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Downtowner

M A G A Z I N E

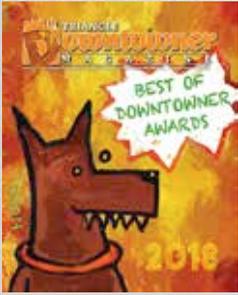
ISSUE 137 • 175,000 READERS EACH MONTH • PROMOTING LOCAL SINCE 2005 • READ ARCHIVED ISSUES AT WWW.TRIANGLEDOWNTOWNER.COM

BEST OF
DOWNTOWNER
AWARDS

NORVAL



2018



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Triangle Downtowner Magazine has acquired BOOM! Magazine which has been merged into one locally owned and run publication.

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TRIANGLE DOWNTOWNER MAGAZINE — ISSUE 137

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ON THE COVER: For this year's Best of Downtowner Awards, we tasked local artist (and Reader Favorite in the Local Artist category!) Keith Norval with creating our cover for this issue using elements of his awesome work. Keith has delighted the Triangle for fifteen years with his whimsical, pop art-inspired oil paintings. To see more of his work, visit www.keithnorval.com or stop by his Artspace studio upstairs in room 220, which he shares with his talented wife, artist Anna Podris.

Are you a local artist or designer and want to be considered for next year's Best of Downtowner Awards cover? Head over to www.TriangleDowntowner.com and send us an email through our Contact form! We're also looking for contributing writers and reporters who want to help us herald all the great things happening all across Raleigh and the Triangle.

Follow us on our social media pages for photos and more news between print issues.



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Read archived issues from 2006 to current online at
www.TriangleDowntowner.com

Please recycle or give to a friend after you're done reading!

This magazine is proudly printed on recycled paper and uses toxin-free, environmentally-friendly, soy ink.



This is the first of a monthly column highlighting some of the dogs and cats who have called the SPCA of Wake County home for far too long. Since the SPCA is a no-kill shelter, their adoptable pets stay with them as long as it takes them to find a home. This means that when the shelter is full, there's no available space for new pets. Some of these wonderful animals are older or have traits that require special attention or medications but want and need to be loved all the same. We hope you'll consider giving one of these (and the many other) long-timers a place to call home where they can feel safe and be cared for. Visit the SPCA of Wake County for more overlooked pets who could use a new family. You can also visit www.spcawake.org/longtimers or call 919.772.2326.



Bojangles is a two-year-old chocolate lab mix. More than anything else, he loves tennis balls. Walks are ok, but playing fetch in a fenced yard is his favorite way to pass the time and get some exercise. He would like to be the only pet in the home, just to be sure he gets all the tennis balls. Not to worry though, BoJangles knows to trade one tennis ball so he can chase a new one. He can even pick up two tennis balls at once, so you'll never know you're only playing with one dog! His foster mom says he is a dream in the house. He can be crated but doesn't need to be. Talk to an adoption counselor at 919-772-2326 if you're interested in meeting him.



Tommy If you're looking for an easy-going feline, Tommy is just the cat for you. He doesn't ask for much. Tommy was adopted as a kitten and lived in his home for almost three and a half years. His adopter had to move across the country and couldn't take Tommy along, so Tommy is back to the SPCA. His family said he's good with men, women, kids, and other cats. They've never seen him around dogs. Tommy is on a diet to make sure he feels his best, so he's hoping his new family will help him play and exercise. Call 919-772-2326 or visit www.spcawake.org for more information on Tommy.

This space is donated to the SPCA of Wake County by Triangle Downtowner Magazine because we love our furry friends.

PRESENTING THE WINNERS AND
READER FAVORITES FOR THE

BEST OF DOWNTOWNER AWARDS 2018



NORVAL

The 2018 Best of Downtown Award Winners!

We're proud to present the winners of our 8th Annual Best of Downtowner Awards! There are lots of familiar names and a few new ones in this year's winners' list. All the high-density areas of the Triangle are still growing by leaps and bounds: Downtown Raleigh, North Hills, downtown Durham, Cary, and Wake Forest. In Wake County alone, there are over 60 new people moving in EVERY DAY. All these new residents are driving new traffic to both new and existing businesses.

It's nice to see that our readers have some of the most wonderfully diverse, eclectic, and smart preferences of any magazine readers in the Triangle. It's refreshing that we enjoy such a wide range of dining, entertainment, and business choices. As always, the Food & Drink and Restaurants & Bars categories garnered the most votes. In general, the foodie scene across the entire Triangle is pretty amazing and we're lucky to have so

many great options to choose from.

We're proud to continue featuring only locally owned businesses in the Best of Downtowner Awards, and equally proud that a few other magazines have started doing the same. Buying local ensures more of our spending dollars stay here in our local economy, which helps to create (and keep) local jobs, drive growth, and develop self-sufficiency for community. So, be sure to always try to buy local first!

We hope this list provides you with plenty of new restaurants to choose from, businesses to patron, and interesting things to do. Watch for "Best of Downtowner Awards" stickers on business doors and windows and you'll know there's something good waiting for you inside. A huge Thank You to all who voted this year and helped to make the Best of Downtowner Awards a great way to support and promote all things local.

All Reader Favorites are listed in random order.

FOOD & DRINK

APPETIZERS

Royale

Reader Favorites
Crawford & Son
Brewery Bhavana
Vidrio
Stanbury
Taverna Agora

Sandwiches

NOFO @ the Pig

Reader Favorites
Parkside Restaurant
The Pharmacy Cafe
Side Street Café
The Rockford
Woody's at City Market

Steak

Angus Barn

Reader Favorites
NanaSteak
Peddler Steakhouse
Sullivan's Steakhouse
Death & Taxes
Vinnie's Steakhouse

Sushi/Sashimi

Waraji Japanese Restaurant

Reader Favorites
M Sushi
Tasu/Shiki Sushi
Sono
Sushi-O
City Market Sushi
Mura

Seafood Dishes

42nd Street Oyster Bar

Reader Favorites
Crawford & Son
Cortez Seafood + Cocktail
18 Seaboard
St. Roch Fine Oysters + Bar

Pizza

Lilly's Pizza

Reader Favorites
Patrick Jane's Bar & Bistro
Pizza La Stella
Mellow Mushroom
Moonlight Pizza
Trophy Brewing & Pizza
DeMo's Pizza & Deli
Brookside Market & Pizza

Tacos

Gonza Tacos y Tequila

Reader Favorites
Centro
Gringo A Go Go
La Santa Modern Mexican
Jose & Sons

Ribs

The Pit Authentic Barbecue

Reader Favorites
Angus Barn
Clyde Cooper's Barbeque
The Pit Authentic Barbecue

BBQ

Clyde Cooper's Barbeque

Reader Favorites
The Pit Authentic Barbecue
Backyard BBQ Pit
Tobacco Road Sports Café

Burgers

Bad Daddy's Burger Bar

Reader Favorites
Player's Retreat (PR)
Chuck's Burgers
Abbey Road Tavern & Grill
Royale
The Station

