



Study Shows Insurance Industry Price-Gouges Businesses

In early March 2020 — days before the COVID pandemic hit — the Center for Justice & Democracy (CJ&D) and Consumer Federation of America (CFA) released How the Cash Rich Insurance Industry Fakes Crises and Invents Social Inflation1 (hereinafter referred to as Fake Social Inflation). At that point in time, businesses were seeing insurance rates increase (also known as a “hard market”) after 13 years of low or stable rates (also known as a “soft market”). The CJ&D and CFA study documented in significant detail how the overcapitalized property/casualty insurance industry was charging many businesses far too much in premiums while threatening even greater increases, all while attempting to create the perception that it was too financially troubled to pay claims and blaming a concept they invented: “social inflation.”

The report also took a historical look at the up and down economic cycle of the insurance industry, and showed how, since the 1970s, insurance companies have not been forthcoming about why jumps in insurance premiums happen. Put simply, premiums go up and down in sync with a well-established cycle and are never reflective of any trends in paid claims. This has been confirmed by decades of insurance loss and premium data.

For example, in the decade before Fake Social Inflation was released in 2020, the industry's own data showed that total commercial insurance payouts had not spiked and generally tracked the rate of inflation

and growth of population. In order to increase premiums in 2019 at the start of the most recent hard market, insurers used an accounting trick to inflate their “incurred losses” by increasing or padding reserves — the money set aside to pay claims — despite, at the same moment, experiencing no increase in payouts or any trend suggesting large future payouts. This “over-reserving” is part of a decades- long pattern, often politically inspired and used by insurers as a way to show poor income statements, which it then uses to falsely claim large “losses” and, in turn, to justify imposition of large premium increases.

As shown throughout the Fake Social Inflation study, a great deal of industry coordination is necessary to push the country into a hard insurance market, because the entire industry must collude and raise rates together. As part of their narrative, industry leaders publicly spin the notion that the industry is financially beleaguered and cannot pay claims without significantly raising rates. The most common story presented historically by industry leaders is that lawyers, lawsuits, judges, and juries have suddenly and jointly become more “aggressive” after not being this way for the 10 to 15 years of the prior soft market. This alleged aggression only lasts three to four years, after which the lawyers, juries, and judges apparently become meek again. It is a narrative used not only to push for a cycle turn but also to maintain rate hikes for the entirety

of a three-to- four-year hard market, which we are still in.

To make the case for the current hard market, the insurance industry settled on a new PR term — “social inflation” — to cover a number of wildly disconnected things that corporate and insurance lawyers complain cause them to lose cases and increase payments to claimants. These include: #MeToo and child sexual abuse claims; lawyer advertising and case funding; securities class actions; millennials as jurors; and verdicts in worsening truck crashes. There has been little consistency regarding industry descriptions of social inflation. What's more, as shown in Fake Social Inflation, others within the industry privately doubted



its existence. Nonetheless, in 2019, insurance industry representatives began a coordinated effort to market the idea that “social inflation” was hurting insurers financially.

The term never caught on with the general public, or at least much beyond insurance industry trade publications. Perhaps this was due to the fuzziness of the term, or its confusion with economic inflation — an actual global problem. Or maybe it was the fact that complaining about jurors — aside from juries being a bedrock element of the U.S.

Constitution — seemed absurd when juries resolve an extremely low percentage of state tort cases and large verdicts are almost never paid. In fact, experts write that civil jury

trials have been “nearly eradicated” in this country. Or perhaps it was the disclosure that the insurance industry was sitting on an \$800 billion record surplus — a surplus that quickly grew to over one trillion dollars by the end of 2021.

And then, just a few months after the hard market kicked in, we were in a global pandemic. When COVID hit, courthouses shut down. Jury trials stopped. New case filings dropped. Tort caseloads in state trial courts — already representing an extremely low percentage of incoming civil caseloads — dropped by over 4 percent between 2019 and 2020, and continued to drop in 2021. Juries resolved an extremely low percentage of state tort cases in 2020, with rates ranging from 0.0 to 1.59 percent. In 2021, the range was 0.0 to 1.79 percent. This rate has remained incredibly low for the past decade.

In addition, for months during the height of the pandemic, people stopped driving. The public drastically cut down on non-essential medical care. At the same time most states passed laws immunizing hospitals and nursing homes from liability. In sum, no one believed that suspended jury trials, non-existent victims, or lawyers who couldn't get their cases heard could possibly be driving insurance rate hikes. And now, the civil justice system has a backlog so large that “the already rare civil jury trial is likely to lay dormant for the foreseeable future.”

Yet almost as if to demonstrate the meaninglessness of the “social inflation” concept, insurance industry consultants and representatives were so fully invested in their anti-jury PR strategy that they never stopped complaining about jury verdicts even

when there weren't any. Now, the industry is clearly struggling to make sense of the term. For example, medical liability insurer The Doctors Company recently issued the Medical Malpractice Claims-Made Social Inflation and Loss Development Report, accompanied by a press release with a screaming headline about how social inflation causes billions in medical malpractice losses. Yet a quick look through this report finds, among other things, that medical malpractice claims have actually been dropping and social inflation has, according to the Doctors Company, “disappeared.”

Of course, it never existed in the first place, particularly when it came to medical malpractice. As we demonstrated in Fake Social Inflation and show again here, for decades insurers have misrepresented their actual losses, sometimes by large percentages. The result is that doctors were and continue to be unfairly price-gouged.

For five decades, businesses and consumers have been victims of periodic eruptions in insurance premiums caused by the property/casualty insurance industry's economic cycle, the industry's unique accounting methods, and laws that allow anti-competitive pricing by this industry. While insurers try to convince the public that lawsuits and juries, or “social inflation,” are to blame, historical data are clear that this has never been true — and it is not true today. The only way to stop volcanic eruptions in insurance premiums is through better oversight and regulation of the industry's mismanaged accounting, particularly of padded reserves, and the cyclical nature of the insurance business.

NC Lawmakers Target Wasteful Spending In Tuesday's Government Efficiency Hearing

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The North Carolina House Select Committee on Government Efficiency convened Tuesday morning in the NC General Assembly Legislative Building to discuss how the state can better manage taxpayer dollars and reduce wasteful spending. The meeting included testimony from State Auditor Dave Boliek and Deputy Secretary of Services David Elliott, with input from a bipartisan group of legislators.

The committee was formed earlier this year by House Speaker Rep. Destin Hall (R-Caldwell, Watauga), who stated in a January press release, “Unnecessary government bloat and waste hurt North Carolina taxpayers' wallets and divert funds that could be used for core functions such as public safety and education.”

Key members of the committee include Rep. John Torbett (R-Gaston), Rep. Keith Kidwell (R-Beaufort, Dare, Hyde, Pamlico), Rep. Zack Hawkins (D-Durham), and Rep. Phil Rubin (D-Wake).

“What we're trying to do is view audits, our results, and our recommendations through not the lens of what needs to be cut but from the lens of what is the return on investment that the taxpayers are getting from appropriations that flow from

this body,” Boliek said.

He emphasized that the auditor's role is to act as the investigative arm of the state, analyzing how public funds are used, how agencies are run, and how data can support better budget decisions. Boliek also noted that his office is actively monitoring state appropriations to enhance transparency.

Discussing regulatory disparities across the state, Boliek pointed out the stark contrast between rapidly growing regions and those still struggling economically.

“There's developing NC, we're sitting right here in the epicenter of growth in this state, Mecklenburg County, and the surrounding counties, and the Triad,” Boliek said.

He pointed to Rep. Shelly Willingham's district that runs from Rocky Mount to the Albemarle Sound as a contrast: “Some communities never recovered from Hurricane Floyd in 1999. It's those communities that need the other type of regulatory assistance: they may not need people to get out of the way, they may need people to come in and invest dollars to get a return on investment from their tax dollars.”

Rep. Zack Hawkins raised concerns about inefficiencies in the state's public university and community college systems. North Carolina has 16 UNC campuses and 58 com-

munity colleges, many of which independently purchase software and technology systems.

“It is important that we don't wait until the red flag is waving; that we have a systematic approach,” Hawkins said. “Why is each campus buying things individually when they all use some of the same processes?”

Hawkins argued that standardizing purchases across the system would reduce costs and eliminate redundancy: If one university buys a new set of upgraded software, and the others don't, the state is spending more money by using funding for each university to buy an individual set, when Hawkins argues buying for all of them would lower the total cost and prevent additional future purchases.

Rep. Phil Rubin shifted the focus to staffing issues in the state's prison system, particularly the low wages paid to correctional officers.

“Our Department of Adult Corrections does not pay enough. This leads to substantive issues about safety and recidivism, but it's actually a waste of money because you're spending money on dealing with this constant thrash of retraining new correctional officers because you can't keep people—that costs money,” Rubin said.

He cited data showing that North Carolina ranks about 10th worst

nationally for correctional officer salaries. However, he insisted that current pay rates are contributing to a cycle of high turnover, training costs, and understaffed prison facilities.

“Our prisons are functioning on safety only; they're not trying to rehabilitate anyone—they don't have the staff. We can't operate all the beds in our prisons, because we don't have enough officers to keep them safe,” Rubin added.

David Elliott, the Deputy Secretary of Services, discussed the importance of fuel procurement for state operations. His office oversees contracts that bring in approximately \$8 billion a year.

“Fuel is one of the most important commodities in North Carolina. They run the school buses to the ferries to our emergency responders to work in Western NC. It is essential; North Carolina does not function without fuel,” Elliott said.

His remarks highlighted the need for careful negotiation of fuel contracts to ensure that state operations remain uninterrupted and cost-effective.

As the committee continues its work, members aim to identify strategies for better resource allocation, cost-saving measures, and ways to ensure that all North Carolinians—regardless of region—see a return on their investment in government services.

An Explanation Of How Cashless Bail Works And Why Trump Is Targeting It

By Amanda Hernández

Stateline

When President Donald Trump signed an executive order last month threatening to withhold federal funding from states and localities that have adopted “cashless bail” policies, he escalated a national fight over how courts decide who should remain behind bars before trial.

The move has already rippled into state capitols. In North Carolina, Republican lawmakers are considering legislation this week that would tighten pretrial release rules after a high-profile fatal stabbing on a commuter train last month.

The bill, which was first introduced in March and altered earlier this week with the title “Iryna's Law,” would require people to post money bail for certain offenses and would restrict judicial discretion for violent and repeat offenders. The bill also would add a new category of violent offenses that require specific pretrial conditions, such as electronic monitoring. It passed the state Senate on Monday.

“When we were looking at drafting this bill, a lot of it was looking at the situation that happened in Charlotte,” said North Carolina state Sen. Danny Britt, a Republican and criminal defense attorney, to WRAL-TV.



In New York, Republican lawmakers are pushing to advance legislation that would further limit pretrial release and allow judges to weigh a defendant's “dangerousness” in setting conditions. New York ended bail for most misdemeanors and nonviolent felonies in 2019, but has since scaled back the law at least three times to allow judges more discretion.

And in Texas — where legislators passed new bail restrictions earlier this summer — voters in November will consider a constitutional amendment banning bail altogether in certain cases for violent offenses such as murder, aggravated assault and

indecency with a child.

Trump signed the cashless bail order three days after Iryna Zarutska, a 23-year-old Ukrainian refugee, was killed in a seemingly random stabbing in Charlotte, North Carolina. The suspect, who has a lengthy criminal record, had been released without bond last winter after being charged with misusing the 911 system.

Trump's order directs U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi to identify which jurisdictions have “substantially eliminated cash bail,” though it does not define what that means — leaving its scope and enforcement unclear. Some legal experts say they

expect challenges in court, as has happened with previous efforts to tie federal funding to state or local policies.

Trump issued the directive alongside another order aimed at Washington, D.C., where he declared a “crime emergency” and sought to roll back the city's decades-old bail law. The district did not fully eliminate cash bail when it passed its Bail Reform Act in 1992, but judges are required to consider nonfinancial conditions — such as electronic monitoring, curfews or check-ins — before setting a monetary bond.

Trump's orders are part of his broader crackdown on crime and public safety, which has also included deploying the National Guard to Memphis, Tennessee; Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles.

Same charge, different outcomes
Cash bail is a guarantee to show up to court: A defendant pays money and is allowed to go home. At the end of their case, they may get the money back. A judge or magistrate may set the amount based on the severity of the charge and whether the defendant is considered a flight or safety risk.

But someone unable to pay the bail, even after being charged with a

(See **CASHLESS BAIL**, P. 7)



STATE LEADERS AND ADVOCATES GATHER FOR FIRST BLACK YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION CONFERENCE

State officials, mental health advocates, and community members gathered Saturday in Rocky Mount for the Stronger Together conference, North Carolina's first event centered on the state's Black Youth Suicide Prevention Action Plan. The gathering featured community-driven solutions to one of the most pressing public health challenges facing Black youth.

The plan comes as suicide rates among Black youth and young adults have risen sharply nationwide. In North Carolina, from 2013 to 2022, 377 Black North Carolinians ages 10 to 24 died by suicide, according to state data.

Nearly 17% of Black high school students said they had seriously considered suicide, while more than a third of middle schoolers reported the same. The numbers peak at age 24 — and are especially stark for Black girls questioning their sexual orientation, who now report the highest rates of suicide attempts in schools statewide.

“This is about empowering communities and tapping into their inherent strengths,” said Kelly Crosbie, director of the state's Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services. “I would much prefer that kids get the support they need well before they have a crisis.”

In her speech on Saturday, Crosbie noted youth ages 10 to 18 are now the largest group calling the national 988 crisis hotline, a statistic she described as both “good and shocking.”

The conference drew dozens of participants despite early funding challenges. Dr. Rodney Harris, who coordinated the event, described it as the product of grassroots persistence. “We're creating a coalition that saves lives,” Harris said in a speech. “This is love in action, because this is the essence of community and family.”

The day included workshops, a documentary screening, and panel discussions led by young advocates. Panelists spoke candidly about the stigma surrounding mental health in Black communities, particularly the pressure on young men to suppress emotions. They urged peers to seek connection rather than isolation.

“Being vulnerable or asking for help does not make you weak. It actually makes you stronger,” said Nautica McCoy, a member of the North Carolina

(See **BLACK YOUTH SUICIDE**, P. 5)

ROCKY MOUNT ANNOUNCES FINANCIAL RECOVERY PLAN AMID BUDGET CRISIS

The City of Rocky Mount is addressing a serious financial crisis uncovered by a recent comprehensive budget review, the city announced today. The review, conducted by the city's new city manager, revealed that for over two years, the city has spent millions more each month than it received, requiring immediate action to protect vital services.

“These findings are troubling, and the city is hiring an independent forensic accounting firm to further investigate,” Rocky Mount City Manager Elton Daniels said. “We will share those results publicly when we can.”

In 2023, city council members Knight and Blackwell were suspicious about city management and voiced their concerns publicly— others were unconvinced until data was produced verifying the broad and deep concerns. By August 2024, the majority of the city council voted to place the city manager on administrative leave, though no fiscal changes were initiated until Manager Daniels' team discovered the deficit.

To address the crisis, the city will reduce spending by at least \$30 million over the next 10 months. This includes freezing non-essential projects, pausing capital initiatives, and reducing staff, with at least 10% of full-time employees and half of part-time staff facing layoffs. The city will do its best to help them land on their feet, including providing full-time employees with transition assistance.

Business & Finance

Fewer Households, Businesses Will Get High-Speed Internet Under New Plan

LEFT HAND, W. Va. — The residents of Roane County, West Virginia, enjoy living among the rolling mountains and winding, two-lane roads. Situated between Charleston and Parkersburg, two of the state's largest cities, the rural county is known for its small towns and historic buildings.

That's how Sherry Husted, the director of the Roane County Public Libraries, described her native community as she worked last week at Geary Public Library in Left Hand, West Virginia. Each of the county's three library branches has at least three public computers and free internet access, among other services.

These services are essential to residents living in Roane — where less than 32% of the county's households, businesses and community buildings — have reliable internet connectivity, according to the Federal Communications Commission's National Broadband Map.

"We love our rural area," Husted said. "But there's always the catch. You love your rural area, but then access to things is always more limited there."

Members of the library staff regularly help patrons fill out job applications and build resumes. They also help those who have never used a



desktop computer before — many of the county's residents rely on their cellular devices and spotty mobile service, Husted said. Most residents still use landline phones, she added.

And those with internet access at home are paying a steep price. Husted's plan with Frontier, which includes fiber internet and a landline, comes to \$170 a month.

"If you work from home, you need reliable internet," she said. "Frontier does the best they can. But this is a very rural area, so the trees and terrain are constantly messing up the internet. And because of the demand

on these older lines, your internet may not be reliable enough to host things like meetings or classes."

Roane County is one of the areas federal officials hoped to support through the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment Program, or BEAD, a federal grant program meant to expand broadband access. The \$42.45 billion initiative, created under the Biden administration's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act of 2021, aimed to close the digital divide — with a focus on rural communities.

The Trump administration's

changes to the program, however, have disqualified hundreds of thousands of locations — including homes, businesses and community buildings — from receiving internet access. And the program's new technology-neutral approach will also shift a large portion of the federal funds toward satellite internet companies, including Elon Musk's Starlink, that cost less to build but have more uneven service than underground fiber optic cable. That means households and businesses that were looking forward to reliable, high-speed internet will no longer get support from the BEAD program.

