



# THE CIVIC

## New Bern Civitan Club's Award Winning Newsletter



Chartered October 4, 1956

Celebrating our 67th Year

December 2023

### CHRISTMAS PARTY AT PAULA'S

Our annual Christmas Holiday party at Paula's Restaurant will be on Friday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 am. Put this date on your calendar. It will be after the tree lot sales are done but we still will be selling peanuts at the Farmers Market until they are sold out. It is also the Friday before we start our yearly Santa Land. It will be a buffet which will include chicken parmigiana, stuffed shells, lasagna, salad, bread, soft drinks, and dessert – homemade carrot cake. The cost per person will be \$22 – (same as last year) a real bargain for all this food!!! We are working on some other surprises for this party – stay tuned! Make your reservations by contacting the Club secretary, Maureen Comer at [maureencomer0720@gmail.com](mailto:maureencomer0720@gmail.com) or phone 252 636-2217. Make your checks payable to the Club and give to Van Rice. **Deadline is December 2<sup>nd</sup>**. *(The owner of Paula's, Roberto, needs time to order the right amount of food).*

You won't want to miss these festivities, as well as celebrating the season with old and new Club friends. Spouses, guests, and significant others are more than welcome. Our next meeting will not be until after the New Year on January 12, 2024, at 11:30 am at Paula's.

If transportation is an issue, let Jim Comer know, and he will arrange a ride to and from the party. Sign up NOW. All of you have earned this party with the challenging work you have done and will do to make this another successful Civitan year. Remember to "join us in the fellowship and service of Civitan" as well as the **fun!**



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS FOR DECEMBER 2023

**December 1-3** – Tree Lot Open – 9 am to 6 pm – Shifts for members are 2.5 hours each starting at 8:30 am until 6:30 pm – *Please sign up for something – this is our biggest fundraiser of the year.* Contact Randy King [rkingnewbern@gmail.com](mailto:rkingnewbern@gmail.com)

**December 1** – Deadline to sign up for the Club's Christmas Party – contact Maureen Comer [maureencomer0720@gmail.com](mailto:maureencomer0720@gmail.com)

**December 2, 9, 16 and 23** – All Saturdays in December, we will be selling peanuts at the Farmers Market from 8 am to 2 pm. *If you can help, please contact Marie Leonard* – [marieleonard25@hotmail.com](mailto:marieleonard25@hotmail.com)

**December 6** – Decoration of the Santa Land trailer at JT Barber in the morning – exact time TBA.

**December 7** – **HAPPY CHANUKAH!**

**December 8** – Club Christmas Party at noon at Paula's Restaurant – Italian buffet and entertainment - \$22 per person – all included.

**December 11** – Board of Directors Meeting – *cancelled!*

**December 11** – RCS Shelter Christmas Party – 6 pm

**December 11-14** – Santa Land at JT Barber Elementary School – mornings – All are welcome to visit!

**December 21** – Winter begins.

**December 25** – **MERRY CHRISTMAS!**

**December 26** – Kwanzaa begins.

**December 31** – New Years Eve.

**January 1, 2024** – **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

Meetings in **January 2024**

**January 8** – Board of Directors Meeting – 1 pm Garber UMC Rm. 222

**January 12** – NBCC Afternoon Meeting at 11:30 am at Paula's Restaurant

**January 25** – NBCC Evening Meeting at 5:30 pm at Paula's Restaurant

## DECEMBER CIVITAN BIRTHDAYS

Eileen	Buscemi	December 01
Elizabeth	Walker	December 03
Van	Rice	December 22
Helen	Shine	December 29

## DECEMBER CIVITAN ANNIVERSARIES

George	Sawyer	December 1981
William	McClinton	December 1989
Jeff	Williams	December 1997
Clark	Saylor	December 2009
Mary	Dougherty	December 2010
Judy	Lewis	December 2013
Peggy	Marcus	December 2016
Robert	Marcus	December 2016
Buck	Irvin	December 2017
Cathy	Welles	December 2021
Ed	White	December 2021

