

COMMUNITY

\$2,000 raised for Book Bag Buddies program

BY NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON
Editor

The annual Fill the Food Pantry netted \$2,000 for the Edenton-Chowan Food Pantry's Book Bag Buddies program.

Organizer Lee Lolkema said about 87 attended the event, which was held Saturday night at Nothing Fancy Cafe and Market, on North Broad Street. Ticket sales were down compared to last year, but several substantial donations were made, she said.

Nothing Fancy has hosted the event, sponsored by the Unitarian Universalists of the Albemarle, for seven years. Owner Deidre Martin took

over providing the meal two years ago when she bought the business. The previous owners, Gail Hare Singh and Shannon Anderson, let Martin know about the fundraiser before she bought the business from them.

"I agreed to help keep it going," she said.

"As I've gotten to know these people, it's become a no brainer — of course I'm going to do it," Martin said, speaking of the Unitarian Universalists who meet twice a month at her restaurant and the food pantry board members.

Martin's restaurant had two stations filled with a buffet-style meal featuring soup, sandwiches and baked potatoes. Volunteers

provided desserts covering a few tables near the entrance.

Every weekend, 27.9% of the children in Edenton-Chowan Schools go home hungry, said Karen Harrington, food pantry program coordinator.

The Book Bag Buddies program, or the Bulldogs Buddies Program if the student attends Chowan Middle, provides children in need with two meals during the day, four over the weekend. The bags include cereal, milk, juice, fruit and some kind of main course, Harrington said. It costs \$5 to put each bag together, Lolkema said.

The proceeds of the Fill the Food Pantry ticket sales



NICOLE BOWMAN-LAYTON/CHOWAN HERALD
Fill the Food Pantry attendees enjoy their meals as they listen to a speaker Saturday at Nothing Fancy Cafe.

to the Book Bag Buddies Program. This year, the winner of the 50/50 drawing, Helen Cooney, wife of food pantry board President Gerard Cooney, donated her winnings back to the fundraiser.

Food Pantry Director Joe

Rizzo thanked the Unitarian Universalists and Nothing Fancy for hosting the fundraiser and all of those who attended for their support.

"We've had people come in to the shop, and we've had two or three children tagging along behind them," he said.

"When they leave, they are so very thankful. You realize that you're doing the right thing."

"What we are trying to do is the right thing with the Book Bag Buddies program," Rizzo continued. "It is so important to the children."

Rizzo and Gerard Cooney noted that the food pantry soon will transition to the children's summer nutrition program, which provides meals to children while they are out of school.

The food pantry needs volunteers to help programs like Book Bag Buddies program continue. Rizzo urged the audience to find the time to come down to the pantry, located on North Broad Street, and help.

Check It Out!

Celebrate your local library

By Jennifer Finlay

It's National Library Week. Yes it's that annual week to appreciate how fabulous the Shepard-Pruden Memorial Library is. I always write my column in my head before I go to sleep on Thursday night (hence the chronic lateness on Friday due to lack of sleep), and this is what I pieced out. The amount of money I personally save by having a library card is extraordinary. At the moment I am listening to the audiobook, "The Library Book," by Susan Orlean, watching a DVD TV series, reading a physical Louise Penny book and have the same book as a Kindle book. If I'd gone to Amazon and purchased all of these today — it would cost \$81. All of this is free. This is an extraordinary gift that the community gives itself. Thank you for entrusting me with its care.

As usual — we will be here to provide support for the community for The Pilgrimage. The "We Have Clean Restrooms" signs will be out and we will be here on Saturday, April 13, until about 5 p.m. My Uncle Douglas and Aunt Joyce will be in town. I know they will be attending the Presidential Ball — tickets are still available!

Our Friends have done some Spring Cleaning, and we have some beautiful dolls and antique books for sale including Raggedy Ann and Andy. All funds raised from the sales of these items will go to our Summer Reading Program. We have an out of this world Summer Reading Program coming up. We'll be increasing days and programs. Just wait!

