



African American Cultural Celebration Marks 25 Years



The 2026 CIAA Tourney Is In The Books, But Ohh What A Ride!

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Algorithms That Customize Marketing To Your Phone Could Also Influence Your Views On Warfare, Politics

The Conversation—When a coupon suddenly appears on your phone as you approach a store, you might find it convenient and even helpful. But the same AI systems that know where you are and try to influence your purchases can be used to infer what you fear, what you trust and which stories you are likely to

believe. AI-fueled marketing algorithms are becoming increasingly good at influencing human behavior.

That raises concern about what various governments might do with these tools to influence citizens' views about warfare. A clear-eyed look at how administrations are exploiting these systems may help

people and their nations navigate an uncertain future.

The rise of AI-mediated influence has raised questions about the erosion of people's capacity to exercise free will and, by extension, society's ability to distinguish a just war from an unjust war.

AI-powered marketing

The integration of AI with location-based services is pushing the marketing frontier. Location-based services use geographic data from indoor sensors, cellphone towers and satellites to promote goods and services that are tailored to your location, a capability called geofencing.

When marketing firms couple massive amounts of data about individuals' behaviors — including information that people voluntarily or unknowingly share through mobile device applications — the firms can group, or segment, potential customers based on what they like, what they do and what they say.

Once an AI-powered marketing system knows where a user is and can make an informed guess about that person's likes and dislikes, it can design targeted coupons and advertisements to influence the behavior of each person in a group, and possibly the group as a whole. This combination of AI with geofencing and segmentation makes hyperpersonalized marketing content possible at an unprecedented scale.

Real-time propaganda

What might this advance have to do with warfare? The use of psychology to win battles or obviate the need for war is as old as armed conflict itself. Sun Tzu, the Chinese military general and philosopher who died in 496 B.C., wrote: "Therefore the skillful leader subdues the enemy's troops without any fighting; he captures their cities without laying siege to them; he overthrows their kingdom without lengthy operations in the field."

From Sun Tzu's era until today, skilled practitioners of military strategy have sought to reduce the risk in fighting through reflexive control: getting opponents to willingly perform actions that are best for the strategist's empire or nation.

Today's strategists increasingly rely on paid social media advertisements, influencers, AI-generated

content and even fake social media accounts to sway popular opinion toward their goals. This power, and controversy surrounding it, has been implicated in recent national elections, domestic unrest and negotiations to end the conflict in Ukraine.

Unlike propaganda during the Cold War between the U.S. and the Soviet Union, modern influencers don't rely on a single message broadcast to the masses. Strategists test and deploy thousands of narrative variations simultaneously, monitor how different groups respond and refine their approach in near-real time. The purveyors don't need to convince everyone. They just need to nudge enough people at the right moment to change election outcomes, pressure domestic policies or

(See **ALGORITHMS**, P. 9)



Civil Rights TV Launches In Selma As The World's First 24/7 Station

SELMA, Ala. — Civil Rights TV, the world's first 24-hour television network dedicated exclusively to civil rights history, education, and future equity, has officially launched on the Connect To Your City OTT platform powered by Connect2OTT.

The network debuts from Selma, Alabama — one of the most historically significant cities in the American civil rights movement — marking a new chapter in how civil rights stories are preserved, amplified, and carried forward for future generations.

Civil Rights TV operates continuously on the Connect To Your City OTT platform powered by Connect2OTT, offering documentaries, news analysis, live discussions, educational programming, global civil rights coverage, and cultural storytelling. The channel functions as both a historical archive and a living platform addressing contemporary civil rights challenges.

Civil Rights, Technology, and the



AI Era

As technology and artificial intelligence increasingly shape access to information, media, and opportunity, Civil Rights TV launches at a moment when access to digital infrastructure itself is emerging as a civil rights issue.

Media fragmentation, misinformation, and uneven access to technology continue to reshape public dis-

course. While on-demand platforms have expanded individual content access, large-scale live broadcasting still faces challenges related to congestion, latency, and energy consumption.

Civil Rights TV leverages broadcast-efficient OTT architecture designed to reduce bandwidth usage and energy requirements, enabling continuous global distribution with-

out placing added strain on network infrastructure.

Why Civil Rights TV Matters Now Civil Rights TV is not only a media launch—it is a signal.

The network underscores the importance of preserving civil rights history using the most accurate and comprehensive sources available. For generations, the Black press has maintained some of the deepest and most reliable documentation of the civil rights movement, currents events, news and critical Black history, much of which remains underrepresented in modern digital media archives and inaccessible to artificial intelligence (AI) systems.

As a result, Civil Rights TV will rely heavily on national Black press for news, historical archives and independent voices. Prominent digital news platforms, podcasts, and broadcasters—will play an instrumental role in shaping continuous coverage, historical interpretation, and public discourse.

Foushee Narrowly Leads In NC-04 Democratic Primary; Recount Likely

The Democratic primary for North Carolina's 4th Congressional District is heading to a likely recount, with incumbent Valerie Foushee leading by one percentage point.

In unofficial results, Foushee won 49.22% of the vote, just 1.01% more than the 48.21% for Durham County Commissioner Nida Allam. Mary Patterson won 2.6%. Foushee leads Allam by 1,202 votes out of nearly 122,000 primary votes cast.

Provisional ballots and some military and overseas votes are yet to be counted. If the margin is 1% or less after those votes are counted, Allam may request a mandatory recount.

Allam took the stage at her watch party just before midnight, addressing supporters, staff and press after about five hours.

Though we go to bed tonight without the full results, we will keep exercising our right to dream, and we will bring home a victory for the working families of North Carolina



in the days ahead," Allam told supporters.

The race broke records for outside spending in a North Carolina congressional primary. Independent expenditure groups dropped nearly

\$4.5 million on advertising for the candidates as of Monday, beating the previous record set by the 2022 contest between Allam and Foushee.

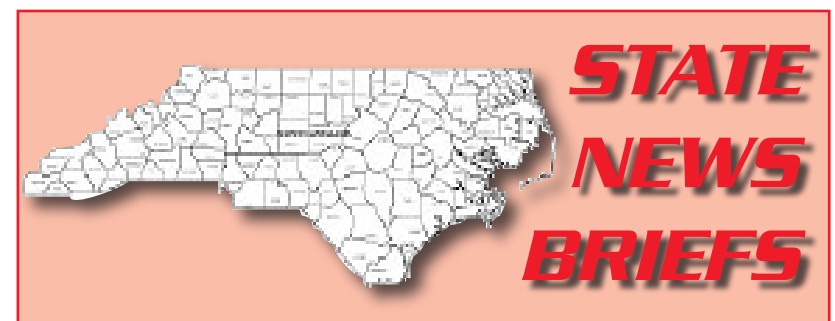
The primary was symbolic of the emerging battle between progres-

sive and establishment wings of the Democratic party. This divide deepened in the wake of the 2024 elections, where Democrats lost the White House and both chambers of Congress.

Foushee, having served in Congress for two terms, has the support of the traditional Democratic base, especially among Black voters. She's a fixture in Orange County politics and was previously a state representative and senator and the chairwoman of the Orange County Board of Commissioners.

Allam had the backing of progressives like independent Sen. Bernie Sanders from Vermont, who stumped for her as part of his Fighting Oligarchy Tour in Durham last month.

The Democratic nominee will face Republican Manesh Gunorkar and Libertarian Guy Meilleur on the ballot in November, but is expected to win easily in the reliably Democratic-leaning district.



NORTH CAROLINA LAUNCHES PROGRAM TO BOLSTER SOCIAL WORK WORKFORCE ACROSS THE STATE

NC NEWSLINE - After three years of planning, North Carolina officials on Monday launched the Public Service Leadership Program, a five-year effort to expand the state's social work workforce and address shortages in rural and underserved communities.

The new program, a partnership between the N.C. Dept. of Health and Human Services and a coalition of 25 universities and colleges across North Carolina, seeks to double the number of social workers serving the state's most vulnerable populations.

State officials and university leaders said the goal is to train and keep social workers in public service jobs.

By offering to pay off student loans in exchange for a three-year commitment to public service, officials hope to steer graduates away from the private sector and into the state hospitals, child welfare offices, and rural clinics where they are needed most. Currently, less than half of the state's social workers work in the public mental health system.

The launch coincides with the release of a new report showing major gaps in mental health care across the state. North Carolina has nearly 10,000 licensed clinical social workers, but most practice in urban areas. Urban counties have twice as many providers as rural ones, and three counties — Camden, Hyde and Tyrell— have no licensed clinical social workers at all.

"This work is about making sure no matter what county you're in, you have access to a provider," said Ramona Denby-Brinson, dean of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

Kelly Crosbie, director of the N.C. Division of Mental Health, Developmental

(See **INCREASE IN SOCIAL WORKERS** P. 2)

IF YOUR WATER TASTES WEIRD, IT MIGHT JUST BE A SPRING CLEAN

WUNC — Triangle residents may notice their tap water tastes and looks different over the next month. But this isn't anything new.

In fact, it's part of a routine annual water disinfection changeover, a process necessary for disinfecting the water distribution system.

Each year, public works systems across the country temporarily switch from chloramines, a mixture of chlorine and ammonia, to chlorine only for pipe disinfection. The water stays safe to drink throughout the month-long process.

Sometimes called a system burnout, the temporary treatment allows chlorine to reach all corners of the drinking water distribution system, said Katie Hall, Orange Water and Sewer Authority's (OWASA) Public Information Officer, in a statement.

This keeps the distribution system and pipes in "top shape" for high-quality drinking water, Hall said.

Some customers might notice slight changes in the way their water tastes and smells. Adding lemon slices to water, boiling water to remove chlorine and storing water in an open container to let the chlorine evaporate can help remove the chlorine taste, Hall said.

Dialysis patients and aquarium owners should continue to take special precautions to remove traces of ammonia and chlorine from their water before use, she said.

During the changeover, many utilities also flush hydrants to disperse the chlorine throughout the system. According to the City of Durham, people might see hydrant meters releasing water during this period.

Sometimes, this can stir up mineral deposits and can cause discolored water, Hall said. If customers experience discolored water, it's recommended to flush the cold water tap in a bathtub or shower for five to 10 minutes until the discoloration is clear.

The water disinfection changeover practice is recommended by the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality. It's done in coordination with neighboring utilities, Hall said. The dates for counties across the Triangle include:

- Wake County: Feb. 26 to April 2. Learn more here.
- Durham County: Feb. 27 to April 13. Learn more here.
- Orange County: March 1 to early April. Learn more here.
- Johnston County: Feb. 26 until around April 2. Learn more here.
- TriRiver Water Chatham County North District: Feb. 2 to March 2. Learn more here.
- TriRiver Water Pittsboro, Sanford, Siler City and Chatham County: March 1 to April 1. Learn more here.

You can read more frequently asked questions on OWASA's website. If you're a visual learner or want to explain the process to your kids, Raleigh Water also has an animated video guide published online.



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Business & Finance

North Carolina's Data Center Surge Is Sparking Debate Over Energy Costs

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Data centers have become the backbone of modern life. In North Carolina, that backbone is expanding at a historic pace by bringing billions in investment, thousands of construction jobs and a growing debate over energy, water and who pays the bill.

The warehouse-sized facilities that power cloud computing, artificial intelligence, streaming services and nearly every corner of the modern digital economy are expanding rapidly across North Carolina. Yet it remains surprisingly difficult to pin down exactly how many data centers there really are in the state. Depending on the source and how facilities are categorized, estimates range from roughly 40 major operating centers to 140 total facilities statewide.

North Carolina's data center footprint began in earnest in 2009 when Apple announced its campus in Catawba County. The company now operates eight hyperscale facilities there, spanning more than 500,000 square feet, including a recent \$175 million, 237,600-square-foot expansion. Meta established a multi-building campus in Rutherford County, while Google has invested more than \$1.2 billion in Caldwell County.

Amazon Web Services has announced projects across multiple counties too, including a \$10 billion investment in Richmond County. The largest operational data center currently in the state is the T-5 Data Center in Cleveland County, a facility that consumes roughly as much electricity as nearly every home in Durham County combined. Microsoft purchased a 1,385-acre megasite in Person County for \$26.85 million in 2024. In Edgecombe County, Energy Storage Solutions plans to



break ground in 2026 on a \$19.2 billion, 900-megawatt data center and energy storage campus in Tarboro's Kingsboro development, with a similarly scaled project planned in Fayetteville.

Several factors have made North Carolina particularly attractive to data center developers: strong grid coverage from Duke Energy, significant solar generation capacity, abundant large parcels of land at competitive prices, business-friendly tax incentives, and proximity to major East Coast routes. Nationally, Virginia remains the dominant data center market with more than 600 facilities concentrated in Northern Virginia's "Data Center Alley," the largest cluster in the world, while Texas and California follow behind.

The growth comes with significant energy implications. According to Duke Energy's 2025 load forecast, total demand across its two Carolina systems is projected to increase between 16% and nearly 60% through 2040. Future growth is expected to accelerate sharply, with data centers accounting for about 80% of Duke

Energy's projected demand growth, according to Gov. Josh Stein's North Carolina Energy Policy Task Force.

Between 2017 and 2024, the average residential electricity bill in North Carolina rose nearly 30%, with almost two-thirds of that increase driven by rising fuel costs tied largely to volatile natural gas prices. Utilities are projecting further increases by 2040, including proposed residential rate hikes of 16-18% over just the next two years.

In response to those concerns, Gov. Stein created the bipartisan Energy Policy Task Force in August 2025 through Executive Order 23. The 30-member panel, co-chaired by Department of Environmental Quality Secretary Reid Wilson and Rep. Kyle Hall, released an interim report recommending the development of large-load tariffs to ensure that major customers like data centers pay the majority of costs tied to their infrastructure needs. The task force also proposed "bring your own capacity" options that would allow large-load customers to procure or build their own energy resources,

encouraged load flexibility programs that would require data centers to reduce consumption during peak demand periods, and called for an assessment of the dollar value of existing tax exemptions for data centers. The task force will refine its recommendations over the next year before issuing a final report in February 2027.

