

“THE RIGHT TRACK”



Volume 17 Issue 2

<http://ci.spencer.nc.us>

November 2011

“Home of the North Carolina Transportation Museum”

FROM THE MAYOR

We have just completed another election for the Town Board of Spencer. I'd like to thank Tracy Aitken and Delaine Fowler for serving as Aldermen on the Town Board these last two years. Your service to our town is greatly appreciated.

Welcome, Jim Gobbel and Kevin Jones as our newly elected Aldermen. I look forward to working with them and our returning Aldermen, Scott Benfield, David Smith, Reid Walters and Jeff Morris. I'm sure this team can accomplish a great deal.

We received a \$200,000 grant from the North Carolina Parks and Recreation Trust Fund. This will help to pay off the 42 acres called Spencer Woods. Thanks to Fred and Alice Stanback and to everyone else that donated to this worthy cause. There was a large turnout for the forum held on November 10th. We appreciate your time and suggestions. On January 19th and 20th, the North Carolina Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects will be in town to interview citizens to get input on how you would like to see this land developed. They will be doing a “walk through” over the land to see what is feasible for this park. Lynn Raker is responsible for getting this group of volunteers together, at no cost to the Town of Spencer. Thank you, Lynn. We are partnering with the Land Trust of Central North Carolina on this endeavor.

As the holiday season nears, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving, a Merry Christmas and a safe, Happy New Year.

Jody Everhart, Mayor

FROM THE TOWN MANAGER

As we head into the holidays and as the last newsletter of the year, it's easy to reflect back and see the number of accomplishments and changes we've made in 2011.

The big one is of course moving to curbside pickup. We worked very diligently for months on the details that would make this transition go as smoothly as possible, and many thanks go out to YOU for ultimately helping us make it go as smoothly as it has.

A code enforcement and an administrative position were additionally cut from staff close to the end of the fiscal year, so we've been working out those details throughout the third quarter of the year. Again, special thanks to all of you that have been taking the time to call in concerns before they get too far along. It's definitely been great teamwork from within the community!

And lastly, I know I've personally fielded at least a half-dozen questions since July from property owners asking how their tax bills went down since our tax rate went up this year (obviously these weren't complaints, but rather happy surprises!). To recap from the budget process: the short and simple answer is that during years of county revaluation, the state requires that towns calculate what tax rate would be needed under revaluated property values to produce the same amount of tax revenues previously produced. If property values went up by a certain percentage, then our rate would be less in that upcoming year; if they went down by a certain percentage, then our rate

would be more. Our \$0.60 tax rate last year consequently would have been \$0.656 under the newly assessed values. Instead of going to that though, we only went to a \$0.628 tax rate. So, even though the tax “rate” number went up, many people did indeed see a decrease in their final bills—and that is completely normal. It simply depended on what final amount your particular property was assessed during the county revaluation.

The I-85 expansion project is still coming along well on schedule. The expansion will ultimately (and inevitably) make the commercially and industrially zoned properties along the corridor more enticing for development and economic development initiatives. Given the challenges that come (tax-wise) from our predominantly residential base, that in and of itself is good news for whenever it falls on the horizon. In the meantime though, thanks again to our dedicated staff, volunteers and boards, who have all helped continue our creative approaches to providing services and conducting operations. During the past six years, those efforts have steadily stabilized our fund balance while still providing the level of services decided upon each year. THANK YOU and keep up the great work!

Larry E. Smith
Town Manager



LIBRARY EVENTS

Spencer Public Library has begun to offer some programs geared for children. There is a pre-school storytime presented on Wednesday mornings at 10:30 am. These storytimes are themed and include books, flannelboard stories, songs, and movement songs and rhymes. These will continue on an ongoing basis with the exceptions of November 23 and December 21 and 28.

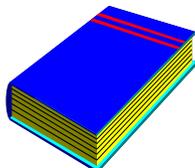
Free afterschool tutoring and homework help is now available for children in grades K-6 from 3:30 pm to 4:30 pm Mondays through Thursdays. Please come by or call the library at 704-636-9072 to register your child for this service.



The book sale is also ongoing with additional times to "fill the sack" now available on Mondays 2-6, Wednesdays 2-5 and Fridays 2-5. The cost if you bring your own sack or bag is \$2.00 for cloth bags and \$1.00 for plastic bags. Plastic bags are available at the library which you may purchase and fill for \$1.50. Regular prices of \$1.00 for hardbacks and \$.50 for paperbacks (half price if your name is on the card in the back of the book) will be in effect on Tuesdays and Thursdays. New materials are being added as space allows.

