

# Currents

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# BLIND BINGO

## Local Lions Club offers activity for visually impaired county residents

STORY AND PHOTOS BY  
WILLIAM R. TOLER  
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

For just more than a year, visually impaired residents have been yelling, "Bingo!"

That's because the New Bern chapter of the Lions Club, an organization dedicated to providing assistance and activities for the blind and visually impaired, has sponsored weekly, Wednesday bingo since Sept. 14, 2004 at the Senior Center on George Street in downtown New Bern.

Last year George Fisher, current secretary of the chapter, met with Senior Center Executive Director Sue Harper and Linda Brown, center manager, to start the program. Lori Brault, social worker for the blind and visually impaired in Craven and Carteret counties, was also involved in the process.

"What I did was send out mailings to the people on the register to see what the interest was," said Brault.

She said there were 251 blind and visually impaired people in Craven County listed on the register. She added that there may be just as many who aren't on the list.

Brault's husband, John, who is visually impaired, is also one of the participants.

"We have 10 to 12 VIPs [Visually Impaired People] on average," said Fisher. "We normally have five to six volunteers." Those volunteers include Fisher and his wife Bobbi (who is the current president) and other members of the New Bern Lions.

The wisecracking crowd ranges in age from 38 to 91.

Fisher said that the club supplies all game materials and prizes, which are bankrolled through two semi-annual yard sales.

In order to get "more VIPs to attend," Fisher said that the club is going to try and expand the activity to two days per week.

But bingo isn't all the Lions have done for the blind. "In addition to the Wednesday

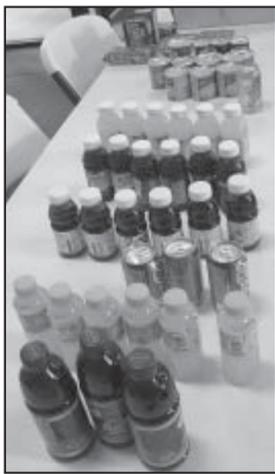
program, we've also taken them bowling and to a Kinston Indians game," said Fisher.

The state chapter sponsors a yearly fishing tournament, being held this week on the Outer Banks. Fisher said that the Lions are expecting 500 VIPs at this year's event. Three hundred Lions Club volunteers from across the state will be on hand to assist the patrons.

In addition, the state chapter provides Camp Dogwood, a summer camp located on Lake Norman just south of Mooresville for the blind and visually impaired. Activities range from boat rides and horseback riding to an end-of-the-week talent show.

Fisher said that the camp served more than 850 guests this past summer.

Contact William R. Toler at 633-2757 or william@indieregister.com



Typical bingo prizes include small food and drink items.



Frank Pocta calls out another round of bingo at the Senior Center.



New Bern Lions chapter president Bobbi Fisher (right) helps out Joe Bellamy with his cards.



Lions Club volunteers and participants engage in another round of bingo.

## Flying Blind

### Mother reaches goals despite physical setbacks

WILLIAM R. TOLER  
CURRENTS EDITOR



I can only imagine what it's like to grow up blind. My mom, however, knows firsthand.

Granted, she isn't totally blind, but it's been a struggle nonetheless.

When her vision problem was first discovered, the doctors said she would only be able to see shapes and shadows. That was not the case.

She was able to go through public schools, with a little difficulty, and was an active member of the Junior Civitans at West Craven High School.

Following high school, she attended Western Carolina University for one year.

She probably would have gone back, but she met my dad over summer break. They met on a blind date...literally.

By December, they were married. And a year and a half later, I came along.

Now, I can't remember when I first found out about her obstacle, but I do remember other things. I remember her rocking me to sleep in her blue-backed rocking chair. I remember her strapping me in to the child seat on the back of her bike and riding to the local store, nearly three miles away.

When I started school, she and her mother, my grandmother, would volunteer at my school. She also served as a substitute teacher for both kindergarten and fourth grade.

Once I got settled into my education, she continued hers, this time at Craven Community College.

Not letting her sight, or lack thereof, hold her back, she maintained a high grade-point average, became an ambassador for the college, was a charter member of the international honor society Phi Theta Kappa, and made it on the national Dean's List.

During this time, she tutored two local blind children for her classes.

In 1994, she graduated from CCC with an associate in arts in early childhood education.

She would have continued on to work on her bachelor of arts at East Carolina University, but couldn't find a ride. She had planned to ride with me and we would both be enrolled at ECU following my high school graduation.

Well...plans change. In February of my senior year, she gave birth to kid number two: a hyperactive bundle of energy named Jesse James.

With that being as such, and my not applying to a four-year college on time, I attended CCC...for six years.