Environmental advocates point to a Duke University study suggesting that the true cost impact may depend less on total electricity consumption and more on when that electricity is used. The study found that adopting "load flexibility"—shifting computing tasks to off-peak hours when unused grid capacity exists—could help the United States avoid up to \$150 billion in new power plant, fuel and transmission costs over the next decade.

Local governments are grappling with how to manage the boom. Chatham County leaders recently approved a one-year moratorium on new data center construction to reassess zoning and infrastructure impacts. In Apex, residents in the New Hill and Jordan Pointe communities have voiced opposition to a proposed 190-acre data center near old U.S. Highway 1.

At the same time, the construction surge is straining labor markets. Data center projects require mission-critical standards for redundancy, cooling, power and security, creating high demand for journeyman and master electricians, low-voltage and fiber technicians, HVAC and refrigeration specialists, pipefitters, ironworkers, concrete crews and experienced project managers. Contractors say finding qualified workers is becoming as challenging as securing materials, particularly in counties where hyperscale campuses overlap with advanced manufacturing projects.

Classifieds

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The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction has the following contract in Wake County out for bid: C- 11838 Central Prison Steam Leak Repairs . The bid opening is scheduled for: Thursday, 03/26/2026 . To obtain the Notice to Bidders, any Pre-Bid Requirements, and any Addenda visit: <https://evp.nc.gov/solicitations/details/?id=7db9b48e-3d13-f111-8406-001dd800b811>

REQUEST FOR BID

REHAB OF 545 E. EDENTON ST.

The City of Raleigh will accept sealed, written bids for the rehabilitation of the property located at 545 E. Edenton Street, Raleigh, NC 27601 until March 27, 2026, at 1:00 p.m. (EST). Bids can be submitted at the City of Raleigh's Housing and Community Development Department at 421 Fayetteville St, Suite 1200, Raleigh, NC 27601 at which time and place bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for the construction of the Rehab of 545 E. Edenton Street project.

A mandatory on-site pre-bid meeting will be held on March 10, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. [PD1] [PD2] [NB3] [NB4] (EST) at 545 E. Edenton Street, Raleigh, NC 27601. Information is also posted on the North Carolina Electronic Vendor Portal (eVP): <https://www.evp.nc.gov>. The City reserves the right to reject all bids.

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

T. A. Loving Company (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **Moyock Wastewater Treatment Plant Infiltration Basins** project for the Town of Moyock, Currituck County which bids on March 16, 2026, at 4:00 PM. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * NC Institute of Minority Economic Development (NCIMED) website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, hauling, earthwork, erosion control, seeding, dewatering, flatwork, CIPC, concrete forms, concrete rebar, and fencing. Please contact **Michael Cox (mcox@taloving.com)** if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-734-8400; fax: 919-736-2148; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. T. A. Loving Company is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

Please advise if assistance is needed with obtaining necessary equipment, supplies, materials, or insurance/bonding to satisfy the work requirements. We are willing to accept quotations for all or partial quantities and items of work. We can offer 2-party check payments and quick payment agreements, but the agreements need to be negotiated prior to the bid date.

D/M/WBE

SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

T. A. Loving Company (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the **Water System Improvements - Parts A, B, C, and D - Contracts 1 and 2** project for Gates County which bids on March 12, 2026, at 2:00 PM. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Patetown Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 * Gates County, County Manager's Office; 115 Court Street; Gatesville, NC 27938 * Green Engineering, PLLC; 303 Goldsboro Street, East; Wilson, NC 27893 * ConstructConnect website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, hauling, asphalt paving, striping, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, jack & bore, directional drilling, and flatwork. Please contact **Jeff Price (jprice@taloving.com)** if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-734-8400; fax: 919-736-2148; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. T. A. Loving Company is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer.

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100 Black Men of Coastal NC Mentors Youth On Life Lessons And Success

WILMINGTON, N.C. (WECT) — Leaders in the 100 Black Men of Coastal North Carolina are sharing the importance of its organization during Black History Month.

It is part of 100 Black Men of America, which the organization describes as the largest African American-led youth mentoring organization in the world, with more than 110 chapters worldwide.

The Coastal North Carolina chapter was founded in 2007 and serves youth across five counties in southeastern North Carolina, primarily in New Hanover County.

One of the founding members of this chapter says he hoped to fill a gap in male role models in the community.

"We saw a need, you know, with our youth, and especially the black male young students, we saw a great need in our community to have them to focus. And we thought we could bring some quality of life to them," John Battle said.

The chapter's two primary programs include a middle school mentoring program, in which members are assigned to local middle schools, and the Success Academy — a co-ed program for students from late middle school through high school that meets at the University of North Carolina Wilmington.

Battle and other members met with their mentees on Saturday morning on the college campus.

They went over dining etiquette, how to conduct themselves in business meetings, and hands-on financial literacy training focused on stock trading and investing.

Kevin Briggs, president of the lo-



cal chapter, said the organization's programming is built around four priorities: economic empowerment, mentoring, education and health and wellness.

"You know, I consider it an honor, and it's a great opportunity to really invest in young people, but also share what was shared with me along the way," Briggs said. "It's kind of paying it forward and giving back in a way that really helps to bring the value to our community overall."

Not only is this club a way for students to get ahead in life, but also to build a meaningful community with other like-minded students.

One mentee says he's grateful that he joined five years ago.

"Well, so first, I didn't want to

join this because I was scared. My mom made me do it, but once I, like, gotten into it, I was no more confident. I used to be antisocial, but I'm not anymore. I broke out of that," Amari Libingi said. "This group made me — I made new friends, made new people, met new opportunities, and this is just a great place to be at."

Libingi is a senior at Laney High School and plans to attend college.

"I had a really low [test] scores, but my score is higher now after I retook it. We worked on ACT and SATs. I got accepted into NC A&T and I'm going to be studying industrial engineering," Libingi said.

Briggs said he knew Libingi would do great things with his life.

"I think if you talk with his family,

they would definitely tell you that the 100 has had an impact on him. He's very much a model citizen as a young person. And I think we have done our part in showing him that, you know, life can be all that you want it to be," Briggs said.

Joseph Conway, who is on the board, says they make sure mentors show mentees through their own lives and actions how to be successful.

"The 100 Black Men, we actually have a trademark, and it's called, what they see is what they'll be. And no one else can use that. So it is paramount that our members, that anyone that we invite to be in front of our students, represents that. Something that they can achieve, something that they can overcome, something that they can see themselves fulfilling in the future."

Conway says the youth can have the future they dream of by following a few steps.

"One, remain malleable. Always have the ability to adapt and change. Two, don't believe everything that you see on social media. You define your destiny. You define the steps that you will take. You define your response to this tumultuous environment that we find ourselves in. And number three, Do what it takes to get there. Be settled in your heart and in your mind of what you want to achieve," Conway said. "And if I had to have a number four, avoid the distractions. It's okay to be distracted for the fun and just keep that youthful side of you. At the same time, when it comes to fulfilling your goal, be careful about the things that can derail you."

The Southern Black Girls And Women Org. Are Bending Philanthropy Toward Justice

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Since its founding in 2017, the Southern Black Girls and Women's Consortium has set out to do one thing: transform the philanthropic landscape for Black girls and women across the South.

In 2017, LaTosha Brown, co-founder of Black Voters Matter, encountered a report from the Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative showing that Black women and girls received less than one percent of the \$4.8 billion in philanthropic investments flowing into the South. Determined to change that narrative, Brown joined with Felicia Lucky of



the BlackBelt Community Foundation, Alice Jenkins of the Fund for Southern Communities and Margo Miller of the Appalachian Community Fund. Together, they formed Southern Black Girls and Women's Consortium as anchor institutions committed to centering Black girls and women in grantmaking.

To date, the consortium reports awarding more than \$11.4 million to over 250 Black women-led organizations and more than 800 girls across its 13-state footprint, including the organization's Youth Ambassadors program. The program engages young leaders as advocates, helping

(See *PHILANTHROPY*, P. 4)

Philanthropy Toward Justice — CONT. FROM PAGE 3

shape grant funding priorities and inform content for the annual Southern Black Girls conference. In January 2025, Youth Ambassadors from across the 13-state region gathered in Charlotte for a day of learning and collaboration.

“For more than twenty years, I’ve worked alongside communities and know first-hand that communities of color experience the disproportionate impacts from environmental pollution and climate change,” said Executive Director Chanceé Lundy. “Black women are often on the front lines advocating for justice and building innovative community based solutions with little to no resources.”

In 2022, the consortium partnered with Megan Thee Stallion’s Pete and Thomas Foundation to launch the “Joy Is Our Journey Dream Tour,” a monthlong bus tour that created space for Black girls to connect across the South. That same year, the organization hosted its inaugural Black Girls Dream Conference. The Southern Black Girls has since

expanded through partnerships with Comic Relief US and Jay-Z’s Roc Nation.

The organization recently launched its Environment and Climate Justice Fund, a new grant initiative supporting organizations that advocate for and build solutions around environmental and climate justice impacting Black girls, women and femme-identifying youth across 13 Southern states—including North Carolina. The fund awards grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$20,000 to underfunded organizations advancing environmental and climate justice.

“Even in difficult times, investing in organizations that center Black girls and women is an act of resistance, imagination, and faith in the future,” said Lundy.

Lundy has helped guide Southern Black Girls into a new era of growth and national recognition. In 2024, she was invited by the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá, Colombia, to engage with leaders and activists on shared challenges around climate change,

equity and economic empowerment. The Southern Black Girls’ climate fund opened during Black Climate Week 2026, a national campaign led by The Solutions Project and the NAACP that centers Black communities as hubs of climate innovation and justice.

“By centering joy as both resilience and resistance, Southern Black Girls is building a future in which our communities have the infrastructure, resources, and power to survive and thrive amid environmental pollution and climate change,” Lundy said.

Southern Black Girls also convenes a Wisdom Council to guide its focus on regional and statewide issues affecting Black girls and women. Through its Sage Circle, a monthly session for its network, partners lead conversations aimed at strengthening the broader community. Its Joy Network, hosted on the Mighty Networks platform, serves as a digital hub where Black girls and women across the South can share resources, collaborate and participate in virtual events.



In 2024, the organization launched its “Resistance and Resilience” grant through the Black Girls Defense Fund, offering \$2,000 mini-grants to support community-led efforts addressing adultification, dehumanization and violence impacting Black girls.

“There’s a particular kind of calm-

ness in the eye of the storm. There’s a particular kind of calmness when you center yourself back into your own body. I had to recenter myself and be grounded on who I am and what I believe. I believe that love will win,” Brown said. “The South is my home. I love the South. It’s beautiful.”

Through grantmaking, youth leadership development, national partnerships and now environmental and climate justice funding, Southern Black Girls and Women’s Consortium continues to reshape how philanthropy flows in the South by ensuring that Black girls and women are centered as architects of change.



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Health and Wellness

The History Of The Quigless Clinic-Hospital in Tarboro

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Dr. Milton Douglas Quigless Sr. created one of eastern North Carolina's most important Black-owned medical institutions.

Born on August 16, 1906, in Mississippi, Quigless graduated from Alcorn State College and later earned his medical degree from Meharry Medical College in Nashville. Before becoming a doctor, he briefly toured as a trombonist with the Rabbit's Foot Minstrels, first arriving in North Carolina in 1922 while promoting a show in Tarboro.

When Quigless moved to Tarboro in 1936, the town's only hospital was restricted to white patients, and local white physicians rarely treated Afri-

can Americans. The town's previous Black physician had died years earlier. Denied hospital privileges at the white-controlled Edgecombe Memorial Hospital because of segregationist policies, Quigless established his first medical office in an abandoned fish market.

For years, he treated patients in that modest space and in their homes, often improvising equipment while caring for tenant farmers living without electricity or adequate sanitation. Diseases such as typhoid, dysentery and tuberculosis were common, and surgery had to be performed under difficult conditions.

In 1946, after being turned down by several Tarboro banks, Quigless secured a \$37,000 loan from a bank in Rocky Mount and used his



life savings to convert the old fish market site into a two-story, 25-bed hospital and clinic just across the Tar River on the edge of Princeville. The Quigless Clinic-Hospital opened that December as the only hospital serving Black patients in Edgecombe and Nash counties. Furnished with World War II military surplus equipment, the facility included an operating room, inpatient beds and an in-house pharmacy where Quigless mixed his own medications.

"From the day I started, it was filled up," he later recalled, noting that many patients he once saw in rural homes had died before he was

able to build the hospital.

The clinic quickly developed a strong reputation. Quigless treated arthritis, asthma, allergies, skin diseases and fractures; he performed appendectomies and delivered babies. He was known for blending conventional treatments with remedies he had learned earlier in life, including herbal preparations, though his daughter later wrote that he disdained being labeled a folk healer. Despite occasional controversy over his unconventional approaches, his skill and outcomes earned respect.

By the 1950s, white patients began seeking care at the clinic as well. In

quiet defiance of Southern custom, Quigless operated his hospital with a single entrance and waiting room for all patients, Black and white.

Quigless was a charter member of the East Tarboro Citizens League. He mentored and recruited numerous Black physicians who later practiced across eastern and central North Carolina and served as an officer and president of the Old North State Medical Society, the statewide organization of Black doctors. After desegregation, he became the first Black physician to admit patients and perform surgery at the local county hospital in Tarboro.

