

For any woman to consider ...

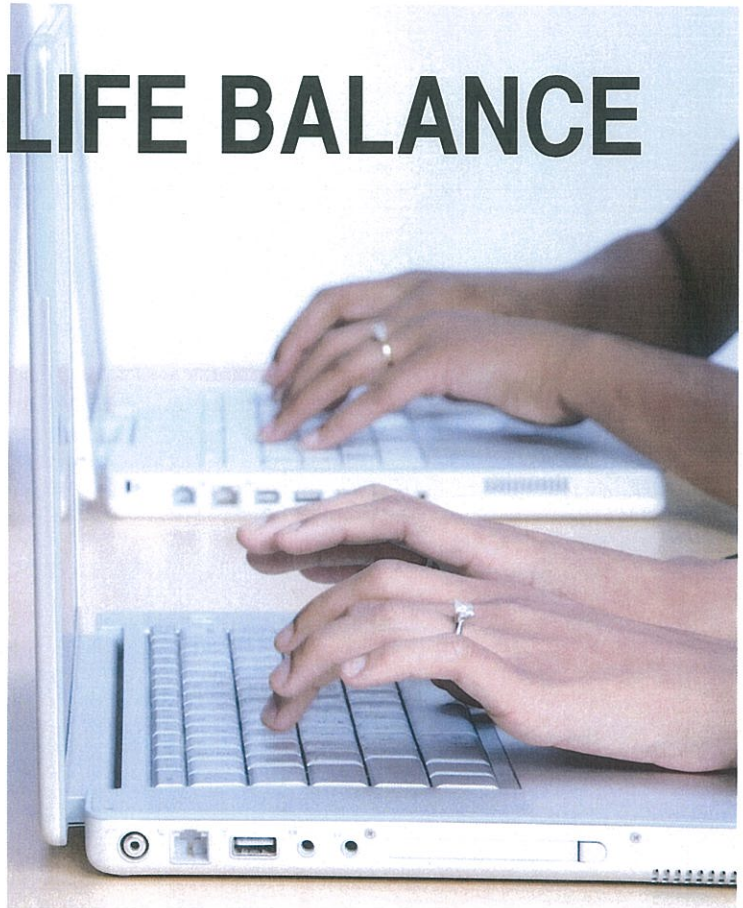
# Inspiring self lessons in striving to achieve

## WORK-LIFE BALANCE

**W**ork-life balance is a loose term so many of us toss around, but very few have mastered.

I know it seems the harder I try to prioritize and practice sound time-management, the harder it gets. It's an ongoing struggle for me to put the time needed into my career, spend quality time with my spouse, children and parents, grow spiritually, serve others and have something left for me. This is a much debated topic in my house since my husband and I have hectic schedules and many demands on our time. After 15 years of marriage, we are still trying to get our schedules in sync.

Even though my mother worked outside of the home and sometimes juggled a part-time job, I always remember her being a present force in my life. When I was young, she worked dayshift in a local textile mill but I always remember her making sure I had everything I needed for school, and she prepared dinner every day without complaint. I can never recall a time my mom seemed overly impatient. I think the major difference between my generation and that of my mother's is we have different priorities now. My mother attended church regularly, she worked and above all



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her main focus was her children. Her priorities were clear — God, family and work. Unlike me, I feel like most days I am flying by the seat of my pants and not getting much accomplished. In recent years, I have done a tough self-evaluation focusing on my spirituality, relationships with others and changes I needed to make to get things right. While others celebrated me for all the causes I championed in my community, I really didn't like the person I had become. I knew I had to make some changes and it has not come without some major challenges.

The changes began with me and eventually impacted some of the people I cared about. I realized as long as I said, "yes," people would keep asking and putting demands on my time. I knew mentally and physically I could not continue going at the pace I once did. I had encountered some experiences that changed my life forever — deaths of loved ones, losses of friendships and challenges with child-rearing. My self-reflection revealed I had spent many years focusing on many wrong things. As I began to remove some clutter from my mind and life, I was able to see more clearly. My days now are spent between my job, managing my family's schedule, keeping a watch on elderly family members and developing a stronger relationship with God. I must admit it gets lonely sometimes since I don't have a lot of people around me like I once did, but I love that I don't have the "reality show" drama that once seemed to follow me.

Since I began my career, I have always tried to keep my personal and professional life as two entities as much as possible, but



**Work-life balance is a loose term so many women toss around but very few have mastered.**

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sometimes it's really hard to do. As I face personal challenges that may impact my work schedule I try to be as open and honest with my employer as much as possible without seeming "needy" or falling into the role of a "whiner."

When thinking about how to make the most out of my career while taking care of the people I love, I have adopted a few coping mechanisms. Something that has helped me stay sane in my career while seeking this balance is making every effort to build some down-time in my schedule whenever I can. Everybody needs "me" time. I have learned to say "NO" to activities and people who sap my energy. This includes toxic people who inundate you with "mindless" gossip.

OK, now this is a big one for me — rethinking the way I approach my errands. I still waste a lot of time not properly planning my daily schedule. As I approach the age of 50 in a few short years, my mind tells me I can accomplish everything on my to-do list but my body tells me otherwise. I am learning I need more rest to be able to accomplish my goals. When possible I try to make sure I am also exercising, which helps build my stamina and wards off anxiety and depression.

I guess what I have learned is to focus on the important things that add value to my life, spend less time worrying about what others think of me, invest my time and efforts wisely, and live and love regardless of the challenges you face.

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*Kimberly D. Bracy is a native of Roanoke Rapids. She received her Bachelor of Arts in Public Relations with a minor in English from N.C. Agricultural and Technical State University. She has worked in public relations for more than 25 years, and is mill communications manager for KapStone Paper and Packaging Corporation. Also Kim is vice chair of the Halifax County Department of Social Services Board and she is on the Board of Directors for Susan G. Komen for the Cure/Triangle to the Coast affiliate. She is actively involved in the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, is a mentor to local students and attends Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church. Kim is married to Dr. Elie Bracy III and they have three children.*

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## *Yes please, and thank you*

**A** few weeks ago my family and I had planned to travel to Concord, I had a meeting to attend and then we were going to get in some quality time. At the last minute our plans changed, the family couldn't attend but I still had to make my way down Interstate-85 for my meeting.

Since I am not fond of driving long distances alone, I asked a friend to accompany me. She was scheduled to work that day, she took the day off and away we went. My meeting only lasted a few hours so she and I got in some fun, fellowship and good food.

Imagine how surprised I was to open my mailbox this week and there was a thank you note from my friend expressing her gratitude for the trip. I thought to myself I should be the one sending her a thank you. I was surprised because people don't normally take the time to send thank you notes these days. I will get an occasional email, Facebook

message or text informally to convey appreciation.

Is the art of writing “thank you” cards lost? I was raised to always write thank you cards. As a child, I remember writing them seemingly constantly; a thank you card to an aunt for birthday money or to family friends who gave a gift. As an adult, I send handwritten thank you card notes to co-workers who help me with projects or to people who give my family things from their garden or baked goods.