Mac & Cheese

Poole's Diner

Reader Favorites
My Way Tavern
Parkside Restaurant
The Pit Authentic Barbecue
Oak City Meatball Shoppe



Royale co-owners Jeff Seizer and Jesse Bardyn

Biscuits

Rise Biscuits & Donuts

Reader Favorites
Big Ed's City Market
Mandolin
State Farmers Market Restaurant

Chicken Wings

Carolina Ale House

Reader Favorites
My Way Tavern
Woody's at City Market
DeMo's Pizza & Deli
The Point Restaurant

Fried Chicken

The Pit Authentic Barbecue

Reader Favorites
Clyde Cooper's Barbeque
Beasley's Chicken + Honey
Dames Chicken and Waffles
State Farmers Market Restaurant
Royale

Hot Dogs

The Cardinal

Reader Favorites
Roast Grill
Snoopy's Famous Hot Dogs
Pharaoh's at the Museum

Oysters

Royale

Reader Favorites
42nd Street Oyster Bar
St. Roch Fine Oysters + Bar
Stanbury

French Fries

NOFO @ the Pig

Reader Favorites
Capital Club 16
Carolina Ale House
Chuck's Burgers
The Station

Dumplings

Brewery Bhavana

Reader Favorites
David's Dumplings & Noodle Bar
MOFU Shoppe

Desserts/Sweets

Lucettegrace

Reader Favorites
Bittersweet
Gughupf Bakery & Cafe
Hayes Barton Cafe

Vegetarian/ Vegan-Friendly Dishes

Irregardless Café & Catering

Reader Favorites

Neomonde Mediterranean
Fiction Kitchen
Remedy Diner
Living Kitchen

Bloody Mary

NOFO @ the Pig

Reader Favorites
Buku
Humble Pie
Plates Kitchen
Tupelo Honey
Person Street Bar
Clouds Brewing
Raleigh Times Bar

Margaritas

Centro

Reader Favorites
Jose & Sons
Cantina 18
La Santa Modern Mexican
Gonza Tacos y Tequila

Local Brewery

Brewery Bhavana

Reader Favorites
Trophy Brewing
Lynnwood Brewing Concern
Bond Brothers
Big Boss

Local Distillery

Pinetop Distillery

Reader Favorites
Social House Vodka
Durham Distillery
Graybeard Distillery
TOPO Distillery

RESTAURANTS & BARS

New Restaurant (opened in 2017)

Vidrio

Reader Favorites
Brewery Bhavana
so•ca cocina latina
Cortez Seafood + Cocktail
St. Roch Fine Oysters + Bar

New Bar (opened in 2017)

Watts & Ward

Reader Favorites
Milk Bar
Alley Twenty Six

Favorite Go-To Restaurant

Stanbury

Reader Favorites
Crawford & Son
Royale
Brewery Bhavana
Bida Manda
Mandolin
Poole's Diner
NOFO @ the Pig

Family-Friendly Restaurant

Big Ed's City Market

Reader Favorites
Elmo's Diner
NOFO @ the Pig
Cowfish
The Pharmacy Cafe
Neomonde Mediterranean

Fine Dining Restaurant

Angus Barn

Reader Favorites
Second Empire
Heron's
Death & Taxes

Neighborhood Deli

Carroll's Kitchen

Reader Favorites
DeMo's Pizza & Deli
Village Deli
Parker & Otis

Diverse and Delicious Menu

Buku

Reader Favorites
Crawford & Son
Royale
Mandolin

Italian Restaurant

Bella Monica

Reader Favorites
Gocciolina
Mother's & Sons
Gravy
Mulino

Mexican/Latin American Restaurant

Gonza Taco y Tequila

Reader Favorites
Jose & Sons
Centro
Gringo A Go Go

Mediterranean/Middle Eastern Sitti

Reader Favorites
Bosphorus
Neomonde Mediterranean
La Shish Mediterranean Cuisine
Sassool
Jasmine Mediterranean Bistro

Greek

Taverna Agora

Reader Favorites
Kipos Greek Taverna
Taza Grill
Alexander's Mediterranean Cuisine

Japanese

Waraji Japanese Restaurant

Reader Favorites
M Sushi
Sono
Shiki Sushi/Tasu
Sushi O

Chinese

David's Dumping & Noodle Bar

Reader Favorites
5 Star Restaurant
Red Dragon
Beansprout Chinese Restaurant



Chef Masa from Waraji Japanese Restaurant



Debbie and Randy Holt from Clyde Cooper's Barbeque

French

Saint Jacques

Reader Favorites
Royale
Coquette Brasserie
Vin Rouge

Indian

Azitra Authentic Indian Fare

Reader Favorites
Cilantro Indian Café
Taj Mahal
Garland

Thai

Sawasdee Thai

Reader Favorites
Lemongrass Thai Restaurant
Thaiphon Bistro
Shabu Shabu

Local Coffee Shop

Morning Times

Reader Favorites
A Place at the Table
42 & Lawrence

BREW Coffee Bar

Sola Coffee
Third Place
Jubala Coffee

Local Bakery

La Farm Bakery

Reader Favorites
Boulded Bread
lucettegrace
Yellow Dog
Night Kitchen

Doughnuts

Duck Donuts

Reader Favorites
Rise Biscuit & Donuts
Monuts
Daylight Donuts

Breakfast

Sola Coffee Café

Reader Favorites
Big Ed's City Market
Brigs

Brunch

NOFO @ the Pig

Reader Favorites
Irregardless Café
Buku
Parkside Restaurant
Taverna Agora

Arcade/Pool Hall

Boxcar Bare + Arcade

Reader Favorites
Level Up Kitchen & Baradium
Quarter Horse Bar + Arcade
Brass Tap & Billiards

Local Coffee Roaster

Larry's Coffee

Reader Favorites
Counter Culture
Benelux

Food Truck

Chirba Chirba

Reader Favorites
Cousins Maine Lobster
American Meltdown

Healthy Food

Happy + Hale

Reader Favorites
Raleigh Raw
Living Kitchen
Neomonde Mediterranean
Irregardless Café and Catering

Value for the Money

Mitch's Tavern

Reader Favorites
Guasaca
Caffe Luna
Armadillo Grille
Clyde Cooper's Barbeque

Southern Comfort Food

Poole's Diner

Reader Favorites
The Pit Authentic
Parkside Restaurant
NOFO @ the Pig
Clyde Cooper's Barbeque
State Farmers Market Restaurant

Restaurant for a Business Meeting

18 Seaboard

Reader Favorites
Second Empire
Winston's Grille
Angus Barn
21c Hotel/Counting House

Dive Bar

Slim's Downtown Distillery

Reader Favorites
Black Flower/Flash House
Neptune's Parlour
Ruby Deluxe
Flex

Bar Food

Whiskey Kitchen

Reader Favorites
Parkside Restaurant
Carolina Ale House
MotorCo
My Way Tavern
Woody's at City Market

Wine Menu

Mandolin

Reader Favorites
Second Empire Restaurant
Angus Barn
Sullivan's Steakhouse
Seaboard 18
Vidrio

Selection of Craft Beers

Raleigh Beer Garden

Reader Favorites
Parkside Restaurant
Flying Saucer
Brewery Bhavana
Carolina Ale House

>>>

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Craft Cocktails
Dram & Draught

Reader Favorites
Foundation
C Grace
Bittersweet
Fox Liquor Bar
William & Co.

