

2023 People's Choice Awards is Here!

Look Inside for the Ballot and QR Code to Vote Online.

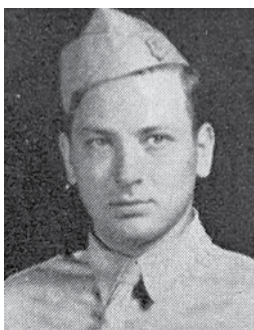
Ballots can be mailed to: SeaWay Printing | 4130 Long Beach Road, Southport, NC 28461

Voting Runs January 10th - February 15th.

Doodles on Oak Island Honors Veteran's with a Memorial Wall

The Doodles Veterans Wall is nearing completion and needs your help! Bring in a service related photo of yourself or a loved one and let us proudly display it for all to see. Vets, bring in your favorite cup or mug and get a free coffee or fountain drink any time! We thank you for your unselfish dedication and service to our great country!

Joseph Chapman Lewis is the focal point of the wall. Chapman was born and raised in Bolivia, NC and joined the Army during World War 2 to defend freedom and democracy like so many had done before him. Chapman was attached to the 120th Infantry 30th Infantry Division Company K. During the last strong push of the German Army called the Battle of the Bulge, in a town called Malmédy, company



Joseph Chapman Lewis

K was fighting German forces and receiving friendly fire from medium bombers on December 23rd, 24th, 25th and 27th.

Chapman was declared Missing in Action/ Killed in Action on 25, December 1944. His final resting place will never be known but he is memorized in The Ardennes American National Cemetery in Belgium along with 5162 Americans and 463 Missing in Action.

Chapman gave the ultimate sacrifice long ago, but we have countless servicemen and women standing guard to do the same if needed. Please say a prayer and give thanks for those that stand between us and the evils of this world.

Thank you to all that have served and sacrificed so much for us to be free.



Doodles is located at
130 Country Club Drive,
Oak Island, NC,
(910) 278-9991
doodlesoki@gmail.com



New Hope Clinic Provides Healthcare to Low or No Income Adults

The New Hope Clinic is a non-profit health care clinic that provides free, comprehensive primary care to uninsured adults who are 18 and older with low or no income. Their staff includes six paid professionals as well as 150 volunteers, offering medical care, dental care, pharmacy services, and health education. They also connect patients to care with specialists, mental health professionals, and for necessary testing. The staff is dedicated to building a healthy community in

Brunswick County. New Hope Clinic was established in Brunswick County over 20 years ago, because the health care needs in our community are so great. Approximately 11% of the people in our county are uninsured or underinsured. The Clinic serves close to 1,000 adults each year, who make up less than 10% of the people in Brunswick County who qualify for our services. The greatest challenge is to get the word out about their services to those in need before they have a

health emergency. The main clinic is located in Boiling Spring Lakes off of Highway 87 and there is a satellite clinic located in Shallotte with Brunswick Family Assistance. New Hope serves Brunswick County adults who qualify. Stop in to the Clinic, visit the website (www.newhopeclinicfree.org) or learn more by calling (910) 845-5333. Our staff works with each person to help them identify if they qualify for our services and to find a different clinic if they do not.

Samara's Village Winter Pop-Up Shop

Samara's Village will have a remote pop-up shop on Wednesday, January 18, from 10am-1pm at 5200 Bridgers Road in Shallotte (parking lot of the former Coastal Cinemas). The rain date will be January 25.

All Brunswick County families with children ages 3 and under and expecting mothers are welcome!



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Vote in the 2023 People's Choice Awards

Voting Runs January 10th - February 15th.

- BEST BAKERY _____
- BEST BREAKFAST _____
- BEST LUNCH _____
- BEST BURGER _____
- BEST BBQ _____
- BEST RIBS _____
- BEST WINGS _____
- BEST PIZZA _____
- BEST STEAK _____
- BEST ASIAN FOOD _____
- BEST SEAFOOD RESTAURANT _____
- BEST FAMILY RESTAURANT _____
- BEST BISTRO _____
- BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT _____
- BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT _____
- MOST CREATIVE CHEF _____
- MOST ROMANTIC RESTAURANT _____
- BEST WATERFRONT RESTAURANT _____
- BEST WAIT STAFF _____
- BEST ICE CREAM _____
- BEST CANDY STORE _____
- BEST SEAFOOD MARKET _____
- FRIENDLIEST BUSINESS _____
- BEST CATERING COMPANY _____
- BEST PUB/BAR _____
- BEST BARTENDER _____
- BEST WINE SHOP _____
- BEST WINE CLUB _____
- BEST CRAFT BEER _____
- BEST MARTINI _____
- BEST LIVE MUSIC VENUE _____
- BEST LOCAL BAND _____
- BEST CHIROPRACTOR _____
- BEST HOSPITAL _____
- BEST DOCTOR _____
- BEST DENTIST _____
- BEST BEACH RENTALS _____

- BEST REAL ESTATE COMPANY _____
- BEST REALTOR _____
- BEST MOVING COMPANY _____
- BEST PEST CONTROL CO. _____
- BEST GARDEN SHOP _____
- BEST FLORIST _____
- BEST ACCOUNTANT _____
- BEST INSURANCE _____
- BEST GOLF COURSE _____
- BEST CHILDREN'S AMUSEMENT PLACE _____
- BEST BARGAIN STORE _____
- BEST GIFT SHOP _____
- BEST BEACH WARE _____
- BEST WOMEN'S APPAREL _____
- BEST MEN'S APPAREL _____
- BEST HAIR SALON _____
- BEST PLACE TO PAMPER YOURSELF _____
- BEST CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION _____
- BEST CAR WASH _____
- BEST OIL CHANGE _____
- BEST PET SERVICES _____
- MOST PET FRIENDLY BUSINESS _____

3 Ways to Vote!



Scan QR Code and Fill Out Ballot on Survey Monkey
 or
 Go to: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/WMFSVZP>
 or Mail Your Completed Ballot to:
 Seaway Printing to
 4130 Long Beach Road
 Southport, NC 28461

Only 1 Completed Ballot will be Accepted Per Person
 Any Duplicated Ballots will Not Be Counted.



We Made It! It is a New Year!

Well, we ended the year 2022 with record cold temperatures only to recover with temperatures in higher degrees more to our liking. As for the past year in review, it marked comings and goings of many Brunswick County businesses. It was a mixed bag for our economy, both good and bad. This year promises to be interesting for small businesses. They are, after all, the backbone of our small seaside communities and deserve all our support.

During this off-season period when some businesses close down until spring, many businesses are offering specials appealing to locals that will help keep businesses going.

Places like **Fixin's** and **Wallace Express Food Truck**, in front of **Back 2 Shuckers**, are offering reasonably priced blue-plate specials or complete meals that are perfect for a late lunch or for a take home early dinner.

The Break on Oak Island has been offering a \$10 burger bash on Wednesdays and chicken and biscuit casserole with a soft drink lunch special.

Maria's Pizzeria in Ocean Isle Beach features specials on pizzas, dinners, and wine that satisfies appetites and wallets. **The Joyce** in Brun-

swick Forest, Leland has Trivia Nights and a Thursday Prime Rib dinner special that the locals seem to love.

