

# Chatham News + Record

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## Exploring Vingroup's vast reach in Vietnam, and what it means for Chatham County

BY BEN RAPPAPORT  
News + Record Staff

*Editor's note: Ben Rappaport has just returned from a week in Vietnam touring VinFast's manufacturing facilities and meeting with company officials. It was part of a VinFast-paid media tour in advance of the electric vehicle manufacturer's plans to locate a \$4 billion plant in Chatham County. This is the first in a series of stories about Rappaport's experiences.*

Dinner cruises along Ha Long Bay, rooftop dinners with fire-breathing performers and five-star hotel stays were all part of an extravagant tour put on last week by Vingroup, the parent company to VinFast.

The News + Record was invited as part of this tour, which included more than 200 media members, social media influencers, investors and VinFast customers from across the U.S. and Canada. Just four of the participants included in the tour were from North Carolina — including two members from WRAL-TV in Raleigh and a freelance electric vehicle reporter from Charlotte.

The six-day excursion — described as the Vingroup Elite Vietnam Tour — provided an inside look at the manufacturing facilities of VinFast and provided visitors the chance to be some of the first in the world to test drive one of the company's new electric SUVs, the VF-8.

**A long journey and an introduction**

After a 26.5-hour journey that began last Monday from RDU, via San Francisco, weary travelers landed in rainy and humid Ho Chi Minh City. But even the extensive travel couldn't dull the excitement of those excited to see the offerings of Vingroup in person.

The young company has exploded in Vietnam under the guidance of its chairman, Pham Nhat Vuong, who is now the country's richest man. Vingroup is the country's largest conglomerate, with a total market value of \$24.4 billion. Its 2020 revenue accounted for

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Staff photo by Ben Rappaport

**A look inside the VF-9 SUV as it travels down VinFast's assembly line in Haiphong. VinFast says it is preparing to scale production to send the VF-9 to mass market by September. The electric vehicle will be one of two cars to be manufactured when VinFast's plant opens in Chatham County in 2024.**

### CHATHAM'S HOUSING MARKET

## Home values holding steady in a still-sizzling marketplace

*Median home prices have jumped 31% in the last year*

BY TERI SAYLOR

News + Record Correspondent

*Editor's note: This is the first in an occasional series examining Chatham County's residential housing market.*

PITTSBORO — A cozy white house on a corner lot in Pittsboro is a perfect fit for Beci Markijohn Beasley and Mike Beasley, and their dogs, a pack of Cavalier King Charles Spaniels and Bohemian Shepherds, which keeps their active lives interesting.

For the Beasleys, who've moved to Pittsboro from Apex, the new home is their reward for patience, persistence, and a little bit of good fortune. After months of searching, they closed on it last November.

"We were lucky to find our house when we did," Beci said. "We made an offer on a Monday, and the next day, as we were finalizing the sale,

See HOUSING, page A9



Staff photo by Teri Saylor

**After months of navigating the competitive housing market in the Triangle, Mike Beasley and Beci Markijohn Beasley of Apex found just what they were looking for in Pittsboro — a spacious home and yard, and a dog-friendly neighborhood for their business, Kymerite Cavaliers.**

### 'TO HELP PEOPLE AND HELP OUR COMMUNITIES'

## Mountaire's new community relations manager aims to foster relationships

BY MAYDHA DEVARAJAN

CN+R Staff Reporter

SILER CITY — As a child growing up in Randolph County, Cam Mills would spend weekends on his grandfather's chicken farm.

From the ages of 8 to 12, he'd venture over on his free Saturdays and Sundays to clean out chicken coops and help his grandfather on the farm.

"It's about the closest thing I have to an agriculture background," Mills said.

Now, the 23-year-old is stepping into a role at Mountaire Farms — the fourth largest chicken company in the country — as its new community and government relations manager.

The company employs nearly 10,000 people at facilities across the country in Delaware, Arkansas, Maryland, Virginia and North Carolina, according to its website. And in addition to its \$170 million, 255,000-square-foot facility at

See MANAGER, page A7

### 'WE'RE COMMITTED TO IT'

## Pittsboro, Greensboro officials hold first in-person meeting to discuss water quality

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN

News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Officials from Pittsboro and Greensboro came together for the first time in person last Thursday to discuss water quality issues and seek ways to safeguard the Haw River — the source of Pittsboro's drinking water — from pollutant discharges, as well as to hear a formal apology from Greensboro.

The meeting, held in Chatham Park's offices, didn't result in any decision-making. But the clear focus was to find collaborative ways to prevent discharges of 1,4-Dioxane in the Haw River after three such discharge incidents within the last year, and to ensure Greensboro met the terms of a state-mandated consent order to keep 1,4-Dioxane levels at or below 35 micrograms per liter.

"You have my full commitment and staff's full commitment to do everything we can to make sure that we abide by the Special Order by Consent," Greensboro Water Resources Director Michael Borgers said. "Even when it finally

See WATER, page A6

### 'A LOT MORE PEOPLE ARE NEEDING HELP'

## Love Chatham combats homelessness, financial insecurity within county



Staff photo by Taylor Heeden

**Love Chatham intern Mary Lacey Eubanks (left) and Dakota Philbrick, the nonprofit's executive director, stand in front of Freedom Family Church in Siler City, where Love Chatham is headquartered.**

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN

News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Historically high inflation has left Chatham County's poor — and not-so-poor — in need, seeking assistance from organizations such as Love Chatham, a nonprofit working to address homelessness that's based at Freedom Family Church in Siler City.

Dakota Philbrick, Love Chatham's executive director, sees the impact of inflation firsthand as his organization's clientele continues to increase.

"The last time we checked, we had increased our numbers by about 60% year over year," Philbrick said. "The demand is there ... a lot more

See HOMELESS, page A6

# COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Events are subject to change based on closures related to the coronavirus pandemic. Verify with organizers prior to events.

## ON THE AGENDA

• **The Siler City Board of Commissioners** will meet for their regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 1, at Wren Memorial Library's multipurpose room. The meeting will be livestreamed via Zoom.

## OTHER

• **American Legion Post 93**, 100th Year celebration. Free to Veterans and their guests, Saturday, August 20, at 1 p.m. at the Siler City Moose Lodge. RSVP by August 1, Phone: 919-704-1219 or Email: ncpost93@gmail.com. Door prizes and refreshments.

## ONGOING

Siler City's City Hall is currently under renovation. The 1st and 2nd floors are closed to the public. The Planning and Community Development Department is located in the basement and can be accessed through the far left door facing E. 3rd St. Parking available at the 100 block of E. 3rd St.

• **The Silk Hope Ruritans** host a Benefit Bingo on the first, third, and fifth Thursdays of each month. Next month's schedule is August 4 and 18, at the Silk Hope Community Center.

• **Chatham Community Library** to Present Live Musical Performance: Being Bilingual Rocks! Families with children of all ages are invited to a celebration in Spanish and English in a live musical performance of Being Bilingual Rocks! on Saturday, August 13, at 10:30 a.m. at Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro, in the Holmes Meeting Room. It is free and open to the public. Contact youth.services@chathamlibraries.org.

• **St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church** provides a healthy meal at no cost to those who come to us hungry at noon on Thursdays. We provide a place of hospitality and fellowship for everyone. All are welcome, regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religious preference, handicap, or income.

• **The Chatham Historical Museum** is open Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. We will be following the governor's directive on occupancy, masks, and social distancing. Adult and kid friendly; no admission fee. Our permanent exhibits cover all aspects of Chatham's unique history. The museum is located in the historic Chatham County Courthouse in the Circle. More info at <https://chatham-history.org>.

• **Second Bloom** hours are 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. at 630 East St., Pittsboro. Credit cards are accepted. All proceeds provide support for survivors of domestic violence, sexual as-

sault and promote community education in collaboration with Chatham County.

• **The Chatham Arts Council** has put together a relief effort specifically for artists and arts-workers called CAARE: Chatham Artist and Arts-Worker Relief Effort. For more information on CAARE, or to donate, visit [ChathamArtsCouncil.org](http://ChathamArtsCouncil.org).

• **Foster and/or adoptive** information: Give children a safe place to grow. Interested in becoming a Foster and/or Adoptive parent? Call 919-642-6956 to learn more.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** — North Carolina District 33, call the Help Line at 866-640-0180 for the meeting schedule for this area.

• **Motorcycle Association** — The Motorcycle Association for Chatham, Western Wake, Lee, Orange and Alamance counties meets in Pittsboro and is open to all riders. For information, call 919-392-3939 or visit [www.chathamCBA.com](http://www.chathamCBA.com).

• **Narcotics Anonymous** — For drug problems in the family, Narcotics Anonymous helps. Call 1-800-721-8225 for listing of local meetings.

• **Al-Anon Meeting** — Pittsboro Serenity Seekers Al-Anon Family Group meets at 7 p.m. Mondays at Chatham Community Church, in the lower level of Chatham Mill.

## SCOUT NEWS

• **Boy Scout Troop 93** in Pittsboro meets 7 p.m. Wednesdays at the Harold Boone Scout Park on Hwy 64W, just past CCCC. Open to boys, ages 11-17. Visit [www.bstroop93.org](http://www.bstroop93.org) for more information.

• **Pack 924** of Siler City First U.M.C. meets from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. Tuesdays for boys, grades 1 through 5. Come join the Cub Scouts.

• **Pack 900** in Bear Creek meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays at Meroney's U.M.C., following the school calendar. See <http://pack900.com> for more information.

# News + Record adds Devarajan as additional reporter

CN+R Staff Report

Maydha Devarajan, a Cary native and a former editor at The Daily Tar Heel at UNC-Chapel Hill, has joined the staff of the News + Record. Publisher Bill Horner III has announced.

She'll become a third reporter for the newspaper while its "La Voz de Chatham" reporting project is on hold.

"Maydha was a real star in the newsroom of the DTH," Horner said. "We'll benefit from her reporting and editing experience at UNC, and her time working in the newsroom of a large daily paper. I'm really pleased she's chosen to join our team."

The 2022 UNC graduate earned degrees in journalism and medical

**'I'm excited to join a newsroom where so many reporters I've long admired have worked.'**

## MAYDHA DEVARAJAN

anthropology. She was on the staff of The Daily Tar Heel, UNC's student newspaper, for four years, working as both a staff writer and editor. Most recently, she was the editor of a section of the newspaper called "Elevate," which aimed to highlight stories of under-represented communities at the university, in Chapel Hill and in Orange County.

She also worked as a metro reporting intern for the Raleigh News & Observer.

In addition, Devarajan was co-president of Monsoon, UNC's South Asian affairs magazine, and danced on Bhangra Elite, a South Asian folk dance team.

"I'm excited to join a newsroom where so many reporters I've long admired have worked, and to learn more about the vibrant, growing community that is Chatham County," Devarajan said. "I admire storytelling that centers people who are affected by the issues that are being written about, and I'm looking forward to getting to know this area and its people to do exactly that."

In addition to her reporting work, Devarajan was a research intern for the Center for Innovation and Sustainability in Local Media at UNC and helped to produce a 2020 report on "news deserts" — communities with no local newspaper — in the U.S.

"One of my most valuable experiences while working as an intern for CISLM was getting the chance to speak with owners and publishers

of local papers across the country," she said. "Hearing directly from the people who work to keep journalism alive about both the challenges they

faced and the successes they gained was invaluable to giving me a richer understanding of this industry."

In addition to general

assignment work and feature reporting, Devarajan will cover Pittsboro government. She can be reached at [mdevarajan@chathamnr.com](mailto:mdevarajan@chathamnr.com).

## HOLLAND CHAPEL A.M.E. ZION CHURCH

Holland Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church will honor Sister Bernice Barbee on

## CHURCH NEWS

Sunday, July 31, during the 10 a.m. morning worship, as she retires after 30 years as Preacher Steward. Family and

friends are invited to join the church family for this event. You may call the church office at 919-362-7831 for more information.

## How did you LAND here?



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**LAND (Representing Sellers) 32 Units**

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- 275 George Brooks Drive (184 Acres)
- 0 NC 42 Highway (10.89 Acres)
- 0 Jim Gilliland Road (64.882 Acres)
- 218 Pete Thomas Road (109.11 Acres)
- 0 Roselle Road (46.2 Acres)
- 323 Patterson Drive (5.46 Acres)
- 106 Caley Wilson Road (2.185 Acres)
- 0 Pete Roberson (61.21 Acres)
- 180 Thompson Street (.30 Acres)
- 1562 Hadley Mill Road (15.489 Acres)
- 0 Stone Street (50.72 Acres)
- 1604 Bonlee School Road (110.49 Acres)
- 720 Hamlets Chapel Road (.69 Acres)
- 1447 Old US 1 (.870 Acres)
- 0 Chicken Bridge Road (10.051 Acres)
- 00 Manns Chapel Road (49.41 Acres)
- 2328 Andrews Store Road (24.385 Acres)
- 0 Pearleman Teague (23.1 Acres)
- 00 Roberts Chapel Road (123.87 Acres)
- 45 The Whites Way (5.61 Acres)
- 271 Talon Drive (11.97 Acres)
- 1835 Lewter Shop Road (3.24 Acres)
- 0000 Jim Gilliland Road (57.284 Acres)
- 18 Pearleman Teague Road (2 Acres)
- 4931 Old Graham Road (2.774 Acres)
- 208 Stonewall Road (3.810 Acres)
- 1456 Hadley Mill Road (28.353 Acres)
- 1475 Lewter Shop Road (4.445 Acres)

**LAND (Representing Buyers) 9 Units**

- 0 NC 42 Highway (10.89 Acres)
- 388 Wade Bright Road (10 Acres)
- 0 Roselle Road (46.204 Acres)
- 720 Hamlets Chapel Road (.69 Acres)
- 685 Revmont (3.893 Acres)
- 0 Mays Chapel Road (365 Acres)
- 0 Pearleman Teague (23.1 Acres)
- 00 Roberts Chapel Road (123.87 Acres)
- 45 The Whites Way (5.61 Acres)

**COMMERCIAL (REPRESENTING SELLERS) 3 Units**

- 219 East Street (Pittsboro)
- 45 West Street (Pittsboro)
- 175 East Salisbury Street (Pittsboro)

**COMMERCIAL (REPRESENTING BUYERS) 1 Units**

- 45 West Street (Pittsboro)

**RESIDENTIAL (Representing Sellers) 25 Units**

- 427 Fenton Place (Charlotte)
- 52 Gentle Winds Drive (Pittsboro)
- 1475 Hoyt Scott Road (Bear Creek)
- 550 Callie Lane (Bear Creek)
- 3871 S. Plank Road (Sanford)
- 76 Millbrook Drive (Pittsboro)
- 5144 Rives Chapel Church Road (Slier City)
- 200 Valley View Lane (Pittsboro)
- 1822 Chandellay Drive (Durham)
- 5631 Swanns Station Road (Sanford)
- 4233 NC Highway 902 (Pittsboro)
- 130 Estes Drive (Chapel Hill)
- 117 Foxwood (Sanford)
- 1136 Sanford Road (Pittsboro)
- 729 Hope Hills Drive (Slier City)
- 1429 Van Thomas Road (Pittsboro)
- 1315 Hoyt Scott Road (Bear Creek)
- 745 Merl McManus Road (Bear Creek)
- 2349 S. Main Street (Goldston)
- 206 Olympia Street (Slier City)
- 8798 Sylvan Road (Liberty)
- 488 NC 87 N (Pittsboro)
- 76 Fox Chapel Lane (Pittsboro)
- 354 A Mountain View (Pittsboro)
- 138 Oakwood Lane (Pittsboro)

**RESIDENTIAL (Representing Buyers) 6 Units**

- 427 Fenton Place (Charlotte)
- 4513 Bumphus Road (Chapel Hill)
- 107 Hawks Spiral Way (Pittsboro)
- 85 Herndon Creek Way (Chapel Hill)
- 729 Hope Hills Drive (Slier City)
- 6490 Snow Camp Road (Snow Camp)

### PROPERTIES CURRENTLY UNDER CONTRACT

**(Representing Sellers) 6 Units**

- 13120 Strickland Road (16.25 Acres)
- 0 Hamlets Chapel Road (42.805 Acres)
- 0 Old Graham Road (161.97 Acres)
- 0 Moons Chapel Road (86.599 Acres)
- 0 Pearleman Teague Road (23.1 Acres)
- 0 Alston Chapel Road (10.23 Acres)

**RESIDENTIAL (Representing Sellers) 2 Units**

- 218A Poplar Street (Chapel Hill)
- 390 New Salem Church Road (Pittsboro)

**Featured CN+R YouTube Video of the Week**  
NEW URL: [https://youtu.be/LJhWO\\_KuJfl](https://youtu.be/LJhWO_KuJfl)

**NEW TOPIC: Will Rising Interest Rates Affect Real Estate in North Carolina?**



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THE ROAD AHEAD

# Challenges remain for VinFast despite domestic success

**BY BEN RAPPAPORT**  
News + Record Staff



Staff photo by Ben Rappaport

**A first look at the VinFast VF-8. The all-electric SUV features a 15.6-inch display and a nearly 350-horsepower engine. Vingroup tour members were some of the first to test drive the vehicles in Nha Trang.**

VinFast, and the N.C. government, have put a big bet on getting Americans to buy into its product.

“It’s going to be a really tough sell to the American market,” said Sebastian Blanco, contributing editor at Car and Driver. “It needs to stand out from the pack. It has the potential to, but at least in pre-production it’s not there yet.”

Last week, the company announced the opening of six showrooms across the California coast, and it has made prominent showings at the New York Auto Show to accompany the upcoming factory in Chatham County.

Michael Smith, the president of the Chatham Economic Development Corporation, said that’s an indication of VinFast’s commitment.

“These are all reminders of how serious the company is at being a successful EV manufacturer in the U.S. market,” he said, adding that VinFast has hired top attorneys and firms — some of which have years of experience in U.S. automotive projects.

The Vietnamese company also pledged to invest \$2 billion in North Carolina for the initial phase of construction of its plant. VinFast has also pledged a total investment of \$4 billion, accompanied by more than \$1.2 billion in tax incentives from N.C.

The incentives include the N.C. Job Development Investment Grant of \$316 million over 32 years; state appropriations of \$450 million for site preparations, road improvements and additional water and sewer infrastructure; community college training worth \$38 million; a Golden Leaf Foundation grant of \$50 million; and \$400 million in incentives from Chatham County.

The automaker is a young company, even in its home country. It’s uncommon to see VinFast cars on the roads of Ho Chi Minh City or Hanoi, but production is ramping up by the end of the year with the goal of capturing the global EV market.

**The battery**

The company’s youth, accompanied with the mass capital growth of VinFast, are cause for both excitement and skepticism. The company is taking a gamble and trying something new: an EV battery subscription service.

To keep sticker prices of the car lower, VinFast is offering a 10-year warranty on an EV’s most expensive component — the battery. Consumers will have the option to lease batteries from the company for a small monthly fee. Once the battery life degrades to 70%, VinFast swaps in a new one, free of charge.

It’s a unique proposition,

especially if there is little about the vehicle itself to differentiate it from well-established automakers in the U.S. But it’s also confusing. The idea relies on the company being able to produce more batteries than an average EV company, and the math doesn’t always add up.

For example, earlier this week, Chevy announced its new EV Blazer with a sticker price of around \$45,000; the sticker price of a VinFast VF-8 is about \$41,000. It’s a similar range in price — so why, some on the tour asked, would consumers pay for the unknowns of VinFast along with its battery subscription service, when both are marketed for similar audiences?

Vingroup has undoubtedly invested a lot of money in ensuring its global success. The conglomerate has already sunk \$6.6 billion into its operations, hiring and manufacturing. But even with deep pockets, there’s no guarantees of the company’s success.

According to recent reporting from Triangle Business Journal, Vingroup, the public parent company of VinFast, is trading at just \$3 per share and has seen a 22% drop in year-over-year revenues. The numbers also show Vingroup’s stock price has dropped more than 30% in the past seven months.

When asked how consumers can trust the company given these figures, Thuy Le,

VinFast deputy chief executive officer said, “The stock market is the stock market, we can’t control it. We are not alone in this hole.”

The deputy CEO said VinFast is just one part of the Vingroup finances, so she believes it may be unfair to project Vingroup’s trends onto VinFast.

Vingroup has also looked to go public in the U.S. with an IPO, but the date of that keeps getting postponed due to market conditions.

“We are in no rush to IPO, we will wait until the timing is right,” said David Mansfield, chief financial officer of VinFast.

**The ‘fast’ in VinFast**

In Vietnam, Vingroup is the first in everything they do. They’ve created electric vehicles, luxury housing, schools and resorts with blazing speed. But in the U.S., VinFast won’t be the first or the only company producing EVs. Ensuring the company’s success abroad will be no easy task.

Money and government incentives are certainly on their side, but ultimately the success of the company relies on consumers buying into the message and believing in the product too.

“Our core message is that we produce quality products, with premium technologies,” Thuy Le said. “We want value and affordability in the car and quality in our after-sales services. That’s what’s going to set us apart.”

Thuy Le said at the beginning of her career with VinFast, people accused the company of being “crazy” for saying they could produce EVs in just two years. But now, she says, seeing is believing.

“People didn’t think all of this was possible,” she said. “Reflecting on the past and looking toward now, we are audacious and we want to make things happen in the U.S. We have people, knowledge and backing from the state.”

*Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at [brappaport@chathamnr.com](mailto:brappaport@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter @b\_rappaport.*

## VINFAST

Continued from page A1

2.2% of national GDP, and it’s hard to go anywhere in the country without seeing its reach.

So, getting the chance to experience the breadth and magnitude of that reach is a powerful pitch to media and investors who may be skeptical as Vingroup looks to take its branding to the global marketplace.

Members of the tour were given luxury treatment throughout the trip in an effort to promote the brand and generate buzz. The first stop of the trip was at VinPearl Resort in Ha Long. The hotel and spa is on its own island amid Ha Long Bay — a place recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage site. Attendees then took a dinner cruise along the bay, weaving between serene green islands popping up from the sea. It was a level of high class that came to be expected on the trip.

The beauty of the boat ride was only compromised by what felt like a whitewashed display of Vietnamese culture where visitors learned “traditional Vietnamese crafts,” like conical hat making and tea tastings, which seemed highly reductive of the rich history of Vietnamese art.

Problematic cultural appeals to tourists aside, the thing that stood out immediately about the company is the number of people employed to make this operation

function. In the first few hours, tour members interacted with members of the Vingroup global communications team, employees from VinFast’s U.S. public relations firm — Citizen Relations, resort staff and more.

The high employment evident throughout the trip was an encouraging sign as the company, alongside North Carolina’s government officials, has touted high figures for employment at the upcoming VinFast manufacturing plant in Moncure. The plant is expected to deliver on its 7,500-job promise to North Carolina if it wants to receive the full benefit of the tax incentives it has been awarded by the county and the state.

The opening cruise also served as a networking event to interact with many of the executives who are working in Vietnam and abroad to make VinFast come to life. The News + Record met with executives who came from top car brands like Renault, General Motors and BMW who expressed excitement about what VinFast is doing and believed in its ability to become a quality electric vehicle brand in the North American market.

“This is a company that’s going to make EVs and make them for everyone and it’s really exciting to be part of a new venture that I believe in,” said Shaun Calvert, VinFast deputy CEO in charge of manufacturing,

who formerly worked at GM. “We are producing a premium product at an affordable price.”

**A look inside the VinFast manufacturing complex**

Calvert also led the second day of the tour as he walked media members through the manufacturing facility of VinFast.

The 870-acre site in Haiphong was constructed in just 21 months — a massive feat considering the scale and scope of all that VinFast hopes to build at the plant. The site was previously a marshy swampland — a byproduct of bombings by American troops during the Vietnam War. In fact, on Google Maps, the location near the South China Sea still shows the swamp and previous images from Google Earth show the un-utilized and destroyed land — tales of what was.

Now, the once deadland is filled with the whirring of robotic manufacturing machines twisting and welding around every corner. The whole production is 80% automated, but still utilizes more than 6,000 employees in its body shop, press shop, battery plant and general assembly complex. The plant produces all of VinFast automobiles and products, including the SUV models — VF-8, VF-9 and VinFast President — the hatchback model VF-34, and electric scooters. Earlier this

year, VinFast announced that beginning in August, it will switch to exclusively manufacturing EVs — meaning the President and other internal combustion-engine vehicles will cease production.

The complex also displayed mockups and prototypes of potential EVs built for the near future, including a sedan model — the VF-6 and VF-7 — and options aimed at lower price points with cheaper materials — the VF-5.

The plant currently produces 38 vehicles per hour, roughly 650 vehicles per day, with plans to ramp production up to more than 65 per hour and 1,000 vehicles per day by September.

The numbers produced here are comparable to estimates and goals from VinFast about production in Chatham County. The company plans to start by producing 150,000 electric vehicles annually beginning in July 2024.

Veteran automotive reporters told the News + Record that VinFast provided unprecedented access to its manufacturing facilities with inside looks at the machines and battery operations. VinFast officials said that’s because they were proud of what they had built and wanted to show it off to a large audience to prove they were on the right track as they look to expand.

Michael Johnson, director of VinFast U.S. manufacturing, said the plant seen in Haiphong is similar to the one

planned for Chatham County, with some variations. The primary difference is the size. The Haiphong plant is massive and tour members had to take trams to get from shop to shop, but the facility planned for Triangle Innovation Point in Moncure will be more than double in size at a whopping 1,977 acres. The reason for the size discrepancy is that the battery plant for Vietnam is currently located off-site in central Vietnam; in the U.S., the batteries will be produced on-site. The N.C. facility will also include other buildings, including research and development offices and professional development training.

**Vingroup’s powerful conglomerate**

The third day was all about showing off what Vingroup calls its ecosystem. This includes VinHomes, the VinPearl resort, VinUniversity, VinMall and more.