Upcoming Events:

■ Spring Break Star Wars: Episodes 1 through 3. Monday, April 22, starting at 10:30 a.m. Rated PG and PG-13

■ Episodes 4 through 6. Tuesday, April 23, starting at 10:30 a.m. All rated PG

■ Episodes 7 and 8. Wednesday, April 24, starting at 10:30 a.m. All rated PG-13

■ Cycle North Carolina Bicycling Theme Movies April 25-27. Two classics from the 80s. One stars Pee Wee Herman on a big adventure. The other stars Kevin Bacon as a bike messenger. Both rated PG! The Pee Wee Herman Movie will be showing at noon on Thursday, April 25. Kevin Bacon will be at 4 p.m. April 25. Pee Wee again at 11 a.m. on Friday. Kevin at 2 p.m. on Friday. And Pee Wee at 11 a.m. on Saturday.

Picture Books

■ Baby Dragon, Baby Dragon! — Melissa Marr & Lena Podesta

■ Hello Lighthouse — Sophie Blackall (Caldecott Medal 2018)

■ A Piglet Named Mercy — Kate DiCamillo & Chris Van Dusen

■ Swarm of Bees — Lemony Snicket & Rilla Alexander

Juvenile Fiction

■ Jake the Fake Goes for Laughs — Craig Robinson

■ Jedi Academy: Revenge of the Sis — Jarrett Krosoczka & Amy Ignatow

■ Kati vs. Dogg — James Patterson & Chris Grabenstein

■ Sweeping Up the Heart — Kevin Henkes

Juvenile Non Fiction

■ Who Was Norman Rockwell?

■ Who Was H.J. Heinz?

Fiction

■ The A List — J.A. Jance

■ The American Agent — Jaqueline Winspear

■ Blood Oath — Linda Fairstein

■ Deep Harbor — Fern Michaels

■ Miracle at St. Andrews — James Patterson

■ Over the Fence — Mary Monroe

■ The Savior — J.R. Ward

■ The Tinderbox — Beverly Lewis

Large Print

■ Absaroka Valley — Luran Paine

■ Broken Bone China — Laura Childs

■ Celtic Empire — Clive Cussler

■ The Duel — Giles Tippet

■ Of Fire and Lions — Mesu Andrews

■ The Persian Gamble — Joel C. Rosenberg

■ Wolf Pack — C.J. Box

Non Fiction

■ Diabetes Cookbook & Meal Plan for the Newly Diagnosed — Lori Zanini

DVDs

■ Batman — The 1960s TV series

■ Beauty and the Beast — Animated

■ Dirty Dancing

■ Harry Potter Movies — All of them!



FINLAY

Chowan Round-up: Sears, Rotary and otters

BY MILES LAYTON
Staff Writer

A round-up of all things Chowan County ...

First up, when the building where Sears store is located South Broad Street was listed for sale about two weeks ago by Perry & Co. Sotheby's International Realty, I was alarmed that Edenton's store may be in peril, however it is not.

"No, we are not moving and we aren't definitely not closing," said Dana and Preston Allgood, who own/manage the popular store that is locally owned — independent — from the national chain.

That's good news because Sears is a popular downtown store with a longtime lease. Our family bought a dryer and may buy a refrigerator or a bigger kayak from that store when our federal tax return comes through.

Going price for the 21,000 square foot property — \$399,000 — according to Perry & Co. Sotheby's International Realty with a listing that says, "Imagine a 7,000 sq. ft. showroom with full window exposure on the main street of Downtown Historic Edenton. Behind the building is abundant public parking plus a loading dock with excellent access. The back of the store and mezzanine are currently used for storage and office space. There are two additional 7,000 sq. ft. floors with freight elevator and back step access. The showroom has been renovated with freshly painted sheetrock walls, new floor tiles, alarm system and has been rewired."

Edenton Rotary Club will host a breakfast from 6:30-11 a.m. April 27, at the John A. Holmes High School cafeteria. The meal includes pancakes, scrambled eggs, sausage and drink. Meals cost a \$7 donation. Eat-in or take-out is available. For tickets, talk to any Rotary Club member.

The money raised goes toward a scholarship to a top student. Last year, the coveted Edenton Rotary Cup Scholarship was presented to Nev Duruman, a multi-sport athlete who attends UNC Chapel Hill. Who will win the scholarship this year?

Stay tuned.

In other matters, the newly renovated McDonald's looks great and celebrating its reopening Saturday. Feels like the service is faster than before, but maybe that's me. My french fries were hot — very particular about my freedom fries.

Some of the walls are decorated pictures/photographs of Edenton. I'm not sure what the wall paper depicting an ancient stone wall was all about — reminded me of something Biblical or from the Southwest.

