

Chatham News + Record

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A YEAR AFTER GEORGE FLOYD'S DEATH

Chatham's law enforcement community reacts to Chauvin's murder conviction

BY D. LARS DOLDER
News + Record Staff

An anonymous jury of his peers — six white and six people of color — convicted former Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin last week of murdering George Floyd, a Black man whose death sparked a resurgent civil rights movement almost one year ago.

The much-anticipated verdict was historic in at least one sense: it was the first time ever in Minnesota history that a white officer was deemed guilty of murder for killing a Black man on the job. The conviction is sim-

ilarly unprecedented in other states.

In the wake of Chauvin's historic trial, many police officers have voiced their approval, or rejection, of the outcome. A day after the trial concluded, Andrew Brown Jr., a Black man, was shot five times by police in Elizabeth City. He died from a "kill shot to the back of the head," according to attorneys for Brown's family.

Coupled with Chauvin's guilty verdict, the incident has sparked widespread rancor; many, including some police officers, say law enforcement must change in response to calls for reform and increased

accountability.

To see what Chathamites can expect of their police officers amid the nationwide reckoning, the News + Record interviewed local law enforcement leaders. These are their responses.

Chatham County Sheriff's Office

"My reaction is I think it's important for all officers to intervene when they see something inappropriate," said Chatham County Sheriff Mike Roberson. "Whether that's inappropriate use of force or an officer doing

See **POLICE**, page A7

How to talk with your child about sexual abuse

BY VICTORIA JOHNSON & HANNAH MCCLELLAN
News + Record Staff

Child sex abuse is more common than many think — and it's also a lot closer than many realize.

Just weeks ago, the Siler City Police Department arrested Oscar Vera Jimenez, a Siler City pastor, for more than 100 charges related to the sexual abuse of two children.

That's not a rare situation. In the United States, one in five girls and one in 20 boys are victims of child sexual abuse, according to the National Center for Victims of Crime. About 90% are abused by those they know and trust.

But education and dialogue — though uncomfortable — can help prevent child sex abuse. The News + Record spoke with three local experts during National Child Abuse Prevention Month about how parents can protect their children from sexual abuse, how they can talk with children about it and what to do if it happens.

Here's what experts advised:

See **ABUSE**, page A8

'WE NEED THE COMMUNITY'

Siler City murder suspect still on the run

BY D. LARS DOLDER & VICTORIA JOHNSON
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — More than four months after the killing of Ramon Hernandez, Chatham County police have made little progress in locating his suspected killer, Sergio "Yovani" Rodriguez Pereira.

"We have warrants for him. We're actively looking for him. We have probable cause for his arrest," Sheriff Mike Roberson told the News + Record. "... It's just a matter of locating him. And there's no end or statute of limitations on it. I hope we find him soon, but if it's years, the warrants are still active, and they'll stay active. It's not going to go away."

Hernandez, 28, died Dec. 20 in the UNC-Chapel Hill Medical Center after he was shot several times in the torso. He'd been found earlier the same day on Waterford Street in Siler City after authorities received reports of several gunshots.

See **SUSPECT**, page A3

RAISING A GLASS AT VINO!!

At Pittsboro's wine shop, Lange makes a case for great taste

BY BILL HORNER III
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Wine may be considered the nectar of the gods, but Anna Lange views it from a more down-to-earth perspective.

"It's such a social thing," she says.

After a year of ubiquitous pandemic-induced social-distancing, Lange — the co-owner/operator of Vino!!, the boutique wine shop located in downtown Pittsboro — could hardly be blamed for crying sour grapes. While Vino!! was never forced to fully close during North Carolina's COVID-19-mandated shut-down of bars, restrictions and the simple fact that people weren't getting out as much meant a significant decrease in traffic to her shop. Over the last year, Lange cut hours, laid off most of her part-time staff and was forced to eliminate or curtail many of the events that helped drive the business's revenue.

People didn't stop drinking wine, but as a vintage, Vino!!'s 2020 was a bit of a bust. As 2021 unfolds, though, Lange is a little more hopeful about the harvest for the little wine shop she and her family opened — somewhat on a lark — nine



Staff photo by Bill Horner III

Anna Lange, the operator and co-owner of Vino!!, the wine store in downtown Pittsboro, says she's happy to make wine recommendations to customers — as well as engage in serious wine talk with 'wine geeks' like herself.

years ago.

Essential, but reduced

Back in March 2020, as COVID-19 surfaced in N.C. and trends grew more alarming, Gov. Roy Cooper ordered restaurants and bars to stop indoor service. Before the gradual easing of restrictions later in the year, the state's hospitality industry was pummeled: business closings and job losses were felt every-

See **WINE**, page A13



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Customer Shirley Caraball gets a pour during last Friday's wine tasting at Vino!! in Pittsboro. The tastings, halted for a time during the pandemic, are held from 5-7 p.m. each Friday.

'A light within a very dark time': Celebrating Ramadan during a pandemic

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN
News + Record Staff

For the second Ramadan in a row, Chatham resident Delinda Otto hasn't stepped foot in a mosque.

Last year — during what Otto calls a "super-COVID Ramadan" — at the beginning of the pandemic, most mosques were closed. This year, COVID-19 gathering restrictions have forced Otto to break fast, recite the Quran and conduct Taraweeh Prayers with her family at home, instead of at the mosque or in large gatherings.

"Ramadan was difficult but not difficult," said Otto, an ESL teacher at Siler City Elementary, of last year's

Ramadan.

Her daughter and son-in-law, Hanaan Salamah and Mohamed Abdou, had recently moved into her two-bedroom apartment in Clemmons with their four young children after Salamah graduated medical school.

"It was really fun — we all sat on the floor and ate dinner to break fast," she said. "It was more gathering and more family time. It was small, but it made us closer. It was a light within a very dark time."

The pandemic and COVID-19 restrictions make the communal aspects of Ramadan more challenging, and mosques and religious leaders are

See **RAMADAN**, page A3

Adopt-A-Street volunteers work to keep Siler City clean

BY D. LARS DOLDER
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Clad in ultra-reflective vests and furnished with official NC-DOT-approved "grabber sticks," Siler City's business leaders are out to beautify their town, one piece of trash at a time.

"You know those little grabber things? Sometimes elderly people use them, or you use them to get things up high," said Siler City's Angelynn Fox, laughing. "Well we've got those things, and our lovely orange safety vests with the neon reflective stripes, and everybody just kind of puts their orange trash bag in hand and gets to work."

Fox, owner of the Siler City Pharmacy, is one of several local businesspeople who participates in the town's Adopt-A-

Street program to clean and maintain Siler City roads. As part of the Siler City Merchants Association, Fox — the organization's president — and the other 33 group members are responsible for cleaning Memorial Drive and Cottage Grove Avenue, both of which the organization adopted in 2014. Last Tuesday, the group collected about eight bags full of trash, but it's not uncommon for them to walk away with 12 to 15, Fox says.

"And the idea is just to try to dive into really, truly beautifying Siler City," she said, "and those two roads are incredibly notorious for just being really, really trashy. I know that sounds bad, but it's true."

The volunteers find all kinds of gar-

See **CLEAN**, page A3

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

The 2021 Spring Chicken Festival, scheduled for May 1, has been cancelled due to COVID-19.

The Friends of the Chatham Community Library has cancelled its Spring Book Sale due to the continued lockdown of government offices and businesses, ordered by federal, state, and local government. More information can be found on the website: friendscl.org.

Chatham County Council on Aging: Both centers are closed at this time until further notice. If you need to pick up supplies, call the Siler City or Pittsboro location or check our website at chathamcoa.org.

ON THE AGENDA

The Siler City Board of Commissioners will meet at 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 3, at town hall.

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners will meet beginning with a work session at 2 p.m. on Monday, May 3, at the Historic Chatham County Courthouse in Pittsboro. The evening regular session begins at 6 p.m.

THURSDAY

Siler City Parks and Recreation invites you to start your day off right with a few laps at the Indoor Walking Program each weekday morning, Monday thru Friday, from 7 to 9 a.m., at the Ernest Ramsey Gymnasium Indoor Walking Track, 512 East 6th Street. The program is free and no pre-registration is required.

Operations are subject to COVID-19 guidelines and mask requirement indoors. For more information, visit www.silercity.org or contact Siler City Parks and Recreation at (919) 742-2699 or email recreation@silercity.org. **Pittsboro Farmers Market** is open with seasonal items year-round from 3 to 6 p.m. on Thursdays, at 287 East St.

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.

SATURDAY

A Community Celebration to benefit **Pittsboro Boys & Girls Club** will be held from 1-5 p.m. on Saturday at Pittsboro Kiwanis Park, 309 Credle St. To celebrate their first anniversary, Eagle Star LLC — a local door and window company — is hosting a community celebration to benefit the Pittsboro Boys & Girls Club. Come join us for a great afternoon of food and entertainment with burgers, hot dogs, desserts, music by The Dowdy Boys, storytelling by Evie Evans, games, and visits by Pittsboro Police and a Pittsboro fire truck.

All of these are free and open to the public. Donations are appreciated and there will be some raffles as well. All proceeds help with the development of the much-needed new Boys & Girls Club of Pittsboro.

CLYDEFEST in the Wild Details: Chatham Artists-in-Schools artist Diali Cissokho and ClydeFEST roving performers will travel through the neighborhoods of Briar Chapel and Nature Trail Community sharing their arts magic. Saturday, May 1, at Bray Park, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Pick up Critter Kits (a critter cut-out, plus paint and glue) at Chatham County Partnership for Children's drive-through Day of the Book/Dia de

los Libros celebration. Families can grab a kit here and adorn them at home. - Sunday, May 2, at Southwest District Park, 1-5 p.m., A ClydeFEST in the Wild celebration in southwestern Chatham! Families and kids, sign up now to schedule outdoor critter-painting time and enjoy the music. The event is free, but participants need to sign-up in advance to reserve a spot for critter painting/glittering/adorn in small groups. Sign up at <https://www.chathamartscouncil.org/clydefest-in-the-wild-2021/>.

OTHER UPCOMING:

The Eastern Randolph High School FFA Alumni in cooperation with Jay Hinson and his Lucky J Rodeo Company and Arena will present their 17th annual Jeff Hinson Memorial N.C. High School Rodeo, on May 7 and 8 at 7 p.m. at the Lucky J Arena on U.S. Hwy. 64 East of Ramseur. The arena's address is 129 Shady Grove Church Rd., Staley, near Captain Tom's Seafood Restaurant. The purpose of this event is to raise scholarship money for graduating FFA members, assist in sending FFA members to local, state, and national leadership conferences, and to help financially support the Agriculture Education/FFA programs at Eastern Randolph High School and Southeastern Randolph Middle School.

The League of Women Voters, Orange, Durham and Chatham, invites the community to a lecture series on "The State of Our Democracy." Join us as six scholars from local universities explore the roots of our government, and the resiliency of our

democracy. Register for one or more, they are free, open to the public from 6:30 to 8 p.m., Tuesday, May 4, America's Struggle Over Voting Rights: Lessons from North Carolina.

The Chatham Historical Museum is open Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. Masks required and groups will be distanced. Adult and kid friendly; no admission fee. Our current special exhibit is vintage toys. Don't miss it! 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: <https://chathamhistory.org>

Second Bloom Thrift Store is open at the Food Lion Shopping Center. Store hours are from Tuesday until Saturday, 11 a.m. until 5 p.m. Masks are required and hand sanitizer is also available. Proceeds provide support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote community education in collaboration with Chatham County.

Pittsboro Youth Theater (pittsboroyouththeater.com) is offering in-person theater camps this summer! All campers will learn a comprehensive variety of theater skills, rehearse and perform a live play at Sweet Bee Theater. Camps will be led by experienced Pittsboro Youth Theater Director(s) and Assistant(s). Camp themes include Princess Camp, Fairy Camp, Jungle Camp, and Alien Camp. There

will also be a 3-week musical intensive one resulting in performances of Frozen Jr., as well as a 2-week intensive for younger campers resulting in performances of Frozen Kids. Enrollment is open now on a first-come, first-served basis. Ages: 6-12; 3 weeks for ages 10-18. Dates: Weekly camps, 2-week summer intensive, and 3-week summer intensive, June 14 - August 13, 9 am to 5 pm, (early drop-off and late pick-up for an additional fee). Frozen Jr. and Frozen Kids: See website for details, COVID-19 Precautions, full details and accommodations - PYT Marketing Team, pytmktg@gmail.com - 18A E. Salisbury St., Pittsboro; 919-533-6997.

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.

JMArts hosted a **JMACoronaConcert** via Twitter featuring performances submitted by JM students and faculty. Concerts can be viewed on its Twitter account @JMArts and by using the hashtags #JMACoronaConcert performances and #JMACoronaConcert program.

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.

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

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

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.bstrop93.org for more information.
 • Pack 924 of Siler City First U.M.C. meets on from 7 to 8:30 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.



NEW DATE: MAY 15, 2021

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RAMADAN

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adapting in a variety of ways, including smaller gathering, drive-thru events and virtual prayers.

The Muslim holy month of Ramadan lasts for 29 or 30 days and is a time of celebration, devotion and spiritual discipline. During Ramadan, Muslims fast from food and water every day from dawn to sunset, and increase prayers, charity and study of the Quran. Ramadan follows the lunar calendar, which is 11 days shorter than the standard Gregorian calendar. That means the Islamic calendar moves backward approximately 11 days each year. Whereas Ramadan began April 23 last year, this year it began on April 12.

Otto is celebrating Ramadan with her daughter's family in Chatham, after moving to their new house in February. The family attends Jamaat Ibad Ar-Rahman in Durham, though Otto hasn't yet been inside the mosque.

Typically, Iftar — the evening meal to break the fast — is celebrated in community with large parties. Due to safety concerns, Otto said this year her family has gathered a few times with nearby families in smaller settings to break fast after Maghrib prayer, the fourth of five daily Muslim prayer times which takes place around sunset.

"This year, we're in a nice, beautiful, big house," she said. "We're trying to slowly get back to the norm of Ramadan, because the



Staff photo by Hannah McClellan

Siler City Elementary teacher Delinda Otto poses in front of her 'Ramadan Mubarak' banner, meaning 'blessed Ramadan.' Otto moved to Chatham in February, and despite celebrating Ramadan for the second time during a pandemic, is grateful to celebrate with family.

enjoyment of breaking fast with friends and family is really important."

'You really have to have it in your heart'

Mohamed AbuTaleb, the Imam of the Islamic Association of Raleigh, said while fasting is a large part of Ramadan, the meaning "is much broader than that."

"The idea is that by quieting what is normally allowed, right, the normal impulses of the body, that a person cultivates mindfulness, piety, empathy with the condition of others, particularly the poor who may be experiencing hunger or loss or hardship," AbuTaleb said. "(One is) able to motivate oneself toward a space of being a better person — better for themselves, better for their family and better for their society."

While generosity is an

important value to most Muslims throughout the year, charity is especially emphasized during Ramadan through things like food drives, community dinners, fundraising and more. In addition to the five obligatory prayers throughout the year, during Ramadan Muslims can participate in optional nighttime prayers where people typically gather together at a mosque for worship. During a normal year, AbuTaleb said these kinds of gatherings at the Islamic Association of Raleigh would include hundreds — sometimes thousands — of people.

"So COVID obviously impacts a lot of this," he said.

The mosque has made adhering to public health recommendations a priority, he added, abiding by COVID-19 protocol and offering distanced-in-person, drive-thru and online gatherings.

"For Muslims, worship is something that goes

beyond just the spoken word, or the message or the sermon, kind of the presence in ranks and in congregation and the physical presence is something that is very important to us," he said.

That doesn't mean individual worship isn't possible, AbuTaleb said, but it's more challenging. Some prayers, like the nightly Taraweeh prayers, are established congregationally. For that reason, the mosque livestreams those prayers.

"But that live stream is more of a community connection," he said. "It's not a substitute for the worship activities."

Otto primarily celebrates with her daughter and son-in-law, as her grandchildren — Maya, 7, Monaya, 6, Maraya, 4 and Mazen, 18 months — aren't old enough to fully participate, particularly when it comes to fasting.

Fasting is not forced on anyone, Otto emphasized, and is sometimes discouraged for young children in Islam because it's difficult for them to know the meaning behind the fasting. Many children are encouraged to begin fasting once they've reached puberty.

"I want to fast with them!" her oldest grandchild Maya tells her. She's fasted through breakfast a few times, joining her siblings for lunch — which is "good training," Otto said.

"We don't start early, and we don't force because if it's not in here," she said, motioning to her heart, "it's not gonna happen. If it's not in here, it's going to be extremely hard and you're

not going to continue with it. You really have to have it in your heart, and that's what we try to instill in the kids as they're growing up."

'American Muslims are our neighbors'

While celebrating Ramadan this year still has its challenges, AbuTaleb said it's been a relief to resume some semblance of normal meetings, especially during a time when overt racial injustice coupled with COVID-19 created so much pain.

In addition to bringing peace to Muslims, AbuTaleb said he hopes Ramadan will serve as a reminder to all Americans that American Muslims are a diverse and populous group of people. More than 75 nationalities are represented at the Islamic Association, he said, and no single ethnicity makes up the majority, despite many people associating Islam with Arab people.

Many Americans say they haven't met a Muslim person, AbuTaleb said, citing a Pew Research Center study, though there are about 3.45 million Muslims in the U.S.

"Something I just wish people knew during this month and after this month, is that, you know, American Muslims are our neighbors, right? They're our teachers. They're our frontline workers at the grocery store, or medical providers. They're our friends," he said. "There are relationships waiting to be rekindled and build and deepen, particularly during this time, where we

see racial tensions, ethnic tensions, religious tensions, placing our country at such a point of unrest and hardship.

"We can be demonstrations that it doesn't need to be like that at any time of the year," he said, "But Ramadan is a particularly ripe opportunity for that conversation."

AbuTaleb said many Muslims are glad to share their faith, especially during Ramadan when their spiritual disciplines are more apparent. Otto said she wishes more people would ask her about Ramadan. While some ask about fasting and prayers the rest of the year, she said most people avoid the subject entirely during Ramadan itself.

Halfway through the month, Otto said she will likely join virtual Taraweeh services for the last 10 days of Ramadan, which are considered the most important.

While Ramadan is always a special time for Muslims, she said the last two years have been especially meaningful because of pandemic's challenges. "It's helped me to remember that we can make it. Allah is there for us," she said, wiping away tears. "You realize, I can do this — Allah is helping me. Not only can I fast, I can teach, I can make it through this COVID. I'm going to survive, no matter how hard it is. ... Faith has helped me get through a lot of this."

Reporter Hannah McClellan can be reached at hannah@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @HannerMcClellan.

CLEAN

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bage — discarded bottles of soda and alcohol, fast food bags, sometimes clothing. But in the last year, the most prolific litter has been discarded or lost masks.

"Masks are the new thing," Fox said, "so we definitely use the grabbers for those."

Memorial and Cottage Grove are not the only streets laden with garbage, though. Many across Siler City are beset with litter. That's why the town first launched its Adopt-A-Street program in about 2007 in partnership with the N.C. Dept. of Transportation.

"It's to make our town look better, clean it up," Town Planner Jack Meadows said, "and there's been quite a few to participate, I would say, in recognition of this need. There's been a lot of support."

Adopt-A-Street program members are obligated



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Renee Kennedy, Angelynn Fox, Jim McClary and Sue Szary pause during an effort to pick up trash discarded along North Chatham Avenue in Siler City last Tuesday. They and other members of the Siler City Merchants Association have adopted two roads near downtown to keep clean.

to clean their sections of road at least quarterly, Fox said, but that's not frequent enough to keep up with the ever-mounting piles of trash.

"I mean some of our members, like Renee Kennedy and Zoann Adams, they're always cleaning up," Fox said, "way more than just quarterly.

They'll be out there, you'll see them with the orange garbage bags, picking up more often."

Kennedy — station manager at Siler City's WNCA radio, where she's been for almost 40 years — was with the SCMA when it first joined the Adopt-A-Street program. The group's two streets aren't

long she says, but they're a bear to keep clean.

"(Memorial) is a short street, very short street, but it has no lights and no houses," Kennedy said. "So it's an easy place for people to throw out their garbage ... So we try to get out as much as we can."

Zoann Adams has been with the Merchants Association since its inception. Besides helping SCMA adopt its two roads, she and her husband Sam have also cared for South 6th Avenue since 2007. Altogether, 13 groups of volunteers make up the town's Adopt-A-Street program, including Chatham Charter School, the Moose Lodge and Fidelity Bank. But as the Adamases prove, it's not just organizations that can participate.

"It would be great to see more streets adopted even by individuals," Kennedy said. "You don't even have to be a group, you can be just an individual."

The Town of Siler City lists more than 100 quali-

ifying streets — representing dozens of miles — in Siler City still available for adoption. Details of the town's Adopt-A-Street program can be found on the Town of Siler City's website, silercity.org, under the Public Works & Utilities section.

To address litter in areas where groups and individuals have not adopted streets, the town hosts a two-week Spring Litter Sweep every year around Earth Day, which falls on April 22. This year, the Siler City Police Department and Siler City Development Organization were primary sponsors.

"There were over 20 organizations and groups that volunteered and helped pick up certain streets that were identified," Meadows said. "NCDOT was a partner for that, too, and volunteers went through streets that had a lot of trash on them and, I think, accomplished a lot."

But quarterly cleanings

and big annual sweeps aren't enough to keep Siler City clean for long, volunteers say.

"I mean, we pick up one day and the next day you can ride through and there's garbage again," Kennedy said. "It just gets so bad that it needs picking up more often."

To affect lasting change, it will take concerted effort from all Siler City residents, according to Fox.

"I hope what these groups are doing will inspire others — not to adopt a street necessarily, although that would be great — but just if you see trash, clean it up," she said. "Don't just walk by something that might be on the street, or near your property on the side of the road. It will truly take a citizen effort to keep Siler City clean."

Reporter D. Lars Dolder can be reached at dlolder@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @dlolder.

SUSPECT

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A witness later identified Rodriguez — a Siler City resident and Hernandez's brother-in-law — as the shooter. The Chatham County Sheriff's Office subsequently charged Ro-

driguez with one count of first-degree murder and three counts of assault with a deadly weapon.

"It's like he disappeared," said Hernandez's older sister, Tania. "He hasn't made contact from what I know with family, or with anyone, so we are clueless as to

how to find (him), how to search for him."

According to Hernandez, Rodriguez's family members in Chatham have also said they don't know his whereabouts. In the event that he's fled town, local police can still retrieve Rodriguez for prosecution through a network of law enforcement agencies. Any law enforcement officer in North Carolina can see any warrant issued within the state, Roberson said. Warrants are also entered into a national database. "When we enter those, if your name gets run in any state, it pops up a hit that you're a wanted person out of Chatham County Sheriff's Office, North Carolina," Roberson said. "And we've also talked to the U.S. Marshals about it and they can do things on their end."

Local law enforcement's authority to apprehend Rodriguez extends even beyond U.S. borders. When asked if the police could still arrest Rodriguez if he's found in another country, Roberson responded, "Yes, the U.S. Marshals will help us with that, or the FBI — the Federal officers will help us with

that."

Tania said she doesn't think Rodriguez has left the U.S., though it's possible.

"That's what we're afraid of, to be honest with you," she told the News + Record. "... I don't think he's flown out. I don't think he's gone to any other place because in Honduras — I don't think he's made it that far. There's no way that he would have."

She thinks it's more likely Rodriguez has fled to a nearby state, perhaps to distant family connections who don't know her brother or what happened.

"I want to think he's still on the east side," she said, adding, "I want to say he's on his own. ... I just don't see anybody that is going to get anything out of it, being incriminated as an accessory for assisting somebody that is on the run. So, what I'm thinking really is he's hiding with friends."

Authorities found Rodriguez's car abandoned within county lines less than a week after Hernandez died, according to Tania.

"So someone picked him up, someone hid

him," she said. "I don't know if that person still has him hiding or just (bought) enough time for him to be moved to another place. And he's been hidden since."

That's why she said she suspects some among the community know more than they've told the family or authorities. And though she understands that some may be afraid, she asks that anyone who knows something come forward — anonymously, if they prefer.

"If you know anything, call the hotline," she said. "You don't have to give out your name. You don't have to come to us. You don't even have to make your face appear if it's a possibility. If you just give us an idea of where he's at ... we're trying to get this crime brought to justice, and unfortunately, we have nothing."

The Sheriff's Office requests that anyone with relevant information, including tips regarding Rodriguez's whereabouts, contact the Sheriff's Office non-emergency line at 919-542-2911.

Like Tania, Roberson fears police will not find Rodriguez unless community members, and

probably his own family, turn him in.

"Without help from the family and the community it's going to take us running up on him somewhere," he said. "... But I think wherever he's found, I think the (district attorney) is willing to bring him back. A lot of times people think the police can find people on their own. But we need the community most of the time. It's going to take the community to help us get him quickly."

To encourage community tips, the Hernandez family, Tania said, is prepared to offer a small reward "as gratitude" to anyone who comes forward with information.

"I think that we are grateful for what was done for Ramon," she said, "and, you know, we grew up in Chatham County. We've been here most of our lives. Just bringing him to justice — it's really what we were asking."

Reporter Victoria Johnson can be reached at victoria@chathamnr.com. Reporter D. Lars Dolder can be reached at dlolder@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @dlolder.



TOWN OF SILER CITY Public Works and Utilities

Starting May 3rd, we will begin our annual hydrant testing and flushing. The Siler City Fire Department will begin on Harold Andrews Road and come back towards town on Snow Camp Road, then to Pearly Man Teague Road and work their way East around the hospital and out highway 64. May the 10th the Fire Department hopes to be in Love's Creek MHP and Hampton Village and will work their way back into the Southeast Side of the city and work towards Jordan Matthews. The weeks of the 17th and the 24th they hope to have the Northeast side of town completed.

VIEWPOINTS

GUEST COLUMN | MINTA PHILLIPS & MARK REYNOLDS

Since last Earth Day, climate impacts have only hit harder

The amount of heat-trapping emissions humans have spewed into our atmosphere since last Earth Day was 10% less than a typical year, a cause for celebration if not for one salient fact: the reduction in carbon pollution will be short-lived as the global economy rebounds from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Though emissions were briefly down, the impact of climate change in 2020 was more devastating than ever. The Atlantic hurricane season broke records for the number of named storms with 30 — so many that the World Meteorological Organization ran out of names and had to

use the Greek alphabet. AccuWeather estimates the economic fallout from these storms to be between \$60 billion and \$65 billion.

The 2020 storm season also saw the rise of another troubling phenomenon associated with climate change: rapid intensification of storms, which can leave coastal communities in the path of deadly hurricanes with little time to evacuate. Rapid intensification is caused by increasingly warmer ocean temperatures.

While hurricanes wreaked havoc in the East, wildfires raged in the West, where dry conditions and record temperatures contributed to one of the worst fire seasons. U.S. wildfires burned a total of 10.27 million acres in 2020, killed at least 43 people and caused damages reaching \$16.5 billion.

The human and monetary toll is considerably higher when the health impact of smoke-filled skies is taken into account. A study looking at the 2018 wildfire season in California found that when the indirect impact of smoke is

considered — hospitalizations, lost wages, etc. — the economic damage was \$150 billion.

Winter provides no respite from the impact of climate change. The rapid warming of the Arctic, scientists say, played a role in weakening the jet stream that contains the polar vortex. This weakening allowed sub-freezing temperatures to reach all the way to the Gulf Coast of Texas earlier this year, knocking out electricity and heat to millions.

Here in North Carolina, we're feeling the impact of climate change with progressive extreme storm events including tornadoes and quick whipping temperature changes hurting our businesses such as agriculture.

The frequency of disasters afflicting nearly every part of the country will continue to rise with temperatures. Unless ambitious steps are taken to curtail the emissions of warming gases, these catastrophes will outpace our ability to adapt and recover.

Among the numerous tools needed to bring down emis-

sions, a robust carbon price is the most effective and foundational. The key is to set a price high enough to move investments and behavior toward a rapid transition to a clean energy economy. By returning revenue to households, thereby protecting Americans from the economic impact of higher energy costs, we can establish a price that gets the job done.

The end game is to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2050. Only then will we be able to imagine a world where each Earth Day doesn't mark a year of worsening climate impacts. A recent study by Columbia University economists estimated the level and timing of a carbon price to meet that goal. The price would need to reach between \$34 and \$64 per metric ton of CO2 by 2025 and between \$77 and \$124 by 2030.

Several bills that employ the fee-and-dividend approach to carbon pricing fall within the range needed to achieve the needed emissions reductions:

- The Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act in the House, sponsored by Rep. Ted

Deutch (D-Florida)

- The America's Clean Future Fund Act in the Senate, sponsored by Sen. Dick Durbin (D-Illinois)

- The American Opportunity Carbon Fee Act, sponsored by Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-Rhode Island), expected to be introduced soon

By co-sponsoring these bills, Senators Burr and Tillis and Congressmen Ted Budd and David Price can help to ensure that Congress implements this critical tool this year.

Half a century ago, the first Earth Day kicked off a movement that led to cleaner air and water for all Americans. This year's Earth Day comes at a time when more and more Americans have personally felt the impacts of climate change. It's time for Congress to act, and an ambitious price on carbon is a big step in the right direction.

