee is having a consistent, well-defined communications policy that treats all property owners uniformly while abiding by North Carolina and POA rules. For example, the POA must remain neutral, not endorsing commercial products or services, or publishing advertorial, partisan, political or religious belief articles.

Committee members also are looking at the POA’s future communications needs as the community continues to expand and evolve.

Linda loves sharing the stories and information that make St. James the community what it is. “Being the communications chair has enriched my life,” she said. “I’ve made some good friends and acquired insight into how St. James functions with all its moving parts.”
The Town of St. James (TOSJ) started thinking about a community center after receiving a petition from residents in 1999. For the next eight years, the TOSJ investigated the desire, need, feasibility, financial impact and architectural design for such an amenity. As the community population, events and clubs grew, so did the need for meeting amenities.

However, only slightly more than 50 percent of respondents supported this $3.5 million project, primarily due to the concern for the debt burden and a possible tax increase. Approved in 2008, the St. James Community Center opened in late 2010. The center has 12,865 square feet of space, 10 different room configurations with audio-visual and wireless capabilities. The large multipurpose room has an overhead projector system and an adjacent full-catering kitchen.

The manager, Robin Schuster, had been hired earlier that summer of 2010 to help with setting up the interior and electronic reservation program. Robin, who moved to Brunswick County in 1980, was well qualified with her extensive history of recreation and education programs and help to The Clubs swimming programs.

Since then, she has been the go-to person for ensuring that the community center supports St. James and local area events, six days a week (and sometimes on Sunday), from 8 a.m.-10 p.m. But the office is open only on weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Use of the facility increased — it now hosts an average of 200 people daily — so extra staff was needed. Paul Murphy became the assistant manager in 2012, and John Davison joined the staff in 2015. Together they make possible the extended hours, especially with approximately 10 significant events each month from local area commercial and nonprofit organizations and the weekly, popular contracted fitness programs that pay for using the amenity. But most events hosted are free of charge or minimal charge to residents.

Currently, there are no planned upgrades. But there are always the usual repairs and regular maintenance. “The building’s interior and exterior have held up well and provide very practical and functional options with its different room configurations and easy-to-maintain landscaping,” Robin said. “The staff keeps current the CPR and first-aid training, as well as the emergency action plan.”

When Robin was asked what it takes to be the manager of the community center, she said, “That person must be flexible to the needs of residents and event organizers, have good event-planning skills, and efficiently use event-scheduling electronic tools.”

The next time you see these multi-tasking staff members overseeing several events at one time, thank them for all that they do to improve our quality of life at St. James.
In the fall of 2011, American Legion Post 543 was formed with 18 veterans. It has now grown to 170 Legionnaires with no legion hall or bar. This growth is because its members have unwavering commitment to the “Four Pillars” on which the American Legion was founded in 1919: “Americanism,” “National Security,” “Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation,” and “Children and Youth.”

Americanism programs include the Constitutional Speech Contest, which strengthens local high school students’ appreciation for the U.S. Constitution, and participation in Southport’s July 4 Festival. The Post also conducts the annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day observances for the St. James community and maintains the Veterans Memorial in the Town of St. James.

Programs for Children and Youth include teaching enrichment classes to JROTC students at South Brunswick High School (SBHS) and sending Brunswick County high school students to Boys State and Girls State, where they practice the process of democratic representative government. Legionnaires also serve as proctors for tests at SBHS.

National Security includes programs for Marines at Camp LeJeune, Coast Guard families stationed nearby, Operation North State for servicemen and women from North Carolina serving overseas, and Operation Comfort Warrior.

Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation include providing ramps, rails, home repairs and transportation assistance for local disabled veterans, sponsoring the Veterans Work Study Program at Brunswick Community College, providing Military Honors for Veterans of St. James and Brunswick County, and helping local veterans navigate the complexities of Veterans Administration (VA) services through the Vet-to-Vet Program. Recently, 25 Post 543 Legionnaires joined with Legionnaires from other Cape Fear posts and partnered with the VA, state and county to host a three-day Veterans Benefits Action Center (VBAC) in Wilmington.

