

Chatham News + Record

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VOICES OF CHATHAM

Oral history project keeps history alive as the county grows

BY BEN RAPPAPORT
News + Record Staff

Jordan-Matthews High School hasn't always been the home of the Jets. Until 1971, the mascot was the Blue Phantoms — a name that caused many students and community members of color to feel unsafe in the school. Those who were there remember students coming to football games dressed in white sheets in what many Black students saw as an ode to the Ku Klux Klan. "The African American people felt like the mascot represented the emblem of the KKK," wrote Chad E. Seales in his book "The Secular Spectacle: Performing Religion in a Southern Town."

The debates over the name change in the '70s caused multiple days of protest, violence and school closures. There were also lingering protests and acts of violence against Black students for months afterward.

While the violence has subsided, in some ways, the memory of the Phantoms lives on through the current mascot: the "Jets" name was chosen at the height of the Vietnam War when fighter jets became prominent iconography. One of the most prominent was the McDonnell Douglas F-4, also known as the Phantom.

It's a callback to a darker period of racial intimidation and the struggles of integration in Siler City that continues to affect the culture of the school, and the community, today.

That entire story is just one of the close to 90 that have been shared with the county through the "Voices of Chatham" oral history project. The project began in 2019 but faced delays during the COVID-19 pandemic. Voices of Chatham has restarted its work with the goal of documenting the rich cultural heritage of the county.

It's led by three N.C. State researchers and coordinated by Walt Wolfram, in collaboration with the Chatham County Historical Association. The end product will be an analysis of language change in the county, an oral history website and a documentary film.

Beyond words

Brody McCurdy is the research associate on the project. He said the work began as a way to capture the history of Chatham amid a future ripe for change. Even before

See PROJECT, page A3



THE FIGHT FOR CLEAN WATER

Pittsboro commissioners vote to litigate PFAS manufacturers

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — The town's board of commissioners voted unanimously on Monday evening to pursue litigation against manufacturers of PFAS chemicals and aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), a formal step in holding polluters accountable for damages to the town's water supply.

"When we file our lawsuit in the coming days, we will be one step closer to holding the companies responsible for PFAS contamination in our community accountable for the enor-



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

See PFAS, page A6

A view of the Haw River.

CHATHAM COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN

New assessment puts child care front and center

BY BEN RAPPAPORT
News + Record Staff



The Chatham County Partnership for Children is beginning work on an Early Childhood Community Assessment to help identify and understand the needs of children ages 5 years old and younger across various demographics in the county.

Genevieve Megginson, executive director of the Chatham Partnership for Children, hopes the plan will "get to the heart of the real needs of Chatham children and their parents and caregivers."

The community assessment hopes to fill the gaps of existing child-care coverage in the county by examining the current supply and demand of providers, and advising future local policy decisions around early child care through its Early Childhood Action Plan.

The way to reach those caregivers is taking on a

variety of mediums, she said, including surveys, community feedback meetings, making a documentary and more.

This assessment was necessary because the county has changed by leaps and bounds since the last assessment in 2008, according to Megginson.

Understanding the nuances and intricacies of child care in any place is difficult, but that is especially true in Chatham where the diversity of experiences ranges so broadly for caregivers. Megginson said she hopes community members from all walks of life will engage with this process to make the plan as impactful as possible. The engagement process, she says, is "grounded in equity."

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Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Genevieve Megginson, executive director of Chatham Partnership for Children, poses for a portrait outside her office in Pittsboro on Friday.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH | A LOOK BACK, A LOOK UPWARD

Dark addressing 'questions with complicated answers'

BY BILL HORNER III
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Calvin Dark can trace his family's lineage in the Chatham County area back three centuries, but what he'll share next week — and in a book he's finishing — focuses on his maternal great-great-grandfather, Aaron McMasters, an enslaved man who fought to gain his freedom.

McMasters was thwarted by N.C. law, but there's much more to his story.

That's the subject of Dark's lecture, "McMasters' Will: The Scheme that Almost Freed Us," part of Chatham Community Library's observance of Black History Month and scheduled virtually on Feb. 9.

For Dark, an author, researcher and principal of RC Communications, a Washington, D.C.-based public rela-

tions and media training firm, the story is more than 100 years in the making. Its roots are even deeper, and it's Dark's exploration of his past — starting with his childhood here — that's helped shape his life, personal development and work. His path has taken him from Siler City to Duke University, to a Fulbright Scholarship to study in Morocco, to regular appearances through U.S. and international media outlets, where he provides insights and perspectives on foreign affairs, politics and current events.

In addition to his other work, he's has written numerous articles and essays appearing in the North Carolina Folklore Journal, the Journal of American Historians, Duke Magazine, among others.

Dark, who's just accepted the invi-

See DARK, page A7



Dark

Event to focus on state of Black, Brown entrepreneurs

CN+R Staff Report

In Chatham County and other rural counties across North Carolina, the racial wealth gap is wide. But so far, observers say little documentation has been compiled to help understand the barriers faced by those on the low end of the income and wealth scale.

On Friday, Feb. 3, WEBB Squared — a nonprofit organization created in Chatham to build generational wealth by providing incubator-accelerator services to Black and Brown entrepreneurs — will present what organizers are calling a "ground-breaking report." As part of a morning-long event in Pittsboro, speakers will address the status of entrepreneurs of color in Chatham County and other rural counties in North Carolina and share cutting-edge data across a range of social and economic indicators

to highlight the impact of centuries of policies and practices that remain as barriers to opportunities.

The report, according to WEBB Squared's Stephanie Terry, will also help establish a baseline from which to measure progress to stem the tide of wealth inequality — giving new entrepreneurs insights to start, grow, sustain and scale their businesses to create jobs, hire employees, and improve economic household and community conditions.

This week, we spoke with Terry, WEBB Squared's co-founder, to preview the event.

For those not familiar with WEBB Squared, share a little about its creation and mission ...

In October 2021, Rinnie Orr and I

See EVENT, page A9



Terry

IN THE KNOW

Update: report raises questions about gun in Hudson case. PAGE A12

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

ON THE AGENDA

• No governmental meetings are planned for the coming week.

OTHER

• **Siler City's City Hall** is currently under renovation. The Planning and Community Development Department is now located on the first floor and can be accessed through the front door to City Hall (door facing North Second Avenue). Public parking is available in the town parking lot located along the 100 block of East 3rd Street (parking lot is located between North 2nd Avenue and North Chatham Avenue).

• Join the **Siler City Lions Club**. Come see how you can make a difference in the world and your local community. We meet the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. at Dry Dock Seafood. For more information, visit SilerCityLions@gmail.com or call 910-624-5784. Together we serve!

• The **Goldston Public Library** will host Valentine's Day card making sessions on Thursday, February 2 and 9, at 11 a.m. Families with children are invited to create handmade cards that will be distributed to a local nursing home in Siler City on Valentine's Day. The craft sessions will be held in the E. M. Harris Jr. Conference Room at the Goldston Public Library located at 9235 Pittsboro-Goldston Road, Goldston. This event is free and open to the public. For more information, call the library at (919) 898-4522 or email goldston.library@chathamlibraries.org. Information about all Chatham Library branches can be found at www.chathamlibraries.org.

• **Wren Memorial Library in Siler City** invites community members to join its Friends of the Library group. The library will host a Friends of Wren Memorial Library meeting on Monday, February 13, at 6 p.m. Attendees can learn about library updates, input their thoughts, and help grow the Friends of Wren Memorial Library. They participate in activities such as creating and conducting book sales, promoting library events and programs in the community. Friends of Wren especially needs community members to serve in the group's

leadership roles. The Library is located at 500 North 2nd Avenue, Siler City. For more information about the library, individuals may contact wren@chathamlibraries.org or (919) 742-2016. Information about all Chatham Library branches can be found at www.chathamlibraries.org. **Haw River Christian Academy** is proud to host author David Goodwin on Monday, February 6 at 7 p.m. Mr. Goodwin will be speaking about the book he co-authored with Pete Hegseth, *Battle for the American Mind*, in the Emmaus Baptist Church Sanctuary, 2430 Silk Hope-Gum Springs Road, Pittsboro, and is open to the public. Refreshments will be provided.

• **Chatham Community Library** is offering free online classes on Microsoft Word in January. Class descriptions and a registration link can be found at www.chathamcountync.gov/ComputerClasses. Call 919-545-8086 or email reference@chathamlibraries.org for more information - Microsoft Word Basics, Part 2: January 19, Thursday, 3 p.m. Build on the concepts learned in Part 1. Create bulleted and numbered lists, insert charts and tables, add headers and footers, and more. Participants should have prior basic experience with Word. - Microsoft Word: Beyond Basics: January 26, Thursday, 3 p.m. Learn about more advanced tools in Microsoft Word, including mail merge, macros, and fillable forms. Participants should have prior basic experience with Word.

• **Chatham County Public Libraries** will host the Winter Reading BINGO Challenge - Children and teens are invited to participate at all Chatham County Public Libraries branches through February 11. The Challenge, sponsored by the Friends of the Chatham Community Library, is open to youth ages 2 thru 18. Readers participate by picking up a reading BINGO sheet at their local library branch and completing a 5-in-a-row BINGO to earn a free book (one book per participant, while supplies last). All readers who complete at least one BINGO will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Gift Card to McIntyre's Books. For more information about the Winter Reading BINGO Challenge, or other youth events and programs at the Public Libraries, contact youth services@chathamlibraries.org or visit www.chathamlibraries.org.

chathamlibraries.org.
 • **The Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District** invites students in grades 3-12 to participate in the 2023 conservation contests. The categories are poster, essay, and public speaking, and the theme for this year is "Water...The Cycle of Life." - Contests are open to public, private, charter, and home school students. The poster contest is open to students in grades 3, 4, and 5. Essay and public speaking contests are open to grades 6, 7, 8, and 9-12. Entries are judged by grade level, with the exception of grades 9-12. Grades 9-12 will be judged together for each contest. - Poster and essay contest entries are due to the Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District office located at 1192 US 64 W Business, Pittsboro, NC, 27312 by February 28. - For complete details, rules, study materials, and NC curriculum standards correlation information, individuals may contact Ms. Oldham at (919) 545-8440 or brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov. Information also can be found by visiting the Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District Conservation Contests web page under the Education Programs link, www.chathamcountync.gov/swcd.

• **Community Meals: St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church** in Pittsboro distributes two meals each week for the benefit of the community. From 12 to 1 p.m. each Thursday, the Pittsboro Community Lunch (in its 15th year!) provides healthy, ready-to-eat meals to all who come. Just arrive hungry! Then from 4:30 to 6 p.m. each Tuesday, the Chatham Chuckwagon provides cooked/frozen entrees that are ideal for quick dinners. These meals are provided at no cost (though donations are welcomed!). Our volunteers invite you to join our efforts to preserve a caring and sharing community spirit. The church is located at 204 W. Salisbury St., Pittsboro. For more information, call 919-542-5679.

• **The Chatham Historical Museum's** permanent exhibits cover all aspects of Chatham's unique history and are appropriate for adults and children. The Museum is open Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays, 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.; no admission fee. The current short-term exhibit features the art of Pittsboro native Frank Marsden London, 1876-1945, Pittsboro, New York, Paris. The

Museum is located in the historic Chatham County Courthouse in the Circle. More info at <https://chathamhistory.org>.

• **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.

• **Second Bloom** announces their winter hours from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Tuesday until Saturday. Credit cards are accepted. We are located at 630 E. Street, Pittsboro, in the Food Lion shopping center. All proceeds provide support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote community education in collaboration with Chatham County.

• **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 Anony-**

mous — 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.

• **Al-Anon Meeting** — Pittsboro Serenity Seekers Al-Anon Family Group meets at 7 p.m. Mondays at Chatham

Community Church, in the lower level of Chatham Mill.

SCOUT NEWS

• **Boy Scout Troop 93** in Pittsboro meets at 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 from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. on 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.

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CURRENTLY UNDER CONTRACT

<p>Residential</p> <p>1474 Alston Bridge Rd (Siler City) 3 Bdrm, 2 Bath \$150,000</p> <p>261 Ridge View Rd (Pittsboro) 3 Bdrm, 2 Bath \$525,000</p> <p>Land</p> <p>0 Hudson Rd (Siler City) 5 acres \$40,000</p> <p>Lot 2 Buckhorn Rd (Sanford) 6.636 acres \$80,000</p> <p>0 Hal Clark Rd (Siler City) 29.730 acres \$360,000</p>	<p>0 Callicutt Rd (Bear Creek) 60.375 acres \$500,000</p> <p>0 Hamlets Chapel Rd (Pittsboro) 42.804 acres \$1,200,000</p> <p>12190 E US 64 Hwy (Apex) 15.158 acres \$1,894,750</p> <p>0 Olives Chapel Rd (Apex) 6.70 acres \$9,051,600</p> <p>Commercial Unimproved</p> <p>10681 E US 64 Hwy (Apex) 3.97 acres \$1,500,000</p>
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Visit & Subscribe to Eric's YouTube channel for a variety of fun & informational videos



The Best Roads to Buy Land on in Chatham County NC

https://www.youtube.com/c/ericandrewsrealtor



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CHURCH NEWS

HOLLAND CHAPEL A.M.E.Z. CHURCH

Please join Holland Chapel A.M.E.Z. Church for the 5th Sunday Youth Missionary service on January 29. Encourage all children and youth to bring a friend! The church is located at 360 Burgess Rd. in Apex.

SANDY BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Sandy Branch invites all current members, past members, and friends of the church to join us on Sunday, January 29, as we celebrate our 150th

anniversary. The church was established December 23, 1872.

Sunday School will begin at 10 a.m. and the worship service will follow at 11. Rev. Barry Lawrence, Sandy Creek Baptist Association's Director of Missions, will be guest speaker and he and his wife, Lynette, will provide special music.

Following the service, there will be a Chili Cook-Off Competition to determine the "Chili King" or "Queen."

Everyone is invited to 715 Sandy Branch Church Rd., Bear Creek.

Chatham News + Record

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PROJECT

Continued from page A1

VinFast, WolfSpeed and Chatham Park became headline news, it was clear the county was preparing for big changes. Voices of Chatham wanted to make sure the agricultural, rural and cultural history of Chatham was preserved for future generations.

“You drive down the roads and you see names on the signs of folks who are still around today,” McCurdy said. “That’s not something you see in most places.”

The study began as a work of N.C. State’s Language and Life Project, which examines dialect and language changes over time and “seeks to build awareness and appreciation of linguistic diversity through educational resources, television programs and award-winning documentaries,” according to its website.

Doing this work involves listening to people from a specific place — in this case Chatham County — speak for long periods of time, then analyzing the waveforms

of their voice to pick out how pronunciations and voice patterns shift from generation to generation.

McCurdy, 25, a graduate of N.C. State’s Masters in Linguistics program, previously worked on a similar analysis in Raleigh and said he found the dialect in Raleigh has become less traditionally southern over time as more out-of-state residents move in.

Interviewees participate in “socio-linguistic” interviews, which means they are there partly to study the research of their dialect, and partly for oral history research, too. But there’s more to the project than just having people talk for long periods of time, McCurdy said.

“We are aiming for this concept of linguistic graffiti,” he said. “Which is that you have an obligation to give back to the people that you research with.”

Part of the way they’re giving back is through the creation of an oral history website and documentary, which will both be available to the public. Voices of Chatham also hopes to encapsulate the breadth of life in Cha-

Voices of Chatham
An Oral History Project

ABOUT OUR PROJECT
The Language & Life Project has partnered with the Chatham County Historical Association to collect oral histories about life in Chatham!

ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS
While we are prioritizing long-time residents (75% of life in the county), we welcome anyone with a connection to Chatham who is interested in participating! Participants must be 16 or older.

WHERE? WHEN?
Whenever and wherever! We're happy to interview participants at their homes but the (old) Chatham Courthouse is available as well. To schedule an interview, email bjmccurd@ncsu.edu

WANT MORE INFO?
Visit voicesofchatham.org or email Brody McCurdy at bjmccurd@ncsu.edu

CHATHAM COUNTY 1770

Graphic courtesy of Voices of Chatham

Voices of Chatham aims to tell the story of the county through oral history interviews.

tham — from agriculture to arts to small businesses, the project hopes to learn about all the things that make the county unique.

Culture intact

Structuring the expansive story of the county is a bit of a challenge

for the small team of three researchers, but they each bring a unique perspective to the work, according to Documentarian Lydia Elrod.

“We’re looking for a lot of natives of Chatham to speak to their experience,” Elrod said. “For newcomers, we want to paint

Chatham as a place to come to, but we also want to paint it as a place where its culture is still intact.”

Elrod, 25, who’s not from Chatham, said she’s found this work to be inspiring because of all the “quirks” of the county. For example, she said it’s rare that a place with so much pride in its rural character can also be open-minded toward development.

Where else can you be neighbors with the birth of the environmentalist movement, have a thriving local arts scene and share the lore of the Devil’s Tramping Ground? All the while, there’s the background of the American rural south — the complications over the end of slavery, Jim Crow and the struggles of integration, she said.

“The stories tell themselves in Chatham,” Elrod said. “You see the names of people, Black and white, repeated over and over throughout the county. Seeing where people live and knowing that their ancestors were on this land, and they still live on this land. That stuff is powerful to see.”

It’s rare, Elrod said,

for people to understand and grapple with their difficult history.

‘A listening ear’

The three researchers aren’t from the county, but they said that’s more of an asset for this work than a drawback.

“People want to share their stories,” McCurdy said. “So coming at it with an open mind and a listening ear makes them eager to share and tell you more about themselves.”

More than 90 people have provided oral history interviews for Voices of Chatham, but Elrod and McCurdy said the work is still far from complete. There will still need to be more interviews, which will be uploaded to an oral history database at N.C. State, compiling of film and analysis of data.

The researchers said they are especially in need of interviews with Chathamites who are Latino and/or under the age of 30 who lived the majority of their lives in Chatham. Participants must be 16 years or older. For more information or to get involved with Voices of Chatham visit voicesofchatham.org or email bjmccurd@ncsu.edu.

CARE

Continued from page A1

Surveying the landscape

While the community assessment is still in the early stages, thus far that equity approach seems to ring true. The first step of the community assessment is distributing a survey to various members of the community. The survey will be made available online (www.chathamkidsmatter.org/parent-caregiver-survey), on paper or via phone call. Megginson said the survey will also soon be available in Spanish.

“Watching the response rates for different segments in our community will help direct outreach,” she told the News + Record. “Along the way, specific efforts are planned to connect with hard-to-reach parents and families in every community so that the survey represents the county’s demographic, economic and geographic diversity.”

The challenges of distributing this survey and ensuring its accessibility were likely invisible to the layperson, but Megginson said everything from the wording of the questions on the survey to the font choice was meticulously vetted to make sure it could get into the hands of anyone who wanted to get involved.

The process has been personally enlightening

because it made her realize how much detail goes into implementing equity.

“We’re going to be trying to get parents who either have children in child care or who aren’t in school yet,” Megginson said. “And also parents whose children are in kindergarten who still have that fresh remembrance of what their needs were before their kids became school age.”

The survey asks a mix of demographic, personal and county-focused questions. The personal questions include: What child care is near you? Why did you choose your current early child care and education options for your child? And did you have access to the quality early care and education option that you wanted for your child?

The county-focused questions ask about satisfaction levels with the number of high-quality early care and education options that are available in Chatham County, and whether a public pre-K program, if available, would generate interest for parents.

It hopes to understand the status of supply and demand for early child care in the county.

With the survey officially launched last week, the Community Needs Assessment is officially underway. Megginson said she hopes they receive an adequate number of survey responses — around 800 total responses — by February,

so the Partnership can begin the second phase: community interviews.

Voices at the table

Part of the reason she recognized the detail necessary is because of the work with the project’s consulting partners — Partners for Impact and Community Voice Consultants. The consulting partners on the project have both bought into the goal of equity, too. The assessment team is also working with Community Organizing for Racial Equity (CORE) to develop an equity plan for the project, which will be released later this month.

Megginson said the unique skills of each firm make the collaboration exciting. For example, Community Voice Consulting has a unique method for gathering input using a documentary film process and Partners for Impact has strengths in community change initiatives, strategy development and evaluation.

Beth Bordeaux, founder of Partners for Impact, has more than 15 years of experience working on projects related to early child care. During that time, Partners for Impact has engaged in several similar community assessments across the state. She said the goal of her work is always centered around community change.

“We’re always looking at assisting communities to make change in the ways that they are seek-

ing,” Bordeaux said.

Partners for Impact will be taking the lead on the supply and demand analysis by analyzing survey results while Community Voice Consulting will lead the community feedback and documentary processes.

The project also aligns with the values of Partners for Impact, Bordeaux said. She believes the endeavor is especially exciting because it is aimed at bringing equitable, systematic change to the county.

“There’s an opportunity for anybody who wants to be involved, to be involved,” Bordeaux said. “I think that’s pretty special about this project. You don’t always get that level of a comprehensive approach, but you’re bound to get a strong plan with this many voices coming to the table.”

Gabe Cumming, founder of Community Voice Consulting, focuses his work on ensuring the right people make their voices heard. While his consulting firm has not worked in early child care previously, he said he will use his work in other nearby North Carolina counties to inform this process.

“When an organization demonstrates a commitment to doing a process like the community voice process,” Cumming said. “It shows that they’re taking community participation seriously.”

He said the approach the Chatham Partnership

for Children has taken in devising this assessment process shows they want as many stakeholders as possible involved in the future of child care in Chatham. Cumming said that involvement is important because it ensures people see themselves in the plans and subsequent policies created, which leads to a happier and more involved community.

Making it meaningful

Working with these consulting groups, according to Megginson, has been tremendously helpful because of their experience in this field and their understanding of what it takes to produce a project of this magnitude.

“It really is kind of like being in the room with famous people,” Megginson said. “They have done some remarkable work over the years. And I’m just really pleased that we have the opportunity to bring them to Chatham.”

Bordeaux, Cumming and Megginson have never worked together on a project before, but each said the individual skills and experiences of each person and their respective organizations have brought the assessment to new heights.

“We are not going to limit ourselves to one sort of social circle or environment,” Cumming said. “When a community is coming together to plan an important aspect



Staff photo by Peyton Sickles

Genevieve Megginson is spearheading a new early childhood assessment plan for the county. The plan aims to fill gaps in child care for children ages 0 to 5.

of their future together, that makes this work meaningful to people’s actual lived experience in Chatham County.”

Next steps

After gathering the survey data, the team will comb through the responses to find interviewees to speak about their personal experiences. Megginson said this allows the assessment to dig deeper into the state of child care in the county and understand residents.

After those interviews, there will be several community input sessions for the public to provide feedback. Both the interviews and these feedback sessions will serve as footage for the documentary made by Community Voice Consultants as part of the assessment.

“We’re doing an assessment where we really listen to, and elevate, voices,” Megginson said. “So we’ll hear trends across the board from families and providers that we might look into deeper.”

The team hopes a rough draft of the assessment will be available for the community by the end of April. The whole process will extend throughout 2024.

For more information about the Chatham Partnership for Children and its Community Needs Assessment plans including methodology, resources and how to get involved, visit chathamkidsmatter.org or email genevieve@chathamkids.org.

Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at brappaport@chathamnr.com or on Twitter @b_rappaport

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VIEWPOINTS

On the demise — in N.C., at least — of the four seasons



BILL HORNER III
Publisher + Editor

states' climates feature four honest-to-goodness seasons.

We can now boast of at least few more.

I've only lived in North Carolina and Kansas — both have a defined winter, spring, summer and fall — but have always preferred our weather here. The simple reason: in N.C., our extremes are less volatile. And here, there aren't as many tornadoes, not as much snow. Our winter wind chills don't routinely

Folks in some tourism and marketing departments like to chirp that when

it comes to weather, their

hit 20-below, and we don't get those blast furnace-like winds blowing up from Texas that make going outside in the summer feel like you've just stuck your head inside a broiler oven.

Still, there are trade-offs. Among the meteorological musings we ponder here that we didn't get in the midwest: hurricanes and months of unrelenting humidity.

Regardless of how you feel about climate change science, there's no getting around the notion that weather oddities are on the increase. Seasons, too, it turns out. The N.C. Climate office, in its blog post last week summarizing 2022, riffed on a viral tweet by RDU Airport from September to confirm that last year, our state had not four seasons, but 12.

"It was a year that started

and ended with totally out-of-season weather, and included just about every extreme in between, from hot to cold, wet to dry, and frozen to fire," the post read. "Ultimately, 2022 was the product of both persistent climate patterns and trends that have become familiar in recent years, along with the return of several weather features we hadn't seen in a while."