The **Tiki Tavern** in Southport attracts locals on Wednesdays with Open Mike Night and for Tuesday Tacos and Margaritas.

On the burgeoning Brunswick beer/cider scene: **Brunswick Beer and Cider** in Leland in Brunswick Forest, is becoming a favorite with craft beer and cider lovers. The first in-house cider "I'm Currently Blue" sold out quickly followed by new "Pink Guava Cider." They introduced their first beer "Western Cypress" IPA on December 1, 2022.

Leland Brewing Company located at 133 Old Fayetteville Rd. is still under construction. Carolina

Carolina Crab Brewing Company, 4810 Long Beach Rd., is still feverishly being worked on to be up and brewing by spring.

Not to be missed, **Solar Brewing Company** at 8108 E. Oak Island Dr. on Oak Island has fast become a place for brews, wings, pizzas and appetizers. Their most recent release of holiday ale with notes of cinnamon ginger has gotten enthusiastic reviews.

Paul's of Oak Island is one of the most popular spots for good food and drinks and

a perfect place to watch all sports games! There are big TV screens galore. Sports fanatics are starting to gather to cheer their teams here. Comradery and cool atmosphere topped off with drinks and food specials are found here.

Southern...A Gathering Place is slated to open this spring next to Dry St. in Southport. Locally known Chef Ashley promises great things!

When the weather is chilly, don't forget homemade soup and sandwiches. Made-from-scratch everyday specials like roasted tomato crabmeat jalapeno soup and grilled cheese (not your American cheese on soggy white bread) or grilled cheese with sausage, corn, and potato chowder for \$12 can be found on the menu at **StrEat Side Take Out** on 524 Howe St. You can also get delish sandwiches and bowls for a tasty lunch.

Pizza or Italian food is always a good idea. Brunswick County has plenty of places to choose from. Each has a different style reflecting the many regional cuisines Italy is known for in the culinary world. Two new places join our area...**Gondolfo's Take-out** in Leland at 1735 Reed St., features NYC style pizzas and Sicilian square cut.

A new restaurant opened recently that boasts all homemade in-house pastas and raviolis compliments of a chef newly arrived from Italy. The place is **Lucca Italian Chop House**, 4924 Main St. Shallotte. The fabulous Tomahawk steak special for two with two sides, two salads, and two desserts is the talk of the town!

Sea Biscuit Cafe in Holden Beach on Stone Chimney Road is serving up delicious daily Blue Plate specials in addition to their usual normal menu. Stop by and give them a try.

Calabash is awaiting the opening of a cute little pink shop called **Blondiez** at 1159 River Rd. that will serve doughnuts to die for...or so we are told!

One sad note - **Cox Furniture** on Oak Island is closing after serving the Oak Island area for a number of years.

Coming to the shopping plaza area between Hwy. 211 and Long Beach Rd., is **Southport Suzie's**, a sweet little place for the kiddies and adults to indulge in frozen yogurt.

February Means Valentine's Day!

Here are some suggested ways to treat your sweetheart. Besides flowers and dinner out, why not bring dinner in? Order a meal to go maybe



from **Castucci's** or **D's Italian Restaurant** and pick up wine from **The Grape & Ale** on Oak Island or from **Uncorked by the Sea** in Southport to go with it. Have a romantic dinner catered...by Rhonda from **StrEat Side** or by **Gourmet to Go**, both in Southport. Candy is always dandy and **Chuck's** in the Southport Lowe's Food shopping center has hand dipped as does **Nancy Jo's Bakery** or specialty arrangements from **Candy Girl**, both on Oak Island. Looking for something a bit more sparkly? **SeaSide Jewelers** on Oak Island is the perfect place to find just the right gift.

If you have any new information about businesses in Brunswick County that you want to share with us please send it along to share with you fellow readers.

PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS 2023

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Dosher Celebrates Opening of Employee Walking Trail

A .25 mile marked trail was created to support workplace wellness



On Thursday December 1st, Doshers Memorial Hospital celebrated the opening of their employee walking trail, a .25 mile marked course that begins and ends at the back entrance of the hospital. The walking trail was an initiative conceived by Doshers's Workplace Wellness Committee to give employees a designated space to exercise, enjoy the outdoors, or unwind after their shift. The Wellness Committee which was piloted with the support of the Doshers Wellness Coalition this past March, was formed to impact employee well being and to improve the overall health of Doshers staff members.

Said Lynda Stanley, President and CEO of Doshers, "Part of being a great place to work is investing in the overall well-being of our staff. Our physical and emotional health impacts us in all areas of life. The culture we strive to enact at Doshers is one where employees have access to programs that will help them create the healthiest versions of themselves."

For more information on health-care services from Doshers Memorial hospital, go to Doshers.org.

For more information on the Brunswick Wellness Coalition, go to BrunswickWellness.org.

No matter if you are new to the area or just want to know what's new to the area, the Coastal Consumer Showcase is a must attend event where you can see the product or talk with the business owner about their services, is extremely valuable. For this reason, the Chamber holds the Coastal Consumer Showcase.

The Coastal Consumer Showcase is held annually the second Thurs-

day in February (2/9/2023) from 4pm-7pm at the St. James Community Center, 4136 Southport-Supply Road, St. James, NC 28461. The Showcase is organized by the Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce for the general public. There are many free giveaways provided by the participating businesses.

For more informations: <https://www.southport-oakisland.com/event/coastal-consumer-showcase.html>

WALK-IN CARE

At the Doshers Wellness Center



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Walk in 9am-6:30pm, M - F

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Doshers.org/Clinics



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Need Some New-to-You Reads for the New Year?



Visit the Once More Bookstore inside of Southport Realty at 727 N Howe Street in Southport. The store is run by The Friends of the Library Southport & Oak Island (FOLSOI), a non-profit organization that provides financial and operational support to the Southport and Oak Island libraries, enabling them to remain current, accessible, and appealing.

FOLSOI raises money for upgrades to book collections, equipment, and facilities, and its volunteers sponsor educational and cultural programs to engage library patrons of all ages.

A volunteer will be available to accept payment and make change

during posted sales. If a volunteer is not available, exact change/check placed in the wall-mounted cash box is greatly appreciated.

Shop Monday through Friday 1-3pm (except holidays), and Saturday 10am-12pm (except holidays)

Have books to donate? Donations are accepted Tuesdays and Saturdays 10am-12pm. Bring your donations to the double doors on the 8th Street side of the building. We are unable to accept encyclopedias, textbooks, out-of-date technical books, magazines, cassette tapes, VHS tapes, and damaged books.

For more information on the organization visit: <https://folsoi.org>



Save the Date - Safe Plates Training February 20 & 27, March 6

Safe Plates is NC State Extension's family of evidence-based food safety programming and resources for retail, community, and home-based food safety. The Brunswick County Center of N.C. Cooperative Extension offers Safe Plates for Food Managers and Safe Plates Food Handlers.

Safe Plates for Food Managers is an evidence-based, interactive food safety training course developed by NC State University. This course prepares participants for a CFP-AN-

SI accredited Certified Food Protection Manager exam from the National Registry for Food Safety Professionals.

Reserve your space by calling 910.253.2610 or email Cheryle Syracuse, clsyracu@ncsu.edu.

