

JULY 2015 | Your Community. Your Neighbors. Your Story.

# FOUR OAKS Journal

## STAYCATION 2015 *things to do in your own backyard*

- Meet our new detective
- Experience the Ava Gardner Museum
- Four Oaks Veterans

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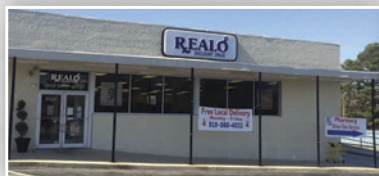
Erica Depaz, Carl Edwards,  
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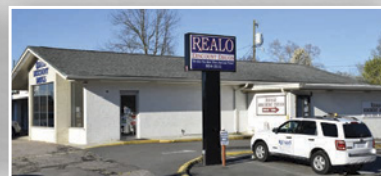


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## FROM THE PUBLISHER

# It's Summer, Summer, Summer-Time!

It's July, which means the dog days of summer are here.

It's also the time of year when you're likely to hear these two terrifying words from your children:

## "I'm bored."

While there's no one-size-fits-all solution, we've thrown a few ideas together for things to do fairly close to home in this edition.

We've got outdoor stuff at Howell Woods and Tucker Lake. There are air-conditioned options, like the Ava Gardner Museum.

You can drive over to Zebulon for a Mudcats game, or zip over to Erwin or Clayton for a few frames of bowling.

Something for everybody, you might say.

These are all budget-friendly "staycation" options. We really don't have the expense account for a trip to the Caribbean.

Some of you might, though. And if so, by all means, send us some pictures.

Maybe we haven't be clear enough about that sort of thing. We really do want pictures of your pool parties, dance recitals and picnics.

We want your drawings and short stories. Got a great idea for a story? Tell us about it.

Got a recipe for some great banana pudding? Share it with us.

This is ***YOUR*** magazine.

Don't forget that while you're enjoying another beautiful summer in the 27524.

And if you want to make us some of that banana pudding, that would be OK, too.



Randy Capps  
randy@fouroaksjournal.com

## FEATURES



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## ON THE COVER

Katon Blackmon, Lanie Norris, Anna Smith and Caroline McMullen splash and laugh at the Four Oaks Community Pool.



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# Howell Woods loaded with summertime outdoor fun



**Howell Woods**  
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6601 Devils Racetrack Road, Four Oaks  
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[www.johnstoncc.edu/howellwoods](http://www.johnstoncc.edu/howellwoods)

Can't decide what to do today? If you can narrow it down to "something outside," chances are you can do it at Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center.

Whether it's camping or kayaking, hunting or fishing, Howell Woods is a picturesque spot to immerse yourself in nature.

"Most people come to fish," museum caretaker and educational instructor Brittany Brenner said. "We have several ponds. The one out front? I was fishing in it last week and caught, like 10 brim. My boyfriend was mad, because he only caught two. We've got some pretty large

bass and catfish, too."

If you're not into fishing, there's plenty of other things to do at Howell Woods.

"It's 2,800 acres," Brenner said. "There's plenty of hiking trails, and they're open sun up to sun down everyday – and there's no charge to hike. There's bird watching, and we have over 175 different song birds. I take care of the animals in the museum, so I'm more into the birds of prey."

There are also paddle boats and cabins for rent, and a picnic shelter than can be reserved for parties and church groups.

There's enough happening, Brenner said, that she and the staff could use a little help.

"I'm trying to start up a volunteer program to get some teenagers involved," she said. "I had a girl helping me with kayak lessons last weekend, and it looks really good on their college applications, resumes and whatnot. They'll help with programs or feeding the animals."

"It's just that a lot of kids don't really know about this place. I volunteered at the aquarium at Fort Fisher a few years ago, and they have a great volunteer program. We're trying to model something after that."