While some experts were initially skeptical about the program's goals, every state utilized its allocated funds to develop plans to provide high-speed fiber internet to nearly every home and business in the country, said Christopher Mitchell, the director of the Community Broadband Networks Initiative with the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, an anti-corporate advocacy group.

Most states are expected to get started on deployment projects in 2026. But the Trump administration's changes have undermined the major investment for rural areas,

(See **HIGH SPEED INTERNET**, P. 11)

Budget Negotiations Harder, Trump Has The Power To Cut Spending Through ‘Rescission’

The Conversation—Typically, you would get an actual passage of a full budget for a year. But in the last 20 or 30 years or so, since we've become a more polarized country with a polarized Congress, we have a lot of what are called continuing resolutions, or CRs. They're stopgap measures — not the full budget — and don't tend to make a lot of changes on a lot of the spending priorities that Congress has.

Continuing resolutions usually just extend current levels of spending for a short time so that the two parties can continue negotiating. But as negotiations over long-term budgets have tended to fail more and more, these CR's are becoming more common, and Congress almost never passes a full budget on a yearly basis at this point.

The president has the power to veto any piece of legislation, and that includes the federal budget. Essentially, what majorities in Congress



need when they are going into a budget fight is either the president's implicit sign-off on whatever they pass, or they need enough votes to override the president's veto.

Congress and the presidency right

now are both held by Republicans, they're in pretty deep alignment, so that's not as much of a concern this time. It's really just what Trump wants that needs to be a part of this legislation, and if there's something in it that he really doesn't like, then Congress needs to go back to the drawing board and the Republicans need to find out a way to get that into the bill.

Two different things are at work here. One is that Congress, as I mentioned, is really polarized. The two parties are farther apart from each other than they used to be. So the average Democrat and the average Republican aren't going to agree as much on policy priorities and funding priorities than they did, say, in the 1980s or 1970s or before that.

The other thing is that Congress in recent decades has been more closely divided than they have been in the recent past, say, the last century. In both chambers, House and Senate, it's very rare for one party or the other to have some massive majority. You need a majority of 60 in the Senate to have a chance at passing most legislation, for example, and this big a majority hasn't happened since 2009. That's something President Obama enjoyed with the Democrats for just a short period of time.

Since then, there have been very closely divided chambers in Con-

gress, and that means that you need, at least in the Senate, some bipartisanship in order to pass that 60-vote threshold to break a filibuster. That's what's really gumming up the works right now. Democrats don't feel like they're being included in negotiations, and so they're not likely to agree to a Republican-only budget in the Senate.

A lot of the dynamics are still the same. You still have partisan fighting. And you still have some divides within the two parties that I think are worth mentioning. One example: There was a Senate vote just the other day on one of these budget resolutions, and a couple of Republicans voted with the Democrats. So for some of these more deficit-hawk Republicans, that concern is still playing a role.

What's new this time around is this element of rescissions. This is a tool that's been available since the 1970s in which presidents ask Congress to rescind spending that they had allocated. This is what happened earlier this year with the rescissions on public broadcasting — NPR and PBS — that got a lot of attention, as well as on USAID. Trump said he wanted to cut funding for public broadcasting — the GOP in the Senate and House voted to let him. They didn't need 60 votes in the Senate for a rescission, either. Just a majority for this move.

So in this case, Democrats are looking at this and thinking, "Why should we negotiate, if you're just going to rescind that later on without our consent?" That's a major element that's changed. While it's a power that has been in place for a while, Trump and the Republicans have been really willing to wield that.

This is a pretty serious breach of what we call Congress' "power of the purse." That spending power is set out in Article 1 of the Constitution. It is a key power, maybe their most important power and point of leverage they have in going back and forth with the president and making sure the executive branch doesn't accrue too much power.

The Market Is Shifting To Favor Homebuyers Finally

Looking to buy a new house this fall? You're in luck.

A new analysis from home listings website Realtor.com finds that the week of Sept. 25 to Oct. 1 is the best time to purchase. That's thanks to an ideal combination of housing market conditions that give buyers the upper hand, including lower prices, more inventory, reduced competition and more time to make decisions.

Realtor.com estimates that the last week in September could see nearly 50% more active listings compared to the average for the rest of 2022. The company also expects that people who buy that week will save more than \$20,000 on a median-priced home compared to those who bought during the peak of the market this summer, when a median-priced home cost \$450,000.

In addition, potential buyers can look forward to demand that's generally about 8.5% lower than an average week as well as homes that stay on the market about a week longer than is typical. More price cuts than usual are on deck, too.

Realtor.com's experts attribute these changes in the market to seasonal factors. Not only do kids return to school in the fall, but the weather also cools off, making showings and inspections harder to conduct. (Plus, the cold reduces curb appeal.) As a result, demand drops.

High mortgage rates make it more expensive to buy

Of course, it's only a good time to buy a home if you can afford to do so. Many families are facing affordability challenges thanks to rising mortgage rates, and the issue is only likely to get worse if the Federal Reserve continues to push rates higher — something that many experts agree is likely next week as the central banking system keeps trying to bring down inflation.

"The housing market always cools down this time of year, but this year, I expect fall and winter to be especially frigid as sales dry up more than usual," Daryl Fairweather, chief economist at real estate brokerage Redfin, said in a blog post last week.

If your budget has some wiggle room and you can stomach borrowing at higher rates, though, this could be an opportunity to jump into the market.

Davis Real Estate Services
Raleigh, NC

FOR SALE
Call (919) 606-0848

TIRED OF PAYING HIGH RENT?

CONTACT US TODAY!

DENNIS DAVIS, OWNER (BIC)
919-231-8761

SHANI SMITH, REALTOR
919-931-7461

YOUR HOME IS OUR PRIORITY!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION!



WHAT HAPPENED TO CUSTOMER SERVICE?

Customer service once meant something. You walked into a store, and someone greeted you with a smile. You said, "thank you," and they replied, "you're welcome." Not "no problem." Not "yep." That's how many of us were raised.

Lately, things feel different. Service has gotten faster, yes — more digital, more automated. But it's also gotten... looser. More, too casual. Sometimes even rude.

Last weekend, my extended family gathered to celebrate a landmark birthday. There were nine of us in all. We had reservations, ordered a cake, the whole nine yards. We are all adults, working, professional adults. There would be one check, a healthy tip, and pleasantries. These are people who dine out way more than they cook. We selected a restaurant that should have been a solid choice.

Nothing could have prepared us for what ensued. Drinks and appetizers were ordered and served. Entrees were selected, customized and ordered. At this point we had nothing but positive interactions with the staff. The arrangement of the tables pushed together to accommodate our party didn't allow for the server(s) to walk behind those of us seated on the inside. Here is where the drama began.

In no particular or strategic order our entrees were served. Some seated on the outside received their food before others seated across from them on the inside. To reach the far side of the table, the served leaned over several diners who had received their plates and were beginning to eat to serve those on the inside.

When the awkward service process was pointed out our main server apologized and came around the table closer to the inside diners. When a man from the kitchen decided to clear some dirty dishes using the same process and he was corrected, his reply was, "Some people don't think it's rude."

That's right. He wanted a debate although that he was advised to, "Let it go." After attempting to have the last word Mr. Table-clearer returned to the kitchen. Within a few minutes, here comes a more than middle-aged looking woman who identified herself as the manager. She accused US of having mistreated her staff to the degree that our original server had cried! What? In a foolish bout of self-righteous privilege, Miz Ann budded into what we used to call an "A" and "B" conversation, prompting me to prepared myself for whatever was coming next as she was asked to "C" her way out of it. When asked our original server, the alleged "crier" if she was alright, baffled, she responded, "Do I look like I have been crying?" Well, no, she didn't.

BTW: I asked CoPilot for protocol for serving diners in tight places. Here's the response: Serve from the Side or Front When Possible

- Approach from the side of the guest if there's no room behind.'
- If side access is blocked, serve from the front with a polite acknowledgment "Pardon me, I'll be serving from the front today."
- Avoid reaching across guests: Never reach across a guest to serve another.
- A simple "Excuse me" or "May I serve you from here?" maintains respect and clarity.
- Staff should be trained to navigate tight spaces without bumping chairs or guests.
- Encourage calm, deliberate movement and a warm demeanor.

Didn't happen.

Poor management, weak policies, a lack of professional service protocol, and over-confidence can conspire to create a threatening, confrontational incident for some folks just trying to celebrate a birthday. I'm surprised we didn't end up on TikTok!

The customer is not always right, and respect should go both ways however, it is not wise to approach any strangers in an aggressive manner. Good management should aim for the illusive win-win outcome. De-escalate the situation, accept responsibility for the possibility of a misunderstanding with the goal being maintenance of a customer and, a pleasant environment for other customers.

Customers and staff deserve to be treated with care. But care doesn't mean coddling. It means clear communication, fair policies, and a willingness to listen.

Oh, and a basic understanding that you may not be the craziest person in the room. Mother used to say, "Err on the side of caution." Good advice then and now.

Bottom line: customers should be kind. Employees should be trained. And businesses should set the tone — not just with slogans, but with real support. Because when service works well, it's not just a transaction. It's a moment of connection. Let's bring back the basics: kindness, patience, and a little bit of grace. Because in a world that's changing fast, those old-school values still hold up.

William Peace University Receives Record \$5 Million Gift

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

RALEIGH, NC — William Peace University (WPU) announced last week it has received the largest single gift in the institution's history: a \$5 million donation from the estate of alumna Mrs. Peggy (Garner) Britt, class of 1956. The historic gift is designated entirely for scholarships, fulfilling Britt's explicit goal of giving students who might not otherwise be able to attend college the opportunity to do so. Britt, a Raleigh native who passed away in 2024, was a long-time generous supporter of her alma mater. This bequest expands on her previous donations, including a \$1 million gift in 2022, which established the Peggy Britt Scholarship and the Peggy Britt Endowed Scholarship.

President Lynn Morton said the gift is a monumental investment in the university's mission. "This historic and generous gift is a transformative investment in our students and in the future of Peace," said Morton. "It reaffirms our deep commitment to access and affordability, ensuring that talented students from all backgrounds can pursue their dreams without financial barriers. We are profoundly grateful for this extraordinary bequest — it will change lives for generations to come."

Peggy Garner Britt's generosity was rooted in her own life story. Born in Raleigh on September 5, 1936, she graduated from Broughton High School in 1954 and became the first person in her immediate family to attend college. She graduated from Peace College in 1956 with a degree in business. In a 2022 interview, Britt reflected on how her time at Peace shaped her. "When I enrolled at Peace, I was very quiet and shy," she said. "Peace helped me grow academically and socially so that when I entered the workforce after graduation, I was confident about my ability to do my job."

That confidence propelled her to extraordinary success. In 1957, she married Bill Britt, and together they built one of the largest Amway businesses in the world, achieving the rare Founders Crown Ambassador level. She worked tirelessly to motivate others to "dream big" and was instrumental in forming numerous other businesses. Her success enabled her deep commitment to philanthropy, which included supporting St. Jude Children's Hospital, Samaritan's Purse, and establishing the Bill and Peggy Britt Foundation Inc. to continue her philosophy of "people helping people."

Britt's gift was driven by a desire to give promising students the same chance she had. "I believe that most young people want to improve themselves and have a meaningful and rewarding life," Britt said in her 2022 interview. "Unfortunately, many promising young people and their families lack the financial resources to attend college. I want to help deserving students have that opportunity."

University leadership emphasized that Britt's legacy will do exactly that. "This remarkable gift — the largest scholarship commitment in Peace's history — reflects not only the incredible generosity of one of our most distinguished alumni, but also her deep belief in the power of education," said Paul Scherschel, Vice President for Advancement. "Her legacy will open doors for countless students and inspire others to invest in the promise of future generations."

In her own words, Britt summed up her motivation to give back: "I have worked hard and been very fortunate in my life. That good fortune gives me the ability to help others, particularly those promising young people who need a little assistance to get started on their own roads to success."

90 Businesses Receive State Grants To Accel. Innovation

RALEIGH, N.C.—Addressing a well-known gap that many innovative companies face, today the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology & Innovation announced its latest round of funding to small businesses developing and commercializing new technologies in North Carolina. In fiscal year 2024-2025, 90 small businesses in 21 counties received 102 awards from the One North Carolina Small Business Program, providing \$4.12 million for innovation in a variety of industries, including pharmaceuticals, energy, advanced materials, and agriculture.

“North Carolina is home to thriving, high-demand sectors, including life sciences and advanced manufacturing, that propel our economy forward,” said Governor Josh Stein. “By supporting small businesses at a critical stage of their growth, these grants help drive job creation and economic prosperity.”

The One North Carolina Small Business Program awards state-funded grants for small businesses that apply for awards from two highly competitive federal initiatives: the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) and Small Business Technology Transfer (STTR) programs. The federal SBIR and STTR programs, collectively referred to as America’s Seed Fund™, are administered through 11 federal agencies to support technology development by small businesses, with the goal of commercialization and economic sustainability for the selected companies. SBIR and STTR are the single largest source of early-stage technology development funding for small businesses across the country, with nearly \$4.3 billion awarded annually.

Since 2006, the One North Carolina Small Business Program has leveraged these federal awards to support North Carolina’s innovation ecosystem and help small

businesses navigate the early stages of company growth. By providing this additional capital, the One North Carolina Small Business Program can improve the trajectory of small businesses and the likelihood of commercializing their innovative solutions.

The One North Carolina Small Business Program awarded two types of grants during the fiscal year 2025 funding round: Incentive and Matching. Incentive grants support qualified North Carolina businesses as they prepare and submit an SBIR or STTR proposal to federal agencies, helping to offset some of the costs of developing these complex proposals. The state program aims to improve the quality of proposals, particularly from first-time applicants, and incentivizes broader technology and geographic diversity among North Carolina’s SBIR and STTR applicants. In North Carolina fiscal year 2025, 51 small businesses were awarded Incentive grants totaling \$418,863.

If a company is successful in winning a Phase I SBIR or STTR federal award, the Matching Program supplements those federal funds. This supplemental funding helps the company navigate what’s often called the “Valley of Death” – the time from the launch of a business idea to the point that idea generates sustainable revenue. Additionally, the Matching Program helps attract small businesses to North Carolina, create jobs, and draw more investment to the state. In the most recent round of grant-making, 51 small businesses in 14 North Carolina counties were awarded \$3.69 million in Matching grants after receiving \$14.2 million in federal funds.

Among the 51 companies awarded Matching grants, 10 are located in more economically distressed Tier 1 or Tier 2 counties. The N.C. Department of Commerce uses the Tier ranking system to designate the economic well-being in each county through a county’s unem-

ployment rate, median household income, population growth, and adjusted property tax per capita. Tier 1 represents the 40 most distressed counties, the next 40 counties make up Tier 2, and the 20 least distressed form Tier 3. By using this Tier ranking system, state programs can focus on economically advancing the lower Tier counties, in this instance through growth of small innovative businesses. Out of the 10 total awards in Tier 1 and Tier 2, three of the awards went to companies in Tier 1 counties – the most to be awarded through the Matching program in a single year.

The One North Carolina Small Business Program is administered by the North Carolina Department of Commerce on behalf of the North Carolina Board of Science, Technology & Innovation.

“At a time when other states and nations are increasing their investments in scientific discovery and technological advancement, we need to continue to develop solutions to our greatest challenges, grow our economy, and boost our competitiveness,” said Sheila Mikhail, Chair of the Board. “By awarding grants to small businesses across the state, we are investing in our greatest natural resource – our innovative human capital – to drive economic vitality and North Carolina’s leadership in the global economy.

Since 2006, the One North Carolina Small Business program has awarded a total of nearly \$41 million to 510 businesses across the state. With the support of this early-stage capital, the small, innovative businesses have gone on to maintain more than 2,000 jobs and receive more than \$9.6 billion in follow-on funding from other sources to support the innovation economy within North Carolina. Combined, the businesses employ more than 4,000 people, pay \$600 million in total wages, and pay per-employee average wages that are twice the state average.



Support Small & Local Businesses

Replace your job and earn money at home!

Login at **www.jointonyallen.com** or call **(919) 252-3147** for details to get started.