Stops at each of these complexes show Vingroup is building more than just cars in Vietnam — it’s creating a lifestyle brand aimed at the upper class.

VinHomes creates riverside villas near Hanoi with man-made beaches and rivers, extravagant sculpture gardens and private living that contrasts the crowded density of the Old Quarter in Hanoi. The massive conglomerate now has 27 urban complexes and 83 shopping malls across

Vietnam.

VinUniversity partnered with the likes of University of Pennsylvania and Cornell University to create an Americanized education system in Vietnam for 400 international students. The school, however, costs more than \$35,000 per year, which is comparable to many U.S. universities in a place where the currency has much less purchasing power — essentially making VinU a pay-to-play program for the uber-wealthy.

And looking at the place, they certainly aren’t trying to hide their audience. Massive marble columned buildings, a 30-acre rose garden, special sensory relaxation rooms and a massive fountain featuring the 12 Greek gods with Apollo at the center don’t exactly make it appear like a school for the everyman.

The point of showing off these spectacles of the Vingroup ecosystem was to provide credibility behind the company and show it has its hands in all the right cookie jars to make it a real international competitor.

When making the leap to N.C. and the North American market, however, Vingroup isn’t bringing all those other jars with it. It will only be relying on VinFast to succeed, and whether that’s feasible still remains up for debate.

*Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at [brappaport@chathamnr.com](mailto:brappaport@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter @b\_rappaport.*

# VIEWPOINTS

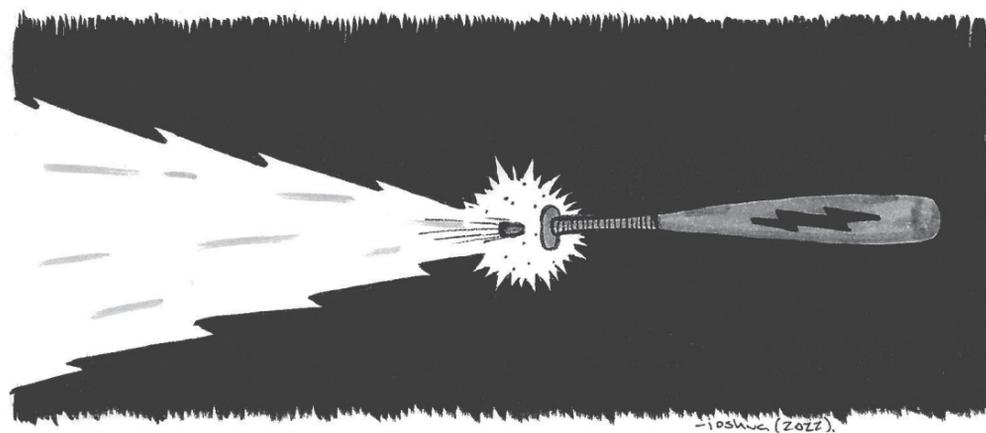
## Bullets into baseball bats

On July 10, gunshots were fired at a Little League Baseball game in Wilson. You can find the video footage on Facebook, although I admit that I cannot watch — the near misses hit too close to home.



**ANDREW TAYLOR-TROUTMAN**  
Hope Matters

My 6-year-old son just finished playing T-ball. I enjoy baseball, but the fun of this experience was more about the delightful kids than the actual sport. Multiple players preferred to wear their gloves on their heads. The shortstop lay on his back and made dirt angels with his arms and legs. Twin sisters only threw the ball to each other, no matter where they were positioned. And there was Bubba. His grandmother hollered, “Bubba, swing that bat!” That bat was bigger than Bubba, but that didn’t stop our little dynamo from swinging so hard that he spun in circles. Half the time, Bubba was so dizzy he took off



toward third base instead of first!

After the last game, my son, his glove on his head, grinned: “Dad, I can’t wait to play next year!”

As a parent, what more can you ask for? Sure, you might like your kid to learn a few fundamentals — maybe not the intricacies of a double play but how to wear the glove. At the end of day, you just want kids to have fun and look forward to the next time.

There almost wasn’t a next time for players and coaches in Wilson.

The list of places where children have been shot and murdered includes schools, movie theaters and playgrounds. Guns were also fired at Little Leaguers in North Charleston, South Carolina, this spring. How do we even begin to address this evil?

My fellow pastor and father Chris Breslin was one of the coaches on the field in Wilson. His Facebook post alluded to the challenges before us when he likened the police hunt for the shooter to searching for a needle in a haystack. The county, state and country are filled

with guns.

Breslin wrote that, when he closes his eyes, he relives the horrific images of July 10. Whizzing bullets. Parents huddled under the bleachers. The young boy Breslin covered with his own body who asked if they were going to die. This child added, “I’m never playing baseball again.”

But as a person of faith, Breslin has another vision. He posted a friend’s artwork that echoes the biblical Isaiah’s vision of turning swords into plowshares by picturing a speeding bullet morphing into

a metal baseball bat.

When I close my eyes, I can recall the metallic ping of Bubba’s oversized bat making contact with the baseball. I can hear his grandmother’s voice above the cheering fans, “The other way, Bubba! Run to first base!”

What sights and sounds will our children remember? How can we ensure that they are heading into the right direction in life?

How can we make sure there is a next season?

Breslin challenged all of us to take the next steps: “We must vote and harangue and persuade and partner to create a culture of action that is unsatisfied with anything less than justice, peace and safety for our kids, for all kids, everywhere.”

Bullets could be transformed into baseball bats. But it is going to take a team effort.

*Andrew Taylor-Troutman is the pastor of Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church. His newly-published book is a collection of his columns for the Chatham News + Record titled “Hope Matters: Churchless Sermons.”*

## Life’s lessons linger, lengthen

As the years come and go with more candles on the birthday cake, I’m becoming more aware — maybe a better word is surprised — of things I remember. Many of them are from childhood and the people who were part of mine. I daresay you likely have similar memories of the special folks who shepherded you through your young years.



**BOB WACHS**  
Movin’ Around

The question, however, isn’t so much remembering those people, places and things as is their meaning. Some are easily understood after remembering them. For instance, when my father started teaching me to drive, an early directive was, “Son, keep it between the ditches.” I had no trouble understanding what that meant.

When my mother would ask me how much money I made at my various teenage part-time jobs and even later as an adult, I thought that was a bit personal and said so on more than one occasion. Her standard answer was, “Son, nobody has your welfare at heart any more than I do. You need to save some of that instead of spending it all.” I also understood that. And believed it ... and still pretty much do. Unfortunately, I was better at following what my dad said than what Mama said but that’s another story.

Besides the sayings and words, there were actions that appeared on my life’s blueprint. For instance, Saturday night was always “shoe-shine night” in our basement so that we’d look good at church Sunday morning. My father impressed on me that a fellow could wear the sharpest suit and tie but if his shoes were a mess, so was he. I still believe that but through the years I have occasionally gotten casual at shining shoes. But every so often, I’ll empty the closet of shoes, go out on my back porch and throw polish around everywhere. That behavior tells me that some things I learned years ago are sometimes more words than actions.

But then there are things I experienced years ago that are still big on my radar and I wonder why some of them are that way while others are not.

I’ll be the first to admit I’m a social dinosaur. Using my desktop computer to hammer

out these words is about as far as I can navigate the world of technology. I still have a flip phone because all I want is a way to contact folks when necessary and not to know what time it is in Singapore. And I’m OK with that, that this “brave new world” of ours is leaving me behind. But I can’t help it ... and don’t really want to change it or see the need.

All that is said to say that some of the things I experienced as a child still have a hold on my life. And one of them is the world of business on Sunday. I know The Book says we’re to honor the Sabbath Day and “keep it holy.” I also know it says if your ox falls into a ditch don’t leave it there until the next morning.

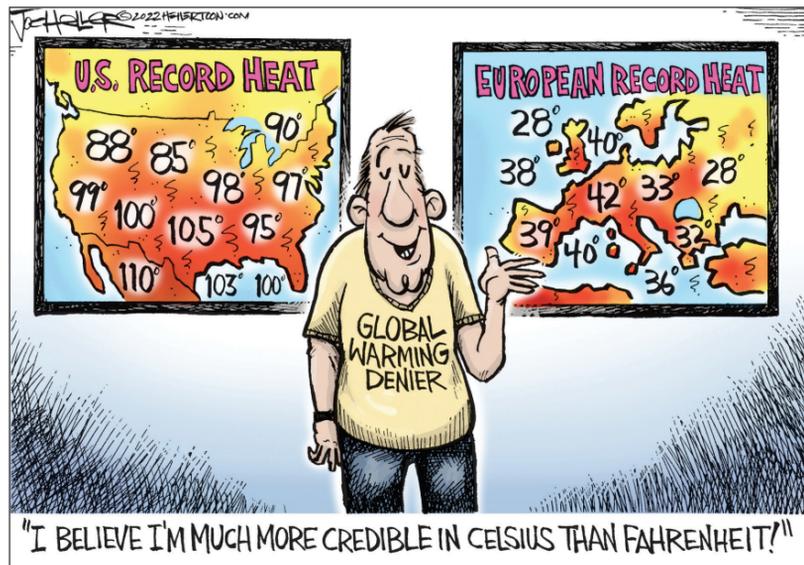
But I confess I still have second thoughts about mowing yards on Sunday or baling hay or cutting wood. I also know if you’ve got hay down and all of a sudden, it “comes up a cloud” as Grandpa said, you need to get the hay up before it sours and there’s nothing to feed the ox once you get him out of the ditch. I know some folks work on Sundays because their jobs require it — police, fire fighters, nurses, cooks and servers. I’m not faulting that; I’m just remembering and trying to understand. Part of that was society because Saturdays you got gas in the car because no gas stations were open on Sunday.

With all that, however, there’s one thing I find it extremely hard to do. Can’t remember the last or first time doing it. It’s impossible for me to write a check on Sunday. Actually, what’s impossible is putting a date that falls on a Sunday on a check. I have written some on Sunday mornings for our church’s weekly offering and put Saturday’s date on it.

So, does that mean I’m a hypocrite? Probably. Is it legalism? Yeah, most likely. Am I straining at a gnat and missing an elephant? Most likely.

Remember, I said at the start many things surprise me. I wonder what it all means.

*Bob Wachs is a native of Chatham County and retired long-time managing editor of the Chatham News/Chatham Record, having written a weekly column for more than 30 years. During most of his time with the newspapers, he was also a bi-vocational pastor and today serves Bear Creek Baptist Church for the second time as pastor.*



## Are we already in a recession?

The big news in the economics world is a question: Are we already in a recession? While a future recession has been talked about for months, the issue is becoming more prominent with many economists raising their predictions of a recession occurring later this year or next.

But some economic analysts are going one more step. They’re saying a recession is already here. Why are they saying this?

Before giving an answer, some background on the definition of a recession is needed. The federal government actually “farms out” the dating of recessions to an economic think tank, the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER). Despite its official-sounding name, the NBER is a private outfit. Its unique characteristic is that it has been around for over 100 years.

NBER defines a recession as occurring when there is a “significant decline in economic activity” that lasts for “more than a few months.” This is a rather broad, non-specific definition that gives the NBER wide latitude in defining a recession. The NBER says it looks at several measures of the economy in concluding if a recession has occurred.

There is, however, a “rule of thumb” definition of a recession. The “rule” is that a recession occurs when a broad-based measure of the economy — called “gross domestic product (GDP)” — declines for two consecutive quarters, that is, six months.

“OK,” you may be saying, now translate GDP: GDP is the monetary value of all goods and services produced for sale to “final users” in a specific period of time. Final users are

those who consume the good or service rather than reselling it. Basing GDP on final users avoids counting inputs multiple times as they move through the supply chain. For example, we wouldn’t want to count the value of the wood used in a home’s construction once when the tree is cut, a second time when the wood becomes lumber and a third time when the home is sold. Instead, the value of the wood is included in the home’s sale price.

Also, in comparing GDP from one time period to the next, the dollar values are adjusted to remove the impact of general inflation. This eliminates the possibility of GDP rising just because prices are higher.

Now let’s get back to the idea that a recession may already be upon us. The federal government has already released the data for GDP in the first quarter (January, February and March) of 2022. The GDP growth rate was negative for the nation as well as for most of the states, including North Carolina. For the nation, the “annualized” growth rate was -1.6%, and for North Carolina the “annualized” growth rate was -1.4%. Only four states — Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire and Vermont — registered positive growth rates for GDP.

Remember, it takes two consecutive quarters of negative growth in GDP to meet the “rule of thumb” of a recession. Official GDP numbers for the second quarter of 2022 won’t be released until the end of July. Still, there are forecasts available now for the second quarter rate. One of the most respected forecasts is from the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta. Their current forecast shows the second quarter GDP rate at -2.1%.

With consecutive quarterly GDP growth rates of -1.6% and -2.1%, the standard often applied to declare a recession would be met. Thus, if the At-

lanta Fed’s forecast is correct, we may already be in a recession.

But if we already are in a recession, why doesn’t it feel like one? Hiring is still occurring, the jobless rate is low and consumers continue to spend.

A big reason is directly related to how the quarterly changes in GDP are reported. Notice I referred to them as “annualized” changes. An annualized change takes the actual quarterly change and assumes it would continue for a full year. The federal government — specifically the Bureau of Economic Analysis — likes to report all changes as if they are occurring for a full year. This means the reported annualized change in national GDP in the first quarter of 2022 is derived by taking the actual quarterly change and assuming that same change would continue for a full year (four quarters).

The actual quarterly decline in first-quarter GDP was less than one-half of 1% (specifically, -0.4%) for the nation and close to one-third of 1% (-0.35%) for North Carolina. And if the Atlanta Fed’s forecast of an annualized change in GDP of -2.1% in the second quarter happens, it would actually be a drop of only one-half of 1%.

These numbers do not diminish the adverse impacts of a recession if one were to occur. Yet they do suggest if we are already in a recession, it is — thus far — likely very modest.

While these comments may ease some worries, they do not mean we are “out of the woods” for a bad recession. An alternative scenario is we are not in a recession now, but after the Federal Reserve raises interest rates significantly in the coming months, we will enter a bigger downturn later this year. We’ll have to wait to decide.

*Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor Emeritus at North Carolina State University.*

# VIEWPOINTS

## We can't all be experts

I have strong opinions — but not about how to perform brain surgery, write an app, design a golf course or produce a hip-hop album. Perhaps you do have a strong view about one of these, but almost certainly not about all four.

Why? Because none of us can simultaneously be a surgeon, a software engineer, a golfing expert and a music producer. When it comes to our work, we specialize in a few things and then trade what we produce for the goods and services other specialists produce. The exchange makes us all better off.

We live most of our lives engaged in such exchanges. There is a great deal of

specialized knowledge, with more produced every day. But individually, we possess or are even aware of only a tiny fraction of that knowledge. It would be too difficult or costly to acquire. We don't need it. We just need to trade for its fruits.

Among specialists or other discrete communities of interest, however, there is often robust debate. Surgeons learn, practice and disagree about the merits of new ways to attack brain cancers. The rest of us don't typically know which side to root for in these contests. We just root for them to keep at it, so we as potential cancer patients can benefit, and otherwise leave them alone as we go about our own business.

Now consider what happens when goods and services are provided by government agencies and public employees rather than private companies and independent professionals. Suddenly, we all feel the

need to express our expert opinions about the best ways to rehabilitate a prisoner, treat a mental illness or teach a child to read — even though we can't possibly possess expertise in so many different and challenging fields, and even those possessing such expertise may lack consensus.

The problem is that, unlike in the earlier cases, we can't simply sit back and let the professionals fight it out. If we don't like a new smartphone app or hip-hop album, we don't have to buy it. If a particular brain surgeon or hospital seems to have poor results, we can go elsewhere.

But what if we don't like the outcomes produced by our prisons, public health agencies or public schools? It's either impossible or highly expensive to "take our business elsewhere," as it were, by relocating ourselves and our tax dollars to another state. Instead, we seek to change the mix of

professionals providing those services by casting ballots in the next election.

This is not nearly as effective an accountability mechanism. For one thing, we may be outvoted. Even if our preferred candidates win, they may not be in a position to swap out the personnel in question or overrule their professional judgments. And through it all, we end up doing the very thing I'm suggesting we lack the capacity to do well — engaging in debate about matters we don't and can't fully understand.

There is no magic wand one can wave here. Ensure more competitive elections? Great. Collect more data and encourage more experimentation and research? Sure. But the problem will remain in some form. It is endemic.

I submit that the best response is to minimize the extent to which people are compelled to receive services from professionals they don't select.

That argues for more choice and competition in education, health care and transportation, even when those services are substantially funded by governments. The next best thing is for governments to pay for measurable performance, by public or private providers, rather than focusing on inputs or dictating procedures.

More fundamentally, this argues for limiting the scope of the public sector. In fact, I think it's one of the best arguments for limited government. Although you may care and worry about me as a person, it does you no harm if I have a wrong idea, do a foolish thing or hire an incompetent doctor. You can even learn from my mistakes.

*John Hood is a John Locke Foundation board member. His latest books, Mountain Folk and Forest Folk, combine epic fantasy with early American history (FolkloreCycle.com).*

## Frank Daniels Jr. — strong to the end

When Frank Daniels Jr. died June 30, people lined up across the state to express admiration and appreciation for his service and contributions to North Carolina. He was praised for his and his family's importance to the state through their ownership of The Raleigh News & Observer.

As president and publisher, Daniels hired progressive editors including Claude Sitton, who had gained a national reputation as The New York Times leading reporter in the South during the Civil Rights Movement.

With Daniels' support, the N&O pushed the state and region away from their conservative roots. Its liberal opinion pages and hard-hitting news stories gained it the nickname "The Nuisance & Disturber."

His obituary explained, "A yellow-dog Democrat, Frank Jr. offered support to many of North Carolina's most successful politicians including Governors Hodges, Sanford, Moore, Scott, Hunt, Easley, Perdue and Cooper."

Ironically, the N&O's founder and Frank Daniels Jr.'s grandfather, Josephus Daniels, was a confirmed racist who helped engineer the 1898 coup that brought about the overthrow of the Wilmington city government and resulted in the massacre of scores of black Wilmington residents.

Josephus' views were, however, complicated, as explained by N.C. State professor Lee Craig in his book, "Josephus Daniels: His Life and Times." Josephus was also viewed as one of the most influential progressive politicians in the country. President Woodrow Wilson made him secretary of the navy during World War I., making him Craig asserts one of the most important men in the world.

Craig continues, "I've become comfortable with the contradictions of the man. He was a progressive, a warm-hearted family man, a man who genuinely cared about the country's less fortunate and downtrodden, at least as he defined them. Yet at the same time, he was a white supremacist, who used the coercive powers of the state to keep blacks in a socially and economically inferior state for generations."

Frank Daniels Jr. took over the leadership of the N&O in 1968, succeeding his uncle Jonathan Daniels and the founder of the N&O, Josephus Daniels.

At Frank Daniels Jr.'s funeral, his son Frank III explained how his father and the family dealt with the community's changing views about Josephus.

"You are probably aware that over the past several years, the family has been reckoning with increased attention to Josephus Daniels' role in our state's history of racial inequity. Like many prominent men of his time, Josephus was a white supremacist and, sadly, used his newspaper to support those views.

"When cousin David Woronoff and I sat down to talk with dad about taking down Josephus' statue in Nash Square and the repercussions that would likely come, it was clear how sad it made him. The Josephus he knew was not that man, but a kind grandfather who loved him and who built a business that allowed our family to prosper. However, he did not hesitate to say that he trusted us, and he knew we had to be proactive and try and do the right things on our own, and not put others in the position of having to demand them of us.

"Over the space of days, we took the statue down, the school board renamed Daniels Middle School, North Carolina State University renamed Daniels Hall, and his University of North Carolina suggested we take Josephus' name off our scholarship plan there.

"Those were some tough blows for him, and it was heartbreaking to me because my experience of watching him ... is that his views were 180 degrees from those of his grandfather."

Handling tough situations was Frank Jr.'s special strength. The decisive way he and the Daniels family handled Josephus' legacy should be a challenging example for any family whose beloved ancestors had white supremacy views that would be unacceptable today.

*D.G. Martin hosted "North Carolina Bookwatch," for more than 20 years.*

*To view prior programs: <https://video.pbsnc.org/show/nc-bookwatch/episodes/>.*

## What happens when you mix green, blue and red?

It's been said North Carolina is politically a purple state, a mixture of red (Republican) and blue (Democrat). Now we might have to add green to the mix since the Green Party has petitioned to gain statewide ballot access in this



**TOM CAMPBELL**  
N.C. Spin

November's general elections. The feud that's erupted over it could alter this year's election results, but even more importantly, the outcomes in 2024. Let's try to sort it out as best we can.

We don't know much about the Green Party or who is involved with it, but it boasts principles of "green" politics, such as social justice, environmentalism and nonviolence. They want to field a slate of candidates to run statewide in this November's elections and, to comply with North Carolina law, the new party must present at least 13,865 signed petitions from registered voters to get that approval.

In order to obtain such a large number, the Green Party hired several contractors to conduct petition campaigns throughout the state and submitted some 22,000 signed petitions to the State Board of Elections.

Democrats and their supporters, including the Elias Group — a law firm known for advocating for Democrats — complained to the State Board of Elections. They said that some of the submitted signatures were "intentionally doctored" and that the Green Party should be denied status as a new party on the basis that it didn't qualify.

By a 3-2 vote, strictly along party lines, the State Board of Elections denied the Green Party's request. The three deniers were Democrats and the two in favor were Republican members.

Spokesmen for the Green group immediately accused the State Board of blatantly attempting to prevent a new party, thus increasing chances the Democrats could prevail. They are suing the board for a reversal of the decision, saying that the board

violated their First Amendment and Due Process rights. They acknowledge that some of the signatures might not be valid but, since they collected more than 22,000 signatures and that more than 16,000 had been validated by county boards, they had plenty enough to surpass the 13,865-hurdle needed.

After some questions were raised, the state board discovered that not all county boards had properly checked signatures and directed all 100 county boards to validate the signatures and report back to them by July 29. But that is too little, too late for the Green Party.

Even if it is demonstrated that there are sufficient numbers of valid signatures and the state board reverses its decision, the reversal won't help for this year. The deadline for candidates filing to run in November's elections was July 1 and to change that deadline would require either a court order or a vote by the legislature.

Republicans, not willing to sit on the sideline, have joined the Green cause, saying that Democrats and their operatives are contacting signees and asking them to revoke their signatures from petitions, further telling signees that a third party will significantly disadvantage Democrats' chances of winning elections. This could get messy!

Some are accusing the state board of partisanship, saying they knew that setting the July 29 date for counties to report back would keep the Green Party off the ballot in November. We also find it interesting Republicans are siding with the Green Party. Won't a third party also splinter off some of their votes? And what was the real reason behind the Green Party petitioning this year?

The big prize, unspoken but understood, is November's election for the U.S. Senate. Democrats believe they stand a good chance of flipping the seat, but a split vote may result in the election of another Republican.

As a point of clarification let us cite North Carolina law for accepting a new statewide political party.

"Any group of voters which shall have filed with the State Board of Elections petitions for the formulation of a new political party which are signed by registered and qualified voters in this State equal in number to one-quarter of one percent (0.25%) of the total number of voters who voted in the most recent general election for Governor. Also, the petition must be signed by at least 200 registered voters from each of three congressional districts in North Carolina." The State Board of Elections reports there were 5,545,848 votes cast for Governor in 2020. Doing the math confirms that 13,865 signatures are required for the approval of a third party this year.

Polls have repeatedly shown that North Carolina voters would welcome a third political party. Of the 7,325,245 registered voters in our state 34.03% are registered Democrats, 30.17 are Republican, but the largest percentage (35.12) are registered Unaffiliated. Voters are increasingly preferring not to belong to either party.

Here's my spin: I don't have a pony in this current race, but I do know that North Carolina's ballot access laws are archaic — too difficult for candidates to gain access on the ballot and have needed changing for years. They haven't been because the two political parties don't want additional competition and have stymied efforts to loosen requirements. Voters need more options, not fewer.

Sadly, whatever action the State Board of Elections takes is going to further divide us and create distrust in our election process. We will await the State Board's decision and trust they will make a decision free from partisan political influence. Then let's hope they will clearly explain it to voters and champion law changes.

*Tom Campbell is a former assistant N.C. State Treasurer and was the creator/host of N.C. SPIN, a weekly statewide television discussion of N.C. issues that aired on UNC-TV until 2020. Contact him at [tomcamp@carolinabroadcasting.com](mailto:tomcamp@carolinabroadcasting.com).*

### What's on your mind?

The Chatham News + Record welcomes letters from its readers on topics of local and public interest, as well as thoughtful and informative guest columns.

At our discretion, we may edit letters for clarity. We reserve the right to refuse letters and other submissions that promote a commercial product, contain either libelous material, personal attacks on individuals or vulgar language. Consumer complaints and letters containing unverifiable factual claims are ineligible for publication.

Each letter must contain the writer's full name, address and daytime telephone number for verification. Letters should be no more than 400 words in length. Letter-writers are limited to two published letters per month. Letters selected for publication may be edited and all letters become property of the Chatham News + Record.

To submit a letter: Mail it to the News + Record at P.O. Box 290, Siler City, N.C. 27344; or email to [bhorne3@chathamnr.com](mailto:bhorne3@chathamnr.com); or drop by our office at 303 West Raleigh Street in Siler City.

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# HOMELESS

Continued from page A1

people are needing help.” Siler City, in particular — which on average offers lower wages than other parts of the county — has been the source of most of Love Chatham’s increases.

“The average income in Siler City is in the \$29,000 range, versus the county’s, which is \$80,000 plus,” Philbrick said. “There are resources that are needed in this area, and I think the additional economic pressures are definitely straining families and straining the community.”

Each of Love Chatham’s ministries — a hotel ministry, a food pantry, a clothing closet and more — contributes to helping an overall 61% increase in people seeking Love Chatham’s assistance for food or clothing, according to Philbrick, and he said he doesn’t see that number going down any time soon.