Minta Phillips is a volunteer with the Greensboro chapter of Citizens' Climate Lobby. Mark Reynolds is the Executive Director of Citizens' Climate Lobby.

Life's signposts reappear in each generation

All along life's journey are signposts that mark important points.

While some are unique to an individual, many others we have in common with most every other person in the world ... or at least those in our immediate world.

Among them are the beginning of school, graduation, college or the military or a job, marriage, a promotion, the birth of children, retirement to name a few. We've all had some of them.

Included for me was my four-year college career crammed into seven years, a couple of children along the way and a good long time still with my better half. I missed out on serving Uncle Sam and got only a promotion or two before changing careers. But of all the events that tell me about milestones, I suppose my clearest one is the presence of the young folks who are part of the next generation of my family and who make me a grandfather.

There are seven of them, ranging from 15 years to almost a year old — two guys, the bookends — and then five little princesses in between. I'm not going to show you any pictures because if you've got some of these folks of your own then I'm pretty sure you think yours are the greatest. (Although you would, of course, be mistaken.)

There are lots of reasons this is all a milestone for me, especially as I interact with them at their different ages. The oldest one is a teenager who's good company; I enjoy messing with him and he's a lot of help with chores my parents — Mother Nature and Father Time — sometimes make it hard for me to do. His counterpart on the other end has just learned to stand alone and take some halting steps, and he is extremely proud of himself as he stands and crows about it all. And for the moment, he likes to sit in my lap hanging onto my finger as he stares right through me with those big beautiful blue eyes.

The stairstep crew in the middle, the gaggle of girls, are all unique but still, so far, think I hung the moon. I intend to ride that train as long as it will leave the station. We watch Paw Patrol and read stories and ride bikes and eat ice cream and act silly as I watch them — and try to be with them when I'm with them — I've noticed something about them and me and life in general.

And that is that some signposts and milestones are timeless and each generation takes them up. I'm speaking here of softball and t-ball and of how three of mine are on overdrive in those pursuits. All three are on different teams in different communities, which can make scheduling a bit of an issue.

And two of them are in the same league, meaning they play against each other. The other day before their first game, one of them asked me about her cousin, "Do you think they'll let us talk to each other after the game?"

As they ate their hot dogs — another signpost: hot dogs at ball games — and frolicked on the playground, I think they figured it out.

Now as I have more candles on my birthday cake, it does me good to see these milestones still alive and well. While I didn't make the Little League Hall of Fame — it was a much cruder version when dinosaurs roamed the earth — my hope today is that some parents (and, heaven forbid, grandparents) will tone down some of the fussing and let the little folks enjoy life, like the behavior I experienced when as a young father my offspring were playing.

On one of those days, I was in the field with some players while the other team was at bat. A little fellow whose full name I won't disclose — because he and his family are still around and he's a fine young man today with a responsible position, and I don't wish to embarrass him — did something that was timeless, something I see happen at most every game I take in now.

As he went to his position somewhere around where the second base dirt meets the outfield grass, he took off his glove, sat down and began to play in the dirt. Through some miracle of physics, an equally little person hit a ball near me and my player. He looked up from doodling in the sand, watched the ball stop about a foot away and then went back to his play.

"Adam," I said.
"What?" without looking up.
"Don't you want to get the ball?"
"No."

And that was the end of that. Soon, a convoy of his teammates came rushing over, half of them falling down in a mad dash to get the ball and not knowing what to do with it afterwards. But when the game was over, they all said they had fun and made off to the concession stand. Same as today.

Let the little people be little people. Give them the basics and then don't fuss at them. No college athletic scholarships are going to be given out this summer. And say "thank you" to the men and women who help these little folks put up mileposts of their own. Mark those signposts well. Some day they'll be priceless.

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.



Things I see from the Midgett's 'pizer'

Mrs. Walls and I took a break from the real world last week and drove to the Outer Banks. We stuffed the car with everything we thought we might need for a week until it looked like the back bumper would scrape the ground. Then we packed some more. After shoehorning the dog between two coolers, we turned onto U.S. Hwy 64 and drove down east to the little town of Manteo on Roanoke Island. To pass the time on the drive, I counted vehicles with white plastic tubes for fishing poles on the front bumper. I lost count once we hit Williamston, but the Subaru with six poles hanging in the wind was unforgettable.

For the past several years, Elizabeth and I have rented the Neva Midgett House in Manteo for our seasonal getaways. Midgett is a common family name on the Outer Banks, dating back to the early 1700s — sparking my friend Bob Midgett to joke, "If you're from around here, there's a Midgett in your family."

Natives refer to each other with some pride as "hoi toiders" because they speak a regional dialect which makes "a hoi toid tonight" come out as "a hoi toid t'night." And I must admit to being baffled by some regional terms. For example, while visiting a local friend whose home has a wrap-around porch, he referred to that porch as a "pizer."

When I asked him if that word meant "porch," he told me it meant "piazza." The Neva Midgett House has a pizer, too. Almost a century ago Neva Midgett pumped Esso brand gasoline at Whalebone Station on Bodie Island, where the maintained road came to an end and the only way south was to drive on the beach. On the wall in her house is an old black and white photograph of her three kids climbing on top of the gargantuan sun-bleached bones of the beached leviathan that gave her station its name.

Known as "the Esso lady" to visitors of all stripes, Neva not only knew when the fish were biting and where to find them, but she saved countless drivers from the anguish of being stuck in the sand by properly lowering their tires' air pressure. She gave them free air on the way back. The station was also the end

of the wired world; she sent and received telegrams and telephone messages, day or night. She often administered first aid to injured fishermen, and in one recorded instance walked to a U.S. Coast Guard station to demand they collect a fisherman with a sick child.

After Neva retired, she had the service station disassembled, floated across the sound and re-erected in the lot next to her house in Manteo as a cozy guest cottage. We stayed in the cottage once, but the ceilings are too low for me. I kept hitting my head when I went through the doorways.

The big, wrap-around porch of her house faces the street, and sitting on the pizer in the late afternoon sun is my favorite activity when I come to Manteo. A neon green anole agrees with me; the little lizard shows up in the same bright spot on the railing every afternoon to rhythmically display his pink dewlap.

From my rocking chair I see regular folks making their way at the end of the day; here, I see a woman walking a bulldog, plastic baggie in hand; there, I see an old man with a buzz cut and a sour expression climbing into his parked car. A minivan rolls past with its music turned up full blast, the oblivious driver singing along. I see SUVs and pick-up trucks and Jeeps, all with white plastic tubes to hold fishing poles.

Lots of kids use this street, too. They roll by on all kinds of wheels: a girl with straight black hair on a pink bicycle, her ponytail flopping from side to side as she pedals. Two big kids ride by on beach bikes, both wearing their ball caps backwards. A couple of little kids on skateboards push their way home, followed by two more riding kick scooters.

But yesterday I saw something I had never seen before; in the twilight I saw a kid on a BMX bike rolling up from the waterfront. Somehow, he had zip-tied several white plastic tubes onto his handlebars. One tube held a rod and reel three times longer than the kid was tall; another tube had a stringer of fish looped around it. He was grinning from ear to ear.

Dwayne Walls Jr. has previously written a story about his late father's battle with Alzheimer's disease and a first-person recollection of 9/11 for the newspaper. Walls is the author of the book "Backstage at the Lost Colony." He and his wife Elizabeth live in Pittsboro.

VIEWPOINTS

LETTERS

Chatham County needs a sustainable strategy for wastewater management

TO THE EDITOR:

I am writing on behalf of StopChathamNorth, an advocacy group representing concerned residents of the Briar Chapel community. We have been following your series of articles investigating Chatham County's water and sewer infrastructure and appreciate that you are raising awareness across your readership. We agree that there is not currently a long-term solution for regional wastewater in NE Chatham County. Since 2016, there have been 32 reported sewage spills in Briar Chapel. These sewage spills have totaled more than 87,000 gallons with over 72,000 gallons having spilled directly into Pokeberry Creek (tributary of the Haw River and Jordan Lake). For these spills and other issues, ONSWC has been issued 21 Notices of Violation (NOVs). Chatham County planned for the Briar Chapel wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to become a regional WW system for NE Chatham County; however, the placement of the facility in

the midst of a densely populated community with homes and amenities surrounding the WWTP combined with the elevated location of the plant and persistent infrastructure issues makes this a poor choice for regionalization. Briar Chapel's WW system is one of ten in NE Chatham County, but it's not the only privately-owned WWTP having serious problems.

- Fearington Village's system is reaching end of life. The system has 23 NOVs for not meeting nutrient requirements for their discharge into Bush Creek.
- Carolina Meadow's WWTP is not meeting nutrient requirements for their discharge into Morgan Creek.
- Governor's Club's WWTP is reaching end of life for portions of their plant.
- North Chatham Village's WWTP has reached maximum capacity. They've had numerous NOVs for exceeding nutrient limits for their discharge and the plant is nearing end of life.

There are also numerous smaller, older neighborhoods in NE Chatham County using septic systems which are starting to age out and need to be replaced. The current strategy of hav-

ing developers provide their communities WW treatment systems isn't working. Developers will do what's necessary to get their communities built, then they will sell the plant and walk away. They are not vested for the long term. The Chatham County residents and our environment suffer the consequences. We need to adopt a more sustainable strategy for wastewater management in NE Chatham County. We are not asking Chatham County to purchase our privately-owned community-based WW systems. We are asking our county to provide the leadership to launch a Study Commission to investigate and propose options for a long-term solution. We believe a Public/Private partnership could be the way forward.

Liz Rolison
Chapel Hill

Rep. Reives on school flexibility

TO THE EDITOR:

The past year has been difficult for us all. As a father, I know personally how much effort it takes to balance work and life; with students having to work remotely, like many of us over the past year, that balance became even more difficult.

That's why I have been working with my colleagues at the General Assembly to make the process of returning our kids to school as simple and flexible as possible. Now that students are back in classrooms, we need to look forward to the upcoming school year to ensure that we maximize the learning potential after a year of so many students falling behind. I recently introduced legislation (HB 445) that would allow our local school board to adjust the school calendar. It's important that we provide flexibility so that students get the most out of the upcoming year and we reduce learning loss. These changes would also benefit students enrolled in community college courses. As it stands, those schedules do not align. We can provide more opportunities for students to enrich their education and prepare them for college. Flexibility would also allow exams in winter to occur before a long break. Two weeks is a long time to be out of the classroom before important tests that determine grades for the semester. At its core, this change would entrust our local community with the power to set a schedule that works best for the students, teachers and fam-

ilies of Chatham County.
Rep. Robert Reives II
(D-Dist. 54)
Goldston
(The writer represents Chatham County and parts of Durham County in the N.C. House of Representatives and serves as House Minority Leader.)

Time to stop electing stupid people

TO THE EDITOR:

Someone has fertilized stupidity in Americans. A notorious propagandist by the nickname "Tokyo Rose" once tried this during World War II, but allied troops were too intelligent to believe her lies. What changed between the years 1941 and 2020 that interferes with Americans recognizing the difference between truth and lies? The truth is: America should always come first. All 27 amendments of the Constitution should always be protected and apply to every American citizen. The rights of honest hardworking citizens should always come before those of criminals, and it is time to stop electing stupid people to government office.
Carol Gene Good
Conover

GUEST COLUMN | GARY PEARCE

Will Governor McCrory become Senator McCrory?

Maybe you can't stand Pat, but former Governor McCrory could be future Senator McCrory. When McCrory announced he'll run for the Senate next year, many of my fellow Democrats laughed — and pounced. So did Republicans. Democrats dismissed him as the Governor who signed into law House Bill 2, the controversial transgender "bathroom bill," and then became the first North Carolina governor to lose reelection. Another Republican running for the Senate seat, former Congressman Mark Walker, attacked him saying: "With taking back the Senate majority hinging on our success in North Carolina, why would we gamble on Pat McCrory — a career politician who has lost more statewide races than he's won?" McCrory lost to Bev Perdue in the 2008 governor's race, then soundly defeated Lt. Governor Walter Dalton in 2012 after Perdue decided — late in the campaign season — not to run again. McCrory took shots from both parties because he interviewed for jobs in the Trump Administration after losing narrowly to Gov. Roy Cooper in 2016, but didn't get appointed. Walker said, "If Pat wasn't good enough for Trump's administration, he's not good enough for our state." The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee said McCrory "couldn't even get hired by the Trump administration." But he could get elected U.S. Senator. He enters the race with an advantage in name recognition, as his own campaign's poll boasted. A Republican primary opponent will need a lot of money to overcome that. McCrory has been mayor of Charlotte and governor. He has automatic stature.

Critics scoffed when he called himself an "outsider," but that's smart positioning. His campaign cited "the strength McCrory has as someone who has not served in Congress but instead has made executive-level decisions as a proven conservative." In other words, he's not a Washington swamp creature like Walker and another Congressman who might run, Ted Budd. Lara Trump, Donald Trump's daughter-in-law, also might run. But why would she give up New York, Palm Beach and a Fox News gig? Plus, does Donald Trump want to risk his brand before 2024? McCrory had a media gig too. He hosted "The Pat McCrory Show" on WBT radio. His campaign says that was "the top-rated talk radio show in Charlotte." It's not "The Apprentice," but it's a big media market, especially in a Republican primary. And he's been a regular on NBC's "Meet the Press." It's noteworthy that McCrory's announcement didn't mention Trump. You have to dig deep in his campaign website to find a mention of Trump. The former President is obviously a plus in the primary, but may be poison with Independents in a general election. Senator Richard Burr, who is vacating the seat, got censured by North Carolina Republicans when he voted to impeach Trump over the Jan. 6 Capitol riots. Paul Shumaker, an experienced Republican consultant who worked with both Senators Burr and Thom Tillis, is handling McCrory's Senate race. Shumaker can provide the skilled professional hand that McCrory lost when Jack Hawke died after the 2012 election. If McCrory wins the primary, history favors him. Republicans have won the last four Senate races in North Carolina and six of the last seven. Since the two-party era began in 1972, Republicans have won 13 Senate races and Democrats, only four. The last North Carolinian to be elected both Governor (1960) and Senator (1986) was Terry Sanford. Now, I knew Terry Sanford. Terry Sanford is a hero of mine. Pat McCrory is no Terry Sanford. But he could win Sanford's old Senate seat next year — and be both a Governor and a Senator.

Gary Pearce was a reporter and editor at The News & Observer, a political consultant, and an adviser to Gov. Jim Hunt (1976-1984 and 1992-2000). He blogs about politics and public policy at www.NewDayforNC.com.



A plea and a prayer for creation care

Scientists now refer to our era as the Anthropocene Epoch, meaning that the collective actions of human beings ("anthropos" in Greek) have substantially altered the environment — the lands, oceans and atmosphere. And our impact has been disastrous. Instead of the benignly worded "climate change," it is more fitting to speak of the impending "climate catastrophe." Here in North Carolina, the rising global temperature is expected to result in higher sea levels, extreme heat and more powerful hurricanes. Not only will we pay for the shifting weather patterns in terms of our agriculture and economy, but climate catastrophe will cost lives.

Now is the time for bold action. We must summon the collective fortitude to revamp our energy sector. I was heartened to learn of President Joe Biden's 10-year plan to reduce U.S. greenhouse gas emissions to half of the levels of 2005. Biden's plan to innovate and implement renewable forms of energy will not be cheap, quick or painless. Significant changes to our society rarely are. Yet, the sacrifices necessary to transform our energy economy seem quite inexpensive in light of the potential cost of life. What's more, I believe such sacrifice for the future of the world is our sacred responsibility. In the creation account found in the opening chapter of the first book of the Bible, the Creator makes humankind, both male and female, in the divine image. Some have interpreted that this entails an exalted status for humans, and I agree that humans have a unique role to play. But I hasten to add that this role is often misinterpreted because of one word — dominion.

Genesis 1:26 states that humankind has been given "dominion" over all the earth; however, this Hebrew word does not mean to lord over with power. Dominion does not mean to exploit for selfish purposes. Rather, the term connotes the sense of lowering or descending. It implies humility and service. Elsewhere in the Bible, the metaphor for this dominion is that of a shepherd. Not only must sheep be guided and protected, but the wellbeing of a shepherd is directly connected to the welfare of the flock. The shepherd does not live at the expense of the sheep; shepherding has costs. One ancient rabbi made such sacrifice explicit: The good shepherd lays down his or her life for the sheep (John 10:11). In ancient Israel, the king was viewed as a shepherd. We can view elected officials in our democracy as good shepherds charged with caring for the public and the creation at large. This can unite citizens across the political spectrum. I realize we live in a time of hyper-partisanship. Pundits and citizens alike call their adversaries "sheep" and not as a compliment. But cynicism is a cousin of despair. I disagree that reducing our greenhouse gas emissions is a futile climate gesture and that the majority of Americans are unwilling to make sacrifices for future generations. We need everyone, regardless of religion or creed, to commit to shepherding our planet. Seeking unity, let me close with a prayer outside the Judeo-Christian tradition from poet Emily Dickinson: in the name of the bee, and of the butterfly, and of the breeze, amen!

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

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 bhorner3@chathamnr.com; or drop by our office at 303 West Raleigh Street in Siler City.

VIEWPOINTS

Tax policy shapes migration flows

North Carolina is a popular destination for those seeking to make a new life in a new state. According to a tracking report by United Van Lines, we ranked sixth in the nation for inbound migration during 2020.

I should hasten to add, fellow Tar Heels, that we ought not to puff out our chests too much. South Carolina ranked second.

The closer you look at patterns of interstate relocation, the more complex those patterns appear. Don't assume everyone moves towards warmer weather. Don't assume everyone moves towards urban centers, or away from them, or to places with low housing prices, or high test scores, or where one's preferred political

party is in charge.

Plenty of people do each of these things. But America is a big country full of people with big dreams that don't necessarily match up with the big dreams of others. Tastes vary, as does tolerance for risk. And what attracts a 70-year-old to a new state can be very different from what that same person might have found attractive at 30. Conservatives have long argued that tax policy plays a role in attracting or repelling interstate migrants — and we're right! Dozens of peer-reviewed academic studies have confirmed a relationship between migration and either overall tax burdens or certain tax rates.

The latest research I've seen was just published in the Journal of the American Taxation Association (hey, now, don't smirk at me — my reading diet happens to range widely across journals and magazines). Kansas State University's Amy Hageman and the University

of Central Florida's Sean Robb and Jason Schwebke examined migration data for the years 2008 through 2015.

Adjusting for a host of control variables, they found that states with lower overall tax burdens tended to attract more inbound migration. They also found a negative association between inbound migration and high income taxes, high property taxes, and high taxes on the sale of certain goods and services.

In a finding some observers may find surprising, Hageman, Robb, and Schwebke found that high property and sales taxes were more likely to discourage inbound migration than high income taxes were. Others studies have yielded different results on that question.

I wasn't as surprised as some conservatives might be to see their result. My reading of the evidence is that income taxes are especially unattractive to investors, those who own

or would like to own a business, and professionals with higher-than-average incomes. There are plenty of people in those categories, naturally, and if you chase them away from your state with high income taxes, the economic losses are often broadly shared. But for other would-be movers, property taxes or even sales taxes can be a bigger turnoff. It depends on individual circumstances.

To say that taxes matter in relocation decisions is not to say that they are always, or even usually, decisive. Lots of other factors enter into the equation. Americans with a taste for smaller government, lower taxes, and less regulation may also like urban amenities, or proximity to water, or proximity to family. They're going to mix and match accordingly.

Among the top 10 states in inbound migration in 2020, for example, three were not in the Sunbelt: Idaho, South Dakota and Oregon. The first two have

no state income tax. Oregon, on the other hand, has an income tax but no state sales tax.

The migration leaders in the Southeast were South Carolina (#2), North Carolina (#6), Tennessee (#7), Alabama (#8), Florida (#9), and Arkansas (#10). Among them, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Florida get good scores on the Tax Foundation's State Business Tax Climate Index. South Carolina, Alabama, and Arkansas get bad scores.

My point is that there is no single characteristic, amenity, or policy choice that explains why people live where they live and move where they move. All other things being equal, places with greater economic freedom tend to attract more residents. Politicians ought to act accordingly. Just don't expect them to produce miracles.

John Hood (@JohnHoodNC) is chairman of the John Locke Foundation.

A woman takes over the Parkway, and thanks to Josephus Daniels

The National Park Service's recent announcement that a woman would be the new superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway is a reminder of the important role Josephus Daniels played in the Parkway's location.

Only a few older folks remember that North Carolina would have lost much of the Parkway to Tennessee if Josephus Daniels had not gone to bat in 1934.

We should recognize that although Daniels held and exploited the racist views of his times, his foresight and advocacy are still improving the lives of North Carolinians of all races.

Earlier in April, National Park Service Regional Director Stan Austin announced the selection of Tracy Swartout to be superintendent of the Blue Ridge Parkway, effective May 23.

Austin said, "Tracy is an exceptional leader with a solid record of performance, managing multi-faceted park operations and collaborating to achieve important agency and community objectives. Her experience, commitment to operational excellence and passion for inclusive public participation make her well-suited for this role. We are excited to select Tracy to lead one of the country's most visited parks in the National Park System."

Swartout grew up in South Carolina and attended Montreat College before returning home to graduate at the University of South Carolina. Later, she did post-graduate work at Duke University. A 22-year veteran of the Park Service, she had served as superintendent of Congaree National Park in her home state and more recently as deputy superintendent at Mount Rainier National Park in Washington.

Swartout said, "Throughout my life, the Blue Ridge Parkway has played a prominent role, with some of my most treasured memories being shaped along that winding road and in the national parks and communities beyond. The area's landscape, arts, music and culture are deeply meaningful for me."

The new superintendent will oversee the Parkway's 469-mile route through the mountains of North Carolina and Virginia. Last year, the Parkway had an estimated 14 million recreational visitors, making it one of the most visited national parks in the U.S.

As a child Swartout and her family backpacked and camped in the Smoky Mountains along and near the Parkway. She said that she, her husband and their two children are "deeply connected to the area."

With their children and two dogs, she and her husband plan to live in the Asheville area.

What Josephus Daniels has to do with the Parkway's location is a part of the story Anne Mitchell Whisnant tells in her 2006 UNC Press book, "Super-scenic Motorway: A Blue Ridge Parkway History."

In 1933, the new President Franklin Roosevelt believed a program of massive public works would help the nation recover from the Great Depression.

Whisnant explains, "The Parkway was authorized under the National Industrial Recovery Act, signed in June 1933, which created the Public Works Administration (PWA) to finance large-scale public works projects as a way of pumping money into the sagging economy and creating jobs in the construction of substantial structures that would be of long-term value to the nation."

Roosevelt approved a scenic roadway connecting Shenandoah National Park in Virginia and Great Smoky Mountains National Park located along the North Carolina-Tennessee border. All agreed that the Parkway would run from Virginia down to Linville. From there it would either (1) cross the mountains into Tennessee and end at the Tennessee park entrance near Gatlinburg, or (2) continue in North Carolina through Asheville and then to the park entrance near Cherokee.

The experts recommended the Tennessee route. But when Josephus Daniels had been Secretary of the Navy during World War I, Roosevelt was assistant secretary and the two men remained close. After Daniels weighed in, Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes overruled the experts and selected the North Carolina route.

North Carolinians who enjoy traveling the Parkway from Linville through Asheville owe Josephus Daniels a strong thank you.

D.G. Martin hosts "North Carolina Bookwatch," at 11 a.m. Sundays and 5 p.m. Tuesdays on UNC-TV. The program also airs on the North Carolina Channel at 8 p.m. Tuesdays and other times.

Should we revive the idea of a negative income tax?

Income inequality, poverty, hunger, unemployment —



MIKE WALDEN
You Decide

these are all issues that have been with us for a while but became worse during the pandemic. The various stimulus bills tried to help, and currently Congress is considering legislation that would make more permanent changes to addressing the challenges.

However, it's not as if we haven't been engaged in helping alleviate economic stress. In my recently published book, "Real Solutions: Common Sense Ideas for Solving Our Most Pressing Problems," I identified 92 individual poverty programs operated by 52 different agencies of the federal government and collectively spending almost \$1 trillion annually. Unfortunately, each program has its own rules and there can be little coordination among the programs.

There are also major administrative costs with these programs, usually at the rate of 15 to 20 percent of the total agency budget — with some as high as 40 percent! Obviously, this means less money going to recipients.

Another problem with several of the programs is the existence of a "tax cliff." A tax cliff occurs when additional income earned by the recipient results in a big drop in help from the program. Sometimes the value of assistance drops more than 100 percent for every extra dollar earned by the recipient. In other words, if the recipient earns an additional \$1,000 by working more, they may lose more than \$1,000 in program benefits. Obviously, a tax cliff reduces the incentive of the recipient to become economically self-sufficient.

What all this means is that not only do we need a commitment to helping households in poverty, but we also need to have a logical and coordinated process for delivering that help, and in a way that still leaves an incentive for the recipient to ultimately become self-supporting.

Fortunately, many say there is such a system, the idea of which has been around for almost 50 years. It's called a "negative income tax," or NIT. Maybe it's time to revive that idea.

Here's how an NIT works. All households file an income tax return that lists their earnings and members of the household including dependents. The IRS compares the household earnings against the income deemed necessary to achieve some agreed-upon standard of living for the household. If the household's earnings exceed the minimum income standard, then they pay income taxes as usual.

However, if the household's earnings are less than the minimum income standard, then the IRS sends money to the household. The money could be sent in one lump sum, although a better approach would be monthly payments. Notice, this money is not a tax refund. A refund occurs when a household has paid too much taxes and has the excess returned.

Importantly, the NIT would be structured to preserve financial incentives for the household. This means if the household earns more, the amount of the funds received from the IRS would drop, but by much less than the extra earnings. Some plans recommend a reduction of 50 cents for every additional dollar of earnings.

Preserving the incentive to earn more would mean more households would qualify for payments from the IRS than are receiving some form of poverty assistance today. However, with the incentive to earn more, over time many of these households would move to self-sufficiency.

Two big plus points for the NIT are its low administration costs and flexibility. A similar program the IRS currently operates has administrative costs of only 1.5 percent. The NIT could be set up to quickly adjust to a household's circumstances. When a household's earnings change — either up or down — an interim income tax form could be filed allowing the NIT payments to be adjusted. Alternatively, employers could be required to send information about hirings,

firings and payment adjustments to the IRS.

Financial help via the NIT could be brought into the 21st century by issuing debit cards to recipients. The cards could be replenished each month, and when adjustments to the amounts are needed, they can quickly be reflected in the cards.

One reason there are so many federal poverty programs is that each addresses a different aspect of poverty — such as hunger, housing, energy costs, etc. The simplest NIT program would eliminate these categories and just provide households cash via the NIT debit cards. It would then be up to households to decide how to use the cash.

While this would be the simplest and most straightforward approach, there are some who think controls should be placed on how recipients use public financial assistance. Such control could be accomplished by issuing several NIT debit cards, with the amounts on each card limited to certain expenditures, like food, housing, transportation, etc.

How does the NIT compare to a universal guaranteed income (UGI)? While there are many versions of the UGI, the most common gives recipients a certain amount of cash with no strings attached. Some versions provide almost everyone the cash regardless of their income. Obviously, the NIT is more restrictive as well as directed to those with the most need.

The political environment seems to be set for a renewed focus on economic challenges faced by a large part of our society, but in particular those who live in or near poverty. Now might be the perfect time to restructure how we provide help to those households. Should the idea of a negative income tax be part of that restructuring? You decide.

Michael Walden is a William Neal Reynolds Distinguished Professor and Extension Economist in the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at North Carolina State University who teaches and writes on personal finance, economic outlook and public policy.

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.

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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 bhorner3@chathamnr.com; or drop by our office at 303 West Raleigh Street in Siler City.

POLICE

Continued from page A1 something wrong.”

Chauvin’s trial emphasized the critical role empathy plays in an officer’s duty to serve the people, Roberson said; he values the quality above impressive education, advanced tactical skill and even experience in some cases.

“We do not hire Superman or Superwoman,” he said. “... We’re looking for human beings that have serving hearts, you know, they want to help others. We hire a lot of waitresses and waiters and send them to law enforcement school. We hire a lot of certified nurses. I have everything from GEDs to Master’s degrees that are on the front line. But what they have in common is compassion.”

While all police officers have an obligation to prevent and report abuses of power among their peers, Roberson said a well-functioning department should root out bad officers before they have opportunities to hurt the public.

“You know the things you’re seeing on TV, some of those are just so far from common sense — it’s just shocking sometimes what you’re seeing,” he said. “We can’t wait until that point to start making corrective action. It’s got to be earlier.”

To preemptively quell indiscretion, Roberson has adopted an internal policy of frequent body camera footage review.

“We actually regularly review them for policy violations,” he said. “So we don’t wait until there’s a use of force complaint. We’re always looking for policy violations, even smaller things. And sometimes that means it’s a training thing, not necessarily a discipline thing. It could just be, ‘Hey, I noticed you were doing this,’ and we’ll try to retrain them. What I’m saying is we don’t wait until it’s really, really bad.”

Roberson said a staff which reflects the county’s diverse demographics will also help to promote better police-resident relationships. His office boasts “two or three times as many women on staff than normal police departments,” he said. But hiring people of color has proved difficult.

“I would agree I’m having issues hiring male and female minorities,” Roberson said. “... I’m having the most difficulty hiring Hispanic and Black males. There are not enough applying to hire them at that rate. There’s a lot of pressure from their family, from friends, to not be in this line of work, and so we’re dealing with that a little bit.”