At the VBAC, 766 veterans received help to resolve their issues or questions concerning VA benefits. Officials from the Veterans Health Administration and Wilmington Health Care Center enrolled veterans in MyHealthVet and VA medical care programs. VA claims examiners authorized $1.8 million in payments for deserving veterans in North Carolina, including a Korean War veteran and a homeless female veteran.

These are just some of the day-to-day activities that Post 543 Legionnaires do through the generosity of the St. James community.
The flotilla wars

By Judy Rubin

No matter where you’re from, once you arrive at St. James, you can’t escape the history of the surrounding areas. The North Carolinians who resisted the British Stamp Act, the local “gentleman’s pirate” Stede Bonnet, the Civil War battle at Fort Fisher and our very own Tommy Thompson with his profitable occupation as a blockade runner remind us of days gone by.

But have you heard of the Beaver Creek Flotilla Wars of the late 1900s?

It seems that Beaver Creek’s dividing line was at the intersection of Silverleaf and Tide Marsh Court. Residents on the northern end were referred to as the “Damn Yankees,” and those toward the Founders side were the “Southern Belles.” During hot summer days around July 4, the northern folks would launch their fleets (canoes, kayaks and a few small motorboats) and head down the creek to the Intracoastal and on to open waters.

Floating, paddling and maneuvering the marshes was easy. But the Damn Yankees had to pass the docks of those Southern Belles, which is where the water wars broke out.

Weapons of choice were water balloons, squirt guns and Super Soaker rifles. Neither group dominated and there were no declared winners. But there always was a peace treaty, signed at one of the houses along the route (“shore parties”) on the docks of the Madsens, Moseleys or Meyers.

Generally, the treaties were one-year pacts, with the parties agreeing to free passage from the north fork of the creek to the Intracoastal. Treaty parties included more games, shared food and tons of libations.

During the treaty parties, decorated with red, white and blue pennants, the sailors opted for costumes and colors. Donna Cluse wore a gown, posing as Lady Liberty. Participants rightfully agreed the flotilla wars were another excuse to get together and enjoy the company of friends, families and neighbors (as if we need reasons for these events).

The annual wars continued until, one year, a female alligator with offspring took up residence under one of the docks, forcing a cancellation. There was no war, just the party afterwards. Somehow, participants still had fun without the precursory troubles. The water fights ceased, but the neighborhood gatherings continued, and as with so much of St. James, memories were made.
What should I do to get my vegetable garden approved?

So you want to plant seeds or young plants and watch your vegetables grow? It’s certainly the season. But if you plan to plant a new garden, be sure to get Architectural Control Committee (ACC) approval.

For this minor change, property owners must fill out a Modification of Existing Home/Site application and provide a Site Plan with the proposed location of the garden — which should be no larger than 100 square feet and located in the rear yard of the property within the setbacks and easements — along with color images of the fencing or netting you plan to use. Freestanding vegetable gardens will be reviewed by the ACC on an individual basis. Where necessary, evergreen screening on the outside of the garden will be required.

For the ACC to determine your screening needs, please provide photos of your lot lines, one for each side and one for the rear. If you’re worried about critters, you can use approved wildlife netting so long as it’s not higher than four feet tall and is removed when the garden is dormant. Rules also require gardens to be well maintained.

If you wish to further review the 2015 POA Design Guidelines you can find them on the POA’s website under the Resources tab. For further questions, please feel free to email Genna Porter, the POA’s ACC administrator, at gporter@stjamespoa.net.

Editor’s Note: Architectural FAQs will be provided periodically to provide discreet, easily digestible facts about POA Design Guidelines. Genna Porter is the POA Architectural Control Committee administrator.
Karen Maggiola
Karen, who has always had a passion for the arts, focuses on watercolor, acrylic painting, pen and ink and pastels. An injury caused her to give up those forms of art, but she still wanted to be creative in some way. After years of helping friends and family decorate their homes and creating silk floral arrangements for them, Karen finally decided to showcase her treasures at the gallery and other venues. She’s also available to help residents decorate their new homes.

Karen has a unique creativity that transforms customers’ wishes into shape, color, texture and form so the finished design blends perfectly in their homes. Her creative process begins when she starts a new project, a new vision to arrange a variety of colors, textures and sizes into a pleasing finished product. Her reward is the enjoyment she gets in creating a product sure to please the eye.

