



## Fourth NASCAR Win Jordan's Team



The "Track Too Tough To Tame" tested Tyler Reddick in every way possible Sunday, and this year's top star in NASCAR naturally passed with flying colors for his fourth victory of the season. Reddick began the season with a Daytona 500 win on the way to becoming the first driver in NASCAR history to win the first three races of the season. He joined NASCAR Hall of Famers Dale Earnhardt (1987) and Bill Elliott (1992) as the only Cup drivers to win four of the first six races in a season.



## VA's 2A Community Is Up In Arms Over New Gun Legislation

By Guns & Ammo Staff

Virginia is poised to become the 12th state in the nation to ban so-called "assault weapons". Senate Bill 749, which passed along party lines by the Democrat-controlled General Assembly and now sitting on Gov. Abigail Spanberger's desk, will prohibit the sale, purchase, importation, manufacture, and transfer of a broad category of semi-automatic firearms beginning July 1, 2026. Spanberger, who has publicly supported such legislation, is expected to sign it.

Law-abiding Gun owners across the Commonwealth are scrambling to understand what it means for them. Violent criminals, such as the known terrorist and convicted felon who murdered an Army ROTC instructor at Virginia's Old Dominion University, will be unaffected by the legislation.

If there was any doubt that gun control has become a completely partisan issue in the Commonwealth, the passage of this bill should put that to rest. As soon as Virginia Democrats achieved the "trifecta" of the Governor's office and majorities in both legislative chambers, this ban marched forward. Not a single Democrat voted against it.

Republicans in the General Assembly pushed back hard, pointing out the hypocrisy of the soft-on-crime members pushing for the ban. "Democrats in Virginia refuse to take criminals who repeatedly terrorize our communities off our streets," Senate Minority Leader Ryan McDougle (R- Mechanicsville) told Guns & Ammo. "But they want to punish law-abiding gun owners who follow the rules."

Critics also note the arbitrary nature of the ban. The features targeted by SB 749 are largely cosmetic, a point opponents made with little effect on the bill's supporters.

The bill defines "assault firearms" using a feature-based test that will be immediately familiar to anyone who lived through the 1994-2004 federal ban — because it's essentially modeled on it. Lead sponsor Sen. Saddam Salim (D-Fairfax) has said as much.

Under SB 749, a semi-automatic, centerfire rifle that accepts a detachable magazine becomes prohibited if it has any one of the following features:

- A folding, telescoping, or collapsible stock
- A thumbhole stock or pistol grip that protrudes beneath the action
- A second handgrip or protruding grip for the non-trigger hand
- A grenade launcher

A threaded barrel capable of accepting a muzzle brake, compensator, suppressor, or flash hider. In practice, this sweeps up the AR-15 and millions of other legally owned rifles. Semi-automatic pistols face a two-feature test. The bill also bans magazines that hold more than 15 rounds.

The Grandfather Clause  
As we've seen in other jurisdictions, the law includes a grandfather clause. Firearms and magazines lawfully owned before July 1, 2026, may be kept but not sold or otherwise transferred to a fellow Virginian. The plan is clear: elimi-

(See **UP IN ARMS**, P. 2)

## State Law Says Public Records Must Be Provided 'As Promptly As Possible.'

NC LOCAL - In North Carolina, nearly all documents that city and county government officials create or receive while carrying out their duties are considered the property of the people. State law requires officials to make those documents — including written communications like emails, text messages, and social media posts — available "as promptly as possible" when anyone requests to inspect or copy them.

Although the law is the same across North Carolina, the time it takes local officials to fulfill that requirement can look quite different across the state. Long delays and incomplete responses for communications records requests are common, frustrating the public's legal rights and the media's ability to hold leaders accountable.

In conjunction with Sunshine Week, an annual celebration of open government and public records, NC Local, The Assembly, WFAE and

WUNC News requested the same set of emails from North Carolina's 20 largest cities at the same time.

Some provided the documents within minutes. Others placed the requests into queues that could take months or even years to clear.

What does the law say?  
Chapter 132 of North Carolina's General Statutes governs public records. The law covers "all documents, papers, letters, maps, books, photographs, films, sound recordings, magnetic or other tapes, electronic data-processing records, artifacts, or other documentary material, regardless of physical form or characteristics," related to the public business of governments across the state.

The law does exempt some documents, such as communications covered by attorney-client privilege, sensitive security information, and negotiations over economic development incentives. But even if a docu-

ment contains confidential information, government officials must still release the nonconfidential portions and bear the cost of any redactions.

"Every record created by a government official doing government business is presumptively a public record, and that of course includes email correspondence," Brooks Fuller, policy director for Common Cause North Carolina and a former executive director of the NC Open Government Coalition, said. "The law sets a pretty high bar that you would have to clear to keep that email from seeing the light of day."

Requesters don't have to share any reason for wanting to obtain public records, and they can request the information in any medium they'd like. Requests themselves are generally free. However, governments may charge for the actual cost of making copies (such as a flash drive for large digital files) or for the "extensive use

of information technology resources or extensive clerical or supervisory assistance."

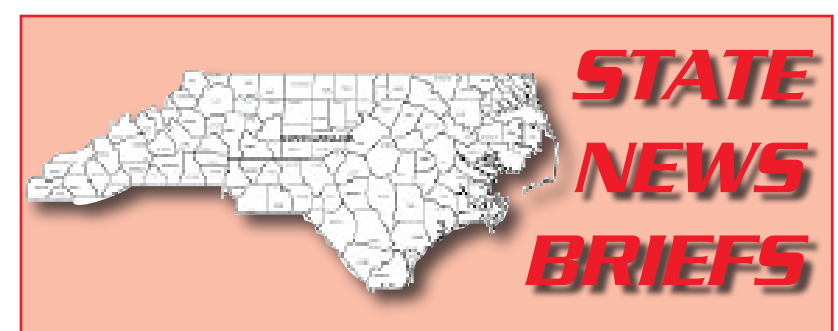
What is the reality?  
In practice, getting communications records from local governments can be a challenge.

Although the law says officials must share records "as promptly as possible," it doesn't define the meaning of that phrase. Local governments generally don't establish any timeframe for fulfilling records requests.

Exceptions include the city of Greensboro, which says it aims to respond within five business days, and Guilford County, which sets a target of 10 business days "for most routine requests."

Mike Tadych, a lawyer who helps monitor the N.C. Press Association's legal hotline, said many jurisdictions take substantially longer to release

(See **STATE LAW ON PUBLIC**, P. 2)



### NC INVESTS \$26M TO EXPAND HIGH-SPEED INTERNET INTO ADDITIONAL RURAL AREAS BY 2026

NC NEWSLINE - Thousands more rural North Carolinians will receive access to high-speed internet by the end of 2026, following a nearly \$26 million state investment announced Monday.

