

Great Neighbors Make Great Neighborhoods



Sunset Hills Newsletter | *March, 2024*

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A Message From The President

by Scott Michaels

I may be cursing us by saying this, but it's almost Spring in Sunset Hills! It won't be too long until daffodils, azaleas, tulips and other blooming plants start adding color back to the neighborhood. While I love the cozy winter months, Spring is always an exciting season of rebirth.

But before we move on to Spring, I want to take a moment to thank all of our neighbors who worked so hard to make Sunset Hills so beautiful for the Holidays. The Lighted Christmas Balls continue to attract people to our neighborhood and to be our signature event.

In 2023, we collected 15,892 pounds of food, raised \$138,563 and provided 977,887 meals. Many thanks to Nick Loflin for another great Running of the Balls, to John Kelly and his team for decorating the park and to Anne and Jonathan Smith, as always, for starting this tradition and for hosting the workshop for new and old neighbors to meet and make new balls. Also, thanks to Erin Reis and the SHNA Environmental affairs committee for providing LED lights and helping us reduce our carbon footprint.

(continued on page 3)



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A Message From The President

(continued from page 1)

And a lot more will be happening soon in Sunset Hills.

Thanks to John Kelly and his team, again, we are in for another exciting season of music when Rock the Block returns to the park. The annual Easter Egg Hunt is not too far away.

Preparations will also be moving into high gear planning for our Centennial Celebration next year. Thanks to Cindy Ramsey and her team, we are working with local sculptor Lawrence Feir and the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department to create and install a statue in the park to commemorate 100 years since the founding of Sunset Hills. I'll leave the details to Cindy but be on the lookout for more information and how you can help make this happen.

This is such a special neighborhood because we have so many special people who are willing to give of

their time and other resources to make all these events a success. I'm pleased to announce Beverly Gass will be taking over as our New Neighbor Coordinator to help welcome new folks to the neighborhood. Let Beverly, myself or any Board Member know if you want to help out with this revived committee. We always want new people involved and have several other committees that are active and hoping for more members.

The SHNA Board, the Environmental Affairs committee and the Sunset Hills Garden Club are continuing to work together to help to both beautify our parks and bring in more native plants while reducing invasive species.

I love our neighborhood and our neighbors who contribute so much to making this such a wonderful and special place to live. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else! I know most of you feel the same way. I look forward to another year of us working together to celebrate Sunset Hills and to help, not just our neighborhood, but all of Greensboro to become an even better place to live!

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A Note From Your Treasurer

by Elaine Brune



Now taking **Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association Dues** for the calendar year 2024. Dues are \$10 per house.

Please make sure to include the names as you want it to appear in the newsletter and the address.

Just \$10 gets you events and activities in the neighborhood (such as the Halloween party, Pig Pickin, Rock the Block and Tree Reforestation project) Plus you can list items or notices on our ListServ.



Make checks payable to **Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association (SHNA)** and drop off in the red

postal box on my porch or drop in the door slot of my home at 2504 Sylvan Road. Payments via PayPal are available through the website: <https://www.sunsethillsneighborhood.org/duesanddonations>.

Questions? Email me at sunset-hillsgsonc@gmail.com

_____ sh _____

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The Sunset Hills History Project Update

By David Hammer



The Sunset Hills history project is making some good progress. We have our first few documents that have been scanned by the UNCG staff as the initial items to include when the website is ready. We can continue to submit documents at any time, so let me know if you have any you would like added - photos, newspaper articles, home histories, etc.

We have received lots of interest in the video

portion of the project, with over thirty residents who have been in their homes for 30+ years. Seven



Above: Two examples of the type of photos and information the UNCG staff is looking for as they develop the Sunset Hills History

of these have over 60 years and two have over 70! Amazing. We will be collecting video interviews with many of these over the next few weeks. The UNCG staff will be creating the website once we have enough material ready for them. I will let you know when it is ready

to go live.

Thanks for all of the participation so far.

David Hammer 336.312.2647

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LS
— —
Leslie Stainback

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Rock the Block 2024 Summer Schedule

By John Kelly



I am happy to once again announce that the Rock the Block summer outdoor music events will continue this year and our summer band bookings are complete.