To register by mail send check or money order for \$125 to:

NC Cooperative Extension
PO Box 109 in Bolivia 28422

Make Checks to Brunswick County.



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Youth Business Fair Gives Young Entrepreneurs Business Experience



A great time was had at the recent Youth Business Fair! This one of the most heart-warming experiences of our year. Thank you to everyone who came out to support these young entrepreneurs including their family who guided them along the way. These young people were impressive. They had to decide on a product, secure capital, develop the product including inventory and manufacturing, bring it to market, polish up a sales pitch, make change, and provide excellent customer service.

Thank you to Jay Schach, Sea-Grass Consulting for leading them through the process. Thank you to Novant Health for your title sponsorship and Brunswick Senior Resources Volunteers The Brunswick Center

for inviting us to be a part of their crafter's bazaar.

Congratulations to: Overall Age Group 6-8, Cafe' de Paris; Overall grade 3-5 Surf and Sand Slimes; Best Presentation grade 3-5 - Bryant' Blades; Most Original grade 3-5 Nolan's S.T.E.M Gifts; Highest Business Potential grade 3-5 Max's Snax and Highest Business Potential grade 6-8 Marsh Wood.

Thank you to Lisa Benna, Benna Consulting for your participation as a judge and sponsoring the gift we gave each participant. Thank you to our certificate sponsors Mitzi Swing, Mary Kay Independent Beauty Consultant, Pacula Builders, Margaret Rudd & Associates and Southport Ace Hardware.

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If you're considering an energy efficiency project, a Weatherization Loan can help. BEMC Members can apply for a 5% loan up to \$6,000 for residential projects and up to \$10,000 for commercial projects. Terms can be as long as 60 months, and payments are included with your monthly electric bill.

Call (800) 842-5871 or visit bemc.org/weatherization-loans for more information, and how to apply.

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January/February Events

BOLIVIA

January 20

Face 2 Face: Tribute to Billy Joel & Elton John

7-9pm | Brunswick Community College | 50 College Road NE

Face 2 Face is an amazing tribute to superstar Elton John and Billy Joel. Elton and Billy dominated the charts through the 70s, 80s and 90s selling millions of records with mega hits such as Saturday Night, Crocodile Rock, Yellow Brick Road, Candle in the Wind, Piano Man, Big Shot, Just the Way You Are.

Elton and Billy on stage together is a "must see" show. Face 2 Face is a high energy, interactive show with funny performance bits, sing-a-long parts and spontaneous humor.

No Refunds, No Exchanges

www.etix.com/ticket/p/6241222/face-2-face-elton-john-billy-joel-tribute-supply-brunswick-community-college-odell-williamson-auditorium

February 27-28

EMS Officer I

8am-5pm | Brunswick Community College | 50 College Road NE

This 16-hour traditional classroom-based course is aimed at providing the new or aspiring EMS officer guidance in confronting common challenges faced by those in EMS managerial and/or leadership roles. Based on the national model, with heavy focus on North Carolina EMS structure, you will be presented with concepts to aid the aspiring, newly promoted, or experienced EMS officer for service in what is expected in an EMS department. Through facilitated discussions, lectures, case studies, and exercises, you will be introduced to creating and maintaining a successful EMS organization. Topics will focus on managerial leadership, team building, professional communications, quality improvement, discipline, customer service, strategic planning, crisis management, and budgeting.

LELAND

January 7

Student Showcase Gallery Showcase

12-2pm | Leland Cultural Arts Center | 1212 Magnolia Village Way

The LCAC'S Student Showcase brings together students from all over the center to feature their work. With so many talented

individuals creating at the LCAC this is a can't-miss show!

January 14 - February 18

Saturday Sunshine Program

10-11:30am | Leland Cultural Arts Center | 1212 Magnolia Village Way

For individuals aged 16+ who have mild to moderate cognitive disabilities. Guardian or helper participation is highly encouraged. Register online or in person.

January 20 & February 8

Leland We Don't Know

9am-12pm | Leland Cultural Arts Center | 1212 Magnolia Village Way

Our award-winning program is back and kicks off with a presentation of Leland's history and growth, so you won't miss a thing as we tour the town! Next, we'll hop on the Leland Express for a two-hour tour of Leland visiting sites of the Town's early days, highlighting the history, and discussing some of the Town's exciting plans for the future. Register online or in person at the LCAC. <https://www.townofleland.com>

January 21

All Are Welcome "Art@LCAC"

10am-12pm | Leland Cultural Arts Center | 1212 Magnolia Village Way

Free children's event. We will read "All Are Welcome" and create art together. Hosted by Brunswick Arts Council & LCAC & NEA Big Read Program.

January 28

Jigsaw Junction

10am-12pm | Leland Cultural Arts Center | 1212 Magnolia Village Way | \$40/per 4 person team

Join the fun where teams compete to complete the same 500 piece Jigsaw puzzle in a two hour time frame. The first three teams to finish win prizes. The puzzle will be yours to keep at the end of the tournament. Fun for all ages! Register online or in person at the LCAC.

OAK ISLAND

January 17

Musical Story Time

10am | Barbee Library
8200 E Oak Island Drive

Join us for a special musical story time

honoring this year's NEA Big Read children's books. A limited number of free books, funded by the NEA Big Read, will be available! No registration required.

January 18-May 24

Parent's Night Out

5-8pm | First Baptist Church of Oak Island | 4608 E Oak Island Dr

Children age 3 through 6th grade come together each week to learn about missionaries around the world and the people from the Bible who inspired them to live on mission.

Boys and girls age 3- Kindergarten participate in Mission Friends and learn through play, crafts, and story time.

Boys in 1st- 6th grades participate in RA's (Royal Ambassadors), while girls are in GA's (Girls in Action). They learn through games, crafts, stories, and mission projects of their own.

Mission groups are a part of our Wednesday Night Worship that begins with a family meal which is FREE for children, \$5 for adults. At 6:30, children ages 4-6th grade gather together for Children's Bible Study. At 7:00, while children are in Mission Groups, youth grades 7-12 have Bible Study and adults participate in Prayer Meeting which includes a Devotional time.

January 19 (Every 3rd Thursday)

SMART Kids Club

4:30-5:30pm | Barbee Library
8200 E Oak Island Drive

Come out to Barbee Library every third Thursday at 4:30 p.m. beginning Jan. 19th for SMART Kids Club featuring various STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math)-based activities. Call 910-278-4283 to register. Recommended for ages 6 and up.

February 4

Parent's Night Out

5-8pm | Oak Island Ocean Education Center

While you're spending a night out on the town, let the kiddos get crafty at Oak Island Ocean Education Center! Participants will love the holiday themed crafts, movie, and games followed by a celebratory pizza party! Children must be 6-12 years old. For questions contact Recreation Center Supervisor, Carrie Winkler, at cwinkler@OakIslandNC.gov or by calling (910) 278-5518. www.OakIslandNC.gov/RecDesk

OCEAN ISLE

January 12-15

Christian Yoga Instructor (CYT) Revival 2023

10am | 1641 Seaside Rd SW
A yearly gathering of yoga instructors from all walks of life that love Jesus. Coming together to invite the Holy spirit to awaken in us our purpose for God on the yoga mat. To Cultivate ideas and relationships with other instructors. To revive and renew our individual missions in a safe space.

