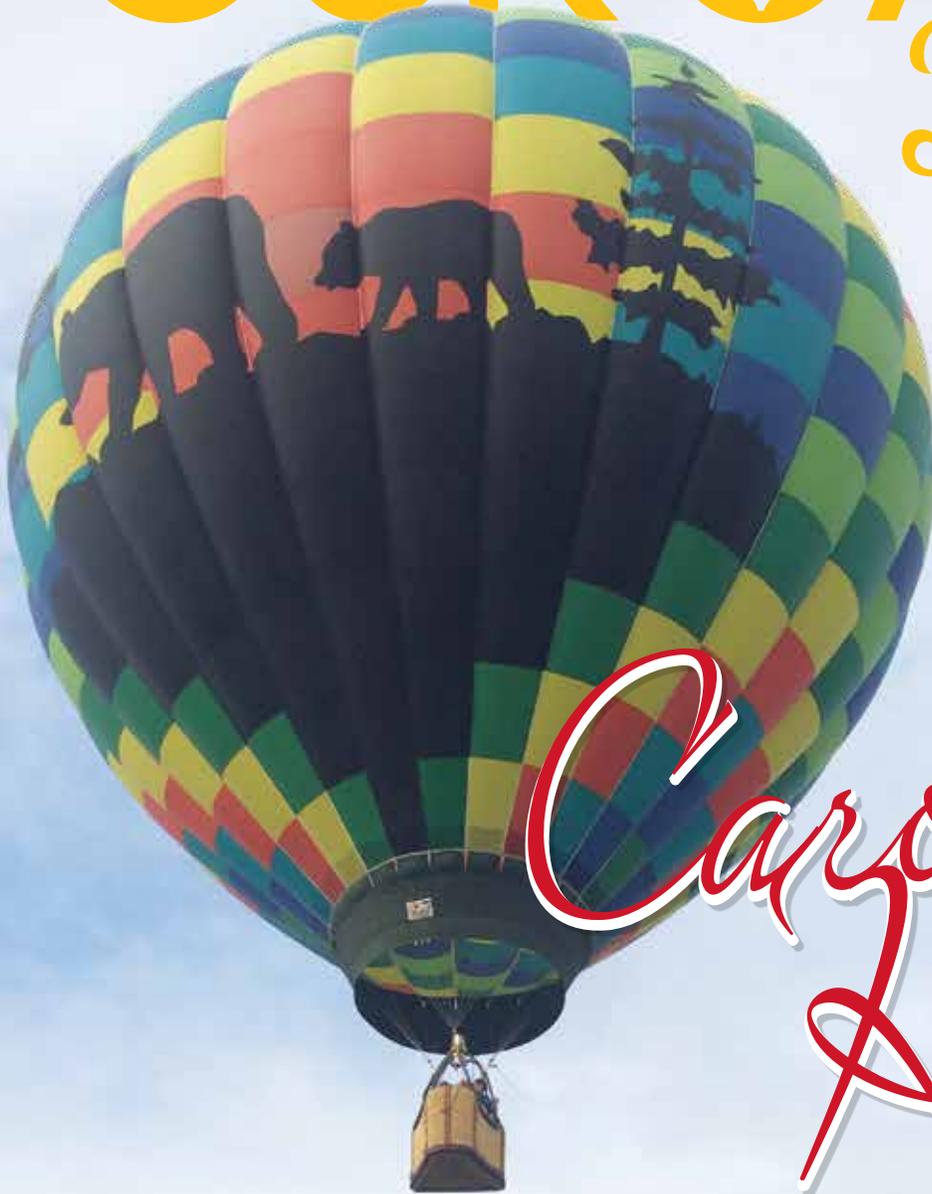


JANUARY 2016 | Your Community. Your Neighbors. Your Story.

FOUR OAKS Journal



Carolina High

-
- Tips for improving your health and fitness
 - Town gathers for Thanksgiving meal
 - Community Calendar
-

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

It's time for a resolution

For as long as we've been together, my wife and I each have a special day on the calendar. A day during which we can not be bothered with the trivialities of everyday life.

Her day is Black Friday, where she joins the hustle and bustle of holiday shoppers in search of the next big deal.

Mine is New Year's Day, where I make a lasting impression on my couch and watch football from noon until midnight.