## The Civitan Creed

**I am Civitan:** as old as life, as young as the rainbow, as endless as time.

**My hands** do the work of the world and reach out in service to others.

**My ears** hear the cry of children and the call throughout the world for peace, guidance, progress and unity.

**My eyes** search for others to join in the fellowship and service of Civitan.

**My mouth** utters the call to daily duty and speaks prayers in every tongue.

**My mind** teaches me respect for law and the flag of my country.

**My heart** beats for every friend, bleeds for every injury to humanity and throbs with joy at every triumph of truth.

**My soul** knows no fear but its own unworthiness.

**My hope** is for a better world through Civitan.

**My motto:** builders of good citizenship.

**My belief:** do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

**My pledge:** to practice the Golden Rule and to build upon it a better and nobler citizenship.

## OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Dennis Pymm

### PRESIDENT ELECT

Roy Leonard

### VICE PRESIDENT

Vacant

### SECRETARY

Maureen Comer

### ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Eileen Buscemi

### TREASURER

Van Allen Rice

### ASSISTANT TREASURER

Amy Willis

### CHAPLAIN

Bill Baldree

### ASSISTANT CHAPLAIN

Jim Comer

### SERGEANT AT ARMS

Ken McCain & Dev Lippitt

### EDUCATION OFFICERS

Helen Shine, Maureen Comer

### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

Gary Todd

## DIRECTORS

### One Year

*Term Expires*

*Sept. 30, 2024*

Dev Lippitt

Renee Salvatore

Judith Lopez

Betty Todd

### Two Year

*Term Expires*

*Sept. 30, 2025*

Alan Craig

Dave Super

Ann Super

Joanne Tello

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### CIVITAN'S SANTA LEADS PARADE



Santa Jim led the New Bern Parade to the Tree Lighting at Union Point Park – arriving on a city fire truck along with his elves. After the tree lighting, crowds of kids and their families followed the fire truck back to the Beary Merry Christmas House at Bear Plaza where Santa's House was officially opened for the season.

### GIVING TUESDAY



During the annual Giving Day in New Bern at Union Point Park, our President-Elect, Roy Leonard, on behalf of our Civitan Club presented a check for \$1000 to the Eastern North Carolina Food Bank which provides foods for hundreds of residents of Craven County who suffer from food insufficiency.

Roy presented the check to the Food Bank representative, LaTrone Hardy. This was particularly noteworthy as "Giving Tuesday" is a "triple match" day. This means that our \$1000 donation becomes a \$3000 donation. That translates into 15,000 meals for the hungry through this organization. For us in the Club, that translates into a sizeable "bang for our buck." We are pleased to be able to help our neighbors in Craven County with this significant contribution!



## MOM

No, this article is not about our mothers, but rather about MOM – Missions of Mercy. Let's go back to the "pre-COVID" days – say around 2017 and 2019. Members of our Civitan Club volunteered at another "MOM" event in New Bern – a free dental clinic held at Epiphany School and at Garber UMC. Because of our previous involvement in this project, four of our Civitans – ramp crew members – were recruited to assist again for another free MOM Dental Clinic. Our members, Tim McLearn, Van Rice, Randy Beltz and John Klecker traveled to Wilmington, NC to provide utilities support for this new event.

The Wilmington clinic was held at the First Baptist Activities Center. There were New Bern residents who made significant contributions to the success of this clinic. They included Dr. Jeff Thomas, Dr. Breck Gibbs, Dr. Darryl Warren, Dental Lead Daphne Ellison, and many volunteers from as far away as ECU.



The Clinic was open on Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> and Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup>. It had forty-five dental chairs. Patients were those who had no or little access to oral hygiene care. Services included cleanings, fillings, and extractions. Over eight hundred people received dental care from dentists, technicians, hygienists, and students from all over North Carolina. There were approximately one thousand volunteers.

What did our own team of "Civitan heroes" contribute to this occasion – you might ask? They were tasked with connecting and monitoring electrical equipment to provide power to the sterilization area and power to large vacuum pumps that serviced each dental chair. They installed piping for these systems to operate properly. In addition, they connected and monitored equipment to make pure water, and supply clean, dry air to each chair.

Tim, Van, Randy, and John – you exemplify the meaning of Civitan commitment to service. Thank you so much for representing our Club so honorably at this vital benefit to those in true need of help!



## **COMMUNITY AWARD – FOSTER PARENTS – 2023**

Joe and Megan Davis were honored this year with the Club's Community Award for Foster Parents at a ceremony at the Department of Social Services on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Social Worker, Veronica Edwards, praised the couple by saying, "Your dedication, love, and unwavering support for the children you've fostered are truly remarkable. Your commitment to making a positive difference in their lives is inspiring. We are so grateful for the incredible work you do."

The Davises have been foster parents since 2020. Ms. Edwards further commented, "They consistently maintain an open and respectful communication with the biological parents of the children in their care. They recognize the importance of maintaining family connections and support reunification efforts. They actively involve the biological parents in decision-making regarding the children's well-being, and they go above and beyond to ensure a smooth transition when reunification is the goal."