The guiding principles for these events continue to be:

- Focus on the months that the kids are out or about to finish school (May, June, July & August)
- Keep the date on a Thursday (so we don't step on neighbor's weekend plans)
- Start and end early 6-9pm (to respect the neighbors)
- Choose quality musicians and food trucks
- Unique not repeat

My focus coming out of 2023 was to simplify and streamline the event set-up and breakdown. It was at a make or break point of either shutting it down or solving the time consuming stage setup and breakdown. For our Light the Park event in November, the Sunset Hills Neighborhood Association stepped forward and helped with stage, insurance, street closure and sound engineering. That influx of support allowed me to leverage the city owned stage rental (thanks Molly Lyles for the idea!) and peeled off hours of setup and breakdown time. The city was awesome to work with, providing the stage, leveling it out and picking up when the event was over....game changer.

Since the stage rental worked out so well, the next step was to see if I could add additional sponsorships to cover the added expense of the city stage rental and \$1m of mandatory insurance the city requires. Much to my surprise, after an email ask on the listsrv email chain, our great neighbors stepped up and I had all the



sponsorships I needed to get over the hump of the stage & insurance costs!

I want to thank the following small businesses with ties to Sunset Hills that came forward to help in 2024; please support them:

- Leslie Stainback - TRM Homes
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- John Martin - Fourth Elm Construction
- Brittany Blue - Friendly Dentistry
- Ashley Meredith - Ashley Meredith Homes
- Wally and Martha Overman - Wally Overman Plumbing
- Scott Michaels - Allen Tate Realty
- Steve Gingher - The Sage Mule
- Todd Nunn
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- Melissa Greer - Berkshire Hathaway
- Garland Turner - Ashley Home-Store & Outlet
- Pam Frye - Frye Build and Design
- Michael Driver - ReMax

With the big problems solved going into 2024, we have an amazing lineup of artists coming into the neighborhood!

In May, thanks to Melissa Greer, we have Pressing Strings coming in

from Maryland with their blend of Indie, folk and soul. The band started with an acoustic folk based direction; in recent years they have gravitated more towards a soulful bluesy rock direction which is where they seem to hit their mark live. Like many bands they have developed a knack for taking well-known cover material and spinning it into their own style. A great example is the song Going to California (Spotify) which will give you an idea of their smooth style. Jordan Sokel's voice is really



unique and this is a great band to kick off the 2024 season; try not to miss this one!

In June, thanks to Scott Michaels, we have a wrinkle to a very popular act we had last year. Camel City Yacht Club (CCYC) came to the neighborhood last August and killed it. Their popular covers of easy listening



smooth rock were a crowd favorite. I'm happy to say that Clay Howard, the front man from CCYC and Jerry Chapman, the lead guitarist from CCYC will bring both their bands to

the neighborhood in June. They will mix in some original with well-known covers. Should be a great evening of some sing along with some new tunes that Clay and Jerry have been working out.

In July, thanks to Britney Blue, The Jared Stout Band will come into Sunset Hills from Southwestern Virginia. Jared Stout brings a group of talented musicians that is a fusion of country, rock, soul with integrity. They were a runner up

Home, Luck, Cost (Jared likes simple song titles) to get a feel for the band. Really a treat that his band agreed to come down to Greensboro!

In August, thanks to John Martin, I am very pleased to finally get our own Sam Fribush into the mix. Sam grew up on Madison Avenue in an extremely talented musical family. I've tried to get The Sam Fribush Band for our Rock the Block events since the inception, but Sam has been busy as part of Hiss Golden Messenger; he also joined Caamp at Red Rocks, playing and recording with Charlie

Hunter as well as growing his own band and brand. August promises to be a special show and it's so cool to have someone who grew up in the hood (he played in the early July 4th neighborhood parties) back to play for us again!

The plan is to also do a Light the Park event on November 23. More details will come later in the year.

The feedback I have gotten has been wonderful and I hope folks can attend the 2024 season....bring a friend, a chair, a few beverages, a couple bucks to tip the band, a couple more bucks to support the food trucks and a good attitude! I can't tell you how many people that come into our neighborhood from other areas and say –

Wow, I wish our neighborhood did something like this!

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at Floydfest 22's "On the Rise" band competition and every time I see them, I am blown away by how they get the audience up and moving....just a ton of fun to experience live. I would check out some of their songs on Spotify –

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Sunset Hills Centennial Is Here!!

by Cindy Ramsey



2024 has arrived! Sunset Hills is 100 years old! As the year continues,

expect to hear more about the history of the neighborhood, the efforts to reforest by planting 100 trees and regular events with added elements to celebrate 100 years!