Now, she shops on other days and I certainly watch my share of football on other occasions, but these days are special — simply because we've declared them so.

Last year, at about this time, we had the idea to launch this little magazine. We sat on the couch on New Year's Eve, made a toast and declared 2015 "the year of change."

Boy, was it ever.

We pressed the button, officially creating our business on 12:01 a.m. on New Year's Day. From there, we had about as much change as a family could handle.

We've both changed jobs (three times total), Ethan got braces and there's this whole magazine thing.

It's been challenging, exhausting, humbling and fun in varying degrees. But above all, it has been special.

The response has been amazing. I never get tired of hearing people say how much they enjoy reading our magazine or seeing the smile on someone's face when they see themselves inside its pages.

It took a year of change, but something wonderful came out on the other side.

So, whatever New Year's resolution you decide to make, make sure to leave room for something special.

Happy New Year from your friends at the Four Oaks Journal!

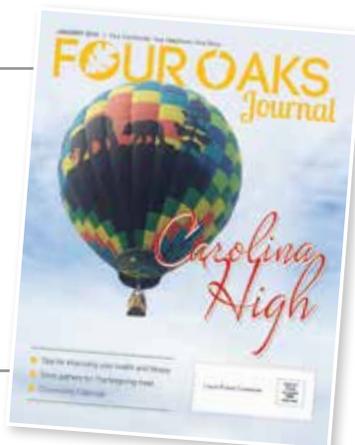


Randy Capps
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ON THE COVER

The "Spellbound Spirit II" sails high above southern Johnston County on a Sunday afternoon.

Photo by Randy Capps



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Thanksgiving Community dinner

The Thanksgiving Community dinner was held at the Four Oaks Volunteer Fire Department, where several area organizations, including Four Oaks Area Ministries and Heaven's Gate Ministry, combined to serve dinner to area families.



The community pulled together as several organizations gathered to serve Thanksgiving dinners, including the South Johnston girls' basketball team. They are pictured below, back row (left to right): Anna Marbry, Anna Weaver, Skyler Johnson, Kelly Dorman, McKinley Johnson, Sarah Pierce, Emma Blackman and Ronda Johnson. Front row: Emma Jernigan.

Photos by Shanna Capps



The Four Oaks Middle School cheerleaders visited the Ronald McDonald House last month to make their annual donation of paper products, can tabs and food. The squad toured the facility, and got to stop by Jaylen Stanley's room as well. "It was a very humbling experience for the girls," coach DeAnna Haley said. Pictured are, front row (left to right), McKenly Thompson, Lydia Carberry, Alyssa Barefoot, Bella Leonard and Katie Evans. Back row, Allison Smith, Calesie Godwin, Madi Miller, Anna Makey, Cynthia Allen, MacKenzie Swartz, Mary Lauren Lee, coach DeAnna Haley and coach Angela Braswell.



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HOW TO KEEP **YOUR** NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION TO GET IN **SHAPE**

**MEAL AND
FITNESS PLANS!**

The holidays have come and gone and the calendar has flipped to January.

That means it's time to make some New Year's resolutions, and one of the most common ones is to get in better shape.

For many, that means a renewed effort in January and February that slowly tapers off before Spring. The secret, it seems, is creating a new "normal."

"They have to get in a routine," Davy Johnson, owner of Four Oaks Fitness Center, said. "It's a lifestyle change. They have to find an hour four or five times a week to get in their fitness and plan their meals. The biggest problem is that people are reactive, instead of proactive. They're always reacting to what's happening, rather than planning ahead."

Johnson also believes that accountability is key.

"You have to set goals," he said. "You have to write them down to have an idea of where you want to be. Weigh yourself. Write it down on your calendar and figure out where you want to be, and what you have to do to get there."

Sometimes, joining a gym can be a good way to keep that promise to yourself.

"We've got equipment that makes it easy," Johnson said. "And we've got people that will help you get started."

Can't make it to the gym? Get up and walk.

"Walking is the perfect exercise," he said. "Especially somebody with health issues and joint problems, walking is the place to start. Walking does a lot of different things. It creates better oxygen flow through the body, and when you get through, it releases endorphins, which make you feel good. It's a natural high."

Of course, exercise is only half the battle. Watching what you put into your body is important as well.