When asked for his thoughts on the social media movement to “defund the police,” Roberson responded that he supports what he thinks the slogan stands for, but not literal budget cuts in police departments.

“I’ve heard the term, but I’ve not heard a defini-

tion of what it means,” he said. “If you mean defund the Sheriff’s Office, I think that’s a bad idea. If you mean defund bad cops, then I understand what you mean.”

The phrase is catchy, Roberson said, and well-intentioned, but too vague and obscure.

“I think the big thing that is being said in this is that people want change, and that’s how serious they want change,” he said. “... We can tend to paint with a big brush on that, but I think that ‘defund the police’ is sort of a direction — making sure things change — more than the actual vocabulary of what those words mean by definition.”

While the “defund the police” phrase has only proliferated in the last year, some activists have for decades decried “overpolicing” and called for literal budget cuts or total abolition of police departments.

Roberson is proud of how Sheriff’s Office staff have behaved in the last year in response to protests and uneasiness among residents, he said. But he knows there exists an entrenched angst whenever some Chathamites interact with police — a distrust that will not quickly fade.

“I want to say that in Chatham County we recognize that the fear is very real,” he said, “and we’ve taken several steps and are trying to improve transparency and accountability for all of our staff. That’s deputy, detention,

investigators — everyone.”

Siler City Police Department

Siler City Police Chief Mike Wagner declined to comment directly on the Chauvin trial, but said he takes seriously resident concerns within his department’s jurisdiction.

Siler City has the greatest concentration of minority groups in Chatham County. Almost half the town’s residents — 47.1% — are Latino, as the News + Record previously reported. Another 18.7% are Black, meaning two-thirds of the town’s population is made up of minorities.

“We put out a plan of evolution, of our department making change, long before it was requested,” Wagner said of department policies to avoid use of force and reflect a diverse citizenry. “So we were well ahead of the curve.”

He has also “met with the leaders of the NAACP for Orange and Chatham County,” he said. “And I’ve met with the NAACP members here in West Chatham to talk about the direction of this place.”

In the last year, his department has had only 12 incidents involving use of force, Wagner said. “That’s a stat that is pretty impeccable for the whole year, and for a department that is extremely short staffed.”

In recent budget meetings for the Town of Siler City, Wagner has requested significant extra funding to support enhanced training and hire more officers. The “defund the police” movement works contrary to police improvement, he said.

“It’s just irresponsible, and the state legislative board to build our state statutes and laws is not even considering such a thing,” he said.

Pittsboro Police Department

“I’m happy with the verdict,” said Pittsboro Chief of Police Shorty Johnson of Chauvin’s murder conviction. “I looked at it, and I think a lot of law enforcement officers looked at it, and did know that what Chauvin did was

wrong, and we were glad to see the outcome.”

Of note in Chauvin’s trial was that other officers, including his former chief, testified against him. They broke what has been called the “blue wall of silence” — an unspoken agreement among law enforcement officers not to implicate each other for their on-the-job conduct.

“There’s always been that talk that officers will look after each other, but I think the profession is changing,” Johnson said. “We’re changing, and good officers are definitely standing up now. They want to do the right thing, and if that’s pointing out something that a bad officer is doing, then they’re going to do it.”

But claims that officers testifying against each other sets a new precedent misrepresents what has always been the police code of ethics, Johnson said.

“I don’t think it’s a new idea like some people have tried to portray it,” he said. “Good officers have always stood up for what’s right and will continue to do the right thing. I think it has more to do with society seeing this play out on a larger scale because of the magnitude of the cases we have witnessed in the last few years.”

Johnson said it’s a positive thing that police departments have been “more scrutinized” in the last year. “That’s definitely made us as police officers step back and take a look at ourselves and say, ‘What are we doing right and what are we doing wrong?’”

A “wrong” his department identified was an absence of official policy regulating police behavior under difficult circumstances.

“We have added, along with many other departments across the country, a policy on a duty to intervene if an officer sees another officer doing something unethical or breaking one of our policies and/or procedures,” he said. “That duty has always been there, but I think it’s better that it’s on paper. This reinforces our stance on doing the right thing and our commitment to making

our town and community a great place to live.”

The adjustment — and others — didn’t come in the wake of Chauvin’s murder conviction, though. Immediately following George Floyd’s death last year, Pittsboro evaluated its internal policies and rules.

“When the George Floyd incident happened, we at the police department started looking at our use of force policies,” Johnson said. “... We banned chokeholds, except in a life or death situation. And, in general, as far as use of force, we’ve looked at that.”

As for the “defund the police” movement, Johnson, like Roberson, thinks the objective is sound, but the method faulty.

“I disagree with that,” he said. “... People think we need to be better trained like with de-escalation techniques and tactics, and implicit bias training and things like that. Unfortunately, if we have money taken from us, that could take training from us. Then I don’t have the resources or the money to send my people to different classes or different training to make them better.”

Some arguments behind police defunding call for money to be rerouted to other specialists, such as mental health experts, who can navigate tense, and potentially dangerous situations without resorting to use of force. Johnson supports the essence of such logic.

“Mental health reform, that’s always been kind of close to me,” he said, “and we definitely know that the country as a whole needs to focus on mental health reform and putting money aside, or putting money towards it.”

But that sort of education must still fall within the police department, he says, because no matter what, it’s police who will be first on the scene when a crisis arises.

“Whatever our funding, we still got to answer calls,” Johnson said. “We still got to be there when somebody needs the police.”

Reporter D. Lars Dolder can be reached at lldolder@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @lldolder.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Town of Siler City: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact

SUMMARY: The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to the Town of Siler City for a Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) Nutrient Removal and Increase Capacity (Project) in Siler City, NC.

FURTHER INFORMATION: To obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Nancy L. Whittington, Area Specialist, USDA Rural Development, 847 Curry Drive, Suite 104, Asheboro, NC 28359, Lynn.Whittington@usda.gov, (336) 308-1660.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed project consists of upgrading the Town’s existing WWTP located at 198 Utility Drive in Siler City to accommodate nutrient removal. The project is anticipated to be constructed as two (2) phases. The first phase is to improve nutrient removal at the current capacity of 4.0 million gallons per day (MGD) and a second phase to increase capacity to 6.0 MGD. The project also includes upgrades to approximately 5,600 LF of gravity sewer interceptor from the point that Mountaire Farms’ flows enter the interceptor to the WWTP. Alternatives considered by the RUS and Town of Siler City include: No Action; Gravity Sewer Interceptor Replacement Alternatives, Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Alternatives, and Proposed Action. The alternatives are discussed in the Town of Siler City Proposed WWTP Nutrient Removal and Increase Capacity EA. The RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspaper: Chatham News + Record on March 11, 2021 & March 18, 2021. A 14-day comment period was announced in the newspaper notices. The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development office. There were no comments received during the 14-day comment period.

Based on its EA, commitments made by the Town of Siler City, and lack of public comments received, RUS has concluded that the project would have no significant impact (or no impacts) to water quality, wetlands, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project would not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development’s Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RUS’s federal action would not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

April 29, 2021



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MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING

Siler City Police work to raise awareness about child abuse

BY D. LARS DOLDER
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — To promote National Child Abuse Prevention Month and draw attention to local resources for abuse victims, the Siler City Police Department operated an information booth last Friday at the Walmart Supercenter on U.S. Hwy 64.

“We’re out here today trying to just bring awareness to child neglect and child abuse,” said SCPD Chief Mike Wagner. “So many times there are very simple signs and symptoms that the general public may overlook.”

Besides obvious indications such as bruises, cuts, burns and welts, Wagner said, the manifestations of child abuse or neglect may be more subtle. A child’s behavior and demeanor could change inexplicably. He or she might often miss class or withdraw from usual social activities. Those symptoms are often visible only to adults who know the child well, and without their help the police are powerless to intervene.

“The majority of child abuse that’s reported comes through some type of government organization, either social services, the courts or even law enforcement,” Wagner said. “But I think there are people out there that may suspect it at times but are hesitant to report it or don’t know who to report it to. So we’re here trying to spread the word about how prevalent it is and what our



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

From left, Chief Mike Wagner, Karen Phillips, Gloria Malvonado, Assistant District Attorney Kayley Tabor, Elizabeth Anderson, Angie Switzer and Cheryl Windsor man the booth during a child abuse awareness event at Walmart.

community can do to prevent it or at least investigate it.”

When adults close to the situation neglect to report it, even severe child abuse cases can go unnoticed, Wagner said.

“This year alone, that is 2020, the Town of Siler City investigated eight cases,” he said, “and one of those cases involved a death.”

Most child neglect and abuse cases, however, are not so extreme. Still, anyone aware of child mistreatment — to any degree — should not hesitate to contact the police.

“A lot of people will say, ‘I thought there was something wrong but I didn’t know for sure,’” he said. “Well nothing should stop you at that point from coming to the police department, to a social services

worker, or a teacher. In fact, a lot of this stuff gets reported by our education system.”

Teachers and guidance counselors are often the first to recognize signs of child abuse. In many cases, they have been the critical intercessors who prevent abuse from continuing or escalating. In the last year, though, students have learned from home where it’s more challenging for educators to detect signs of abuse and to intervene.

“I think it’s a very strong possibility,” Wagner said when asked if he thinks more abuse cases have gone undetected in the last year than usual. “We won’t know until all the revelations of the pandemic have come out. But you

‘It is critical and incumbent upon all adults who even have an inclination that something might be wrong in the house for a child to make the call ... You’re not wasting our time. It’s important.’

MIKE WAGNER, Siler City Chief of Police

can tell that our youth and young adults are in some kind of mental health crisis already because of the suicides we’ve worked throughout the country. If (the pandemic) is affecting that family dynamic in the household, you can only reason that perhaps there are other dynamics that are affecting the small children.”

Sometimes, victims — and adults close to the situation but powerless to stop it — are slow to report child abuse to law enforcement out of fear the abuser will go unpunished. They reason, and justifiably so, that reporting abuse may only anger the abuser and worsen the situation, according to Chatham’s Assistant District Attorney Kayley Taber.

“When you have someone report a case and then nothing happens, it’s hard to convince people that it’s a good idea to contact authorities,” said Taber, who attended the police department’s Friday event. “So I understand that.”

But Chatham, unlike many counties, has a dedicated prosecutor for child abuse cases — Taber.

“I prosecute all cases involving minor children,” she said. “And I think that can inspire confidence in our residents that we’re going to take this seriously and we will prosecute ... They’re the toughest cases for prosecutors to take, but I’ve been doing this almost exclusively for 14 years.”

Her advice to Chathamites mirrors Wagner’s.

“We need the community to be a part of this, too,” she said. “We all have a duty to report these cases. If you see something, say something.”

To any who fear they might bother the police by reporting even unconfirmed signs of child abuse, Wagner’s admonition is clear: “It’s our job,” he said. “It is critical and incumbent upon all adults who even have an inclination that something might be wrong in the house for a child to make the call. We are equipped and prepared to handle any complaints at all costs.”

“Our time is the community’s time,” Wagner emphasized. “They deserve that type of service and we are willing and bound to address those issues. You’re not wasting our time. It’s important.”

Reporter D. Lars Dolder can be reached at dldolder@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @[dldolder](https://twitter.com/dldolder).

ABUSE

Continued from page A1

Talk to your kids about sexual abuse — and start as early as possible.

Proactively talking with children about sexual abuse, and from a young age, is important, experts agreed. According to data from the Crimes against Children Research Center, children are most vulnerable to child sex abuse between the ages of 7 and 13.

“Focusing on the ways that we can all make a difference in the lives of all children is really the best way to create healthy communities where children are safe from many ills of the world, abuse included,” Jennie Kristiansen, director of the Chatham County Dept. of Social Services, told the News + Record in an email interview.

According to the National Child Traumatic Stress Network, parents can do that by teaching children to bathe and wipe after using the bathroom, among other things. That way, parents can teach their children self-reliance and show them that adults and older children don’t need help with their “private body parts.”

Teaching children the difference between “OK” and “not OK touches” is also crucial, Kristiansen said — and so is empowering them to say no when they don’t want to be touched, even in non-sexual ways like hugging.

Ashleigh Glover, Chatham Counseling & Wellness’ co-founder and psychotherapist, said it’s important to enforce this boundary even with trusted family members, telling children things like, “It’s up to you and it’s your body.”

Teaching children accurate names of their body parts can also protect against abuse.

“A lot of times you have parents that call a vagina a ‘sugar bowl,’ or your ‘sweet spot’ or just whatever it is,” Glover said. “And I think that’s one thing that parents can do — to start really teaching that ... ‘No, it’s your vagina, it’s your penis, and people don’t touch your vagina or your penis and you tell them you don’t touch my

vagina or my penis.”

Adults should also talk with children about the difference between good and bad secrets, particularly because most children are abused by someone they know and trust — and therefore might be more easily convinced to not disclose abuse.

Creating a habit of regularly checking in with and listening to your kids can help children feel safer disclosing in such situations and can help parents detect signs of abuse more quickly, said Samantha Owusu, Second Bloom of Chatham board member.

“I think as a parent or as an adult who cares about children (that) just being attentive, being observant, being available and open, and not placing judgment on them, I think that goes a long way in preventing child abuse, because children will know they have a safe adult to go to,” said Owusu, a licensed social worker with Chatham County.

Use age-specific methods and language to teach your children about child sex abuse.

Often parents hesitate to talk about abuse because they want to protect their children from difficult topics, or because they’re unsure how to do so in an age-appropriate manner. But adults can help prevent abuse by helping children understand and set boundaries without specifically talking about abuse, Kristiansen said.

“It is important to talk openly and honestly with children about their bodies starting at a young age, in a way that matches where they are developmentally,” she said. “Creating an environment where children are comfortable asking questions and helping children understand the concept of boundaries help(s) set a strong foundation as they grow.”

Having a serious conversation with a toddler or Kindergartner might not be effective, for instance, Owusu said, but parents can do little things to create and reinforce healthy boundaries.

During bath time, parents can let their 2- or

3-year-old wash themselves, even if parents are used to doing it. Allowing young children to politely say no to hugs, hand-holding or kissing can also teach them that they have agency over their bodies.

“... Honoring that helps them to build an understanding of like, ‘I have a right to say I don’t want this kind of touch,’” Owusu said. “So that’s something small that you can do, but at that age, too.”

As children get older, having explicit conversations about consent — actively and enthusiastically agreeing to be sexual with someone — is also important, but often not age-appropriate for younger children.

Prepare for conversation and listen without judgment.

Parents must prepare for conversations about abuse, Glover said, realizing that children need their parents to listen to them without judgment. She said “checking in with yourself” before such a conversation is a crucial step. You should make sure you know any triggers or biases that may prevent you from listening to and caring for your child as they share.

How will you respond if your older child tells you they’re sexually active, or if your child indicates someone you know has inappropriately touched them?

“I think the first thing is to just be completely ready for whatever your kid is ready to talk about — you need to be aware of any bias that you might have as a parent,” Glover said. “And no matter what the kid discloses, you want to remain calm, you want to remain stable, you want to really be able to just take that and be able to process that with them, really being non-judgmental.”

Staying calm is important so that children don’t mistake your emotional response to the situation as anger or frustration with them. If children think they’ve made you upset or sad by what they’ve shared, they’re more likely to hide information moving forward, or feel like any abuse they experienced is their fault.

Signs of distress or

abuse can include crying, bed-wetting, or clinginess, Kristiansen said. Glover added that big shifts in a child’s personality, or avoidant behaviors such as not wanting to be touched, could also be indicators.

You can best support abuse survivors by listening, reassuring them that you believe them and by just being there.

If anyone — especially a child — discloses that they’ve been sexually abused, first things first: Stay calm. Listen to them and don’t judge or criticize, Glover recommended.

“Even if your heart is racing, even if you feel like you’re going to go into a panic attack, that child needs to see you as a person that is able to cope with their story,” she said. “You’re not judging their story, you’re able to handle it.”

When children disclose sexual abuse, Glover said most of the time they’re not lying. Because most victims know their abusers, sex abuse damages how children trust adults.

That’s why experts say it’s imperative to tell children you believe them and reinforce that it’s not their fault.

“If somebody discloses, you let them know that you believe (them),” Owusu said. “I mean, hands down to me, that’s probably the most important thing to do — just let them know that you heard them, that you believe what they said.”

“If they disclose sexual abuse, first, you want them to know that it’s never their fault,” Glover added. “And just reinforce it is not your fault, they are not to blame, you’re not going to be punished for this under any circumstances. They’ve done nothing wrong.”

Children might not tell you the full details at one time, Glover said. They may not have the capacity or the language to communicate all of the information, she added, or describe what they’re feeling, but it’s important to be patient and ask questions.

Everyone in North Carolina has a state-mandated duty to report any child abuse to the local Department of Social

Services, experts added.

Several child welfare workers are on call 24/7, Kristiansen told the News + Record. In Chatham, people should call 919-642-6988 during the weekday. After hours and on the weekends, people should call 919-542-2911 and ask to speak with the social worker on call.

“The most important thing you could do for a child is to let them know that you heard them, you believe them, and to let them know that you’re going to have to reach out to people whose job is to make sure that what happened to them doesn’t happen again,” Owusu said. “And I think it’s important not to make any promises because we don’t know how those situations will turn out.”

Both private and public organizations in Chatham offer various resources for abuse or assault survivors and their families.

Various services exist to support children who’ve experienced abuse as well as their families. Typically, local law enforcement or the DSS will refer children to such services. Beyond government referrals, several community organizations and programs also strive to both help survivors and prevent future abuse.

Second Bloom offers a 24/7 domestic violence and sexual assault helpline (919-545-0055) that people can call anonymously or otherwise and ask for support. The county’s Child Victim Services Program, led by Anne Chapman, offers education and case management to abused children and their families as well as referrals to community resources that can help children heal.

Guardian ad Litem (GALs) are also “awesome” resources, Owusu told the News + Record. GALs are trained and court-appointed volunteers who serve as advocates and represent children’s interests in court.

“They actually represent the child whenever there is any concern about abuse and DSS involved and the child needs to kind of have somebody speak for them in court cases and things

like that,” she said. “But they’re also really good sources of just information and education for the community.”

Another local program, Family Visitation Services of Chatham County, provides a safe space for “supervised visits” by and between abused children and their families. Led by Kit Stanley, the program is free for all Chatham residents.

Glover said she plans to offer pro-bono counseling services to anyone hurt by Jimenez’s alleged acts.

There’s also a training program for parents and community members who want to educate themselves and be prepared, Owusu said. The training — called Darkness to Light: Stewards of Children — seeks to equip community members with the means and education to proactively prevent child sex abuse. Residents can take it through the YMCA of the Triangle.

“Community members can take this training, and it equips them with the knowledge of, what does grooming look like? You know, what the resources are,” Owusu said. “How do I respond to a child who discloses sexual abuse? So it’s a really good training, and for any parent who wants to feel like I need to actively do something after an event like this, I think that’s a really great option.”

It’s important for community members to acknowledge that sexual abuse can happen to anyone, Owusu said.

“I know that sometimes we like to make it into like an individual family, an individual person, issue when a sexual assault or abuse happens, but this is a community problem, and it’s not going anywhere just because this one man was caught is,” she said. “Hopefully he will have to answer for what he did, but just as a community, I just hope and wish that we could all know that we’re all responsible for one another, especially for children.”

Reporter Hannah McClellan can be reached at hannah@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @[HannerMcClellan](https://twitter.com/HannerMcClellan). Reporter Victoria Johnson can be reached at victoria@chathamnr.com.

CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION MONTH

Child abuse prevention starts with meaningful connections and awareness

From Chatham County Government

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Board of Commissioners has proclaimed April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The Chatham County Department of Social Services is calling attention to this issue that greatly impacts the lives of the county's most vulnerable residents; factors due to the pandemic could make these children even more at risk.

"Now more than ever, we are reminded of the importance of meaningful connections in our lives and how those connections can help protect against child abuse and other negative life outcomes," said Mike Dasher, the chairperson of the Chatham County Board of Commissioners. "Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, individuals and families have been isolated from one another, and they have less access to their usual places of gathering such as schools and extended family get-togethers. We want to take this opportunity to spotlight the issue of child abuse and encourage everyone to be more aware and take action if they suspect abuse or neglect."

The National Child Traumatic Stress Network and Prevent Child Abuse NC both provide



Submitted photo

On April 1, Chatham County employees wore blue in honor of Child Abuse Prevention Month.

resources for families related to the impacts of child abuse and neglect and have added information about coping with COVID-19. They recommend keeping a regular daily routine, limiting media exposure and maintaining connections with friends and extended family through phone calls, texting or online communication platforms.

"What we have come to learn about child abuse prevention is that it's really about making connections, providing help to your neighbor in need and making available services and programs in the community that provide treatment and support,"

said Chatham County Department of Social Services Director Jennie Kristiansen. "We also know that in order for children to be safe, healthy and well, families need access to life's basics such as housing, electricity, employment opportunities and child-care."

Individuals who are concerned about the safety of a child may contact the Chatham County Department of Social Services at 919-542-6988 or after hours at 919-542-2911. Everyone in North Carolina is mandated to report suspected child abuse or neglect, and all reporter information is confidential.

#BEACONNECTION

CCPHD, Chatham DSS encourage community to 'be a connection' for children

From the Chatham County Public Health Department

What is a connection? What does it mean to be connected? And what can it mean to some of the most vulnerable among us, children, particularly during a worldwide, life-changing pandemic?

April is Child Abuse Prevention Month, and the Chatham County Department of Social Services is marking the occasion by celebrating this year's theme: #BeA-Connection.

"Science tells us that connections matter," said Sharon Hirsch, Prevent Child Abuse NC president and CEO. "Our work to build positive connections, stable foundations, supportive communities and strong families where all children can thrive has never been more important than it is now as North Carolina families grapple with additional stressors from the COVID-19 pandemic."

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought perhaps the most strenuous challenge our connections with one another have ever seen, and among the most affected are seniors and children. The youngest among us, who are in critical stages of social-emotional development, have had their routines upended, relationship-building interrupted and short lives changed forever because of this deadly pandemic.

While child abuse has been an issue before the



Submitted photo

Staff members of the Chatham County Department of Social Services pose with a sign marking #BeAConnection, the theme for this year's Child Abuse Prevention Month.

pandemic, it continues to be a cause for concern. In 2020, Chatham County Child Protective Services accepted 281 reports of abuse, neglect or dependency regarding 555 children. The 2020 Community Child Protection Team report, a Chatham-focused document that outlines data on the child abuse and foster care system and provides recommendations moving forward, stated that the number was a decrease from the year before, but for a sobering reason. The decrease came most likely from reduced access to children by school system reporters during the pandemic.

It's in this environment — where hundreds of Chatham County chil-

dren each year are facing abuse, neglect or dependency — that the Chatham County Department of Social Services and Chatham County Public Health Department call on Chatham residents to #BeAConnection for all Chatham County children.

"We see firsthand every day why connections are important," said Jennie Kristiansen, director of the Chatham County Department of Social Services. "When parents and children have supportive people in their lives, someone they can call on when they hit a rough patch or run into problems, we are less likely to see them in our child

See **CCPHD**, page A14

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OBITUARIES

EDWARD PATRICK LEWY



Commander, United States Coast Guard (Retired)
Launched: February 9, 1930, in Los Angeles, California
Final Voyage: April 14, 2021
Edward (Lew, Baba Lew, Lewy) was the youngest of six sons born to Bashir and Matilda, Syrian immigrants. Orphaned at age 8, he was sent to Monte Vista Christian Boarding School, later graduating a year early from Kearney High School in 1947. He supported himself through

high school by working at a riding stable where he developed a love and respect for horses; Lew learned that hard work and independence were important keys to life.

In 1948, Lew enlisted as a Coast Guard seaman recruit in Long Beach, California. He was proud of being a "mustang," advancing through the ranks to Commander during his 30-year military career. It was said by many that he was the most "non-military" leader with whom they had ever served. He quietly led by example, earning the respect and admiration of his crew.

In 1952, Lew met a widow, Mary Jean White Hoover, in Long Beach. They married in 1954, just before he was transferred to Hawai'i. Mary already had two sons, Stephen and Timothy; and he readily forged a strong bond with them before welcoming his own son, David, into his new family. During his career the family would call Honolulu, Long Beach, Mercer Island (Seattle), Alameda and Long Beach again as home ports. He and Mary retired in 1978 to Issaquah, Washington, where she passed away in 2000.

Lonely and grieving to reconnect with his high school sweetheart, Kaye Hildegard Panicke, in 2001; they had first met when they were 14 and 16 at the stable where he worked, and had enjoyed riding together. Searching on the internet, Lew found Kaye living in Wilmington, N.C. He moved to the East Coast to court her and in 2006 were married in Hillsborough, N.C. Lewy and Kaye relocated to Fearrington Village, N.C., to be closer to her children, Mark Hopper of Carrboro, Lauri Langham (David) of Chapel Hill, and Jan Waugh (Ben) of Pittsboro. Lew deeply loved his North Carolina family which includes nine grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren.

Lew leaves behind his wife Kaye, and his West Coast family: David (Deb) of Buckeye, Arizona, Steve (Becky) of Brush Prairie, Washington, and Eva (Tim's widow) of Bellevue, Washington. Baba Lew was very proud of his five grandsons and thrilled to be blessed with five great-grandchildren, also the Jan Lewy family of Bakersfield, California.

Lew was the quintessential listener; family members and friends knew they has his undivided, patient, and non-judgmental attention. He offered advice only when asked and it was always tempered with love and understanding. A true officer and gentleman, Lewy was a generous and loving husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather who will be greatly missed.

So, Lewy, as you sail away, know that there are those still standing on shore waving and wishing you well as you stay a true course to where the harbor where the seas are still and calm, the winds are warm and gentle...fitting for a man who was likewise calm, warm and gentle.

"Hark now, hear the sailors cry, smell the sea and feel the sky, let your soul and spirit fly, into the mystic." — Van Morrison

BLANCHE OLIVE GOLDSTON



September 3, 1926 – April 25, 2021
Blanche Olive Goldston passed away unexpectedly on Sunday, April 25, 2021, after 94 remarkable years. She was born on September 3, 1926, in High Point, N.C., to the late Beulah Thomas and William Bryan Olive. When she was a small child, her family moved to Cottage City, Maryland, before returning to Olivia, N.C., to live near her grandparents.

She graduated from Benhaven High School in Olivia, and Hardbarger Business College in Raleigh. She returned home to Olivia, took a job at a bank in Sanford and rode the bus each day to work. During her first months at the bank, she met her future husband Earl Goldston. They married in 1945, raised three children in Goldston, and celebrated 59 years of marriage. She was an active member of Goldston United Methodist Church for 76 years.

A strong advocate for public education, she returned to college, during her early 50s, and earned an associate degree in Early Childhood Education from Central Carolina Community College in Sanford. Afterward, she worked as a teacher assistant at J.S. Waters School in Goldston.

An avid reader throughout her life, she advocated for literacy by being a founding member of the Goldston Friends of the Library. She served on the Chatham County Library Board and the N.C. Regional Library Board.

She always had a competitive spirit showing it as an athlete in high school. She rarely missed a televised UNC basketball game, played bridge for more than 70 years, and enjoyed a good Scrabble game with her grandchildren.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Earl William Goldston; her son, Earl William "Bill" Goldston Jr.; brothers, Billy Olive and Boyce Olive; sisters, Marilyn Olive, Joyce Olive Belsma, and Daisy Olive Roberts.

She is survived by daughter, Beth Goldston and husband Michael Barnes; son, Bryan Goldston and wife Margaret Fishburne Goldston; grandsons, Will Spoon and wife Lisa Bakale-Wise, and Jon Spoon; grand-daughters, Susannah Goldston, Emily Goldston Perrine and husband Viko Perrine; three great-grandchildren, Ezra Goldston Perrine, Henry Douglas Spoon and Everett William Spoon; brother, Ronald Olive; sister, Nancy Olive Christian; and several nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that memorials be made to: Goldston United Methodist Church, P.O. Box 85, Goldston, N.C. 27252; Friends of the Goldston Library Inc., c/o Penni Tharp, 11742 U.S. Hwy. 421, Goldston, N.C. 27252; Chatham County Council on Aging, P.O. Box 715, Pittsboro, N.C. 27312; or Hemophilia of North Carolina, 260 Town Hall Drive, Suite A, Morrisville, N.C. 27560.

A graveside service was held on Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at 4 p.m. at Goldston United Methodist Church Cemetery, 185 Hillcrest Ave., Goldston, N.C. 27252 with Rev. Lucas Nelson officiating.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the Goldston family.

Online condolences may be made at www.pughfuneral-home.com.

DR. DUANE A. DREYER



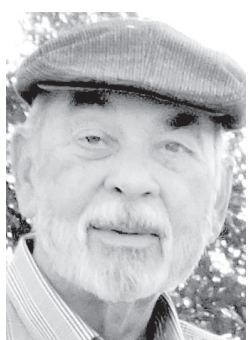
May 10, 1942 – April 22, 2021
DURHAM, N.C. - After giving it all he had for four years, Dr. Duane A. Dreyer, 78, was finally able to round his challenging third base and slide into home plate on April 22, 2021. His wife, Marti, was by his side at home when he passed.

