Rocky Mount, Nashville & Wilson NC Edition - 919.623.9392

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Volume 3, Number 2B January 18–31, 2013

## Flu Outbreak Prompts Greater Safety Efforts

The flu. Influenza, unlike the common cold, can feel like it is attacking your whole body. With this year's flu season getting an early start, reports of flu cases are high and people are asked to use extra precautions to protect themselves and others.

Most US states are experiencing flu outbreaks which exceed last year's mild flu season. Flu cases were so numerous in Boston this month that a state of emergency was declared. At a Pennsylvania hospital, an extra outdoor area was erected for handling potentially contagious ER patients.

In this country, people don't often wear masks when they are sick, nor stay home to rest and recuperate! With the severity of this flu season, either may be a good way to minimize spread of the virus. If you get the flu, wearing a mask out or staying home could minimize wear you spread the virus. If you can take time off when ill — without losing your job or dropping grades at school — keeping your flu "germs" at home can minimize your passing the virus to others and give you time to heal. Bed it, don't spread it!

If you haven't caught the flu, taking a few precautions may keep you from catching it. Stay away from others who are ill. Don't touch items you know an ill person has been using. Washing your hands with soap and water can help you avoid picking up germs from public places. *No skipping the soap, kiddies!* Also, the less you touch your face with your hands during the day, the fewer germs you might place near your nose or mouth.

Flu season continues for awhile. Hopefully you will avoid catching the flu, or spreading it, and minimize the local impact.



POLYGRAPH EXAMINATIONS • INTERVIEWING



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## Riding the Rails in NC

Like many families, ours has spread across the country. With my oldest daughter living all the way on the West Coast, visits are tough. Luckily, she recently made a trip to Boston, bringing her that much closer to our NC home. Time for a visit with her was limited. I needed to get to Boston, and I needed to get there fast!

Option 1: Driving would mean 11-12 hours in the car, a few hundred dollars for gas, and arriving tired from all the driving Since my 12 year old was going to go along, that meant lots of stops for breaks along the way and likely a longer trip. Taking a bus seemed like it would be much the same, with added cost of tickets.

Option 2: Flying would be quick enough. Flights were running a few hundred dollars each. While the timing was right, flights were fairly expensive and we needed 2 tickets.

Option 3: Taking the train. I was new to the idea of taking a long train ride. With multiple stations in Eastern NC, the train was easily accessible and went where we needed it to go. It was about 4-5 hours longer than driving estimates at a total of about 17 hours with travel and stops. The train would be less work than driving. The train would have rest rooms, a snack car, room to stand and stretch or even walk a little, allowed 2 bags for each of us, and there was "WiFi". The tickets would be a few hundred dollars, with the 12 year old's ticket discounted to half price.

I decided to take the train to Boston January 11th and bought the tickets. What follows are a few points on the experiences of two first-time train travelers, based on our limited experience on the trains available from Rocky Mount & Wilson stations.

The day of departure, my husband took us to the Rocky Mount train station. When the train arrived, our boarding pass was scanned and we were directed where to sit. Our bags at our feet and legs stretched in ample room, off went our train. (Having flown frequently, I was glad there was no lengthy scanning, body searches, poking, radiation, or general negativity. We arrived. We were checked in. We sat down. The train rolled on.)

Our train car was comfortable, and gave us plenty of leg room. The "wifi" was in the front cars, so we went to the snack car to surf the web for awhile. Through the 700 hundred miles, we watched out the window, snacked, listened to music, and napped. When a group of people left, we spread across empty seats and slept. Changing trains in DC, the wifi was a bit slow we mostly slept.

Advantage to the train over driving the highways was that we could walk around and stretch our legs, even walk from car to car up the train and back,... while still moving and covering the miles. Another advantage was that we could both sleep, since I didn't need to be watching the road as with driving.

A disadvantage was the limited travel times. Coming back at the end of the weekend, the train brought us home overnight on a school night, getting us home after most of the school day was done.

Seating was much more comfortable on the Palmetto route from NC. On the Northeast Regional train we boarded in DC to head north, the seats had less leg room.

Smokers jumped out at stops to smoke, as the trains were nonsmoking only. Before the train pulled out of the station, smokers would return to their seats. At some stops, the smokers were not allowed off the train to smoke, which caused them some discomfort.

Snacks offered in the snack cars included chips, microwaved sandwiches and pizza, and bottled drinks. There was a variety of snacks, though limited to easily prepared fare. Travelers can bring their own snacks, so we packed a few.