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# Flag Retirement

Four Oaks Girl Scout Troop 1728 held a flag retirement ceremony on Memorial Day. This year, the troop, along with a guest Cub Scout and a guest Boy Scout, retired 41 United States and three North Carolina flags. The troop has been holding this ceremony for more than 15 years, and once held a ceremony in which it retired 75 U.S. and 20 more state flags.



Elizabeth Barbour, Lillian Sherman and Takyia Bishop cut a stripe from a flag.



Victoria Reimann, Tiffany Smith, Nicky Allen and Helen Allen hold an American flag.



WEEEEEEEEEEEE!!!

Kayleigh Peppers enjoys one of many trips (according to her mom) down the water slide.

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# MEET NEW POLICE DETECTIVE

INTRODUCING:

## Detective Jamie Edwards

When he was hired as police chief in Four Oaks earlier this year, Stephen Anderson promised to make some changes to the police department.

One of the more noticeable ones is a new detective, Jamie Edwards.

Edwards, 26, is a Sampson County native who relishes the chance to use police work to help others.

"It's always been a dream of mine (to be in law enforcement)," she said. "I've always wanted to help people and this is one of the best ways to do it. We deal with all different kinds of people on a daily basis and all different kinds of situations and circumstances. I feel like this is my way of reaching out to the community and to have the chance to help other people."

Edwards worked in Pine Level and Princeton, as well as serving as a correctional officer, before starting in Four Oaks in late April.

"I like it," she said of her time in town so far. "It's a nice town. It's a small town, but there's plenty to do to keep busy."

With her small-town upbringing and police experience, and her desire to serve others, Edwards seems to fit the department's community-driven ideas on police work.



"I've only been here a couple of weeks, but it's definitely a pretty tight-knit community," she said. "Everybody's pretty friendly. Everybody seems to know everybody. Of course, I'm still getting to know everybody, but it seems to be a nice little community."

Edwards is engaged, and has two children, so there's little time left over after meeting the demands of her career and her family.

"Mainly, I just spend time with my children," she said. "Being a full-time mom and a full-time police officer, I really don't have a lot of spare time to do anything else."

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# Fun in the sun – *and on a wakeboard* – at Tucker Lake

Sometimes, in the midst of an Eastern North Carolina summer, it's just too hot to do anything outside.

Anything, that is, except be near a lake.

A short drive to the edge of Benson will take you to Tucker Lake, where you can find a sandy beach, clean, clear water in which to swim and a host of other great ways to whittle away a summer's day.

"We have a 167-foot water slide," Kimberly Austin, Hexagon Wake Park manager said. "We have clear lake water. There are kid slides. We have a picnic area with a charcoal grill. We have a nice shady area for outdoor eating. ... Anything you can find at a beach, you can find right here at Tucker Lake."

Throw in a snack bar, slides and sprinklers for the kids, rope swings and a volleyball court, and you end up with a place that has plenty of bang for your "staycation" buck.

If you want to try something a little more adventurous, you can try out

## Tucker Lake

3025 Allens Crossroads Rd, Benson  
919-894-6090 | [www.tuckerslake.net](http://www.tuckerslake.net)

[www.hexagoncablepark.com](http://www.hexagoncablepark.com)

Hours: Lake, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., M-F and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sat./Sun. Wake Park: Noon to dark, M-F and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Sat./Sun.

Note: There are separate admissions to Tucker Lake and Hexagon Wake Park

cable wakeboarding at the Hexagon Wake Park.

So, what's cable wakeboarding, you ask?

According to the website, it's "wakeboarding while being pulled not by a boat, but by an overhead cableski system. ... It combines the best of the extreme nature of wakeboarding without the need for (or expense of) a boat."

You can rent all of the equipment you need on site, and with different cable systems, it's

suitable for any skill level.

"We have two cable options," Austin said. "We have a System 2.0, which is our beginner cable. It's where we can go out and teach you how to get up on the board and be confident sailing up and down and back and forth. Then, we have our full cable on the other side, which has many obstacles out there - from beginner ramps to rails."

"We have kids as young as five, all the way to older adults."