Karen also performs her design magic on items such as wine bottle decorations and decorative visors and hats. She’s always on the lookout for ways to produce beautiful and unique holiday decorations, each year coming up with new designs to add to the home holiday spirit.

Nick Noble
For many years, Nick has been interested in coastal landscape photography. His retirement from teaching quantitative economics and his move from southwestern Ohio to St. James has allowed Nick to spend many hours pursuing his interest. He finds that Brunswick County area is an excellent setting to develop and refine his skills. He loves photographing piers, sunrises, sunsets and seascapes. He will return to the same location, each time with different lights and different tides, to understand how these differences influence the picture.

Nick’s move here also allowed him to develop an entirely new photographic interest — landscape astrophotography. This is photographing the stars and Milky Way, particularly in the late night and early morning. A chilly, quiet winter morning with his camera, a cup of warm coffee and a sky full of stars has become his “happy place.”

Nick’s photography can be seen on his website (nicknoblephotography.com) and his Facebook page (www.facebook.com/NickNoblePhotography) as well as on other social media. His work has been featured in several local calendars and publications.
Participants in the May Crafts and Cocktails, sponsored by Troon, enjoyed wine, punch and appetizers as well as an opportunity to be creative. Robin Weir from Wild by Nature in Southport helped participants create three different fresh flower arrangements in vases. The Artisans were on hand to assist with creative ideas. Based on the history of May Day and keeping with tradition, each participant could choose to give some of their vases to friends, anonymously placing them on their doorsteps. The event was a big success, and participants were pleased with their artistic creations.
Seven months of research, observations and consultations with experts aimed at improving the pond water-quality levels throughout St. James are included in a report completed by the St. James Pond & Water Shed Water Quality Tiger Team.

“Recommendations for Improved Pond Management” is the second major report the team, established by the POA Board, recently delivered.

There are approximately 240 ponds in St. James. Aside from the appearance and recreational aspects of ponds, they serve primarily as a stormwater management tool to control surface water in the community. Pond creation is specified in a government handbook with slope and depth parameters to help sustain useful life. If a pond deteriorates because of silt and excessive nutrient runoff, its capacity to hold stormwater is limited.

The report recommends to the POA Board several approaches to help our ponds stay healthy, maintain their beauty and, more importantly, preserve their capacity for the long term. One such method detailed in the report is the creation of a six-foot vegetative buffer at the edge of each pond. Vegetative buffers ideally contain native aquatic plants that will prevent erosion of silt and fertilizer runoff. The pond at the Woodlands Park roundabout has a partial vegetative buffer. A sign explains the various types of plants that work well around ponds.

Tiger Team and Ponds Committee member Keith Knauer prepared this detailed report, with contributions from the entire team. St. James resident George Freeman is the chair of the team. The cover letter sent to the POA Board with the report states, “[Implementation of the report’s recommendations] will lead to the enhancement of the health and aesthetic beauty of ponds across St. James while simultaneously reducing overall costs.”

The next and final Tiger Team report will focus on the plan for monitoring pond and watershed quality throughout St. James in the years to come.
Severe storm seminar and fair June 6

By Laura Miller

The 2017 storm and hurricane season arrives June 1 and lasts through November. To help residents prepare, the Town of St. James’ Emergency Management Team (EMT) will host two informational events at the community center addressing potential severe weather storms. It’s a great opportunity for new residents and for long-term residents who want a refresher.

A severe storm seminar will be held from 1-2:30 p.m. that focuses on potential hurricanes and features expert guest speakers from the National Weather Service, county and town officials and emergency services personnel. Representatives from the sheriff’s department, SJFD and the POA will also attend.

An informational fair is scheduled from 2:30-4 p.m., when representatives from government agencies, insurance companies, the SJFD, EMS, Firewise, storm water committee, storm-related vendors and residents can meet, share information and ask questions.

Consider carpooling, as the event has been well attended for the last seven years.

Editor's note: Laura Miller is a member of the TOSJ’s EMT.
This month, I’m focusing on two exceptional houses that are far different from any others in St. James.

The first house is an “atrium,” or courtyard house. This style, where the rooms are grouped around a central outdoor space, is thousands of years old and is found mostly around the Mediterranean. The most famous example of this style are the houses unearthed in the excavations of Pompeii.