Fundraising efforts to install a sculpture in the park will begin in the spring. The goal is to raise \$10,000-\$15,000. Sunset Hills has commissioned Lawrence Feir



<https://lawrencefeir.com> to create and install a sculpture that has elements important to the neighborhood. Lawrence created a scale model, we expect the sculpture to be similar to the model; although as the project starts, there may be adjustments to the design. Please consider making a donation to this project. Donors will be published on the website and the newsletter.

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Far left: Scale model of Sunset Hills Centennial Statue

Near left: Enlarged view of Sunset Hills Centennial plaque on statue

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Those Beautiful Brick Bungalows

by Emily Sulecki / Wright Avenue



I fell in love with Sunset Hills in 1995 while attending UNCG my freshman year. I'm originally from Burlington and the offerings of Greensboro seemed so big in comparison, especially to an 18 year old who was ready to explore the world (or at least the area 21 miles southwest of my home town). There was so much to do in Greensboro: ample shopping- Four Seasons Mall AND Friendly Center (I only had BMOC, Holly Hill Mall really didn't count); a sizeable downtown with unique destinations such as Glitters and the Bellemeade parking deck (oh, that cool spiral path leading to the sky!); Tate Street and it's super fun fall festivals; and, last but not least, a very charming neighborhood with an abundance of beautiful brick bungalows (my fav) named Sunset Hills.

I quickly grew familiar with many abodes in this community as families scooped me up for babysitting (how ironic that I'm

always on the search to find sitters for our daughter now). My first gig was with the Merlinis who, after raising three children in this amazing area, still reside on Rolling Road (just the parents, not the kids). Quick fact, Renee (Merlini) and I grew up beside one another on the quiet stretch of HWY 62

All three Merlini children were also in our 1999 wedding! Renee knew my innate love of caring for littles and suggested I become a camp counselor for Greenway East Park (a locale our child loves as well) through the Greensboro Parks and Recreation Department. She was really just interested in free childcare. Yes, FREE.



That was the summer of 1997 when, every morning of my work week, I took a trip to the Parks and Rec facility and checked out kid approved equipment for the hours ahead (the 9 hours



Top, Right & Bottom: Three views of the wide range of sizes, shapes and styles offered by the beautiful bungalows on Wright Avenue.



ahead). Children came out of the woodwork, parents dropped off in van fulls and I sweated it out in the sticky summer heat while loving every minute. I continue to hold my end-of-that-summer-gift dearly: A mancala board (we only had checkers in Burlington), thoughtfully given to me by Renee and a few other mothers to reminisce those heated (literally!) mancala matches.

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near the Alamance Battleground State Historic Site. My parents and her mom are neighbors to this day.



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Sunset Hills Tour of Historic Homes Coming In May

by Kathryn McDowell



Every year Preservation Greensboro hosts its annual fundraiser, The Tour of Historic Homes & Gardens.

We choose a different neighborhood each year to spread the love of preservation through the city. For 2024 we are so excited to bring it back to Sunset Hills! Not only do we get to visit new homes, but we get to celebrate your 100th anniversary!

In order to pull this event off we need your help! We need docents to staff the houses and we need houses! When you volunteer to be a docent you will fill a 3.5 hour time slot with the rest of the weekend to use your free ticket to see the tour! With putting your house on it you get an in depth history of your home, a feature in our coveted tour program and invited to our closed Tour Gala being hosted in a private home in Sunset Hills.

The tour is planned as a classic in-person tour, held on the weekend of May 18-19, 2024. Tour tickets may be used any day of the weekend - one admission per house. The tour will be open



11am-4pm Saturday May 18 and 1pm till 5pm on Sunday May 19. Bring a friend, wear comfortable shoes, and leave your car in one spot to walk and enjoy this spacious neighborhood. If you are interested in helping please email Kathryn at kmc-dowell@pres-ervationgreens-boro.org

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The Ripple Effect Of Ol' Fred

by Jeri Rowe

Jeri Rowe is the senior writer at High Point University. He and his wife, Katherine, and their two children, Elizabeth and Will, have lived in Sunset Hills since September 2007. This essay first appeared two days after Fred Chappell's death in Jeri's blog, "JRowe's Walk: A journalist's journey through life".



At a table inside Tate Street Coffeehouse, a block or so from his former office, I talked to Fred Chappell about writing.

Of course, I was nervous. I mean, he was Fred Chappell. He was this giant of Southern literature and the retired professor from UNC-Greensboro who put the school's MFA program on the country's literary map.