Between Tucker Lake and Hexagon Wake Park, there seems to be a little something for everyone.

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# Ava Gardner M · U · S · E · U · M

## JOHNSTON COUNTY'S SLICE OF HOLLYWOOD

The name Ava Gardner is well known to most people in Johnston County. She was a farm girl from Smithfield (or just down the road in Grabtown, to be specific) that became a movie star in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

How captivating was the southern beauty? After seeing Gardner in "One Touch of Venus" in 1948, Dutch artist Bert Pfeiffer, then an 18-year-old student at The Hague's Academy of Arts, was smitten.

His infatuation ran deep enough to request publicity photos from MGM and paint dozens and dozens of portraits of the starlet over the next 53 years until his death in 2001.

He never actually met the object of his affection, but they did exchange letters and the three paintings of his that she bought were hanging in her London home when she died in 1990.

Most of those paintings, including Ava's three favorites, are adorning the walls of the Ava Gardner Museum in downtown Smithfield – adding charm and personality to the celebration of a life that had both in abundance.

"As nostalgia is growing and people are watching more (Turner Classic Movies) and looking back at all these movies with Marilyn (Monroe) and Audrey (Hepburn), they're getting really into this culture again," executive

Gardner, on the set of  
"The Killers" in 1946.



director Deanna Brandenberger said. "She is becoming more relevant. ... Her spunkiness was very characteristically Johnston County."

The museum has stood in its current location on Market Street since the turn of the century, and if you've never dropped in, you should. There are nearly 50,000 artifacts from Gardner's career, collected over the course of museum's 35-year history.

"It's heritage," Brandenberger said when asked

why Johnston County folks should stop in. "She is every Johnston County girl. She's taken some of the best parts of that – and some of the worst. We don't represent her as being all good or all bad. She certainly had scandal in her time, and there are people here who certainly remember it. We do try to paint this woman – she was beautiful, she did accomplish a lot – and she has put Smithfield on the map.

"It's not just a film museum. It's also an art museum and a history museum. It's very unique, and it's right here in our back yard."

If social media would have been around in Gardner's day, she would have made for quite the follow.

She is rated the 25th Greatest Female Star by the American Film Institute, and she was once called "the world's most beautiful animal," a tag which she hated.

She also had three whirlwind marriages to actor Mickey Rooney (1942-3), band leader Artie Shaw (1945-6) and Frank Sinatra (1951-7) that kept her on the tabloid pages more often than she liked.

"He was the love of her life, and she was the love of his," Brandenberger said of Gardner's romance with Sinatra. It was a match made in Hollywood, and "People" magazine called it one of the "Romances of the Century."





Gardner and Frank Sinatra.  
Photo courtesy: London Daily Mail

Although the two stars couldn't make their marriage work, Gardner played a key role in re-energizing Sinatra's career by helping him land a role in the 1953 film "From Here to Eternity," which eventually earned him an Academy Award.

The two remained friends until Gardner's death, and at her Smithfield funeral there was a bouquet from the legendary crooner that read, "With my love, Francis."

Of course, no look at Ava Gardner's life and times would be complete without fashion.

"Ava's Closet" is currently the main display at the museum, and it's contents are worth a look to visitors old and new.

"There's over 14 dresses in there, to include the nightgowns and all that," Brandenberger said. "You'd never get to see her in a bathrobe, but here, we have her kimono on display. Unless you were very intimate with Ava Gardner, you would never see that."

Her "closet" also features red carpet gowns, including a dress made for her by billionaire aviator and producer Howard Hughes and a dress she wore to a royal wedding.

Museum-goers like the display, Brandenberger said, but are also struck by something else.

"They're also very wowed by her 18-inch waist," she said. "And a little bit more wowed when you tell them she could eat all the fried chicken she wanted – she would always eat Southern fare when she came home. It's just amazing that she could keep that wonderful figure."

Walk in the museum, stand in front of Ava's black dress from "The Great Sinner" and wrap your mind around that.