The design of this home in St. James offers total privacy and focuses all the activities on the courtyard, where the swimming pool and spa are located. From the exterior, this house appears to be a somewhat conventional brick house. But it’s a different world within. This house is located on Ridge Crest Drive.

The second home was designed for the owner by her architect son, Bodhi Knot. I mention this because, given the right client, architects often can more freely exercise their creative abilities. This house is a series of connected similar volumes with steep roofs and minimal overhangs. Stone, clapboards and shingles are combined on the exterior. Clerestory windows were used liberally to bring light into the interior.

This design harks back to the simple forms of the houses and barns of colonial times in the northeast. The house was designed to be interesting from all sides and has something of the appearance of a small village. This residence is on Moss Hammond Wynd.

We misidentified the large brick home pictured in last month’s article, “St. James and its houses, part 2.” The home, shown below, is on Pinecrest Drive. It’s a grand Federal style residence, popular during the late 1700s and early 1800s. The Federal style was a reaction to more elaborate Georgian houses, simpler and more appropriate for a new republic. Federal style houses tend to be large brick boxes with simple ornaments. With its grand front stair and widow’s walk, this house recalls a ship captain’s home in Providence, R.I.
Running for the prizes
By David and Paula Paxton

David and Paula Paxton hosted a Kentucky Derby party May 6, celebrating the 143rd running for the roses. They have been hosting Kentucky Derby parties for more than 30 years. Mint Juleps, ladies’ dazzling hats and a strong voice to shout for your horse was the order of the day. Horses’ names were drawn from a hat, and the lucky winner, Marcy Speidel, won the pot and a dozen roses. The second-place prize went to Diane Gorge, and Andy Klimchak came in third. The last-place draw, Anneke Pin-Jantzen, earned the lucky horseshoe (perhaps next year, Anneke).

A capital band

Mike’s Garage Band (MGB) received one of 22 Medallion Awards for Volunteer Services awarded by North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper on May 9.

The band was one of two award winners in the Brunswick County charities category; the other winner was the North Carolina Azalea Festival. MGB has raised $720,000 in donations since Mike Haase formed the St. James group in 2011.

St. James residents and current band members Mike, Dave Reed, Chuck Krambuhl, Mike Horgan, Dave Holly and Tony DeFillipis

Brunswick County charities category; the other winner was the North Carolina Azalea Festival. MGB has raised $720,000 in donations since Mike Haase formed the St. James group in 2011.

St. James residents and current band members Mike, Dave Reed, Chuck Krambuhl, Mike Horgan, Dave Holly and Tony were at the ceremony. Keyboard player John Staryak was unable to attend.

John Staryak “Volunteerism teaches us all that we need to know about being good neighbors and better citizens,” Cooper said. “Volunteers are the best of us, and those of you being honored today have gone above and beyond.”

According to the governor’s website, the Medallion Award for Volunteer Service was founded in 2006. Award recipients are nominated at the county level, then evaluated by community service leaders from across the state.

The award recognizes the top 20-25 volunteers at an annual ceremony, where they are recognized for their commitment of time, accomplishments, community impact and enhancement of the lives of others.
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Playing a round for WAVES 4 K.I.D.S.

By Cheryl L. Serra

The 2017 Phillip A. Cook Memorial Golf Tournament, held in April at the Oak Island Golf Club, was a sellout. An estimated 30 percent of the golfers were from St. James, according to Kay Wolf, president of WAVES 4 K.I.D.S. (Kids in Disruptive Situations), the organization which benefits from the fundraiser.

WAVES 4 K.I.D.S provides financial and other support to children in Brunswick County living in disruptive situations. While the books aren’t yet closed, it looks like the fundraiser — which launched in 2011 and is sponsored by Island Way restaurant — exceeded or met last year’s record donation of more than $31,000.

A major portion of the proceeds go to the Phillip A. Cook Education and Development Fund, which provides educational funds to students in Brunswick County. These funds allow students who are qualified but underfunded to attend vocational school, trade schools and college. Kay says recent beneficiaries include students studying dentistry, law and a variety of other topics. Twin brothers are attending N.C. State; one is studying engineering and the other, business management. A young woman is entering a graduate school program.