By the mid-1970s, new state building code requirements forced Quigless to make a difficult decision. Rather than undertake expensive renovations, he closed the hospital in 1975 and joined the staff of the new Edgecombe County General Hospital, finally receiving full privileges decades after first being denied. He continued to see patients from his office in the old clinic building until shortly before his death from emphysema in 1997 at age 93.

Recognition followed in his later years and posthumously. In 1987, the Rocky Mount chapter of the NAACP named him "Man of the

Year" for distinguished service, and that same year Congressman John Lewis paid tribute to him on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. From 1996 to 2003, equipment from his operating room was displayed at the North Carolina Museum of History as part of the exhibit "Health and Healing Experiences in North Carolina". The Quigless Clinic building was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2000, and in 2004 he was posthumously inducted into the Twin County Hall of Fame honoring leaders from Edgecombe and Nash counties. His papers are preserved at East Carolina University's Laupus Health Sciences Library.

In later years, Quigless worked on a memoir, "Looking Back: The Way It Was," reflecting on his childhood in Mississippi, his brief time traveling with the Rabbit's Foot Minstrels and the racial climate that shaped his life. Portions of his recollections appeared in regional publications, including an excerpt discussing the impact of the 1917 screening of "The Birth of a Nation" on race relations in Port Gibson. Though publishing plans shifted over time, his autobiography was ultimately released in 2009 by one of his daughters.

What To Know Before Asking An AI Chatbot



WASHINGTON (AP) — With hundreds of millions of people turning to chatbots for advice, it was only a matter of time before tech companies began offering programs specifically designed to answer health questions.

In January, OpenAI introduced ChatGPT Health, a new version of its chatbot that the company says can analyze users' medical records, wellness apps and wearable device data to answer health and medical questions. Currently, there's a waiting list for the program. Anthropic, a rival AI company, offers similar features for some users of its Claude chatbot.

Both companies say their programs, known as large language models, aren't a substitute for professional care and shouldn't be used to diagnose medical conditions. Instead, they say the chatbots can summarize and explain complicated test results, help prepare for a doctor's visit or analyze important health trends buried in medical records and app metrics.

Here are some things to consider before talking to a chatbot about your health:

Chatbots can offer more personalized information than a Google search. Some doctors and researchers who have worked with ChatGPT Health and similar programs see them as an improvement over the status quo.

AI platforms are not perfect — they can sometimes hallucinate or provide bad advice — but the information they produce is more likely to be personalized and specific than what patients might find through a Google search.

"The alternative often is nothing, or the patient winging it," said Dr. Robert Wachter, a medical technology expert at University of California, San Francisco. "And so I think that if you use these tools responsibly, I think you can get useful information."

One advantage of the latest chatbots is that they answer users' questions with context from their medical history, including prescriptions, age and doctor's notes.

Even if you haven't given AI access to your medical information, Wachter and others recommend giving the chatbots as many details as possible to improve responses.

If you're having worrisome symptoms, skip AI. Wachter and others stress that there are situations when people should skip the chatbot and seek immediate medical attention. Symptoms such as shortness of breath, chest pain or a severe headache could signal a medical emergency.

Even during less urgent situations, patients and doctors should approach AI programs with "a degree of healthy skepticism," said Dr. Lloyd Minor of Stanford University.

"If you're talking about a major medical decision, or even a smaller decision about your health, you should never be relying just on what you're getting out of a large language model," said Minor, who is the dean of Stanford's medical school.

Consider your privacy before uploading any health data. Many benefits offered by AI bots stem from users sharing personal medical information. But it's important to understand that anything shared with an AI company isn't protected by the federal privacy law that normally governs sensitive medical information.

Commonly known as HIPAA, the law allows for fines and even prison time for doctors, hospitals, insurers or other health services that disclose medical records. But the law doesn't apply to companies that design chatbots.

"When someone is uploading their medical chart into a large language model, that is very different than handing it to a new doctor," said Minor. "Consumers need to understand that they're completely different privacy standards."

Both OpenAI and Anthropic say users' health information is kept separate from other types of data and is subject to additional privacy protections. The companies do not use health data to train their models. Users must opt in to share their information and can disconnect at any time.

Testing shows chatbots can stumble. Despite excitement surrounding AI, independent testing of the technology is in its infancy. Early studies suggest programs like ChatGPT can ace high-level medical exams but often stumble when interacting with humans.

A 1,300-participant study by Oxford University recently found that people using AI chatbots to research hypothetical health conditions didn't make better decisions than people using online searches or personal judgment.

AI chatbots presented with medical scenarios in a comprehensive, written form correctly identified the underlying condition 95% of the time.

"That was not the problem," said lead author Adam Mahdi of the Oxford Internet Institute. "The place where things fell apart was during the interaction with the real participants."

Mahdi and his team found several communication problems. People often didn't give the chatbots the necessary information to correctly identify the health issue. Conversely, the AI systems often responded with a combination of good and bad information, and users had trouble distinguishing between the two.

The study, conducted in 2024, did not use the latest chatbot versions, including new offerings like ChatGPT Health.

A second AI opinion can be helpful.

The ability for chatbots to ask follow-up questions and elicit key details from users is one area where Wachter sees room for improvement.

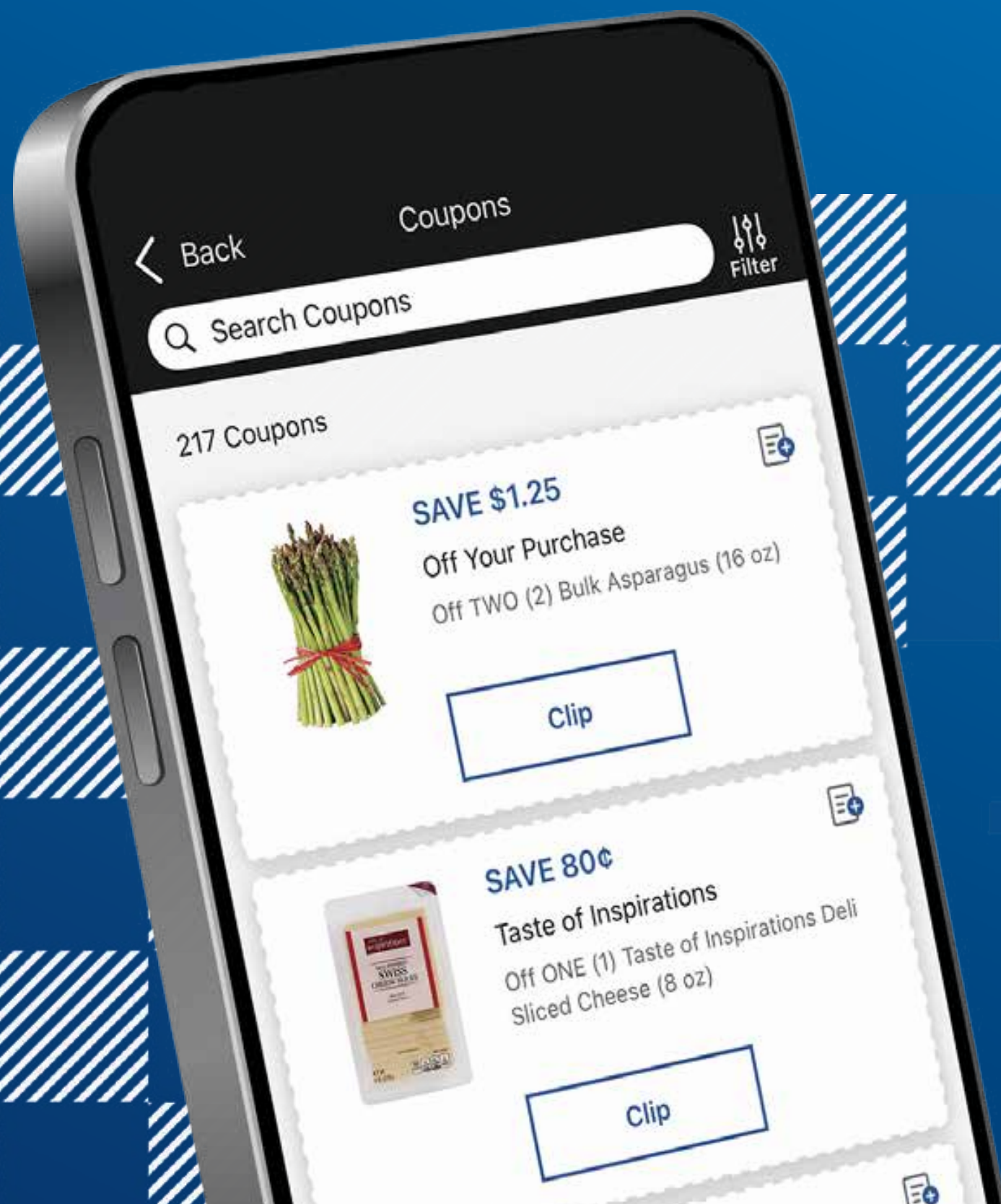
"I think that's when this will get really good, when the tools become a little bit more doctor-ish in the way they go back and forth" with patients, Wachter said.

For now, one way to feel more confident about the information you're getting is to consult multiple chatbots — similar to getting a second opinion from another doctor.

"I will sometimes put information into ChatGPT and information into Gemini," Wachter said, referencing Google's AI tool. "And when they both agree, I feel a little bit more secure that that's the right answer."

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Arts & Culture

Free Women of Color Take Center Stage in New NC Exhibit

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

A new exhibit from the state archives is shining a light on stories long left in the margins.

Through MosaicNC, an initiative of the North Carolina Office of Archives and History, the state is elevating the voices of free women of color who lived through and helped sustain the American Revolution. The exhibit, led by the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, centers on a collection titled North Carolina's Women of the Revolution: In Their Own Words, with a special focus on "Free Women of Color." Drawing from Revolutionary War pension applications, the project reveals the lived experiences of women whose contributions to the Patriot cause were historically overlooked.

Contrary to common assumptions about 18th-century North Carolina military policy, Patriot forces were integrated. White men and free men of color served alongside one another in the state militia and Continental Line with no distinction in pay or official status. Prior to the state's 1835 constitutional revision, all free adult men—regardless of race—were subject to the draft.

While George Washington was hesitant at the "Federal" (Continental) level, the North Carolina militia



operated under its own state laws. North Carolina had a relatively large population of Free People of Color, and because they were already "freemen" and taxpayers, North Carolina viewed them as part of the "body politic" obligated to defend the state—Unlike South Carolina or Georgia, which remained terrified of arming Black men until the very end.

Military payrolls and discharge papers rarely noted a soldier's race, underscoring what historians de-

scribe as a bureaucratically color-blind structure during the war. It is often only through later pension applications that researchers can identify a veteran as a man of color.

Behind these soldiers stood wives and families who sustained farms, protected children, and kept communities functioning amid wartime disruption. For free women of color, those responsibilities came with additional layers of vulnerability.

Nearly 250 years after the Revolution, women's contributions remain



less understood than those of their husbands. The pension applications featured in the exhibit offer rare first-person testimony. Although many of these women were largely illiterate and rarely appear elsewhere in the written record, the pension process required them to recount their wartime experiences in detail. These documents reveal women acting as farmers, nurses, refugees, and family guardians. They also expose the obstacles they faced in seeking recognition.

Among the women highlighted at the exhibit is Rachel Locus. While her husband Valentine served as a private in the Continental Line for two years, Rachel cared for their children, grew crops and managed their homestead. After the war, the family settled in Wake County near Lick Creek. In 1801, a group of white men forced their way into the Locus home and abducted two of their children, Absalom and Polly. During the attack, Rachel and Valentine were beaten badly. The abductors likely intended to sell the children into slavery in the Deep South, despite their legal status as free people of color.

Though Absalom and Polly managed to escape and return home, the perpetrators were never identified or charged.

After Valentine's death in 1811, Rachel raised eight children on her own. In 1838, she applied for a Revolutionary War widow's pension. Even after her claim was approved, she encountered further injustice: in 1839, she wrote to the Secretary

of War explaining that her pension agent had been collecting and keeping her payments. Only after federal intervention did she receive the benefits owed to her.

In another presentation, a 24-year-old Granville County free woman of color, Nelly Taburn, was living near Fishing Creek when the Revolution began. Born free, she and her husband, William, participated in the war effort just as their white neighbors did. William was drafted for three separate terms, spending more than ten months in service. During his absences, Nelly cultivated crops and sustained their growing family.

Yet when William later applied for a pension, federal officials subjected his claim to unusual scrutiny. The U.S. Pension Commissioner reportedly doubted that an African American man could have served alongside white soldiers. Affidavits from fellow soldiers and officers were not enough. Only after North Carolina's Secretary of State confirmed that free men of color had indeed been subject to the draft did the claim proceed.

By that time, William was described as "almost blind" and living in the county poorhouse. After his death in 1835, Nelly applied as a widow. Records suggest she may have spent her final years living with family.

Free women of color had never been permitted to vote, and all faced restrictions in court. For families like the Taburns and the Locuses, these legal barriers compounded everyday hardships.

By focusing on free women of color, MosaicNC's exhibit challenges narrow interpretations of Revolutionary history. It reminds North Carolinians that the ideals of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" were defended in farm fields, homesteads and courtrooms—just as much as the battlefield.

Meet Stephanie C. Simon, Craft Artist

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Greensboro - Stephanie C. Simon is North Carolinian dedicated to art and service. After enjoying a 27 year career with the Guilford County Department of Public Health in the Maternity Services Program, specifically in Maternity Medical Records Stephanie was at a crossroads. "My entire career was in service to the citizens of Guilford County by fostering Healthy Mother/Baby outcomes. I count it as one of the greatest blessings in my lifetime. Since I don't have children of my own, I believe it was God's way of allowing me to contribute to the thousands of healthy children born in Guilford County during my tenure there. Truly, it was an honor."