Lea Funeral Home

2500 Poole Road
Raleigh, NC 27610
(919) 231-1000

“Professional Service With Personal Care”

Call or Visit Us. We also offer Cremation Services & Pre-need Arrangements. You can reserve Our State-of-the-Art Banquet Facilities for your next event

Residential and Commercial Lawn Care



Patrick Yon, Owner
Mobile 984-268-0457

919-346-3337
yonscapes@gmail.com
www.yonscapes.com



Wiring North Carolina One Box At A Time


Website: [HTTPS://Box-Electric.com](https://Box-Electric.com)

Accident & Injury Law

BECTION

THE BECTON LAW GROUP, PLLC

Automobile Accidents • Truck & Motorcycle Accidents
Wrongful Death • Slip and Falls
Real Estate Loan Closings



919.856.0414 www.bectonlaw.com

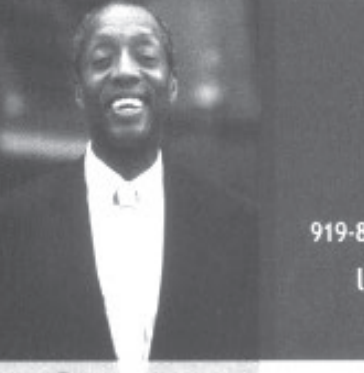
We Only Build Garages and Out-Buildings

Stu Daugherty

Owner

Visit us at the:
HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTER

4905 Departure Dr.
Raleigh, N.C. 27616
(919) 790-1234
FAX (919) 790-1010
www.carolinacustombuilders.com
carolinacustom@hotmail.com




ABE JONES

Attorney at Law

3401 Wendell Boulevard
Wendell, N.C. 27591

919-817-2714 (office) 919-817-2711 (cell)
legalaaffairs@abejoneslaw.com
Fax: 919-366-6770

 **LAW OFFICES OF ABE JONES**

SERVICES OFFER

Residential and Commercial

Product / Service Description

**Burglar alarm
Camera system**

- : homes
- : business
- : farms
- : school and daycare

ask us about temporarily camera system for construction site.

Thank you for your time.

Rouge3 Communication llc
PO BOX 132
Rougemont, NC 27572

Enquiry for service



C.F. Smith Memorial Cares

Your Loved One Deserves The Very Best

NO INSURANCE, NO PROBLEM

SERVICES WE OFFER:
Affordable Direct Burial
Special on Direct Cremation
Affordable Graveside Service
Special on Funeral Service
Special on Memorial Service
Ship-In, Ship-Out & More

WE OFFER SPECIAL PRICING ON CREMATIONS AND FUNERALS

DIRECT CREMATION STARTING AT \$875.00

ASK FOR CRAIG SMITH (FUNERAL DIRECTOR)

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box # 26572
Raleigh, NC 27611

Serving: Wake, Johnston, Harnett, & Durham Counties

CRAIG & DALE SMITH
919- 698-7739



RBR | Physical Therapy, LLC



revive. boost. rebuild.

“Call us today, start your journey to recovery!”

RBR PT Specializes in:

- *Functional assessments
- *Strength training
- *Modalities for pain
- *Balance/Stability training
- *Flexibility/Mobility training
- *Home exercise programs

(No physician’s referral to get started)

**1300 Corporation Pkwy, ste. B
Raleigh, NC 27610**
919-917-7729 (office)
919-400-4178
www.rbrpt.com



Jack's

Seafood & Soul Food

LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1976

Two Locations

**1516 New Bern Ave
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-755-1551**

**5416 Rock Quarry Rd
Raleigh, NC 27610
919-329-8125**

\$1.00 OFF

any take-out or dine-in combo order. Must present coupon at time of purchase.

offer exp 9/30/2025



Steven L. Lyons Funeral Home

“Trust ~ Service ~ Compassion”

1515 New Bern Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27610
stevenlyonsfuneralhome.com
(919)831-2596 Phone



Health and Wellness

HealthySteps Pediatric Clinics, Looks To Expand In NC

By **Jennifer Fernandez**
NC Health News

Jamestown resident Ashley Robinson’s third child arrived three months early. A micro-preemie, Milo weighed just 1 pound, 2.7 ounces, smaller than an average woman’s shoe.

At 3 weeks old, he had his first surgery. Since then, he’s had at least seven others, including for repairs to his intestines and for glaucoma, a condition where the optic nerve is damaged, usually by pressure in the eye.

Like many babies born early, Milo’s lungs were underdeveloped, which left him with chronic lung disease. The umbilical cord did not provide enough nutrients to Milo as he was growing, leading to his premature birth by cesarean section, Robinson said.

Milo was born at Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, but doctors transferred him at 3 weeks old to Duke Hospital for his first surgery. He stayed in the neonatal intensive care unit there for eight months.

Robinson, who had been teaching science at Andrews High School in High Point for two years, had to quit to take care of Milo.

That meant her family went from being a two-income household to a one-income household with three children, one of them with medically complex care. The financial toll left Robinson and her husband, Donte, struggling to feed their family.

Little did she know that help was

waiting for her at Milo’s first visit with the family’s longtime pediatrician. When she took Milo to Atrium Health Wake Forest Baptist Pediatrics-Greensboro, the doctor recommended Robinson speak to the practice’s HealthySteps specialist.

Fourteen pediatric offices in Guilford County have embedded these specialists, who are trained to offer support for problems and concerns — common and complex — that parents might have that doctors don’t have time to address at regular patient visits.

The HealthySteps specialists provide parenting guidance, support between visits, help with referrals and care coordination. They can talk to parents about issues like behavior, sleep and parental depression, as well as social determinants of health such as access to food or transportation that could be affecting health care.

For Robinson, the HealthySteps specialist provided an opening she didn’t realize she needed.

“There was just something about her that when she asked if I was OK ... I felt like I could be honest with her and tell her ... I’m not OK,” Robinson recalled. “I’m doing the best I can, but I am struggling to keep my head above water here.”

Early focus

HealthySteps is a program of the non-profit Zero to Three, which advocates for evidence-based interventions for infants and toddlers.

HealthySteps focuses on serving children in low-income families who are more at risk of health issues throughout

their lives. Typically, these families are served by Medicaid, the State Children’s Health Insurance Program or are uninsured. However, all children age 3 and younger in participating clinics receive HealthySteps services.

Children receive a series of developmental, socioemotional and behavioral screenings. In addition, the HealthySteps specialists regularly check in with families for other risk factors — from maternal depression and domestic violence, to food insecurity and homelessness.

Nationally, the program has reached more than 496,000 children this year in 334 sites across 25 states, Washington, D.C., and Germany, according to the nonprofit.

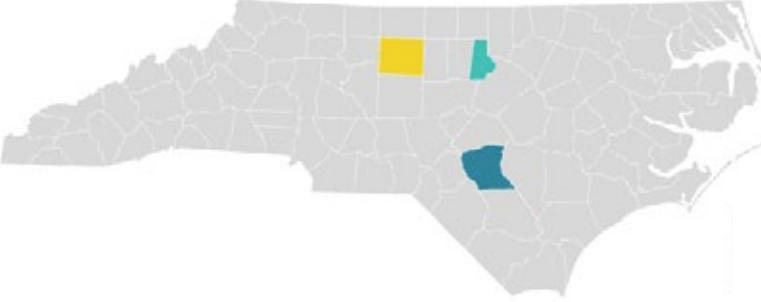
In North Carolina, just over 33,000 children are in HealthySteps pediatric care, said Natalie Tackitt, the program’s state coordinator. More than 25,000 of them are in Guilford County, she said.

There are two sites in Durham and one at Fort Bragg in Fayetteville. The majority, however, are in Guilford County where the Children’s Home Society started the program in 2018 with six HealthySteps specialists, according to Brianna White, HealthySteps program supervisor.

The Children’s Home Society was

HealthySteps sites in North Carolina

With HealthySteps, children receive a series of developmental, socioemotional and behavioral screenings during pediatric well-check visits. In addition, the HealthySteps specialists regularly check in with families for other risk factors — from maternal depression and domestic violence to food insecurity and homelessness.



Map: Jennifer Fernandez/NC Health News • Source: HealthySteps • Get the data • Created with Datawrapper

already doing parent education in a handful of clinics but wanted to have a bigger impact, in part by wrapping a suite of support services around the child, White said.

The way Tackitt describes the wrap-around concept is that no baby lives by themselves, and an unwell parent is not going to be able to support the healthy development of a child.

She described HealthySteps as “promoting healthy behaviors to prevent unhealthy outcomes.”

HealthySteps has a three-tiered ap-

proach to services. All children 3 years old or younger, and their families, get screened. The HealthySteps specialists check a child’s ongoing progress on reaching developmental milestones. They help connect families to services. They answer questions families have about child development and well-being.

More intensive services are available for children who need additional help, from behavioral health consults to early learning resources to ongoing, preventive team-based well-child vis-

its.

Referrals and follow ups are a key component to ensure that children and families are getting the help they need.

One reason HealthySteps focuses on the period from birth to age 3 is that young children go to their pediatricians for well-checks a lot during this period, Tackitt said. They usually make seven visits in the first year alone.

Those first few years are also key to a child’s development, from learning motor skills to acquiring language to setting up good mental health. The brain is growing rapidly, creating nearly a million neural connections per second, absorbing information like a sponge.

The idea is that HealthySteps “becomes almost a one-stop shop for families where they’re being asked about their social, emotional, mental health, as well as being asked about their medical health,” Melissa Baron, director of quality for HealthySteps’ national office, said earlier this year at a conference on early childhood at the UNC Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute.

‘A friendly face’

(See **HEALTHYSTEPS, PED.**, P. 7)

Product Review: Power Peace Pads



By **Jheri Hardaway**

Staff Writer

This year at Earn Your Leisure’s InvestFest, one of the vendors that stood out the most had a product that most of the population needs but is not widely produced. It stops girls from going to school and can impact women from working. You can only use it once, but it is relied upon. I’m talking about sanitary napkins or pads. Rizza Islam’s Intellectual Power Peace Pads are dedicated to providing women with safe, comfortable, and reliable sanitary products. Their mission is to empower women by ensuring their personal care needs are met with the utmost respect and quality. The team at Intellectual Peace Pads believes that every woman deserves the peace of mind that comes with knowing her needs are taken care of with products designed for her well-being.

After utilizing this product for several months, I have found that Peace Pads is a top-of-the-line product that rivals all the major options in drug stores today. The various sizes are helpful for different points in the cycle and are well packaged. The labeling is beautifully packaged with encouraging words of affirmation for women.

Via their website, “At Peace, our vision is to revolutionize the way women experience their menstrual cycle. We believe in providing a product that not only offers superior comfort and protection but also promotes a sense of tranquility and well-being during a time that can be stressful for many. Our commitment to quality and sustainability ensures that every sanitary napkin we produce is not only kind to your skin but also to the environment. At Peace, our commitment to providing high-quality sanitary napkins is unwavering. We understand the importance of reliable, comfortable, and safe menstrual care products. Our dedication to your well-being is at the heart of everything we do.”

At \$35 plus shipping for the Peace Pack, this Black Owned product is definitely worth a try. Purchasing a Peace Pack for the ladies in your life would be an outstanding way to show them you understand and that you care. Congratulations to Rizza Islam and his team for a thoughtful and impactful product.

BLACK YOUTH SUICIDE

Continued from page 1

Black Youth Wellness Advisory Board, during a panel discussion.

Judith Beth VanBoven, who also serves on the state’s youth advisory board, told the audience that sharing their experiences can help others. “Your testimony will become a legacy that someone else will learn from,” she said.

Rafiah Maxi Cole, founder of Sole Survivors of Chicago, also took part in the panel discussion.

She spoke with NC Newsline ahead of the conference, sharing her own story of loss. In 2020, her 19-year-old son died by suicide. “I wanted to be vocal about learning more about what happened,” she said.

Maxi Cole has since dedicated her life to prevention efforts, producing the documentary “While the Children Fade” and leading community outreach in nontraditional spaces — from laundromats to bus stops.

“We must meet the community where the community is,” she said. “Street outreach is the best outreach.”

She praised North Carolina’s action plan as an important step in reducing the stigma around mental health struggles. “To recognize that Black youth are surpassing any other ethnicity when it comes to suicide ideations and attempts brings about an awareness,” she said in earlier interview. “It’s time to humanize this subject.”

Throughout the day, speakers framed suicide prevention as a collective responsibility. Brandon Johnson, who leads a national Black youth suicide prevention initiative, said in his speech that “this is an act of love, an act of hope, an act of resilience. We care deeply about each and every one of you.”

Community members also shared stories of local resilience. Corey Kent, a barber student at Edgecombe Community College, described how his decision to pursue barbering became a form of service. On Saturday, he was offering free haircuts both as a way to hone his skills and connect with neighbors. “Write your dreams out. Don’t ever stop chasing them,” Kent said.

Organizers said that the initiative’s success depends on grassroots involvement. Efforts include training barbers and other community members to recognize warning signs of depression, as well as providing culturally responsive care.

Despite political uncertainty surrounding diversity initiatives, organizers said the community-led approach makes their work resilient. “When the community and the village embrace the work, it can’t be stopped,” said Dr. Sonyia Richardson, a UNC Chapel Hill researcher who helped developed the state plan.

The plan will focus on the 17 counties with the highest suicide rates, while maintaining a commitment to reach all 100 counties in North Carolina.

For Crosbie, the stakes could not be higher. “Suicide is now one of the leading causes of death among youth,” she said. “But prevention is possible when we build safe spaces and strong networks of support.”

FOOD

LION

FEEDS

CharitableFoundation

Buy an apple bag for your family and *help* fill *another* family’s table

*From **September 17 – October 7, 2025**, Food Lion will donate 50¢ (monetary equivalent of 5 meals) from each bag purchased, up to \$200,000, to The Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation to provide grants to local feeding partners within Food Lion’s 10-state footprint. Monetary donations made at checkout in-store or online will also be donated to The Food Lion Feeds Charitable Foundation.

foodlion.com/feeds

Arts & Culture

The Overlooked Role Of Black Women In Early Cinema

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

On last Thursday evening, the Wake County Public Library hosted a thought-provoking presentation that honored the complex journeys of early African American actresses in Hollywood.

The presentation was delivered by Dr. Charlene Regester, a renowned scholar and associate professor in the Department of African, African American, and Diaspora Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. With decades of research devoted to Black visibility in early film, Dr. Regester illuminated the ways in which Black women on screen struggled against—and sometimes strategically subverted—the racialized roles they were given.

Dr. Regester, who also serves as interim director of UNC's Institute for African American Research, has long been a fixture in the world of Black film scholarship. She was among the first students to use the Walter Royal Davis Library at UNC Chapel Hill when it opened in 1984, where she reviewed over 30,000 articles from Black newspapers on microfilm.

This work formed the backbone of several of her publications, including African American Actresses: The Struggle for Visibility, 1900–1960, a critically acclaimed book that was

nominated for an NAACP Image Award.

Dr. Regester traced what she described as the transition of Black women in film "from aprons and pin-afores to jeweled crowns and rhinestone gowns."

Among the earliest actresses discussed was Bertha Regustus, a largely forgotten but important figure who appeared in silent films as early as 1903, including What Happened in the Tunnel. In these early roles, Black characters were often used for comic relief and were portrayed through grotesque stereotypes—sometimes even by white actors in blackface.

Madame Sul-Te-Wan, born Nellie Crawford, became the first Black woman to sign a film contract, appearing in the controversial film The Birth of a Nation (1915). Despite the groundbreaking nature of her contract, the film's portrayal of African Americans—villainous, caricatured, and servile—exemplified the toxic narratives that early Black performers were forced to navigate.

Dr. Regester critically examined how such portrayals were crafted for white audiences' amusement and how fear and ridicule were often central to the cinematic depiction of Black people. In the 1920 silent short Neighbors, for instance, a white criminal hides under a sheet in a Black woman's laundry, terrifying the family—an

unsettling nod to the Ku Klux Klan that used Black terror as the punchline.

"Not only did these pictures challenge Black stereotypes, they also depicted white characters who performed the Black stereotype, in reverse roles with Blacks, for the purpose of providing comic relief," Dr. Regester said.

The presentation also focused on more widely recognized actresses, like Hattie McDaniel, who became the first African American to win an Academy Award for her portrayal of Mammy in Gone with the Wind (1939). While some civil rights leaders, including NAACP's Walter White, criticized the role for reinforcing subservient stereotypes, Dr. Regester highlighted how McDaniel brought depth and subtle resistance to the character.

Through commanding voice, posture, and presence, McDaniel transformed Mammy into a figure of moral authority—becoming the emotional and ethical "center" of the film. McDaniel's own pragmatism was reflected in her famous quote: "I'd rather play a maid making \$7000 a week than \$7 a week being one."

"She took the role and turned it into something more. I think we need to acknowledge her talent and ability to do that," Regester said. "Mammy attempts to locate a space for herself while articulating her voice and physi-

cal positioning."

Also under consideration for the Mammy role was Elizabeth McDuffie, the White House cook, who was recommended by none other than First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt. Ultimately, McDaniel secured the part, though Louise Beavers—another prominent Black actress—was also in the running. Meanwhile, Butterfly McQueen, best known for her portrayal of Prissy in the same film, embodied a different kind of emotional labor than McDaniel.

In a critical birth scene, McQueen's character breaks down in panic, shifting the emotional burden from Scarlett O'Hara, the white female lead, to the Black supporting character.

"The Black characters bear the emotional burden of the film. So, it is Prissy, when she acts out and expresses her real fear in helping to deliver a child, this is really probably the fear they'd like for Scarlett to have, but they don't want to tarnish this image of a Southern belle," Regester said. "They displace it onto the Black character. So, though the Black character is a stereotype, she serves other purposes."

Dr. Regester also highlighted trailblazers who operated outside the typical Hollywood framework, such as Hazel Scott, a Trinidadian-American musical prodigy, who became the first Black woman to host her own U.S.



BERTHA REGUSTUS

television show in 1950.

