



Dedicated to the Spirit and Service of God

RALEIGH, N.C.

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A Short List Of People We Said Goodbye To In 2025

ECHOES IN THE SOIL

The year turns its page, marked by shadow and light, A roll call of spirits ascending in flight. From the stages they graced to the battles they fought, We honor the lessons their living has taught. Voices of soul that defined a whole era, Like Roberta Flack's melodies, drawing us nearer. Sam Moore's powerful call, a soulful command, And Sly Stone, a funk anchor across the land. Roy Ayers' vibraphone, a jazz-funk delight, And D'Angelo's smooth neo-soul, fading from sight. Wayne Lewis's R&B notes, a sweet, somber tune, And Gwen McCrae's "Rockin' Chair," gone too soon. The screen and the airwaves, they feel a deep void, Malcolm-Jamal Warner's presence, forever enjoyed. Ananda Lewis's passion, her fierce, honest grace, Barry Michael Cooper's vision, an indelible trace. From activism's fire to the sports arena's roar, George Foreman's big presence, now standing no more. And Ananda Lewis, a voice for the culture's esteem, A vibrant, bold spirit, the end of a dream. Though their bodies return to the

(See **FAREWELL POEM** P. 4)



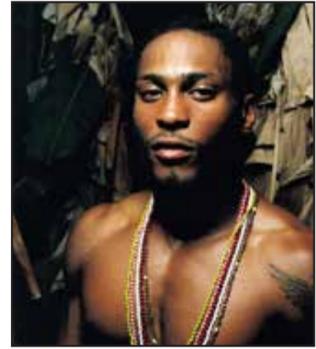
Ella Perry – 96
 A lifelong community advocate and education champion who helped preserve the legacy of the Panther Branch Rosenwald School.



Malcolm-Jamal Warner – 58
 Actor who played Theo in the famed *Cosby* Show



Assata Shakur -78
 Activist, Black Panther Party member and noted revolutionary



D'Angelo – 51
 Neo-soul musician, songwriter and multi-instrumentalist



Betty Reid Soskin - 104
 The nation's oldest park ranger when she retired in 2022 at age 100, and a trailblazer in preserving the history of Black Americans and women



Viola Fletcher - 111
 The oldest living survivor of the 1921 Tulsa Race Massacre



Kenneth Washington – 88
 American television and film actor know for his role in *Hogan's Heroes*



Angie Stone - 63
 American singer, songwriter, rapper, actress, and record producer

Black State Leaders Pay Tribute To Governor Jim Hunt And His Legacy

By Cash Michaels

Contributing Writer

African-American leaders across North Carolina joined the many who paid heartfelt tribute to former Governor Jim Hunt upon word of his passing at the age of 88. "Gov. Jim Hunt was one of the greatest governors to ever serve North Carolina. His compassion, care, and commitment to the people of our state will be felt for generations to come," said Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12) in a statement after his daughter, Lt. Gov. Rachel Hunt, announced the former governor's death on Thursday, December 18th. "My prayers go out to his family, friends, and loved ones," Rep. Adams continued. "Gov. Hunt will be missed, but his legacy will never be forgotten." Indeed James Baxter Hunt Jr., North Carolina's longest serving governor, will forever be remembered for his leadership in improving public education, promoting technology and economic development, and giving African-Americans prime opportunities in advisory and governing roles during his unprecedented 16 years in office. Hunt was a proponent of the so-called "New South."



"Governor Jim Hunt was a force of nature that shaped North Carolina for the better," said state Senator Dan Blue (D-Wake). "The Hunt administration was a beacon of progress in the South, showing the region and the country what is possible if we fight for what is right and invest in future generations." "I was honored to have worked along side him and to call him a friend," Blue continued. "My prayers are with his family as we all mourn his passing. Rest easy Governor Hunt."

Born in Greensboro, Hunt grew up as a farm boy in Wilson County, later becoming perhaps the most skilled, visionary and powerful North Carolina politician in history. After being elected lieutenant governor in 1972, Hunt enjoyed success upon his election as governor in 1976, 1980, 1992 and 1996, and saw himself worthy of the national political stage, like fellow Southern governors Jimmy Carter of Georgia and Bill Clinton of Arkansas, both of whom rose to the presidency. Under Gov. Hunt, attacking poverty in rural North Carolina was a priority, along with establishing his Smart Start early child education program, and attracting new industries to the state, thus creating new jobs and opportunities. Because of those policies and programs, Hunt, the "education governor," enjoyed strong support in the black community, particularly after appointing leaders like the late Benjamin Ruffin as a top advisor, and several judicial figures like Henry Frye of Greensboro as the first African-American NC Chief Justice of the NC Supreme Court, and later Cheri Beasley to the District Court. She would later rise to become the first black female Chief Justice. That black community support

would be tested when in 1977, during his first-term in office, Hunt refused to pardon the Wilmington Ten - nine blacks and one white falsely convicted of firebombing a white-owned grocery store in Wilmington in 1970. In 1972, the ten were tried, convicted and sentenced to a total of over 200 years in prison. Upon reviewing the case, Gov. Hunt announced on statewide television in January 1977 that he agreed with the controversial trial verdicts, but felt that the sentences were too long, and commuted them. Hunt drew tremendous criticism from both sides of the controversy, with many surmising that by not pardoning the ten but shortening their sentences, he was being politically expedient. Because of the worldwide attention to the case at the time, the Wilmington Ten controversy would remain part of Hunt's political legacy, especially in the black community. Another highlight of Gov. Jim Hunt's political career was his 1984 battle to unseat conservative Republican US Senator Jesse Helms. The contest is considered one of the most expensive, and most bruising

(See **GOV JIM HUNT** P. 2)



LOSING SPEED. TINY NC TOWN ON VERGE OF SHUTTING DOWN.

CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS – SPEED – Despite its name, life moves slowly in the Town of Speed. So does its municipal government, which has been pressured by the state's Local Government Commission to dissolve voluntarily after falling way behind on mandatory financial reports. Speed, a 0.3-square-mile parcel of land just off the highway in rural eastern Edgecombe County, is surrounded on all sides by cotton fields. In autumn, when the crop is ready to be harvested, fluffy cotton covers the farmland like snow. About 60 people live within the limits of Speed, many of whom have been there for most of their lives. It's an older community – the median age of residents is 67. That wasn't always the case. First founded as a railroad stop town in 1901, the town's population peaked above 140 in the middle decades of the 20th century and at one time had a bank, a school and a law enforcement program, none of which exist today. In 1999, the town was ravaged by flooding caused by Hurricane Floyd and it never quite recovered. Vacant buildings remain today a reminder of the floodwaters which caused many residents to move away. The town is easy to miss, and in some respects, hard to reach. Speed has no full-time staff, no official website and – although the town hall does have an email and phone number – there's no obvious way of finding that contact information online. The town's governance has seen very little change over the decades. One former commissioner, Leroy Candies, served up until the age of 96 before resigning in December. He died in March. Wilbert Harrison, 74, has been mayor since 1996. He's used a wheelchair for the past several years since recovering from health incidents that include a stroke and tongue cancer. These days he does most of his work out of his home. In 2023, he won what will likely be Speed's final mayoral election, uncontested, with 12 votes. Although one might think politics can get messy in such a small town, Harrison told Carolina Public Press that such a small community is actually an advantage. "Like a family, you talk to them," he said of his neighbors. "Try to get to thinking (about) what they desire."

(See **LOSING SPEED** P. 2)

NC DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SHELTERS, CHILD ADVOCACY CENTERS HIT WITH FUNDING CUTS

WUNC – North Carolina nonprofits that serve victims of domestic violence and child abuse are facing funding cuts. For decades, the federal Crime Victims Fund has provided grants to domestic violence shelters, rape crisis centers and children's advocacy centers. But North Carolina's share has dropped from \$100 million in 2018 to just \$40 million this year and \$25 million last year. Caroline Farmer leads the Governor's Crime Commission, which administers the grants. She told a legislative oversight committee that the agency has used other funding to maintain grant levels until now, but last week it notified nonprofits that their grants will be cut by an average of 20%. A facility in Hoke County serving victims of sexual assault and domestic violence will see its grant drop from \$83,000 to \$66,000, for example. "These are pretty significant drops for these people and these services," she said, adding that the grant money has been "paying for crisis counselors, victim advocates, resource coordinators, cell phones, utilities, rent, mental health advocacy and so forth." Farmer says her agency is looking at options to fund the services in the future. "The Governor's Crime Commission cares deeply about the work that victim service providers do in communities across our state," she said in an emailed statement Friday. "We will continue to explore solutions that ensure victims of crime in North Carolina have access to critical services. The cuts will affect 54 child abuse centers and 84 domestic violence shelters or rape crisis centers across the state. The reduction in federal funds stems from reduced revenue for the Crime Victims Fund, which is financed by criminal fines, fees and penalties.

Environmental Justice Projects Hit by EPA Cuts

WUNC – When the Trump administration terminated the nearly \$2 billion EPA Community Change Grant Program earlier this year, organizations across the nation lost millions of dollars in environmental justice grants. In North Carolina, the birthplace of the environmental justice movement, three organizations have lost more than \$41 million in grants combined, due to the termination of this program. Southwest Renewal Foundation - High Point, NC Dorothy Darr is the executive director of the Southwest Renewal Foundation of High Point, one of the North Carolina organizations that's been impacted by the cuts. Darr believes the Trump adminis-



tration is sending a clear message to organizations championing environmental justice. "The message is, 'I don't want to help you.' We were termed (told) by our local senator, state senator, 'Oh you're just a DEI project,'" Darr said. The elimination of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) programs is a leading reason as to why the EPA said they canceled hundreds of justice-focused grants. In a February press release, EPA Administrator Lee Zeldin called them "wasteful DEI and environmental justice initiatives." Southwest Renewal planned to use its \$18.5 million EPA grant to improve water quality and plant more

(See **JUSTICE PROJECTS** P. 7)

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From Car Titles To Property Taxes To Voting, N.C. Lawmakers Explore The Possibilities Of Blockchain

Eight months after the North Carolina House gave the green light to the state treasurer to invest a small percentage of the state's pension fund in cryptocurrencies, a legislative committee met Wednesday to explore alternative uses for blockchain and digital assets.

Rep. David Willis acknowledged that while there's still a big learning curve for many legislators, there is also great opportunity.

"We're here to talk about real-world applications that can be used for government efficiency and accountability," said Willis.

The Union County Republican said North Carolina needs to position itself to leverage the technology and be at the forefront of an industry that's going to create new jobs and new companies.

Michael Postupak, the policy engagement manager for the nonprofit Blockchain Association, told lawmakers that to understand the benefits, it helps to visualize blocks in a blockchain as data where new transactions can be added. New blocks of data are connected through cryptography, essentially a unique digital fingerprint or 'hash.' And as more blocks are added, more cryptography enters the system, becoming a much stronger record.

Postupak said owners have full control of their digital assets with a public address and a private digital key.

"Blockchains are powered by a global, decentralized distributed network of computers that verify, secure and digitally store information," Postupak explained. "With these networks being supported by hundreds, if not thousands, of computers globally, the chance that there's ever a network failure is almost zero."

"So, who are these decentralized computers? How do we know that's a trustworthy source?" asked Rep. Allison Dahle (D-Wake).

Postupak said the number of computers in the network prevents the information from being tampered with. In Bitcoin's vast network of thousands of computers, to take control of the network, you would have to have control over 50% of the computers in that network, he said.

"Could we use this blockchain technology for voting online?" Dahle asked. "Would that make it safer for casting ballots or for military people to cast ballots from overseas?"

"I know that's something that countries and municipalities around



the world are looking at," said Postupak, who added he would need more time to research the question.

Anthony Janocko with New York-based Ava Labs, said California's DMV is a good example of how governments can use the technology. Their blockchain infrastructure has been enormously successful in digitizing 42 million car titles.

"That's another way you can think about digital assets — it's basically taking something that exists in the real world, then applying it to the

framework of blockchain technology, allowing for some of the digital ownership and provability of those assets online," said Janocko.

In the case of the California DMV, residents had access to verifiable digital credentials and the ability to check on the status of their digital titles.

"Each event or digital asset or title in its lifecycle process was basically being tacked onto the blockchain," Janocko explained. "When users or DMV workers need to look

up certain titles, they're able to see that full history."

Janocko said the end result is an auditable log of all the previous transactions that exist on a ledger, reducing time during an audit or reconciliation. He said it's a far better system than a traditional database, which often cannot be shared across agencies.

"What the blockchain solved with this case is, it created a tamper-proof system of record of ownership of vehicles, allowing for real-time updates and verification of history of those specific titles," he said. Janocko said the blockchain infrastructure is not about rebuilding government systems from scratch. Rather, it's about adding a modern shared system of records underneath that can be referenced with a high degree of integrity.

Wyoming is exploring blockchain technology with the first state-issued stable token. In its pilot, real-time government contractor payments using the token, managed on a blockchain network, reduced the timelines for payouts from 45 days to just a few seconds.

John Bridge of the Atlanta-based firm Trust Stamp said blockchain is being used in Africa to digitize property records and improve ac-

countability.

A permissioned blockchain allows multiple agencies to access the records, with the chain recording if any errors were made, when a correction occurred, and who made the correction.

"We're able to see that full data. That increases transparency and trust in the system. And then it also speeds up the sales and transfers," explained Bridge.

Baltimore County is using the technology in a pilot project to more accurately assess distressed properties, said Bridge. Payment and delinquency events can be tracked more easily, improving collections efficiency.

Improving services at the DMV and revenue collection are two areas that hold great appeal for North Carolina lawmakers heading into 2026.

While Wednesday's committee hearing was for informational purposes, Rep. Willis said it was clear that blockchain technology is the future of data retention.

"This isn't just a fad. Whatever we can do to help get ahead and craft what that's going to look like and for the betterment of North Carolina and the efficiency of our government, we're all for it," said Willis.

People's Champ Bass Distinguished For Community Uplift

RALEIGH, N.C. — Boxed lunches eased appetites during North Carolina Black Alliance's (NCBA) midyear retreat at a Southeast Raleigh church in August.

There Marcus Bass was after lunch breaking down the boxes for easier disposal, going about the task with a certain vigor, like he was the clean-up

man for the church.

Bass is NCBA's deputy director. He's a big deal. Yet he cared about the person whose job at some point would entail getting those boxes out of the fellowship hall. It was typical Bass. That's just who he is, to say nothing of what he does daily to build Black political power in North Carolina — to say

everything about why he received The HBCU Triumph Community Advocate Award during Shaw University's 2nd Annual HBCU Triumph Gala at the Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport on Dec. 6.

"Marcus has always been a champion for the people," said Terrell Midgett, the co-founder and chief operating officer of Raleigh Raised Development. A Shaw University alum, Midgett co-chaired the gala with fellow alum LT McCrimmon.

Indebted At the gala, Bass explained Martin Luther King Jr.'s belief that Black

people never will be able to satisfy the debt they owe their ancestors.

"I believe that deeply as an advocate," Bass said.

So he works. Hard. For the people. "Marcus embodies the true spirit of community service — educating others about policy, empowering candidates to serve and holding leaders accountable. Thanks to his leadership, our communities have not only grown but truly thrived," said McCrimmon, a government relations professional.

Bass provides leadership for an organization that in 2025 knocked on nearly 60,000 doors and made some

142,000 phone calls encouraging North Carolinians to vote.

NCBA had people on the ground at eight sites throughout the state for the September 20 Rooted in Wellness Day, an annual outreach to increase health care access for people in rural communities.