When I receive baked goods and the person sends it in his or her’s container, I always like to return the container clean with a nice thank you note enclosed. Sure, it’s easier to fire off an email or send a text — and in some instances I do — but in an era of modern electronic commu-



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Thank You

Thank You!

Thank You!



nication, I truly believe there is nothing classier than someone who takes the time to write a handwritten thank you. Let's take a little time out to revisit the art of the thank you note.

The first question many people have is when to write them and when not to. There are many, many etiquette guides out there which detail pretty much every situation you may ever be faced with. I like to boil it down to this: Whenever you've been gifted with someone's time, belongings, presence or money that is outside of an ordinary occurrence — write a note.

There are plenty of situations where I am thankful, but I write emails or quick texts given how busy we all are. But these are all either very regular happenings or immediate family. You should aim to send these out as quickly as possible after the event — ideally no later than two days afterward. There is a big exception on this which is with wedding and baby presents, where it is generally acceptable up to six weeks after the event.

Good luck to you as you rekindle the art of written expressions of gratitude.



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# *Office Politics 101*

**S**ome people steer clear of office politics, yet playing the game may be crucial to career success because it offers a way to learn how power and influence are managed in your company.

To get a handle on office politics, observe how things get done in your organization. Ask some key questions: What are the core values and how are they enacted? Are short- or long-term results more valued? How are decisions made? How much risk is tolerated? The answers to these questions should give you a good sense of the culture of your organization.

And don't be afraid to toot your own horn. If no one knows of your good work, you may lose at the game of

office politics when you really deserve to win. Let others know what you've accomplished whenever you get the opportunity. Just be careful to avoid coming across as a braggart by exaggerating your successes or taking too much credit for teamwork in which you participated.

Learn to communicate persuasively. Develop an assertive style, backed with solid facts and examples, to focus attention on your ideas and proposals. Good politicians adjust their messages for different audiences, but do not align themselves too strongly with any one group. While an alliance may be powerful for the moment, new leadership can oust existing coalitions and surround itself with new supporters.

Meanwhile, keep an eye out for any office turmoil that might be directed at you. If a boss or colleague works to sabotage your career — or you perceive you are being sabotaged — no matter the reason, it can be tough to cope. Complain and you're no longer considered a team player or may be accused of imagining the situation. Yet if you sit back and do nothing, your career advancement could be in jeopardy.

If a colleague attempts to denigrate your character, blame you for something you didn't do or steal credit for your work, make sure to keep your cool. Don't confront the saboteur. First, carefully weigh the unpleasant possibility your assumptions about the person are false. Make sure it's not you that's the problem. If you're unsure, consult with a trusted colleague or mentor. Should you then feel certain you're in the right, talk to your boss in private about the issue.

Going forward, you may be able to stop a conniving boss or colleague in his or her tracks by putting every idea, suggestion and accomplishment into a time-stamped document, like an email message.

Overall, focus on being true to yourself. After analyzing the political landscape in your company, if you decide the game is one you can't play, prepare to move on.

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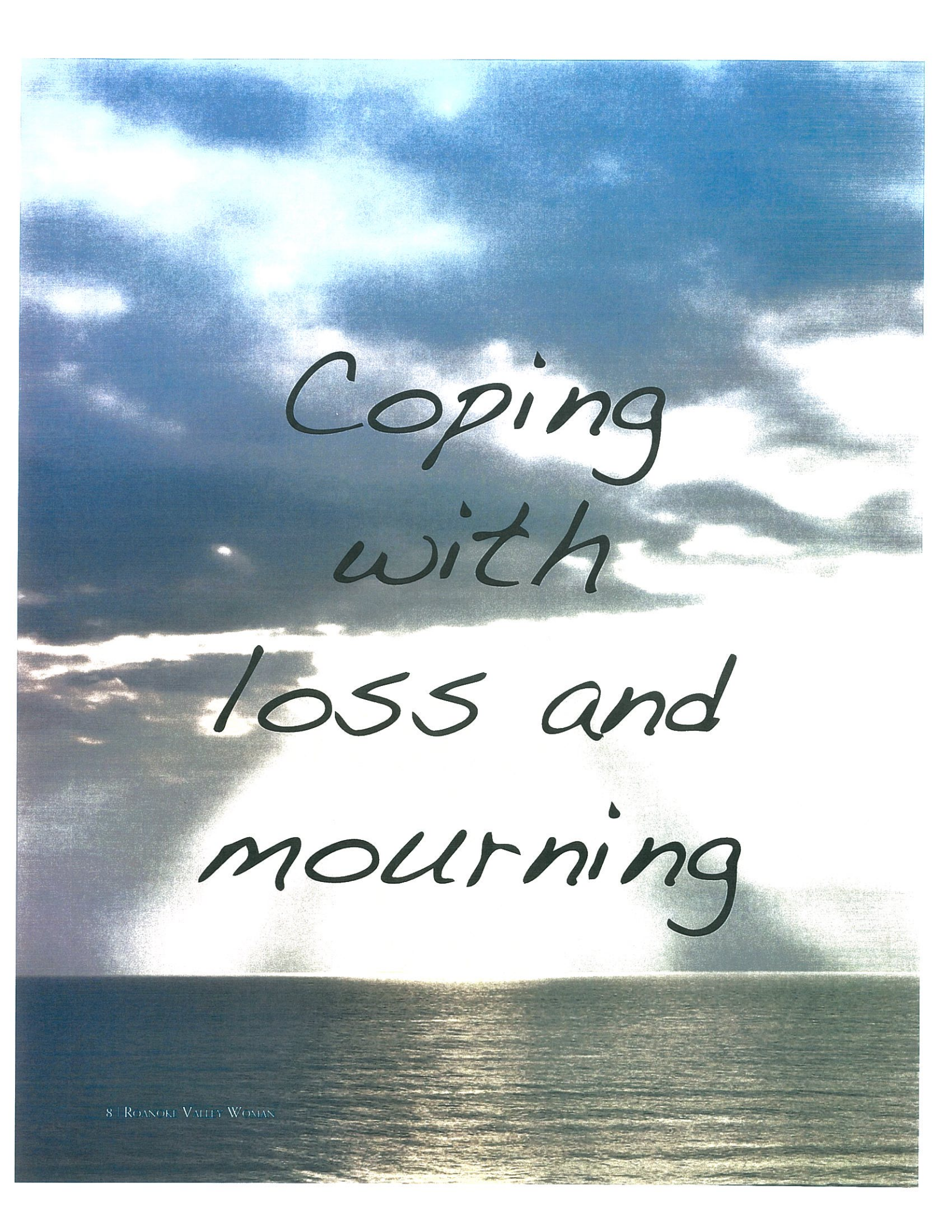
*Kim's community involvement includes vice chair of the Halifax County Department of Social Services Board and she is on the Board of Directors for Susan G. Komen for the Cure — Triangle to the Coast Affiliate. She is actively involved in the Roanoke Valley Chamber of Commerce, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, is a mentor to local students and attends Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Margaretsville. Kim is married to Dr. Elie Bracy III and they have three children.*



**“Don't be afraid to toot your own horn. If no one knows of your good work, you may lose at the game of office politics when you really deserve to win.”**







Coping  
with  
loss and  
mourning



## Strategies to directly face *grieving a loved one now gone*


In recent weeks, two families whom I care a great deal about lost loved ones. One family lost a beloved husband and father. He was also an accomplished coach and educator who shaped young minds throughout our community. The other family lost a sister, who was a mother and grandmother. All of this brought back so many memories for me, as my mind reflected on the loss of my sister and brother. I could only sit and try to provide some comfort to these families. Although people tell you in that moment they know how you feel, I don't believe anyone truly knows. If you have dealt with death and loss you have some idea, but you still can't fully know how another individual feels at this time.

