

I would like to introduce you to our guest columnist for this week. Bob Bryant is a Covington Mill resident, terrific husband to Anne Bryant (even though he was a “Crow“ recipient), the Commander of our FEAT (Fire Emergency Assistance Team) a member of the Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Department, and will soon be attending classes to become a certified First Responder. Bob is also an expert on fishing in our local lake and streams. And he is my friend. You will see in his following words, The North Forty is very fortunate to have people like Bob and Bill DeWolf who offer different styles and points of view from mine. Enjoy! Happy New Year, be safe and happy – Betty Eyman.

Another Christmas has come and gone. The North Forty hopes your Christmas was a happy one.

With the holidays come thoughts of friends, family and good deeds. Recent events got me to thinking about the people of the North Forty and how everybody seems to pitch in to make this community the truly great community it is. Many of the things people do are part of organized efforts and some people are just there when needed.

The poet, Walt Whitman, wrote, “That you are here – that life exists, and identity; that the powerful play goes on, and you will contribute a verse.” What verse have you contributed?

Not so long ago I was talking to a friend who is fairly new to our community. He asked me, “How long did it take for you to be ready to volunteer?” “Well,” I explained, “I waited two years before getting involved in FEAT and almost three years before joining the fire department.” He said he had been thinking about volunteering and had been approached by various organizations to do so. My advice to him, “Volunteer when you’re ready and volunteer to do something you want to do, not something you’re pressured into doing”. Don’t misunderstand; this friend is already very active in the community, just not in a formal way - yet.

If you’ve been thinking about getting involved, here are some of the groups, in no particular order, in our area, that do help and could use your help. Our schools and churches have volunteer opportunities at various levels and how wonderful is it to help our children. Public safety always needs help in this age of inadequate funding. The Trinity County Sheriff’s Department, Coffee Creek and Trinity Center Volunteer Fire Departments, Fire Emergency Assistance Team (FEAT), the local Red Cross and Fire Auxiliaries are always looking for help and/or members.

I’ll bet you’d be surprised at how many “boards” there are in the North Forty. Some examples are the North Trinity Lake Improvement Association (NTLIA), various water boards and even a board to run the Scott Museum. Many fine people serve on these boards and others. Many of our residents are pilots. The local Pilots Association is about 50 members strong and active in our area.

Of course, the Lions Club is a great source of entertainment, socialization and volunteerism. This wonderful group of people contributes to our community in many ways, not only financially but with manpower when needed.

North Forty businesses also pitch in when needed. Just a few of the businesses that come to mind are the Country Store, Jaktri Market, KOA, Yellow Jacket and Jim Lucky Enterprises. Our businesses don’t hesitate to donate money, products, support and services to help our community. Generosity is alive and well in the North Forty.

Who are these people who keep our community strong? Everyone, from part-timers to new residents to life-long residents of north Trinity County - from adolescents, to the young, to the young-at-heart make up our productive population.

By 1960, Trinity Center had been moved from its original location to where it is now. We are very fortunate to have members of the McDonald, Scott and Hamilton families still in our midst. Their families have been and continue to be very active volunteers in the North Forty community

You know, ours is a small community, fairly insignificant to those who don't know us. Visitors see us as primarily an opportunity for recreation – a place to go for a week or so to get away from the pressures of everyday life. To those of us who call the North Forty home, it's variously described as paradise, heaven and bliss. Why? Well, the trees, rivers, mountains and lakes are a big part of that. However, when I first came here twelve years ago and returned regularly until I moved here full time three years ago, it was the people, I realized, that made this place the really special place it is. And, now, when we have visitors spend time with us, the comment I hear when they have to leave is that the people here are "so nice."

Yes, it's the people who make the North Forty the special place it is. And, it's the people who volunteer and otherwise contribute who make the North Forty the truly wonderful and successful community it is. Thank you to all of you who contribute a verse to the powerful play that is the North Forty.

A perfect example of contributing "a verse" is by how well you responded to our Secret Santa. A secret Santa writes, "Thank you so much for your generous participation in the fourth year of our "Secret Santa" program. The spirit of giving and caring is alive and well in the North Lake area. You've made a special difference in the lives of our local children with the best ever Secret Santa drive. A total of \$1206.00 was raised through business and individual donations- \$200.00 over last year. Isn't that AWESOME! Local businesses participating were: Coffee Creek Country Store, Coffee Creek Ranch, Forest Café, Jaktri Market, Lucky's, North Lake Auto, Sasquatch and the Yellow Jacket. Participating Weaverville businesses and organizations included: Don and Robin Reilly at Coldwell Bankers, Fackrells, Joy Griner at Innovative Loans, Longs, Mountain Valley Physical Therapy, Olson's Stoneware, Trinity Alps Medical Group, Trinity Professional Pharmacy, Trinity Theater, and Nancy Dean at Weaverville Realty. Several generous donations from individuals were also received. In addition, people participated by purchasing and wrapping one or more gifts for children. All together 87 gifts were provided to 29 children to help their dreams come true. Additionally, Santa provided the fixin's for ten turkey dinners. At the last minute another name came in and the money we thought to donate to the local Lions went to one more family. Ending balance = 0!!

Some calendar notes: Don't forget the FEAT New Year's Eve party at the IOOF Hall on Dec 31 from 8 to 1:00 a.m. - \$10 per person, BYOB and favorite dish, There will be music, dancing and raffle drawings. All proceeds go to FEAT.