Other organizations have seen similar increases in the percentage of people seeking financial or material assistance. CORA (Chatham Outreach Alliance, based in Pittsboro) has served almost 11,300 people in 2022 alone and has over 1,100 children enrolled in its SNACK program.

“Our numbers are growing and our organization is growing,” Philbrick said. “We’re going after more grants and such, which is going to help us continue to be able to grow ministries.”

## High demand, strained resources

As the need for Love Chatham’s resources has increased, so has the frequency



Staff photo by Taylor Heeden

**Love Chatham’s clothing ministry allows for those in need to come and get clothing items they might lack. Pictured are Mary Lacey Eubanks, Love Chatham’s summer intern, and Executive Director Dakota Philbrick.**

of having to tell clients “no” to some requests.

Mary Lacey Eubanks, Love Chatham’s summer intern, is a Chatham County native who’s working in Siler City in hopes of giving back to the community that raised her.

“I grew up in this area, so it was a really exciting opportunity for me to work in a way that will make a difference for my community,” she said.

Eubanks works with Philbrick to provide clients with a chance to be successful, whether that means providing individuals with a hotel room for a night or handing a family a box with food items for that week’s meals.

But not all requests sent to Love Chatham end with a “happily ever after.” Eubanks recalled a scenario where she was in contact with a woman who had been served eviction papers and tested positive for COVID-19.

“I remember trying to call her management company and the landlord, and I just couldn’t get in touch with them, so it’s hard to have to go back and tell her there’s not much we can do,” Eubanks said. “It’s hard not to be really empathetic when you’re talking to someone directly about what they’re struggling through. I really wanted to be able to help her.”

Love Chatham was able to pay the woman’s water bill so she could at least be comfortable, but because the costs of goods have increased, operations costs for Love Chatham have increased, too.

“We’re not undervalued, just under-resourced,” Philbrick said. “We’re working very closely with these other partners to bridge the gap to be more efficient, to be more effective, and to communicate and streamline processes behind the scenes.”

Love Chatham has partnered with agencies such as the Salvation Army, CORA, the United Way, Chatham County Department of Social Services, and more to assist community members in need. Eubanks said she sits in on calls with these partners with Philbrick, and in a recent meeting, partners were already saying their resources were stretched thin.

“Even with the spread of nonprofits all working towards the same cause, we were already running out of resources because it seems like the demand is very high,” Eubanks said. “I don’t know if that was because of the higher prices in June or if that’s just how things usually go, but they were expressing they were having to put people on the waitlist

## BY THE NUMBERS: Love Chatham

**VOLUNTEER HOURS:** 1,875 hours year to date (an 87% increase over last year to date)

**HOTEL MINISTRY:** 255 rooms, 578 people (numbers in line with last year)

**FOOD PANTRY & CLOTHING:** 353 families, 1,098 people year to date (61% increase over last year to date)

**SNACK PROGRAM:** 72 families, 140 children

**FURNITURE MINISTRY:** secured furniture for 21 families since October of last year

and running out of funds for this month until July.”

The organization does have fundraisers, including a Chicken Plate Fundraiser set to take place on Saturday, July 30, but fundraisers aren’t always enough.

Something Philbrick thinks could help with the increased demand is a full-time housing shelter in Chatham County. As of now, there is not a facility dedicated to sheltering those experiencing homelessness in Chatham, nor are there any plans for one to be developed.

“I grew up in this area, and it concerns me that we don’t have something in place to help our struggling brothers and sisters, our neighbors,” Philbrick said. “We’d be able to help a lot more people, and we’d be able to help the community a lot more effectively if we had a permanent shelter.”

## Removing the stigma

Philbrick would love for people across the county to rush to help those experiencing homelessness by supporting the development of a homeless shelter. He’s wary, though, of attitudes and stereotypes about people without housing.

“We do our best to talk about and debunk some of those myths and to really share

with our community these are people, they deserve a shot,” Philbrick said.

One of the more harmful phrases Philbrick hears on a day-to-day basis is “Why can’t these people get a job?”

The answer’s not always easy. “There could be some mental or physical challenges or disabilities,” he said. “We could see somebody that just needs help get some documentation. ... It’s hard to get hired if they don’t have a permanent address ... we see folks that experience transportation challenges ... so those are some challenges that are unique to this area.”

To tackle the negative stereotypes surrounding the impoverished, Philbrick said he turns to where Love Chatham’s mission comes from: the Bible.

“We’re just joining God where he’s already working, that’s our goal,” Philbrick said. “You have to educate people — you have to help folks see someone that’s experiencing homelessness ... help them see that individual as a person, not just this label of homelessness, and all the things that it conjures up sometimes.”

*Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at theeden@chathamnr.com and on Twitter at @HeedenTaylor.*

# WATER

Continued from page A1

gets resolved, whatever we agree to do to keep the community safe, we’re committed to it.”

The two boards discussed various issues, saw a presentation on the status of Pittsboro’s Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) project, talked about grants and more.

## Communication is key

The meeting began with updates from each of the municipalities on solutions for water quality issues and plans to implement them.

Pittsboro Commissioner Kyle Shipp, who led most of Thursday’s discussions, provided Greensboro’s commissioners with updates about Pittsboro’s water system, including the plans to merge wastewater systems with Sanford. He said the announcement of VinFast’s arrival to Chatham has accelerated the need to find solutions to the town’s water woes.

“VinFast is going to have a lot of water and wastewater needs,” Shipp said. “We (Sanford and Pittsboro) are going to be able to help with that.”

The Sanford-Pittsboro partnership would allow the two municipalities to “regionalize the public water and wastewater utility systems of the town of Pittsboro,” including water treatment plants, distribution, wastewater treatment and public wastewater collection infrastructure, he said.

Shipp also shared that Pittsboro is now labeled as a “distressed utility” by the N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality, which would allow Pittsboro to accept additional funding from the state to improve its water infrastructure.

Shipp said the “distressed” label is based on data the state collected in 2020, but the town has made changes to its water infrastructure since then. However, he feels it’s “strategic” to accept the designation as a way to increase funds for Pittsboro’s water treatment plant.

“In another town, it would not be a welcome designation, necessarily,” Shipp told those

gathered. “But we think where we’re at with the regionalization process and with utility projects in progress, this is set to be the opportunity to qualify for funding and receive help for what we’re already working on.”

Borgers talked about Greensboro’s efforts to improve dialogue with Pittsboro and other municipalities when chemical discharges occur, including the implementation of a new communications protocol.

“It is used to maintain lines of communication and opens them up even further to share important information as it relates to our operations,” Borgers said.

The communication protocol added Pittsboro officials and Town Manager Chris Kennedy and water utilities staff as first contacts if Greensboro’s water treatment plants discharge chemicals such as 1,4-Dioxane.

In addition to creating the protocol, Borgers also offered an apology to Pittsboro for the multiple discharges from Greensboro’s water treatment facility.

“I mean it when I say your customers are just as important as ours because it’s our community,” he said. “I want to express my concern and apologize for the impact this has had on your customers.”

## GAC progress and grant funding

Pittsboro brought in construction company CDM Smith Engineer Bill Dowbiggin to present on the town’s new granular activated carbon (GAC) treatment to filter out PFAS, PFOA and PFOS, other likely human carcinogens.

“The brand-new system is almost online and is on track to be online by the end of the month,” he said.

Dowbiggin explained to the two boards how the carbon works — water flows through the GAC, removing the PFAS as the water trickles through.

He also said the GAC system is just the first phase of modifications planned for Pittsboro’s water plant. Dowbiggin said some infrastructure

to treat 1,4-Dioxane could be in the works in the future if funds were made available.

Pittsboro Engineer Kent Jackson commented on the funding, saying the town is working on applying for some grants and loans to help fund future water infrastructure projects.

The town applied for a \$11.6 million grant to help make more improvements to the town’s water treatment plant, but was only approved for \$550,000.

“They had initially communicated to us that we were approved for the \$11.6 million in their preliminary recommendations,” Jackson said. “However, that changed when we were funded \$4.45 million for our sewer system, so with that particular grant, there’s a \$5 million cap, so that’s why we got the \$550,000.”

Jackson suggested the two towns should apply for grants jointly in hopes they can both receive more funding to better the two municipal treatment plants. Greensboro’s Borgers voiced his support to work with Pittsboro to try to receive more funds.

“You have really piqued my interest, especially with this joint application,” Borgers said. “It helps us as far as compliance (with the SOC) and getting on the path where we help those communities. I am definitely interested to explore further.”

## Post-meeting reaction

Emily Sutton, the Haw River Assembly’s riverkeeper, attended the meeting. She said she was cautiously optimistic about the discussion.

“I’m encouraged that Pittsboro has finally taken this step after years of community outpouring and pushing them to do this work to protect communities,” Sutton said. “Greensboro came to the table today to discuss whether it was a viable option for them to partner, too, and invest in 1,4-Dioxane treatment as well.”

While she was encouraged by the joint meeting, Sutton felt the proposed changes weren’t enough

to combat the damage pollutants caused to Pittsboro. She said she wants the state to do more to crack down on the industries that continue to discharge pollutants into the Haw.

“The state needs to

hold those wastewater treatment plants accountable in their discharge permits to therefore put the responsibility back on the individual dischargers at the industrial user level,” Sutton said. “So Greensboro, includ-

ed, needs to be holding all of those industrial users accountable.”

*Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at theeden@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @HeedenTaylor.*

# 529 Plans: Underused But Valuable

In just a few weeks, students will be heading off to college — and parents will be getting out their checkbooks. Without a college-bound student in your home right now, you might not be thinking much about tuition and other higher education expenses, but if you have young children, these costs may eventually be of concern — so how should you prepare for them?

It’s never too soon to start saving and investing. Unfortunately, many people think that they have a lot of “catching up” to do. In fact, nearly half of Americans say they don’t feel like they’re saving enough to cover future education expenses, according to a 2022 survey conducted by financial services firm Edward Jones with Morning Consult, a global research company.

Of course, it’s not always easy to set aside money for college when you’re already dealing with the high cost of living, and, at the same time, trying to save and invest for retirement. Still, even if you can only devote relatively modest amounts for your children’s education, these contributions can add up over time. But where should you put your money?

Personal savings accounts are the top vehicle Americans are using for their education funding strategies, according to the Edward Jones/Morning Consult survey. But there are other options, one of which is a 529 plan, which may offer more attractive features, including the following:

- **Possible tax benefits** — If you invest in a 529 education savings plan, your earnings can grow federally income tax-free, provided the money is used for qualified education expenses. (Withdrawals not used for these expenses will generally incur taxes and penalties on investment earnings.) If you invest in your own state’s 529 plan, you may receive state tax benefits, too, depending on the state.
- **Flexibility in naming the beneficiary** — As the owner of the 529 plan, you can name anyone you want as the beneficiary. You can

also change the beneficiary. If your eldest child foregoes college, you can name a younger sibling or another eligible relative.

- **Support for non-college programs** — Even if your children don’t want to go to college, it doesn’t mean they’re uninterested in any type of postsecondary education or training. And a 529 plan can pay for qualified expenses at trade or vocational schools, including apprenticeship programs registered with the U.S. Department of Labor.
- **Payment of student loans** — A 529 plan can help pay off federal or private student loans, within limits.

Keep in mind that state-by-state tax treatment varies for different uses of 529 plans, so you’ll want to consult with your tax professional before putting a plan in place.

Despite these and other benefits, 529 plans are greatly under-utilized. Only about 40% of Americans even recognize the 529 plan as an education savings tool, and only 13% are actually using it, again according to the Edward Jones/Morning Consult study.

But as the cost of college and other postsecondary programs continues to rise, it will become even more important for parents to find effective ways to save for their children’s future education expenses. So, consider how a 529 plan can help you and your family. And the sooner you get started, the better.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor.*

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*Investors should understand the risks involved of owning investments. The value of investments fluctuates and investors can lose some or all of their principal.*

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## Join the Chatham County Council on Aging and Chatham Health Alliance for a

**CHATHAM COUNTY COMMUNITY RESOURCE HUB**  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 6.**  
**GOLDSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY PARKING LOT**  
**10 A.M. TO 1 P.M.**

Come out for free food, demonstrations from Chatham County Cooperative Extension and schedule your COVID-19 vaccination appointments!



## MANAGER

Continued from page A1  
 the corner of U.S. Hwy. 64 and East Third Street in Siler City, Mountaire also has a processing plant in Lumber Bridge.

Mills' position is an important one, bridging communications between Mountaire and a number of groups: employees, community leaders, elected officials, farmers, local churches, charity organizations and chambers of commerce.

"My job is literally to create relationships for Mountaire," Mills said, who started in the role on July 11.

### 'Not in it for one thing'

Mills grew up down the road in Asheboro and attended Southwestern Randolph High School, where he played football and was in Future Farmers of America. He graduated from Wingate University in 2021 with a degree in sports management and marketing, originally planning to become an athletic administrator.

But he ended up taking a different route, instead working in politics shortly after graduation.

Prior to taking up the Mountaire position, he worked for U.S. Rep. Dan Bishop (R-N.C. 9th District) and U.S. Rep. Richard Hudson (R-N.C. 8th District) as an intern and field representative, respectively. He also worked on the successful primary campaigns for Christian Castelli and Bo Hines, two GOP candidates for the U.S. House of Representatives.

It's this background in politics that Cathy Bassett, Mountaire's corporate director of communication and community relations, believes will help Mills succeed.

"The legislative process itself is an interesting one," she said. "And it's very helpful to have folks who have that understanding of that process, and how elected officials work and interact, and ways in which we can work together and share with them how important our industry is, and what we do to give back."

Bassett described Mills as a people person.

"He's certainly familiar with how to interact with the community and figure out what's important and how we can build those relationships with the right folks in the community to make sure that we're giving back, and that we're participating in the most important things that are going on in Chatham County and beyond," she said.

Mills learned about the Mountaire position through his friend Sarah Duncan, who recently held the post and also had a background in politics.

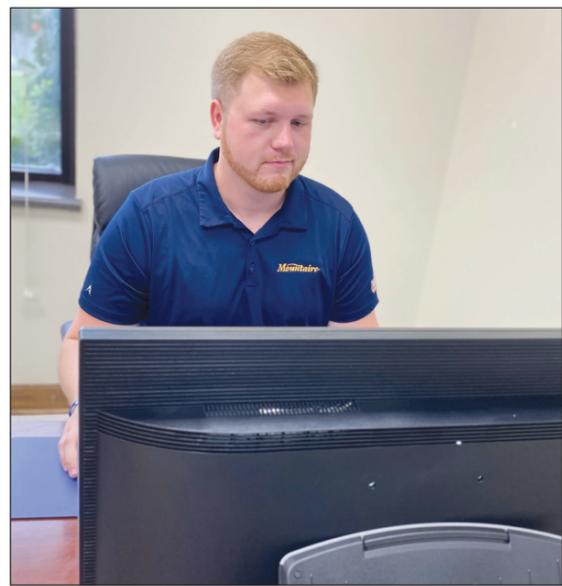
"She mentioned to me, 'Hey, this company is hiring. It's close to you. And it's community and government relations, you know, you should give them a shot,'" he recalled.

Bassett spent time helping Mills get adjusted over the past few weeks, ensuring he got a chance to meet key employees and better understand the company's culture.

"He's young, but he's a great listener," she said. "And he's a fast learner."

Both Bassett and Mills highlighted Mountaire's philanthropic work in the community as part of the company's larger focus. The company sponsors local charitable efforts and recently paid \$15,000 for a new speaker system for Jordan-Matthews High School's athletic department.

In addition to fostering relations with community members, Mills said part of his job entails attending local government and state agricul-



Staff photo by Bill Horner III

### Cam Mills is Mountaire Farms' new community and government relations manager in Chatham County. He works from Mountaire's offices in Siler City.

ture meetings, where he may be called on for the occasional presentation.

He's already got a packed schedule; his plans include attending the Sept. 11 Flatwoods Parade during the Flatwoods Festival, hosted by the Tri-County Ruritan Club in Bennett, N.C., and the Chatham Chamber of Commerce's upcoming Business After Hours event on Aug. 25.

"Wherever we have a base of operations, whether it's Siler City or Lumber Bridge, or the hatchery, or farmers, we want to let those communities, those workers, those people that eat our chicken [and] enjoy our product — we're just not in it for one thing," he said. "We're in it to help people and help our communities."

### Community expectations

From farmers and plant workers to consumers and government officials, the poultry industry has a lot of stakeholders, and Mountaire is no different.

"The chicken business is a fascinating business," Bassett said. "And so there's a lot of moving parts to it, from the breeder farms that we have out in Statesville, North Carolina, to all of our independent contractor growers to making sure we get the birds to the plant, and then getting them out to the different markets where we sell our products."

Ilana Dubester is the executive director and founder of the Hispanic Liaison, a nonprofit based in Chatham County that helps connect the local Hispanic community and other groups, including government agencies and law enforcement.

Statewide, the Liaison has advocated for workers' rights. Most recently, the N.C. Justice Center, American Civil Liberties Union of North Carolina and Charlotte Center for Legal Advocacy filed an administrative complaint on behalf of the Hispanic Liaison against N.C. Dept. of Commerce's Division of Employment Security, alleging inadequate access to language services, specifically regarding unemployment benefits.

When it comes to Mountaire, Dubester said she is looking forward to meeting Mills and hopes to engage in open communication with him.

"I hope to have, going forward, a more open relationship with [Mountaire] in terms of community education," Dubester said. "So we've done a lot of communication around COVID, and outreach and clinics and things like that. And I would love to be able to spread the word to their workers about some of our initiatives."

She noted this was the first year that Mountaire is sponsoring the Hispanic Heritage Fiesta, which is hosted by the Liaison. This year, the event will be held on Sept. 17, and

will feature donations from Mountaire, including chickens the organization plans to use to help feed volunteers.

Having a contact with the company is always helpful, she said, particularly when issues arise that require a conversation.

Specifically, Dubester cited recent matters the company has come under fire for, including allegations from workers at Mountaire's Lumber Bridge facility about exposure to toxic chemicals. In February, N.C. Occupational Safety and Health fined Mountaire for failing to provide employees with adequate training and protective equipment — citations the company has disputed and appealed.

Dubester mentioned that it has been helpful to have regular meetings and visits with Mountaire's community and government relations managers over the years. This was particularly true in 2018, she said, when the Liaison negotiated on behalf of residents facing eviction from a mobile home park that was to be cleared for expansion of the company's Siler City plant.

"Having that avenue of communication with the community relations manager — it was more brief at the time — was really critical, both for the company and for us, and for the community," she said. "Because we could sit down and negotiate and talk about things. And so that's what we're looking forward to, to have somebody that we can talk to."

Mountaire also faced criticism during the pandemic for not publicly sharing updates about the number of COVID-19 cases among workers.

Mills said though he can't speak to a lack of transparency in the past, the company has taken measures during the pandemic to protect its employees, such as encouraging them to get vaccinated and using barriers at work stations.

As he continues in his role, Mills hopes to take some time to continue to meet and build relationships within Mountaire as well, with those working in the processing plant. He wants to know who he's representing, he said.

"I think that's step one is just getting to know them and what their concerns are, and what they're happy with, and what we can work on," Mills said.

Ultimately, he wants people to feel like they can reach out to him with the positives and the negatives.

"I want our community to feel comfortable," he said.

Cam Mills can be reached at [cmills@mountaire.com](mailto:cmills@mountaire.com).

Reporter Maydha Devarajan can be reached at [mdevarajan@chathamnc.com](mailto:mdevarajan@chathamnc.com) and on Twitter @maydhadevarajan.

# OBITUARIES

## JONATHAN DIRCK MARTIN



August 1, 1962 ~ July 11, 2022  
Jonathan Dirck Martin, 59, died Saturday, July 11, 2022, at his home in Chatham County, North Carolina. He was the first child born to Rev. Alfred Clark Martin and Mrs. Diane Sadler Martin on August 1, 1962, in Charlottesville, Virginia. Dirck is survived by his two daughters, Hannah Avery Martin, Mallory Clark Martin of Richmond, Virginia, and grandson, Brayden Michael Dawson of South Boston, Virginia.

Dirck is also survived by his mother, Diane Sadler Martin, of Topping, Virginia, and his eight siblings, Elizabeth M. Burfiend and husband Eric of Richmond, Laura D. Martin and companion, George Athas of Richmond, B. Kyle Martin of Richmond, A. Brian Martin of Richmond, Heather Swift and husband Doug of Hudson, Ohio, C. Bruce Martin and wife Sirlei of Athens, Ohio, Finley L. Martin, of Roanoke, Virginia, and Anna Maas and husband Ben, of Warrenton, Virginia. He is survived by a host of nieces and nephews, his former wife, Lysaundra C. Jones, and former mother-in-law, Rachel A. Smith, both of South Boston.

Dirck was preceded in death by his father, Rev. Alfred Clark Martin of Yorktown, Virginia, his paternal grandparents, Dr. John W. Martin and Mrs. Blanche Clark Martin of Yorktown, and his maternal grandparents, Judge Robert Watson Sadler and Mrs. Elizabeth Dey Sadler of Charlottesville.

Dirck spent his young childhood in Kenbridge, Virginia, and later moved with his family to Halifax, Virginia, where his father was a minister of St. John's Episcopal Church on Mountain Road from 1965-1993. There he gained a life-long appreciation of church, family, and friends. Dirck graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a bachelor's degree in 1992. He lived in Chapel Hill for the remainder of his life, as he loved the creativity and kindness of the area. Dirck was employed at Big Valley Auto as a mechanic and worked with several local landscaping companies until he developed his skill in stone and rock masonry. He ran his own business, Everlasting Stone Masonry, until his death.

Dirck enjoyed vegetable and flower gardening, playing the trumpet, guitar, and harmonica. He loved dancing, attending music festivals, tie-dyeing, and making friends along his adventures. Most of all he loved sharing his zest for life with his children, grandson, family, and friends. He shared his vegetables with his family and friends and often shared his homemade canning, breads, and pies.

Dirck shared his belief in God and his positive outlook on life with everyone he met along his way. He traveled to Costa Rica, Jamaica, Amsterdam, China Tibet, Nepal Thailand, Mexico and Guatemala. He enjoyed visiting friends and family throughout the United States spending time in nature. He quickly became friends with everyone he met.

Funeral services are planned for Saturday, July 30, 2022, at St. John's Episcopal Church on Mountain Road in Halifax, Virginia, at 1 p.m. with a reception to follow in the church undercroft. In lieu of flowers, please consider a local charity close to your heart, as Dirck supported several local charities in Chapel Hill, and tithed to several nature conservation groups.

## LORETTA BARNES BINKLEY



March 8, 1956 ~ July 16, 2022  
Loretta Barnes Binkley, 66, of Siler City, passed away on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at her home.

Mrs. Binkley was born in Moore County on March 8, 1956, the daughter of Albert and Nettie Heaton Barnes. Loretta was the middle child out of 11. She was previously employed with Collins & Aikman, until becoming the owner/operator of Scooter's Cafe for over 20 years before retirement. Loretta loved animals of any kind. She cherished taking care of her family and her husband Larry. Loretta also loved anything to do with Elvis. In addition to her father Albert Barnes, she is preceded in death by her sisters, Ruby Johnson, Geraldine Hall; and grandson, Nathan Andrew Meece.

She is survived by her husband of 27 years, Larry W. Binkley; daughter, Susan "Suzie" Meece of Bonlee; son, Tommy W. Meece of Rockingham; mother, Nettie Heaton Barnes of Siler City; sisters, Shirley Johnson of Dunn, Robin Hogan of Siler City, and Louise Robinson of Robbins; brothers, Albert Barnes Jr. of Troy, Timmy Barnes of Bear Creek, Roy Barnes of Robbins, Wayne and Marty Barnes, both of Siler City; and grandsons Wyatt and Jared Allred, who are currently serving in the U.S. Navy stationed in Mayport, Florida.

The family will receive friends on Friday, July 29, 2022, from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. at Smith & Buckner Funeral Home, 230 N. Second Ave., Siler City, followed by the funeral service at 12 p.m. with Rev. Bob Lovette and Rev. Donnie Nuttall officiating. Burial will be at 4 p.m. at Richmond Memorial Park Cemetery, Hwy. 74 East, Rockingham, N.C.

Memorials may be made to the ASPCA, <https://www.aspc.org/>.

Online condolences may be made at [www.smithbucknerfh.com](http://www.smithbucknerfh.com).

## ROBERT 'BOB' ALLEN SHEPHERD

May 5, 1940 ~ July 19, 2022  
Robert "Bob" Allen Shepherd, 82, of Moncure passed away on Tuesday, July 19, 2022, at his home.

The family received friends at 5:30 p.m. with a memorial service following at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, July 22, 2022, at the Chatham United Methodist Church, with Pastor Danny Berrier and Rev. Ed Earp officiating.

Bob was the son of Robert and Almada Thomes Shepherd, who preceded him in death, along with one brother, Jim Shepherd. After high school, he joined the U.S. Navy. After the military, he worked in the coal mines of West Virginia, in construction, installing guardrails and landscapes and with

the postal service.

Bob is survived by his wife, Frances Reeves, of the home; sons, Thad Shepherd, of Nunda, N.Y., and Elvis Shepherd of Columbus, Ohio; daughters, Kim S. Marshall of Thomasville, Ramona Shepherd, Fannie Jean Shepherd, and Laurie Shepherd, all of Dansville, N.Y.; two step-daughters, Darlene R. Warren of Chapel Hill, Sheila Reeves of Fuquay Varina; 15 grandchildren, 23 great-grandchildren, four step-grandchildren and ten step-great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to PACE, 163 Chatham Business Dr., Pittsboro, N.C. 27312.

Online condolence can be made to [www.smithfuneralhomeoncure.com](http://www.smithfuneralhomeoncure.com).