Known for her refusal to play segregated venues, Scott was a fearless advocate for civil rights and artistic integrity. Scott placed anti-discrimination clauses in her contracts and dazzled audiences by playing two pianos simultaneously—a feat later honored by Alicia Keys at the Grammy Awards in 2019. Scott's political outspokenness ultimately led to her being blacklisted during the McCarthy era, cutting short her television career.

Her marriage to Adam Clayton Powell Jr., an American Baptist pastor and the first African American to be elected to Congress from New York, was believed to have "elevated Scott's political involvement" while helping to "narrow the divide that existed in New York with Black immigrants who had migrated there and African Ameri-

cans", Regester said.

Another icon, Lena Horne, made history by signing a seven-year contract with MGM in 1942—the first Black woman to do so in over 25 years. During World War II, Horne famously refused to perform for the segregated U.S. Army audiences, choosing instead to sing directly to Black soldiers relegated to the back—while white German POWs sat in front. Her signature performance of Stormy Weather (1943) became a civil rights anthem.

The presentation also spotlighted Alice Burton Russell, a North Carolina native born in Maxton, whose father was a newspaper editor.

Russell worked alongside her husband, pioneering filmmaker Oscar Micheaux, acting in many of his race films—movies made by and for Black audiences. Their last film was made in Charlotte in 1959. Through her performances, Russell represented the Black bourgeois class—dignified, educated, and central to the narrative, unlike the stereotypical roles available in mainstream Hollywood.

Throughout the evening, Dr. Regester made a compelling case that these women were not mere victims of stereotyping but agents of cultural transformation. They used their limited roles to assert humanity, dignity, and resistance in an industry—and society—designed to erase them.

Afro-Bolivians Fight Invisibility Through Dance And Memory

YUNGAS, Bolivia (AP) — Cielo Torres had always lived in Bolivia. Yet before moving at age 17 to the remote town of Tocaña — where much of the country's Afro-descendant community lives — she had rarely encountered people who looked like her.

"Back in Santa Cruz, we were the only Afro," said Torres, now 25. "But when I saw others like me, I told myself: This is where I want to be. Here I feel comfortable and understood."

Her sense of belonging echoes the experience of many Afro-Bolivians. Although officially recognized in the constitution since 2009, they remain one of Bolivia's least visible groups, struggling to feel at home in their own land.

"Many think that we are foreigners and we don't have any rights," said Carmen Angola, executive director of the Afro-Bolivian National Council (CONAFRO). "But we were born here."

More than 11.3 million people live in Bolivia. Around 23,000 identified as Afro in a 2012 census, the first and only time they appeared as a distinct category. Most live in Yungas, a region where roads and communications are scarce but coca leaf plantations abound.

"Our Afro communities depend on coca harvesting or honey production," said Torres, who runs a bee-keeping business with her husband.

"We are people used to walking trails instead of paved roads," she added. "People who learn from the land."

Symbolic gestures, scarce change

Official information on the community's history is hard to come by. "We have been made invisible by



(AP PHOTO/JUAN KARITA)

the state," said activist Mónica Rey. "There weren't any written registers reflecting our reality. We wrote that history down ourselves."

She said some progress was made in 2007, a year after Evo Morales became Bolivia's first Indigenous president. "By 2009 we were included in the constitution," she added. "But we have demanded our inclusion and rights to all the past governments."

Morales supported CONAFRO's founding in 2011. That same year, Sept. 23 was established as the National Day of the Afro-Bolivian People and Culture. Still, according to Rey, symbolic recognition is not enough to achieve structural change.

"The idea was that this day would serve to reaffirm our identity and that the state would create public policies for the Afro people," Rey said. "But

it turns out we celebrate among ourselves and the government doesn't do anything."

She and Carmen Angola contend that promoting their people's legacy has proven difficult. Angola has tried to convince local authorities to allow a group of Afro-Bolivians to visit schools and share insights of their community. None have agreed so far. "They just say they're going to address discrimination, history and racism," Angola said. "But the people who created the curricula aren't Black. Their history is not ours."

From the mines to the 'haciendas'

CONAFRO joined efforts with another organization to gather testimonies documenting the Afro-Bolivian community's long-lost past. A comprehensive document was released in 2013.

"We got our history back," Rey said. "Our experiences, our elders' tales, our culture, have been retrieved and documented."

The Afro-Bolivian people descend from the Africans enslaved in the Americas during the European conquest between the 16th and 17th centuries.

Mostly born in Congo and Angola, they were initially taken to Potosí, a colonial mining city located about 340 miles (550 kilometers) southeast of La Paz.

The high altitude — 13,700 feet (4,175 meters) above sea level — and the extreme weather quickly took a toll. Later on, exposure to mercury and other substances in mining led to severe illnesses — from tooth loss, respiratory disease and death.

Two centuries later, the ancestors of the current Afro-Bolivian population were forcibly relocated to Yungas. There they settled and started working in large estates known as 'haciendas,' where coca leaf, coffee and sugar cane were grown.

"The Afro people were dying and that was inconvenient because they were considered investments," said sociologist Óscar Mattaz. "So people started buying them and taking them away."

Now Tocaña and neighboring towns are considered the cultural heart of Afro-Bolivians.

A king with no crown

In Mururata lives Julio Pinedo, a symbolic leader regarded as the king of the Afro-Bolivians.

Bolivia's Black community has recognized kings for centuries. Pinedo's role carries no political weight within the government, but he is considered

a guardian of his people's rights. Local authorities acknowledge his title and even attended his coronation in 1992.

"The king was a symbolic means to show there's royalty in the community," Mattaz said. "He was very influential, worked hard and was respected."

His position hardly made a difference in his lifestyle. Pinedo, now 83, resides in the same humble home he has always lived. He now relies on his son's coca harvest for income.

Pinedo welcomes visitors. But engaging in conversation is hard due to his age. According to his wife, Angélica Larrea, his royal ancestry dates back 500 years.

"I remember his coronation," she said. "People came from other communities. They danced and there was a procession. A priest came and we celebrated Mass."

A handful of Afro-Bolivians have tried to decipher what their ancestors' spirituality was. Yet the community remains overwhelmingly Catholic.

Close to Pinedo's home, the sole parish of Mururata has no resident priest. Nonetheless, a group of devoted women are welcomed to read the Bible each Sunday.

Isabel Rey — a distant relative of Mónica — said her ancestors were Catholics. And even without a priest to rely on, the catechist in charge of the church has kept the community's faith strong.

"She will soon celebrate 40 years sharing the Lord's word," Rey said. "I help her, because she can't keep up the work alone."

A dance of struggle and love

There might not be an Afro-Bolivian spirituality, but the community's soul remains bonded through the "saya," a traditional dance performed with drums and chants.

"Our demands were born through this music," Rey said. "The saya has become our instrument to gain visibility. We protest with drums and songs."

Torres recalled dancing saya before moving to Tocaña. Yet her feelings while performing it changed.

"Here it's danced from the heart," she said. "I learned how to sing and listen. It's no ordinary music because we tell our history through it."

She said each detail in their garments bears meaning. The white symbolizes peace and the red honors the blood shed by their ancestors. Men wear black hats to remember how their predecessors worked endlessly under the sun. And the women's braids depict the roads they dreamed of to escape.

"It may seem like fashion, but it's not," Torres said. "It's our culture." For more than a decade now, she has learned new moves and saya songs. She became fluent in her community's language — a variation of Spanish that is not officially recognized — and is proud of her identity.

"I used to feel embarrassed for dancing saya," Torres said. "But when I saw people dancing here, I told myself: This is what I am. I am Black."

Committed to raising her daughter to also be proud of her ancestry, she constantly praises her skin color, hair and moves.

"She already dances saya," Torres said. "I tell her: 'You are Black. My Black little girl.'"

Muslim Storytelling Aims to Change Harmful TV Stereotypes

By Tazeen M. Ali

The Conversation

For over a century, Hollywood has tended to portray Muslim men through a remarkably narrow lens: as terrorists, villains or dangerous outsiders. From shows such as "24" and "Homeland" to procedural dramas such as "Law and Order," this portrayal has seldom allowed for complexity or relatability.

Such depictions reinforce Orientalist stereotypes — a colonial worldview that treats cultures in the East as exotic, irrational or even dangerous.

However, recent years have seen a noticeable increase in Muslim-led storytelling across platforms in the U.S. and U.K. While still a minority, these stories depart from decades of misrepresentation.

As a scholar of Islam and gender who has conducted research on masculinity, sexuality and national belonging in Muslim entertainment media, I analyze a new wave of critically acclaimed shows where Muslim characters are at the center of the narrative.

Historical stereotypes

Scholar of media and race Jack Shaheen has documented the systematic vilification of Arabs and Muslims in Western media. In his 2001 book "Reel Bad Arabs," he analyzed over a thousand films and found that the vast majority depicted Arab and Muslim men almost exclusively as fanatics, oil-rich villains and misogynists.

More recently, a 2021 study from the University of Southern California's Annenberg Inclusion Initiative looked at 200 popular movies and found that Muslim characters were either completely missing or shown

as violent.

Despite the consistency of negative representations of Muslims on television following the rise in Islamophobia, the post-9/11 climate actually saw the introduction of more diverse Muslim characters. Such portrayals promoted the idea of the U.S. as a tolerant, liberal society.

Scholar of popular culture Evelyn Alsultany writes that Hollywood introduced Muslim characters who were often law-abiding citizens or patriotic allies. She explains that despite these positive attempts, these characters were still depicted in simplistic ways, as either "good Muslims" or "bad Muslims." The "good Muslim/bad Muslim" framework was coined by scholar of postcolonialism Mahmood Mamdani to describe how Muslims are understood across this binary. The "good Muslims" distance themselves from their faith and align themselves with Western liberal values to gain acceptance.

Expanding on this theme, Islamic studies scholar Samah Choudhury explains how the mainstream success of South Asian Muslim male comedians such as Hasan Minhaj, Kumail Nanjiani and Aziz Ansari is shaped by their adoption of secular ideals.

Even so-called "positive" characters, such as Muslim FBI agents or loyal informants in shows like "NCIS" or "Homeland," ultimately served to normalize state surveillance and justify the global war on terrorism, a global campaign initiated by the U.S. following the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. These brown and sometimes Black Muslim characters are portrayed as "good" only when aligned with U.S. state power.

Effort in contemporary television



WORKING TITLE TELEVISION

Hulu's comedy drama series "Ramy" is a milestone in Muslim storytelling. Created by actor-comedian Ramy Youssef, the series, which debuted in 2019, follows a young Egyptian-American Muslim navigating family, faith and relationships in New Jersey.

Ramy is devoid of storylines about national security. Instead, the show foregrounds its main character's grappling with religiosity, dating and identity. Moreover, as I have argued elsewhere, the protagonist's religious devotion is never a punchline but a part of his everyday experience.

For instance, Ramy prays five times a day — at the mosque and at home, fasts during Ramadan, and abstains from alcohol as a matter of Islamic observance. At the same time, he also partakes in hookup culture and wrestles with guilt for falling short of Islamic ideals. By showcasing this duality, the show illuminates internal debates within American

Muslim communities, including on gendered norms around marriage and sexual ethics.

Across the Atlantic, the BBC comedy series "Man Like Mobeen," created by comedian-actor Guz Khan, offers a layered portrayal of Muslim life in inner-city Birmingham, England. The show follows Mobeen, a reformed British Pakistani gangster, striving and often failing to leave his criminal past behind and live as a devout Muslim while raising his teenage sister.

The show explores the struggles of the working class. It situates Muslim communities within broader class and racial dynamics whereby working-class Black and brown men are vulnerable to racial profiling by law enforcement and gang violence.

With incisive and dark humor, it challenges British racism against Muslims and offers social and political commentary on U.K. society. This includes critiques of British far-right movements and their racism, as well

as the failures of the National Health Service.

Muslim women on screen

The flip side of stereotypical portrayals of Muslim men as violent and misogynist is the equally reductive portrayal of Muslim women as passive or oppressed. When Muslim women appear on screen, they are often presented as submissive or "liberated" only by a white non-Muslim male romantic interest. This process of liberation usually involves removing their hijab or distancing themselves from Islam.

A refreshing departure from such storytelling norms can be found in the British Channel 4 comedy "We Are Lady Parts," created by filmmaker and writer Nida Manzoor, which debuted in 2021.

The show follows an all-female Muslim punk band in London. The bandmates are funny, creative and rebellious. While they defy Western views of Muslim women, they do not appear to be written solely to shatter stereotypes.

They reflect the contradictions that many Muslims live with, juggling faith, identity and politics in their music. The band's songs include feminist themes but are diverse, subverting Islamophobic stereotypes against women with humor with songs like "Voldemort Under My Headscarf," or lusting after a love interest in "Bashir with the good beard."

The band members are also often seen engaged in ritual prayer together, a unified display of worship among women who otherwise have very different personalities, fashion sensibilities and goals in life. The show also addresses queerness, Islamophobia and intergenerational

conflict with nuance and humor.

I explore all of these themes in further detail in my forthcoming book, in which I examine how this new wave of Muslim media offers insights about the lived religious experiences of American and British Muslims.

Narrative authority

What unites these series is their rejection of reductive and stereotypical narratives. Muslim characters in these shows are not defined by violence, trauma or assimilation. Nor do they serve as spokespeople for all Muslims; they are written as flawed and evolving individuals.

This wave of nuanced portrayals of Muslim life includes other recent productions such as Netflix's 2022 series "Mo" and Hulu's 2025 reality series "Muslim Matchmaker," which centers real people whose lives and romantic journeys showcase American Muslim life in authentic ways. Muslims in the show are depicted as having various professions, levels of faith and life experiences.

These series and their creators signal that real progress comes when Muslim voices are telling their own stories, not simply reacting to the gaze of outsiders or the pressures of political headlines. By foregrounding daily ritual, spiritual aspiration and even awkwardness and desire, "Ramy," "Man Like Mobeen" and "We Are Lady Parts" all refuse the burden of "representation."

By moving away from the binary of "threatening other" versus "assimilated citizen," this new wave of media challenges the legacy of Orientalism. Instead, they offer characters who reflect the complex realities of Muslim lives that are messy, joyful and evolving.

Community

For the Community, By the Community: A Sheriff's Vision For Harnett County

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Lillington, NC - Major Aaron Meredith, a 20-year veteran of the sheriff's office, is running for Sheriff of Harnett County with a platform centered on community enhancement and a modern approach to law enforcement. With a history of serving in nearly every capacity within the department, he brings a unique perspective and a deep understanding of the office's operations.

"I've pretty much done everything at the sheriff's office," he said. "What I didn't do, I was overseeing at some point. I feel like I can go into the role knowing things that someone on the outside really needs to."

Major Meredith's top priority is expanding the department's community programs, a core belief that has guided his career. He emphasizes that the three constitutional duties of the Sheriff—civil service, court security, and detention—are non-negotiable, but what can be built upon is a stronger community presence. "I want to focus on community. I'm big on community," he stated. "It's

what I've done, it's what I've come up with. I think there's a lot more we can do."

One of his key initiatives is nurturing and expanding existing programs, such as the P.A.L. Program, which includes boxing, wrestling, a makerspace with 3D printers, and even robot camps. Major Meredith said the program is a "little tiny plant that just needs to be watered." He wants to see similar programs flourish, including Senior Well-Check and Exercise Programs, Self-Defense Classes, and a Sheriff's Cadet Program to train and mentor future Harnett County law enforcement professionals. The goal is to provide a pipeline for local youth to grow within the department, with the possibility of having their basic law enforcement training paid for.

Major Meredith understands the community's concerns and promises to re-examine all departmental policies, including the controversial topic of high-speed chases. Acknowledging that the current policy is designed to uphold law and order, he recognizes the shift in perspective that comes with experience. "I can really



understand... what that means when a life is taken because somebody is running from a traffic stop for an expired registration," he said. "I do plan on re-looking at those things. I plan on looking at all of the policies."

He also plans to focus on complaint-driven narcotics investigations. This approach would prioritize the most pressing issues for residents—a drug dealer living next door, for example—and aim to provide visible, responsive action. While acknowledging the lengthy process of building a case, he believes there are

times when it's appropriate to take swift action, even if it's as simple as knocking on a door and telling a dealer to stop.

He also emphasizes the need to invest in modern technology to ensure the safety of deputies and the public. Tools like drones and a remote-controlled robot with cameras, which can be sent into dangerous situations, are "very, very important pieces of equipment" for keeping everyone safe.

Major Meredith also envisions bringing in therapy dogs for both the community and department personnel. Citing the success of such programs in other counties, he sees them as a vital resource for addressing the trauma experienced by 911 dispatchers and for helping comfort children at the scene of a tragic event. Major Meredith's vision for the Harnett County Sheriff's Office is one of progress and collaboration. He aims to bring his years of experience and a fresh, community-focused perspective to the role, building a department that is not only effective but deeply connected to the people it serves.



Pictured from left to right: Rev. Darlington, Moses High, Dr. Ross, Nurse Darkes, Dr. Darkes, Lloyd Inman, Carolyn Green Boone, little Aiden Green, Barry Parker.

