

Have You Heard . . . ?

Pine Knoll Shores residents help to set record. The 20th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society and held February 17-20, set event records for the number of participants, number of checklists submitted and number of species identified. North Carolina was among the top 10 states for checklists submitted, and local bird enthusiasts contributed to that result.

Yvette Bannen counted birds here in Pine Knoll Shores and reported her findings: 7 common grackles (purple), 2 mourning doves, 1 red-bellied woodpecker, 3 blue jays, 3 Carolina chickadees, 2 tufted titmice,* 1 Carolina wren, 1 robin, 1 brown thrasher, 3 yellow-rumped warblers, 2 white-throated sparrows, 2 cardinals and 2 house finches. Much to her regret, she did not see the Pine Knoll Shores traveling turkey and couldn't include it in her counts.

Amry and Robert Cox participated as well. Amry counted in Northern Virginia for part of the weekend (and saw mostly water birds) and here at home in Pine Knoll Shores for the remainder of the time. Robert was with his father in Tampa and they counted together there.

**Note: The etymology of the word titmouse reveals that mouse comes from an Old English word "mase," meaning small bird (and has nothing to do with a rodent). An internet search reveals much discussion on the plural form of titmouse. The Merriam-Webster online dictionary reports the plural to be titmice, and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology uses titmice as well—and now so does The Shoreline. In the spirit of fairness, at least one search revealed the opinion that using titmice for the plural of titmouse is akin to using mongeese for the plural of mongoose. Either way, the tufted titmouse is reportedly a "charming bird."—The Editors*

April Sudoku Puzzle

		1	5					3
	8				9			
		4		8				2
				5			8	6
			4				3	
		2		6	8		5	
					3			
9	5			1		7		
6			9	2				

See page 12 for solution.

American Music Festival

By Linda Seale

Closing the 2016-17 season, American Music Festival will present the Jasper Quartet on April 22 at 8 p.m. at the History Museum of Carteret County in Morehead City. Don't miss this opportunity to enjoy classical chamber music in an intimate space, up close and personal.

The quartet will perform Schubert's "Death and the Maiden" and "Meditation" from American composer Aaron Jay Kernis' "Musica Celestis." The string quartet has won top prizes in many competitions, completed a residency at Oberlin Conservatory, and is currently at Temple University.

Tickets are available at the door, online at americanmusicfestival.eventbrite.com, or by calling 728-6152.

Mayor's Memo

By Ken Jones

Spring forward

As we move into the month of April, it seems this winter will not be one to remember (with my fingers crossed). No long, extended, windy cold spells and none of that white stuff accumulating on the ground. Look out, spring—here we come.

We started this year off in high speed. February was a very busy month for our town. Aside from some of the hot issues of the day, we had some big events that have become annual and are part of our town's strategic plan.

The first week of February, our commissioners and I had our annual off-site strategic planning session. These meetings have become so much more constructive with our town's strategic plan, and this tool has been invaluable. We had a lot of input from you, and we are paying attention. When we start our annual off-site, we always review our vision and mission statements. Then we review the past calendar year and what we accomplished, and take a look ahead at what we expect our upcoming challenges to be. This is also a time we kick off our budget season.

We have had some challenges as we start the year: tree trimming by Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative, crosswalks on Highway 58, and it looks like we will be spending time fighting another piece of legislation in Raleigh to change the state's distribution of sales and use tax. This year, the senate is trying to take sales and use tax earned in our county and send it elsewhere—my definition of "wealth redistribution." We've fought on this issue several times, but this year might be tougher than previous years.

Community involvement is a strategic area we take very seriously. With so many of our homeowners being part-time residents, we take the extra effort to keep you informed. Our strategic plan says that we are to "consider unique needs of part-time residents and guests." Town Manager Brian Kramer and I ventured to Raleigh on February 25 to have a quarterly Dinner with the Mayor for the first quarter of 2017, and Commissioners Edwards and Brodman also came along this year. We had some great discussions and answered questions. I extend a huge thank you to all who came out for this year's dinner. In a continuing effort to keep communication open, we are streaming the Board of Commissioners meetings live on the internet.

As we start preparations for our 2017-18 budget, which must be passed by July 1, we are very conscious of the fact that we are working with *your* money. We continually look for smarter ways to do business and improvements in our processes.

No one could do all the things we do and accomplish them alone. This town, our town, is a great place to be because we communicate and work together—a simple formula that works.

One team, one town, one Pine Knoll Shores.