## MAYE WILLETT CHEEK



February 4, 1932 ~ June 25, 2022  
Maye Willett Cheek, 90, of Siler City, went to be with her Lord and Savior on Monday, July 25, 2022.

Mrs. Cheek was born in Chatham County on February 4, 1932, the daughter of James Robert and Rosa Brewer Willett.

Maye was a faithful member at Edward Hill Friend's Meeting where she held many titles. She sang in the Church Choir, taught the Kindergarten Sunday School Class, and attended the Edward Hill Friends Meeting Youth Group. In addition, she also was the church reporter, helping with finances and the cemetery committee. Prior to meeting her husband, she worked for Kellwood Company, and also at the Fabric Center. Maye made her and her family's clothing, she was an excellent seamstress. She loved cooking for the family, baking and sewing. Maye had an amazing rose garden, and enjoyed vegetable gardening out at Howard and Faye Brooks' home. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her sisters, twin, Faye Brooks, Alene Perkins and Estelle Swaim; and brothers, Howard and Coy Willett.

The family will receive friends on Friday, July 29, 2022, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Smith & Buckner Funeral Home, 230 N. Second Ave., Siler City. A funeral service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, July 30, 2022, at Edward Hill Friends Meeting, 92 Ed Leonard Rd., Siler City, with Josh Conrad officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

She is survived by her husband of 67 years, Charles J. Cheek; daughter, Phyllis Cheek Kondor and husband Paul of Cary; and grandchildren Wendy and Robin Krieg.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to the Youth Group at Edward Hill Friends Meeting, 92 Ed Leonard Rd., Siler City, NC 27344.

Online condolences may be made at [www.smithbucknerfh.com](http://www.smithbucknerfh.com)

## SHELIA AMOS ASHLEY



In the early hours of July 24, 2022, Shelia Amos Ashley passed away at Cambridge Hills Assisted Living in Pittsboro, after a long battle with dementia.

She is survived by her daughters, Misty Peeler, Beverly Phillips, and grandchildren, Matthew, Anna Grace, Aaron, Samantha, Autumn, Tess, and Jake.

Shelia is preceded in death by her husband, Jesse Fowler, and brother, Richard Amos.

She loved teaching dance and exercise classes, as well as rescuing and spending time with her cats and gardening. Shelia touched many lives and will be greatly missed by all.

## ROSE LORRAINE BLOXSOM JOHNSON

February 21, 1942 ~ July 16, 2022  
Rose Lorraine Bloxsom Johnson, 80, died July 16, 2022, at UNC Hospitals.

Ms. Johnson was born February 21, 1942, in Alamance County to William Howard Bloxsom Sr. and Vera Helen Trout. She was a member of Center United Methodist Church. Rose was a graduate of Eli Whitney High School. For seven years she worked at Blue Cross and Blue Shield, and many years at Chatham Hospital, but her longest calling was as a dispatcher for the Siler City Police Department, retiring from there after 23 1/2 years. Rose loved Elvis Presley and her dog, which she named Elvis.

In addition to her parents Ms. Johnson was preceded in death by a brother, three sisters, three nieces and a nephew. She was also preceded by her daughter-in-law, Karen Johnson.

Rose is survived by her two sons: Barry S. Johnson Sr. and wife Penny of Snow Camp, and Keith Johnson of Graham; three grandchildren, Scott Johnson, Kyle Johnson and wife Katie, and Taylor Johnson; three great-grandchildren, Kennedy, Kloie and Blair; two nieces, and numerous great nieces and nephews.

The family will receive friends on Friday, July 22, 2022, at 1 p.m. at Smith and Buckner Funeral Home with a memorial service following at 2 p.m. with Rev. Joseph Park and Rev. Wendy Bishop officiating.

The family would like to say a special thank you to Ms. Johnson's caregivers Connie Ferguson and Amy Ramsey, along with all the nurses from Home Health.

Smith and Buckner Funeral home is assisting the Johnson family.

Condolences maybe made at [www.smithbucknerfh.com](http://www.smithbucknerfh.com).

## KAZUKO KOYANATSU FRADEL

February 29, 1936 ~ July 11, 2022

Kazuko Koyanatsu Fradel, 86, of New Hill passed away on Monday, July 11, 2022, at her home.

Her funeral service was held at 2 p.m., Monday, July 25, 2022, at Sandhills State Veteran Cemetery with the Rev. Ed Earp officiating. Burial followed in the Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery.

She was born in Saga Ken, Japan, the daughter of Sakae and Chisa Yamaguchi Koyanatsu. Kazuko was preceded in death by her parents and her husband, Michael Fradel.

Surviving are her sons, Michael J. Fradel of Anaheim, California, Donald J. "Don" Fradel of the home and Robert A. "Bob" Fradel of Vacaville, California; sister, Fumiko K. Kawamura of Japan; brother, Kyoshi Koyanatsu of Japan; nine grandchildren, and 11 great-grandchildren.

Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneralhomeoncure.com](http://www.smithfuneralhomeoncure.com).

## MARTHA LOU LUCK

November 5, 1950 ~ July 22, 2022  
Martha Lou Luck, 71, passed away on Friday, July 22, 2022.

A memorial service was held on Tuesday, July 26, 2022, at 11 a.m. at Flat Springs Baptist Church with Rev. Dr. Gary McCollough officiating.

She was born in Lee County to the late Joseph Alvie Luck Sr. and Evlyeen Dawkins Luck.

She is survived by her daughter, Amanda Luck Frye of Sanford; and a brother, Joseph A. Luck Jr. of Sanford.

Memorials can be made to C.A.R.A., 42 Deep River Rd., Sanford, N.C. 27330.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com).

## JOHN ED MATTHEWS

May 5, 1938 ~ July 20, 2022  
John Ed Matthews, age 84, of Sanford, passed away on Wednesday, July 20, 2022, at his home.

The funeral service was held at Emmanuel Baptist Church 11 a.m. with Pastor Mike Garner and Pastor Terry Pleasants officiating. Burial followed in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Cemetery.

He was the son of Alton Page Matthews and Elsie Myrtle Calcutt Matthews. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two brothers, Julius Matthews and Ralph Matthews. John Ed owned and operated a backhoe service and farmed in the same community all his life.

Matthews is survived by his wife of 66 years, Mildred; sons, Randy Matthews of Sanford, Banjo Matthews of Sanford and Dexter Matthews of Carthage; a sister, Sarah Margaret Wicker of Sanford; three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com).

## CHARLES 'CHARLIE' KIGER

March 3, 1951 ~ July 2, 2022  
Charles "Charlie" Kiger, 71, passed away July 23, 2022, at FirstHealth Moore Regional Hospital.

A celebration of his life will be held at a later date.

Charlie was the son of the late Charles and Annabelle Kern Kiger. He served as a sergeant in the Marine Corps, including two tours of duty in Vietnam. After that, he was a police officer in Anadarko, Oklahoma, and then, realized his passion as a long haul trucker.

He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Cindy; son, Tristan Kiger of Cameron; daughter, April Kiger of Denver, Colorado; brother, Gary Kiger of Wisconsin; sister, Leanna Hood of Florida and two grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, consider donations to Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home, 600 W. Main St., Sanford, N.C. 27332 to assist the family with funeral expenses.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com).

## DONALD LEE BRAY

February 3, 1975 ~ July 18, 2022

Donald Lee Bray, 47, of Siler City, passed away on Monday, July 18, 2022, at Duke University Hospital.

A memorial service will be held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, July 30, 2022, at Brush Creek Baptist Church with Rev. Frank Taylor and Rev. Shannon Petty presiding. The family will receive friends at the church from 1 to 1:45 p.m. Casual attire is requested. Joyce-Brady Chapel will be open from 1 to 5 p.m. on Friday, July 29, for friends to sign the register.

Donald was born in Lee County to June and Bobby Bray. He was a truck driver. He was preceded in death by his mother, June Thomas Bray.

Donald is survived by his wife, Sara Neal Bray, of the home; children, Hunter Bix Bray and Madyson Leigh Bray, both of the home; father, Bobby Ray Bray of Siler City; sisters, Brandy Bray Brewer of Goldston and Brittney Ann McGeachy of Siler City; and brother, Dwight David Bray of Siler City.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to SECU, 1131 N. Glenn Ave., Siler City, N.C. 27344, payable to Sara N. Bray.

Condolences may be offered online at [www.joycebrady-chapel.com](http://www.joycebrady-chapel.com).

Joyce-Brady Chapel is honored to serve the Bray Family.

See **OBITUAIRES**, page A9

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*Charles Campbell*



*Greg Campbell*

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Opposite Smith & Buckner Funeral Home

# OBITUARIES

Continued from page A7

## SARAH CATHERINE MASON IANNARONE

August 1, 1930 ~ July 21, 2022  
Sarah Catherine Mason Iannarone passed away on July 21, 2022, at home in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

A Celebration of Life will be held Friday, July 29, 2022, at 2 p.m., at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home, Sanford. Interment will follow at Spring Hill United Methodist Church Cemetery in Lillington. Visitation will be held Friday from noon until the service hour at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home.

Catherine is survived by her family, Phil Iannarone and Leecy Davis, both of Chattanooga; two granddaughters; one sister, Margie Kelly of Sanford.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Carmen, her parents, Claude Mason and Leecy Holder Mason Gilmore, her brothers, Willis, Fletcher, Britton, Ross, and Grady Mason, and sister, Janice Herring. Visit the online obituary, [www.heritagechattanooga.com](http://www.heritagechattanooga.com).

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com).

Arrangements are by Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home, Sanford.

## CALVIN EUGENE PERSON

Calvin Eugene Person, 58, of Sanford, passed away on Monday, July 18, 2022, at his residence.

Funeral services were held Sunday, July 24, 2022, at Knotts Funeral Home with burial following at 3:30 p.m. at Minter Cemetery.

## JONATHAN WILLIAM KELLAM

Mr. Jonathan William Kellam, 50, of Yadkinville, passed away on Saturday, July 16, 2022, at Central Carolina Hospital in Sanford.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford.

## WADE LEE CRUMP, SR.

February 3, 1949 ~ July 19, 2022

Wade Lee Crump, Sr., 73, of Moncure passed away Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at Sanford Health and Rehab.

Professional services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford.

## CALVIN EUGENE PERSON

Calvin Eugene Person, 58, of Sanford, passed away on Monday, July 18, 2022, at his residence.

Professional services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

## ANN BRYANT WOMACK

August 10, 1949 ~ July 22, 2022

Ann Bryant Womack, 72, of Broadway, passed away on Friday, July 22, 2022, at Central Carolina Hospital in Sanford.

A memorial service was held on Wednesday, July 27, 2022, at 2 p.m., at Holly Springs Baptist Church with Rev. Scott Yow, Rev. Jerry Parsons and Rev. Eddie Thomas officiating.

She was the daughter of the late Robert and Mary Lee Bryant, who preceded her in death. Ann was a member of Holly Springs Baptist Church.

Surviving is her husband, James Womack of the home; sons, Kevin Womack of Broadway, and Jason Womack of Lillington; brother, E.C. Bryant of Davidson; and two grandchildren.

Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneralhomebroadway.com](http://www.smithfuneralhomebroadway.com).

## ARLENE CRAM

Arlene Cram, 79, passed away on July 20, 2022, in Virginia Beach, Virginia. Please visit [www.vacremationsociety.com](http://www.vacremationsociety.com) for full obituary and to offer condolences.

## YENIFER JASMIN ARAUJO

Yenifer Jasmin Araujo Lopez, 17, passed away on Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at her residence in Richmond County.

The family gathering was held Saturday, July 23, 2022, at Knotts Funeral Home in Sanford.

## TERRY LEE WILLIAMS

July 25, 1952 ~ July 14, 2022.

Terry Lee Williams, 69, of Sanford, passed away on Thursday, July 14, 2022, at Central Carolina Hospital

He was the son of Everett and Georgia Hubbard Williams.

The funeral was held at 2 p.m. Saturday, July 23, 2022, at Knotts Funeral Home.

## SEDONIA MAE (JENNINGS) SMITH

Sedonia Mae (Jennings) Smith, 87, of Sanford, passed away on Sunday, July 17, 2022, at Liberty Commons Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

The funeral service was held at noon on Saturday, July 23, 2022, at Mt. Nebo FWB Church in Sanford.

## GEORGE WESLEY PARRISH

George Wesley Parrish, 81, of Chapel Hill, passed away on Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at The Laurels of Chatham in Pittsboro.

Funeral services were held at noon on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at St. Joseph CME Church.

# HOUSING

Continued from page A1

other people came in and started making offers, but ours stuck.”

The house had been listed in the 2021 Parade of Homes, which attracted would-be buyers. The Realtor.com website and other sites list the sale price for the 2,731-square-foot home at \$600,000.

Mike is a firefighter with the Apex Fire Department. Beci is sales support for Principled Technologies and works in sales and marketing for All Star Bikes in Cary. The couple was living in a townhouse in Apex and wanted more space with a yard for their dogs, which they breed and show. They also sought a new home within 45 minutes of Apex that was not part of a homeowner’s association.

It was a daunting process.

When they decided to put their 2,500-square-foot Apex townhouse on the market, they posted a “coming soon” sign on a Friday. By Sunday, someone had put an offer on it, sight unseen. According to realtor websites, it sold for \$400,000.

Then they faced mounting pressure to find a new home to move into.

“Many of the re-sell homes we bid on were sold before we could even make an offer,” Mike said. “We lost out on three or four different houses because we were outbid.”

The house they bought was new construction, situated just outside Chatham Forest.

## Offers over list price

The Beasleys’ experience is typical of the Chatham County housing market, local realtors say.

Kris Howard, the owner of Chatham Homes Realty, recalled a client who put generous offers on seven houses, and none were accepted.

“My client was willing to pay \$50,000 in due diligence and offering \$50,000 over the list price, and wasn’t getting the houses,” she said.

Then the client sweetened the pot with \$50,000 in due diligence and \$200,000 over list and made a purchase.

Due diligence is money buyers pay to sellers to demonstrate their commitment to purchasing a home. If for any reason the sale falls through — even if the buyer has trouble getting a mortgage, or if the home’s foundation is cracked — the seller is entitled to keep the due diligence payment. According to Howard, the typical due diligence offer is around \$10,000 but during the real estate frenzy, buyers have been offering large sums, demonstrating their determination to buy their dream home.

“My client took a huge risk, but she vowed to not lose the home, and her strategy paid off,” Howard said.

According to data from the Triangle Multi-Listing Service, the median price for homes in Chatham County in April 2022 was \$620,540, which is 31% over April 2021, when the median price was \$473,300. The average price of homes sold in April in Chatham was \$749,343, a 44.2% jump from last May.

Howard is seeing an uptick in the sale of homes that cost over \$1 million.

“We’ve had more million-dollar sales recently than we’ve ever had,” she said. “In the past, we typically would sell maybe five homes in the million-dollar range, and last year, we doubled that number and we’ve sold several for over \$2 million.”

Howard attributes much of the high-dollar sales to incoming residents from places where housing costs and home values are even higher than the Triangle area, like California, Michigan, Connecticut and New Jersey.

“They are used to the cost of living being high, so when they come here they see a \$500,000 — \$600,000 home that we would consider expensive, but to them, that’s a bargain because it would sell for \$3

## RECENT HOME SALES COMPARISON

A look at year-over-year prices of homes sold in the Triangle and in Chatham County

	MAY 2021	MAY 2022	% change
<b>TRIANGLE</b>			
Closings	5,005	4,311	-13.9%
Median Home Price	\$358,000	\$421,757	17.8%
Average Home Price	\$411,582	\$482,085	17.1%
<b>CHATHAM COUNTY</b>			
Closings	163	103	-36.8%
Median Home Price	\$473,300	\$620,540	31.1%
Average Home Price	\$519,775	\$749,343	44.2%

Note: Chatham's most recent data is from April 2022

Table: CN+R graphic by Bill Horner III • Source: Triangle MLS • Created with Datawrapper

Created with Datawrapper

million where they come from,” she said. “So, they either pay cash, or they just buy a 4,500-square-foot house.”

Data from a recent Triangle MLS report shows that median home prices across the Triangle region have swelled from \$358,000 to \$421,757 in the last year, a 17.8% increase. The Triangle region covers 16 counties in central North Carolina. At \$525,000, Orange County has the highest median home price. But Chatham County’s 31% increase in home prices is the highest percentage increase among Wake, Durham, Orange and Johnston counties.

## Prices may remain high

An economist from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte says he doesn’t see much change on the horizon, with rising mortgage interest rates balancing housing prices, which are starting to level off.

“If you consider a house today at a 5.5% rate or do you hope the market price for homes falls a little bit and you buy later when the mortgage rates are a little higher?” asked John Connaughton, professor of financial economics and director of UNC Charlotte Economic Forecast.

“In terms of your monthly house payment, there probably won’t be that much difference,” he added.

Some buyers are not fazed by the rising interest rates. For those with pockets full of money, cash is king.

“We are seeing more cash buyers than ever before,” Howard said. And the Beasleys set their sights on more than one home that ended up going for cash.

While housing demand and rising costs are a topic in many places, the Triangle area is a particularly hot market thanks to the economic development activity in the region, fueled by life-changing announcements of new industry, like electric car manufacturer VinFast, FedEx, the Toyota Battery Factory, Apple, Google, and others.

## Chatham ‘on fire’

These industries offer a mix of jobs from high-paying tech positions to mid-range labor. And as more business and industry locate in the area, the need for affordable homes is on the rise, too.

“The Chatham market is on fire,” said Holly Fraccaro executive director of the Home Builders Association of Durham, Orange and Chatham Counties. “While the VINFast manufacturing plant is super exciting news, it puts significant pressure on the area to develop housing and to build a wide diversity of housing types and costs, which is challenging.”

She believes building for more density will help alleviate some of the pricing and inventory challenges.

“The reality is that the Triangle grows by over 60 people per day, and we need to lean towards building for more density, which allows for homes that our teachers, service workers and first responders can afford to buy on their salaries.”

Eric Andrews, broker and owner of Realty World Carolina Properties in Pittsboro, agrees there is a need for more affordable housing for those with modest incomes. He recalls earlier times when land in Chatham County was not expensive and homes were

built on generous plots. And as the prices began to rise in places closer to Research Triangle Park jobs, people kept moving farther out in search of more affordable homes and land.

“In Chatham County, we typically have placed homes on a half-acre or one-acre plot of land lot or more, but in Cary, you may have a quarter or fifth or eighth of an acre,” he said. “I have sold many homes to Chatham teachers in Sanford or Siler City because Pittsboro, Chapel Hill and Apex grew too expensive. Now Sanford and Siler City are going up in price too.”

Andrews noted that today, in the northeastern part of Randolph County and southern Alamance, the Toyota Battery plant is already impacting the housing prices, which are rising there, too.

“For the last couple of years, it has been as if the asking price for a home was just a suggestion, because and many homes have been going for much more,” he said.

## Rural areas popular

Despite the ravages COVID-19 inflicted on the population, the pandemic created a paradigm shift in the way people work, and many people fled their big cities to avoid crowds, heading for more rural areas, including in central North Carolina, Howard said.

“In all reality, we’ve experienced the strongest two years that we’ve ever seen with massive traffic from residents relocating here and retirees,” she said. “We’ve seen tremendous growth in Chatham Park, and we’re also seeing a big boom in the Silk Hope area, where people want a couple of acres or more so they can have a big garden and chickens and room to spread out.”

Fraccaro sees no slowdown in the near term.

“The growth of business and industry will continue to influence the rate at which housing is needed, and I believe the demand is going to continue to outpace the supply for some time,” she said. “We have to do everything we can to unclog the supply chain issues, to produce construction workers, and encourage young people coming out of high school to explore jobs in the trades.”

And while rising mortgage rates may slow the frenzy, the housing market will continue to thrive, particularly in North Carolina’s metro markets, Connaughton said.

“In Charlotte, Raleigh and across the Triangle, the economy is growing very well,” he said. “Even if there is a mild recession later this year or next year, the metro markets will survive fairly well because of the structure of their economy.”

Nine months after moving to Pittsboro, the Beasleys are still settling in. Their house, which was not quite completed when they bought it, is coming along. They have fenced in their backyard and installed a stone patio. They are located close to downtown Pittsboro and are eligible to participate in the Vineyards at Chatham Park amenities. They’re still close to their jobs and friends in Wake County and feel they have the best of both worlds.

“We were lucky to find this house when we did,” Beci said. “All we need here now is a Wells Fargo and a Harris Teeter.”

## HONORS

### SCHOOL HONORS GRADUATES

#### ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

William Key of Pittsboro graduated from Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, N.Y., with a BFA in

industrial design.

### DEANS LIST

#### ITHACA COLLEGE

Winter Faulkner of Pittsboro has been named to Dean’s List status during the Spring 2022 semester at Ithaca College in Ithaca, N.Y.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### Chatham Community Library to present live musical ‘Being Bilingual Rocks!’

PITTSBORO — Families with children of all ages are invited to a celebration of love, acceptance, diversity and language in Spanish and English in a live musical performance of “Being Bilingual Rocks!”

The performance is at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, Aug. 13, at Chatham Community Library in Pittsboro. This event will be held in the Holmes Meeting Room and is free and open to the public.

“Being Bilingual Rocks!” is an interactive, one-of-a-kind experience created by Parents’ Choice Award winners Alina Celeste and Mi Amigo Hamlet. They weave an eclectic blend of original and traditional songs from Latin America, taking kids and families on a musical journey through a mix of contemporary rumba-flamenco, Caribbean beats and bluegrass. Attendees will sing, dance and learn Spanish and English in a joyful blend of

cultures, sound and language.

For more information, individuals may contact Chatham Community Library Youth Services at [youth.services@chathamlibraries.org](mailto:youth.services@chathamlibraries.org). People also may visit the website for Chatham County Public Libraries at [www.chathamlibraries.org](http://www.chathamlibraries.org) for information on this and other library events and program.

### Celebrated author Jason Mott to speak at fall Chatham Literacy event

PITTSBORO — Jason Mott, author of the national best-seller “Hell of a Book,” will be the keynote speaker at Chatham Literacy’s Fall for Literacy Luncheon.

It’s set for 11 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 5, where a book signing will follow. All proceeds will benefit Chatham Literacy.

Tickets, which are \$75 per person, will be available beginning Sept. 1 at [www.chatham-literacy.org](http://www.chatham-literacy.org) or 919-742-0578.