All I had to do was think of one number: 40.

Fred had taught at UNCG for more than 40 years. He had helped generations of students become award-winning writers, poets, and teachers of wide acclaim, and many knew him by his nickname: "Ol' Fred.

His students talked about his infectious laugh, his unassuming demeanor, and his habit of calling them "darling." As one former student said, that affectionate salutation was "the ideal way of moving through the world."

What always got me is what Fred did at The Pickwick.

It was a bowling alley of a bar at what we locals in Greensboro call The Corner. It's the intersection of Walker and Elam, the blacktop

I believe I got everything. I hope.

Anyway, at The Corner now is Walker's Which Way. That used to be The Pickwick, and every time I pass it — which is several times a week — I think of the stories I heard about Fred and The Pickwick.

He took Eudora Welty there when she came to UNCG to speak. But mostly, he met his students there to talk about their writing and their life.

I thought about all that before I headed to Tate Street Coffee-



Above: Fred Chappell, with his smile and wit, lighting up the conversation!

house with my notepad in my hand. When I walked in, there he was. Right past the counter, at a table, underneath the constellation of local art all along the walls. Time to do my journalism thing. Time to talk with someone who made me quake.

boundary between Lindley Park and Sunset Hills. The Corner is quite the communal epicenter with three restaurants, two bars, a laundromat, a coffee shop, a thrift shop, a catering kitchen, and a seven-aisle grocery store known as Bestway.

house with my notepad in my hand. When I walked in, there he was. Right past the counter, at a table, underneath the constellation of local art all along the walls. Time to do my journalism thing. Time to talk with someone who made me quake.

"Rowe, just ask questions," I

remember telling myself. "You got this."

I shouldn't have worried. Fred didn't condescend at all. He listened, I listened, and we had a great conversation about his craft, his poetry, and his mountains.

It was a weekday morning in September 2003. At the time, I was the editor of Go Triad, the A&E magazine at the News & Record, Greensboro's daily. I reached out to Fred because I wanted to know the how and the why of his poem, "The Attending."

He was North Carolina's poet laureate, and in August 2001, the N.C. Arts Council asked him to write a poem for that year's National Arts and Humanities Month.

He figured, as he told me, he'd write "nice things about the human race and go home."

Well, we all know what happened a month later.

Because of the terrorist attacks that changed our country forever, Fred knew his poem would have to change.

He explained how he began thinking about the resilience of past leaders and literary figures, and how he hoped their heroism would help assuage North Carolina, a state frozen in fear and fueled by anger like everybody else.

With that in mind, Fred composed "The Attending."

"Like when someone holds a gun to your head, you need something to keep cool and hold your nerve so you can think about what to do next," he told me. "And I was hoping to give people comfort and

give them confidence that this is not the end of the world. It's happened, and we have to pray it doesn't happen again."

What I still remember today was what Fred said about writing. His own writing.

"I'm not a good writer," he told me. "I'm a good rewriter."

I have used that quote for what feels like forever every time I've talked to college journalists about writing.

Rosemary Roberts, the award-winning N&R editorial writer, lassoed me first. She taught at UNCG. Then, Stan Swofford. He was the N&R reporter, the Pulitzer Prize finalist and my first editor. He taught at UNCG, too. Then, John Robinson, the longtime editor at the N&R. He taught at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Since 2009 or so, I've talked to students at UNC-Greensboro, UNC-Chapel Hill, Elon University and High Point University, where I work now.

With every deep dive into the craft of writing, I tell them about Fred Chappell.

**

Fred died Jan. 4. He was 87.

He was a neighbor to all of us in Sunset Hills. He lived two blocks from me. I could take a left on Sylvan from South Tremont, take a hard right onto Kensington, cross Wright, and I'd be at his front door.

But what always captivated me was not his geography to me, but his impact. I talked about him every time I talked to a class of college students about journalism

and writing.

Then, when he stood in my kitchen more than a decade ago during a Sunset Hills tour of homes, he and I caught up like neighbors do. How are you? I'm good. How is retirement? You know, I do love that poem you wrote for 9/11.

You know, that sort of thing.

Fred was humble, funny, a man of few words. When writers asked about his talent, he told them he felt he was way more lucky than talented.

In North Carolina, we were proud to call him one of our own. In Greensboro, we were grateful for what he did for our city. I've often said there is a writer or a poet behind every tree in Greensboro.

Fred is a big reason for that.