Kay said that unlike other one-time scholarship type funds, the Phillip A. Cook Education and Development fund is available to students on an ongoing basis if they continue to meet program requirements. The remainder of the tournament proceeds goes to the general fund of WAVES 4 K.I.D.S for its other initiatives.

The tournament is named after Phillip Cook, who owned Island Way Restaurant and was a leader in helping people and children in the community. He was murdered in 2007 (two people were charged and convicted of his killing). His sons, Chad and Steve, started the foundation to keep their father’s generous spirit alive.

For more information about WAVES 4 K.I.D.S., visit www.waves4kids.org.

St. James/Troon raises $50,000 for American Cancer Society

By Liz Knapp and Wendy McIver

Photos by John Muuss

A 25-member St. James/Troon team participated in the Brunswick County Relay for Life on May 5. Team members raised $50,000 for the American Cancer Society’s premier fundraising event, which takes place annually in towns and cities across the country.

The event includes teams of participants from schools, churches, businesses and community groups who join to celebrate survivors and remember family and friends lost to this terrible disease.

This year’s event at West Brunswick High School included 48 teams from across the county. They braved gusty winds to continue fundraising that had begun prior to the event. Fundraising at the event included face-painting, games and fun activities such as a dunk tank, photographs with Cinderella and refreshments and tutus for sale. Refreshments were donated by Troon and the Oak Island Confectionary.

The Luminary Ceremony is a very important part of each Relay for Life event and sums up a good part of why people participate. Luminarias are purchased in honor of, or in memory of, a cancer patient. They line the track at every Relay event, with names on each bag. There were more than 1,000 luminarias at the Brunswick County event. Each luminary represented a loved one who has fought the battle. At dusk, the luminaries are lit, a moment of silence is observed and participants reflect on the people in their lives for whom they Relay.

St. James has hosted a Relay team for 18 years, with Susan Sturgill at the helm. She started the team and worked tirelessly on growing the event every year until her retirement this year. A big thank you to volunteers and the entire St. James community for their support and help, once again making the St. James/Troon team a leader in the fight against cancer.

Editor’s Note: Liz Knapp and Wendy McIver are the St. James Relay for Life team captains
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2017 Flea Market

The 19th annual St. James Service Club Flea Market took place in late April at Brunswick Community College.

The Flea Market, which requires months of planning and hundreds of hours volunteers commit to the event, has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Brunswick County community. Proceeds from the event fund scholarships for College for Nursing students at Brunswick Community College and other college-bound students from high schools in Brunswick County.

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And, of course, all our St. James volunteers!

Fashion Show

The Service Club’s Fashion Show at the St. James Community Center featured fashions from Island Breeze in Sunset Beach. Service Club members modeled fashions from casual to formal styles.

New Service Project: Fur the Love of Pets

Fur the Love of Pets, a new service project, was organized to address the lack of available pet foods at food pantries. Food and supplies were collected from homes in St. James, as well as from Lowes Food stores in Southport, Oak Island and Leland. The Service Club distributed approximately 900 cans of dog and cat food, as well as dry food, boxes of treats and kitty litter. We hope to make this a recurring project.

Visit our website at www.stjamespoanc.org (Clubs and Groups/Service Club).
Continued success for St. James tennis

By Denise Studt

Joe Meissner and Jerry Donovan, captains of our U.S. Tennis Association (USTA) teams, typify the competitive spirit and camaraderie of St. James tennis. Rarely have those qualities been better demonstrated than during the 2016 USTA Men’s 55-and-over Combo North Carolina state tournament (Joe’s team), and the 2016 USTA Men’s 3.0 65-and-over North Carolina state tournament (Jerry’s team).

Joe’s team, beginning in the Wilmington region, won 11 of 12 matches. Then the 15-member group advanced to state competition, where they faced teams from all over the state and advanced from state competition with three wins and one loss. “We were fortunate to win the tournament,” said Joe. “We had to win two out of three matches on every court. And we needed to come from behind in the last tiebreaker to become the champions of North Carolina. We were well balanced, and they were great teammates.”

Meanwhile, the Combo Team continued a remarkable string of success — getting to the postseason for a run at the state championship every year since 2012. Joe credits his co-captains, Ihor Zyga and Tom Grillo, tech support Craig MacPherson, and Bill Kamzik, court arranger, for their efforts in support of the team’s winning record.