A visitation is planned and details of it, as well as plans for a celebration of his life, may be found in an expanded obituary on the Donaldson Funeral Home, Pittsboro, N.C., website at <https://www.donaldsonfunerals.com/listings>.

Dr. Dreyer was born in Ypsilanti, Michigan, on May 10, 1942, the son of V. Dean and Virginia Jones Dreyer. Educated in the public schools in Ann Arbor, Minneapolis, and Findlay, Ohio, he graduated from Findlay Senior High School in 1960. He attended Ohio Northern University, and graduated from the University of Cincinnati in 1965 with a B.S. in Pharmacy. After serving 1967–1969 as Senior Assistant Pharmacist in the United States Public Health Service, Division of Indian Health in Lame Deer, Montana, he was awarded his Ph.D degree in Pharmacology in 1971 from the University of Pittsburgh. Duane's academic appointments included positions in the Dept. of Pharmacology, School of Medicine, University of Pittsburgh; the Dental Research Center, UNC-Chapel Hill; the Divisions of Neurosurgery and Dept. of Physiology, Duke University Medical Center; the Dept. of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, School of Dentistry; and the Dept. of Physiology, School of Medicine, UNC-Chapel Hill. While at UNC, he received a five-year Research Career Program Development Award from the National Institute of Dental Research; the Richard F. Hunt Award for Excellence in Teaching Award from the School of Dentistry; and the Outstanding Faculty Award, Medical Education Development Program. In semi-retirement he also taught at Durham Technical Community College, Meredith College, Watts School of Nursing, and Miller-Motte College which honored him with its first emeritus status.

Left to miss him dearly are his wife and high school sweetheart, Marti Miller Dreyer, his son and daughter-in-law, Scott and Jennifer Russ Dreyer and their son, Russ. A daughter and her son are estranged. He is also survived by sisters, Joyce Baughman, Carol Kendall, and Deborah Hinton.

ERNEST 'ERNE' HUGH SMITH



Ernest "Ernie" Hugh Smith, 78, formerly of Smith Hudson Road, Siler City, went home to be with his Lord on April 23, 2021.

Ernest was born on September 20, 1942, to Heiskell Ernest Smith and Kathleen Fox Smith. Ernest loved interacting with people. He worked in tool sales and later as an auto parts manager. He enjoyed the fruits of his labor, living on the property that held so much of his Smith heritage. He loved his Lord, his family,

and tending to the harvest of the land. He attended Calvary Faith Baptist Church. Ernest served his country in the U.S. Navy from 1960 to 1963. He is preceded in death by his parents, Heiskell and Kathleen Smith.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Linda Schillinger Smith; daughters, Rebekah Smith Lamb (Daniel) of Lewisville, N.C., and Darlene Smith Cox (Jody) of Seagrove; five grandchildren, Joshua and Meredith Lamb, and Josiah, Charissa, and Susanna Cox; his sisters, Margaret Young (Phil) and Carolyn Handley (Herb); and brothers, Ronald (Margaret), Mike (Carol), Donald (Sheree) and Randy (Lisa).

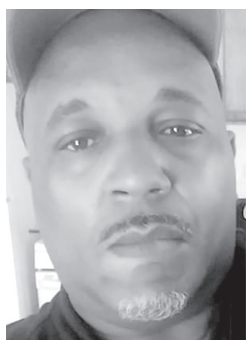
Memorials may be made to the Bible Broadcasting Network (BBN), P.O. Box 7300, Charlotte, N.C. 28241, or to the Faith Christian School, 5449 Brookhaven Rd., Ramseur, N.C. 27316, in honor of his love for God's Word and his love for Christian Education.

The family received friends on Tuesday, April 27, 2021 from 12 to 2 p.m. at Calvary Faith Baptist Church, 2891 Siler City-Snow Camp Rd., Siler City, N.C.. The funeral service followed at 2 p.m. at Calvary Faith Baptist Church. Burial followed at Chatham Memorial Park, 13260 Hwy. 64 West, Siler City, with Randy Smith, Pastor Thomas Smith, Pastor Jimmy Talton and Pastor Tony Brafford officiating.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the Smith family.

Online condolences may be made at www.pughfuneral-home.com.

JAMES WADE TAYLOR JR.



James Wade Taylor Jr. lost his battle with pancreatic cancer on Wednesday, April 21, 2021, at Season's Hospice in Baltimore, Maryland. He was surrounded by his children and grandchildren. He was preceded in death by both parents.

James was born April 13, 1963, in Chatham County to James Wade Taylor Sr. and Josephine Snipes Taylor. Growing up, he attended Silk Hope Elementary and Jordan-Matthews High School. He played

baseball and football during his younger years. He was a die-hard Redskins fan all of his life and he loved being a big truck driver.

He is survived by his children, Kristy Goins of Greensboro, Corey Taylor (Tink), Ashley Taylor, Marcus Moore, Zachary Taylor, and Joshua Taylor, all of Baltimore, Maryland; three stepchildren, Ashlynn Matthews and Justin Smith, both of Baltimore, and Timmy Smith of Raleigh; eight grandchildren, Christian Goins, Thainia Goins, Jaivon Goins, Josiah Goins, Corey Taylor Jr., Deasia Scales, Damari Taylor and Ashton Fisher; one great-grandchild, El' Jay Austin Shneider; three sisters, Denise Godfrey of Siler City, Carol Taylor of Graham, his "Baby Sis," Laquesha Taylor Scales (Jason) of Gibsonville; one brother, Tony Taylor (Cassandra) of Mt. Olive; one beloved aunt, Nancy "Aunt Jane" Headen (Jimmy) of Burlington. He also leaves behind a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

No services will be held. Cremation handled by Maryland Cremation Services of Millersville, Maryland.

"Death leaves a heartache, no one can heal;
Love leaves a memory, no one can steal" - Anonymous
We love you bro, rest easy now!

NEIL ARTHUR MCKOY SR.

Neil Arthur McKoy Sr., 84, of Sanford, passed away on Saturday, April 24, 2021, at his home.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, May 1, 2021, at 11 a.m. in the Chapel of Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home with Bishop Emmanuel Coleman and Chaplain Winters officiating. Friends may visit the funeral home on Friday, April 30, from 2 until 4:45 p.m. to sign the register and view the body. Due to COVID-19 and out of respect to others, masks will be mandatory to attend the service.

Neil was born in Lee County on September 17, 1936 to the late Artee and Flora Cameron McKoy. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Eliza C. McKoy; son, Dennis McKoy; daughter, Anita McDowell; sisters, Birdie Lee Matthews, Flora McNeil; and a brother, Artee McKoy, Jr. He served his country in the United States Army, and he was a retired welder.

Survivors include his daughter, Lavinia McKoy of Sanford; son, Neil A. McKoy Jr. of Garner; one grandson; a sister, Maria Thompson of New Jersey; and several grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be made at www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com.

Arrangements are by Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home.

SHELTON OWEN SMITH

Shelton Owen Smith, 65, of Sanford, formerly of Moncure, passed away on Saturday, April 17, 2021, at Central Carolina Hospital.

Funeral service was held at 1 p.m. Friday, April 23, 2021, at Knotts Funeral Home, Pittsboro. Burial followed at Liberty Chapel Church Cemetery.

CLARENCE LEE HOWARD

Clarence Lee Howard, 70, of Cameron, passed away on Tuesday, April 6, 2021.

Funeral service was held at 4 p.m. Friday, April 23, 2021, at Increasing Faith Delivery Ministries. Burial with Military Honors was held at 3 p.m. Monday, April 26, 2021, at Sandhills Veterans Cemetery at Fort Bragg.

SHAMEKA LYVETTE DOWDY

Shameka Lyvette Dowdy, 42, of Sanford passed away on Wednesday, April 21, 2021.

Funeral service was held at 2 p.m. Wednesday, April 28, 2021, at New Beginnings for Christ, with burial following at Lee Memory Gardens.

VERNON 'BUG' WAYNE FARRIS, JR.

Vernon "Bug" Wayne Farris Jr. 46, of Liberty, formerly of Siler City, passed away Friday, April 23, 2021, at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Siler City.

KAYLANI ELIZABETH COLE

Kaylani Elizabeth Cole, 18, of Sanford, passed away on Sunday, April 25, 2021, at her residence.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

See **OBITUARIES**, page A12

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Chatham News + Record

CHURCH NEWS

ROCKY RIVER FRIENDS MEETING

You are invited to the annual Memorial Service at 10 a.m. on Sunday, May 2, at Rocky River Friends Meeting. We will remember and honor those members who died and others buried in our cemetery in the last two years. Don Farlowe, former Superintendent of the N.C. Yearly Meeting of Friends, will be the guest speaker.

The service will be in the meeting room and broadcast via FM radio to vehicles in the parking area and online via Facebook Live. Social distancing,

face masks, etc., are encouraged. Due to the COVID concerns, there will be no luncheon this year

LOVES CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH

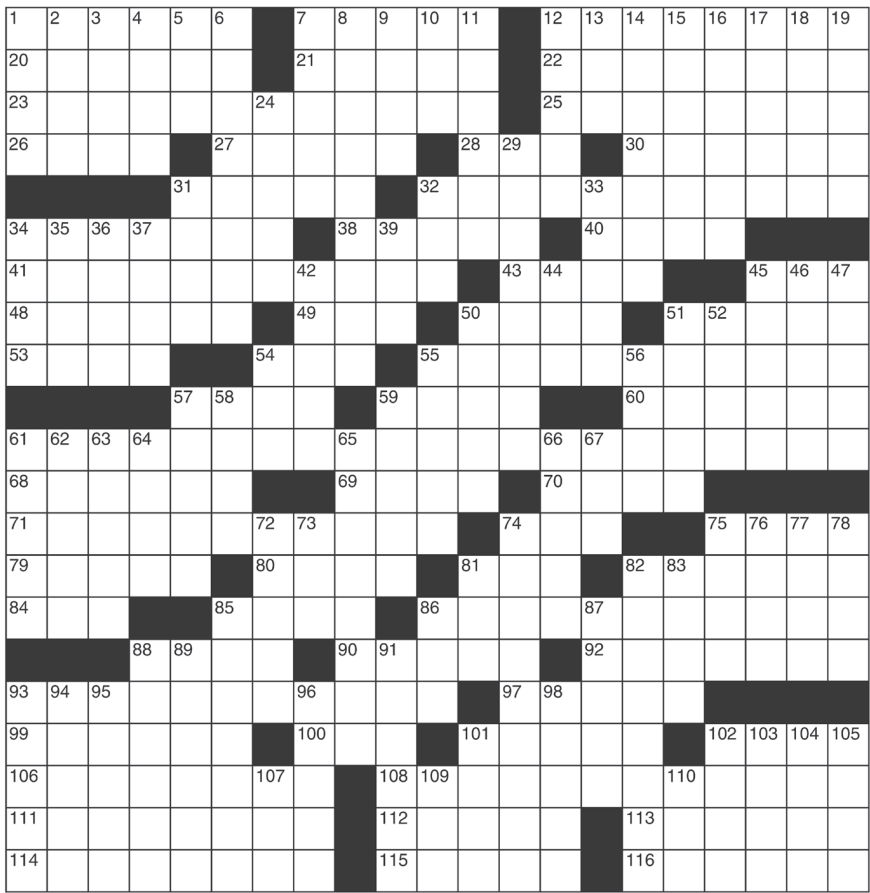
We will be Revisiting Easter at 10 a.m. on Sunday morning, May 2, at Loves Creek Baptist Church, for a special day of message and song and we celebrate again the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The church is located at 1745 East 11th Street, Siler City. COVID restrictions will still apply.

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo

RECORD PLAYING

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Same Old Love" singer Gomez
 - 7 Taken-back autos, e.g.
 - 12 Most adultlike
 - 20 Sanctuary
 - 21 Novelist Jong
 - 22 Undeveloped expanse
 - 23 Carole King album hanging as a decoration?
 - 25 Surpass
 - 26 Drags to court
 - 27 Endures
 - 28 Big primate
 - 30 San — (Texas city, informally)
 - 31 Nixon veep Spiro
 - 32 Taylor Swift album signed for a Catholic dignitary?
 - 40 Hoodwink
 - 41 John Lennon album sitting there all by itself?
 - 43 Shoe parts
 - 45 "Attack, dog!"
 - 48 Portions out
 - 49 In the style of
 - 50 Closest buds, in brief
 - 51 Savor —
 - 53 Get as profit
 - 54 Historic start?
 - 55 Write preliminary lyrics to a
 - 57 Healing sign
 - 59 Cello's ancestor
 - 60 Pop's Grande
 - 61 Michael Jackson album that plays mind games?
 - 70 Spellbound
 - 71 Bob Marley album that's very popular in big cities?
 - 74 Granola bit
 - 75 Dearth
 - 79 Works by painter Joan
 - 80 Small bouquet
 - 81 Polymer used in piping, for short
 - 82 U.S. Navy builder
 - 84 Major Calif. airport code
 - 85 General — chicken
 - 86 Looking to buy a
 - 88 Only OK
 - 90 Frequently
 - 92 Least distant
 - 93 Badly damaged
 - 95 Fleetwood Mac album?
 - 97 Assessed
 - 99 Mad
 - 100 Dryly funny
 - 101 Peeling knife
 - 102 Smartphone extras
 - 106 Mark up with comments
 - 108 Joni Mitchell album upon being hit by lightning?
 - 111 Billy Joel hit
 - 112 Stones
 - 113 Celestial dust cloud
 - 114 Parts of car wheels
 - 115 Cheeky
 - 116 Old Faithful is a famous one
- DOWN**
- 1 Toothed tools
 - 2 Jacob's twin
 - 3 Actor
 - 4 Edifice
 - 5 Granola bit
 - 6 Mixtures
 - 7 Della of song
 - 8 Of times past
 - 9 Fruit stones
 - 10 Scanner of bar codes, for short
 - 11 Doc's throat-checking request
 - 12 Copied a cow
 - 13 Clerk on "The Simpsons"
 - 14 The "T" of the DPT vaccine
 - 15 Detach, as a jacket fastener
 - 16 Toy in a crib
 - 17 Mistake
 - 18 River by the Louvre
 - 19 Affixed, as gift wrap
 - 24 Bambooc-eating bear
 - 29 Comical tumble in slapstick
 - 31 Very busy
 - 32 Sebastian of England
 - 33 That is, to Tiberius
 - 34 Not closed all the way
 - 35 Stubborn sort
 - 36 Land in el agua
 - 37 Go no further
 - 39 Go — diet
 - 42 Greta of the silver screen
 - 44 Part of OTB
 - 45 Cordage fiber
 - 46 Dunne of the silver screen
 - 47 Labor leader Chávez
 - 50 Extensive
 - 51 Supporting the idea
 - 52 Seed casing
 - 54 Compadre
 - 55 Chopped into small cubes
 - 56 Lyre relative
 - 57 Tibias' places
 - 58 Spiral shape
 - 59 Title cousin in a 1992 film
 - 61 Purple fruits
 - 62 Letter flourish
 - 63 "Hey, dude!"
 - 64 Turin "Ta-ta!"
 - 65 Turns rancid
 - 66 Part of OTB
 - 67 Chapeau
 - 72 — salts
 - 73 Slimy stuff
 - 74 Bakers get their mitts on them
 - 75 Oz lion player Bert
 - 76 Busy as —
 - 77 Cartoon pics
 - 78 Retained
 - 81 — -wee
 - 82 Smiling evilly
 - 83 "Yikes!"
 - 85 Huge wave
 - 86 Rds.
 - 87 Bury
 - 88 Actress Raven —
 - 89 Speechifier
 - 91 Fast-food cooks
 - 93 Not inclined
 - 94 Spirits in lamps
 - 95 Of the moon
 - 96 "Hee Haw"
 - 98 Bohemian
 - 101 Delts' neighbors
 - 102 "Dear" advice columnist
 - 103 In addition to
 - 104 Cry feebly
 - 105 Blacken, as a steak
 - 107 Scot's cap
 - 109 Mauna —
 - 110 Mediocre grade



Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.

S C A L P S M I S R E A D S A S C I I
 E A S I L Y A N T E N N A S F E R N S
 W H E N I S A W S O M E O N E R A I D S
 S N A K E C R E M A P A L E O
 R T E A P P R O A C H M Y D O G
 A F R E S H A M S A B R A D E F R O
 L O U T E R R S T I E S S C O U T
 A N D A T T E M P T T O T A K E H U S H
 I D O V A C O R A N S M I L E S
 M O L E S A D B O T S K Y M A N
 O F F T H E P R O T E C T I V E G U A R D
 H O R S E Y F L U T E N A D I A
 M A L A W I C A A N T A U D O S
 A P I N C O V E R I N G I T S M O U T H
 C A N E R D I N A R T E K I C E E
 A T E E L E C T S E S E M I L E R S
 W H A T D I D I S H O U T D E M
 E M I R S O R O N O P E C O S
 S T E N O D O N T M O V E A M U Z Z L E
 L I N G O O N E U P P E D E T R A D E
 O C T E T L O A T H E R S N E A R E D

Nearly a third of Chatham residents now fully vaccinated against COVID-19

From Chatham County Public Health Dept.

PITTSBORO — More than 42% of Chatham County residents had received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine while the community continues its efforts to end the pandemic.

According to data from the N.C. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 31,586 Chatham residents have received at least one dose as of last week, while 23,856 residents, making up 32% of the county's population, are fully vaccinated against COVID-19. For more on Chatham vaccination data, visit <https://covid19.ncdhhs.gov/dashboard/vaccinations>.

"It has been four months since we received our first shipment of COVID-19 vaccine and we have made tremendous strides in protecting ourselves against this deadly virus by getting vaccinated," said Chatham County Public Health Director Mike Zelek. "That said, we have seen demand for vaccinations slow down in recent weeks and I am concerned we will not reach the level needed to get beyond this pandemic if these trends continue. If you have not gotten your vaccine yet, it's now your turn. The good news is there are more options to get vaccinated than ever, including many that don't even require an appointment."

All Chatham County residents aged 16 and older are now eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine and have a variety of means to receive their shot in Chatham County. For locations in and around Chatham County to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, visit myspot.nc.gov.

Latest on health department's efforts

The Chatham County Public Health Department has continued its outreach, education and vaccination efforts. The department administered second doses to individuals at the Chatham County Detention Center this week, along with some second doses at its clinic in Siler City.

The department will begin taking first-dose vaccine appointments at its clinic on Fridays beginning May 7th.

StarMed
StarMed continues to operate

COVID-19 vaccination clinics at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center in Pittsboro. Beginning next week, StarMed will provide first doses at the Ag Center between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.

Gov. Cooper outlines timeline

During a press conference on April 21, Gov. Roy Cooper said that the state plans to lift mandatory social distancing, capacity and mass gathering restrictions by June 1 if COVID-19 trends continue to be stable and vaccinations continue to increase. The face covering mandate will likely remain in place for those spending time indoors in public. Both NCDHHS and the CCPHD urge all businesses and residents to continue to follow health recommendations.

For the full news release, visit <https://governor.nc.gov/news/governor-cooper-outlines-timeline-lifting-state%E2%80%99s-covid-19-restrictions>.

Final reminders

The CCPHD encourages all residents to continue to practice the 3 Ws in public — wearing a face covering, washing your hands regularly and waiting six feet apart from others — both before and after vaccination.

The CDC says it is safe for fully vaccinated people — those who have received the full dosage (one for Johnson & Johnson, two for Moderna and Pfizer) at least two weeks ago — to gather with others in small groups indoors without wearing a mask. However, according to the CDC, it remains important to "keep taking precautions ... like wearing a mask, staying six feet apart from others, and avoiding crowds and poorly ventilated spaces — in public places." Individuals can read more about the CDC's recommendations for fully-vaccinated individuals here: www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/fully-vaccinated.html.

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and the CCPHD's vaccination plans, visit www.chathamcountync.gov/coronavirusvaccine. To learn more about the Chatham County Public Health Department, visit www.chathamcountync.gov/publichealth or www.facebook.com/chathamhealth.

NEWS BRIEFS

AABE hosts 'clean energy' session

The American Association of Blacks in Energy will host a clean energy session from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. on May 3.

AABE is a national organization and its mission dates back to 1977 when the country was in an oil crisis. Its founders wanted to be sure all Americans had a voice at the table on energy matters. This national organization is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit professional organization committed to ensuring the input of African Americans and other minorities into energy and environment discussions, and development of energy policy regulations and

research and development technologies. Through strong membership, AABE continues to grow and provide networks and professional relationships that benefit members and the companies they represent throughout the country.

The North Carolina chapter of AABE focuses on educating North Carolina communities about energy-related matters, developing diverse energy professionals and increasing student awareness of energy-related career opportunities. In addition, the chapter awards scholarships to students pursuing higher education in STEM. To date, it has awarded more than 100 scholarships and

held high school events in the Triangle at N.C. Central University and other venues.

Learn more about AABE national at <https://www.aabe.org>.

Dominion conducting controlled burns

Dominion Energy will be conducting natural gas system inspections beginning this week at 13804 U.S. Hwy. 64 in Siler City near the Walmart Supercenter. As part of that process, motorists will see a vertical flame off U.S. Hwy. 64. Related work will take place several times a week and the flame may be visible for approximately three to six hours each day. There will be road signs to remind the community that the flame is a controlled burn activity.

These activities are overseen by Dominion Energy and other qualified personnel in cooperation with local fire department officials. If residents smell a rotten egg odor and have concerns there may be a leak in or around their home, they should call 911 and Dominion Energy at 1-877-776-2427 from a safe place.

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Wednesday Spotlight



Pittsboro Feed Store

We are your locally owned, family-ran feed store right here in Pittsboro! It's spring time so that means it's baby chick and gardening season are upon us! Make sure you stop by to get your North Carolina grown veggie plants!



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Mobile: 919-799-1692 (Jennifer)

ART SALE AT Brown's Chapel United Methodist Church
There will be an art sale of Dot Walker's original paintings and prints benefiting Brown's Chapel United Methodist Church located at 355 Chicken Bridge Road, Pittsboro on Sunday, May 2 from 12:00 to 2:30. Prices range from \$15 to \$150.
Watercolor and oil paintings are available, primarily of old barns, landscapes, birds, flowers, Southwest and Indian subjects. Dot's nickname is "The Realist Painter." Payment in cash and checks will be accepted.

OBITUARIES

Continued from page A10

JERRY ALLEN POWERS



Jerry Allen Powers, 53, of Siler City passed away on Thursday, April 22, 2021, at UNC Hospitals, Chapel Hill.

Mr. Powers was born in Randolph County on November 7, 1967, the son of Jack and Merita Shupe Powers. Jerry loved anything that was made by Ford. He enjoyed spending any free time riding his motorcycle. Jerry was preceded in death by his parents.

He is survived by his daughters, Nicki Powers of Keene, New Hampshire, and Becka Powers of Cape Cod, Massachusetts; his sister, Teresa Powers Culberson and husband Brad of Siler City; nieces, Casey Allred (Gabe Laaper) of Siler City and Haley Allred of Siler City; nephew, Zachary Allred of Siler City, great-niece, Avery Jane, and great-nephews, Carter Rhett and Louie Ray.

The family will hold a private memorial service at a later date.

Smith & Buckner funeral home is assisting the Powers family.

Online condolences may be made at www.pughfuneral-home.com.

NEWS BRIEFS

Central Carolina Promise/K14 program to hold virtual information sessions

From Central Carolina Community College

SANFORD — Pre-register now to attend a virtual information session for the Central Carolina Promise/K14 program.

The program provides free tuition at Central Carolina Community College to qualifying high school graduates who live in Chatham, Harnett and Lee counties.

Learn more about the Promise/K14 program by attending one of these virtual information sessions:

- Chatham County Promise, 6 p.m. Tuesday, May 4
- Harnett County Promise, 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 5
- Lee County Promise, 6 p.m. Thursday, May 6

Register at: www.tinyurl.com/k14sessions.

The same content will be covered in each session, so students may register for any session that fits their schedule. A recording will also be available after the sessions conclude for anyone who cannot attend.

Priority deadline for the program is Thursday, July 1. The first step is to complete the

Central Carolina Promise/K14 interest form on the Promise website at www.cccc.edu/promise.

Those with questions can email to: promisek14@ccc.edu, or call (919) 718-7542.

For more information on Central Carolina Community College — which is dedicated to providing pathways to achievable dreams — visit www.cccc.edu.

Siler City indoor walking

Siler City Parks and Recreation invites you to lace up your shoes and get ready to walk into better health! Start your day off right with a few laps at the Indoor Walking Program each weekday morning from 7 a.m. to 9 a.m. beginning Monday, April 26, 2021. The program is held at the Ernest Ramsey Gymnasium Indoor Walking Track at 512 East 6th Street, Siler City.

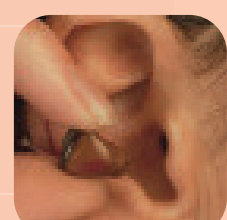
This program is free and no pre-registration is required. Operations are subject to COVID-19 guidelines and mask are required indoors.

For more information, visit www.silercity.org, contact Siler City Parks and Recreation at (919) 742-2699 or email recreation@silercity.org.

— CN+R staff reports

LOCAL NEWS

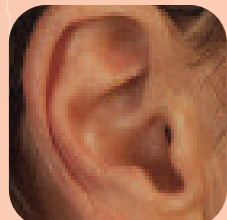
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WINE

Continued from page A1

where, particularly in Chatham County.

“Lucky for us, we were deemed essential and did not have to completely close due to COVID-19,” Lange said. “But we did have to shut down for in-store business.”

Vino!! reduced its hours in the beginning of the pandemic and at one point was

only open on Tuesdays and Fridays. Some employees were temporarily laid off. Events — in-person Friday night wine tastings, wine dinners, seminars and the business’s annual Wine Fest — were also among the casualties. Customers could no longer pop in, roam across the creaking wooden floors inside Suite D at 89 Hillsboro St. and browse attractive displays of bottles, or sit at a table in the second-floor space and order wine by the glass — a relatively new feature that Lange said had “just started taking off” when the pandemic began.

Lange and Vino!! were able to pivot by bolstering online sales. After updating the online inventory and promoting delivery service (which existed, Lange said, but never really caught on prior to the pandemic) and offering curbside pickup, customers began to adjust, too.

And in a masked world, Vino!! added in new elements that put “social” back in play: virtual dinners and wine tastings held through videoconferencing platforms.

Not business as usual, but at least it was business.

“Now, we don’t get a lot of people coming in to drink by the glass,” Lange said of Vino!!’s return to in-person business. “While we are offering our in-store wine tastings, they aren’t nearly as busy as they used to be before the pandemic because of the limitations on how many people can be in a room at one time. Plus, some people still don’t feel comfortable patronizing businesses.”

Seating capacity limits attendance at wine dinners held in conjunction with local restaurants, and lingering unknowns about the pandemic and the post-pandemic world for businesses like hers means Lange simply doesn’t know when Vino!! will “ever be able to get back to throwing events of that nature.”

But she’s hopeful. She deemed last Friday’s wine-tasting “a success,” for example.

“So it remains a struggle to keep our customers engaged and to offer fun wine events to increase our business,” she says. “We are not sure what the future holds, but it seems like things may remain this way for a while. Wine is such a social thing, and the fear and worry of being close to other people and getting sick really limits the events we are able to hold in our industry.”

From law to wine

Lange isn’t a trained or certified sommelier. Her background, in fact, is in law. She graduated from Campbell University law school and practiced as a litigator for a few years but found it not as much to her liking as she anticipated.

Before getting her law degree, she’d worked at different restaurants in her native Chapel Hill and enjoyed talking to customers about wine and drinking it herself.

“Once I was 21 and could really explore wine, it became a hobby of mine,” Lange said. “I loved trying new things and learning about wine. I was also the friend people asked wine advice, too.”

She passed the bar

exam and began to practice law, and by then considered herself “something of a wine snob.” The idea for Vino!!, in fact, was something she and her sister, Liz Arias — who’s a practicing attorney — had kicked around for a few years “on the back burner as a

fun side project.”

In 2012, finding herself between jobs as an attorney, Lange knew it was time. She joined forces with her mother, Carolyn Kizer, and Liz and Liz’s husband, Ascar

Arias, in the venture.

“If I didn’t open the wine shop then, I never would,” she said. “And the rest is history!”

Vino!! remains a family business. Lange — who, with her husband, Martin, is expecting the couple’s third child in June — does the bulk of the work, making orders and filling customer requests and handling marketing chores. Mom Carolyn still helps out occasionally.

At Vino!!, the goal has always been simple: provide customers with quality, eminently drinkable, affordable wines from all over the world that they can’t necessarily find anywhere else.

“We carry wines for every taste profile and we are happy to make recommendations,” Lange said. “Our audience is anyone who is interested in and loves wine.”

She promotes the atmosphere of Vino!!’s unique 1,019-square-foot space, a carefully curated selection (more than 400 different wines) and personal attention.

“We get to know our customers and their personal preferences and love suggesting wines to them,” Lange said. “We are also small and family-owned, and like to bring in wines we’ve tried and think offer great quality and value — not just wines that score well or that are on sale. We like to personally interact with our customers, which is why you will never see a tasting machine in our shop. We think we have a great selection that is affordable and meets everyone’s personal preferences.”

On a recent afternoon, for example, a local customer walked into the store looking to buy a bottle not for herself, but as a gift for a visiting out-of-state friend.