Brewery Bar
Lynnwood Brewing Concern

Reader Favorites
Brewery Bhavana
Crank Arm
Trophy Brewing
Oak & Dagger Public House
Bond Brothers

Outside Patio
Mulino

Reader Favorites
Raleigh Beer Garden
Humble Pie
Whiskey Kitchen
Boylan Bridge Brewpub
LGBTQ-friendly bar
Legends Nightclub
Reader Favorites
Flex
Ruby Deluxe
Brewery Bhavana
Pinhook
Bourbon/ Whiskey Selection
Whiskey Kitchen

Reader Favorites
Dram & Draught

Reader Favorites
Player's Retreat
The Oak



Another happy adopted family (and new family member Opie) at Saving Grace pet adoptions in Wake Forest



Mandolin chef & owner Sean Fowler, wife Lizzie, and girls

Sports Bar
Carolina Ale House

Reader Favorites
Tobacco Road Sports Café
Player's Retreat
Clouds Brewing

Friendly & Awesome Staff
NOFO @ the Pig

Reader Favorites
Brewery Bhavana
Bida Manda
Angus Barn

Place to Go Dancing
Ruby Deluxe

Reader Favorites
Neptune's Parlour

Coglin's
Legend's Nightclub

Romantic Dinner
Angus Barn

Reader Favorites
Stanbury
Second Empire
Bida Manda

Irish/British Pub
Hibernian Restaurant & Pub

Reader Favorites
London Bridge Pub
James Joyce Irish Pub
Trali Irish Pub
Doherty's Irish Pub

RETAIL & SERVICES

Customer Service
Quail Ridge Books

Reader Favorites
NOFO @ the Pig
Tesoro Hair Design
Benchmark Autoworks

Hair Salon for Women
Alter EGO

Reader Favorites
Salon Blu
Sam & Bill's Hair Design

Hair Salon/Barber Shop for Men

Tesoro Hair Design
Reader Favorites
Arrow
Alter Ego
Thairapy 101 Salon
Salon Veritas

Nail Salon
Polished

Reader Favorites
Seaboard Nails
Paintbase

Local Butcher Shop
The Butcher's Market

Reader Favorites
Southern Craft Butchers
Hook & Cleaver

Catering Company
Rocky Top Catering

Reader Favorites
Catering Works
Donovan's Dish
Irregardless Café & Catering

Late Night Food
Lucarne

Reader Favorites
The District Raleigh
The Cardinal Bar
MoJoe's Burger Joint
5 Star
Tobacco Road Sports Café

Rooftop Restaurant/Bar
Raleigh Beer Garden

Reader Favorites
Taverna Agora
Raleigh Times Bar
The Durham Hotel
10th & Terrace

Local Neighborhood Bar
Havana Deluxe

Reader Favorites
Player's Retreat
London Bridge
Person Street Bar
My Way Tavern

Place to Hear Jazz & Blues
C Grace

Reader Favorites
Circa 1888
Beyú Caffé
Humble Pie

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Choice Auto Car

Reader Favorites
Benchmark Autoworks
Triangle Car Care

Local Pharmacy

Person Street Pharmacy

Reader Favorites
Glenwood South Pharmacy
& Market
Ashworth Drugs

Local Tailor

Glenwood South Tailors

Reader Favorites
Lee's Tailors
Village Tailor

Dry Cleaner

Medlin-Davis Cleaners

Reader Favorites
Capstone Cleaners
Brothers Cleaners

Florist

Fallon's Flowers

Reader Favorites
Kelly Odom Flowers
Carlton's Flowers
The English Garden

Gym or Place to Work Out

02 Fitness

Reader Favorites
Heat Studios
Alexander YMCA

Med Spa/Skin Care

Synergy Spa & Aesthetics

Reader Favorites
Cynthia Gregg, MD & Associates
Skin Raleigh
Glo De Vie Med Spa

Chiropractic Office

Raleigh Chiropractic & Wellness

Reader Favorites
The Joint Chiropractic
Oak City Chiropractic
Raleigh Spine Clinic

Accounting/CPA Firm

H. Lee Miller, CPA

Reader Favorites
Oak City Accounting
Tim Wicker, CPA

PR/Marketing/Ad Agency

French West Vaughan

Reader Favorites
S&A Communications
Gibbs & Soell

Cosmetic Surgery Practice

Cynthia Gregg, MD & Associates

Reader Favorites
Synergy Spa & Aesthetics
Wake Plastic Surgery
Davis & Pyle Plastic Surgery
Collins Plastic Surgery

Dental Office

Stanley Dentistry

Reader Favorites
Ashely Lloyd, DDS
Downtown Dental

Orthodontic Office

Wells Orthodontics

Reader Favorites
Zaytoun Orthodontics
Carolina Braces
Six Forks Smiles
Gladwell Orthodontics
Raleigh Orthodontics

Roofing Company

Baker Roofing

Reader Favorites
Roofwerks



Havana Deluxe's own Mike Reid (photo by Nicole Dasnoit)



The Logan's Garden Shop family

Old Raleigh Roofing and Repair
Dana Dean Roofing Company

Mortgage Broker

Southern Trust Mortgage

Reader Favorites
Primary Residential Mortgage, Inc.
Prime Mortgage Lenders

Real Estate Attorney

Law Offices of Duane R. Hall

Reader Favorites
Klish and Eldrith
Sterling Law

Gymnastics/Dance Studio

Tutu School

Reader Favorites
Cary Dance Productions
Carolina Ballet, Inc.
North Carolina Dance Institute

Veterinary Office/Animal Hospital

Veterinary Care Anywhere, Mobile, PLLC

Reader Favorites
Care First Animal Hospital
at Oberlin
CityVet
Quail Corners Animal Hospital
Hayes Barton Animal Hospital
Boulevard Animal Hospital

Yoga/Pilates/Barre

Blue Lotus

Reader Favorites
Barre Up
110 Yoga
Open Door Yoga

Tattoo Parlor

Mad Ethel's Tattoo

Reader Favorites
Blue Flame Tattoo
Phoenix Tattoo
Oak City Tattoo

Pet Adoption

Saving Grace NC

Reader Favorites
Second Chance Pet Adoptions
SPCA of Wake County
Cause for Paws

Vintage Furniture

Cheshire Cat Gallery

Reader Favorites
Revival Antiques
Father and Son

Antiques

Hunt & Gather

Reader Favorites
Antiques Emporium
Raleigh Flea Market

Local Wine Shop

Raleigh Wine Shop

Reader Favorites
Taylor's Wine Shop
The Wine Feed
Seaboard Wine

Wine Authorities

Bottle Shop

Crafty Beer, Wine & Spirits

Reader Favorites
Tasty Beverage Company
Bottle Revolution
Pelagic Beer & Wine
Oak & Dagger Research Library
Bottle Shop

