

Fundraiser for historic rifle range

Tickets available for ‘Derby Day’

By Lee Hinnant
Staff Writer



Photo supplied
Jim Plant and Bo Plant won the best hat awards at last year’s Derby Day event.

Tickets are still available for Derby Day by the Rifle Range, a fundraiser to help save and restore the 1918 rifle range pit located next to the golf course at Caswell Dunes.

All 42 horses for the seven table-top races have been sold, but there’s still time to reserve spots for the barbecue dinner, being catered by Turtle Island Restaurant.

The event includes door prizes, a raffle and awards for the best-dressed couple and best hats. The meal and games are pre-race events for the televised running of the Kentucky Derby.

To reserve a seat, e-mail normaron@mindspring.com or call (910) 278-7584.

The Friends of Fort Caswell Rifle Range is now a 501c-3 non-profit corporation whose members have worked for years to stabilize and enhance the rifle range pit, one of the few highly visible reminders of the role American troops played in World War I. The group has raised enough money to fully stabilize the structure and has engineering contracts in hand. Work is expected to begin as soon as liability issues are resolved.

The range was once part of the larger Fort Caswell complex. U.S. troops learned long-range marksmanship there before heading to the front lines in Europe.

“We could never achieve our goal without the support of the many businesses of Oak Island, Caswell Beach and Southport,” the friends group said in a prepared statement. “Above all, we want to thank the Town of Caswell Beach for the generous contributions and the town commissioners for their encouragement and support of our efforts.”