



THE CIVIC

New Bern Civitan Club's Award Winning Newsletter



Chartered October 4, 1956

Celebrating our 68th Year

January 2024

BE ON THE LOOKOUT...

January is a big **SALE** month so all you great shoppers and bargain hunters be on the lookout for the following items that we can use for next year's Santa Land. We need children's hats (not infants), scarves and gloves. These items usually go on sale this month. Operation Keep Warm Chairperson, Eileen Buscemi, will collect these items.

For next year's RCS Dinner and Christmas Party, we will need men's wallets and women's French purses. We have collected enough men's and women's socks for next Christmas. These items should go to Maureen Comer

Throughout the year, we will be collecting stuffed animals – new or gently used – of any size. Be on the lookout at Yard Sales. If you have grand kids who have outgrown their stuffed animals – we will take them too.

Do you knit or crochet? Can you make children's hats? Can you make children's scarves? If so, make them about five inches wide and 45 to 48 inches long. Have left over yarn or see some on sale in a store or a yard sale? We'll take it...someone can use it to make kids scarves or hats. Find any colorful fleece? We can cut it to make children's scarves. If the fleece is sixty inches wide, we will need at least a yard and a quarter to make twelve kids' scarves. If the fleece is forty-five inches wide, we will need at least two yards.

Your donations are vital to the perpetuation of these projects. All donations are **GRATEFULLY** accepted.

JANUARY CIVITAN BIRTHDAYS

Susan	Husson	January 2
Sandy	McClinton	January 17
Karen	Crump	January 19
Norma	Judd	January 29

JANUARY CIVITAN ANNIVERSARIES

Dan	Roberts	January 2008
Woody	Besser	January 2017
Betty	Sweeney	January 2019
Fred	Ohsol	January 2020
Joanne	Tello	January 2023

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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JANUARY 2024 CALENDAR

Monday, January 1 – *Happy New Year!*

Monday, January 8 – Board of Directors Meeting @ 1 pm at Garber UMC, Rm. 222

Monday, January 8 – RCS Shelter Dinner 6 pm. Donations needed. If you can help, sign up at <https://signup.com/go/dUenBpr>

Friday, January 12 – NBCC Afternoon Meeting 11:30 am at Paula's Restaurant.
Speaker: Samantha Krop – Neuse RiverKeeper Sound Rivers, Inc. *If you will be attending, please contact Maureen Comer by Wednesday, January 10th.*

Monday, January 15 – Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Thursday, January 25 – NBCC Evening Meeting, 5:30 pm at Paula's Restaurant.
Speaker: Laura Lefler, Care Coordinator at Reviving Life Ministries & Mark Devanney, Executive Director, and some residents. This group helped us on the tree lot. *If you will be attending, please contact Maureen Comer by Tuesday, January 23.*



A FINE TIME WAS HAD BY ALL

Forty-one Civitan members and guests enjoyed a Christmas party at Paula's restaurant on December 8th. An Italian buffet was the menu, and all enjoyed their meal as well as a specially made cake for the occasion – carrot cake. Although we meet at Paula's regularly, this festive lunch was especially pleasing to all who attended.

In addition, Matt Johnson from Garber UMC, entertained us and led us in Christmas Carols while playing his guitar. It was the end of another productive calendar year for the New Bern Civitan Club. We look forward to more fellowship and opportunities to help others in our community in 2024!



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PREPARING FOR SANTA LAND

December 6th saw many busy Civitan members at the Santa Land trailer at J. T. Barber Elementary School. It took about three hours to transform this very drab trailer into the wonderful Santa Land that would soon entertain approximately 280 Pre-K children from the Craven County Pre-K and Family Literacy program. This is the second year that Santa Land has been located at this site.

Those responsible for this renovation included Sandy McClinton, Cathy Welles, Dennis Pymm, Wendy Fleming, Nathan Silvers, Judy Lopez, Betty Todd, Gary Todd, Jim Comer, and Maureen Comer. Thank you for your hard work and creativity in making this trailer a wonderland for children!



Gary Todd sizes up the Santa Land trailer to see what needs to be done next.