Joe and Megan are both educators in the local school system. They have three daughters of their own. In addition to fostering, they provide assistance for foster families in the area that need immediate support. They provide equipment, clothes, diapers, beds, cribs, car seats and frozen meals when a family takes a child into their home through foster care. They are also part of a mentor program for new foster parents. They offer emotional support and encouragement to these "newbies".

Recently, Joe and Megan had to say goodbye to one of their foster children. It was incredibly difficult for them, but they understood the importance of permanency. They knew it was the best for the child, but it was a heart-wrenching and painful moment for them. For these and for many more examples of their selflessness toward others, the Davises received the Foster Parent of the Year 2023 Award.

Thank you to Helen Shine for coordinating this presentation. Thank you to President Dennis Pymm, Secretary Maureen Comer and DSS Christmas Angel Chairperson, Judy Lopez, for attending this ceremony. It is our Club's honor to praise Joe and Megan Davis for their contributions for the children of our community.

P. S. – Joe Davis was a former student of Helen Shine's...who would have guessed that?



Pictured (l. to r.) NBCC President Dennis Pymm, Community Awards Chair Helen Shine, Social Worker Veronica Edwards, Foster Parents Megan Davis and Joe Davis.

### **BLESS THE BEASTS...AND THE VOLUNTEERS**

Our guest speakers on November 10 were from the Craven-Pamlico Animal Services – a local Shelter. Dr. Tanya Osler became the first-ever veterinarian named as the Director of the Shelter on May 31. She attended the University of Florida for her undergraduate degree and went to veterinary school at the University College in Dublin, Ireland. She has an extensive veterinary background with service in many locations in Florida and New York.

Our other speaker, Alyssa Merget, is a full-time staff member at the Shelter serving in the role of Operations Manager. Most recently, Alyssa was Animal Care Manager at the Humane Society of Hamilton County, Indiana for two years. Before that, she was an ER Tech at IndyVet for two years and in charge of Adoptions, Education, and Outreach for the Yuma, Arizona Humane Society. She's a Marine wife and mom.

Dr. Osler has been working to train staff to recognize signs of illness, how to care for animals, and educate the community about the importance of vaccines are some of her short-term goals. Her long-term goals are to focus on spay and neuter programs to address the area's rampant overpopulation problem and offer vaccination services for local animals.

With Dr. Osler taking over the reins of the Shelter, there have been many improvements. The Shelter used to have the reputation of being a poorly run facility. She has taken great strides in improving conditions for the staff, volunteers and especially the animals. Amazingly, the shelter has a weekly intake of between 60 to 120 animals per **WEEK**. In addition to the "normal" animals taken in weekly – dogs and cats – they have seen snakes, llamas, chickens, mice, exotic birds and more. Despite all their efforts to get animals into good homes, many still must be euthanized. That's why the Shelter is stressing the need to spay and neuter all animals to control the pet population.

Owning an animal is a responsibility that people should not take lightly. It is a financial, physical, and emotional obligation that owners need to understand before taking on the responsibility of a pet. Dr. Osler stated that the Shelter could NOT exist without its many volunteers who have varied responsibilities at the Shelter. Our President-elect, Roy Leonard, is a dog walker for the Shelter and a great advocate for its work with the animals.

The Shelter accepts monetary donations as well as appropriate goods – blankets, towels, unopened food, cat litter etc. It is also grateful for volunteers. If you want to learn more about volunteering or how you can help in other ways, visit the website at [www.cravencountync.gov](http://www.cravencountync.gov)



Left to Right  
Dr. Tanya Osler and Alyssa Merget receive  
peanuts for their presentations to the club.





## HELP WANTED

Recently, our President Dennis Pymm, put out a “Help Wanted” ad to our membership seeking someone to volunteer for the position of Vice President from now until September 2024. This position is due to the unfortunate resignation of Cyndi Papia who has resigned for personal reasons. She will continue to run our website and we are grateful to her for all she has done for the Club over the past few years.

It is imperative that we fill this position and fill it sooner rather than later. Why, may you ask? Leadership is vital to the health of the Club. The President, President-elect, and Vice President work as a strong team – collaborating and learning from each other. Along with the other officers and the Board of Directors, they shape the direction of this Club as it goes forward. Without a strong continuum of people willing to lead the Club, we can flounder and lose focus. Planning for continuity is essential to our organization’s ability to sustain itself and continue to thrive over time.