"I would say she is the most famous person from this town," Brandenberger said. "I don't think anybody would argue about that. She is iconic to this day. Worldwide, she's recognized."

Drop in on the museum, or visit a few places along the Ava Gardner Heritage Trail in Wake, Wilson and Johnston counties, and find out why.

Randy Capps can be reached at [randy@fouroaksjournal.com](mailto:randy@fouroaksjournal.com)

This 1941 photo of Gardner, taken in a New York photography studio, got her discovered by talent scouts at MGM.



**Ava Gardner Museum**  
325 E. Market St., Smithfield  
919-934-5830 | [www.avagardner.org](http://www.avagardner.org)  
Admission: Adults (ages 18-64) - \$8  
Seniors/Military/Teens (13-17) - \$7  
Children (6-12) - \$6 • Children Under 6 – Free



A few dresses from the "Ava's Closet" exhibit.



# Local artist blends old with new in historic Four Oaks buildings

Confucius once said “everything has beauty, but not everyone sees it.”

He’s been dead almost 2,500 years, but he’s still right on the money.

One such hidden gem can be found in the heart of Four Oaks, in a brick building on South Railroad Street.

Barbara Keen’s art studio sits neatly inside and, when you consider the building’s rich history, you have a site sure to please architects and artists alike.

“I really think it’s the architectural jewel of Four Oaks,” she said.

The building, constructed in 1917, was the original home of Four Oaks Bank. It served as such until 1928, and in the years that followed, housed a post office and later a storage area for sweet potatoes and health care supplies.

The years weren’t kind to it, though, and after the turn of the century, it had fallen into disrepair.

The eyes of an artist saw its potential, however, and Barbara and her husband, Harold, bought the building in 2006 with an eye on restoring it as an art gallery.

“I think it was the architectural design, and watching it fall apart,” she said. “Riding by every week and seeing it in a little worse shape than the week before. I just really wanted to fix it up. I guess Harold got tired of hearing me say that, and he said ‘let’s see if we can buy it.’”

The process of restoring the building was even bigger than she could imagine.

“We thought this is going to be so much fun,” she said. “We can come in and spend some extra time and just scrape these walls and clean them. We thought we could do more of the project ourselves, but when we found that we had so little time, we got some help.”

And this wasn’t a simple tear-down and rebuild, either. Because the building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, repairs and renovations have to be done in a manner consistent with the building’s original design.

That’s one of the reasons that Barbara has a photo album full of before and after pictures of the building’s various features.

“It wasn’t that difficult,” she said. “It’s just that every time you started to do something, you reminded yourself that this has to be preserved this way. It may have added a little more time as far as waiting for someone to come and see what

**Barbara A. Keen Studio**  
105 S. Railroad St., Four Oaks  
919-628-0022  
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you’ve done to approve it, but in the end it was worth it.”

“It was a little more expensive to do it to their standards, and to do it correctly,” Harold said. “On the other hand, if you’re going to do it, you’re doing it for a long period of time. And you want to do it correctly and have it in the condition that it will last years and years.

“In some ways, they force you to do that by doing it to their standards – which was great.”

For a while, the project moved along gradually. Some new paint here, some work on the archway there and the little matter of removing the remnants of the old bank vault in the middle of what was to become a gallery.

An 18-month flourish finally resulted in the project’s completion in 2013.

“That was an amazing feeling,” she said. “To walk in and see the shiny new floors with reclaimed boards that looked as closely matched as what it was as possible and all the light coming in that beautiful window – it was just a really good feeling. It was fantastic.

“It’s a very unique place, I think. Somehow, it feels old, but it also feels new. That combination is a surprise to people.”

Today, much of the tangible “new” is on the walls or hanging in the window. Colorful and elegant stained glass windows soak in natural light and almost radiate color and beauty. Landscapes and portraits hang on the walls – a hay field, sunflower fields and flowers from the Grove Park Inn in Asheville, to name a few.