Please be aware of the new library hours of Mondays 2-6, Tuesdays 2-5, Wednesdays 10-12 and 2-5, Thursdays 2-6 and Fridays 2-5. The library is closed on Saturdays and Sundays.

Cyndi Atwell
Librarian

**HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS CELEBRATION**

You'll notice lots of new lights and decorations around town this year! We've partnered with the NCTM to add exterior lights to the Master Mechanic's office, created 3 new Kissing Balls, and worked with local merchants to add 18 new wreaths and ribbons. Please join us for the following events:

Spencer's Christmas in the Park

Date: Friday, December 2nd

Time: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Library Park, Spencer

The Spencer Tree Lighting Ceremony is always a magical event. Join the Hometown Holidays Committee on Friday, December 2nd as they usher in the Christmas season.

Festivities begin at 6:00 pm, tree lighting at 7 pm. Over 500 luminaries will light up the park. Some of the entertainers include: Adam Broyles, Central United Methodist Church's Circus Train, North Hills Christian School's Black Light Ministry, Caroline Nance, North Rowan Glee Club, Santa, and Steppin' Out Dance Company.

Candlelight Tour of Homes

Date: Thursday, December 8th

Time: 6:00 pm—9:00 pm

This festive tour features six beautiful homes all decked out in Christmas finery. Tour tickets will be on sale at Debbie Barnhardt Jewelers, Spencer Home Supply, Green Goat Gallery and the Rowan County Visitors Bureau. Ticket prices are \$10.00. Houses on the 2011 Tour include: Marty Lineberger, 413 S. Spencer Avenue; William and Anna Mandlestamm, 204 Fourth Street, Jill Peterson, 308 South Carolina Avenue, Lynn Plummer, 405 S. Baldwin Avenue, Tommy Stoner, 301 Fourth Street, and Jody & Steve Vail, 600 Fourth Street.

Candlelight Tour of Churches

Date: Friday, December 16th

Time: 6:00 pm—9:00 pm

The fourth annual Candlelight Tour of Churches will be held in Spencer again this holiday season. This self guided tour is free and open to the public. Event runs from 6 pm to 9 pm. Trolley rides are available for this tour, seating is limited. Please meet at the Spencer Shoppes (formerly Park Plaza) at 5:30 pm. Price is \$1.00 for all riders over the age of 3. Tour schedule is as follows:

- Stop 1, Spencer Presbyterian Church 6:00 pm—6:20 pm
- Stop 2, Oakdale Baptist Church 6:30 pm—6:50 pm
- Stop 3, Dorsett Chapel 7:00 pm—7:20 pm
- Stop 4, Central United Methodist Church 7:30 pm—7:50 pm
- Stop 5, First Baptist Church 8:00 pm—8:20 pm
- Stop 6, Calvary Lutheran Church 8:30 pm—Special Christmas Service

Spencer's Outdoor Holiday Decorating Contest

Date: Monday, December 12—Wednesday, December 14

Time: 6:00 pm—9:00 pm

Help us light up the town! We're having a contest and we want you to participate. Decorate your home and yard and you could win big! Winners will be notified the following week.

2012 Spencer Community Calendars on SALE NOW! They will be available for pick up in early December from your local merchants. All proceeds from the sale of the calendar will help us continue our community efforts in Spencer.

For more information about any of these events please visit www.spencerhometownholidays.com or email Beth Morris Nance at bethmnance@gmail.com

LAND MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Please join me in welcoming in the Fall season! In the last newsletter, I mentioned how the town worked with the Historic Preservation Commission to create a walking tour of the town's Historic district. Copies of that brochure have been printed. Please feel free to stop by town hall and pick up a copy! The walking tour is one mile long. Also, an electronic copy is available on the town's web site (ci.spencer.nc.us).

The Planning Board has been studying issues such as the town's adult establishment ordinance, our flood damage prevention ordinance and issues arising from a recent joint Planning Board / Board of Aldermen meeting. The Zoning Board of Adjustment has been engaged in interactive training exercises.

Finally, we have an open spot on our Planning Board. If you have an interest in being on this board or know of someone who may, please contact me at 704-633-2231.

Dustin Wilson
Land Management Director

LEAF AND BRUSH REMOVAL

The fall of the year is now upon us and our leaf and brush removal is in full force. We are running two vacuums to stay ahead of the leaves. We have changed the dates for loose leaf collection this year and wanted to remind all citizens that the vacuums will only be running from October 1st through December 31st. Outside of these dates all small debris such as leaves and grass will need to be bagged for pick up. We will run our leaf vacuums during the spring for one month to ensure you an opportunity to do any spring yard cleaning without the need to bag your debris. As always our brush chipper is running year round and we will pick up any yard debris that is cut in lengths of less than 6' and nothing larger than 4" in diameter. All cut ends need to face the street and be stacked as neatly as possible. As always we appreciate all our citizens' hard work in maintaining their property and we will continue to collect all debris to maintain the esthetics of our Town.