When state legislators propose ominous bills, NCBA deploys crews to the North Carolina General Assembly to push against what could become bad laws for Black people. "Marcus shows up for justice, for educational equity and for our branches across the state," said Deborah Dicks Maxwell, the

president of the North Carolina State Conference of the NAACP. "Day in and day out, he lifts others, builds coalitions and moves us forward."

Legacy During his acceptance speech, Bass, a North Carolina A&T State University (NCA&T) alum, couldn't resist sticking it to anyone at the HBCU Triumph Gala who attended rival North Carolina Central University (NCCU).

"This evening, just a few miles down the road, North Carolina A&T triumphantly defeated the Eagles of North Carolina Central 69-54," Bass jabbed.



GOV JIM HUNT

Continued from page 1

in American history, ending only when Helms, whose racial politics were well-known, predictably played the race card against Hunt condemning his support for affirmative action, culminating a come-from-behind victory.

As bad as that defeat was, Hunt was able to run twice more for governor and win each time.

"Governor Jim Hunt's extraordinary life of public service and lasting contributions to the people of North Carolina include his tremendous impact on the state judiciary," said Democratic Associate Justice Anita Earls of the NC Supreme Court. "He appointed more African-American judges than any of his predecessors. I will always be grateful for the way he stood with me when I announced my candidacy for the North Carolina Supreme Court in 2018. My condolences to the Hunt family; it is a great loss for all of us."

Funeral services for former Governor James Baxter Hunt Jr. will be held Friday, December 26th at 1 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church in Wilson.

The public is invited to sign a book of condolence, which will be available at the North Carolina State Capitol beginning Saturday morning.

Another Huge Recall Hits More Than 272,000 Ford Trucks And Crossovers

Autoblog—The recalls just keep on coming for Ford in 2025, and the latest means that your truck or crossover might not be where you left it. According to a recall filed with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, vehicles from the 2022-2026 model years have an issue that could cause them to roll away after being put in park. The problem affects 272,645 vehicles, so it's not a small issue like the Escape recall we covered yesterday, and unlike yesterday's report, this one affects three different vehicles, both electric and combustion-powered. On the plus side, the fault can be easily resolved with an over-the-air update, so it's not mechanical.

The rollaway risk affects the Ford F-150 Lightning (2022-2026), the Mustang Mach-E (2024-2026), and the Maverick (2025-2026). The recall acknowledgement document says that "the integrated park module may fail to lock into the park position when the driver shifts



into park," potentially allowing the vehicle to roll, which increases the risk of a crash. As noted above, a simple OTA update will address this software issue, but unfortunately, owner notification letters are only expected to be mailed on Febru-

ary 2, 2026, which is around the time Ford expects to have devised a remedy to the problem. Customers who want to determine whether their vehicle is impacted will have to wait until January 26 to search their VINs on the NHTSA's website.

Ford has accumulated the most recalls ever amassed by an automaker in a single calendar year, and it achieved that undesirable feat within the first six months of the year, but it is working towards improving its reliability scores and is doing all it can to retain customers. Various changes in quality control processes should improve future vehicles, and in the meantime, the Blue Oval is quietly offering discounts to customers who may be thinking of moving to other brands. Hopefully, these measures will be enough for current and future products, of which there will be several. The automaker is responding to market demands by phasing out the current all-electric F-150 Lightning in favor of one with a range extender, as well as working on a compact pickup, a small SUV, and new vans. Of course, quality control improvements mean little if there's a software issue, but at least those are quick and easy to resolve.

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Losing Speed —CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

For the most part, that's simply meant maintaining trash services and streetlights. The town also has a volunteer fire department and a water tower, but neither receive funding from the town.

However, since 2022, Speed has struggled to keep up with the financial paperwork required to remain an incorporated town. Under state law, it must produce a yearly financial audit, semiannual cash and investment reports and a balanced budget by July 1 of each year.

The town hasn't submitted a financial audit in three years, nor has it kept up with the other requirements. In 2024, Speed approved its budget more than three months late, and in doing so violated state statute by continuing to use town funds without a budget.

The LGC, the state agency tasked with financial oversight of more than 1,000 local government units across North Carolina, first suggested that Speed consider dissolving in August 2024.

Representatives of the LGC visited Speed and gave a presentation to the town commissioners about what dissolution could look like, but they reported back that the town's leadership wasn't interested in taking that route.

The relationship between Speed and the LGC grew more fraught after that visit, and the state soon said it was having difficulties contacting the town at all. An auditor hired by the town also cited issues with communication and ceased his services that year.

"Speed continues to face challenges complying with the Local

Government and Fiscal Control Act," Deputy Treasurer Debbie Tomasko reported at the December LGC meeting.

"We've had just some struggles in getting information we need and getting timely responses to staff requests for information."

At that meeting, the Commission voted 4-2 to require the town to contract with an outside financial officer or else face a dissolution process initiated by the LGC. The last time the Commission took that step was with East Laurinburg in 2021.

"These steps aren't taken lightly," then-Treasurer Dale Folwell said.

Folwell was replaced by Brad Briner after the 2024 election, but that didn't ease the pressure off of Speed. Kenneth Randolph, a town commissioner since 2015, said that the LGC told the Town Board that even if Speed got caught up with its audits and other required paperwork, it still didn't bring in enough monthly revenue to keep a balanced budget.

"Personally, I would like to keep the town," Randolph said, even if it's just for a few more years.

But the LGC didn't give the town much of a choice. Voluntary dissolution would give the town more autonomy in how the process is carried out, compared to a state-initiated one, which was becoming increasingly likely.

On Oct. 14, the Town Board passed a resolution of intent to dissolve its charter.

"It's kind of heartwrenching," Harrison said of the idea of Speed dissolving. He still holds out hope that Speed can find a way to carry on, but the chances of that happening are



slim.

Town Clerk Dolores Faison didn't respond to multiple requests for a copy of that resolution of intent to dissolve.

The town faces logistical issues. The town has until June 30, 2026, to develop a plan to distribute its assets and liabilities. The commissioners must also decide what to do about its town-owned roads, streetlights and trash service.

Edgecombe County doesn't offer trash pick-up, which will be a prob-

lem for the town's elderly residents, Randolph said. One option is to form a homeowners association or other organization that could collect dues to pay for those services, but nothing like that is in the works yet.

Charter or not, Randolph's favorite aspects of his town — the name and the quiet — will remain. Harrison's neighbors, all of whom he knows by name, will continue on as a "community of togetherness."

After all, not much changes in Speed.



Business & Finance

Housing Affordability, Availability Top The News In '25

NC NEWSLINE - Housing affordability and availability spent a lot of time in the headlines in North Carolina and across the country in 2025.

Rents have risen faster than incomes, pushing rental units out of reach of many modest income tenants. And while interest rates have begun to come down, higher rates in recent years and climbing home prices have pushed homeownership out of reach for many Americans.

The NC Housing Coalition's 2025 housing needs assessment showed that 28% of the state's households — 1.1 million — are cost-burdened by rent or mortgages. Families that spend more than 30% of income on housing costs are considered cost-burdened.

The housing affordability crisis in this state is most acute among renters, with 48% considered cost-burdened, the coalition found. Meanwhile, 10% of homeowners have trouble affording their homes.

The coalition determined that a \$22.28 hourly wage or an annual income of \$46,340 is needed to afford a fair market rent of \$1,158 a month in North Carolina.

High housing costs can have dire consequences for families unable to pay them. In North Carolina, 11,394 families faced foreclosures and 194,526 faced an eviction in 2025, the coalition reported. The Eviction Lab has linked rising rents and evictions to premature death because cost-burdened families prioritize paying rent over spending on health and well-being.

A housing gap
A month into 2025, the NC Chamber Foundation, NC REALTORS and the N.C. Homebuilders Association released a comprehensive statewide report showing that North Carolina faces a five-year housing inventory gap of more than 765,000 units.

According to the report, titled the

2024 Housing Supply GAP Analysis: State of North Carolina, there's a projected gap of 442,118 for-sale units and 322,360 rental units across the state over the next five years.

"Addressing North Carolina's significant housing supply gap is more than just meeting immediate demand; it's a critical investment in our state's future," NC Chamber Foundation President Meredith Archie said in a statement accompanying the report.

The report advised addressing the gaps through some combinations of new construction, housing repairs and weatherization and financial assistance to address "severe housing affordability issues." Those strategies could generate \$489 billion in economic activity and create nearly 2.2 million jobs, the report said.

In October, Jenny Schuetz, an affordable housing expert at Houston-based Arnold Ventures, told state housing advocates, developers and policymakers at a conference in Raleigh that the nation must build its way out of the current housing crisis.

"We haven't been building enough homes to keep up with demand created by population growth and job growth for more than 15 years now," Schuetz said. "Going back to the great financial crisis, we just stopped building housing altogether for about four or five years. It took a long time for industry to start digging itself out of a hole."

Estimates of the national housing shortage range widely. A Zillow analysis of Census data found the nation has a housing shortage of 4.7 million. The National Low Income Housing Coalition reports a shortage of 7 million affordable rental homes for extremely low-income individuals.

The state housing crisis grabbed the attention of North Carolina lawmakers during the legislative ses-



sion.

A controversial bill that Rep. Jeff Zenger, a Forsyth County Republican and developer, said would make it easier for developers to build affordable housing stalled in the House.

House Bill 765 would have restricted local enforcement of land-use rules not authorized by state law. Critics argued the bill would weaken local government control and undermine community planning.

Zenger and other supporters said the bill would remove red tape, which would make it easier for developers to build more housing.

More people experience homelessness

Homelessness in North Carolina increased 19% from 2023 to 2024, according to the 2024 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report. The report features data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Annual Point in Time Count.

The report found that homelessness in the nation reached an all-time high, with roughly 771,480 Americans experiencing homeless-

ness, a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that works to prevent and end homelessness.

Shawn Liu, director of communications for the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Homeless Programs, told NC Newsline that the strategy to reduce homelessness for veterans is a simple one: provide housing and do it as quickly as possible. It's a "housing first" approach to provide permanent housing and support services to people experiencing homelessness that's supported by many advocacy groups for people experiencing homelessness.

"No veteran should experience homelessness in the country that they swore to defend, period, end of story," Liu said.

Just months into his second presidency, President Donald Trump signaled that his administration is moving away from the housing first strategy that Liu and other advocates believe has helped reduce homelessness among veterans. The administration plans to cut funding for long-term permanent housing and redirect those funds toward transitional housing that requires recipients to work and to accept mandatory addiction or mental illness treatment.

At a recent fundraising event, Latonya Agard, executive director for the North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness, cited the coalition's success at turning back Republican-sponsored bills in the General Assembly that she and other advocates believe would be harmful to people experiencing homelessness.

One example, Agard said, was a controversial House Bill 781 to ban public camping. Agard said the bill would have unfairly criminalized people experiencing homelessness "for simply not having a home."

A bill co-sponsor, Rep. Brian Biggs (R-Randolph), said leaders of local municipalities came to him looking

for guidance in handling homelessness. Biggs insisted the bill doesn't criminalize homelessness.

"It addresses the use of public property for camping and sleeping without prohibiting homelessness," Biggs said in April. "It does create clear guidance. We need guidance."

Another bill, House Bill 437, Agard noted, would have made homeless shelters operators responsible if drugs were sold or delivered outside of their facilities. It passed the state House, but stalled in the state Senate.

Rep. Heather Rhyne (R-Lincoln) said the law is needed because the state's homeless population is under regular threat from dealers seeking to sell them controlled substances.

"By making homeless shelters drug-free zones, we reduce the opportunity for these criminal elements to further victimize the homeless while holding operators of these facilities accountable," said Rhyne, a bill cosponsor.

But Agard said it could have forced shelters to close. Both bills stalled in the Senate.

Tenants' rights
Across the state, tenants rose up to fight against high rents and unsafe and unsanitary living conditions.

In Durham, the city council unanimously approved an amendment to the city's housing code that prohibits landlords from collecting rent if a housing unit is found to be "imminently dangerous" to tenants' health and safety.

Under the ordinance, which is modeled after one in Charlotte, landlords can be charged with a misdemeanor if they collect rent on housing that has immediately dangerous conditions such as rotted or damaged structural supports, unsafe wiring, unsafe roofs, no potable water supply or no operating heating equipment in cold months, among other violations.

Howell-Bey Leaning In And Listening In Johnston County

RALEIGH, N.C. — Try as some might to confine Black history to a month, there's just too much to limit it to 28 days a year.

Faith Howell-Bey discovered similarly with Women's History Month.

"When I first created Queens Table Brunch, it was envisioned as a one-time Women's History Month event highlighting the work and legacy of Shaundrelle Watson. She's the founder of The Brown & Black Cultural Exchange, a mentorship program in Selma, North Carolina, serving young Black and Brown girls in Johnston County," Howell-Bey said.

Queens Table Brunch morphed into its own thing, a series dedicated to curating space where Black women can lean into their crowns. The way the gathering developed provides a patch in the quilt telling the story about why The Johnston County Citizens Association in early December recognized Howell-Bey for her public service.

"There are leaders who work hard, and then there are leaders who shift the very direction of community," said Lamair Bryan, the Triangle area regional coordinator for Advance Carolina. "Faith is the kind of leader whose impact you don't just see, you feel."

Restoring Black women

The Rev. Yolanda Murphy pastors Smithfield's St. Mark AME Church, which hosted a Queens Table Brunch in May. Her book, "Still Standing: Dealing with Grief, Loss & Sickness," aligns with the personal restoration Howell-Bey cultivates during the brunches.

"Our culture has a problem with [people] keeping things to themselves," Murphy said. "It's those testimonies that help others to deal with certain situations."

Brunch attendees like newly elected Anchor Lodge town council member Franky Echols said Howell-Bey has created a safe space to give and receive encouragement, and the pro-



fessional networking is right on time.

Anchor Lodge is in Johnston County. Black people have not had the smoothest of roads in Johnston County, according to the history books. But Howell-Bey's initiatives there, which include rallying voters to show up and cast ballots, have gotten traction.

"Johnston County is different because she has walked its streets, listened to its people and poured her spirit into their future," Bryan said. "She sees a barrier and finds a path. She sees a problem and builds a solution. She sees her community struggling, and she shows up again and again, with creativity, resilience

and that unmistakable fire that Black women carry when they know their work is transforming lives."

"Deep listening"

In other words, Howell-Bey understands her assignment — because she listens to the people.

"Based on the feedback I received from participants, I felt called to transform what began as a one-off gathering into something recurring," Howell-Bey said. "I asked Black women how they experienced the space and what they needed, and, overwhelmingly, they shared a desire for a space like this to convene regularly."

Howell-Bey — her background is in African American and diaspora studies, as well as psychology — said her work in Johnston County is rooted in centering the lived realities Black people face and how those experiences show up in their bodies and with each other.

"In my view, there are neighborhoods, there are communities, and

then there are villages," said Howell-Bey, 28. "Neighborhoods are defined by proximity, communities by connection and villages by shared responsibility and collective care. I am truly in the business of developing villages; environments that sustain themselves, empower and uplift one another and are grounded in the principles of Kwanzaa — unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. As I move forward with expanding Queens Table Brunch, I am excited to incorporate community days of action with each cohort."

She understands the assignment. "What moves me most about Faith is that when challenges show up, she doesn't back away, she leans in," Bryan said. "If we want a healthier democracy, if we want real change, we need young leaders like her." It's just listening — seeing a need and meeting it, Howell-Bey explained.