“I’m working with stained glass and oil painting,” she said. “It keeps me busy. I taught graphic design for years as a career, and when I started my studio I decided that I needed to settle into a couple of things instead of everything.”

Barbara created several stained glass pieces for the building, including one over the door with the street address. Because it’s not a permanent addition, it complies with the historical guidelines.

It adds a touch of style and charm to the building – one you might miss, unless you’re looking carefully.

*Randy Capps can be reached at [randy@fouroaksjournal.com](mailto:randy@fouroaksjournal.com)*



## BEFORE...



## AFTER...





# Four Oaks Veterans Portray Their Story

On May 5, Four Oaks American Legion Post 346 and the Auxiliary presented a program to the fifth grade students at Four Oaks Elementary.

Reggie Parker narrated the program that depicted 10 soldiers and their times of service. The slide show presented the soldiers in their uniforms, maps and pictures of the wars in which they served and pictures of the presidents that were in office during each confrontation.

The program began with Tim Daniels, U.S. Marine Corps, retired, and Sam Smith, U.S. Navy, retired, folding the flag of the United States in the correct manner and explaining the procedure.

Each student was given a booklet entitled: "Let's Be Right on Flag Etiquette" by the American Legion and a small flag. Auxiliary president Gertrud Beaver distributed these items to each fifth grade class.

Parker gave a brief history of how the Four Oaks Legion Post was started in 1946 by World War II veterans. He also discussed the plaque on the wall at the front of the school that listed the names of soldiers from World War II that attended Four Oaks High School.

Parker discussed Lester Stewart, who landed on the beaches of Normandy in 1944. Stewart received the Silver Star and Bronze Star for his bravery. The Republic of France honored him as a Knight of the French Republic for helping free France from Nazi occupation.

Next, was Everett Barefoot, a U.S. Army Air Force tail gunner on a B-24 bomber that flew more than 20 missions. Both men still live in Four Oaks.

Edison Temple, a retired U.S. Army Command Sergeant Major (artillery) that served in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars, was present at the event. Smith also served in Korea on a transport ship that landed Marines and supplies on the beaches of Korea.

Another sailor, David Snead, sailed on the U.S.S. Wisconsin.

During the Vietnam War, Talmadge Snead was an Army diver. He repaired bridges and piers and helped to salvage ships while wearing a 200-pound diving suit.

Dennis Lee was a combat engineer during the conflict. He helped build bridges and roads to move supplies and men in Vietnam.

After his service in Korea, Smith served again on a gunboat that patrolled the rivers in South Vietnam.

All these men are proud citizens of Four Oaks.



From left, Hannah Burnette, Erica Sumner, Abby Davis and Tori James look at the memorabilia.



From left, Edison Temple, Talmadge Snead, Tim Daniels, Sam Smith, Charlotte Reeves, Tom Britt, Chad Stewart and Dennis Lee.

Tom Britt served during the Cold War, helping guard the border between West Germany and Soviet-occupied Czechoslovakia. Parker served as a Russian linguist during the Cold War.

Daniels served in the Marines during the Panama and Desert Storm campaigns.

Chad Stewart served in the Navy and helped with the transport of supplies during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Charlotte Reeves, retired U.S. Air Force Master Sergeant, helped to evacuate injured soldiers during Operation Enduring Freedom.

The program ended with students looking at memorabilia displayed on tables. The veterans answered questions that students asked about the display.

The art students in Laura Myers' art elective made beautiful pottery eagles that were presented to the soldiers who attended the event.

*Submitted by Kay Surles*



# STAYCATION 2015

## *things to do in your own backyard*

If you've read through the rest of this magazine and you're still looking for a few ideas for things to do to help whittle away a summer day, we've got a few more suggestions.

Be sure you check our community calendar, which has a host of town, library and other options. Now, here's a few more:

### CATCH A FLICK

Two great choices for movies are just a short drive to Smithfield away.