Jeff Bumgarner
Public Works Director



OUTSTANDING STUDENTS AND SCHOOL AWARDS

At the September Board of Aldermen meeting, MacKenna Clifton, fourth grader in Ms. Killian's and Ms. Beechams' classes, was recognized as North Rowan Elementary School's student of the month. Zinajah Watson, seventh grade student at North Rowan Middle School, was also recognized.

October's certificates went to Eric Diaz, a fifth grader in Ms. Childers' class at North Rowan Elementary, Bryn Gilland, an eighth grader at North Rowan Middle, and Fayelesa Shropshire, a junior at North Rowan High School.

For the month of November, the following students were recognized: Diego Dela Cruz, a fourth grader in Ms. Volpicelli's class at North Rowan Elementary; Janet Hernandez, a student at North Rowan Middle; and Jessica Wall, a freshman at North Rowan High School.

Congratulations to all these fine students!



NOTICE FROM SPENCER SENIORS PLANNING COUNCIL AND SPENCER COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

Due to the renovation work on the Family Life Center at Oakdale Baptist Church, the Spencer Seniors Christmas Party will not be held. We're hoping to have a Winter Festival mid January to which our Spencer seniors would be welcome to attend. We will have a luncheon and then a program in the Family Life Center at Oakdale Baptist, 200 Charles Street, Spencer.

The Spencer Council of Churches will be offering a special worship service at Christmas time for those who have suffered either the loss of a loved one or employment or any other tough issue they are facing at Christmas. The pain of loss at Christmas can be a very tough experience. We're calling this service a "Blue Christmas Worship Service." It will be held Wednesday night, December 21 at 6:30 in the chapel room of Central United Methodist Church, Spencer. It will be a time to minister to the pain of your loss with the hope of our faith and by testimonies of others and how they got through that first Christmas having suffered a great loss of some kind. We will have opportunities to hear from many participants in this very informal service. For more information please call Pastor Carrie Bishop at 704-636-2152 or Pastor Richard Gross at 704-633-9412.



SMOKE DETECTORS

Spencer Fire Department would like to remind everyone that as winter approaches and furnaces are being put into use, please remember to change the batteries in your smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. If anyone needs help changing the batteries or checking their detectors, please call the fire department at 704-637-6135 and leave a message so someone can return your call.

Anyone who has a working fireplace is reminded to have the chimney inspected and cleaned before using the fireplace. If you have gas logs, it is a good idea to get them inspected as well to make sure there is not a problem with carbon monoxide. And remember that space heaters can cause fires if they are placed too close to flammable materials such as drapes, furniture or bedding.

If you do not have smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors, consider making that purchase a priority. It can save a life!

B. Gray Grubb
Fire Chief



NORTH ROWAN CLASS OF '72

North Rowan High School, Class of 1972 will be having a 40th class reunion in the fall of 2012. I am looking for all classmates from this class. If you know of anyone from this class, please contact Carol Harrison Alley, email calley@rtmc.net or cell number 336-596-0024. Thank you!

FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department has had multiple reports of a tall, almost 6', muscular black female entering residences while the homeowner is out in the yard. The suspect looks for cash and then exits through the rear of the residence while the homeowner comes through the front door. The suspect seems to especially prey on the elderly. Please lock your door when you go outside to prevent incidents like this from taking place. If you see any suspicious persons in your area that do not belong, and especially anyone matching this suspect's description, please call 911 and report a suspicious person and an officer will respond to investigate. We live in difficult economic times and the desperate are becoming more desperate than ever.

The Police Department would also like to remind residents to keep the doors locked on their automobiles. There have been numerous incidents where unlocked vehicles were entered and GPS and loose change was taken from the vehicles. Thank you, and stay safe.

Michael James
Chief of Police



HOW TO CONTACT A POLICE OFFICER

Spencer Police Officers are dispatched by Rowan County Communications in Salisbury. Therefore, if you have an emergency and feel that your life or property is being threatened, **please call 911**. If you need to report a crime or need an officer to stop by your residence, and feel that there is no immediate danger, you can also call Rowan County Communications directly at 704-216-8500.

If you need an officer for *information only, or need a question answered*, please continue to call the police department (704-633-3574) from 8:30 am until 5:00 pm on weekdays. After 5:00 pm and before 8:30 am and on weekends, you will need to call 704-216-8500.

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