Sandy McClinton (l) and Cathy Welles (r) finish decorating the Christmas tree at the trailer



Wendy Fleming strings jingle bells, and untwists beads to use as decorations around the trailer



The Finished Santa Land Set

RCS CHRISTMAS PARTY CELEBRATION

Thirty-one adults and nine children were being housed at the RCS Shelter the night of December 11 when our Club put on a dinner and party celebration for the residents. A full ham dinner with sides of hashed brown potatoes, sweet potatoes, salad, rolls, and soft drinks were provided by Randy King, Susie Bare, Eileen Buscemi, Mary Kay Dyer, and Cathy Welles. Dennis Pymm prepared chicken "fingers" and French fries for the kids. Judy Lopez baked dozens of Christmas cookies for the residents which were displayed on a cookie tree made last year by President Pymm. (see picture).

Our set up and clean up crew came early to make the RCS dining room look festive. They also served the residents their meals. Helping with this duty were Randy King, Mary Traina, Judy Lopez, Mary Kay Dyer, Wendy Fleming, Dennis Pymm, Cathy Welles, and Maureen Comer.

Santa Jim Comer arrived to hand out gifts to the residents and children after dinner. Each resident received a set of hats/scarves/gloves, socks, a wallet or French purse and a toiletry bag made by Judy Lopez filled with items donated by club members. The individual gifts for each child (ages 2 weeks to 9 years old) included hats/scarves/gloves and a kids' dental kits. Parents provided us with one item from the child's wish list. These gifts were purchased by Club members Buck Irvin, Ann and Dave Super, Lovay Wallace-Singleton, Mary Kay Dyer, Joanne Tello, Eileen Buscemi, Randy King, Sandy Hagan and Marie and Roy Leonard. For security reasons and privacy, no pictures were taken at the event.

We hope that all these efforts helped to brighten the Holiday Season for all who will spend Christmas at the Shelter. May the generosity and caring of all of you return a hundred-fold through blessings for you and your families. Merry Christmas!



RCS Christmas Cookies

SANTA LAND FOURTEEN YEARS LATER

Yes, you read that headline correctly. It's been fourteen years since the Club sponsored our first Santa Land. The first Santa Land hosted eighty children and each child received a stuffed animal and a picture of themselves with Santa. It was held on the tree lot in a tent. Along the way, we moved from an outdoor venue to a trailer at one of the schools. Also, along the way, we have added for each child – a book, and hats, scarves, and gloves. And, oh yes, this year we saw two hundred eighty-eight children!

All of this has been conducted through donations and monetary support from the Club, its members, community members, friends, neighbors, and relatives. Then, of course, there are the volunteers. They make this happen every year. This year, we must thank:

*The volunteer photographers from the Coastal Photography Club -Coordinator: Rick Meyers

*The trailer decorators: Betty Todd, Gary Todd, Judy Lopez, Nathan Silvers, Wendy Fleming, Dennis Pymm, Cathy Welles, Sandy McClinton, Jim Comer, Maureen Comer

*The elves: Frank Salvatore, Nathan Silvers, Wendy Fleming, Mary Shine Williams, Dennis Pymm, Mary Traina, Renee Salvatore, Eileen Buscemi, Cathy Welles, Judy Lopez, Maureen Comer, Mickie Wittmeyer, Kathleen Klecker, Carol Creedon, Mary Kay Dyer

*Operation Keep Warm Coordinator: Eileen Buscemi

*Scheduler and Chief Worry Wart: Maureen Comer

*Pre-K Coordinator: Renee' Harrell

*And, of course, Santa Jim Comer

We will be celebrating the holiday and then we start over again in January – preparing for Santa Land 2024. Many of you volunteers have been there at the beginning. Some have joined us along the way. In either case, your volunteer hours are immeasurable, and your support has been invaluable. The journey continues...

FIREFIGHTER OF THE YEAR – JOSHUA WHITFORD

This year's firefighter of the year plaque went to Fire Specialist III, Joshua Whitford who was presented with this award at the New Bern Firehouse on December 14th. He has been a New Bern Fireman for fifteen years. In his job, Josh is responsible for conducting fire suppression activities on fire scenes, operating fire apparatus, ensuring that equipment is in a state of readiness and always ready for the next operations. Interim Fire Chief McConnell says, "Josh shows up for work every day ready to take on the challenges with which he is confronted. He can adapt, overcome and stay focused on the overall mission of the department and the tasks related to the job."

Chief O'Connell went on to say that Josh takes pride in his work and is a leader within the department and outside the department. He believes in teamwork and is quick to lend a helping hand to co-workers and the public. He can be very instrumental and encouraging to others. He does not hold back when it comes to giving his opinion or providing facts and honest answers. Josh is incredibly involved with Fire Prevention and education. He communicates with children well and delivers valuable information on safety.