She continued to raise my brother and became active at church. She served as the education director at our church and planned the week-long vacation Bible school.

I have gotten away with not having to pay for gas or insurance by being her chauffeur...driving her to the doctor, to get groceries, to a National Federation of the Blind protest in Washington, D.C. ... things like that.

She has been an inspiration to me as well as others, vision notwithstanding.

Contact William R. Toler at 633-2757 or william@indieregister.com



Frequent player John Brault notices he is one chip away from 'Bingo.'

## From flu shots to fun Opportunities for county seniors abound

STAFF REPORTS  
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Craven County Senior Services will be providing activities and fellowship opportunities throughout the area this month.

A breast cancer awareness program will be held on Thursday, Oct. 13. This free event will begin at 12:30 p.m. at the George Street center in New Bern and last about one hour.

Staff from the Pitt County Center for Hearing will be providing a hearing screening in New Bern from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Wednesday Oct. 19. There is no reservation required for this free service.

Flu shots will be given by Maxim Health Care at all county centers: Wednesday, Oct. 12 from 10 a.m. until

noon at the Vanceboro site; Tuesday, Oct. 18 from 9 a.m. until noon at the George Street center in New Bern; and Friday, Oct. 21 from 10 a.m. until noon at the Havelock center. Free shots will be available for those with Medicare part B. A \$25 fee will apply to all others. Seniors should bring a picture ID along with their Medicare cards.

Seniors are invited to attend Halloween and Harvest festivals at each of the county's centers. On Wednesday, Oct. 26, events will be held at both the Harlowe and Havelock centers. The Vanceboro site will hold its activity the following day and New Bern's will be on Halloween day.

The George Street center in New Bern will hold a free,

hour-long Alzheimer's workshop on Monday, Nov. 7 at 2 p.m. The guest speaker will be Michelle Holland, director of operations for Help at Home. Seniors and friends and relatives of Alzheimer's patients are encouraged to attend.

Free meals are available for residents and spouses ages 60 and above at all four senior centers at noon. Activities are also held at each location.

Volunteers are also needed to deliver meals to homebound residents in the Havelock and New Bern areas.

For more information about these and other activities, contact Craven County Senior Services at (252) 638-1790.

# Sympathy for the Blue Devils

## Rolling Stones perform at Duke University

BY WILLIAM R. TOLER  
THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

DURHAM – More than 40,000 fans of the legendary Rolling Stones got satisfaction as the aging rockers blasted onto the stage at Duke University's Wallace Wade Stadium Oct. 8.

Opening for the Stones was Trey Anastasio, former Phish guitarist. Anastasio's set included a cover of the Beatles' "I Am the Walrus" and a song dedicated to his mother, who was in the front row, for her birthday.

Pyrotechnics lit up the cloudy sky as Mick Jagger pranced out onto the stage in his trademark strut to open the show with "Start Me Up." At age 62, the formidable frontman proved time was on his side as he continued through with the classics, "You Got Me Rocking," "She's So Cold," and "Tumblin' Dice."

"Oh No, Not You Again" was the first of several songs from the band's new album, "A Bigger Bang."

Sly, smoking guitarist Keith Richards then traded his five-string Fender Telecaster for an acoustic for the popular ballad "Wild Horses." Jagger, too, donned an acoustic guitar to perform the country-like "Dead Flowers."

A horn section came in for "Bitch" and continued with a soulful rendition of the Ray Charles song, "Night Time is the Right Time," featuring backup vocalist Lisa Fisher as the female lead.

Jagger then introduced the band, including bassist Darryl Jones, who replaced Bill Wyman in 1994, and legendary rock pianist Chuck Lavelle.

Richards took center stage for "The Worst" and "Infamy," jokingly proclaiming between songs, "It's good to see you...it's good to see anything, really" as the crowd roared.

Jagger returned to the stage, guitar in hand, as the band broke into "Miss You."

As the song began, the center of the stage began to trolley into the center of the field.

The band then performed the high-energy single "Rough Justice" from the new release with Richards and lead guitarist Ron Wood trading off licks.

It began to drizzle as the Stones belted out their first major hit, "Satisfaction."

While the band played in the center of the stadium, a flowered, inflatable tongue rose from the stage.

"Honky Tonk Woman" was next in the lineup as the mini-stage rolled back to the larger setup.

The light rain seemed to set the mood for the bluesy "Out of Control," which gave Jagger a chance to wail on the harmonica.

Drummer Charlie Watts, staying with the band despite a recent bout with throat cancer, banged out the beginning beats of "Sympathy for the Devil," as fire shot out from the top of the stage on both sides, prompting fans to howl out the



INDEPENDENT REGISTER PHOTO ILLUSTRATION/WILLIAM R. TOLER

backup "Woo woo" part.