“I’d like to give her some produced here in North Carolina,” the woman told Lange, who directed the customer to the part of the store displaying local and regional wines. After a few questions, the customer took Lange’s suggestion on a bottle and departed happy.

Another customer eyed a Rhone Valley red that happened to be one of the most expensive wines at Vino!!. Lange suggested a less-expensive alternative with a similar taste profile that she and one of her distributors both raved about; the customer went away with something he’d not tried before and reported back later that he’d found the wine to be one of the best he’d had.

Tasting, learning

The knowledge base of Vino!!’s customers ranges, she said, from “super knowledgeable” geeks to novice drinkers, but they share an enthusiasm “for tasting, learning about, and drinking wine.”

As does Lange herself. “We learn something new about wine every day,” she said.

And for the curious customer who comes in with a need for a bottle of wine, but no idea where to start?

“Usually we try to understand budget and whether they want a red or a white,” Lange said. “From there, we try to determine the taste profile they are looking for in the

Vino!!’s Anna Lange shares suggestions for five red wines, five white wines and five spring favorites available at her boutique Pittsboro wine store — along with her tasting notes. Prices range from \$8.99 to \$36.99.

RED WINES

- 2017 Jolite ‘Le Verre Cuvee’ Pinot Noir, \$25.99

From Willamette Valley, Oregon, this 100% Pinot Noir was aged for 16 months in French oak. Approachable, it delivers a vibrant array of fresh red cherries and berries with crushed flowers and smooth, pastry-like tannins that hold impressively punchy, red-cherry and plum flavors. Only 678 cases produced. Second label for high end Pinot Noir producer Cadeau.

- 2018 Round Pound “Kith & Kin” Cabernet Sauvignon, \$36.99

This delicious Napa Valley Cabernet Sauvignon is made by famous winemaker Thomas Rivers Brown. “Kith & Kin” is old English for “friends and family” and is a perfect description of this wine — it is comprised of Napa Cabernet from all corners of Napa Valley with a healthy dose of Rutherford fruit. It boasts with dark fruit flavors, cocoa powder, bright red fruit and finishes with a long, dusty and balanced end. A killer made wine for an amazing price!

- 2016 Montebro Priorat Crianza, \$15.99

This is a fabulous and affordable red blend of 50% Grenache, 30% Carignan and 20% Cabernet Sauvignon that comes from a prestigious, well-known area of south Barcelona known as Priorat. Full-bodied with flavors of vanilla, cocoa and ripe cherries. Well-balanced with soft tannins and a slight presence of mature oak in the finish. Enjoy with your favorite meats and cheeses.

- 2020 Saint Cosme Cotes du Rhone, \$17.99

This Cotes de Rhone, made from 100% organically grown Syrah, is full of fruit and fresh aromas of violets, blueberries, cassis and blackberries, with a nice, tight texture. Flavors of redberry, blackcurrant, licorice and violet with a long finish of pepper and smoke. The fresh, spicy tannins are present but balanced with freshness, finesse and a creamy texture. In a blind tasting, one might think this Syrah comes from Cornas or Crozes-Hermitage.

wine or ask about the food being served in order to recommend a good pairing. If the customer has absolutely no idea what to get, then we will suggest wines in their price point that tend to be crowd pleasers or top-sellers.”

Inside the store, wines are arranged and displayed by country and region, rather than by varietal. Vino!!’s inventory features plenty of selection in the under-\$20 range, along with higher-priced bottles — including a stellar \$84 2017 Domaine Usseglio Raymond & Fils Cha-

ANNA’S PICKS

At Vino!!, here are some select wins you might like

- 2016 Vecchia Torre Salice Salentino, \$11.99

From Puglia, Italy, the Salice Salentino is made from the Italian indigenous grapes, Negroamaro (90%) and Malvasia Nera (10%). This wine is juicy and tastes of dark berry fruit and mild spice. Generous, warm and velvety with a pleasantly bitter aftertaste. Perfect with pizza and spaghetti. While Italian grapes can be intimidating, try this wine and become an instant convert!

WHITE WINES

- 2019 Brunn Gruner Veltliner 1L, \$17.99

From Kamptal, Austria, this is an eminently enjoyable estate-made Gruner Veltliner! Delightfully versatile, it exhibits white flower and mineral aromas. Medium-bodied and satin-textured, with gravelly white fruit, apples, citrus, stone and mineral flavors, and a traditional peppery hint. A crisp and refreshing wine.

- 2020 The Ned Pinot Gris, \$13.99

From Marlborough, New Zealand, this 100% Pinot Gris (“Pinot Grigio”) has aromas and flavors of ginger spice, apple, pear, melon and persimmon. Aged in stainless steel, it’s crisp and refreshing on the finish, with just the right amount of tangy acidity — making you want to drink more!

- 2020 Beaumont Chenin Blanc, \$24.99

From Walker Bay, South Africa, this 100% Chenin Blanc is clean and dry, with high natural acid levels and great fruit purity. A very expressive wine with a lovely, balanced palate. Unoaked and full of zest, peach and apple flavors. Nicely rounded after six months on the lees in tank.

- 2019 Michele Alois Caulino Falaghina, \$19.99

From Campania, Italy, this white is made from one of the region’s most unique white grapes, vibrant Falaghina. Sustainably farmed, the nose bursts with aromas of orange citrus, pear and even pine. Refreshing, dry and crisp with great acid and minerality. Enjoy with salads and seafood.

- 2020 De Wetshof Limestone Hill Chardonnay, \$16.99

From Robertson, South Africa, this 100% unoaked Chardonnay has pure, refreshing apple, peach and lemon fruit aromas and flavors, with a lovely leesy richness of texture and a nutty, chalky, fruit-filled finish. A balanced



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Vino!! customer Shirley Caraball (right) samples a white wine during last Friday’s wine tasting at Vino!! in Pittsboro.



Staff photo by Bill Horner III

Although in-store sales were suspending during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Vino!! is again open for wine by the glass and its Friday night wine-tasting events.

wine with sheer drinkability.

SPRING FAVORITES

- 2019 Santola Vinho Verde, \$8.99

From Vinho Verde, Portugal, this quaffable white is made from Lourerio and Pederina grapes. Delicious, spritely and refreshing. Thirst-quenching, low in alcohol and slightly fizzy, this wine is way too easy to drink. Loads of citrus aromas and flavors such as lemon and lime.

- 2020 Antxiola Getariako Txakolina Blanc, \$17.99

From Spain, this lightly spritzzy white is made from the local varietals, Hondurrabi Zuri and Hondurrabi Beltza. Aromas of fresh orange and green apple, with a touch of dusty minerals adding vibrancy. Silky and light, with zesty citrus and orchard fruit flavors and a refreshing bitter quinine finish.

- 2020 Borgo dei Trulli Salento Rosato, \$15.99

From Puglia, Italy, this fun packed rose is made from 100% Primitivo. It brilliantly shows off the juicy nature of Primitivo and sunshine! Scents and flavors of strawberries,

passionfruit, watermelon and orange blossom. The palate is full, fresh and crisp. The finish is long and clean. Vegan friendly.

- 2018 Pollo Creek Sparkling Pinot Grigio, \$11.99

From Cimislia, Moldova, this excellent, dry sparkling bubbly is made out of Pinot Grigio! A fun little discovery for an everyday bubbly, the grapes in this wine were produced near the cool banks of the Cognainic River. Pleasant citrus aromas with a harmonic, splendid, crisp and fresh taste.

- 2019 Echeverría Clasico Sauvignon Blanc, \$10.99

Vina Echeverría is a long-established Chilean estate-winery fully owned and managed by the Echeverría family whose vision is to have sustainably farmed wines that are known worldwide for their quality, value and reliability. This 100% Sauvignon Blanc from Casablanca Valley is aged in stainless steel. Vibrant with aromas of fresh herbs, green pepper and tomato leaves, with citric notes of grapefruit and lime. The palate is fresh and crisp, with a balanced natural acidity and a fruity finish.

out that are anywhere from, say, \$7 to \$25 — that’s our sweet spot,” she said. “Then, of course, I’m going to get the higher-end wines that people are looking for.”

Selling doesn’t require a lot of effort if the quality and price point are there. “If we think it’s good quality, and if you think it’s worth the price point, then we put it out,” Lange said.

And for Vino!!’s customers who are novices, or don’t want to break the bank, she understands — she was a novice, too.

“There’s great value

out there in the \$10 price point,” Lange says, “but I think the problem is that there is so much you have to weed through because there’s a lot out there that is not necessarily that great. I mean, that’s our job as a wine shop owner. It’s to weed through all that for you — to try those wines and find the things that we think represent good quality and value.”

CN+R Publisher and Editor Bill Horner III can be reached at bhorner3@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @billthethird.

TASTING NOTES

Vino!!'s Anna Lange on serves up her thoughts about wine

Vino!!
Vino!! is open from 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Tuesday through Friday and noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday. The store's address is 89 Hillsboro St., Suite D, but enter off of West Salisbury Street and climb the stairs to the shop.

On wine prices
"Certainly it's true that as you go up in price point, the quality of the wine changes. And so you do tend to find that wines can, generally speaking, taste better and be higher quality ... the higher you go up in price point. But again, it's all personal preference. I may try a \$50 bottle of wine and not like it. There are a lot of really good value wines out there, though, in the under-\$15 price point — you just have to search through and you have to trust whoever your local wine shop owner is to help you find those."

On Vino!!'s Friday night tastings
"We have a weekly wine tasting every Friday from 5-7 p.m. It is very informal. Customers show up anytime

during that time frame and taste at their leisure. Masks have to be worn except when tasting or sitting down and having a glass of wine. All wine being tasted is 10% off. The wines tasted every week change and are sometimes themed, sometimes not. But all are hand-selected by the shop and super delicious!"

On a small store's selection, compared to larger shops

"It's impossible to carry it all. And that's the other thing too, I like people to know, is that we are small, but we're not limited to what we have in here. So just because we don't have it doesn't mean we can't get it. So I'm always willing to look into things for people if they're trying to find a certain or particular wine."

On Vino!!'s customer base
"So I definitely have my regulars who buy the same thing every time. And there's nothing wrong with that. You like what you like and you know you like it. And then I have customers who

come every Friday to the wine tasting and buy a new bottle and then they don't come back in for that — they come back to the tasting and buy something new. So I would say it's probably like half and half. But there's a lot of people who are willing to like try something new."

On what she finds fascinating about wine

"Obviously I like how it tastes. But I think it's so neat how you can take one grape, and depending on where it's from, how it's grown, the soil it's grown in, how it's made ... all of that can totally change what a wine tastes like. A lot of people don't realize how difficult it is ... the whole process that goes into wine-making."

On what she likes to drink
"Generally I like dry, crisp whites like Grüner Veltliner. I like rosé's. It depends on my mood. You know, like one day I might be in the mood for a certain type of red. I really like pinots

and Rhone varietals, things like that. But sometimes you want that big, bold, juicy wine because you just do."

On buying wine online
"You know, it's, that's tough, because we're also a little limited. I get why people are buying online, because of pricing ... We have to go through an importer and distributor. And so I run into that a lot. I'm not price gouging — I'm charging the right price. I can save you shipping, and with me you have somebody who knows you, who personally knows your preferences and really does tailor to you."

On the peculiarities of taste
"I think so many people get caught up in what they think they're supposed to be drinking. Who cares what somebody tells me shouldn't be good? You've got to try it, you've got to figure out what you like. It's all subjective anyway, you know? I don't judge anybody based on what they like. I try to get them the best of what they're looking for, because, you know, we're all different."

CCPHD

Continued from page A9

child welfare system. Let's all work toward being a connection for someone in our lives. It could really make a difference."

There are many ways Chatham adults can #BeAConnection for local children, but here are a couple.

Communities in Schools of Chatham County has a program where adults can either be a "lunch buddy" or a mentor to a child in Chatham County Schools. This allows those individuals to have one-on-one time with a young person who needs that one-

on-one time. Chatham resident Erika Guy has volunteered as a lunch buddy with CIS and says she remembers the first adult other than her parents who took a genuine interest in her, and she hopes she can do the same for others.

"You need other adults in a kid's life to make them feel valued and make them feel like they have importance out in the world," Guy said. "Connecting with kids is a vital part of what I think every adult can do. I think it instills in kids the ability to see — kids can't be what they can't see. Finding meaningful ways to connect with kids with experiential

approaches is a really good thing for all the community."

Kit Stanley serves as a volunteer guardian ad litem for children in North Carolina Judicial District 15b, which includes Chatham County. The GAL program equips community volunteers to investigate and determine the needs of abused and neglected children petitioned into the court system. She said GALs have a lot on their plate — working nights and weekends, lots of phone calls and writing — but she's been able to develop strong connections with the children she represents, and that makes it worth it.

"It's hard, but it's fighting the good fight," she said. "Children without connections are going to get lost, and that's going to impact all of us. They need someone who's going to advocate for them in the legal system if that's necessary, in the school system if that's necessary. These kids deserve a chance, but they have to have a chance, not only for that child, but for our community."

Spending time with children and donating needed items for their health and well-being are just two ways all Chatham residents can #BeAConnection not just for children but for everyone.

Prevent Child Abuse NC has a full list of ways to #BeAConnection on their website, preventchildabusenc.org. Some of the other ways: leave a gas gift card at a gas pump, help a neighbor or friend who is moving, compliment the first three people you speak with today and even just sending a grateful text message to a friend.

For an individual to #BeAConnection, it turns out, can be pretty simple. And in the effort to prevent child abuse, it could make all the difference in the life of a child, whether you're going to #BeAConnection to a child, their parents or the

whole family.
"This year's theme of Child Abuse Prevention Month fits perfectly into our primary goal as a public health department," said Chatham County Public Health Director Mike Zelek. "We know that connections matter to developing healthy brains, caring relationships and thriving communities. For our children to be healthy in every way, they need adults in their lives who are positive influences. By committing to preventing child abuse, serving as a mentor and supporting local nonprofits that serve children, you can be that positive influence, that connection."



After months of planning and research, Garman Homes - a member of the builder team in Chatham Park, Pittsboro, NC - is breaking ground on a new concept home created as a result of the America At Home Study. This national survey of adults ages 25-74 with annual household incomes of \$50,000 or more, was conducted in two waves during the pandemic to gain a better understanding of all that new home and community design requires in a post-pandemic world. Insights from 7,000 participating consumers culminated in this original floor plan, named "No Little Plans - Barnaby," that will debut in Chatham Park later this year.

When the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down in 2020, economists began introducing theories and projections about the pandemic's economic effects on society. The medical field researched the toll these changes would take on mental health including suicide and depression rates. However, the way Americans feel about their homes and community in this "new normal" and how it would change the way Americans view and feel about their home received little attention. Lifestyles had changed overnight as jobs and educational efforts went virtual, converting spaces in the home into offices and classrooms. Entertaining areas were transformed into meccas for board games, craft projects, and newly discovered hobbies. And out-

door living became safe havens to enjoy some fresh air and a little nature. Three women leaders in the home building industry Belinda Sward, Nancy Keenan, and Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki took the initiative to explore these changes through the America At Home Survey. They then invited Alaina Money-Garman, founder and CEO of Garman Homes, and set out to design and now build a concept home in Chatham Park.



"Inspired by consumer insights from the America At Home Study, the concept home is believed to be the first home intentionally designed in response to the radical changes spurred by the pandemic. Special attention was paid to the entries of the home - both for owners and guests because they need to perform differently, and to the functionality and natural light in the kitchen. The home includes two separate office spaces, neither one simply a re-purposed bedroom. There is a guest suite

and two covered outdoor spaces for safe social gathering. This home is the collective effort of the founders of the study and Dahlin Group Architecture Planning (architect), Garman Homes (builder), and Cecilian Partners (digital customer experience)." - AmericaAtHomeStudy.com



The America At Home concept home, "No Little Plans - Barnaby" is part of Garman's new NONFICTION brand that features the Quotables Collection. This collection includes four floor plans and can be expected for presentation this year in Vineyards at Chatham Park.

"Chatham Park is honored to feature the concept home for the America At Home Study," said Executive Vice President of Preston Development Vanessa Jenkins. "Our community vision is to showcase homes that consider how we live now and, in the future, rather than what our standards have been in the past. We could not think of a better example than the Barnaby concept home from Garman homes."

Chatham Park's dedication and commitment to research, technology, and well-rounded living - shown in their five pillars: Innovation, Connectivity, Quality Design, Wellness, and Stewardship - are exemplified by Garman's involvement in the America At Home Study. As Chatham Park works with Garman Homes to develop America At Home-inspired houses, the community continues to aspire to create spaces where people look forward to live, work, play, shop and dine at home, or within minutes of home.

DISCOVER CHATHAM PARK AT CHATHAMPARK.COM

HAVELOCK 32, NORTHWOOD 7

'We just can't finish': Havelock overcomes early struggles to eliminate Northwood

BY VICTOR HENSLEY
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — It was 18 months ago, on a partly cloudy, 34-degree night in Durham, when members of the Northwood Chargers' football team walked off of the field — many of them for the last time — and made their way to the bus after a 56-14 loss to Northern Durham.

That 42-point loss capped off a four-game losing streak to end Northwood's 4-7 season in 2019.

The postseason was out of the question.

It was the closing game of head coach Cullen Homolka's first season with the team,

while simultaneously being the final moments of the careers of 13 seniors, including the team's starting quarterback, second-leading rusher, second-leading receiver and sacks leader.

While the season hadn't gone as planned, there were glimpses of what Northwood football could be, visible building blocks for a successful future.

They just had to get there. On Friday, a year and a half later, the Chargers' pandemic-shortened spring season ended in a similar fashion, a sizable loss, 32-7, to a formidable opponent, the still-undefeated Havelock Rams.

But this time, it was in the second round of the NCHSAA

2A football playoffs in Pittsboro, with Northwood finishing the year as 6-3 conference co-champions.

What a difference an extended offseason makes.

"(This season) went great," said Michael Anthony, senior defensive tackle for the Chargers. "It went way better than we expected. We had a lot of people doubting us — we still do — but hey, we set a foundation for them to go forward next season to be great and achieve what we couldn't achieve and win a state championship."

By all accounts, this wasn't supposed to be a close game.

See FOOTBALL, Page B2



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Northwood seniors Jake Mann (44) and Christopher Poston (73) combine on a tackle in their team's 32-7 second-round loss to Havelock last Friday.

Moving parts: Northwood's Jason Amy named Seaforth AD

Cameron Vernon steps down as Chargers' women's basketball coach to focus on family, AD role

BY VICTOR HENSLEY
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — A familiar face is set to lead Seaforth High School athletics this fall.

After 15 years at Northwood High School — 11 as one of its athletic directors — Jason Amy is leaving to become the AD at newly constructed Seaforth in Pittsboro, scheduled to open its doors to students at the start of the 2021-22 school year in August.

"We've got to do it right because this is creating a legacy," Amy told the News + Record. "When we say 'We Are Seaforth,' it means we are going to have our own identity and everybody will know Seaforth athletics as one of the premier sports programs."

Seaforth's identity became a little clearer on April 20, when the school unveiled its mascot during its virtual "Vision of Seaforth" presentation. Moving forward, they'll be the Seaforth Hawks.



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

Northwood women's basketball head coach Cameron Vernon (center) speaks to his three seniors (from left to right: Jamaría Faucette, Rae McClarty, Jillian McNaught) during the Chargers' first-round playoff win over E.E. Smith on February 23.

Amy has a long track record of leadership and dedication to student-athletes, acting as a health/physical education teacher, varsity wrestling/women's golf coach and athletic director during his time at Northwood.

On Monday, he was named the 2020-21 Big Eight Coach of the Year in women's golf, where he helped lead Northwood to a conference title.

His hiring at Seaforth means that Cameron Vernon, Northwood's co-AD for the last five years alongside Amy, will become the school's lone AD, a job that comes with plenty of responsibilities.

Those additional duties contributed to Vernon deciding to step down as Northwood's head women's basketball coach after 12 years,



Submitted photo

Northwood co-athletic director and women's golf head coach Jason Amy holds up the plaque for his Big 8 Coach of the Year award, given to him on Monday after his team won the Big 8 Conference Tournament.

a somewhat surprising move after the program's recent success.

"It was tough, but I think the girls understand," Ver-

non told the News + Record. "After I told (the team), it's been a huge relief off

See AMY, Page B4

CHATHAM CENTRAL 14, JORDAN-MATTHEWS 1

Chatham Central continues dominant reign in comfortable win over J-M

BY VICTOR HENSLEY
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — If there's any team peaking at the right time, it's Chatham Central softball.

Boasting both dominant pitching and high-powered bats, the Bears are living the best of both worlds. And the results are proof of it.

Chatham Central extended its winning streak to six games last Thursday after a 14-1 drubbing of the Jordan-Matthews Jets on the road, improving their overall record to 8-1 while the Jets fell to 5-7.

The game lasted just five innings, called short because of the mercy rule, of which the Bears are accustomed.

The Bears have won five of the last six games by at least 11 runs, outscoring the six opponents during their winning streak by a combined score of 74-5, including four mercy-rule victories.

You can't get much better than that.

"We've played really good, the pitching's been great, the defense has been great," said Jerry Polston, the Bears' head coach. "Our hitting's coming around, which is what you want toward the end of the



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Chatham Central sophomore starting pitcher Mary Gaines winds up to pitch in her team's 14-1 win over Jordan-Matthews last Thursday. Gaines allowed just two hits and one run, collecting 11 strikeouts in five innings.

year. You want to start peaking at the right time, which I think we are."

The opening inning was quick for both sides, with both starting pitchers needing to

face just three batters before switching sides. It appeared that this may be a closer game than the teams' records indicated.

But you can't contain a scald-

ing hot offense for long.

Chatham Central led off the top of the second with back-to-back doubles by junior Taylor Poe (1-for-4, 2B) and senior Lindsay Polston (2-for-2, 2B, 2 RBI), which opened up the scoring, putting the Bears on the board first.

Later in the half-inning, sophomore starting pitcher Mary Gaines (1-for-2, 2B, RBI) hit the Bears' third double of the inning to drive in another run, followed by a single from junior catcher Lindsey Johnson (2-for-2, 2 RBI) to score Gaines. By the time J-M finally recorded the third out, Chatham Central had a 3-0 lead.

"We were a little slow the first inning adjusting to the pitching, but once we adjusted to it, we hit the ball really, really well," Polston said. "We're playing good. All facets of the game."

J-M's lone run of the game came in an unorthodox way in the bottom of the second.

After a single — and a stolen base — by Jets' freshman catcher Reagan Smith (1-for-2), junior third baseman Auburn Campbell (0-for-2) struck out, but ran to first after the ball was dropped by Johnson behind the plate. She scooped

up the ball quickly and threw it in the direction of Polston at first, but it hit Campbell in the back and allowed her to reach base. With the ball lying on the ground near first, Smith was able to sneak by from third base and score to make it 3-1.

Blunders like these were rare for the Bears, who had just one error in a game where their defense brought nearly as much heat as their bats.

Gaines was otherworldly in her appearance against the Jets, allowing one run on two hits in five innings, racking up 11 strikeouts in the process. J-M reached base just four times all night.

"Mary pitched wonderfully," Polston said. "Mary has learned how to move the ball around and hit her spots and not worry so much about speed. When we need her to throw it fast, she can throw it fast, but she moves it around really well."

As great as the offense has looked in recent weeks, the Bears' lockdown defense has been a consistent factor to their success. They have yet to allow more than two runs in a game.

See SOFTBALL, Page B4

SOUTHWESTERN RANDOLPH 1, JORDAN-MATTHEWS 0

'It was so frustrating': Jets' offense flames out in loss to Cougars

BY BRENNAN DOHERTY
News + Record
Correspondent

SILER CITY — For the second time in nine days, the Jordan-Matthews women's soccer team fell to non-conference opponent Southwestern Randolph on Wednesday, losing 1-0 in a game that lacked many scoring opportunities for both sides.

The loss was a mild setback for the Jets, who had previously won back-to-back games, beating conference foes Randleman and Trinity 10-1 and 2-0, respectively.

But against Southwestern Randolph, J-M saw its recent goal-scoring form run out against an opponent content with a pragmatic, no-nonsense-at-the-back approach to defending. And as they did last week in a 3-1 win over J-M, the visiting Cougars relied on forward Maggie Lowe's penchant for drawing fouls in the box to score the game's only goal in the 26th minute on a penalty kick.

"It was this sort of defensive, back-and-forth, back-and-forth," J-M Head Coach Chip Millard said of the game's choppy flow. "We played two conference games our last two games, and we had so many more chances. This time, it was so frustrating just to trade back and forth with Southwestern Randolph."



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

The sun sets over the field at Jordan-Matthews during the Jets' 1-0 loss to Southwestern Randolph last Wednesday.

Because Wednesday's match was a non-conference affair, the defeat does not impact J-M's postseason prospects. However, the Jets' only shot at earning an automatic bid to the NCHSAA 2A playoffs came to a close after a 10-1 loss on the road to the conference-leading Wheatmore Warriors (9-0, 7-0 in PAC 7), whom the Jets also lost to, 11-2, on March 30.

Now, J-M will need to hold on to second place in the conference and hope to receive a wild-card bid in the East, which may come down to Wednesday's home game against the Providence Grove Patriots (5-4, 4-3 in PAC 7), who the Jets defeated, 2-1, on April 5.

Southwestern Randolph's game-deciding goal came about when Lowe was brought to the ground in the 18-yard box by defender Michelle Parroquin Vallejo in the 26th minute. Moments later, Lowe slotted her spot kick past Janeyra Guerrero, who played goalkeeper in the first half.

For J-M senior winger and captain Litzy Martinez, Wednesday's loss provided clear illustrations of what needs to improve, but also proof that the Jets can get better as a game goes on.

For one, her team's communication needs work, she said. "Wherever we are, we need to communicate," Martinez said. "If we have the ball and



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Jordan-Matthews senior captain Litzy Martinez (right) battles with a Southwestern Randolph defender as a pass drops in front of her in her team's 1-0 loss to the Cougars last Wednesday.

someone's open, they have to tell me they're open so I can look up and pass the ball. We need to communicate if I have someone on me — 'man on!' — we have to pass the ball or send it. It's just communication, most of it."

Still, the second half saw J-M gain more control of the ball in the midfield. Moving from goalkeeper to forward after halftime, Guerrero was effective in her team's buildup play, often winning possession of the ball with her back to goal before spraying passes out wide to Martinez or sophomores Maricarmen Landa and Maggie Thornton.

"I saw how we were communicating and passing more and running," Martinez said. "We were trying to do some little plays here and there, but it just didn't work out, sadly."

In the end, there was no equalizing goal for J-M, which actually had its strongest scoring chances come about in the game's opening minutes, as Landa recorded a pair of shots-on-goal in the opening seven minutes, while Thornton misconnected on a header from a corner kick in the third minute.

Now, the attention turns to the tough task at Providence Grove.

FOOTBALL

Continued from page B1

Havelock, entering Friday night, had an 8-0 record, winning all but one game by at least 37 points. It beat its first-round opponent, Southern Guilford, 56-14 on April 16.

The Rams' star running back, Kamarro Edmonds, has committed to play for the UNC Tar Heels next season, while their dual-threat quarterback, sophomore Andrew Frazier, lit it up in the team's first eight games — throwing for more than 1,400 yards and 25 touchdowns before the match-up with the Chargers.

While those two — along with some of Havelock's other offensive centerpieces — posed problems down the stretch, Northwood seemed to have them rattled early on.

The Chargers are billed as a defense-focused team with superb special teams to boot, an accurate characterization in the first half of Friday's game — especially in the first quarter.

As unbeatable as Havelock's looked all season, the game didn't start that way.

On the game's opening drive, Frazier found sophomore wide receiver Javonte Vereen wide open in the middle of the field for a 53-yard touchdown, but it was called back on an illegal motion penalty on the Rams. The next play was an offensive holding penalty on an incomplete pass, pushing Havelock back even further in its own territory.

Two plays later, on a Havelock punt, Northwood senior safety and starting quarterback Cam Entrekinn burst through the offensive line untouched, engulfing the ball as it left the punter's foot. It bounced on the ground once and landed right back into Entrekinn's hands, and he returned it for a 31-yard score.

Just like that, Northwood took a 7-0 lead as its sold-out crowd (limited capacity) and sideline went wild.

For a moment, the Chargers had a chance. Havelock hadn't seen a defense or special teams unit quite like Northwood's. That became more evident when, on the ensuing Rams drive, Edmonds coughed up



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Northwood special team players — senior Cam Entrekinn (9), senior Aidan Laros (33) and junior Jack Vail (7) — celebrate Entrekinn's blocked punt touchdown in the first quarter of their team's 32-7 second-round loss to Havelock last Friday. That was the only time the Chargers found the end zone all night.

the ball on a carry near Havelock's own 35-yard-line and Northwood recovered. The Chargers had elation in their faces, the Rams had frustration.

"At the beginning of the game, they were getting frustrated when we were stopping them and then they started yelling at each other," said Jake Mann, senior linebacker and long snapper for the Chargers. "Usually that doesn't help the team, it makes them worse."

Havelock must thrive on tough love, however, because despite the bickering, the finger-pointing and the visible momentum shift, the Rams still found a way to settle into their rhythm.

Northwood's offense couldn't capitalize on the turnover, barely gaining any yards — aside from an unsportsmanlike conduct penalty on Havelock — for senior kicker Aidan Laros, who missed a 35-yard field goal try.