He began teaching at UNCG in 1964, the last year when it was known as the Women's College. His beginning salary: \$5,000 a year.

He came from Duke, where he earned his undergraduate and master's degrees. He moved to Greensboro with Susan, his high school sweetheart, and he helped build UNCG's MFA program into what it is today.

He became the magnet that drew generations of students to UNCG's MFA program. He never overwhelmed them with what he knew — and he knew a lot, mind you. He would simply, as he liked to say, "shut up and listen."

The quotes from his former students, found in UNCG's Magazine in the fall of 2022, attest to that. Go online. You can find it. If you

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More Than Just Chicken Wire And Lights

by Anne & Jonathan Smith



As the end of January quickly approaches, we wanted to give a report on the annual neighborhood Lighted Christmas Balls and Shine the Light on Hunger efforts.

From 1996 – 2007, the LCBs were just chicken wire and lights. But when neighbor Marlene Pratto suggested pairing the lights with a neighborhood food drive, the LCBs went viral. In 2012, a friend who is a GSO Fireman, invited us to lunch

to hear his dream of having a nighttime run under the LCBs. We were initially hesitant and said, if you can make it work, we will give it our blessing. And Nick and his wife Kristen did just that.

The run has been enormously successful, thanks to Nick, his Running with Horses (RWH) team, the City of Greens-



boro, the Police Department, EMS, and countless volunteers. The run had 3,800 registered participants and probably 2,000 more who weren't registered and jumped in without know-

ing it was a charity event. The double-lane drive-thru race packet
(continued on page 19)



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Those Beautiful Brick Bungalows

(continued from page 11)

Anniwho, back to several fond families of Sunset Hill: There were the Hammers (I was an occasional fill-in sitter), the beloved Stauffers, the Tierneys, plus a few more here and there. Tammy Tierney and I bonded over her love of all things creative, so much so she inspired me to pursue interior design (an interior designer herself). And 23+ years later, I'm still in the industry! Tammy was also a bridesmaid in our 1999 wedding. Speaking of which, shortly after tying the knot, my husband and I decided to invest in a home of our own. For a young, newly married couple just starting our careers, Sunset Hills was highly desired but not quite yet attainable. We bought in College Hill instead. Then Old Irving Park and following, moved south to Atlanta for a year and a few months. The highways of Georgia re-confirmed our love of Greensboro (where everything is only seven minutes away!) I often joke that we moved to Atlanta to be in Sunset Hills. Honestly, it gave us the opportunity to find where we truly belong and we belong here- In this superbly, spectacular Sunset Hills Neighborhood with wonderful neighbors, bountiful Christmas ball displays, charming corner restaurants/amenities + more. We currently live in one of those beautiful brick bungalows I dreamed about as a teen.

_____ sh _____

Easter Egg Hunt

When: Saturday, March 16th 3pm

Where: Sunset Hills Park at the intersection of Berkley and Market

What to expect: An appearance by the Easter bunny. One large egg hunt with a staggered start based on age. Crafts, lawn games and music.

If you would like to help stuff eggs, hide eggs or set up please contact the event coordinators.

[Cindy Ramsay ramsay01@mail.com](mailto:Cindy.Ramsay@mail.com), [Allison Garrett Allison.garrett84@gmail.com](mailto:Allison.Garrett@gmail.com), [Jenny Munro jennyrollins@gmail.com](mailto:Jenny.Munro@jennyrollins.com)



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More Than Just Chicken Wire And Lights

(continued from page 17)

pickup was brilliant and looked like the model for future years.

John Kelly and his crew ensured Sunset Hills Park was breathtaking and likely the most photographed place in the Triad. They even took the lights across W. Market Street to South Park.

The environmental committee prioritized keeping dead Christmas light strings out of our landfills. They staged collection boxes in Sunset Hills with attractive, informative signs, making it easier to recycle dead lights than to throw them away. Then they faithfully lugged piles of dead lights to the

correct recycling spots. Thanks, Erin and crew.

In 2022 combined efforts raised \$109,309.73 in cash, including \$80,000 from ROTB; "TEXT-TO-GIVE" signs brought in \$4,044. Generous folks from Greensboro and beyond dropped off 16,957 pounds of food. The food and money combined will provide 773,644 meals for hungry persons.

Since 2007 the neighborhood effort has raised \$788,494.79 including \$606,001 from ROTB 2012-2022 and 176,508 pounds of food, which became 5,616,196 meals for hungry persons. Yes, you read that right, that's five million, six hundred thousand healthy meals.