"One, drink more water," he said. "Replace your sodas, teas and fruit juices with water. Those are loaded with sugar. Cut sugar out of your diet any way you can. Second thing to reduce is breads, white foods and starchy foods. Breads, potatoes, pastas — those are loaded with calories."

Making a few changes to your exercise habits and diet can go a long way to building a better you.

"It's important to work out," Johnson said. "By working out, you can add 10 to 20 years to your life. It helps your nervous system, your bone strength and your overall appearance. People will spend all their money on things they think will make them feel good when exercise is one of the cheapest, cost effective ways to feel good."

And, if you start a program and stick to it, you can make a different resolution next year.

MEAL PLAN

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Breakfast	Oatmeal, egg white omelet and wheat toast	Bowl of raisin bran with low fat milk	Scrambled eggs in coconut oil with oatmeal	Bowl of cheerios with blueberries	Protein pancakes with berries	Deer sausage with eggs and wheat toast	Protein shake with banana
Brunch	Yogurt and apple	Egg sandwich on wheat	Snack wrap	Banana	Protein potato chips	Protein bar	Turkey Sandwich on wheat
Lunch	Club sub on wheat with little dressing	2 snack wraps	Salmon with sweet potato and long green beans	Big Chicken salad	Sushi green onion mix salad with brown rice	Chicken breast with tomato and rice	Low-fat Vegetable beef soup
Afternoon snack	½ cup almonds	Protein shake	Low-sugar protein bar	Quest bar	½ cup mixed nuts	Snack wrap	Bowl of low-carb soup
After work	Protein shake	Grilled chicken tenders	Peanut butter and jelly sandwich on wheat	Low-carb Greek yogurt	Low-carb protein bar	Pack of tuna with wheat bread and pickle	2 white string cheese sticks
Dinner	Chicken salad	Tuna salad	4 oz Chicken breast with snap beans	4 oz Catfish nuggets with slaw and peas	4 oz Steak with salad and small sweet potato	Pork chop with garden peas and brown rice	Lean meat loaf with asparagus and carrots
Late night snack	Cottage cheese	Low-carb protein shake	2 low-carb string cheese sticks	Grapefruit	Low-carb protein shake	Small serving of left overs	Peanut butter and celery

Note: Any of the meals can be switched out for dinner or lunch and for snacks

- » Drink water throughout day to keep body in fat-burning state and hydrated.
- » Eat baked or grilled foods.
- » Limit sugar and white carb foods such as bread, sugar, pasta and potatoes, especially at night.
- » Supplement protein after workouts and breakfast.
- » Plan and prepare meals ahead of time.
- » Avoid sweet tea, sodas and fruit juices that are loaded with sugar.
- » Avoid foods with over 5 grams of sugar.
- » Eat meals every 3 or 4 hours to prevent body from storing calories.
- » Eat lean meats and vegetables for most meals.
- » Avoid large meals by eating snacks or splitting meals in half to shrink stomach size!
- » STAY CONSISTENT, NOT PERFECT!

WORKOUT AND CARDIO PLAN

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30-minute weight training	Chest and back	Legs	OFF	Shoulders and arms	OFF	30-60 mins exercise activity: » Workout » Ride bike » Play basketball » Play tennis » Jog the dog » 5K » Football » Soccer » Dance » Yoga » Softball » Soccer » Crosstrain	Church/relaxation
	3x10 chest press	3x10 leg press		3x10 shoulder press			
	3x10 lat pull	3x10 leg curl		3x10 lateral raise			
	3x10 incline press	3x10 lunges		3x10 tricep ext			
	3x10 back row	3x10 calf press		3x10 dumbbell curls			
30-minute cardio	30 min. Treadmill	30 min. bike ride		5 minute ab video			
				30 min. elliptical			Afternoon walk, light exercise

- » Weight train 3-5 days a week to build extra muscle and accelerate fat burn.
- » Do cardio activity and abs after workout or first thing in the morning to help burn fat and improve energy and heart health.
- » Do a warmup set at start of workout and a five-minute stretch at end of workout.
- » Schedule rest days to let body recover.

UP UP & AWAY!

Taking an unexpected journey with Carolina High

One of the things I enjoy most about journalism is the fact that no two days are ever exactly the same.

Sometimes, though, even after more than 20 years of telling stories, I can still be surprised.

I had been chasing this story for months. I called Jean Lee of Carolina High Hot Air Balloon Company during the summer, hoping to set up a story.