Both captains agree that playing against each other regularly as fierce competitors and good friends has made them successful in competition. This attitude seems to run throughout USTA tennis players in St. James. “Our team’s purpose is to have fun playing competitive tennis,” said Jerry.

Following two previous trips to Sectional Championships in the USTA 65+ 3.0 league, St. James’ USTA players most recently won the newly formed Senior 65+ men’s 3.0 league, winning nine out of 12 matches in the Wilmington region, all three matches in the state competition and advancing again to Southern Sectionals. “Not bad for a bunch of old guys, only one of whom was under 70,” said Jerry. “The roster also included a 78, 79 and an 82-year-young player.”

Jerry aptly states the spirit of St James Tennis. “Everyone wants to win, but the spirit of friendliness and camaraderie that underlie participation in tennis here allows us to root for one another, whoever wins league play or goes on to the post season.”
The idea that anyone can perform a task without thought, preparation or provocation — especially if it’s been years since the task was last performed — is wishful thinking, to say the least.

But that didn’t faze me as I pondered a return to sailboat racing, decades after my last competitive venture on the bounding main. There’s much to learn while helping navigate a sophisticated, balanced and beautiful sailboat in pressure situations. What I learned years ago is far short of everything one needs to know to be an accomplished seaman; but it’s enough to forget.

So, as my good friend and experienced sailor, Harry Martens, and I approached the 40-foot sloop that was to serve as my re-introduction to sailboat racing — bobbing invitingly at its Southport Marina berth — I was a far cry from the cocksure mariner I may once have been. But it was too late to turn back. So, I opted for the truth, reminding everyone around me that for all intents and purposes, I was a mere landlubber in search of truth and knowledge.

I needn’t have been concerned. Phil Ellison, our skipper, seemed unfazed by my nautical naiveté. He introduced us to his boat, pointing out the different sails and the lines, winches and other hardware needed to raise, lower or trim them. Harry and I met our crewmates, also more experienced than I, and we reviewed the rules for the race as laid out by our host, the Southport Yacht Club.

Soon, we were in the Cape Fear River. I listened as the crew prepared a strategy for the running start that lay ahead. Mindful that we couldn’t cross the start line before the race started, we sailed away from the course, eventually coming about in what my comrades thought would be a good approach. But we missed the start by more than a minute, placing us firmly in last place before we had begun.

I maintained radio silence during these tactical discussions, minding my duties with the winches and manfully cranking the jib into its proper position. That’s when I remembered it helps to be in good shape to operate winches. After a few tacks and jibes, I was exhausted, regretting I hadn’t followed the repeated suggestions of my wife, Sherry, to exercise. Too late now.

I made only one mistake during the race — not bad for a born-again sailor. For future reference, remember to wrap the lines connected to the jib (“sheets”) clockwise around the winch. If you don’t, you’ll cause your boat to come to a screeching halt during a critical maneuver and deeply disappoint your mates.

In truth, my gaffe didn’t make much difference. We never caught up with the rest of the fleet, finishing dead last. But we agreed to persevere, vowing to practice hard and perform better. The rest of the season is ours to win.

Meanwhile, we’ll look forward to the post-race socials. I don’t need to be in shape to enjoy them.
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By K. Frances

You’ve moved to a community with easy access to golf and you finally have time to improve your game. But, if you’re playing more, why aren’t your shots going as far as they used to?

In a recent interview on the Golf Channel, Dustin Johnson, PGA pro currently ranked No. 1 golfer in the world, remarked, “The key to my distance is not my height and strength, but rather my flexibility.” "Men’s Fitness Magazine" recommends “Getting distance in your golf swing isn’t so much how big your muscles are — but instead about how you maintain a balanced swing by maintaining flexibility.”

Easy for younger folks to say.

The best stretches for a more fluid golf swing target the shoulders and lower back. They include cow face pose, thread the needle, reclined spinal twist and seated twist. Holding each pose for 30 seconds on each side (left and right) a few times each week helps increase fluid to the connective tissue of the shoulders and back. These stretches also build flexibility for a more fluid and balanced golf swing.

The easiest way to learn the correct stretching form is in a yoga class. Most yoga classes work through a series of stretches that address the major muscle groups of the body. A yoga instructor will make sure you learn the correct form for your stretches before you try them by yourself.