In case you missed it, here's a list of those resultant seasons: 1. Winter. 2. Fool's Spring. 3. Second Winter. 4. Spring of Deception. 5. Third Winter. 6. The Pollening. 7. Actual Spring. 8. Summer. 9. Hell's Front Porch. 10. False Fall. 11. Second Summer. 12. Actual Fall.

I crow to my Kansas friends about our stunning autumns here in the Old North State,

which often feature six to eight consecutive weeks of my idea of perfect weather: cool mornings, deep blue skies, afternoon highs in the 70s, low humidity. And on those 65- and 75-degree days we always get in January and February, I've been known to rub it in a bit by sending a Snapchat photo of me working on our sun-dappled porch or walking the dog in shorts and sandals.

But there's always the flipside. Last year, we had "The Pollening," which felt like it lasted forever. We all know pine pollen season usually goes on for about three weeks in N.C.; in 2022, it went on for six. And summers are stretching longer, too. The Climate Office says N.C.'s summer of '22 lasted from mid-May until late September — interrupted

and punctuated only by a very brief "False Fall" and then by Hell's Front Porch, a nearly month-long stretch from mid-June into July where our average daily highs were well into the 90s and heat indices topped the century mark.

Too hot for too long for my taste.

I'm not sure about you, but I'm willing to dispense with few of those 12, and implore Mother Nature to cut the list down to a more manageable number.

How about usual four, plus an extended False Spring and a couple of well-timed False Falls?

That's only seven. No need to be greedy.

Bill Horner III can be reached at bhorner3@chathamnr.com and [@billthethird](https://www.instagram.com/billthethird).

Sorrow and joy



ANDREW TAYLOR-TROUTMAN
Hope Matters

enough, a truck backfired in the distance and the bunny was gone.

This bunny reminded me of a poem by Naomi Sahib Nye in which she notes that, if you "enjoy fireworks" then "you would have to have lived a different kind of life." Nye is the daughter of a Palestinian refugee. She knows people suffering from PTSD for whom fireworks evoke missile attacks. I see the bunny as cute and fireworks as a celebration. A truck backfiring is not cause for alarm. Heck, when I hear a car horn, my first reaction is to wave. My wife shakes her head: "He wasn't greeting you!"

In light of recent news, you might imagine where I am going with this. In Monterey Park, California, the city's celebration of the Lunar New Year was shattered by a mass shooting. According to several eyewitnesses, the gunfire initially sounded like firecrackers and was assumed to be yet another sign of the celebration. The shooting left 11 people dead and at least 10 more wounded. Heartbreaking.

I saw a picture the morning after of a banner in Monterey Park proclaiming "Happy Year of the Rabbit" with police officers standing guard underneath. There is a string of red lanterns overhead that the picture caught reflecting in the police's long guns.

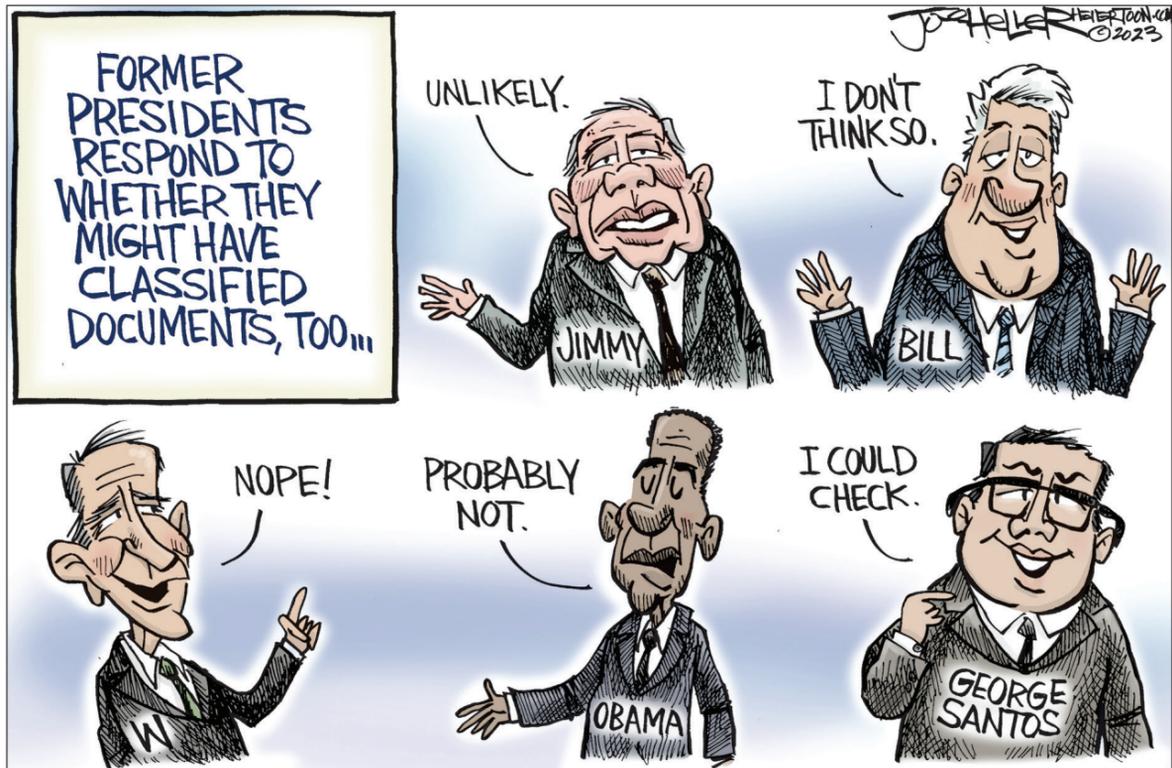
I'm writing Monday morning. I imagine that, in the days to come, details about the shooter will emerge, possibly motives. But I'm certain that, for the survivors and mourners, there is now "a different kind of life." My heart breaks for them.

How are we to react? How terrible that we keep asking this question in the aftermath of yet another mass shooting. I hope we resist the urge to go back to our "normal" lives. Not everyone suffers the same things, but everyone suffers. Drawing on our experiences, we might notice the suffering of others, imagine what it's like in Monterey Park or Ukraine. That attention might connect us.

Ross Gay's new book "Inciting Joy" opens with a reflection on sorrow. Surprising that a book about joy begins with sorrow, and yet deeply profound. Gay writes, "We might call it sorrow, but we might call it a union, one that, once we notice it, once we bring it into the light, might be joy." This is not meant to deny sorrow but rather empathize with it. And it is old wisdom: "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep." (Romans 12:15)

Rejoice and weep. Sorrow and joy — not either/or. Fireworks and rabbits and all they can mean. Monterey Park and you and me.

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



A lesson worth remembering from the one who modeled it



BOB WACHS
Movin' Around

Just recently, her family and many friends laid to rest my Aunt Rachel.

She was 95, the last of a group of 12 brothers and sisters, including my mama, born to Grover and Verdonia Cooper

of Bynum. It had been 13 years since the passing of the next to the last of that group to cross the Great Divide.

During those years, and indeed many before, that group of folks was both pleasure and inspiration to their children — my cousins and two brothers and me.

Beyond our own individual personal concerns, that big family was our life. Sunday afternoon visits and school and summer activities were where we lived. Wherever we wound up at suppertime on Sundays was where we'd eat, adding a cup of water to the soup or frying another chicken or making a fresh pan of biscuits. The adults talked of people, places, things and events we children knew little or nothing about while we little folks played and fussed and fought.

Then we grew up and that sibling group began to age. At the same time, we cousins had begun jobs and careers and marriages and families of our own. Times together became less frequent. It wasn't on purpose; nobody was angry; it just happened. Still, from time to time, there would be gatherings, especially an annual event the Friday after Thanksgiving Day. Those were always good.

As the calendar began to turn

pages, we began to lose the folks in that group of 12, them and their husbands and wives. The first was in 1972, the last earlier this month, a period covering 51 years.

Where did the time go? 51 years! Now they're all gone and we cousins are left with memories, something not all our own children know since many of that generation weren't on the scene yet.

But there's a great lesson in here, namely that we should share — tell and show — the characteristics we saw lived out, modeled before us. Our last aunt, for instance, was kind and loving and generous, a legend of sorts in her hometown. She shared her home, her skills in the kitchen and as a seamstress, even herself with warm hugs and a verbal reminder "I love you." None of us ever doubted that. For a time, her telephone answering machine carried the message at the end, "Remember, Jesus loves you and I do, too." There have been times in my life when I'd call her and finding out she wasn't home that I would call back just to hear her sweet voice with that sweet message.

For several years, she had told me, "When I die, I want you to do my funeral." I'd fuss at her, tell her not to make any plans or to think of something I could say. Then the other day happened and it was an honor to speak a few words on that occasion.

There was not a shortage of material, quite the contrary. I spoke of her life, her faith, her love of community and church and all that makes up a life well-lived. But in the days before the service, as I thought of what to say, it dawned on me that

perhaps the most significant characteristic of her life was a goal I think we all should have: She was content, no matter what.

Numbers of people had heard her say something to the effect, "I've had a good life. If I die tomorrow, I'm not worried. I know where I'm going. If I had sat down to write a script for my life, I couldn't have written a better one." This was from a woman who lost a young grandson to cancer in the 1970s, her husband 27 years ago and an adult daughter a few years ago to the ravages of memory loss. In addition, she was suffering from various physical ailments of her own, including heart distress and vision loss. Still, she kept going out to eat, especially with a group of her peers on an almost-daily basis.

As I thought about all that, it dawned on me she was content for three reasons and in those three areas was the key — and it's not a secret — to her contentment.

First of all, she was content with what she had — food, clothing, shelter, family and friends. Secondly, she didn't major on what she didn't have. She lived a comfortable life but never did she make material items her god. And lastly, she understood that all she had was a gift from God.

It strikes me that if I — and maybe you — can learn that, we, too, can be content when the curtain closes on our earthly existence. Every human being has an influence of some kind on other human beings. I'm glad this human — my aunt — had such a positive one. If you've got a positive example in your life, follow it and tell them so. And resolve to not only learn from it but also to live it.

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

GUEST COLUMN | STAN ABRAMS

Chatham's growth shouldn't trample rights

With the Triangle expanding and North Carolina, in general, growing at an explosive rate, it's high time for a frank conversation about the balance between collective action and individual rights. This tension is at issue in debates on everything from healthcare to national security, but perhaps is nowhere more keenly felt than on matters of private property.

At the moment, thousands of North Carolina's home and property owners are attempting to play a high-stakes game in which they're unaware of all the rules.

The "game" in question involves the concept of "eminent domain" — the process by which the government can take control of private property. Last year, the State of North Carolina engaged in thousands of eminent domain cases, condemning properties from Murphy to Manteo. Chatham

County residents need to look no further than the recent controversy surrounding the upcoming VinFast plant and the historic Merry Oaks Baptist Church (see "Despite threats, Merry Oaks community persists," News + Record, Dec. 15-21 edition).

Eminent domain isn't necessarily bad. As newcomers flock to our attractive communities, we need new roads and other public projects to comfortably and safely accommodate everyone. VinFast's arrival in Chatham County will certainly signal new jobs for this community.

What's troubling is the extent to which individual rights are lost in the complicated, often intimidating eminent domain "game." On one side of the table is a team of skilled government attorneys and administrators who know the rules far better than any layman. Their mission is to secure properties for public projects

quickly and efficiently.

On the other, much lonelier side of the table is the individual property owner. This person doesn't see the property in question as another tract of land to be handled with machine-like precision. This person sees a home bursting with memories or a lifetime of work forged over years into a proud business.

The property owner is left in the difficult position of both dealing with raw emotions and figuring out what his/her rights are. It's not easy to be dispassionately analytic in such an impassioned situation, and many do not play their full hand of rights.

While home and business owners are typically most at risk of losing their properties to eminent domain, other organizations like churches are not immune and have the same rights as anyone else.

Take for example the case

of the Good Shepherd Baptist Church (name changed to respect the church's privacy). A big road project was going to bring traffic within yards of the church's sanctuary and hinder its ability to grow by taking a good chunk of its parking lot and areas it had set aside for expansion.

The offer they received from the state treated their land as simply that — square feet of grass and pavement. They didn't take into account the past, present and future of the church that so many generations had worked for.

Rejecting the state's initial offer and working with an experienced attorney, the congregation of the Good Shepherd Church was able to secure a "second check." A check that supplemented the one they received through no effort on their part and gave them a cushion to plan a new course for their church's future.

The concept of a "second check" helps to make it more real and tangible to people facing a difficult situation that they have options and rights. In the end, the great tragedy of eminent domain cases may not be the loss of specific property but the unintentional forfeiture of an individual's rights due to a lack of knowledge.

Perhaps the most compelling virtue of American democracy is that the state is not a steamroller. As eminent domain cases move forward, as government experts make massive amounts of offers of homes and businesses, the individual is not simply a pawn, but an active player in his/her destiny.

Stan Abrams is a former assistant attorney general for the N.C. Dept. of Justice representing the N.C. Dept. of Transportation. He is a partner and lead attorney for the N.C. Eminent Domain Law Firm.

LETTER

When it comes to climate change, don't listen to these folks

TO THE EDITOR:

What a screwed up world! The recent Davos conference was the epitome of extravagance and hubris. It was filled with, as John Kerry worded it, a "select group of human beings" who were there to tell us regular human beings how stupid we are. We are to line up like lemmings and follow their guidance without question.

The main subject was climate change (CC). With a little research I found the following facts about these participants' dedication to what they are preaching:

- John Kerry has made 48 trips covering 60 air-time hours since President Biden appointed him CC Czar

- Kerry's jet emits 5 metric tons (MT) of carbon per air-time hour; it has emitted over 300 MTs since Biden took office

- As of Jan. 10, 2023, there were 2,658 participants registered for the Davos Conference
- One in 10 attendees flew to Davos in private jets

Using these numbers I've deduced, if 80% of registrants attended, that more than 200 private jets flew in to Davos. If those jets average four air-time hours in round trips to Davos (probably understated) and average what Kerry's jet emits in MTs, they will have emitted 4,000 MTs of carbon.

All that to tell us to buy \$50,000 EVs, stop cooking with natural gas, and eliminate incandescent lights while subsidizing countries — as Kerry said "money, money, money" — whose main effort is to survive and who couldn't care

less about climate change; or, like China, are only bent to overcome western civilization with whatever it takes; pollution control be damned.

For comparison, one MT is equivalent to the emissions from one average automobile over three months. Their jets created over 10 days the air pollution that would be generated by 1,000 cars over one year.

Don't get me wrong: I believe in climate change. I just believe our Creator, Mother Nature, or whatever Force one may prefer/believe has a much larger say in this than such penny-ante characters as John Kerry, Al Gore, Greta Thunberg, Larry Fink (chairman of BlackRock Investments), and others who believe they are so privileged with their "select group" of activists.

Philip H. Johnson
Siler City

Roads are a solution, not the problem



JOHN HOOD
John Locke Foundation

While Charlotte is known as the Queen City, the behavior of its leaders sometimes invites comparison to a different monarch: Hans Christian Andersen's newly "clothed" Emperor. Earlier this month, the tale was restaged with House Speaker Tim Moore in the role of the plain-spoken youth.

Appearing at a Charlotte Business Alliance forum alongside Senate leader Phil Berger, Moore answered a reporter's question about the city's \$13.5 billion proposal for new rail lines, bus service and other transportation projects. To help finance it, Charlotte leaders want to raise the sales tax again. They need the General Assembly to authorize putting the tax hike to a referendum.

For the North Carolina House to go along, Moore explained, such a plan "needs to be focused on road capacity." In its current form, about 80% of the \$13.5 billion would be spent on transit.

"I think we really need to be looking at road construction," the speaker explained. "If you get out and you drive anywhere and 95% of people are driving a car, they are not riding a bike. They are not riding a bus. I think bus ridership after COVID is at abysmally low levels."

He's right about that — and it's not just in the Charlotte region. Nationwide, transit ridership has recovered a bit from its 2020 trough but remains a third lower than it was before the onset of COVID-19. Raleigh's system roughly matches the national experience while Charlotte's system is down an astounding 50% from pre-pandemic levels. For the Queen City's buses, in particular, the decline began even earlier than that: ridership is 75% lower than its peak in 2013. In Winston-Salem, Greensboro, Durham and other cities, bus ridership has fared better but still makes up a tiny share of daily commutes.

I've long favored the provision of bus service as a form of public assistance, and as an alternative along a few highly congested corridors. I do not, however, believe the share of "choice" riders — those North Carolinians who could commute by passenger vehicle but elect not to do so — will ever be significant enough to affect traffic congestion, air quality or other often-stated policy goals.

Moore appears to agree. Not surprisingly, the speaker drew critical comments from local politicians and transit boosters. One common refrain was to ridicule Moore's emphasis on road capacity by arguing that new roads or lanes won't help because of "induced demand" — the notion that new capacity serves only to induce more people to drive, leaving the corridor just as congested as before.

This is a serious, albeit common, misinterpretation of what really happens when growing communities build (or fail to build) new road capacity. As transportation expert Robert Poole pointed out in a Reason Foundation analysis, induced-demand studies usually examine only what happens to travel along newly constructed or expanded highways, rather than looking more comprehensively at traffic across the broader network. "Analytically, they treat parallel arterials and all other roadways in the metro area as a large blob," Poole wrote.

Actually, we want to redirect daily commutes from other roads and streets to interstate-quality highways. That makes the system safer and more efficient. Moreover, while fast-growing places are going to experience more traffic, the best available evidence suggests that it is precisely where more and better roads are built that traffic congestion is less egregious.

It isn't just in Charlotte where regional planners, politicians and activists seek big increases in transit expenditures. In the Triangle, they want to spend \$3.2 billion on a commuter-rail line that would stretch 43 miles from Durham through Wake County to Clayton, in Johnston County. Its per-mile cost is lower than the Charlotte plan, primarily because it makes use of existing tracks, but is still hard to justify.

BOOKS TO MOVIES

Why aren't more North Carolina books made into movies?



D.G. MARTIN
One on One

We ask ourselves even though the film, "Where the Craw-

dads Sing," based on the popular book set in North Carolina, was a great success last summer. Thanks in part to the movie, the book's sales continue to make the best-seller list. According to an article published last summer by Carrie Wittmer and Elizabeth Logan on the glamour.com website, "as of January 2022, the book sold 12 million copies, making it one of the best-selling books of all time."

But we miss the days when every Nicholas Sparks book and every John Grisham book was made into a blockbuster film. Sparks lives in New Bern and Grisham has close family connections to Raleigh and Chapel Hill.

Both authors rank high on the list of "The Living Authors with the Most Film Adaptations" compiled by Lit Hub (<https://lithub.com/the-living-authors-with-the-most-film-adaptations/>). Sparks, with 11, was topped only by Stephen King with 34. Grisham had nine and was topped only by John le Carre (10), Ian McEwan (10),

Both authors rank high on the list of "The Living Authors with the Most Film Adaptations" compiled by Lit Hub (<https://lithub.com/the-living-authors-with-the-most-film-adaptations/>). Sparks, with 11, was topped only by Stephen King with 34. Grisham had nine and was topped only by John le Carre (10), Ian McEwan (10),

and tied with J.K. Rowling (9).

Why are not more North Carolina books turned into movies?

One of the reasons is explained by Jen Doll in an article republished on the Atlantic website.

"But any way you look at it, the movie version of a widely successful book is bound to go wrong. Has any book lover ever truly been fully satisfied with the big-screen adaptation? The relationship we have with the book is personal and special; the relationship we have with the movie is more distanced from that, more passive, and certainly less demanding of us.

"We sit back and watch it play out, and we do so with a changed eye, having read the books. We're not going in as innocents but as experts; we know how the story goes, and we know what we expect. If we were more naive, new to the plot and characters, things might be different, but since we've read the books,

and read them emphatically, possibly more than once, we can't know that for sure. We can only compare to what we do know, and already love."

Acknowledging these difficulties, I would still like to see more North Carolina books made into movies. At the top of my list would be Wiley Cash's recent novel, "When Ghosts Come Home," set in southeastern North Carolina near Wilmington, in 1985. The action begins at 3:11 a.m. when Sheriff Winston Barnes and his wife hear an airplane crash at the nearby airport. He rushes there, finding only a deserted airport, a crashed airplane, and the body of a young Black man shot in the chest. No fingerprints or other clues can be found, but almost certainly drugs were involved.

Race, small town politics, and international drug trafficking plus the common problems of ordinary people drive a mystery that captivates and leads to a completely surprising ending that would have movie

goers holding on to their seats.

A book by respected North Carolina author Nancy Peacock, "The Life and Times of Persimmon Wilson," had me holding on to my seat just the way a great movie would. The story begins, "I have been to hangings before, but never my own ..." Beloved North Carolina author Lee Smith explains the power of the book, "From this riveting beginning to the last perfect word, Nancy Peacock grabs her reader by the throat and makes him hang on for dear life as the action moves from a Louisiana sugar plantation to life among the western Comanches, bringing to blazing life her themes of race and true love caught in the throes of history. 'The Life and Times of Persimmon Wilson' is as deeply moving and exciting an American saga as has ever been penned."

What a wonderful movie this story would make.

There are many more action-packed North Carolina books.

Think of your favorites and how you would adjust them to make great movies.

D.G. Martin, a lawyer, served as UNC-System's vice president for public affairs and hosted PBS-NC's North Carolina Bookwatch.

SILER CITY'S LAND USE PLAN

New planning director to oversee update of 'road map' for future development

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Jennifer Baptiste's first meeting with the Siler City Board of Commissioners was on Jan. 3, her second day as the town's new Planning Director. Since then, Baptiste said she's been working to learn more about her new role. "I've been doing great since coming on," she said. "[I'm] just busy trying to learn and make sure I'm versed in everything that's going on." Baptiste says she and her department's staff have turned their collective focus to updating the

town's decade-old land use plan, which she said she hopes to complete by the end of the year. "We're going to start working with the contractor in developing the timeline to see what kind of time frame they're looking at, so we're going to have to coordinate with that," Baptiste said. Baptiste has experience in updating land use plans; she was in charge of developing the city of Fayetteville's future land use plan when she served as its planning & zoning division manager before coming to Siler City. "A land use plan kind of gives us a road map,"

she said. "It lays out areas that we want to see develop and how we want to see it develop." The process to update Siler City's land use plan involves looking at the land within the town's planning zone and seeing what's being developed in different areas. Baptiste said factors considered when examining different land parcels included road access, water and sewer capacity, existing infrastructure and more. "It gives a good idea to see this is what you have right now ... this is where you should concentrate on doing higher intense uses in certain

areas so that we're not overwhelming an area that doesn't have the infrastructure or having people develop in areas that are not ready for that intensity," Baptiste said. "We'll look at the infrastructure because you don't really want a lot of industrial or heavy commercial development being too close to a residential neighborhood, so we'll make sure with the plan that we have a commercial, industrial park area while having a nice separation from residential so that the two don't conflict." The last time Siler City underwent a massive

land use plan update was around a decade ago, according to Baptiste. She said that revisiting what was originally passed more than 10 years ago was necessary to ensure the land use plan is up to date with the town's priorities and development goals. "You're constantly working on the land use plan," Baptiste said. "Every five years, you should look at it to make sure that the goals in the map and all the information in it is still applicable." Baptiste said one of her main goals for the land use plan was to ensure there is enough

land zoned for various kinds of housing developments — from affordable, multifamily complexes to single-family houses and townhouses. "We're going to try to make sure to see the town has a healthy balance of commercial and industrial development to support people living here but also providing quality living spaces and living areas for current residents and new residents," she said. "Providing a variety of housing ... making sure that we provide a good balance of housing to support the

See **PLAN**, page A7

PFAS

Continued from page A1

mous costs of cleaning it up," Pittsboro Mayor Cindy Perry told the News + Record after the vote. "Everyone knows when you make a mess, you're supposed to clean it up ... They (the manufacturers) should pay for it, not our taxpayers." The vote during Monday's regular meeting, held at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center, came after years of discharges of "forever chemicals" known as PFAS by industries and manufacturers upstream from Pittsboro along the Haw River. PFAS, per- and polyfluoroalkyl chemicals, are considered likely human carcinogens and have been found consistently in raw water samples from the Haw, which is Pittsboro's main source of drinking water. PFAS may also be linked to increased cholesterol levels, decreased vaccine response in

children, changes in liver enzymes, increased risk of high blood pressure or preeclampsia in pregnant women, decreases in infant birth weights, and an increased risk for kidney and testicular cancer, according to the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. Pittsboro commissioners approved a motion last July to engage Sher Edling LLP, an organization based out of California which has extensive work in environmental-related legal processes, to investigate potential sources of PFAS discharges upstream. The findings of that investigation couldn't locate a single specific source of the compounds, according to a memo dated last Friday to commissioners from Pittsboro Town Attorney Paul Messick Jr. "Upstream of the Town's intake on the Haw River are many cities, towns, industrial dischargers, and nonpoint (i.e., diffuse) sources that are known or suspected to discharge PFAS into the Haw River," Messick

wrote. "Given these factors, Sher Edling has recommended bringing a PFAS suit against major manufacturers of both PFAS chemicals in general and aqueous film forming foam ('AFFF') more specifically." The goal of litigation is to help cover past and future costs for treating Pittsboro's water, including maintaining the town's granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration system. "Despite the effectiveness of the Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) system currently in place, it is costly, and the treatment expenses are borne by all our water consumers," Commissioner Kyle Shipp said. "This legal action is a crucial step in holding the relevant corporations accountable for the damage they have caused to our community and natural resources." The unanimous vote by the board gives Sher Edling the green light to file a lawsuit against "major manufacturers of both PFAS chemicals in general and AFFF."