Stephanie's mother, Ms. Carolyn Hackett Simon, always marched to the beat of her own drum and, in so doing, she was inspired to do the same. Stephanie watched and learned as her mother participated in the Civil Rights Movement while attending NCA&TSU and beyond,



working at the Election Polls for decades, and serving as their church pianist since the age of 15! Stephanie shared that her mother, "Embodies the meaning of being a missionary and teaches me by example what it is to be a true citizen of the community at large and what it means to work for a better world for right now and

for generations to come. Because of her, I have a deep appreciation for the way meaningful work can last beyond our lifetime and positively affect those whom we may never meet. In 2020, Mom and I were each honored to be featured on our own Official First Class US Mail Postage Stamp!"

As if that wasn't cool enough a love of art emerged during a major life transition, "As I approached retirement from my career in Public Health, I considered what was next for me. I knew I wanted my second act to include continual learning. I have always enjoyed the Arts so I took classes in drama, improv, arts and crafts, and anything else I found of interest. During the pandemic, I began to do some craft painting and fell in love with it! Painting gave me a place to channel my focus. I found it meditative. When I began to share my artwork, people started asking if they could purchase my paintings; that's when I heard myself say, "Yes, you can!" My art is now collected in seven different states by collectors as

young as ten years old to senior citizens. It is my mission to contribute meaningful art to the world, starting in North Carolina."

Stephanie is thrilled to continue sharing her art with the North Carolina Community! She has been selected to be exhibited at the downtown Greensboro Project Space Art Gallery, March 17-21, 2026, as part of the annual Community Small Works Exhibition.

One special fact that must be shared is Stephanie C. Simon made history, "I am an original COLD STEEL drumline member. I was the only female snare drummer on the drumline during the two years that I performed with them in the Blue and Gold Marching Machine at NCA&TSU. It was a favorite time at A&T and I am honored to have been at the beginning of their renowned 42-year legacy." Now that is some serious Aggie Pride!

Her biggest piece of advice is to, "Keep learning and be open to the wonderful places that learning will take you."

The 25th Annual African American Cultural Celebration In Raleigh Was Held On Saturday

The African American Cultural Celebration (AACC)—presented by the North Carolina Museum of History with support from its community partner, the North Carolina African American Heritage Commission—celebrated Black History Month with engaging demonstrations, inspiring presentations, and powerful performances. For 25

years, this celebration has brought together African American community members, organizations, authors, artists, musicians, filmmakers, scholars, and more around a central theme to highlight the contributions that African Americans, past and present, have made to North Carolina's history and culture. Mathias Bishop Photos



The Spirit We Move With: A film honors one of America's first self-governed town founded by formerly enslaved people

THE GUARDIAN - In 1862, while the American civil war spread across the country, formerly enslaved people on Hilton Head Island in South Carolina were imagining a new future and envisioning new possibilities. They began organizing themselves and eventually created one of the first self-governed, autonomous city for freed people. It was called Mitchelville, named for the Union army Maj Gen Ormsby Mitchel, who led what would become known as the Port Royal Experiment, a model for how the country might transition away from slavery that served as a precursor to the Reconstruction period.

The freed people, who would come to be known as the Gullah Geechee, built their own homes, elected their own officials, created their own economy and, for the first time in US history, mandated education for their children. Each individual made their own decisions, from what they would wear, to whom they would see, to where they would go - decisions that they were prevented from making when they were kept in bondage.

The Spirit We Move With, a new documentary set on Hilton Head Island, explores the story of the historic Mitchelville and its connection to Gullah Geechee descendants today. The film underscores the notion that Gullah Geechee people don't just have a past; they are also the pioneers of their future. While their history is a central theme of the film, the Gullah people and families who are featured in the short ensure that viewers come away understanding their resiliency and their continued impact on the island they have called home for generations.

The short, directed by Andrew Maguire and executive-produced by Lola Campbell, who is also featured in the film, was developed by the island's Gullah community and made in partnership with the Hilton Head Island-Bluffton chamber of commerce. After premiering in early February at Mitchelville Freedom Park, the film will be shown in festivals, including the Rappport festival in Brixton, London, on 28 March.

For Campbell, a sixth-generation Hilton Head native islander whose family traces its ancestry back to an enslaved person who was brought to the island around 1820, the documentary is valuable to outsiders and to Gullah Geechee people themselves. Ancestors understood the importance of storytelling, and now their descendants must continue on the tradition. "It started there: let's get some stories of people," Campbell said. "We won't always have everyone around, so we want to capture as many stories as possible. And then it kind of weaved its way into an overall story of resilience."

Through stories of family, food and land, the film explores specific Gullah Geechee traditions on Hilton Head Island. "Capturing stories and making sure that the culture remains and that people know that it is still here and thriving, but also get a backstory of where it started, is important for me," Campbell said. These communities can sometimes be forced into an awkward position: outsiders are keenly interested in their history, but that interest comes at the expense of acknowledging that they are a living, continuously developing people.

Further, outsiders have threatened Gullah Geechee people's ways of living. Many Gullah people have been forced to assimilate by speaking English over preserving their own language, and some have also been persecuted for selling palmetto roses, a traditional Gullah art form. Gullah Geechee people have had to fight to preserve lands their families have occupied for generations as developers encroach.

That notion is especially tangible on Hilton Head, where Gullah Geechee land loss is particularly prominent: in 1880, Hilton Head Island was about 98% Black; today it is about 77% white. Since 1995, Gullah Geechee land ownership on the island has decreased by about 70%.

Maguire, who is not a descendant, brought a "respect and sensitivity" to his coverage of the community, Campbell said. "There was definitely a huge responsibility put on me," Campbell said. "I started with a blessing from that group of what the overall theme of this could be."

Instead of using a large crew, Maguire and an assistant served as the camera people. That allowed for intimacy to easily be fostered. "We basically filmed a Sunday family dinner and I got to be right in the middle of it," Maguire said. "I had chills the whole time. It was so special and such a unique experience that I'll take with me for ever."

He added: "This family was so open to me just being in their living room with a camera. I thought it really speaks to the film as a whole. It speaks to the way the community approached the film, their acceptance, of wanting to tell their story."

Ensuring members of the community of all ages know their history is a key theme of the documentary, and a function of the project itself. "Storytelling is one of the most important parts of preservation for our culture," Campbell said. "It's the way that we pass down from generation to generation. It does come through in the film because that is the only way that our culture can really sustain or survive, and that's exactly what we're doing."

She continued: "We're still here. We are surviving. We may look a little bit different than before, but we continue to pass those overarching themes, the significant things that describe our culture. We pass those on."

Community

Taylortown's Winterfest: Inaugural Leadership Luncheon, Vendor Market, And Keep Hoop Alive Sports Tournament

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Taylortown - On an unseasonably warm last day of February in Moore County, Taylortown residents and the surrounding community were empowered by a day full of organizing, economics, and excellence in sport! The day kicked off with the MLK Leadership Luncheon bringing together historic Black communities from across Moore County. Addor, Broadway, Eagle Springs, Eastwood, Happy Valley, Jackson Hamlet, Hickory Inn, Jackson Springs, Jimtown, Midway, Monroeton, Needmore, Smoke, West Southern Pines, and Taylortown all had representations and were able to



share a path forward for the communities present in the spirit of economic development and leadership. Lea reminded us, "Everything we need is here. The brain power, the grit, it is here." Lea shared immediate next steps to help the communities get on one accord emphasizing, "We can have our community be more attractive and competitive to businesses. We are more than housing for the working class." These sentiments rang true and deep at the audience became captivated by the ideas and opportunities.

After the luncheon Taylortown Public works quickly turned the space into a vendor market with community members selling their goods inside and outside. As the marketplace thrived our inaugural Keep Hoop Alive Tournament began in the Academy Heights Gym. As the community prepares the renovate the gym we are excited to welcome sponsors or hoop lovers who would like to contribute to the transformation of this historic school. Great things are happening in Moore County and Taylortown is grateful for all who participated in this special celebration. Please follow Taylortown Government on Facebook and or Instagram for news and updates.

Two speakers shared words of wisdom. I spoke on "Continuing the Dream, Why I Choose to Lead" and Lea Henry, Vice President of the Institute Community Development Initiative of the National Institute of Minority Economic Development

shared a path forward for the communities present in the spirit of economic development and leadership. Lea reminded us, "Everything we need is here. The brain power, the grit, it is here." Lea shared immediate next steps to help the communities get on one accord emphasizing, "We can have our community be more attractive and competitive to businesses. We are more than housing for the working class." These sentiments rang true and deep at the audience became captivated by the ideas and opportunities.

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N.C.'s Top Winners Of Tuesday's 2026 Midterm Election Primary Competition

By Cash Michaels

Contributing Writer

The party standard-bearers of the all-important November 2026 North Carolina midterm elections were elected Tuesday night. Candidates must have won more than 30% of the vote in their respective races to secure their party's nomination to run in November and avoid a May runoff.

The results from the Tuesday primary contests are unofficial and preliminary, to be certified at a later date.

In the Democratic primary race for U.S. Senate, no surprise here as popular former NC Gov. Roy Cooper dominated a large candidate field of six to win with over 92% of the vote.

"I'm running because I love North Carolina," said Cooper during his victory speech. "It's time for a change."

On the Republican side, former NC Republican Party Chairman Michael Whatley ran in an even larger field of seven, which included MAGA former NC schools superintendent candidate Michele Morrow, Whatley winning with approximately 65% of the vote.

The winner in November succeeds outgoing Republican Sen. Thom Til-



lis. In the contentious and headline-making Republican primary race for NC Senate District 26, longtime powerful incumbent and Senate Majority Leader Phil Berger is in a two-vote deadbeat with challenger Rockingham Sheriff Sam Page. Provisional ballots and a recount may ultimately decide this race.

In the US House District 12 Democratic primary race, incumbent Rep. Alma Adams dominated young challenger Monaca Williamson, 79 to 21%.

On the Republican side of the District 12 primary race, Jack Codiga won the right to try to unseat Rep.

Adams in November, beating opponent Abdul Ali, 67 to 33%.

In the Democratic primary race for the 4th Congressional District, incumbent Valerie Foushee faced off in a second contentious challenge from Durham County Commissioner Nida Allam, winning with less than one percent of the vote. Provisional and military ballots have yet to be counted, and Allam is expected to call for a recount.

In the Republican primary race to challenge incumbent Democratic Congressman Don Davis in the 1st Congressional District, Laurie Buckshot, who was endorsed by Pres. Trump, led a field of a field of five

GOP hopefuls with over 39% of the vote.

The NC General Assembly redistricted the First District so that it would lean Republican in November.

Also Tuesday night, three Black Democratic House members who voted with the Republican majority against Democratic Governor Josh Stein and their party lost their primaries unofficially.

Representatives Carla Cunningham, Shelly Willingham and Nasif Majeed all lost, according to unofficial primary results. Cunningham, a seven-term incumbent, lost to Baptist Minister Rodney Sadler in the District 106 race for North Charlotte. Willingham, a six-term incumbent from Rocky Mount, lost to challenger Patricia Smith in the House District 23 race.

And Rep. Majeed, another Charlotte incumbent, lost his race to be reelected to House District 99 to Veleria Levy, a health care con-



IOTA IOTA CHAPTER OF OMEGA PSI PHI FRATERNITY, INC. BLACK HISTORY QUIZ BOWL

On February 28, 2026, the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. held its annual Black History Quiz Bowl at the Omega Multipurpose Center, OMC in Garner, NC. Three High School Teams participated: Raleigh-Apex NAACP Youth Council, Top Teens of America, Raleigh Chapter and Garner Road Teen Achievers. Pictured above is the first place winning team, Raleigh-Apex NAACP Youth Council.

Vice Basileus, Demond Reed, Youth: Michael Braswell, Logan Thomas, Elijah Rodgers, parent and co-advisor, LaDonna Rodgers, and Bethany Rodgers, Basileus, Tyler Vincent. Not pictured Mo Johnson.

Congratulations to all the participants!

Shawtown Alumni Association Continues To Build Community

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Shawtown - Shawtown, North Carolina, is a historically African American community near Lillington in Harnett County. Distinguished by a robust history of community-driven education, primarily centered around the Shawtown School, this institution was established through the Rosenwald Fund in the 1920s to serve the educational needs of Black children.

The Shawtown School's origins date back to the early 1900s, initiating on a small parcel of land approximately three-tenths of a mile south of its current site at 965 Shawtown Road, Lillington, North Carolina. Given the limited educational resources for Black citizens by the state of North Carolina at that time, community members purchased an acre of land and erected the initial wooden structure, which accommodated grades one through seven. Two teachers were employed, and Mr. Suggs served as the inaugural principal while also instructing classes. Teachers received minimal salaries, which were supplemented by the citizens of the Shawtown community.

Mr. C. W. McNeil subsequently assumed the principalship. During his tenure, additional classrooms were constructed around 1924, and as enrollment expanded, the curriculum was extended to include grade eight. Students who completed grade eight and attended a summer session were awarded certificates enabling them to



teach. Individuals who finished the eighth grade and sought to pursue further education were required to attend boarding schools outside the town, such as Mary Potter School in Oxford, NC, and Harnett County Training School in Dunn, NC. Other individuals who served as principal of the original school include Mrs. Maggie Street, Mrs. Betty McKoy, Mr. T. J. Young, and Reverend Jameson.

The legacy of the Shawtown School is alive and well. The Shawtown Highschool Alumni Association has broken ground on a community center. The mission is to create a space that allows at-risk families to receive tutoring assistance, skill building training, career orientation, entrepreneurial

access, on-site health and dental screening, peer group support, debate skills, anger redirection, healthy nutrition choices, law enforcement partnerships, mentorship, non-traditional career choices, and specific needs referrals assistance. By doing so we hope to foster a strong sense of solidarity among the Shawtown community and to create a better future for generations to come. Impressive sums of money has already been gathered and the progress is encouraging to say the least. A dedicated group with an appreciation for the opportunities created for them persisted and we at The Carolinian are thrilled to cheer on the progress and provide encouragement and updates.