We are profoundly grateful to so many. You, who lit up the park, hung up balls or lights in your yard, or helped someone else with theirs, taught someone to make an LCB. You, who donated your time, food, or money, rounded up hundreds of cardboard boxes to box up the food for transport to food banks, cleared out the food hut and trailer every night, and unloaded 8 1/2 tons of food onto food bank loading docks. You, who managed, volunteered, ran, or walked in the Running of the Balls and recycled non-working lights. You are the Lighted Christmas Balls; chicken wire and lights are just the props. You spread joy and helped to shorten the line of hungry people.

_____ sh _____

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The Ripple Effect Of Ol' Fred

(continued from page 15)

do, scroll to page 21. That's where the quotes start. Here's one from Maria Hummell, Class of '98:

"When I met with him one afternoon, seeking a list of All the Important Books a Young Writer Must Read, he told me the advice Randall Jarrell had offered him, 'Read at whim.' In other words, we should learn to find our own best influences. I know one of mine, and I'm grateful for all that Fred has given me."

Fred's guidance and mentorship helped make UNCG's MFA program one of the best in the nation.

Meanwhile, he continued to write. He wrote

poetry, and he wrote fiction. For years, he wrote in longhand, and his talent displayed on the page earned him a spot on the top shelf of all Southern writers, right there beside William Faulkner and Flannery O'Connor.

Consider this take from The Los Angeles Book Book Review.

"Not since James Agee and Robert Penn Warren has a Southern writer displayed such masterful versatility. Together with only a handful of his American contemporaries, Chappell reminds us of the almost forgotten phrase 'man of letters.'"

You'll also find "Fred Chappell: I Am One Of You Forever," a beautiful hour-long documentary on Fred that is available online at PBS.org. It's a wondrous piece of work put together by UNCG professor Michael Frierson. I encourage you to watch it.

Fred talks about growing up as a farm boy in western North Carolina, in the hollers of the Southern Appalachian Mountains, in a dot of a community called Canton.

He called Canton a "grimy little mill town." But he did love that town.



Above from left to right:

A few of the over 30 books written by Fred Chappell; "More Shapes Than One", "Dagon", "I Am One of You Forever", "The Inking", "The Fred Chappell Reader"

He even wrote about it in the piece for the N&R in June 1991. He penned a scene he remembers when he was the little boy waiting for a haircut at Rymer's Barber Shop in downtown Canton. Here's how he started it.

If you were a boy sufficiently young – 9 years old, say, or 11 or 12 – you pushed open the door of Rymer's Barber Shop with a sense of wary familiarity. The little mountain

town of Canton, N.C., already offered few surprises. There were about 5,000 souls in this grimy mill town and they all knew one another and they all knew you, too.

But in the barber shop, no one was in a hurry to acknowledge you. There were two barber chairs but only one Mr. Rymer, and his chair was always occupied. On a wooden bench under the wall-length mirror opposite the chair sat five or six men, waiting their turn or only waiting for the hour or week or century to pass.

They were big and slow-talking and smelled of soil and labor. The farmers wore rubber boots or high-topped brogans, the loggers and outdoorsmen wore wool stockings beneath calf-high lace-up boots, and the mill workers wore street shoes. They crossed their legs and shifted their

feet as they chatted, and to a little boy, they looked awfully large. Their hands especially looked huge, knotty and calloused. They took not the least notice when you sat in one of the cane-bottom chairs up front with your back to the plate glass window and its legend painted in a sunrise design: "RYMER BARBER" over the top and "SHOP" below.

You sat and watched and listened, partly because there was nothing else to do. In 1947, television hadn't yet reached Canton and Mr. Rymer didn't stock magazines. No Field and Stream, no Collier's, no Progressive Farmer.

There was a radio, a tiny Arvin, perched on a shelf above one of the worn porcelain basins, but it was turned on only during the World Series. There was a copy of our newspaper, The Canton Enterprise, but its separate pages were scattered about the room, and you would never think of going among the adults to gather them.

The communication between these men was as deliberate and lazy as that among lions in the noontime veld. One of them would venture a phrase or more likely the name of an acquaintance and it would hang conspicuous in the silence until someone else felt an impulse to toy with it.

Two years ago at Greensboro Bound, the city's annual literary festival, I was one of many sitting inside the Jan Van Dyke auditorium at the Greensboro Cultural Center. We all watched "I Am One of You Forever." Sitting down front with UNCG's Michael Frierson was Ol' Fred himself.