#### Howell Theatre

If you're looking for bang for your movie-going buck, this is it. Visit [www.howellmovies.com](http://www.howellmovies.com) for showtimes.

For the rest of the summer, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays at 10 a.m., you can watch two movies for just \$1. Call 919-302-5880 for more details.

#### Smithfield Cinemas

If you're dying to see the new Terminator movie (like our creative consultant), and don't want to wait, this is the place to go.

Visit [www.smithfieldcinemas.net](http://www.smithfieldcinemas.net) for showtimes. They also have a summer kids' special on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, which is \$2.50 per person and includes a popcorn and drink. Call 919-934-2198 for more information.

### HIT THE LANES

Hopefully, you're a better bowler than I am. I still enjoy going on occasion, and if you share that affinity for the lanes, you've got two choices. It basically comes down to whether or not you feel like visiting Harnett County.

#### Rainbow Lanes

I haven't been to Rainbow Lanes in Clayton, but my son has been a frequent visitor and says it's "fun," which is basically his strongest non-movie opinion on anything.

They have tons of specials, including a Kids Bowl Free program, which includes two free games a day during the summer. Call 919-553-4386 to learn more.

#### Buffaloe Lanes

A good spot if you have really small children, since there's a good-sized arcade in this smoke- and alcohol-free facility in Erwin.

Call 910-891-7668 for details, and yes, they have a summer bowling program for the youngsters as well.

### TEE IT UP

There are lots of good golf courses within a reasonable drive of the 27524. The two closest?

#### Country Club of Johnston County

I've played there a few times, and have never had a bad experience. Well, except for my short game, that is. No. 7, I think, is the one that trips me up the most. A hard dogleg, followed by a downhill run into a little valley and then way uphill to the green.

You can call 919-934-4166 for a tee time, or book one online at [www.ccjohnstoncounty.com](http://www.ccjohnstoncounty.com).

#### Reedy Creek Golf Course

This is a beautiful course, and aside from my tendency to lose golf balls in the water that runs along the fairway on No. 13, it's always a good time.

Call 919-934-7502 or visit [www.reedycreekgolf.com](http://www.reedycreekgolf.com).

Pro tip: Download the Golf Now app. You can find really good deals on these and other courses.

### TAKE A DIP

Nothing beats a good swim on a blistering summer's day, right?

#### Smithfield Recreation & Aquatics Center

It's a members' only kind of thing, but day passes are available.

Visit [www.sraonline.com](http://www.sraonline.com) to learn more about what the SRAC has to offer, but the highlights are a beautiful indoor pool and splash park. Yes, I've been in both of them.

The staff is wonderful and helpful, too, which is always a plus.

#### Four Oaks Community Swimming Pool

You'll need to buy a membership, and you can get an application form at the pool during regular hours or from Anita Stephenson's office on South Railroad Street.

Once you've been approved, the pool, located on East Sanders Street, is open during summer hours on Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. and on Sundays from 2-8 p.m.

This month, the pool will be open until 10 p.m. for late night Fridays.

Want to know more about the membership process? Call the pool and speak to the manager on duty at 919-963-3153.

### GRAB YOUR BIBLE

Here are a few options for VBS programs locally:

#### First Baptist Church

"Camp Discovery: Jesus at Work Through Us"

July 5-10, 9 a.m. to noon

At Camp Discovery, kids have fun as they explore the Bible, make new friends, sing songs and learn how Jesus works through them in their everyday lives. Campers discover five Bible truths that excite and challenge them. Jesus, their True North, gives them the wisdom and the courage to step out in faith and serve - whether they're at school, playing with friends, or helping out at home.