In his book, “Science of Flexibility,” Michael Alder says, “The main reason we become less flexible as we get older is a result of certain changes that take place in our connective tissues. As we age, our bodies gradually dehydrate to some extent.”

The good news, according to Adler, is stretching, which “stimulates the production or retention of lubricants between the connective tissue fibers, therefore maintaining flexibility.”

Warming up before a round of golf is crucial to avoid injury. But players also should adopt a stretching program between rounds. Dozens of articles recommend various stretches for golf, which players can do at home or as part of a yoga and/or stretching class.
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North Carolina Museum of Art—
a treasure trove of art, activities and culture
By Cheryl L. Serra

Picture this: You’re dancing and swooping and stretching your way through the classical Greek and Roman masterpieces and Rodin sculptures, learning as you dip and swirl. As a Vogue participant of Museum Workout wrote, “Typical art-viewing etiquette this is not,” adding, “…it’s a curious hybrid: part guided tour; part all-levels fitness class; and part performance piece blending choreography, music, and narration.”

This is just one of a virtual cornucopia of artistic activities occurring in June and available just three hours from St. James at the North Carolina Museum of Art in Raleigh.

The museum’s roots go back to 1924, when the North Carolina State Art Society was formed to generate interest in creating an art museum for the state. In 1928, the society acquired funds and approximately 75 paintings by bequest from Robert F. Phifer, a North Carolina native and businessman. The following year the first in a series of temporary art exhibition spaces opened in the Agriculture Building in Raleigh.

Today, the 164-acre site includes the East and West buildings, an amphitheater, and the Ann and Jim Goodnight Museum Park, featuring public art installations, environmentally sustainable landscapes, beautiful gardens, miles of recreational trails and a terraced pond. A restaurant and museum store complete the campus. It’s a lot to digest, so programs such as “Meet Your Museum Tour” and “Ask Me!’ Roaming Docent” can help you sort through the museum’s treasures.

The museum’s permanent collection spans more than 5,000 years of history and includes art categorized by types such as African; American; Ancient American; British, Spanish and French; Classical (Greece and Rome); contemporary (described as “a truly global, cross-cultural dialogue in which artists employ a variety of media to express their ideas”); Egyptian; Italian; Judaic; Modern; Northern European and Rodin.
In addition to the permanent collections, the museum sponsors a wide variety of programs for adults and children, including summer camp, special exhibits and programs.

There is also a Conservation Center, professionally staffed by caretakers of the priceless fine art collection.

A recent trip to the museum illustrated how vibrant a facility it is. A nun stood near a docent as they discussed a painting from the Venetian exhibit. Children from numerous visiting groups looked down on a mosaic, listened to a discussion of Ansel Adams’ work and life and learned about art in general. People meandered through gardens and gazed and interacted with exhibits.

It’s a great place to bring the grandchildren (there’s a wide variety of summer camps there, too) or to take a field trip with some friends who share your love of art. Be sure to visit the web site at ncartmuseum.org to learn more about this priceless treasure just a short drive away.
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Andrew Lloyd Webber and Tim Rice burst onto the musical theater scene in the late 1960s and early 1970s with two hit musicals on highly unlikely subjects. The two shows, “Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat” and “Jesus Christ Superstar” took their stories from the Bible, certainly an unusual source for the hippie/anti-war days of the time. Both shows, however, experienced tremendous success and won numerous awards.

Show times are 8 p.m., with 3 p.m. curtains for the Sunday matinees. For tickets call, 910-632-2285, stop by the Thalian Hall box office at 310 Chestnut Street or purchase them online at www.thalianhall.org.

Also opening in June, and a bit closer to home, will be the longest-ever-running Broadway musical revue, “Smokey Joe’s Café.” Staged by Brunswick Little Theatre in its home at 8068 River Road (Highway 87), the show is certain to delight patrons of a ...ahem...certain age. The show features songs (more than 35) written by the prolific team of Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, along with an occasional assist from the likes of Ben E. King, Phil Spector and others.

A sampling of the show’s tunes should get the memory juices flowing — “Kansas City,” “Dance With Me,” “On Broadway,” “Yakety Yak,” “Hound Dog,” “There Goes My Baby” and “Stand by Me” are just seven of the hits featured in the show. There’s no plot, so little thinking is required. It’s simply an evening of toe-tapping, sing-a-long, shag-inducing great music.