I was dumbstruck by who I saw around me. I recognized many faces, and more than a few made a life by flexing their creative muscles. I sat across the aisle from my good friend, Sam Frazier, a book club buddy and a musician of much renown.

As we watched Michael's film, I recognized a guitar, a tune, a run of notes from the soundtrack that brought back dimly lit memories from nights long ago at old The Blind Tiger at The Corner.

Wait a minute

"Sam," I whispered, leaning into the aisle. "That's 'The Core.' That's yours!"

The Attending

*Let us, in this time of bitterest lament,
Go awhile apart and meditate
And reverently attend the ancestral choir
Of prophets, sages, founders of the state,
Who lend us strength and solace when the world is rent
And everywhere besieged with fire.
Let us linger, as we may, within the grove
And hear those voices in the heat of day
Speak like gentle winds stirring the silence
Softly in their never-ceasing play
Of loving variations on the theme of love
And weary descant against violence.
For we are nothing without the ones who came before,
They who with palette, loom, and graceful pen
And sculpted stone, with treatise and debate
Built up our world and built it up again
When it was brought to rubble by incendiary war
And the towering, sword-blade flames of hate.
And let us join with them in spirit by going to
Their words and deeds that make our history
A matter of some pride, if we will know
The best of it, forgoing vanity
And boast and doing calmly what we ought to do,
As they did then, a world ago.*

He smiled.

When the film ended, light illuminated the room and Fred talked about how odd it felt watching his life onscreen. Michael then opened it up to questions. And the questions came. I remember raising my hand and asking Fred something about how growing up in the mountains influenced his writing.

Or something like that.

He responded to my question the same way he's answered so many others curious about how his Appalachian roots acted as his creative fuel.

"I carry the mountains wherever I go."

Nice.

Now, back to September 2003, and my conversation at a table in the Tate Street Coffeehouse about "The Attending." Fred's poem is to the left.

John Robinson, the former editor of the N&R, had in his office hanging on the wall the page featuring Fred's poem. The page was framed, and it had a few paragraphs from me, the poem from Fred and the photo of NYC firefighters raising the American flag at Ground Zero.

It was quite the layout created by one of our many talented designers at the N&R.

Who knows where that framed page is today. But when I reread "The

Attending" after Fred's death, one line will always stick with me.

For we are nothing without the ones who came before.

So true.

Thanks, Fred. Thanks much.

_____ sh _____

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Updates From Sunset Hills Environmental Affairs (SHEA)

by Erin Reis



Thank you to everyone who participated in our "Lighten the Burden" string light recycling program. I took two huge

carloads of lights to Ecoflo, and I'm only one of many neighbors who collected light strands! If you still have burned-out string lights to recycle, please



take them to Ecoflo, 2750 Patterson St.

Also, thanks to the Carbon Offset Fee that runners pay when registering for Running of the Balls,

SHEA purchased a carbon offset of 100,000 pounds! Our estimate is that is enough to offset 20,000 lighted balls (assuming LED lights, 6 hours per day, for 60 days). The remaining funds will be used to purchase

LED light strands for the balls in the park, which I thought looked

especially beautiful this year.

Our Neighborhood Reforestation tree program is off to a great start! We have had 40+ tree re-



(continued on page 25)

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Updates From Sunset Hills Environmental Affairs (SHEA)

(continued from page 23)

quests and they are still coming in. The second order of trees should be in by the end of February. The deadline for ordering trees for the winter-spring planting is February 29. We will take orders through the summer but will not order new trees until October 1, 2024, for optimal planting. Please join our effort to plant 100 trees in the neighborhood, in honor of our neighborhood Centennial!

Several of our neighbors participated in the campaign led by the Greensboro Solar Power Now coalition to push Guilford County Schools to adopt a plan to transition to 100% clean energy

by 2050. Solar Power Now had speakers at every School Board meeting for at least nine months and had been planning to send Valentines to the school board members asking them to add the deadline of 2050 to the policy. On the day we got 200 Valentines printed, we found out the School Board had added the deadline! We decided to repurpose the Valentines as thank-you notes, and you may have seen a table at the Corner Farmer's Market on February 3 to collect signatures on the cards. Thank you to everyone who stopped by!