Jagger, dressed to kill, portrayed Satan himself as he pranced along the balcony of the stage. The video screens had a red tint as the song went on.

The band went on to perform the classic hits "Brown Sugar" and "Jumpin' Jack Flash" before leaving the stage.

They soon returned for an encore, however, due to the response of the multi-generational audience, with "You Can't Always

Get What You Want" and "It's Only Rock and Roll."

After leaving the stage a second time, the crowd pleaded for a second encore, but was notified by a series of fireworks that the show was regrettably over.

The Rolling Stones proved to the Carolina crowd that, even after 40 years, they still have what it takes to put on a great show, and sealed their stake as "The World's Greatest Rock and Roll Band."



## Band-Aid

Oct. 14

**Narallis**

Mickey Milligan's, New Bern  
8 p.m.

Oct. 15

**Scrap Metal Casket**

The Salty Dawg, New Bern  
9 p.m.

\$5

Oct. 21

**Centipede**

The Salty Dawg, New Bern  
10 p.m.

\$5

Oct. 22

**Two Weeks Notice**

6th annual Bike Rodeo, Hubert  
(Benefit for Disabled American  
Veterans)

3 p.m.(gates open)

\$8

**\$10 couples**

**Tuesday Nights**

**Stretch**

Open-mic Night

Harvey Mansion,

New Bern

Free

Bands: Send your gig announcements to [william@indieregister.com](mailto:william@indieregister.com)

## City jazzes up

### New Bern prepares for Jazz and Blues Fest

STAFF REPORTS

THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

The Bear City will swing into its second annual Jazz and Blues Fest Oct. 21 and 22 at the New Bern Riverfront Convention Center.

A ton of mojo will be in the air on Friday night with "Canadian Blues Queen" Maria Rolls belting out blues tunes with a voice that has been described as "Janis Joplin, B.B. King and Etta James all rolled into one."

The night rolls along with the return of Cool John Ferguson, who won over the crowd at last year's event. Ferguson is "expected to pack the house again for the Friday's blues event" according to the festival Web site.

On Saturday, a free concert will be given at Union Point Park from 2 to 4 p.m. Performing will be the Day Springs Gospel Jazz Band and the Second Marine Aircraft Wing Jazz Band.

The grooves keep coming as The Frank and Joe Show, a New York City regular act, open the night's event. The band, featuring guitarist Frank Vignola and percussionist Joe Ascione, has a set list that ranges from classical to classic rock.

The festival will come to a close as Freddy Cole plays the night away. Cole, brother of legendary crooner Nat King Cole, has a voice the *New York Times* describes "a hot-oatmeal voice, soothing and good."

Both the blues and jazz concerts will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 each or \$250 for a table of 10 and are available at a variety of locations.

For more information, call (252) 634-3261 or visit [www.newbernjazzandbluesfest.com](http://www.newbernjazzandbluesfest.com).

## A ghostly gathering

STAFF REPORTS

THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

Spirits will be out early again this year as the New Bern Historical Society presents its 15th annual New Bern at Night Ghost Walk.

The yearly event, held this year Oct. 20 through 22, features apparitions recalling their lifestyles in a particular time period. "Fabulous Fifties" is the theme for 2005.

Scheduled stops along the tour include 10 historic homes, a fire station, and the Masonic Theatre, as well as a trip through the "chilling" Cedar Grove Cemetery. Period autos will also be prowling

the streets of the downtown area. The "King of Rock n' Roll" may also be found rollicking in the night. There will be music and dancing of the era located at several downtown venues ranging from country to rock and doo-wop.

Tickets are \$13 in advance (before Oct. 19) for adults and \$10 for children 12 and under. Group discounts are available for parties of 20 or more.

To purchase tickets or for more information about the event, contact the New Bern Historical Society at 638-8558 or visit [www.newbernhistorical.org](http://www.newbernhistorical.org).

## X-Fest 6 comes to Kinston

STAFF REPORTS

THE INDEPENDENT REGISTER

New Bern rock station 99.5 WXNR-FM will present X-Fest 6 at the Kinston Dragstrip Oct. 22.

Headlining acts include the bands Chevelle, Crossfade and Taproot.

A variety of area bands will occupy the Local 99 Second Stage.

A haunted clown house and a bikini pageant are among activi-

ties scheduled for the day-long event.

"Co-eds on Trampolines" and a "Battle of the Turntable DJs" are also on tap.

Ticket prices are \$20 in advance or \$25 at the gate.

Gates open at 10 a.m and the show is scheduled to start at noon.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit [www.wxnr.com](http://www.wxnr.com).

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