

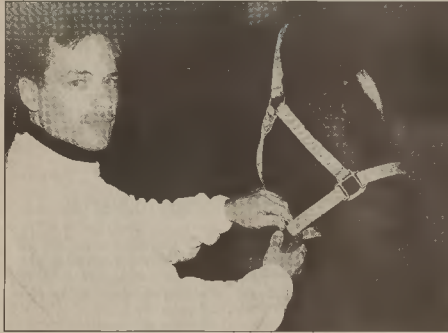
The Progress

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A NEW VENTURE—Greg Patterson of Morrisville hopes a new harness he and a partner have developed will catch on.

Gambling a 'snap'

With patents in hand, a Morrisville entrepreneur, partner prepare to market their invention

By Mary Beth Phillips

A couple of aerospace engineers got together about five years ago and thought up a horse halter, using a process that compresses powdered metal, the same process used for some aerospace parts.

For five years they have been perfecting the harness, which they named a Turtle Snap, because the clamp resembles a snapping turtle.

Greg Patterson of Holly Creek Road in Morrisville and his partner, Mark Welsh of Florida, are finally ready to begin manufacturing and marketing the halters, which will automatically release at 400 pounds



of pressure, unlike the current state-of-the-art halter, called a panic snap.

"We could sit around and play with this thing until we're old and gray," Patterson said of the engineer's penchant to keep improving the product. "But we think we're

ready now."

The partners have already gotten three patents on the product, including a copyright on the name, Turtle Snaps.

Patterson got the idea after going to horse shows with his wife, Ashley, the horse enthusiast of their home.

"I would watch the horses break free. I found out that it was generally around 400 pounds of pressure where they would break the halter or line. This product will release before anything gets broken."

He said the halter is also easier to put on than the panic snap used by

horsemen today. It enables the horseman to tether and untether the horse with just one hand.

He is holding a meeting in the Carpenter community on Friday, Jan. 30, to discuss investment opportunities.

Patterson got the idea for the halter while working at Pratt-Whitney in Florida. He had graduated from N.C. State University with a degree in aerospace engineering in 1986. He spent eight or nine years in Florida, but moved back home (he met his wife at State) about three years ago when he took a job at

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Rotary Club established in Morrisville

By Mary Beth Phillips

A provisional Rotary Club was formed in Morrisville Tuesday at a lunch meeting at Sorento's, led by Cleve Folger of the Cary-Page Rotary Club, who has been assigned to help organize a Rotary Club in Morrisville.

Thirteen prospective members attended the meeting and decided that future meetings will be held at 5 p.m. on Tuesdays and drinks and hors d'oeuvres will be the fare, rather than a traditional meal.

The site of the meetings will be rotated, just as in the first Rotary meetings in 1905, which is actually how the club got its name.

Before the club permanently charts, there must be 20 charter members. No more than two can fit a certain classification, such as insurance or government.

"I am so excited about extending a club to Morrisville, I can't stand it," Folger said after the meeting. "I'm delighted with the quality of people here, and very excited."

Ten members of existing Rotary Clubs also attended, offering background and information on Rotary.

Bill Stone of the Raleigh Rotary Club said his club was the first civic club in North Carolina and that Rotary Club was the first civic club in the world. The organization has a \$101 million budget and gives more scholarships than any other foundation, he told the group.

There are more than 27,000 clubs and more a million members worldwide, he said.

Lynn Loots of the West Raleigh Rotary Club gave some examples of the service projects by her club last year. Of course, Rotarians ring the bell for the Salvation Army for Christmas each year. Her club also contributed to a handicapped program at a church, helped with construction and maintenance at Umstead Park, and got involved with Exploris, the new science museum under construction in Raleigh.

She said there are opportunities for donating to such things as building wells in India, and the Rotary Foundation will match donations by individual Rotary Clubs.

Jay Miller, president of the Cary-Page Rotary Club, said his organization makes back-to-school packets for elementary schools, and the project has increased from 150 the first year to 1,200 nine years later.

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BUILDING FOR BIRDS—Dr. Norman Banks, environmental steward for Prestonwood Country Club shows off one of several houses the maintenance department has built for bluebirds.

They're for the birds, bats too

By Mary Beth Phillips

Keeping dozens of families of bluebirds happy has become a habit for some members of the Prestonwood Golf Course Maintenance Department.

They know that the bluebirds will only build their nests out of pine straw, and that they like their houses to be exactly five feet off the ground. They also like the bottom of the entrance hole to be 5-and-a-half or six inches from the

floor, and for the house to face to the Southeast.

Though they are picky, they are friendly, and don't mind human contact, said Dr. Norman Banks, environmental steward for the Prestonwood Country Club.