Loss is a part of life. Over the course of our lives we experience loss of relationships, things, people and even ways of thinking about the world. In terms of losing people, you may have lost someone as a result of natural causes, disease, homicide or suicide. We also lose people who are still alive but our relationship with them has ended. The connection may have ended because of simply growing apart or as a result of a violation of trust, incarceration, infidelity, or those instances when the person does not share the reason for ending the relationship.

Besides losing people, we may also experience loss of a job, loss of a pet, loss of safety, loss of health and loss of financial stability. When we don't deal with our grief and loss, the hurt feelings can be overwhelming and can result in a number of unhealthy behaviors, such as isolating ourselves from others, developing a dependence on substances for escape or other destructive activities. Loss can also lead to a range of feelings, including but not limited to anger, guilt, fear, sadness and numbness. It is important to face your loss directly and allow yourself to work through it honestly and at your own pace.

Here are a few strategies that may help you:

1. Consider and celebrate the positive things the person and the relationship brought to your life.
2. Find people with whom you can talk about the person, the relationship and your loss. You don't have to deal with it alone.
3. There are various types of loss, so seek out more information on the specific type of loss you are experiencing. There are a number of sites online as well as self-help books.
4. Develop a ritual — some activity that allows you to remember and honor your memories. Rituals may include silent reflection, playing music, lighting a candle, reading a poem or going to a place that reminds you of the person.



5. Your faith, spirituality or religion can often provide insight and affirmation for the grieving process. Consider prayer, reading an inspiring text or talking with your religious leader as potential sources of support.

6. Most cities have a number of bereavement and loss groups. Getting support from those facing similar experiences can be quite restoring. There are groups for persons who have lost someone due to cancer, addiction, incarceration and violence. Do some research online to find out what groups are meeting in your area.

7. Take care of yourself. Due to the difficult feelings we are experiencing, we sometimes start neglecting ourselves. When you don't care for yourself, you end up feeling worse. Try to get rest, eat healthy foods, exercise and avoid holding stress in your body.

8. When grief and sorrow do not go away, it is a good idea to speak with a mental health professional to assist you through the grieving process.

9. Give yourself time and space to grieve in your own way and at your own pace. Everyone responds to loss differently. You may cry often or you may feel the tears will never come. There is not one correct way to grieve. Instead of comparing your process to where someone else may be on the journey, honor yourself by recognizing and honestly expressing your feelings and thoughts.

10. Be aware of the "grief triggers" so you can be prepared. Examine what are the things, situations, dates or places that remind you of the loss. In this way, you can be more equipped to work through those experiences with compassion and patience.

Remember good grief is honest grief. Be honest with yourself about where you are and where you would like to be. Then recognize healing is a journey that requires facing our losses and not running from them. Be encouraged by knowing you don't have to get through this alone. Remind yourself of the good memories as you hold on to the hope there will be good life moments you have yet to experience. This awareness will assist you in walking in the next season in your life.



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## Working Safely is No Accident

According to the OSHA, each year more than 4,000,000 people in the United States suffer a workplace injury or occupational illness. Injuries are always unexpected, but using simple and proven concepts, employees and contractors can learn to recognize at-risk conditions or behavior before they lead to an injury. Stan Clayton, Project and Reliability Engineering Leader, recently conducted a Contractor Safety Refresher Training. Representatives from six companies were in attendance. The companies invited to participate are considered “daily contractors. The primary focus of the training involved two key areas: 1) Barricade Signage and 2) Hotwork Permits. Clayton emphasized the importance of getting all the details correct in a continued effort to reduce the likelihood of injuries in the workplace.



Roberts Company worked with their sub-contractor Concor to prepare foundations for #3 Paper Machine secondary screen and feed pump foundations. Hard barricades were in place with caution tape and signs to alert others that caution should be taken in those areas.

## Electrical Safety Training

In February, Larry Gums, Process Manager Maintenance, led Electrical Safety Training on Quick Trips. A Quick Trip is a mechanism that immediately stops the trip function of the breaker it is associated with. The device lowers your exposure risk from a Category 3 to a Category 2 lessening the potential for injuries among employees. The switches in the Roanoke Rapids Mill are located on the AK Breaker Compartment Doors. They are prominently labeled “Quick-Trip”. For a list of Quick Trip locations, contact Larry at ext. 6486.



One of several Quick Trips located within the mill.

## Finished Products Review

The Finished Products Department is in the process of conducting 2014 Finished Product Review of Safety, Quality and Performance. In addition, Capital Plans, Goals and Expectations for 2015 are being communicated. Attendees include the Machine Crew, Lab Personnel, Mechanics, Electricians, and shift managers.

The sessions begin with an introduction by Finished Products Manager Bill Wiese, where he shares the safety accomplishments of each shift, salutes them and encourages them to continue to work safely and be involved in the safety initiatives we have at the mill whether it's BBS Observations, RAPIDS participation, involvement with the departmental safety committee, or helping to develop Risk Assessments for the tasks we do day in and day out. He then shares some safety basics with them on the 3P's of Safety: Plant and Equipment, Policies and Procedures, and People and Behavior. Bill's final focus point on safety references complacency in the workplace.

Bill's introduction is followed by a safety presentation, presented by Linda Martin and Quintin Williams, B-Mill and Shipping BBS coordinators respectively, where they continue to motivate the attendees to examine their approach to safety by sharing the rewards and benefits of leaving the mill the way they came in and recognizing the “Common Thread” of safety in the workplace. 2014 BBS statistics are shared with the group to alert the attendees to the top at-risk behaviors observed for the year and the means whereby we can be proactive and prevent serious injuries by combining that information with SafeStart principles. The safety talk is followed by the Quality Review on the 2014 Quality Metrics Scoreboard presented by Steve Jaffe, Quality Engineer, that starts with the 2014 Quality Metrics-Scoreboard. The review culminates with 2014 achievements and milestones in safety, quality, and productivity.





## Back by Popular Demand: Leadership Audits

Leadership Audits were recently re-launched at the Roanoke Rapids Mill. Audits are an essential component of our Safety Program. A safe and healthy workplace is important to all of us. We have all heard about work-related accidents that caused severe injuries or even death.