SOUTHPORT

January 7 & February 4

"This is Our Town" Cleanup

9am | Old Jail Annex | Rhett St
Show your support for Southport and join our volunteers for weeding, pruning, and other gardening delights on the first Saturday of every month. Contact Lynne Geiman at 301-741-6698 or Scarlet517@hotmail.com

January 17 & February 21

NC Maritime Museum at Southport, Third Tuesdays

6:30-10pm | Southport Recreation Department | 309 N Foldale Ave

All Third Tuesday Evening programs are free and open to the public; however, donations are happily accepted. Lectures are held at the Southport Community Building at 223 E. Bay St. at 7:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Please contact the museum for more information or to register 910-477-5151. Lectures are geared for 16 years and older. Seating is limited, so registration is required! For details about specific programs visit <https://ncmaritimemuseumsouthport.com>

February 3-4

Leading Lady

6:30-10pm | Southport Recreation Department | 309 N Foldale Ave

A two day Women's Event

Stepping into who you're Designed to be. We as women can feel ourselves stuck in a moment of time or a season, making us feel alone or trapped! But when women come together the very promises given to them will jump with Joy! It is time to step into the next season as the Leading Lady

Agenda: Friday night soaking and Worship, Saturday morning testimonies and unmasking, Saturday evening is the Red Carpet Gala event, Embracing yourself as the Daughter Princess Warrior you are and Lead your life with a promise. Register at www.leadingladybydesign.com

For Up-to-Date Information on the Above Events and to Find More Fun Things to Do:

www.oakislandnc.com/ | www.oakislandnc.com/government/parks-recreation | www.townofshallotte.org
www.hbtownhall.com | www.sunsetbeachnc.gov/ | www.ncbrunswick.com/events | www.southport-oakisland.com
www.townofleland.com/ | www.oibgov.com/ | www.southportnc.org/ | www.townofcalabash.net/ | www.cityofbsl.org/
 Also check events on your facebook page

MAKERS MADNESS

February 18 | 1 - 3 PM
Leland Cultural Arts Center
1212 Magnolia Village Way

SUBMISSIONS OPEN Application Closes Feb 4

Open to current students at the Leland Cultural Arts Center




Join the Leland Cultural Arts Center in celebrating the many talented students working in our center. Pottery, artwork, and baskets will be for sale. Coffee, tea, and hot chocolate will be for sale by Cool

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For more information please call (910) 385-9891, or email lcac@townofleland.com
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Project Lifesaver Program

As we embark on a new year, it's always important to remind our community about the various programs the Sheriff's Office has to offer.

The Project Lifesaver program is one of the most important programs offered to our citizens. Our community is growing and a great many of the folks moving into our are seniors. Project Lifesaver is a FREE service for Brunswick County residents who are caring for loved ones with Alzheimer's disease, autism or other conditions that make them likely to wander away from caregivers, or who have difficulties communicating with rescuers. Project Lifesaver bracelets, which are provided at no cost, help first responders loved ones who have wandered away. This program gives care givers peace of mind.

In order to participate in the Project Lifesaver Program, the prospective client must meet all of the following requirements:

- Live within Brunswick County.
- Be diagnosed by a certified physician as having Alzheimer's disease, other dementia disorders, autism, Down's syndrome or similar disorders.
- Be known to wander away from caregiver.

Project Lifesaver is funded solely through donations and once again is free to Brunswick County residents. More information can be found on our website: <https://www.brunswicksheriff.com/community-program-lifesaver>

Another extremely important program we offer is the Anchor Initiative Program. We have found, through experience and research, the three biggest obstacles for those suffering from addiction not seeking IMMEDIATE treatment assistance has been lack of knowledge, money and transportation.

Individuals with addictions can contact the Sheriff's Office through self-referral, social referral or officer interaction. Once contact is made, the person requesting assistance de-

clares they are addicted and request assistance. Participants will not be charged with drugs or paraphernalia found in their possession if socially or self-referred.

Participants are not asked where the drugs came from during these encounters. Those encountered by law enforcement while in the criminal element are subject to arrest, however the arrest does not disqualify them from Anchor assistance. The individual will be put in immediate contact with an Anchor coordinator, who will respond and do an assessment. The coordinator will contact RHA Mobile Crisis or a like entity to start the process of finding availability for detox facilities. If the individual is in need of medical treatment, the coordinator will transport them to the local ER to be checked out. During this process, the Anchor Coordinator will work to find the individual a treatment option; first seeking inpatient, comprehensive outpatient or intensive outpatient care. The Anchor coordinator will be working with the volunteer group to provide transportation to and from the ER, Detox and Treatment as needed. The Initiative will strive to keep the cost for these individuals as low as possible, paying for the transportation, Detox (if necessary) and initial entrance fees to treatment providers (if necessary). The Anchor Initiative Program is funded through donations to the Brunswick Sheriff's Charitable Foundation.

The Sheriff's Office offers many other programs and resources to the community including Citizens' Academy, Rape Aggression and Defense (R.A.D.), Are You Okay - just to name a few. All of our programs can be found on the Sheriff's Office website at <https://www.brunswicksheriff.com/community-programs>.

Wishing everyone the best in 2023.



Sheriff John Ingram

Brunswick Marketplace

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New Shopping Center Coming to Leland

In the works is a 17-acre shopping Plaza. Let's go Brunswick County!

Site plans recently submitted to the town by a Georgia-based developer and engineer outline "The Shoppes At Savannah Branch," a more than 141,500 square-foot multi-tenant grocery and retail space nearby Brunswick Forest.

Developer Columbia Properties and engineer PM Engineering, Inc., have hopes of transforming the open lot, which is located across U.S. 17 from the Lowes Foods on East Cutlar Crossing in Leland, and bring commercial services to the area, near Jackeys Creek.

This site along U.S. 17 across from Brunswick Forest in Leland could be home to a grocery store and other retail businesses.

Included in the plans to develop the 16.7 acres are 10 store fronts, including a nearly 48,000 square-foot

unnamed grocery store. Parking is also included on the site.

Jessica Jewell, communications manager for Leland, said these plans are currently being reviewed by the town's technical review committee.

The committee will provide comments on the project, which must be addressed by the developer, if necessary, before the project moves forward in the approval process.

Development is booming in Leland, notably in the U.S. 17 area. Brunswick Beer & Cider on South Dickinson Drive opened last month, and a Lowe's Home Improvement is on its way to the corner of Ocean Gate Plaza and Gateway Boulevard.

The grocery store, which has not yet been named, would be one of at least six in the town - including nearby Lowes Foods, Harris Teeter and Aldi; as well as Village Road's Piggly Wiggly and Food Lion.

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Nominate a Business & Non-Profit For Annual Awards

The Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce is accepting nominations for its annual awards: Small Business of the Year and Non-Profit of the Year. The nomination deadline is January 31st. Once nominated, the qualifying business or non-profit will be required to submit a nomination packet, which is then presented to the Brunswick Community College Small Business Center for selection.

All nominated businesses will be invited to a celebration reception to be held in early March.

The winners will be announced on the Chamber's Social Media in late March. Please take a few minutes to nominate a small business or non-profit who deserves the title of Southport-Oak Island Area Small Business of the Year or Non-Profit of the Year.