The awards come from the Stop-Gap Solutions program, administered by the N.C. Dept. of Information Technology's Division of Broadband and Digital Opportunity.

The additional funding targets 5,161 homes, businesses and community anchor institutions in 66 counties across rural areas across the state.

"These broadband projects will ensure more families can soon access telehealth, students can complete their homework, businesses can compete in larger markets, and communities can thrive," Gov. Josh Stein said in a statement.

The program aims to broaden high-speed internet access for households, facilities, businesses and communities in North Carolina. It uses funds from the federal American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 to expand "last mile" broadband line extensions for individuals and small pockets of businesses and homes in hard-to-reach areas, according to the statement.

"High-speed internet access is the foundation for health care delivery, public safety operations, workforce development, and economic growth in our state," NCDIT Secretary and state Chief Information Officer Teena Piccione said in a statement. "This program allows us to move with urgency and precision to connect more North Carolinians."

NCDIT has contracted more than \$670 million for broadband projects reaching completion in 2026, according to the statement. These projects will connect more than 252,000 homes and businesses.

The department has also awarded almost \$50 million to state government agencies, local governments, community organizations and nonprofits which have provided 40,965 computers and training to 66,410 people, according to the governor's office.

### NCDMV ROLLS OUT LIVE WAIT TIME TRACKER FOR DRIVER LICENSE OFFICES

WUNC - The North Carolina Division of Motor Vehicles is rolling out a new online tool to help cut down on wait times at its driver license offices.

Customers can now check how busy each site is before heading out. The feature is available on the NCDMV website and covers locations statewide.

Each office will show one of three statuses: accepting walk-ins and appointments, busy with longer waits or at capacity.

The estimates are based on real-time data, including how many people are waiting and how long services typically take.

State officials say the goal is to help residents better plan their visits and avoid long lines.

## Supreme Court Skeptical Of Allowing States To Count Late Mail-In Ballots

STAE LINE - The U.S. Supreme Court's conservative justices on Monday appeared skeptical of the validity of mail-in ballots that arrive after Election Day, in a case that could potentially affect hundreds of thousands of voters during the upcoming midterm elections.

The high court heard arguments on whether federal law overrides a Mississippi law that requires mail-in ballots that are postmarked on or before Election Day to be counted as long as they arrive within five business days of the election. Fourteen states have similar laws, which extend a "grace period" to ballots that arrive through the mail after polls close.

Several conservative justices raised concerns with allowing ballots to arrive after Election Day, including whether voters could recall ballots once they've shipped them but before they arrive at election offices. Justice Brett Kavanaugh questioned whether late-arriving ballots risk undermining election confidence.

"The longer after Election Day any significant changes in vote totals take place, the greater the risk that the losing side will cry the election has been stolen," Kavanaugh said, quoting from an analysis by a New York Uni-



versity law professor.

The case comes before the Supreme Court at a moment of broader attacks against mail-in voting. Four Republican-led states eliminated their ballot arrival grace periods last year. And Congress is mulling proposals that would restrict voting by mail amid a sprawling debate in the U.S. Senate over legislation demanded by President Donald Trump that

would impose sweeping new voter restrictions nationwide. That legislation, known as the SAVE Act, is unlikely to pass because of the filibuster.

The Republican National Committee is challenging Mississippi's grace period law. The party contends a longstanding federal law that sets the Tuesday after the first Monday in November as Election Day for federal offices preempts state laws that allow

ballots cast by Election Day, but received later, to count.

Paul Clement, an attorney for the Republican National Committee, argued the prospect that the outcome of an election could change because of ballots arriving after Election Day would be unacceptable to losing candidates. After the 2020 election, President Donald Trump demanded election officials not count ballots that came in after Election Day. States kept counting ballots.

"If you have an election and the election is going to turn on late-arriving ballots in a way that means what everybody kind of thought was the result on Election Day ends up being the opposite a week later, 21 days later, the losers are not going to accept that result. Full stop," Clement told the justices.

Mississippi Secretary of State Michael Watson, a Republican who is defending the state law, argues that federal law allows ballots cast by Election Day to be received later. In legal filings, attorneys for the secretary argue both legal and historical precedent support his position. States may decide that voters have made

(See **BALLOTS**, P. 2)

## UP IN ARMS

Continued from page 1

nate ownership within a generation.

Law enforcement agencies are exempt from the sales ban, and federally licensed dealers may continue to acquire and transfer the affected firearms but only to eligible buyers outside Virginia or to other FFLs, not to individual Virginia residents.

Violations are classified as a Class 1 misdemeanor. Convictions carry a three-year prohibition on purchasing, possessing, or transporting any firearm: a consequence that should not be taken lightly.

## The Legal Fight

Second Amendment advocates are not waiting to see how this plays out in the legislature. The constitutional argument centers on District of Columbia v. Heller (2008), which held that firearms "in common use" for lawful purposes cannot be banned. By any measure, the AR-15 and similar semi-automatic rifles qualify since they are among the most popular firearms in the country.

The legal landscape is genuinely mixed. Several federal district courts have struck down similar laws under the Bruen (2022) standard, which requires the government to show that a restriction is consistent with America's historical tradition of firearm regulation. But the 4th Circuit, the federal appellate court with jurisdiction over Virginia, upheld Maryland's "assault weapon" ban in 2017 and 2024. That tension may ultimately have to be resolved by the Supreme Court, which declined to take up the Maryland ruling in 2025.

Virginia gun owners who have not yet contacted their governor or gotten involved with pro-Second Amendment organizations in the state should do so now. The legal challenges ahead will take time, money, and organized pressure to succeed. The clock is already running.

## BALLOTS

Continued from page 1

their final choices when ballots are submitted to state officials rather than when they're received, according to Watson.

On Monday, the justices appeared divided along ideological lines, with conservative justices skeptical of the grace periods and liberal justices more sympathetic. Conservatives hold a 6-3 majority on the court.

"It seems to me that we have a very long history of states having a variety of different ballot receipt deadlines, to include after Election Day," said Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, one of the court's liberal members.

Mississippi Solicitor General Scott Stewart told the court the dispute is over whether Congress in an 1845 law blocked states from counting ballots cast by Election Day but received later. "No one challenged it until now," Stewart said.

At least 725,000 ballots were postmarked by Election Day 2024 and arrived within a legally accepted post-election window, The New York Times has reported, citing election officials in 14 of 22 states and territories where late-arriving ballots were accepted that year.

About 30% of voters cast a mail ballot in 2024, according to data gathered by the U.S. Election Assistance Commission.

The 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled in October 2024 that federal law requires ballots to be received by Election Day. Trump likewise issued an executive order last year that attempted to require that mail ballots be received by the end of Election Day and to impose other election changes, but much of the order has been blocked by federal courts.

Rick Hasen, a professor and director of the Safeguarding Democracy Project at the University of California-Los Angeles School of Law, wrote on his Election Law Blog that it was clear from Monday's arguments that the Supreme Court will be closely divided, "and the case could come out either way." A decision is expected later in the spring or early summer.