Area Physician Combines Praise And Prostate Cancer Awareness

RALEIGH, NC – September 14th marked the 3rd annual "Prostate Cancer Awareness Sunday" at Christian Faith Baptist Church in Raleigh, NC. Christian Faith member Doctor Leroy Darkes plays guitar there regularly during worship. But Dr. Darkes is also president of the North Carolina Minority Prostate Cancer Awareness Action Team. In commemoration of September being Prostate Cancer (PC) Awareness Month, the "Action Team" recently joined Christian Faith for worship.

The vestibule flourished a sea of "PC blue" on the shirts of Action Team members and a table of brochures, PC blue ribbon pins, screening reminder pens as well as other life-saving information. In the sanctuary ushers presented striking blue prostate cancer church programs. Christian Faith members Lloyd Inman & Dr. Darkes were the genesis of this meaningful tradition. Christian Faith pastor Reverend Keith A. Darlington has graciously welcomed and hosted the annual prostate cancer awareness service.

Multiple online worshippers and those present witnessed Dr. Darkes celebrating his two year PC survival anniversary following an emotional revelation of his diagnosis at the same event back in 2023. The irony of Dr. Darkes' prostate cancer diagnosis was that he's been a long-term soldier in the battle against PC. He's a staunch advocate for comprehensive PC screening and an Action Team Shepherd who guides men with PC though what is often a harrowing ordeal. For many years, Dr. Darkes has been a trusted physician who counsels PC patients and screens for PC as part of his practice. He has administered PSA blood tests and digital rectal exams to countless men...many times on a volunteer basis at free screenings. Dr. Darkes' talk at Christian Faith centered around the disparate rate of PC induced morbidity and mortality for minority men which inspired formation of the Action Team. But he also emphasized how that rate can be lessened with regular screening which increases the possibility of early detection. Dr. Darkes revealed that PC displays no symptoms until later stages and that early detection gives the best chance for a successful outcome.

Reverend Darlington preached an inspiring sermon about the importance of tolerance and inclusivity, as well as humility and service—which he pointed out all require self-sacrifice. He noted the sacrifices made by Action Team members as they selflessly work to increase PC awareness and provide support for those afflicted with the incidious disease.

In attendance were many ladies motivated to gain and share PC information with others- and to encourage loved ones to get screened. Among them was Dr. Darkes' wife, Dee Darkes. Nurse Darkes chairs the recently revived "PC Angels", a branch of the Action Team designed to give information and support to wives, companions and families of PC patients & survivors. Also present was Dr. Louie Ross, chair of the Action Team Support Group which meets online monthly. The Action Team meets at noon on second Fridays at the Zeta-Sigma House in Raleigh and can be reached at 919-438-2673.

La Fiesta del Pueblo Celebrates 31 Years of Hispanic Heritage



By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Raleigh's streets came alive Sunday afternoon as La Fiesta del Pueblo, the Triangle's largest celebration of Latin American culture, returned for its 31st year.

Held annually as part of Hispanic Heritage Month, the cultural event transformed six blocks of Fayetteville Street into a vibrant hub of music, food, art, and community connection.

Organized by El Pueblo, a Raleigh-based nonprofit dedicated to leadership development in Wake County's Latinx community, the festival brought together a wide cross-section of people to celebrate the diverse traditions and flavors of Hispanic heritage.

Veronica Aguilar, Communications Director at El Pueblo, described the festival as "a moment to celebrate the pride, the existence, the resistance, and the legacy of the Hispanic community in North Carolina." She emphasized that La Fiesta del Pueblo is "a moment to remember traditions held tightly, whether from home countries or passed down here in the U.S., and to connect again with that heritage."

As immigration fears have led to the cancellation of similar events—most notably Charlotte's Heritage Festival of the Carolinas—Raleigh's organizers were determined to move forward.

Despite nationwide concerns over immigration crackdowns, the Raleigh event remained strong. Attendees expressed relief and joy that the festival continued as planned.

The crowd—approximately reaching 20,000—sampled cuisine from across Latin America. Food vendors included Tropical Kabob & More by Chef Palau of Greenville, offering authentic Puerto Rican dishes; Poblanos Tacos out of Knightdale with Mexican flavors; and Empanadas RD from Raleigh, serving specialties from the Dominican Republic.

Artisan booths added a creative flair to the event. Vendors such as Crafts by Shirley from Sanford featured handcrafted kitchen items like fabric bowl holders and plastic bag organizers. Charlotte's Elizabeth Lopez Fashion showcased vintage and recycled designer apparel and accessories, while Nana Moon Spark of Concord offered macrame, crochet pieces, and beauty services.

For over three decades, La Fiesta del Pueblo has grown alongside the region's Hispanic population, reflecting its evolving stories, challenges, and triumphs. As the festival expands each year, so does its importance as a cultural cornerstone in North Carolina.

Cashless Bail—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

low-level misdemeanor, may remain in jail for days, weeks or months. Defendants by law are presumed innocent, but stuck behind bars, they can lose jobs or housing and be unable to care for their family.

Dozens of jurisdictions, including some states, have taken steps to change their bail systems, but there is no single definition of what constitutes "bail reform" or how such changes are applied.

Some states, counties and cities have moved toward fully or nearly eliminating, cash bail. Under these "cashless bail" systems, people may be released before trial without paying money unless a judge determines they pose a public safety risk or are unlikely to return to court. These decisions, experts say, are made intentionally, based on the facts of the case — including the charges involved — rather than on a defendant's ability to pay.

The policies can affect a large share of the people in the justice system. About 5 million felony cases and 13 million misdemeanor cases are resolved in state courts each year, according to the National Center for State Courts. Since misdemeanors make up the bulk of cases, state and local bail policies can shape outcomes for millions of people charged with lower-level offenses.

Some opponents of cashless bail policies argue that lenient policies may result in the release of defendants who could reoffend or fail to appear. Supporters counter that keeping people in jail simply because they cannot afford bail is unfair and disproportionately affects Black, Latino and low-income defendants.

The ongoing debate has fueled misconceptions, partly because some



news coverage repeats unproven claims that cashless bail policies cause upticks in crime.

Trump has frequently drawn that connection himself. In a July post on Truth Social, he wrote: "Crime in American Cities started to significantly rise when they went to CASHLESS BAIL. The WORST criminals are flooding our streets and endangering even our great law enforcement officers. It is a complete disaster, and must be ended, IMMEDIATELY!"

Supporters of cash bail often raise concerns that released suspects might commit new, potentially more serious crimes. While that is possible in individual cases, some research suggests that eliminating cash bail does not lead to a widespread increase in crime. Some research also suggests that setting money bail isn't effective in ensuring court appearances or improving public safety.

How the bail system works Washington, D.C., the immediate target of Trump's executive orders, largely eliminated the use of cash bail in 1992. Judges are required to first consider nonfinancial conditions, such as check-ins or curfews,

though cash bail may still be used in serious cases.

Several states also have adopted major changes. Alaska, California, Illinois, New Jersey and New York have passed laws scaling back or fully eliminating cash bail, though some of those laws have since been revised. New Mexico voters in 2016 also overwhelmingly approved a constitutional amendment to eliminate cash bail.

In 2023, Illinois became the first state to fully abolish cash bail through the Pretrial Fairness Act, which also guarantees defendants legal representation at pretrial hearings.

"Those early decisions about someone's liberty are much more deliberative," said Don Steman, a professor and co-director of the Center for Criminal Justice at Loyola University Chicago. The center's team has been evaluating the implementation and impact of the Pretrial Fairness Act. "It's about, 'Is this person a threat to public safety or a threat to willful flight?'"

In Houston, a 2019 settlement and consent decree resolved a lawsuit challenging Harris County's

HealthySteps Pediatric —CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

Alice Eaton, who has been a HealthySteps specialist in Guilford County for four years, said she talks to families about a variety of issues, from eating and sleeping to development and behavior. Mental health of the entire family also is discussed.

"One of the unique things about HealthySteps is that we're hopefully there from the very beginning, whether there's a concrete need or not," Eaton said. "If something were to come up, we're kind of a friendly face, especially in a lot of practices where you might see different providers every time, or different nurses every time, where there's a lot of changing faces."

A favorite part of the job for Eaton is watching families change and grow, especially parents, who grow in their confidence.

"Parents are really appreciative when they know that there's someone that they can call or talk to even between visits," she said.

Even parents who've already had children often find themselves with questions about something they didn't encounter with their other children, or that was easier with a previous child, Eaton said.

Everyone has access to the HealthySteps specialist. Families don't have to sign up or meet any qualifications to get services.

Even if one child ages out, many times families will have another child young enough to be part of HealthySteps, so they continue to get those support services, said Samantha Prior, Zero to Three's senior communications director.

That's the case for Robinson, whose family will still be served by the pro-



ASHLEY AND DONTÉ ROBINSON WITH THEIR CHILDREN, INCLUDING 3-YEAR-OLD MILO (HEALTHYSTEPS)

gram when Milo ages out because her 1-year-old daughter, Malia, qualifies.

She said HealthySteps has been invaluable to her family. It has been a lifeline for her.

Moms are supposed to be like superheroes, Robinson said.

"We're supposed to do all the

things," she said. "And we do all the things, but we need support and help too, and sometimes it's not easy to say that, or to even know where you can go to get that type of support."

Funding

There's been a lot of interest in expanding the program in the state,

Church

Ethically, Should Pastors Use AI for Church Ministry?

By Patricia Engler

Answers In Depth

A new era has dawned in church history. For over two millennia, Christians who gathered to hear teachings from God’s Word could safely assume the teacher would be human. In June 2023, however, over 300 people flocked to St. Paul’s church in Fuerth, Germany, to hear from a virtual preacher powered by artificial intelligence (AI). The following year, Christian headlines reported, “Pastor Creates AI Version of Himself Offering Personalized 1-on-1 Prayer.” Similarly, websites such as ai-pastor.com advertise individually tailored sermons, devotionals, Scripture analyses, and prayer support from chatbot “pastors.” Not even having a flesh-and-blood pastor guarantees hearing fully human-authored sermons, given how companies like SermonDone encourage pastors to copy, paste, and preach AI-generated messages.

With AI unlocking novel possibilities and raising new questions within ministerial contexts, pastors need biblical, ethical boundaries for using AI in ministry. In response, this four-part paper argues that, while AI can be a useful support for certain purposes such as research, AI should not replace pastors’ spiritual leadership responsibilities such as personal Scripture study, sermon preparation, and pastoral care.

Part One examines a biblical understanding of four concepts: the church, the pastor, the sermon, and technology. Part Two introduces the basics of what generative AI is, how this technology works, and how AI differs from human intelligence. Part Three describes common practices and rationale regarding the use of AI in pastoral ministry. Finally, Part Four applies theological concepts from Part One to argue against outsourcing personal Scripture study, sermon preparation, and pastoral care to AI.

The Ministerial Context: The Church
To draw biblical boundaries for AI in churches, we need to consider what God’s Word says about the nature, purpose, and structure of the church. We can glean initial insights into the church’s nature from considering the word church itself, known in the Greek New Testament



(NT) as 'ekklesia.' The Septuagint renders ekklesia as the Hebrew term 'qahal,' which exclusively refers to the physical assembly of God’s covenant people. The NT use of ekklesia also refers to an embodied community of God’s people, now under the new covenant in Christ. Scripture depicts this new covenant community as God’s flock (1 Peter 5:2) and as Christ’s own body and beautiful Bride (Ephesians 5:29–32). Ultimately, Revelation 7:9 portrays the church’s fulfillment as an eschatological gathering of all God’s redeemed people. By nature, then, the church is an embodied, eschatological assembly of human believers unified in Christ.

The church’s purpose and structure reflect its nature. On earth, the church gathers in local congregations that function as “embassies” of God’s kingdom, pointing to heavenly realities. In view of these realities, the church works to make disciples (Matthew 28:18–19) and to edify, equip, and mobilize believers as Ephesians 4:11–16 describes. This passage lists various offices of church leaders, including “shepherds and teachers,” whom God ordains to work together for “building up the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:11–12).

The church’s structure thus flows from its God-given purpose, with human leaders serving God’s people under Christ, the church’s head (Ephesians 5:23).
The Ministerial Person: The Pastor

As 1 Peter 5:2 indicates, the pastor’s high calling is to serve as an embodied, human shepherd of God’s embodied, human flock (cf. John 21:15–17). How does Scripture portray the shepherd’s responsibilities? Primarily, the shepherd feeds the sheep by preaching God’s Word (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15, 4:1–2). The shepherd also leads the sheep by personal example, following the example of Christ (1 Timothy 4:12; 1 Peter 5:3; cf. 1 Corinthians 1:11). Meanwhile, the shepherd protects the sheep by defending against false doctrine (2 Timothy 4:3). The shepherd additionally corrects the sheep who are going astray, guiding them through appropriate exhortation, reproof, and discipline (2 Timothy 4:2). Along the way, the shepherd tends to sheep in need by providing pastoral care. In all these responsibilities, the pastor answers to the chief Shepherd, Jesus (1 Peter 5:4).

The habits, hallmarks, and heart of the shepherd harmonize with these responsibilities. The habits of

the shepherd include deep personal Scripture study and meditation, prayer, accountability to others, and the active pursuit of godliness (1 Timothy 4:7–10, 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:21–23). The hallmarks of the shepherd include personal diligence (1 Timothy 4:7–16; 2 Timothy 2:15), integrity (1 Timothy 4:7–16, 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:21–23; Titus 1:5–9), perseverance (2 Timothy 2:1–6), and faithfulness, resisting compromise in both lifestyle and teaching (1 Timothy 6:13–14). And the heart of the shepherd beats for something higher than itself. The pastor is not

to be driven by self-centric, earthly focused motivations (1 Peter 5:2) but rather by love for the awesome chief Shepherd (1 Peter 5:4).

The Ministerial Message:
The Sermon

Along with characterizing shepherds as teachers in Ephesians 4:11, Paul’s letters to church leaders consistently emphasize the importance of teaching sound doctrine (e.g., 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15, 4:1–2; Titus 2:1). This emphasis highlights the role of preaching as a primary responsibility for pastors. In Scripture’s portrayal of preaching across both the Old Testament (OT) and NT, God’s human messenger communicates God’s Word to God’s people in a particular time and place. Nehemiah 8:8 depicts preaching as both proclaiming and explaining Scripture, a pattern that carries into the NT in 1 Timothy 4:13.15 The scriptural pattern of preaching is God-centered, Bible-focused, and aligned with the biblical responsibilities, habits, hallmarks, and heart of the shepherd.

Scripture also clarifies the purpose of preaching. As theologian David Christensen surmises from Colossians 1:28, “Our purpose in proclaiming Christ is nothing short of leading each person to completion in Christ.” In line with this purpose, preaching is context specific. The sermon delivers God’s Word to this group of God’s people in this place at this time with these needs. Discerning and communicating God’s heart for this congregation requires diligent prayer, study, reflection, and relational reliance on Christ. As Paul David Tripp said so well,

Preaching is more than the regurgitation of your favorite exegetical commentary. . . . It is bringing the transforming truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ from a passage that has been properly understood, cogently and practically applied, and delivered with the engaging tenderness and passion of a person who has been broken and restored by the very truths he stands up to communicate. You simply cannot do this without proper preparation, meditation, confession, and worship.

Underscoring this need for personal diligence, Scripture repeatedly characterizes preaching as labor (1 Timothy 5:7). Christensen unpacks the NT definition of labor as involving struggle, striving, and even a sort of agony, adding that God’s Spirit empowers this labor. Part of this labor requires careful study, along with basking in the richness of Scripture as only a human in relationship with God can do (Psalm 119:18).

The Ministerial Media: Technology
Whether in the form of paper and ink or pixels and screens, technologies can support (but cannot appropriately supplant) human ministry. As software engineer and theologian John Dyer describes, technology is a gift to steward for the good of humans and creation. Dyer also stresses that no technology is value neutral. Instead, every technology reflects the values of its users and developers. Additionally, even well-intended uses of technology can yield non-neutral consequences. For these reasons, wisely stewarding technology requires anticipating how specific applications of technology may impact our thinking, behaviors, and relationships.

Practical Biblical Principles

TO BE SIFTED LIKE WHEAT
Read: Luke 22:31-38

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral
Like many today who are the targets of the enemy, the devil had his eyes upon Peter long before Peter denied knowing our Lord three times. Peter had cracked the door earlier for the devil to come into his life and set up shop, so to speak. Peter opened the door for the enemy to enter his life for the first time when he rebuked the Lord. This was the time when Jesus began to tell His disciples for the first time He was going to be betrayed and put to the cross.

Jesus and His disciples had just feed the 4,000 plus people in the mountains around Galilee and then traveled some thirty plus miles north to the city of Caesarea Philippi. It was here Jesus ask his disciples, “Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?” The short of this questioning session, Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter had now been with Christ some two and half years. Jesus revealed to Peter that only God could have revealed that truth to Peter. Jesus then said to Peter, “I will build my Church on the faith that you have Peter and will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven.

Such promises to Peter indicates that Peter was a vessel of gold to God and filled with the Spirit of God. For the Holy Spirit had yet to permanently fall upon the chosen individuals.