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Church

How To Use Digital Devices This Lent For Holy Reflection

THE CONVERSATION – The season of Lent is upon us. This is a holy season for Christians who seek to identify with Jesus Christ's 40 days of fasting as he prepared to be tested and later crucified. In order to identify with Christ's self-sacrifice, Christians often join in a symbolic fast, giving up certain foods such as meat or chocolate or even giving up certain practices.

In recent years, fasting from the

internet or other forms of technology has become popular. Fasting from technology is encouraged by many religious leaders as the ideal way for individuals to reflect on their daily dependency on technology. Sometimes called taking a "digital Sabbath," it refers to the Christian and Jewish practice, in which one day a week is set aside as sacred.

On such a day, secular practices such as using media are halted in

order to help believers focus on God and their faith. This is based on the premise that the best way to critically engage with technology is to unplug from it. It's a way to remember that true communication is unmediated by technology and grounded in being with one another in the "real world."

Unplugging from social media or limiting one's internet use for a set period such as during Lent can be

helpful for some individuals. My research, conducted over two decades, however, shows that some of core assumptions on which digital fasting is based on can be problematic or misguided.

Technology can, in fact, be good for religion. The question is, how do we engage with technology thoughtfully and actively?

Media and immoral values? First, let's look at how religious groups interact and make decisions about new forms of media.

In my book, "Networked Theology," my coauthor Stephen Garner and I discuss how some religious communities believe the media primarily promote immoral values and frivolous entertainment. Therefore, they insist interaction with media via digital devices should be controlled, just as is done during a digital fast.

In "Networked Theology," we explain how abstaining from media is based on an assumption often referred to as "technological determin-



ism." It is a theory that argues media technology shapes how individuals in society think and act. Technology is presented as the central factor driving society, and its character is often described as selfish and dehumanizing.

This view presents the internet as

a medium that creates environments that disconnect us from reality. For example, YouTube could be seen to promote entertainment culture over wisdom, Facebook encourages self-promotion over community-building

(See *USING DIGITAL DEVICES*, P. 9)

Obituaries

BRYON CHRISTOPHER LEAK, M.D. OBITUARY

Byron Christopher Leak, M.D., affectionately known as "Chris" to his family, was born Feb. 3, 1977, in Atlanta, GA. To John Franklin Leak and Claudette Fort Leak Chris died suddenly and unexpectedly Feb. 9, 2026, at the age of 49 in Raleigh, NC. He leaves a legacy of kindness, compassion, and unwavering love.

Chris knew and demonstrated that the true measure of a successful life lies not in material wealth, but in how we treat others. Throughout his journey, he touched the lives of family, friends, patients,, and colleagues with genuine warmth and respect. Six months after his birth,, he became part of the family at St. Philip A.M.E. Church. As he grew, he participated in the Junior Church and was an inaugural member of the Bobby Kelly Usher Board. His sports activities include Pop Warner baseball and football at DeKalb County's Exchange Park, soccer at the South DeKalb YMCA, and, in high school, basketball, shotput and discus.

His early curiosity and intellect were nurtured at Northwoods Montessori School, where, at age five, he learned sign language and geometric concepts, setting the stage for an



impressive academic path. Following Peachtree Junior High School and Dunwoody High School, Chris graduated with honors from Morehouse College (Atlanta, Ga.) and Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine (Cleveland, Ohio.)

Those closest to Chris will remember him as humble, humorous, academically brilliant, and at times not always politically correct. His older brother, Brandon, was his steadfast champion. His aunt, Sheila Fort-Ray, relished her role as Chris protector and spoiler. His uncle, David Leak, M.S., guided him through his

medical studies and career. His uncle, Harold Fort, introduced him to Healing Transitions (HT) in Raleigh, which led him to his most rewarding career opportunity.

For the past five years, Chris dedicated himself to the mission and work of Healing Transitions (HT). There, Chris found his true calling in serving individuals facing addiction and homelessness. His tireless efforts helped secure medical services and stable housing for countless men and women. In 2025, Chris was honored as Employee of the Year by HT staff, clients, and alumni. He was a board member of the City of Raleigh's Transit Authority and advocated for the needs of Raleigh's under-resourced residents and served on the board of Oak City Cares, Inc. in Raleigh whose mission is to make homelessness rare, brief, and nonrecurring. Chris had recently begun preparations to launch a podcast to educate the public on addiction prevention, treatment, and recovery.

Those who cherish his memory include his parents, John and Claudette Leak; brother; Brandon Leak (Trayce); aunt, Sheila Fort-Ray; uncle, James Harold Fort (Gloria); cousins; beloved godchildren; and many treasured friends.

Practical Biblical Principles

THE FLOOD AND WAR ARE NOT OVER

Read: Revelation 12:1-10

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral The defeat of the devil started in heaven. There was a war in heaven, and the devil was cast out. He was cast to earth. The heavens rejoiced. However, there was stark warning to those living upon the earth and sea – "For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time (Revelation 12:12)."

This is what all Christians must be aware of today. All who are associated with Christ will become targets of the devil. And the reality of the devil among us is some believers will have to pay with their lives until Christ returns (Revelation 12:11). However, the Christians loss of life will be avenged by God in God's time frame. In short, the battle with the devil goes on and on until Christ returns to set up His kingdom here upon the earth.

The priest/prophet Zechariah was one of the three OT prophets that God called upon to minister to the people at the end stages of their 70-year captivity and final freedom. The other prophets before him were Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Zechariah was born in the Babylonian captivity. Zechariah had the scholarship and wisdom required in his priestly role as he ministered to the Jews who were just recently freed from Babylonian captivity. When one reads the Book of Zechariah, one will see the effects the devil had upon these people as the prophet called them back to God (Zechariah 1:1-3). It did not take long for the Jews to go wild, so to speak, after being set free by King Darius. It is amazing to see just how God poured out His love toward them to bring them back to Himself as they continued to 'act out,' so to speak. God's love is amazing!

To prepare Zechariah for his ministry to the just freed Jews, God down-loaded eight visions to him to fortify his ministry, thus giving

future hope to the Jews letting them know just how much God loved them.

The eight visions were just like reading the Book of Revelation. These visions were positive in nature showing the blessings of God which are to come upon the Jews in spite of their disobedience.

There was the vision of the red and white horses, the vision of the four horns and four craftsmen, the measuring line, the vision of the high priest, the lampstand and the olive trees, the flying scroll, the woman in a basket, and the vision of the four chariots. These visions were all prophetic in nature and they all will come to past. These visions parallel the prophecies in the book of Revelation. These visions are covered in the first six chapters in the Book of Zechariah. Zechariah saw the coming of Jesus in his visions and prophesied the same to the Jewish people to give them hope for the future now that they are back home in Jerusalem. The returned Jews had started building the walls of the city and temple, but they had stopped the construction for whatever reasons and started sinning. Was this to make up for lost time in captivity? At any rate, God still promised them a prosperous life. What love God has for His people.

However, the war is not over by a "long shot." When God showed Zechariah the vision of Joshua, the High Priest standing before the Angel (the Lord) there was somebody else standing there with him on his right hand, the devil (Zechariah 3:1). What did this mean? It means there will be 'hell to pay' when God begins to bless His people up until Jesus returns, This is a picture of the on-going "flood" the devil spewed out at the woman, Israel in Revelation 12:15). The flood symbolizes the aggressive, everyday assaults by the devil to destroy all of God's people and anybody else associated with Christ. The flood include murder, stealing robbery, car, train and airplane crashes, divorce, prison, bro-

ken families and homes, sex trafficking, adultery, the list goes on and on and it include all that is evil against God's people. This also means every chance the devil gets he will seek to destroy God's people. He is in a rush to do this because he knows he has a short time.

God's children and any new convert must learn quickly the ways of the devil. When Paul says the devil is like a roaring lion (1Peter 5:8) we must know what this means. One of the devil's favorite strategies is to do preempted strikes. Our South -African safari guide told us that when a lion roars it sends out a warning ahead of time in hopes of stampeding his prey so that they will run right towards him, not knowing where he is hiding. Many innocent people run into the devil and mean to. "I gotcha" the devil will tell you. The devil works to spot our lives so that when Jesus calls us to Him, we will not feel ourselves worthy to come to Him. Spotting our lives with painful and ugly experiences before we get to know Jesus is what the devil wants to do before Jesus calls us to Him. This again is a part of the flood which is spewed out at us. The question is now, "What do you do if you find yourself caught in the devil's flood? What if you don't know Jesus?"

Will you be as fortunate as the thief on the cross? He had heard about Jesus. All Jews born have been taught about God and the coming Messiah. There is no Jew who has never heard about Jesus. Like some people today have heard about Jesus but has never responded to Him when He called their names to come into the fold.

The thief knew about Jesus, the Messiah, but only responded to Him in his last moments of life. Do you want to take that chance so close to the end of one's life to receive Jesus as your Lord and Savior? That on-going and overwhelming flood from the devil may not give you a chance to do so. Today, don't let the flood overrun you!

SERMON of the WEEK



Sermon of the Week SING, SING, SING!

Sermon dedicated to the Lincoln Park Holiness Church Senior Choir by: Bishop-Elect William Billy "Eli" Ratcliff

Singing is using the God-created parts of your being to lift lyrics into melodies. In Psalms 96, attributed to King David, just two verses give us three clear directives on how to sing—and get it right with God.

Psalms 96:1-2 says, "O sing unto the LORD a new song; sing unto the LORD, all the earth. Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; shew forth his salvation from day to day."

Notice here, the word SING is mentioned 3 times: SING, SING, SING! Look at the text. David tells us: What to do — SING. What to sing — a SONG. What kind of song — a NEW SONG. Who to sing to — the LORD. And who should sing it — ALL THE EARTH.

Take note: He's not calling for a Solo, a duet, a trio, a quartet, or a Mass Group. He's calling for a GLOBAL CHOIR! First, for this Senior Choir Anniversary, I want to say to them and everybody under the sound of my voice:

#1: SING TO THE LORD

Notice, David is specific. He doesn't just say sing to anybody, he says sing unto the Lord, and not to see who can out-sing who, like they're auditioning for Heaven's Got Talent!

Furthermore, he says "sing unto the Lord" three times. I believe that: Our singing should have direction and purpose. We don't sing for applause. We don't sing for recognition, and we sing unto the Lord!

The Bible says in Psalms 22:3 that "God inhabits the praises of His people." That means when we sing to Him, He moves in!

Let me give you a little history. Did you know the first recorded song in Scripture is in Exodus 15—the Song of Moses? After God brought Israel through the Red

Sea, Moses sang, "I will sing unto the Lord..." Then his sister Miriam came right behind him, took her tambourine, and the women danced and sang. The second song recorded in the Bible is in the same chapter.

They didn't have hymn books. They didn't have microphones. They didn't have monitors. They had not even rehearsed. But what they did have was a song in their hearts, because God brought them out of bondage and brought them across the Red Sea.

Moreover, we have all been brought through something. You didn't just wake up this morning, you were kept. Can't you hear Grandma singing, "Just another day that the Lord has kept me...He has kept me from all evil, with my mind stayed on Jesus."

#2: SING A NEW SONG

David says, "Sing unto the Lord a NEW song." Now that doesn't mean throw away the old songs. It just means God has done something fresh.

Lamentations 3:22-23 says, "Through the Lord's mercies we are not consumed...They are new every morning; great is Your faithfulness." I want you to know that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases; His mercies never come to an end. That's not just something to sing about, that's something to shout about!

Like Robert Blair and the Fantastic Violinaires sang, "I've got so much to shout about!" Folks may laugh when you shout—but when you know what the Lord has done, you know what you're shouting about.

Back in the 70's, the Byrd Sisters of the Senior Choir gave the church something to shout about when Loraine Williams, Ella Jane Lassister, Louise Blue, and Dorothy River would sing: "Jesus is on the main line, tell Him what you want! If you need more POWER—HEALING—tell Him!"

Yes, those were old songs—but they were new every time God did something fresh. That's what Moses did, Miriam did, David did, the Byrd sisters did, and that's what the Senior Choir has been doing for 86 years—and that's what we must do. If God heals you — sing! If God keeps you from losing your mind — sing! If God makes a way out of no way — sing!

Sing hope in the morning, hope at noonday, hope until the sun is going down! And if you must wait until midnight, sing, "I'm going to wait 'til the midnight hour... when

there's no one else around. I'm going to wait until the midnight hour. Til God's POWER comes streaming down! He's the one that will hold you, and I know He will console you—in the midnight hour!" (Oh yes, He will!)

Now that's not Wilson Pickett's version—but Bishop-Elect's version? And I know you haven't heard that one before— Why? Because it's a NEW SONG!

#3: SING EVERY DAY

Verse 2 says, "Show forth His salvation from day to day." And I'm not talking about Sunday-only singing. I'm talking about daily singing.

Sing when people like you. Sing when they don't. Sing even if they lie on you. Sing and say, "This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me."

Haters didn't give it. Enemies didn't give it. And even a Trillionaire can't take it. Politicians can't take it. The world can't take it away! Man may take programs. Man may change systems. But man can't take Jesus—or salvation!

Let me remind you how the old Saints always had a song ready: They didn't wait for the government. They didn't wait for politicians. They didn't wait for programs. Can't you hear them sing, "I woke up... I woke up... I WOKE UP this morning with my mind stayed on Jesus!"