“Minor” incidents can cause major disruptions to our operations; it is important to do everything we can to prevent these situations from occurring. One way to do this is by conducting Safety Audits.

“Leadership safety audits are a joint venture between the union hourly and salary management,” said Scottie Jordan, Utilities BBS Coordinator. “We come together with one common goal; to insure we are the best we can be in our safety efforts at all levels within our mill.”

A safety audit is an examination of a work area to make sure that it is as safe as possible. In order for audits to be successful, we need everyone to cooperate. Leadership Audits were initiated at Roanoke Rapids in 2011.

Audits are conducted weekly at the mill. The first type of audit is conducted by a member of the Lead Team in conjunction with a member of the Union Executive Committee. When conducting the audit, the representatives determine their area of focus based on the current projects at the mill or other areas of interest based on recent safety trends. The second type of audit is a Departmental Audit which is assigned on a rotational basis to Department Area Managers who focus on a specific issue within their individual areas. These audits often involve a cross-functional department team and identify positive work practices and opportunities for improvement.



### Intent of Audit:

1. To make contact with employees that are performing tasks. This gives you a chance to observe how it's done. Talk with the employees, discuss the job, and make sure that you keep the focus on doing it safely.
2. To improve safety communications. You can discuss recent incidents, SST topics, Safety alerts, or near misses. It is your chance to also LISTEN, LISTEN, LISTEN!
3. To identify and control hazards in the workplace associated with the jobs you observe.

Let's continue to demonstrate our safe work practices. Our audits will continue to help ensure our safety and the safety of our co-workers. It is imperative that we all continue to take responsibility for safety at the Roanoke Rapids Mill.

## Communication is Key



C-Evaps Outage Work-Replacement of a Block Valve and Automatic Control earlier this month.

In a recent interview, Process Managers Joe Coyne, David Edwards and Herbie Liles discussed the preparations necessary to ensure the success of the recent #7 Recovery Boiler Outage. This task was not one taken lightly as the #7 Recovery Boiler is the biggest steam producer in the mill, it is at the “heart” of our operations.

The recurring theme throughout the discussion centered around the importance of communication from beginning to end. Joe stated that as a group all of the key players come together to develop the best plan with the goal of working safely and producing optimal results. At the onset important details to consider are what equipment is going to be down and making sure you have a “good” Lockout Sheet for all work being done during the outage. Teams are taking even greater effort to review Lockout Sheets, we recently switched to a new format.

“There are so many things we have to take into consideration,” said David. “Coordination and communications is key.”

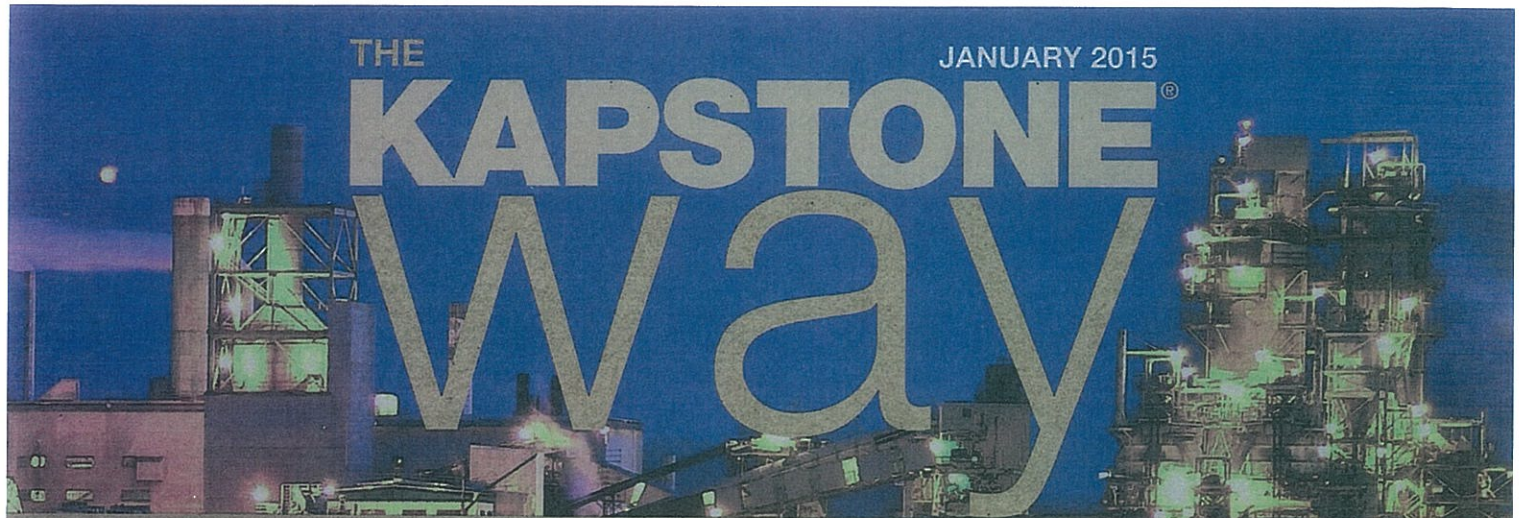
When determining who needs to assist with the outage you want to make sure you have enough help-experienced team members as well as individuals that would benefit from the task from a training perspective.

According to Herbie, two of the groups involved were Utilities E&I and Mechanical Maintenance. He also expressed the importance of exploring the opportunity to perform other work while the equipment is down. In addition to the C-Evaps, other work performed during the outage included the primary wind box, secondary liquor heater automatic, end caps on rotary valves cleaned, port rodders, #7 Recovery Boiler heaters and safety work on the sluice system.

On outages, timing and attention to detail is crucial. We have to plan to go down, stay within our timeframe and plan our successful start-up. Through proper planning and communications the Roanoke Rapids Mill continues to be very proud of the way we have maintained our equipment at the mill.

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JANUARY 2015



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# ROANOKE RAPIDS PLAY OF THE DAY

## EVERYONE MAKES A DIFFERENCE

When the production team at Roanoke Rapids paper mill holds its daily meeting to review the mill's operations, there is a fixed item on the agenda that asks for "Plays of the Day." Patterned after awards given to sports figures for outstanding plays, at Roanoke Rapids the recognition is given to individuals or groups of employees who have made special contributions that keep people safe, customers satisfied, and the mill running efficiently.



Utilities Maintenance

## EXAMPLES OF PLAYS OF THE DAY

Individuals pictured in these photos were recognized for efforts they put forth in the following areas:

**SAFETY:** Recognized for providing confined space training and repairing equipment for annual outage

**PAPER MILL:** Emergency repair on #3 Paper Machine

**PULP MILL:** Starting up the Pulp Mill from the annual outage with a new control system and minimal venting

**UTILITIES MAINTENANCE:** Replacement of the scrubber fan bearing

## ▶ ABOUT RECOGNITION

**THE AWARD** was first implemented 10 years ago. Since then it has become part of the plant's culture. It is a fairly private recognition and it means a lot to people. Award letters, signed by Mill Manager Bill Kessinger, can be seen around the mill, hanging in lockers and posted in offices.