It was soon after this incident Jesus begin to tell His disciples that He was going to be betrayed and killed in Jerusalem. Peter, whose collective mind was on “that” Messiah that would come and defeat the Romans and free the Jews from such restricting occupation. Therefore, Peter’s Old Testament mind could not accept what Christ had just told

them about His pending death in Jerusalem. Peter was focused on his own agenda, took Jesus aside and begin to rebuke Him saying, “Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You! Jesus then turned to Peter and rebuked him saying, “Get thee behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men” (Matthew 16:22-23). It was here that Peter opened the door for the devil to come into his life. The devil now had seen a weak spot in Peter’s armor. The devil has now seen that Peter is arrogant and capable of showing no respect for the words the Lord says or teaches. Not only that, Peter, made himself equal to Christ when he told Christ what is not going to happen to Him. You can bet your bottom dollar the devil took note of Peter’s behavior at this time. This all happened just moments after Peter had declared that Jesus was the “Son of the Living God.”

It was not just Peter who was in danger. The word “you” in Luke 22:31 is plural. Jesus was speaking to Peter, informing him that the devil had his sights set on all the disciples. It was then Jesus said to His disciples, “Take up your cross” (Matthew 16:24-25).

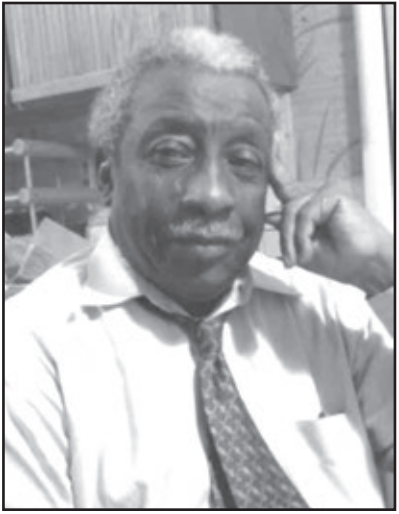
A few months later, It was not long after Jesus and His disciples arrived in Jerusalem. This would be Jesus’ last trip to the city. Before the cross, Jesus had koinonia in the Upper Room with His disciples telling them he was about to return to His father. The devil was there also. First it was Judas, the thief, the devil made good use of by having him betray Jesus. The disciples were already filled with sorrow about the Lord’s leaving them. The devil jumped again, and his next event was to have the disciples argue about who will be the great one in heaven next to Jesus (Luke 22: 24).

Jesus having decerned the devil was in the room as well. Our Lord then turns to Peter and said in a warning, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat” (Luke 22: 31- 32). The devil didn’t come to Jesus asking Him for Peter. Jesus decerned what was in the devil’s heart about Peter. “But I have prayed for you that your faith “should,” not fail; (not “would not fail” which would imply a “slam dunk” for Peter. The word “should” imply Peter will also have to do some “heavy lifting” in his own faith in order to become victorious) and when you have returned to Me, strengthened your brethren.” Peter said, “Lord, I am ready to go with You, both to prison and to death.” Then Jesus replies to Peter, “I tell you Peter, the rooster shall not crow this day before you will deny three times that you know Me” (Luke 22:34).

Trials are expected in the Christian life. We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22) God uses these experiences for our good (Romans 8:28-29) to refine our character and strengthen our faith to make us more like Jesus (1 Peter 1:6-7; James 1:2-4, 12). Whenever we do experience a test, Jesus is with us to strengthen us and intercede for us (Hebrew 7:25; Philippians 4:13).

Before, Peter was overconfident, trusting in his own strength (Luke 22:33). But after being sifted like wheat, Peter learned that failure is possible because the flesh is weak (Mark 14:38). Now that he understood how easy it is to fall, Peter would now have greater compassion and mercy for others while helping them avoid the same mistake. Our true faith and perseverance are revealed not in a walk of sinless perfection but in repentance and restoration. We get up and keep going like Peter, after we fall.

Obituaries



DR. JAMES HENRY COLSON

Washington, D.C., Dr. Colson and his wife relocated to Raleigh, North Carolina, to participate in a state loan redemption program. He became a dedicated member of the Phi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha and established a successful dental practice in downtown Raleigh. Later, he joined a pioneering group of Black professionals in developing a landmark professional building in South Raleigh to expand access to care and services in the community.

Dr. Colson was a faithful member of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, where he served on the vestry and as senior warden. Under his leadership, the parish launched a hospital-ity ministry to strengthen fellowship and implemented a capital fund-raising campaign that raised over

\$178,000.

An avid golfer, Dr. Colson was a devoted member and later president of the Golf Players Association of Raleigh, participating in tournaments across the country. His civic engagement extended to political and professional organizations, including the Wake County Democratic Party, the Wake County Black Democratic Caucus, and the State-wide Black Leadership Caucus. He held leadership positions throughout his life, including president of the Phi Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha, senior warden of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church, president of the Golf Players Association of Raleigh, and president of the Raleigh component of the National Dental Association.

Dr. Colson is survived by his loving wife, Dr. Lacy Colson; his children, Dr. James H. Colson II (Danette Charles) and Dr. Mel-landa Colson Scott (Don); his niece Cynthia Marrow (Barry); and his cherished grandchildren, Jaden and Peyton. Stepmother Marzella Steele (deceased), Sisters Mary Carr, Mel-lie Colson (deceased), Deborah Steele, Chardayle Robinson (Wil-burn), Millicent Steele, Hazelene Steele, Maricoma “Peaches” Hughes (James), Brothers Manzell Spencer (Hester), Lewis Spencer, Jr, Sandy Steele (Deborah), Carl Steele (deceased), and a generous amount of nieces and nephews

His life was defined by service, leadership, and an enduring commitment to his family, community, and faith.



“Our family serving your family for 110 years”

www.haywoodfh.com 2415 S Wilmington Street Raleigh, NC 27603 919-832-2835



SUBSCRIBE TODAY

☐ Yes, I Want A 1 Year Subscription For**\$45.00**

☐ Yes, I Want A 2 Year Subscription For**\$75.00**

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

PHONE

EMAIL

Make checks payable to The Carolinian Newspaper

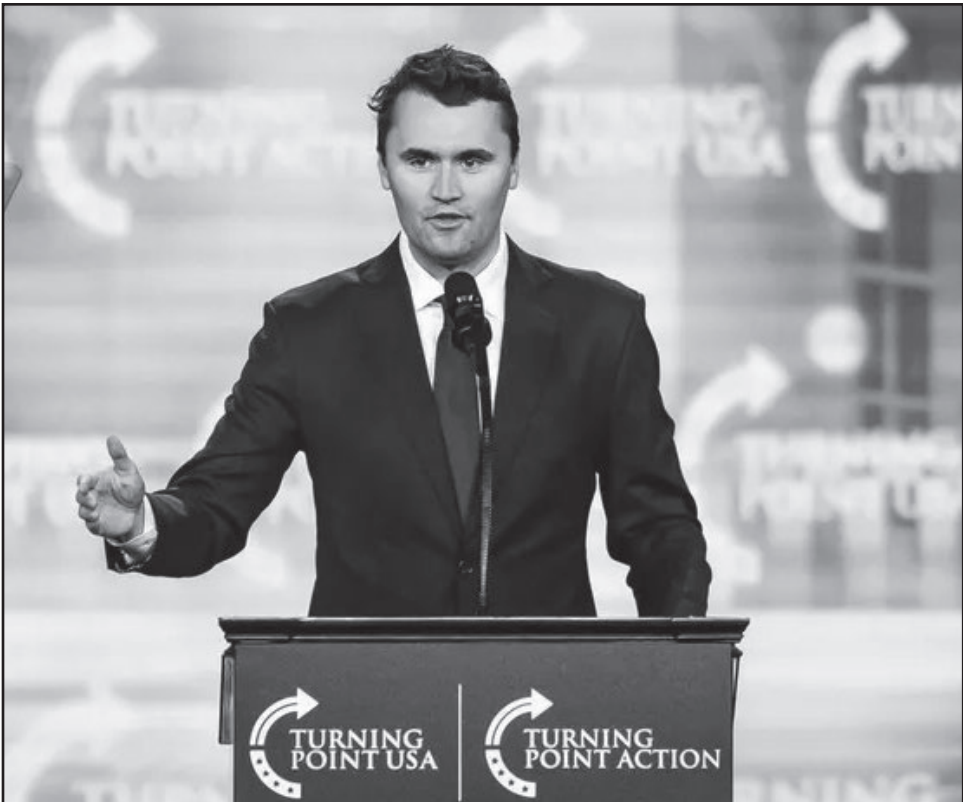
Mail your subscription form and payment to PO Box 25308 Raleigh, NC 27611



Editorials

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials in this space are the opinion of the newspaper. All other opinion pieces, including those from regular columnists, are the opinion of the writers themselves. The Carolinian strives to provide provocative commentary that is likely to spur thoughtful debate, regardless of whether we agree with it.



Kirk's Assassination: The Left's Big Denial

By Larry Elder

Despite data showing the willingness of the "very liberal" to support violence to achieve political ends, Democrats like Rep. Pat Ryan (D-N.Y.) deny that calling political opponents "fascists" or "Nazis" or "Hitler" contributes to the "overall problem."

Ryan said: "I actually don't think it does. I think people are trying to grapple with a really unprecedented time in our country where we're seeing maybe history not fully repeat, but history rhyme at some of the darkest times in our world's history and struggling in good faith to try to put some intellectual thought into that and find the right language ... I think not being honored by this president, that's hard to figure out how to, how to put word to that in a way that is constructive."

In short, how would one describe a "fascist" without calling him and, by extension, his supporters, "fascist"? Quite the dilemma. At this point, it's probably useless to point out how Adolf Hitler, unlike President Donald Trump, murdered his political enemies; controlled the media and the arts through censorship, intimidation and propaganda; arrested and detained adversaries indefinitely and without trial; murdered 6 million Jews and 5 million others; and ignited a world war that resulted in an estimated 50 million civilians dead worldwide.

Virtually every policy Trump enacts or attempts to enact ends up in court. He appeals unfavorable district court decisions, many of which end up at the Supreme Court, where Trump usually wins. Still, Trump's critics call him a "tyrant" and a "dictator."

Examine the judicial system under Hitler's Germany. The Holocaust Encyclopedia writes: "... Like most areas of public life after the Nazi rise to power in 1933, the German system of justice underwent 'coordination' (alignment with Nazi goals). All professional associations involved with the administration of justice were merged into the National Socialist League of German Jurists."

Comparing Trump, a democratically elected leader, to Hitler is, was and always will be insanely and profoundly ignorant. It is insidious.

Former Democrat House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said, "People don't have the intention of saying something that will lead to something dangerous (so) we cannot take responsibility for the minds that are out there and how they hear it."

How did Charlie Kirk's suspected assassin, Tyler Robinson, "hear it"?

After Robinson shot Kirk, he texted his roommate/partner, a man transitioning to be a woman. Robinson told his partner to find and read a message Robinson left before the assassination. It read: "I had the opportunity to take out Charlie Kirk and I'm going to take it."

Partner: "You weren't the one who did it right????"

Robinson: "I am, I'm sorry."

When asked why, Robinson responded: "I had enough of his hatred. Some hate can't be negotiated out."

On the ammunition found with his rifle were several phrases including, "Hey, fascist! Catch!"

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) insists her party comes to the debate with clean hands because, well, you know, Trump. Warren said: "Oh, please. Right. Why don't you start with the president of the United States? Right? And every ugly meme he has posted and every ugly word ..."

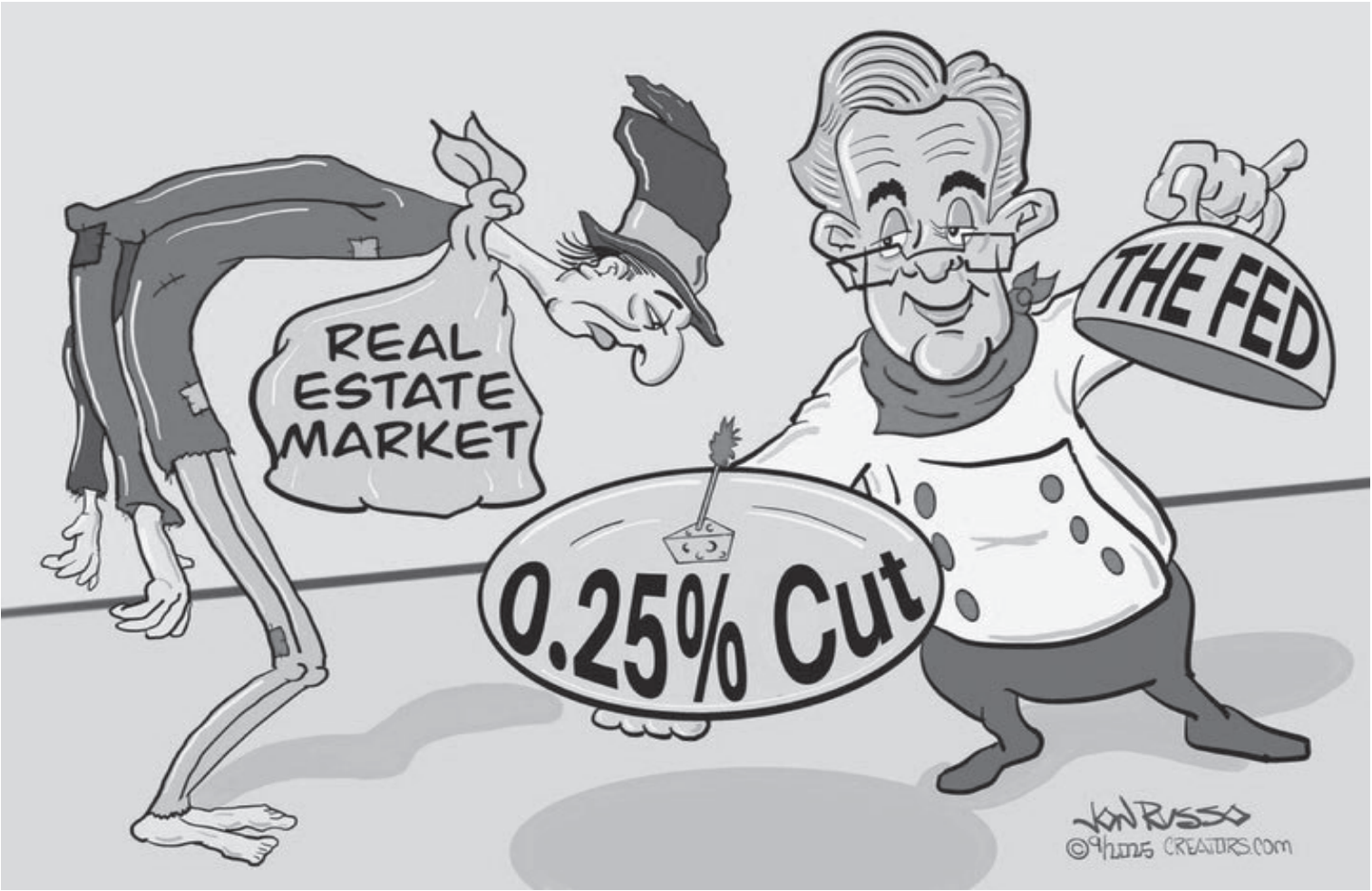
Let's start with the president. It was former President Joe Biden who said, "It's not just Trump, it's the entire philosophy that underpins the — I'm going to say something, it's like semi-fascism."

Vice President and then-presidential candidate Kamala Harris, when asked whether she considered Trump "a fascist," responded: "Yes, I do. Yes, I do. ... He's saying to his generals, in essence, why can't you be more like Hitler's generals? Come on!"

A YouGov poll taken after Kirk's assassination found that 25% of the self-described "very liberal" believe political violence is sometimes acceptable to achieve political goals. This is eight times the number of the self-described "very conservative" who feel likewise. Last year, a report affiliated with Rutgers University called "Assassination Culture" wrote: "Over half of those who self-identified as left of center (56%) reported that if someone murdered Donald Trump, they would at least be somewhat justified ... This includes 14.1% who said this murder would be 'Completely Justified.'"

In 2008, then-presidential candidate Barack Obama, accused of merely uttering empty words, said: "Don't tell me words don't matter. 'I have a dream' — just words? 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal' — just words?"

Larry Elder is a bestselling author and nationally syndicated radio talk-show host.



CONSCIOUS SPEAKING

If you are willing to pay attention to life, there are valuable lessons to be learned. I've mentioned before the power of words.

Words affect the body—our own words and the words spoken to us by others. A man once conducted an experiment where he placed jars of water in a room. Different people were invited to speak a single word or phrase to the water, and a label was placed on each jar. Later, crystals were scraped from the water and examined under a microscope. The crystals reflected the words: ugly words produced ugly crystals, while beautiful words created beautiful crystals.

Yes, I know I've shared this before, but some readers are encountering these ideas for the first time, so I repeat them. If you search "Messages in Water," you can see this for yourself. For me, it was an opportunity to become mindful of how I speak and write, especially to children. When I conducted workshops for parents and teachers, I included this video to encourage them to reflect on the words they use.

What happens to a child when they hear: You can't learn. You're not smart. I'm disappointed in you? Not every child believes it, but too many do. It stunts their growth and makes them feel unworthy, undervalued, and unimportant. If we remembered that God is always listening, would we still declare negative prophecies over His creation?