Caleb Hays, chief policy counsel at the Center for Election Confidence, a conservative-leaning legal advocacy group that opposes ballot grace periods, said his organization was pleased that the justices appeared to pick up on the need for a clear end to the voting period. He also welcomed the justices raising the issue of recalling ballots when they are delivered through the mail or by a third-party service like FedEx.

"That brings into question some of the arguments we saw from (Mississippi) on a ballot being final when it is cast and cast includes when it is deposited in a mailbox," Hays said in an interview.

As the legal challenge made its way through the courts over the past two years, some Republican-led states moved to eliminate their grace periods. Kansas, North Dakota, Ohio and Utah last year moved to require all or nearly all ballots to be in the hands of election officials on Election Day to count.

The states that continue to extend grace periods for ballots arriving after Election Day are Alaska, California, Illinois, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Nevada, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Washington and West Virginia, along with the District of Columbia.

Some local election officials have urged the Supreme Court to uphold ballot grace periods. A decision that strikes down state laws' grace periods would increase the administrative burdens on many election officials, said a collection of election officials and local governments in California, Massachusetts and Washington in an amicus brief.

"(Grace periods) enable administrators in large and small jurisdictions to do their essential work in a timely and reasonable manner," the brief says.

If the Supreme Court requires that ballots must arrive on or before Election Day, Clement suggested election officials would have enough time to prepare ahead of November. He said such a decision wouldn't violate the Purcell principle, a Supreme Court doctrine holding that major changes to election policy and practice shouldn't be made just before an election because voters could get confused.

The federal law at issue pertains to general elections, not primary elections, he noted — meaning the court's decision would apply only to the November election.

"There's plenty of time," Clement said.

# 'Wandering Officers' Are Widespread Across NC Law Enforcement Agencies

CAROLINA PUBLIC PRESS - In 2015, Mark Oakley, then an officer with the Roanoke Rapids Police Department, slammed a detainee at the Halifax County jail to the ground, then "tased him" while the man was "in handcuffs and posed no threat," according to a civil lawsuit later filed against Oakley.

An officer who is found to have used excessive force against an unarmed person risks losing his career in law enforcement. That didn't happen in this case.

The incident sparked an internal investigation, and the Roanoke Rapids police chief at the time would later tell attorneys that he was prepared to terminate Oakley for misconduct. However, Oakley resigned before that investigation concluded.

He would go on to work at three more law enforcement agencies over the next eight years, until eventually he landed in nearby Warren County at the Warrenton Police Department, which fired him in March 2024 following an SBI investigation into multiple complaints of Oakley unnecessarily deploying his Taser on civilians.

Before Oakley used the stun gun on them, all three individuals named in the lawsuit were "detained and immobilized." One woman was pinned to the front seat of her car and another was handcuffed in a patrol car. A third man was pinned against the back of a car with his hands visible.

Even the investigation into Oakley and his dismissal didn't mean the end of his career. He continued to work his part-time gig as an officer back in Halifax County with the Littleton Police Department, another small agency



just 15 miles from Warrenton. Federal agents arrested him more than a year later for depriving the stun gun victims of their rights "under the color of law," according to the indictment.

Even then, the Littleton police never actually terminated Oakley. Instead, he handed in his resignation five days after being criminally charged.

Oakley was a prime example of what criminal justice experts call a "wandering officer."

While no agreed upon definition of a wandering officer exists, the one used by the late scholar Dorothy Moses Schulz is helpful: "a police officer who leaves one department after being terminated for misconduct or under a disciplinary cloud, and secures employment in another law-enforcement agency."

This article, the first in the three-

part investigative series Stray Cops by Carolina Public Press, explores the extent of the wandering officer problem in North Carolina. Upcoming articles in the series will examine the systemic reasons for this phenomenon in North Carolina and potential solutions to increase transparency and accountability in law enforcement hiring.

NC data limits wandering officer count

CPP identified nearly 700 wandering officers in North Carolina as of the most recent data available, although several issues make producing a precise count of wandering officers across the state extremely difficult.

For one, the most recent statewide employment data kept by the NC Department of Justice is inadequate for the task. Since switching to a new database system in 2022, publicly avail-

able law enforcement employment data no longer gives a reason for why an officer separated from an agency.

That makes it impossible to distinguish between officers who leave their departments because they retired versus officers whom agencies terminated because of misconduct.

The second problem is identified in Schulz's definition of a wandering officer. An officer who resigns from one job "under a disciplinary cloud," as Oakley did in Roanoke Rapids in 2015, is much harder to track compared to an officer whom an agency fired outright.

Keisha James, an attorney with the National Police Accountability Project, a nonprofit that litigates instances of police misconduct across the county, including North Carolina, said the public often has difficulty getting detailed information about what happened at a previous agency if an officer resigned.

"Even in situations where an officer was engaged in misconduct at a previous employer, you might not be able to get any information about what actually happened, because the investigation essentially closed before it can really begin," she said. "What would have been a termination ends up in a resignation."

So, the total number of wandering officers CPP identified likely undercounts the total cases because it doesn't include anyone without a dismissal on their record, even if they resigned due to accusations of misconduct. It also wouldn't include officers who were fired from an agency

(See *WANDERING OFFICERS*, P. 7)

## State Law on Public Law — CONT. FROM PAGE 1

records.

Some requests in Charlotte, for example, have waited years for fulfillment. A 2024 analysis by The Charlotte Observer found over 1,500 unfilled requests, including one ask for emails and text messages initially submitted in 2020.

In other cases, officials don't share public records that requesters know exist. Pate McMichael, a communications instructor at Elon University and director of the NC Open Government Coalition, said elected officials often omit communications from their private cell phones and email accounts.

The law considers those communications to be public records if they were sent or received regarding official business. But government staffers have no way to verify if a city council member, for example, is turning over all relevant messages from his or her personal phone number or Facebook page.

"Unless you're willing to sue, it's very difficult to get them to disclose," McMichael says. "I just don't feel confident that, even if you get back whatever it is they're turning over, you're getting the full story."

A test of basic communications requests

To see how different local governments would respond to a routine request for communications, NC Local and its media partners asked 22 cities for the same set of records: all emails sent to or from the city's clerk between 9 a.m. and noon on Feb. 24.

Journalists with NC Local, The Assembly, WFAE in Charlotte, and WUNC in the Triangle used identical language and sent all requests the morning of Feb. 27.

Each request was submitted to the cities' formal public records portals; if a city didn't have a portal, the request went by email to a public information officer or directly to the city clerk.

The experiment covered North Carolina's 20 largest cities by population, from Charlotte through Wake Forest. The Border Belt Independent, part of The Assembly network, also submitted requests to Lumberton and Pembroke.

Which cities provided documents?