The suit will be filed in the coming days, according to Messick, but it could be months before anything comes from the case. Commissioner John Bonitz, who has called for litigation throughout his tenure, said he was relieved the town was finally at the point to bring forth a lawsuit. With litigation on the horizon, Bonitz also said it could've been prevented if these chemicals were treated as potentially dangerous from the beginning. "None of this suffering would have happened if we as a nation had a different regulatory philosophy," he said "We can change it — we need to regulate chemicals as hazardous until proven innocent ... I'm glad we are moving forward with litigation, grateful to have skilled and experienced legal counsel, and mindful that this is but one small step in a process that may be protracted." **Other business:** • Commissioners heard a presentation from Sharpe

Patel, an accounting firm, regarding the town's annual audit into its finances for the fiscal year. The audit showed the town had no suspicious financial activity, with the firm giving an "unmodified opinion," which is the best opinion a financial institution can give to a municipality, according to Jay Sharpe of Sharpe Patel. The town also reported higher revenues than expenses every year over the last 10 years, as well as an increase in revenues from property tax without having to raise the property tax rate in the last eight years. • The town also received information about creating a social district downtown, which would allow patrons to purchase alcohol from a business and walk to other business with the drink in hand. A vote wasn't taken on the item. *Updates to the PFAS litigation will be posted on www.chathamnewsrecord.com.*

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'DEVIL CHURCH' STORY UPDATE

Report raises questions over whether Hudson brandished gun in July incident

CN+R Staff Report

SILER CITY — New information obtained by the News + Record in the case of a Pittsboro Elementary School teacher charged with assault with a deadly weapon raises questions over whether he did indeed brandish a gun during an encounter with five teens who were allegedly trespassing on a road near his home.

On July 30, Eric Hudson was arrested and charged after an incident that occurred on July

10. Two teens involved — a brother and a sister — told the News + Record on that day, Hudson chased after the car that they and three others were traveling on Pleasant Hill Road. Hudson is accused of following the teens, passing them in his car, and stopping suddenly in front of them, causing a collision. The teens say Hudson appeared to brandish a gun in the process of confronting them. Hudson continued to follow the teens, they say, until

they were able to elude him.

Neighbors criticized the News + Record's reporting of the story and defended Hudson, saying the teens were exaggerating. They say the car — in which five youngsters traveled — was being driven on their private road and that the teens yelled expletives at Hudson. They also said Hudson — whom they described as an ideal neighbor "whose precious family has suffered from several of these incursions"

— doesn't own a gun, and that he was acting to protect his family.

The Chatham County Sheriff's Office report of the incident describes Hudson's modus operandi as "by subject threatening victims with a gun" and lists "handgun" in the "weapon" portion of the report; a copy of the warrant filed regarding the incident clarifies the "weapon" as a gray Lexus.

But a copy of Hudson's

arrest warrant, which is dated July 30 and details the charges against him, doesn't specifically mention a gun.

Late Friday, a spokesman for the Chatham County Sheriff's Office told the News + Record its own internal report includes the mention of the gun because it was part of what officers were told during the original investigation.

"Whenever an individu-

See **REPORT**, page A12

DARK

Continued from page A1

tation to join the Duke University Library Advisory Board, spoke to the News + Record from Rabat, Morocco, where he lives part of the year. (He splits his time between Morocco, Washington, D.C., and Siler City.)

Your family lineage in the Chatham County area extends back three centuries. What role did that genealogy and history play in the development of your own interest in history?

My parents, Ralph and Margie Dark, who have passed away, played a major role. They encouraged me to know our history — our kinfolks, especially our elders — because they wanted me to know that I had so much to be proud of. They expected a lot from me because I had amazing opportunities thanks to the foundation laid by those who came before me. My ancestors couldn't go, study, live

and enjoy what I've experienced. I'm proud to honor them by learning about and telling their stories.

Each of us has a limited perspective about our personal history. As you researched your family for this project, what insights did you gain about the notion of personal perspective, and about the importance of knowing your roots?

I learned that it is so important for us — me, people who live in the area or have roots in Chatham — to know our history. But that knowledge can't come from just one perspective — whether it's school, movies, television or bits and pieces we grew up hearing. It must include all the experiences of the people who made the history, including Black voices who too often didn't get a say.

Growing up, I had so many questions about the people, places and events that I saw and heard about. Those questions had complicat-

ed answers, especially about the role of my family and other African American families in our history. How did Siler City get its name, and did it have anything to do with my paternal great-grandmother Maggie Siler Dark's family? Why is there a Black Rocky River Baptist Church (my mother's home church) and a White Rocky River Baptist Church just down the road — and is there a historical connection between them? Why does no one ever talk about the Black and White neighbors in our community who share last names (McMasters and Dark, for example), or how we have a shared history and genealogy? Researching my family's history helped answer many of those questions.

Your own career has taken you from Siler City to Duke University to a Fulbright Scholarship to Morocco; now, you're partly based in Washington, D.C., for your work with your company RC Communications. I'm curious about how lessons you learned in Siler City and in Chatham County have helped pave the road to where you are now, and serves you to this day?

I've lived, studied, and worked in France, Argentina and Morocco (and I currently spend a good part of every year in Morocco). Living abroad has made me so proud to be an American from Siler City.

The best tool that helped me understand other cultures was to firmly know who I am and where I come from — and I share those stories with the people I meet and friends I make. In Siler City, most people know each other or at least "know your people." You'll find that this is also true in small towns in Morocco. When you get down to it, people, cultures and places that seem so different have a lot in common.

The presentation you'll give on Feb. 9 is a part

IF YOU'RE GOING

What: In recognition of Black History Month in February, Chatham Community Library will present Calvin Dark's lecture, entitled "McMasters' Will: The Scheme that Almost Freed Us."

When: 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 9, via Zoom

Cost: no charge

To register: Go to tinyurl.com/McMastersWill to receive the meeting link. Residents may visit the libraries' website, www.chathamlibraries.org, or contact the library at 919-545-8084 or rita.vanduinen@chathamlibraries.org for more information.

of the Chatham County Library's observance of Black History Month. What's your sense about what people in Chatham understand and don't understand about the rich history of the county's Black population?

So much of our history from slavery, Jim Crow, and the civil rights movement to the systemic racism in law enforcement, education and the workplace that we see today can make us — Black people — feel like we don't belong here, deserve to be here, or contributed nothing positive to our country, state and town. Too many of us don't really believe that we should be proud of who we are, where we came from and how we built this country and our communities. I'm proud of the teachers, lawyers, medical professionals, homemakers, entrepreneurs, church leaders and hard workers in my family. There's reason for pride in all our families. We should teach our children this rich history. We must own it. But before that can happen, we must know it.

Black History Month is a perfect opportunity to address the past through righting old wrongs in as much as we can, honoring African American heroes who were denied public recognition and changing our conversations and the ways that we speak about our past. Those conversations about the most horrible times of our country's past are not easy and too often we're taught or feel pressure to "let sleeping dogs lie." (I've been told that many times in my life!) We can't be afraid to honestly look at our past and acknowledge that some of the challenges

of 2023 are rooted in those things we'd prefer not to face. I hope the observance of Black History Month in Chatham County this year will be focused on addressing our past in the very real ways that can improve our present and future.

Your presentation will focus on the story of your great-great-grandfather, Aaron McMasters. How did your family come to be known by the surname of "Dark"?

The presentation will be unbelievable because my family's story is unbelievable! Not only will I tell you the story, but I'll show the evidence of how my family defied the odds in ways you probably didn't think were possible.

Grandpa Aaron McMasters (my maternal great-great-grandfather) was promised freedom by his enslaver, but North Carolina law wouldn't allow it. So, a controversial (and illegal) scheme was concocted by members of an anti-slavery group, The North Carolina Manumission Society, from Chatham, Randolph and surrounding counties to free Grandpa Aaron. My presentation will answer the question: did the scheme to free Aaron (and the rest of my family) work?

The story of the Darks from Siler City — my father's side of the family — is my next book project that is already underway. That story is unbelievable as well, especially how we got the last name Dark.

You've said that anyone in Chatham County who attends the presentation will hear the name of someone they're related to or they'll

know someone related to someone you'll talk about. What else is in store for those who attend?

I guarantee that the names, places and events that I'll talk about will ring a lot of bells for a lot of folks! I'll share details about the people and groups who took a stand against slavery in our area, like the Quakers who played a key role in the scheme to free Grandpa Aaron. The presentation will be interactive because I'm excited about learning from those who attend who likely know more about events and people than I do and can answer some of my questions.

You're in the process of writing a book about Aaron McMasters and his story. How's that coming along?

Yes, the forthcoming book is titled "McMasters' Will: The Scheme That Almost Freed Us." I'm in the final editing stages now and hope to publish by next year. A challenge for me has been that every time I think I've written the whole story, I uncover another facet of the history from people I interview — it just keeps growing! But this is a good challenge which makes the writing process even more interesting.

What else should people know about you and the presentation, and why should people attend? What's going to be the main takeaway for those who attend?

I imagine that a good number of attendees will probably have roots in the Chatham County and surrounding areas, so I know there will be many questions — I look forward to answering them! So many people want to answer those complicated questions just like I did, but don't know where to begin. I'll share my advice on how anyone can start their genealogy journey and discover their family's history. While my family's story is unique, every family's journey is special. All of those family stories deserve to be told.

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*WestEd: Sound Basic Education for All, 2019

DID YOU KNOW?

CHATHAM EDUCATION FOUNDATION

PLAN

Continued from page A6

various demographics of people who live and are going to live here."

Baptiste and the town have already taken the first step to develop the plan by selecting a contracting firm, Stewart Inc., to help formulate and draft it. That decision was approved via the Jan. 17 meeting's consent agenda, allowing for Baptiste to move forward with working with Stewart to draft the plan.

"Generally, a good land use plan could take anywhere between six months to nine months to get fully developed," she said. "We're going to ... have them do a ride around town so that we

can show them the area, we'll give them information from our GIS system, from our current plans and stuff so that they can look at that."

There'll also be parts of the process where members of the public can provide their own input as to what they want to see come to Siler City, through town hall-style events and public work sessions.

"We're going to be having some public meetings to gather information from the public to see what they're interested in and keep them updated on what's going on with the plan," Baptiste said. "Then we'll do a final presentation that'll go before the planning board, and then go to the town council."

Baptiste said she

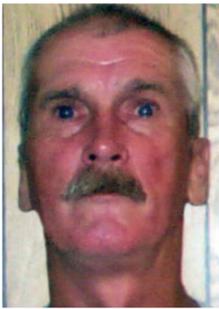
encourages the public to come to the input sessions to give residents a platform to say what they'd like town staff to prioritize.

"We're more than likely going to have community meetings, like small town hall meetings, but we're looking to encourage people in the community to come out and participate and to stay active in the process," she said. "I want to make sure people can come out and get some information as well, and let other people know ... we can keep people in the loop that way as well."

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

OBITUARIES

TERRY 'T.J.' JUSTICE



July 18, 1952 ~ January 18, 2023
SILER CITY – Terry "T.J." Lee Justice, 70, passed away peacefully on Wednesday, January 18, 2023, at Genesis, Siler City Center.

He was born on July 18, 1952, in Chatham County to the late Hoyt Nathaniel Justice and Dorothy Meeks Justice. T.J. was a former employee with Gaddy Tree Service. He was of the Baptist faith and an avid NASCAR fan who enjoyed watching all kinds of racing.

He is survived by his brothers, Ricky Justice, Ray Justice and wife Rhonda, Lynn Justice and wife Peggy, and several nieces and nephews. T.J. was preceded in death by his parents and a brother, Randy Blake Justice.

The family would like to express their gratitude to the staff and nurses at Genesis, Siler City Center for all their loving care, compassion and friendship that was shown to T.J. during his time with them over the years.

The funeral service was held at 3 p.m. Sunday, January 22, 2023, at Lowe Funeral Home Chapel by Pastor Walter Jones. The family received friends from 1 to 2:45 p.m. Sunday, prior to the service and other times at the home of Lynn and Peggy Justice in Mebane. There was a private graveside service at Graham Memorial Park on Monday.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to The Salvation Army of Alamance County, P.O. Box 1238, Burlington, NC 27216.

You may send condolences and watch the service at www.lowefuneralhome.com.

CHARLES REID 'ROMEO' TEAGUE

August 30, 1949 ~ January 12, 2023



Charles Reid "Romeo" Teague, 73, passed away Thursday, January 12, 2023, at his residence after a prolonged illness.

A native of Chatham County, Reid was born August 30, 1949, to the late Leon and Catherine Oldham Teague. He was a dedicated member of Antioch Baptist Church in Goldston and worked as a truck driver for over 50 years, where he was identified by the handle "Romeo."

Considered by many a legend, he loved driving trucks and, though he was supposed to be retired, continued to do so until his health forced him to hang up his keys. He loved to talk, tell stories, and could fix anything. He loved to hunt, go fishing and he loved his dog, Corky. He was strong, strict, old school, hard working, dependable, playful, a jokester and true to his character. He was a provider, a protector and a faithful servant. He was a teacher, a friend, one of a kind and was a hero to a lot of people.

Reid was not only known as Romeo to the trucking community, he was a true "Romeo" to his loving wife of 55 years, Carolyn Clark Teague. Their love was unshakeable as they were true examples of dedication and unity. True love and devotion have never been more greatly displayed.

In addition to his parents, Reid was preceded in death by his brother, Lynn Teague and grandson, Dean Reid DiBenedetto. He leaves behind to cherish his memory, his wife, Carolyn; daughters, Julie Teague of King Mountain, and Cheryl DiBenedetto of Pittsboro; sister, Linda Spivey of Goldston; niece, Kelly Spivey and nephew, Jeff Spivey and several other nieces and nephews; grandchildren, Brandon Garcia, Cecilia Garcia, Dorie DiBenedetto, Darrin DiBenedetto, Destiny DiBenedetto, great-grandchildren, Laiya, Eli, Roman, Mila, Makx, Jayce ... and one on the way.

The family will hold a celebration of Reid's life at Antioch Baptist Church, Goldston, on Saturday, February 4, 2023, at 2 p.m.

The family would like for any truck drivers who ran or worked with Romeo to come with their road tractor. At the end of the service, truckers will be dismissed to drive by the church for a trucker ceremony blowing their horns to honor the late Romeo.

Drivers wishing to participate, please contact Barry Brown 919-548-3655 for more details.

Reid touched the lives of many friends. His family invites you to share your stories about him. Your shared memories will hold a special place in their hearts and be a blessing during this difficult time.

Donald Brothers Hardware. He was a member of Cameron Baptist Church. A member of Johnsonville Ruritan Club, he ultimately served as a National Director for Ruritan National. He was instrumental in building the Johnsonville Veterans Memorial at Hwy. 24/27 and spearheading the annual Memorial and Veterans Day celebrations at the site.

He is survived by his daughter, Shawn Hickman of Cameron; son, Thomas Davis Jr. of Texas; eight grandchildren, six great-grandchildren and three great-great-grandchildren.

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

GENE GRAY THOMAS

May 5, 1942 ~ January 17, 2023

Gene Gray Thomas, 80, of Broadway, passed away on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at Transitions Hospice in Raleigh.

Graveside funeral service was conducted at 3 p.m. Friday at Broadway Town Cemetery with Rev. Scott Yow and Rev. Jerry Parsons officiating.

Mr. Thomas was born in Lee County on May 5, 1942, son of the late Ernest Cecil Thomas and Zola Inez Thomas, who preceded him in death, along with his sisters, Inez Weldon and Rebecca Nordan; brothers, Mac Cecil Thomas, Halford Thomas, George Thomas, Nello Thomas, and Gerald Thomas. He retired from GKN in 2008.

Survivors include his wife, Sue McNeill Thomas of the home; a daughter, Jill Thomas Bruffey of Fuquay-Varina; a son, Kevin Gray Thomas of Holly Springs; and five grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, the family request memorials are made to Transitions Hospice, 250 Hospice Circle, Raleigh, NC 27607.

Online condolences can be made at www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com.

NELLIE WADDELL WILSON

December 24, 1935 ~ January 21, 2023

Nellie Waddell Wilson, 87, of Sanford, passed away on Saturday, January 21, 2023, at Westfield Rehabilitation and Health Center.

The family received friends on Tuesday, January 24, 2023, at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home. The funeral service followed at 2 p.m. with Rev. Dave Kenney officiating. Burial followed in Jonesboro Cemetery.

Mrs. Wilson was the daughter of the late John Waddell and Addie Page Waddell. In addition to her parents, she was preceded by her husband, William Alvin Wilson and brothers James Waddell, Alfred Waddell, M.Q. Waddell, Owen Waddell, E.C. Waddell; and a sister, Frances Angel. She was a homemaker.

See **OBITUARIES**, page A9

SANDRA LOUISE ACKER

December 12, 1949 ~ December 30, 2022



"You could say she crammed a lot of life in her 73 years!" Sandy intensely lived and passionately loved the people in her life.

Sandra Louise Acker went home to be with her heavenly Father on December 30, 2022. Sandy passed in peace and leaves behind many to cherish her memory.

A one-of-a-kind woman, Sandy is survived by her husband, Steve; daughter, Kimberly (Kurt) Krause of Raleigh; two very special grandchildren, Keeghan and Kellyn; sister, Marla of Raleigh; her dog Kira; and many caring friends.

The family especially wants to thank her loving caregiver Morgan Moore.

Sandy was born and raised in Michigan, living most of her life in Lansing, moving to North Carolina 22 years ago.

Sandy was a member of Hanks Chapel U.C.C., loved attending there. She had a special talent for decorating her houses to make everyone who visited feel a special part of her home, she loved chocolate ice cream, going to Virlie's, and visiting with friends and family. Sandy knew no strangers. She'll certainly be missed. In keeping with her wishes, Sandy was cremated.

The family is being served by Donaldson Funeral Home of Pittsboro.

Arrangements are yet to be finalized; a memorial service is being planned for spring, the season of life. "Godspeed, beloved Sandy."

AMY LOIS NEAL OLDHAM

November 26, 1940 ~ January 15, 2023

Amy Lois Neal Oldham, 82 of Bear Creek, passed away on Sunday, January 15, 2023.

Visitation was held from 1 to 2 p.m. on Friday, January 20, 2023, with the funeral service following at 2 p.m. at Fair Promise U.M.C. with Rev. Tom Hallberg officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

Lois was the daughter of Willis Chaffin and Jessie Eva McKenzie Neal. She was a member of Fair Promise U.M.C. She was employed with Chatham Motors and was a telephone operator for several years. She was City Clerk for the Town of Sanford and later worked for the Moore County Department of Aging. At First U.M.C. in Siler City, she served as the finance secretary. In addition to her parents, Lois was preceded in death by her son, Timmy Oldham, and sisters, Beatrice Beal and Bobbie Phillips.

Survivors include her sons, Jeffrey Todd Oldham of Bear Creek and Marty Alan Oldham of Siler City; sisters, Ann Thomas of Bear Creek, and

Marie Barber of Carthage.

Memorials may be made to the Fair Promise U.M.C. building and cemetery fund c/o Carmen Hussey, 372 N. Howard Mill Road, Robbins N.C. 27325.

Smith and Buckner Funeral Home assisted the Oldham family.

THOMAS WILLIAM DAVIS

Thomas William Davis, 82, of Cameron, passed away at his home on Tuesday, January 17, 2023.

Graveside services will be conducted on Monday, January 30, 2023, at 12 p.m. at Sandhills State Veterans Cemetery with Pastor Jared McNeill officiating.

Mr. Davis was preceded in death by his wife, Carole Himmler Davis; parents, Frank and Alice Hardinger Davis and siblings, Betty Mae Barley, Shirley Jean Hawkins, Alice Dunkle and Ronald Davis.

Tom worked at Blue Ribbon Bakery before serving in the United States Air Force, retiring as M Sgt after 21 years. Following that, he worked at Mann's Hardware and Mc-

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OBITUARIES

Continued from page A8

Memorials may be made to the American Cancer Society, 8300 Health Park, Suite 10, Raleigh, N.C. 27615.

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

RUBY LEE POINDEXTER CREED

October 15, 1936 ~ January 19, 2023

Ruby Lee Poindexter Creed, 86, of Sanford, passed away on Thursday, January 19, 2023, at her home.

The family received friends Sunday, January 22, 2023, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home. A graveside service was held Monday, January 23, 2023, at 2 p.m. at Flat Springs Baptist Church Cemetery with Bud Bramblett and Stephen Womack presiding.

She was the daughter of the late Thomas Eugene and Maggie Lee Buchanan Poindexter. In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph W. Creed Jr.; sisters, Virginia Crook, Alice Gainey; and brother, Tommy Poindexter. Mrs. Creed was a

retired sales associate with J.C. Penney Department Store.

Survivors include her son Joseph Steven Creed of Aberdeen; daughters Myra Susan Creed of Snellville, Georgia, and Dawn Creed Weathers of Sanford; brother, Phillip Poindexter of Sanford; two grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

The family received friends Sunday, January 22, 2023, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home. A graveside service was held Monday, January 23, 2023, at 2 p.m. at Flat Springs Baptist Church Cemetery with Bud Bramblett and Stephen Womack presiding.

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

COREY GREGORY POWERS

February 4, 1993 ~ January 19, 2023

Corey Gregory Powers, 29, of Lillington, passed away on Thursday, January 19, 2023, at his home.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Tuesday at The Saviour's House with Pastor Tracy Lowery, Pastor Dena Lowery and Pastor Kimberly Robinson officiating. Burial followed

in the Holly Springs Baptist Church Cemetery in Broadway.

Corey was the son of Claude Gregory Powers and Amanda Dawn Haire.

Surviving are his wife, Kayla Nichole Powers of the home; his father Claude Gregory Powers and wife Tonya of Dunn; his mother, Amanda Dawn Haire of Broadway; sons, Isaiah Powers, Ezra Powers, Kingston Powers and Dallas Powers, all of the home; his sister, Kloe Dianne Ballard of Broadway; brothers, Bradley Everett, Brandon Everett, Jayden Everett, Jordan Everett and Jeffery Powers; his grandparents, Tony and Teresa Womack of Broadway, and Howard Powers of Sanford.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Smith Funeral Home, P.O. Box 370, Broadway, N.C. 27505 for funeral expenses.

Online condolences can be made at www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com.

CRAIG MCKEITHAN JR.

August 2, 1991 ~ January 12, 2023

Craig McKeithan Jr., 31, of Raleigh, passed away on Thursday, January 12, 2023.

Funeral services were held at 1 p.m., Saturday, January

21, 2023 at Greater New Sweet Springs Non-Denominational Church.

Burial followed in the Holly Springs Cemetery.

SAMUEL BERNARD BURCH SR.

December 27, 1965 ~ January 15, 2023

Samuel Bernard Burch Sr., 57 of Sanford, passed away on Sunday, January 15, 2023, at Novant Health New Hanover Regional Medical Center in Wilmington.

The funeral service was held at 12 noon, Saturday, January 21, 2023, at Knotts Funeral Home. Burial followed at Lee Memory Garden.

NARTARSHA RENEE ALSTON

November 20, 1973 ~ January 15, 2023

Nartarsha Renee Alston, 49, of Broadway, passed away on Sunday, January 15, 2023, at her residence.

The funeral service was held at Sunday, January 22, 2023, at Blandonia Presbyterian Church.

GRACE BYRANT (HENDRICKS) WIGHT

October 25, 1930 ~ January 21, 2023

Grace Wight, 92, of Durham, passed away on Saturday, January 21, 2023, at Waltonwood Senior Living in Cary.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford.