Local Gift Shop

DECO Raleigh

Reader Favorites
NOFO @ the Pig
Briggs Hardware & General Store

Local Shop for Women's Clothes

Art of Style

Reader Favorites
Edge of Urge
Vert & Vogue
Uniquities
Revolver Consignment
Dress

Local Shop for Men's Fashions

Liles Clothing Store

Reader Favorites
Art of Style
Kannon's Clothing

Consignment Shop

Revolver

Reader Favorites
Dress
Adore
Refinements
Vault Raleigh

Jewelry Shop

Baily's Fine Jewelry

Reader Favorites
Reliable Jewelry & Loan
Raleigh Diamond
Diamonds Direct

Hardware Store

Burke Brothers Hardware

Reader Favorites
Seaboard Ace Hardware
Briggs Hardware and General Store



Mad Ethel's Tattoo and Body Piercing

Independent Bookstore

Quail Ridge Books

Reader Favorites
Reader's Corner
So & So Bookstore
Letters Bookshop
Regulator Bookshop

Garden Center/Nursery

Logan's One Stop

Garden Shop

Reader Favorites
Campbell Road Nursery
Fairview Garden Center
Garden Supply Company

Dog-Friendly Business

London Bridge Pub

Reader Favorites
Black Flower
Crank Arm
Whiskey Kitchen
Trophy Brewing Company

Art Gallery

Artspace

Reader Favorites
Adam Cave Fine Art
Gallery C
The Mahler Fine Art
Little Art Gallery
Lee Hansley Gallery

Local Charity

Community Music School

Reader Favorites
Foundation of Hope
Interfaith Food Shuttle
Activate Good
Boys & Girls Club

Best Charity Event

Triangle Wine Experience

Reader Favorites
Walk/Run for Hope
Band Together Music Event
Arthouse

PEOPLE

Local Chef

Ashley Christensen

Reader Favorites

Scott Crawford

Jeff Seizer

Matt Kelly

Sean Fowler

Local Artist

Dan Nelson

Reader Favorites
Bob Rankin
Paris Alexander
Eric McRay
Keith Norval

Interior Designer

Diane Makgill

Reader Favorites
Tula Summerford
Lisa Stewart
Laura Koshel

Promotes Local Business

Pam Blondin

Reader Favorites
Jean Martin
Evelyn Marshall

Local Politician/Employee

Sig Hutchinson

Reader Favorites
Nancy McFarlane
Bill Bell
Jessica Holmes
Josh Stein

OUT & ABOUT

Live Music, Large venue

Red Hat Amphitheatre

Reader Favorites
Lincoln Theatre
Pour House
NCMA Amphitheatre
Walnut Creek
DPAC

Live Music, Small venue

C Grace

Reader Favorites
42nd Street
Slim's Downtown Distillery
Deep South The Bar
Imurj
Black Flower
Pinhook

Private Event Space

The Stockroom at 230

Reader Favorites
Bay 7 at American Tobacco
Campus
Vidrio
Capital City Club
The Glass Box
The Boiler Room

Place for a Girls' Night

Bhavana Brewery

Reader Favorites
Vidrio
The Wine Feed
Vita Vitae

Cortez Seafood + Cocktail
C Grace

Place for a Guys' Night

Dram & Draught

Reader Favorites
Foundation
Watts & Ward
Boxcar Bar + Arcade
Tobacco Road Sports Cafe

Hangout for People Over 30

Watts & Ward

Reader Favorites
42nd Street
Vivace
Dram & Draught
Foundation

Boutique Hotel

21c Museum Hotel Durham

Reader Favorites
Mayton Inn
Renaissance North Hills
Unscripted Durham
The Durham Hotel

Golf Course

Northridge Country Club

Reader Favorites
Lonnie Poole Golf Course
Briar Creek Country Club
Hasentree Club
Prestonwood Country Club

Outdoor Event

Artsplasure

Reader Favorites
NCMA outdoor movies
Band Together
Raleigh Bluegrass Festival
Hopscotch
NC State Fair

Place to Take Out-of-Town

Guests

NC Museum of Natural

Sciences
Reader Favorites
NC Museum of Art
Contemporary Art Museum
Brewery Bhavana
Angus Barn

Wish list for a New Business,

Service, or Attraction

Food truck park near downtown Raleigh
Reader Favorites
Better Triangle mass transit options
Sports arena in/near downtown
More farm-to-fork restaurants
All-inclusive website with Triangle events, places to go, food/drink specials

More traffic lanes on I-40 through the Triangle

Some kind of water feature (like American Tobacco Campus) in/through downtown

✧ CASUAL DINING ✧



Chef Mama and owner John Tang

Saigon

GRILL & BAR

BY CHRISTY GRIFFITH • PHOTOS BY CRASH S. GREGG

Local restaurateur **John Tang** (also the owner of acclaimed Sushi O Bistro & Sushi Bar) recently opened the best-kept secret of Glenwood South: **Saigon Bar & Grill**. Specializing in authentic Vietnamese cuisine, Tang has tapped a niche in downtown Raleigh that had previously gone unanswered for far too long – a casual international dining experience that doesn't require a little black dress or fear of overdrafting your bank account. But if you do show up in those uncomfortable but seriously adorable impractical heels, you won't have to suffer too long a walk from your car as Saigon validates parking in the adjacent garages while you feast. **FREE DOWNTOWN PARKING DESERVES THE CAPSLOCK!!!**

The space formerly occupied by first Blue Mango then Indio is almost as expansive as my appetite. The atmosphere belies the humble menu, recently revamped to get back to the basics of Vietnamese comfort food. I'm digging the numbers assigned to each dish so I can order a number 17 and not accidentally curse someone out in another language; I am only comfortable using English curse words, and those words only on purpose.



#2 Goi Cuon (Summer Rolls) \$4.99

#2 on the menu is **Goi Cuon** (Summer Rolls, \$4.99) and they are probably the dish to order if you want to introduce any scaredy-cat milquetoast acquaintance to how amazing Vietnamese food can be. Now that the weather is warming up, they would make a lovely nibble while dining outside. Just you, some pork, shrimp, noodles, lettuce, cucumber, and the dynamic duo of fresh mint and basil, all wrapped up in translucent rice paper...I forgot where I was going with that, but it I'm sure it was headed into Harlequin territory.

The next thing I shoved into my happy face was #8, **Goi Du Du** (Papaya Salad, \$7.99). Made with unripe green papaya, it comes in shreds similar to spaghetti squash. The papaya itself doesn't taste like much – think jicama – but the crunch and clean-



#8 Goi Du Du (Papaya Salad) \$7.99

ness of the fruit makes for a wonderful backdrop to the fresh herbs, tomato, pork, and shrimp that crown it. A forward fish sauce dressing is strong on its own but paired with the salad and puffed shrimp crackers, the muted papaya becomes bright and exciting. If one could distill the feeling of entering the swimming pool by jumping into the deep end into a taste, I bet it'd be similar. Except without emerging with chlorine up your nose and mascara down your cheeks.