More than two weeks after those inquiries went out, less than half of the cities had provided the requested emails. The quickest to respond was Chapel Hill, which shared its documents in less than 30 minutes. Apex provided the emails in just over an hour, and Huntersville also responded on the same day.

Burlington, High Point, and Kannapolis all responded within a week. Durham provided records on March 9, Fayetteville on March 11, and Charlotte on March 12. (Pembroke's clerk responded March 12, saying she had neither sent nor received any emails during the time period in question.)

The formats of responses varied. Some cities shared each email as a separate PDF document; Kannapolis compiled everything into a single 52-page PDF. Others cities provided the records as Microsoft Outlook files, which require specialized software to open.

The emails themselves provided a glimpse into the workaday business of city administration and the variety of jobs city clerks are tasked with accomplishing. Durham Clerk Diana Schreiber, for example, spent the morning of Feb. 24 asking for updates on city committees, coordinating responses to records requests, and approving a purchase order for Chai Latte K-Cups.

How did other governments respond?

Most cities that had not provided records after two weeks gave no communication about the requests other than automated response emails. Other cities had staff acknowledge receipt.

Cary, for example, wrote that WUNC News could expect a response "in about 10 business days." Jacksonville's clerk said she would send the information "once it has been compiled." As of publication, NC Local had not received further communication from either city.

Raleigh responded on March 10, saying that it hadn't begun the search for records and asking for any keywords that might narrow the scope of the request. "The more specific

your criteria, the faster we can begin processing your request," the city's email read, despite the initial inquiry already being tightly limited to three hours of records for a single employee. State law does not require requesters to target any specific keywords.

The City of Asheville processes requests for communication records separately from requests for other types of information, although the law makes no distinction between the two.

"By separating the two, we're able to keep things moving more efficiently," said city spokesperson Kim Miller.

Communications requests, which include requests for items like emails and text messages, are placed into a queue, which currently lists 30 entries dating back to July.

Although the queue document was updated March 12, it did not contain NC Local's communications request as of press time.

Allison Byers, who as Asheville's public records officer is the sole employee processing communications requests, wrote that the queue "is not intended to serve as a realtime indication of request status or progress."

Miller confirmed that communications requests are processed in the order received, regardless of their size, and that only one request's emails are reviewed for release at any given time. Many requests in the queue are substantially larger than NC Local's inquiry: One request covers over two years' worth of communications from dozens of city officials.

Tadych, the NCPA lawyer, said he believes Asheville's approach may not comply with state law.

"If they've got a quagmire for somebody else's request, and somebody else can turn and pull the three emails that you want, they should do that. The law doesn't contemplate a queue or getting in line," Tadych said. "If you're talking about a finite set of every email between Bobby and Sue on this day, that's 10 minutes' worth of work."

What's next?

Despite the clear lack of consis-

tency between how local governments handle records requests, there are currently no efforts at the General Assembly to refine or tighten the relevant law.

Sen. Graig Meyer, a Democrat from Chapel Hill who received the 2024 "Sunshine Award for Public Service" from the NC Open Government Coalition, said colleagues on both sides of the aisle have been reluctant to support that work. (Meyer recently announced his resignation from public office, effective at the end of the month, to serve as executive director of the North Carolina Justice Center.)

"I wish that all politicians believed that transparency actually made us more effective at our jobs, but the truth is that they don't. Sometimes, including in the General Assembly, that's because people are hiring their corruption," Meyer said. "Sometimes it's just because people are hiding their fear, and sometimes there are people who just don't want to have to articulate what it is that they stand for and why, which should be a basic requirement for people to hold public office."

And while the core of the public records law has remained in place, the legislature has added meaningful exceptions in recent years.

McMichael with the Open Government Coalition pointed to a provision in the state's 2023 budget that allows General Assembly members to deny any request for their own records. Last year, the state also exempted "name, image and likeness" contracts for college athletes, thereby shielding millions of dollars in taxpayer spending on athletics from public scrutiny.

In contrast, recent bills that would have expanded public records access have died in committee. Those efforts included the Government Transparency Act, which would share the general reasons for the dismissal and discipline of state employees; the H.A.L.L. Accountability Act, which would open records related to redistricting; and a constitutional amendment guaranteeing the public's right to access records.

## Raleigh City Council Pushed for Safer Streets

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

A Tuesday morning Raleigh City Council meeting focused heavily on a strategy aimed at reducing traffic deaths and serious injuries—particularly around schools and high-risk corridors—while also advancing housing and infrastructure funding plans.

The centerpiece of the meeting was the city's Comprehensive Safety Action Plan, developed through the Federal Safe Streets for All (SS4A) program under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in 2021. The plan lays out a long-term framework for improving roadway safety using a "Vision Zero" approach, which assumes human error is inevitable and emphasizes designing streets and systems that prevent those mistakes from becoming fatal.

City staff presented stark findings: 68 percent of Raleigh's fatal and serious injury crashes occur on just 13 percent of its roadway network. The most common contributing factors

include speeding, lane departures, and failure to use seatbelts. High-speed, multilane arterial roads and complex intersections were identified as the most dangerous, particularly in areas serving pedestrians and cyclists. Each year, roughly 40 people die in traffic crashes in Raleigh, while about 250 sustain serious injuries. Statewide, those figures climb to approximately 1,700 deaths and 4,500 serious injuries annually.

Residents cited speeding, distracted and aggressive driving, and gaps in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure as their top concerns. Particular attention was given to school safety. Officials said that many schools—including Enloe High School and Central Wake-area campuses—are located near high-risk corridors where students face challenges crossing streets and navigating insufficient pedestrian infrastructure. The plan recommends a tiered approach to address the most dangerous school zones first, combining engineering upgrades, education campaigns, and targeted enforcement.

Among the most urgent corridor-level recommendations are two stretches of Capital Boulevard: from Sumner Boulevard to Calvary Drive, and from New Hope Church Road to Brentwood Road.

The city's Vision Zero initiative, launched in 2022, has already led to measurable investments. Raleigh and the North Carolina Department of Transportation have secured more than \$15 million for safety improvements at 35 locations, including 25 upgrades around schools, 40 intersection projects, and 20 street lighting enhancements. Enforcement data presented during the session underscored ongoing concerns. A recent saturation patrol along Glenwood Avenue resulted in 138 traffic stops and 188 charges, including 53 for speeding, eight for seatbelt violations, and nine for driving under the influence.

Beyond transportation safety, the council also advanced discussions on housing and financing. A required public hearing process is underway for the city's FY 2026–2027 Annual Action Plan, which will guide how

federal housing funds from programs like Community Development Block Grants, HOME Investment Partnerships, and Emergency Solutions Grants are allocated. The plan is expected to come before the council for final approval in May.