CHRISCAL LYSHA QUICK

July 13, 1969 ~ January 20, 2023

Chriscal Lysha Quick, 53, of Pittsboro, passed away on Friday, January 20, 2023, at UNC Hospitals in Chapel Hill.

The family will receive friends at the father's home from 5 to 7 p.m. each day at 2414 Overbrook Lane, Sanford.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford.

LAVONNE ELIZABETH (MCIVER) MCCUTCHEN

June 23, 1964 ~ January 22, 2023

LaVonne E. McCutchen, 58, of Sanford, passed away on Sunday, January 23, 2023, at her residence.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

Siler City names Jenifer Johnson as budget manager

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Long-time Siler City Town Clerk Jenifer Johnson has been named the town's new budget manager, a recently-added position.

Johnson had served as the town's clerk since November 2013, and Town Manager Hank Raper told the News + Record she's been an asset to the town — and that the transition was a logical one.

"Jenifer has been involved in the budget process since she started working for the town," Raper said. "She's not really taking on any new tasks ... she's really just being recognized for what she's already been doing."

The budget manager posi-

tion was created Jan. 3 by the board as part of a number of changes to the town's finance department recommended by Raper. The position was reclassified from the financial analyst position, which was vacated when the financial analyst became the assistant finance director. That came after the former assistant director became the department director when Tina Stroupe left her position with the town for a post with the city of Raleigh.

Johnson will oversee the budget process through her own department, which will be separate from the town's finance office. Raper said moving the budgeting process outside of the finance department would expedite finding

additional cost-saving measures and make the process of budget adjustments easier.

"Finance is very reactive by nature — it's designed to do accounting work in response to something that's already happened," Raper said. "Budget is very proactive — projecting about things that are going to happen and to anticipate happening ... those are all budget practices."

Raper explained the reclassification of the budget manager position would give him the chance to move staff into various positions and help trim personnel costs for existing jobs. He said that would create a "top administrative structure," which will help create departments and positions to address the town's

needs.

"As the town grows, if you have the right framework, it's so much easier to plug in additional positions where they're needed," Raper said. "When you don't have the top administrative structure correctly, it becomes that much more difficult."

The now-vacant town clerk position has been listed on the town's employment opportunities website, and according to the position listing, the clerk will also serve as a communications specialist for the town.

Raper said communication from the town to its staff and residents needs additional focus, and adding the communications specialist role to the clerk's duties will improve that

function.

"Communication is something, that we know from our strategic plan, that we're falling short on, and we need to do a better job communicating internally and externally within our organization," Raper said. "Having a centralized point of contact or communications is key."

The town clerk and communications specialist position will remain open until it's filled, according to the job listing. Raper said he hopes to announce a replacement for Johnson by the board's next meeting on Feb. 6.

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

EVENT

Continued from page A1

launched Wealth through Entrepreneurship for Black and Brown Businesses (WEBB Squared), a nonprofit incubator/accelerator that seeks to redress the racial wealth gap and build generational wealth by providing incubator-accelerator services to Black and Brown entrepreneurs, providing training, coaching and resources for minority businesses.

During the height of the pandemic, we met online with diverse entrepreneurs. We'd meet weekly to understand how to navigate COVID-19 and its impact on our businesses; entrepreneurs also shared business expertise, networks and resources.

Eventually, the Black entrepreneurs began to meet weekly, in addition to the regular meetings, to discuss and connect around the unique challenges that we faced as entrepreneurs of color. The Black entrepreneurs began to realize, after researching, that there was very little infrastructure to support Black entrepreneurs living in rural counties in North Carolina.

The racial wealth gap grows from centuries of a systemic race-structured economic order embedded in institutional culture, policies, social norms and belief systems. WEBB Squared, informed by this reality, understands that people of color require intentional services, resources and opportunities for wealth building.

Can you share some success stories from the incubator-accelerator services you've provided to Black

and Brown entrepreneurs?

In January 2022, WEBB Squared onboarded 19 Black entrepreneurs from various industries. Outcomes from a year of our programmatic services include:

- two received grants totaling \$25,000
- one completed a successful capital campaign
- 12 completed license and registration
- one connected to a partnering organization
- 80% business plans written
- 250+ coaching hours
- 70% completed Phase 1 of Entrepreneurial Mindset Workshops
- four entrepreneurs moved from ideation to product/service launch
- 50% participated in case study research group

There's been some discussion here about the racial gap in Chatham and other rural counties, but what about data and documentation? What's been missing in that discussion?

There is no place more ripe for reform than the economic environments of rural communities in North Carolina. In 2017 U.S. Census data shows that North Carolina was a majority rural state, with 80% rural counties. Black residents consistently measure below the national average and are likely to live in areas of concentrated poverty.

Discriminatory policies have been inherited and are embedded in our institutional infrastructure, our social norms, and our unconscious biases and beliefs. As long as these mechanisms remain unrecognizable and detached from their historical origins, the more powerful they will continue to inform the racial wealth gap.

We believe that race-

based problems require race-based solutions.

Our interventions are designed to liberate consciousness and efficacy in our target populations and in the larger business stakeholder community. We believe that Black and Brown entrepreneurs are the change agents that can help evolve and transform our rural economies. Our programs support translating their brilliance into profitable, sustainable business ventures.

And why is it important to close that gap — to provide opportunities to entrepreneurs and business owners to help build generational wealth?

Our work places us in the heart of rural Black communities. The relationships we develop often involve people who don't even consider themselves entrepreneurs because they don't have the physical, economic or manufacturing infrastructure supporting them. Yet, they are highly skilled tradespersons, artisans and service providers, selling their products and services to friends, family and the community.

Our ability to assist these informal entrepreneurs with realizing their talent and economic potential relies on cultural competency that other small business aggregators don't make an effort or have the capacity to do.

Our guiding question is always: "What would our rural communities look like if we address the constraints that limit the masses of skilled, innovative, and talented Black and Brown entrepreneurs?"

Our vision of our work is to curate, incubate and accelerate an analysis

connected to methodologies that transform rural local markets in North Carolina from excluding and hierarchical to a maturity that encourages cooperation, constrains racism, supports circulation and nurtures active interdependency.

What'll happen at your event on Feb 3?

The event begins at 9.30 a.m. with a networking hour and brunch. Chatham County Commissioners have indicated that they will attend, as have the mayors of Pittsboro and Siler City. Many of WEBB Squared's business partners will be there as well. The products and services of some of the small businesses that have been launched as a result of WEBB Squared's work will be on display.

The program starts promptly at 10.30 a.m. The presentation of WEBB Squared's "State of Black Entrepreneurship in Rural North Carolina" report will disaggregate data from a range of sources to create a clear picture of the racial wealth gap in our county, to explain its origins and explore some of the assumptions that reinforce the systems and processes that continue to thwart economic mobility for people of color. The report's author and presenter, internationally respected historian and scholar, and Chatham County resident, Dr. Carolyn Jefferson-Jenkins, will speak.

A community discussion will immediately follow the presentation. WEBB Squared has convened a panel of experts from all sectors to share their experience and expertise to help elaborate on the information presented in the

report and generate ideas about how we can work together across sectors to create an economy in Chatham County that drives economic opportunity for all.

It'll be a part of a panel that will include:

- Karen Howard, chairperson of The Chatham County Board of Commissioners
- Michael Smith, president, Chatham County EDC
- Chreatha Alston, vice chairperson, board of directors, Chatham County EDC
- JaLisha Richmond, director of Lending & Client Support, Thread Capital
- Shirley Gray, president, Vauxhall Enterprise and WEBB Squared entrepreneur
- Shauna Noel-Robinson, founder, Chef Shauna's Events & Catering and Webb Squared Entrepreneur
- Rep. Robert Reives II

Can you provide a preview of what attendees will learn?

Attendees will learn about the racial wealth gap in Chatham County and North Carolina and how it affects both families and our county's economy. They will explore several widespread assumptions about economic inequity and consider new ideas about how local policies and processes can be enhanced to build an economy that ensures all families have a fair shot at achieving their economic dreams.

Why is it important for people to attend?

Chatham County's economy is on the threshold of a boom. The arrival of VinFast and Wolfspeed signal

only the beginning of an economic development trend that is going to bring not only new jobs — but also, the need for local business services and goods. As we consider the future together, and plan policies and systems to handle the growth, it is critical that we do so with an understanding of the wealth gap that exists and a shared commitment to working together to create an ecosystem that works for everyone — and in which no one is left behind.

And why will the report you present be so important?

The report is important because it synthesizes an enormous amount of data from respected sources and makes it easy to understand how this information impacts the quality of life in Chatham County.

To attend:

Tickets are available through WEBB Squared <https://webbsquared.org/state-of-black-entrepreneurship/>

Brunch will be provided by Scurlock's Catering and 39 West Catering services.

Sponsors include The Fenwick Foundation, 39 West Catering, Chatham United Way, The Plant, Chatham Park, MOSAIC, Thread Capital, Emily Bennett Creative, Duke Energy, Community Organizing for Racial Equity, Marlow Campbell Insurance Group, CAM Mega Site, Central Carolina Community College, Brookwood Farms, American Endowment Foundation, TickWarriors, Levitate, and the Community Remembrance Committee Chatham.

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CLASSIFIEDS

REAL ESTATE

LEARN ABOUT LAND - Chatham Land Experts - www.learn-aboutland.com - 919-362-6999. Jy2,tfnc

OFFICE SPACE RENT

OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT, Approximately 2,000 sq. ft. reception area, conference room, six offices, kitchenette and restrooms. Siler Business Park, 919-930-1650. Jn15,tfnc

ONE BEDROOM, 1 1/2 bath furnished cottage, 3 miles north of Pittsboro. \$1600/month plus utilities. winzelerrobert@gmail.com. J12,19,26,3tp

RENTAL APARTMENTS

POWELL SPRINGS APTS. Evergreen Construction introduces its newest independent living community for adults 55 years or older, 1 and 2 bedroom applications now being accepted. Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Call 919-533-6319 for more information, TDD #1-800-735-2962. Equal housing opportunity, Handicapped accessible, A2,tfnc

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

FOR SALE

1996 16-ft CREST Pontoon Raft, needs work and a new top. Trailer and new tires included, \$900. winzelerrobert@gmail.com, J12,19,26,3tp

USED GO KART, 4 horsepower engine, runs good, two-seater, disc brakes, needs work, \$600 or best offer. 919-227-6698, J5,J12,19,26,4tc

INGERSOL RAND Air Compressor, 5 H.P. 2-Stage, 80 gal. tank, Like New, \$750.-- Craftsman Roll Away with top chest complete with mechanics tools, Asking \$1,400. Call 336-233-1361, J5,12,19,26,4tp

FIREWOOD FOR SALE - Dry, ready to burn. Call 919-742-4561, J5,12,19,26,4tx

TV ANTENNAS - Come by MacPage Communications at 102 N. Third Avenue, Siler City, 919-227-6698, J5,J12,19,26,2tc

AUCTIONS

RICKY ELLINGTON AUCTIONEERS - Equipment, business, liquidation, estates, land, houses, antiques, personal property, coins, furniture, consignments, benefits, etc., NCAL #7706, 919-548-3684, 919-663-3556, rickyellingtonauctions@yahoo.com, J6,tfnc

AUCTIONEER SCOTT L. HARRIS at JHA. One Call...We sell it all!!! Real estate, personal property, estate settlement, farms & land, business liquidation. JHA has been conducting auctions in the state of NC since 1989. Fully Licensed Real Estate and Auction Firm. NCAL #8420 Firm #8086 www.Jerry-HarrisAuction.com, 919-498-4077, J6,tfnc

SERVICES

DIGGING AND DEMO - Land improvements, mini-excavating, stump removal, mobile home and building tear down, all digging. Call John Hayes, 919-548-0474, J19-Ju1,20tp

CASH PAID FOR JUNK cars and pickups, 336-581-3423, J12,19,26,F2,4tp

RAINBOW WATER FILTERED VACUUMS, Alice Cox, Cox's Distributing - Rainbow - Cell: 919-548-4314, Sales, Services, Supplies. Serving public for 35 years. Rada Cutlery also available. Au26,tfnc

AUTO BROKERS RECYCLERS - Cash paid for Junk/Wrecked vehicles. Call 919-545-0194. My13,tfnc

JUNK CARS PICKED UP Free of charge. Due to many months of low steel prices and unstable steel markets, we cannot pay for cars at this time. Cars, trucks, and machinery will be transported and environmentally correctly recycled at no charge. 919-542-2803. A2,tfnc

LETT'S TREE SERVICE - tree removal, stump grinding, lot clearing. Visa & Master Card accepted. Timber. Free estimates. 919-258-3594 N9,tfnc

HELP WANTED

TOWN OF SILER CITY, TOWN

CLERK/COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST --- Performs advanced administrative work serving the Town Board of Commissioners and Town Manager by preparing, maintaining, and ensuring the safety of official public records. Supports the Town's communications goals through advanced writing and design and through multimedia production and maintenance, all of which require high levels of independent judgment and discretion. - Required Education and Experience Qualifications: Graduation from a community college with an associate degree in business, office administration, office technology, secretarial science, or related field and considerable experience in office management; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Moderate experience in the safekeeping and care of public records. Moderate experience in executive assistant type duties. Moderate experience in communications and dealing with the public. Strong writing, editing, and video and website experience. Extensive customer service experience dealing with a diverse customer population. Advanced computer skills including MS Word, Excel, and Outlook. Possession of a valid North Carolina driver's license. - Preferred Education and Experience Qualifications: Previous experience as a Town Clerk or Communications Specialist. Previous experience in a municipality, public affairs, public relations, or journalism setting. - Possession of Notary Public certification upon hire. Possession of CMC/MMC certification upon hire. - Bilingual in both written and spoken English and Spanish. - Additional Employment Requirements: Possession of Notary Public certification within six months of hire. -- All required certifications and licenses must be maintained with no lapse during the course of employment. Hiring Salary, \$54,703.00. Please refer to our website for a full job description. To Apply: This posting is open until filled. A completed Town of Siler City application and resume is required for consideration. The application may be found on our website at www.silercity.org or picked up at City Hall. The application may be mailed or delivered to City Hall, Attention: Human Resources, 311 N. Second Ave., PO Box 769, Siler City, NC 27344 or submitted via email to dritter@silercity.org. Pre-employment drug testing, DMV check, and background checks are required upon job offer. EOE. The Town of Siler City is an Equal Opportunity Employer. The Town of Siler City's applicants are considered for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, disability, or other legally protected status. The Town of Siler City will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided necessary accommodations. J26,1tc

CHURCH ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - Active relationship with Christ and membership in a church of like-faith required. 18-20 hrs/wk to manage office, prepare publications, and maintain records. Computer proficiency required. Submit resume and hourly salary requirement to: Personnel Committee, Tyson's Creek Baptist Church, 10891 Siler City-Glenndon Rd., Bear Creek, NC 27207 or email to tysonscreek@tysonscreek.com. J19,26,F2,9,4tc

PART TIME HOUSE CLEANING, near Siler City. \$19/hr plus travel allowance, 910-773-0722. J12,19,26,F2,4tp

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

LEGALS

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of **ALFONZA CARRINGTON**, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 7th day of April, 2023 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 5th day of January, 2023. Ledora Annette Hackney Administrator of the Estate of Alfonza Carrington 35 Prestonwood Drive Pittsboro, NC 27312 J5,J12,19,26,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **MANAL DANIEL SOLIMAN**, deceased, of Alexandria, Egypt, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 6th, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the Decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of January, 2023. Arja Helena Soliman, Executor, c/o Elizabeth K. Arias, Esq., Womble Bond Dickinson (US) LLP 555 Fayetteville Street, Suite 1100 Raleigh, NC 27601 J5,J12,19,26,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22-E-703 ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **THELMA WILHELM BAKER**, deceased of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to: Deirdre Baker, Administrator, 813 Ascot Ln, Raleigh, NC 27615 on or before April 6, 2023 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the Decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of January, 2023 /s/ Diane A Wallis of Wallis Law Firm, P.A., Attorney for Deirdre Baker, Administrator of the Estate of Thelma Wilhelm Baker 5500 McNeely Drive, Suite 102, Raleigh, NC 27612 919 783-8118 J5,J12,19,26,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 707 All persons having claims against **TIMOTHY BUTCH WILSON**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 6th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of January, 2023. Jacqueline Spinks Wilson, Executrix 145 Seaforth Landing Dr Pittsboro, NC 27312 J5,J12,19,26,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 714 All persons having claims against **ANDREW LOUIS RIPLEY, JR.**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 6th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 5th day of January, 2023. Thomas R. Hayes, Co-Executor 2924 Reynolds Square Winston Salem, NC 27106 Leslie L. Hayes, Co-Executor 2924 Reynolds Square Winston-Salem, NC 27106 J5,J12,19,26,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 691 All persons having claims against **CAROL PITTMAN RIGSBEE AKA CAROL JEAN RIGSBEE**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of January, 2023. Nancy R. Brown, Executrix 239 Rocky Ridge Rd Leasburg, NC 27291 J12,19,26,F2,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 717 All persons having claims against **VICTORIA LYNN DOWLING**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of January, 2023. Anthony W. Vaughan, Administrator 379 Winding Rd. Fries, Va. 24330 J12,19,26,F2,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 E 651 All persons having claims against **TERRI LITUCHY**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of January, 2023. Todd Lituchy, Executor 17640 Rhoda St Encino, CA 91316 J12,19,26,F2,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY All persons having claims against **IDA LEE COTTEN**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of January, 2023. Crystal Gisele Josey Davis, Executrix 1205 Barman Ct Summerfield, NC 273358 J12,19,26,F2,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 22 E 681 All persons having claims against **KATHY SUE HEFNER AKA KATHY FREEMAN HEFNER**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12th day of January, 2023. Andrew B. Hefner, Co-Administrator 105 George Street Siler City, NC 27344 1526 Vander Oldham Rd Bear Creek, NC 27207 J12,19,26,F2,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 23 E 26 All persons having claims against **ALLENE H. HARMON AKA ANNIE ALLENE HARWARD HARMON**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of January, 2023. Jane Harmon Pendergrast, Executrix 140 West Newman Rd Chapel Hill, NC 27517 J19,26,F2,9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY The undersigned, having qualified as **Executrix of the Estate of TROY M. HANCOCK, JR.**, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the said decedent or his estate to present them to her at 2755 Bonlee-Bennett Road, Siler City, NC 27344 on or before the 20th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All of those indebted to the said estate are hereby requested to make prompt payment to the undersigned. This the 19th day of January, 2023. Ann P. Hancock Executrix of the Estate of Troy M. Hancock, Jr. 2755 Bonlee-Bennett Road Siler City, N.C. 27344 J19,26,F2,9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 2022 E 000711 All persons having claims against **MARTIN PALMER ODOM JR.**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of January, 2023. Margaret T. Odom, Adminis-

trator 5128 Bonlee Carbondon Road Goldston, NC 27252 J19,J26,F2,F9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 23 E 8 All persons having claims against **ELIZABETH BROOKS COBB**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of January, 2023. Christopher William Cobb, Co-Executor 6368 Waterway Drive Falls Church, VA 22044 Anna Lees Cobb, Co-Executor 1315 Langdon Place 1315 Fearington Post Pittsboro, NC 27312 J19,J26,F2,F9,4tp

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 2023 E 000018 All persons having claims against **HELEN MARY KNAPP**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 27th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Andrea Paula Judge, Executor 35 John Laurel Dr Murphy, NC 28906 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tp

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 22 SP 129 Under and by virtue of a Power of Sale contained in that certain Deed of Trust executed by F. NORTON DICKMAN, III to Trste, Inc., Trustee(s), which was dated April 10, 2007 and recorded on May 1, 2007 in Book 01331 at Page 1169, Chatham County Registry, North Carolina. Default having been made of

CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

Line ad deadline Tuesday — Noon

Display ad deadline Monday — 5 p.m.

Rates and payment Minimum charge of \$5 for each classified advertisement of 25 words or less per week. For each additional word, no matter how many insertions, add 20¢ per word. Payable in advance.

Blind ads No information will be given out by this office to the identity of person placing "keyed" or "blind" ads.

Errors In advertisements that run more than one week, we are responsible for errors appearing in the first week only. If you find an error in your ad, report it immediately.

the note thereby secured by the said Deed of Trust and the undersigned, Trustee Services of Carolina, LLC, having been substituted as Trustee in said Deed of Trust, and the holder of the note evidencing said default having directed that the Deed of Trust be foreclosed, the undersigned **Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at the courthouse door of the county courthouse** where the property is located, or the usual and customary location at the county courthouse for conducting the sale on **February 7, 2023 at 01:00 PM**, and will sell to the highest bidder for cash the following described property situated in Chatham County, North Carolina, to wit: ALL THAT REAL PROPERTY SITUATED IN THE COUNTY OF CHATHAM, STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA:

BEING THE SAME PROPERTY CONVEYED TO THE GRANTOR BY DEED RECORDED IN BOOK 630, PAGE 465 CHATHAM COUNTY REGISTRY, TO WHICH DEED REFERENCE IS HEREBY MADE FOR A MORE PARTICULAR DESCRIPTION OF THIS PROPERTY. And being more particularly described by metes and bounds according to said Deed as follows: BEGINNING at an iron pipe in the eastern margin of NC Highway No. 87, said stake be-

PITTSBORO VILLAGE APARTMENTS
Now accepting applications for 2BR, 1.5BA Range, refrigerator, dishwasher are included in the rent. Rent starts at \$630 and up.
400 Honeysuckle Dr., Pittsboro, NC 27312
919-542-5410
TDD 1-800-735-2962
Email: pittsborovillage@ECCMG.com
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

HIRING CNA's ALL SHIFTS
CALL: 919-542-3151
Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for appointment to complete application and interview.
Pittsboro Christian Village
1825 East Street, Pittsboro, NC

Career Opportunities Available
Visit www.chathamcountync.gov and click Jobs.