Since 1995, bluebird houses have been springing up all along the fairways and near the greens at the three golf courses. There are now 64 happy bluebird families wintering in wooden bird houses along

the "bluebird trail," and about 25 more bluebird houses line the walls of the maintenance shop, ready to be set up this spring in time for nesting. There is already a bluebird house at every golf course hole, and soon there will be two.

John Hilton, former maintenance supervisor, started the effort, and is still involved, but he has passed the leadership to Banks, who also takes care of the woodworking for Pres-

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Elections Board reviews charges of 'flyer' slander

By Mary Beth Phillips

Former mayor Margaret Broadwell has filed a complaint with the State Board of Elections, accusing Ernest Lumley, who served as mayor from 1982 to 1997, for mailing out false and slanderous flyers during the recent campaign.

Mrs. Broadwell said she traced the flyers through the meter number to Right of Way Equipment Company and was told by officials there that Lumley had requested permission to mail the letters and had paid cash for the mailing.

Lumley, a purchasing agent with the North Carolina Department of Transportation, has done business with Right of Way Equipment Company for many years.

The complaint cites general statute 163-274, sections 7 and 8, both of which are class II misdemeanors. Section 7 focuses on the fact that the flyers were not signed (anonymous, derogatory flyers), Section 8 focuses on the falsity or "reckless disregard of its truth or falsity when such report is calculated or intended to affect the chances of such candidate for nomination or election."

Yvonne Southerland, deputy director of campaign finance with the State Board of Elections, said Mrs. Broadwell's complaint was hand-delivered on Dec. 17. She said the elections board is investigating the allegations and should come to a conclusion by mid-February. If a violation is found, the state board would report the violation to the Wake County District Attorney for prosecution.

Alan Briones, Wake County Assistant District Attorney, said the maximum penalty for a class II misdemeanor is 60 days in prison or supervised probation, and/or a fine up to \$1,000.

Mrs. Southerland said using the business meter was not a violation because he paid for the use.

Lumley said a candidate, whom he declined to identify, to mail the flyers because of financial concerns, asked him. It was cheaper to mail through a meter than with regular postage.

"I didn't unpackage them. They had address labels on them, and

were sealed up," Lumley said.

"I have no idea who put it together, where it came from, what was in there," Lumley said. "It looked like there were two different kinds of materials in there. One looked like a folder, the other looked like an envelope."

Lumley said he also picked up some address labels for the same person from the State Board of Elections. He said he had to pay part of that money out of his pocket, but that he was reimbursed for that money and for the money paid to mail the letters.

Lumley said he paid out of his own pocket to have a letter published in the Progress before the election. He said he wrote the letter because many Morrisville residents had asked his opinion about the candidates. "The only thing I had heard was rumors, especially about Bill Case and Jan Faulkner. I didn't know them, but what I put in there was based on what I had heard and was my personal opinion at that time," he said.

The letter said that if Mrs. Broadwell and Case and Faulkner were elected that they would fire town employees, including the manager, the finance officer, the planner, and the clerk. He went on to call Commissioner Mark Silver-Smith unprofessional, and to say that Mayor Broadwell wanted an office so she could make it a throne. "Mayor Broadwell wants a kingdom and she the queen," he said in that letter.

He endorsed current commissioners Billy Sauls and Phyllis Newnam who were unseated by Faulkner and Case, and political newcomer Gordon Cromwell, who was successful in obtaining the mayor's seat.

He added that he signed his name to that letter, and that he always signs his name. "I'm not very good at writing, so I don't try to put a whole lot of things out in the mail," he added.

Mrs. Broadwell said in her complaint that the flyers "bombarded the public, stating totally false, slanderous statements as if it were the truth about my character and

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Cromwell recuperating from recent stem cell transplant

By Mary Beth Phillips

Mayor Gordon Cromwell is recovering well from a stem cell transplant Jan. 16, and is living temporarily in an apartment that is isolated from other people and animals.

The surgery was performed on an outpatient basis, and the first five or six days were "not the best days of your life," Cromwell said Tuesday. He said he is still kind of weak and groggy, but he feels much better and hopes to go home next week.

After stem cell surgery, which kills the existing bone marrow, there is a period of about 20 to 30 days while the body is

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Police officers say close calls warrant need for SWAT unit

By Mary Beth Phillips

After facing several situations with armed suspects in the past year, six Morrisville police officers are training to become a SWAT team.

Sgt. Alan Rushing's report was among those given by town department heads at a work session on Jan. 10 for the Morrisville Board of Commissioners.

Rushing said the police officers paid for their uniforms out of their

replacement uniform budget, supplementing with money from their own pockets. The training, which will take place at Wilson Community College in February, is free.

Rushing said during the past year there have been several instances where the training would have come in handy.

On Dec. 14, Officer E.J. Hanks stopped a vehicle on a routine traffic violation and later discovered

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