If there's one thing I should caution you to avoid eating on a first date, it would be #11, **Banh Xeo** (Crepe, \$10.99). It's deliciously messy and you will look like a fool the moment you try to figure out what to do with it. A gigantic, eggy, coconutty crepe will appear before you stuffed with ground pork, shrimp, and bean sprouts. Cut into it and stuff it in the lettuce leaves that come with the crepe and you've got yourself some Vietnamese tacos. And now that you're eating tacos, it's officially first date food. You are winning at life! Swipe right for dates and crepes.



#11 *Banh Xeo* (Crepe) \$10.99

One of the most familiar Vietnamese dishes nowadays is pho, and lucky #13 on the menu is **Pho Tai** (Eye Round Pho, \$9.99). Be sure to pronounce it correctly when you order; pho is high on the list of commonly mispronounced food words. The correct pronunciation is fuh not fō. Pho actually refers to the style of long, flat noodles themselves, not the soup itself, although it is commonly associated with the dish as a whole. Now you're in the pho know! The slow-simmered beef broth is peak comfort food, easily the best part of the supersized bowl of soup that appeared before me, accompanied by a plate of various fresh herbs, sprouts, chilies, and limes for topping my oodles of noodles as I wished. Every part of this is incredible, but I keep going back to that broth – is this what they serve you in the afterlife if you were good about recycling and donating to the local public radio station? Because I think an eternity wouldn't be long enough to slurp up the deep, savory liquid teeming with star anise, ginger, a hint of cinnamon, and probably unicorn tears because IT'S MAGIC. The thin slices of beef floating on top of the soup are so unnecessary (the recipe for this broth is actually



#13 *Pho Tai* (Eye Round Pho) \$9.99
and #19 *Bun Bo Hue* (Spicy Beef Pho) \$11.99

what Nicholas Cage was searching for in National Treasure) yet so *completely necessary* (like potato chips on a sandwich). One of Tang's favorite items on the menu is #19, **Bun Bo Hue** (Spicy Beef Pho, \$11.99). The rice noodles are wider than what comes in the pho, and the broth is decidedly spicier. "Be careful eating this; if you get it on your shirt, it's very hard to get out," he warns with a laugh. I decide not to use my chopsticks because I have neatness problems and I did not come prepared with a lobster bib or plastic poncho. I make a bigger mess than necessary trying to stab hunks of pork and beef that bob away from the tines, but I do manage nab an unusual piece of protein on my fork that I cannot identify. John tells me it's Vietnamese ham. It's weird and it's wonderful and it's slightly spammy. It does not look, feel, or taste like any type of ham I've seen in my entire life and this whole experience reminded me of how much more is out in this big, big world that I haven't eaten yet. #goals

#23, **Ca Kho To** (Clay Pot Mahi Mahi, \$12.99) is the dish that will make you *want* to slow down and appreciate every beautiful bite of this extremely tender and moist fish. What will *actually* happen is that while your dining partner is bending down to pick up that napkin that you *accidentally* knocked off the table, you will shove as much of it into your pie hole as humanly possible, provided you are just like me, three parts glutton and one part ogre. My only complaint is that I want two clay pots filled with >>>

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mahi mahi in front of me and zero side eyes from the table next to me. I come prepared in stretchy pants. I've been training for this my whole life.

Bun Cha Gio (\$9.99), or known to this English-speaker as #49, is like opening up a package of Easter grass. You think you know how much there is in the bag, but then it somehow turns into another state of matter and all of a sudden instead of a bag of Easter grass, now you've got a whole floor full. The rice noodles in this dish completely cover a bounty of fresh herbs and vegetables and you won't know how much this



#23 Ca Kho To (Clay Pot Mahi Mahi) \$12.99

dish will expand until you dive in and start clumsily poking at things with your chopsticks before remembering that you are possessed with a debilitating fear of not only cursing at someone in their native language while trying to order noodles but are also unable to use chopsticks in front of an Asian person because you are not very confident in getting noodles to mouth with these two sticks and now you've got Adam Sandler's voice in your



#49 Bun Cha Gio (Grilled Pork (or tofu) with Spring Rolls and Noodle Salad) \$9.99

head screaming THEY'RE ALL GONNA LAUGH AT YOU! Which they're not. At least, not in front of you. Okay, back to the Bun Cha Gio. This is actually a pork dish, but we subbed tofu for the meat. It's a good deal of food studded with tons of fresh flavor bombs to brighten up the mild and pillowy tofu that has been battered and fried. Crispy vegetable spring rolls adorn the top like Vietnamese croutons. Lots of textures going on here and the dish is all the better for it and I'll have you know it tastes just as good if you choose to eat it with a fork.

Saigon doesn't bill itself as a small plates place, as it shouldn't – the servings are more than generous for the price – but it's definitely an eatery where you can afford to select several options and serve yourself family style at the table with first dates, friends, or anyone who may or may not be judging your chopstick skills. Order as much as you can. I promise you won't feel gross. This is actually the first profile in a long time where I ate and ate and ate and didn't feel icky afterward. In fact, I had room for dessert and I hope you will as well. If you're into coffee, Saigon's Flan (\$5.99) is the one thing you actually may not want to share. The custard is incredibly creamy, but not too rich. It comes swimming in a sweetened chilled coffee that makes for a melt-in-your-mouth-now-I'm-making-interesting-happy-noises experience. And if you'd just rather drink your dessert? The Vietnamese Iced Coffee (\$3.99) is the end-all, be-all of iced coffee experiences, and you better have access to insulin because the French drink comes enriched with a healthy dose of sweetened condensed milk. And bonus, no chopsticks required! ☺

Saigon Bar & Grill

222 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 103, Raleigh, NC 27603
919.307.3477 | www.saigonraleigh.com
www.facebook.com/saigonrillandbar.raleigh/



From the Publisher



We're proud to bring our readers the 2018 Best of Downtowner Awards issue and along with it, lots of recommendations for places to eat, drink, and visit. Congratulations to all the winners as well as the reader favorites. We try to feature only locally owned businesses in our Best of Downtowner list and hope you'll find a few new favorites to check out in the upcoming months. We'll be tagging and posting a few winners from each category every week until we've promoted each one. This is our way of supporting local business here in the Triangle as well as keeping our readers informed and in the know.

For all the fireworks fans who plan on coming downtown this July 4th, be aware that The Works, the downtown Raleigh fireworks display, has been moved to the PNC Arena area in part because of all the

construction in downtown. There will still be a Downtown Day Party on the 4th, just no fireworks at night.

There are some other great events coming up this summer, including the annual Band Together live music fundraiser. Band Together has raised over nearly \$7.8M for local non-profits since its inception in 2001. Walk the Moon and American Aquarium headline this year's event to raise funds and awareness for Triangle Family Services, which will provide access to mental health services for up to 600 individuals in our community each year. Check out the ad on the back page of this issue for more information.

If live music is your thing, there's no shortage of concerts this summer, ranging from Joan Jett, Imagine Dragons, Phish, DMB, Arctic Monkeys, and Sugarland. Check out our online calendar at www.TriangleDowntowner.com for a complete list of concerts, events, and more.