Suggestions can come from anyone at any level. There is no limit to what a person or group can be

recognized for or who in the organization can be tapped.

Bill notes that Play of the Day serves an additional important purpose beyond the individual recognition. "There is so much going on every day that we tend to spend more time talking about issues and things that aren't going well. I think this just gives you a time every day to stop and talk about the things that went well and more importantly the people that helped them to go well." **KS**

Safety

Pulp Mill

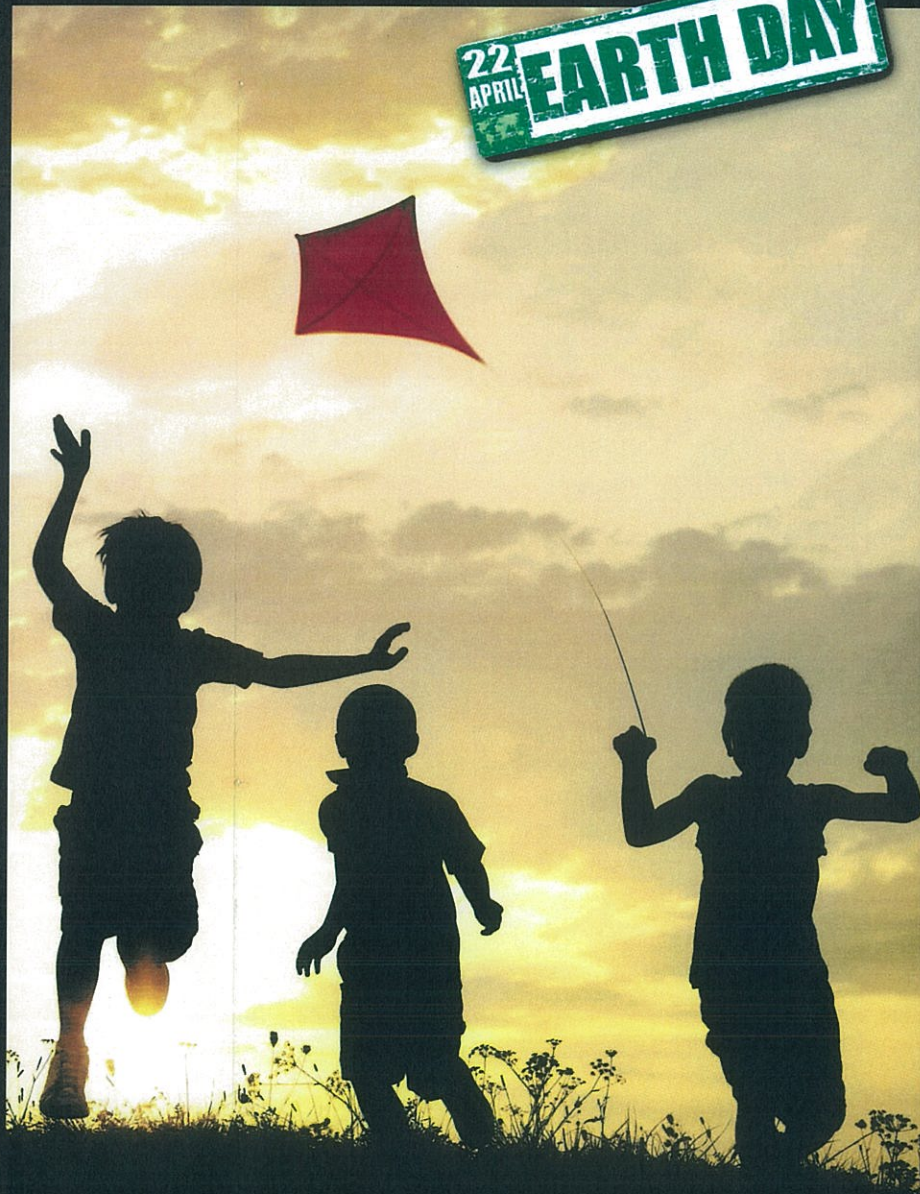
Paper Mill



“We do not inherit the Earth  
from our ancestors,  
we borrow it from our children.”

Ralph Waldo Emerson

22  
APRIL  
**EARTH DAY**



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INTRACOMPANY CORRESPONDENCE

TO: All Employees

FROM: Bill Kessinger  
Vice President of Mill Operations

DATE: April 2, 2015

SUBJECT: Organizational Announcement

I am pleased to announce the following organizational changes at the Roanoke Rapids Mill:

**Ben White** has been named Manager of Operations Services, reporting to me. In this role, Ben will lead control systems engineering, the new continuous improvement organization, and the environmental programs group. He will also oversee the development of our operator training systems. Ben will direct the implementation of our continuous improvement training and initiatives and integrate our efforts within the mill system.

Ben began his career at the Roanoke Rapids Mill in 1989 as a process engineer after having previously worked for Union Camp in Franklin, VA. He has held ever-increasing responsibilities in technical services and operations including Pulp & Utilities Manager and Operations Manager. He is a graduate of North Carolina State University with a Bachelor's Degree in Pulp & Paper Technology.

**Bret Pate** has been named Area Process Manager – Continuous Improvement, reporting to Ben White. In this role, Bret will improve our capability to deliver innovation, quality and service to our customers and our ability to more rapidly implement and sustain continuous improvement initiatives. **Steve Jaffe**, Quality Engineer, and **Chad Wray**, Technical Leader – Process Engineering, will report to Bret.

Bret began his career at the Roanoke Rapids Mill in 1991 as a process engineer. He also has held ever-increasing responsibilities in technical services and operations. As area manager, Bret has led significant improvements to No. 3 Paper Machine over the last 10 years. He is a graduate of North Carolina State University with Bachelor's Degrees in Pulp & Paper Technology and Chemical Engineering.

With these changes, **Mike Knudson**, Environmental Programs Manager, will report to Ben. In addition, **Russell Rooker** and **Joe Coyne, Jr.**, Process Managers – Training for their respective areas, will work with Ben to improve the effectiveness of our operator training systems.

As previously announced, **Brett Darnell**, Area Process Manager – Control Systems Engineering, will report to Ben.

In related changes, **Bill Wiese**, Finished Products Manager, and **Steven Walker**, Pulp & Utilities Manager, will report directly to me. **Butch Oliver**, Process Manager – Paper Mill, will assume the role of Area Process Manager – No. 3 Paper Machine on an interim basis, reporting to Bill Wiese.