Trains stop at different stations depending on the route. The more a traveller knows about the stops in advance, the better a person can plan for things like grabbing souvenirs or a meal. From Wilson station going north, the train stops in Rocky Mount about 20 minutes later but is a brief stop. On the way to DC the train stopped at several NC and VA locations before rolling into Union Station. On the DC to Boston train, there was a long stop (40 minutes) in New York City's Penn Station.



## Things to Do in NC When You're Bored

#### \* Nashville \*

#### Storytime (January 28 @ 10:30-11am)

Kids Storytime. Come and enjoy a book or two with little ones. Held at the Harold D. Cooley Library, 114 W Church St., Nashville Info: www2.youseemore.com/cooleylibrary

#### Valentine Social (February 14 @ 11am)

Social event for senior Valentines. Bring a favorite sweet treat to share. Free event held at the Nash County Senior Center, 103 N Alston Street, Nashville

Info, call Christy Southall at 252.459.1375.

## \* Rocky Mount \*

Friday Night Dance Party (January 18 & February 15 @ 7-10pm)

Join the Rocky Mount USA Dance chapter for an evening of dancing. Held 3rd Friday of each month. Fee of \$3 payable at the door. At Maria V Howard Arts Center, 270 Gay Street, Rocky Mount

For more info, call 252.972.1632.



#### Live Music on Sunset (January 24 & 31, February 7 @ 7pm)

Live music Thursdays for your listening pleasure. January 24th-Rob Alford, January 31st-Monte Tippette, & February 7th-Steven Stewart. At Westridge Grill, 3639 Sunset Avenue, Rocky Mount

Call 252.937.7299 for more information.

#### 10 Week Weight Loss Program on (February 12-April 16 @ 6:30-7:30pm)

Tuesday Nights. Free for any woman or man interested in losing weight the Healthy Way! Registration required. Braswell Memorial Library, 727 N Grace Street, Rocky Mount Call Amber Perry at 252.459.1240.

#### \* Wilson \*

#### School House Rock Live, too! (January 18-19 @ 7:30pm)

Presented by ACT! for Youth. The familiar characters & catchy songs! Don't miss it! Tickets \$12/person, \$8/Students & Seniors. Boykin Center, 108 W Nash Street, Wilson Contact The Wilson Arts Council at 252.291.4329.

#### Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Celebration (January 21 @ 3pm)

Tickets \$5/person. At the Boykin Theater, 108 W Nash Street, Wilson Information & tickets: 252.291.4329

#### ProMusic Café Musicale Open Mic Night (January 25 @ 7:30-9:30pm)

Open Mic Night is an opportunity for acoustic musicians, poets & storytellers to share their talents. For the whole family. An evening to relax, socialize, share talent & munch on sweet morsels. Small fee of \$2 admission. Held at ProMusic Conservatory, 105 Nash Street W, Wilson More information, call 252.291.3386.

#### \* Elsewhere \*

#### Live Music in Spring Hope (January 18 @ 7-10pm)

Live Music with Travis Moss-January 18th. Stop by Showside Grill & Bakery, 102 N Pine Street, Spring Hope Info at www.contagiousconfections.com.

#### Stepping Into the Past Series (January 19 & 26 @ 10am-3pm)

Event/workshop with museum admission. A new topic each week, wide range of topics over the year. Held at Tobacco Farm Life Museum, 709 N Church Street, Kenly Info at www.tobaccofarmlifemuseum.org.

#### Martin Luther King Holiday (January 21 @ All Day)

National holiday, as well as a citizens' Day Of Service to community.

#### "Yet, Praise Him!" A Gospel Stage Play (January 26 @ 7pm)

Visit with our vendors from 5:30-6:50pm, then enjoy the play. Free & open to the public. New Hope Freedom & Deliverance Cathedral, 3012 Hwy 98, Louisburg For info, contact Tai Miles 919.306.7642.

These "Things To Do..." listings are free, at publisher's discretion, and as space allows. Up to 2 lines of description may be included with an event. Priority is given to free, public events. Sponsor names may not be included. Event organizers may purchase regular advertising spaces to provide more details for upcoming events.

## **Optimist Club's Essay Contest**

The Northern Wake Optimist Club is holding an essay contest. Students will write on the topic, "How Can I Help My Friends Realize Their Value?" The Due Date for essay entry is February 10th.

Essays should be 700-800 words Title, footnotes and bibliography are not included in the final word count.

The contest is open to students under age 19 as of December 31st, 2012, who have not yet graduated from high school or the equivalent.

