

Saxapahaw Current

Comforting the Afflicted <> Afflicting the Comfortable

An independent self-reporting news source in and for the community of Saxapahaw. For a listing of businesses, entertainment, education, wellness and outdoor options here, visit www.saxapahawnc.com.

Rights of Nature

By Linda Pucci



7 Directions of Service* recently launched an Action Fund (501(c)(4) policy and advocacy arm) making use of grassroots advocacy, policy development, and legislative action to defend water, land, and future generations. **House Bill 345: Rights of Nature/Certain River Basins**, the first-of-its-kind bill in North Carolina seeks to grant legally enforceable rights to the Haw and Dan rivers as well as their ecosystems. Changing the status of nature from “property” to a rights-bearing entity, like a person, grants these rivers a voice in the legal system which, in turn, affords

greater protections under the law. The benefits for ecosystems include expanded “standing” for enforcement, new and elevated standards of protection, and restoration required as a remedy. For more information contact: 7Directions of Service [@7directionsof service](https://twitter.com/7directionsof service).

*7 Directions of Service (7DS) an Indigenous-led collective rooted in environmental justice and community organizing, operates on the ancestral homelands of the Occaneechi-Saponi in rural North Carolina and focuses on, among other things, advocating for the Rights of Nature. 7DS is holding their Rights of Nature on Wednesday April 23 starting at 9 am at the NC General Assembly. Go to info@directionsof service.com for more information or to register. ●

All about Love

By Amybeth Kissinger

I’ve been reflecting on Hooks’ “love ethic” where communities function through care, respect, and nurturing. This means actively practicing love through our choices and actions. Netwalking offers inclusive spaces that allow us to connect in nature,

move at our own pace, share stories, and build affirming relationships. Whether you’ve joined once or many times, your presence helps cultivate this love ethic. I invite you to organize your life around love and join us for a netwalk. Everyone is welcome. Keep an eye out for our monthly schedule. Here’s to more steps, stories, and community-building ahead! ●

“When small communities organize their lives around a love ethic, every aspect of daily life can be affirming for everyone.” —Bell Hooks, All About Love



Ojibway designs by Heart Berry

The Sanctuary off 54

by Ed Cockrell



The Bethlehem Presbyterian Church on Mebane Oaks Road, established in 1820, has served the community for over 200 years. As families moved and membership dwindled we established a work-group to explore options for preserving the church cemetery and grounds. Together with UNC Law School’s Community Design Center, we founded a The House of Bread* as we envisioned our new role in the community.

We have been able to partner with some real Saxapahaw go-getters by bringing local artist/musicians and the community to share our worship space and fellowship hall. SAFE hosts monthly community dinners and (DRUMROLL) a Farmers Market, Beginning May 6, every Tuesday 4-7 pm in the church parking lot. Follow us on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/sanctuaryoff54) at “Sanctuary OFF 54. We look forward to seeing soon. ●

**In old Hebrew Bethlehem translates to Bread House.*

Beneath Notice, the Fungus among us

By Scott LaGreca

Lichens, a complex life form, are a symbiotic partnership of alga and fungus. They grow anywhere with plenty of light, on human-made structures as well as rocks and trees. In the 1700s, a Swedish scientist (Carolus Linnaeus) spent his entire life identifying and naming all the worlds life many forms, including lichens. He called lichens “the poor trash of the plant world”. In 1866, Henry Green from South Carolina sent Edward Tuckerman, lichenologist and founding member of the Boston Natural History Society, a sample lichen he’d found. Since then, for the past 150 years, this lichen known as Catawba River Spotted Lichen* has existed beneath notice. In 2016, a group of lichenologists identified it growing on rocks along the Haw River, right here in Saxapahaw.

I became acquainted with Catawba River Spotted Lichen in 2022, one year after moving to Saxapahaw. I collected a tiny piece and submitted it to a colleague for analysis. His preliminary response was that this species is evolutionarily distant from other lichen species—confirming that the Catawba River Spotted Lichen is indeed unique and very special.



Geographic and political isolation can, at times, leave us Saxapahaw residents also ,feeling “beneath notice”. But upon closer inspection, we find rare beauty around us—things noteworthy, consequential, and valuable. I hope you will take pride in Saxapahaw and our special Catawba River Spotted Lichen. Watch for it as you walk the Haw River and Saxapahaw Island Trails.

Although not yet listed as “rare” by the state of North Carolina, it should never be removed or disturbed in any way, should you be lucky to encounter it. ●

* Latin name: *Dermiscellum oulocheilum*

ME and TREE

By Alison Weiner

along the edges of river and forest
at the intersection of Haw and Piedmont

bound
by storied roots and branches
and
by
intervals
engaged in the in between

we soak up the gift of sunlight
we bathe in birdsong while the current
plays the rocks

there is no noise
only natural harmonies available
for the listening
for the healing

breath and release

Shout out !

A shout out for **Kyle Decker** who, since 2017, has been the creative force behind the Haw River trails.

He’s retiring, so we want him to know we are forever grateful for his dedication to making “his” trails a joy for all!.

Let us hear your shout out in the next Saxapahaw Current.



WRITERS WANTED



Got something to tell us about a favorite Saxapahaw Topic? We’d love to hear from you. Send an article (Max 200 words) and earn a spot in our next issue. Submit to Saxpahawcurrent@gmail.com

The Saxapahaw Current, an independent, self-reporting, newsletter keeps us apprised of happenings in the village. A sincere thank you to Chris Carter, Ed Cockrell, Amybeth Kessinger, Scott LaGreca, Linda Pucci, Teresa Teague, Bonnie Walker and Alison Weiner who have contributed to this Spring 2025 issue. Back issues can be found at www.saxapahawnc.com/media/saxapahaw-current.