Financial updates also included a proposal to issue up to \$157.5 million in Limited Obligation Bond Anticipation Notes to support major projects such as the relocation of Red Hat Amphitheater and the first phase of the Raleigh Convention Center expansion. Officials said the financing mechanism will help reimburse approximately \$30 million in prior expenditures and ensure sufficient cash flow moving forward, supported in part by Wake County hospitality tax revenues.

Council members also received an update on property tax collection trends from Wake County officials, who cited increasing affordable housing exemptions, large commercial appeals, and broadfield exemptions as key factors affecting revenue.

## The Carolinian

(ISSN 00455873)

1504 New Bern Ave, Raleigh, North Carolina 27610

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 25308

Raleigh, North Carolina 27611

Periodical Postage Paid at Raleigh North Carolina 27611

Warrenton Address: P.O. Box 536

Warrenton, NC 27589

Rocky Mount Address: 120 N Franklin St

Rocky Mount, NC 27804

Postmaster

Send all address changes to:

The Carolinian

1504 New Bern Avenue

Raleigh, NC 27610

PUBLISHED SIX TIMES MONTHLY

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

One Year ..... \$45.00

Payable in advance. Address all communications and make all checks and money orders payable to *The Carolinian*.

Founded by P.R. Jervay, Sr. in 1940

The Carolinian Newspaper, Inc. of Raleigh

Publisher.....Adria Jervay

Sales Consultant.....Paul R. Jervay, Jr.

Circulation Manager.....Andrew Alston

Jervay Agency, National Advertising Representative

www.TheJervayAgency.com

Member:

North Carolina Black Publishers Association

National Newspaper Publishers Association

HUB Certified MWBE

The Publisher is not responsible for the return of unsolicited news, pictures or advertising copy unless necessary postage accompanies the copy.

Opinions expressed by columnists in this newspaper do not necessarily represent the policy of the newspaper.

Phone: 919-834-5558

e-mail: info@caro.news

www.caro.news

Facebook: TheCaroNews

Twitter: @TheCaroNews

To SUBSCRIBE To The Carolinian call us at

919-834-5558

or visit us online at

www.CARO.news



# Business & Finance

## NC Lawmakers Rethink How Future Transportation Dollars Are Spent

NC NEWSLINE - In today's highly partisan environment, it's hard to get Republicans and Democrats to agree on much. But when it comes to North Carolina's transportation infrastructure, both sides agree the current funding formula needs to be reworked.

Members of the House Select Committee on North Carolina's Transportation Future held an initial meeting last week to discuss challenges, opportunities and strategic needs affecting the state's transportation systems.

N.C. Dept. of Transportation Deputy Planning Director David Wasserman told legislators that for 13 years, the state has relied on the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) law to score and prioritize which transportation projects get built in the state.

Based on how projects are scored and ranked, they may qualify for one of 22 'buckets' of funding. A project deemed critical to the state's mobility — like interstate maintenance or a bridge replacement — could score high enough to qualify for a larger portion of state dollars and move up the priority list. A project not chosen there could be selected for regional funding where 30% of the dollars are allocated. An even smaller project — perhaps a highway rail crossing or a bridge rehabilitation — could qualify as a division need and fall into a smaller funding bucket.

Growth outpacing state funding Rep. Frank Iler (R-Brunswick) said the road-tested formula may have worked in the past, but it's not working now.

"The assumption is that Raleigh and Charlotte are getting most of the money and possibly the Piedmont, and that the eastern and western [parts of the state] are not getting projects even when their growth is exploding," said Iler.

Iler said Brunswick County has doubled in size in the last 20 years but has not qualified for a larger slice of the STI pie.

"In the next 15 years, they got 70,000 housing units being permitted, and we're connected to the Myrtle Beach area with about half a million people," said Iler. "That



doesn't seem to count on a statewide level."

Rep. John Torbett said North Carolina is overdue for a comprehensive, bipartisan study to show how recent growth has impacted the state. Transportation decisions made a decade earlier might be funded differently today based on how the population has shifted.

"I think significant alterations may be needed to the process based on those outcomes," said the Gaston County Republican.

But Torbett said that's not the only problem.

"We have more projects than we have the funds to accommodate," said Torbett. "Maybe we're reaching for too many needs, and we need to channel that back."

Torbett said the NCDOT also must do a better job managing expenses and deadlines.

"All I'm hearing these days instead of this project being completed is this project is delayed, this project is delayed, and this project is delayed based on inflationary cost overruns," said Torbett.

Durham Democrat Rep. Zack Hawkins said from his perspective, it was shortsighted not to look at the statewide benefits of light rail in the Triangle. The initiative was viewed as a regional project and never ranked high enough to fall into one

of the larger financial buckets.

"There were a lot of things about this project that were doomed from the start, but this was one of them and it shouldn't have been," said Hawkins. "I think about how many other major projects that are not in even urban areas that have been categorized wrong or miscategorized but could have had great benefit to the state."

Rep. Carolyn Logan (D-Mecklenburg) agreed that the state needs to find a better way to manage rush hour traffic in metro areas beyond trying to add highway lanes.

"You can't grow more land," said Logan, a former state trooper. "We're going to have to find other ways to get traffic moving, and that would be mass transportation. Regional railroad would be an excellent way, in my opinion."

A 2022 study for GoTriangle estimated the cost of building a new commuter rail system to serve the region could be as much as \$3.2 billion.

Interstate repairs in WNC may not be complete until 2028

A more immediate need is the completion of Interstate 40 in the mountains, said Rep. Alan Branson, a Guilford County Republican who owns a trucking company.

The NCDOT estimates the damage Hurricane Helene caused in 2024 to

transportation infrastructure at \$5.8 billion, with I-40 representing a \$2 billion project.

"To date, we've spent about \$1.4 billion on repairs out of that \$5.8," said Patrick Norman, NCDOT's chief engineer. "We're only about 25% of the way as far as expenditures."

The NCDOT anticipates the full reopening of I-40 in western North Carolina in the summer of 2028.

Torbett suggested that while the cost would be huge, the state should investigate adding another route through the mountains should there be another storm or landslide like Helene.

The chief engineer said the agency could certainly study that request, but NCDOT expects the I-40 infrastructure repairs to be sustainable.

"I wish we could get a bus of all North Carolinians to go look at that project. It's astronomical," said Torbett. "Literally half of that mountainside, half of those lanes of I-40 are just simply not there anymore. They're downstream somewhere. It just seems like you could be there forever putting back rock where a rock used to be."

Chris Lukasina, president of the N.C. Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, offered a reality check.

He told lawmakers population growth and congestion are far outpacing the state's current resources.

He said lawmakers would be wise to look at all revenue options, with more areas now showing an interest in a local option sales tax to speed up regional projects.

Ahead of the April legislative session, Lukasina said the General Assembly also needs to find a way to preserve institutional knowledge at the NCDOT. The agency has had a vacancy rate hovering around 18%-20% for the past couple years.

