

GASTON ALIVE

MAGAZINE

HOME | GARDEN | STYLE | FUN | FOOD | HAPPENINGS

Art Transforming Gastonia

p12



Gaston County's Community Gardens p6

Cool and Easy Peach Trifle p11

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FROM THE PUBLISHER

For those of you that have been saying for years that you wish Gaston County would get it together, or that you wish that “they” would do something about economic development, etc., rest assured, “they” are. During a recent conversation with Gastonia Mayor John Bridgeman, I quickly filled a legal pad with projects that are on the drawing board, have been announced in the press, or are presently under construction. Here is a partial list:

- Mount Holly’s long proposed greenway finally has the green light!
- The Chronicle Mill project in Belmont

And in Gastonia:

- The Webb Craft Kitchen (formerly Nick’s)
- Several projects on South Street in Gastonia-including a law firm currently doing renovations in buildings there
- The old Morris Jewelers building is under renovation
- Lily’s Italian restaurant is open and packed almost every night
- A new bicycle shop
- Merryman Cleveland’s Hive art, stationery and event/class space
- Life of Pie pizza restaurant on the corner of Marietta and Main
- Artspace will bring 50 artists to a new live/work/gallery space on the corner of South and Franklin
- A new Harris Teeter

- A new Hilton Garden Inn
- A boutique hotel in the Lawyers Building on Main
- Multiple locations of new condos and apartments
- Johnny Harris proposed new Ballantyne project below the airport on the East side of the river will necessitate a road into Gaston County (not the Garden Parkway)
- Proposed new lanes on I-85 to prevent congestion

...and more that space here will not allow. The point is, if you have been waiting for change to come to Gaston, get ready. As Mayor John Bridgeman says, “It’s our turn, it’s our time”.

All the best,

David

dhamrick@gastonalive.com

featured this month

06

GASTON COUNTY’S
COMMUNITY GARDENS

11

COOL AND EASY
PEACH TRIFLE

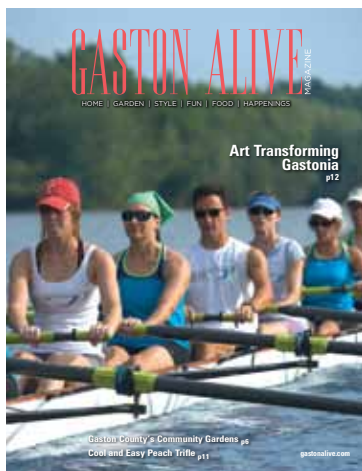
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ART TRANSFORMING
GASTONIA



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on the cover



Pictured on this month's cover is a crew from the Belmont Rowing Center, on the Catawba River just outside Belmont on a recent Saturday morning. They are currently looking for a new home in Gaston County-if you have any ideas or can connect them with appropriate space, please reach out to them at info@BelmontRowing.org. They would love to talk to you, Let's keep this great organization in Gaston County!

Photo courtesy of Rick Haithcox, rickhaithcox.com

our staff

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GA|07|15

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Community Gardens In Gaston County

From Concept To Reality!

By Ben Dungan

Belmont Community Garden

Coming up with a great idea isn't that hard to do. Many of us come up with great ideas on a daily basis. It's the implementation process of those great ideas that is actually the hard part. That's the reason I'm amazed and fascinated at the number of community gardens our county now boasts. Two years ago, there wasn't a single community garden to speak of. And now there are five.



Belmont Community Garden (Jonathan Taylor with niece Susannah Taylor Spath)

Community gardens have always been around in some form or fashion, but it seems as of late, more communities are getting together to make it a reality. But like anything, a community garden may sound like a great concept in theory. However, just like any plant, it needs the right conditions to not only grow, but to thrive. There a lot of pieces that need to come together simultaneously to make a community garden a reality. That includes an actual place to garden, an organization with great leadership, and of course, a devoted core of passionate volunteers.

Those are just the basics. Without those, a community garden doesn't have much of a chance to succeed. That's why it's amazing to see many of the community gardens thriving in our area. And what's even more amazing about it all, is that they each have their own distinct personality.



Volunteers working in the Gastonia Rotary Garden

Belmont Community Gardens

This garden is now into its second growing season. The idea for this garden came to light after Jonathan Taylor and Tyler Jones were sharing some conversation over a couple beers. They soon took to Facebook to gauge interest for the idea, and the response was overwhelming.

Sixteen months later, the garden has 47 garden plots for lease with a strong emphasis on organic gardening. Taylor is amazed at how involved the parents of both Page and Belmont Central Elementary students have been in making their garden a great learning resource for kids in Belmont.