I'd like to know: is there anybody reading this article who can say, "This morning when I rose, I didn't have no doubt"? (If so, email LPHCSermon@gmail.com or write to: LPHC SERMON, 13 Heath St., Raleigh, NC 27610—I would love to hear from you!)

Let's get back to the sermon: It's not the government that kept us. It wasn't the system that sustained us. It wasn't policy that protected us. It was the Lord... IT WAS THE LORD...

We sing because we're happy. We sing because we're free. We sing because we know that Jesus died—and got back up again! And if you don't believe God will come in the midnight hour, just ask Paul & Silas.

Nevertheless, that's why David says, "I will bless the Lord at all times." So, tell yourself, your children, and your church friends: don't just sing once—BUT SING... SING... SING!!!

Please visit www.youtube.com/@lincolnparkholinesschurch1913 to watch this week's sermon on video. We invite you to Like, Subscribe, and Share your comments. We would love to hear from you.



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You Decide: What's Wrong With the Job Market?

The most recent job market report for January was received with much enthusiasm. Total jobs in the country increased by 130,000, the highest number since May 2025. The unemployment rate also fell, but only by one-tenth of 1 percent (0.1%). Still, that was an improvement — although modest — from 2025 when the jobless rate rose from 3.7% to 4.4%.

However, the news wasn't all good. Job growth was not widespread. Most of the job additions, specifically 60%, were in one sector: health care. Several sectors lost jobs, including financial services, transportation/information and the federal government. Also, job layoffs were high, wage growth was very slow, long-term unemployment (meaning 27 weeks or more without a job) remained high, and job growth in several previous months was revised downward.

It is important to recognize the job market could be worse. Jobs are not declining; they're just not rising significantly. And while the jobless rate is higher than we'd like, it is nowhere near the levels we see during a recession. It's also important to note that while North Carolina's economy continues to be stronger than the national economy, the state has also experienced a slowdown in the creation of new jobs.

What are the reasons for the sluggish job market? Economists point to three reasons, each of which is creating uncertainty for businesses. And when a business is uncertain, it usually becomes very cautious about adding new costs through more payroll.

The first generator of uncertainty for businesses is a change we are increasingly hearing, artificial intelligence (AI). Some economists have called AI the most transformative technology to impact the labor market since the tractor. The tractor was revolutionary because it reduced the need for labor in agriculture and dramatically increased the efficiency of agriculture, thereby allowing many more people to be fed. Consequently, not as many farmers were needed. As a result, a mass migration of farmers occurred from rural areas to cities. This was just at the time manufacturing was expanding in the cities and requiring workers.

The distinctive impact of AI is the technology's effect on both physical labor and cognitive labor. For example, AI will increase a robot's capability of performing many human tasks, especially in factories. But AI will also be used to perform cognitive tasks, like bookkeeping, various kinds of analysis, and even teaching. Millions of workers and businesses will be impacted.

Businesses know AI usage is spreading, and to be competitive they will need to incorporate it. But it's still uncertain when they will need to make the change and how extensive the change will need to be. This is likely one of the factors behind slow hiring.

A second reason why hiring has slowed is tariffs. Tariffs are a tax on incoming imports from foreign countries. Although some believe that tariffs are paid by the foreign exporter, in fact they are paid by the U.S. importer. It's estimated almost \$300 billion in tariffs has been collected from U.S. businesses by the U.S. government in 2025. This is a large new cost for businesses.

Again, tariffs have created more uncertainty for businesses. The rates have been changed several times. Higher tariffs have been imposed on some imports, while lower tariffs have been levied on other imports, and more changes can be made quickly. Most importantly, there is a pending Supreme Court decision on whether some of the tariffs are legal. If the Supreme Court rules that some tariffs are illegal, then the question becomes how the Trump administration will react and if they could substitute other types of tariffs. The result leads to more questions and additional uncertainty for businesses.

Lastly is mass deportations. Currently, estimates suggest almost 3 million individuals have been deported from the country, including those who have self-deported. Several economic sectors, such as construction and agriculture, have traditionally used foreign laborers. Deportations have reduced the labor supply for these sectors, even among legal immigrants, thereby curtailing hiring. Due to the physicality, seasonal nature of the work and relatively low pay, unemployed individuals often don't consider these jobs.

As long as these three factors remain, the sluggish job market will likely continue. However, one change could improve the labor market. This is if the pace of economic growth accelerates. In recent years the economy has been growing in the 2% to 3% range. If, as some are predicting, the national economic growth rate could rise to the 4% to 5% range, the need for additional jobs would likely overwhelm the uncertainties and other challenges businesses are now facing.

Some have tagged today's labor market the "no-fire, no-hire economy," meaning businesses want to keep the workers they currently have but don't want to add new workers. This makes it hard for new workers, like the high school and college graduates we will see in a few months. I always recommend what I call the KEF approach: knowledge, enthusiasm and flexibility. Job seekers should communicate — but not boast — about their skills, they should indicate they are excited about working for the company, and they should let the company know they are flexible with respect to the tasks, hours, pay and benefits of the job.

What will it take to improve the job market, and are we headed in that direction? You decide.

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

ALGORITHMS

Continued from page 1

even trigger ethnic violence.

How much deception is tolerable?

As online influence becomes more automated and personalized, it is harder to determine where persuasion ends and coercion begins. If groups of people, or even a nation's citizenry, can be guided toward certain beliefs or behaviors without overt force, democratic societies face a new problem: how to distinguish traditional attempts at influence from manipulation — especially during conflict.

Recent studies show that Americans trust local news sources more than national ones, although trust in both local and national news media has declined across all age groups in the U.S. Ironically, this trust deficit is being exploited by unscrupulous media in various ways, such as AI-generated, pink-slime news — online news stories that only appear to be from authentic local news outlets. The stories are often technically accurate but presented with veiled political bias.

AI-driven propaganda directly challenges how people typically evaluate claims that their nation has been wronged — that it is the "good guy" standing up for what is right. Just war theory assumes that citizens can reasonably consent to war. Legitimate political authority requires an informed public that can decide violence is both necessary and proportional to the offense. However, when influence operations sway people's views without them being aware of it, these systems threaten to undermine the moral preconditions that make war just.

The question citizens have to answer is how they will allow their information environments to evolve. Do they assume that deception is ubiquitous and therefore governments must control information and even preempt the truth by weaponizing AI-driven narratives? Or should the public accept the risk of AI-generated influence as a regrettable but necessary part of openness, pluralism and the belief that truth emerges through transparent debate and not under tight controls?

The same systems that decide which coupon reaches your phone are starting to shape which narratives reach you, your community and a nation's entire population during a crisis. Recognizing this connection is the first step toward deciding how much influence people are willing to accept from such algorithms and the propagandists who control them.



DONALD LIVES FOR APPLAUSE

I watched the State of the Union last week. Not because I wanted to, but because I knew I would likely have to discuss it and perhaps write about it. I wanted to form my own opinion.

My primary opinion is that he lied. About what, you might ask? About almost everything.

Even when he congratulated the Olympic gold medal hockey team, I questioned the motive. Was it meant to present himself as a normal president, proud of a team's achievement? Frankly, it felt like theater and filler, words likely handed to him by someone else. Even the medal he gave to the 100-year-old soldier stood in stark contrast to past comments he has made about military service. He claims to respect soldiers, yet he mocked John McCain for being captured and held as a prisoner of war. He has been dismissive while standing in cemeteries overseas where American soldiers are buried. Those contradictions are difficult to ignore.

I do not even need to list every example. The fact that he can initiate military action without clear congressional agreement, as required by the Constitution, and then mention casualties with a smile, saying that more may come, makes me question his emotional awareness. On his side of the ledger, death is final. It means grieving families and permanent loss.

What makes this more troubling is his history of accusation. On November 20, 2011, during Barack Obama's bid for a second term, Trump claimed that Obama would start a war with Iran to boost his standing. In October 2012, he suggested that if Obama's numbers dropped, there would be a strike in Libya or Iran. He repeatedly predicted military action driven by desperation. Yet Obama negotiated an agreement to halt Iran's nuclear weapons program, a deal Trump later withdrew from after taking office.

Now Trump has done what he once accused Obama of doing. Ironically, he campaigned on not being a wartime president and on keeping the country out of "stupid wars." The reversal is striking.

Listening to Trump requires the kind of discernment one might use when dealing with a narcissist. You begin to notice not only what is said, but what is left unsaid. You recognize projection. Often, what he accuses others of is what he himself is prepared to do.

During the address, he criticized the Supreme Court's ruling on tariffs, implying that the justices did not know what they were doing. It reinforces the sense that he has not fully embraced the constitutional limits of executive power.

He also criticized Democrats for not clapping or standing. Perhaps he does not understand that applause signals agreement. Some statements may have sounded good at first hearing but rang hollow to those who believed they were misleading. For example, when he said a president's job is to protect the lives of citizens, not undocumented immigrants, some likely thought about lives recently lost in domestic incidents and the broader responsibility of leadership. The president's job is also to uphold the Constitution, something he rarely emphasizes.

Clapping at a State of the Union has become partisan ritual. Members applaud their own party's leader and withhold applause from the other side. It has happened under both parties. Democrats did not applaud everything said by President Biden, just as Republicans withheld applause from him when he spoke about taxation or healthcare.

Still, Trump appears to crave applause in a way that goes beyond politics. If he does not receive it, he treats it as personal rejection. And when he feels rejected, he escalates.

That may be the most revealing moment of all.



GOD SEES YOU

Church just ended. The sermon today was brought by author, evangelist, human-trafficking warrior Christine Caine. Once again, God spoke to me, directly to me, through His word. Today's message was all about embracing the place God put you as a part of the body of Christ. The scriptural basis was 1 Corinthians 12:12-17 and 1 Samuel 16:7-13.

In 1 Corinthians 12:12-17, Paul explains to us, He doesn't see what we see. To Him, each part of the Body of Christ has an important place and role. Christine Caine used our physical anatomy and her personal experience of tearing her ACL amongst other unseen, mostly unknown body parts in a serious skiing accident to illustrate her point. I got it. Like most of us, I am hugely unaware of my internal organs until something goes wrong. The human body's structural system is a mystery to me. I pray it remains a mystery to me and that it never requires any special attention. I am also aware that God didn't make any unnecessary parts. Each organ serves a purpose. As we get older, many of us experience limited functionality and in some cases complete failure of certain organ systems. It's a shame they only get our attention at that time because they are all uniquely created and important.

My big take-away this week (another potential t-shirt): Prominence and visibility do not determine significance.

Christine Caine admonished us to not confuse popularity, social media presence, hype, name recognition, position, title with importance to the Body of Christ. Her examples were the many un-seen, unrecognized, back-stage workers that make our ministry possible. It was

a very relevant message today since after the worship experience, we were holding our introduction to service events, e101, to explain volunteer opportunities at each of our campuses. This is where I was introduced to Outreach. My initial assignment was showing up every other Sunday morning at 7am to construct the Outreach area. I learned about pipe and drape, display, and the importance of personal connection with those who walked down that hallway. It was also during that time that I signed up to help cook and serve at Raleigh Rescue Mission for the first time. I didn't know why God led me there. I know now, I learned so much and continue to expand my skills there. Recruiting for those semi-monthly volunteer opportunities forced me to engage other Sunday volunteers. Leading that event has helped me fine-tune my leadership, cooking, and planning skills. In return I have witnessed God's hand in changing the lives of countless RRM participants.

In addition to empowering my faith, embracing the place God placed me has allowed me opportunities for evangelism (my word and commitment for 2026). When God gave me that word, I didn't know how it was going to happen, but I knew He would make a way.

Lately at work I have felt underutilized and unnoticed. Somedays I'm grateful for that. Other days my ego seeks more attention. I can see that now. I'm not saying ego won't rear its foolish head again however I now feel fully ready to see it for what it is. At almost 73 years old, I am grateful for my job, fully committed to service to our constituents, and have embraced this unique assignment from God. I will go to work tomorrow prepared to do what no one else can: be me. I will perform the duties of my job, pray for my colleagues, appreciate their gifts, bring encouragement and support to those I encounter. Mostly I will remind myself that despite all external circumstances that appear to be against me, God made a way. No one can do what I do, the way I do it better. No one has the same assignment on their lives, with the same past, same skills, same wisdom gained from the same mistakes. For that, I am grateful.

Sometimes, we are placed in humble places, given humble tasks, feel invisible and unappreciated. We may not have thousands of "likes" or followers. So what? At our age, if most of our body parts are working and we're given another day of life, we're already ahead of the game. Be gracious as we seek grace. Be forgiving as we seek forgiveness. Bring joy as we seek happiness. Do this wherever God put you. His is the only "like" we need.

USING DIGITAL DEVICES THIS LENT

Continued from page 8

and Twitter facilitates tweeting whatever comes to one's mind rather than listening.

People are not passive users

The truth is digital media is increasingly a part of daily routines. People learn, do business and communicate with technology. Often technology enhances our daily lives, such as eyeglasses correcting vision or the telephone helping people communicate across time and space.

The problem, however, comes when we assume that people have only two options: to engage technology and inevitably be seduced by it, or refuse to use it in order to resist its power.

Digital fasting follows this second option. It presents individuals as slaves of technology. Taking the occasional timeout from the all-powerful grip of technology is done in order to simply regroup and prepare to again face its irresistible seduction.

In my view, such an approach places too much emphasis on the assertion that technological devices now dictate most people's lives. It also does not take into account that technology users have the ability to make their own choices about how they approach it. So people can choose to use technology in ways that fulfill spiritual goals.

In "Networked Theology," we argue that digital technology can be reshaped by users. As others have written, we agree that people should take more responsibility for the time spent with their devices.

Deepening devotion with technology

So, instead of resisting technology during Lent, individuals could use this space of holy reflection to actively consider how to integrate technology to support their spiritual development.