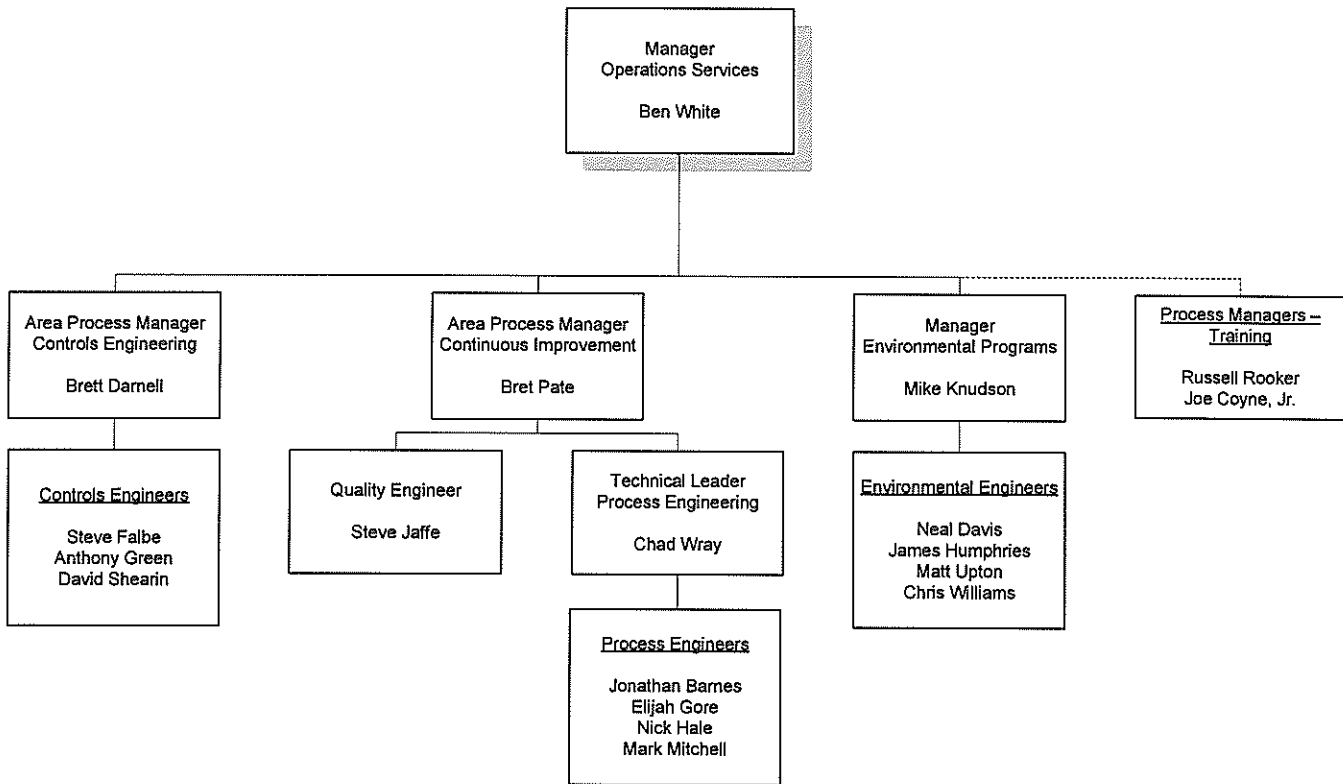
A copy of the organization charts for the Lead Team and the Operations Services organization are attached.

These changes will be implemented over the next month as we work together to successfully execute the Cold Mill Outage. Please extend your full support to each of these individuals during this transition and in their new roles.

Attachments

# KapStone Kraft Paper Corporation Roanoke Rapids Mill Organization

March 31, 2015





KAPSTONE  
PAPER AND PACKAGING CORPORATION

1101 Skokie Boulevard - Suite 300 Northbrook, IL 60062  
847.239.8800 fax: 847.205.7551 www.kapstonepaper.com

December 20, 2011

To All KapStone Employees

As 2011 comes to a close, it is appropriate to recognize our recent successes, acknowledge our opportunities to improve, and look forward to next year.

By all accounts, 2011 was a successful year characterized by reasonably strong demand across our product lines and stable, adequate pricing. The combination of these favorable market trends and outstanding productivity at our facilities, attributable to all your efforts, has resulted in strong financial performance. We will end the year with good momentum and a solid balance sheet.

Another highlight of the year was the acquisition of U.S. Corrugated which consists of a recycled containerboard mill in Cowpens, SC, 14 container plants located throughout the Southeast, Midwest and Northeast parts of the U.S. and a group of highly skilled, outstanding people. USC provides us with an important growth platform and also helps to ensure that our mills will remain relatively busy in the case of a slower demand environment. Needless to say, we are very excited about this transaction.

Employee safety continues to be our most important priority and an opportunity to improve. While safety results improved last year, particularly at the U.S. Corrugated plants, we simply must do better. Our goal, going forward, is to have accident free facilities throughout our organization.

In spite of the overly publicized uncertainty surrounding the U.S. and global economies, we remain optimistic about our future. We are fortunate to have a group of innovative, caring, hard working employees who supply superior products and services to our customers. As mentioned above, our strong balance sheet provides us with flexibility enabling us to withstand difficult times and take advantage of future opportunities.

Thank you for your past efforts and your future support. We wish you and your entire family a wonderful holiday season and a happy and healthy new year.

Sincerely,

Roger Stone  
Chairman & CEO

Matt Kaplan  
President & COO

## Women think strong

By Jenny Gray [jgray@rrdailyherald.com](mailto:jgray@rrdailyherald.com) | Posted: Friday, March 27, 2015 12:51 pm

WELDON — Judge Brenda Branch poured out her heart during a panel discussion to whoops and hollers from attendees of the Women of Excellence conference Thursday at Halifax Community College.

“I’m really certain that we’re going to have to stop looking out and start looking in,” Branch advised the 350-plus participants. “My concern is, what’s my goal? I don’t particularly care if someone doesn’t agree with my goal; that’s their problem. Define your own personality, your own style, your own strength and deal with your weaknesses.”

The panel discussion was moderated by Deryl Davis Fulmer, vice president of Academic Affairs at HCC, who asked thought-provoking questions shared equally among panel members. Those members included Branch, chief district court judge of District 6; Cathy Scott, executive director of Halifax County Economic Development Commission; Kimberly D. Bracy, Mill communications manager at KapStone Paper and Packaging Corp.; Valerie Asbell, district attorney, 6th Prosecutorial District; and Marty E. Hackney, director of Entrepreneurial Initiative at East Carolina University.

“What is your greatest achievement, and how did you unleash your power to get that?” Fulmer asked several members of the panel.

Bracy and Branch said despite circumstances in life, going back to school and gaining satisfying careers changed their lives. Hackey talked about motivation.



**Brenda Branch**

Brenda Branch, Chief District Court Judge, District 6, fires up the crowd Thursday during a panel discussion at Halifax Community College's Women of Excellence conference.

“My greatest achievement has been self actualization. There are only two motivators in life,” she said. “Either you’re moving toward your goals, or you’re moving away from something terribly uncomfortable.”

Hackney said she was a terrible procrastinator, and that trait got in the way of her achievements.