Black Women's Leadership Collective (BWLC) Of North Carolina

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

The Black Women's Leadership Collective (BWLC) is emerging as a critical force in American politics, acting as a strategic organizing hub to significantly amplify the social and political influence of Black women nationwide. Powered by the "Power Rising" initiative, the BWLC connects national organizations, advocates, and grassroots supporters to ensure Black women are powerfully represented, both at the ballot box—mobilizing an audience of over 20 million in 2024—and in the halls of power. Operating as a "Movement of Movements," the collective works in close partnership with influential groups like the "Divine Nine" Sororities and civic powerhouses such as the NCNW and The Links, Incorporated. The organization's leadership, steered by figures like Donna Brazile, Minyon Moore, and Star Jones, highlights its serious intent to champion the growing number of Black women running for office, a number that surpassed 1,200 in 2024.

Here in North Carolina, the current cohort of BWLC NC Candidate Training Program is preparing to graduate its 2025 class. Led fearlessly by Bajeyah Eaddy, a visionary leader committed to strengthening communities, shaping inclusive policies, and driving meaningful political and social impact, who also serves as a leader of the Roy Cooper for United States Senate campaign team.

With countless legislators and local leaders speaking and providing guidance throughout the program, BWLC is a premier organization for anyone looking to make an impact in the community who is seeking insight on structure and best practices.

As the 2025 class comes to a close, several members of the cohort have filed for office and begun their cam-



BRITTNEI LARUE

paigns. Here is a bit of insight on the current cohort of the Black Women's Leadership Collective North Carolina 2025:

Meet Brittnei LaRue. Brittnei is running for the New Hanover County School Board because she believes every child deserves a high-quality education and a fair opportunity to succeed. She also believes that strong schools are built through listening—listening to families, educators, and students whose lives are directly impacted by school board decisions. As a mother of two children in New Hanover County Schools, Brittnei has experienced firsthand the realities many families face. Her son's journey navigating the IEP process showed her just how critical it is for schools to meet students where they are and provide individualized supports that allow every child to thrive. Her daughter's experience with bullying further strengthened Brittnei's resolve to advocate for school environments that are safe, respectful, and supportive for all students. These deeply personal experiences transformed Brittnei from a parent advocate for her own children into a community advocate determined to improve outcomes for families across the district.

Brittnei's commitment to service



DILCY BURTON

extends well beyond her role as a parent. As a financial professional, she brings a strong understanding of transparency, accountability, and responsible decision-making. She believes public trust is built when resources are used wisely, decisions are clearly explained, and community members feel confident that leadership is acting in the best interest of students and educators. Brittnei approaches governance with a people-centered mindset—balancing fiscal responsibility with compassion and long-term planning.

Throughout her professional and community work, Brittnei has built a reputation as a thoughtful listener and collaborative leader. She has worked across political and social lines, bringing people together around shared goals and practical solutions. She understands that meaningful progress happens when parents' voices are respected, teachers' expertise is valued, and partnerships are formed between schools, families, and the broader community. Brittnei is running for school board to help strengthen those partnerships and restore confidence in public education leadership. She believes the role of the board is to govern responsibly, support educators, protect students, and ensure policies



JHERI HARDAWAY

are clear, fair, and focused on student success—not political agendas. Her vision for New Hanover County Schools centers on safe learning environments, strong academic outcomes, transparent decision-making, and a culture of respect and inclusion.

At the heart of Brittnei's campaign is a simple belief: when we listen first, lead with integrity, and put students at the center of every decision, we create schools where all children can succeed. She is ready to bring her lived experience, professional skills, and collaborative leadership style to the school board to help build a stronger, more unified school system for New Hanover County. Learn more at larueforschools.com.

Meet Dilcy Burton, a Durham Public Schools graduate and parent of graduates from Durham Public Schools. She is a former DPS substitute teacher, former Vice President of the PTA, former Committee Chair and Chaplain for Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., and Durham Delegate to the SEC for the NC Democratic Party. Dilcy believes every child deserves a safe, supportive, and high-quality education that reflects the full diversity of the community. Dilcy has a reputation for equity, problem-solving, and accountability in her

roles as an attorney and chaplain. Dilcy understands the challenges facing our schools and her training as an approved NC OSHR mediator will prove an essential asset and benefit to DPS.

Dilcy is a candidate for Durham County Board of Education District One because she will improve Durham Public Schools. She is committed to providing essential curriculum support to teachers, and increasing recruitment of exceptional children educators. She is a supporter of fair and market rate compensation for DPS staff, teachers and administrators. She advocates for transparency in the oversight of the DPS budget. Dilcy believes the DPS academic calendar should reflect the diversity of its students. She supports an academic calendar that increases the number of DPS holidays which is similar to the school calendar in NYC Public Schools. Dilcy is committed to responsible, transparent decision-making involving school closures that consider family and neighborhood public comment events.

Dilcy is a strong advocate for dependable and consistent DPS transportation services, livable and market wages for bus drivers, custodians, cafeteria workers and instructional assistants. Dilcy is prepared to work collaboratively with Durham's state legislators, county commissioners and federal stakeholders to fight for increased financial funding to DPS. Dilcy is a voice for students, a partner for parents and a champion for educators. Success for Durham Public Schools begins with a vote for Dilcy Burton on March 3, 2026. Please visit www.dilcy4durham.com for further information.

Say hello to your author, and BWLC 2025 Cohort member, Jheri Hardaway, a voice for North Carolina's future, running for the North Carolina Senate in District 12. Jheri is

an experienced writer, educator, innovative organizer, and dedicated sales professional running for NC State Senate to bring a fresh, results-driven perspective to Harnett, Lee, and NW Sampson counties. Known for her strong work ethic, a dynamic understanding of American history, and an encouraging, motivating spirit, Jheri is excited to go to work for the people.

For years, Jheri Hardaway has served the community as an educator and prolific journalist, contributing currently to The Carolinian News weekly. Also a notary, this background has instilled a deep understanding of the issues facing our state and a proven ability to research, articulate complex ideas clearly, and advocate for the public good. As a writer and journalist, Jheri is uniquely equipped to tackle legislation with precision and clarity. Beyond the news and classrooms, Jheri is a dynamic sales professional who understands the engine of our economy and is passionate about economic development. With a talent for executing memorable experiences and organizing innovative events, Ms. Hardaway has a successful track record of bringing people and resources together to achieve ambitious goals. This combination of hustle and execution is exactly what's needed to attract new businesses, support local entrepreneurs, and create high-quality living-wage jobs across the district.

Jheri Hardaway is campaigning on the promise of effective leadership and a commitment to ensuring every resident has the opportunity to thrive. With a blend of media acumen, lesson planning, business savvy, and a relentless drive to deliver results, Jheri is the clear choice to be your next State Senator. Protect the will of the people by supporting The Committee to Elect Jheri Hardaway.

Frank S. Green Jr. And The Foundations Of Modern Computing

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Frank S. Greene Jr. stands as one of Silicon Valley's quiet architects, an engineer whose work on early semiconductor memory chips helped accelerate modern computing.

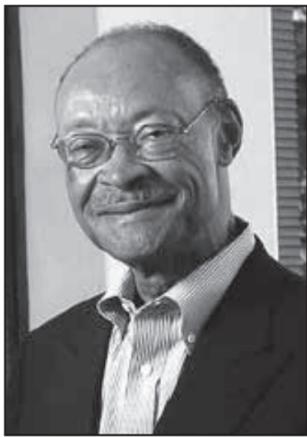
Born in Washington, D.C., and raised in St. Louis during an era of racial segregation, Greene showed an early talent for math and science. Encouraged by his parents to pursue education despite systemic barriers, he became one of the first black students to attend Washington University in St. Louis, earning a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering in 1961. He continued to Purdue University, completing a master's degree in 1962, and later earned a Ph.D. in electrical engineering from Santa Clara University in 1970.

Greene's early career placed him at the intersection of national security and cutting-edge technology. As an electronics officer in the United States Air Force, he became the first African-American cadet to graduate

from the Air Force ROTC program and rose to the rank of captain. During his service, he worked on high-performance computers for the National Security Agency; systems that demanded speed, reliability, and innovation at a time when computing power was scarce and expensive.

Greene's most influential technical contribution came during his time at Fairchild Semiconductor in the mid-1960s. Fairchild was a birthplace of Silicon Valley innovation, and Greene was part of a team developing high-speed semiconductor memory systems. Their work led to a patented memory chip design that achieved the fastest speeds of its time.

This breakthrough mattered because memory speed is foundational to computing performance. Faster memory allows processors to access data more quickly, enabling complex calculations, real-time decision-making, and scalable systems. While today's AI accelerators and GPUs are vastly more powerful, they still rely on the same core



principle Greene helped advance: reducing the distance between data and computation. In many ways, Greene's work anticipated modern challenges in AI hardware. Today's chip designers focus on memory bandwidth, latency, and energy efficiency to support machine learning

models with billions of parameters. In 1971, Greene became the founding CEO of Technology Development Corporation (TDC), a research and development firm that provided engineering services to the U.S. government. TDC grew from four employees to more than 300, contributing to major projects such as avionics for the F-16 Fighting Falcon, systems for the space shuttle program, and even underwater communication systems for scuba divers.

In 1985, Greene founded ZeroOne Systems, a supercomputing systems company that reached \$15 million in annual revenue within two years. In 1993, he founded New Vista Capital, one of the first venture capital firms dedicated to supporting startups led by women and people from marginalized communities.

Greene taught electrical engineering and computer science at institutions including Stanford University, Santa Clara University, Howard University, and Washington University in St. Louis. He also became the first African-American trustee

at Santa Clara University, helping influence institutional leadership from within.

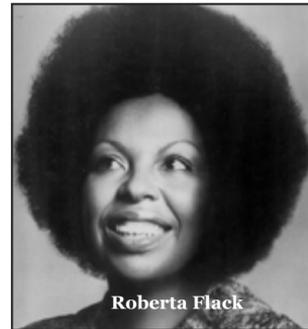
His commitment to the next generation is embodied in the Dr. Frank S. Greene Jr. Scholars Program, a K-12 STEM initiative supporting African-American students. With hands-on science fairs, engi-

neering competitions, mentoring, and parent engagement, the program has achieved remarkable success. Greene also supported scholarships honoring his wife, Phyllis Greene, and founded initiatives aimed at building vision, relationships, and execution in young leaders.

FAREWELL POEM

Continued from page 1

brown earth below,
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Roberta Flack



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Health and Wellness

Older Black Men Are Affected More By The Overdose Crisis

By Dr. Nora Volkow

Saturday, August 31, was International Overdose Awareness Day, when we collectively remember those who have lost their lives to drug overdose, support those who grieve those losses, and offer encouragement to those who seek recovery from addiction. It is also an opportunity to share new knowledge about the overdose crisis and strategies for confronting it. There is some very good news this year: Provisional data from the CDC show that, overall, overdose deaths dropped by 7.5% in the 12 months ending March, 2024, the largest decline in decades. It is cause for optimism. But unfortunately, for some groups, we continue to see only greater escalation of the overdose crisis.

A recent New York Times article highlighted the tragic epidemic of overdose deaths among older Black men in Baltimore. It is a city that has been especially hard-hit by the overdose crisis, but the trend is being seen nationwide. Although white and Black people use drugs at similar rates, fatal overdoses have escalated in Black people at a much higher rate than in other groups over the past decade, and multiple recent studies have documented especially high rates of overdose deaths among older Black men.

Fentanyl, often in combination with stimulants, is driving increased overdose deaths in most demographic groups. In all groups, men are at greater risk of overdose

than women, but additional factors, including age-related health disparities, social isolation, and lifetime exposure to structural racism, may be colliding to produce the rise in overdoses among older Black men especially, and it points to the urgent need for intervention.

A NIDA analysis found that between 2015 and 2023 (provisional data), there was a nearly 5-fold increase in overdose deaths among non-Hispanic Black men 55 and older (figure). In 2023, deaths in that demographic category were nearly triple the national average for that age group. The largest proportion of these deaths, and the steepest increases, involved fentanyl and cocaine. The overdose rate in older Black men is markedly higher than that for Black men overall.

An increase in drug use and drug problems is being seen in older people of all races and ethnicities. Over the past two decades, substance use treatment admissions have increased among people aged 50 and over. In older adults, the risk of problematic opioid use is raised by chronic illness, and pain may be an especially important factor. Chronic pain is prevalent among older adults, and treatment for pain is less effective in this age group than it is in younger people; it negatively impacts quality of life and is a risk factor for cognitive decline and premature death.

As people age, they may start to lose partners and social contacts. A recent National Academies report identified social isolation as a major contributing factor to illness and poor quality of life in older people; it par-



ticularly impacts men, who tend to have fewer social supports in later life than women. Loneliness and social isolation are well-known risk factors for substance use, and in an analysis of substance use patterns among older people with varying degrees of social connectedness and perceived loneliness, those who lived alone and felt lonely had the highest rates of nonmedical drug use. Although Black and Hispanic older adults have lower odds of social

isolation than white older adults, as well as lower rates of alcohol use, one analysis of overdose deaths among middle-aged and older adults in Illinois identified a common profile of socially isolated, predominantly Black men who had alcohol in their system when they died.

Health and other social disparities likely contribute to escalating overdose rates among older Black men. Black people face discrimination and implicit bias in healthcare set-

tings, including significantly longer wait times for emergency treatment of health problems. Black patients tend to be undertreated for pain, compared to white patients. Such discrimination goes along with other social determinants of health including under-resourced urban environments, housing instability, and food insecurity that may contribute to higher rates of premature mortality and a higher burden of chronic illnesses. Excess mortality from causes including heart disease, cancer, assault, cerebrovascular disease, and diabetes is also higher among Black men.

Discrimination takes a toll on mental health. An analysis of data from the National Epidemiologic Survey on Alcohol and Related Conditions found that discrimination against Black people was associated with higher odds of illicit drug use. Along with other minoritized groups like American Indians, Black people are less likely than white people to engage or remain in substance use treatment. Black people seeking addiction treatment face greater delays obtaining it than white people, and they are much less likely than white patients to be prescribed buprenorphine, which significantly reduces

the risk of overdose death. Unfortunately, even when older Black people receive substance use treatment, they are more likely than their white counterparts to have their treatment terminated by a treatment facility.

Structural discrimination is nothing new. The greater devastation fentanyl is wreaking in Black neighborhoods and communities like Baltimore could partly reflect longstanding patterns of economic disadvantage and mental health impacts of adversity—a reemerging signal that had been temporarily drowned out by the white overdose deaths that dominated the statistics and the headlines during the first two decades of the opioid epidemic. Overdose death rates among older Black men have been consistently higher than for any other racial/ethnic group of the same age and have accelerated just as fast if not faster than in other groups for nearly a decade.

In a widely cited 2015 paper, Princeton economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton argued that increased economic hardships for white people without college education in the years 1999-2013 contrib-

(See **OVERDOSE CRISIS** P. 12)

Surprise! Your Health Care Provider Added A Fee For That Digital Questionnaire



By Michelle Crouch and Charlotte Ledger

When Steve Hardman of Charlotte checked in to see a Novant Health sleep doctor earlier this year, the receptionist handed him a survey to fill out.

Hardman, 66, had seen the questions before — Do you feel safe in your house? Can you afford food? He spent a few minutes checking off the answers and handed the form back to the front desk.