Bobby and Melanie Black, and grandson Cooper Summerlin



Gastonia Rotary Garden
(Scott and Debbie Scarborough)

Gastonia Rotary Garden

Sometimes you get an idea or thought in your head and you just can't shake it. That's how Dr. Will Current describes how the Gastonia Rotary Garden came to be. After years of driving by a vacant lot between Avon and Broad streets on East Franklin Blvd. in Gastonia, Current kept coming back to one idea - a community garden.

Current, a member of the Rotary Club of Gastonia, decided to approach his rotary club with the idea of taking this up as a service project. And take it up they did. Now in their second growing season, they currently have 43 garden plots managed by various community

groups. However, what makes this garden different from the rest, is that all the produce harvested goes directly to organizations in our community that feed the hungry.

Mount Holly Community Garden

Of the three profiled for this story, this is the youngest of the gardens. The Mount Holly Community Garden, which operates under the Mount Holly Farmers Market non-profit status, broke ground in February of this year. With 52 garden plots available, it's hard to believe the amount of progress they have made in such a short period of time.

According to Melanie Black, a board member with the Mount Holly Farmers Market, everything just fell into place like it was meant to be. They found the perfect lot (owned by First United Methodist Church), a great church to partner with, and were blessed to have a passionate and supportive Farmers Market board. She was amazed at how much energy and support this garden had from the very beginning.

However, it's clear to see that in each of these instances, a simple idea about a garden has blossomed and grown into something that all of these organizations and groups could have never imagined. I think it's fair to say that the amount of community excitement and support has blown them away.

So maybe it's true. If you build it, they will come. And don't let your black thumb keep you away. After all, as Melanie Black told me, "it's only 10% gardening. It's 90% community".

For more information about all of the community gardens in Gaston County and how you can get involved, visit www.gastoncommunitygardens.com.

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Firehouse Subs
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Kids eat free. All day.

Tijuana Flats
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MONDAY

The Round Bistro
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TUESDAY

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504 Cox Rd.
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Moe's Southwest Grill

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Kids eat free with purchase of adult entree. All day.

McAlister's Deli

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Kids eat free after 4pm.

AmberJack Seafood Restaurant
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Kids 10 & under with purchase of adult entree.

Thai House
4008 E. Franklin Blvd.
Gastonia

Kids 9 & under eat free with adult entree purchase.

Surf & Turf Lodge

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Bessemer City
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One free kid's meal per adult meal purchase.

Thai House
4008 E. Franklin Blvd.
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SATURDAY

Steak 'n Shake
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Hooters
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GASTON ALIVE

MAGAZINE

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- Jesse Cole,
Owner/President Gastonia Grizzlies

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The Coming Economic Recession

By Todd Van Der Meid, MBA, CFP®

Many think of recessions as unexpected financial calamities that strike without warning, leaving devastation in their path. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, economic recessions and expansions are two sides of the same economic coin; you can't have one without the other. The oscillation between expansion and recession is called the business cycle and its components are well documented. No one can tell you with certainty when the next recession will begin or what will be the cause, but I can assure you that we will have recessions in the future as we have had in the past. Understanding some of the economic factors that often precede a recession can go along way in determining when and what types of adjustments should be made to your portfolio to mitigate the impact.



1. Employment – If I only had one piece of economic data, the monthly employment report would be the most useful. On the first Friday of each month, the Bureau of Labor Statistics releases it's monthly jobs report. At an elementary level, if people have jobs they have money to spend, resulting in economic growth. Employment, however, is a lagging economic indicator. Businesses begin reducing staff after demand has fallen for their goods or services. Employers do not begin hiring until after an upward trend in their business has been established.

What other economic factors should you know about?

Continue reading this article on my blog at www.rhinowealth.com



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PEACH TRIFLE

By David Hamrick

Peaches, peaches! If you live in the Carolinas in late July, you are in peach heaven! Whether you buy them at the grocers, a roadside peach stand, or are lucky enough to pick from your own trees, peaches are a summertime treasure. Here is an easy, quick, cool (no bake) recipe for a spectacular, visually stunning dessert that will have your friends and family asking for more.



INGREDIENTS

Angel food cake
4-6 Ripe peaches
1 Large box vanilla instant jello pudding mix
1 Small box french vanilla instant jello pudding mix
1 Large cool whip
1 to 2 Tablespoons of sherry

Break the angel food cake into small pieces and place in bottom of bowl. Spread sherry over top. Cut up the peeled peaches and place on top of the cake pieces. Mix the pudding mixes together according to directions on the box. Pour over peaches and cake pieces. Cover with cool whip, and place in refrigerator for several hours or overnight. Garnish with peach slices, fresh mint, or other fresh fruit.

Other types of in season fruit can be substituted- check Pinterest for tons of Trifle dessert ideas! Thanks to our good friend and brilliant cook Helen Killian for her “secret” recipe! Enjoy

Cooking With Glenn will return next month!