The Rams were held scoreless until their first drive of the second quarter, a rarity, when Frazier took the game into his own hands on a QB keeper, looping around a blocker to his left and speeding past a trio of Northwood defenders for a 37-yard touchdown.

Those big plays, as they have on multiple occasions this season, were killers for the Chargers, who weren't able to make much noise offensively.

Homolka mentioned after previous games that

Northwood will "live and die" by its run-heavy offensive style. Friday was no different.

The Chargers, whose offense has struggled this season, ran 55 offensive plays against Havelock, with a lopsided split of 52 runs and just three passes. On those 52 carries, Northwood mustered 108 yards, an average of 2.1 yards per carry against a Havelock defense that was just as tenacious as its own.

With a little over two minutes to play in the second quarter and the ball on the Havelock 46-yard-line, Northwood attempted a questionable fake punt on fourth-and-seven, which saw backup quarterback Kirk Haddix take the ball for two yards on a carry up the middle.

That missed opportunity allowed the Rams to have great field position on their final drive of the half.

After a 34-yard pass from Frazier (15-for-19 for 231 yards, 2 TDs) to senior wide receiver Jaheim Lockhart that put them in the red zone, Havelock used up the remaining clock, capping the drive off with a 1-yard touchdown by Edmonds with just 11 seconds left in the half. The extra point was no good, but despite early struggles, the Rams took a 13-7 lead into the locker room.

"We thought we had them on the ropes," Homolka said. "Our team has to learn how to finish that, though. That's been a thing we've had all year,

we've got a team on the ropes and we just can't finish it. ... That's something we'll work on this summer and get right."

In the second half, it was all Havelock as the Chargers' offensive woes continued and the Rams' athletes turned up the heat.

Halfway through the third quarter, Frazier lofted a 32-yard touchdown pass on a drive that started at Havelock's own 10-yard-line, putting them up 19-7 after another missed extra point.

Setting up that touchdown was a 30-yard run by Havelock's senior rushing leader Jaylen Budget, who broke a few tackles deep into Northwood territory. Budget (6 carries for 55 yards, TD) and Edmonds (15 carries for 151 yards, 2 TDs) were masterful at forcing broken and missed tackles once they got going.

"We could have done a little bit better on securing tackles," said Anthony. "I missed a couple myself and I'm still kind of beating myself up on that. I always will. I beat myself up on that every game. But overall, I feel like we played well."

On the following drive, Northwood turned the ball over on downs after four straight rushing plays, leading to another short field for the Rams, who took a 25-7 lead on a 4-yard touchdown run by Edmonds.

The same spirit and energy wasn't quite there for the Chargers in the second half, who allowed 32 unanswered points and scored none of their own after the blocked punt touchdown in the first quarter. The offense was held scoreless as it continued to run the ball, even

when down a few scores.

In his post-game speech at midfield, Homolka commended the players who fought to improve upon last season's mediocrity, especially the seniors who helped make this run possible.

Northwood is losing 16 of those seniors, three more than last season, including Mann, Anthony, Laros and plenty of others who have thrived this season on both sides of the ball.

"We played like a family and a team, that's all I care about," Anthony said. "I'll be supporting those guys every step of the way, whether I'm in college or I'm playing football or I'm down here, I'm for sure going to support those boys. They're my boys for life."

The void they leave will

be huge, but Homolka had a message for the underclassmen after the game: "We aren't rebuilding, we're reloading."

He appeared confident in the players he had moving forward as he looks to continue building off of the winning culture he's created in Pittsboro in his second season.

"The seniors got us there and iron sharpens iron," Homolka said. "Our juniors and sophomores coming up are going to be great players, so we have a chance to do something similar to this next year if we just get together and start working now."

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at vhensley@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.



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CHATHAM COUNTY ATHLETICS RUNDOWN

This week's schedule and last week's results

BY VICTOR HENSLEY
News + Record Staff

This week is the most action-packed one Chatham County has seen all year. We have the golf, men's tennis, softball and women's soccer seasons concluding this week, while a flurry of new sports — baseball, track & field, women's tennis and wrestling — play their first regular-season contests this week. No matter which school you root for, you'll have plenty of sports to keep you busy. Here are this week's schedules and last week's results.

THIS WEEK

Wednesday, April 28

Baseball: Chatham Charter men vs. Ascend Leadership Academy, 6 p.m.

Soccer: Jordan-Matthews women vs. Providence Grove, 6 p.m.

Soccer: Northwood women vs. Vance County, 6 p.m.

Softball: Jordan-Matthews women vs. Providence Grove, 6 p.m.

Softball: Northwood women vs. Vance County, 6 p.m.

Tennis: Chatham Central men vs. Yadkin Valley Conference opponents, 11 a.m. (Yadkin Valley Conference Tournament)

Tennis: Jordan-Matthews women vs. Randleman, 4:30 p.m.

Tennis: Northwood men at Vance County, 4:30 p.m.

Tennis: Northwood women vs. Southern, 4:30 p.m.

Thursday, April 29

Baseball: Chatham Central vs. Lee County, 7 p.m.

Baseball: Jordan-Matthews men at T.W. Andrews, 5:30 p.m.

Soccer: Jordan-Matthews women vs. Woods Charter, 6 p.m.

Soccer: Northwood women at Southern, 6 p.m.

Softball: Chatham Central women at Gray Stone Day School, 7 p.m.

Tennis: Chatham Central men vs. Yadkin Valley Conference opponents, 11 a.m. (Yadkin Valley Conference

Tournament)

Track & Field: Chatham Central vs. YVC opponents, 4:30 p.m.

Track & Field: Jordan-Matthews at Wheatmore, 4:30 p.m.

Track & Field: Northwood at East Chapel Hill (Vance County also attending), 4:30 p.m.

Wrestling: Jordan-Matthews vs. T.W. Andrews and Eastern Randolph, 5 p.m.

Wrestling: Northwood vs. Vance County and Southern, 6 p.m.

Friday, April 30

Baseball: Chatham Charter at NC Leadership Academy, 6 p.m.

Baseball: Northwood men at Southern, 6 p.m.

Softball: Chatham Central vs. South Davidson, 6 p.m.

Softball: Chatham Charter vs. North Moore, 5 p.m.

Wrestling: Chatham Central at Asheboro, 6 p.m.

LAST WEEK

Monday, April 19

Soccer: The Jordan-Matthews women defeated the winless Trinity Bulldogs, 2-0, in overtime. The Jets scored both of their goals in the overtime period, one each from sophomores Michelle Parroquin Vallejo and Maricarmen Landa. Freshmen Janeyra Guerrero and Iris Sibrian Zetino combined for the clean-sheet win.

Soccer: The Northwood women defeated the Orange Panthers in a close one, 3-2. Scoring for the Chargers were juniors Hanna Randall, Monique Diaz and Sydney Arnott, each with one goal.

Soccer: The Woods Charter women saw a three-game win streak snapped with a shutout loss to the Raleigh Charter Phoenix, 5-0, to fall to 6-2 on the season. The Phoenix have handed the Wolves their only two losses this year.

Softball: The Jordan-Matthews women lost a six-inning road game to the Randleman Tigers, 11-1. Leading the Jets with her bat was freshman Logan Gunter (2-for-3, HR, RBI).

Tennis: The Northwood men narrowly lost a road match to the

Orange Panthers, 5-4, dropping their record to 3-6 on the year. Northwood's 4-6 players — freshman Felton Burleigh (6-0, 6-3), senior Clay Riggsbee (6-4, 6-4) and freshman Walker Magrinat (6-1, 6-1) — each won their singles matches. The doubles team of sophomore Matteus Butler & Magrinat also won their match, 9-7.

Tuesday, April 20

Softball: The Jordan-Matthews women dominated the Trinity Bulldogs, 10-0, in a five-inning, mercy-rule victory at home.

Softball: The Chatham Central women earned their fifth straight win against the Albemarle Bulldogs, 14-1, in a five-inning, mercy-rule victory.

Tennis: The Chatham Central men narrowly escaped their first loss of the season, winning 5-4 against the Union Pines Vikings. This is the first time in school history that the Bears have beaten the Vikings. Only two Bears won their singles matches: junior Colby Williamson (6-2, 6-1) and senior Pacen Dunn (6-2, 6-1). Chatham Central swept the three doubles matches, however, giving them the slight 5-4 advantage. The streaks of seniors Jayden Gilliland (20-0) and Preston Cox (17-0), who hadn't lost singles matches since their sophomore seasons, came to an end with three-set losses to Union Pines juniors Luke O'Donnell and Caleb Downing. As a team, Chatham Central is still undefeated on the season at 8-0.

Wednesday, April 21

Soccer: The Jordan-Matthews women lost a close game to the Southwestern Randolph Cougars, 1-0, to drop their record to 5-4 on the season. The Jets had a few opportunities to score early, but never could create any sort of offensive identity, leading to the clean sheet loss. Read our recap in this week's edition.

Soccer: The Northwood women defeated the Northern Durham Knights, 1-0, to improve to 6-4-1 on the season. The Chargers tied with the Knights in their only other matchup this year.

Softball: The Chatham Charter women brought their bats in their four-inning victory over the

N.C. Leadership Academy Falcons, 16-6. Leading the Knights were junior Taylor Jones (2-for-3, 3B, BB, 2 RBI), freshman Meah Brooks (1-for-4, 2 RBI), junior Alexis Hayes (1-for-2, 2B, 2 RBI) and senior Morgan Lineberry (1-for-1, 2B, 2 BB, 2 RBI).

Tennis: The Jordan-Matthews men narrowly lost to the Providence Grove Patriots, 5-3, to remain winless on the season. One Jet won his singles match — sophomore Buck Thornton (10-3) — while the duos of Thornton & senior Christian Campechano (8-2) and Thornton & sophomore Robert Huang (8-0) won their doubles matches.

Thursday, April 22

Golf: The Chatham Charter women placed third (out of three teams) in a match against Raleigh Charter and Cornerstone Charter at Wildwood Green Golf Club in Raleigh.

Softball: The Chatham Central women trounced the Jordan-Matthews Jets, 14-1, in an inter-county rivalry match in Siler City. The Bears took an inning to adjust to the pitching, but took off after that, scoring 14 runs in the following four innings to earn a mercy-rule victory in just five innings. With the win, the Bears improve to 8-1 on the year, while the Jets fall to 5-7. Read our recap in this week's edition.

Softball: The Northwood women lost an extra-inning shootout to the Northern Durham Knights, 17-16, in eight innings. The Knights racked up 24 hits in the contest, while the Chargers had 12, as they scored one in the bottom of the eighth inning for the walk-off win.

Tennis: The Jordan-Matthews men barely missed out on their first win of the season against the Southwestern Randolph Cougars, losing 4-3 to remain winless on the year (0-9). The Jets' 4th and 5th players — senior Michael Ortiz (10-4) and sophomore Ronald Huang (10-4) — each won their singles matches, while the duo of Ortiz and senior Kevin Hernandez (9-7) won their doubles match.

Friday, April 23

Football: The Northwood men

lost their second-round playoff matchup with the undefeated Havelock Rams, 32-7, eliminating them from the NCHSAA 3A playoffs. The Chargers took an early lead on a blocked punt by senior safety/quarterback Cam Entrekinn that he returned for a touchdown on the game's opening drive, putting them up 7-0. But they wouldn't score for the remainder of the game as the Rams' deadly offense began to heat up, scoring 32 unanswered points (19 in the second half) to end the Chargers' season and hopes at a state semifinal appearance. Read our recap in this week's edition.

Soccer: The Woods Charter women lost handily to the unbeaten Southern Alamance Patriots, 5-1, dropping their record to 6-3 on the season.

Softball: The Chatham Charter women earned a close win over the Bethany Community School Wolves, 7-6, improving their record to 7-2 on the season. The Wolves took a 6-0 lead in the bottom of the second, but the Knights battled back, scoring seven unanswered runs to seal the victory. Leading the Knights were senior Morgan Lineberry (1-for-3, 3 RBI), sophomore Chelsie Hardister (3-for-4, 2B, 3B, 2 RBI) and junior Olivia Cheek (3-for-3).

Softball: The Northwood women lost to the conference-leading, undefeated Orange Panthers, 13-2, dropping their overall record to 7-5 on the season.

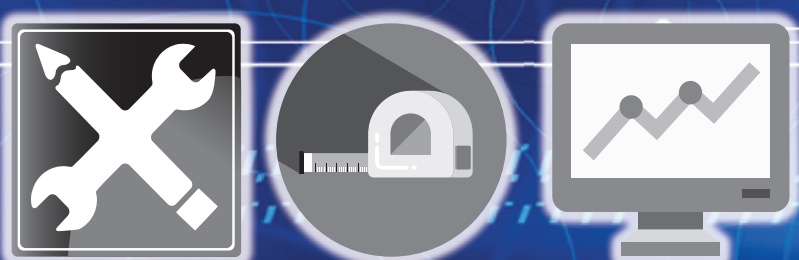
Soccer: The Siler City FC U17 boys' team won their division, U18 Boys Blue, in the Wake FC Tournament of Champions hosted at various fields in Holly Springs, Cary and Apex over the weekend. The club won all four of its games: 5-0 vs. NCFC Navy North, 6-1 vs. WFC Tottenham, 7-1 vs. NCFC Edge and 3-1 vs. WFC River Plate North. Siler City FC has played in three tournaments so far, winning all three.

Sunday, April 25

Soccer: The Siler City FC U17 boys' team won their division, U18 Boys Blue, in the Wake FC Tournament of Champions hosted at various fields in Holly Springs, Cary and Apex over the weekend. The club won all four of its games: 5-0 vs. NCFC Navy North, 6-1 vs. WFC Tottenham, 7-1 vs. NCFC Edge and 3-1 vs. WFC River Plate North. Siler City FC has played in three tournaments so far, winning all three.

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at vhensley@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.

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SOFTBALL

Continued from page B1

Gaines is a member of the Bears' impressive pitching trio that also includes Poe and junior Ashley Roberts, which has been lights out this season. In nine games, they've allowed 11 total runs. That's three less runs than Chatham Central scored in one game against J-M.

After scoring three more runs over the next two innings — made possible by back-to-back triples by junior Gracie Gaines (2-for-4, 3B, 3 RBI) and senior Mary Grace Murchison (2-for-3, 3B, RBI) in the fourth — the Bears took a 6-1 lead into the top of the fifth.

Then things fell apart for the Jets.

Chatham Central collected four hits — all RBI singles — in the top of the fifth inning to go along with three J-M errors, a hit-by-pitch that loaded the bases and a bases-loaded walk. By the time the Jets finally got the second out, it was a 12-1 game.

By the end of the inning, it was 14-1.

"For some reason, it only takes one (error)," said Dylan



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Chatham Central senior Mary Grace Murchison fist bumps her first base coach after a single in the second inning of her team's 14-1 win over Jordan-Matthews last Thursday. Murchison went 2-for-3 with a single, triple and an RBI against the Jets.

Smith, assistant coach for J-M. "For some reason, after one, I don't know what they're doing. I think it's a mental game. They start getting down on themselves, then their teammates pick them back up."

Jordan-Matthews is a victim to its lack of depth, especially at the pitching position.

Sophomore starting pitcher Macy Beavers (5.0 IP, 14 H, 14 R, 2 BB, K) has had to pitch most

of the team's games despite playing through back pain. The only other listed pitcher on the roster is Gunter, who primarily plays shortstop.

"Our depth is killing us," Dylan Smith said. "(Macy's) been having some back trouble and having to go to physical therapy to try and figure that out, so she's battling. She's a tough little cookie. ... Hopefully next year we'll have a few pitchers coming up."



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Jordan-Matthews freshman catcher Reagan Smith swings at a pitch in her team's 14-1 loss to Chatham Central last Thursday. She was one of just two Jets to get a hit against the Bears.

Chatham Central, on the other hand, is sitting pretty after another comfortable win under its belt — and a rivalry win, at that.

The Bears have a couple of games left on their schedule before heading into playoff bracketing on May 1, where they'll likely earn a spot as the second-place automatic qualifier from the Yadkin Valley 1A Conference.

If the Bears continue to peak at the right time, they

have a real shot at a postseason run.

"The girls are really motivated," Polston said. "We're just staying upbeat and positive and just understanding that if we get beat, we get beat, but let's give them our best shot and see what happens."

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at vhensley@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.

AMY

Continued from page B1

my shoulders because I would have had too much going on in my life. And I just think that I needed to step back and take some things off my plate so that I could focus my attention on my family, on the AD role, on my teaching. Because coaching alone, even in high school, is a full-time job."

As co-ADs, Amy and Vernon have helped foster a community around Northwood athletics, Amy said, creating a student-first environment that transcends the on-field results.

"We're in charge of basically upbringing these student-athletes, teaching them sports skills and teaching them lifelong skills that will benefit them forever," Amy said. "We want the same thing the parents do and that's giving student-athletes the opportunity to excel in the classroom and on the field, on the court, on the mat or whatever sports they want to play."

Switching roles

Vernon has taken Northwood women's basketball — and women's sports — to new heights.

While he's coached for 12 years (13 if you count his one year of J.V. basketball) his last two seasons have undoubtedly been some of his best, featuring both a Sweet 16 appearance in 2019-20 and a Final Four appearance this past season. He's won back-to-back Big Eight Coach of the Year awards.

This year's Chargers not only made it to the state semifinals, becoming the first-ever women's sports team to do so at Northwood, but also completed the team's second-ever undefeated regular season (11-0).

Next season, the Chargers are expected to be just as dominant despite losing a couple of key pieces to graduation and transfers. This is why Vernon's decision to step down, in the middle of a such great run, might have come as a shock.

For him, it was inevitable.

While his teams were having some of the most successful seasons in program history, Vernon said it became harder and harder to feel excited about entering a new season, especially after the 2019-20 Sweet 16 year.

"I don't know what was going on with me, it's not the kids or the parents, it's just not looking for-

ward to going to practice every day," Vernon said. "I was not looking forward to workouts, it was almost feeling like a job, whereas the past 12 years, I felt excited, looking forward to that part of my day to work with the girls, workouts, game preparation work and skill development."

He has 4-, 6- and 8-year-olds at home, which made it increasingly more difficult to leave them in the evenings to come to practice.

Vernon thought about stepping down prior to the 2020-2021 season, but with the COVID-19 pandemic likely making it tough to replace him, he felt it wouldn't be fair to put the school or his team in that position.

Then came Amy's hiring at Seaforth, thrusting Vernon into the lone AD spot and making it tough to keep coaching alongside his other duties.

Now is the perfect time to move on.

Last week, Northwood officially named Kerri Snipes — a former player and four-year assistant coach under Vernon — the new varsity women's basketball coach. Vernon said he couldn't be more excited for her.

"I've always wanted to run my program like Carolina, so it's exactly what I was hoping to do: find somebody to step in who played for me, who knows the kids, who knows the culture," Vernon said. "She's played basketball her whole life, she knows the game, she's all about teaching fundamentals and developing relationships with the kids. She's going to be outstanding. She's a perfect fit for the job."

Vernon's focus fully shifting to the AD job will allow him to give his time and energy to other programs at the school without worrying that he's giving too much attention to the women's basketball team.

"Part of me is excited because now there are some things that I want to incorporate into Northwood," Vernon said. "I'm excited to help lead our coaches and to be more

available to them than I have in the past."

A fresh start

Amy, who has been an integral part of Northwood athletics for nearly two decades, appears excited for a fresh start at Seaforth, the first new high school the county has constructed since Northwood opened its doors in 1972.

However, becoming the AD at a brand new school is much different than taking the job at one that's already established.

This semester has been a whirlwind for Amy, who's having to balance his duties at Northwood and Seaforth until the end of the school year. One moment he's working sporting events and coaching for the Chargers, the next he's ordering equipment and putting together coaching staffs for the Hawks.

"There's not a lot of sleep," Amy said, laughing.

Amy is also being tasked with drumming up interest in Seaforth athletics, sending out surveys to determine what sports they'll have next year, among a plethora of little things that come with starting programs from scratch.

As of now, the plan is for Seaforth's student-athletes to participate in varsity sports starting this fall, along with some J.V. sports, despite the school only hosting 9th and 10th graders this year. Amy cited younger students at Northwood and beyond who are "phenomenal athletes" as one reason why they should be given the chance to play against varsity competition.

"They deserve the right to play sports at the highest level and we want our kids to compete," Amy said. "If we're not allowing them to compete, we're doing an injustice to them."

While the exact numbers are unknown, based on those Amy has already gathered, Seaforth is likely to offer all of the same sports that

Northwood does, even niche ones like lacrosse and swimming.

Some sports, such as football, will have combined J.V. and varsity seasons. The Hawks' first four football games will count as J.V. games, while the rest will be varsity.

If Amy's goal is for the Hawks to create an identity to resonate across the county, it might not take long.

Seaforth will immediately become familiar with its Chatham County counterparts as it's slated to be a member of the Mid-Carolina 1A/2A Conference alongside Jordan-Matthews and Chatham Central.

While taking on a project like this hasn't been easy, Vernon agrees that Amy is the man for the job.

"There are some

athletic directors in the state ... who have concentrated on football or basketball, those sports that bring in gate revenue," Vernon said.

"But (Amy) is always focused on the collective program as a whole and his philosophy has always been, 'If all of us do well, it benefits each one of our individual programs.' ... He's just someone that's really good to work for."

READ IT ONLINE



Chatham COA Events & Announcements

April 29th - May 5th

- Thursday, April 29th**
 - [Arthritis Foundation Exercise](#) at 10:00 AM
 - [Trivia with Faye](#) at 11:15 AM
 - [Matter of Balance](#) at 1:00 PM
 - [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) at 3:00 PM
- Friday, April 30th**
 - [Strong & Fit with Jackie](#) at 9:00 AM
 - [Weekly Call with Director, Dennis Streets](#) at 10:15 AM
- Monday, May 3rd**
 - [Arthritis Foundation Exercise](#) at 10:00 AM
 - [Bingo with Joe](#) at 11:15 AM
 - [Tai Chi for Arthritis](#) at 3:00 PM
- Tuesday, May 4th**
 - [Body Conditioning with Jackie](#) at 8:00 AM (*Outside at the Eastern Chatham Senior Center Bocce Court*)
 - [Strong & Fit with Jackie](#) at 9:00 AM
 - [Spill the Beans with Liz](#) at 11:15 AM
 - [Matter of Balance](#) at 1:00 PM
- Wednesday, May 5th**
 - [Virtual Walk](#) at 10:00 AM
 - [Chair Yoga with Liz](#) at 10:00 AM
 - [Wood-Turning with Alan](#) at 11:15 AM
 - [Short Stories with Chris](#) at 12:30 PM

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Join the Trivia Hunt & Win!

Each week we hide trivia question in the *Chatham News + Record*. Find the correct answer and enter to win a \$25 VISA gift card in the COA's monthly drawing. Look in **Section A** for this week's question.

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NEWS BRIEFS

Chatham Literacy's Interesting Virtual Event a Success

Why Goats? That question was answered last Tuesday during a Chatham Literacy first virtual spring author's event.

The life of goats, the essence of life on a farm and the beauty of nature elevated to deeper inspiration were topics discussed at this fundraising event by noted author Jill McCorkle and documentarian and photographer Tom Rankin.

The couple's presentation of home resonated with more than the 100 participants watching Chatham Literacy's first virtual fundraising event. The discussion was both inspiring and often quite amusing and included Rankin's lush, documentary-style photographs. The event raised over \$15,000 for the nonprofit's adult, literacy-based services.

"While we all miss getting together Jill and Tom did a fantastic job inviting us into their home and engaging us in their world. You did not feel as if you were alone at your computer," said Vicki Newell, Chatham Literacy Executive Director. "In-person programs are preferable; but I would do another virtual event in a heart-beat and hope that the community will join us again if that needs to happen for our major fall author event."

The lunchtime event included live discussions with the couple about their recently acclaimed book, *Goat Light*, showcasing vivid photography and reflective stories about their rural Piedmont lifestyle. The lush text and photography has won accolades from buyers and critics alike.

The program also featured moving testimony from a Chatham Literacy tutoring team Christie Minchew and Janet Ramirez. With the support of her employer, Hispanic Liaison, Janet is working on her professional writing and communication skills through the English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) Program.

"At first the reason I joined Chatham Literacy in 2019 was because my boss requested I do it," Janet told participants. "But after a couple of tutoring sessions, I realized that I really wanted this improvement for myself so I could grow as an individual. After meeting Chatham Literacy's staff members, I felt extremely encouraged that I could better myself and that Chatham Literacy actually cared about my learning."

— CN+R staff reports

Pittsboro medical device manufacturer vaulted to global relevance

Medical device manufacturers have come under intense scrutiny in the last year. Several scrambled at the pandemic's start to supply COVID-19-specific products, with limited success. Just this month, federal regulators harangued a medical laboratory in Baltimore after hasty disregard for sanitation standards led to about 15 million contaminated vaccines.

But Pittsboro's Gilero — an engineering design firm and medical device producer — is showing the world how it's done.

I caught up with Gilero's CEO, Ted Mosler, last week to see what new and ambitious plans he has for the yet-modest operation. Last I wrote about the company, Gov. Roy Cooper had just visited the Pittsboro plant to examine its face shield production. Gilero, which only opened its Pittsboro location in 2019, shot to statewide prominence when its 3D printed plastic protectors were used in health care facilities around North Carolina.

Its next moves, though, will promote Gilero to international renown.

"We're scaling up to very high production there in Pittsboro to pack out and sterilize swabs,"

Mosler told me. "We'll be in a position to do 30 million units per month by the summertime."

Swabs may not sound all that exciting, but these are no run-of-the-mill Q-tips. The "novel swabs," as Mosler calls them, are entirely made of plastic (no cotton) and carefully prepared and packaged to uphold rigorous sanitation standards. For what? To be used in the first federally-backed, at-home, instant-result COVID-19 test kits.

"Right now, when you need to get a test, maybe you go to the doctor or go to a parking lot and someone swabs your nose through your car window, and then eight hours later you get a text message and you find out if you have COVID," Mosler said. "Now, with these new tests — if maybe your loved one's feeling ill — you can run to the drugstore, get a test for \$15 to \$30, and the results come in 20 minutes."

The kits promise to buttress normalcy as we enter post-pandemic living. Most experts have given up on the idea that the coronavirus will retreat into obscurity as other frightful viruses have in the past (when's the last time you heard reports of Ebola spreading?). Already several coronavirus variants have emerged, and it's unclear whether currently available vaccines will effectively ward them off.

"It's unlikely that the vaccines we have right now are going to provide

sterilizing immunity," said Jennifer Gommerman, an immunologist at the University of Toronto, in an interview with *The New York Times*. In other words, vaccines will not stifle infection forever. The virus is here to stay.

That doesn't mean, though, that we're doomed to eternal apocalyptic crisis. Eventually, epidemiologists predict the coronavirus will assume a place in our lives much like the regular flu. We're habituated to the flu, but it kills tens of thousands every year. COVID-19 and its offspring will, too. So, how are we to know if future malaise is symptomatic of the coronavirus? An easy drug store test sure would help, and Gilero will be central in its production.

Of course, rival COVID test kits are also in development. But Gilero's — although primary ownership belongs to Durham's Yukon Medical LLC with Gilero as a key contributor — is the only one funded by the National Institutes of Health as part of its RADx (rapid development of diagnostics) initiative. Radx was created "to speed innovation in the development, commercialization, and implementation of technologies for COVID-19 testing," according to the NIH website. "Accurate, fast, easy-to-use, and widely accessible testing is required before the nation can safely return to normal life."

Eventually, Mosler

says, Gilero's special swabs might appear in a dozen or more test kits sold under different names all around the world.

"It'll start nationally at first," he said, "but once U.S. demand is met, they'll start selling these products globally."

Right now, Gilero's Pittsboro factory employs about 25 workers. At the pandemic's zenith, about 35 worked around the clock to meet demand for face shields. The extra workers weren't laid off — most of them were college students who have since returned to school. But Mosler expects the factory will need 20 new employees before year's end. Besides the critically-important swabs, Gilero will soon begin production of a "hospital pharmacy bag product" for use in administering chemotherapy, a skin numbing device that just received FDA clearance and a device that "will be kitted with a non-opioid drug to eliminate pain from surgical procedures," Mosler said.

Most of the new jobs will be entry level operators, but the company "does not pay minimum wage," Mosler said. "We pay a very competitive wage so that we're able to keep people here." Ideal candidates will have at least a high school degree.

"We have been very impressed by the labor pool, and it's a really nice location that we have been very happy with,"

Mosler said. "We couldn't be happier with it. All the employees love the ability to walk downtown and grab lunch ... Even our design center people based in RTP, everyone loves making the trip to Pittsboro, it's their favorite place to go."

Other business news

In a major boon for the greater Triangle region, Apple will establish a new campus in RTP, as first reported by the *News & Observer*.

The company announced its decision on Monday after more than three years of deliberation. Apple representatives say it will invest \$1 billion in the state over the next 10 years. In Raleigh, the company will pour \$522 million into design and construction of its new facility where 3,000 employees will eventually work, earning an average salary of \$187,000.

The campus site is to be on the Wake County side of RTP, according to the N&O, with "tracts of land straddling N.C. 540 near Cary and Morrisville."