A few weeks later, the bill arrived, and it included an extra \$8 fee he hadn't seen before.

Thinking it must be a mistake, Hardman called Novant's billing office. The billing representative told him the fee was connected to the questionnaire he had completed.

Hardman was shocked, especially since no one at Novant had talked to him about the survey or his responses.

"You are asking people if they feel safe, if they can afford food. Then you charge them," he said. "In what world does that actually make sense?"

He said it sounded like a strategy to boost revenue: "It's only a small amount, but you multiply that by I-don't-know-how-many patients — probably millions every year — and that's a nice add to the bottom line."

A national trend
Across the country, hospitals have started charging for self-administered questionnaires — brief surveys that screen for depression, food insecurity, domestic violence or other risks, said Caitlin Donovan, senior director at the Patient Advocate Foundation, a patients' rights nonprofit.

The screenings are supposed to flag patients who need extra support, but many people don't learn about any potential fees until the bill arrives.

Donovan said she has talked to patients from multiple states frustrated that they were billed for checking a few boxes. She said it's part of a broader billing trend her organization has noticed of health care systems billing for items that used to be included in the visit, whether it's a facility fee or a charge for messaging your doctor.

"They're screening for mental health or safety, and that's incredibly important, but it should be part of the fee for the visit, not an add-on," Donovan said. "They know if it's a small-enough amount, most people probably just pay it."

When asked about the charges, a Novant Health spokesperson said in an email that the survey asking about safety, housing and food security became a billable service in 2024.

"Social determinants of health assessments uncover non-medical factors affecting well-being, connecting patients to social workers, community health workers, and local resources as appropriate," she wrote.

For example, she explained, patients facing food insecurity are connected to food resources and, if it's urgent, provided with an emergency pack that includes a four-day supply of food. To date, Novant Health has provided nearly 16,000 emergency food packs, according to the email.

The hospital said most insurance providers cover the assessment, "and the majority of patients pay between \$5 and \$10."

UNC Health and Cone Health do similar screenings, but do not charge separately for them, according to spokespeople at each hospital. Other North Carolina health care systems queried by the Charlotte Ledger/NC Health News did not respond in time for publication.





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Arts & Culture

Lumbee Tribe's Recognition Is Assured By Tillis & Trump

AP NEWS—With the passage of the National Defense Authorization Act by the Senate on Wednesday, the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina is all but assured to become a federally recognized tribal nation.

The state-recognized tribe, whose historic and genealogical claims have been a subject of controversy, has been seeking federal recognition for generations. Congress has considered the issue for more than 30 years, but the effort gained momentum after President Donald Trump endorsed the tribe on the campaign trail last year.

"It's going to be a very, very emotional time for us. It's going to be a time to rejoice and a time to be happy," said Lumbee Tribe member Charles Graham, a retired special education teacher and former state legislator. "We'll be able to stand on our principles in terms of who we are, where we've been, our sovereignty, and we can speak to that with a lot of pride."

With federal recognition comes a bevy of federal resources, including access to new streams of federal dollars and grants, resources like the Indian Health Service, and the ability to put land into trust.

The journey to recognition in the 1980s, the Lumbee Tribe sought recognition through the Office

of Federal Acknowledgement within the Interior Department, which evaluates the historical and genealogical claims of tribal applicants. The office declined to accept the application, citing a 1956 act of Congress that acknowledged the Lumbee Tribe but withheld the benefits of federal recognition.

That decision was reversed in 2016, allowing the Lumbee to pursue recognition through the federal administrative process. The tribe instead continued to seek recognition through an act of Congress.

There are 574 federally recognized tribal nations. Since the Office of Federal Acknowledgement was established in 1978, 18 have been approved by the agency, while about two dozen have gained recognition through congressional legislation. Nineteen applications are now pending before the agency, with at least one under consideration by Congress.

Once federally recognized, the Lumbee Tribe would become one of the largest tribal nations in the country, with about 60,000 members. Congressional Budget Office estimates have found that providing the tribe with the necessary federal resources would cost hundreds of millions of dollars in the first few years alone.

"Hopefully, Congress will expand the pie in appropriations so that the



other tribes, many of which are poor, don't suffer because there's suddenly such a larger number of Native Americans in that region," said Kevin Washburn, former assistant secretary of Indian affairs at the Interior Department and a professor at the University of California, Berkeley School of Law.

Over 200 Lumbee members gathered in a gymnasium in Pembroke, North Carolina, to watch the final Senate vote on television. They celebrated with shouts, raised hands and applause as the unofficial tally indicated the bill would receive final congressional approval.

A drum circle played afterward and chanted for the jubilant crowd that got up after waiting patiently for the vote in folding chairs and gym bleachers.

Disputes over merit and heritage Not everyone in Indian country is celebrating. The move has drawn opposition from some tribal leaders, historians and genealogists who argue that the Lumbee's claims are unverifiable and that Congress should require the tribe to complete the formal recognition process.

"Federal recognition does not create

us — it acknowledges us," Shawnee Tribe Chief Ben Barnes, an opponent of Lumbee recognition, testified before the Senate last month. He warned against replacing historical documentation with political considerations.

Critics have noted that the Lumbee have a history of shifting claims and previously used different names, including Cherokee Indians of Robeson County, and say the tribe lacks a documented historical language.

"If identity becomes a matter of assertion rather than continuity, then this body will not be recognizing tribes, it will be manufacturing them," Barnes told lawmakers.

The Lumbee Tribe counters that it descends from a mixture of ancestors "from the Algonquian, Iroquoian and Siouan language families," according to its website, and notes it has been recognized by North Carolina since 1885.

Politics influence tribal recognition While the Lumbee Tribe has received bipartisan support over the years, federal recognition became a campaign promise for both Trump and Democratic nominee Kamala Harris during the most recent presidential race.

"President Trump traveled to Robeson County and pledged to get federal recognition done. He kept that promise and showed extraordinary leadership," said Republican Sen. Thom Tillis

of North Carolina, who introduced a bill to recognize the Lumbee Tribe.

Robeson County, where most Lumbee members live, has shifted politically in recent years. Once dominated by Democrats, the socially conservative area has trended Republican. The Lumbee Tribe's about 60,000 members in North Carolina are an important voting block in the swing state, which Trump won by more than three points.

In January, Trump issued an executive order directing the Interior Department to develop a plan for Lumbee recognition. That plan was submitted to the White House in April, and a department spokesperson said the tribe was advised to pursue recognition through Congress.

Since then, Lumbee Tribal Chairman John Lowery has worked closely with members of Congress, particularly North Carolina Sen. Thom Tillis, and appealed directly to Trump. In September, Lowery wrote to Trump announcing ancestral ties between the Lumbee Tribe and the president's daughter Tiffany Trump, according to Bloomberg, which first reported on the letter.

"We are confident that with your continued support and advocacy, we will successfully achieve full federal recognition of our nation," Lowery wrote.

Event Spotlight: A Soulful Black Nativity At Durham's Hillside High School Delights



By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Producers Wendell Tabb and Xavier Cason, in powerful association with the esteemed Triangle Performance Ensemble, recently captivated audiences with an outstanding and truly inspiring rendition of Black Nativity. This production was far more than a simple retelling; it was a deeply soulful and triumphant celebration that vibrated with the spirit of the season, solidifying its place as an essential holiday tradition for the Durham community. From the moment the curtains rose, the production's artistic

direction shone brilliantly through the meticulously crafted costumes. A stunning kaleidoscope of color, texture, and cultural significance added profound depth to the story. Alongside the visual feast was the wonderful music, which served as the pulse of the performance. The talented cast and chorus delivered timeless gospel songs with unmatched passion, transforming the John H. Gattis-Wendell Tabb Theater into a sanctuary of song. The crowd was irresistibly moved to participate, singing along to beloved seasonal classics such as Go Tell it on the Mountain, the deeply moving I Love the Lord, and count-



less other spiritual anthems.

At the very heart of the performance was the sweetest and most wonderful actor of all: the baby who played the role of the newborn Jesus, adding a layer of genuine emotion and tender awe that resonated deeply with everyone present. The experience extended beyond the stage as many of the actors worked the crowd up and down the rows throughout the performance. The energy of the play spilled out into the lobby as well, where local vendors and artisans had set up a vibrant marketplace. Attendees were able to complement their theatrical experience by brows-

ing a selection of high-quality, local artisan gifts, unique apparel, and a tempting array of tasty holiday treats, turning the intermission into a delightful community gathering. This year's production of Black Nativity was a perfect synthesis of theatrical excellence, cultural celebration, and community spirit. A truly wonderful and essential holiday experience that warmed hearts and uplifted spirits. The collective message from the producers and ensemble is clear: This tradition is one to be shared. The community is warmly invited to "Meet us there next year!" to experience the magic once again.

NC's First State Supervisor of Negro Schools

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Annie Wealthy Holland's life story is inseparable from the story of Black education in the early twentieth-century South.

Born in 1871 in Isle of Wight County, Virginia, Holland entered the world on land adjacent to the Wealthy plantation, where her grandmother had been enslaved. She was named after Annie Wealthy, the plantation owner who had freed her grandfather.

From an early age, Holland understood education as both opportunity and responsibility. She completed her studies at the Isle of Wight County School by the age of sixteen and, with the support of her grandfather, enrolled at Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute.

Like many Black women of her generation, Holland adapted to circumstances with resilience: she worked in New York City as a nurse and later trained as a dressmaker before returning home to earn a teaching certificate.

By the late nineteenth century, Holland had established herself as an educator in Virginia. She taught for years in rural schools, became an assistant principal in 1897, and later served as a principal herself. In 1888, she married Willis B. Holland, also an educator and Hampton graduate, and together they dedicated their lives to teaching Black children during an era when resources were scarce and segregation was rigidly enforced.

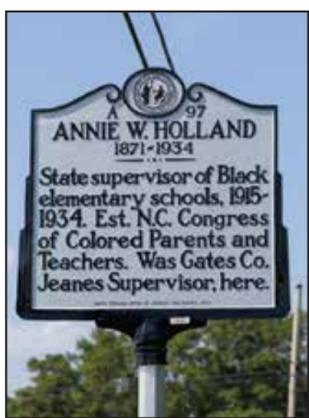
Holland's most far-reaching impact, however, came through her work in North Carolina. In 1911, she became a Jeanes Fund instructor in



Gates County, joining the first generation of Jeanes Teachers—Black women who effectively served as "Black superintendents" of rural schools during segregation.

Funded by the Anna T. Jeanes Foundation, these educators trained teachers, introduced industrial and domestic education, and helped schools become centers of community life. In Gates County alone, Holland supervised 22 rural schools and worked with communities to establish agriculture clubs that promoted self-sufficiency and economic resilience.

North Carolina soon recognized her extraordinary leadership. In 1915, Holland became the Jeanes Fund's state demonstration agent, making her, in effect, the state supervisor of Black elementary schools. When the state created the Division of Negro Education in 1921, her position was formally incorporated into the state system, and she became the



State Supervisor of Negro Elementary Schools.

Holland visited counties across North Carolina, met with superintendents and school boards, organized fund drives, and taught demonstration lessons in subjects ranging from reading and writing to nutrition, sewing, and agriculture. A 1917 itinerary required her to visit 21 counties in just over a month. She helped raise money for schools, supported teachers' professional growth, and even advocated for hiring nurses.

In 1928, Holland founded the first parent-teacher association for African Americans in North Carolina, holding its inaugural meeting at Shaw University in Raleigh. The organization became known as the North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers.

Annie Wealthy Holland died on January 6, 1934, at the age of 63, while addressing a group of teachers

in Louisburg, North Carolina. Her death came in service to the profession she had devoted her life to advancing. She was buried in Franklin, Virginia, half an hour north of Murfreesboro, North Carolina.

On the tenth anniversary of the founding of the North Carolina Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, members planted a tree in her memory at Shaw University, symbolizing the growth she had nurtured across the state. Her importance was further recognized in 1935, when she was featured in Five North Carolina Negro Educators, a collaborative publication prepared by the biracial team under the supervision of N. C. Newbold. Holland stood alongside figures such as Simon Green Atkins and James B. Dudley as one of the architects of Black education in North Carolina.

Decades later, at a historical marker unveiling ceremony in Sunbury, retired history professor Dr. Valinda Littlefield delivered the keynote address, emphasizing that Holland's most lasting contribution was "providing educational access to the masses." Littlefield noted, "Before people can be voters or activists," Littlefield explained, "their basic needs have to be met."

The ceremony also highlighted the role of NC Rep. Rodney D. Pierce of Halifax County, who applied for the marker. Pierce said he immediately recognized the importance of Holland's story and its need for public recognition.

Today, Holland's name lives on in places such as North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, where students reside in Holland Hall and gather at Holland Bowl.



By Judykay Jefferson

RECOGNITION

In 2013, as the Director of Community and Constituent Services for the North Carolina's Governor's Office, I hired a young Marine veteran, a proud member of the Lumbee tribe. From day one until the end of last week, wherever he went, whatever his role, he remained a warrior in the fight for federal recognition of the Lumbee tribe. When he was elected to the North Carolina House of Representatives, he utilized his access to further the fight. Now, as Senior Advisor for Indian Affairs to the Trump Administration, Jarrod experienced the thrill of victory on Wednesday, December 17, 2025, when a bi-partisan coalition of US Senators sent the Lumbee Recognition bill to the President's desk for his signature as promised during his presidential campaign.

North Carolina recognized the Lumbee in 1885, but Congress refused to follow suit for nearly 140 years according to USA TODAY. More than 40 bills failed before this one finally passed USA TODAY. That kind of delay is not accidental. It is structural. It is historical. And it is deeply racial.

Opponents of Lumbee recognition have long argued that the tribe is "not Indian enough," that their ancestry is "too mixed," or that their history is "too complicated." But America has never demanded racial purity from any other group before granting basic rights. The idea that a people must prove their identity to the satisfaction of outsiders—often outsiders with political or financial motives—is a tactic African Americans know all too well.

The Lumbee have been subjected to the same suspicion, the same moving goalposts, the same coded language that has historically been used to deny rights to people of color.

One of the long-standing objections to Lumbee federal recognition has been the claim that the Lumbee are "too mixed"—specifically that their ancestry includes Europeans and enslaved or freed Africans. This argument appears in historical debates about their identity and has been used by critics to question whether the Lumbee meet federal standards for tribal recognition.

According to reporting on Lumbee history, the tribe's ancestry includes Indigenous peoples alongside Europeans and Africans, forming a distinct community over centuries in what is now Robeson County, North Carolina. This blended heritage is not unusual in the Southeast, where Native, African, and European communities often lived in proximity under the pressures of colonization, enslavement, and displacement.

The objection arises because some opponents argue that African ancestry undermines the tribe's claim to Indigenous identity. But this argument reflects outdated racial thinking rather than historical reality. The Lumbee have maintained a continuous, self-identified Indigenous community since the 1800s, regardless of the racial categories imposed on them by outsiders.

The presence of African ancestry is real, documented, and part of the Lumbee story—but it has been weaponized by critics who use racial purity arguments to deny the tribe's legitimacy. That objection says more about America's racial biases than about Lumbee identity.

Some of the loudest objections to Lumbee recognition have come from other tribes, particularly those with casino interests. Federal recognition would make the Lumbee eligible for certain benefits and potentially for gaming rights. Competition, not anthropology, often drives the resistance.

But when economic self-interest hides behind racialized arguments about identity, the result is the same: a community of color is told to wait its turn. Told it hasn't earned what others inherited. Told its story is too messy for America to honor.