Cardinal Chase Apartments
Featuring 1, 2 & 3 BR units: conveniently located in Siler City, NC
Handicap accessible units 3x3 available
Section 8 Assistance Available. Income Restrictions Apply
Call 919-742-4377
Telecommunications Relay Services: 711
Office Hours: M-T-TH-FRI • 8:30AM - 5:00PM
Equal Housing Opportunity
Managed by Community Management Corporation

ing situate southwardly along said highway .11 miles from intersection of said highway with NCSR 1546, and being a corner with property owned by Joseph W. DeGraffenreid and running thence from said beginning point North 72 degrees 04 minutes 22 seconds East 142.69 feet to an existing iron pipe; thence South 23 degrees 30 minutes East 331.08 feet to an existing iron pipe in the line of William B. Bland; thence with Bland's line South 72 degrees 47 minutes 32 seconds West 157.64 feet to an established iron pipe situated in the eastern margin of NC No. 87; thence with the eastern margin of Highway 87 North 21 degrees 24 minutes 09 seconds West 306.77 feet to the point and place of BEGINNING, containing 1.123 acres, according to a survey and plat prepared by Smith & Smith Surveyors

entitled "Survey for F. Norton Dickman, III" dated November 29, 1993. Save and except any releases, deeds of release or prior conveyances of record. Said property is commonly known as **7610 Hwy 87 N, Pittsboro, NC 27312**. A Certified Check ONLY (no personal checks) of five percent (5%) of the purchase price, or Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00), whichever is greater, will be required at the time of the sale. Following the expiration of the statutory upset bid period, all the remaining amounts are immediately due and owing. **THIRD PARTY PURCHASERS MUST PAY THE EXCISE TAX AND THE RECORDING COSTS FOR THEIR DEED.** Said property to be offered pursuant to this Notice of Sale is being offered for sale,

transfer and conveyance "AS IS WHERE IS." There are no representations of warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at, or relating to the property being offered for sale. This sale is made subject to all prior liens, unpaid taxes, any unpaid land transfer taxes, special assessments, easements, rights of way, deeds of release, and any other encumbrances or exceptions of record. **To the best of the knowledge and belief of the undersigned, the current owner(s) of the property is/are All Lawful Heirs of F. Norton Dickman, III.**

An Order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to G.S. 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but no more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in the notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination [NCGS § 45-21.16A(b)(2)]. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination. If the trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason, the sole remedy of the purchaser is the return of the deposit. Reasons of such inability to convey include, but are not limited to, the filing of a bankruptcy petition prior to the confirmation of the sale and reinstatement of the loan without the knowledge of the trustee. If the validity of the sale is challenged by any party, the trustee, in their sole discretion, if they believe the challenge to have merit, may request the court to declare

the sale to be void and return the deposit. The purchaser will have no further remedy. Trustee Services of Carolina, LLC Substitute Trustee Brock & Scott, PLLC Attorneys for Trustee Services of Carolina, LLC 5431 Oleander Drive Suite 200 Wilmington, NC 28403 PHONE: (910) 392-4988 FAX: (910) 392-8587 File No.: 22-14264-FC01 J26,F2,2,tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY FILE NO: 23 E 2 All persons having claims against **KATHERINE H. DOTSON**, deceased late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 27th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Jeffrey P. Dotson, Co-Executor 152 Mockernut Rd Pittsboro, NC 27312

Douglas R. Dotson, Co-Executor 326 Mockernut Rd Pittsboro, NC 27312 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tp

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION FILE NO: 22-CVD-237 NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY **TARA TENNILLE FARRELL, Plaintiff VS CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL FARRELL, Defendant** **NOTICE OF SERVICE OR PROCESS BY PUBLICATION TO: CHRISTOPHER MICHAEL FARRELL** TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed on the 13th day of April, 2022 in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is as

follows: Plaintiff is seeking an absolute divorce from defendant based upon one year's separation. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than 40 days following the 26th day of January, 2023, said date being the first publication of this notice, or from the date complaint is required to be filed, whichever is later, and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This 26th day of January, 2023. **TARA TENNILLE FARRELL, Plaintiff** **MOODY, WILLIAMS, ATWATER & LEE** **W. Ben Atwater, Jr. Attorney for Plaintiff** P.O. Box 629 Siler City, NC 27344 (919) 663-2850 J26,F2,F9,3tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 2022-E-0300 Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **CATHY S. STOW**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 27th day of April, 2023, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. c/o David A. Burns, Attorney for Jeffrey A. Stow, Executor of the Estate of Cathy S. Stow PO Box 17803 Raleigh, NC 27619 Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton, LLP 4101 Lake Boone Trail, Suite 300 Raleigh, N.C. 27607 P: 919.781.4000 F: 919.781.4865 www.wyrick.com J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

LEGAL NOTICE The **Pittsboro Fire-Rescue Department Inc.** intends to purchase a Pierce Engine to replace a 2004 E-1 Engine and related equipment. We wish to have interest compounded on the financing agreement to be treated as a tax-exempt transaction. Under the Technical Corrections Bill (HR 4333) there is a specified procedure for compliance with Internal Revenue Service regulations concerning tax-exemption of interest payments on purchases or lease agreements for volunteer fire departments. In accordance with Section 147 (f) of the Internal Revenue Code, notice is hereby given that as Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, I have designated Chief Daryl Griffin is to conduct a public hearing at 10:00 AM on February 1, 2023 at the Pittsboro Volunteer Fire Rescue Department located at 150 Sanford Road, Pittsboro, NC 27312, for the purpose of hearing comments from the residents of the Circle City Fire District and the Town of Pittsboro, any resident of the District or town may appear and comment on the above request by the Pittsboro Volunteer Fire Rescue Department Inc. Karen Howard, Chair Board of Commissioners Chatham County J26,F2,2tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

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believed to be accurate, but no representation or warranty is intended.

Address of property: **307 Danbury Ct, Pittsboro, NC 27312**
Tax Parcel ID: **0083002**
Present Record Owners: Tyler Brett Porer and Robin Iten Porter
The record owner(s) of the property, according to the records of the Register of Deeds, is/are Tyler Brett Porer and Robin Iten Porter.
The property to be offered pursuant to this notice of sale is being offered for sale, transfer and conveyance AS IS, WHERE IS. Neither the Trustee nor the holder of the note secured by the deed of trust being foreclosed, nor the officers, directors, attorneys, employees, agents or authorized representative of either the Trustee or the holder of the note make any representation or warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property offered for sale. Any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to such condition expressly are disclaimed. This sale is subject to all prior liens and encumbrances and unpaid taxes and assessments including any transfer tax associated with the foreclosure. A deposit of five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid or seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00), whichever is greater, is required from the highest bidder and must be tendered in the form of certified funds at the time of the sale. Cash will not be accepted. This sale will be held open ten days for upset bids as required by law. After the expiration of the upset period, all remaining amounts are IMMEDIATELY DUE AND OWING. Failure to remit funds in a timely manner will result in a Declaration of Default and any deposit will be frozen pending the outcome of any re-sale. If the sale is set aside for any reason, the Purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to a return of the deposit paid. The Purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, the Substitute Trustee or the attorney of any of the foregoing.

SPECIAL NOTICE FOR LEASE-HOLD TENANTS residing at the property: be advised that an Order for Possession of the property may be issued in favor of the purchaser. Also, if your lease began or was renewed on or after October 1, 2007, be advised that you may terminate the rental agreement upon 10 days written notice to the landlord. You may be liable for rent due under the agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination. The date of this Notice is January 20, 2023.

Jason K. Purser, NCSB# 28031
Morgan R. Lewis, NCSB# 57732
Attorney for LLG Trustee, LLC, Substitute Trustee LOGS Legal Group LLP 10130 Perimeter Parkway, Suite 400 Charlotte, NC 28216 (704) 333-8107 | (704) 333-8156 Fax | www.LOGS.com
Posted:
By: 22-112662 J26,F2,2tc

J26,F2,2tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against **ROBERT C. BROOKS**, deceased, of Chatham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before April 28, 2023, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Shelia Elizabeth Jenkins, Executor c/o Bagwell Holt Smith P.A. 111 Cloister Court, STE 200 Chapel Hill, NC 27514 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

University Dr.; PO Box 51759, Durham, NC 27717, on or before the 30th day of April, 2023 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment. This is the 26th day of January, 2023. Richard Stuart Thoits, Executor Estate of Evelyn M. Thoits, Deceased Robert A. Idol, Esquire IDOL LAW, PLLC Attorneys at Law PO Box 51759 Durham, NC 27717 (919) 401-5151 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

against the decedent to exhibit the same to the undersigned Executor on or before the 28th day of April, 2023, 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 January, 2023. The Estate of Greta L. Owens Susan O. Biggs, Executor 7239 Bulb Road Julian, NC 27283 Attorney for the Estate: William H. Flowe, Jr. P.O. Box 1315 Liberty, NC 27298 Phone: (336) 622-2278 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

Carolina, this is to notify all persons having claims against the estate of the deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of April, 2023 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the estate of the deceased will please make immediate payment. This the 26th day of January, 2023. Stephen Keith McLaurin, Executor 2075 McLaurin Road Siler City, North Carolina 27344 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of April 2023, 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 January 2023 W. Woods Doster, Administrator of the Estate of Susan Julie White 206 Hawkins Avenue Sanford, NC 27330 Attorneys: Law Offices of W. Woods Doster, P.A. 206 Hawkins Avenue Sanford, NC 27330 J26,F2,F9,F16,4tc

is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to provide services to transport, process, and recycle electronic devices collected from Chatham County's residents in an environmentally sound manner and in compliance with all applicable local, state, federal, and international laws and treaties. **Sealed bids will be accepted by mail or delivery until 2:00 PM, on February 9, 2023.** Vendors must submit both an electronic PDF version of the proposal (excluding any materials that are non-electronic) and three hard copies with all attachments, including signatory pages, which should be received by the deadline above. A public bid opening will take place sharply at 2:00 pm in the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center, 1192 US Hwy 64 West Business, Pittsboro, NC 27312. If not delivering to the bid open location, the hard copies must be sent to one of the following delivery addresses: Postal Address: Michele Peluso, Chatham County Finance Office P. O. Box 608, Pittsboro, NC 27312 (all postal delivery) Street Address: Michele Peluso, County Finance Office, Courthouse Annex 12 East Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312 (land delivery only) **All inquiries relating to this request must be received by February 1, 12:00 NOON.** Requests must be in writing and addressed to: Michele Peluso, Chatham County Finance Office, P.O. Box 608; Pittsboro, NC 27312; or by fax to 919-545-2417; or emailed to: purchasing@chathamcountync.gov. This solicitation and others can be located on the Chatham County Current Bids and Proposals webpage at: https://www.chathamcountync.gov/government/departments-programs-a-h/finance/bid-proposal-opportunities Chatham County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, age or disability. J26,1tc

P. O. Box 608, Pittsboro, NC 27312 (all postal delivery) Street Address: Michele Peluso, County Finance Office, Courthouse Annex 12 East Street, Pittsboro, NC 27312 (land delivery only) **All inquiries relating to this request must be received by February 1, 12:00 NOON.** Requests must be in writing and addressed to: Michele Peluso, Chatham County Finance Office, P.O. Box 608; Pittsboro, NC 27312; or by fax to 919-545-2417; or emailed to: purchasing@chathamcountync.gov. This solicitation and others can be located on the Chatham County Current Bids and Proposals webpage at: https://www.chathamcountync.gov/government/departments-programs-a-h/finance/bid-proposal-opportunities Chatham County is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate on the basis of sex, marital status, race, color, creed, national origin, age or disability. J26,1tc

EXECUTOR'S NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified on the 20th day of January, 2023, as Executor of the Estate of **GRETA L. OWENS**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims

Creditor's Notice NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **MARGARET ANN HART MCLAURIN**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North

CREDITOR'S NOTICE NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY Having qualified on the 5th of January 2023, as Administrator of the Estate of **SUSAN JULIE WHITE**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the decedent

Request for Proposals for Electronic Recycling Solid Waste & Recycling Division Chatham County Request for Proposal - Electronic Recycling Solid Waste & Recycling Division The Chatham County Solid Waste & Recycling Division

CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

Changes to CCS principals afoot after resignations, appointments

BY BEN RAPPAPORT News + Record Staff

The leadership at three Chatham County Schools is set to change mid-year after several principal resignations and appointments were announced this week.

Savage leaves Chatham Grove

Chatham Grove Elementary Principal Larry Savage announced his resignation from the position on Wednesday. He has accepted a job as the principal of West Cary Middle School, in Wake County Public School System.

Savage was named the principal of Chatham Grove Elementary School on January 6, 2020. He was the first principal of the school, which opened in May of that year.

"My time working with our CGE staff and community the last three years to open our school and build our vibrant and thriving Chatham Grove school community has been unforgettable," Savage wrote in a message to the CGE community Wednesday. "I will hold onto dearly the professional relationships we have formed and the memories we have made in service of our students."

His new role in Cary will begin on March 20, with his last day as principal at CGE on March 17. Savage said he made



CN+R file photo

Bobby Dixon was hired by the N.C. Dept. of Administration to be N.C. State Director of Non-Public Education. He served as the principal of Chatham School of Science & Engineering for seven years.

the switch to Cary to be near his father, who is 90 years old. "I cannot pass up this chance to spend more quality time with him and better support him in our remaining years together," Savage said. An interim principal for CGE has not yet been named.

Eanes tapped for CSSE On Friday, another principal switch was announced as Karla Eanes, the current principal at Chatham Central High School, was named the new principal at Chatham School of Science & Engineering.

Bobby Dixon, the current CSSE principal, has been hired by the N.C. Dept. of Administration to work as N.C.

State Director of the Division Non-Public Education. Dixon served as the principal at CSSE since it opened in 2016 and worked for CCS for 16 years.

In 2019, Dixon was named the 2018-19 North Carolina Association for Scholastic Activities (NCASA) Principal of the Year.

"I am excited about my new venture," Dixon said. "It is much more difficult to leave a job you love than to leave one that you dislike, which is why this was such a tough decision to make. I am really pleased, though, that Dr. Eanes will be succeeding me as principal. I will always look back at my 16 years of service in Chatham County fondly. This is my home."

Dixon begins his new job

with the DOA on Feb. 20. Eanes has been an educator for 26 years. She has been part of Chatham County Schools for 21 years. She has been the principal at CCHS since 2018 and before that served as assistant principal at the school since 2012.

Her classroom experience includes work with Exceptional Children. She has a doctorate in educational leadership from UNC-Chapel Hill. Eanes earned her master's degree in special education from UNC-Greensboro, where she also earned her undergraduate degree in elementary education.

"It's been an honor to be part of the Chatham Central High School family," Eanes said. "I have thoroughly enjoyed my students, families and staff I have worked with over the years. I am excited about my new role with Chatham School for Science and Engineering, though, and the opportunity to continue to grow as an educator and to take on new challenges. As the early college program in Chatham County Schools, CSSE will afford me the opportunity to see different approaches to education."

Chatham County Schools Superintendent Dr. Anthony Jackson said Eanes' experience makes her a tremendous asset in her new role.

"Having such an experienced administrator step into this role will ensure a smooth transition for Chatham School of Science



CN+R file photo

Chatham Grove Elementary Principal Larry Savage announced his resignation last Wednesday to take a position in Wake County Schools. He led Chatham Grove since it opened in May 2020.

and Engineering and will continue to move our district as a whole forward," he said.

Dark new assistant principal at Chatham Central

The board of education also approved Mary Margaret Dark, an assistant principal at Jordan-Matthews High School, as the interim principal at Chatham Central High School.

Dark was appointed as assistant principal in August 2020 after teaching at Chatham Middle for several years. Dark is a CCHS grad with degrees from UNCW and UNCG

Her start date at CCHS is still to be determined.

REPORT

Continued from page A7

al reaches out to the Sheriff's Office to file a report, we take down their account of events as they describe their experience," Lieutenant Sara Pack, the office's chief public information officer, said. "This information becomes the foundation for future

investigation; evidence gathered during an investigation may support this initial report, disprove all or parts of the initial report, or results may be inconclusive. It was initially reported that Mr. Hudson brandished a gun during the encounter; therefore, this information was included in the initial report." Chatham County

Sheriff Mike Roberson addressed the conflicting information in a statement.

"During the course of an investigation, deputies may receive conflicting information," he said. "Misinformation can also be amplified and shared in the media and online, complicating investigations and potentially influencing an individual's right to a fair trial. The

Sheriff's Office is not for or against any person; we are for facts, justice, and the truth."

Pack also clarified that the Sheriff's Office filed charges against Hudson in the case. The News + Record previously reported the charges were brought by the District Attorney's office based on statements made by the victims in the case. Multiple calls about the

case made to the District Attorney's office were not returned.

"The Sheriff's Office brought the charges in this case; our investigators gathered enough information and evidence to charge Mr. Hudson with assault with a deadly weapon and injury to personal property," Pack said.

Hudson's court date, scheduled for last

Wednesday, Jan. 18, was continued. His case, originally scheduled to be heard back in August, had been delayed. Hudson's next scheduled court appearance was scheduled to be Wednesday, Jan. 25. In addition to the five assault with a deadly weapon charges, Hudson has also been charged with damage to personal property.

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SPORTS NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT

JANUARY 26 - FEBRUARY 1, 2023 | chathamnewsrecord.com/sports | SECTION B

BOYS BASKETBALL

Seaforth's Stevenson has a week for the ages



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Seaforth junior Jarin Stevenson slams home a dunk in the Hawks' 63-62 win over Cummings last Friday.

BY JEREMY VERNON
News + Record Sports Editor

PITTSBORO — As talented as Seaforth junior Jarin Stevenson is, even he's not had a stretch like this before.

Stevenson, a 6-foot-10 forward ranked as the No. 14 overall player and No. 1 player in North Carolina in the Class of 2024 by 247Sports' composite basketball rankings, entered last week on the cusp of reaching 1,000 career points.

Needing only a modest scoring performance to reach the mark, Stevenson could have taken a more conservative approach to last Wednesday's game against North Moore, and no one would have batted an eye. Instead, Stevenson managed to pass 1,000 points while checking off another milestone off his personal list: with 19 points, 21 rebounds and a career-high 10 blocks, he also notched his first career triple-double.

"To me, it was just a regular game at first," Stevenson said. "I just went out there and played hard. It just shows that, over time, things can come true if you put in the work. If you stay grinding, things will come true."

Seaforth breezed past North Moore, 53-36, on the road Wednesday night, but when



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Seaforth junior Jarin Stevenson (15) had 27 points, 12 rebounds and four assists in the Hawks' 63-62 win over Cummings last Friday.

the Hawks found themselves in a tighter contest Friday night at home against Cummings, it was again Stevenson who took control.

Down, 62-61, in the closing moments of the game,

Seaforth ran a play to set up Stevenson with a one-on-one opportunity against his defender. He drove to the basket and converted a tough bucket,

See SEAFORTH, page B4

Panthers should steer clear of Levis in draft



JEREMY VERNON
Sports Editor

There is already too much chaos in this world for me to entertain a man who willingly puts mayonnaise in his coffee. I do not need this guy starting at the most important position on my favorite football team.

If it isn't clear who I'm referring to here, it's Kentucky quarterback

Will Levis, one of the top prospects eligible for selection in this year's NFL Draft. Back in July of last year, the story broke that Levis enjoys his morning cup of Joe with a hearty helping of Miracle Whip. Why he wasn't immediately arrested for domestic terrorism is still unclear.

Over six months later, Levis is considered one of the top quarterback prospects available in the 2023 class. And, lo and behold, the Panther have a top-10 selection at No. 9 overall.

There have been rumors linking the Panthers to Levis over the last several months, including a December report by the Charlotte Observer stating Panthers owner David Tepper was interested in taking Levis if he fell to Carolina in the draft.

Levis has been mocked to the Panthers in

See PANTHERS, page B2

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Walden, Bland hit milestones; Central quietly playing well

BY JEREMY VERNON
News + Record Sports Editor

Ahead of last Friday's tilt between Chatham Charter and Woods Charters' girls basketball teams, Knights senior Tamaya Walden was approached by her dad, who let her know how close she was to checking another personal milestone off her list.

When Walden heard she was 30 points away from 1,500 career points, she was unsure whether she could get the job done that night. Coming into the game, she hadn't totaled 30 points on the season, and had only accomplished the feat four other times in her career so far. But after the dust settled in Chatham Charter's 57-27 win over its rival, the senior guard had hit the mark right on the nose.

"I ended up surprising myself and made (my dad) happy," Walden said. "It all caught me off guard. I wasn't really expecting to get it Friday. It's just another milestone that keeps me motivated and keeps me going toward that ultimate goal that I want."

Walden's latest accomplishment comes one month after she became the all-time leading scorer in Chatham Charter girls history. Her 1,500 career points are also the most of any player — girls or boys — currently playing high school basketball



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Chatham Charter senior Tamaya Walden reached 1,500 career points with a 30-point outing against Woods Charter last Friday.

in Chatham County. For the season, she is averaging a county-high 21.2 points per game to go with 4.2 rebounds, 4.9 assists and

3.2 steals. Chatham Charter entered this week with a 13-4 overall record and a 4-0 mark in league play.

Walden has been part of several successful teams during her time at Chatham Charter. As a freshman in 2019-20, Walden helped lead the Knights 27-4 record and a trip to the third round of the state playoffs while averaging 10.3 points per game. Last season, in 2021-22, Walden and the Knights made it to the second round of the playoffs before losing to Clover Garden School.

Compared to those previous teams, Walden believes this year's squad is more tight-knit, a factor she says has contributed to their success.

"Every time we're waiting for practice or a game, we're in the locker room or doing something together, making each other laugh, riding with each other. We all have that tight bond," she said. "We're all sisters — a family — and I think we all have the same mindset when it comes to basketball, to win and to share the ball so everyone can have their moment. Any time, say, a freshman comes off the bench and starts playing, we all get excited for them. And whenever they score, we get excited for them. We just bring a lot of energy to the plate for each other."

See MILESTONE, page B4

FOOTBALL

Northwood hires Mitch Johnson as next head coach



Photo courtesy of Northwood Athletics

Mitch Johnson was 4-7 as the head coach of South Iredell during the 2022 season.

BY JEREMY VERNON
News + Record Sports Editor

PITTSBORO — Mitch Johnson was already familiar with Northwood High when he recently applied to become the team's next head football coach. Heck, he had already applied for the job the last time it was open after the 2021 season.

Things didn't work out back then, and Johnson settled on a move from Appleton-West High in Wisconsin back to his home state and South Iredell High in Statesville. But after leading the Vikings to a 4-7 record this

past fall, Johnson found himself with another opportunity to take over the Chargers.

This time, the stars aligned. Last week, Northwood officially announced that Johnson had been hired as a teacher and the team's next head coach.

"When they told me I had gotten the job, I was extremely excited," Johnson told the News + Record. "It's a beautiful area, and the school is rich in tradition in all the sports. They have a very supportive and strong admin team, which is something I always look for.

They've been very down-to-earth and very helpful since I've come in contact with them."

Johnson's coaching career began as an assistant at Pinecrest, his alma-mater. After four years with the Patriots, he took the head coaching job at Lake Mead Christian Academy in Henderson, Nevada, and led the team to a 6-3 record in 2017. In four seasons at Appleton-West after leaving Lake Mead, he amassed a 15-26 overall record.

See COACH, page B4

SCORES AND SCHEDULES

SCORES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17

Girls basketball

Northwood 60, Western Alamance 47
Chatham Central 53, North Moore 26
Bartlett Yancey 64, Jordan-Matthews 17
Clover Garden 66, Woods Charter 32

Boys basketball

Northwood 72, Western Alamance 26
Chatham Central 74, North Moore 52
Bartlett Yancey 45, Chatham Central 35
Clover Garden 52, Woods Charter 42

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18

Indoor track

Seaforth boys place first, girls place second at Mid-Carolina Conference Polar Bear Championships

Girls basketball

Seaforth 61, North Moore 14
Chatham Charter 64, Triangle Math & Science 43

Boys basketball

Seaforth 53, North Moore 36
Chatham Charter 66, Triangle Math & Science 24

THURSDAY, JANUARY 19

Wrestling

Seaforth 42, Bartlett Yancey 30

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20

Girls basketball

Northwood 56, Williams 45
North Moore 37, Jordan-Matthews 22
Chatham Charter 57, Woods Charter 27
Seaforth 55, Cummings 12

Boys basketball

Northwood 71, Williams 40
Chatham Central 76, Graham 49
North Moore 64, Jordan-Matthews 48
Chatham Charter 63, Woods Charter 25
Seaforth 63, Cummings 62

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21

Boys basketball

Northwood 58, New Hanover 45

SCHEDULES

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24

Girls basketball

Northwood at Cedar Ridge (6 p.m.)
Seaforth at Bartlett Yancey (6 p.m.)
Jordan-Matthews vs. Cummings (6 p.m.)
Chatham Charter vs. River Mill (6 p.m.)
Woods Charter at Southern Lake Academy (6 p.m.)

Boys basketball

Northwood vs. Cedar Ridge (7:30 p.m.)
Seaforth at Bartlett Yancey (7:30 p.m.)
Jordan-Matthews vs. Cummings (6 p.m.)
Chatham Charter vs. River Mill (7:30 p.m.)
Woods Charter at Southern Lake Academy (7:30 p.m.)

Wrestling

Chatham Central, Chatham Charter at Southern

Alamance (7 p.m.)

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 25

Wrestling

Seaforth quad meet at Cary High (TBA)

Girls basketball

Chatham Charter vs. Eastern Randolph (6:30 p.m.)

Boys basketball

Chatham Charter vs. Eastern Randolph (7 p.m.)

THURSDAY, JANUARY 26

Girls basketball

Chatham Charter at Clover Garden (6 p.m.)

Boys basketball

Chatham Charter at Clover Garden (7:30 p.m.)

Swimming

Mid-Carolina Conference Championship Meet at Ashboro YMCA (6 p.m.)

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27

Girls basketball

Jordan-Matthews vs. Graham (6 p.m.)
Woods Charter vs. Clover Garden (6 p.m.)

Boys basketball

Jordan-Matthews vs. Graham (7:30 p.m.)
Woods Charter vs. Clover Garden (7:30 p.m.)

CLIPBOARD Q&A | RANDY COX

Northwood boys lacrosse trending in right direction

BY JEREMY VERNON
News + Record Sports Editor

The best record of any Chatham County boys lacrosse team last spring belonged to Northwood, which finished the year 11-6 overall — the team's best season since 2018 — after reaching the second round of the state playoffs.

The Chargers finished second in the Central/Mid-Carolina conference behind Orange with a 9-3 league record and entered the 1A/2A/3A tournament as the No. 8 seed in the east region. After a first-round bye, Northwood fell to conference opponent Williams, 12-10, in the second round.

Over the offseason, the Chargers only graduated three seniors, and plenty of talent is returning to the field this spring. Leading the way will be the senior trio of Taylor Laberge, Will Smith and Jason Walden, who combined for 145 goals and 37 assists to carry Northwood last season.

Chargers head coach Randy Cox has a 30-18 record in three seasons in Pittsboro. Earlier this week, Cox caught up with the News + Record to discuss the upcoming season, his talented senior class and Northwood's impending move to 2A next school year.

How pumped are you for the upcoming season, given what your team was able to accomplish last spring?

