Pedestrians should exercise common sense, look both ways and avoid sudden moves. They need to be aware of their surroundings and give themselves plenty of time to avoid walking into the path of an oncoming vehicle that is too close and going too fast to stop. It's probably a good thing for all pedestrians to assume that every driver out there is either impaired, on the phone, texting, distracted by other people in his vehicle or some combination of the above. It's also a good idea for pedestrians to try to make eye contact in order to see if the driver is aware of their presence. At 45 mph it only takes a vehicle about 5 seconds to cover a distance of 400 feet.

Another huge risk comes from vehicles approaching a crosswalk while they are behind another vehicle and, therefore, don't have a clear view. If the lead car slows or stops for a crosswalk, the following car is also supposed to stop, but if the driver is unaware that there is a crosswalk there, he may drive around the stopped vehicle on the left, endangering anyone in the crosswalk. This can also happen if the driver of the lead car slows and signals his/her intent to turn right just before a crosswalk, and the following car pulls out and passes on the left. Drivers need to realize that crossing the center line or using the left turn lane for traveling straight ahead is not only illegal, but extremely dangerous. Left turn lanes, like the ones at the Mimosa/Highway 58/Dogwood intersection, can also create blind spots for any following motorists if they are occupied with a turning vehicle. In addition, while left and right turn lanes at intersections may facilitate traffic flow, they make the road wider and create new dangers for pedestrians who are crossing.

The town is considering several possible steps to improve pedestrian safety, including the posting of additional signage at each end of town alerting motorists to the presence of crosswalks and their duty to yield to pedestrians. This could be accompanied by the addition of "yield to pedestrians" signs at each crosswalk. We are also looking at the placement of additional blinking lights warning motorists of upcoming crosswalks and the presence of pedestrians. The town is also considering lowering the posted speed limit on Highway 58 to 35 mph on a seasonal basis. However, NCDOT takes the position that Highway 58 through Pine Knoll Shores is a 45 mph roadway. They say we simply don't have enough businesses, driveways or high traffic arteries flowing into our part of the roadway to justify a lower speed limit. It might happen sometime in the next few years, but probably not this summer. As a bottom line, additional law enforcement and better driver education efforts may be the answer, but pedestrians and drivers alike need to be cautious and aware.

CAF Presents NC Author Lee Smith

By Monika Bottlinger

The Carteret Arts Forum will present North Carolina author Lee Smith on Wednesday, April 9, at 11 a.m. at the Coral Bay Club in Atlantic Beach. Ms. Smith is a fiction writer whose 16 books and short stories typically incorporate her roots in the South.

Ms. Smith has received many writing awards, including the O. Henry Award, the American Academy of Arts and Letters Award for Fiction, the North Carolina Award for Literature and, in April 2013, was the first recipient of Mercer University's Sidney Lanier Prize for Southern Book Critics Award. Smith reached a wider audience with *The New York Times* bestseller *The Last Girls* (2002), which was also a "Good Morning America" Book Club pick.

This program is included in the Carteret Arts Forum's subscription series, and single tickets are available for \$35 (\$30 for book clubs purchasing as a group).

For information or to purchase a ticket, please contact Tim Bradford at 240-1699. Tickets may be purchased online at www.carteretartsforum.org.