—CN+R staff reports

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# CLASSIFIEDS

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**LEARN ABOUT LAND** - Chatham Land Experts - [www.learn-aboutland.com](http://www.learn-aboutland.com) - 919-362-6999. Jy2,tfncc

### OFFICE SPACE RENT

**BEAUTY SALON FOR RENT**, prime established location. Call Butch Hudson, 919-545-1795. Jn16- Au4,8tp

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### RENTAL APARTMENTS

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**ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS** now for one bedroom apartments, adults 55 years or older. Water included, appliances furnished, on-site laundry, elevator, keyless entry. Section 8 accepted. No security deposit. Application fee \$25 per adult. Call Braxton Manor, 919-663-1877. Handicap accessible. Equal Housing Opportunity. Jy14,tfncc

### MOBILE HOME SALES

**TWO BEDROOM**, one bath mobile home on five acres in Siler City, city water, no pets, call (919) 260-1354 leave message. Jy14,21,28,Au4,4tp

### YARD SALES

**MULTI-FAMILY** yard sale, Saturday, July 30, 8 a.m., 4739 Siler City-Snow Camp Rd., Household items, clothing, seasonal items, toys, furniture. Jy28,1tp

### FOR SALE

**FARM ANIMALS**, seven Black Angus Bulls: three Registered Bulls, 4 Pure Stock. Price ranges from \$1,000 to \$2,000. Call 336-362-8887, Dale, Jy21,28,Au4,11,4tp

**TV ANTENNAS** - Come by MacPage Communications at 102 North Third Avenue, Siler City, 919-227-6698, Jy14,21,28,3tc

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### SERVICES

**CASH PAID FOR JUNK CARS** and pickups. Call 336-581-3423, Jy28-S15,8tp

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**FIRST MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**, needs Minister of Music to oversee music, for regular, special services and events. More information, contact Jennifer Scotton, 919-799-0503 or FMBCsecretary914@gmail.com. Jy28,1tp

**FOOD SERVICES STAFF**, Pittsboro Christian Village is accepting applications for Server, Pantry Cook, and Cook. Apply in person 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday - Friday, at 1825 East St. in Pittsboro. Jy14,tfncc

**FURNITURE UPHOLSTERS NEEDED**, Charter Furniture, Liberty, NC - \$2500 Signing bonus to those candidates who have a min. of 2 years furniture Upholstery experience with a licensed furniture company; Signing bonus of \$2,500 payable in three installments as per the following: \$500 paid after 3 months of continuous employment, \$1,000 paid after 6 months of continuous employment; \$1,000 paid after 12 months of continuous employment - All payments subject to normal taxes and withholding. -- Position Summary: Upholster inside sections of furniture such as chairs and sofas, utilizing knowledge of upholstery materials and methods. Fit, install and secure material on frames, using hand tools, glue, cement, and/or staples. -- Duties/Responsibilities: Lists frame to be worked on and places it on workbench. Tack material along front rail. Place padding and material over seat springs and tack material onto frame to complete seat upholstery. Repeat operation to upholster arms. Place and shape layers of padding over inside back and tacks material to complete inside upholstery of product. May use grooved foam rubber padding and work excess material into grooves to produce channeled effect securing material with buttons using needle, thread and cotton. Inspect the overall quality of assembled product. Comply with all Health and Safety guidelines within the work place.. Maintain a clean and orderly work area. Perform other duties as required or assigned. -- Job Type: Full-Time, Pay: \$18.00 - \$35.00 per hour. Jy7,14,21,28,4tc

**HOMECARE SEEKING** - Now hiring for immediate positions in Pittsboro/Siler City: Certified Nurse Aides and Personal Care Assistants - Competitive Weekly Pay, CNA's start at \$12.00/hr. & up for extra care cases - Total Life Care, Call (919) 799-7275 or visit 106 Village Lake Rd., Ste. A, Siler City for more info or to apply. Jy7,14,21,28,4tc

### LEGALS

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 165**  
All persons having claims against **WILMA M. ROBINSON**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of July, 2022. Jamie Robinson, Executor 1513 Duet Dr. Siler City, N.C. 27344 Jy7,Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 371**  
The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **SHIRLEY C. STROWD**, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, notifies all persons,

firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned at his address, 4041 Mt. Gilead Church Road, Pittsboro, North Carolina, 27312, on or before the 7th day of October, 2022, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment. This 29th day of June, 2022. John Wayne Strowd, Jr. 4041 Mt. Gilead Church Road Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312 GUNN & MESSICK, PLLC P. O. Box 880 Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312-0880 Jy7,Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 327**  
Having qualified as Executors of the Estate of **MARGIE LEE COLLINS HALLMAN** aka **MARGIE LEE HALLMAN**, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 7th day of July, 2022 Ira A. Hallman, Sr. and Timothy Lee Hallman, Executors of the Estate of **MARGIE LEE COLLINS HALLMAN** aka **MARGIE LEE HALLMAN** c/o Samuel Gray, P.O. Box 1381, Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526 Jy7,Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ESTATE OF ALLEN MARK FEINBERG, 22-E-347**  
All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against **ALLEN MARK FEINBERG**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before October 7, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. Matthew Jon Feinberg, the fiduciary, is fully authorized to receive and administer all assets belonging to the state. C/O Pierce Law Group PLLC 3028 S Miami Blvd, Ste 201 Durham, NC 27703 Jy7,Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 357**  
All persons having claims against **NANCY W. MCCOY**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of July, 2022. Teresa M. Crumley, Executrix 759 Newbern Ave Asheboro, NC 27205 Jy7,Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,4tp

**EXECUTOR NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **TAD WHITCOMB JONES**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against

said Estate to exhibit same to the undersigned on or before October 30, 2022, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. Susan Edison Jones Hartley, Executor c/o Thomas A. Earls, Attorney at Law 102-B Fountainbrook Circle Cary, NC 27511 Phone: (919) 462-9177 Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,Au4,4tc

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS

**NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 381**  
All persons having claims against **JAMES LEE MCDIARMID**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of July, 2022. Matthew McDiarmid 9474 Hwy 87 N Pittsboro, NC 27312 Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,Au4,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS 22-E-105 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
The undersigned, Alton Rayvon King, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **BERTA FAYE JOHNSON KING**, deceased, late of Chatham County, this is to notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 12th October, 2022, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 14th day of July, 2022. Alton Rayvon King, Executor c/o Marie H. Hopper, Attorney for the Estate Hopper Cummings, PLLC Post Office Box 1455 Pittsboro, NC 27312 Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,Au4,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
The undersigned, having qualified as Executrix of the Estate of **JEAN G. WATERBURY**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit them to the undersigned at the offices of Tillman, Whichard & Cagle, PLLC, 501 Eastowne Drive, Suite 130, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, on or before the 14th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the estate will please make immediate payment. This 14th day of July, 2022. Joyce A. Waterbury AKA Joyce W. Weston, Executrix, Estate of Jean G. Waterbury Tillman, Whichard & Cagle, PLLC 501 Eastowne Drive, Suite 130 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,Au4,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22-E-373**  
All persons having claims against **RUBY MAE SCURLOCK**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors

of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 14th day of July, 2022. George C. Scurlock, Jr., Administrator c/o Hemphill Gelder, PC PO Box 97035 Raleigh, NC 27624 Jy14,Jy21,Jy28,Au4,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 367**  
All persons having claims against **EVA LOUISE TRACY**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 21st day of July, 2022. Kelly Tracy Pincus, Executrix c/o Howard, Stallings, From, Atkins, Angell & Davis, P.A. 5410 Trinity Road, Suite 210 Raleigh, NC 27607 Post Office Box 12347 Raleigh, NC 27605 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22-E-369**  
All persons having claims against **ROBERT BRUCE MCKINLEY**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 14th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 21st day of July, 2022. Barbara Myers McKinley, Executor c/o Hemphill Gelder, PC PO Box 97035 Raleigh, NC 27624 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 188**  
All persons having claims against **WILL BERNARD WILLARD, JR.**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of July, 2022. Ahylea Michelle Willard, Administrator 422 A Greenlawn Drive Asheboro, NC 27203 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tp

**CREDITOR'S NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
Having qualified as Co-Executors of the Estate of **MOYNA BLAIR MONROE**, late of 500 Carolina Meadows, Apt. 10, Chapel Hill, Chatham County, North Carolina 27517, the undersigned do hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned c/o Jean Gordon Carter, McGuireWoods LLP, P.O. Box 27507, Raleigh, NC 27611, on or before the 21st day of October, 2022, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their

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recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 21st day of July, 2022. Blair Cameron Kendall and Logan Adair Kendall, Co-Executors of the Estate of Moyna Blair Monroe Attorney: Jean Gordon Carter McGuireWoods LLP P.O. Box 27507 Raleigh, NC 27611 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 20 E 551**  
All persons having claims against **BETTY RUTH POWELL**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of July, 2022. Wayne Paul Hildreth, Administrator 101 S 3rd Ave; # 208 Siler City, NC 27344 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 401**  
All persons having claims against **ROBERT SAMUEL MORROW**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 21st day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of July, 2022. Edward L. Morrow, Sr., Executor 3091 Moon Lindley Rd. Snow Camp, NC 27349 Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY HAVING QUALIFIED** as Executor of the Estate of **ELEANOR MARIE JASION**, late of Chatham

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# Eastern Chatham Senior Center recertified as 'Center of Excellence'



Staff photo by Tanner Bubeck

PITTSBORO — Following a rigorous review from the North Carolina Division of Aging and Adult Services, the Eastern Chatham Senior Center in Pittsboro has been recertified as a “Center of Excellence.”

The distinction will run for a five-year period through June 30, 2027. Each center is evaluated individually and, if expectations are exceeded, can be deemed a Center of Excellence — the highest rating provided by DAAS — or a Center of Merit. It is possible to carry different ratings for each if a county houses more than one center.

The Western Chatham Senior Center in Siler City, currently classified as a Center of Excellence, will undergo its own recertification process in September 2023.

Each center is evaluated in five different areas with a sixth section for Center of Excellence aspirants. Centers across the state must demonstrate proficiency in Services/Publicity/Marketing, Activities/Volunteer Opportunities/Advocacy/Transportation, Planning/Evaluation/Input From Older Adults, Staff and Operational

## The Chatham County Council on Aging's facility in Pittsboro.

Issues. Center of Excellence candidates are encouraged to undertake special projects, mentor other senior center professionals and submit a statement as to why it should earn the status.

“Receiving the designation of being a Center of Excellence only validates the Council on Aging’s commitment to providing outstanding services to the young-at-heart members of our community,” Chatham County Council on Aging Director Ashlyn Martin said. “The entire Council on Aging

team is to be commended for their hard work in making this recertification happen, especially Senior Center Manager Liz Lahti and Activity Coordinator Jackie Green who plan and implement the activities for our Senior Center participants each day.”

Of North Carolina’s 100 counties, 61 house at least one Center of Excellence. However, Chatham County joins a collective of just 15 counties (Cleveland, Catawba, Iredell, Davidson, Forsyth, Guilford, Yadkin, Johnston, Orange, Franklin,

Halifax, Nash, Brunswick and Pender) to have multiple centers all with Center of Excellence ratings.

In its review, the DAAS team commended the Council for its innovative virtual programming in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including regular conference calls and the successful pursuit of a BAND-NC (Building a New Digital Economy) grant from N.C. State that allowed the purchase of digital tablets and software for isolated seniors. “The Senior Center Oper-

ations and Program Evaluation (SCOPE) Recertification process requires a team effort,” Lahti said. “It is an honor to be recognized as a Center of Excellence. It enhances our professionalism, provides accountability, assures quality and promotes uniformity.”

The Council was also lauded for its number and variety of special events throughout the previous five-year period.

In addition, the Council partnered with the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health to help complete the Chatham County Aging Plan 2018-2023. Further partnerships with the area’s university community included work with the UNC School of Nursing to pilot a new practicum teaching model, yielding four separate projects.

“It is evident that the center is an active and invested community member as well as a community-wide advocate of older adults in Chatham County,” the recertification letter observed.

For a list of current COA activities, visit our centers at 365 NC Highway 87 N., Pittsboro or 112 Village Lake Rd., Siler City, or visit the Council’s website at [www.chathamcoa.org](http://www.chathamcoa.org).

County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

This the 19th day of July, 2022.  
Linda Jasion Royal, Executor of the Estate of Eleanor Marie Jasion  
5207 Clear Run Drive  
Wilmington, North Carolina 28403  
MOODY, WILLIAMS, ATWATER & LEE  
Attorneys at Law

Box 1806  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312  
(919) 542-5605  
Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of **JEFFREY LEE HOLDER**, late of 2404 Piney Grove Church Road, Siler City, Chatham County, North Carolina 27344, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned at 4145

Randolph Church Road, Liberty, NC 27298, on or before the 24th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This is the 21st day of July, 2022.  
Lisa L. Moore, Administrator of the

Estate of Jeffrey Lee Holder  
Pamela E. Whitaker  
Attorney at Law  
4145 Randolph Church Road  
Liberty, NC 27298  
(336) 622-3553  
Jy21,Jy28,Au4,Au11,4tp

al meeting of the membership of the Silk Hope Volunteer Fire Department, Inc. The meeting will be held on August 2, 2022 at 8 p.m. at the office of the corporation which is the fire station which is located at the intersection of S.R. 1003 (Silk Hope Rd) and S.R. 1346 (Silk Hope Gum Springs Rd). The business to be conducted at the annual meeting is as follows: The election of four directors. 2. Any other business which may lawfully come before the meeting is held.  
Tony Bristow, Secretary  
Jy21,Jy28,2tc

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
HAVING QUALIFIED as Administrator of the Estate of **BARBARA ANN HOWARD** late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the under-

signed on or before the 27th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.  
This the 21st day of July, 2022.

Kimyetta Howard, Administrator of the Estate of Barbara Ann Howard  
902 Jack Bennett Road  
Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27517  
MOODY, WILLIAMS, ATWATER & LEE  
Attorneys at Law  
Box 1806  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312  
(919) 542-5605  
Jy28,Au4,Au11,Au18,4tp

Box 1806  
Pittsboro, North Carolina 27312  
(919) 542-5605  
Jy28,Au4,Au11,Au18,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of **CYNTHIA BROOME CARROLL**, late of 259 Shady Wagon Farm Lane, New Hill, Chatham County, North Carolina 27562, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned at 4145 Randolph Church Road, Liberty, NC 27298, on or before the 28th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This is the 26th day of July, 2022.  
Michelle Leslie Executor of the

Estate of Cynthia Broome Carroll  
c/o Pamela E. Whitaker  
Attorney at Law  
4145 Randolph Church Road  
Liberty, NC 27298  
(336) 622-3553  
Jy28,Au4,Au11,Au18,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY**  
HAVING QUALIFIED as Administrator of the Estate of **EDGAR JUNIOR BARWICK, JR.** late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to present them to the undersigned on or before the 27th day of October, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.  
This the 21st day of July, 2022.

Marvin Barwick, Administrator of the Estate of Edgar Junior Barwick, Jr.  
6649 Kerr Drive  
Randleman, North Carolina 27317  
MOODY, WILLIAMS, ATWATER & LEE  
Attorneys at Law

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# One-stop 'Hub' dedicated to factual, relevant information about COVID-19

Chatham Health Alliance, Council on Aging team up for Aug. 6 event in Goldston

The Chatham Community Resource Hub is a mobile, co-located collaboration between the Chatham Health Alliance and partner agencies. On Aug. 6, the Alliance and the Chatham Council on Aging will join for a second Hub, this one at the Goldston Public Library. The focus: sharing critical information about COVID-19 vaccines and scheduling appointments for those seeking them.



Martin



Lewis

This week, we speak with two of those working to prepare for the event, Sara Martin and Jimmy Lewis.

Martin is the social and community services manager for the Chatham Health Alliance. A graduate of the University of South Florida — where she received her Master of Public Health in International Health — she's lived and worked in Chatham County for four years. In addition to her work for the Health Alliance, she is the lead organizer for CORE (Communities Organizing for Racial Equity) and serves on the board for Communities In Schools of Chatham County and Robin Hood's Kitchen. Martin has been a pivotal part of the Resource Hub since its inception in June 2020.

Lewis is the grants and communications specialist for the Chatham County Council on Aging. He joined the agency last October and is responsible for the agency's grant identification, application and reporting processes while overseeing its public outreach plan over print and digital platforms.

A former journalist, Lewis entered the field of aging services after a career that yielded 13 awards in the N.C. Press Association's annual News, Editorial & Photojournalism Contest.

**The Chatham Health Alliance has been hosting monthly Community Resource Hubs, so what's different and unique about what's planned for Aug. 6?**

**LEWIS:** Typically, the Hubs are one-stop shops or mobile resource fairs on a variety of topics. This will be the second Hub specifically dedicated to distributing factual and relevant information regarding COVID-19 vaccines and scheduling appointments, from first doses to second boosters, if eligible. The Chatham County Council on Aging received grant funding in February from the Triangle J Council of Governments towards COVID-19 vaccination education and outreach. We found a willing partner in Chatham Health Alliance, which had already pioneered the successful Community Resource Hubs.

It only made sense to lean on their expertise and tailor it to events with an emphasis on improving vaccination rates across all of Chatham County. While the intent of the grant is to specifically boost vaccination rates among Chatham's older adult population, all are welcome to come Aug. 6 to Goldston Public Library and schedule appointments for any "level" of vaccination. The vaccinations are not administered on site, but people can be scheduled for convenient locations quickly.

**MARTIN:** The Community Resource Hub began in June 2020 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic. With businesses and organizations shuttered, there was a need for the community to access not only personal protective equipment, but other resources they regularly utilized that were no longer available to them. The goal was to bring these resources directly to the community.

We began by partnering with CORA — an organization that provides food to people who encounter food insecurity in the community — at their monthly mobile food distribution on Technology Way behind Chatham Hospital. In March 2021, the Hub began partnering with the Inter-faith Food Shuttle. We were able to go directly into neighborhoods, parks and other well-trafficked areas of the county to provide hot meals and resources. The Hub has since been able to procure sponsorships that subsidize local food trucks to hand out these meals at our events.

As pandemic restrictions have waned throughout the country and Chatham County, the need for easily accessible resources has not diminished. The Hub is seeking to find new ways to collaborate with our partnering organizations to maximize the benefit to community members as well as the organizations that seek to serve them. We operate in all areas of the county and try to travel to those places where there is a specific need identified by organizations or the community. When the Council on Aging reached out to the Chatham Health Alliance to ask about collaborating on a grant to provide information about booster shots, we agreed to help plan the events. If the Resource Hub can plan an event in the community to help promote programs, deliver services, resources and information or make referrals that benefit the community, then we have done our job.

**The first COVID-specific Hub was June 25. What did you learn, and what can those who go expect for the Aug. 6 Hub?**

**LEWIS:** Owning to the dog days of summer, we decided to conduct this Hub from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. instead of the 1 to 4 p.m. we did for the June Hub. We tweaked our outreach strat-

egy a little to make it clear that this isn't a single file, transactional event revolving around COVID-19 vaccination information and appointments. We want folks to come and linger, having fun, food and fellowship with us and our friends from Chatham County Cooperative Extension. And if they're lacking on their COVID-19 booster shots, swing by our appointment tent and we will be happy to get you set up with a location in your area.

**MARTIN:** Every Hub event is unique. The majority of our events occur in locations that we have never been previously, so the logistics look a little different every time, making it hard to predict what each event might look like. The June 25 event was held at the West Chatham Senior Center in Siler City. Participants who showed up there were concerned about the growing number of COVID cases and eager to schedule first and second booster shots, as well as a few who wanted to schedule their initial dose. At the Aug. 6 event, participants can receive up-to-date information on vaccines, COVID testing and booster shots from the Public Health Department. Additionally, we will have medication disposal resources from Insight Human Services, free books generously provided by the Chatham Education Foundation, programs and resources from 4-H, as well as other ways to get involved in the community with organizations like the Chatham Health Alliance and Communities Organizing for Racial Equity (CORE). Every participant will be able to bring home a meal for their entire family as well.

**When you talk about "factual, relevant" information about vaccines, it's interesting to note a recent study that showed the majority of people haven't budged from their initial impressions about COVID and vaccines — that those who were reluctant or skeptical early on remain so, for example. What will your strategy be when it comes to sharing the best and most relevant information?**

**MARTIN:** We will have up-to-date information from the Chatham County Public Health Department, as well as qualified personnel there to answer questions and guide them through the appointment-making process, where walk-ins are not accepted. Information about testing and where to go will also be provided for those interested.

**LEWIS:** Let me first say this: I had COVID-19 for the first time in June despite two vaccines and one booster. They are intended — and were always intended — to reduce the probability of serious illness or death. And if what I had was classified as a "mild" case of COVID, I in no way want to encounter the "moderate" or "severe" editions.

Even with my personal tes-

timony on the matter, we are still dealing with that famous Ronald Reagan quote from his presidency: "The nine most terrifying words in the English language are 'I'm from the government and I'm here to help.'"

Unfortunately, many of those who are vaccine skeptical hold some version of this belief. And the reality of the situation is, that no matter how well-intentioned, the message will not be received if the messenger is distrusted or originates from distrusted "official" channels. To try to counter this, we have invited Chatham County Cooperative Extension out to our Hub events. They have established relationships with many of our target communities and the idea, simple as it may be, is to coexist in a single location. While folks are checking out Extension cooking demonstrations or picking up 4-H learning kits, they are welcome to slide over to the Council on Aging/Chatham Health Alliance area and sign up for that vaccination appointment that's been placed on the back burner. But don't leave hungry!

**What does your own preparation and planning for these Hubs tell you about vaccination rates in Chatham County?**

**LEWIS:** As you travel to points west and south in Chatham County, vaccination rates begin to decrease dramatically while the skepticism rises. Without diving too deep into the numbers game, when we submitted our grant proposal to Triangle J in February, we found that 75% of Chatham's 65-and-over residents were at least partially vaccinated. Today, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services reports that 63% of Chatham residents have at least one dose, but less than half (49%) of the county has had a second dose or the first booster shot.

According to the Chatham County Public Health Department's 2020 report "Spotlight on Health Disparities in Chatham County," the county's median income is \$66,875. But once you head west into Siler City, that dips below \$35,000. That points to an extreme wealth disparity in Chatham, which correlates in turn to vaccine skepticism. It's important to note that the vaccine is free, even for those who do not otherwise have health insurance. While that statement may seem like common knowledge to a lot of us some two and a half years into the pandemic, it is still a question that gets asked.

**MARTIN:** I think Jimmy outlined the data well in his response. It is clear that the need for vaccines is still prevalent in some areas. This is an important issue that the Council on Aging is seeking to address. Our experience from the first Hub was very informative in that there are people

in the County still seeking out information and resources who may not know where to go or how to access them. If we can bring that information directly to people who need them, then I will consider the event a success.

**Can you share a story or experience from the first Hub?**

**LEWIS:** Sure. Our vision for these Hubs in the planning process was for them to be a place where Chatham residents could come schedule COVID-19 vaccination appointments and receive information in a safe, welcoming environment. With our first hub being at the Western Chatham Senior Center in Siler City, people had access to our rocking chair porch where they could leisurely chat and enjoy a meal from our food provider, Robin Hood's Kitchen. During what was a perfect weather day, we had families take advantage of that.

Others stopped by to primarily visit the Chatham County Cooperative Extension tent; then finally made their way over to see what vaccination information we had to offer. The casual nature of the day — folks coming and going while visiting different event partners and not just the vaccination component — was what we were aiming for.

If you try to be too heavy-handed with this topic and create an environment where you are dictating as opposed to inviting, you will turn individuals off immediately. Given the areas and populations of Chatham we are attempting to reach, you can't afford to do that.

**MARTIN:** At the June 25 event, we were able to guide one couple through the questionnaire necessary to receive their booster shots through their preferred pharmacy. The wife spent a few minutes talking to us about how frustrating it was to receive so much conflicting information about the vaccines on the news programs she watches. She also took the time to share with us some of her story about how she grew up in Chatham County, her career as an elementary school teacher and how the pandemic had affected her family. One of the greatest strengths of the Hubs is their ability to foster relationships with the community, build trust and a more in-depth understanding of the pressures facing individuals and families on a daily basis.

The Resource Hub will keep showing up and keep learning from these stories and will keep partnering with organizations throughout the county to promote programs and resources being offered. If you wish to have the Hub come to a neighborhood or location near you or you would like to partner with the Hub, please send an email to [smartin@chatham-healthalliancenc.org](mailto:smartin@chatham-healthalliancenc.org)



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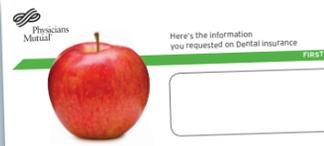
  
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# SPORTS NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT

JULY 28 - AUGUST 3, 2022 | chathamnewsrecord.com/sports | SECTION B

## Fresh off of historic season, Wolves designate Amanda Gough as newest pack leader



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Newly hired Woods Charter volleyball coach Amanda Gough (in gray) demonstrates hitting at the net during a volleyball open gym on Monday.

BY VICTOR HENSLEY  
News + Record Staff

CHAPEL HILL — When Amanda Gough joined the “Volleyball Play in the Triangle” Facebook group just after moving to Raleigh last month, she never expected it to lead to her first head coaching gig.

Then, after just a few short weeks, Dena Floyd came searching.

Floyd, the athletic director at Woods Charter School, sent out a post to the group asking if anyone would be interested in becoming the Wolves’ next head volleyball coach.

And Gough jumped on it. “She had just posted infor-

mation (in the group) and said anyone interested (in the head coaching job) that had experience coaching or working with kids and was really passionate about volleyball should email her,” Gough explained to the News + Record. “I just happened to scroll past it and thought, ‘This could be a great opportunity.’”

Gough said she originally joined the adult volleyball group to find a community to play with in her new home, connect with other players about open gyms and maybe, if she was lucky, find a school where she could help out as an assistant coach.

But on July 15, two days after

reaching out to Floyd, Gough was officially named the next volleyball coach at Woods Charter.

The athletic department’s social media accounts made it public on July 18.

“Welcome Coach Amanda Gough, our new Varsity Volleyball Head Coach!” the Instagram post read. “Amanda brings experience as both a player and previous coach. We are excited to have Amanda on board, as she is immensely passionate about volleyball and coaching.”

Gough steps into the role previously held for four sea-

See GOUGH, page B3

### 2026 U.S. GIRLS’ JUNIOR

## Old Chatham’s quest for U.S. Girls’ Junior bid began with familiarity, past success



Photo by Suzie Wolf

Competitors get in their practice swings during the 2019 U.S. Senior Amateur at Old Chatham Golf Club in Durham.

BY VICTOR HENSLEY  
News + Record Staff

DURHAM — In the world of both amateur and professional golf, North Carolina is viewed as one of the sport’s prized possessions.

“I just think North Carolina is the golf Mecca,” Tracy Parsons, championship director for the U.S. Golf Association, told the News + Record. “North Carolina itself has so many great facilities, great weather, great conditioning, so I think it’s going to be in perfect condition for a summer championship.”

When Old Chatham Golf Club hosts the U.S. Girls’ Junior Championship in July 2026, it’ll be the 39th USGA-sanctioned championship hosted on the Tar Heel State’s soil, including this year’s U.S. Women’s

Open (Southern Pines) and the 2024 U.S. Open (Pinehurst).

And it’ll be Old Chatham’s second USGA championship event, following up the 2019 U.S. Senior Amateur, won by Bob Royak of Alpharetta, Georgia.

Old Chatham is a private golf club sitting on 400 acres of land in Durham, just inside the Chatham County line, that prides itself on “offering a sanctuary for those with a passion for golf built around exceptional camaraderie, service and amenities,” according to its website. It’s played host to four championship events for the Carolinas Golf Association (CGA) over the last 13 years, including the 2009 North Carolina Amateur Championship and the 2014 North Carolina Mid-Amateur Championship.

Jill Marino, the club’s member-

ship director, said it’s “a tremendous honor” for Old Chatham to serve as the host of two USGA championships.

“We reflect such an incredible location because we really are the center of the state, where multiple counties come together,” she said. “Chatham, Durham, Wake, we all come together right here. There’s so many incredible things happening in Central North Carolina right now and I’m just delighted to be a part of this area.”

Selecting championship host sites, the job of the USGA’s Future Sites Committee, can be a long process. The committee sifts through bids from clubs around the country — as well as scouring the nation for under-the-radar candidates — to

See GOLF, page B2

## Rob Manfred’s recent comments on minor league pay reflect greed, apathy

If you walk up to just about anyone on the street and ask them who they think is the worst commissioner in North American professional sports, the answer would be fairly consistent.



VICTOR HENSLEY  
Sports Editor

Sure, while NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell has done plenty of questionable things — helping cover up football’s link with CTE, handing Ray Rice just a two-game suspension for domestic violence in 2014, among others — he doesn’t even hold a candle to the worst of the bunch.

That title, to no one’s surprise, goes to Rob Manfred, the leader of Major League Baseball. And I’m sure most people would agree with me.

Manfred has held on firmly to that title since his appointment in 2015 thanks to a laundry list of blunders, gaffes and boneheaded decisions.