Small Business Nomination criteria:

Businesses must be a member of the Southport-Oak Island Area

Chamber of Commerce and have been in operation for a minimum of five years. (Chamber staff will check to make sure the business qualifies - you do not need to know this information).

Non-Profit criteria:

Non Profit must be a 501 (c) 3 Non-Profit Organization recognized by the United States Internal Revenue Service, provide charitable services in the Southport-Oak Island Area, and have been operating for a minimum of five years.(Chamber staff will check to make sure the non-profit qualifies - you do not need to know this information).

Customer Service of the Year Award will also be announced in March. Those businesses who qualified for a Golden Pineapple Award in the designated four quarters will be eligible to compete. Please nominate a business for a Golden Pineapple <https://lp.constantcontactpages.com/sv/rg1ObDG>

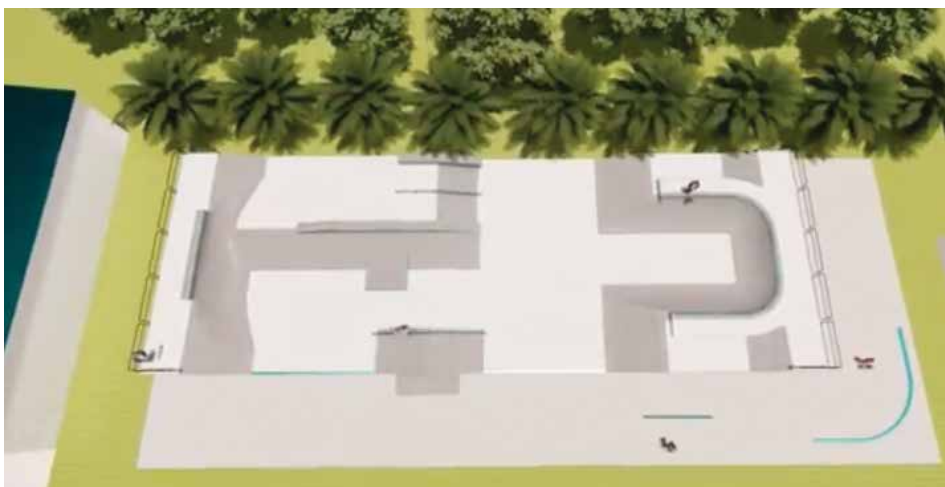
Kevin Bell Skatepark Rebuild Project

Construction crews arrived during the week of November 21, and began site preparations just prior to the Thanksgiving holiday. The forms for some of the new park features were constructed on-site prior to Thanksgiving, with site work currently focusing on preparation for concrete.

Estimated completion time and opening for the rebuilt park is March 2023.

The timeline is subject to change, pending multiple factors such as weather, materials availability, and contractor scheduling.

Skatepark construction can be viewed in real-time below, courtesy of the Oak Island Water Rescue Webcam mounted on the Oak Island Water Rescue station, just next door to the Skatepark. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lahr4p6zY-ww>



The proposed design for the NEW Kevin Bell Skatepark, as presented during the second Public Input Meeting on Thursday, June 23, 2022.



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(Sit / Down / Stay / Come / Leave It / Heel / Up & Off / Place)

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Other obediences classes are offered beyond the basic class.

Reactivity / Aggression Class

Reactivity & Aggression are one of the most common issues that we see in the industry; however, dealing with these types of behaviors are unique and require more in-depth training practices to assist in the behavior modification of your dog. This class will help you better understand why your dog is behaving this way by breaking down canine psychology. In this class we will show you different training techniques and handling procedures to help navigate you through your training. We will also focus on building motivation and strengthening relationship with your dog as we help navigate issues.

4 Sessions (\$300)

Other Reactivity & Aggression classes are offered beyond the basic class.

Puppy Development Course - AKC S.T.A.R (prerequisite: 6mo old or less)

This kick-starter course is designed



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This course will offer a wide array of training covering topics such as:

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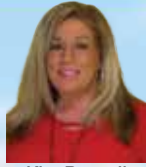
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Town of Leland Awarded Community Development Block Grant Neighborhood Revitalization Funding

The Town of Leland has been awarded \$442,000 in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for the Neighborhood Revitalization Program. This funding will allow for rehabilitation for substandard housing and replacement housing assistance.

The Town will use this grant to repair or reconstruct three homes identified in the community whose owners need assistance to bring their living conditions up to safe standards.

The three structures have a range of repair needs including foundations incapable of supporting normal load, window casings severely decayed, heating systems unable to heat to 70 degrees, failed septic tank, and unsafe electrical wiring system. One of the homes has a failed septic tank and will be connected to public sewer, which runs in front of the property. Based on the severity of

repairs necessary, two of the homes will be completely replaced.

“The Town hopes to strengthen and revitalize the community and invest in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods by targeting federal funding into housing improvements to ensure safe, sanitary living situations for residents who need assistance,” Community Development Planner Barnes Sutton said.

This CDBG grant will enhance community development by providing safe, energy-efficient, standard living conditions for low-income residents in the Town.



The Brunswick Sheriff's Charitable Foundation Selects Recipients of Proceeds from the 11th Annual "Diamonds & Denim" Ball

The Brunswick Sheriff's Charitable Foundation has selected Brunswick County Literacy Council and Samara's Village as the recipients of proceeds from the 11th Annual "Diamonds & Denim" Charity Ball to be held on Friday March 3, 2023.

The proceeds will help these two non-profit organizations with assisting residents in Brunswick County.

The Foundation was established in 2012 and is dedicated to serve the people of Brunswick County by building permanent charitable capital to support programs and provide services that enhance the quality of life for all its citizens. In keeping with the mission of the Foundation, the Foundation Board chose these organizations from non-profit organizations located in Brunswick County who offer programs specifically benefiting Brunswick County residents.

The Foundation is proud to endorse and support such vital programs through its 11th annual charity ball. This prestigious event, themed "Diamonds and Denim" featuring hors d'oeuvres, a buffet dinner, wine, beer, music by Tru Sol Band, dancing and a silent and live auction, will be held on Friday March 3, 2023 from 6pm-10pm at the St. James Community Center on Highway 211 in Southport.

Sponsorship packages are available. Tickets are \$90.00 per person and will be on sale in early January.

For more information, guests can visit www.sheriffscharity.com, call 910-253-0922 or email sheriffscharity@gmail.com.

The Foundation expresses its gratitude to all the supporters, volunteers, sponsors and businesses that have made this event memorable and successful over the past ten years.



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- Family services
- Civic and community programs
- Cultural and arts programs
- Emergency services
- Economic Development

Applications are accepted December 1 through February 15. Grants are awarded in the spring.

Funding for this program comes from the equipment auction held during BEMC's Annual Meeting. Since its inception, nearly \$600,000 has been given back to the community through these grants. For more information and to apply, visit bemc.org/community-grants.



Annual Bella Italia

Join us for our the Annual Bella Italia! Mark your calendars for February 11, 2023, 6-9pm for an evening of wine tasting, specialty hors d'oeuvres, a plated dinner, and dessert featuring Italian fare from Angelo's Bistro. The event will be at 101 Stone Chimney Place in Supply. Sponsorship opportunities and tick-

ets are still available. All proceeds will benefit student scholarship support at Brunswick Community College.