"The folks there are very competent. There's just a whole lot less of them doing the work compared to ten or fifteen years ago," Lukasina said.

When the agency must rely on third-party consultants, it results in new funding challenges and the reality of projects continually starting, stopping and restarting, he said.



## Duke announces \$200 million 'economic opportunity' initiative

WUNC - Duke University says it will commit more than \$200 million to expand economic opportunity in the Triangle. The "HomeGrown" initiative will unfold over the next three years and include a combination of hiring, investing in affordable housing, and spending with local and regional businesses.

More than half of the money, \$120 million, will go to increasing partnerships with Triangle-based construction companies. Another \$45 million is earmarked for contracting with other local businesses. \$38 million will be spent on affordable housing developments and assistance for first-time homebuyers.

The remaining funds will go toward hiring Triangle residents for entry-level roles at the university and hospital, as well as youth internships and an employment program for people who were formerly incarcerated.

"This isn't about Duke doing something for the community — it's Duke recognizing that we are part of the community and we rise or fall together," Ian Brown, Duke Health's chief community health and social impact officer said at a Wednesday media briefing. "HomeGrown reflects what we heard by listening to residents, to employees, and small businesses about what they need most."

Not everyone agrees this commitment is enough to address what some see as an extractive relationship between Duke and the Durham community.

In the past, Duke University has been criticized for not making direct payments to the city, in lieu of not paying property or sales taxes. Other universities like Yale, Princeton, and Brown have made such payments.

Nate Baker is a member of the Durham City Council and has been one of the critics. He says that the new initiative will be beneficial, but it isn't enough to address what he says is an unbalanced relationship between Duke and Durham.

"Some of these things are quite positive," Baker, an urban planner, said. "(But) I would say that the \$200 million number, I don't think it would be controversial to say it's pretty fluffed and exaggerated."

"Duke is both Durham's largest and wealthiest landowner, and they also benefit by not paying sales or property taxes ... even while using city and county services and infrastructure. And so that results essentially in the loss of tens of millions, if not hundreds of millions, of dollars of revenue — to the city of Durham, Durham County, Durham Public Schools — and that places a greater burden on our residents and on our small businesses."

For the past few years, Baker has been part of a grassroots movement called Duke: Respect Durham that advocates for Duke to make permanent annual investments in the community called "payments in lieu of taxes," or PILOTS.

He said he would like to see the university contribute at least \$20 million to \$30 million per year to the city and county governments, including the Durham Public School System.

Duke officials did not specifically address a PILOT agreement in its panel presentation on Wednesday.

"Over the past several years, we've expanded our capacity, engaged deeply with residents and local organizations, and worked to better define the role Duke can play in supporting long-term economic opportunity across Durham and the Triangle," Adam Klein, Duke's associate vice president for economic development, said in a written statement. "HomeGrown represents a clear plan to advance that work in a more coordinated and measurable way."

Baker, the city council member, said he believes there's several critical steps the university needs to take to foster accountability and transparency with the community. He'd like to see a formal agreement between Duke University and the local government like a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

"Duke is not going to hold themselves accountable to the degree that is necessary. That is going to take the community," Baker said. "That doesn't mean Duke is bad. It just means that they are unsurprisingly, like anybody and everybody does, acting in their own self-interest. And so that's why this really needs to be led by neighbors, by tenants, by workers and by folks on campus; students, professors, staff, alumni."

Duke University plans for its HomeGrown initiative to last until 2029. Klein, Duke's economic development VP, said his team will be coming back to the community annually with updates on how it is progressing.

## Progress, Partnership, and the Path Ahead: 2026 State of the Schools Address by Dr. Robert P. Taylor, Superintendent of WCPSS

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Raleigh, NC - In his second annual State of the Schools address, Superintendent Dr. Robert P. Taylor delivered a message that was equal parts celebratory and sobering. Speaking to a room filled with educators, students, business leaders, families, and elected officials, Dr. Taylor painted a picture of a district leading North Carolina in academic growth and innovation, while simultaneously bracing for the "difficult choices" posed by rising costs and shifting funding landscapes. Dr. Taylor leaned heavily into the district's data-driven successes, noting that academic proficiency has increased for the third consecutive year.

**Key Highlights & Success Metrics**  
 - Graduation Rate for Class of 2025, 90.6% (Over 12,600 graduates).  
 - 5-Year Graduation Rate, 93.1% A district record!  
 - Math Proficiency, High School Math 3 scores rose by 7+ points  
 - National Certifications | 3,250+ National Board Certified teachers, among the highest in the U.S.

- Magnet Excellence: 54 WCPSS schools received National Merit Awards this year, with five being named "Top Schools of Excellence" in the nation.

The Superintendent spotlighted Molly Todd, the 2026 North Carolina Beginning Teacher of the Year from Panther Creek High School, as a symbol of the district's high-caliber workforce. A central theme of the address was the evolution of the classroom. Dr. Taylor emphasized that education in Wake County is moving beyond rote memorization toward problem-solving in a world shaped by AI. Career and Technical Education (CTE) in WCPSS helps students explore interests, develop real-world skills, and prepare for high-demand careers. The school system is focused on hands-on learning, industry partnerships, and career exploration, so students graduate ready for the next step.

**Innovation and Career Readiness**  
 - With 56,000 middle and high school students enrolled in CTE, the district is proving to be an economic engine.

- Over 33,000 industry-recognized CTE credentials earned last year.  
 - Real-World Partnerships: The speech featured a testimonial from Rosville High senior Cal Piotrovski, who is transitioning directly into a pre-apprenticeship with a local electric company, highlighting the "direct connection" between school and the local workforce.

(See **SCHOOLS ADDRESS** P. 6)

## The Pay Gap Between Women And Men Widened In 2025, Analysis Finds

NC NEWSLINE - The earnings gap between men and women slightly widened last year, according to a new report.

The left-leaning Economic Policy Institute calculated women last year earned 18.6% less than men per hour on average. That's up slightly from 2024, when the wage gap narrowed slightly to 18%.

The wage analysis, which examines several federal data sets and independent research papers, controls for race, ethnicity, education, age, marital status and geography.

The findings were published ahead of Equal Pay Day on March 26, a symbolic date marking how far into 2026 women would have to work on top of their 2025 hours to match what men earned in 2025.

The new analysis found the wage



gap is smallest among lower-wage workers, in part because minimum wages create a uniform wage floor. But women are paid less than men across all education levels — women with a graduate degree on average earn less than men with only a college degree, it said.

The analysis found the widest wage gap among Black and Hispanic women: Black women are paid only 68.3% of white men's median wages. That's a gap of \$9.87 per hour — translating to roughly \$20,500 lower annual earnings for a full-time worker.

The institute says women earn less

because of occupational differences, societal norms and the devaluation of women's work.