When President Trump signed the recognition bill in December 2025, Lumbee citizens wept openly in Washington, D.C., honoring ancestors who began this fight in the 1880s as reported by KOSU. It was a reminder that recognition is not symbolic—it is material. It affects healthcare, education, housing, and the ability to govern one's own community.

African American seniors know what it means to fight for recognition. We know what it means to be told to wait. We know what it means to have our identity questioned, our history doubted, our legitimacy challenged.

The Lumbee victory is a reminder that persistence can outlast prejudice. But it is also a reminder that racism adapts. It finds new language, new disguises, new battlegrounds.

When one community of color wins recognition, it strengthens the fight for all of us. And when we stand together—Black, Native, Latino, Asian—we make it harder for America to deny any of us the dignity we deserve.



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Community

Senator Natalie Murdock on Hip-Hop, Healing, and High-Stakes Legislating

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

In the world of North Carolina politics, Senator Natalie Murdock is proving that authenticity is the ultimate political currency. As the first Black woman under 40 to serve in our state Senate, Murdock isn't just filing bills; she's building a brand rooted in the culture and the real-life struggles of her constituents. During a recent conversation, Murdock drew a thoughtful parallel between the halls of power and the entertainment industry. "Politics and the music industry have a lot of similarities," she noted. When asked what she would title her political discography, her answers sounded like chart-toppers: Freshman Album: Coming in Hot, Sophomore Album: We Back Y'all, and the Third Installment: Here to Stay!

"You are a brand," Senator Murdock explained. "In this social media era, you are a product that people either buy into or they don't. I look at my presentation as the 'full pack-

age,' marketing the values, the bills, and the logo to show people what you stand for."

One of Murdock's most headline-grabbing moves was the "North Carolina Raise Up" bill. Inspired by an episode of *Unsung* and a deep love for hip-hop during the 50th Anniversary year, the bill sought to make Petey Pablo's "Raise Up" the official state hip-hop song. But for Murdock, it was about more than a catchy hook. The bill included "whereas" clauses honoring North Carolina legends like J. Cole, Rapsody, and Little Brother. "I wanted to show the people who honestly couldn't care less about what we're doing in the General Assembly to say, 'Wait a minute, somebody in Raleigh gets it. They see me.'"

Beyond the culture, Murdock is tackling systemic inequities with surgical precision. She has been a fierce champion for the CROWN Act, aiming to end hair discrimination, and has secured \$5,000 grants for menstrual products in public schools—a program so vital that the funds were



depleted within a single week.

Perhaps her most emotional work lies in the Black Maternal Health Mommibus. With Black women 3 to 4 times more likely to die from childbirth-related causes than white women, Murdock refuses to let these

statistics remain numbers on a page. When asked about how emotional it can be to hear these stories from constituents, Senator Murdock suggested, "I think you should be emotional," Murdock said, reflecting on the heart-wrenching stories of near-death experiences and miscarriages shared by her constituents. "Instead of allowing that emotion to control you, you allow it to move you. You channel it into motivation."

Whether she's working with Senator Lisa Grafstein to streamline DMV renewals so working people don't get "swept up in the legal system" or fighting for environmental justice, Murdock's philosophy remains consistent: Visibility. "My philosophy is about seeing people and lifting them up," she concluded. "Whether it's the CROWN Act or renewing licenses, it's worth putting the bills out there to drive the conversation." With her "sophomore album" in full swing, Natalie Murdock is making it clear: she isn't just occupying a seat; she's changing the frequency of North Carolina politics.



DURHAM BETA PHI CHAPTER CELEBRATES EXCELLENCE DURING ACHIEVEMENT WEEK

On Sunday, November 9, 2025, the Durham Beta Phi Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity hosted its annual Achievement Week Program, honoring the accomplishments of chapter brothers and distinguished community leaders. The program, one of the fraternity's nationally mandated observances, highlighted service, leadership, and dedication to uplifting the Durham community.

Those recognized during the ceremony included Brother Antonio Jones, Chapter Basileus; Brother Jerry Fulmer, accepting the Star Studded Award on behalf of Brother Louis Threatt; Brother Gene Lofton and Brother Hank Speller, recipients of the Basileus Award; and Brother D. Curtis Lawson, honored with the Superior Service Award. Additional honorees included Ms. Camille Johnson, recipient of the High School Essay Award; Brother Jim Harper III, presented with the Founders Lifetime Achievement Award; Brother Kumani Simmons, named Omega Man of the Year; Brother Thomas Taylor, recipient of the Star Studded Award; and Mr. Claiborne "Tre" Tapp III, honored as Citizen of the Year. Bryan Patton, 1st Vice Basileus of the chapter, also joined in the celebration.

The Achievement Week Program was held at St. Joseph AME Church and served as a powerful reminder of Omega Psi Phi's enduring commitment to scholarship, service, and community leadership.

Justice Projects Hit By EPA Cuts—CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

trees in High Point.

But those plans, such as removing lead pipes from local schools, took a detour when the EPA canceled their grant May 2.

A few months earlier, Southwest Renewal did receive more than \$77,000 from the EPA; however, Darr said very little of the money was used towards their project since it was split amongst the organization and eight of its community partners.

"If you just divide it equally, plus us, you are a product that people either buy into or they don't. I look at my presentation as the 'full pack-

age,' marketing the values, the bills, and the logo to show people what you stand for."

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celed.

The Whittingtons are the founders of Democracy Green, a Fuquay-Varina-based grassroots organization committed to seeking environmental justice for marginalized communities.

La'Meshia says she and her mother joined the environmental justice movement after witnessing Hurricane Katrina devastate Black and Brown communities in 2005.

"We know that our communities have been historically under invested, having lack of government response, undercounted in the census, so much disenfranchisement, so all this intersection, we knew that it was only a matter of time before we saw this worsen for communities like ours," La'Meshia said.

When Hurricane Florence hit North Carolina in 2018, La'Meshia said their work intensified. "Those community members that we had been in relationship with, the youth that we were doing programs with their families, they actually began to call us on like Facebook, like the Facebook Messenger, call us, and they were like, hey, we actually need your help to evacuate," she said.

After Florence, Democracy Green continued to expand their operations to community education workshops, statewide tours and more.

In 2022, they launched Clean Water is Safe Water, a statewide program aimed at addressing water contamination in local drinking water.

"We go in, train people, test their

water sources, come back, teach them what their water tests state. And then we go into providing that mitigation, remediation service," she described.

The Whittingtons planned to use the now-canceled \$20 million grant to expand Clean Water is Safe Water programming to Brunswick County, a county known for its prevalent Gullah-Geechee culture and unincorporated communities.

As Afro-Indigenous women, serving overlooked communities like Brunswick County is very important to the Whittingtons.

Using the grant funds, Democracy Green arranged to remove lead pipes from 500 local homes and remediate water infrastructure systems. However, only the first phase of the project was completed.

"We were able to pull down close to \$30,000 to launch the very first community outreach," said La'Meshia.

After that initial fraction of the grant was disbursed in April, the grant was officially cancelled in May.

Despite the challenges, La'Meshia's mother Sanja said Democracy Green is still running its program across the state while also taking legal action against the EPA among others.

"We're going to fight this. We're going to hold on," said Sanja.

MDC Inc and North Carolina Hispanic Federation - Durham, NC

While they said they can't comment on any pending litigation, another organization in the Triangle may be looking at a similar fight after its \$3 million EPA grant was also

canceled.

MDC Inc, a Durham-based non-profit aimed at advancing economic and environmental equity, has spent months partnering with the local Hispanic Federation to boost Latino participation in Eastern North Carolina's environmental politics.

The Hispanic Federation's North Carolina director Lariza Garzón said this initiative combats years of exclusion.

"Historically, Latino communities have not been sitting on the table with decision makers when it comes to environmental issues," Garzón said.

The \$3 million EPA grant was supposed to help fund a project that the two organizations hope will solve this issue.

"The idea really for this project was that we didn't want leaders and non-profits who are Latino-led to continue to work in silos. We wanted to make sure that we could create a bridge between them and local and state government," Garzón said.

Before the grant was cancelled, the organizations received more than \$366,000 to begin programming in April. However, only one community event was held before the grant was ultimately terminated in May.

Mrs. Ella Wilder Perry Dies

Mrs. Ella Wilder Perry, 96, departed this earthly existence on Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025, and she left a legacy of community caring. She was a force behind the Panther Branch Rosenwald School. When she reminisced about elementary, she thought of a framed one-story, weatherboard building in Garner. But she also thought of a time when African American children were dependent on the strength, vitality and sacrifice of their community, and an unprecedented atmosphere of interracial collaboration for their schooling.

In 1911, philanthropist Julius Rosenwald met black educator Booker T. Washington, the son of slaves and founder of the Tuskegee Institute. Up to this point, other philanthropists and religious denominations had successfully launched upper-level training grounds, include Shaw and St. Augustine's Universities in Raleigh, NC, but one void remained: the education of young black children. Washington asked Rosenwald to help him improve their opportunities. By 1915, the year Washington died, 80 schools across three states had been built.

Mrs. Perry constantly reminded us of that history, as well as being a reliable member of her present day community, when it came to advancing the concept of it takes a village to rear a child. See Ms. Perry's full obituary in your next edition of this newspaper, and you can watch a video interview that The Carolinian Legacy Project did with Mrs. Perry on our website at www.CARO.news in the video section.

Sports



SHAW DOMINATES VU-LYNCHBURG IN 120-72 NONCONFERENCE WIN

The Shaw Bears men's basketball put on an offensive showcase on December 18, 2025, cruising to a decisive 120-72 victory over the Virginia University of Lynchburg Dragons in a nonconference matchup in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Shaw set the tone early, controlling the pace and capitalizing on fast

breaks and sharp ball movement throughout the first half. Dreveon Scott (No. 2) helped lead the charge, confidently handling the ball and creating opportunities against VU-Lynchburg's defense, including Jacob Newman (No. 1).

Tamari Rowland (No. 10) was a constant offensive threat, attacking

the lane and knocking down shots while facing pressure from defenders Filaun Paythress (No. 15) and Derek Todd Jr. (No. 22). Devin Sims (No. 20) also made his presence felt, rising for key shots over Ernest Brima (No. 32) as Shaw continued to extend its lead.

By halftime, Shaw had built a

commanding advantage and never looked back, maintaining intensity on both ends of the court to secure the lopsided win. The performance highlighted Shaw's depth, scoring balance, and defensive pressure as the team continues its nonconference schedule with momentum. (Photos by Steve Worthy.)

Debnam Clinic

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(919) 832-1667



Dr. Marie Debnam, MD is an Internist in Raleigh. Dr. Debnam specializes in Internal Medicine, and has 34 years of experience. Dr. Debnam graduated from Meharry Medical College and is affiliated with Wake Med Hospital.



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Church

All You Need To Know About The Evolution Of Christmas

AP NEWS – Christmas is a Christian holiday that observes the birth of Jesus. But did you know that the earliest followers of Jesus did not annually commemorate his birth? Or that Santa Claus is inspired by the acts of kindness of a fourth-century Christian saint? And have you heard about the modern-day Japanese tradition of eating Kentucky Fried Chicken on Christmas?

Since the early 20th century, Christmas has evolved from a religious holiday to a hugely popular cultural holiday observed by Christian and secular people across the globe who gather with families, exchange gifts and cards and decorate Christmas trees.

Here's a look at the history, beliefs and the evolution of Christmas:

Origins and early history of Christmas

Early followers of Jesus did not annually commemorate his birth but instead focused on commemorating their belief in his resurrection at Easter.

The story of the birth of Jesus appears only in two of the four Gospels of the New Testament: Matthew and Luke. They provide different details, though both say Jesus was born in Bethlehem.

The exact day, month and even year of Jesus's birth are unknown,

said Christine Shepardson, a professor at the University of Tennessee who studies early Christianity.

The tradition of celebrating Jesus' birth on Dec. 25, she said, only emerged in the fourth century.

"It's hard to overemphasize how important the fourth century is for constructing Christianity as we experience it in our world today," Shepardson said. It was then, under Emperor Constantine, that Christians began the practice of gathering at churches instead of meeting at homes.

Some theories say the date coincides with existing pagan winter solstice festivals, including the Roman celebration of Sol Invictus, or the "Unconquered Sun," on Dec 25.

While most Christians celebrate Christmas on Dec. 25, some Eastern Orthodox traditions celebrate the holy day on Jan. 7. That's because they follow the ancient Julian calendar, which runs 13 days behind the Gregorian calendar, used by Catholic and Protestant churches as well as by much of the secular world.

Rowdy medieval celebrations For centuries, especially during the Middle Ages, Christmas was associated with rowdy street celebrations of feasting and drinking, and for many Christians, it "was not in good standing as a holiday," said Thomas

Ruys Smith, a professor of American literature and culture at the University of East Anglia in England.

"Puritans," he said, "were not fond of Christmas."

But in the 19th century, he said, Christmas became "respectable" with "the domestic celebration that we understand today — one centered around the home, the family, children, gift-giving."

The roots of modern-day Christmas can be traced back to Germany. In the late 19th century, there are accounts of Christmas trees and gift-giving that, according to Smith, later spread to Britain and America, helping to revitalize Christmas on both sides of the Atlantic.

Christmas became further popularized with the publication of "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens in 1843, and the writings of Washington Irving, who was a fan of St. Nicholas and helped popularize the celebration of Christmas in America.

The first Rockefeller Center Christmas tree was put up by workers in 1931 to raise spirits during the Great Depression. The tradition stuck as the first tree-lighting ceremony was held in 1933 and remains one of New York City's most popular holiday attractions.



Practical Biblical Principles

CHRISTMAS MEANS DECLARING VICTORY

Read: Psalm 121:1-8

By: John L. Caldwell, Pastor

New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

When God said that we can speak life or death with our tongue, many Christians fail to truly understand the power, gift, and spiritual authority He is giving us. All of this is the result of the birth of Jesus. One of the most powerful gifts given to man is the gift of "declaring."

When the scriptures stated that when Jesus ascended into heaven, He gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8). Here "men" means men and women. The same meaning as in Genesis 1:26; Whereas the word "them" means male and female. In short, the spiritual power Jesus gave was for the man and woman alike.

We as God's children must take control over our spiritual and physical environment. Least the Christmas Advent would be for naught and will have no real meaning in our personal lives. The birth of Jesus gives spiritual power to those who have accepted Him as Lord and Savior. This includes repenting of all past sins. In doing so God will have a clean vessel to work with.

Not only must we look at ourselves, but we must also look in and around our homes. Ourselves and our homes are our environment spoken of earlier. Our bodies and our homes must always honor and host our God and Savior. Now this calls for spiritual discernment and not ignorance. Discernment is the presence of the Holy Spirit. Question: Do you have a sacred, quiet place in our home? A place that you guard with spiritual sanctity- meaning a place you can go to and be in peace so that you are able to talk with God. The point here is that the child of God must and should have another personal and private sanctuary in their pocket in addition to the church they go to.

God wants access to everyday in the week and not just on Sundays. Not having our own private sanctuary is a part of the missing puzzle which does not give God access to us when He needs it. What the child of God must understand is that God often wishes to contact us first, as opposed to us only contacting Him in time of trouble or crisis. God doesn't necessarily want

to wait until Sundays to contact His children. It is our responsibility to have a private sanctuary for Him to visit us when He wishes to give us a spiritual download and blessing. Like a soldier will not go to war without armament or protection, neither should the child of God go into the world without declaring His presence and promises for our daily lives. Peter declared his faith in Christ when he stepped out of that boat into the raging sea. As long as Peter held to his declaration, he was safe. Yet Jesus was always with him.