Sponsorships are still available! Tickets are \$100.00 per person. Please call Kathy at (910) 755-7473 to learn more.

<https://www.brunswickcc.edu/about/foundation/>

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The Mardi Gras Parade will begin on SE 64th Street, travel down E. Oak Island Drive, and end at SE 46th Street. Parade goers will celebrate the season as floats, stations, golf carts, and more parade by in Mardi Gras style!

After the parade, Mardi Gras celebrations will continue at Middleton Park with a Mardi Gras Market, outdoor concerts featuring the Cuise Brothers, carnival type games, kids

zone, food trucks, and more. Festival goers and vendors are encouraged to dress in their favorite Mardi Gras themed attire as the community comes together for a all day celebration by the sea!

For those interested in joining the parade, or being a vendor at the Market, simply reach out to Program Supervisor, Ryan Gordon, at rgordon@oakislandnc.gov

Vendor applications are available at Oak Island Recreation Center (Must have tax ID number, No Refunds or Credits).



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BEMC Awards More than \$34,000 To Local Teachers through the Bright Ideas Education Grants Program



Brunswick Electric Membership Corporation awarded \$34,160 to 24 local teachers in Brunswick and Columbus counties to fund creative, engaging projects for their students. The funds support projects that bring learning to life in reading, math and the sciences.

“We’re always impressed with the ingenuity and dedication of the teachers who apply for these grants,” said Brookes Versaggi, Manager of Member Engagement and Communications. “Just like these educators,

we’re committed to making a difference in our communities, and we’re glad to help bring their projects to life.”

Started at Brunswick Electric in 1994, the Bright Ideas education grants program quickly became a shared initiative of all 26 electric co-ops in North Carolina. Collectively, BEMC and North Carolina’s electric cooperatives have issued more than \$14.3 million supporting more than 13,000 projects benefiting well over 2.8 million students statewide.

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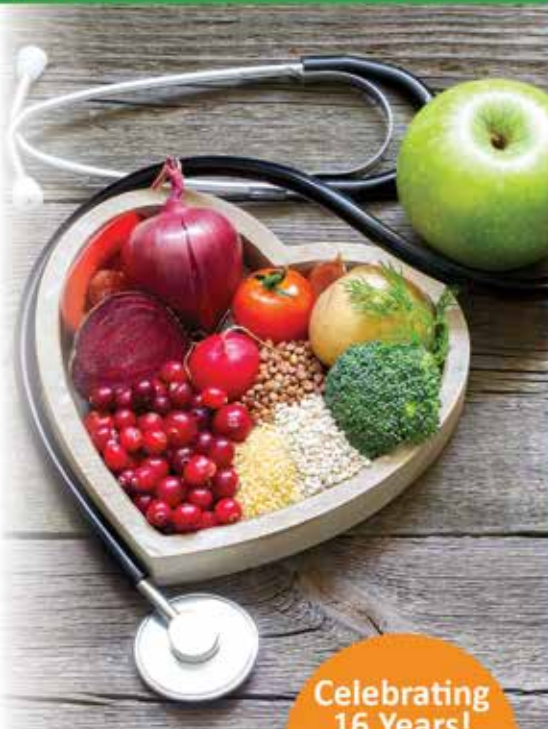


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North Carolina New Year's Eve Drops

On New Year's Eve, many localities in America mark the beginning of a year through the raising or lowering of an object. Many of these events are patterned off festivities that have been held at New York City's Times Square since 1908, where a large crystal ball is lowered down a pole atop One Times Square (beginning its descent at 11:59:00 p.m. local time, and concluding at midnight). In turn, the event was inspired by the time balls used by ship navigators in the 19th century to calibrate their chronometers.

Whilst some of these events use a ball in imitation of Times Square, many "drops" utilize objects that represent an aspect of local culture, geography, or history. Ball drops are by far the most common in, but not exclusive to, the United States.

Here are notable drops from North Carolina:

Beaufort, North Carolina: A pirate is dropped.

Black Creek, North Carolina: A large red heart drop represents "A Small Town with a Big Heart".

Brasstown, North Carolina: A plexiglass pyramid containing a living opossum is lowered from the roof of Clay Logan's convenience store for The Possum Drop. The possum is turned loose at the end of the celebration. Despite these measures, the event has been met with criticism from animal rights activists, particularly PETA, who has a history of objections to the event. The event resumed in 2014. After PETA protests, organizers announced in January 2018 they would be stepping down and retiring from organizing the event, saying that "it's a hard job to do" and "it's time to move on."

Burgaw, North Carolina: A blueberry drops in reference to the town's annual blueberry festival.

Eastover, North Carolina: A

three-foot tall, thirty-pound wooden flea is dropped.

Charlotte, North Carolina: A lighted crown is raised, representing Charlotte's nickname as "The Queen City". Charlotte Center City Partners produces the festivities.

Greenville: Emerald Drop

Harkers Island: Anchor Drop

Marion, North Carolina: A five-foot tall illuminated gold nugget drops into a large doughnut. The event is hosted by the Marion Rotary Club with support and sponsorship from many local organizations and businesses.

Morehead City, North Carolina: A "kids' crab pot drop" is lowered.

Mount Olive, North Carolina: The New Year's Eve Pickle is lowered down the Mt. Olive Pickle Company flagpole.



New Bern: Bear Drop

Raleigh, North Carolina: A 900-pound copper-and-steel acorn, designed by sculptor David Benson to celebrate the city's 1992 Bicentennial and Raleigh's nickname, "The City of Oaks", is lowered by a crane. The event has since become one of the busiest New Year's celebrations in the United States with roughly 40,000 attending each year and an attendance record of 80,000 set in 2012.

In years when the Carolina Hurricanes play at home on New Year's Eve, PNC Arena holds its own New Year's Eve "puck drop" inside the arena for fans that attend the game.

Reprinted from Wikipedia.

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SAVE THE DATES:

- Sicilian Wine Dinner, Thursday, January 26th Presenting a Range of the Varied Cuisine and Wines of Sicily - A Hearty Four Courses of Traditional Foods with Appetizers, Soup or Salad, Entrées and Desserts with four Wine Half Pours!
- Chef's Croatian Tasting and Wine Dinner, February 23rd. Presenting a 4 Course Authentic Croatian Prix-Fixe Meal with Pours for each Course.

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You're Eggs are Up!



A Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held Wednesday, December 28th, 2022, at Eggs Up Grill.

Owners Jason & Jenna Padilla created a welcoming and relaxed at-

mosphere at Southport-Oak Island newest eatery.

They are located at 5009 Southport Crossing Way, Suite 100 in Southport.

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Congratulations and Kudos



Congratulations to the Ocean Isle Beach Fire Department as they won against the Ocean Isle Beach Police Department in the annual OIBPD versus OIBFD fishing tournament. The OIBPD has taken honors the past two years but this year the OIBFD dominated with the events biggest fish and highest aggregate weight total. Ocean Isle Fishing Center thanks the police and fire departments for their outstanding ser-



vice in our community. The Ocean Isle Fishing Center is proud and honored to Host the event for these great groups. The Town of Ocean Isle Beach thanks the OIFC for their generous donation of \$2,500 to the OIBPD and OIBFD!