Opening night is Thursday, June 15. It runs for two weekends. Evening shows start at 7:30 p.m., with the Sunday matinees going up at 3 p.m. Tickets are $20 and can be purchased online at www.brunswicklittletheatre.com.

As always, I hope to see you at the theater!
A “bucket list” event

By Linda Eyler

It’s the end of the world — as deemed by ancient civilizations — when a rare event passes through our region on August 21. Those ancient civilizations tried to scare off the sun’s menacing entities by making lots of noise. Today, we are still good at making noise, but instead, we have an opportunity to see a total solar eclipse not too far from St. James.

Total solar eclipses in the continental U.S. do not come often. The last one was 20 years ago, and the next ones, depending on how far you want to travel within the U.S., will be in 2024, 2045, 2052 and 2078. So, take advantage to see whether this memorable event might bring out that primordial awe or fear in you.

This total solar eclipse can be seen in a 50-mile-wide path starting at the West Coast and ending in South Carolina. The centerline of the sun’s path goes over Columbia and Santee and finally leaves U.S. soil at 2:49:07 p.m. after crossing U.S. Route 17 halfway between Georgetown and Charleston.

The further away from the centerline, the less time you will have to see the sun’s disc blacked out to show its corona and the stars. That time ranges from 2.5 minutes at the centerline to 10 seconds at the path’s edge.

Solar eclipses occur when the moon blocks the Sun as it gets between the Earth and the Sun. There are three types: total, partial and annular. All are dependent on the elliptical orbital position and distance of the moon from the sun. Total and partial are self-explanatory. An annular eclipse occurs when the moon is farther away from the sun than usual. The moon’s smaller shadow doesn’t cover the entire sun’s surface, leaving a “ring of fire” or annulus around the moon’s shadow.

You should consider seeing this total solar eclipse with your family, especially the grandkids. It’s a memorable event. I saw my first total solar eclipse in 1970 while in college. I and fellow astronomers rented a small plane that flew into the eclipse path near Nantucket.

The best viewing place is probably around Columbia, with its many hotels, easy interstate highway access and better probability of good weather. Do wear special eclipse-viewing sunglasses until it’s safe to view the sun directly when in total eclipse. You can search online for these sunglasses and additional eclipse details on the many websites.

Plan your arrangements early, as many folks will want to experience the celestial event. Also, get to your location early, because that 50-mile swatch will have heavy traffic. But it’s worth it!
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There I was, doing my very important ironing and listening to that 1973 classic, “Time” by Pink Floyd; you know the one, with all the clocks ticking, tocking, clanging and chiming.

This got my wheels turning about all the different songs over the years that have the word “time” in the title. It’s not that I’m an expert, nor do I usually have “Too Much Time on My Hands” (Styx), I’m usually that last one to arrive anywhere since I’m a dawdler and like to have all my ducks in a row at all times.

My husband uses the term Gina Standard Time (GST), but I prefer the term ‘ish.’ Dinner is seven-ish.

An air microphone adds a special touch.

“Our Standard Time” (Bob Dylan). I’ll say. Rude awakening when you put on your glasses in front of your make-up mirror. When did that happen? “Time in a Bottle” (Jim Croce). Oh, the endless possibilities here. You could relive all those special times that have happened over the course of your life. The things you will always remember, like they were yesterday.


“Time Will Tell” (Cher). I wouldn’t have eaten so many Snickers. “Time Won’t Let Me” (Outsiders). Turn back time. “The Longest Time” (Billy Joel). Sitting through anything you didn’t want to go to in the first place.

“Time Won’t Let Me” (Outsiders). Turn back time. “The Longest Time” (Billy Joel). Sitting through anything you didn’t want to go to in the first place.

“My husband uses the term Gina Standard Time, but I prefer the term ‘ish.’ Dinner is seven-ish.”

So, who will admit to gyrating, head-jerking and bouncing around like you were the only one in the room when “Let’s Do the Time Warp Again” (Rocky Horror Picture Show) came on? Great family favorite for Halloween-time watching. I better start preparing so I’ll be ready-ish.
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