We had a few pleasant phone conversations, during which I learned just how busy she and her husband, also named Randy, were flying their balloon all over this side of the continent (New Jersey, Canada, Maine, Florida, South Carolina and Statesville — all in the last few months).

We never could get our dates lined up though, so I filed her name and number away on a sticky note with all the other story ideas I haven't gotten around to yet. And then I did what I often do with those ideas. I forgot about it.

Until, that is, the phone rang on a Friday night in November.

It was Mrs. Jean, inviting me to take a few pictures of a planned flight. Thinking that I could probably grab Randy for a few minutes and get a few quotes to go with the pictures, I jumped in the car on a postcard worthy Sunday afternoon and headed to Benson, specifically the Marathon station off the exit to I-40.

First, I met the crew. Charles Daniels and his son, John, clad in

unmistakable bright orange shirts, were sitting at a table outside the station. Then, Randy and Jean arrived.

I had it planned out in my head. I figured I'd tag along to the launch site, snap a few pictures, grab a few quotes and head on back to the house.

Right after I shook hands with Randy, I realized my plans and his didn't match.

"We're going to take off, fly a little bit, land and then have you jump on," he said, very casually.

Now, a bit of background is in order here.

I love flying. When I was young, I was in the Civil Air Patrol, which means that I got to take a turn or two at the controls of a Cessna 172 in the skies above the Marion County (S.C.) Airport.

Until I realized that I have a problem with authority, I wanted to be a fighter pilot instead of a writer.

But until that moment, I had never thought about going up in a hot air balloon. To be honest, I was a tad nervous.

So, while I was thinking about flying around southern Johnston County in a wicker basket filled with people I just met, Randy grabbed



Randy Capps
randy@fouroaksjournal.com

a little black balloon, filled it full of helium, tied it off and released it into the autumn sky.

“We know what the wind’s doing down here,” he said. “I want to see what’s it’s doing up there.”

So, Randy, Charles and I stood in the parking lot of a gas station, watching a balloon float away. After watching it long enough to see it become a tiny, tiny speck in a sea of blue and white, a slight wind out of the south was detected, and a take-off site was chosen.

“Eighty percent of flying a balloon is weather,” Randy said.

“Understanding weather systems. I can look at those clouds — I call them the healthy ab clouds that look like somebody’s six pack — that is a sign that something’s coming.”

He was right, by the way. It did rain the next day.

On the drive over to Benson Middle School, I got to know my pilot a little better.

“I flew airplanes when I was younger,” he said. “Sky dived, scuba dived and rode motorcycles.”

I learned that he was retired from a state job assessing surplus property. Apparently, he enjoys auctioneering, and does a bit of consulting work with RDD Auction. That’s when he’s not playing a bass guitar. Or flying a balloon.

Trying to gather some intel on what I was in for, I asked what the most common first-time reaction to ballooning was.

“They’re awestruck at the serenity,” he said. “The calmness. With ballooning, there’s no sense of flight. You can be moving 25 or 30 miles an hour in the balloon at altitude and you can light a candle — and it won’t even flicker. You don’t feel any wind. You are the wind.”

I liked the sound of that, since I was expecting a far bumpier ride.

Then, he said something amazing that made me dramatically more at ease.

“I’m scared of heights,” he said. “I can’t work on a roof. On a ladder, once I get about 12 or 14 feet off the ground, I’m (nervous). I’ve been messing with balloons for 20 years, but that hasn’t helped me climbing a tree.”

The white van and a trailer with the balloon and basket inside pulled behind the school to the playground.

Randy made another call to check on the weather as the crew set up the balloon.

“You can take off just about anywhere you don’t have any obstacles for the balloon,” he said when asked about this flight’s starting point. “You have to calculate your flight based on where you’re going to be after



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his intention to land at a nearby farm. Jean jumped out to ask permission as the “Spellbound Spirit II” made its descent.

He set the balloon down with a one-skip landing (I was counting), and after a minute or two, motioned for me to get on.

So, I did.

“The pilot thanks the crew,” Randy said, as the balloon again took me off the ground.

I immediately realized two things. The first is I should have followed Randy’s lead and worn a hat. It gets pretty warm at the top of that basket when he pulls the rope.

The other is that there isn’t much room in the basket when there are four people on board.