During his seven years in office, Manfred has:

- had a desire to constantly change — or “juice” — the baseball in an attempt to create more offense, despite also expressing interest in speeding up pace of play
- botched the handling of the 2017 Houston Astros cheating scandal, refusing to punish any players involved — despite handing out year-long suspensions to the general manager and head coach — and allowing them to keep their World Series trophy
- decided to suddenly crack down on pitchers’ use of grip-assisting foreign substances in the middle of the 2021 season, leading to pitchers having to adjust the way they played and, in cases like that of Tampa Bay Rays pitcher Tyler Glasnow, potentially led to injury
- blamed the players for the lockout in late 2021/early 2022 and was called out by multiple players for lying about the collective-bargaining negotiations between the players and the

See MANFRED, page B2

### ‘IT WAS PRETTY UNBELIEVABLE’

## Former Northwood standout Palermo to begin next chapter with Rockies organization

BY MAX BAKER  
News + Record Staff

DENVER, Colorado — As he sat on his living room couch watching the MLB Draft last week with his parents, sister and girlfriend, Davis Palermo couldn’t help but think about how far he’d come in such a short time.

During his first three seasons of collegiate baseball at UNC-Chapel Hill, Palermo tossed only 26 ⅓ innings. But his confidence grew toward the end of the 2021 season, which translated into a dominant full year out of the Tar Heels’ bullpen this past year. The 2018 Northwood graduate finished with a 2.72 ERA and 74 strikeouts in 58 ⅓ innings pitched.

That performance was enough to garner him third-team All-American honors from Perfect Game USA.

It also caught the attention of MLB scouts.

So when the Colorado Rockies called Palermo before their eighth round pick on July 18, he was at a loss for words.

“It was pretty unbelievable,” Palermo, who was selected at No. 236 overall, said. “It’s just a pretty crazy thing to think about. It took a little bit to settle in.”

“You can go back year after year,” he continued. “Even last year at this time, I would’ve said you were crazy. My freshman year, I would’ve said you were even more crazy. It’s just unreal that this is happening

from where I was.”

Palermo said that he’d talked with Rockies scouts prior to the Draft, but hadn’t thought of Colorado to be at the forefront of teams interested in him. The Rockies didn’t specifically mention to Palermo what they liked about his game, but his season performance speaks for itself.

“Even talking to them the past week, (Colorado) really seems to know what they’re doing,” Palermo said. “They seem to have a great feel for pitching. It’s in a great spot. All the affiliates, too, are in great spots. It seems like a great organization and I’m excited to be a part of it.”

While Palermo had the op-

See PALERMO, page B3



Photo by Anthony Sorbellini

UNC relief pitcher Davis Palermo (38) lets out an emotional celebration after closing out the Tar Heels’ 7-3 win over VCU in the NCAA Chapel Hill Regional on June 6 to advance to the Super Regional.

# GOLF

Continued from page B1

find the best fit for each of the USGA's 17 championships each calendar year.

After a successful event with the U.S. Senior Amateur, Parsons said Old Chatham was eager to get its name back into the mix for another championship hosting opportunity.

Three years later, the USGA awarded it.

"Sometimes, when we're preparing for a championship, staff might be in the area and try to find a hidden gem," Parsons explained, "but this is a site that actually circled back and reached out and wanted to put their name back in the hat to get back into the lineup."

When the USGA is searching for its host sites, it takes a number of things into account depending on the event it's in the running for, including the course, its measurements and its conditioning, the club's schedule, the infrastructure of the clubhouse and the supportiveness of the community, among others.

To the committee, Old Chatham checked all of those boxes.

"The recipe for a good USGA amateur championship is a fantastic golf course, supportive membership and an enthusiastic golf community," Parsons said in a USGA-prepared statement, "and Old Chatham has all those things. The 2026 U.S. Girls' Junior will be an exceptional experience for all involved."

While the USGA has done its part to select Old Chatham as the event's host, that's just the beginning of the preparation process.

Now, Old Chatham will be tasked with creating a host committee — likely involving some of the same people it did for the 2019 tournament — consisting of staff or club members that plan to do the "heavy lifting," said Parsons, in terms of the volunteer operations. Those on the committee would be named to roles like caddies chair, college coaches liaison, evacuation chair, player hospitality chair, volunteer chair and scoring chair, among others, and will be responsible for finding volunteers to work on their specific area.

Old Chatham had a group of 250 volunteers that assisted it with the 2019 U.S. Senior, working on elements like managing practice areas, guiding spectators, transporting guests and players and other "critical elements to making the championship run smoothly,"



Panoramic view of the 18th hole and the clubhouse at Old Chatham Golf Club.

Photo via Old Chatham Golf Club



Golfers work on their putting during the 2019 U.S. Senior Amateur held at Old Chatham Golf Club.

Photo by Suzie Wolf



Old Chatham Golf Club hosted the U.S. Senior Amateur in 2019, the club's first USGA championship event.

Photo by Suzie Wolf

Marino said.

"Each time we make site visits, we're going back and meeting with those people, covering their areas of responsibility and just building the championship from the ground up," Parsons said, "so that when players arrive, everyone is kind of in tune and in line with the plan to make sure the players have the best experience possible."

Marino, for example, shifted her focus to hospitality during the U.S. Senior Amateur, an event she described as "thrilling."

"I was on the inside of the (clubhouse) and helped make sure that the competitors and their guests were comfortable," Marino said. "This was an unbelievably friendly group of competitors and their golf knowledge was so high. They truly enjoyed their time here. We were so delighted to have them and they really felt that welcome. We hope to extend that welcome to the junior competitors, as well."

Having hosted a USGA championship in the last three years already gives Old Chatham a leg up on other clubs that may be winning host bids for the first time. Parsons said she doesn't expect the club to have to make course

adjustments to comply with the event's standards. Marino seconded that sentiment, saying that the USGA wants the course to remain "as-is."

Hosting a tournament of this caliber doesn't come cheap, however.

Parsons didn't specify exactly what it would cost Old Chatham to host the event, but called it a "joint effort between the USGA and the host club," explaining that the USGA puts forth a portion of the funding, while the club typically does some fundraising among its community to help with the rest.

Luckily for anyone interested in attending the 2026 U.S. Girls Junior, it's entirely free and open to the public.

Marino said she expects there to be a much bigger turnout in 2026 than there was in 2019, due in part to the number of family members who will attend, but also because of the number of golf fans eager to get a glimpse at the next crop of young stars competing on one of the sport's largest amateur stages.

The U.S. Girls' Junior, the top competition for the girls' junior division, is open to amateur girls under the age of 19 with a USGA handicap index of 9.4 or less. It's made up of two days of stroke play, followed

by a match play tournament with the remaining 64 competitors. As of 2017, the winner of the tournament is given an automatic exemption into the following year's U.S. Women's Open.

While the U.S. Junior championship events rarely make headlines outside of devoted golf circles, Parsons said the level of competition is astonishing.

"When you say that a location is going to host a Girls' Junior, a lot of members think that these are young ladies who just picked up a golf club yesterday that are so cute with their little pigtails," Parsons said with a laugh. "But when they come out and watch, they're blown away by the level of play."

Over the years, the U.S. Girls' Junior has played host to plenty of young athletes that eventually go on to compete in events like the U.S. Women's Open, Curtis Cup and U.S. Women's Amateur, many of whom find their way onto the LPGA Tour.

That includes Minjee Lee, an Australian-born player on the LPGA Tour who won the U.S. Women's Open on June 5, her second major victory. She won the U.S. Girls' Junior in 2012 at Lake Merced Golf Club in Daly City, California.

"They're literally going to

see the future generation of the game," Parsons said. "And a lot of people are going to be shocked at how far these girls have come, how precise they are, how good their short game is. ... It's really inspiring for juniors in the community to see what other kids their age can do in this sport."

Old Chatham's bid to host the U.S. Girls' Junior will not only be a great way to get even more exposure for a well-established golf club, Marino said, but will also give the club a chance to advocate for women in golf.

"It's an opportunity for us to give back to amateur golf," Marino said. "That's what it's all about here. That's part of the club's mission. ... However, this is an opportunity to support an entirely different demographic. These are junior golfers, which is a growing demographic of the game and, on top of that, it's junior girls. These are going to be future Division I golfers, future LPGA stars."

"As a golfer, you want to see the game grow," Marino said. "And this is how you grow it."

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhensley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhensley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.

# MANFRED

Continued from page B1

league

And those are just some of the most notable things.

His tenure has also brought about minute annoyances that people, including myself, have with him, stemming from distasteful comments he's made or a clear lack of leadership or consistency coming from his office.

The latest issue I have with Manfred, however, deals with the former.

On July 19, ahead of the 2022 MLB All-Star Game, Manfred had a press conference with the Baseball Writers Association of America, where a reporter asked him if he saw any issues with the way the league compensates minor league players.

"Look, I kind of reject the premise of the question that minor league players are not paid a living wage," Manfred answered. "I think that we've made real strides in the last three years in terms of what minor league players are paid, even putting to one side the signing bonuses that many of them have already received. They received housing, which obviously is another form of compensation. So, you know, I just reject the question. I don't know what else to say."

It's the phrasing of Manfred's response — not the opinion we already knew he shared

— that truly gets me. "I reject the question," said the man in charge of a league that made upwards of \$10 billion in 2019.

Meanwhile, minor leaguers have been in a years-long battle for the right to simply negotiate their contracts. Thanks to the 1922 Supreme Court ruling on Federal Baseball Club v. National League, the MLB has antitrust exemption that, effectively, prevents minor leaguers from forming unions or gaining any protections against labor-law violations.

And, thanks to MLB's stranglehold on minor leaguers' non-negotiable contracts, they've become part a profession that hardly pays players a livable wage.

The average minor league salary ranges from \$400 (in rookie-ball leagues) to \$700 (Triple-A) per week, thanks to a minor (no pun intended) bump in salary during the 2021 season. That's a range of about \$8,000 to \$14,000 per five-month season. If minor leaguers got paid during the offseason, which they don't, they'd only be making between \$19,200 and \$33,600 per year before taxes. Depending on the amount of people in their household, that's either just above or just under the Federal Poverty Line.

Earlier this year, I read a Washington Post op-ed that's since resurfaced entitled "I'm a minor-league pitcher. Why can't baseball pay a

living wage?" by former Montgomery Biscuits (Rays Double-A affiliate) pitcher Simon Rosenblum-Larson.

In the op-ed, he discusses the things he's both experienced and witnessed as a low-level minor leaguer.

He writes of teammates having to skip meals to make rent, share apartments with seven other players and work multiple jobs in the offseason just to make ends meet.

"After my first game as a professional ballplayer, I went home to a cot squeezed into a 10-by-12-foot room that I shared with a teammate in a house set up by our team. A few weeks later, I received my first check, for two weeks of work: \$550, before taxes and clubhouse dues," Rosenblum-Larson said in the op-ed. "Was that worth it for a shot at a dream? Absolutely. But was it fair? Absolutely not."

And therein lies the true issue here.

When a new crop of players are drafted, as was the case last week during the 2022 MLB Draft, they report to their respective teams, hoping that one day, they'll get a shot at the Show.

From there, they go through years of grueling spring trainings (which teams aren't required to pay them for), long seasons and financial hardships in smaller towns and cities across the country. Some may do this for five, six or seven years before eventually

making it to the big stage and getting a piece of the \$700,000 major-league minimum salary.

But some will flame out. Either their ability will decline, forcing them to fall out of baseball entirely, or they simply won't be able to handle the restricting, exhausting life of a minor leaguer with no reward in sight, being paid very little by a league worth so much money.

Fortunately, there are actions being taken to potentially lessen the financial struggles of minor leaguers.

The day before Manfred's press conference last week — and the reason for which the question was asked in the first place — the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee sent a letter to the MLB's commissioner requesting information on the league's antitrust exemption.

The organization Advocates for Minor Leaguers has played a major role in fueling the committee's most recent inquiry into the exemption — far from the first — and the organization's executive director, Harry Marino, told Sports Illustrated that bipartisan support for minor leaguers' labor rights gives them hope that this may actually yield results down the road.

Manfred had until Tuesday to give his response to the committee.

Regardless of what happens with this inquiry or any other

political approach to the issue, such as Sen. Bernie Sanders' (I-Vt.) Save American Baseball Act, introduced in March, this is an issue that all baseball fans and most North Carolinians should care about.

We live in a state with 10 MiLB teams, a few of which — the Greensboro Grasshoppers, Winston-Salem Dash, Durham Bulls, etc. — are just a short drive from Chatham County. These are folks living in our communities that, in an effort to live out their dreams, are being neglected and exploited by one of the wealthiest sports leagues in the country.

Manfred's comments last week not only signaled that he's as out-of-touch as a pro sports commissioner can be, but

he's also a profits-first businessman with little concern for the players, big and small, that he oversees.

Maybe one day, we'll wake up in a world where minor leaguers can be adequately compensated for the endless amount of entertainment and revenue they bring to small American towns and cities.

Until then, though, we're forced to watch Manfred embarrass himself while stuffing his pockets with cash amounting to more than 800-times that of the average minor leaguer.

As goes the wonderful world of American pro sports.

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhensley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhensley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.



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# GOUGH

Continued from page B1

sons by Scott Green, who accepted the head volleyball coaching position at Seaforth this summer. Green amassed a 22-48 record during his time with the Wolves, the highlight of which was last year's 18-4 campaign, which saw Woods Charter turn a major corner and reach the third round of the 1A playoffs.

Despite her lack of head coaching experience, Gough said her ability to lead others — having worked on specialty coaching drills with her old club team after graduating college — and teach the fundamentals of volleyball will go a long way.

And of course, the passion she has for the game doesn't hurt, either.

## 'It was freeing to play'

Gough's volleyball journey started early in her middle school years in Centreville, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C., with a population of a little more than 74,000.

There, she became interested in the sport and decided to take a couple of volleyball classes, which led to her joining a 14U club team when she was just 12 years old, choosing to play a bit out of her age range.

As she soon came to find out, it wasn't easy.

"It was a little hard being so much younger than everyone else," Gough said. "Starting out and having to go through that age jump, it really gave me a better sense of how to be more mature and become a leader. It kind of instilled those skills in me."

As much as Gough was drawn to volleyball for its fundamentals, its skill curve and its competitive nature, she also used the game as an escape, a way to calm herself from the hustle and bustle of middle and high school.

"When I started picking up volleyball, it was just very freeing to play," she said. "I felt like I could go out and just have that relief of everything else in life. I could just focus and hone in on volleyball. I didn't have to go and be worrying about all of the tasks I had to do, all of the high school drama in life. I think that's why I was really passionate about it."

Throughout middle school, she

bounced around between a few different club teams, playing a multitude of positions, including defensive specialist, libero and hitter.

But once she got to high school, she found her home with a club called Southwestern Youth Association (SYA), based out of Centreville, where she began to play as a setter.

"I had the same coaches the whole time and they were great," Gough said. "They motivated me. I acknowledged them as family and I played setter the whole time. It allowed me to really be a leader."

For her final two seasons, Gough acted as the team captain for a squad that made it all the way to the Capitol Hill Volleyball Classic in Washington, D.C. — a USA Volleyball seeding tournament hosted over President's Day weekend that features more than 1,000 teams from across the nation — during her junior and senior years.

"We actually ended up taking second place one year and third place another year, which was a huge accomplishment," Gough said. "A lot of people don't even get to see the medals there, so that was definitely a proud moment."

Once her high school days were behind her, Gough's volleyball career took a backseat to academics. While studying at Virginia Tech from 2017-21, she had a double-major in biology and criminology, leaving little time for her to pursue volleyball besides the occasional open gym or intramural game.

After graduating in 2021, Gough was itching for a change of scenery. That's when she decided to move to Pensacola, Florida, where she stayed for a year before moving to Raleigh so she could be closer to her family in Northern Virginia.

With volleyball being a major part of her life, part of settling down in Raleigh was that she needed to find a way to get on the court as either a player or a coach.

Cue "Volleyball Play in the Triangle."

## Leader of the pack

In her first season as a head coach, Gough is inheriting a team stacked with talent.

Woods Charter is coming off of its best season in program history, having won 18 games, including the Central Tar Heel 1A conference

title game over Chatham Charter, and made it to the Elite Eight, dropping a close one to Neuse Charter on the road, 3-1.

While the team is losing six seniors, it still has all-conference athletes Maya Sheridan and Lexi Smollen — also the Central Tar Heel Player of the Year — to act as the backbone of a young nucleus that Gough said she's excited to lead, even if it will be a learning experience for her and the team.

"I know that I'm going to have a lot to learn as a coach," Gough said, "but I feel like (Dena Floyd) and her whole team is very supportive in every way."

Gough said that her coaching style will primarily be individual-focused, catering to the needs of each individual player rather than having a cookie-cutter approach for all of her athletes.

If a player is more receptive to a supportive, gentle coaching style, that's how she'll approach them. But if they need extra motivation through tough love or constructive criticism, she'll go there, too.

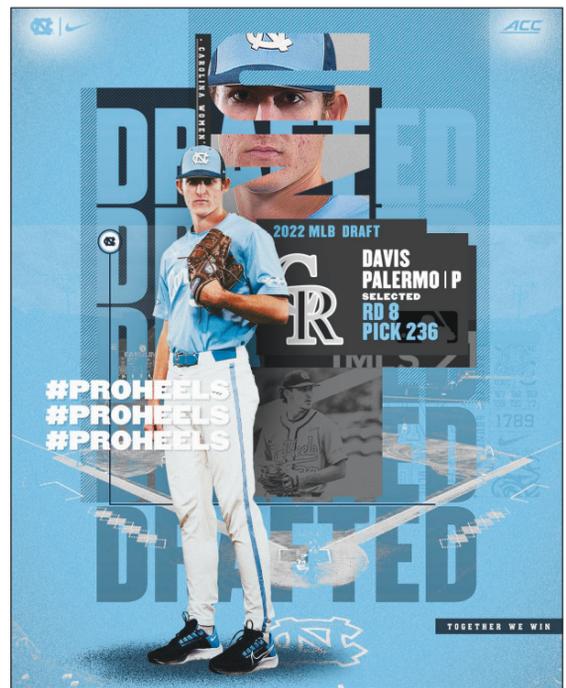
"I just really want to make it a good experience for the girls," she continued. "I had great coaches growing up, especially with my club team. They really motivated me and it was a place where I could come to practice and get rid of all the stress from the day, so I didn't have to worry about it and just have fun. ... I want to be able to give that same experience to the girls while also helping build their skills."

Before the Wolves' season-opener against Franklin Academy on Aug. 26, Gough said she and the team have a lot of work to do, which includes open gym sessions like the one she hosted on Monday.

But when you're passionate about the sport, she said, it rarely feels like work.

"I'm honestly just excited to be back in volleyball," Gough said. "I've been going to open gyms, but it's not been competitive play. Even just being able to be right there on the sidelines and coach these girls and cheer them on as they're doing what, hopefully, they love is going to be amazing. ... It's going to be an amazing feeling to be a part of that journey."

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhensley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhensley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at [@Freezeal33](https://twitter.com/Freezeal33).



Graphic by UNC Athletics

Former Northwood pitcher Davis Palermo, a four-year player at UNC, was drafted by the Colorado Rockies with the 236th overall pick (8th round) in the 2022 MLB Draft on July 18. In his final season with the Heels, he posted a 2.72 ERA with 74 strikeouts in 58 1/3 innings pitched.

# PALERMO

Continued from page B1

tion to return to school for another year, he's already made up his mind. The 22-year-old flew out to Arizona on Sunday to sign his contract and undergo a physical before being given his first assignment as a pro.

"It's always tough especially with how awesome UNC has been to me and how great my experience was there," Palermo said. "It's always tough to say 'bye' to that and move on. It was just the right time for me."

Palermo wasn't a major prospect for much of his career. Colleges didn't start recruiting him until his junior year of high school, even as he shined as a starting pitcher for coach Thomas Parks at Northwood. Wanting to use Palermo

as much as he could, Parks pushed him into the bullpen for his senior campaign.

That decision translated well for college. Palermo improved every season and was primarily used in relief, where his 94-97 mph fastball and newly developed slider caught hitters off balance in 2022.

Growing up less than 15 minutes from the campus of UNC, Palermo idolized Tar Heel baseball stars Dustin Ackley, Alex White and Kyle Seager. He attended games regularly and revered the 2007 team that went 57-16. Ackley and White were drafted in the first round of the 2009 MLB Draft and Seager went in the third.

Palermo always wanted to be like them.

Now he's getting his shot.



**PADDLES**  
SWIM & PICKLEBALL  
**NOW OPEN!**

During these dog days of summer, it's not always easy to stay cool, but we have the solution! Get ready to dip your toes and swing your paddles at the newest amenity at Chatham Park. We are excited to announce that Paddles, a swim, and pickleball amenity — is the perfect place to relax by the pool or engage in a rousing game of pickleball. We celebrated the opening in July, and our members have taken full advantage of this beautiful addition to the area.

Paddles Swim & Pickleball is located in Vineyards at Chatham Park adjacent to Knight Farm Community Park and features a six-lane competition-style pool, a kiddie pool, and a concession stand. Members can enjoy umbrellas, individual loungers, and outdoor showers. Outside of the swim area, there are eight pickleball courts, so bring your neighbors and your best game!

Not familiar with pickleball? Easier to learn than tennis with less stress on the joints than aerobics, pickleball is a great way to stay healthy and meet your neighbors! It is the fastest-growing sport in America, with more than 10,000 courts nationwide.

Don't live in Chatham Park? No problem! Paddles is a private membership facility with memberships open to everyone.

"We are so excited to open this gorgeous new amenity," said Vanessa Jenkins, Executive Vice President of Preston Development Company. "We welcome anyone from the area who would like to become a member, residents and non-residents alike."



Paddles is just one more example of the incredible growth happening in our live, work, play, and learn master-planned community in Pittsboro, North Carolina. For more information on our current amenities, and homes, or how we fulfill our promises for more balanced lifestyle opportunities, visit our new Vineyards Information Center located at Paddles Swim & Pickleball at 500 Vine Parkway.

**SCAN HERE FOR PADDLES MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION**



**DISCOVER CHATHAM PARK AT CHATHAMPARK.COM**

PITTSBORO COMMISSIONERS

# Board discusses sanitation services, pending water merger with Sanford

BY MAYDHA DEVARAJAN  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Commissioners on Monday raised concerns about the town's sanitation services contract with an external vendor and agreed to schedule further discussions regarding the pending merger with Sanford's water and sewer system.

Pittsboro's board authorized Town Manager Chris Kennedy to send a letter of intent to the city of Sanford in May to establish a merger between Sanford and Pittsboro's water systems.

At Monday's meeting, Kennedy said staff of the two municipalities have drafted a scope of work, which is awaiting final consent. He said staff are examining the benefits and expenses of a merger and are looking to have a deliverable containing their findings for the board within 90 days and a final report in 180 days.

Commissioner James Vose asked whether it would be possible for the board to be provided with a "real-time update" sooner than three months from now.

"I feel like this is a very important project for us, and I think I myself would benefit from discussion, and I feel [like] really the board would," Vose said.

Kennedy said staff are going through a data collection process, assessing assets and debt services regarding the merger, and promised to provide updates at the board's meeting.

The board also spent much of the meeting discussing the town's sanitation services contract with GFL Environmental, an external sanitation vendor. GFL provides trash and recycling collection services for Pittsboro residences and certain businesses; as Pittsboro renews that contract, the town is looking to increase its recycling services.

At the moment, the vendor provides trash collection service to Pittsboro in 95-gallon containers on a weekly basis and recycling collection service in 65-gallon containers on a bi-weekly basis. Commercial customers receive charges individually via their utility bill, while residential customers pay a total on their annual tax bill — the base rate for residents is \$210, according to a board memo.

GFL offered three potential contract additions that would alter the town's current services:

- changing the recycling container size from 65 gallons to 95 gallons and keeping the same bi-weekly pick-up schedule. This change would increase the recycle rate from \$2.85 per cart to \$3.75 per cart.
- changing the recycling schedule to every week and keeping the same 65-gallon recycling containers. This change would increase the recycle rate from \$2.85 per cart to \$6.88 per cart.
- establishing a yard waste collection on the non-recycle service week in 95-gallon

containers. The memo states that GFL will provide the bins needed. Bi-weekly yard waste collection would be \$2.48 per 95-gallon container. During the meeting, Kennedy said there is no price comparison because the town would absorb the cost.

Commissioner Kyle Shipp said about a third of the recycling cans he observed while driving around town last week were overflowing.

"I think that 90 cents a month increase for that large of a size of container is really good," Shipp said. "I'm surprised to see how much more it costs to do recycling every week, and it's probably not worth it."

Shipp also said he'd wished the board had received the information regarding options for expanded services when the town's budget was being considered, calling it "effectively a tax increase."

"With that being said, I think it's reasonable but it's certainly adding costs just outside of the budget," he said.

Kennedy agreed, saying it was "a fair point," and something staff tried to avoid. He suggested moving the commencement of the expanded services to the following fiscal year in an addition to the contract, but Shipp expressed support for the Nov. 1 start date previously recommended by Kennedy.

Commissioner John Bonitz also voiced concerns regarding the planned fluorescent color scheme of the cans, suggesting

instead blue for recycling and green or brown for trash or yard debris.

"I remain concerned that notwithstanding your point that we're a small customer, in five years we'll be a bigger customer," Bonitz said. "And I'm not comfortable agreeing to a five-year contract with a service provider that is unresponsive to questions about aesthetics of the colors of the bins, and unresponsive to concerns about the imperative that we all reduce our pollution emissions and transportation."

Similarly, Commissioner Jay Farrell also expressed reservations about putting in a third bin for yard waste, citing the potential lack of space for another container as the construction of homes in high density in the area continues.

**In other business:**

• Following the COVID state of emergency being lifted Aug. 15, commissioners will no longer be allowed to join meetings remotely.

"Based on what we've seen from advice of legal counsel across the state as well as the School of Government, that it will prohibit board members from participating remotely, which is kind of a pre-pandemic open meetings law," Kennedy said.