The proposed location is a short drive from Pittsboro where the Chatham Park development and other neighborhoods are preparing to welcome more than 50,000 new residents over coming decades.

In a joint statement on Monday from Gov. Roy Cooper and Chatham Rep. Robert Reives II, among others, state leaders expressed their hope that Apple's new move will further bolster North Carolina's growing and competitive society.

"Innovation has long been North Carolina's calling card and Apple's decision to build this new campus in the Research Triangle showcases the importance of our state's favorable business climate, world-class universities, our tech-ready workforce, and the welcoming and diverse communities that make so many people want to call North Carolina home," the statement reads. "This announcement will benefit communities across our state and we are proud to work together to continue to grow our economy and bring transformational industries and good paying jobs to North Carolina."

Have an idea for what Chatham business topics I should write about? Send me a note at dldolder@chathamnr.com or on Twitter @dldolder

D. LARS DOLDER

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New building, growth in outreach propels CORA

The mission of CORA, the Chatham Outreach Alliance, is to provide food to individuals and families within the community who are in need during difficult personal economic periods. This week, we speak with Melissa Driver Beard, CORA's executive director, about growth and changes in the organization's work.

Driver Beard has been working in the nonprofit sector for nearly 30 years at local, state, national and international levels. After working for many years in developing countries, she made the decision to address the issues of poverty and hunger closer to home and began her work with CORA in 2019. Beard is a North Carolina native, a UNC graduate, a self-proclaimed "travel addict" and proud mom.

Let's start with the new building. What can you tell us about it, how it will be utilized and how it fits within your growth plans?

This year, thanks to overwhelming support from our community, our new building is finally under construction. The new 2,800 square-foot building will sit adjacent to the existing food pantry and will serve as both a food warehouse and pantry.

The new building will double our current space to store food. This larger space will allow us to streamline operations, and more safely and effectively provide the maximum level of support for CORA's programs. We are excited to have a place to store pallets of food and a forklift. The new warehouse will enable faster food transport, efficient storage and the ability to handle greater inventory.

The new building will also greatly enhance our pantry operations. The pantry will be much larger, almost double in size, and allow for a more pleasant shopping experience. The space will have freezers, refrigerators, shelving and produce bins that will display a wide variety of food and other products from which families can choose. We envision the new space as an enhancement to our choice model that will provide a welcoming experience designed to promote shopping for fresh, healthy food.

How will your existing building be re-purposed?

Although CORA is getting a new building that will serve as both a warehouse and pantry, the organization will need to re-purpose our existing building to better serve those facing food insecurity and poverty in our community. Each year we serve over 15,000 individuals in Chatham County. CORA is committed to serving nutritious food in a welcoming community space that brings people together to grow, cook, share and advocate for healthy food.

We want to create a spacious reception area in which families can comfortably talk, share recipes and receive nutrition information while they wait to shop in the pantry. CORA can serve more than 80 families a day and wait times may fluctuate. It is our plan to establish a warm, friendly environment for all of our shoppers — even the little ones! We intend to set up a safe and fun area where children can play, read or just relax with their families. We also envision the creation of a welcoming space where people can connect with one another, receive support services and



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

CORA's pantry expansion is under way in Pittsboro. Plans include an open area where clients can shop for produce and non-perishable items.

nonprofit resources. Our holistic approach to helping those facing food insecurity will include the following:

- Nutrition classes and cooking lessons to expand tastebuds and help families make healthier food choices
- Life skills classes that will serve as building blocks and strategies to help people move out of poverty
- Volunteer opportunities to reduce social isolation and build relationships within the community
- Community spaces for meetings and additional administrative offices to accommodate organizational growth

We've spoken a lot in the last year about the increased demand for CORA's services. What's the latest on that subject?

Last year at this time we saw a huge increase in demand for our services. In February 2020, prior to the pandemic, CORA was serving on average 185 families per week. In March and April 2020, we were serving approximately 275 families a week. That is a 49% increase. In May and June 2020, we saw service numbers normalize as families received assistance from stimulus checks, enhanced unemployment benefits, increased SNAP benefits and the (P-EBT) program for families whose children normally receive free and reduced-cost lunch at school.

However, as time has passed, we have seen the numbers level off a bit. In recent months, we have reverted back to our pre-pandemic service levels, averaging 185 families per week.

Due to a change in our service policy that now allows for up to 24 visits per year, families are visiting CORA more often. And thanks to generous donors of both food and funds, we are distributing more food than ever. We expect to serve more than 1.9 million meals this year. However, for us, the

most important thing is that CORA is fulfilling 100% of requests for assistance and exploring new and creative ways to reach those facing food insecurity in our community.

You're expanding CORA's Mobile Market from once to twice per month. What has driven this change?

Roughly 25% of the families who visit CORA cite transportation as a barrier to receiving our service. Many families borrow vehicles from friends or family and carpool. In order to overcome this barrier to service, CORA launched a Mobile Market in Siler City in October 2019. Approximately 50% of CORA's clients live in Siler City and more than 60% live in the western part of the County. The lower-income areas in western Chatham County are home to several food deserts. By operating our Mobile Market in Siler City, the disparity in access to fresh, healthy foods is reduced. Using our truck, we set up the monthly "markets" to distribute food to members of our community.

Since launching the pilot phase of our Mobile Market in October of 2019, CORA has served an additional 178,500 meals to 8,500 people, many of whom are new to CORA. The Mobile Market has proven to be an effective model. We expanded the program from once a month to twice monthly in January 2021. The second Mobile Market rotates to strategic points around the county where food insecurity is the greatest and will specifically target areas of need in the northern part of the county. In the first three months of 2021, CORA's second Mobile Market served 539 individuals more than 11,000 meals through this expansion.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created other changes for you as well, including operationally. What can you share about delivery of your

services in terms of changes in curbside work?

As a temporary measure, while we navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic, we have restructured our direct service strategy. The client intake process is conducted outside, and clients receive their groceries curbside in a drive-through manner. We are distributing pre-packed bags of shelf-stable food including canned fruits and vegetables, rice or pasta, soups, breakfast cereal or cereal bars and a variety of other nutritious food. We supplement these staples with fresh produce, bakery items, milk and eggs. Our client service hours have also changed to 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Monday, Wednesday and Friday. Each person receives enough food for breakfast, lunch and dinner for 21 meals each time the pantry is visited. This year we have expanded the number of visits from six to 24 times per year.

With these changes we have learned that some families enjoy the convenience of curbside. We hope to offer various different services when the new building is complete, including choice shopping, grab and go groceries and maybe even concierge style service.

Summer's not too far away, which means the start of your annual SNACK! Program. What will it look like this summer, and how can families participate?

In Chatham County, approximately 50% of public school children receive free or low-cost meals through the federal school lunch program because their family income is at or near the poverty level. More than 4,450 school children in Chatham County won't have adequate replacements for these meals during the summer of 2021. SNACK!'s goal is to increase the accessibility of nutritious meals to food-insecure Chatham County children during the summer by providing each participating child



CN+R file photo

Melissa Driver Beard, CORA's executive director.

'We expect to serve more than 1.9 million meals this year. However, for us, the most important thing is that CORA is fulfilling 100% of requests for assistance and exploring new and creative ways to reach those facing food insecurity in our community.'

MELISSA DRIVER BEARD, executive director, CORA

distribute food to hungry families. PORCH Chatham provided CORA more than 89,000 pounds of food last year for distribution. You can find out more about PORCH at <https://porchcommunities.org/chatham>.

In addition, the Food Bank of Central and Eastern N.C., grocery stores, churches, organizations, businesses and schools donate food to CORA each month. So far this year we have received 630,000 pounds of food. If you would like to host a food drive and participate, visit <https://www.corafoodpantry.org/ways-to-give/donate-food/>.

What are CORA's biggest needs right now, and how can people help?

As we get ready for SNACK! this summer, we are hosting a SNACK! Food Drive in May. We are asking people to help in three distinct ways.

- Organize a food drive and collect soup, canned vegetables, canned chicken, and individually wrapped snacks (granola bars, raisins, pretzels, etc.).

- Register for our Virtual Food Drive. No food drive bins. No food drive trucks. No visits to the grocery store. Just go online to select your choice of healthy food items in our Virtual Store and pay at checkout.

- Participate in our "Drive-Through SNACK! Food Drive" between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. on May 15th at CORA. Come on by and donate foods to children facing hunger.

You can find more information on how you can participate and donate to CORA at www.corafoodpantry.org.

Also, we need volunteers! You can check out the opportunities on our website or email Meredith@corafoodpantry.org.

More than half of the food CORA distributes has been donated. Tell us about those donations and how your efforts to solicit donations is going?

We have been very fortunate to have a committed community supporting our efforts to feed those in need. We have expanded our PORCH communities from 19 to 24 in the past year. PORCH is an all-volunteer, grassroots hunger relief organization whose mission is to collect and

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News + Record publishes its first Spanish print edition of 'La Voz de Chatham'

CN+R STAFF REPORTS

SILER CITY — The Chatham News + Record published its first Spanish print edition of La Voz de Chatham last week nearly a year after the bilingual reporting project first began.

It's also Chatham's first Spanish community paper.

After sending the new edition to press last Wednesday, the News + Record directly mailed over 2,500 copies to every Spanish-speaking household in the county. Hundreds more will be distributed primarily to Hispanic-owned businesses and organizations around Siler City and Pittsboro.

"This has been months in the making," said lead La Voz reporter Victoria Johnson. "Even at the beginning, we'd always planned to publish some kind of Spanish-language print product of La Voz to reach people who might not have online access or know about the project. We're super happy with how it's turned out and hope that readers will feel the same."

La Voz de Chatham is a bilingual project the News + Record began last June thanks to a Facebook Journalism Project grant to cover COVID-19's impact on Chatham's Hispanic/Latinx community. At that point in time, over half of the county's COVID cases came from Chatham's Hispanic community, even though Hispanic residents make up just over 12% of the



Staff photo by Victoria Johnson

The News + Record published its first Spanish-language print edition of La Voz de Chatham last week. More than 2,500 copies have been directly mailed to all households in Chatham that identify as Spanish-speaking.

population.

Led by Johnson, the project publishes La Voz stories in English in the weekly print edition of the News + Record, and both English- and Spanish-language stories on the News + Record's website. The stories are shared through the News + Record's various social media platforms as well.

And La Voz de Chatham has since expanded to cover more than just COVID's impact; to date, La Voz has published more than 60 stories, and at least half have been community and organization profiles as well as event features.

"The intent of our La Voz project from the beginning was to give a voice to a segment of Chatham County's community, and cover important stories which hadn't been covered previously," said News + Record Publisher and

Editor Bill Horner III. "We're a community newspaper and part of our mission is covering our community. To not address issues within the Latinx community isn't just a disservice to them, it's a disservice to everyone. Ultimately what we have in common is Chatham County as a whole."

The original Facebook grant, for \$30,600, expired last fall, but the News + Record is continuing to fund the project. Assisting is Chatham Hospital, which has provided supplemental grant funding.

"UNC Chatham Hospital is excited to announce a partnership with La Voz de Chatham, a project launched by the Chatham News + Record," said Susan Magrogan, the marketing operations specialist for UNC Health. "The COVID-19 pandemic has and continues to affect

all of us in Chatham county, but especially the Latinx community. It is important that this community can easily access the latest information about COVID-19, stay up to date on how to keep their family and themselves safe and hear directly from others what they are experiencing. By working with the News + Record, we want to focus on sharing stories from our Latinx communities and serve as a trusted resource for health care, during and long after the pandemic. We look forward to helping tell your stories."

Within 18 pages, the print edition contains articles produced over the past year, plus a two-page opinion section and two facing inside pages dedicated to the pandemic's impact on the Hispanic community. The edition also offers a chart informing readers how and where they can get vaccinated against COVID-19 in Chatham

County.

"It was hard to choose which articles would be included and which wouldn't," Johnson said. "In a perfect world, we probably would have included half of our work from the past year, but since we had limited space, Patsy and I chose the articles we thought would be most meaningful and useful to the community."

Patsy Montesinos, a senior at UNC-Chapel Hill, is part of the La Voz reporting team, along with CN+R intern Olivia Rojas, who, like Montesinos, is studying journalism at UNC. Besides translation and multimedia projects, Montesinos writes columns for La Voz, one of which appears in the print edition.

"I'm so happy that the Hispanic community, my community, will finally have a place to see their stories and their work," Montesinos said. "It's been a hard year for all of us, and I'm incredibly proud of the work we've done at La Voz de Chatham to keep the community informed."

So far, the La Voz print edition has been well received by many among the county's Hispanic community, as community members and organizations have told the News + Record. Chatham ESL teacher and activist Alirio Estevez told the News + Record that he was excited the La Voz print edition had been made reality. He contributed a column to La Voz's opinion section.

"I feel that our Latino community will benefit tremendously by having a trustworthy newspaper

that will inform us about important events in our county and our state," he said. "La Voz de Chatham will help increase the civic involvement of our community. I want to thank the Chatham News + Record and its journalists for making this dream come true. I look forward to reading every issue from now on."

Maria Gomez Flores, the Liaison's Advocacy and Civic Engagement Program Manager, also contributed an opinion piece to the print edition. She told the News + Record that as a bilingual resident, she's able to read about local news in English publications, which helps her feel more connected to Chatham. But not all Chatham residents can say the same, she added.

"The Spanish-speaking community for the longest time didn't have this privilege," Gomez Flores told the News + Record. "That's why I was really excited for La Voz and their new Spanish print (edition to) bridge that gap for Spanish speakers. The Latinx community also deserves to have access to local news and to feel connected to the place they call home. I gave the La Voz print edition to my grandmother, and she was really happy to see the amazing work that the community was doing. I am excited to see La Voz and the Chatham News + Record further their connection with the Latinx and immigrant community because we exist and we are a part of Chatham County."

Future print editions of La Voz de Chatham are being planned.

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POLICE REPORTS

CHATHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Randall Willett, 46, of Siler City, was charged April 8 for embezzlement. Willett was issued a \$1,800 secured bond with a April 12 court date in Pittsboro.

Damontrez Von Wertz, 27, of Wagram, was charged April 8 for resisting a public officer. Wertz was issued a \$2,500 secured bond with a June 2 court date in Pittsboro.

Wade Farrish, 67, of Siler City, was charged April 9 by Magistrate's Order for Court Order Violation related to charges of assaulting an individual with a disability. Farrish was issued a \$2,000 secured bond with a May 12 court date in Pittsboro.

Christopher Mansell, 30, of Siler City, was charged April 11 for filing a false report to a police station, misuse of the 911 system and resisting a public officer. Mansell was issued a written promise with a April 28 court date in Pittsboro.

Dupre McCall, 44, of Mebane, was charged April 13 for failure

to appear. He was issued a \$500 secured bond with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

William King III, 51, of Siler City, was charged April 14 for indecent exposure. He was released on a written promise with May 5 court date in Pittsboro.

Robert Mason, Jr., 34, of Siler City, was charged April 13 for assault by strangulation, assault on a female, communicating threats and interfering with emergency communications. He was held on a 48-hour DV hold with April 27 court date in Pittsboro.

Katrina Ann Cassell, 37, of Asheboro, was charged April 14 for failure to appear. She was released on a written promise with a May 4 court date in Asheboro.

Oscar Jimenez, 53, of Siler City, was charged April 15 for indecent liberties with a child, first degree kidnapping, sexual battery and common law robbery. Jimenez was issued a \$350,000 secured bond with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

James Kendall, 31, of Sta-

ley, was charged April 16 for failure to appear. Kendall was issued a written promise with a May 3 court date in Asheboro.

Jamail Hall, 30, of Durham, was charged April 16 for a fugitive warrant out of Houston, Texas. Hall was issued no bond with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

Jesse Crawford, 26, of Chapel Hill, was charged April 16 for a true bill of indictment related to second degree without regard. Crawford was issued no bond with a June 8 court date in Bolivia.

Juana Martinez-Avalos, 24, of Pittsboro, was charged April 16 for failure to appear on charges of speeding and reckless driving with wanton disregard for public safety. Martinez-Avalos was issued a \$100 secured bond with a April 26 court date in Burgaw.

Vincent Sheeley, Jr., 33, of Pittsboro, was charged April 17 for failure to appear on charges of simple possession of a Schedule IV controlled

substance. Sheeley was issued a written promise to appear with a April 26 court date in Asheboro.

Morris Thompson, 55, of Pittsboro, was charged April 17 for assault on a female. Thompson was issued a written promise with a June 9 court date in Pittsboro.

Adrian Jones, 19, of Pittsboro, was charged April 17 for hit/run with failure to stop after property damage. Jones was issued a written promise with a May 24 court date in Durham.

Michael Farrar, 64, of Staley, was charged April 17 for simple assault, assault inflicting serious injury, false imprisonment, injury to personal property and injury to real property. Farrar was issued a \$600 secured bond with a June 8 court date in Pittsboro.

John Rogers, 66, of Ithaca, New York, was charged April 18 for possession Schedule I controlled substance, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz and possession of marijuana para-

phernalia. Rogers was issued a written promise with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

Shawn Marion, 50, of Pittsboro, was charged April 19 for communicating threats. He was held on a 48-hour DV hold with a April 28 court date in Pittsboro.

Shawn Marion was charged April 20 on charges from another jurisdiction for communicating threats and injury to personal property. He was issued a \$10,000 secured bond with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

Tyler Howard, 27, of Siler City, was charged April 19 for simple possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance. He was released on a written promise with a April 28 court date in Pittsboro.

Phillip Jones, Jr., 40, of Siler City, was charged April 20 for assault by strangulation and assault on a female. He was held on a 48-hour DV hold with a April 26 court date in Pittsboro.

ELECTION CYBERSECURITY

Bet your Bitcoin: Cyber attacks and disinformation will persist

BY BUCK RYAN
Citizen Kentucky

"A lie can travel halfway around the world while the truth is still putting on its shoes."

If you think that's Mark Twain speaking, think again. Centuries ago fans were saluting satirist Jonathan Swift for that sentiment.

OK, try this quote: "On average, a false story reaches 1,500 people six times more quickly than a factual story."

That's from a research study cited last week by Sarah Mojarad, a lecturer from the University of Southern California's Viterbi School of Engineering. "This is true about false stories on any topic," she added, "but stories about politics are more likely to go viral."

Mojarad was one of 11 speakers convened online for a two-hour regional workshop for North Carolina and four other states as part of the USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative.

Mojarad's focus was disinformation and misinformation while other national experts offered tips and insights on cybersecurity, cyber safety and crisis response techniques.

What's a good sign you're reading disinformation? It causes you to fear or feel outrage, Mojarad said.

Take a breath and check it out before sharing it, thereby giving it more credibility than it deserves, she said.

Don't use the same password for one account that you also use for financial transactions, warned Clifford Neuman, director of USC's Center for Computer Systems Security. Without your knowledge, your passwords may already be available on the dark web.

"The most believable phishing sites trick almost half the users," or 45%, Neuman said. "Hackers move fast. Twenty percent of the accounts are accessed within 30 minutes."

The most common password people used in 2020 was 123456. Rather than think of a password, Neuman said, use a pass-phrase, such as WellWinSuperBowl56!

Worried about malware and ransomware?

"Every new app you install is a risk," Neuman

said. "Always download apps from trusted sources." Don't just Google to find an app, he added.

In an interview before the workshop, host Adam Clayton Powell III flashed this red light for journalists: Bad actors have shifted their focus from national attacks to local governments, local elections, local businesses and local news organizations, which offer both more credibility to hack and more vulnerability to malicious interventions.

Powell is executive director of the USC initiative, a nonpartisan, independent project funded with a generous grant from Google. Last year Powell's team visited all 50 states, either in person or mostly online because of the pandemic.

This year the USC initiative will cover all 50 states again, but with combinations of states in 10 regional online workshops. The North Carolina workshop, held LAST Thursday afternoon, also included representatives from Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

"From RSVPs we can see that almost all of the workshop participants are new — they were not with our 2020 workshops — so we are reaching new campaign and election workers across the country," Powell said. "For 2021 we are including live updates on both the new threats and the new free resources for campaigns and elections."

From North Carolina to Kentucky, one thing became clear: No one is safe from malicious actors intent on breaching their private information — personal, medical or financial — or holding their institutions ransom.

Last year, Chatham County's computer network was hit with a ransomware attack launched through a malicious attachment in a phishing email, as reported by the News + Record.

Last month, Kentucky's state capital, the City of Frankfort, sustained a cyberattack. Details of a suspected ransom are still being sought with open records requests by The State Journal, the city's newspaper.

One year later, the details of a historic cyberattack on the University of Kentucky and UK HealthCare are revealed in a recent audit by the university showing how much the hospital's cyberattack cost — \$5 million — and how "perilously close" it came to the dire consequences of

a system-wide shutdown for UK HealthCare.

The university's 46-page audit revealed that malware installed on university servers was designed to mine cryptocurrency.

Calculating the costs surrounding cybersecurity is difficult enough. But when the bad actors demand ransom in Bitcoin, the calculations are elusive.

The demand for a 50 Bitcoin ransom in the Chatham County case was estimated to be nearly \$700,000 in the News + Record's first-day story about the Oct. 28, 2020, attack. When the Raleigh News & Observer published a follow-up story in February 2021, it calculated the same 50 Bitcoin ransom amount — at time of publication — to be worth \$2.4 million.

Any way you count it, time is money, and there's no time to lose to secure your own operations against cyberattacks, according to workshop speakers.

Flying under the flag of "Our Candidate is Democracy!" the workshop's goal was to keep the next elections in all five states safe and secure.

"The USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative is an invaluable effort to spread the word about digital threats to American democracy," said Robert Farley, a senior lecturer who recommended the workshop to his students in UK's Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce.

"We know that the electoral system has suffered malicious attacks from both foreign and domestic actors," Farley said, "and understanding both the effects of those attacks and the steps that have been taken to protect the integrity of the electoral process is critical to maintaining faith in the electoral process."

The University of Kentucky hosted a USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative workshop in February of last year. At that time, Don Blevins Jr., Fayette County clerk, predicted a dark future and the ultimate challenge for journalists. He now fears that prediction may have come true.

"My primary concern is actually not about cybersecurity," Blevins said. "My primary concern is that the public will lose confidence in elections through misinformation or other types of activities that might lead them to believe their vote doesn't count or that the election is rigged ... I think that is a far greater challenge we need to watch for."

News + Record Publisher Bill Horner III said such things threaten democracy.

"We've seen an incredible growth in not only the amount of disinformation, but also in peoples' willingness to swallow it without question," he said. "For others, it's easy to just throw their hands up and separate themselves from valid news reports and even interest in the elections because of frustration and mistrust."

For perspective on the challenges faced at the state level, Powell turned in Thursday's workshop to Bob Babbage, a former Kentucky Secretary of State, a lobbyist and a cofounder and managing partner of a consulting and advocacy firm, Babbage Cofounder.

"With global cybersecurity experts," Babbage said, "we have learned this much: That whatever we do, the bad folks, the criminals, are going to

keep coming back and trying to break in. That makes your initiative all the more important."

Buck Ryan, a University of Kentucky journalism professor, is conducting a "participatory case study" of the Chatham (N.C.) News + Record. He can be reached at buck.ryan@uky.edu. For more information on the USC Election Cybersecurity Initiative, visit www.electionsecurity.usc.edu

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Photo courtesy of Chatham County

The Chatham County Red Cross blood drive on April 20 at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center in Pittsboro. The blood drive collected 32 lifesaving blood donations to help hospital patients in need.

Chatham County community comes together to give life

From Chatham County Government

PITTSBORO — A week ago Tuesday, Chatham County employees and residents rolled up their sleeves to give the gift of life at the Chatham County Agriculture and Conference Center in Pittsboro. Thirty-two lifesaving blood donations were collected to help hospital patients in need.

The Chatham County Employee Blood Drive is held every April with the American Red Cross. This year, however, it is especially important for community members to give back as the nation, state and local community continue to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, the Red Cross is experiencing the ongoing effects of the coronavirus, as roughly 1,000 drives are canceled each week because of the pandemic. As the nation transitions to a new, hopeful phase of this devastating pandemic, blood donations remain essential to the health of

all communities. "It's important that I donate blood to help others, and it's such an easy thing to do," said Chatham County employee Jill Oldham, who has been donating blood for more than 20 years. "If a family member or I ever needed blood, I hope that others donate so we would have it."

Red Cross staff and blood drive volunteers followed strict protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Donors' temperatures were checked upon entry and again during the pre-screening before their donation. Workers and donors alike practiced social distancing and wore face coverings while seats, donor beds and computers were disinfected after each use. Each blood donation is tested for COVID-19 antibodies.

"Giving back is a way of life for me, and it's my passion to help others," said Chatham County resident and blood donor Paul Bolig. "I enjoy volunteering in the community, and giving

blood is one more way to do that."

According to the Red Cross, every two seconds someone in the U.S. needs blood. Patients need blood for a variety of reasons including individuals who have experienced trauma, people fighting cancers and those with chronic illnesses such as sickle cell disease.

"My late husband received blood when he battled cancer, and I appreciate the donors who helped him," said Chatham County Register of Deeds and blood donor Lunday Riggsbee. "There are a lot of patients out there who still need blood every day, and I hope people continue to give blood so it's there when they need it."

Individuals who would like to give blood but were unable to make the April 20 blood drive can look for donation opportunities by downloading the American Red Cross Blood Donor app, visiting redcrossblood.org or calling 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).



Photo courtesy of the Chatham County Historical Association

CHATHAM 250: A look back

Crutchfield's Taxi Cab Service, Siler City, 1947. When did you last see a taxi in Siler City? If you can tell us more about Crutchfield's, please do! Click on the photo to enlarge. Thanks to Larry Pickard for contributing this photo to the CCHA collection.

'IS THAT JUST A SLOGAN?' CCS launches new equity trainings as part of two-year plan

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Chatham County Schools recently began its two-year equity training efforts with a group called The Equity Collaborative, the district said at its April 19 Board of Education meeting.

The efforts will cost the school system \$67,000 and include multiple levels of training for school staff as well as assistance in developing a new equity strategic plan. The training is a part of the Equity and Excellence for Everyone (E3) team's work, which was formed five years ago. The team, which has representatives from each of the district's 19 schools, works to support students by eliminating barriers for student groups as well as by using and providing culturally relevant resources across the system.

"We are now getting kind of this next phase of our work where we really need to roll up our sleeves and get to the real meat and the focus of equity work," Amanda Hartness, CCS Assistant Supt. for Academic Services and Instructional Support, said during a presentation at the board's April 19 meeting.

"Much of our prior work has been in setting vision structures, developing materials, sponsoring events. And all of those things are great, and they're helpful, and they're positive, but they don't create systemic change," she added. "They don't close achievement gaps, and they don't change the culture of our district to ensure success for all students. So our next phase really has to be very targeted with professional development, leadership coaching, regular development and community engagement."

Along with race and income, Hartness previously told the News + Record that the district's equity efforts also focus on sexual orientation, disability status, religion, gender and any other protected class.

The district first began the Request for Proposals (RFP) process in September 2020, selecting the Equity Collaborative as its vendor in January. Work with the group began in February.

Work by the E3 team in the last few years has led to the district revising various policies, such as dress code and discipline, making language on district forms more gender inclusive and adding more diverse texts and curriculum to classrooms. In addition to the equity training and assessment — which will involve talking to all levels of school community members and looking at schoolwide data — the team will expand opportunities for student focus groups, support and expand student racial affinity groups, host an equity conference in the fall and more.

All school administrators and equity team members received training from the Equity Collaborative in March and around 10-15 members of the team will take an Equity Certification Course through Western Carolina University this spring. The district also hosted "equity Twitter chats" using the hashtag #cces3 to discuss various prompts such as resources, the importance of relationships and the biggest obstacles to achieving equity.

Every district school will also get an "equity professional library," the district's presentation said, starting with about 30 books for media centers as well as racial identity books for K-5 teachers.

Ness Shortley, Horton Middle School librarian, joined the equity team last year and helped with the collection development of library resources. Before joining the team, she said she was pretty vocal about increasing inclusion at Horton.

"I often focus on areas that maybe don't get a lot of loudness. I feel like I'm constantly pushing equity for our disabled kids and equity for LGBTQ kids," Shortley said. "And that's not something I've seen a lot of progress on so far."

Defining equity as

broadly as possible — to also include race and ethnicity, language, economic status — is an important part of better serving as many students as possible, she said. In her job, increasing inclusivity for disabled and LGBTQ students could look like including books which positively represent both groups, or helping make sure the library is quiet or dark enough for students with sensory issues.

"We have disabled kids in our schools, obviously, we have queer kids in our schools, obviously," Shortley said. "And doing nothing sends a message to those kids that those parts of them aren't necessarily welcome."

She emphasized too that looking at LGBTQ and disability status includes people of color, and can provide a more intersectional approach rather than an exclusionary one.

Hartness said having staff from every school and in various roles is an important part of working toward equity.

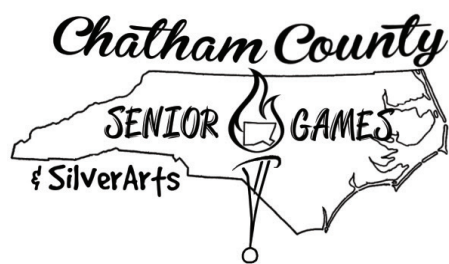
"We want to make sure that equity is not just happening on silos, that our school administrators are a part of the conversation," Chris Poston, executive director for elementary and middle grades and an E3 founding member, said at the board's meeting.