But everything he said about flying in a balloon was true. It was as calm and still as it could be. And I was far more worried about dropping my iPhone (with all of my pictures and interviews) over the side than I was

you’ve flown an hour so you’ll have plenty of landing opportunities.”

After placing the basket, which weighs more than 600 pounds with full fuel tanks, on its side, the crew set up an industrial floor fan to start filling the balloon.

While Charles, John and Jean scurried about the balloon, Randy did a pre-flight briefing, to which he made sure I was listening.

“While we’re flying, we’re just like Southwest Airlines,” he said. “You’re free to move around the cabin. I can fly from anywhere inside the basket except when we’re close to trees and I’m getting ready to land.”

He went on to explain his perfectly reasonable sounding policy of avoiding power lines, asked us to avoid grabbing fuel hoses and went on to discuss the landing procedure.

“When we get ready to land, we want to face the direction we’re going, hold on tight and flex our knees,” he said. “You’ve taken a rock and thrown it on a lake before and got it to skip, right? That’s the way a balloon basket lands. So don’t (throw your hands up) and say ‘wee, that was fun.’ Because it’s going to be fun two or three more times.”

You know when you fly, and the safety announcement covers what to do in an emergency landing? Ballooning also has a “hard landing” briefing.

“If we have a hard landing, we’re going to do the same thing, except we’re going to crouch down,” he said. “If the basket tips over, we’re just going to lay there and get to know each other. It won’t be a crash. More like a ‘wee’ (as the basket slowly tips over). But no matter what, stay in that basket. Because if somebody gets out (too early), everybody else is going on a free balloon ride.”

While this was happening, the balloon, which deflated fits into a bag not much bigger than a playpen, had expanded to near its capacity of 100,000 cubic feet of air — or enough to hold that many basketballs.

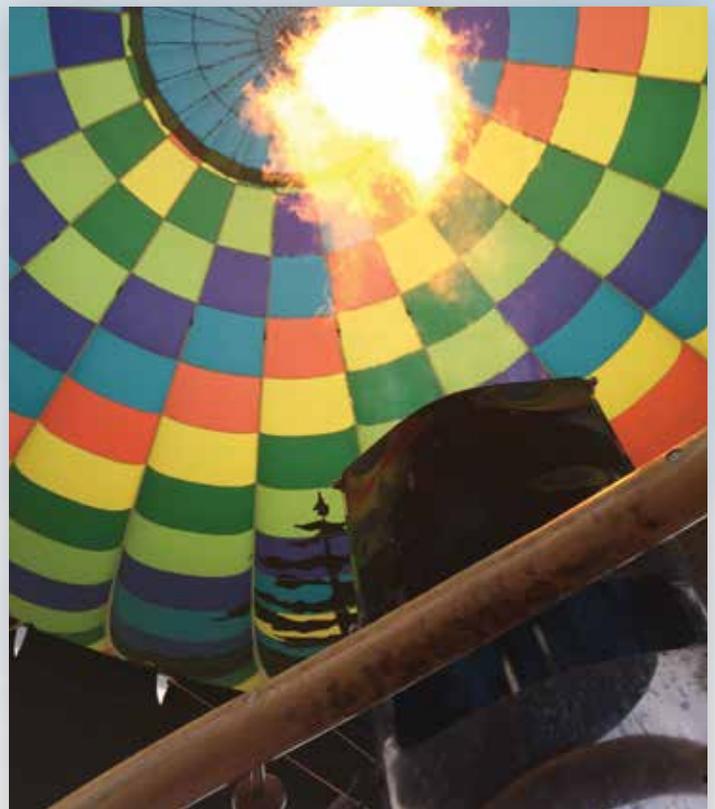
With a few tugs on the rope to heat up the air inside the balloon, Randy stood up the basket, welcomed his passengers, Anna and Lauren Johnson, into the basket and, after unhooking from the van, floated slowly away.

I joined the crew back in the van, and we started following the flight path. Using his iPad, Charles was able to track the altitude, direction and speed of the balloon as it drifted northwest roughly along the path of N.C. 50.

I took a look at the telemetry. It was 1,646 feet high and moving about 3.4 miles per hour.

Piece of cake.

A few minutes later, Randy’s voice cracked over the radio, announcing



about falling out.

And, since it's been about 25 years since I've flown a Cessna, I forgot how far you can see when you're that high.