“I started rewarding myself for my little tiny successes,” she said. “You can’t eat a turkey with just one bite. It takes a lot of little bites.”

Fulmer asked Asbell how she overcame obstacles.

“Power is confidence in yourself,” Asbell replied. “I have faced some obstacles, personal and professional. ... When you feel uncomfortable, act comfortable. Walk forward and show people you are comfortable.”

She talked about “The Four Agreements,” a best-selling book by Miguel Ruiz. These are:

- Be impeccable with your word.
- Don’t take anything personally.
- Don’t make assumptions.
- Always do your best.

“In 2000, there was only one other female DA in the state of North Carolina,” Asbell said. “When I went to my first conference, there were two women and a roomful of ... men. When I walked in, everybody stood up.”

She said that embarrassed her.

“I told them, ‘We all have the same position and I wasn’t going to stand up for them,’” Asbell said, laughing.

Scott said she came from a working-class family, and she learned knowledge creates power. When she started working in the field of economic development, there were just five women within 430 organizations.

“It was a man’s occupation and a man’s job,” she said. “I strived very much to know more things than the guys did. I had to always be prepared for whatever walked in the door.”

Women need to recognize their talents, strengthen them and use them, according to Branch.

“If you operate under the idea that you have your own gift, wrap it around you,” she stressed. “As a female, you set the tone (with your family and your co-workers).”

Bracy cautioned the audience to banish negativity.

“Watch what’s going into your head,” she said. “If you are in conversations that are negative about someone else, or if you’re always concerned about what someone has done to you, you need to check your circle (of associates).”

Picking battles also was discussed.

“If you know what your rights are, you don’t feel fear,” Branch said. “And when they treat you less than they should, now it’s time to fight. You have to learn how to fight, when to fight and what to fight for.”

Asbell agreed.

“There’s a saying: In my boat, I want to make sure you’re rowing, not drilling holes in my boat,” she said. “And you have to be rowing in the same direction.”

Exposure to all things in life will develop women as well-rounded individuals, Asbell added.

“I didn’t forget where I came from, and it wasn’t from a lawyer’s family,” she said. “Exposure. Exposure. Exposure. When we learn something, we can’t just go back home. We have to stay out front.”

Giving back to other women, particularly young women, completes the circle, she added.

“Give as good as you received; be a mentor,” Branch said. “Do I have time to sit on a panel? Of course. I can move things around and sit on a panel.”

## Connecting with others to be a better Valley

**The Daily Herald News Editor | Posted: Friday, April 6, 2012 11:04 am**

It's a way of connecting for businesses and other entities in the area to stay informed about needs and causes to aid in support for the Roanoke Valley.

KapStone Paper and Packaging Corporation brings folks of all strokes together four times per year for its Community Advisory Council — organized by mill Communications Manager Kimberly Bracy, and in practice since May of 2011.

As a first-timer attendee, it was truly a great experience. Roughly 25 or so people broke bread and had a chance to share goings-on in their parts of our local world.

This opportunity allows for more people to connect in the community, to take what they learn to share with others and to hopefully make our Valley a better place to work, live and to be better neighbors.

Whether support is needed for the Boys & Girls Club, volunteers for Relay for Life or fundraising for digital mammography — the information was shared at the first meeting of the year Tuesday. These causes and more are regularly featured in The Daily Herald in the Around Our Valley section on page 4.

The next upcoming event for the mill is in honor of the Girl Scouts 100th anniversary. KapStone will host an Earth Day presentation for local Girl Scouts in Halifax and Northampton counties, focusing on forestry, paper-making and recycling. The event starts at 6:30 p.m. April 27 at Halifax Community College, 400 building, rooms 401 A and B. (For more information, call 252-533-6287).

Guest speaker at the advisory meeting was Halifax Regional Foundation coordinator Geoffrey A. Hardee. He explained how \$650,000 was needed to bring digital mammography to the Valley. Hardee emphasized the multiple fundraising steps involved in the process, and due to the quick response from hospital employees and the community, the company that makes the device agreed



to bring the procedure to town before all of the money was raised. Hardee stated the Roanoke Valley is nearly to the \$650,000 goal.

Just last night, Kapstone helped get closer to reaching that goal at an open house on the campus of Halifax Regional at The Mammography Center. The mill presented a check to the foundation for \$50,000. Hardee told The Daily Herald that the foundation is now at around \$500,000, with roughly \$150,000 left to get to the goal.

The advisory meeting is just one way to connect entities in the Roanoke Valley, leading to progress for residents.

Parts of what I took from the advisory meeting:

- The emphasized importance of upkeeping the flow of information about our local causes and community. (Please email me at

ksmith@rdailyherald.com with details on events or happenings in Halifax or Northampton counties).

- When asked “Paper or plastic?” Go paper.
- And by all means, support digital mammography in the Roanoke Valley.

These are just some of the ways residents can support needs and causes in our area.

News Editor Kris Smith can be reached at 252-537-2505 ext. 238, or on the web at ksmith@rrdailyherald.com.

## **IP grant helps nine organizations**

**Posted: Tuesday, July 25, 2006 12:00 am**

KATHRYN KENNEDY HERALD STAFF WRITER

ROANOKE RAPIDS - The International Paper Foundation awarded a total of \$15,000 to nine local organizations for 2006.

Recipient representatives attended a check presentation and luncheon Monday at the PACE Union Hall on Roanoke Avenue.

Those awarded thanked IP and its employees; however, it's the grant-givers who are truly saying thanks, said Kimberly Bracy, IP's communication manager.

"It's you that add value to our community: Serving the under-served, helping the youth. We appreciate what you do and there's no way we can repay you for what you do ... but we hope this will help in some small way."

The recipient of the largest grant was Mudcastle Community Development Corporation. The Garysburg-based community center was given \$2,320 to put toward their after-school programs for local children.

"There are a lot of children who need help passing the EOG (End of Grade tests)," explained Mudcastle Executive Director and CEO the Rev. Franklin Williams. "The standards are very high now."

Williams explained the funds will also ensure they can continue offering transportation, educational materials and snacks for the children they serve. Additionally, in 2007, they hope to launch an adult care program for seniors.

Along with youth programs at Mudcastle, Lincoln Heights and the 4-H Rural Life center, other recipients included two churches and three fire departments.

“Our business changes so much our need never ceases to end,” said Ricky Cobb of Rheasville Volunteer Fire Department. He stated the \$2,000 the department received will go toward the purchase of a rescue boat.

IP Mill Manager Anitra Collins led the check presentation, after everyone finished the luncheon of chicken, sides and strawberry shortcake.

Collins emphasized that though the name International Paper will be changing, the people working there will remain the same and so will the company's commitment to the six-year-old grant project.

“It's just a small way for us to give back to the community we work in and serve in.”

## KapStone leads Roanoke Valley Earth Day efforts

Posted: Wednesday, April 17, 2013 10:11 am

KapStone Kraft Paper Corporation will lead several community events in observance of Earth Day in the Roanoke Valley.