#### Beulah Hill Christian Church

"Outback Rock"

Friday, July 17, 5:30 to 9 p.m. (dinner included)

Saturday, July 18, 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. (lunch included)

Sunday, July 19, 11 a.m. "Sunday Celebration" service

The theme of the program, designed for kids 2-12, is that God is always with us. The key verse is "I am with you always, even to the end of the age." - Matthew 28:20

Friday night's lesson is that God is with Joseph - Genesis 37:1-45:14

Saturday's lesson is Jesus dies, comes back to life, then appears to his followers. - Matthew 26:26-28:20

#### Four Oaks United Methodist Church

"G-Force: God's Love in Action"

July 19-23, 6 to 8:30 p.m.

#### Burnell Baptist Church

Through July 2, 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

#### Blackman's Grove Baptist Church

July 19-23

#### Stewart's Chapel Church

July 25

#### Unity Advent Christian Church

Aug. 2-6



## SAVE THE DATE

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m. (through Aug. 19)**

**Boys' Summer Study – “The Real Win”**

Beulah Hill Christian Church

Prepare for a paradigm-shifting view of biblical manhood. Every man wants to succeed. But for so many, life seems to get in the way. Everyone has friends - good men, followers of Christ even - who start out well but before long, they're failing at relationships, bending ethical standards, or driving themselves so hard at work they're losing the hearts of their wife and kids. This study is for middle school and high school boys, and includes dinner.

**Wednesdays, 6:30 to 8 p.m. (through Aug. 19)**

**Girls' Summer Study – “Faithful One”**

Beulah Hill Christian Church

This program will dissect 1 and 2 Thessalonians, examining Paul's truths about Christ's character and how he reigns over all the Earth, despite how lost our world is. Students will be challenged to live as faithful followers of Jesus in a world that is desperate and searching for his Gospel. This study is for middle school and high school girls, and includes dinner.

**July 1, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “Hometown Heroes: Four Oaks Police Department.” Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**July 8, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “Hometown Heroes: Johnston County Sheriff's Department.” Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**July 11**

**Beginner Creek Paddle**

Howell Woods - In this trip (ages 13 and older), we'll kayak the narrow and slow-moving waters of Hannah Creek. This trip is only a few hours, making it perfect for beginners or kayakers that may not want to endure longer hours of paddling.

Cost: \$25 - Register by contacting the Learning Center at (919) 938-0115.

**July 13-16, 8 a.m. to noon**

**Cooking Camp: Chef in Training**

Using easy to learn techniques, we guide you through cooking basics. Ask questions, experiment with tastes, but most of all have FUN. Open to rising 7th, 8th, & 9th graders. Location: Johnston County Workforce Development Center, Clayton. The fee is \$130, and registration closes July 2. To register, visit [bit.ly/1ENMpjs](http://bit.ly/1ENMpjs).

**July 15, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “Create your own hero.”

Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**July 16, 2 to 6:30 p.m.**

**Four Oaks Community Blood Drive**

Juniper Grove Disciple Church

Help the American Red Cross keep local blood supplies strong. Call 919-963-4004 for more details.

**July 20, 6 to 7:30 p.m.**

**Landscaping with Native Plants**

Howell Woods

Learn the advantages of using native plants around the home. Tour the gardens at Howell Woods and talk about choices and techniques to make your native flower gardens thrive.

Cost: \$10

To register, contact Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center at (919) 938-0115 or [jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu](mailto:jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu).

**July 22, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “Exploring the flight of Wonder Woman's plane.” Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**July 24, 11 a.m. to noon**

**Clothing Closet and Food Pantry**

Four Oaks Farmers Market

For details, contact John Nernigan of Lighthouse Christian Fellowship at (919) 320-7387.

**July 25, 3 to 7 p.m.**

**Cruise In**

Main Street, Four Oaks

View classic cars and spend some time on Main Street in Four Oaks. For more information, call 919-963-4004 or visit [www.fouroaksareachamber.com](http://www.fouroaksareachamber.com).

**July 25, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

**Neuse River Kayak Trip**

Howell Woods

The Neuse River runs right along the back of the Howell Woods property and makes for the perfect paddling route for more experienced kayakers. The course of this trip stretches through 12 miles of Johnston County, ending at the Richardson Bridge boat landing. Our guides will provide history of the Neuse, as well as identify wildlife along the way. Cost: \$35

Register by contacting the Learning Center at (919) 938-0115.