The Raleigh skyline was there in the distance, and Randy pointed out the water towers for Four Oaks, Smithfield and Benson.

It was breathtaking. Aside from some chatter and the occasional attempt to (carefully) take a picture, time had no meaning. I would guess we flew for about 15 minutes, but I honestly have no idea.

I watched tiny tractors zip around fields. I saw a little black dog run around his yard, barking at us as we meandered by. I saw kids playing in the yard stop and point at us.

It really was quite something.

Randy chose another home for his landing place, and he picked out a spot of grass between the driveway and the start of a bean field.

He put the basket down gently (it felt like one hop), and as suddenly as it began, the ride was over.

The landing site was a common one, I gathered, as the families nearby crowded around the balloon for photos.

"Everywhere we land, we give the landowner a card," he said. "They can go to (the Carolina Balloon Association) website and enter a drawing for \$100. We can't do this without them."

Amazingly, the crew deflated the balloon and got it back into that bag. Then, we headed back to the Marathon station.

Once there, Randy told the story of the first ballooners, the Montgolfier brothers, who successfully built and piloted the first hot air balloon in France in 1783.

He presented the passengers, me included, a flight certificate and named Lauren — "Carolina High's No. 1 fan" — an honorary pilot.

I lingered a bit with Charles and Randy talking about, what else, the weather, before finally getting back in my car to leave.

It was not the day I expected, but one I thoroughly enjoyed.

Want to fly?

Visit the Carolina High Hot Air Balloon Company at www.flycarolinahigh.com or call (919) 894-5893.

Will you be committed in 2016?



Matthew 5:1-2 (NIV) — *Now when Jesus saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them.*

This is what he said: Have you ever climbed a mountain? Have you ever run up a hill?

When you are at the bottom of the mountain or hill, you have two decisions to make. Will I climb this mountain or not? Once your decision is made to begin your journey up the mountain or hill, you must continue if you are to reach the top.

Oh yes, you can stop and go back down the mountain, but you will never know what the view was like on top of the mountain or hill.

Living a life committed to The Lord is like climbing a mountain. You cannot see what is on the other side of the mountain until you take the trip up the mountain.

Climbing a mountain is not easy.

If the mountain has snow, it will be cold and slippery going up. It will be slow going, but if you keep your footing and stay warm you can make it.

Sometimes the mountain may have big rocks you have to climb up and over. It is tough and you must be very careful, but if you keep your eyes on the top you can make it.

Sometimes the mountain has a path. You can walk or run up the mountain at your own speed without a lot of obstacles in your way.

Committing your life to The Lord is just like these scenarios. In the Bible, He told us it would not be easy — there would be obstacles and people in our way. But before we can climb the mountain, we must first commit to Him.

We need to commit to Him and then begin the journey with God. We all know it will not be easy but we all know He will be with us every step of the way.

When we reach the top of the mountain, He will be with us if we committed ourselves to Him and He lives in our heart. The view will be so much more beautiful from the top of the mountain with Him than at the bottom where we cannot see the other side.

Will you commit to follow God in 2016? Will you decide this is the year you will not walk up the mountain alone? God with you is so much better than you without God.

Instead of making a New Year's resolution that will be broken by February or March, decide on one word for 2016.

COMMITTED.

Submitted by Jeanie Benson

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Faith-based counseling now available close to home

Ten steps off Railroad Street in Four Oaks is the front door of Haven of Rest Counseling, and inside is a cozy space that features a reception area and an office.

Soft music fills the air, and Anecia Lee greets a visitor with a warmth and charm that inspires immediate comfort — even with the counselor’s couch in plain sight.

Lee is the owner of the business, which came to Four Oaks in September. She “married into Johnston County” more than 27 years go, and she and her husband, Roger, have two grown sons, Blane and Jonathon, and a granddaughter, Ella Grace.

She spends her days counseling soldiers and their families on Fort Bragg, but her nights and weekends are spent in this quiet space, helping local people in a private practice.

A portrait hangs over her desk with the verse from Matthew 11:28, and that verse is not only the genesis of the business’ name, but the reason it exists as well.

“Haven of Rest basically comes from that scripture,” she said. “When Christ said ‘come unto me all you who labor and are heavy-laden, and I’ll give you rest.’ I’m not the one that gives them rest. It’s actually him. He just uses me.