RANDY COX: We are extremely excited. We had a successful season last season. We've got essentially five all-conference, all-region, all-state players coming back this year, which is nice for us. We're adding hopefully a couple of young men who can contribute. We have a very good goalie coming in and some players who have played the game already who should come in with some pretty good skills. You take that and you add that to an already seasoned, experienced



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Northwood boys lacrosse coach Randy Cox (center) led the Chargers to an 11-6 overall record last spring.

group of upperclassmen, and I think that lends itself to having success. But the boys have to be ready. That's for sure. You can have all the talent in the world, but if you're not mentally prepared and you're not in shape and physically ready to take on the competition, you'll have limited success. That's really where our focus is.

You have a really strong senior class, led by the trio of Taylor Laberge, Will Smith and Jason Walden. How have you seen those three players grow together over the past few years, and what's the next step for them?

I think (the next step) is just being a more unified group and really knowing where the other ones are going to be on the field. Playing together is where I see them really impacting this year's team. From being a young athlete, your first time handling a stick, to the point they are now with understanding the game, I think their game IQ is pretty solid. They're going to need to bring the younger freshmen and sophomores that are now entering the program, they're going to need to bring them along. I have always tried to work on, No. 1, the game IQ, No. 2, their skills, but No. 3 is their leadership. We're going to be looking to them for leadership, and there are going to be

some challenges along the way. There's going to be so some games where the competition is going to be pretty solid. We have a great schedule. I think we're at 17 games right now. It's a pretty solid schedule. I think Northwood is a fairly respected program in our region, so I think people want to beat us. We're going to have to be prepared for every game. I see them as players who are going to have really lead the team.

Who are a few of the younger players, specifically, you would like to highlight?

There's (freshman) James Flanagan in the goal. Obviously he's going to have to go ahead and perform. I don't believe we're going to have the goalie that we had last year that's been part of the program. I think he's made a conscious decision to pursue some other interests. I'm hesitant to say this, but my son, (freshman) Grayson Cox, has got to step up and play in the midfield. I think (senior) Will Johnson also on the defensive side, and (senior) Taylor Zelhoff, I think we need to expect a lot out of them, and they need to step up and play for us.

Northwood is at the 3A level for one more year, but next spring you'll be competing as a 2A school. What was your reaction to that decision? Is 2A the right

place for Northwood?

I really don't think it matters whether you put us 1A, 2A or 3A. We've played 4A teams as a 3A team. We played Chapel Hill last year. It depends on the talent level of the student athlete, in terms of who we play. I don't believe being a 2A school changes my mindset in terms of challenging our student athletes. If we're a 2A school and we have the ability to play a 3A or a 4A school, then I want to do that so we can continue to improve both individually as players and collectively as a team.

I'm trying not to look at it in terms of, "OK, now we're a 2A school. Let's just play the teams in our conference and not challenge the boys." We want for them to improve. Some of these boys have aspirations to play post high school and collegiately, and I don't think playing in a 2A- or 1A-type conference is going to put some of these boys in a position to play the level of competition they need to play in order to give them an opportunity to play after high school. I think from a coaching standpoint, we still need to put them in situations where they're developing and getting better, if that makes sense.

Sports Editor Jeremy Vernon can be reached at jeremy@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @jbo_vernon.

PANTHERS

Continued from page 1B

several places, including a recent CBS mock that had Carolina trading up to No. 1 overall to select the Kentucky QB — a scenario that would assuredly give me a brain aneurysm.

Despite Levis' impressive physical traits at 6-foot-3 and 232 pounds, the big knock against him is his accuracy. This past season, Levis completed 65.4% of his passes — an average number — while only tossing 19 touchdowns compared to 10 interceptions. Over the past two seasons, Levis has a touchdown-to-interception ratio of just 1.9, while other top prospects Bryce Young and C.J. Stroud had ratios this season of 6.4 and 6.8, respectively.

Levis will be a project wherever he lands, and I don't think the talent is exciting enough to make a franchise-altering trade to acquire. For my money, I'd rather Carolina stay put at No. 9 and take someone like Florida quarterback Anthony Richardson, a similarly polarizing prospect with a cannon for an arm but who, importantly, doesn't have any disgusting culinary habits I'm aware of.

Richardson, nicknamed AR-15 because of his initials and number (woof), is a 6-foot-4, 232-pound dual threat who threw for 2,549 yards and 17 touchdowns against nine interceptions this past season. He also ran for 654 yards and nine touchdowns.

If trading up to No. 1 is a possibility, the Panthers should also consider taking Young or Stroud, who — in my opinion — are vastly superior prospects to either Richardson or Levis.

Young, the 2021 Heisman Trophy winner, had an overall offensive rating of 91.5 this past season, according to Pro Football Focus, ranking him sixth in the country. Over the past two seasons, Young has thrown for over 8,000 yards and 79 touchdowns against just 12 interceptions.

The big knock on Young is his size, at 6-foot-even and 195 pounds, but he has shown time and time again he has the poise and the confidence to perform under the brightest lights.

Stroud, for his part, didn't have as strong of a 2022 season as Young, but he did turn things up when they mattered most. In Ohio State's loss to Georgia in the College Football Playoff semifinals, Stroud completed 23 of 34 passes for 348 yards, four touchdowns and zero interceptions.

Stroud possesses not only the ideal size for a starting quarterback at 6-foot-3 and 220 pounds, but he is also seen as one of the most accurate quarterbacks in this upcoming class. After years of watching Sam Darnold and the rest of the Panthers' traveling band of quarterbacks play catch with opposing corners, I'm ready for a new guy to come in and get his own teammates the ball — a novel idea, I know.



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WRESTLING

Seaforth captures conference championship over Bartlett Yancey for 2nd straight year

BY DAN E. WAY
News + Record
Correspondent

of the moment. The Mid-Carolina 1A/2A regular season wrestling title was on the line in a familiar battle of foes with unblemished conference records last Thurs-

day, Jan. 19. Bartlett Yancey grabbed the initial lead with an opening bout with an opening pin at 182, so the Hawks' freshman 195-pounder felt compelled to mash

the momentum. "I felt some pressure to win. It was an intense moment. I set the tone," Compton said after he clamped the Buccaneers' Na'zeer Isley in a mere 50 seconds to tie the score 6-6. He had a one-track mind stepping onto the home mat: "If we start crushing them at the beginning, we can get the rest of the team on a roll. We started getting win after win after that. Everybody had this positive energy and winning spirit."

The Hawks won seven of the next 12 matches, including five bouts with bonus point wins and two forfeits, to prevail 46-36 despite a strong Bartlett Yancey comeback threat late in the match.

The teams finished in the same 1-2 order for the conference title last year. It's a phenomenal repeat because Seaforth has been in existence just two years. They have only two juniors. The rest of the team is made up of freshmen and sophomores. Bartlett Yancey, meanwhile, is a seasoned team with a host of veterans who have qualified for past state tournaments.

Seaforth coach Ryan Armstrong said the championship required some of his wrestlers juggling weight classes for a competitive advantage. "We had to play the



Staff photo by James Kiefer

Seaforth's Cadan Brewer tries to flip Bartlett Yancey's Amber Hundley during a home match last Wednesday.

chess game," he said. "We got the matchups we needed, and we wrestled matches that we didn't need."

Armstrong said the Hawks' impressive growth is welcome, but somewhat unexpected.

"We're a year ahead of where we thought we were going to be," he said. "Our goals are set high this year. We've got a plan."

The boys and girls on the team are all putting in hard work, some six days a week. He's proud they are excelling in the classroom and the wrestling room.

But Bartlett Yancey didn't go out with a whimper. After falling behind 42-12 at 132 pounds, the Bucs stormed back with a forfeit win and two falls. That narrowed the gap to 42-30 with two matches remaining and a possible tie hanging in the balance.

Armstrong didn't get rattled. He knew if the final score was knotted, tiebreaker criteria would favor Seaforth for the win because Bartlett Yancey forfeited at two weights and Seaforth only gave up one forfeit.

"We knew what we had at 160," Armstrong said. With Judge Lloyd, who is having a strong year, and coach said he felt good about Alex Hinchman's chances at 170, even though he was going up against a state qualifier, Armstrong said. Lloyd picked up a 10-2 major decision against Justin Shumaker on the strength of a takedown, a pair of reversals, an escape and 3-point tilt. But Hinchman fell by fall to Jakoby Casselman to end the bout 46-36.

The match got off to a rocky start for the Hawks at 182. Davonta Warren,

See **WRESTLE**, page B4



Staff photo by James Kiefer

Seaforth's Lockard Bowen struggles against Bartlett Yancey's Dallas Wall in a 138-pound bout last Wednesday.

Council on Aging Weekly Activities Calendar

Monday, January 30

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Chair Yoga w/Liz (at Chatham Grove Community Center and on Zoom)**
- 10 a.m. - **Geri-Fit Part 2 w/ Jackie**
- 11 a.m. - **Bingocize**
- 11:15 a.m. - **Chair Volleyball**
- 2 p.m. - **Table Tennis**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Show & Tell**
- 2 p.m. - **Strength & Tone**

Tuesday, January 31

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **3G's Men's Group**
- 10 a.m. - **Woodcarvers; Bingo w/Joe & Coffee**
- 1 p.m. - **Rummikub**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9:45 a.m. - **Chair Exercises w/Olivia for Beginners (in-person and Zoom)**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Ping Pong**
- 1 p.m. - **Rook/Phase 10/Rummikub; Book Club; "Bring Your Own Project" Gathering**

Wednesday, February 1

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 10 a.m. - **Chair Yoga w/Liz (in-person and Zoom); Coffee & Games w/Chatham County Sheriff's Department**
- 1 p.m. - **Board Games & Cards, Open Art Studio**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 8 a.m. - **Veterans Benefit Assistance (Appointment required to Michael Daniels at 919-545-8334)**
- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 10 a.m. - **Bible Study**
- 1 p.m. - **Cornhole**
- 2 p.m. - **Crafting w/Kathryn (DIY Clipboard)**

Thursday, February 2

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 10 a.m. - **Crafts and Chat**
- 11 a.m. - **Nutrition Education by Ann Clark**
- 1 p.m. - **Bridge**
- 1:30 p.m. - **Line Dancing**
- 3 p.m. - **Gentle Yoga w/Liz**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9:30 a.m. - **Men's Coffee & Conversations**
- 10 a.m. - **Music Jam Session**
- 1 p.m. - **Book Club**
- 2 p.m. - **Tai Chi**
- 3 p.m. - **Bingo**

Friday, February 3

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 a.m. - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 10 a.m. - **Geri-Fit Part 2 w/Jackie**
- 11:15 a.m. - **Cornhole & Shuffleboard**
- 1 p.m. - **Card Games/Euchre**
- 3 p.m. - **Jukebox Live! ("Music to Get You Movin")**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 7 p.m. - **Friday Night Dance (fee required to attend)**



For more information on these and other programs, call our centers Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

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WRESTLE

Continued from page B3

a 2022 state qualifier for Bartlett Yancey, hit a headlock to show the lights to Cole Seder in just 33 seconds.

That's when Compton had a breakout moment at 195. Having struggled the past few weeks on his feet, he hit a fireman's carry to get a takedown.

"I saw he was letting me get the inside grip, so I was able to secure the arm, grab his leg and just roll him over, and from there it was pretty easy. I just put a lot of weight on him" for the pin, Compton said.

Buccaneer Jayelan Warren got the momentum swinging back toward the visitors with a pin at 220 over Cole Ballard and a 12-6 team lead. It was the last time Bartlett Yancey would be in front.

At 285, Palmer Moade wasted little time squeezing on a front headlock and bulldozing Bartlett Yancey's Jacob Walker backward, working into a near-side cradle for a 5-0 lead. Walker escaped, but Moade stuffed Walker's ensuing leg shot and spun behind for a 7-1 lead. Starting on top in the second period, the Hawk showed why teammates



Staff photo by James Kiefer

Seaforth's Cole Ballard flips Bartlett Yancey's Russell Bartlett in a 220-pound bout last Wednesday.

have designated him "Beast Moade." He flipped Walker to his back, criss-crossed his opponent's arms across his chest, and flattened him with a body press for a fall to even the score at 12-12.

Seaforth's Jordan Miller got a forfeit at 106 and Gabe Rogers decked Buccaneer Kaden Schnell with a half nelson after building a 10-1 lead at 113. The Bucs evaded standout Josh Miller at 120, choosing to forfeit, and Hawks 126 pounder Layne Armstrong followed by sticking Cole Russell with a first period reverse half and underhook for a 36-12 lead.

At 132 Seaforth's Chance Cody compiled

a commanding 15-5 lead featuring six takedowns against Cameron Stokes before decking him with a reverse half in the waning seconds of the bout. That put Seaforth in front 42-12 before hitting some brick Walls — brothers Dallas at 138 and Dakota at 145, both returning state qualifiers for Bartlett Yancey.

Dallas Wall slapped a far side cradle on Lockard Bowen for a first period fall and Dakota Wall received a forfeit. Jeremiah Johnson then pinned Seaforth's Keira Rosenmarkle with a first period headlock to narrow the score to 42-30, setting the final stage for Lloyd and Hinchman.

COACH

Continued from page B1

Johnson takes over for Chris Kenan, who coached the Chargers to a 4-6 record this past fall. Kenan resigned as the head coach and as a teacher at Northwood following the fall season.

"We are extremely excited to bring Coach Johnson into our school community," Northwood athletic director Cameron Vernon said in a statement. "Not only did he impress us with his track record of turning programs around, but we also know we are getting an outstanding teacher in the classroom. Coach Johnson is going to instill a strong work ethic in our students and student-athletes."

With a lot of experience, and miles under his belt, Johnson believes he has what it takes to help Northwood generate sustained success.

"I've been at a small school," he said. "I've been at a big 4A school in North Carolina. I was at the highest level in Wisconsin. I've seen a lot of different types of cultures and a lot of different types of kids, and I feel like it has really prepared me for this position. I hope to be at Northwood for as long as I possibly can, and I'm looking forward to working with all the student-athletes I'm going to come in contact with."

As far as coaching philosophies, Johnson said he like to spread things out on offense to make opposing teams, "defend every blade of grass," though

he also won't shy away from also using the power run game. On defense, Johnson said his team will have a "bend but don't break," mentality, though his main emphases will be coaching his players to play with both discipline and passion.

Outside of offense, defense and special teams, Johnson also preaches a secret "fourth phase" of the game that he believes gives his teams success: the sideline.

"I want the kids to acting professional, obviously, but I want them to be crazy and being the biggest fans for the guys on the field and be ready for when their number is called upon," Johnson said.

Johnson will be the fourth coach Northwood has had since the start of the 2018 season, following Kenan, Cullen Homolka and Brian Harrington. Over that span, the Chargers have an overall record of 22-28 and a conference record of 13-16.

With a move to 2A on the horizon next fall, Johnson hopes his presence will bring a level of continuity that has been absent with the Northwood football team over the past several seasons.

"They're looking for structure. They're looking for leadership. And I think I can help provide that..." Johnson said. "I hope to be here at Northwood as long as they'll have me."

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SEAFORTH

Continued from page B1

which ended up being the difference in the Hawks' 63-62 win.

Stevenson finished the game with 27 points, 12 rebounds, four assists and five blocks. For the season, he leads all Chatham County boys players in points (20.9), rebounds (11.5) and blocks (3.6) per game.

"We went 4 flat for the final play, and I was glad to get a bucket," Stevenson said. "No one can guard me one on one. I just took it took the basket and got a tough layup, then ran back on defense because I knew there was still time on the clock. We got the stop and then I started celebrating with the fans."

One might think Stevenson's dominance is a sheer product of his size. At 6-foot-10, Stevenson is the tallest player in the county, but he is far from overly dependent on his physical attributes to get the job done.

Despite his size, Stevenson is a gifted ball-handler and passer, and Seaforth tends to run best with him initiating the offense. In games where the junior has at least three assists — something that has happened nine times this season — the Hawks are 7-2. When he has two or less, they are 5-3.

Stevenson is also a gifted shooter for his size. Despite going 0-for-9 from 3-point range in his last three games, he has still made 19-of-50 (38%) of his deep attempts this season, a marked improvement after making 21-of-74 (28.4%) of his threes a year ago. And the junior has been completely lethal from inside the 3-point line, making over 68% of his attempts from there this season.

It's this unique blend of size and skills that have Stevenson among the top recruits in the entire country in the Class of 2024. Already reporting offers from UNC, Virginia, Georgetown and Missouri, among others, the forward figures to be one of the most sought-after prizes of next year's senior class.

While the recruiting process can be overwhelming at times, Stevenson has done well to keep his focus on the



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Seaforth junior Jarin Stevenson scored his 1,000th career point Wednesday against North Moore. He also notched his first career triple-double with 19 points, 21 rebounds and 10 blocks.

court. At 12-5 overall and 7-0 in Mid-Carolina Conference play, Seaforth still has some business to take care of to put itself in good standing ahead of the 2A state tournament.

The Hawks are five games away from a second straight perfect season in conference play, but the highlight of the team's remaining schedule comes Saturday, Feb. 11, when Seaforth hosts undefeated Chatham Charter.

The Knights entered this week with a 22-0 record and played in last season's 1A state championship game. Despite being the smaller of the two schools, Chatham Charter figures to have the edge in the meeting with the Hawks, especially after defeating them 44-23 at home last season.

Stevenson knows his team's regular season

finale will be a challenge, but it should also be beneficial for a Seaforth team with limited experience playing in high-pressure situations.

If Stevenson can channel the performances from this past week when the Hawks meet the Knights, don't count out Seaforth from pulling off a shocking upset.

"That game (against Chatham Charter) will definitely prepare us for the state playoffs," Stevenson said. "We just need to play hard and play smart. They apply a lot of pressure, so we just need to stay calm, be careful with our turnovers and be confident out there."

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MILESTONE

Continued from page B1

Bland passes 1K

Adding to the excitement of the past week, Northwood senior Te'Keyah Bland eclipsed the 1,000-point mark for her career in the Chargers' game against New Hanover on Saturday.

Bland is the third Chatham County player to pass 1,000 career points already this season, joining Chatham Charter senior Adam Harvey and Seaforth junior Jarin Stevenson. She and Walden are the only active Chatham County girls to hit that mark in their careers.

This season, Bland is averaging 11.8 points, 6.9 rebounds and 1.7 blocks per game while shooting 47% from the field and 75% from the free-throw line.

Bland has helped lead Northwood from an 0-3 start to the season to a 13-4 overall record and a 7-0 mark in conference play. The Chargers — who won the 3A state championship last season — are ranked by MaxPreps as the No. 4 team in the 3A East.

Earlier this season, Northwood head coach Kerri Snipes credited both Bland and fellow

senior Gianna McMaman for the team's turnaround.

"Having both of them has really encouraged the younger girls who haven't always been in these positions with us to continue to fight it out until the end," Snipes said.

Central girls on a roll

One of the overlooked basketball teams in the county this winter has been the Chatham Central girls, who have quietly put together a 10-5 record through their first 15 games this season.

The Bears, led by head

coach Lynda Burke, came into the 2022-23 season having finished each of the past seven years with a record of .500 or better. Last season, Chatham Central started 2-9 before rallying to finish the year 14-14 overall.

The Bears have a 4-2

record in Mid-Carolina Conference play, which continued when Central played Eastern Randolph after press time. The team also plays Friday at home against Seaforth, which defeated the Bears, 63-20, earlier this month.

Since the first loss to

the Hawks, Chatham Central is 4-1 and has allowed their opponents just 29.2 points per game on average.

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Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Northwood senior Te'Keyah Bland scored her 1,000th career point Saturday in a home game against New Hanover.



With great joy and excitement, the Rotary Club of Pittsboro celebrated its 6th birthday this past week. We were honored to have District Governor, Debbie Scott, and Rotary International Director Elect, Patrick Eakes, as our distinguished guests. Patrick was present at the club's inaugural meeting, so we were pleased he could join us for this special occasion. No birthday celebration would be complete without cake, and our own Pittsboro Rotarian, Shawn Brothers, spoiled us all with his creation. In the course of six years, we have accomplished many service projects, but we look forward to achieving much more in the years to come!



Join us Wednesdays at Postal Fish Company (noon-1pm) for conversation, connection, and community.

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PITTSBORO'S WATER WOES

An updated timeline of Pittsboro's fight for clean water

CN+R Staff Report

PITTSBORO — The town of Pittsboro has dealt with water quality issues for decades. The town's main water source — the Haw River — has experienced discharges of unregulated contaminants, including PFAS, PFOA and 1,4-Dioxane, which has routinely compromised Pittsboro's water supply.

Back in June, Pittsboro commissioners voted unanimously to investigate and potentially

pursue litigation against industries or others responsible for repeated discharges of PFAS and 1,4-Dioxane — two families of compounds which have been deemed likely human carcinogens, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) — into the Haw River, Pittsboro's source of drinking water.

In an effort to document what's transpired, here's a chronological timeline detailing what the town has done in response to address the

water quality problems since the June vote:

June 2022: Activists react to the town's decision to investigate polluters

Activists and various organizations advocated for Pittsboro to pursue legal action against those responsible for discharges of PFAS and 1,4-Dioxane into the Haw River.

Pittsboro resident and Clean Haw River co-founder Katie Bry-

ant found out about the town's decision to pursue litigation on the eve of her birthday, which she called "the biggest birthday gift the town could have given" her.

"I can't even explain to you how overjoyed and how happy I am and proud of them," Bryant said. "I know it's just the beginning and may not fix everything, but I realized that in this kind of work, every step forward is what gets us to our bigger picture."

Haw River Assembly's Riverkeeper Emily Sutton has also been on the front lines in advocating for clean water in Pittsboro. She expressed the same sentiment as Bryant, saying she hoped this decision set an example for other downstream towns.

"With cases like this where downstream communities are going into litigation to help finance water treatment systems to keep their communities and their customers safe," Sutton said, "I hope that this sets a precedent for other communities to know that this is a legal tool in their toolbox — and that we need to identify the sources and eliminate the sources of pollution at the discharge."

July 7, 2022: Pittsboro accepts 'distressed' community designation

The town's board of commissioners voted unanimously to become a part of North Carolina's Viable Utility program, which provided Pittsboro with grant money — the program's total fund was \$9 million — to help address issues with its water and wastewater infrastructure challenges.

The Viable Utility program "provides funding to build a path toward viable utility systems using long-term solutions for distressed water and wastewater units in North Carolina," according to the NCDEQ website.

A distressed unit is defined to be "a public water system or wastewater system operated by a local government unit exhibiting signs of failure to identify or address those financial or operating needs necessary to enable that system to become or to remain a local government unit generating sufficient revenues to adequately fund management and operations, personnel, appropriate

levels of maintenance, and reinvestment that facilitate the provision of reliable water or wastewater services."

July 21, 2022: Pittsboro, Greensboro officials hold first joint in-person meeting

Officials from Pittsboro and Greensboro came together for the first time in person to discuss water quality issues and seek ways to safeguard the Haw River from pollutant discharges, as well as to hear a formal apology from Greensboro.

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

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

Aug. 10, 2022: Greensboro published a 'year one' report on its 1,4-Dioxane chemical discharges

The city of Greensboro published a Special Order by Consent Year One report last June, in the wake of yet another accidental discharge of 1,4-Dioxane — the third since June 2021 — into the Haw River. The 34-page document, spanning May 1, 2021, to April 30, 2022, contained summaries of the city's investigation results, oversight activities and a public education outreach plan.

Aug. 26, 2022: Pittsboro's Granular Activated Carbon (GAC) filtration system goes online

The project was in progress for nearly a year and a half and served as an essential first step in addressing the town's

issues with emerging contaminants and unregulated chemicals in its drinking water.

The new GAC system can process 1 million gallons of water daily, which is the town's average daily use throughout the year. At \$3.5 million, the investment is one of the largest single infrastructure projects undertaken within Pittsboro's utility program, with funding coming from both the town's revenue and grant funding.

A GAC filtration system removes contaminants from the water supply by flowing water through the GAC material, which pulls the contaminants like PFAS out of the water and forces them to stick to the carbon.

Nov. 14, 2022: Pittsboro board highlights water and sewer expansions and demands

Wastewater woes have troubled Pittsboro for years, but some town officials hope solutions are within reach.

Commissioner Kyle Shipp, along with Interim Town Manager Hazen Blodgett and Engineering Director Kent Jackson, led a two-hour discussion on how the town's sewer and water capacities reached their current states — with demand currently threatening to outpace space — during Monday's board meeting.

Shipp, who focused most of the presentation on ways for Pittsboro to move forward, said the past can help inform future agreements as the town addresses capacity issues.

"What I really want to focus on is where we're at today and where we can go in the future," he said.