The organization suggests states enact pay transparency laws, mandate employers provide paid family and medical leave, raise the minimum wage, fund universal child care and remove laws that make it harder to join labor unions. But conservative lawmakers and private employers argue that many of those policies would lead to reduced workforces or higher prices.

"Closing pay gaps by gender and by race and ethnicity will require policy solutions on multiple fronts," the report said. "Although attacks on gender and racial equity continue at the federal level, state lawmakers can and must take steps to address the gender wage gap."

## North Carolina's Disaster Risk Is High. How Does That Affect Home Insurance

BPR News - New data from a national insurance-comparison platform, Insurify, shows that homeowner's insurance rates are rising across the nation — in many cases, due to climate risk.

Insurify projects North Carolina's insurance premiums to rise only by about 5% in 2026, and have risen 14% overall since 2023, though rates actually fell a little in 2024. Compared to other high climate-risk states, the premiums are fairly flat — but there's more to the story.

Between 1980 and 2024, North Carolina's seen 121 billion-dollar disasters with an average of over seven billion-dollar disasters per year since 2020, according to climate data from the National Centers for Environmental Information.

North Carolina has had an interesting few years when it comes to insurance premiums. The state's rate bureau asked for a 42% rate hike last year, citing both increased risky development in hurricane-prone coastal areas and billions of dollars in storm damage from Hurricane Helene. The state insurance commissioner granted just a 7.5% increase.

Much of the damage incurred by North Carolina homeowners over the past several years is flood damage



from extreme, multi-billion-dollar storms like Helene in Western North Carolina, and Florence in the coastal region, but flooding damage is not covered by homeowners' insurance.

Other storm damage is covered in certain cases, like wind-related tree damage, but that too is proving to be problematic. One homeowner, Bob Tatum in Avery County, N.C., told BPR that his State Farm homeowners' insurance — with a premium of \$2,000 per year — wouldn't cover

tree and wind damage after it totaled his house during Hurricane Helene. Because the trees had pushed his house off its foundation, it had flooded.

"They kept saying, 'No, it's flood,' they wasn't going to cover anything," Tatum said. He had previously had flood insurance for \$9,000 per year, but had quit because it was so expensive.

"In North Carolina and in higher-risk coastal states, insurers are not

# M&F Bank Grants \$10,000 to Raleigh Small Business Marking \$100,000 In Total Gifts Awarded Since 2024

DURHAM, N.C. – March 23, 2026 – M&F Bank, North Carolina's only Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) and minority-owned bank, awarded \$10,000 to Sherrill's University through its Empowering Growth Small Business Grant. The Raleigh business provides vocational and entrepreneurial training focused on cosmetology, barbering, natural hair care, and instructor training. The award was made possible through the bank's ongoing partnership with Fiserv, a leading global provider of payments and financial services technology solutions.

"At M&F Bank, our mission has always been rooted in service—and the Empowering Growth Small Business Grant is a meaningful extension of that commitment," said Caroline Taylor, senior vice president and chief lending officer at M&F Bank. "By investing in entre-

preneurs, we're not just supporting individual businesses—we're fueling broader economic opportunity. After all, when small businesses grow, communities thrive."

The recent grant marks the final of five \$10,000 awards M&F Bank distributed as part of its 2025 grant cycle, bringing the total to more than \$100,000 granted since the program's inception in 2024. Through this initiative, the bank is advancing its mission to spur economic development, expand access to capital, and uplift entrepreneurs across North Carolina.

Interestingly, more than seventy percent of grant recipients have been female business owners, including Sherril's University, whose mission is to address workforce gaps and economic inequities, the school provides hands-on trade education, professional development, and career pathways for youth,

adults and second-career learners. The business serves diverse populations, including rural residents, low-income individuals, and those seeking alternative pathways to traditional college education. The company will use the grant to strengthen operational capacity and expand educational impact.

"Raleigh is a growing city filled with opportunity, and I want to make sure that people in our community have access to career pathways through trade education," said Wanda Short, owner of Sherril's University. "My commitment has always been the same – to provide training that helps individuals build independence, confidence and entrepreneurship right here in Raleigh."

As a grant recipient, the company will gain access to a coordinated ecosystem of supportive business tools, trainings, and networking



opportunities. It will receive a dedicated M&F Bank business banker to provide personalized guidance, expert advice, and tailored financial solutions as well as Chambers of Commerce memberships and complimentary technology from Clover, the world's smartest point-of-sale system and business management platform.

"Commerce has the power to move the world forward—to uplift communities, drive economies, and transform lives. We're committed to ensuring that all businesses, large and small, can be part of this force that propels us toward the future we all envision together," said Neil Wilcox, head of corporate social responsibility at Fiserv. "M&F Bank's mission to serve underrepresented people and communities aligns well with our efforts to support small businesses and make a meaningful impact."



## Support Small & Local Businesses

**Replace your job and earn money at home!**

Login at [www.jointonyallen.com](http://www.jointonyallen.com) or call (919) 252-3147 for details to get started.

**Lea Funeral Home**  
 2500 Poole Road  
 Raleigh, NC 27610  
 (919) 231-1000

*"Professional Service With Personal Care"*

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

Residential and Commercial Lawn Care

**YONSCAPES**  
 Meticulous Lawn Care, Exceptional Results.

Patrick Yon, Owner  
 Mobile 984-268-0457

919-346-3337  
[yonscapes@gmail.com](mailto:yonscapes@gmail.com)  
[www.yonscapes.com](http://www.yonscapes.com)

**BOX ELECTRIC**

Wiring North Carolina One Box At A Time

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

Accident & Injury Law

**BECTION**  
 THE BECTION LAW GROUP, PLLC

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

*Eliwood Becton* *Marcus Becton* *Dekisha Becton Rozier* *Taurus Becton*

919.856.0414 [www.bectonlaw.com](http://www.bectonlaw.com)

We Only Build Garages and Out-Buildings

**Carolina Custom Builders**

Stu Daugherty  
 Owner

Visit us at:  
 HOME IMPROVEMENT CENTER

4005 Departure Dr.  
 Raleigh, N.C. 27616  
 (919) 790-1234  
 FAX (919) 790-1010  
[www.carolinacustombuilders.com](http://www.carolinacustombuilders.com)  
[carolinacustom@hotmail.com](mailto:carolinacustom@hotmail.com)

SERVICES OFFER

Residential and Commercial

Product / Service Description

Burglar alarm  
 Camera system

• homes  
 • business  
 • farms  
 • school and daycare

ask us about temporary camera system for construction site.

Thank you for your time.