**August 5, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “How can I be a superhero?”

Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**August 12, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

This session is “We have the power to change the world!” Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**August 19, 10:30 a.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

The final session is still being determined.

Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**August 22, 6 p.m.**

**Summer Reading Program - “Every Hero has a Story”**

James Bryan Creech Public Library

The end of summer bash features the “Superhero Training Camp.” Call (919) 963-6013 for more information.

**August 31, 6 to 8 p.m.**

**Preserve the Produce, Vegetable and Fruit Canning**

Howell Woods

Growing too much food in the garden? Learn canning techniques for preserving your vegetables and fruit.

Cost: \$10

To register, contact Howell Woods Environmental Learning Center at (919) 938-0115 or [jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu](mailto:jtastoske@johnstoncc.edu).

**To add your organization's events to the calendar, email us at [hello@fouroaksjournal.com](mailto:hello@fouroaksjournal.com).**

## “Comfort” is their middle name

Phillip Tyler is a busy guy.

As president of Carolina Comfort Air, a company that serves customers “from Charlotte to Beaufort to Myrtle Beach,” that isn’t surprising.

So, when a reporter came by for an interview recently, Tyler offered him a seat in the conference room – in the middle of a staff meeting.

But ask him about his customers, and specifically about the phrase people hear when they call his company, “where your comfort is our priority,” and he suddenly has time for nothing else.

“That’s what we’re in business to do,” he said. “Keep people comfortable. A house is really the biggest investment 80 percent of people will make, and we think people should be comfortable in their house at all times.”

From a different seat in the conference room, marketing director Aimee Sharrett agreed.

“We actually do care about you, and your home and your comfort,” she said. “That sets us apart from everybody else.”

It’s a simple notion, but one that’s allowed Tyler to expand his business from three employees when the doors opened eight years ago to around 275 today.

Simple works best – especially when it’s 95 degrees outside and your air conditioner’s busted. In that scenario, speed is a big deal, too.



“We do it right, and we do it fast,” Tyler said of his company’s service. “It depends on the part. If it’s a part we keep in stock, we can turn it around the same day. If it’s a part they don’t have at the supply house, it’s whatever the manufacturer’s lead time is. Usually two to three days.”

But, while Carolina Comfort Air is ready to help if you’ve got a problem with your unit, Tyler says that a little maintenance for these systems goes a long way.

“Dirty coils, not taking care of their systems, not keeping them clean and serviced like they’re supposed to,” he said when asked about common issues affecting units during the summer months. “You can look at it kind of like a car. If you don’t change the oil, the tires, air filter and all that stuff, how long is your car going to last?”

“You need to have them cleaned and serviced twice a year. And the manufacturer actually requires that for your warranty.”

Whether it’s the ounce of prevention, or the pound of cure, you need for your heating and cooling system, Carolina Comfort Air has you covered.

The preschool classes from First Baptist Church of Four Oaks posed for a picture recently wearing their Graduation Apple T-shirts. The theme was Fruit of the Spirit.



Back row: Left to right, Lily Johnson, Alan Watson, Director Carol Adams, Mia Littleton, Nevaeh De Jesus, Teacher Melissa Best, Daniel Hardison, KyLee Caudil, Teacher Susan Heath, Gracie Parker, Joseph Jackson, Teacher Asst. Stephanie Littleton, Hannah Hardison, Sarah Peedin, Teacher Lisa Massengill, Rex Coker and church secretary Deirdre Parker

Front Row: Riley Pazzuto, Gavin Hyer, Camden Winters, Leah Woodall, Lucy Lassiter, Ede Barbour, Camryn Outen, Carly Rae Johnson, Claire Mizner, Montana Eason, Cloie Baker, Jacob Everhart and Dylan Jackson





D.J. GRIFFIN PHOTOGRAPHY

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