Cheers,

Crash

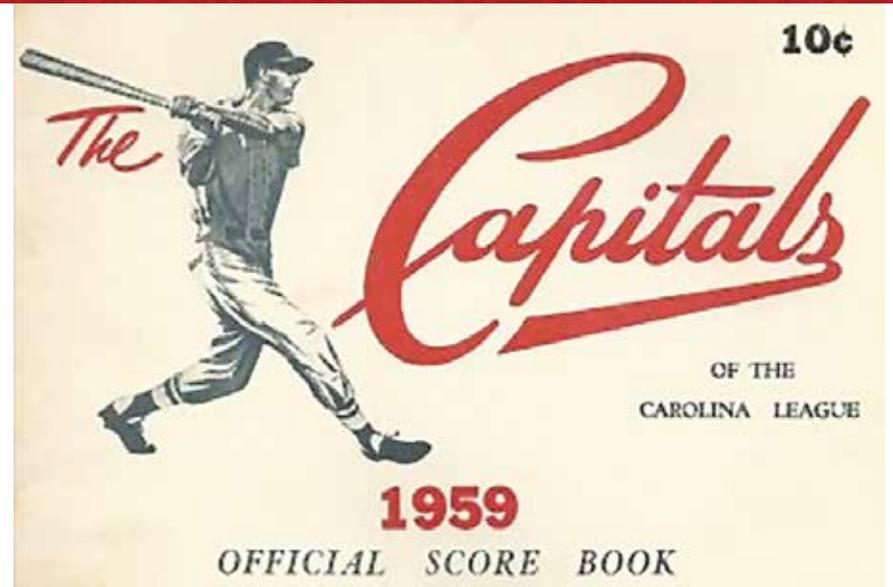
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1949 St. Augustine's College baseball team



BATTER UP!

A LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF BASEBALL IN RALEIGH

By JENNY LITZELMAN

Baseball first made its way into the hearts of Raleigh citizens when the Union Army occupied Raleigh at the end of the Civil War in 1865. Raleigh did not experience any battles within the immediate area and to pass the time Union troops amused themselves with the popular northern pastime of baseball. Civil War soldiers played at Baptist Grove (now Moore Square), Camp Russell, and Nash Square.

Raleigh citizens quickly fell in love with baseball and the earliest baseball diamond, created in 1866, was built on a plateau overlooking the city near the Joel Lane home. Around this time, Wake Forest students also created a baseball diamond and played against nearby communities.

Segregation dominated baseball's first years in Raleigh. Early white teams included the Athletics, Swiftfoots, and Stars. Black American teams such as the Pastimes and Socials also adopted baseball early on, though it would be many years before teams integrated or played against one another. The Nationals were the most popular black American team and boasted higher attendance than their white counterparts.

Local teams took up collections to buy their uniforms. At games, winning teams received a ball and bat as their prize, an important means of collecting necessary equipment. Protective gear, however, did not exist in the early years of baseball in Raleigh. By 1885, several cities formed the North Carolina Baseball Association and the game became more organized. During this time, professional players were hired to a small extent, though they were eventually let go for economic reasons.

William Wynne is considered the first North Carolinian to play for the major leagues. Born in 1869, he played for the Raleigh Amateurs in the 1880s. He later

went on to play for the Washington Senators of the National League in 1894. Wynne once pitched seven games in six days with an open gunshot wound in



Raleigh High School baseball players, 1950s

his right arm. Ever the character, Wynne was the first person recorded to ride a bicycle down the Capitol steps and then attempted to ride down the steps of the Washington Monument only to have his bicycle seized by guards. Wynne also started the radio station, WRCO in 1924, which he later sold to Durham Life Insurance, becoming WPTF in 1929.

As Raleigh moved into the 1900s, new baseball clubs such as the Capitals were born and the city began to see a wider division between professional and amateur leagues. Many neighborhoods had their own amateur team and often played games for local charities. Local businesses competed against one another and women's teams were recorded as early as 1889.

On a professional level, the Capitals served as Raleigh's minor league team for several decades and played at Devereux Meadow Baseball Park. The Capitals enjoyed many exciting seasons, especially in 1959 when Carl Yastrzemski (he went on to play for the Boston Red Sox) was voted Most Valuable Player. Interest in minor league baseball tapered off in the 1960s, and by 1971, Raleigh was without a minor league team. In 1967, the Durham Bulls – then known as the Raleigh-Durham Mets – played half their season at the Durham Athletic Park and half in Raleigh's Devereux Meadow, commonly misspelled Devereaux, at the corner of Peace and West Streets.

In 1991, minor league baseball finally returned to Raleigh (in nearby Knightdale), as the Carolina Mudcats.

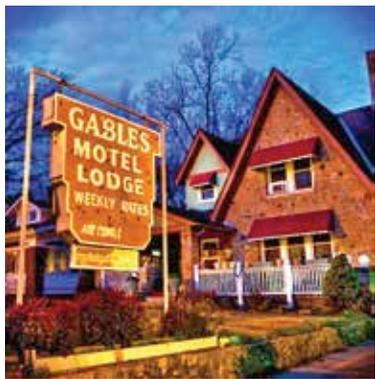
With intimate ballparks, affordable prices, lovable mascots, good food, and successful teams, baseball remains alive and well in the Triangle. 🍪

Around Town News in the Triangle

We love hearing about local growth and sharing it with our readers. Please keep us posted on any new locally owned restaurants, bars, retail shops, or business opening in downtown Raleigh or across the Triangle. Send an email to news@welovedowntown.com and clue us in. To say "Thanks Y'all," we'll pick a couple of random tipsters each month to win a free Downtowner t-shirt.

We're looking for writers who want to help us report on what makes the Triangle a great place to live, work, play, and shop for both our print issue and our new website www.TriangleDowntowner.com. Email us at writers@welovedowntown.com if you're interested. Be sure to include a few writing samples and we'll get back to you asap. Much thanks to some of our blogger friends for helping to spread the news on all the great new businesses, restaurants and bars in the area: Triangle Food Guy, Ashton Smith, and the wonderfully tongue-in-cheek WFIV.

To keep up with news between issues as well as lots of event and food photos, be sure to follow us on all of our social media pages. Facebook www.facebook.com/triangledowntowner • Instagram www.instagram.com/triangledowntowner • Twitter www.twitter.com/welovedowntown



American singer-songwriter and musician **Tift Merritt** has teamed up with Duke alumnus **Daniel Robinson**, co-owner of the Durham Hotel, to reopen the historic **Gables Motel Lodge** in Raleigh.

This beautifully chic motel on Old Wake Forest Road dates back to 1925 and was best known during an era when US Highway 1 was the only route for tourists traveling from New York to Florida. With 19 bedrooms and 13 bathrooms, it's no surprise that Merritt and Robinson are planning to apply for rezoning the property from the current residential status to one that allows for lodging. Their aim is to create an atmosphere of nostalgia and uniqueness that retains the feel of Raleigh's colorful history.