Two important events coming up:

March 13, 2024, at 7:00pm: Please join us at Maxie B's for a SHEA meeting to discuss our projects for

this year. Our subcommittees focus on the natural world (promoting native plants, stream health and wildlife habitats in our neighborhood), renewable energy (promoting rooftop solar, especially on the new and/or rehabbed Lindley Elementary School), and environmental education (see the kiosks in the park for information about upcoming events and environmentally-focused lending library!). We welcome your ideas and participation.

March 17, 2024, at 2:00pm: Stream Clean-Up! Meet at the corner of Greenway and Berkeley. Bring work/garden gloves if you've got them; other cleanup supplies will be provided.

_____ sh _____



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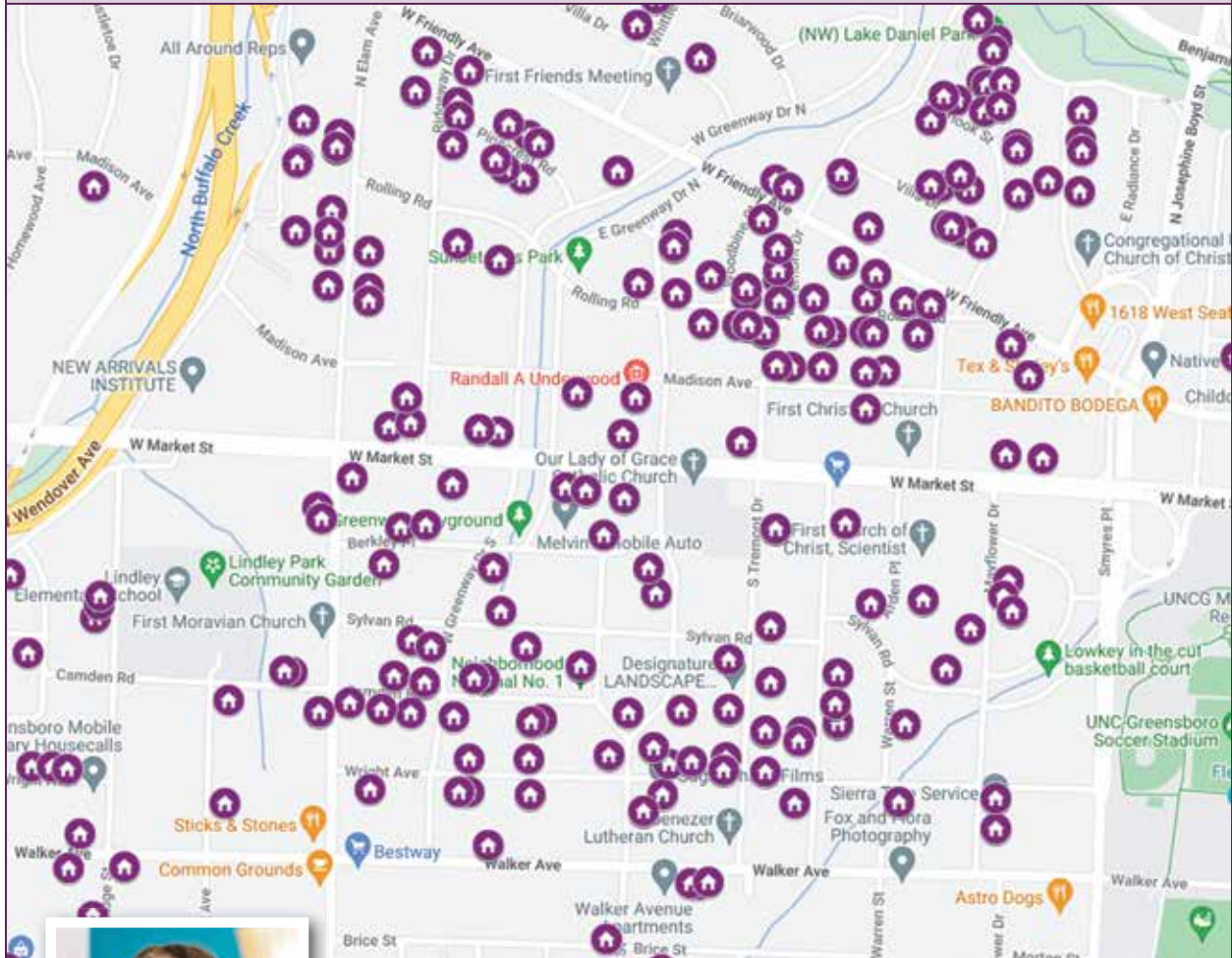
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