22 Students Recognized at Good Neighbor Breakfast



Twenty-two students at South Brunswick Middle were honored this morning for being “Good Neighbors” in their school and in their communities. Honorees, along with their parents, were invited to attend the award ceremony which took place in the school’s media center. Breakfast was shared while South Brunswick Middle School Principal Scott Dalton and guest speaker, Deputy Willie McCray, Brunswick County Sheriff Office shared what makes a good neighbor and why it is important. McCray, a former student and current mentor

impressed upon the students the importance of being a good neighbor in all aspects of your life.

Teachers then presented students with their awards while sharing briefly why the student was chosen to be honored.

The Southport-Oak Island Area Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with South Brunswick Middle School, holds the breakfast twice during each school year. Thank you Doshier Memorial Hospital and McDonald’s of Southport for supporting the event.

Oak Island Angels Bring Christmas Joy to Local Families



Oak Island Angels Christmas giving back project 2022 was a huge success. The community once again stepped up to help families in need, to have a Merry Christmas. Because of your generosity and love they were able to assist 34 local families including 73 children with gifts, food cards and stockings filled. The Angels were also able to deliver 89 gift bags to Southport Health and Rehab as well as 70 gift bags to Terra Bella Assisted living in Southport. Thank you to everyone who dropped off trees and decorations for the families to stop by and pick up. Thank you to all that picked gift tags from the Angel tree that was located at Second Wind and to those that adopted

a family. Thank you to those that dropped off stocking stuffers and gifts. Thank you to the volunteers that helped from the beginning to the final day that we all met up at the Pirates Deck to prepare for pick up.

Without the generosity of local residents and businesses, the oak Island Angels could not have provided for 159 elderly and 73 children. Special thank you's go to: Second Wind, Oak Island Deli, Island Jo's, Skipp's Home Improvement, 49th Street Grill, Elks Lodge, Oak Island VFW, Strands Outfitters, Lazy Turtle, Stacy's Home Improvement and the Pirates Deck. When we say it takes a village, whew yes it does. Thank you all for thinking of others.

Brunswick Family Assistance Brightens the Holidays for Children and Seniors



Brunswick Family Assistance was able to put smiles on the faces of 1826 children and seniors. 771 bicycles and tons of toys were distributed. Brunswick Family Assistance supports the low income living through out Brunswick county.

Visit their Facebook page to find out how you can help, <https://www.facebook.com/BrunswickFamilyAssistance/> or go to their website <https://brunswickfamily.org>

Welcome Home Angel Reveals a Major Makover for Local Child

On Wednesday, December 21, Welcome Home Angel, media, guests and volunteers Staged a functional room 'major' makeover for Family Arrival

A major makeover is the highest

level of space transformation Welcome Home Angel provides, which includes a full bathroom renovation to make fully wheelchair accessible.

The reveal marks the second major makeover since the organization's

two-year COVID hiatus after being unable to enter homes of medically-fragile children. Coupled with delays in labor and materials, the reveal will be an exciting opportunity to celebrate its 15th Anniversary.

Similar to Extreme Home Makeover, local supporters, funders, and guests will be at the home ready to cheer and celebrate the Angel, Landon, as he sees his space for the first time.

Led by Gsell + Smith Design, local angel, Landon, and his sister, Olivia, received room makeovers—a unique feature of the agency's mission to include siblings as part of the special day.

Landon suffers from a severe seizure disorder, is wheelchair bound and nonverbal. His makeover will provide, not only a joyful new bedroom, but a safer bathing environment or his family and caregivers to provide easier care.

Founded in 2007, Welcome Home Angel carries out its mission by renovating and remodeling the bedrooms and other living spaces of chronically ill or injured children with necessary

accommodations to make life easier and happier for the entire family. Renovations vary and may include ramps or door widening to accommodate a wheelchair, specialized bathing equipment, assistive/sensory technology, and more. If you are interested in learning more about Welcome Home Angel, want to donate, volunteer, or become involved in helping children with chronic illness or injury, visit welcomehomeangel.com, email info@welcomehomeangel.com or call (910) 679-6901.



Landon Hayes (middle) is surrounded by family and members of Welcome Home Angel at the reveal of the Hayes home makeover.

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Brunswick County Libraries Offer Fun Programs for Kids & Adults

Barbee Library

Love Legos? Come by Barbee Library on Oak Island at 8200 East Oak Island Drive, Tuesdays at 4:30 p.m. **The Lego League** starts January 24th! We can't wait to see all the new creations! No registration required.

Beginner Chess Class

Have you always want to learn chess? Register (Limited space) to learn the basic strategy on Tuesday, February 1 from 2-3:15pm at the Barbee Library. This program is recommended for 3rd grade and up.

Be an ecoEXPLORE Badge Earner with #BCLibrary

Are you ready for Ornithology Season! All about our feathered flying friends! Ornithology Season starts in January and goes until the end of February! Keep an eye out for cool events that the ecoEXPLORE Southern Coastal NC and the NC Museum of Natural Sciences at Whiteville will be having for the birds!

Search "ecoEXPLORE" on www.brunswickcountync.gov to find the Discovery Packs to check out for exploring tools. Keep an eye on the on-line calendar for upcoming ecoEXPLORE events, and visit ecoexplore.net for even more cool happenings plus a map of local ecoEXPLORE HotSpots, including the Rourk Branch Library and Founder's Park in Leland right behind the Leland Library.

Leland Library

Change is just around the corner at the Leland Library! We will be upgrading our Storytime schedule in the new year. We will now offer

three separate Storytime programs each week for a variety of age groups:

- 0 to 2 years - Wednesdays at 10am
- 2 years to Kindergarten - Wednesdays at 11am
- Kindergarten & Up - Tuesdays at 4:30pm

The Leland Library is located at 487 Village Rd. NE, Leland. 910-371-9442

Harper Library

Crafting with Candice

Create a personalized mug for yourself or a gift. Materials provided.

Thursday, January 19 at 2pm. Call or stop by to register.

Writer's Group

Looking to grow as a writer? Bring a piece you've written (1,500 words max.) to share with the group. Participants will take turns reading aloud and providing constructive feedback.

Thursday, January 26, 1-3pm. For adults age 17+. Call or stop by to register.

Books for Bailey

Improve your child's confidence and literacy skills by reading to therapy dog, Bailey. Children must be able to read independently. Sign up for 20-minute time slot.

Registration is required. Call or stop by to register.

Harper Library is located at 109 W. Moore St., Southport. 910-457-6237

Visit <https://www.brunswickcountync.gov/library> for more information and to find other events happening at our libraries.

Visit the Brunswick Marketplace Website
@ www.brunswickmarketplace.com

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Get Out and Walk! 2023 is the Year of the Trail.

Packed on some holiday pounds? Never fear - Brunswick County has some great walking trails and also guided walking tours if in-town is more your speed to walk off those pounds.

Brunswick Nature Park - The Coastal Land Trust purchased this large tract of land (912 acres, roughly the size of Central Park) and gave it to Brunswick County in 2004 to create a public Nature Park.