As with the McDonald's outside Tarboro and other places, there is a kiosk indoors where you have the option of choosing to order your own food without talking to a cashier. Some folks may like that system, but I'm old school — I want to talk to a real person when ordering food.

Speaking of fast food, people have asked what's been going on with Taco Bell and the brew pub. Per our good Town Manager Anne-Marie Knighton, "Taco Bell land transactions has taken longer than anticipated. We expect the properties to be acquired by Burger Busters will be acquired in the next 30 to 60 days. Burger Busters is purchasing 232 Virginia Road from Southern Bank, where Southern Bank's ATM is located and a small piece of property from Chowan Crossing Shopping Center."

Regarding the Brewery & Brew Pub, Knighton said, "Council set deadline for that transaction to take place by June 30th. We expect to receive application from John Glover shortly for his request for Board of Adjustment variance from the flood ordinance requirements. Mr. Glover will also need a Certificate of Appropriateness from Historic Preservation Commission for any changes to the exterior of the building."

Saturday, I saw Keith Ammons and his family at Wal-mart in Elizabeth City. Ammons is a key organizer of the annual Back to School Bash that provides backpacks and school supplies for students in the Edenton-Chowan Schools prior to the start of the school year. That's an excellent program.

As to Ammons, he works for Regulator Marine which has expanded so as to add 64 more jobs to our area. When adding those jobs to the ones Colony Tire and Jimbo's Jumbos have created from their compa-

ny's vigorous expansion, Chowan County continues its long tradition of having a strong business presence in eastern North Carolina by God's grace.

Saw Shepard-Pruden librarian Jennifer Finlay working out on the "good" exercise bike Saturday at the YMCA in Elizabeth City. Worth noting, if you are a member of the Y, you can use facilities from Kitty Hawk to Windsor.

Mayor Roland Vaughan and company safely returned to Edenton from their trip last week to Seattle for the Main Street Now Conference. A quick conversation with Vaughan — he's glad to be back. Who can blame him? Thank God we are not Seattle or any other large city for that matter.

So as to take advantage of the weather, the mayor and his wife Peggy Anne Vaughan were walking around downtown with her grandson Fletcher and his friend Hudson is from Raleigh. Peggy Anne talked about life in places near and far as it relates to life in our town. She said, "If you embrace Edenton, it will embrace you." True words. Edenton is a sanctuary city of down home values, civility, civic pride and getting to know your neighbor.

I used to aspire to work and live in a large city. Nope. Never again. Though people, usually folks living in big cities, say the population is declining in rural areas, I suspect that as time marches on and the urbanites get sick of the heavy traffic, high taxes, crime and stepping around human waste (poop) and on busy streets, there will be a mass exodus for the country.

Lots of turtles are sunning themselves deep in the Shrek meme known as Queen Anne Creek. Also, my wife saw a couple of otters swimming in the bay one morning. And the squirrels are out too. Those small white flowers by Frances Ingalls home are blooming.

According to reliable sources, the coyotes are back, so be careful outdoors after dark and be sure your pets are protected.

Last note, some folks have asked who is the editor — my wife or me? Short answer — Nicole is. She drew the short straw. As for me, I'm taking life one day at a time, reconnecting with my family and more. That said, please send any news tips to mlayton@ncweeklies.com.

Apply for Albemarle EMC education grant

From Submitted Reports

Albemarle Electric Membership Corp. is partnering with local educators to bring learning to life through the Bright Ideas education grant program. Starting April 1, educators can submit an application for Bright Ideas grants of up to \$1,500 for innovative, hands-on classroom projects that would not otherwise be funded. Educators can learn more and apply online at www.ncbrightideas.com.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the Bright Ideas Education Grant program. Albemarle EMC expects to award more than \$15,000 in Bright Ideas grants this year to teachers. The grants are available to K-12 teachers for projects in any subject, and educators can apply individually or as a team online.

Applications will be accepted through Sept. 23. Teachers who submit their applications by the early bird deadline of Aug. 15 will be entered to

win one of five \$100 Visa gift cards.

To apply, teachers must include a budget; explain the implementation, goals, creative elements and evaluation of the project; and have approval from their school's principal. Applications will be judged through a competitive evaluation process, with judges looking for projects that feature inventive and creative approaches to learning. Grant-writing tips can be found at www.ncbrightideas.com.

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