There will be no restrictions on the public attending meetings, Kennedy said, and he anticipates the board will continue to stream meetings online.

• As part of the unanimous approval of the consent agenda, the board approved a budget amendment carrying over funds from the previous fiscal year for police computers and vehicle upfit. According to the budget amendment memo, the Pittsboro Police Department had funds allocated during FY 2021-22 year to buy new computers for police vehicles and to upfit their vehicles, but because of supply issues the computers weren't delivered and the upfit did not occur.

• During the presentation of new business, the board unanimously voted to approve the acceleration of the Chatham Park Way South project under the N.C. Dept. of Transportation's State Transportation Improvement Program. The acceleration also allows Chatham Park investors to construct the project and be later reimbursed by N.C. DOT.

The project is estimated to cost around \$65 million, according to a board memo. The southern section of the road project includes building a two-lane divided roadway at a new spot on U.S. Hwy. 15-501/N.C. Hwy. 87 and widening a section of the current two-lane Chatham Park Way to four lanes.

Commissioners will meet again Aug. 8 at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro.

Reporter Maydha Devarajan can be reached at [mdevarajan@chathamnr.com](mailto:mdevarajan@chathamnr.com) and on Twitter @maydhadevarajan.

## Sawyer Shafer selected to guide J-M's new theater curriculum

From J-MArts

SILER CITY — Theater classes return to Jordan-Matthews High School this fall for the first time in decades, with stage professional Sawyer Shafer being appointed this afternoon as the school's new theater arts teacher.

As currently structured, the new faculty position will be shared with Chatham Central High School, with Shafer teaching both semesters in Siler City and Bear Creek.

His arrival as teacher and artistic director is a major milestone in JM theater, a program revived by JMArts, the Jordan-Matthews Arts Foundation, more than a decade ago — initially with shows written in-house to raise enough money and develop enough student talent to produce Broadway musicals. From the beginning, nearly all school theatrical productions, acting instruction and trips to experience regional and touring shows have been funded almost entirely by JMArts through private donations and grants.

Shafer, a theater professional living in Greensboro, became interested in the new teaching position after being hired by JMArts to direct the school's spring production of "Oklahoma!" Though he spent two years as director and producer of Finneytown High School's musical theater program in Cincinnati, Shafer said he hadn't really considered moving into full-time teaching until his experience here.

"I am beyond excited to finally be joining the teaching staff in a full-time capacity," he said. "From day one, it was clear to me that the students here at JM are

**JMArts is a nonprofit organization providing what JM students need to succeed in dance, music, theater and visual arts.**

some of the most enthusiastic and talented kids that I have ever met, and I cannot think of a student body more deserving of the opportunity to engage with the theatre arts on a daily basis."

Shafer has a broad and distinguished history in professional theater and theater education.

In addition to his work at Finneytown High School in Cincinnati, he has served in various roles at Creative Greensboro, Virginia Repertory Theatre and in Ohio for Mechanicsburg High School, Marietta College and Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park. He currently oversees the performance space and facility for Creative Greensboro.

An Ohio native, Shafer received his Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Studies magna cum laude in 2018 from Wright State University.

JMArts President Rose Pate said she couldn't be happier with the appointment. Though Shafer has directed just one show at JM, students loved working with him and their collaboration was rewarded this spring when the cast received a nomination for Best Ensemble in the Triangle Rising Stars regional musical theater awards. The Triangle Rising Stars is an annual competition for high schools in North Carolina's Triangle and Triad regions, where top individual actors selected at the Durham Performing Arts Center advance to The Jimmy Awards, a national competition on Broadway.

"After watching his competent and compassionate work with our student actors during

"Oklahoma!" rehearsals, I couldn't be happier that Mr. Shafer decided to join the JM family," Pate said. "I look forward to watching him collaborate with our other arts teachers to grow our theater program."

After the successful spring production of "Oklahoma!," Shafer agreed to direct JM's upcoming production of "Shrek The Musical," so he had already been thinking about where to take JM theater over the coming months. But now, he'll have even more to keep himself busy as the new school year approaches.

"I have spent a lot of my downtime this summer brainstorming new and innovative ways to tailor the theater curriculum to this community, and I hope the students are as responsive to these new ideas as they were to the vision we had for 'Oklahoma!' last spring," he said. "I never thought I would be this excited to go back to high school again, but the welcome I received in Siler City has me counting down the days until the school year starts."

JMArts is a nonprofit organization providing what JM students need to succeed in dance, music, theater and visual arts. All money raised through individual donations, admission fees, fundraising events and grants goes directly to providing performance showcases, educational opportunities, instruments and supplies for students.

The nonprofit is best known for JMArts Scholars. Scholarships are awarded each year allowing returning JM students to pursue intensive study over the weeklong, residential workshops offered on university campuses. Other major projects include the school's annual musical, a variety of public events and the New York Arts Adven-

ture, where eight students travel to New York City for five days over spring break to experience the best in the arts

and learn directly from several world-renowned professionals.

More information about JMArts, including

a schedule of all upcoming arts events and information on membership, is available online at [JMArts.org](http://JMArts.org).



### Chatham COA Events & Announcements

August 2nd through August 5th

**Tuesday, August 2nd**

- [Body Conditioning w/Jackie](#) at 8:00 AM (at Eastern Chatham Senior Center - masks optional, RSVP w/Jackie Green)
- [Blood Pressure Screening](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Woodcarvers](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Bingo w/Joe](#) at 10:15 AM (at ECSC)
- [Spill the Beans w/Liz](#) at 11:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Rummikub](#) at 1:00 PM (at ECSC)

**Wednesday, August 3rd**

- [3G's Men's Group](#) at 9:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Chair Yoga w/Liz](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC and on Zoom, RSVP w/ Liz Lahti)
- [Games and Coffee w/Chatham County Sheriff's Department](#) at 10:00 AM (ECSC)
- [Let's Get Reacquainted](#) at 11:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Open Art Studio](#) at 1:00 PM (at ECSC)

**Thursday, August 4th**

- [Body Conditioning w/Jackie](#) at 8:00 AM (at ECSC - masks optional, RSVP w/Jackie Green)
- [Needleworking Group](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Let's Move w/Jackie](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC, RSVP Jackie Green)
- [Games and Coffee](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Science with Alan](#) at 11:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Line Dancing](#) at 1:30 PM (at ECSC)
- [Gentle Yoga w/ Liz](#) at 3:00 PM (at ECSC, RSVP Liz Lahti)

**Friday, August 5th**

- [Body Conditioning w/Jackie](#) at 8:00 AM (at ECSC - masks required, RSVP w/Jackie Green)
- [Games and Coffee](#) at 10:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Team Jeopardy](#) at 11:00 AM (at ECSC)
- [Friday Night Dance](#) at 7:00 PM (at Western Chatham Senior Center, fee required)

For more information or to register for these and other programs, visit our website: [chathamcouncilonaging.org/activities/calendars/](http://chathamcouncilonaging.org/activities/calendars/)

**RSVP Contacts:**  
Jackie Green - 919-542-4512, ext. 227 or [jackie.green@chathamcoa.org](mailto:jackie.green@chathamcoa.org)  
Liz Lahti - 919-542-4512, ext. 228 or [liz.lahti@chathamcoa.org](mailto:liz.lahti@chathamcoa.org)

**The Chatham COA is Here for You!**  
For more information on our ongoing programs & services visit our website at [chathamcoa.org](http://chathamcoa.org) or call our centers, Monday-Friday, 8 am - 5 pm.

<p><b>Eastern Chatham Senior Center (ECSC)</b> 365 NC-87 N Pittsboro, NC 27312 919-542-4512</p>	<p><b>Western Chatham Senior Center (WCSC)</b> 112 Village Lake Road Siler City, NC 27344 919-742-3975</p>
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# Siler City Commissioners appoint Jay Underwood to at-large seat

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — The town’s board of commissioners appointed James “Jay” Underwood to Mayor Chip Price’s unexpired at-large commissioner seat in a special meeting Monday.

The board originally convened to interview Underwood and Donald Matthews, both of whom unsuccessfully sought election to the board in May before applying for Price’s seat. They were expected to be interviewed separately, with commissioners then voting by ballot to decide the winner. But during time provided to him to make a five-minute opening statement, Matthews announced to commissioners he was withdrawing his candidacy for the at-large position.

“I went to the VA [Veterans Administration] today and there are some things that I have to immediately take care of,” he said through tears.

Matthews told the board that an upcoming surgical procedure wouldn’t allow him to give his full commitment to the position if he were selected.

“For me to go and proceed with this would be selfish on my part,” Matthews said. “I wish you guys the best because this can be the best place to live in the state if you guys work together for the common good.”

After Matthews’s withdrawal, commissioners went on with the questioning process for Underwood. While he was the only candidate left to choose from, Siler City Commissioner Norma Boone said it was important for the

board to follow the protocols the board set.

“I would still like for us to do the questioning because we still need to know where he is on some of these issues,” Boone said.

The board asked Underwood an array of questions, mostly regarding why he wanted to become a commissioner. Underwood’s response: he wants to make Siler City a place children want to move back to once they complete their education.

He drew from his personal experience, saying his eldest daughter recently had to move to Virginia to find work because of the lack of employment opportunities in Siler City.

“I was really hoping she’d find something closer to home, but unfortunately there’s nothing around here,” he said.

“I’d love to see Siler City to what we used to have — we had industry, we had businesses, and we had young adults staying in town. Now, unfortunately, that’s not the case.”

Underwood said Monday that prior to his campaign, he had no political experience. He hoped to be able to learn on the job and play a role in improving the town and prospects for its residents.

“I just want to be able to get something here, and for our youth to be proud of the town they came from,” Underwood said.

Underwood is expected to be sworn in by the time of the board’s next meeting, which is scheduled for Aug. 1.

Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at [theeden@chathamnr.com](mailto:theeden@chathamnr.com) and on Twitter at @HeedenTaylor.

## WASTEWATER STUDY COMMISSION

# Group narrows solution options, begins preparations for report to commissioners

BY BILL HORNER III  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — In its final group meeting before sharing recommendations with the county’s board of commissioners, the Chatham County Wastewater Study Commission on Monday narrowed its list of potential solutions for addressing the county’s myriad of wastewater issues to six — three long-term and three interim.

The group plans to refine its work through email messaging while preparing a September presentation to commissioners.

At the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in the board’s fifth meeting since January, study commission members discussed, brainstormed and ultimately voted — amiable, but with occasional strong disagreements — before whittling down its list from 10 potential options.

The group’s three long-term solution recommendations — to be explored in a second phase of its work, based on reaction by and direction from county commissioners — include two potential partnerships with nearby wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) operators and the construction of a new WWTP system.

Those recommendations include:

- utilizing an extension of Durham County’s Tri-

angle WWTP to northeast Chatham

- utilizing an extension of the South Durham system — part of the city of Durham’s wastewater system — to northeast Chatham

- building a new wastewater system for northeast Chatham, which would involve the formation of either a new public authority or a public/private partnership

Each of the three options provided unique challenges, including willing partners in Durham and the huge expenditure of a new WWTP. But Chatham’s rapid growth and existing problems with private wastewater system capacity in place necessitate solutions to allow for continued development in northeast Chatham.

Liz Rolison, one of the three co-chairpersons of the group, said the evaluation of the options would likely involve engineering studies that would, among other projections, look at Chatham’s wastewater demands over the next 30-50 years.

“Using that information, Phase 2 will need to further explore partnership arrangements with Durham County and City of Durham and assess whether the projected wastewater demand is sufficient to make building a regional wastewater system in northeast Chatham County viable — and if so where it would be located and how discharge will

### ABOUT THE WASTEWATER STUDY COMMISSION

- the 12-member group was formed by the Chatham County Board of Commissioners in November 2021 to study future growth and wastewater treatment options in the underserved northeastern part of the county
- the group’s members have a wide array of wastewater expertise and a variety of viewpoints about best practices for wastewater treatment
- its first meeting was in January; Monday’s meeting was the group’s fifth
- the group is scheduled to make a Phase 1 presentation to the county’s board of commissioners in September
- the group’s “problem statement,” which it created early on, addresses the rapid growth of northeast Chatham and the lack of sustainability of existing wastewater services within the county, as well as a review of all potential solutions based on “smart growth principles, properly balanced residential and commercial property components, sound business practices, and environmental sensitivity”
- of the 14 existing wastewater package plants operating in northeast Chatham, three are regularly not meeting nutrient requirements for discharge, three are at or near capacity, three are approaching end of life status and one system has been responsible for 35 sewage spills into nearby waterways

be handled,” she told the News + Record. “Depending on these findings, they will likely need a hydrology study to determine the feasibility and cost of moving wastewater from the study area — or a portion of the study area — to any of these three options.”

Rolison estimated the timeline of those options at eight to 10 years, and even longer for a new regional wastewater system.

The group also decided — with mixed consensus — on three interim options that would, among other things, provide a bridge to longer-term

solutions and improve upon the 14 existing “package” WWTP operating in northeast Chatham County. Those plants handle about a million gallons of raw sewage per day, but some have experience multiple spills — particularly in Briar Chapel — and can’t accommodate projected growth in the area.

The interim options include:

- a “status quo” option that would continue the use of privately-owned systems, some of which have shown improved performance after ownership changes

- managing decentralized systems by providing oversight of existing package plants

- agricultural use of reclaimed water, which involves moving biosolids and some reclaimed water for processing and distributing to farmers in Chatham and surrounding counties

The group also eliminated three other potential solutions from further discussion and combined a fourth option with one on its interim list.

Study commission members devoted a little more than an hour of Monday’s meeting —

with member Scott Peck facilitating — to brainstorming the benefits and challenges of the 10 options, with the goal of collectively deciding which of them to continue pursuing. Those options in the assessment exercise where “benefits,” as decided on by members, outweighed “challenges” were given consideration for additional discussion.

Chatham County Manager Dan LaMontagne, who was in attendance, told commission members the county’s growth necessitated having plans to address its wastewater issues “ready to go,” and that the county’s board of commissioners planned to follow through based on the commission’s efforts.

“We’re going to see the most dramatic changes in the county’s history in the next five years,” he said.

A decision to move forward with any of the longer-term options depends on additional information about projected growth, LaMontagne said, and the long-term plans of the private systems in the area.

“A demand projection study would be useful in answering many questions, but that study would be informed by potential future changes in land use that could result from the county’s Unified Development Ordinance project,” he said.

Rolison said the group still wasn’t clear about what to expect from the county when it makes its presentation to commissioners, tentatively scheduled for Sept. 19. The county, she said, has “been clear that they really don’t feel like wastewater is their responsibility — that it’s really the responsibility of the state, or municipalities.”

That would make one of the long-term solutions the group agreed to continue pursuing — building a regional WWTP in northeast Chatham County — a tall order.

Rolison said members of the study commission “were about evenly split” on the issue of “smart growth” versus “no growth” in Chatham County.

“But the thing that I think we all agree on is regardless of whether you want to promote growth or not, you have to have adequate wastewater infrastructure for what development is being approved,” she said. “And in northeast Chatham County, it’s been consistently growing. We can’t say it isn’t, you know, so we need to be ready for it. We need to handle it more responsibly.”

CHATHAM IS **BOLD!**



# POLICE REPORTS

## CHATHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

On July 15, John Monroy-Pulido, 31, of 23 Glendale Drive, Pittsboro, was arrested by Deputy Tyler Clark for two counts of resisting a public officer. He was issued a \$500 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on July 19.

On July 15, Derek Deleon Taylor, 44, of 3022 Byrd Avenue, Sanford, was arrested by Investigator Ricky Culberson for trafficking in methamphetamines, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver methamphetamines, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession with intent

to manufacture/sell/deliver marijuana, maintaining a vehicle for controlled substance, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of a firearm by a felon, and carrying a concealed gun. He was issued a \$200,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on Aug. 15.

On July 17, Darlin Fonseca-Almaraz, 19, of 24 Heath Road Lot 134, Chapel Hill, was arrested by Deputy Andrew Gray for fleeing to elude arrest with a motor vehicle. She was issued a written promise to appear in Wake County District Court in Raleigh on Aug. 22.

On July 18, Patricia Ann Hart, 41, of 30 Kivett Court Drive,

Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Conner Lee for simple assault. She was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Aug. 2.

On July 18, Tina Marie Beers, 38, of 305 N Dogwood Avenue, Bear Creek, was arrested by Deputy Breanna Burkett for breaking and entering, larceny after breaking/entering, obtaining property under false pretense, and possession of stolen good/property. She was issued a \$50,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Aug. 15.

On July 18, Michael Wayne York, 50, of 2423 Silk Hope Lindley Mill Road, Siler

City, was arrested by Deputy Vincent Iorio for failure to appear. He was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on July 26.

Mr. York was also arrested by Deputy Iorio for probation violation. He was issued a \$5,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on July 26.

On July 20, Steven Augustine Bozzo, 41, of 4641 Lambeth Mill Road, Bennett, was arrested by Deputy Jonathan Frazier for felony stalking. He was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Aug. 15.

On July 20, Jermond Monya Freeman, 39, of 7710 Rogers Road, Chapel Hill, was arrested by Deputy Marcus Hart for common law robbery, assault on a female, Domestic Violence Protective Order violation, battery of an unborn child, and injury to personal property. He was issued a \$50,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Durham County Court in Durham on Aug. 1.

On July 20, Ryan Alezander Seymour, 30, of 1115 Mt. Gilead Church Road, Pittsboro, was arrested by Deputy Jonathan Frazier for unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. He was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Aug. 17.

# CCS hires Burton as executive director for secondary and CTE

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Board of Education approved the hire of Michelle Burton as the executive director for Secondary and Career and Technical Education Wednesday. In her new role, Burton will lead the district's curriculum efforts to support the academic achievement of all students across the district in grades 9-12. In addition, Burton will oversee the Career and Technical Education program. Burton has worked in education in North Carolina and Virginia for 24 years. She has served as an elementary teacher, assistant principal and principal of high schools, HR coordinator,

chief human resources officer and, most recently, assistant superintendent of student services and innovative programs. Burton's passion for students and their education has been the driving force behind all of her work. While serving as principal of Weldon High School, Burton was recognized by Halifax Community College with the Principal's Leadership Award. This award recognizes outstanding leadership, determination and innovation by increasing student engagement, inspiring teachers, staff and students and enhancing the learning environment. During her tenure at Weldon

High School, Burton was recognized as the 2015 Wells Fargo Principal of the Year for Weldon City Schools. Burton also is a graduate of the North Carolina School Superintendents' Association Aspiring Superintendents Program. Burton earned her bachelor's in English and master's in Teaching from Hampton University. She has an Educational Specialist Degree in Educational Leadership and Administration from George Washington University. Currently, she is a doctoral student at High Point University. "We are fortunate to have Ms. Burton joining our team," Superintendent Dr.

Anthony Jackson said. "Her experience will benefit our students and ensure we continue to provide high-quality secondary and Career and Technical Education programs for our students. She brings tremendous passion and energy to Chatham County Schools." Burton said she is excited about her new role. "I am eager to join Chatham County Schools," she said. "I look forward to working with all stakeholders to ensure the continued access to high-quality learning experiences that will enhance the college- and career-readiness for all students."

## Farmers market



An array of farm-grown foods at the Farmers Market at The Plant.



Kim D'Amico puts her purchased produce in her tote bag. Staff photo by Kim Hawks



Sunflowers from Periwinkle Farms on full display at the Farmer's Market at the Plant. Staff photo by Kim Hawks



Aunt Kelly Hughes of Pittsboro and her 9-year-old niece Lola Lewis of Wilmington enjoyed morning shopping at the Chatham Farmers Market. Staff photo by Kim Hawks



Grand Hope Farms grows and sells a large variety of tomatoes including four different varieties of cherry tomatoes. Staff photo by Kim Hawks

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# Does a secretive underground Pittsboro facility serve as inspiration for the ‘Stranger Things’ lab?

BY HANNAH KAUFMAN  
Indy Week

PITTSBORO — At first glance, Big Hole Road appears to be an ordinary, dusty country road — the kind of dead-end street a wrong turn might lead you down if you’re lost in Pittsboro.

But if that wrong turn takes you farther down Big Hole Road, you might notice that some of the houses along the road seem a little out of place — mismatched and clashing in a world of homeowners associations and uniform suburbia. You might also wonder why the road is empty, despite it being the middle of the day.

The lure of this place, though, doesn’t lie along the road but at the end of it, where you’ll be met with an empty guard box, a warning sign in blaring red font and a tall barbed-wire gate adorned with the AT&T logo. Dig a little deeper — seven stories deep, even — and you might find a giant, secretive underground bunker that stretches somewhere below the site’s 191 acres of property. You might need a pretty big shovel.

Like Nancy Wheeler, one of the characters in the wildly popular Netflix show “Stranger Things,” I’m an intern at a local paper trying to get a start in the world of journalism. Unlike Nancy Wheeler, though, my editors actually give me the chance to explore stories.

Stranger Things is the creative brainchild of identical twins Matt and Ross Duffer, who were born and raised in Durham. If you pay careful attention through the show’s four seasons, the Duffer brothers have hidden North Carolina Easter eggs throughout the entire show, including the layout of the show’s fictional town of Hawkins, Indiana with identical streets to Durham like Kerley and Cornwallis; bodies of water named Jordan Lake and Eno River; and a direct reference to Durham in Season 4.

The brothers have confirmed many of these details as being influenced by their childhood — but have provided little information on the inspiration behind Hawkins Lab, the creepy government building at the center of the plot.

That’s where this assignment on Big Hole — an underground facility located in Chatham County — comes in. Named after the not-so-subtle 75-foot hole dug in the ground during its construction, it is rumored to be several stories deep, while atop its grassy surface sit a few oddly shaped buildings, huge security cameras and antennae. The entirety of the facility is surrounded by a barbed-wire fence and “no trespassing” signs.

The site dates back to the 1960s when AT&T built five central facilities as part of the Project Offices program. Within this confidential program, AT&T built and maintained several structurally sound facilities along the East Coast of the United States in the mid-20th century for an ongoing non-public project. In addition to Big Hole, these facilities were also constructed inside various northeastern mountains.

AT&T has never disclosed the purpose of these bases, besides a vague assertion of “communications,” but according to a 2008 Raleigh News & Observer article, the sites were originally intended as nuclear bunkers for government and military officials during the height of the Cold War. With



The exterior of the Big Hole facility in Chatham County.

Courtesy of IndyWeek

the rise of the nuclear age in the 1960s, the federal government contracted with AT&T to run classified communication networks at secret sites around the country. Project Offices was one such classified program — the five facilities were linked by a troposcatter radio system so that government officials inside one site could still communicate with the other four facilities and maintain a skeletal national system for “continuity of government” (COG) in the case of a nuclear attack.

The most publicly known COG facility is the Greenbrier Bunker, a presidential relocation facility in West Virginia that now lies under a luxurious hotel after being exposed in a 1992 article and decommissioned, leaving little evidence behind — except for a telephone switchboard with the words “CHATAM” and “HGRSTOWN” on it, linking it to Big Hole and the Project Office in Hagerstown, Maryland.

But even among the specialized Project Offices, Chatham County’s sticks out like a sore thumb. The locations of the other four facilities, which are all Washington, DC-adjacent, are more logical. The Chatham County facility makes the least sense. It’s all the way in the remote woods of North Carolina, removed from the other four neighboring Project Offices — what makes Big Hole so special?

In a 2000 INDY Week piece about the site, former Pittsboro mayor — and former AT&T employee — Chuck Devinney had this to say about his time at Big Hole: “I wiped it all out of my head. When I went out the door, I never looked back.” Reached over email, current mayor Cindy Perry didn’t offer much more: “I don’t know any details about the Big Hole,” she wrote.

AT&T media contacts did not respond to INDY requests for comment.

Rebecca Kastleman, an assistant professor of English and Comparative Literature at Columbia University, grew up in Chatham County and published a scholarly article called “Big Hole: Excavating Intimate Histories of a Nuclear Homefront” in 2020. She said it’s the site’s very remoteness that may have given it a leg up as a nuclear bunker for military or government officials.

“Its distance from DC might have been seen as an advantage in certain nuclear scenarios,” Kastleman said over the phone. “I think the real question to ask is, why is there a direct line to the Chatham station from the Greenbrier Hotel? Who would the president need to communicate with at Chatham?”



Signs at the facility warn off curious visitors.

Courtesy of IndyWeek

If you’re befuddled by the site’s history, its present-day state guarantees still more questions. The facility was rumored to close in 2008, and it’s unclear whether it’s still active. When I visited this week, I noticed that the pavement was fresh and the grass had just been mowed. Validating my suspicions, longtime Chatham resident Daniel Fields says Big Hole Road has remained surprisingly busy over the years, despite its apparent abandonment.

“I’ve seen people there over the years, turning down that road or turning out of it, trucks working on the lines right near there,” Fields says. Matt Phillips, one of Fields’s childhood friends who lived in the South Chapel Hill-Chatham County area, says he recalls his friend group’s growing curiosity around Big Hole and the mismatched homes along the road.

“You know when you go to a minigolf course and stuff is obviously fake and kind of weirdly proportioned?” Phillips said. “Very similar energy.”

In the INDY Week article about Big Hole, two decades ago, local residents told the paper that they witnessed unexplainable phenomena at the facility over the years, like an isolated dark cloud and sporadic lightning over the site on an otherwise sunny day. Stories like these have given rise to conspiracies about paranormal activity and extraterrestrial communication, which were only expanded on a decade later when Fields says he heard a story about a truck with a Roswell tag parked in a driveway off Big Hole Road.

As teenagers in 2008, Phillips and his friends would often stop by Big Hole Road on their way to or from lunch at Allen & Son Bar-B-Que. These visits normally included gawking at the barbed-wire fence, though one day, he says, they pulled up in his friend’s Subaru hatchback — barbecue in hand — to an open gate. Phillips says the facility appeared to be transi-

tioning to new ownership, as people inside the fence were unloading items out of the ground entrance and cars were driving in and out of the gate — an opportunity his friend group took to drive in.