“Whether a person wants faith-based (counseling) or not, my role is to come alongside the people that I serve. To help them get to the place they want to be. Whether that’s children, young people, teenagers, individuals, couples or families, that’s my heart.”

She tried having a practice in Smithfield for a time. But while that might have been a sound business plan, it never quite felt right.

“I knew that I wanted to go into private practice,” she said. “I thought Smithfield was the place. But it wasn’t home. I leased the office and put the bare necessities in there. I didn’t enjoy going there. We started praying about it, and I just felt Four Oaks. ... There was no one in Four Oaks, and the need was great.

“When I walk into this place, it’s like walking into home. I love coming here. It’s not a burden to work all day long at Fort Bragg and



then come here and see folks in the evening. So, I know that this is the place the Lord wants me to be.”

Lee is aware that the idea of counseling scares some people, but she insists that the process is anything but frightening.

“It truly is as simple as making a telephone call,” she said. “Because once you make the telephone call, the rest is done. That seems way, way simple, but I had a gentleman last night say to me, ‘I was scared to death to come in here, because I didn’t know what to expect. You have made my time so comfortable, and you’ve made this environment for me so easy

and comfortable, that I’m very thankful I came.’

“Mental health is always going to have a stigma. Because who wants to say they’re crazy? When people think counselors, they think ‘I’m not crazy. There’s nothing wrong with me.’ But for me, it is as simple as somebody comes, they sit and I partner with them.”

Lee smiles easily, and radiates joy with the idea of helping her friends and neighbors.

“I love what I do,” she said. “God has given me the opportunity to walk alongside people. And that’s what it’s all about.”

For more information on Haven of Rest Counseling, visit them on the web at www.havenofrestcounseling.org

Christmas in Four Oaks

Four Oaks had quite the turnout for its annual Christmas parade — and you might have even seen us there, tossing out candy from the company Mazda. And good ol' Saint Nick stopped by the library a few days later. Here are a few photos from a festive time in town.



Above: Katie Collins, Lynn Harper, Santa Claus, Tonie Collins and Kayla Anderson pose for a photo.
Submitted photo



Left: Boy Scout Troop 60 cruises down Main Street.
Photo by Amber Wise



Right: Brooklyn Wise watches the parade go by.
Photo by Amber Wise



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SAVE THE DATE

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Every Wednesday, 10:30 a.m.

Story Time

James Bryan Creech Library, Four Oaks
Come out for story time at the library each Wednesday morning. For more information, call (919) 963-6013.

January 5, 5:30-7 p.m.

Four Oaks Area Chamber of Commerce meeting

204 N. Main St., Four Oaks
The public is invited to this general meeting of the Four Oaks Area Chamber of Commerce. Also, starting this month, the chamber office will only be open on Mondays and Tuesdays from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. For more information, call 919-963-4004.

January 8, 4 p.m.

Basketball: South Johnston at Cleveland

(JV and varsity, boys and girls)

January 12, 6-8 p.m.

Pen and Ink Stippling

Arboretum at JCC
Explore your artistic horizon with this pen and ink class. Learn how to use dot patterns to create drawings of natural materials from the garden. Cost is \$20. For more information, call (919) 209-2052.

January 15, 4 p.m.

Basketball: Triton at South Johnston

(JV and varsity, boys and girls)

January 22, 4 p.m.

Basketball: Corinth Holders at South Johnston

(JV and varsity, boys and girls)

January 23, 9-11 a.m.

A Walk through the Exhibit Room

Howell Woods - A guided tour through the Howell Woods museum! Get to know our favorite critters by attending this special program where we will discuss animal names, habitat, diet, and personalities. Also, we have the celebrity star "Elvis" in the house who loves to meet new guests! Cost is \$10. For more information, call (919) 938-0115.

January 26, 4:30 p.m.

Basketball: South Johnston at Smithfield-Selma

(JV boys and varsity, boys and girls)

January 29, 11 a.m.

Clothing Closet and Food Pantry

American Legion Post 346, Four Oaks
For details, contact John Jernigan at Lighthouse Christian Fellowship at (919) 320-7387.

January 29, 4:30 p.m.

Basketball: South Johnston at Western Harnett

(JV boys and varsity, boys and girls)

To add your organization's events to the calendar,
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