The park, located at 2601 River Road (NC 133), Winnabow, NC 28479, hosts hiking trails with a stunning view of Town Creek, biking trails, and a kayak/canoe access to Town Creek. It is open from dawn to dusk, 365 days/year.

The Brunswick Riverwalk at Belville: 580 River Road SE, Belville, NC. Discover this 1.2-mile loop trail near Leland, North Carolina. Generally considered an easy route, it takes an average of 22 min to complete. This is a popular trail for hiking and walking, but you can still enjoy some solitude during quieter times of day.

The Green Swamp Preserve - The Green Swamp contains some of the country's finest examples of longleaf pine savannas. The open savannas have a diverse herb layer with many orchids and insectivorous plants. Almost 13,000 acres of the preserve, however, are comprised of a dense evergreen shrub bog (pocosin) dominated by gallberry, titi and sweetbay.

The Green Swamp contains at least 14 different species of insectivorous plants, including extensive populations of Venus flytrap, sundew, butterworts and bladderworts, and four species of pitcher plant. The preserve is also home to many rare animals, including the American alligator, Henslow's sparrow, Bachman's sparrow and Hessel's hairstreak butterfly.

From 17, follow HWY 211 North towards Hwy 74 for 5 miles. The parking area for the trailhead will be on the right; there is a small parking area sign just before the turn off. A kiosk at the trailhead gives you more information about the preserve.

City of Southport - The City of

Southport has partnered with the Southport Historical Society to use the free mobile app called PocketSights to provide visitors and residents with directions for self-guided tours of Southport and the Cape Fear Region. Five tours are currently available.

Historic Southport Tour - 24 locations in Southport

Historic Monuments and Markers Tour - 38 locations in Southport

Safe Haven Movie Tour - 11 locations in Southport

African American Heritage Tour - 17 locations in Southport

Cape Fear River Circle Tours - 8 locations from Southport to Wilmington and return.

The first four tours are "Free Roam Tours", meaning you can either walk and/or drive from location to location in any order you choose. You will want to drive if you plan to take The Cape Fear River Circle Tour, as the "circle" covers nearly fifty miles and could take sixteen hours to walk!

The free mobile app by PocketSights will guide you from one point of interest to the next using GPS.

Download the mobile app below to take the following self-guided tours on your GPS-enabled mobile device.

Kindred Spirit Mailbox - Explore this 3.8-mile out-and-back trail near Sunset Beach, North Carolina. Generally considered an easy route, it takes an average of 1 h 5 min to complete. This is a popular trail for running and walking, but you can still enjoy some solitude during quieter times of day. The trail is open year-round and is beautiful to visit anytime.

Take NC-211 N and Hwy 17 S/Ocean Hwy W to Sunset Blvd S in Sunset Beach. Continue on Sunset Blvd S. Drive to W Main St.

So many trails to explore and not enough space to list them all here. For more places to explore, www.alltrails.com is a great site to visit.

Make 2023 your year of the trail, and enjoy the beauty that is Brunswick County.

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Valentine's Day Traditions Around The World

Check out the interesting Valentine's day traditions around the world. This day isn't all about flowers and chocolates around the world. Different countries celebrate it in their own way.

Argentina – A Week of Sweetness

Argentiniens don't celebrate Valentine's Day in Feb, but "the week of sweetness" in July. It's the day when lovers exchange kisses and receive chocolates and other sweets. In the country, the day actually started as a commercial invention but later became Valentine's traditions.

France – Epicentre of Romance

It is believed that the first-ever Valentine's Day card was originated in France, when Charles, the Duke of Orleans, sent love letters to his wife from the prison in 1415. And the French village called "Valentine" turns into the epicenter of romance between 12th and 14th February. One can see the beautiful yards, trees, and homes decorated with love cards, roses, and proposals for marriage flakes.

Spain – Feast of Saint Dionysus

The day of love in Valencia of Spain falls on 9th Oct. This is known as the feast of Saint Dionysus. The festival is celebrated in most of the parts of Spain by making 'macadora', a marzipan figurine. The figurines are made by men to gift to their female companions. One can also witness colorful parades on the streets of the villages of Spain.

Denmark – A Celebration of Love

Although Valentine's Day is one of the new Denmark festivals, the country also celebrates the day of

love and romance on 14th Feb with a twist. In Denmark, Valentine's Day is not limited to roses and chocolates. Friends and lovers exchange handmade cards with pressed white flowers that are called snowdrops.

Philippines – A Gala Event

In the Philippines, Valentine's Day is the time when many young couples marry in an event sponsored by the government as a form of public service. Among the most amazing Valentine's Day celebrations around the world, this one is a gala event in the country and a special day for young people.

Bulgaria – Day of Winemakers

Like any other country, Bulgaria celebrates Valentine's Day in its own style. On 14 February, San Trifon Zartan is celebrated in Bulgaria, which means "day of winemakers". Young and old couples celebrate their love with a glass of wonderful local wine.

Wales – Day of San Dwynwen

In Wales, Valentine's Day is celebrated in the most unique way. The country celebrates its day of love on Jan 25, which is called the "day of San Dwynwen." On the day, lovers exchange unique and beautifully handcrafted wooden spoons to each other. This tradition is being practiced since the 16th century.

Japan – Exchange of Unique Gifts

Japan does it quite differently. It is celebrated on 14th Feb and women buy gifts and chocolates for their male companions or lovers. Men can't return gifts until March 14, which is called the "white day".

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Let's Talk "Beach Bonfires"



Sitting around a low, crackling fire with your family and friends, while the sunset shimmers over the waves gently lapping against the shore ... it's a great way to spend a weekend, and one of the things Oak Island is famous for this time of year.

We're thankful this season has gone well so far, and attribute that to everyone following a few simple guidelines to ensure a safe, enjoyable bonfire experience.

However, if this is your first time hosting a bonfire, or it's been a while since you last had one, here are a few reminders to make sure your gathering starts off safely:

1. Bonfires should be manageable by a single person, about 4ft. x 4ft. in size or smaller (we know this size may not be "what you call a bonfire in your neck of the woods" but for the sake of discussing safety on our beaches, that is what we are referring to)
2. All materials burned must be natural, untreated wood (NO lumber or manufactured products, as well as gasoline, diesel, tires, or other fuels used for the burn)
3. Fires must be extinguished if winds exceed 15 MPH (even if the windspeed was lower when your application was submitted)

4. There must be a person with a means of contacting 9-1-1 at the bonfire site at all times

5. There must be a way to extinguish the bonfire at all times; such as an "ABC Type II" fire extinguisher, a bucket of water, a shovel to cover the fire with sand, or other sufficient device.

6. All burned materials must be completely extinguished and REMOVED from the beach area after the burn - DO NOT simply cover the fire to extinguish it, as this can still smolder and seriously injure the feet of any person or animal who walks across the burn site

7. No additional debris, trash, or unburned wood should be left on the beach (please remember to leave the beach cleaner than you found it)

Again, it's been a great Beach Bonfire season so far, and with your assistance, we look forward to keeping it that way throughout 2023 and beyond.

Remember if you ever have questions or concerns, you can always contact the Fire Department directly by calling 910-278-1000.

For a complete list of the rules, information, and Beach Bonfire Permit applications, just visit the Town Website at www.OakIslandNC.gov/BONFIRE





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