When I was earning my master's degree, I took a required course in sex therapy. On the first day, the professor asked us to share words commonly used to describe sexual intercourse and genitalia. I was shocked at the violent and demeaning words my classmates used. I won't give examples, but many were abhorrent to me. The rest of the quarter was spent exploring how to cultivate healthy sexual relationships for our clients.

How can we hope to help others when even our own beliefs about sex are so negative, confused, and ignorant? Words carry energy. Many words we casually use are counterproductive to what we actually want to express. For example, I often used to say, "It hit me" or "It struck me" when I had an idea. But do I really want to invite the energy of being struck or hit, even by a good thought? Instead, I've learned to say, "A thought came to me" or "I had an idea." Doesn't that feel better?

I admit, I'm guilty of using careless language. Words linger in the air, and too often, I catch myself saying things I don't truly mean. Recently, a friend of mine passed away. For years, her conversation revolved around saying, "I want to die" and expressing hatred toward a certain ethnic group. In my last conversation with her, I begged, "Please don't say that—those words carry energy, and you will attract it." Sadly, not long after, she died in a car accident caused by a member of the very group she spoke against.

Another woman I knew often said she was "sick" of the person she lived with. She eventually developed a disease that claimed her life. A man I knew used to say, "I'm not going to get that job"—and he never did. When he said, "They're going to offer me that job," they did. Was he a prophet or a manifeater? I don't know. But I believe in the power of words enough to monitor my own.

Kinesiology research has shown that the word try weakens the body, while the words I am strengthen it. Here's an experiment: hold your arm out while someone presses down as you say, "I'm trying to hold my arm up." Then, repeat while saying, "I am holding my arm up." The difference is noticeable. Think about how often we tell children to try. Could we be unintentionally weakening them with our encouragement?

Do I know all of this for a fact? No. But I know what I've experienced, and I believe in it. I've also witnessed how giving children specific descriptions of the behavior we want is far more effective than vague commands like, "Be good."

I once knew a little boy who was told to "be good," but it didn't change his behavior. However, when he was taught that if he wanted to answer a question in school, he should raise his hand high instead of yelling out, he learned quickly. Many children need to be shown how to do something, not just told to "be good." That doesn't mean they're bad—it means they need guidance.

The Bible says God spoke the world into existence: "Let there be light," and there was light. We are not God, but we are made in His image. If that is true, could it also be true that what we say influences our lives? Jesus said, "As a man thinks in his heart, so is he." He also taught that harboring lust in one's heart is equivalent to committing the act, and that anger can lead to destruction. Our thoughts and words carry real power.

From my own experience, I've learned that peace in my heart allows me to get along better with others than fear or condemnation ever could. Affirming and positive thoughts always return to me. So, my advice is: why not choose them?

FUNdraising Good Times

By Mel & Pearl Shaw Saad & Shaw

IS MANAGEMENT A BAD WORD?

In the world of fundraising, whatever "glory" can be obtained usually comes in the form of titles. There is a hierarchy implied within titles such as senior vice president, vice president, director, coordinator, or associate. There's nothing the matter with titles, but sometimes they can keep us from seeing each other as equals. And sometimes those in executive leadership can feel the work of "managing" is below their rank.

We believe that fundraising is a team process with a shared outcome led by a person who takes responsibility for managing the fundraising process and sharing information that leads to collective success. This makes an executive or a director more of a coach than the person at the top of a pyramid. As a coach, you play the critical role of ensuring those on your team have the resources they need to fulfill their roles and responsibilities. It means you have a game plan, more frequently referred to as a fundraising plan. The plan has to be more than a spreadsheet with high-level financial milestones. You'll need to know how much your organization anticipates raising through events, online giving, board giving and solicitation, individual major gifts, sponsorships, corporate gifts and grants, foundation grants, direct mail, and/or government grants. You will want to know who exactly the prospects are within each revenue category, and what you anticipate receiving and when. Finally, because not everyone who supports your organization or institution will give at the level you anticipate, we strongly recommend working with a pool of prospects for each giving category that is three times your goal.

It is a lot of work to create such a plan, but it pays off if you use it. As the coach, you are working with team members to ensure they know who they are engaging and towards what end. You are reviewing progress reports and adjusting the plan as needed. Most importantly, you are a manager of people — your staff and ideally the volunteers who are engaged in fundraising. Yes, you have your own portfolio of donors to strategically engage and solicit, but that is not your sole responsibility. As the leader of the fundraising team, you are a manager. If you feel that this is below your pay grade or that it is not making the best use of your time, you may be in the wrong position. You may be a major gifts officer or a special gifts officer, but not the right executive or director of a fundraising team. That person is a member of the team.

So, here we are, back to titles and the word "manager." The person who manages the fundraising process is not a lower-level person. This individual is experienced with multiple fundraising methods and can support their team. It is an honor to manage a process and a team — it is not a demotion. Let's play ball! God protect America, and the world we live within.

Classifieds

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001186-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of September 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARY ENSLEY WESTMORELAND, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 25th day of September 2025.

Joseph Bryan Westmoreland
Executor
3159 Rose of Sharon Road
Durham, NC 27712
9/25, 10/2, 10/9, and 10/16/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001075-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 15th day of August 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of WILLIAM HENRY AMOS, SR., Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 25th day of September 2025.

Denise Parker
Administrator
401 Archdale Dr #1306
Durham, NC 27707
9/25, 10/2, 10/9, and 10/16/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001105-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against Edward Watkins Meeler, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 12-29-2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 9-23-2025.

Betty E. Meeler, Executor of the Estate of Edward Watkins Meeler
c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law
2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202
Durham, North Carolina 27705
For Publication: 9-25, 10-2, 10-9, 10-16-2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001099-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against LYNNISE MICHELLE HAWES, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 12/18/2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This September 18, 2025.

Diann Walker
503 Dunbar St
Durham, NC 27701
9/18, 9/25, 10/2, and 10/9/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
Estate Of Brenda Joyce Mcneil
File No. 23E004613-910

All person, firms and corporations having claims against BRENDA JOYCE MCNEIL, deceased, of Wake County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before December 19, 2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 9-11-2025.

Mark H. Webbink, Executor of the Estate of Wanda O'Shinski Moore a/k/a Wanda Henriette Moore c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law 2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202 Durham, North Carolina 27705 9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE Of David Bradley Hull
Estate File No. 25E000801-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against David Bradley Hull, deceased, of

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against Dorothy Y. Jennette, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before December 19, 2025 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 18th day of September 2025, Floyd B. McKissick, III, McKissick & McKissick, 835 N Mangum Street, Durham, NC 27701; The Carolinian, 9/18, 9/25, 10/2, and 10/9/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001106-310

The undersigned, Prince L. Thompson, having duly qualified as Administrator of the Estate of DEBORAH R. THOMPSON, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned in care of Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney for the Estate, 3400 Croasdaile Dr., Ste 205, Durham, NC 27705, on or before December 15, 2025 or it will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons and legal entities indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment. This the 11th day of September, 2025.

Prince L. Thompson, Administrator
C/O Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney
3400 Croasdaile Drive Ste 205
Durham, NC 27705
9-919-246-5775

9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 24E002521-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 2nd day of December 2024, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ASHLEY NICOLE HANNAH, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 12th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 11th day of September 2025.

Janie Nelson, Administrator
1204 Fidelity Drive
Durham, NC 27703
9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001128-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 27th day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JANIE DELORES MCLEAN, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 12th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 11th day of September 2025.

Darvlyn McLean, Executor
2202 Magnolia Tree Lane
Durham, NC 27703
9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
File Number 25E001031-310

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against Wanda O'Shinski Moore a/k/a Wanda Henriette Moore, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before 12-12-2025, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This 9-11-2025.

Mark H. Webbink, Executor of the Estate of Wanda O'Shinski Moore a/k/a Wanda Henriette Moore c/o Lori M. Bernstein, Attorney at Law 2726 Croasdaile Dr. Suite 202 Durham, North Carolina 27705 9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ESTATE Of David Bradley Hull
Estate File No. 25E000801-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against David Bradley Hull, deceased, of

Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to present their claims to Roy D. Hull and Lynn M. Hull, Co-Executors, at 105 Hampshire Place, Chapel Hill, North Carolina 27516, on or before the 11th day of December, 2025 (which date is three months after the day of the first publication of this notice), or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the Decedent are requested to make immediate payment to the Executor/Administrator named above.

This the 11th day of September, 2025.

Roy D. Hull and Lynn M. Hull
Co-Executors of the Estate of David Bradley Hull
Alexander J. Palme
Averett Family Law
Attorneys for the Estate
101 Conner Drive, STE 402
Chapel Hill, NC 27514
9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000993-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 3rd day of September 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of NANCY GALLUP SCHAEFER, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 12th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 11th day of September 2025.

William S. Schaefer, c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr., 4 Consultant Pl., Durham, NC 27707
9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000619-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 8th day of May 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of SHIRLEY ELIZABETH BRADSHAW, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Natalyn R. Bradshaw, Executor
531 Uzzle Street
Durham, NC 27713
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000960-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 23rd day of July 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JOE HOWARD BULLOCK, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Jokyra Bullock Scott, Administrator
7415 Russell Road
Durham, NC 27712
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 24E002192-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 17th day of June 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of TIMOTHY JAMIL HINTON, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said

Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Tamika Trappiel Hinton
Administrator
70 Ashberry Lane
Franklinton, NC 27525
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000773-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 19th day of May 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of SANDRA MARIE MOORE, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Wesley R. Moore, Administrator
c/o Michael C. Hudson
Law Office of Michael C. Hudson
105 E. Center St., Suite B-12
Mebane, NC 27302
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E000582-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 19th day of May 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARIE ALENA SINGLETARY, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Daron D. Satterfield, Attorney for Personal Representative, Reuben Tobia Singletary
24 Stonewall Way
Durham, NC 27704
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 24SP001956-310

Crystal DeSilva v. Christopher Jamison

To: Christopher Jamison: Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought against you is as follows: Partition for Partition and to Sell Property. The Petitioner wishes to sell real property for Christoper Jamison has an interest .

You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than 40 days from and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 4th day of September, 2025.

Daron D. Satterfield
Satterfield Law, PLLC
307 Meadowlands Drive, Suite 101
Hillsborough, NC 27278
(984) 229-8584
(919) 287-2696 fax
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

In the General Court of Justice
District Court Division
Case No: 25CV003018-500
[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING]
Abigail Perez-Cazarin,
Plaintiff

v.
Juan Carlos Villalobos Reyes, Defendant.

To Juan Carlos Villalobos Reyes, Please note that a custody action has been filed in respect of the minor children in the previous Court. You must respond within 30 days of the first posting of this notice. Otherwise, the requested repara-

tion may be granted.

This is the 25th day of September 2025.

Adrianna V Ingram
Vasquez Law Firm PLLC
612 S Brightleaf Blvd
Smithfield, North Carolina 27577
919-989-3000
9/25, 10/2 and 10/9/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E001934-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 14th day of May 2024, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of FREDERICK MATTHEW VUKOVICH, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 25th day of September 2025.

Nadine Vukovich, Executor
8033 Hawkshead Rd.
Wake Forest, NC 27587
9/25, 10/2, 10/9, and 10/16/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

COMPLAINT TO ENFORCE POSSESSORY LIEN ON MOTOR VEHICLE
In The General Court Of Justice
District Court Division
Small Claims
File No. 25CV031993-910

VICTOR CASTILLO, Plaintiff VS. UNKNOWN OWNER VIN NO. 5LVBV12126A012261, Defendant
TO UNKNOWN OWNER: TAKE NOTICE the petitioner has filed with the clerk a petition in proper form indicating that the petitioner has a valid lien against a 2006 HOLMES, ID No. 5LVBV12126A012261 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on October 27, 2025 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 9:30 a.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.

This the 18th day of September, 2025.

Victor Castillo, Plaintiff
3944 Halthcock Rd.
Raleigh, NC 27604
9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
In District Court-Civil Proceedings
File Number 23CV023466-910

CELIA VIVIAN ARAGON CRUZ, Plaintiff VS. PERCY RAPHEAL BROWN, Defendant
TO PERCY RAPHEAL BROWN: Take notice that is hereby given, that in the hearing for Plaintiff's Motion to Compel on the above referenced matter originally issued August 23, 2023, has been continued. The new hearing date is set for December 3, 2025 at 9:00am, to be held at the Wake County Courthouse, located at 316 Fayetteville St, Raleigh, NC 27601, District Courtroom 2C. This continuance order was issued by the Clerk of Superior Court on September 2, 2025. You are required to make an appearance, and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against

you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This, the 18th day of September, 2025.

9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E003404-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 29th day of August 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of THOMAS AUSTIN OLANDER, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Jeffrey Eric Olander, Administrator
501 Driewood Court
Raleigh, NC 27609
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 25E002720-910

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 25th day of August 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KAREN FAITH MERRIS, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 5th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 4th day of September 2025.

Mark Douglas Weber, Executor
4901 Silver Fox Lane
Efland, NC 27243
9/4, 9/11, 9/18, and 9/25/2025

WARREN COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WARREN COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File Number 16E000257-920

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 28th day of October 2024, as ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate of ANDY CLEVELAND ROGERS, Deceased, of Warren County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 12th day of December, 2025 or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This, the 11th day of September 2025.

Sandra Smith, Administrator CTA
275 Sweetbrier Ln.
Boones Mill, VA 24065
9/11, 9/18, 9/25, and 10/2/2025

BUYING CASSETTE TAPES

Paying cash and buying old Rap music cassette tapes and used blank cassette tapes. Call Marvin 919-268-7476.



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction has the following contract in Lincoln County out for bid: C- C11750 Lincoln AC installation . The bid opening is scheduled for: Thursday, 11/20/2025 . To obtain the Notice to Bidders, any Pre-Bid Requirements, and any Addenda visit: <https://evp.nc.gov/solicitations/details/?id=e2381dfa-1b8f-f011-b4cc-001dd8062c20>

Subscribe To The Carolinian Today!

www.CARO.news

Classifieds

WANTED WBE, MBE & DBE BIDS

for the following job:

Oxford-Henderson Aeronautics Authority

Parallel Taxiway Relocation

Granville Co.

Bid Date: October 2nd

These projects may involve some or all of the following aspects of construction: construction survey, clear and grub, trucking, drainage, milling, paving, incidental concrete, fence and guardrail, signs, structures, traffic control, utilities, signals, pavement marking, erosion control and seeding.

Bids can be emailed to stw.quotes@stwc corp.com

Please contact S. T. Wooten at 252-291-5165,

Fax 252-243-0900 no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the bid date.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42, U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to the advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. In accordance with other related nondiscrimination authorities, bidders and contractors will also not be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, age, disability, low-income level, creed/religion, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

WANTED WBE, MBE & DBE BIDS

for the following job:

NC DOT Division 1 Letting

DA00647

Martin Co.

Bid Date: Oct. 15th

These projects may involve some or all of the following aspects of construction: construction survey, clear and grub, trucking, drainage, milling, paving, incidental concrete, fence and guardrail, signs, structures, traffic control, utilities, signals, pavement marking, erosion control and seeding.

Bids can be emailed to stw.quotes@stwc corp.com

Please contact S. T. Wooten at 252-291-5165,

Fax 252-243-0900 no later than 5:00 p.m. the day before the bid date.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation, in accordance with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (78 Stat. 252, 42, U.S.C. 2000d to 2000d-4) and the Regulations, hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively ensure that any contract entered into pursuant to the advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full and fair opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, or national origin in consideration for an award. In accordance with other related nondiscrimination authorities, bidders and contractors will also not be discriminated against on the grounds of sex, age, disability, low-income level, creed/religion, or limited English proficiency in consideration for an award.

James H. Young—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Young’s loyalty and skill with appointments that included chief fertilizer inspector and a seat on the board of directors for state institutions serving the deaf, dumb, and blind—organizations Young had supported as a legislator. In 1898, amid rising racial tensions and the outbreak of the Spanish-American War, Young made history when Governor Russell appointed him colonel of the Third North Carolina Infantry, a regiment of Black volunteers. Young is believed to have been the first African American to achieve the rank of colonel in a state volunteer force, although Charles Young holds that distinction in the regular U.S. Army. Despite fierce criticism from the white press—including Josephus Daniels’s News and Observer—Young and his troops were ultimately commended for their discipline and per-

formance. The Fusionists lost ground in the infamous white supremacy campaign of 1898, which sought to undo political gains made by African Americans and their allies. Democrats equated Fusion rule with “Negro rule” and used this narrative to suppress the Black vote and dismantle political power structures that had briefly included African Americans. In 1899, the new Democratic legislature ordered Young’s name removed from the cornerstone of the newly built school for the deaf, dumb, and blind—a symbol of their intent to erase Black contributions to public life. In 1899, President William McKinley appointed him deputy revenue collector for the Raleigh district—a post he held under McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft until 1913. That year, President

Woodrow Wilson’s Democratic administration removed Young from his position, ending a federal career that had spanned more than 25 years. His dismissal marked the end of an era, as Young was the last Black man holding a significant federal office in North Carolina at the time. Retiring from politics, Young devoted himself to business, religion, and civic engagement. He operated a successful insurance and real estate business from the Masonic Temple in Raleigh, presided over the Raleigh Undertaking Company, and served as a director of the Mallette Drug Company. He remained active in Baptist life, working as Sunday school superintendent at First Baptist Church and president of the Baptist State Sunday School Convention. He also held leadership roles in numerous fraternal organizations, including the Odd

Fellows, Masons, Knights of Pythias, and the Household of Ruth. Even in retirement, Young remained a respected elder statesman among Black North Carolinians. During World War I, he was frequently invited to speak at patriotic rallies and provided counsel to draft officials regarding the enlistment of Black men. Though his message of racial moderation drew criticism from younger activists who accused him of being too conciliatory, Young remained committed to nonviolence and to building bridges between the races. James H. Young died in Raleigh on April 11, 1921. At his funeral, held at the First Baptist Church on Person Street and Le noir Street, people of all races gathered in a powerful display of unity and respect for a man who had spent his life navigating and challenging the deeply segregated structures of Southern society.