Religious groups have the ability to determine the culture technology promotes, if only they take time to prayerfully create their own "theology of technology."

I describe part of this process as being "techno-selective." What this means is reflecting on the technology we select and how and why we use it. It also means being proactive in shaping our technologies so they enhance and not distract from our spiritual journeys.

A digital Lent can become about considering how our devices can help us do justice, practice kindness and demonstrate humility in our world. For example, people could ask if their postings on Facebook are helping in creating a positive or more abusive world? Or, whether the apps they use or their cellphone etiquette promotes peace and social change?

Apps for social justice

In the last five years I have been working with a team of students at Texas A&M University to explore how social and mobile media are being developed that can support a variety of religious beliefs and practices. We found there are religious apps to help people do that. Internet memes also provide unique insights into common stereotypes about religion within popular culture.

Memes can be crafted to counter such misconceptions. For example, the wearing of hijabs, or head scarves, by Muslim women is viewed by many outside the religion as oppressive, but wearing the veil and modesty are themes frequently affirmed in memes created by Muslims.

Further, our research on religious mobile apps has found increasing numbers of apps are available that help individuals stay faithful in their religious practices on a daily basis. Apps can help with the reading of sacred texts, provide religious study aids, help locate kosher or halal products to maintain a holy lifestyle and connect people with places of worship and also to other beliefs. Prayer and meditation apps can help users remember when to pray and become more accountable in these daily spiritual practices.

Also apps designed to encourage involvement in social justice causes, such as TraffickStop, Lose Weight or Donate and CharityMiles, help raise awareness of key issues and even help users link their daily practices, such as what they eat, to micro-donations to social justice organizations.

Classifieds

CHATHAM COUNTY

NORTH CAROLINA
CHATHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice District Court Division File No: 26CV000178-180

To: CARLOS ALFREDO
BELTRAN-CASTILLO, Defendant.

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed. The nature of the relief being sought is for child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than April 1st, 2026 said date being at least forty (40) days from the first publication of this Notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff, RAQUEL DEL CARMEN DIAZ-ZELAYA, will apply to the court located at 40 E Chatham St, Pittsboro, NC 27312 for the relief sought.

This, the 17th day of February 2026.

Aneta Paval
Paval Law Offices, PLLC
Telephone: (919) 410-6690
2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000163-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of MARY HERMAN COLE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before June 8, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of March, 2026.
Charles Herman Sures, Executor,
c/o Richard F. Prentis, Jr.
4 Consultant Pl.
Durham, NC 27707

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS FOR NEWSPAPER

Estate of KIMBERLEE FLETCHER HANAN died on September 10, 2025, in Durham, NC. DONALD ROY HANAN qualified as her Executor with Durham County, NC Clerk of Superior Court file 25E001278-310. All persons, firms or corporations indebted to KIMBERLEE FLETCHER HANAN will please make immediate payment. This is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against KIMBERLEE FLETCHER HANAN to present them before June 12, 2026, or this Notice may be pleaded to bar their claim. Claims and payments may be filed with James M. Arges, Attorney, for the estate at Arges Law Firm, P.C., 3200 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 706, Durham, NC 27705. For Publication: 03/05/2026, 03/12/2026, 03/19/2026, and 03/26/2026.

DONALD ROY HANAN, Executor
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF Florence Fowler Peacock

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against FLORENCE FOWLER PEACOCK, late of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit them to Natalie Peacock Corral as Executor of the decedent's estate on or before June 7, 2026, c/o Janet B. Witchger, Attorney at Law, 1414 Raleigh Rd., Ste. 203, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, or be barred from their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment to the above-named Executor.

This the 5th day of March 2026.
Natalie Peacock Corral, Executor
c/o Janet B. Witchger, Atty.
TrustCounsel
1414 Raleigh Rd., Ste. 203
Chapel Hill, NC 27517

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against DEANN M. STONE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, are hereby notified to present them to Joseph A. Anthony, as

Administrator of the decedent's estate, on or before June 5, 2026, in care of the undersigned's attorney, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the above-named Administrator.

This is the 5th day of March, 2026.

Joseph A. Anthony, Administrator of the Estate of DeAnn M. Stone
Steven W. Arrington, Esq.
The Arrington Firm, P.C.
P. O. Box 4753
Greensboro, NC 27404

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 26th day of February 2026, as Co-Executors of the ESTATE OF RUTH WATKINS BARBER, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, do hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 6th day of June 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 5th day of March 2026.
MARGARET BARBER WOOD
MILTON A. BARBER, IV
CO-EXECUTORS
ESTATE OF RUTH WATKINS
BARBER

c/o E. Jack Walker, Jr., Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 25th day of February 2026, as Co-Executors of the ESTATE OF MILTON A. BARBER, III, Deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, do hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 6th day of June 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 5th day of March 2026.
MARGARET BARBER WOOD
MILTON A. BARBER, IV
CO-EXECUTORS
ESTATE OF MILTON A. BARBER, III

c/o E. Jack Walker, Jr., Attorney
Walker Lambe, PLLC
Post Office Box 51549
Durham, North Carolina 27717
3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

Published Notice To Creditors

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of MICHAEL BALLEK, late of Durham 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's legal counsel, Ceradini Law, PLLC, 8480 Honeycutt Road, Ste. 200, Raleigh, North Carolina 27615, on or before the 5th day of, June 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to the said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of March 2026.

/s/ Matthew P. Ceradini
Matthew P. Ceradini, Esq., on behalf of Beatrice Susanne Setnik, Executor Of the Estate of Michael Ballek
Matthew P. Ceradini, Esq.
Ceradini Law, PLLC
8480 Honeycutt Road, Ste. 200, Raleigh, NC 27615
Counsel for the Estate of Michael Ballek

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

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

File No.: 26E000225-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GWENDOLYN LEE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 27, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 26th day of February, 2026.

Sharnetta Diane Lee, Executor
7804 C. 131 Fairview Rd.
Charlotte, NC 28226
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

This the 26th day of February, 2026.

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of PEGGY JOANN GASKINS-SPENCER deceased in Durham County, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to present them, duly verified, to the undersigned at 5214 Penrith Drive Apt G, Durham, NC 27713 on or before the 26th day of May, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said Estate will please make immediate settlement with the undersigned.

This the 26th day of February, 2026.

Kevin Spencer
Administrator
5214 Penrith Drive Apt G,
Durham, NC 27713
File #26E000109-310
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E000176-310
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of AUDREY JACKSON LUCAS, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 27, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 26th day of February, 2026.
Torhi Klayette Jackson
Administrator
117 Holiday Court
Greenville, NC 27834
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of EDWIN LEE MORRIS, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit them to the undersigned at the offices of Munson Law Firm PLLC, P.O. Box 1811, Pittsboro, NC 27312 on or before the 26th day of May, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the estate will please make immediate payment.

This 26th day of February, 2026.
BARBARA MORRIS, EXECUTOR
ESTATE OF EDWIN LEE MORRIS
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

26E000105-310
Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of JOHN KEITH SPITZNAGEL AKA JOHN K. SPITZNAGEL, late of Durham County, North Carolina, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claim against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned c/o Guido De Maere, P.A. at 100 Europa Drive, Suite 160, P.O. Box 3591, Chapel Hill, NC 27515 on or before the 26th day of May, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 26th day of February, 2026.

Jean S. Hetherington, Executor of the Estate of John Keith Spitznagel aka John K. Spitznagel
Attorney for the Estate:
Guido De Maere, P.A.
P.O. Box 3591
Chapel Hill, NC 27515-3591
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having Qualified as Executor of the Estate of BRENDA PITTS, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 26 day of May, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment.

This the 26 day of February, 2026.
Rashidah Bryant
10 Pumpkin Place
Durham, NC 27703
Attorney for Executor
Karen R. Carnegie
300 George Washington Hwy N
Chesapeake, VA 23323
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000187-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BARBARA ANN MCKENZIE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 27, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 26th day of February, 2026.
Leah Friedman, Executor
8 Stillwater Park
Durham, NC 27707
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of JOAN ANN WORTH, Deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, the undersigned individual hereby gives notice to all persons, firms, and corporations having any claim against the Estate of Joan Ann Worth, Deceased, to present such claims to the Administrator, c/o Samantha J. Hovaniec, Brooks, Pierce, McLendon, Humphrey & Leonard, L.L.P., Post Office Box 1800, Raleigh, North Carolina 27602 on or before May 26, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to Joan Ann Worth, Deceased, are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned Administrator.

This the 26th day of February, 2026.

Jean M. Shanahan, Administrator of the Estate of Joan Ann Worth
Samantha J. Hovaniec, Attorney
Brooks, Pierce, McLendon,
Humphrey & Leonard, L.L.P.
Post Office Box 1800
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602
2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION FILE NO.: 26CV000928-310

Juan Carlos Morales Barrios v. Margarita Isabel Morales Barrios & Miguel Benites de la Cruz

To: Miguel Benites de la Cruz
Take Notice that a Complaint has been filed against you in the Civil Action described above, in the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, by the Plaintiff herein, the nature of which is as follows: The Complaint seeks an Order of Permanent Custody of your minor child, Yasmin Luisa Morales Barrios. You are required to file an Answer including any defenses to this pleading within forty (40) days from the date of first publication of this Notice with the Clerk of Court of Mecklenburg County. If you fail to do so, you may not receive further notices, and the plaintiff will seek the relief sought herein.

Publication begins this is the 26th day of February 2026.
Yesenia L. Polanco-Galdamez,
Attorney for Plaintiff
411 Andrews Road, Suite 130
Durham, NC 27705 (919) 294-8032
Published February 26, March 02, and March 9th, 2026.
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

SMALL CLAIMS

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division
FILE NO: 26CV002121-310
CHANDLERS TIRE AUTO & TOWING LLC, Plaintiff v. UNKNOWN OWNER, Defendant
TO UNKNOWN OWNER, VIN 1JJV532W17L024432 WABASH TRAILER 2007:TAKE NOTICE that a Small Claims action has been filed against you by Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC regarding a motor vehicle left for repairs and/or Towing and Storage and not claimed. You are required to appear before Magistrate in Durham County Courthouse in Durham County as follows;
Date: 04/06/2026
Time: 2:00PM
Location: 3rd Floor Magistrates Durham County Courthouse

510 Dillard Street
Durham, North Carolina 27704
If you fail to appear and defend against the claim, judgement may be entered against you. This the 24th day of February 2026.
Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC
1314 E Club Blvd
Durham NC 27704
919-220-5234
Chandlerstowing.dmv@gmail.com
Deborah Davis

2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

SMALL CLAIMS

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division
FILE NO: 26CV002124-310
CHANDLERS TIRE AUTO & TOWING LLC, Plaintiff v. UNKNOWN OWNER, Defendant
TO UNKNOWN OWNER, VIN 2G0CD14G4B1206094 CHEVROLET C10 1981; TAKE NOTICE that a Small Claims action has been filed against you by Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC regarding a motor vehicle left for repairs and/or Towing and Storage and not claimed. You are required to appear before Magistrate in Durham County Courthouse in Durham County as follows;
Date: 04/06/2026
Time: 2:00 PM
Location: 3rd Floor Magistrates Durham County Courthouse
510 Dillard Street
Durham, North Carolina 27704

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

If you fail to appear and defend against the claim, judgement may be entered against you. This the 24th day of February 2026.
Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC
1314 E Club Blvd
Durham NC 27704
919-220-5234
Chandlerstowing.dmv@gmail.com
Deborah Davis

2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

SMALL CLAIMS

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division
FILE NO: 26CV002040-310
CHANDLERS TIRE AUTO & TOWING LLC, Plaintiff v. UNKNOWN OWNER, Defendant
TO UNKNOWN OWNER, VIN NCX1273588 (2003 BELSHEE TRAILER); TAKE NOTICE that a Small Claims action has been filed against you by Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC regarding a motor vehicle left for repairs and/or Towing and Storage and not claimed. You are required to appear before Magistrate in Durham County Courthouse in Durham County as follows;
Date: Monday, April 6, 2026
Time: 2:00 PM
Location: 3rd Floor Magistrates Durham County Courthouse
510 Dillard Street
Durham, North Carolina 27704

If you fail to appear and defend against the claim, judgement may be entered against you. This the 24th day of February 2026.