It is the work of the devil to create lots of spiritual decay (evil) at Christmas time. We must be careful not to be a part of it. We must not become numb at the sound of God's voice (word). Contrary to popular belief, like good parents, God wants to speak to His children everyday and not just on Sundays. God wishes to speak with us personally at Christmas.

When God spoke to Moses and told him to take off his shoes because he was on holy ground, God was telling Moses he had a special place to meet with God. Moses's shoes represented unholy places they've trod, which were not holy.

God is telling us there are things that should not be in our personal sanctuary that are not holy because such represent other places or things that are not holy. In the Temple of God there are no unholy or outside worldly things found there. For other reasons than experiencing sound sleep, behavioral scientist highly recommends that iPhones and televisions be kept out of the bedroom.

In a silent way, these two items have serious, psychological health implications for the individuals in that room. Yet, at the same time they bring unholy world events into the sanctuary, if you have declared the bedroom your spiritual sanctuary. From a spiritual point of view, this is how the devil slips into your sanctuary brings trouble in your sleep and body- restlessness, and tiredness upon waking up. Your sleep is cut short no matter how long you stay in bed. This is but one of many examples of how we open the door for the enemy to come into our spiritual lives. One of the gifts brought to us at Christ's birth is peace. Question - do you have everyday peace?

Back to the question as to how do we

start protecting ourselves and homes with the gift Christmas brings us? God tells us, "There is death and life in the power of the tongue and those who love it will eat its fruit" (Proverbs 18:21). This means that our words and beliefs must match the words and promises of God. No where in God's words does he express or speak doubt and fear. In simple terms, we as children of God must seek, knock and open our life's desires without fear or doubt. This we do by getting in the habit of "declaring" and calling out what God has promised us. We must declare and confess with our mouths and hearts that our past life is no longer a part of our daily thoughts and future. We must learn to declare without doubt or fear that our physical healing comes from the stripes (whipping) our Lord received in our place-declaring - "By His stripes I am healed." We must declare that we will not seek any unforgiveness on anybody.

We must declare that the door on which I am knocking (praying) will soon be open to me and my blessed future is on its way. We must declare with our mouths all of God's promises to us that we wish to obtain. Otherwise, we speak death into our lives instead of life. What we believe is what we will receive. We must "declare" God's promises and not our worries. This is how we clean house, so to speak, when we speak and declare God's promises for us.

Our prayers are the garments of the Spirit, and spiritually we appear in white robes before God when we pray. Just think of the joy one can have with God in one's own personal sanctuary. When Adam and Eve walked with God in the Garden they were in their own personal sanctuary. When Moses stepped out of his shoes onto holy ground, he was in his personal sanctuary with God.

When Jesus tells us to declare that mountain (troubles, trials) to be removed and it will be removed because Jesus says so. This is speaking life and not death to your faith. believe and declare God's promises for you and the devil can have no place to hide in your life. This is the gift of Christmas which the Christ child brings to us - letting our belief match those of God's promises. We must declare our beliefs with God's Words.

America's secular Santa is inspired by a Christian saint

St. Nicholas was a fourth-century Christian bishop from the Mediterranean port city of Myra (in modern-day Turkey). His acts of generosity inspired the secular Santa Claus legend.

The legends surrounding jolly old St. Nicholas — celebrated annually on Dec. 6 — go way beyond delivering candy and toys to children. He is believed to have interceded on behalf of wrongly condemned prisoners and miraculously saved sailors from storms.

Devotion to St. Nicholas spread during the Middle Ages across Europe and he became a favorite subject for medieval artists and liturgical plays. He is the patron saint of sailors and children, as well as of Greece, Russia and New York.

Devotion to St. Nicholas seems to have faded after the 16th century Protestant Reformation, except in the Netherlands, where his legend remained as Sinterklaas. In the 17th century, Dutch Protestants who settled in New York brought the Sinterklaas tradition with them.

Eventually, St. Nicholas morphed into the secular Santa Claus.

It's not just Santa who delivers the gifts

In the U.K., it's Father Christmas; in Greece and Cyprus, St. Basil (who arrives on New Year's Eve). In some parts of Italy, it's St. Lucy (earlier in December) and in other Italian regions, Befana, a witch-like figure, who brings presents on the Epiphany on Jan. 6.

Instead of a friendly Santa Claus, children in Iceland enjoy favors from 13 mischievous troll brothers, called

the Yule Lads. They come down from their mountain cave 13 days before Christmas, according to folklore.

Christian traditions of Christmas One of the oldest traditions around Christmas is bringing greenery — holly, ivy or evergreen trees — into homes. But determining whether it's a Christian tradition is harder. "For many people, the evergreen can symbolize Christ's promise of eternal life and his return from death," Smith said. "So, you can interpret that evergreen tradition within the Christian concept."

The decorating of evergreen trees is a German custom that began in the 16th century, said Maria Kennedy, a professor at Rutgers University—New Brunswick's Department of American Studies. It was later popularized in England and America.

SERMON of the WEEK

Christmas Service and Community Collaboration Bring Joy to Lincoln Park On Sunday

Lincoln Park Holiness Church embraced the true spirit of Christmas by replacing its regular worship service with a special Christmas program centered on celebrating Jesus Christ as the greatest gift of all. Under the leadership of Pastor William Eli Ratcliff, the sanctuary was filled with joy, creativity, and heartfelt expressions of faith as children and youth led much of the morning's presentation.

The program, titled "Jesus Is the Greatest Gift," featured scripture readings, musical selections, dramatic presentations, and festive performances by various children's groups and choirs. From classic Christmas songs to creative storytelling, the service highlighted the birth of Christ while giving young participants an opportunity to share their talents and faith with the congregation.

Following the morning program, the church family gathered for a Secret Santa gift exchange, creating a warm atmosphere of fellowship and generosity. Laughter, smiles, and gratitude filled the space as members shared gifts and extended love to one another in celebration of the season.

The spirit of giving continued into the afternoon as Lincoln Park Holiness Church partnered with Pastor Shirley Caesar and Mt. Calvary Holy Church on Sanderford Road for a community outreach initiative. Together, the churches provided food to families in need and Mt. Calvary gave out toys all way around from the floor to the pulpit, extending Christmas cheer beyond the church walls and into the surrounding community.

As part of this outreach, 33 food boxes were delivered to elderly residents in the community, ensuring they were remembered and cared for during the holiday season. The out-

reach concluded with Pastor Caesar offering a special blessing over the children, leaving a lasting impression of love, unity, and faith.

This collaborative Christmas effort reflected the power of churches

working together to serve both congregation and community, reminding all involved that the true meaning of Christmas is found in giving, compassion, and shared hope.

By: Peggy Tattum





N.C.'s Twice-Weekly African American Newspaper

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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.



"...HE IS A REWARDER OF THOSE WHO DILIGENTLY SEEK HIM." - HEBREWS 11:6



Veteran Affairs Don't Care

By Rodney Ross

Over the past 3 days my shoulder began to increase in pain and stiffness. I eventually lost the ability to move my arm in any direction. The pain became so extreme, I could not sleep, and at its worst, I could not sit down and I stood for over three hours that night because the pain was at its most bearable standing.

I was in New Orleans for the holiday and discussed with my wife that, upon returning to North Carolina, I would stop at the Veterans Affairs hospital in Salisbury, North Carolina. I did not want to go another day with my shoulder feeling the way it did. I was concerned that the surgery I had over ten years ago became undone because the pain I experienced felt like the pain I had prior to surgery.

When my plane taxied to the C gate at Charlotte Douglas airport, my mind was laser focused on just breathing through the pain. I wanted to deplane as fast as possible, get to our car and start making our way to Salisbury. When I went to the receiving area, the receptionist who processed me seemed to be highly agitated and was abrupt and borderline rude. When she asked me for my name, before I could complete the request, "last for your social" was barked out, and before I could complete that "date of birth" and before I finished the year, "do you have a picture id". It was very rushed and I was made to feel like I interrupted her conversation with her peers and my presence was an inconvenient formality. As soon as she received what she needed from me, she immediately returned back to her dialogue with her peers.

The triage nurse was incredibly pleasant and nice. She took my weight, temperature, blood pressure and asked me what brought me to the E.R. I explained that on a scale of 1-10 I was at a 10 for pain associated with limited motion in my shoulder and the pain radiated down my arm into my wrist. Once that was done we went to the room where I would wait to see a doctor and she brought me a warmed blanket.

It wasn't long before the doctor came into my waiting area. His tone and demeanor was not kind, and he seemed a bit impatient and in the same kind of way as the woman who processed me at the receptionist desk. I heard the nurse explain to him what my issue was and my pain level. As soon as he came into my waiting area he did not introduce himself and abruptly asked "Why are you here?" he said to me. He never gave me a name, nor was he wearing a name tag. The doctor was Asian but I do not know if he was Chinese, or Japanese. I initially took his abrasive candor as culturally different. But the more he spoke to me, his dismissiveness and attitude towards me made me feel like he was not there to help.

He grabbed my arm and pulled it, and I immediately jerked it away and screamed in pain. He asked me to show him where the pain was, and I showed him the four areas of concern and explained the pain radiated all the way down into my wrist. The doctor confirmed the obvious by stating I have a problem with my rotator cuff. He then checked my breathing. I volunteered that I had a labrum repair 10 years prior, which he could have seen in my medical record - which anyone in the V.A. healthcare system can see. I remained poised and courteous despite his disposition.

The doctor then tells me he is going to give me a shot in my shoulder and send me home with steroids. If I had to guess prednisone. He said he was going to do blood work first to check for liver function before giving me the shot and then exited my quarters before I had the chance to really process what just happened and what he said.

After taking a few moments to think I realized that he never set up a CAT scan, an X-Ray, or MRI. His aim was to shoot me up with something and give me some pills to self administer. This did not sit well. While brooding over this, a different nurse comes in and takes my blood. Initially he was as cold as the doctor but eventually warmed up as I encouraged conversation about my trip prior to coming to the V.A. hospital in Salisbury. It didn't take long to draw the blood and soon he was on his way.

I know running blood work can take a minute but he only took one very small sample to process. About 15 minutes had gone by and I became a bit anxious. I kept circling back to the idea that I am in a hospital that is skipping steps in my opinion. What if my anchors in my shoulder tore. What is going to be injected in my shoulder. What are the potential complications and side effects. Since the doctor was not in orthopedics, why did he tell me I needed to move my shoulder in a rotating manner. If I have a tear, would it not be better to keep it stable?

20 minutes into my wait, I heard another patient come in. This time the doctor was much more pleasant, kind even. I even heard him mention that the man was going to get an X-RAY. This made me feel like there was a bias in how I was being treated. I sought confirmation. When the doctor left that patient, he walked past my area and I called out to him. I asked him "what do I need to do to get an xray". He told me that my issue wasn't an emergency - although I am in an emergency room because I was up literally all night because my shoulder hurt so bad it hurt breath.

He then tells me I need to get in contact with my primary care provider, set up an appointment and then they would have to refer me to ortho, while I am sitting right here in an emergency room. I guess I have to re-educate myself on what facilitates an emergency. If I were at home, and I contacted the triage nurse through the hotline, they would have told me to go to the ER of my local hospital. I know this because this is what was done before. Typically when going to a hospital, they will run whatever tests they think are necessary. The first step is either a CT scan or X-Ray to make sure there are no breaks in the bone. Those scans do not show muscle tears. If the pain is extreme and coupled with limited range of motion, it is not out of the scope of escalating to an MRI. Yet, in this Veterans Affairs emergency room, I was told to go home after getting a shot and then follow up with my primary care team. To make matters worse, he was unaware that I never had the shot because he said "since you had the shot, I will put in the order for the steroid medicine to take home."

In other words, he did not even bother with checking my liver function from the bloodwork he said he needed, and already assumed that the nurse gave me the shot and was ready to write a prescription to the pharmacy for me to pick up and take home. I said nothing more. I simply put my shirt and shoes on and left.

My time was wasted. I could have just continued taking the acetaminophen and it would be the same result. I would have no clue as to what is going on with my shoulder. Something would have been given to barely take the edge off the pain, and I would still have to wait and go through the convoluted process of making an appointment, weeks out from when I'm suffering, for someone to tell me they are going to make an appointment for me to see ortho, who is going to take an XRAY when I'm complaining about a potential tear, and eventually get an MRI that will more than likely need a 2nd opinion before anything can be done. And in the meantime, they will recommend rehab of some sort.

None of that helps me today. But the old white man who came in after me is getting an xray.



A Different Voice
By Dorothy Shaw Thompson



IT'S CHRISTMAS

I do not know about you, but I love this season. I love the way some people seem happier and kinder. I love the Christmas pageants, the music, and the joy with which people celebrate. I love the looks of anticipation on the faces of little children when they see the lights. I especially love the lights and decorations. But it came to me this morning that we might be doing this all wrong.

Last night, I attended the White Christmas program at my church, and it was delightful. It was a clear and meaningful Christmas journey starring the children's church, with Ken Walker as Christmas and Rufus Palmer as Manny, and Joy, as Paul Laurence Dunbar wrote in his poem. No, I am not going to tell you everything about it. You should have been there to see it for yourself. I do not know if that play prompted my thoughts this morning, but I am going to share what I was inspired to write for the morning inspiration I send out every day to more than fifty family members and friends. If it did inspire me, thank you to Karen Gaines and Jado Williams, the directors. Here it is:

"Good Monday morning. This is Christmas week. Mary and Joseph took a slow trip into Bethlehem and found the perfect place to stay when there were no rooms left at the inn. Their visitors came simply to see them and to spread the good news. Those who brought gifts left only three gifts for the baby's journey, and they did not share where they were going in order to discourage uninvited guests. The host did not feed the guests, nor did the guests expect to be fed, because they were there to celebrate a baby, God's gift to the world. There was no decorated tree, only one shining light, and no one tried to outshine the welcome. No big meal was cooked and there were no dishes to wash. Nobody complained about what they did not get or what someone else received. It makes me wonder what we are really celebrating this week. Maybe we should take a clue from the story and appreciate God's gift differently. Be blessed as you remember the real story this week, not just the traditions. Take it easy. Do not overdo it. Do not shop where you could not be hired. Do not strive for perfection. Remember the real perfection of the One we are celebrating and follow Him." All of my messages usually include pictures to illustrate the meaning.

There is so much more to consider in the Christmas nativity story. Since this was written as a short message, I cannot include every thought that came to mind. And since I do not know what tomorrow will bring, I did not choose to say "to be continued." I am fascinated by the fact that God sent angels, non-earthly beings, to alert His children about what was coming, some visibly and audibly, others in dreams. Today, if someone suddenly appeared in front of us, most of us would probably run away in fear. Mary felt fear, but she stayed, answered, questioned, and did not seem to think the experience was out of the ordinary.

She was only thirteen, what we would now consider a child, and she was pregnant. Joseph also doubted his dream before he believed. And you know the community raised their eyebrows, just as we do today. A teenage girl and an older man, and everyone already had expectations about what the man was supposed to do. God had prepared His people for the spiritual. Has He prepared us, or do we still struggle to believe that God is the true creator of the babies He sends into our lives? What a lesson we could learn if we truly accepted this story. The baby in the

womb of an unmarried girl was not a scandal, but a miracle.