Well of Creativity

by Merryman Cassels



The clanging bell over the Hive's front door startled me as a raggedy string bean of a man tumbled in. I'd been quietly questioning my wisdom in opening a shop on Main Avenue in Gastonia, and my current customer did not appear to be an affirmation to the contrary. I hesitated then welcomed my visitor. He said he was an artist and someone had sent him my way. I directed him to the art supplies. For some odd reason, I also spilled the truth of my fear. He looked around the Hive and at me and spoke, "My God clearly told me His well of creativity is bottomless. I can work every day until the end of time and never reach the bottom." These words brought me tremendous peace and have remained a daily mediation as I think of all the creative people producing on our little patch of the planet.

Gaston County has always been a creative place rooted in the heritage of our Native American forefathers and evolving with the fiber artists and string bands of our textile age. Today, creative expression remains a vibrant thread running through our community.

Arts on Main, in partnership with the City of Gastonia, houses 26 day studios for working artists. It is home to our thriving fifty-year-old Gaston County Arts Guild, and hosts an impressive gallery, classroom space, and a gift shop that is filled with local artisans' treasures. Curt Butler of Butler Studios is luring aspiring painters by the dozens "across the river" for his weekly classes. Curt is rapidly gaining national recognition as an important working artist. Ryan Karpinsky's edgy Art Station on South Street exhibits a variety of passionate and talented artists and shares a cool hipster vibe with the music happening next door at Zoe's coffee shop. Anastasia Boswell's A Wild Path Studio hosts the popular Wine+Design Parties, Intuitive painting, yoga, and children's art. My Hive preserves the stationery tradition begun by Torrence Stationery and has added artisan gifts and creative workshops. Our classroom instructors come from near and far to share their craft with our community and the folks who travel to Gastonia seeking the Hive's programming. There are at least a dozen more artists secreted away in downtown Gastonia studios painting, bookbinding,



The Merit Building Outdoor Gallery which can be seen from Main Street or while in Center Park.



A Creative Business Pollinator Group at the Hive.

designing jewelry, filmmaking, photographing, playing music, and sculpting.

Five years ago, Richard Rankin asked if I would help him with a Gastonia focused pre-feasibility study for an organization called Artspace. Artspace, founded in 1979, is the largest not-for profit real estate developer in the country. They identify underutilized downtown properties and develop affordable live/work spaces for artists. The cultural revitalization provided by the creative community creates an economic "tipping point" in municipalities that has been successfully repeated 39 times over around the country.



Simple Pleasure Watercolor class with Michelle Winecoff.

extensive analysis, Gastonia qualified to build a forty unit live/work community with gallery and retail space. The Community Foundation of Gaston County has partnered with Artspace to develop Gastonia Artspace Lofts of the corner of Franklin and South Streets in downtown Gastonia. Funding comes from philanthropic leaders and public funding sources for affordable housing, economic development, historic preservation and cultural facility development. This is the first P3 development in downtown Gastonia since 2000 and will be the first Artspace in the country to pioneer an onsite community wellness center through an innovative partnership with CaroMont Health.



CaroMont Health has proven a great arts patron in Gaston County. With the recent construction of the Mount Holly Emergency Department, CaroMont Health worked with community leaders and several area artists to create artwork that reflects Mount Holly's special character. Recently, the Rotary Club of Gastonia commissioned area artists to create dynamic lampshades that were auctioned to raise funds to build book stops for Gastonia parks and public spaces. Other non-profits are crafting similar creative partnerships that have evolved well beyond the old days of simple art auctions. It has been spectacular to witness the community's appreciation for this area's talented artists.

Gaston County enjoys a bottomless well of creativity. It is a miracle to witness downtown Gastonia waking up as it embraces the soulful artists who make our lives richer and more colorful. It's just plain cool that us folks "west of the river" are the ones to recognize and harness the economic powerhouse that a valued, vital creative community can be. ■

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Grout tile floor | <input type="checkbox"/> Repair wood on deck |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Powerwash deck | <input type="checkbox"/> Install backsplash |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Repair kitchen drywall | <input type="checkbox"/> Hang mirror in hallway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fix cabinet hinge | <input type="checkbox"/> Change ceiling light bulbs |
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Minimum of 4 hours of service. Offer valid one time per household. Available at participating locations only. Not valid with any other offer.

Offer Expires: August 31, 2015

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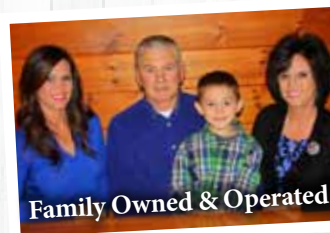
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