Jan. 9, 2023: Sanford provides update on water plant expansion project

The presentation served as an update for the board; Pittsboro is a part of the interlocal agreement for the expansion project.

"Pre-2018, the city of Sanford knew that they needed to consider a water plant expansion," Sanford Public Works Director Victor Czar told Pittsboro commissioners. "Growth is coming for us, growth is coming for you — it's recognized it's not going to stop."

The regional water plant expansion is a part of an interlocal agreement, created by Sanford in 2021, involving multiple local government agencies, including Chatham County, Fuquay-Varina, Holly Springs and Pittsboro.

The expansion would allow the entities in the interlocal agreement to utilize millions of gallons of treated water for their own residents, which former Pittsboro Town Manager Chris Kennedy previously said would address "the lesser known evil" of water capacity issues.

Jan. 23, 2023: Pittsboro votes to pursue litigation against PFAS manufacturers

The town's board of commissioners voted unanimously to pursue litigation against manufacturers of PFAS chemicals and aqueous film forming foam (AFFF), a formal step in holding

See **WATER**, page B8

Open the (Back) Door To a Roth IRA

There aren't many drawbacks to having a high income — but being unable to invest in a Roth IRA might be one of them. Are there strategies that allow high-income earners to contribute to this valuable retirement account?

Before we delve into that question, let's consider the rules. In 2023, you can contribute the full amount to a Roth IRA — \$6,500, or \$7,500 if you're 50 or older — if your modified adjusted gross income is less than \$138,000 (if you're single) or \$218,000 (if you're married and filing jointly). If you earn more than these amounts, the amount you can contribute decreases until it's phased out completely if your income exceeds \$153,000 (single) or \$228,000 (married, filing jointly).

A Roth IRA is attractive because its earnings and withdrawals are tax free, provided you've had the account at least five years and you don't start taking money out until you're 59½. Furthermore, when you own a Roth IRA, you're not required to take withdrawals from it when you turn 72, as you would with a traditional IRA, so you'll have more flexibility in your retirement income planning and your money will have the chance to potentially keep growing. But given your income, how can you contribute to a Roth?

You may want to consider what's known as a "backdoor Roth" strategy. Essentially, this involves contributing money to a new traditional IRA, or taking money from an existing one, and then converting the funds to a Roth IRA. But while this backdoor strategy sounds simple, it involves some serious considerations.

Specifically, you need to evaluate how much of your traditional IRA is in pretax or after-tax dollars. When you contribute pretax dollars to a traditional IRA, your

contributions lower your annual taxable income. However, if your income is high enough to disqualify you from contributing directly to a Roth IRA, you may also earn too much to make deductible (pretax) contributions to a traditional IRA. Consequently, you might have contributed after-tax dollars to your traditional IRA, on top of the pretax ones you may have put in when your income was lower. (Earnings on after-tax contributions will be treated as pretax amounts.)

In any case, if you convert pretax assets from your traditional IRA to a Roth IRA, the amount converted will be fully taxable in the year of the conversion. So, if you were to convert a large amount of these assets, you could face a hefty tax bill. And since you probably don't want to take funds from the converted IRA itself to pay for the taxes, you'd need another source of funding, possibly from your savings and other investments.

Ultimately, then, a backdoor Roth IRA strategy may make the most sense if you have few or no pretax assets in any traditional IRA, including a SEP-IRA and a SIMPLE IRA. If you do have a sizable amount of pretax dollars in your IRA, and you'd still like to convert it to a Roth IRA, you could consider spreading the conversion over a period of years, potentially diluting your tax burden.

Consult with your tax advisor when considering a backdoor Roth strategy. But if it's appropriate for your situation, it could play a role in your financial strategy, so give it some thought.

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CHATHAM IS BOLD!



Funding and future: Chatham school board sets priorities at mid-year retreat

BY BEN RAPPAPORT
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Board of Education met at Chatham Mills in Pittsboro for a day-long retreat last Wednesday to reestablish priorities at the midway point of the school year. Topics of discussion included school safety, utilizing existing funding and planning for future growth in Chatham Park. No action was taken at the retreat, but district leadership shared updates and information about where the plans of the school board should lie in the latter portion of the 2022-2023 school year. Here's a rundown:

School safety

Superintendent Dr. Anthony Jackson kicked off Wednesday's retreat with an update on school safety. The item was originally on the closed session agenda, but Jackson said he felt it was important to clarify for the public what the district is doing to keep students safe. While Jackson would not share specific procedures the district had in place during a lockdown, he said he continues to prioritize the safety of children. "We can't do safety by social media," Jackson said. Chatham County Schools offers parent safety training and classroom safety training for procedures doing a lockdown. Assistant Superintendent of Operations Chris Blice has made several adjustments to school safety policy, including enlisting the help of Risk and Strategic Management Corporation — a Virginia-based company that creates safety plans for institutions and corporations — in providing an updated written safety plan. Safety includes more than just lockdown situations, Blice said; it is also everyday safety like preventing chemical spills, ensuring digital citizenship and clarifying disciplinary practices. "We're going to be very intentional, honest and open about this work," Jackson said. "But most importantly we are going to focus on making our schools safe for students, adults, staff and everyone inside our schools daily."

Board member Jane Allen Wilson wanted to explore parent listening sessions around school safety. She said the board needs to hear parents' anxieties because of the pressure everyone feels around school safety in the modern age. Wilson brought this up in the context of lockdowns at Chatham Middle School earlier this month, which



Photo courtesy of Chatham County Schools

The new main entrance for the Chatham County Schools Central Services building, under construction in Pittsboro.

were topics of discussion during this month's school board meeting (read more in this week's edition). Jackson said a lot of that anxiety is based on a "lack of trust" in the school system, and CCS needs to work on building that trust. While he said he didn't have the exact answer to those anxieties, he felt CCS needed to acknowledge the struggles of modern-day parents and students. "I don't want misinformation, I don't want disinformation and I don't want gossip around school safety," Jackson said. He said the goal is always to send everyone home safely every day when the school day is over.

ESSER funds

The district received an update on its Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Funds. ESSER is federal funding aimed at helping safely reopen and sustain operations of schools and address the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on students. Districts across North Carolina have left millions of COVID-19 relief funds on the table by not allocating them, but that's not the case here: Chatham County Schools has clear plans for the funding it's been allocated.

ESSER was released in three waves, with funding for the final wave needing to be allocated by Sept. 30, 2024. Twenty percent of that funding must go toward learning loss, as per guidelines from the federal government and N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction. Chatham County Schools has a total allotment of more than \$21 million. It can use funds to prevent, reduce or

respond to COVID-19 in the classroom. To date CCS has spent \$18.4 million of ESSER funds, leaving \$3 million remaining to be spent by June 30, 2024. The money from ESSER has created opportunities for CCS to hire more than 50 new positions. That includes a dropout prevention specialist at each high school, three new social workers and three new English as a Second Language (ESL) professionals. The funding has also helped build out the district's summer learning to recoup learning losses from COVID-19. The four main themes of spending included human capital, health and safety, extended learning and instructional support, and professional development. While the funding has been useful to the district, officials also said the massive influx of funds has been overwhelming to manage.

"When it rains it pours," said Carol Little, CCS executive director of federal programs. "It's been great, but it's been challenging to manage \$21 million in such a short time." Chief Financial Officer Tony Messer said he anticipates the remaining \$3 million in ESSER funds will be spent before 2024 with the addition of staff bonuses in 2021-2022.

Operations Research and Education Laboratory (ORED)

With growth coming to Chatham County related to Chatham Park, VinFast, Wolfspeed and other industrial plans, consultants believe the district will be over capacity in the near future. According to ORED, which conducted a land-use study and offered population projections

for schools for the next 10 years, they projected Chatham Park alone will account for more than 4,500 students in the district over the next decade. This means that schools in the eastern portion of the county will be over capacity if it maintains the current state. The district has, however, said it plans to build at least one school in Chatham Park's Northern Village with another likely in the Southern Village as the development progresses.

Question marks also remain about just how much student population growth will be seen in Siler City and surrounding areas once Wolfspeed is fully operational, which is predicted to be around 2026. Board members said they were surprised at just how much growth was projected, especially in the western portion of the county.

LETRS training

Carla Murray, executive director for elementary grades, provided an update on LETRS — Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling. Through a 160-hour professional development program, educators understand "how" students learn to read and write, recognize the reasons "why" some students struggle, and determine "what" must be taught to increase student success. CCS provides a bonus of \$1,000 to any K-5 teacher to any teacher who receives their Certificate of Completion for LETRS. According to Murray, teachers and principals appreciate this program because it helps struggling students learn to read. "This training has been great to help me learn the art of teaching literacy," read one teacher testimonial

ny about LETRS shared at the retreat. "I feel that I am learning the science and why behind my students are learning or not learning to read." Teachers also praised the flexibility and support of the district to engage in LETRS training. CCS allows for virtual training sessions, teacher workdays or ESSER-funded substitutes to attend professional development sessions. The district plans to renew LETRS for two more years.

New Central Services building

Chatham County Schools has been in the process of building a new Central Services building, and construction is well underway. Blice shared an update on the construction and moving process at the retreat. CCS is anticipating beginning the transition to the new building during the last week of February. By the end of January, the project is expected to be substantially complete and a certificate of occupancy is expected before the end of February. The transition to the new building is expected to abide by the following schedule:

- Week of February 27: Move Technology, Public Information, and School Nutrition.
- Week of March 6: Move Senior Cabinet Members.
- Week of March 13: Move ASIS. Will be moving from several different locations.
- Week of March 20: Move Human Resources, Reception, Superintendent & Board of Education.
- Week of March 27: Move Finance (limited window of availability due to payroll con-

straints).

Employee affordable housing pilot program

A range of options was reviewed by the district to help more CCS employees live, work and play in Chatham. Kelly Batten, assistant superintendent for human resources, said the program would be used to help entice future teachers to the county. Affordable housing is defined as 30% Area median income. This means that a CCS teacher with a \$41,000 average salary would pay a monthly rent of \$1,045. The program the county settled on is a quasi-subleasing program, known as master leasing. In a master leasing model, the employee gains access to affordable housing and the financial benefit of reduced monthly living expenses. The monthly rental subsidy can be provided through community partnerships, school system designated funds, corporate sponsors, competitive grants, in-kind contributions, private donations, etc. "Having this kind of lease would provide some stability," Batten said. "That's especially important with all the incoming growth we've heard about today." The concept would apply throughout the county. There are no other counties in the state who have adopted this model, which Batten said means CCS can be a leader in this affordable housing for teachers across N.C. The model is not finalized, but Jackson said he brought it before the board to see if they were interested in the concept. "I think this is much needed," said Wilson. "This will definitely incentivize others to stay and come to Chatham. I'm on board." Wilson said she wanted to ensure community partners would take part in the design, pay structure and modeling of this idea. She proposed the idea of a community think-tank with leaders in local affordable housing to make this concept a reality. Jackson said they'll investigate the idea further. He said the county needs to do more for housing for teachers because too many people are commuting into the district for work, which he believes is not sustainable as the county grows. "The more school employees who live in our county, the better," Jackson said.

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	Capacities		Forecasted Month-1 ADM										
	2023-24	Pre-K Adj.	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31	2031-32	2032-33
Elementary Schools (K-5 / K-8)													
Bennett School	212	190	172	167	169	170	175	172	169	161	157	163	164
Bonlee School	344	344	293	283	272	278	259	268	268	261	253	255	252
Chatham Grove Elementary	750	728	659	690	707	711	724	715	719	724	737	744	752
J S Waters School	403	403	192	197	191	192	197	202	204	212	212	221	217
Moncure School	444	444	212	203	221	248	322	477	603	858	1114	1370	1634
North Chatham Elementary	548	548	591	608	620	633	650	650	664	673	699	718	737
Perry W Harrison Elementary	614	574	213	273	288	362	506	565	753	902	1047	1207	1301
Pittsboro Elementary	654	594	474	477	485	492	500	510	513	523	528	534	546
Siler City Elementary	587	587	594	602	589	591	588	592	598	605	611	613	619
Silk Hope School	344	344	273	269	265	265	271	277	281	286	290	298	300
Virginia Cross Elementary	801	721	424	426	409	400	395	411	435	441	464	465	483
Totals	5701	5477	4097	4196	4215	4344	4587	4839	5208	5646	6112	6586	7005
Middle Schools (6-8 / 5-8)													
Chatham Middle	582	582	550	536	549	564	563	551	541	553	530	535	536
George Moses Horton Middle	816	816	371	401	424	463	521	537	621	676	731	799	849
Margaret B. Pollard Middle	748	748	767	741	763	831	861	924	933	983	928	950	989
Totals	2146	2146	1688	1678	1735	1858	1945	2012	2095	2212	2189	2284	2375
High Schools (9-12)													
Chatham Central High	715	715	363	357	353	343	333	317	309	320	329	345	338
Jordan Matthews High	924	924	904	916	921	890	898	916	913	925	934	953	925
Northwood High	1025	1025	938	780	696	732	799	842	932	1006	1078	1146	1183
Seaforth High	1200	1200	727	931	932	929	962	1000	1066	1159	1233	1304	1376
Chatham Center For Innovation	264	264	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101	101
Totals	4128	4128	3033	3085	3003	2994	3093	3176	3320	3511	3675	3849	3923
System Total	11975	11751	8818	8959	8953	9195	9625	10027	10623	11370	11977	12720	13302

1. 2022-23 Month-1 ADM provided by NC-DPI.
2. Capacities provided by Chatham County Schools (1/1/2023), mobile units not included.
3. Includes the forecasted impact of Chatham Park affecting Perry Harrison Elementary, Horton Middle, and Northwood High beginning in 2020.
4. Pre-K impact included. Each classroom dedicated to Pre-K or other non-school use reduces school capacity by 20 at elementary schools, by 22 at Pre-K to 8th schools, and by 26 at Middle and High schools.

Note: Modular classrooms add school capacity by 20 at elementary schools, by 22 at Pre-K to 8th schools, and by 26 at Middle and High schools.

Operations Research and Education Laboratory
Institute for Transportation Research and Education
North Carolina State University

Date: 1/11/2023



Chart courtesy of Operations Research and Education Laboratory, Institute for Transportation Research, and Education North Carolina State University. This chart shows population projections for each Chatham County public school over the next decade with red indicating over-capacity and orange indicating at-capacity. The information was shared with the Chatham County Board of Education at its mid-year retreat last Wednesday.

SILER CITY COMMISSIONERS

Board debates ADA ramp

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Commissioners met last Tuesday evening at the Wren Memorial Library multipurpose room, where they were finally given a “soft opening” date — March 6 — for the courtroom at the renovated city hall.

Court officials, however, have told town administration they wanted an ADA-accessible ramp installed at the back

of Siler City’s city hall rather than the wheelchair lift the board of commissioners asked for when designing the renovation project.

Town Manager Hank Raper said that was because the Pittsboro courthouse has the same wheelchair lifts, and court officials said people had been hesitant to use the lifts.

“They said they prefer the ramp because they have two chairlifts that are never used because people were scared

of them,” Raper said. “They didn’t trust the lifts.”

Commissioners expressed displeasure about the request because of an additional cost, with the lifts costing around \$60,000 and the ramp costing \$200,000. Mayor Chip Price asked Raper if it was an option to ask for additional funds from the county.

“It’s funny, the court and the sheriff sure are asking for a lot of stuff, but I haven’t seen anything that says how much

they’re willing to put into the pot,” Price said. “It would’ve been nice to know about the ramp when we were at the beginning of this process.”

Other commissioners expressed similar concerns. Mayor Pro Tem Bill Haiges said he was glad to see the remaining projects laid out in various phases, but said the price of the ramp was still a concern.

“It’d be different if we had planned for it,” Haiges said.

“Maybe there’s a way we can ask them to just pay for some of it, because we funded one version, and they don’t want that — they want something else.”

The discussion was tabled to further negotiate with court officials regarding the ADA-accessible ramp.

Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at theeden@chathamnc.com or on Twitter at @Heeden-Taylor.

School board presents awards, hears updates

BY BILL HORNER III
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Board of Education, meeting on the eve of its day-long planning retreat, presented a number of awards and heard a variety of updates at its regular session last Tuesday.

The meeting, held at George Moses Horton Middle School, began with a closed session of more than an hour in

length. After reconvening, Supt. Dr. Anthony Jackson shared observations from his participation in the Chatham County Board of Commissioners’ retreat the week prior — speaking positively about the reception to the school’s preliminary 2023-24 budget plan — and then took time to recognize his own board members.

January is School Board Appreciation Month, and Jackson

thanked the board members individually for their commitment to Chatham County’s schools and students.

“We have one of the best boards in this state, if not the country,” he said.

The board also heard detailed updates from Assistant Superintendent for Academic Services and Instructional Support Dr. Amanda Moran, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Dr.

Kelly Batten, Assistant Superintendent of Operations Chris Blice, Senior Executive Director of Student Support Services Tracy Fowler and Public Information Officer Nancy Wykle on progress toward completion of specific goals within the One Chatham Strategic Plan. Staff also provided updates from the Office of Excellence and Opportunity and a look at communication trends between the district and

stakeholders and other community members.

A number of monthly awards were presented, including:

- The Power of One award, which recognizes an individual who has had a powerful impact on shaping the direction of someone else’s life. November’s honoree was Rebecca Clemens, the band teacher at Margaret B. Pollard Middle School, and December’s was Seaforth High School

sophomore Kyle Stinson — the first student ever to receive the honor.

“I feel that he is more than deserving of this recognition,” said Dr. Janice Giles, the principal at North Chatham Elementary, who nominated him. “He has taken the initiative to design a student leadership book study that he will be implementing as an after-school club for our

See **BOARD**, page B8

NEWS BRIEFS

Grand Trees of Chatham leads guided hike

Grand Trees of Chatham will lead a guided hike at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 25, at the White Pines Nature Preserve.

The White Pines Nature Preserve is truly stellar with beautiful white pines, mountain laurel, many hardwoods and steep, rocky slopes. The Rocky River and Deep River meet at one end of the preserve. It is managed by the Triangle Land Conservancy and preserves a beautiful part of Chatham County.

Phil Cox and Rouse Wilson will lead the hike.

Registration is required to participate. There is no registration fee. If you wish to join, please send an email to grandtreesofchatham@gmail.com, and you will receive a response confirming either that you are registered or that you are on our waiting list. The hike will have two groups with 12 hikers each, for a total of 24 hikers. After 24 registrations, subsequent requests will be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted if there are cancellations.

Pets are not allowed on the hike.

Grand Trees is limiting each group to 12 hikers in order to facilitate safe distancing; masks will not be required.

However, if you have been exposed to COVID or have symptoms or have tested positive, please do not come. Simply send an email to grandtreesofchatham@gmail.com indicating that you want to cancel (no need to give a reason).

The hike is over moderate terrain with some steep areas and takes 1 1/2 to 2 hours at a slow pace. For information on White Pines, including a map and its exact location, go to: <https://www.triangleland.org/explore/nature-preserves/white-pines-nature-preserve>

Parking is just off to the left as you enter the preserve. If weather intervenes and the hike is canceled, hikers will be notified by email.

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle announces seniors diabetes education program

The Inter-Faith Food Shuttle announces Diabetes Education for Seniors, a 12-month program that will serve adults 55 years or older living with diabetes in Chatham and Johnston counties.

The program is looking for participants that come from low-income households in these counties for its 2023 cohort. There is limited space in this cohort, but applicants for the 2024 cohort will be accepted as well.

The program will include

monthly teleconferences with a registered dietitian who will provide nutrition education specific to diabetes, individual meetings with a registered dietitian every three months, monthly food distributions, and three activity days which will include socialization, physical activities, cognitive activities and cooking demonstrations.

The activity days and food distributions will occur at community partner sites in Chatham and Johnston counties. It is recommended that participants have a source of reliable transportation in order to fully participate in the program.

Applicants will receive a final schedule upon acceptance and must be able to commit to the sequence of events before the program starts. The program will operate on a three-strike policy. Strikes will only be given if the participant does not communicate their absence prior to the event. Three strikes will result in removal from the program.

Completed applications, with a handwritten signature, can be emailed to CHE@foodshuttle.org or mailed to 1001 Blair Drive, Raleigh, N.C. 27603.

Interested participants can also email CHE@foodshuttle.org or call 919-390-1978 for an application.

NCDOR opens business, individual income tax seasons

The N.C. Dept. of Revenue will begin accepting both business and individual income tax returns over the next few weeks.

The NCDOR anticipates accepting 2022 Corporate Income and Franchise, Partnership Income, and Estates and Trust Income tax returns by Friday, Jan. 27. The NCDOR anticipates accepting 2022 Individual Income tax returns by Friday, Feb. 3.

Although the NCDOR anticipates that we will begin accepting returns by Feb. 3, it will be early March before the department can begin processing and validating return information and issuing refunds.

This delay is necessary as the NCDOR completes updating and testing of the refund fraud validation system, a measure that protects taxpayer identity and ensures that the appropriate refunds get into the hands of the right people. Once returns are processed and validated, the department will post the “Where’s My Refund” application on the NCDOR.gov webpage that allows taxpayers to check the status of their tax refund.

For calendar year taxpayers, the due date to file income tax returns is April 15. By law, North Carolina considers income tax returns with a due

date on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday as being timely filed if delivered in person or mailed or electronically submitted to the NCDOR on or before the next business day after the Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday.

In 2023, April 15 falls on a Saturday, and Emancipation Day, a legal holiday for income tax purposes, will be observed on Monday, April 17. Therefore, if a taxpayer files their 2022 calendar year income tax return on or before Tuesday, April 18, 2023, the NCDOR will consider the return timely filed.

Taxpayers are encouraged to file their taxes electronically; it is safer, more convenient, and will move through the process faster than traditional paper filing. Free and low-cost online filing (eFile) options for qualified taxpayers are available through the NCDOR.gov website. Taxpayers may even file their taxes electronically before the official opening dates as a way to prevent tax fraud schemes.

The Internal Revenue Service recently announced that it will begin accepting individual income tax returns on Monday, Jan. 23: <https://www.irs.gov/newsroom/irs-sets-Jan.-23-official-start-to-2023-tax-filing-season-more-help-available-for-taxpayers-this-year>.

The NCDOR funds public services benefiting the people of North Carolina. The NCDOR administers the tax laws and collects the taxes due in an impartial, consistent, secure and efficient manner.

Chatham families invited to make Valentine’s Day cards for seniors

GOLDSTON — The Goldston Public Library will host Valentine’s Day card-making sessions at 11 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 2 and 9. Families with children are invited to create handmade cards that will be distributed to a local nursing home in Siler City on Valentine’s Day.

The craft sessions will be held in the E. M. Harris Jr. Conference Room at the Goldston Public Library, located at 9235 Pittsboro-Goldston Rd., Goldston.

This event is free and open to the public. For more information, please call the library at 919-898-4522 or email goldston.library@chathamlibraries.org. Information about all Chatham County Library branches can be found at www.chathamlibraries.org.

Pittsboro Gallery of Arts presents new works

The Pittsboro Gallery of Arts

is presenting “The Theme: Break Glass in Case of POP,” from March 7 to April 2. This event features works by Sarah Fishbein and Alissa Van Atta. There will be an opportunity to meet the artists at a reception from 5 to 8 p.m. on March 10.

When visiting Pittsboro Gallery of Arts, viewers will find it’s a destination gallery, situated in a historic, bustling small town. It’s located at 44-A Hillsboro St. in Pittsboro, a few steps from the County Courthouse circle. At the gallery, onlookers can also view the fine art and fine craft work by each member. On display, there is work in many mediums: paintings, photography, ceramics, mosaics, fiber, jewelry and woodwork.

For further information, call 919-704-8552 and for hours and days open visit www.pittsboroarts.org.

Wren Memorial Library seeks members for ‘Friends of the Library’ group

SILER CITY — Wren Memorial Library in Siler City invites community members to join its Friends of the Library group.

The library will host a Friends of Wren Memorial Library meeting at 6 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 13. Attendees can learn about library updates, input their thoughts, and help grow the Friends of Wren Memorial Library.

The Friends of Wren Memorial Library participates in activities such as creating and conducting book sales and promoting library events and programs in the community. Friends of Wren especially needs community members to serve in the group’s leadership roles.

Wren Memorial Library is located at 500 North 2nd Ave., Siler City. For more information about Wren Memorial Library, individuals may contact wren@chathamlibraries.org or 919-742-2016. Information about all Chatham County Library branches can be found at www.chathamlibraries.org.

The Tams to perform at Mann Center

SANFORD — The Tams, one of Beach Music and R&B’s all-time greats, make a triumphant return to Sanford’s Mann Center Performance Hall at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 2. This Atlanta-based quintet became one of the essential acts of the beach music sound and have continued to release albums and tour for four decades.