I also believe there is a lesson in the part of the story where there was no room at the inn. Could God have been telling us something by choosing a stable? Could He be saying that when we take up space in expensive hospital rooms that the poor and unhoused cannot afford because they lack health insurance, He will still provide a place for them? And that we are not to judge a baby born in a housing project or a tent as being any less valuable than one born in comfort?

Look at who was invited to see the baby. They were not the people we would put on an exclusive guest list. They were likely smelly, unclean shepherds who came not in fine clothes, but straight from the fields. They left their flocks unattended to find this child. Perhaps they believed that if God cared enough to invite them, He would take care of their sheep. They left because they were obedient.

And then there were the wise men who studied the stars, not as astronomers, but as astrologers, comparing prophecies to events in the sky. Because of certain interpretations, astrology has been equated with sin, yet these men were called wise. They studied through a political climate and understood that this brown baby boy was on a list to be killed. They brought gifts with deep meaning, gifts most of us do not have or even want, knowledge of the past and insight into the future. They were commissioned, invited, and tasked with protecting that baby and foiling the plans of powerful leaders.

So whose rules do we choose to follow? And there is more. Look at where the baby was sent for safety. He was sent to Egypt, where he could blend in. You could not hide blue eyes and blond hair in an African country, so what does that tell us? Why then do some preachers today speak against organizations whose origins trace back to Egypt or Greek mythology? Why are these people not considered Christian enough, yet allegiance to a flag is somehow placed above faith?

The nativity story holds far more depth than we often allow ourselves to see. It is worthy of thoughtful and prayerful consideration. Christmas, to me, is not something to be taken lightly. There is so much to understand in what God does and how He does it.



"I'm pretty sure I told you the brakes would be touchy when you left."

Classifieds

CHATHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E000643-180

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 26th day of November 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DONNA LEE MCCORKLE, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 4th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 4th day of December, 2025.

Molly Jo Swann, Executor

c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr.

4 Consultant Pl.

Durham, NC 27707

12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate of MARY DOLAN O'DONNELL, File No.: 25E001434-310, deceased, of Durham County, NC, are notified to present the same to the personal representative listed below on or before March 25, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. All debtors of the said estate are asked to make immediate payment.

This 25th day of December, 2025.

Brendan Hugh O'Donnell, Executor
c/o Moeller & Smith, PA

607 Broad St.

New Bern, NC 28560

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

File 25E001257-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against WILLIAM LEONARD BUTTERFIELD, deceased, of Durham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 26th, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This, the 25th day of December, 2025.

Loree K Miller, Executor

c/o Beth W. Bowen

Bowen Law Firm PC

590 New Waverly Pl., Ste 120

Cary, NC 27518

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Estate Of Arthur William Egan, Jr.
Aka Arthur William Egan

File No. 25E001509-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 16th day of December, 2025, as Co-Executors of the ESTATE of ARTHUR WILLIAM EGAN, JR., also known as ARTHUR WILLIAM EGAN, Deceased, do hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before March 26th, 2026, 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 December, 2025.

Courtney Jayne Egan, Co-Executor

Brittany Yvette Egan, Co-Executor

ESTATE OF ARTHUR WILLIAM EGAN, JR.

AKA ARTHUR WILLIAM EGAN

c/o Jennifer Dalman, Attorney

Walker Lambe, PLLC

240 Leigh Farm Road, Suite 100

Durham, North Carolina 27707

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001464-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 15th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DEWEY J. CUNNINGHAM, late of Durham

County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 25th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 25th day of December, 2025.

Rhonda S. Cohen, Executor

c/o David A. Burns, Esq.

Wyrick Robbins Yates & Ponton, LLP

4101 Lake Boone Trail, Ste. 300

Raleigh, NC 27607

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001760-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 15th day of August 2024, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of RICHARD DORSEY, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 25th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 25th day of December, 2025.

Vanessa Dorsey, Administrator

8 Mirando Place

Durham, NC 27707

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

File Number 25E001348-310

The undersigned having qualified as Executor of the Estate of JAMES SLADE CRUMPTON, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned at the office of IDOL LAW, PLLC, PO Box 51759, Durham, North Carolina 27717, on or before the 30th day of March, 2026, or this Notice will be in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment.

This is the 25th day of December, 2025.

James Slade Crumpton, Jr.,
Catherine Crumpton, Co-Executors
Estate of James Slade Crumpton,
Deceased

Robert A. Idol, Esquire

IDOL LAW, PLLC

Attorney at Law

PO Box 51759

Durham, NC 27717

(919)401.5151

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 16th day of December 2025, as Executor of the ESTATE OF BARBARA JEAN GOODWIN aka BARBARA JEAN GOODWIN-BRODAS, 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 March 2026 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 December, 2025.

Mitchell S. Heard, Executor

Estate Of Barbara Jean Goodwin

aka Barbara Jean Goodwin-Brodas

c/o Rupe S. Gill, Attorney

Walker Lambe, PLLC

Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717

12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF

PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

File No.: 25CV001360-310

(Divorce Proceedings)

Rukayat Sealy, Plaintiff VS. Joseph

Sealy, Defendant

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief sought is an absolute divorce.

You are required to make defense to this pleading no later than forty (40) days from the first publication of this notice by filing a response with the Clerk of Superior Court of Durham County, North Carolina.

Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking relief will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This the 25th day of December, 2025.

Rukayat Sealy, Plaintiff

2317 Fitzgerald Avenue

Durham, NC 27707

12/25/2025, 1/1, and 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

File Number 25E001254-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against GORDON ROBERT PERRY, DECEASED, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 18, 2026, or this notice along with the appropriate general statute will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the deceased are asked to make immediate payment. This the 18th day of December, 2025. All correspondence should be to the Estate of Gordon Robert Perry, c/o Florence A. Bowns, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001530-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 9th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GORDON SPENCER MYERS, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Barbara A. Horvitz, Executor

1541 Catch Fly Lane

Durham, NC 27713

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001466-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 18th day of November 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of RONNIE LLOYD HOLDEN, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Kristen Aiken, Executor

2421 Orange Factory Rd.

Bahama, NC 27503

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001427-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 8th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of ALLAN KEITH MORELOCK, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Gena Netten, Executor

c/o Marion Law Office, PLLC

2741 University Drive

Durham, NC 27707

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001380-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 12th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DAVID ANDREW

ROBERTSON, SR., A/K/A DAVID ROBERTSON, SR., A/K/A DAVID A. ROBERTSON, SR., A/K/A DAVID ANDREW ROBERTSON, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Ronald Wayne Robertson, Executor

c/o B. Bailey Lipfert, III

Allman Spry Leggett Crumpler & Horn P.A.

380 Knollwood Street, Suite 700

Winston-Salem, NC 27103

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF BEATRICE A. CLEMENTS

FILE NO. 25E001359-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against Beatrice A. Clements, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 20th, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 18th day of December, 2025.

Cynthia W. Barrows, Executrix

c/o W.G. Alexander & Associates, PLLC

3717 Benson Dr.

Raleigh, NC 27609

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001468-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 18th day of November 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BARBARA JEAN WALKER, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Amy R. Walker, Executor

4144 Crown Oaks Drive

Oxford, NC 27565

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001479-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 16th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CHARLIE THOMAS GARRETT, SR., late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.

This, the 18th day of December, 2025.

Charlie Thomas Garrett, Jr.,

Executor, c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr.,

4 Consultant Pl., Durham, NC 27707

12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA

DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk

File Number 25E001459-310

DURHAM COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E000862-310
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of July, 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DOROTHY LUCILLE ROYCROFT 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 4th day of March, 2026 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 December, 2025.
 Joseph Harold Roycroft, Jr., Executor, c/o Richard F. Prentiss, Jr., 4 Consultant Pl., Durham, NC 27707.
 12/4, 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025

FORSYTH COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 FORSYTH COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E002798-330
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 9th day of December 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ARENETTIA HICKS, late of Forsyth County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
 This, the 18th day of December, 2025.
 Torey Hicks, Administrator
 5112 Tall Tree Dr.
 Winston-Salem, NC 27105
 12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

GUILFORD COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 GUILFORD COUNTY
NOTICE OF EXECUTOR TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS
 File Number 25E002642-400
 Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of PAUL DEAN KNIGHT, deceased, Guilford County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. This the 18th day of December, 2025.
 Derek D. Knight, Executor
 2300 Bayleaf Ct.
 Greensboro, NC 27455
 12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

JOHNSTON COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 JOHNSTON COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E001468-500
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 3rd day of December 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ASHLEY DALLAS MENGES, late of Johnston County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.
 All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
 This, the 18th day of December, 2025.
 Christina Menges, Administrator
 c/o Ethan C. Timmins
 Patrick Law, PLLC
 3805 University Drive, Suite A
 Durham, NC 27707
 12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

ONSLOW COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 ONSLOW COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E003532-660
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 17th day of July 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of QUENTIN LEE ALDERMAN, late of Onslow County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.
 All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
 This, the 18th day of December, 2025.
 Quentin Lee Alderman II, Executor
 110 Magnolia Drive
 Hubert, NC 28539
 12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026

VANCE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 VANCE COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 File Number 25E000398-900
 ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against ANNIE M. JONES, deceased, of Prince Georges County, MD, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before March 4, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This December 11, 2025.
 Arnice Jones, Administrator
 c/o Browning Law Firm, PA
 120 E. Main Street
 Durham, NC 27701
 December 11, 18, 25, and 1/1/2026

WAKE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E003790-910
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 12th day of December 2025, as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JOAN TECKLA

NIELSEN a/k/a JOANNE TECKLA AMTOFT-NIELSEN a/k/a JOAN MANZOLILLO NIELSEN, late of Wake County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 25th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.
 All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
 This, the 25th day of December, 2025.
 Anja Wynns, Executor
 218 Rosebrooks Drive
 Cary NC 27513
 12/25/2025, 1/1, 1/8, and 1/15/2026
 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
 In the General Court of Justice,
 Superior Court Division
 Before the Clerk
 File Number 25E004295-910
 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 5th day of December 2025, as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of LINDA RYAN A/K/A LINDA ANN RYAN, late of Wake County, North Carolina, hereby wish to notify all persons having claims against the Estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned at the below listed address on or before the 18th day of March, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned at the below listed address.
 This, the 18th day of December, 2025.
 Ryan Keith Pruzinsky, Administrator
 413 Lindsays Run
 Rolesville, NC 27571
 12/18, 12/25/2025, 1/1 & 1/8/2026
 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. 25CV043269-910
 CAPITAL CITY CAR CARE LLC, Plaintiff VS. UNKNOWN VIN: 1G1BL52P2TR160297, 1996 CHEVROLET, 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 1996 CHEVROLET, ID No. 1G1BL52P2TR160297 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on January 26, 2026 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd

Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:00 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.
 This the 11th day of December, 2025.
 Capital City Car Care LLC, Plaintiff
 1819 POOLE ROAD
 Raleigh, NC 27610
 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
 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. 25CV041587-910
 CAROLINA AUTO BODY, Plaintiff VS. UNKNOWN VIN: 1FDKF38FXRNB29280, 1994 FORD, 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 1994 FORD, ID No. 1FDKF38FXRNB29280 and that the petitioner shall have the right to sell to the highest bidder the motor vehicle listed on January 26, 2026 at WCCH, 316 Fayetteville St., 3rd Floor, Raleigh, NC 27601, at 1:00 p.m. You are required to make a defense to such pleading before such date and time.
 This the 11th day of December, 2025.
 Carolina Auto Body, Plaintiff
 468 Old Wilson Road
 Wendell, NC 275
 c/o PO Box 46882
 Raleigh, NC 27620
 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025
 STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
 WAKE COUNTY
NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
 In the General Court of Justice
 District Court Division
 File No. 25CV019735-910
 To: BRYANT KEITH RICHARDSON, Defendant.
 Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is for divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than January 12, 2025 said date being at least thirty (30) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, ASHLEY WRIGHT-RICHARDSON, will apply to the court located at 316 Fayetteville St, Raleigh NC 27601 for the relief sought.
 This, the 11th day of December, 2025.
 Ashley Wright-Richardson, Plaintiff
 8210 McGuire Drive
 Raleigh, NC 27616
 12/11, 12/18, and 12/25/2025

FORECLOSURE

NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY
SECOND NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
 Special Proceedings No. 24SP002173-310
 Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in that certain deed of trust executed by DANIEL A. MCADOO JR. dated June 7, 2018 to JOSEPH P. CLARK, Trustee for TRULIANT FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, recorded in Book 8440, Page 840, DURHAM County Registry; default having been made in payment of the indebtedness thereby secured; and the necessary findings to permit foreclosure having been made by the Clerk of Superior Court of DURHAM County, North Carolina; the undersigned Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash, the property conveyed in said deed of trust, the same lying and being in the County of DURHAM and State of North Carolina, and more particularly described as follows:
 Beginning at a stake on the West side of Booker Avenue South 9 degrees 20' East 375 feet from the South of Stuart Drive, at the southeast corner of Lot #5 Block C, as shown on the plat hereinafter referred to and running thence North 80 degrees 40' West 150 feet to a stake; thence South 9 degrees 20' West 75 feet to a stake, thence South 80 degrees 40' East 150 feet to a stake on the West side of Booker Avenue, thence along and with the West side of Booker Avenue North 9 degrees 20' East 75 feet to a stake, the point of the beginning and being Lot #6 in the Block C of Forest Wood Park as per plat and survey thereof now on file in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County in Plat Book 35 Page 82 to which reference is hereby made for a more particular description of same.
 Property commonly known as: 4016 Booker Avenue, Durham, NC 27713.
PROPERTY ADDRESS/ LOCATION: 4016 Booker Avenue, Durham NC 27713;
DATE OF SALE: January 6, 2026;
TIME OF SALE: 10:30 A.M.;
LOCATION OF SALE: DURHAM County Courthouse;
RECORD OWNER(S): Daniel A. McAdoo, Jr.
TERMS OF THE SALE:
 1. This sale will be made subject to: (a) all prior liens, encumbrances, easements, right-of-ways, restrictive covenants or other restrictions of record affecting the property; (b) property taxes and assessments for the year in which the sale occurs, as well as any prior years; (c) federal tax liens with respect to which proper notice was not given to the Internal Revenue Service; (d) federal tax liens to which proper notice was given to the Internal Revenue Service and to which the right of redemption applies; and (e) the right of payoff or reinstatement of the loan as permitted by law.
 2. The property is being sold "as is". Neither the beneficiary of the deed of trust, nor the undersigned Substitute Trustee, makes any warranties or representations concerning the property, including but not limited to, the physical or environmental condition of the property. Further, the undersigned Substitute Trustee makes no title warranties with respect to the title to the property.
 3. The highest bidder will be responsible for the payment of revenue stamps payable to the Register of Deeds and any final court and/or auditing fees payable to the Clerk of Superior Court which are assessed on the high bid resulting from this foreclosure sale.
 4. At the time of the sale, the highest bidder will be required to make a cash deposit of five percent (5%) of the bid, or \$750.00, whichever is greater, with the remaining balance of the bid amount to be paid on the day following the expiration of the applicable ten (10) day upset bid period.
 5. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may after receiving this Notice of Foreclosure Sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but no more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in this Notice of Foreclosure Sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.
 6. An order for possession of the property being sold may be issued pursuant to N.C.G.S. §45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession, by the Clerk of Superior Court of the county in which the property is sold.
 7. If the sale is set aside for any reason, or if the Trustee is unable to convey title to the property being foreclosed for any reason, the purchaser at the sale shall be entitled only to return of the deposit paid. The purchaser shall have no further recourse against the Mortgagor, the Mortgagee, the Mortgagee's attorney, or the Substitute Trustee.
 Date: November 5, 2025.
 SMITH DEBNAM NARRON DRAKE SAINTSING & MYERS, L.L.P.
 Jeff D. Rogers, Substitute Trustee
 PO Box 176010
 Raleigh, NC 27619-6010
 (919) 250-2000
 Fax: (919) 250-2211
 12/25/2025 & 1/1/2026