Hartness pointed to statistics that show Black students in Chatham are four times more likely than white students to receive a short-term suspension — a number previously reported on by the News + Record. She also pointed to achievement gaps, which show white students in Chatham consistently outperforming other groups of students.

"In Chatham you often hear us say, 'all kids can,'" Hartness said. "What does that really mean? Is that just a slogan, or is it something that we truly believe? And we want to put action behind?"

Reporter Hannah McClellan can be reached at hannah@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @HannerMcClellan.

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Liz Lahti, 919-542-4512 ext. 228
liz.lahti@chathamcoa.org



Tentative schedule - contingent on status of Covid-19

- May 1 Cycling
- 3 SilverArts Entry Drop off
- 4 Archery
- 21 Tee shirt and Packet Pick-up
- 22 Track/Field
- 22 Football & Softball Throw
- 22 Fun Walk
- 24 Golf
- 24 Croquet
- 25 Disc Golf
- 25 Swimming
- 25 Tennis—Women's Singles/Men's Doubles
- 26 Men's Bocce
- 26 Tennis—Men's Singles/Women's Doubles
- 27 Horseshoes
- 27 Tennis—Mixed Doubles
- 28 Women's Bocce
- 28 Bowling
- June 1 Basketball Shoot
- 1 Corn Hole
- 2 Pickleball
- 3 Table Tennis
- 4 Awards Ceremony



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

Murals in Siler City

Siler City resident and artist JR Butler created two murals in Siler City. The flower mural was designed by Siler City artist Michelle Hudson, and JR painted a mural of it on the back of the Arts Incubator downtown. The flora and fauna mural was created on the back of the Chatham Lofts building. Butler is an artist from Silk Hope.



Staff photo by Kim Hawks

Outdoor worship venue

St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church in Pittsboro has created an outdoor worship and venue area. Called 'Celebration Hill,' it's situated on a 1.3-acre lot across from St. Bart's on West Salisbury Street. St. Bart's goal was to create a safe outdoor environment to worship, meditate, and share a meal during St. Bart's weekly Thursday lunch as well as hold additional outdoor community and private events. The area has permanent bench seating for 30 with areas for more seating.

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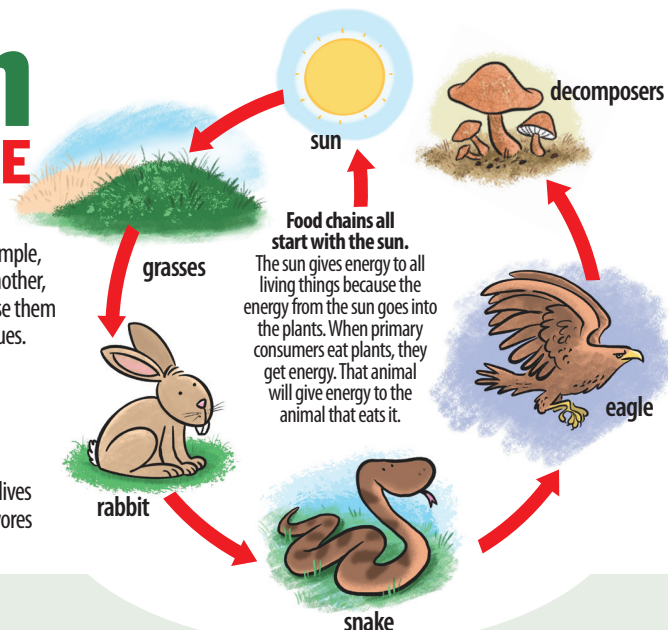
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Food Chain

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

A food chain links plants and animals to each other for survival. For example, a plant gets eaten by a small animal. That animal is also food for another, larger animal. Ultimately, when plants and animals die, decomposers cause them to turn back into soil that will grow more plants and the circle of life continues. The diagram at right illustrates a basic food chain.



Complete the Food Chains

Below are three unfinished food chains. Complete each chain by drawing, naming or pasting a picture of one of the choices of plants or animals who lives in that plant community. Think about which animals are herbivores, omnivores and carnivores.

Evergreen Forest Community

The forest community has many different kinds of trees. Ferns and mosses can also be found.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
bay nuts • leaves madrone berries	quail • squirrel deer	fox • bobcat	mountain lion coyote	worm • fungi bacteria

Creekside Community

The area along the banks of a creek is mostly moist and shady.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
Underwater plants algae	aquatic insects fish	newt frog	raccoon scrub jay	worm • fungi mushroom

Grassland Community

This can be a dry and hot area. Mostly low, dense bushes and a few wildflowers can be found there.

PRODUCER	PRIMARY CONSUMER	SECONDARY CONSUMER	FINAL CONSUMER	DECOMPOSER
flowers • seeds berries	rat • mouse insect	snake • bobcat lizard	owl hawk	worm • fungi mushroom

Food Chain Words

- PRODUCERS:** Plants that produce their own food from sun, water, air and soil.
- CONSUMERS:** Animals that eat other plants and animals.
- DECOMPOSERS:** This group includes fungi, bacteria and worms that eat decaying plants and animals.

Extra! Extra!

Community Connections

Look through the newspaper for five or more people or places that are connected to your life. (Example: A grocery store where your family shops. What other connections can you find?)

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Draw the thing that should come next to continue the pattern in each row.

Row 1: Tree, bear, fish, tree, fish, tree, bear, fish, tree, fish, []

Row 2: Deer, ladybug, deer, ladybug, []

Row 3: Tree, ladybug, bear, fish, tree, ladybug, bear, fish, []

Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

CONSUMER
CHAIN
BACTERIA
CIRCLE
BOBCAT
AQUATIC
LIZARD
ALGAE
FUNGI
FINAL
FROG
FISH
MICE
WORM
WEB

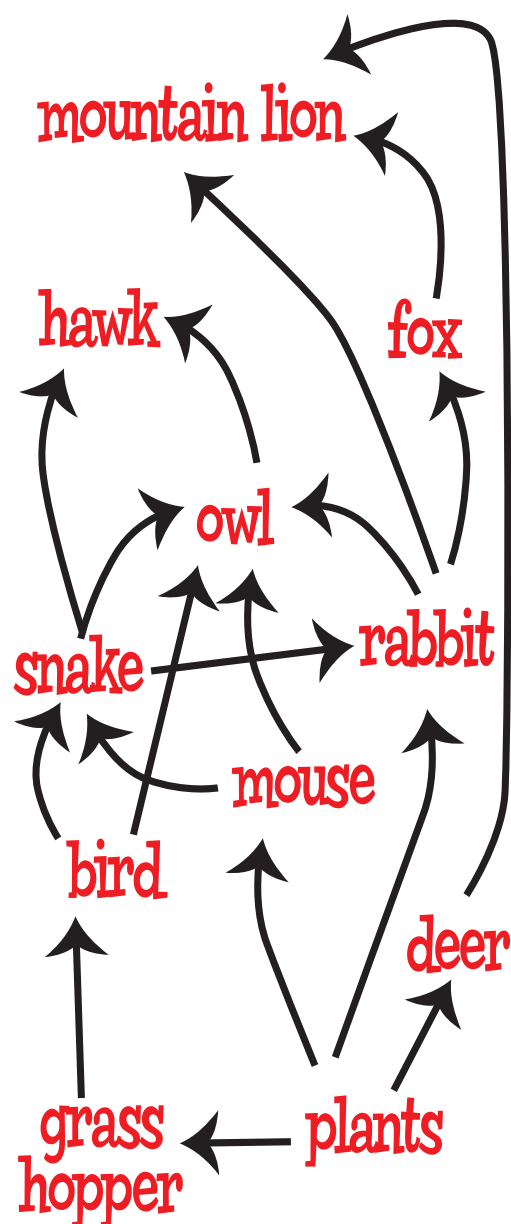
A C R B U E A I T R
Q U E R R A L G A E
U W E C V C F N D M
A O T F I S H U R U
T R A R V M O F A S
I M C H A I N S Z N
C L B O L D W E I O
E G O R F I N A L C
B S B A C T E R I A

Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Kid Scoop Together:

What is a food web?

Food webs show how different food chains are connected. For example, a mouse and a rabbit both eat plants and seeds. Like a spider web, a food web can be very complicated since there are so many different creatures.



Let's Talk!

What would happen if all of the plants and animals in one of the links in a food chain disappeared? Talk it over with a parent or family member. What would happen if one animal in a food web became extinct?

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Plan a Picnic

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Chatham YMCA

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- YMCA DAY CAMP: PITTSBORO ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- YMCA DAY CAMP: PERRY HARRISON SCHOOL

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PITTSBORO BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

So, what is Pittsboro doing about its water problems?

BY D. LARS DOLDER
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Town leadership, including the board of commissioners and town staff, have worked behind the scenes for more than a year to resolve Pittsboro’s worsening water contamination issues. A lack of transparency, though, has veiled their intentions and left many residents unsure of the town’s progress, according to Town Manager Chris Kennedy.

“We have to do a better job of communicating to the public,” he said in the board of commissioners’ regular meeting on Monday. “... We try to push this out as best we can, but for what we may lack in communicative abilities to push this out on a regular basis, I can assure you we are exchanging that for trying to do things on the other side of it ... We are taking this seriously and we’re trying to everything we can to push forward solutions.”

Pittsboro’s water supply, drawn from the Haw River, has received widespread attention across the state and country after scientists and researchers discovered in recent years that it was teeming with carcinogenic per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances known as PFAS, as the News + Record previously reported. Other harmful chemicals such as 1, 4 dioxane have been found in higher-than-normal concentrations as compared to water supplies nationwide, but have dissipated in recent months.

On Jan. 11, the board entertained a presentation from CDM Smith, an engineering and construction company, which provides water solutions for government and private clients. Pittsboro hired the firm to investigate potential solutions to the town’s water contamination.

“That was the culmination of about a year’s worth of work,” Kennedy said of the presentation, “looking at advance treatment for our water plant.”

A month later, town staff petitioned the board of commissioners for \$1.2 million to act on CDM Smith’s recommendations and begin development of a filtration system that would filter 90% of all PFAS from the town’s drinking supply. The commissioners promptly approved the request.

“That \$1.2 million is going toward what we call a fast-track GAC project,” Kennedy said, referring to the granular activated coal filtration the board elected to install. “We know that time is of the essence with projects like these, and so I think the board is being responsive to that call.”

The accelerated installation project should complete within about a year. Of the \$1.2 million allocation, \$800,000 will be used to purchase GAC vessels and the necessary filtration media, “the carbon itself,” Kennedy said. The other \$400,000 will cover engineering costs.

But the fast-track filtration will not cover all of Pittsboro’s long-term water needs. In tandem with GAC installation, the town is pursuing development of a new water treatment plant on Jordan Lake in partnership with Durham, Chatham County and OWASA, the Orange Water and Sewer Authority. At the end of February, Kennedy said, the board approved \$70,000 to “continue forward with that project.”

“Obviously, there’s a much longer lead time,” he said. “We’re looking at the better part of a decade or more. But we’re very much active in that.”

A few weeks after the board authorized staff to proceed with GAC filtration, the town accepted a bid from CDM Smith to carry out the design/build phase of the treatment plant’s modification.

“When you’re looking at qualifications, no one knows our system better than they do,” Kennedy said. “We were very excited to see them submit on that project, they have a very strong construction arm of their team as well. And so we’re well under way with that project and continuing forward.”

Funding such projects remains a concern for the board and town staff. Accelerated construction demands substantial upfront payments, which may have to be displaced by increased user rates. To subsidize the costs,

Kennedy submitted a request to Congressman David Price at the beginning of this month for federal grant money cover most of the project’s expense.

“I think we have a compelling case for Congressman Price to submit that,” Kennedy said. “PFAS is a national topic, and certainly it’s no shock to anybody about our current condition in Pittsboro, so we hope we have a very competitive, compelling case to get some funding ... We swung for the fences with that hoping something happens.”

The town also stands to benefit from President Joe Biden’s American Rescue Plan. Pittsboro is slated to receive about \$1.2 million, all of which will go toward water solutions.

“This board has supported me in suggesting we spend 100% of those dollars towards this fast-track project and our water plan,” Kennedy said.

Installation of the GAC system is expected to cost about \$3 million. Long-term plans to increase and improve Pittsboro’s water supply will cost about \$42 million.

Other news

The commissioners discussed several land development topics. The first three were considered in public hearing and sent to the town’s planning board for further consideration. The final three were approved by motion.

- Rezoning request
Chatham Park Investors proposed an amendment to the Chatham Park Planned Development District Master Plan to rezone three parcels of land located on Eubanks Road adjacent to the intersections of U.S. Hwy. 64 bypass.

- Green Beagle Kennel special use permit
Green Beagle Kennel, which has a pet boarding service in Chapel Hill, requested a special use permit to build a commercial kennel, accessory pet daycare, grooming and dog training facility to be located on approximately 16 acres on Eubanks Road, adjacent to and north of the U.S. Hwy. 64 bypass.

- Zoning text amendment
Planning Staff requested the adoption of the town’s unified development ordinance, which “consolidates, rewrites, and replaces multiple ordinances into a single document to manage land development including the Zoning Ordinance, Subdivision Ordinance, Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, Lighting Ordinance, Stormwater Ordinance, and Riparian Buffer Protection Ordinance,” according to the town’s submitted proposal. The UDO is designed to streamline town function’s and simplify the review for new development.

- Zoning text amendment on nightclubs, bars and taverns
Town staff requested an amendment to the zoning ordinance to permit nightclubs, bars and taverns, within highway commercial (C-2) and central commercial (C-4) zoning classifications. The adjustment would permit such businesses to operate in areas of town — notably downtown — where they were previously limited. The board voted 4-1 in favor of the amendment, with Mayor Pro Tem Pamela Baldwin voting against out of concern that bars and nightclubs might operate too close to schools.

- Shopping center rezoning
Developer Graham Scott Oldham is requested the board rezone about 13 acres from residential agricultural to highway commercial conditional. The land is located at 3151 U.S. 15-501 North and is the current site of Poultry Villa Landscaping and Supplies. Oldham plans to develop a commercial shopping center. The Board of Commissioners approved his request with a unanimous vote.

- Sewer allocation request for Kiwanis Club of Pittsboro
The Kiwanis Club of Pittsboro, which plans to host Pittsboro’s new Boys & Girls club, requested a new sewer allocation from the town of 665 gallons per day. The 2,700-square-foot facility now uses a septic system, which is failing. The board voted unanimously to approve.

Reporter D. Lars Dolder can be reached at dldolder@chathamnr.com and on Twitter @dldolder.

Pfizer, CCCC team up for new apprenticeship program

From Central Carolina Community College

SANFORD — Pfizer is Central Carolina Community College’s newest apprenticeship partner.

Pfizer created three positions specifically for maintenance apprentices in 2020 and those new employees started work and classes in January. Two of the apprentices were already CCCC students.

One of the apprentices is U.S. Army veteran Brandon Yang, of Sanford.

“I’ve always wanted to learn how to fix things,” he said. “While I was deployed overseas, I had the opportunity to help our mechanics swap out the engine of our fuel truck and the rewarding feeling I had when the truck roared as we turned it on after the swap has fueled my desire to learn more about how things work and how to fix them.”

Hunter Cox of Sanford said he decided to participate in the apprenticeship as he was looking for an intern opening at Pfizer because of all the great things he has heard about the facility.

“The apprenticeship is a great thing. It has given me a great job while also letting me have time for school,” he said.

The other apprentice, Marvin Lewis, of Spring Lake, was enrolled in the CCCC Industrial Systems program when he found the program on Indeed.com.

“This apprenticeship program is a real dream,” said Lewis. “First and foremost, I am looking forward to learning in the pharmaceutical environment.”

These students will take a specialized selection of classes at CCCC from both the Industrial Systems Degree Program and Workforce Continuing Education as part of their full-time employment at Pfizer. Once they have completed their on-the-job training at Pfizer and related instruction at CCCC, which will take place over several years, they will have completed a registered apprenticeship program with a journeyman’s certification in the maintenance field, earned a CCCC certificate, diploma, or degree, and advanced in their careers with Pfizer.

Pfizer Logistics Maintenance Manager Craig Hardy, who serves as Site Hard Services Manager, anticipates benefits from the apprenticeship program.

“We anticipate achieving a higher employee retention rate, achieving a more diverse workforce, and a capable and skilled workforce that will replenish retiring colleagues,” he said. “The apprentices learn specific trades and skills that will benefit the needs of our site.”

“We only started in January 2021, however, it has begun very well and we are extremely encouraged and pleased with the talent of our apprentices,” Hardy added. “The apprentices are working in their fields with mentors and tracking their hours per Department of Labor requirements, and they are enrolled in classes at CCCC that meet the program requirements.”

Yang says he enjoys working with people who are experienced in this field and hearing the different stories about how they got to where they are.

“It inspires me to be better and gives me hope that one day I can have a fulfilling career,” he said.

“I have enjoyed learning all the aspects of maintenance while also meeting great people always willing to help,” said Cox.

Lewis said he enjoys working at Pfizer.

“There is an awesome culture here where people work together. And it is



Photo courtesy of CCCC

Brandon Yang



Photo courtesy of CCCC

Hunter Cox



Photo courtesy of CCCC

Marvin Lewis

not just for show. They actually want to see the company and everyone else do well here,” he said.

CCCC, Pfizer relationship

Margaret Robertson, CCCC Vice President for Workforce Development, says CCCC and Pfizer have a long relationship built on trust and collaboration.

“The college has been a partner in developing a successful Pfizer talent pipeline through customized training, program development, student recruitment and now registered apprentices,” she said. “Pfizer has provided the college the benefit of their insight, resources, and leadership as we have worked together to support the community.”

Hardy, who says he has been with Pfizer Sanford for almost 19 years, noted that in his time here, “CCCC has been a great partner in the learning needs of our company. They have provided classes on BioWork and Train the Trainer program that Pfizer has used. I would say that in our maintenance department, about 50 percent of those hired within the past five years have been graduates of the Industrial Maintenance programs at CCCC. They are currently working hard to ensure all courses needed for all instruction of the new apprenticeship program are taught or managed through CCCC.”

Apprenticeships through CCCC

Registered apprenticeships are a collaborative workforce response that supports both the student, providing an excellent opportunity for individuals to “earn and learn” and for businesses working to develop their talent pipeline, according to Robertson. “These experiences are uniquely defined by a company to address specific needs and roles while providing students a structure to develop high demand skills.

“CCCC is positioned to support businesses seeking to investigate

the benefits of registered apprenticeships as well as those actively engaged in providing these experiences,” said Robertson.

“The college can provide the related instruction defined by the business that is core to the apprenticeship and is developing the resources to support more businesses in successfully entering into apprenticeship arrangements.”

Robertson notes that in recognition of the value that registered apprenticeships can have for the development of a high quality talent pipeline, CCCC is investing resources to be better positioned to support businesses seeking to explore the possibilities of apprenticeship programs. “Christina Piard, Director of Corporate Engagement, is working with ApprenticeshipNC and peer colleges to investigate ways for the college to provide additional resources including college sponsorship and the development of apprenticeship cohorts,” said Robertson. “We are looking forward to providing more opportunities for the individuals and businesses within our community to take advantage of registered apprenticeships.”

Hardy is a proponent of the apprenticeship program.

“I feel that any business that wants to see benefits in their workforce, either current staff or potential staff for years to come, should consider the apprenticeship program,” he said. “It is a great way to grow the existing talent they may have or bring in new talent that could provide years of positive returns for the company.”

Companies interested in discussing an apprenticeship opportunity through Central Carolina Community College can contact Christina Piard, CCCC Director of Corporate Outreach, at cpiar156@cccc.edu or by phone at 919-718-7076.

For more information on Central Carolina Community College - which is dedicated to providing pathways to achievable dreams, visit www.cccc.edu.



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1354, A1,8,15,22,4tp

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or nhannah@silercity.org for accommodations for this request. -- Esta información está disponible en español o en cualquier otro idioma bajo petición. Por favor, póngase en contacto con Nancy Hannah al nhannah@silercity.org o 919-726-8625 o en 311 North Second Avenue, Siler City, North Carolina 27344 de alojamiento para esta solicitud. A29,1tc

HELP WANTED - EVENINGS & WEEKENDS, Please inquire in person: Country Mart, 320 W. Raleigh St, Siler City, NC or Desperados, 602 North Second Avenue, Siler City A29,tfnc

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valeriecharris919@gmail.com

or call Valerie at 919-742-4178

and still representing you shall continue to represent you. If you are indigent and not already represented by an attorney, you are entitled to a court-appointed attorney by contacting the Chatham County Clerk of Court. STEPHENSON & FLEMING, L.L.P. BY: /s/ ANGENETTE STEPHENSON
 Attorney for Petitioner, CHATHAM COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES 109 Conner Dr. Suite 208 Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27514
 Telephone: (919) 869-7795 A29,My6,My13,3tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 21 E 268
 All persons having claims against **THELMA MARTHA BINKLEY ESTES**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 29th day of July, 2021, or this notice will

be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 29th day of April, 2021. Tara B. Hussey, Administrator 1795 Oakley Church Road Bear Creek, NC 27207
 A29,My6,My13,My20,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY
 ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **MARIE G. SETTINERI**, deceased, of Chatham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before July 29, 2021, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 29th day of April, 2021. Maria C. Mihok, Executrix c/o Monroe, Wallace, Morden & Sherrill, P.A. 3225 Blue Ridge Road, Suite 117 Raleigh, NC 27612
 A29,My6,My13,My20,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY
 ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **HERBERT WOLFF**, deceased, of Chatham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before July 29th, 2021, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 29th day of April, 2021. Carol Robbins, Executor Estate of Herbert Wolff c/o Roberson Law Firm 1829 E. Franklin St., Ste. 800C Chapel Hill, NC 27514
 A29,My6,My13,My20,4tc

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE TOWN OF PITTSBORO
 The Pittsboro Town Board of Commissioners will hold the following Public Hearing on Monday, May 10, 2021 at 7:00 PM in the Town Council Chambers of the Pittsboro Town Hall, 635 East Street, Pittsboro, North Carolina, to consider the

following item:
 1. Proposed Annexation: Chatham Park Section (Village Center District Section 6.2) (A-2021-01) Annexation request for parcels totaling 130.47 acres Intersection of Chatham Parkway and Suttles Rd, and more particularly described with parcel number 94479. The purpose of the public hearing is to provide interested parties with an opportunity to comment on the request. The complete records are on file at Town Hall located at 635 East Street and are available for inspection through e-mail. The meeting will be held via Zoom, a teleconference software. Instructions on how to join the Zoom Meeting can be found on the Town's website under the BOC Agenda, Minutes, and Audio tab. If you wish to make written comments, please send them to the Town Clerk, Cassie Bullock, PO Box 759, Pittsboro, NC 27312 or via email at Cbullock@pittsboronc.gov by 4 p.m. on September 28, 2020.

A29,My6,2tc
TOWN OF PITTSBORO Official Notice & Public Hearing Notice 2021-2022 Budget
 Notice is hereby given that the proposed budget for FY 2021-2022, pursuant to the provisions of N.C. General Statute 159-12, has been submitted to the Board of Commissioners and is available for public inspection at the office of the Town Clerk between the hours of 8:30 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday and also on the town website http://pittsboronc.gov. There shall be a public hearing on the proposed budget at 7:00 PM, Monday, May 10, 2021 at the Board of Commissioners Virtual Meeting. See http://pittsboronc.gov for the link to join this meeting. Written comments on the Budget will be accepted up to 24hrs after the Public Hearing is held. Cassandra Bullock, Town Clerk A29,My6,2tc

CREDITOR'S NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY
 Having qualified on the 9th day of April, 2021, as Administrator of the Estate of **GEORGE BRIAN MOORE**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the decedent to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 28th day of July, 2021, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the estate should make immediate payment. This the 26th day of April, 2021. Janice Moore-Thomas, Administrator of the Estate of George Brian Moore PO BOX 414 Goldston, NC 27252
 Attorneys: Law Offices of W. Woods Doster, P.A. 115 Chatham Street, Suite 302 Sanford, NC 27330
 A29,My6,My13,My20,4tc

Birthday dinners of days gone by

For quite a few years now, it's been dinner at Monterey — my parents' neighborhood joint which also happens to be a Mexican restaurant with food so good — that for many years it was the site of my birthday dinner. Their carnitas are the kind of food that lost on a desert island, the memory of that meltingly delicious pork could drive one mad.

But my birthday dinner weren't always chicken enchiladas Suisas, chile rellenos, and carnitas street tacos so good they could make you change your religion. In days of yore, I used to ask for a homemade birthday dinner. It was always ... and potato salad. Deli bologna sandwiches, and potato salad. New York strips, so rare they were still mooing, and potato salad. Sausage and peppers (pronounced by my Jersey side of the family, "sausapeppas" — I thought until junior high my Uncle Charlie's name was actually Uncle



Photo courtesy of Debbie Matthews

What's a birthday without a birthday cake?

Cholly), and potato salad. Once I had my first patty melt at Troy's Diner in San Diego, it became for a very long time patty melts ... and potato salad. I have a photo of me eating at a birthday dinner when I was about 14, digging in to a plate. Caught in mid-air, my fork is bearing a load of potato salad to my awaiting gob. Then, once I discovered the buttery, lemony miracle that is Hollandaise sauce, it became for a beautiful spring dinner of fried boneless, skinless chicken breasts and lightly steamed asparagus

covered in lashings of Hollandaise, and potato salad. Last weekend for the first time in two years, we went to my folks' for my birthday dinner. But because of you-know-what, we didn't want to go to a restaurant for dinner, so mom made me patty melts and potato salad. The potato salad recipe I've given to you before (CN+R, 2/3/2021), gentle reader. So today I'm sharing my bologna sandwich, Blender Hollandaise, fried boneless skinless chicken breasts, and classic patty melts.

No matter what the dinner is, there is one iron-clad, no question, my-birthday-doesn't-count-unless-it's-there other favorite food, a creation I have literally



Photo courtesy of Debbie Matthews

Potato salad complements any good meal.

dreamed about; Dewey's Bakery birthday cake with extra frosting (which adds \$5 to the

price). Thanks for your time. Contact me at dm@bullcity.mom.

New Jersey Bologna Sandwich

- | | | |
|--|------------------|-----------------|
| 4 slices very thinly sliced all-beef bologna | American cheese | Hellmann's Mayo |
| 2 slices white | Sliced tomato | Salt and pepper |
| | Red leaf lettuce | |
| | Kaiser roll | |
- Spread a generous layer of mayo on both sides of the roll. Layer on bologna, cheese, lettuce, and tomato. Season with salt and pepper. Devour.

Mom's Fried Chicken

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| 4 boneless chicken breasts | Fat-free buttermilk | Salt and pepper |
| | Self-rising flour | Oil for frying |
- Heat a skillet with about an inch of vegetable oil until it reaches 325°. Put 2-3 cups of flour in a shallow dish. Season heavily with salt and pepper. Put two cups of buttermilk into a second dish. Do a three-part dredge; flour, buttermilk, then flour again. Carefully place into the heated oil. Cook until one side is golden, flip, and cook until the other side is golden and the internal temperature is 165°. Place on paper towel-lined plate and season immediately.

Craig Claiborne's Blender Hollandaise

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 16 tablespoons (1 cup; 2 sticks) butter | purpose) | 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper |
| 4 egg yolks (save whites for another purpose) | 2 tablespoons lemon juice | |
| | Salt to taste | |
- Melt the butter in a saucepan over low heat. Heat butter to bubbling but do not let it brown. Meanwhile, into the container of an electric blender add the remaining ingredients. Cover the container and blend on low speed. The yolks must not be over-blended or the sauce will not make. Immediately uncover and pour in the hot butter in a steady stream. When all butter is incorporated, turn off motor. Keep the sauce warm by placing the container in a saucepan with two inches of hot water. If the sauce becomes too thick, thin it with a little hot water briefly blended.

Mom's Patty Melts

- | | | |
|--|---|-----------------|
| 2 pounds 80/20 ground beef | 8 slices cheese (mom uses American, I love cheddar, some use Swiss) | sourdough bread |
| 2 large onions, sliced into half moons | 8 slices rye or | Mayonnaise |
| 2 tablespoons butter | | Salt and pepper |
- To caramelize onions: melt butter in heavy skillet. Add onions and a big pinch of salt and pepper. Cook on medium low until the onions are soft and the color of butterscotch pudding. Divide beef into four pieces and make into patties. Cook in a hot skillet until the burger is crusted on both sides and cooked medium-rare to medium. Remove from skillet and build patty melts. Place 4 slices of bread down. Lay down a slice of cheese, then burger, then onions, another slice of cheese and top with the other slice of bread. Clean skillet and heat to medium-low. Spread as thin a layer of mayonnaise on the outside of each sandwich as possible. Put the patty melts in the pan and cover. Cook for about five or six minutes, or until bread is golden and toasted and cheese starts getting melty and gooey. Flip, and cook the other side until crispy and browned.

Dental Insurance

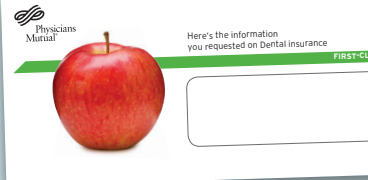
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