



FAIRHOPERS

July, 2020

Volume 2, Number 3

In This Issue

- Margaret Neely profiles our indispensable FSTC office staff
- Pam Turner introduces us to Fairhope newcomers
- Alan Samry profiles Council Vice President Charles Lake
- A Message from FSTC President Lee Turner

News You Can Use: Council Actions and Deliberations

- White Avenue Park Plans presented
- Additional \$15,345 for Gayfer Estates sidewalk
- Next sidewalk project: Nichols Ave. connecting Mershon St. to Section St.
- Took under advisement: Sidewalks to Sedgfield and Twin Beech Estates
- Archives Committee: Updated website: New look, new features, and additional videos, plus 800 photographs!

For links to the online archives and past newsletters visit the FSTC website.

www.fairhopesingletax.com

Office News:

The office lobby is now open. Maintain social distancing. Stay home if you are feeling ill.

Meet the Nisbett's

By Pam Turner

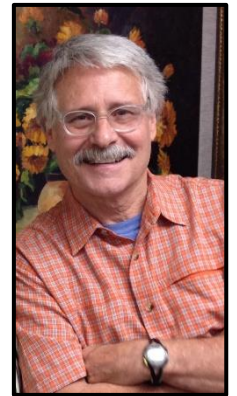
In the last FSTC Newsletter, President Lee Turner concluded that "the greatest thing the FSTC has done for Fairhope is to attract unique people to its shores."

I introduce you to a couple who verify that claim, Nancy and Ran Nisbett, who became Fairhoppers two years ago.

In the following excerpt of a letter he wrote to me and my husband Len, Ran explains the call that brought him and Nancy to Fairhope two years ago:

"I know we are carpet-baggers in some ways--but what drew us to retire here after planning for it over almost 20 years--in Fairhope (where we did not know a single soul), was the deep roots of community and the commons. I studied the history and knew that, eventually, we would thrive here because the "soil" was fertile for cooperation and collaboration. It's in the soul of true Fairhoppers whether they have been here forever or just arrived. "Gaston Progressives--Keepers of the Commons. " I hope all of us can tap into that and build upon those communitarian foundations. Or, as EB Gaston called it: "cooperative individualism." Paul Gaston's "Man and Mission " book is completely relevant to our times of huge wealth disparity, populism, and the need for communitarian approaches. In fact, I'd take the position that the cause of the great late 19th century/early 20th century progressive movement (that gave birth to Gaston's ideas) came out of times very much like our own. As Mark Twain supposedly said, "history may not repeat itself, but it rhymes" and as Faulkner said, "the past is not dead, it is not even past." Have a wonderful day in Paradise, where the voices of the Founders echo on the Bluff trying to share the lessons they learned! Fondly, Ran"

Welcome home Ran and Nancy. Thank you for your generosity of spirit that leads always forward, making the world safer and stronger.



What Goes on in the FSTC Office

By Margaret Neely

The FSTC office may look quiet and peaceful but behind those doors at 336 Fairhope Avenue it is business as usual all day long! Jennifer Sanford, Office Manager, states that orientations take up the majority of her time, as each one lasts from thirty minutes to an hour and she does two to five orientations per day. Jennifer also goes to real estate offices, brokers, closing companies and lenders to teach classes about the FSTC. The entire staff of LeAnn Amond, Pam Hill and Tom Godfrey are busy all day answering the phone, responding to emails, and handling walk-ins. As the real estate market has rebounded it has increased transfers over the last several years between 390 to 450 per year. As new subdivisions are created, the workload increases exponentially – when a field becomes a neighborhood, one lease becomes 100 leases!



Directors

H.C. "Cliff" Pitman
Carol Saltz
Geoffrey F. Kennedy
Fred Watkins, Jr.
James "Jim" H. Reid, Jr.

Officers

Lee Turner, President
Charles Lake, VP
Reuben "Ed" Davidson III, Secretary
Michael Upchurch, Treas.

Trustees

Pat King
Teresa Watkins
George Gilmore

Staff

Jennifer Evans Sanford,
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Pam Hill
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Fairhoppers and the History Lecture Series are brought to you by the FSTC Education Committee. Faye Earnest, Wayne Miller, Margaret Neely, Alan Samry, and Pam Turner.

Have a story idea for an upcoming newsletter or want to serve on the FSTC Education Committee?

Email Wayne Miller
Waynemiller77@yahoo.com

Charles Lake: Professor and Single Tax Vice President

Fairhope Single Tax Founder "Professor" James Bellangee was a tireless spokesperson, lecturer, thinker, and participator in all things Fairhope Single Tax.

That teaching tradition and single tax commitment continues with current Vice President Charles Lake. A 1980 graduate of Fairhope High School, Lake has been teaching business and computer science courses at Coastal Alabama (formerly Faulkner State) Community College since 1986.

Lake has served as Business and computer science chair, Dean of Instruction, and even served as Chair of the Culinary Division from 1998-1998. He also teaches in the business program at Huntingdon College.

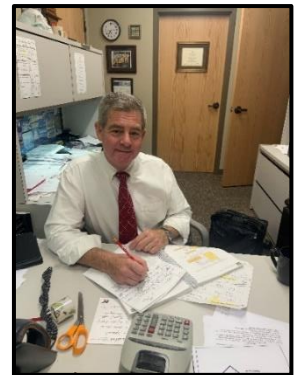
Lake earned all his degrees, undergrad, MBA, and PhD at the University of South Alabama.

As for Single tax, he became a member in 1991. He's served on the hospitality committee, computer committee, rent study, and education committee. He was elected to the board in 2012. He's proud of the first film made about FSTC. The video, *The Legacy of the FSTC*, was the forerunner of the video that shows today in the Fairhope Museum of History and in the office. "I had to take input from so many people at that time and the video resulted in something that many were proud of," Lake said.

Though he expounded on the economics of Henry George (Single Tax), Karl Marx (Communism), and Adam Smith (Capitalism), Lake says, "there are differences in what people believe Henry George meant." Today, Lake classifies George as a "free market capitalist on steroids."

Lake looks back to the determination and optimism of Professor Bellangee, E. B. Gaston, and company.

Lake said, "Our founders put aside their philosophical differences, agreed on the big issues, and made Fairhope a reality today."



From the President: Lee Turner

To quote economist Harley Lutz in the 1942 Oelwein (Iowa) Daily Register, "There ain't no such thing as a free lunch." Recently in a meeting concerning renewal plans for a Fairhope park, a comment stood out that "nothing should be done until everyone is happy." Following that directive and with my experience raising four children under two years apart, my family could never have chosen a restaurant. How can the City get anything done trying to make everyone happy? In the past, we didn't have social media to stir emotions, but a lot of Fairhope projects were controversial. Here are a few I can think of: Setting bay front land aside for a park "FSTC can't stand to lose the income." Planting trees downtown "The roots will tear up the sidewalks and buildings." Building the golf course "It will break Fairhope." Requiring subdivisions to have water retention, green space, sidewalks, LED lighting, and landscape requirements "No one will ever be able to afford to build again." Extending the bike trail through Montrose "It will increase crime." Designating a Historical District "No one will be able to repaint their buildings." Building a parking garage "It will change the entire character of downtown." Building a Skate Park "It will bring drugs to town." Consensus is a goal. When social media stirs us up, how do we decide the correct action? 1. READ the proposals, ordinances, or plans for YOURSELF. 2. Ignore social media. 3. Listen to professionals and the seasoned wise, not the self-interested. 4. Understand there is "no free lunch" (even the no smoking ordinance caused noise issues). Dream and discuss respectfully so that wisdom has a Fair Hope of success.