The observance will begin on April 22 and continue through April 26. The Roanoke Rapids Mill's Environmental Education Program, launched in 2010, will go on the road sharing information about its longstanding role as an environmental steward and raising awareness of Earth Day.

The program will introduce and educate area youth and their families about the benefits of sustainable living practices. The three-part program will cover forestry, papermaking and environmental awareness.

"The goal of this program is to share our vision of preserving a sound environment and supporting a sustainable lifestyle," said Bill Kessinger, vice president of Mill Operations. "We also want to provide them with the resources and tools necessary to improve the quality of life for their family while protecting our planet."

KapStone's Earth Day Team will share information with more than 170 sixth graders at William R. Davie Middle School on April 22 and Boy Scout Troop 146 on April 23. They will team with the town of Weldon and Steve Owens Landscaping on April 25 to spruce up the entrances to River Falls Park by planting trees and flowers.



# KAPSTONE

### Education

The Roanoke Rapids Mill's Environmental Education Program, launched in 2010, will go on the road sharing information about its longstanding role as an environmental steward and raising awareness of Earth Day.

KapStone is also hosting events for their employees to celebrate Earth Day and is continuing its collaboration with Sylvan Heights Waterfowl Center as a corporate sponsor providing passes for employees and their families.

KapStone is very appreciative of the following partners in our Earth Day observances: American Forestry and Paper Association (AF&PA), United Steelworkers 9-425, the Pulp and Paperworkers' Resource Council (PPRC) and the North Carolina Forestry Association.

Kapstone is proud of its heritage of producing great products in a sustainable fashion. When you choose paper, you choose a product that is renewable, recyclable and sustainable. Help us protect the environment by utilizing and recycling paper products!

For more information, call Kimberly D. Bracy, mill communications manager, at 252-533-6287.

## KapStone celebration wet but wonderful

Posted: Monday, October 29, 2007 12:00 am

HANK DEWALD/HERALD STAFF WRITER

ROANOKE RAPIDS - Thursday dawned with pouring rain and a dense fog surrounded the huge "big top" tent KapStone had set up in the parking lot of the paper mill for its centennial celebration, but that did not dampen the mood of anyone.

The KIPP Pride High School "Pride Jazz Band" perked up moods as invited guests mingled with the dignitaries, KapStone management leaders and many mill retirees. Once everyone had found their seats, KapStone Mill Communications Manager Kimberly Bracy welcomed all and recognized Randy and Ronnie Spence, leaders of Boy Scout Troop 146, who presented the colors.

Bracy next introduced Halifax County Board of Commissioners Chairman and KapStone employee James Pierce, who introduced all of the invited dignitaries, ranging from senior KapStone management to local celebrities and leaders to even the very first female to work on the actual mill floor.

Bill Kessinger, KapStone mill manager of Operational Services, told the crowd the mill had grown, been added to and upgraded, but the success of the mill actually meant much more than that. He said it was the collective character of the employees and their teamwork that had enabled the mill to reach its centennial. "We inherited that from our retirees," he told the audience.

Roanoke Rapids Mayor Drewery Beale addressed the crowd and presented a proclamation making Oct. 25, 2007 officially Roanoke Rapids Mill Day. He told the crowd if it were not for the mill,



A great loss, a wonderful legacy

TODD WETHERINGTON

Roanoke Rapids probably would not have survived. "We were struggling. We lost 5,000 jobs at one time, but the mill stood tall," Beale said. "To KapStone, I say thank you."

Matt Kaplan, chief operating officer and president of KapStone Paper and Packaging, told the audience, "It is a great privilege to be here addressing you." He then took the audience through a time line of the past 100 years, pointing out the many significant things that had happened and been invented during that time. He finished his address saying, "We have only been together a short time, but we have a bright and long future together."

Tim Keneally, president of KapStone Kraft Paper Corporation, was next up to address the crowd, and told them these employees and retirees were responsible for the success of the mill by going the extra mile.

Mill retiree Joe Coyne Sr. followed Keneally with entertaining stories about his time spent in the mill. Billy Joe Smith, president of United Steel Workers Union, local 9-425, added to Coyne's stories and emphasized the unprecedented cooperation between the mill and the union during the hard times and the good times.

Finally, Anitra Collins, vice president of mill operations at KapStone Kraft Paper Corporation, rose and addressed the crowd. Collins, herself a shining example of the diverse and capable management and workforce at the mill, asked the crowd, "What made this place so special? Why has it survived when others haven't? It is because we stick together." She said her father had once told her one stick is easily snapped, but two together become much stronger. That, she said, is what has made the Roanoke Rapids Mill so strong.

As the celebratory meeting ended with a luncheon that featured an ice sculpture and several cakes with each of the previous mill owners on them, Bracy urged the crowd to visit the historical display the mill had set up in another building on the campus. She told them there would be public tours of the actual mill for several hours that day and the next day also.

By the time the two-day celebration was over, the community knew much more about the mill than it ever had. Many more people now have a great appreciation for what the mill has done for this community and may answer the oft asked question, "paper or plastic?" with a firm, "paper."

## **KapStone paper mill receives air quality permit**

**Posted: Thursday, April 26, 2007 12:00 am**

Herald Staff Writer

ROANOKE RAPIDS - KapStone Kraft Paper Corporation recently received approval for a Title V permit from the North Carolina Division of Air Quality.

The permit specifies the equipment, emissions monitoring and record-keeping the mill must have.

Nobody spoke against the permit at a public hearing in March. The permit will be valid for five years.

"Because we did have a public hearing, we did want the community to know that we were granted this permit and we're very appreciative of the support we've received from the community, our government officials and our local retirees," said Kimberly Bracy, communications manager for the Roanoke Rapids mill.



## HRMC sponsors Health Fair annually for Valley residents

Posted: Friday, May 28, 2004 12:00 am

Kathryn Kennedy/Herald Staff Writer

ROANOKE RAPIDS - Halifax Regional Medical Center held its annual Health Fair Wednesday to inform area residents about opportunities to receive care in the community.

HRMC's Community Relations Manager Kimberly Bracy organized a scaled-down version of the fair in order to fit the new location at the Super Wal-Mart.

"We chose Wal-Mart because so many people from various areas come through here," Bracy said. "Our purpose is to reach people in outlying areas as well."

There were approximately 10 tables housing representatives from groups including Mid-Atlantic Eye Physicians, American Cancer Society, Halifax and Northampton County Health departments and others.

One unique contributor was the national non-profit sorority Delta Sigma Theta. The sorority displayed information about the importance of self-breast examinations.

"We want to send a positive message," said Deborah Miller. "Prevention is why we're here."

"Any agency providing services for free or minimal cost was invited," said Bracy. "We made that a requirement because of the scale-down."

There were pamphlets at all booths, as well as vision screenings and eye pressure readings and blood sugar and cholesterol screenings available at two booths. Each of the tests were free except the cholesterol screening which cost \$5.