We are all responsible for overseeing the club with the highest standard of care and diligence including the long-term continuity of the Club. Please look to yourself and consider speaking to Dennis and President-elect Roy Leonard on how you might work on this leadership team. Yes, it does involve some time and commitment but if you are already a member, you might have already made that decision. We need YOU to at least consider this invitation. Please look within yourself and decide that you **want** to help. Thank you.

## NATHAN WINS THE “GOLD”



NBCC member, Nathan Silvers, recently won a gold medal at the Craven County Special Olympics. The tournament held the week before Thanksgiving in Charlotte, NC, hosted many special athletes from across the state. Nathan and his partner took the gold in bocce ball. Many other members of the My Big Dream club also competed and won gold and silver. The Club was founded in New Bern by our former member Elizabeth Walker who has since moved out of the area.

We are proud of Nathan for this well-deserved honor that he has earned. We look forward to seeing him compete and win the gold again in whatever competition he enters. Congratulations!



## TREE LOT SETUP

On a beautiful crisp and sunny Thursday, November 16 morning, a group of dedicated Civitan volunteers set up the tree lot for selling Christmas trees.



Here are ten interesting facts that you probably didn't know. Feel free to recite these factoids as your own at your family gathering or workplace:

1. 3 billion Christmas cards are sent in the U.S. each year.
2. Christmas trees have been sold in the U.S. since 1850.
3. It takes about 15 years to grow the average Christmas tree.
4. Alabama was the first state to officially recognize Christmas in 1836. Oklahoma was the last, in 1907.
5. Santa Claus is based on a real person: St. Nikolas of Myra. He is the patron saint of banking, pawn broking, sailing, orphans and New York City.
6. President Teddy Roosevelt, an environmentalist, banned Christmas trees from the White House in 1901.
7. Approximately 35 million living Christmas trees are sold each year in the U.S.; more than 45 million are planted.
8. Holiday purchases account for one sixth of all yearly retail sales in the U.S.
9. "White Christmas" by Irving Berlin is the best-selling single record of all time, with over 100 million sales, worldwide.

All the gifts in the Twelve Days of Christmas would equal 364 gifts.

## SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT CHRISTMAS

“Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind.” – Calvin Coolidge

“I will honor Christmas in my heart and try to keep it all year long.” – Charles Dickens, “A Christmas Carol”

“Christmas is doing a little extra something for someone else.” – Charles Schultz “Christmas, my child, is love in action. Every time we love, every time we give, it’s Christmas.” Dale Evans Rogers

“You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.” – Victor Hugo

“Christmas giving is not just about donating. It is about making a difference.” – Kathy Calvin

“He who has not Christmas in his heart will never find it under a tree.” – Roy L. Smith

“Mankind is a great, immense family. This is proved by what we feel in our hearts at Christmas.” – Pope John Paul XXIII

“Christmas is a season of joy, of holiday greetings, exchanged, of gift-giving and of families united.” – Norman Vincent Peale

“Christmas is built upon a beautiful and intentional paradox; that the birth of the homeless should be celebrated in every home.” – G. K. Chesterton

“Christmas is a piece of one’s home that one carries in one’s heart.” – Freya Stark

“Don’t let the past steal the present. This is the message of Christmas: We are never alone.” – Taylor Caldwell

“That is what Christmas should be about, I think – togetherness and playfulness. It’s like a game.” – Billy Howle

“Gifts of time and love are surely the basic ingredients of a truly merry Christmas.” – Peg Bracken

“One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas Day. Don’t clean it up too quickly”. – Andy Rooney

“Christmas is the season for kindling the fire of hospitality.” – Washington Irving “Christmas gives us the opportunity to pause and reflect on the important things around us.” – David Cameron

“Christmas is a together sort of holiday.” – Pooh – “Winnie the Pooh”

“The spirit of the season never has to end if you keep your loved ones near, and the holiday wish in your heart.” – Jiminy Cricket, “Holiday Wishes”

### **And on the lighter side:**

“I love Christmas. I receive a lot of wonderful presents I can’t wait to exchange.” – Henry Youngman

“Santa Claus has the right idea: visit people once a year.” – Victor Borge

“I once bought my kids of set of batteries for Christmas with a note on it saying, ‘Toys not included.’” – Bernard Manning

“Mail your packages early so the post office can lose them in time for Christmas.” – Johnny Carson

“You know you’re getting old when Santa starts to look younger.” – Robert Paul

**MERRY CHRISTMAS!**