More information and essay contest rules available at

www.optimist.org/Form/ Essay\_RULES\_PAD-E\_12-13.pdf

Essay Contest prize at the District Level is a \$2500 Scholarship. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners will be invited to read their essays at the Optimist Club's March meeting.

For more information, contact Lynn Turnage, at 252.430.2535 or lturnage@vwstores.com, or Barbara Timmons, at 919.426.5824 or barbnjct@aol.com.

## **Annual Banquet** Touts Town's Past, **Present & Future**

January 15th, Lake Myra Elementary hosted the Wendell Chamber of Commerce's Annual Banquet And Business Meeting. Slide shows and speeches started with the Wendell of yesteryear and planning for the Wendell of tomorrow

The evening began with social time. Those attending were from Wendell, Zebulon, Knightdale and beyond. Business people and chamber members came to find out more about the changes planned for the town.

The next part of the meeting included a catered dinner of a tasty salad, meatloaf, chicken, vegetables, and cake. This meal was followed by speeches covering plans for expansion. Four committees have been formed to oversee different aspects of town planning, management, budgeting, and so on. Also discussed was the reviving of Wendell Falls development with support from local banks. The town hopes to add almost 4,000 housing units while increasing commercial opportunities. Several town additions being explored included a college campus.

The evening ended with Chamber and town award presentations to special members and volunteers, including extended applause for the Mayor's Award recipient, Brandy Hunter.

With the Wendell Chamber Banquet and Business Meeting showcasing such promise, the new year should bring great things to Wendell residents and business owners alike.



Photo: 2013 Wendell Chamber Banquet

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## **Shades of Grey**

Some situations are viewed in black and white; right and wrong. Yet, many people think situations also have a **grey area** where solutions are not so easily discerned. This is not just about the choices people make, but the thought process they go through to arrive at their decisions.

#### **Submitted for Your Discussion & Consideration**

Wanting to improve your cooking skills in the new year, you sign up for a cooking class. It takes place after work, and the bonus is that you'll be able to prepare a meal you can take home for dinner.

During one of the classes, everyone prepares chicken and puts it on to cook. While is cooking the instructor walks everyone through preparing a healthy salad and dressing. It is made up of fruits and vegetables. The instructor shows the best way to cut each piece and begins mixing the ingredients together.

As you start preparing your salad based on her example, you notice that one of the other students is cutting salad fixings with a knife she also used for the raw meat. You can see bits of raw chicken on the handle and blade. Since eating raw meat has the potential to make a person ill, you mention to her that she is getting bits of meat in her salad. She doesn't seem to care and continues.

If the other student refuses to cook safely, do you think it would be her own fault if she became ill later from eating the salad? Do you think you would say anything to the instructor? What if you found out weeks later that this student was suing the cooking school because she became ill? Do you think you would get involved as a witness or just stay out of it?

## News from The Grey Area

This January 18th issue includes our usual local news alongside strange information from across the US. This issue is the first to follow our new schedule of publishing every other Friday. Watch for new issues every two weeks to get more frequent unusual news and local information!

The Grey Area is currently published in two Editions. Edition A is distributed in Bunn, Knightdale, Wendell & Zebulon. Edition B is distributed in Nashville, Rocky Mount, & Wilson. News, events, and business advertisements are localized for each Edition's readership.

To advertise, call 919.623.9392. Issues of *The Grey Area* come out for the 1st and 15th of each month. Before the next issue, visit our Facebook page or Twitter feed to see more events and news. Prior newspaper issues may be read in our Archives online at www.greyareanews.com.

## The Strange-ness

## **US Government Decides Not to Build Death Star**

Did you know that any American can start a petition for change? On petitions.whitehouse.gov, you can sign or start petitions for the issues you'd like to see the government address. Any petition reaching 100,000 signatures or more within 30 days is reviewed by the Administration.

Recently, a group posted a petition that a Death Star (similar to that in the Star Wars films) be constructed. The Administration responded once the minimum 100,000 signature threshold was reached. The response, entitled *This Isn't the Petition Response You're Looking For*, a reference to a Star Wars quote, gives a detailed explanation of why the Death Star will not be built.

If this is the first you've heard of this online petition website, please do not get the wrong impression about the petitions. Although the petition mentioned was a request to build a Death Star, and there is a petition relating to sasquatch hunting, most of the petitions deal with real issues.