Chandlers Tire Auto & Towing LLC
1314 E Club Blvd
Durham NC 27704
919-220-5234
Chandlerstowing.dmv@gmail.com
Deborah Davis

2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

Hendrick Acura versus Nikki Keianna Stone, Carl Derrick Houze, Credit Acceptance Corp
NOTICE OF SALE
Take notice that a public sale will take place on March 16th, 2026 at 10:00 am to satisfy a lien against the following vehicle: 2008 Acura VIN# 2HNYD28388H519459. The location of the sale is Hendrick Acura Southpoint, 212 Kentington Sr, Durham, NC 27703.
2/26 & 3/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

BMW of Southpoint versus Jasmine Mashay Brodie, Deaveon Jackson, Stephanie Poe, Nakita Beatrice Russell, Ally Financial
NOTICE OF SALE
Take notice that a public sale will take place on March 16th, 2026 at 10:00 am to satisfy a lien against the following vehicles: 2012 BMW 5UXZV4C52CL767518, 2014 BMW WBA5A7C59ED613296, 2015 BMW 5UXKR0C59F0K61494. The location of the sale is BMW of Southpoint, 225 Kentington Dr, Durham, 27713.
2/26 & 3/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

BMW of Southpoint versus Jasmine Mashay Brodie, Deaveon Jackson, Stephanie Poe, Nakita Beatrice Russell, Ally Financial
NOTICE OF SALE
Take notice that a public sale will take place on March 16th, 2026 at 10:00 am to satisfy a lien against the following vehicles: 2012 BMW 5UXZV4C52CL767518, 2014 BMW WBA5A7C59ED613296, 2015 BMW 5UXKR0C59F0K61494. The location of the sale is BMW of Southpoint, 225 Kentington Dr, Durham, 27713.
2/26 & 3/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS
ALL persons, creditors having claims against PATRICIA G. SIMPSON deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before (3 months, May 19, 2026), or

this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. 17 February 2026.
V-Gail Simpson, ADM
815 Wheat Mill Road
Durham, North Carolina 27704
Phone: 248 559-5718
F#: 25E001577-310
Feb 19, 26, Mar 5, 12, 2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No.: 26E000112-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JUDITH LASCALLETTE, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 19th day of February, 2026.
Hillary Aaron, Executor
3803 Saint Lucy Dr.
Franklinton, NC 27525
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

File No.: 26E000161-310
The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of KAREN DENISE BURNETTE, late of Durham County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against said Estate to present them to the undersigned on or before the 20th day of May, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said Estate please make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 18th day of February, 2026.
Davidia Burnette, Executor
1805 Mystic Drive
Durham, NC 27712
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000158-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GERARD A. ESPOSITO, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 19th day of February, 2026.
Kenneth J. Esposito, Executor
c/o Law Office of Anne Page Watson
3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205
Durham, NC 27705
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, Richard Floyd Pickett and Lisa Ann Crawford, having duly qualified as Co-Administrators CTA of the Estate of SHIRLEY POPE PICKETT, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned in care of Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney for the Estate, 2004 Elcombe Court, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, on or before May 20, 2026, or it will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons and legal entities indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment. This the 19th day of February, 2026.

Richard Floyd Pickett and Lisa Ann Crawford, Co-Administrators, CTA
c/o Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney
2004 Elcombe Court
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
1-919-246-5775
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000161-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GERARD A. ESPOSITO, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 19th day of February, 2026.
Kenneth J. Esposito, Executor
c/o Law Office of Anne Page Watson
3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205
Durham, NC 27705
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

The undersigned, Richard Floyd Pickett and Lisa Ann Crawford, having duly qualified as Co-Administrators CTA of the Estate of SHIRLEY POPE PICKETT, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, hereby notifies all persons, firms and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned in care of Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney for the Estate, 2004 Elcombe Court, Chapel Hill, NC 27517, on or before May 20, 2026, or it will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons and legal entities indebted to the Estate will please make immediate payment. This the 19th day of February, 2026.

Richard Floyd Pickett and Lisa Ann Crawford, Co-Administrators, CTA
c/o Ronald G. Coulter, Attorney
2004 Elcombe Court
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
1-919-246-5775
2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In the General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division
Before the Clerk
File No: 26E000161-310
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of GERARD A. ESPOSITO, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to

DURHAM COUNTY

of DOROTHEA ROBINSON, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 19th day of February, 2026.

Renee Lyons, Administrator
c/o DSR Legal
P.O. Box 51596
Durham, NC 27717
(919) 533-2441

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

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

File No: 26E000137-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate of FRANCES A. MARCHBANK, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 19th day of February, 2026.

Elizabeth A. Brown, Administrator
CTA
c/o Law Office of Anne Page Watson

3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205
Durham, NC 27705

2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

SMALL CLAIMS

In The General Court of Justice,
District Court Division

FILE NO: 26CV001718-310

HERNANDEZ RUIZ SERVICES LLC,
Plaintiff v. UNKNOWN OWNER,
Defendant

TO UNKNOWN OWNER, VIN: 1FTCF15Y2GNA53327 (1986 FORD F150): TAKE NOTICE that a Small Claims action has been filed against you by Hernandez Ruiz Services LLC regarding a motor vehicle left for repairs and not claimed. You are required to appear before a Magistrate in Durham County as follows:

Date: Friday, March 27, 2026

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: 3rd Floor Magistrates
Durham County Courthouse

510 S. Dillard Street
Durham, North Carolina 27701

If you fail to appear and defend against the claim, judgment may be entered against you. This the 19th day of February 2026.

Hernandez Ruiz Services LLC
3929 Gorman Church Rd
Durham, NC 27703

(919) 452-1090

Harriett70@hotmail.com

2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No: 25E001341-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR, ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of NELLIE RUTH BURROUGHS, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 13, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 12th day of February, 2026.

Albert Burroughs Jr.
Executor, Administrator
c/o The Law Offices of Gregory Reynald Williams, PLLC
2232 Page Road, Suite 203
Durham, NC 27703

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No: 26E000119-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of STELLA WEBB, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 13, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their

recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 12th day of February, 2026.

Renee Lyons, Administrator

c/o DSR Legal

P.O. Box 51596

Durham, NC 27717

(919) 533-2441

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

File No: 26E000117-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 6th day of February 2026, as Executor of the ESTATE OF GENE MORGAN PRESSON, 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 May 13, 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 12th day of February, 2026.

JOSHUA NOVAK, EXECUTOR
ESTATE OF GENE MORGAN PRESSON

c/o Jennifer Dalman, Attorney

Walker Lambe, PLLC

Post Office Box 51549

Durham, North Carolina 27717

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No: 24E002561-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of THOMAS WAYNE MURRAY, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 13, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 12th day of February, 2026.

Danny Murray, Executor

3217 Bahama Rd.

Bahama, NC 27503

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No: 26E000091-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BOBBY WALLACE GOSS, deceased, late of Durham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 13, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 12th day of February, 2026.

Eva Lynn Sigmon, Executor

3240 Pleasant Green Road

Durham, NC 27705

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

ESTATE OF YOLONDA LAWRENCE
FILE NO. 25E001474-310

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against Yolonda Lawrence, deceased, of Durham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before May 19, 2026 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This the 19th day of February, 2026 . Ayana Simon, Executor C/O Midtown Legal Group P.O. Box 18175 Raleigh, NC 27619.

2/12, 2/19, 2/26, and 3/5/2026

GRANVILLE COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
GRANVILLE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000058-380

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of PHILLIP WARREN, III, deceased, late of Granville County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before May 20, 2026,

or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned. This the 19th day of February, 2026.

Marquitta A. Warren, Administrator

c/o John W. Perry, Attorneys at Law

PERRY, PERRY & PERRY, P.A.

601 Fayetteville Street, Suite 300

Durham, NC 27701

2/19, 2/26, 3/5, and 3/12/2026

ONSLOW COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
ONSLOW COUNTY

SUMMONS

Rule 204(c)(3)(B). Summons – Publication.

To: Gavin Phillip Chronister

You have been sued by Taylor Kollmann, the Petitioner, in the Sixth District Magistrate Court Court in and for Bannock County, Idaho, Case No. CV03-25-03001.

The nature of the claim against you is Petition for Divorce.

Any time after 21 days following the last publication of this summons, the court may enter a judgment against you without further notice, unless prior to that time you have filed a written response in the proper form, including the Case No., and paid any required filing fee to the Clerk of the Court 624 East Center, Pocatello, Idaho 83201 and (208) 236-7351 and served a copy of your response on the Petitioner's attorney Tiffany Johnson, 1505 Sierra Dr Pocatello ID 83201, at Tiffany@johnsonlawidaho.com Phone: (208)-269-8779

A copy of the Summons and Petition can be obtained by contacting either the Clerk of the Court or the attorney for Petitioner. If you wish legal assistance, you should immediately retain an attorney to advise you in this matter. Dated: 2/6/2026 Bannock County Magistrate Court By Gayla Syphus, Deputy Clerk 2/26, 3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E002872-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of CARLY JEAN GEISEL, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before June 8, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of March, 2026.

John Raymond Geisel

Administrator

231 Kinvara Ct.

Wake Forest, NC 27587

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division

FILE NO. 25CV033406-910

LESTER COBBS, Plaintiff v.

DENISE DARNELLE COBBS,

Defendant

TO DENISE DARNELLE COBBS:

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 as follows: Complaint for Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than forty (30) days after the first date of publication of this notice, exclusive of such date, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 5th day of March, 2026.

Lester Cobbs, Plaintiff

11201 Tidewater Lane, Apt 112

Raleigh, NC 27614

3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division

FILE NO. 25CV019679-910

BRENDA EBERT, Plaintiff

VS JAMES EBERT, Defendant

TO JAMES EBERT: 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 as follows: Complaint for Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than forty (30) days after the first date of publication of this notice, exclusive of such date, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 5th day of March, 2026.

Brenda Ebert, Plaintiff

2820 Sylvester St.

Raleigh, NC 27610

3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In The General Court of Justice
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No.: 23E001810-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of LARRY STACY BROCK,

deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before June 8, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of March, 2026.

Ruthie Goodson Brock

Administrator

5525 Woodpond Ct.

Raleigh, NC 27610

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

ESTATE OF:

SHERRI JACKSON BOYKIN

FILE NO. 26-E-000264-910

All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against SHERRI JACKSON BOYKIN, deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 5, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms, and corporations indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 5th day of March, 2026.

Michael A. Boykin, Executor of the Estate of Sherri Jackson Boykin

4108 Batiste Road

Raleigh, NC 27613

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In The General Court of Justice,
Superior Court Division

Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E002872-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of CARLY JEAN GEISEL, deceased, late of Wake County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate to present them to the undersigned, in writing, at the address shown below, on or before June 8, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are requested to make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 5th day of March, 2026.

John Raymond Geisel

Administrator

231 Kinvara Ct.

Wake Forest, NC 27587

3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division

FILE NO. 25CV033406-910

LESTER COBBS, Plaintiff v.

DENISE DARNELLE COBBS,

Defendant

TO DENISE DARNELLE COBBS:

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 as follows: Complaint for Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than forty (30) days after the first date of publication of this notice, exclusive of such date, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 5th day of March, 2026.

Lester Cobbs, Plaintiff

11201 Tidewater Lane, Apt 112

Raleigh, NC 27614

3/5, 3/12, and 3/19/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
WAKE COUNTY

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

In The General Court of Justice
District Court Division

FILE NO. 25CV019679-910

BRENDA EBERT, Plaintiff

Sports

Love, Victory, and Celebration Mark CIAA Championship

By Steve Worthy

Special To The Carolinian

BALTIMORE, MD — The 2026 CIAA Men's Basketball Championship delivered more than thrilling competition. It also produced unforgettable moments of celebration, leadership, and love that captured the spirit of the Central Intercollegiate Athletic Association tournament.

Fayetteville State University secured the championship title after

defeating Bluefield State in a highly anticipated matchup on February 28 at the CFG Bank Arena in Baltimore. As the Broncos celebrated their victory, the excitement on the court turned into a heartfelt moment that quickly became one of the day's most memorable highlights.

Fayetteville State senior guard Ezekiel Cannedy embraced sophomore cheerleader Mariah Boyd before surprising the crowd by proposing to her during the postgame celebration. Surrounded by teammates,

cheerleaders, and cheering fans, Boyd accepted the proposal, adding a romantic milestone to an already historic championship moment for the Broncos.

Championship Day also drew notable leaders and supporters of the CIAA community. During a time-out presentation at center court, Maryland Governor Wes Moore was recognized by the crowd. The governor responded with a thumbs-up to fans as the arena acknowledged his presence and continued support of the

tournament and its impact on Baltimore and HBCU athletics.

The CIAA Tournament, one of the nation's most celebrated HBCU sporting events, continues to bring together athletes, alumni, community leaders, and fans for a week of competition and cultural pride. From championship victories to personal milestones, the 2026 finale reminded everyone that the CIAA is about more than basketball—it is about community, legacy, and moments that last a lifetime.



Michael Jordan Makes History AGAIN With NASCAR Wins

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Michael Jordan calls Denny Hamlin the "mastermind" behind their 23XI NASCAR racing team. Hamlin calls their co-ownership a "perfect partnership."

The team has been nothing shy of perfect behind driver Tyler Reddick so far early in 2026.

Reddick became the first driver in Cup Series history to win the first three races of the season Sunday. He started the first road course race of the year from pole position, then held off hard-charging Shane van Gisbergen for the victory at the Circuit of the Ameri-

cas. When Reddick's Toyota zoomed across the finish line, Jordan was celebrating with the pit crew as the basketball Hall of Famer and six-time NBA champion exchanged high-fives and hugs.

Reddick has been seeing a lot of postrace smiles from Jordan — after he won the Daytona 500 and then again in Atlanta. Reddick said Jordan reminded him last week that he "does things in threes," referring to Jordan's NBA championships clusters with the Chicago Bulls. "I was really glad to live up to that standard," Reddick said.



Jordan's having so much fun, he now wants to go for four.

"I'm going to Phoenix," Jordan said, noting the next race on the calendar.

And why not? The team is having a lot of fun on its march through NASCAR history.

Jordan and Hamlin took on NASCAR with a federal antitrust lawsuit. The settlement in December was considered a major legal victory that secured a permanent franchise-style model and ensured the team would remain in business for the long-term.

Jordan gives Hamlin the credit

for building the race-winning team on the track, specifically noting Hamlin's pursuit of Reddick as a driver.

"He's the mastermind," Jordan said. "I just put up the money. Denny's done an incredible job building this team."

Hamlin gave the compliment right back.

"It's a perfect partnership," Hamlin said. "This doesn't work out if he doesn't give me a lot of autonomy."

Hamlin, who also drives for Joe Gibbs Racing, said he wanted to be as hands-on as possible when

building the team.

"I wanted to make sure if it failed it was because of something I did," Hamlin said. "This team had three employees working at. We had zero. We didn't buy a team, we just built it."

Bringing in Reddick has proven almost priceless.

The 30-year-old driver raced to his first win with 23XI at COTA in 2023. He was second at Daytona in 2025, but a season that started with such promise ended winless.

Now he seems unbeatable.

"What a dream start for those guys," Hamlin said.