Activities outside of work that Josh does include teaching the alternate driver program for those aspiring to become alternate operators. As a member of NB Fire Rescue relief committee, he gathers information to aid individuals that are falling into tough times. He collaborates with the committee to provide scholarships for fire department family members who are obtaining higher education degrees.

The Club is proud to be able to honor Josh Whitford with this 2023 Community Award. His name will appear on the plaque from Civitan that has honored Firefighters of the past. We thank him for his service to our community. We also thank Helen Shine again for coordinating our Community Awards for 2023.



James McConnell, Interim Fire Chief Firefighter Joshua Whitford and Community Awards Chairman, Helen Shine

TREE AND WREATH SALE: WE SURVIVED!



Our First Customer

We changed the opening of our tree lot from the traditional Black Friday date to one week later. The reason for this change was to have more members who could help on Thanksgiving weekend. That goal was accomplished – we had thirty-three member volunteers who contributed to some part of the project, starting with the lot setup, and ending with the lot teardown. Unfortunately, many of our past customers went elsewhere because of the delayed start and, as a result, we were open for 12 days instead of the usual 2-4. And we had around fifty trees left. Fortunately, we were able to donate these to other organizations: RCS, Peace Foundation, Feeding Craven, Craven Literacy Council, and a Veterans group who were able to find good homes for them.

We ended up selling approximately 226 trees, along with 106 wreaths and 219 cans of peanuts. The wreath and peanut sales were higher than last year because of having more days on the lot.

In addition to the thirty-three members, we were assisted by thirteen other member spouses or volunteers from other groups. Chief among these was what is hopefully a longer-term relationship with the Reviving Life Ministry (RLM) organization. We had six residents from RLM, along with the Care Coordinator Laura Loftin, who even brought her husband along to work!

The financial accounting is not quite finished, but we will end up with a net profit of approximately \$12,000. This was below our expectation, but our donations of trees also brought happiness to many families who otherwise would not have had one.

We appreciate all the volunteers who helped with the many tasks: setting up and tearing down the lot, unloading the trees, making the wreaths, and helping with the sale itself. The accompanying pictures help to tell this story from beginning to end.

Submitted by Randy King and Gary Todd – Tree Lot Co-chairs.

(Editor's note: A great big thank you to Randy and Gary for all their planning and work on this fundraiser.)



ONE LINERS TO MAKE YOU SMILE

Suffering from the post-holiday let down? Got the winter doldrums? Maybe the following “one liners” will put a smile on your face.

I failed math so many times at school, I can't count them.

I was wondering why the frisbee kept getting bigger and bigger, but then it hit me.

I want to die peacefully in my sleep, like my grandfather. Not screaming and yelling like the passengers in his car.

Don't you hate it when someone answers their own questions? I do.

I know they say that money talks, but all mine says is, “Goodbye!”

I can't believe I got fired from the calendar factory. All I did was take a day off.

Most people are shocked when they find out how bad I am as an electrician.

My wife just found out I replaced our bed with a trampoline. She hit the ceiling!

I used to think I was indecisive. But now I'm not so sure.

Russian dolls are so full of themselves.

A termite walks into the bar and asks, “Is the bar tender here?”

Just burned two thousand calories. That's the last time I leave brownies in the oven while I nap.

“Doctor, there's a patient on line one that says he's invisible.” “Well, tell him I can't see him right now.”

The future, the present, and the past walk into a bar. Things got a little tense.

It was an emotional wedding. Even the cake was in tiers.

Blunt pencils are really pointless.

Adam and Eve were the first ones to ignore the Apple terms and conditions.

Refusing to go to the gym is a form of resistance training.

If attacked by a mob of clowns, go for the juggler.

I can tell when people are being judgmental just by looking at them.

The rotation of Earth really makes my day.

Geology rocks, but geography's where its at.

The man who invented knock-knock jokes should get a no bell prize.

The first time I got a remote control, I thought to myself, “This changes everything.”

I bought the world's worst thesaurus yesterday. Not only is it terrible, it's also terrible.

Four fonts walk into a bar. The bartender says, “Hey! We don't want your type in here.”

I saw a sign the other day that said, “Watch for children” and I thought, “That sounds like a fair trade.”

I threw a boomerang a couple of years ago; I now live in constant fear.

I'm reading a book about anti-gravity. It's impossible to put down.

The last thing I want to do is hurt you, but it's still on the list.

People who take care of chickens are literally chicken tenders.

Have you heard about the new restaurant called “Karma”? There's no menu – you get what you deserve.