If you visit petitions.whitehouse.gov, you can review available petitions and "sign" the ones you believe are important — or even quirky — and check back from day to day to see how many other Americans have signed. Or, if you have an issue important to you that is not addressed by existing petitions, you can start one. You'll need to get 150 signatures before it may be found by the search tools. If the issue is big enough, likely you'll attract signatures.

Before you know it, your petitioning of the government for "a redress of grievances" as stated in the First Amendment of the US Constitution could lead to a response. Your voice may be heard, and one can hope that as the government learns what is important it will make changes in the directions the people desire.

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Valentine's Day is coming soon!





Watch for events, Valentine specials and more in our February 1st issue!

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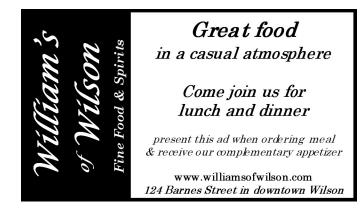


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### **Little Bits**

#### **Translation of the Issue** English —"freedom"

German — freiheit

Irish — saoirse

Spanish — libertad

Italian — libertà

Dutch — vrijheid

Latin — libertatem Danish — frihed

Translations for variations of these words, and in many more languages, may be found in online (translate.google.com, etc.) and print resources.

#### Chuckle of the Issue

A woman went to the doctor's office. Where she was seen by one of the new doctors. After about 4 minutes in the examination room, she burst out, screaming as she ran down

An older doctor stopped her and asked what the problem was. She told him her story. After listening, he asked her sit down and relax in the waiting room.

The older doctor marched down the hallway to where the young doctor was. "What's the matter with you?" he demanded. "Mrs. Finley is 63 years old, she has four grown children and seven grandchildren, and you told her she was pregnant?"

The young doctor continued to write on his clipboard and, without looking up he asked, "Does she still have the hiccups?"

#### Word of the Issue

Resolution

**Definition:** A course of action determined.

**Example:** "I have finally decided my New Year's resolution is to worry less."





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#### Cryptogram of the Issue

Replace the letters in this Cryptogram with other letters to deduce the quote within the puzzle. This month, the name of the person quoted is listed, instead of you needing to solve for the name too. Hint: C = 0.

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Answer to the January 1st issue cryptogram:

I know in my heart that man is good. That what is right will always eventually triumph. And there's purpose and worth to each and every life. -- Ronald Reagan

#### Quote of the Issue

"Courage is being scared to death but saddling up anyway." --John Wayne

## **Ag Forum Offer Economic** and Policy Outlook

The economic and policy outlook for North Carolina agriculture will be on the agenda at the eighth annual Ag Development Forum Thursday, January 31st, at the State

The forum will take place from 9:30am to 12:30pm in the Holshouser Building. Dr. Nick Piggott, an agricultural economist at N.C. State University, will be the keynote speaker.

The forum also will feature Agriculture Commissioner Steve Troxler's annual State of Agriculture address, and representatives of N.C. agribusinesses will share stories of how they succeeded in bringing local foods to market.

A "Winter is a time when farmers plan for the year, and we want to load them up with plenty of information they can use to make decisions," Troxler said. "This forum is designed not just for farmers, but also for agribusinesses and others with an interest in the continued success of North Carolina agriculture."

Admission to the forum is free, and lunch will be provided. Registration is requested by Jan. 25. To register, go to www.ncagr.gov/agforum. Individuals with questions may contact Chrissy Waggett at 919-707-3008.

The forum is sponsored by Matkins Meats, Carolina Packers and Chaudhry Halal Meats.

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## **New Buffet Opens in Wilson**

With growing children, and different tastes of different family members, sometimes it is perfect to hit a buffet. Everyone may choose their own foods. The growing kids can go back for more food if they are hungry for more after finishing their plate.

Just after the New Year began, we took our family out to try a new buffet, Teppanyaki Grill & Supreme Buffet of Wilson. Our crew included the teenager, preteen, and two adults.

This buffet had just opened in Wilson. Teppanyaki Grill & Supreme Buffet, opened in the Forest Hills Centre on Raleigh Road. We found the buffet to be extensive, with a big variety of seafood, meat, and vegetable dishes. The kids found many things that they liked, and that we were happy to have them eat. Some of our favorites included the smoked oysters, and the hibachi area. We filled our plates with our favorite raw vegetables, meats, and space, then watched as they were cooked. As a finale the kids chose their desserts from the long

We left feeling that we had eaten well and for a good price. The kids enjoyed it and have already asked if we can go back sometime soon!



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## **Rose Beach Bingo**

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