High Speed Internet — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Mitchell said. “I think everyone should care about it — even though most people don’t live in rural America — because when we electrified the entire country, the entire economy grew,” Mitchell said. “We will all benefit from this when everyone has more options to share their knowledge, their gifts and their productivity in the economy.”

Even West Virginia, ranking last in internet connectivity, would have effectively achieved universal broadband under the state’s original proposal, according to an unreleased draft of the state’s plan obtained by The Benton Institute for Broadband and Society, a policy group. West Virginia has about 78% connectivity, the only state with less than 80%.

But under West Virginia’s updated final proposal, submitted to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration earlier this month, tens of thousands of households and businesses will no longer have access to BEAD funding.

West Virginia Republican Gov. Patrick Morrisey said he is still optimistic about the rollout, telling reporters recently that some of the decrease in coverage was because of inaccurate information. Some areas had just a few homes, or addresses only had a barn on the property, he and an aide said.

“We’ve been trying to target all the available locations that are eligible,” the governor said Sept. 18 at a news conference at the West Virginia State Capitol. “It’s a pretty fulsome application, and so obviously there were some changes made to accommodate some of the responses from the administration. And in a positive way, they’re trying to save money.”

There are other changes: States and Washington, D.C., may no longer set rates for low-cost residential service options, raising worries that internet providers will put forward plans they say meet the low-cost re-

quirement, no matter the price. And under the “technology-neutral” approach, some locations will no longer be receiving fiber internet, which the federal government previously emphasized due to its speed and durability.

The new guidelines also remove provisions that encouraged states to work with companies and representatives from minority communities. Requirements related to labor, the environment and climate change also were cut.

West Virginia isn’t alone. Under the new rules, thousands of households, businesses and community buildings across the country will be disqualified from the federal government’s push to provide internet access to the areas that need it most. And those locations that are still eligible for funding may not receive the best service available — or be able to afford it.

West Virginia has one of the country’s worst workforce participation rates. Internet access is key to changing that, said Bill Bissett, chairman of the West Virginia Broadband Enhancement Council.

“We are hopeful that this new proposal will be supported because we need to get started on this development as soon as possible,” Bissett said. “Because the longer we wait, the less people will be connected because of increased costs in deployment and infrastructure.”

Following the required revisions, West Virginia fared well compared with other states, said Drew Garner, the director of policy engagement at the Benton Institute. But Garner said he expects frustration in other states.

“West Virginia, because it did a good job with its restructuring, is still going to have a lot of strong outcomes,” Garner said. “But across the country in some of these other states, I think there’s going to be a lot of frustration with these changes and the way it walked back from

what was going to be a very promising outcome.”

In June, the Trump administration revised the rules of the BEAD program in what the U.S. Department of Commerce said was an effort to lessen regulatory burdens, reduce costs and streamline the process.

As of Sept. 18, 41 states had submitted their updated final proposals, according to a database from Connected Nation, a nonprofit that advocates for expanded broadband access.

In December 2022, when the FCC released its updated National Broadband Map, nearly 12 million locations across the country were in need of internet service. Over the years, that number has decreased because of private investments, continued deployment by existing internet providers and additional support from other federal programs.

States originally identified 4.86 million locations that would be eligible for getting internet connectivity through BEAD funds. But that number is projected to fall to 4.19 million locations following revisions initiated by the Trump administration, according to an analysis from Broadband Expanded, a project from the New York Law School.

West Virginia was originally slated to deploy broadband to approximately 110,000 locations. Now, 73,560 of those locations will receive BEAD funding, according to the state’s new proposal. Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, Nebraska and Rhode Island could see more than half of the locations in their state disqualified from the program.

But some of those locations may still be in need of internet, said Garner, of the Benton Institute.

The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), which is part of the U.S. Department of Commerce, directed states to remove certain locations from the BEAD program because

they’d acquired internet access from another source.

But, in an effort to save taxpayer money, states also had the option to say they were “financially incapable” of serving a location.

“One of the changes the administration made to the BEAD program is that states and the NTIA now have a way to simply say that these locations are just too expensive,” Garner said. “They can say, ‘It is just going to cost too much, so now we’re going to say they’re ineligible.’”

The BEAD program’s new technology-neutral approach poses another challenge. The original program favored fiber because of its speed, reliability and ability to reach remote locations. But some argue that other technologies would be cheaper.

This change has opened the door for satellite internet providers, including Elon Musk’s Starlink, to receive money from the program. Starlink could be awarded approximately \$10 billion, according to The Wall Street Journal.

In West Virginia, Starlink will serve more than 4,100 locations, according to the governor’s office.

“Based on the technology and based on all the evidence we have, some of these technologies — uncensored fixed wireless especially — are not really a reliable internet service that’s going to meet the needs of a 21st century household,” Garner said.

Rural advocates speak up In Nebraska, more than half of the counties in the state have signed onto letters to federal officials objecting to the changes, including the disqualification of nearly half the state’s eligible locations.

“It’s very frustrating. We have all these holes in our county, and BEAD was going to bring service to those areas,” Millford County Commissioner Misty Ahmic told the Nebraska Examiner.

Critics in Pennsylvania have said

North Carolina WARN Act & NC WARN Notices Explained

By Benjamin McBrayer

The North Carolina Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification (WARN) Act safeguards workers, families, and communities during workforce changes, such as plant closings and mass layoffs. Below is an overview of its components and enforcement, ensuring compliance and employee rights. Read on to learn how to issue a WARN notice in North Carolina and everything else you need to know about the WARN Act in NC!

Over half of the states, including North Carolina, lack their own state-level WARN Act. However, this doesn’t mean the workers of North Carolina are without protections. Federal WARN Act regulations still extend coverage to employees in North Carolina. The state requires employers to submit and issue WARN notices to workers, providing information on anticipated mass layoffs and plant closures, along with details on the number of affected workers.

Some states are not only regulated by the federal WARN Act, like Ohio, Georgia, Arizona, and Florida, but have their own requirements and regulations specified in their so-called mini-WARN Acts. These states include: California, New York, New Jersey, Illinois, and more, all of which you can read about on our blog.

North Carolina’s WARN Act protects workers facing layoffs or plant closures. Employers in North Caro-

lina are mandated to provide advance notice to employees when aware of impending closures or layoffs. This gives employees sufficient time to explore alternative employment options. But remember, the WARN Act operates independently of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which establishes guidelines for minimum wage, overtime, and unemployment benefits. Be careful not to confuse the FLSA with the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in North Carolina!

On a similar note, however, North Carolina holidays are determined both federally, and locally per state. Check out our federal holiday calendar for an updated and complete list.

WARN notices in North Carolina require 60 days’ advance notification for employees facing layoffs or plant closures. If union workers are involved, notification is directed to union representatives rather than individual employees. While there’s no specific template for the notice, there are a few rules it must follow: it must be in writing, and it must include crucial information such as the site and date of closure or layoffs, reasons for the action, whether the loss is permanent or temporary, affected job titles, unions, and the number of employees, and follow-up contact information. Employers covered by the act must provide written notice to affected workers, labor unions representing these workers, the State Rapid Response Coordinator, and the chief elected official of the local government where

the employment site is located. This notice should be delivered at least 60 days before the anticipated plant closing or mass layoff.

Certain situations trigger the WARN Act in North Carolina. These include the following:

1. Plant closings affecting 50 or more employees for at least 30 days.
2. Mass layoffs involving at least 500 full-time employees.
3. Mass layoffs involving at least 50 full-time employees, constituting 33% or more of the employer’s workforce.
4. Plant closings or layoffs extended over 90 days.

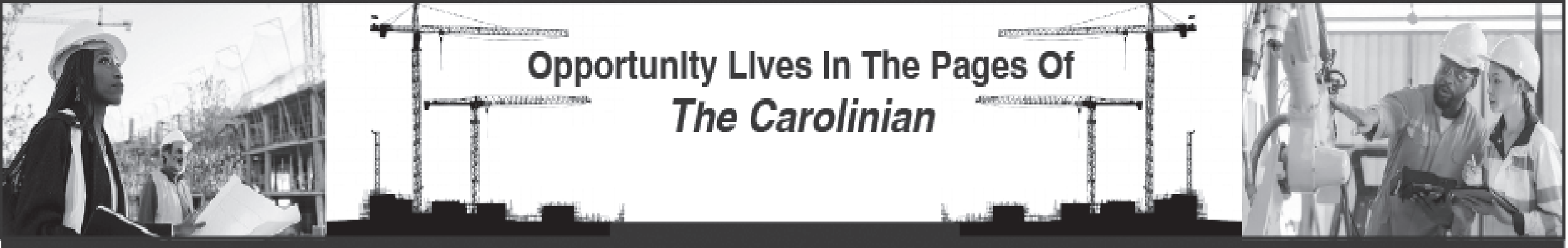
WARN Summary by County/Parish

As of 2025-09-22 08:42:37 Eastern Standard Time/EST

County	Warn Number	Date of Notice	Date Received by NC	Effective Date	WARN Notice: WARN Notice Name
Durham County	202500001	1/6/2025	1/6/2025	12/15/2025	Resilience US, Inc.
Mecklenburg County	202500002	1/13/2025	1/13/2025	8/29/2025	Eaton
Rockingham County	202500003	1/13/2025	1/13/2025	3/14/2025	Press Glass, Inc.
Yadkin County	202500004	1/23/2025	1/23/2025	12/31/2025	PVH Corp.
Davidson County	202500005	1/24/2025	1/24/2025	5/30/2025	Olon Industries Inc. (US)
Randolph County	202500006	1/24/2025	1/27/2025	4/30/2025	Kayser-Roth Corporation
Mecklenburg County	202500007	1/27/2025	1/27/2025	3/31/2025	Air General, Inc.
Durham County	202500008	1/27/2025	1/28/2025	10/24/2025	Charles River Laboratories, Inc.
Rowan County	202500009	1/31/2025	1/31/2025	4/1/2025	General Shale
Rockingham County	202500010	2/3/2025	2/3/2025	6/14/2025	Unifi Manufacturing, Inc.
Guilford County	202500011	2/3/2025	2/3/2025	4/4/2025	Richloom Weaving, LLC
Mecklenburg County	202500012	2/5/2025	2/5/2025	6/13/2025	Walmart
Anson County	202500013	2/11/2025	2/11/2025	4/11/2025	Darling Ingredients, Inc.
N/A	202500014	2/17/2025	2/17/2025	3/25/2025	Behavioral Health Link
Alexander County	202500015	2/24/2025	2/24/2025	12/31/2025	TIMKEN
Mecklenburg County	202500016	3/3/2025	3/4/2025	5/2/2025	UPS
Orange County	202500017	3/10/2025	3/11/2025	6/1/2025	American Institutes of Research (AIR)
Robeson County	202500018	3/7/2025	3/17/2025	6/30/2025	Sodexo, Inc and Affiliates
N/A	202500019	3/18/2025	3/19/2025	6/30/2025	BH Security LLC d/b/a Brinks Home
Guilford County	202500020	3/21/2025	3/21/2025	5/21/2025	Panera, LLC

[Partial List]

WARN notice type	Type of layoff or closure	Number affected at this location	Address 1	City
Layoff	Permanent	120	1733 TW Alexander Dr	Durham
Closure	Permanent	76	5910 Long Creek Park Drive	Charlotte
Closure	Permanent	68	8901 US-220	Stoneville
Closure	Permanent	317	1000 PVH Quality Way	Jonesville
Closure	Permanent	53	67 Bieseker Road	Lexington
Closure	Permanent	116	515 W. Balfour St.	Asheboro
Closure	Permanent	99	4706 Yorkmont Road	Charlotte
Closure	Permanent	37	4025 Storrump Creek Drive	Durham
Closure	Permanent	65	700 S. Long St.	East Spencer
Closure	Permanent	91	805 Island Drive	Madison
Closure	Permanent	54	1914 S. Elm Street	High Point
Closure	Permanent	201	2118 Water Ridge Parkway	Charlotte
Layoff	Permanent	51	656 Little Duncan Road	Wadesboro
Closure	Permanent	2	1201 Peachtree St NE	Atlanta GA
Closure	Permanent	58	1095 McClain Rd	Hiddenite
Closure	Permanent	99	1815 W Pointe Drive	Charlotte
Closure	Permanent	15	100 Europa Drive	Chapel Hill
Closure	Permanent	156	1 University Drive	Pembroke
Layoff	Permanent	1	1278 Loop Rd	Lancaster PA
Closure	Permanent	80	4225 Tudor Lane	Greensboro





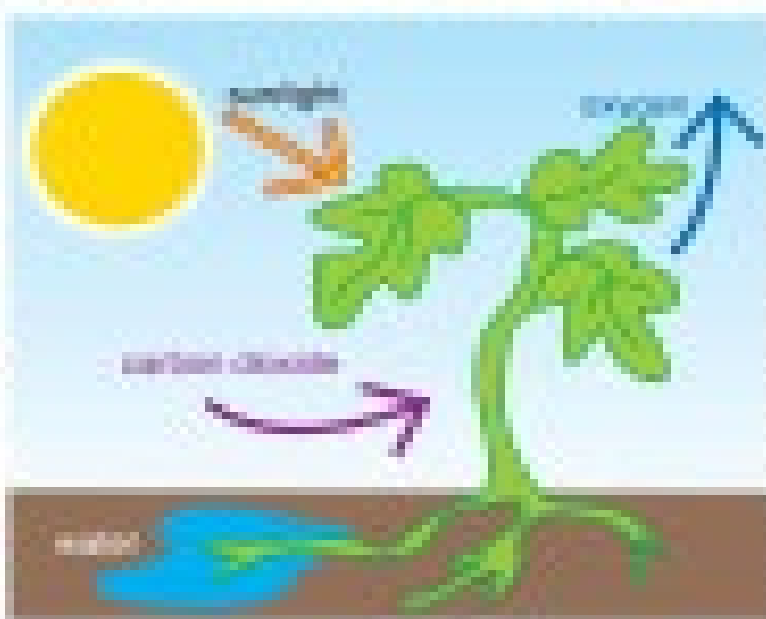
Kid Scoop



Find Kid Scoop on Facebook

©2025 by Publishing Partner. All Rights Reserved. Fall 25, No. 12

Why do leaves change color in the fall?



It's Not Easy Staying Green

Plants make food in a process called photosynthesis. During summer, plants take water up from their roots to their leaves. They absorb carbon dioxide from the air. These combine to make chlorophyll which makes plant leaves green.

Photosynthesis slows in fall as winter approaches. Trees and plants live off their stored food. The green chlorophyll disappears, leaving red, orange and yellow leaves. The dry, brittle leaves soon drop from trees with the help of crisp autumn breezes.

When the rain comes down, what goes up?

Find the answer in the fall leaf books! Start here. Then read every other letter as you move clockwise around the books.


Lookalike Leaves

A lot of the leaves in this book are identical but for one thing—color. Can you find all the differences?




Extra! Extra! Fall Syllables


Find words in the newspapers that have the same number of syllables as the fall words below. Paste each word on the picture with the matching number of syllables.




Leaf



Acorn



Harvested



Jack-o'-lantern

Kid Scoop Puzzler



Double Double Word Search

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?

LEAVES	SYSE	RED	RO
WATER	YSEL	BALL	YS
SYLLABLES	ATAL	ARS	YER
CARBON	DOSA	SECH	AG
SEASON	GOOF	YTA	NT
WINTER	ERNA	CARB	ON
SCENE	EMEC	SWO	BI
BORDER	ELOP	SIGN	W
CRISP	NEAP	PAS	ED
ACORN			
GREEN			
DISAPPEAR			
ROOTS			
FALL			
DAYS			

Kid Scoop Together FALL WORD GAME

Each row of squares below has the letters of a word that can be found on this page. Read today's Kid Scoop page and thinking to unscramble them all.

1 - 5: Autumn

4 - 2: October

8 - 10: Thanksgiving (Three words)

C R O O L

B R A N O C

T W E R I N

G R O N E A

T H U S L I G N

B R A S O B

G Y O N E X

A V E L S E

G E N A C H

M U A U N T

FROM THE LESSON LIBRARY

Autumn

Find five words in the newspapers that describe the autumn season. Paste the words onto a sheet of paper. Write a sentence using each word. Decorate your paper with images of fall.

What's the best way to catch a squirrel?



Write On! Eat Like a Plant

Would you like to "eat" like a plant—moving here the food to your leaves, water and CO2 into food through photosynthesis? Why or why not?