Happy + Hale is a healthy eatery in Raleigh with a big following of wellness-seeking diners in the Triangle area, known for their fresh juices, salads, and smoothies. They're opening another location, their fourth, in **North Hills**, adding to their original location in down-

town Raleigh. They also have locations in Durham and Greenville, SC. Their new spot in North Hills is in the Park Central apartment tower building. The trend of clean eating is nothing new in Raleigh, and Happy + Hale has helped give easy access to this initiative. www.happyandhale.com

After more than two years of construction, Raleigh's intermodal transit **Union Station** has finally been completed on West Martin Street in downtown.



The mid-century warehouse-turned station aims to help support the growing need of mass transit services throughout the Triangle as well as North Carolina with the main building to serving Amtrak passengers and a future building completed to house a bus terminal for Capital Area Transit, Triangle Transit, and Greyhound intercity travel. The name Union Station pays homage to the Union Depot, which was operated on Dawson Street from 1890 to 1950. Local firm Clearscapes was the architect on record for the project. www.raleighnc.gov



UNC REX Healthcare is hosting a **free Wellness Wednesday** in two sessions throughout the summer. This series presents an opportunity of up to 12 weeks of no-cost fitness opportunities. Classes are half an hour and take place every Wednesday at 6:15pm and 7pm through the end of June. Fitness groups such as Orangetheory Fitness, Fitness Connection, and Pure Barre will be teaching classes. To sign up for this you must arrive 15- 30 minutes ahead and register for the session you want to attend. All classes will be held on the grass lawn of Midtown Park in North Hills Raleigh. This is a fun and exciting (and free!) way to discover fitness motivation for a full body wellness experience. <http://visitnorthhills.com/events>



Wahlburgers has finally opened its first NC location in downtown Raleigh on Fayetteville Street, a year and a half after it's original announcement. Opening their first restaurant in Boston about seven years ago, brothers Mark, Donnie,

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and Paul Wahlberg are the names behind the burger. Since then, they have expanded into numerous states across the country. Their menu includes salads and sandwiches alongside their well-known burgers. www.wahlburgersrestaurant.com/raleigh



Five Points will be home for the newest attempt in a high-turnover spot, opening soon near Third Place Coffee, Lilly's Pizza and NOFO @ the Pig. **Lola's Cantina** plans to be serving by the end of June or early July. They plan on serving food such as street tacos, burritos, and nachos as well as margaritas, beer, and cocktails. Hopefully, Lola's will fare better here than the last few tenants, where parking was an issue.

After taking place in downtown for the past six years, The Works, **Raleigh's annual 4th of July Fireworks** display, is now being relocated back to the PNC Arena

and State Fairgrounds area, and is expected to be an even bigger fireworks display. The decision of moving was due to the constant construction and changing skylines of downtown. They will be launched from NC State University Varsity lot near Carter Finley Stadium around 9:30pm with gates opening for entrance at 6pm. Parking at PNC arena will be free. Other celebrations for the holiday include the 4th of July Day Party in downtown, the annual celebration at the State Capitol grounds, the Keep RLGH Independent 4 Miler at Dix Park, and the Barenaked Ladies concert in Red Hat Amphitheater. The 4th of July celebration will have a rain date of July 5th.



Another locally owned wine shop has made its way to Glenwood South, compliments of Sandy and Cameron Bridger. **DRINK** – not to be confused with the bar Drink Drank Drunk on nearby Morgan Street – focuses on family-owned and small production wineries from

around the world, allowing for an ever-changing wine inventory for customers to learn about various brands and varietals in their "Living Room" tasting area. A few favorites will be kept in their permanent portfolio for regulars. Various wine samplings will take every Thursday and occasional weekends. DRINK is located inside the office building at 215-C Glenwood Avenue with convenient parking available just outside. Call ahead for retail hours before stopping by, 919.296.1600. <https://drinkraleigh.com>



If you haven't noticed the closed garage on the corner of Morgan and Blount Streets is gone, check out the Marbles Kid's Museum new **Color Pop Corner** the next time you drive by. A large mural, plant landscaping, large brightly colored concrete balls for climbing, and seating allows for a place where children and parents both can play, relax, and enjoy themselves. Not only does it make a nice place for an outdoor lunch, but the wall also provides a colorful background for pictures and those selfie lovers. www.marbleskidsmuseum.org



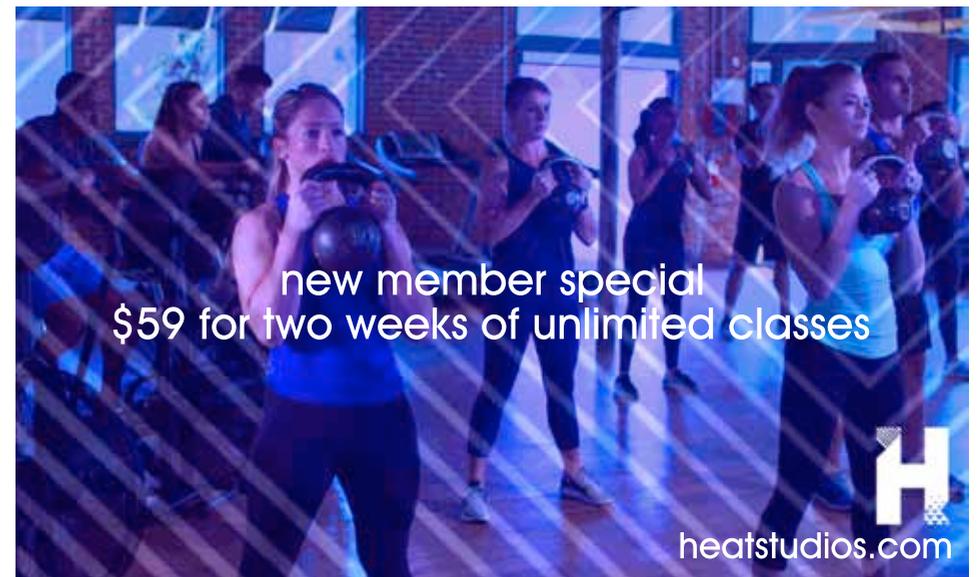
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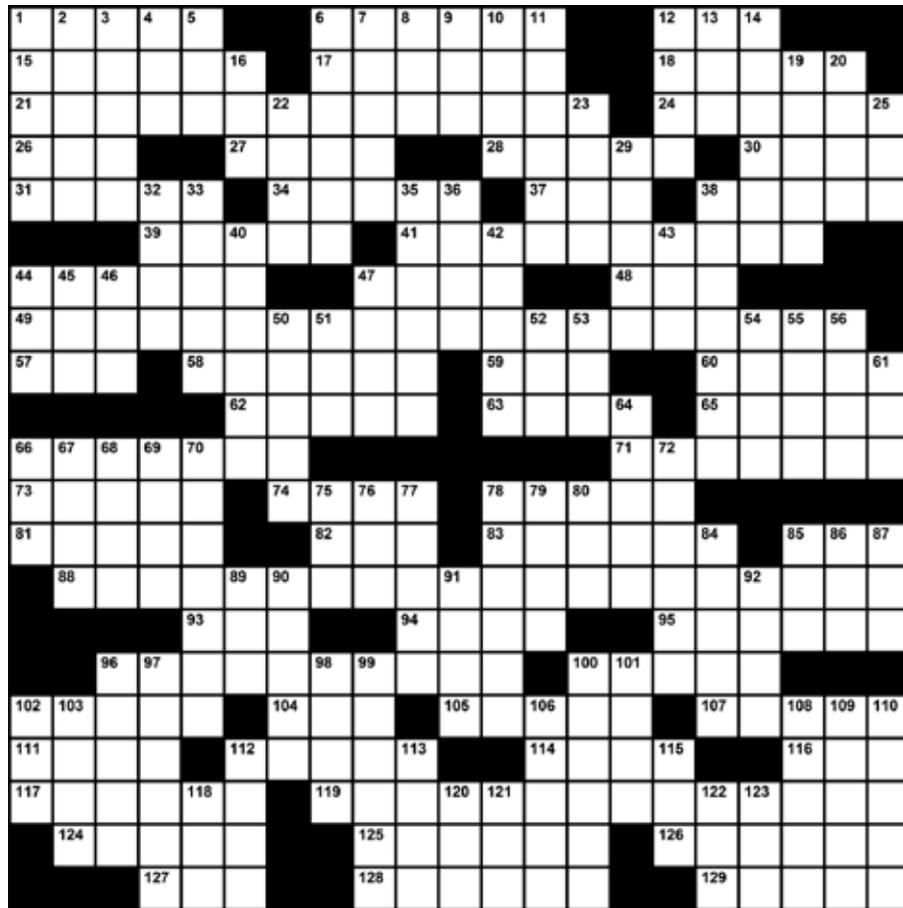