“We drove into the little parking circle, and I had the distinct feeling that everybody who was there clocked our car, saw it drive in and be a civilian car full of teenagers, and looked directly at us,” Phillips said. “All of the people involved kind of mentally went, ‘Oh sh\*t, Code Red, there are people here who shouldn’t be here,’ and watched us make the loop, at which point I remember freaking out and being like, ‘We gotta go right now.’”

“When you drive up, you see that field that’s open at the top, and there was a separate time where I saw a bunch of folks in white lab coats with clipboards walking around,” Phillips says. “I mean, it could have been out of any movie, and I just remember thinking specifically, ‘This doesn’t seem like it has anything to do with communication.’”

Over a decade later, in trying to glean information from locals, I found that this level of secrecy hasn’t changed. When I asked one worker at a nearby store what he knows about Big Hole, he cut me off midsentence — “We don’t talk about it” — adding that, though he had once done a construction job for the facility and descended two stories deep, he’d had to undergo a background check and sign an NDA about his time on-site.

Driving along Big Hole Road, I hopped out of the car and asked one neighbor if she knew anything about the facility. Her answer was automatic: “We don’t know anything. AT&T sold it years ago, and that’s all we know.”

But the giant AT&T logo on the front gate says otherwise. Is Big Hole just that — a big, empty hole, left with only the dust of 20th-century history under its surface? Or is it still a hive of technology and

secret governmental affairs, operating under the facade of a decommissioned facility?

The Duffer brothers may have once asked themselves the exact same questions. It’s well known to Stranger Things lovers that the experiments that were done on the children in Hawkins Lab are based on a real CIA project in 1953 called MKUltra, which aimed to develop mind-control techniques that could be used against Russia in the Cold War.

Of course, this dark bit of American history matches up well with Eleven’s telekinetic powers and Dr. Brenner’s use of her as a weapon, as well as Season 3’s plot of a Russian invasion in Hawkins. But despite the Duffer brothers’ transparency about what inspired Brenner’s experiments, there is little information on how they dreamed up the lab itself.

Could two young, curious Duffer brothers have stumbled upon Big Hole growing up or read about it and become fascinated with its mystery and conspiracy? Although the Duffer brothers were unable to provide a comment for this story, the directors have confirmed that they had an obsession with film from an early age, and Phillips says Big Hole is most often explored by people who don’t live right next door.

“I think that specifically that area has kind of been knowingly avoided by people that live in North Chatham just because it seems like there’s nothing good that can come from that,” Phillips said. “So I can see why the Duffers would have that as some sort of exploration point, especially in a TV show that already has so much local respect.”

Just as the show’s fictional Jordan Lake is proximal to Hawkins Lab, Jordan Lake is in the backyard of Big Hole. The facilities in both Hawkins and Chatham are secretive and, despite some curious teenagers poking around, most people in the surrounding towns tend to steer clear of them. But the biggest difference is that while Stranger Things allows us to uncover some of the answers behind the lab’s mysteries one season at a time, Big Hole’s gate remains up and its facility remains, thus far, impenetrable.

Stranger Things inspiration or not, Phillips says the conspiracies and eeriness surrounding Big Hole were easy to believe as a bored teenager — but even into adulthood, as someone who is level-headed and not often gullible, he said his feeling of apprehension hasn’t diminished.

“As I got into the world as an adult and talked to more locals about it, I think everybody has that similar sense of ‘ick’ about it,” Phillips said. “I don’t think that is unjustified, and I don’t think it would happen unless there was something significant to pay attention to out there.”

Kastleman has a broader, and blunter, take on what the facility represents.

“I think it’s really imperative for us to understand the space that military infrastructure occupies in our landscapes,” she said. “One of the things that knowing the existence of this site can do for the community around Big Hole is invite us to ask questions about its use — and to become aware of the fact that the federal government and corporations occupy space in our community which isn’t always known to us.”

You can find more content at [www.indyweek.com](http://www.indyweek.com).

## JURY SELECTION OPENS

# The trial for the murder of 14-month-old child is set to begin

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Jury selection in the trial of a couple charged in the murder of a 14-month-old child began earlier this month, marking the beginning of what could be a lengthy court case.

Josalyn Upchurch, 32, of Moncure and her ex-boyfriend, Rickey Devon Adams, 43, were both charged with

first-degree murder and felony child abuse in 2018 stemming from the death of Upchurch’s son, DeAndre Cotton on July 16, 2017.

Police and paramedics were called to Upchurch’s apartment at 127 Broadmoor Dr. in Pittsboro after her call to 911. When first responders arrived, they found the child dead and covered in bruises — particularly around his head and face.

An autopsy revealed the cause of Cotton’s death: blunt force trauma to the chest and abdomen. The report noted the child also suffered from broken ribs and a laceration to the liver.

Upchurch is being represented by Sanford-based lawyer Jonathan Silverman, and Adams is being represented by Public Defender Woodrena Baker-Harrell. The News + Record reached out to both attorneys about the cases,

but didn’t receive responses prior to publication.

A trial date hasn’t been set yet, according to Chatham County Court officials.

This is a developing story and will be updated.

Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at [theeden@chathamnr.com](mailto:theeden@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @HeedenTaylor.

# CCCC's student farm



CCCC photo by R.V. Hight

Summer is the growing season at the CCCC Student Farm on the Chatham Main Campus in Pittsboro. Here's a sampling of the work of the students — and nature — from this year's crop. Learn more about the CCCC Sustainable Agriculture program at [www.cccc.edu/curriculum/majors/sustainableagriculture/](http://www.cccc.edu/curriculum/majors/sustainableagriculture/).



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## I can't live by your rules, man

So, I've got two recipes and a really good idea for a third.



**DEBBIE MATTHEWS**  
The Curious Cook

And they all start with the same dish: a really unctuous comfort bowl of cabbage and spaetzle.

And it's all made possible by the fact that I am congenitally incapable of not messing around with a recipe.

I took a mocha chip cookie recipe that was very, very, thin and crispy and turned it into a brown butter, vanilla bean-flecked confection that was, per The Kid, crispy around the edges, and chewy in the middle.

My mother's father's Sunday gravy, or as my mom called it, spaghetti sauce, is an all-day-long cooked, maniacally fussed-over Italian red sauce that cooks for hours and is beloved of anyone who has ever eaten it at her table (except, strangely, me; I am immune to its dubious charms.).

Under my ministrations, it turned into an indulgent, silky sauce stuffed full of little meatballs, mushroom, chunks of Italian sausage, and the color of polished coral, with aromas of garlic and Marsala. I made frosting a food group.

For the week or so, I've been Jone-serve for some cabbage.

I decided I wanted to cook it like they serve at an old-school cafeteria. Cooked in plain water until soft and then drenched in either vinegar or melted butter.

I decided the term was probably stewed. I found a recipe, but she used chicken stock — out! Onion ... I don't think so!

What I ended up with was neither version of stewed cabbage but something altogether different.

That unctuous, comfort food thing from the beginning.

So, then I had leftovers. I had the idea to make them into fritters. When I was grabbing the flour I spied the gluten-free. My friend Val has an allergy to wheat so I thought maybe it would be a good gluten-free option.

Right after I took the first bite I realized something that you, Gentle Reader, have arrived at the finish line and are enjoying a creamy milkshake.

Spaetzle, made from wheat, is chock-full of gluten.

I'm nothing if not slow. It's OK, actually. Cubed potatoes would be just dandy in the role of spaetzle.

Thanks for your time. Contact me at [dm@bullcity.mom](mailto:dm@bullcity.mom).

### It's Really Not Any Sort of Stewed Cabbage

- 1 small head of cabbage, core removed and sliced
- into 1/2-inch ribbons
- 1 cup dry spaetzle
- 6 tablespoons butter
- Water
- 2 teaspoons honey
- Salt and pepper

Melt 2 tablespoons of the butter in a large heavy pot with a cover. Add cabbage, a big pinch of salt, and some pepper. Toss to coat. Cover and set burner to medium-low. Cook until the cabbage is softened and is swimming in the water it has released.

Add spaetzle and enough water to cover. Recover and cook for about 12 minutes, or until the noodle has cooked through. Uncover. If there's a lot of water still in the pot, pour it off until almost none is left. Carefully use a pot holder and the lid, do not strain, you don't want all the liquid removed.

Return pot to burner, turned to low and cook, stirring, until the water that remains is almost gone and you just begin to hear a sizzling sound.

Cut the remaining butter into chinks and stir in until a creamy sauce coats everything.

Check for seasoning and re-season, if necessary.

### Not Gluten-Free Fritters

- Cold left-over cabbage/spaetzle mixture
- Butter
- Flour for coating

Portion out the cold mixture into the same size. Pat and roll into patty shapes.

Melt enough butter in a skillet to coat the bottom of the pan. Dust fritters with flour and carefully lay into skillet.

Turn to medium-low and cover. Cook 3-4 minutes and check. If the first side is golden-brown, flip, re-cover and cook until second side is golden.

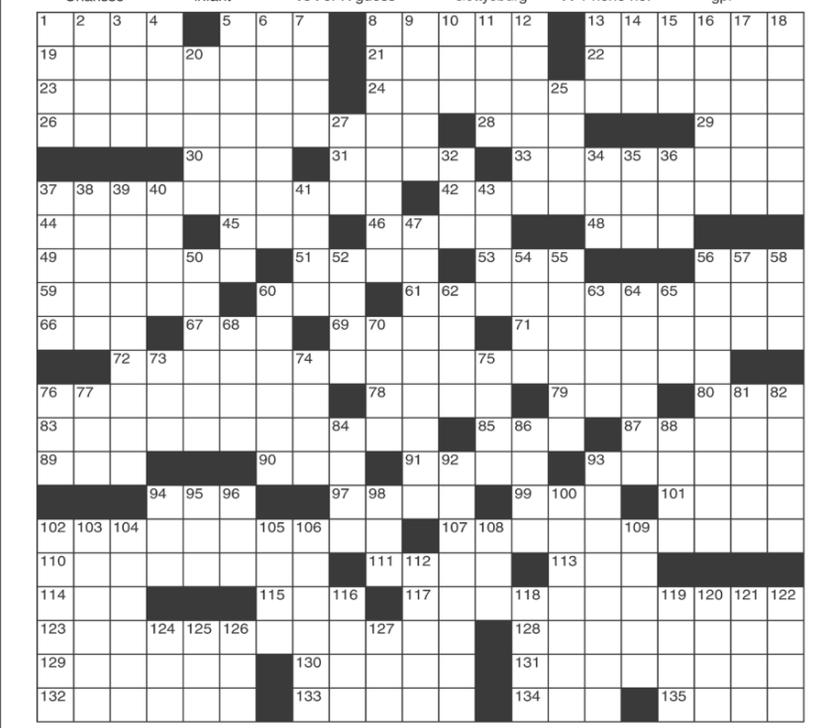
These things are awesome, I'm leaving it up to you, Gentle Reader to decide how to serve them.

### Third Brilliant Idea for Leftovers

Warm mixture in a skillet then add 8 beaten eggs and turn into a frittata. Maybe dot the top with some smoked Gouda before you finish it in the oven.

### PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

- ACROSS**
- 1 Saudi, say
  - 5 Raptors' gp.
  - 8 In a stupor
  - 13 GMC cross-over SUV model
  - 19 Reduces the worth of
  - 21 Lead-in to a bit of bad news
  - 22 What "I" and "y" are, for short
  - 23 Capital of South Australia
  - 24 Actress Dennis leaps?
  - 26 Boxer Marciano begins?
  - 28 — Canals
  - 29 Thurman of film
  - 30 Saloon
  - 31 "I could — horse!"
  - 33 Newspaper based in McLean, Va.
  - 37 Racing driver Wallace does some hammering?
  - 42 Singer Benatar replies?
  - 44 This, in Lima
  - 45 Dancer Charisse
  - 46 Waterproof canvas cover
  - 48 — out an existence
  - 49 Founder of Taoism
  - 51 Hair removal brand
  - 53 Gmail competitor
  - 56 Teensy
  - 59 Yosemite peak, in brief
  - 60 "... — my brother"
  - 61 Quarterback Bradshaw dries himself off?
  - 66 Reindeer kin
  - 67 Jurists' org.
  - 69 Emmy winner Baldwin
  - 71 Like whiteboards
  - 72 Actor Slater goes on vacation?
  - 76 Most thickset
  - 78 Huge hero
  - 79 Sink down
  - 80 Free TV spot, for short
  - 83 Comedian Buttons gains a lot of weight?
  - 85 "True —!" ("Yep!")
  - 87 Heroic tales
  - 89 Ending for duct or infant
  - 90 Lead-in to glottis or Pen
  - 91 Stadium level
  - 93 Employed for the purpose of
  - 94 "Help us!"
  - 97 Light in signs
  - 99 "Son of," in 1-Across names
  - 101 Russo of "Big Trouble"
  - 102 Architect Gehry speaks?
  - 107 Singer Alken woos someone?
  - 110 Helicopter or glider
  - 111 Whittle down
  - 113 Lovey
  - 114 Tatty cloth
  - 115 "-ology" kin
  - 117 Dancer Rogers loses control?
  - 123 Singer Gayle plays tenpins?
  - 128 Niagara River source
  - 129 Oration of adulation
  - 130 10th-century German king
  - 131 Ester in plastics
  - 132 Money in the form of coins
  - 133 Reveals
  - 134 JFK guess
  - 135 Agenda unit
- DOWN**
- 1 Jewish month
  - 2 Totally fix up
  - 3 With, in Paris
  - 4 Pitcher's goof
  - 5 Pain in the neck
  - 6 Accessory for a meal fit for a queen?
  - 7 Far offshore
  - 8 Mild aversion
  - 9 Make — buck
  - 10 Buddhist branch
  - 11 Actor George of "CSI"
  - 12 Dehydrate
  - 13 iPhone extra
  - 14 Freeway sight
  - 15 Actress Meyers
  - 16 Make bare
  - 17 Filmmaker Bergman
  - 18 Analyzes
  - 20 Put away for the future
  - 25 Slugger Sammy
  - 27 Islam, e.g.: Abbr.
  - 32 Fourth mo.
  - 34 Meth- ending
  - 35 "Bad boy!"
  - 36 Have debts
  - 37 Gen. at Gettysburg
  - 38 "Heaven help —!"
  - 39 Security ticker symbol
  - 40 "Ciao!"
  - 41 "... — baked a cake"
  - 43 On — with
  - 47 Takes care of
  - 50 Ancient Greek city
  - 52 Morales of "Rapa Nui"
  - 54 Baseball's Hershiser
  - 55 Greek harp player of yore
  - 56 "Crawling" internet bot
  - 57 Kay-em link
  - 58 Ending for Peking
  - 60 Pain in the neck
  - 62 Cave effect
  - 63 "Look what I just did!"
  - 64 Missouri tribespeople
  - 65 System
  - 68 Jessica of "7th Heaven"
  - 70 Reclined
  - 73 Wheel center
  - 74 Sporty auto roof
  - 75 Ye — Shoppe
  - 76 — Lankan
  - 77 Phone no.
  - 81 Deficient
  - 82 Donkeys
  - 84 Sow's sound
  - 86 Opera song
  - 88 Lima's land
  - 92 Very troubled
  - 93 Opened, as a wine bottle
  - 94 — cone
  - 95 Approved
  - 96 Sow's home
  - 98 Psychic skill
  - 100 From memory
  - 102 Outrageous comedies
  - 103 Rise on the hind legs
  - 104 Sock pattern
  - 105 Indigo dye
  - 106 Sappho's Greek island
  - 108 Writer Deighton
  - 109 Opening
  - 112 Shining
  - 116 Closet pest
  - 118 Pasty stuff
  - 119 Classic soda brand
  - 120 "I smell —!"
  - 121 Fir relative
  - 122 Appear
  - 124 Part of SSN: Abbr.
  - 125 — Fridays
  - 126 Vote in favor
  - 127 Global commerce gp.



Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.

H A S B E E N M I S H A U R G I N G S  
 A L L E G R O A S C O T T A R R I E S  
 S P I T A N D P O L I S H A G A I N S T  
 P O M A D E E R A T L C O N S E T  
 S P R I N K L E D O U G H N U T  
 A D D E D T O D I E T R I T E I R E  
 R O U S E G A L T R I A L S K N E E  
 M I S T F L O W E R S C T S D E E D S  
 T A T A A X E T S E K A Y  
 W H E T B U R U N D I P E T L T R  
 H E R E C O M E S T H E R A I N A G A I N  
 Y E S A R P A L B U M E N R P M S  
 A L S A L L A B A E T A L  
 O P T I C B U Y D R I Z Z L E C A K E  
 R O O M L A N I N A K E A D E T E R  
 B O G P O R T N O Y S N I S S A N S  
 S H O W E R R E G I S T R I E S  
 P L A T E M U S O A T I S T H M I  
 C O E D I T S P O U R I T O N T H I C K  
 R O S E T T A O M N E S S T E E L I E  
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UNITED STATES  
ATTORNEYS  
GENERAL

C G A X V S Q O L J H E C A X  
V T O R P H N K E N N E D Y L  
J H F N D B G T B L Y X V T R  
P O M K Z I R R F M D G E R D  
B Z X W U A A A U O T D Y R R  
H Q O N P D L K N B R E I A L  
J C I A F G A E F D N C T B D  
C S N O I S S E S K O R H A Y  
X O R Y E W V T N N I L O S S  
B D R Y L P O I E W N L P H A  
K J I G F E P R R E D L O H T

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
Unlisted clue hint: FIRST FEMALE JANET —

- |           |          |          |            |
|-----------|----------|----------|------------|
| Ashcroft  | Bradford | Lynch    | Sessions   |
| Barr      | Gonzales | Mukasey  | Thornburgh |
| Biddle    | Holder   | Pinkney  | Wirt       |
| Bonaparte | Kennedy  | Randolph |            |

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	2			6	1	3
		1	5			7
4			9			8
6		2	5			9
	5			7		1
8					3	6
	3		4		8	
		9		6		5
7			8		1	
						2

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ♦

- ♦ Moderate
- ♦♦ Challenging
- ♦♦♦ HOO BOY!

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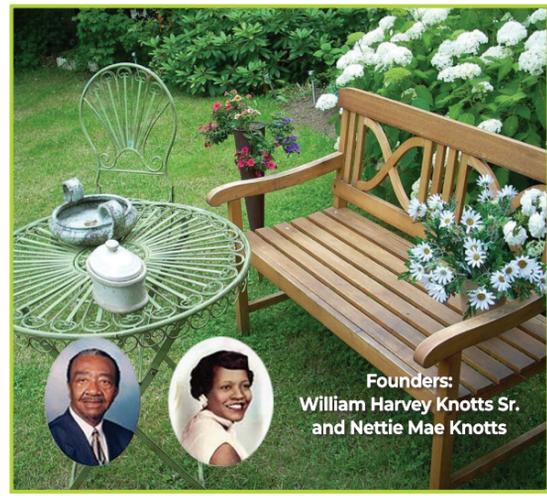
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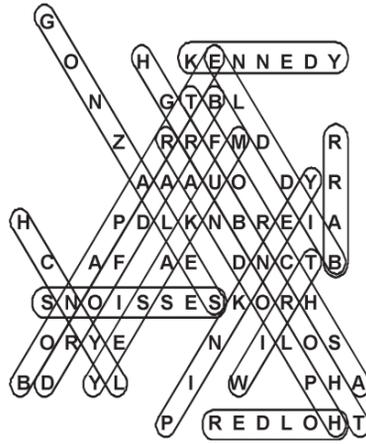
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UNITED STATES  
ATTORNEYS GENERAL



Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

5	2	8	7	4	6	1	9	3
9	6	1	3	5	8	4	2	7
4	7	3	9	1	2	5	8	6
6	1	2	5	8	4	7	3	9
3	5	4	6	7	9	2	1	8
8	9	7	1	2	3	6	4	5
2	3	6	4	9	5	8	7	1
1	8	9	2	6	7	3	5	4
7	4	5	8	3	1	9	6	2

THE CN+R REVIEW | NEIL MORRIS

## Jordan Peele's genre-blending 'Nope' an unwieldy cinematic sensation

A paean to visual filmmaking, Jordan Peele's "Nope" springboards off the first recorded moving picture in 1878, entitled "The Horse

in Motion," which captures the stationary shot of a man riding a galloping equine. The name of the videographer and even the horse are known, but the identity of the rider, a black man who is technically the first film actor and stunt man, is lost to history. In "Nope," the fictitious great-great-grandchildren of that rider are OJ and Emerald Haywood (Daniel Kaluuya and Keke Palmer, respectively), who reside on a horse

**NOPE**

**GRADE:** B +

**DIRECTOR:** Jordan Peele

**STARRING:** Daniel Kaluuya, Keke Palmer, Steven Yeun, Brandon Perea and Michael Wincott

**MPAA RATING:** R

**RUNNING TIME:** 2 hr. 12 min.

ranch amid a sprawling California gulch outside of Los Angeles. After the bizarre death of their father (Keith David), the Haywood siblings assume ownership of Haywood's Hollywood Horses, which provide trained horses for movie productions. The taciturn OJ is bound to the ranch, even if his heart is not in the business. The vivacious Em,

meanwhile, is bound to her brother but harbors bigger showbiz dreams for herself.

When stationary cloud hovers in the same spot over the valley for six weeks, the Haywoods surmise the unidentified aerial phenomena could be extraterrestrial, and that capturing and then selling a visual recording of the object could be their meal ticket off the ranch.

The contrast between OJ and Em is one of the film's sustaining features. Palmer is terrific in a meaty role that spans the acting spectrum, as Em transforms brash comic to scream queen to Western warrior. Kaluuya, meanwhile, recognizes the comedic value of a more subdued demeanor, whether it is his steely stares in the face of Em's hysterics or periodically (and aptly) intoning the film's title.

The genre-blending "Nope" incorporates elements of horror pictures, alien flicks, dark comedy, and Westerns; indeed, when our protagonists joust with the bad guy during the final showdown—one on horseback, the other on motorcycle—it is set to a rousing overture that would sound at home during the likes of "Ride the High Country" and "How the West Was Won." Moreover, Peele's predilection with the evolution of video recording litters "Nope," starting with the sort of hand-cranked camera used to record "Horse in Motion" that reappears in the film's final act.

In between, we witness the use of digital movie equipment, IMAX technology, personal surveillance cameras, and even camera phones. A local tech head named Angel (Brandon

Perea) helps install an internet-based recording system for the Haywoods, and even an anonymous TMZ photog shows up during the denouement. The Haywoods seek the services of a grizzled Hollywood cinematographer (Michael Wincott), whose gravely rendition of "Purple People Eater" essentially removes the cloud of mystery surrounding the stange visitor. It all feels like both Peele's salute to filmmaking and his take on society's voyeuristic nature. While sex equals death in the traditional horror film, in "Nope" bad things after actual eye contact.

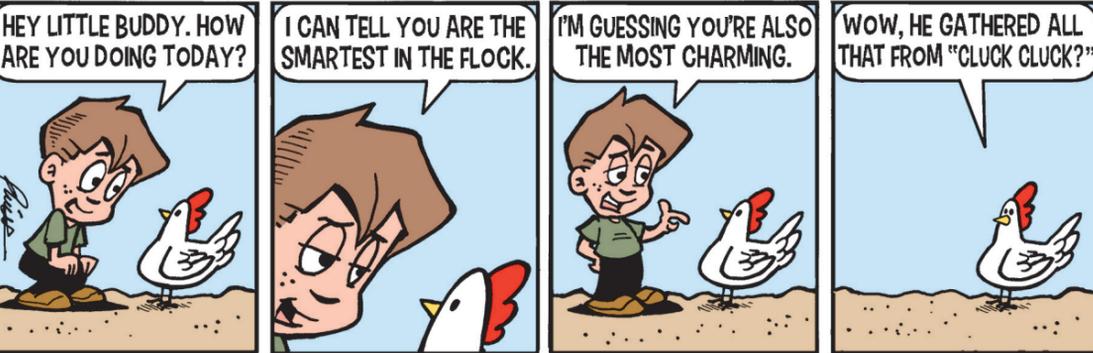
The most disquieting part of "Nope" is not even the primary alien plot. Instead, they are flashbacks (including the film's cold open) to a fictional 1990s television sitcom called "Gordy's Home," which ended in gory and ignominious fashion when the titular chimpanzee suddenly went berserk on set and maimed or killed the cast. Peele shows glimpses of the bloody aftermath through the eyes of the show's surviving child star, Jupe, who now (played by Steven Yeun) operates an Old West theme town adjacent to the Haywood ranch. Jupe also hosts a back-room, macabre shrine to "Gordy's Room" on the side that attracts underground fanatics looking for perverse proof of the show since the TV net-

works have scrubbed its existence from YouTube. So, when the mysterious cloud appears overhead, Jupe quickly pivots to also turn it into a money-making attraction for his patrons.

If there is a through line connecting "Nope's" disparate narrative threads, it is the notion that for all our money and technological marvels, nature does not always acquiesce to our desire to tame reality to our commercial will, whether it is a sitcom monkey, stunt horses, or even a ravenous eye on the sky. In truth, however, this is not the principal takeaway from "Nope." While we still keep waiting for Peele to replicate the searing social commentary of his film debut, "Get Out," he instead produces a triumph of cinematic atmospherics.

Despite a murky and unwieldy plotline, "Nope" is a sensory sensation that succeeds as movies should: by assessing the fears and emotions of its audience through a combination of visual and audio sublimity, furthered in large part by "Dunkirk" and "Interstellar" cinematographer Hoyte van Hoytema and Peele's obvious riffing on Spielberg and Hitchcock. Narratively, it sometimes feels like an overlong episode of a middling "Twilight Zone" episode. It is also what going to the movie theater should feel like.

### Amber Waves



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by Dave T. Phipps



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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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