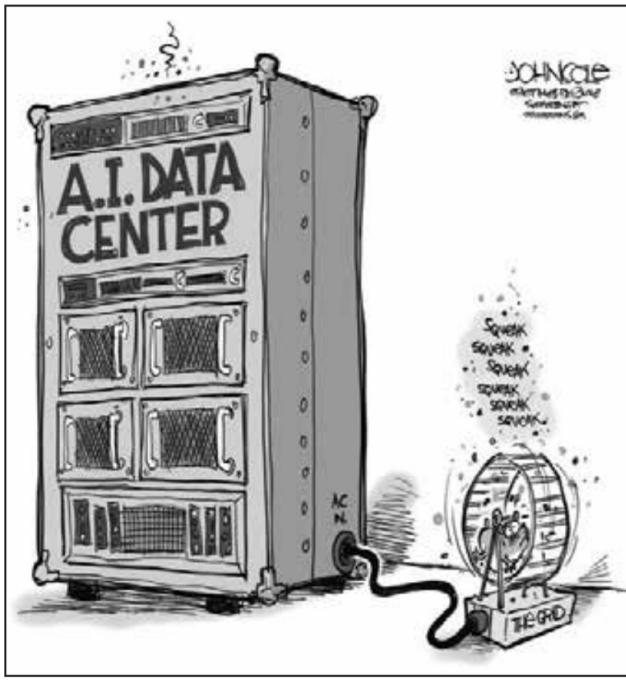
Google To Buy Intersect Power For \$4.75 Billion



Google is set to acquire Intersect Power, a US-based data center and energy infrastructure developer, for \$4.75 billion.
 The deal will see the hyperscaler's parent company Alphabet purchase Intersect's entire portfolio of in-development and under-construction assets, which comprise several gigawatts of energy and data center projects.
 "Intersect will help us expand capacity, operate more nimbly in building new power generation in lockstep with new data center load, and reimagine energy solutions to drive US innovation and leadership. We look forward to welcoming Sheldon and the Intersect team," said Sundar Pichai, CEO of Google and Alphabet.
 Intersect will remain a separate entity from Alphabet and Google. Its existing operating assets in Texas, and its operating and in-develop-

ment assets in California, will not be part of the acquisition. The assets will instead operate as an independent entity.
 Following the deal, it has been reported that Intersect will explore a range of emerging technologies to increase and diversify its energy supply. Intersect CEO Sheldon Kimber will continue to head the company. The company will, in turn, partner with Google's technical infrastructure team to continue work on in-development and new joint projects. This includes the previously announced collocated data center project and energy site currently under construction in Haskell County, Texas.
 "Intersect has always been focused on bringing innovation to the industry, and we look forward to accelerating at scale as part of Google," said Sheldon Kimber, founder and CEO, Intersect. "Modern infrastructure

is the linchpin of American competitiveness in AI. We share Google's conviction that energy innovation and community investment are the pillars of what must come next."
 Intersect Power is a US-based clean energy company with a portfolio of 2.2GW of operating solar PV and 2.4GWh of battery storage in operation or construction – mostly in Texas and California. The company first partnered with Google last year to develop collocated renewable power and storage technologies with new data centers across the US.
 As part of the original deal, Intersect agreed to construct clean energy assets with Google as the oftaker via new data center campuses and as an anchor tenant in collocated industrial parks. Google plans to deliver gigawatts of new data center capacity across the US as part of the partnership.



ATTENTION:
 Beginning on January 1, 2026 the Classified Advertising Rate will increase \$2 per column inch



Happy Holidays From The Burroughs Family!

Around The World In Holiday Celebrations

The holiday season manifests magic in myriad ways around the world with traditions based on foods, drinks, and sweets. Festive lights and decorations bring each flavorful experience to life at these feasts for the senses.

In the United States, vacation destinations decorate with tree displays and gingerbread mansions, serving fireside s'mores and festive cocktails for every winter holiday of the season. Wineries host dinners with pairings, vineyard lights, and artisan markets. In New York City and beyond, delis, diners, fast-casual joints, and fine-dining restaurants fry up latkes for Hanuk-

kah.

In France, the Réveillon feast celebrates fine foods and traditions from around the country: pain d'épices from Burgundy, seafood from Normandy, Christmas market cookies in Alsace, and 13 desserts from Provence.

And sugar reigns supreme. Sweet holiday traditions span Bûche de Noël in France, Buñuelos in Mexico City, Christmas cakes and puddings in England, and Pavlova in Australia and New Zealand. Marzipan brings good luck in multiple countries and forms, perhaps shaped like an eel in Spain or a pig in Scandina-

via.

England's destination bakeries make malt loaves, winter citrus bakes, and classic tearoom specialties. Portugal celebrates with Sonhos fritters, Bolo Rei and Bolo Rainha, the gelatinous dessert Pudim, and the sugar-dusted cake Queijadas da Vila Franca. In India, traditional sweets showcase local and seasonal produce, from crunchy rose cookies and syrup-kissed kulkuls to Goan classics like bebinca, dodol, marzipan, and guava cheese.

At Istanbul's Christmas markets, Turkish people and visitors sip traditional winter drinks like hot salep and cold boza. Speaking of hot and cold, Australians

from Melbourne to Sydney celebrate the holidays with uniquely summer traditions: seafood platters, cherries on ice, and tropical pudding.

Of course the traditions continue with the new year. Korea's crunchy, chewy, syrup-soaked world of hangwa is a storied example. From yakgwa to dasik, traditional confections are a timeless part of Korean Lunar New Year.

Whether you're embarking on holiday travel or celebrating at home, seek out these festive foods and drinks for authentic experiences and gifts to make the holidays that much sweeter.

Christmas Is

Christmas is remembering
The best about the ones
We love...and those we wish to love.
Christmas is the summoning up of
All the little good feelings associated
With happy times...
And then enjoying them.
Christmas is the strength to do
All the good things we promise to do all year
And to promise once again to do them
All year long.
Christmas is being as thankful
For what you have been spared
As for what you have been given.
Christmas is to express gratitude publicly
But also in the heart.
Where it cannot be abused
Christmas is to shed heavenly tears of concern
Being therein perfect
Even as your Father in Heaven is perfect
Christmas is to view those less fortunate
With understanding eyes and hurting hearts
Christmas is private acts of kindness
Shared on with your God.
Christmas is to sense the power of blood.
Blood given and blood shed
Christmas is the live Birth of Hope
The evidence of things scarcely seen.
Christmas is Jesus
And Jesus is the Christ
Christmas is to come
To know him
Know Jesus Christ

Stu Daugherty 2015

OVERDOSES CRISIS

Continued from page 1

uted to increased mortality in this group from drug overdose, suicide, and alcohol-related liver disease—what came to be called “deaths of despair.” However, economic disadvantage has long been the reality for minoritized groups whose higher risks of addiction and its consequences were invisible or ignored. Until 2001, deaths from overdose among Black people were consistently much higher than in white people, yet in that era, the drug problem in Black communities was framed as a problem of crime and deviance, not legitimized through a lens like despair. Overdose rates among Black people again surpassed those for white people in 2020.

The tragic situation the New York Times highlighted in Baltimore appears to be a nationwide problem, and it is clearly a complex one with many intersecting factors at play. Research alone cannot solve it, but it is necessary to understand why the current dangerous illicit drug supply is disproportionately affecting this population. Is there more to it than the additive risk factors of being male, Black, and older? We also need to understand how the increased burden of potentially co-occurring health conditions, including pain, may affect overdose risk in this group, as well as how their opioid use may intersect with other substance use. Answering these questions can guide the development and implementation of prevention, treatment, and harm-reduction strategies tailored for these communities.

Historically, prevention research has mainly focused on children, adolescents, and young adults, but along with the rise in opioid-related overdoses in older individuals in most racial and ethnic groups, increased use of other drugs like cannabis in older adults highlights the need for different kinds of interventions. This could include interventions to prevent opioid misuse or the transition from use to misuse specifically in older adults taking opioids for chronic pain. It might also include public-health interventions aimed at addressing social isolation and loneliness in older people, which could have benefits for a wide range of physical and mental health outcomes beyond substance use and its consequences.

Understanding structural factors affecting the health of underserved groups, both in the healthcare system and communities, is a primary objective of research that NIDA is funding as part of its Racial Equity Initiative. This research can help illuminate barriers to accessing substance use services in Black communities and inform the development of approaches to overcome them.

NIDA's Intramural Research Program (IRP), which is located in Baltimore, is already leading several outreach and community-based research initiatives aimed at both better understanding and preventing fatal overdose in the city. For example, along with the Maryland Center for Health Equity at the University of Maryland School of Public Health, NIDA's IRP is partnering with community barbershops to offer overdose education and naloxone distribution in settings frequented and trusted by Black clients. Analysis of hair samples swept from the floors of these barbershops is being used to monitor the levels of fentanyl in these Baltimore neighborhoods in a completely anonymous manner—a novel approach that could inform how interventions are targeted in these communities.

Ending the overdose epidemic, especially for the hardest-hit groups like older Black men, will not be easy. It will require coordinated work involving health service providers, community coalitions, policy makers, and—critically—people with lived and living experience of substance use. Researchers, too, will be essential, both for developing new and improved interventions and demonstrating how they can be effectively deployed so that they reach the people who need them.

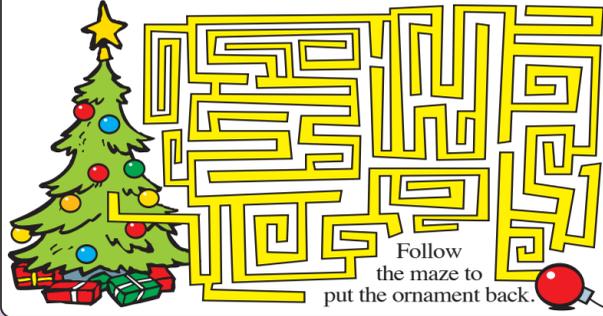
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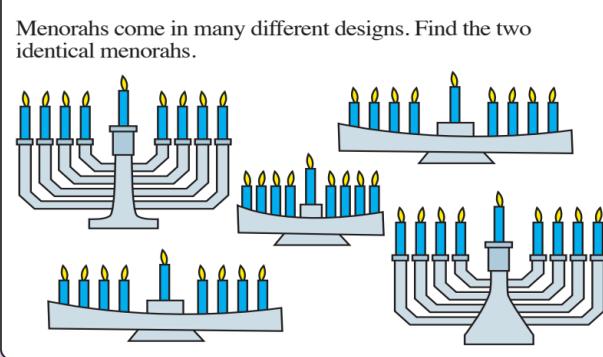
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HOLIDAY HIGH-RISE

APT. 15C: THE ANDERSONS
The Anderson family celebrates the birth of Jesus on Christmas. They give each other gifts, sing songs and decorate their home with a Christmas tree and colorful lights.

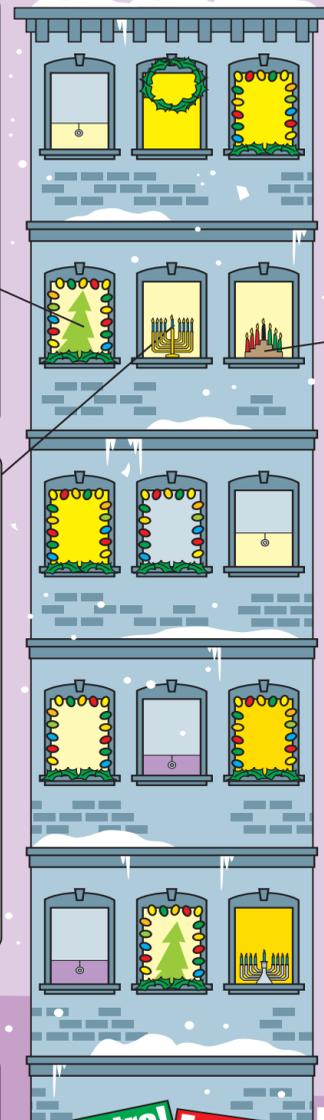


APT. 15B: THE WALDS
The Wald family celebrates Hannukah, a Jewish festival of light. They light a candle on a menorah each night for eight nights. They exchange small gifts each evening, sing songs and eat delicious foods. They display their menorah in their window.



People from different cultures have a wide variety of winter celebrations, many more than can fit on this page. How does your family celebrate in December? Draw it here.

Standards Link: Social Studies: Students know how traditions and celebrations of other cultures compare.



Welcome to Holiday Towers, an apartment building in the big city. Take a look at how the celebrations of these neighbors are alike and different.

APT. 15A: THE MILLERS
The Miller family celebrates Kwanzaa, a week-long celebration honoring African culture.

They light red, green and black candles in a kinara and have a feast at the end of Kwanzaa. They also give each other small gifts.



Mrs. Miller wears a kaftan. Hold this page up to a mirror to find out what this is.

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List three ways these celebrations are alike.

- _____
- _____
- _____

Extra! Extra! Holiday Dot-to-Dot

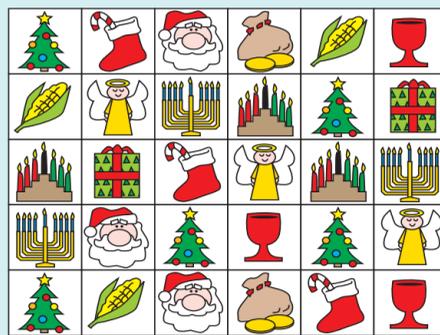
Find the letters that spell each of the following words on one page of the newspaper. Use different color crayons to connect the letters in order to spell each word.

**CANDLES
FEAST
LIGHTS
FAMILY
CELEBRATE**

Standards Link: Spelling: Spell grade-level appropriate words correctly.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Can you find these four squares in this order on the larger grid?

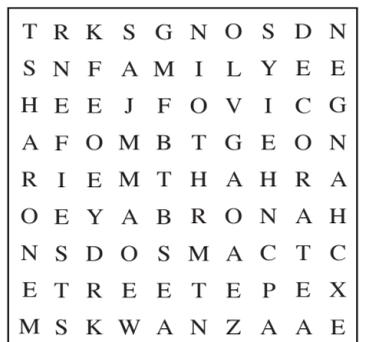


Standards Link: Investigation: Find identical patterns.

Double Double Word Search

NEIGHBORS
APARTMENT
DECORATE
MENORAHS
KWANZAA
KAFTAN
SYMBOLS
EXCHANGE
FEAST
SONGS
TREE
HOME
FAMILY
GIVE
RED

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



Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

FROM THE Kid Scoop LESSON LIBRARY

Holiday Images

Look through the newspaper for words or pictures related to the holidays. Cut and paste these onto a sheet of construction paper to make a collage poster.

Standards Link: Visual Arts: Use a variety of media to convey meaning.

What does a snowman eat for breakfast?

ANSWER: Frosted flakes. (Joke by Kid Scoop reader, Rayne.)