

Kirby Discusses Woodlake at the Bottom of this Article

Bill Kirby Jr.: Woodpeckers fan offers parking suggestion

By [Bill Kirby Jr.](#)

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Keith Allison

Judy Beard says she has lived in Fayetteville for more than 45 years, has attended a lifetime of events in this community, is a season ticket-holder for the Fayetteville Woodpeckers' minor league baseball team and has a suggestion for folks concerned about parking when the Woodpeckers kick off their home season on April 18 at the downtown SEGRA Stadium. "Negotiate shuttle buses to be staged two hours before and two hours after at the major churches or comparable parking lots in the area," Beard writes in an email. "Charge for the ride to and from with a simple amount like \$5 per person. Also offer a season shuttle pass for a discounted, convenient way of hopping on the shuttle. This will address the lack of parking spaces downtown and allow easy drop-offs for our handicapped

population. Our handicapped cannot access the stadium as things stand, even if they are fortunate enough to find a spot.” Sounds, Ms. Beard, like a sound plan.

“I really enjoyed your column about the Prince Charles,” Bob Horne, a former sports reporter with this newspaper, writes about our March 7 column, where Fayetteville native Jordan Jones is supervising reconstruction of the old hotel into apartments, offices, restaurants and amenities galore adjacent to the under-construction SEGRA Stadium. “It’s probably been reported and I missed it, but I didn’t realize that Jordan Jones’ great-great grandfather built the Prince Charles. I do wonder about one thing. I recently learned that the parking deck isn’t for use of the baseball stadium. Parking for ballgames might be a problem. At one time the Observer was reporting that a walkway was planned over the railroad tracks so people could park at the military museum and walk across to games. But that just seemed to fade away. What happened to it? The paper said the downtown parking deck is a couple of blocks away. Isn’t it further than that?” Yes, Jones’ great-great grandfather, James Addison Jones, built the hotel that opened on April 16, 1925, along Hay Street. I don’t recall a walkway to the stadium, but the new parking garage Prince Charles Holdings LLC is building for the city will offer some public parking, but most is earmarked for Prince Charles tenants, Fayetteville Woodpeckers employees and for guests of the coming Hyatt Place hotel. The current downtown parking deck is maybe three blocks from the stadium, but not too far.

Based on the input from students, parents, community members, school and district educators, along with district leadership, \$26.1 million of needs were identified,” Donna Vann, chairwoman for the Cumberland County Board of Education, says about Superintendent Marvin Connelly’s proposed budget that is requesting \$8.9 million more from the county commissioners, who allotted \$80 million for the 2018-19 fiscal year. “Through a very methodical and deliberate process, district leadership reviewed and evaluated the needs and identified specific priorities that lead to the \$8.9 million request.”

I noticed that there was not a story in the Readers Write section of the Saturday, March 16 issue of your newspaper,” Gil Bowman, a regular contributor, writes in an email. “Has this section been omitted from your paper permanently. I surely hope not. This is a wonderful opportunity for people who love to write and see their writing in print, and we are extremely thankful for the opportunity.” Readers Write, Mr. Bowman, long has been a staple in our Saturday publications of community news, and yes, we continue to welcome stories from our readers.

There are literally hundreds of retired military there,” Keith Allison, a Fayetteville businessman, says about Woodlake Country Club property owners who are suffering after Hurricane Matthew in 2016 flooded the landscape and the centerpiece Lake Surf dam was damaged. “Many have the bulk of their life savings in their houses there, and have been neglected. It’s a travesty.” And Allison, who

also owns property at Woodlake, where he says his daughters learned to water ski, is joining with neighbors to do all he can to restore the Woodlake community to what it once was, and that's good news for all who call Woodlake home.

A final word on Woodlake. "Appreciate your series of columns," Dr. Dave Dickerhoff, a Woodlake homeowner, says about the March 13, 15 and 16 publications of the frustrated Moore County community. "Now keep your promise and have a reporter at the town hall meeting in April." Just let me know the time and date of the meeting.

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