In their heyday The Tams released several albums on the ABC-Paramount label

and enjoyed numerous Billboard Hot 100 chart hits, including “What Kind of Fool” and “Be Young, Be Foolish, Be Happy.”

For more information, go to <https://manncenternc.org/event/the-tams/>.

Wolfspeed officially names its Siler City facility

SILER CITY — The silicon carbide chip manufacturer Wolfspeed announced Monday it will officially name its new Siler City facility after co-founder John Palmour. Palmour passed away at age 62 in November.

The full name of the incoming facility is the John Palmour Manufacturing Center for Silicon Carbide. The 445-acre manufacturing plant will be housed at the Chatham Advanced Manufacturing site. It is expected to bring in more than \$5 billion and 1,800 jobs to the county over the next two decades, and is the largest economic development deal in state history.

Palmour authored or co-authored more than 266 publications and was a co-inventor on 46 U.S. patents and 135 corresponding foreign patents. In 2013, he was named an IEEE Fellow. He played an active role in driving research collaborations with N.C. State engineering faculty and students and created a scholarship endowment in the MSE Department at N.C. State in honor of his father, a longtime N.C. State ceramic engineering professor. Palmour was also elected as a member of the prestigious National Academy of Engineering.

“The contributions John made to science and our world are immeasurable and will be felt for generations to come,” Wolfspeed officials said in a statement after his passing.

Improvements coming to several Chatham County roads

LIBERTY — A \$2.2 million contract awarded by the N.C. Dept. of Transportation will bring improvements to nearly 14 miles of secondary roads in Chatham County.

The contract includes resurfacing segments of these roads:

- Silk Hope Liberty Road between Jessie Bridges Road and the Alamance County line
- Hinshaw Shop Road between the Alamance County line and Silk Hope Liberty Road
- Bennett Siler City Road between N.C. 22/42 and Lane Mill Road

The contractor, Vecellio & Grogan Inc., can start the project start as early as March 1, with completion scheduled for fall 2024.

CHATHAM COMMISSIONERS

Rezoning requests set the stage for development

BY BEN RAPPAPORT
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — The Chatham Board of Commissioners heard several rezoning requests — most concerning properties along Old U.S. Hwy. 1 in Moncure — at its meeting at the Chatham Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro last Tuesday.

Commissioners could not take formal action on most rezoning requests because they must first be referred to the county planning board. The recommendations along the Moncure roadway, however, show property owners and potential developers are seeing the industrial potential in what will soon neighbor VinFast's 1,700-acre electric vehicle manufacturing facility.

During the meeting, the board held two public hearings for properties owned by Hardip Dhillon, the owner of Skymart in Moncure, along Old U.S. Hwy. 1.

The first would turn a 15-acre residential area and mobile home park into a zone for neighborhood businesses, meaning it could host small-scale churches, restaurants, daycares and convenience stores. Angela Plummer, Chatham County's assistant planner, said the request could help bridge the gap between residential neighborhoods and incoming industry. There are currently no single-family homes and two mobile homes on the site, but Dhillon's attorneys told commissioners the mobile homes would be vacated by the time the zoning request was officially approved.

The second of Dhillon's properties was a 16-acre property that contains the Skymart in

Moncure. Because of roadway improvements needed by N.C. Dept. of Transportation to make way for the VinFast facility, the Skymart facility would have to be moved. Dhillon filed to rezone property he already owns to move the existing business to a nearby location. Plummer said if approved, the move would keep retail in the county by continuing existing business in a new location. Both items were referred to the planning board.

Three items on the consent agenda of Tuesday's meeting made final decisions on rezonings also along Old U.S. Hwy. 1 or in the nearby Moncure area. All told, 46 acres were rezoned with the approval of the consent agenda. One property currently owned by Because of His Grace LLC was switched from residential to neighborhood business. The other two properties — owned by Russ Anderson and S.T. Wooten — were switched from residential to industrial zones. Industrial zoning could include lumber yards, electronics manufacturing, pharmaceutical manufacturing, industrial supply sales and service, etc.

Two other public hearings occurred at Tuesday's meeting outside of Moncure. The first concerned Aaron Horton Toothbrush LLC, which aimed to rezone the property along Mt. View Church Rd. from residential to industrial. Neighbors who live adjacent to the property nearby spoke at the commissioner's meeting against the potential rezoning. They cited concerns of pollution and the destruction of their neighborhood.

"If you look at that area and this neighborhood, you see why people move to Chatham

County," said Johnny Shaw, a resident of Mt. View Church Road. "If you change the zoning, you're going to change the integrity and the makeup of the neighborhood."

Shaw also said he and his neighbors have put a lot of time into cleaning up the Rocky River, which runs adjacent to the roadway. He believes approving the rezoning would ruin the progress made on cleaning up pollution in the river.

There was no action taken on the item, which was referred to the planning board.

The final public hearing addressed potential build-out portions of Fearington Village. Developers Fitch Creations, which built the original Fearington site that was approved in 1974, now say they want to build a subdivision within Fearington called Granville.

The planned residential development would include 43 lots over 51 acres. Fitch Creations, represented by Greg Fitch and Dan Sears, said it would also ensure the subdivision had its own homeowners association, separate from the Fearington HOA. Sears said the development appeared necessary because Fearington had reached its limit and needed to be built out to accommodate the growing interest in the area.

"Granville has been planned to blend in well with the village and will provide additional open space and walking paths," said Rose Krasnow, president of the Fearington Village HOA.

While she said the HOA was not opposed to the development, she raised several concerns including construction noise and stormwater features

that include seven wet ponds. Krasnow also feared a financial burden on the existing HOA because of the growth.

Sears said it will continue to work with existing homeowners to make the addition of Granville smooth and ensure the community blends into the existing Fearington properties. There was no action taken on this item by commissioners, which was referred to the planning board.

Planning Board appointments

Some new faces will be deciding on these rezoning requests as commissioners filled some of the open seats on the planning board during last Tuesday's meeting. Each commissioner has two appointments, including one residing in the commissioner's district. The terms expire when the appointing commissioner's term expires. The full County Board of Commissioners also makes one at-large appointment to the Planning Board. The appointees were:

- At Large Seat: George Lucier was reappointed
- Dist. 1: Mary Roodkowsky was appointed by Commissioner Karen Howard
- Dist. 2: Commissioner Mike Dasher postponed his planning board appointments until Feb. 20
- Dist. 3: Commissioner David Delaney postponed his planning board appointments until Feb. 20
- Dist. 4: Tony Maher was appointed by Commissioner Katie Kenlan. Her second appointment was postponed until Feb. 20
- Dist. 5: Eric Andrews was reappointed and Norma

Hernandez was appointed by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores.

Other business

• Commissioners heard a second-quarter update on the county budget for Fiscal Year 2023. Darrell Butts, the county's budget director, told commissioners the county spent 39.6% of its proposed budget expenditure so far of the total budgeted \$171,149,892. The county has received 41.1% of the proposed budget revenues. Butts said these numbers were on par with previous fiscal years in Q2 and the county was on track to stay within the budget for the year.

• An update on the county's American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds was also shared with the board. Thus far, the county has spent 42%, or \$6 million of the total \$14,464,924 it was awarded through ARPA. The deadline for budgeting and allocating the funds is Dec. 31, 2026, with the deadline for expending the funds on Dec. 31, 2026. The funds have been used for Capital Improvement Projects, vaccine incentive programs and improving park access. For more information visit www.chathamcountync.gov/arpa.

The next scheduled Chatham County Board of Commissioners meeting is at 2 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 20, at the Chatham Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro. For more information visit www.chathamcountync.gov/government/board-of-commissioners

Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at brappaport@chathamnr.com or on Twitter @b_rappaport

COLLEGE HONORS

UNIVERSITY OF THE CUMBERLANDS

Kayla Morgart of Pittsboro has been named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List at the University of the Cumberland in Williamsburg, Kentucky. The list recognizes students who earn a 3.5 or higher grade point average for the semester.

CEDARVILLE UNIVERSITY

Brent Whitley has been named to the Fall 2022 Dean's List at Cedarville Uni-

versity in Cedarville, Ohio. Whitley, a resident of Moncure, is majoring in Computer Science.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY

Western Carolina University has named the following students to the Chancellor's List for Fall 2022. To qualify for this honor, students must achieve a GPA of 3.8 or higher while completing 12 or more credit hours. The University

is located in Cullowhee. • Emery Eldridge of Siler City • Mason Erman of Pittsboro • Noah Oyan of Pittsboro • Collin Semrad of Pittsboro

UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Patrick Rubinas of Pittsboro has been named to the Dean's List at the University of New Hampshire for the Fall 2022. The school is located in Durham, New

Hampshire.

SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE UNIVERSITY

Juliann Chavis of Pittsboro has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Fall 2022 President's List. Antoine Williams of Siler City has been named to Southern New Hampshire University's Fall 2022 Dean's List. The school is located at Manchester, New Hampshire.

WATER

Continued from page B5

polluters accountable for damages to the town's water supply.

The goal of litigation is to help cover past and future costs for treating Pittsboro's water, including maintaining the town's granular activated carbon (GAC) filtration system.

The unanimous vote by the board gives Sher

Edling the green light to file a lawsuit against "major manufacturers of both PFAS chemicals in general and AFFF."

It could be months, however, before anything comes from the case.

"When we file our lawsuit in the coming days, we will be one step closer to holding the companies responsible for PFAS contamination in our community accountable for

the enormous costs of cleaning it up," Pittsboro Public Information Officer Colby Sawyer told the News + Record after the vote. "Everyone knows when you make a mess, you're supposed to clean it up ... They (the manufacturers) should pay for it, not our taxpayers."

Reporter Taylor Heeden and Reporter Maydha Deverajan contributed to this story.

BOARD

Continued from page B7

5th-grade students this spring. I'm blown away by the quality of the lessons he has designed and the professionalism he has exhibited in working to execute his plan. It's amazing to see his passion for developing student leaders. This program will have a direct impact on developing leadership traits in the students who participate in the program."

• The EC Parent Advi-

sory Council recognized Ronda Marshall, an EC Instructional Assistant at Chatham Grove Elementary, and Becky Bouldin, an EC Resource Teacher at Virginia Cross Elementary, for their work.

• The board also recognized all first-place winners in the Chatham County Schools 2023-23 Science Fair, many of whom were present at the meeting. The first-place winners in 3rd through 12th grades will proceed to the Regional Science Fair on February 11 at the University of North

Carolina Greensboro Middle College.

Senior Executive Director of Excellence and Opportunity Chris Poston provided an overview of CCS's AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) program and highlighted the accomplishments of several AVID students, who also addressed the board.

The board meets again at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, Feb. 13, at the multipurpose room at George Moses Horton Middle School in Pittsboro.

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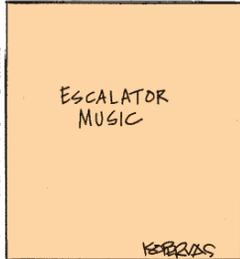
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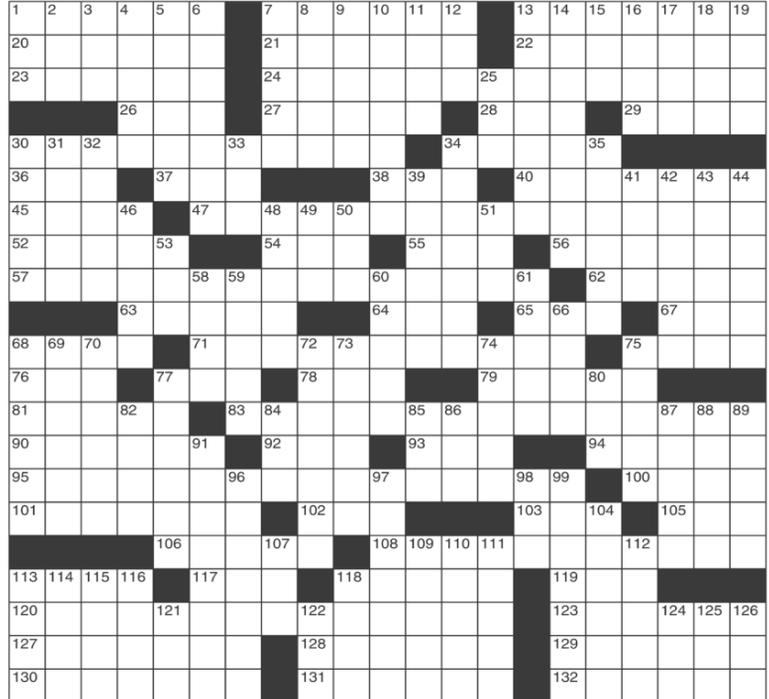
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"TAKE THAT!"

- | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| ACROSS | 1 Printed news sources | 7 Rival of Nike | 13 More potent, as liquor | 20 Supposed evil repeller | 21 Stephen King's "— Lot" | 22 Grow bigger | 23 "The Client List" actress Shepherd | 24 Result of vandalism | 26 Match draw | 27 "Them's fightin' words!" | 28 Suffix with Canton | 29 Right fielder Slaughter | 30 Officials at first or third | 34 Inner self, to Jung | 36 Quarterback Manning | 37 Eight minus two | 38 Nav. officer | 40 Sweater with a pattern of raised bands | 45 Ripens | 47 Auto exhaust and such | 52 River craft | 54 Nav. officer | 55 Rainbow, e.g. | 56 Incentive | 57 Cardiologist | 62 Return to 000 | 63 Digital holiday greeting | 64 Shipping box: Abbr. | 65 Digital color inits. | 67 Suffix with host | 68 Kuwaiti royal | 71 Peck upon parting | 75 Italy's | 76 Prefix with partisan | 77 Singer Des— | 78 English lav | 79 Have an — mystery | 81 Peter out | 83 Belief that people are noticing you more than they really are | 90 Total up wrongly | 92 Source of 24/7 \$20 bills | 93 Hot tub site | 94 More subtle, as a point | 95 Presidential hopeful's bid | 100 Old Icelandic literary work | 101 Dais stand | 102 Suffix with cannon | 103 "Oh, gross!" | 105 President pro — | 106 Fighting it out | 108 Thor and Indra | 113 Spanish for "hand" | 117 Forbid | 118 "Symposium" philosopher | 119 Peter out | 120 Personal psychosocial conflict | 123 Subsidies | 127 Pop flop of 1985 | 128 Catalog again | 129 Manorial home | 130 Whole number | 131 Unlocked | 132 What the starts of nine answers in this puzzle might be | 5 Holy artifacts | 6 Canonized ninth-century pope | 7 Savory jelly | 8 — Vader | 9 "You beat me this game" | 10 Removal from office | 11 Prayer ender | 12 Russ. or Ukr., formerly | 13 Prompt for the iPhone's personal assistant | 14 Nativeness to a certain region only | 15 In the style of | 16 Agatha Christie's title | 17 Tehran locale | 18 Kellogg's waffle | 19 "Cheers" actor Roger | 25 Eight plus two | 30 Ocean liner? | 31 Pond slime | 32 Tuscan city | 33 Wood splitter | 34 Oto or Hopi | 35 Sponge up | 39 Give a poker hand, e.g. | 41 Toy with a tail | 42 Sounds | 43 Build a financial portfolio | 44 Fly of Africa | 46 More miffed | 48 Gives ear to | 49 "Ltd." cousin | 50 15-season CBS series | 51 They often work with DJs | 53 List-limiting abbr. | 58 "For heaven's —!" | 59 Snoops | 60 Keep — head (stay calm) | 61 "Have a bite" | 66 Richard of "Primal Fear" | 68 Nail coating | 69 Item hanging above a crib | 70 "Be there shortly" | 72 Small racer in a groove | 73 Grey irate | 74 Religion in 17-Down | 75 Escort in "The Hunger Games" | 77 Brew colored from oxidation | 80 Slightly amiss | 82 Social skill | 84 Pot's partner | 85 EarthLink or MSN | 86 High no. for a valedictorian | 87 "Is there no — this?!" | 88 Handed over | 89 Trolleys | 91 All-terrain motorcycle | 96 How Jesus walked, miraculously | 97 Aetna alternative | 98 What a H.S. dropout may earn | 99 Syringe parts | 104 Most crooked | 107 At least one | 109 Welcomes to one's home | 110 Of service | 111 Snooped (around) | 112 Arrive at | 113 Skirt style | 114 Yemen city | 115 Pond wriggler | 116 Previously | 118 Job of some cooks | 121 Dress fancily, with "out" | 122 — Magnon | 124 Magle of the old Giants | 125 Adaptable truck, in brief | 126 Corral |
|---------------|------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---|-----------|--------------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------|------------|-------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|--------------|--|---------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------------|------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------|---|------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|---|--|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|------------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-----------|----------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|---------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|------------|



Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.



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

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally
Unlisted clue hint: ADDING — TO INJURY

- | | | | |
|------------|--------|----------|--------------|
| Accidental | Combat | Personal | Traumatic |
| ACL | Eye | Serious | Whiplash |
| Ankle | Fatal | Slight | Work related |
| Back | Head | Stress | |

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Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

		5		3	6	
	9	5		1		
8			2			3
4				8	7	
	1	3			5	
	7		1		8	6
2				7		8
	4	8			1	
	3		6		2	4

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆

- ◆ Moderate
- ◆◆ Challenging
- ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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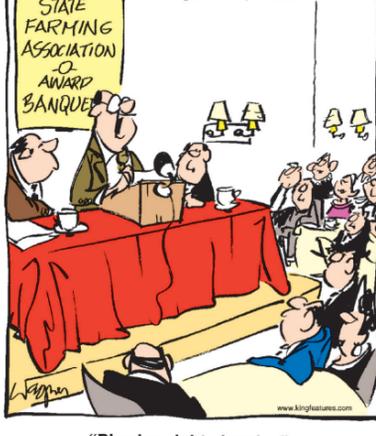


Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



GRIN and BEAR IT



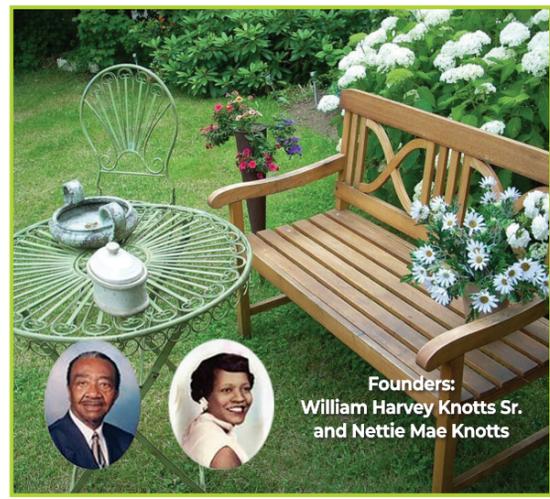
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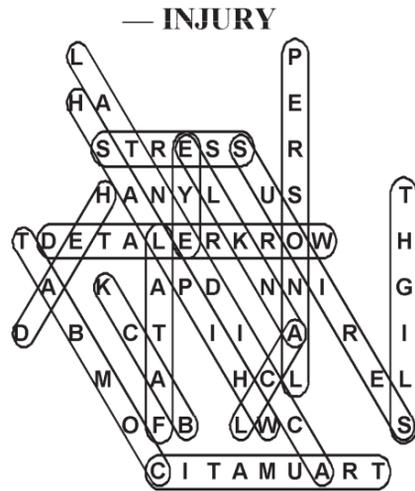
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— Weekly SUDOKU —

Answer

1	7	5	9	8	3	4	6	2
3	9	2	5	4	6	1	8	7
8	6	4	7	2	1	9	5	3
4	2	9	6	5	8	3	7	1
6	1	8	3	7	4	5	2	9
5	3	7	2	1	9	8	4	6
2	5	1	4	9	7	6	3	8
9	4	6	8	3	2	7	1	5
7	8	3	1	6	5	2	9	4

The comfort food experts

DEBBIE MATTHEWS
The Curious Cook

Here's a piece of trivia for you: Chapel Hill native James Taylor got his start by playing and singing as a teenager at a local institution, Merritt's Grill.



Courtesy of Debbie Matthews

Nothing beats a grilled cheese sandwich and tomato soup on a cold winter's day.

In 1929, Ruby and Eben Merritt opened a gas station at the corner of Columbia St. and Purefoy Road in Chapel Hill. People came from all over the area to get gas, car repairs and supplies.

In 1991, Robert and Robin Britt took over the lease. At first it was a convenience store with a little grill in the back, like many other convenience stores. But with all the development in the area, there was a lot of competition, and business began to fall off.

Then the couple decided to focus on the food and forget the rest.

Thus the one ... two ... three, third iteration of a charming white stucco, Art Deco building, looking like something out of a Shirley Temple movie.

In this artfully, scruffily, authentic in a way that would only be authentic in Chapel Hill, they serve two classic sandwiches, each made of a short list of ingredients: BLT and grilled cheese with tomato soup.

It's childhood comfort food the way the Peanuts Christmas Special is Christmas — both a symbol of a nostalgic past.

That's a heavy load for a couple of sandwiches and some soup.

And so easy to blow.

But the versions served up at Merritt's that comes wrapped and served in what

is probably recycled paper are about as close to the platonic ideal of that soul-restoring repast of childhood as is possible to get.

The sandwich? It was on sourdough whose closest description would be to something like a Pepperidge Farm sourdough.

The cheese was a couple slices of American, but the real kind of American you get at the deli counter.

I don't know what type of fat the used on the outside but I'm in favor of something like the merest whisper of mayo.

It was toasted to the palest possible shade of amber. It

wasn't a European dark, with small edges turning black type of toasting, but a little-kids-eat-buttered-noodles-blond-turning-to-caramel level of cook.

The soup was hot and conveyed tomatoes.

I honest to gosh forgot to ask for a recipe, so I persuaded culinary academic The Kid to share their absolutely favorite tomato soup recipe.

Below is my child's recipe along with a few thoughts I had while reading over the words of this ridiculously wonderful human.

Thanks for your time.
Contact me at dm@bullcity.mom.

The Kid's Ultmato Soup

- 3-ish lbs plum tomatoes
- 1 yellow onion
- 4-ish cloves of garlic (Debbie here: I read a quote the other day that is an absolute truth of life and cooking: "Measure vanilla and garlic with your heart.")
- ¼ cup olive oil, divided in half. More for drizzling over bowls for service. Break out the tasty stuff for finishing.
- Salt and pepper to taste (A little sprinkle of really big, flaky shards of sea salt would be nice at the end, as well.)
- 1 pack of basil (flat plastic shell pack)
- 1/3 cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup Sherry (Madeira also works, but I kind of love the idea of cognac. Makes the whole experience smell and feel cozier.)
- 1cup veg stock

Preheat your oven to 375°, core and half tomatoes. Lay them out on a foil-lined sheet pan, drizzle with half of the olive oil, and season heavily with salt and pepper. Once your oven is up to temp, roast tomatoes for at least 30 minutes, or until the look kind of shriveled and jammy. You aren't looking for dried tomatoes, just some good color.

Roughly dice onion, and chop garlic. The soup is getting blended, so no need to break out the good knife skills. (It is always best to use your "good knife skills." It's always beneficial to practice to get better using your knives, but much more importantly, it's safer to not swing your blade around willy-nilly.)

Heat heavy bottomed pot (either enamel coated or stainless steel, not aluminum — otherwise, the acid in the tomatoes will react) with remaining oil over medium heat until shimmering. Sauté the onion until translucent, and then add garlic. Cook until fragrant. Season with salt and pepper.

Once garlic and onion have cooked down a bit, deglaze the pan with sherry (or whichever hooch you choose). Cook until the pan is dry.

Add roasted tomatoes to pot, and top with the vegetable stock. Add basil, reserving a few of the nicest-looking leaves for serving.

Simmer for at least half an hour to an hour, allowing tomatoes to further break down into the soup.

Once the soup has reduced a bit, and your kitchen smells great, remove basil and blend. An immersion blender is easier and cleaner, but a standard blender is totally fine. You want your soup to be totally smooth. (My advice: go buy yourself an immersion blender, hand blender, boat motor, whatever you call it. You'll thank me the next time you make scrambled eggs.)

Once blended, add cream, and cook for 10 more minutes. Check for seasoning, and add more salt as needed.

Serve with a drizzle of olive oil, and a couple of basil leaves (or sprigs of thyme — just sayin' and an artful kiss of a sprinkle of that flaky salt I mentioned earlier). Optional, also serve with a grilled cheese for ultimate comfort.



Adam Phillips, Miranda Parker, Mary Maloney, Gary Phillips, Jay Parker, Don Basnight, Ken Tunnell, Terri Turner, Crystal Fisher



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