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"Animals & Relatives"

ACROSS

1. Mont Blanc, e.g.
4. Wind
6. Arts companion
12. Blonde shade
15. Ended an argument amicably
17. Urge on with shouts, as hounds in a hunt
18. Sharpens a knife
21. Commercial little critter with shades
24. Chinese fruit
26. ___ Annie
27. Read (over)
28. Grannies, e.g.
30. Be rife (with)
31. Princesses from Mumbai
34. Hospital cry
37. Silent or Golden
38. SA aquatic rodent
39. Dork
41. Business-card paper stock
44. One who has powers of endurance
47. More
48. Frequently
49. Do a trick like Cop-perfield
57. Software program, briefly
58. Limited allotment
59. Function
60. Crowbar often
62. Metric unit
63. Set down
65. Quite big
66. Like some climates
71. Swallows
73. Mexican root
74. Falls

78. "If at first you don't succeed..." is one
81. Israeli leader
82. Spa sound
83. Collaborates
85. Miss the mark
88. Fleed fast in the city, perhaps
93. ___ of words
94. Makes a blunder
95. Cuban dance
96. Indian Ocean part
100. So-called "royal herb"
102. Bring up the rear
104. Epoch
105. Watch for
107. Jet
111. Norse goddess of fate
112. Spills
114. Sticky stuff
116. One way to change color
117. Kind of bolt
119. Sees red, as a rabbit perhaps?
124. Churchill's "___ Finest Hour"
125. Teachers on the side
126. Poking (into)
127. Whistle-blower
128. Be that as it may
129. House of a minister

DOWN

1. Butter bread
2. Bamboo-eating bear
3. Cineplex ___ (theater chain)
4. Over, old way
5. Kind of nut
6. Innocent
7. Pinker
8. White, in prescriptions
9. Winter inconvenience
10. Honky ___ music
11. Shakespeare work
12. They provide holes for leather enthusiasts
13. Like Bashful
14. Trojan War hero
16. Seed
19. "I thought ___ never leave!"
20. Ooze through a crevice
22. Demilitarized ___
23. Bygone era
25. National bird of Australia
29. Prohibited
32. Tranquil scene
33. Promise
35. Carpentry groove
36. Former division of Germany
38. Shopper's guide
40. Typos
42. Capital of South Korea
43. Out of sync
44. Place for a treatment
45. Head of a steam hammer
46. Yodeler's perch
47. Inky
50. Make up for
51. Grain storage container
52. Chant by some Olympic spectators
53. Slightly less than a dozen
54. "...where, oh, where can ___?"
55. Fifth and Park, briefly
56. Do lab work
61. Legal item
64. Deep-six
66. Unhappy
67. Nanjing nanny
68. Boxer last name
69. Having wings
70. Updated subscription
72. Observant people
75. "Phooey!"
76. Hidel feature
77. Wingtips
78. Dr. Phil or Quick Draw
79. ___ and aahs
80. Tit for ___
84. Master in old India
85. Shade tree
86. Yiddish mister (title of respect)
87. Knotted weave
89. Smidgen
90. Legal investigation
91. Fertilizer ingredient
92. Break in the action
96. Jack Sparrow expression, perhaps
97. Impostor
98. Spellbound
99. Catnip
100. Test tissue
101. Above
102. Big bang creator
103. Tooth part
106. Ancient assembly area
108. Excess paperwork
109. Blues
110. Small anchor
112. Medieval laborer
113. Shock
115. Siblings
118. Equivocate
120. Slop spot
121. ___ now brown cow!
122. ___ de guerre
123. Government department

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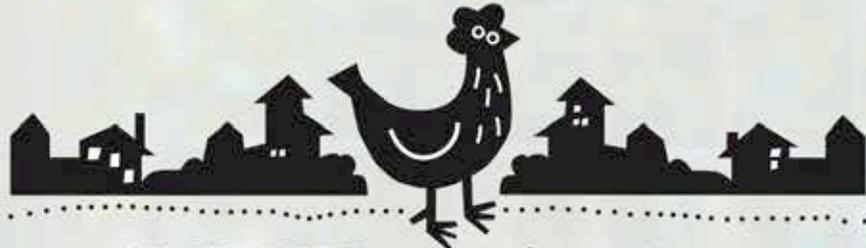
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Saturday, June 2 | 10AM-4PM

Join the largest chicken coop tour on the east coast! See more than 20 backyard coops, bee hives, gardens, and more!
Travel by car or bike!

**Day-of-Event tickets at:
Wake Whole Foods Market stores,
Raleigh Brewing Company, and
Seaboard Ace Hardware**



URBAN MINISTRIES
OF WAKE COUNTY

tourdcoop.com

PURCHASE TICKETS AT BANDTOGETHERNC.ORG

TRIANGLE
FAMILY
SERVICES



BAND
TOGETHER

presents:

WALK THE MOON

SATURDAY, JUNE 23 // RED HAT AMPHITHEATER



2018 BAND TOGETHER MAIN EVENT FEATURING:

WALK THE MOON

Join us for the summer's biggest dance party! We're celebrating our 2018 fundraising partnership with local Raleigh nonprofit Triangle Family Services. Our fundraising goal is to raise \$1 Million to provide up to 600 locals with access to mental health care. **Shut up and dance - all for a good cause!** Purchase tickets at www.BandTogetherNC.org.