Rouge3 Communication llc  
 PO BOX 132  
 Rougemont, NC 27572  
 Enquiry for service

**ADE JONES**  
 Attorney at Law

3401 Wendell Boulevard  
 Wendell, N.C. 27591

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

**LAW OFFICES OF ADE JONES**



**Jack's** Seafood & Soul Food  
 LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1976

**Two Locations**

1516 New Bern Ave Raleigh, NC 27610 919-755-1551  
 5416 Rock Quarry Rd Raleigh, NC 27610 919-329-8125

**C.F. Smith Memorial Cares**

Your Loved One Deserves The Very Best

**NO INSURANCE, NO PROBLEM**

**Services We Offer:**  
 Affordable Direct Burial  
 Special on Direct Cremation  
 Affordable Graveside Service  
 Special on Funeral Service  
 Special on Memorial Service  
 Ship-In, Ship-Out & More

**WE OFFER SPECIAL PRICING ON CREMATIONS AND FUNERALS**

**DIRECT CREMATION STARTING AT \$875.00**

**ASK FOR CRAIG SMITH (FUNERAL DIRECTOR)**

Mailing Address:  
 P.O. Box # 26572  
 Raleigh, NC 27611  
 Serving: Wake, Johnston, Harnett, & Durham Counties

**CRAIG & DALE SMITH**  
 919- 698-7739

RBR | Physical Therapy, LLC

revive. boost. rebuild.

*"Call us today, start your journey to recovery!"*

**RBR PT Specializes in:**

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

(No physician's referral to get started)  
 1300 Corporation Pkwy, ste. B  
 Raleigh, NC 27610  
 919-917-7729 (office)  
 919-400-4178  
[www.rbrpt.com](http://www.rbrpt.com)

**\$1.00 OFF**

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

offer exp 3/31/2026

**Steven L. Lyons Funeral Home**  
 "Trust ~ Service ~ Compassion"  
 1515 New Bern Avenue  
 Raleigh, NC 27610  
[stevenlyonsfuneralhome.com](http://stevenlyonsfuneralhome.com)  
 (919)831-2596 Phone

# Health and Wellness

## Backyard Vegetable Gardens Are Healthy For People & The Planet

AP NEWS - If you want healthy food, experts say to eat what's local, organic and in-season. Those foods benefit the planet too, because they are less taxing on the soil and they don't travel as far.

It doesn't get more local, organic and in-season than a backyard vegetable garden.

At this time of year, many backyards across the country are still covered in snow. But it's the perfect time to start planning for a garden because you'll want to have supplies ready to start planting just after the last frost date in your area.

Below are some tips on how to plan a backyard garden and reasons why you should do it.

Homegrown vegetables have fewer emissions

Vegetable gardens benefit the surrounding ecosystem by adding diverse plant life, especially where they replace grass or cover a deck or patio. They also can provide flowering plants for pollinators.

The plants capture and store carbon in the soil, promote healthy soil by preventing compaction and can make the air cooler on rooftops and patios, according to Ellen Comeau, who chairs the advisory council for the Cuyahoga County Master Gardener Volunteers with the Ohio State University Extension program.

Homegrown vegetables and fruits are responsible for fewer emissions than their store-bought counterparts because grocery store produce typi-

cally travels long distances on trucks.

"There's this whole idea of a zero-kilometer meal, that I don't have to travel anywhere, except my backyard, to make food. That certainly helps the climate," said Carol Connare, editor of The Old Farmer's Almanac.

Gardening has health benefits. The health benefits from gardening are multifaceted, "social, emotional, nutritional, physical," said Katherine Alaimo, an associate professor of food science and human nutrition at Michigan State University.

Gardening promotes physical health because it requires a lot of movement. The food is typically picked at the height of ripeness and eaten fresh so it tends to have more nutrients than grocery store produce.

Alaimo said most gardeners don't use pesticides and grow their food organically. And of course, when you grow more produce, you eat more produce.

"That's going to reinforce people eating more fruits and vegetables even in the off season when they're not growing food. So they try new foods, they potentially increase creativity and their cooking skills," she said.

Alaimo said gardening also connects people with nature, provides a sense of responsibility and accomplishment and encourages sharing harvests with friends. All of that can



contribute to reduced stress, lower blood pressure and higher energy, she said.

Picking the right spot and budgeting

Sunlight is the biggest factor in choosing where to put your garden. Most produce wants at least six hours of sunlight per day. If sunny spots are few, save them for fruiting plants because leafy greens can tolerate more shade.

It also helps to have a nearby wa-

ter source because you'll get more food for less effort if you're not lugging buckets of water a long way.

If you're growing in the ground, Comeau said to start with a soil test to determine its acidity and nutrient makeup. Soil samples, once bagged or boxed, can typically be sent to a cooperative extension office at a university. The Old Farmer's Almanac offers a list of extension offices by state. The results will give you an idea of what to grow and whether

you need fertilizer or other amendments.

If you have barren soil or a concrete patio, you can buy or build raised beds with purchased soil. Connare said raised beds have advantages such as controlling the soil, but the disadvantages include the cost and the likelihood of compacting soil and eventually needing to replace it.

After finding the right spot, Comeau said the next step is figuring out how much you have to spend. That determines how big the garden is, whether you sow seeds or buy baby plants known as starts and how many supplies you can afford.

Another major investment: fencing for pests. That means digging fences into the soil to stop burrowing animals like groundhogs, making them tall to deter deer or installing netting for climbing critters.

Choosing what to grow and when to start

What you can grow depends on what falls into your region's plant hardiness zone. Californians can grow olives more easily than Ohioans, for example.

Connare recommends finding out what plants are working for your neighbors.

"They might be able to tell you, 'I can't grow a Cherokee tomato here to save my life, but these tie-dye ones do great,'" she said.

Once you've narrowed down what can grow, pick what appeals to you. Kevin Espiritu, founder of Epic Gardening, said he used to advise people to focus on what grows the fastest and easiest, but now he also emphasizes choosing what you like to eat.

Connare also recommends adding flowers to attract pollinators. Local garden centers are good sources of knowledge about what native plants will attract beneficial insects.

Espiritu said to figure out the last frost date in your area and plan around that. Many fruits and vegetables are best planted after the frost threat has passed, but some can go in earlier. Cool-season crops like leafy vegetables can tolerate slightly colder temperatures. Seeds can get started indoors weeks before the last frost date.

Comeau said seed packet labels often provide instructions.

"The label will tell you when you can start it and when it can go into the ground. Some obviously go right into the ground and some can be started ahead of time," she said.

## Older Black Men Are Disproportionately Affected By Overdoses



By Dr. Nora Volkow

NIDA

Provisional data from the CDC show that, overall, overdose deaths dropped by 7.5% in the 12 months ending March, 2024, the largest decline in decades. It is cause for optimism. But unfortunately, for some groups, we continue to see only greater escalation of the overdose crisis.

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

Fentanyl, often in combination with stimulants, is driving increased overdose deaths in most demographic groups. In all groups, men are at greater risk of overdose than women, but additional factors, including age-related health disparities, social isolation, and lifetime exposure to structural racism, may be colliding to produce the rise in overdoses among older Black men especially, and it points to the urgent need for intervention.

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

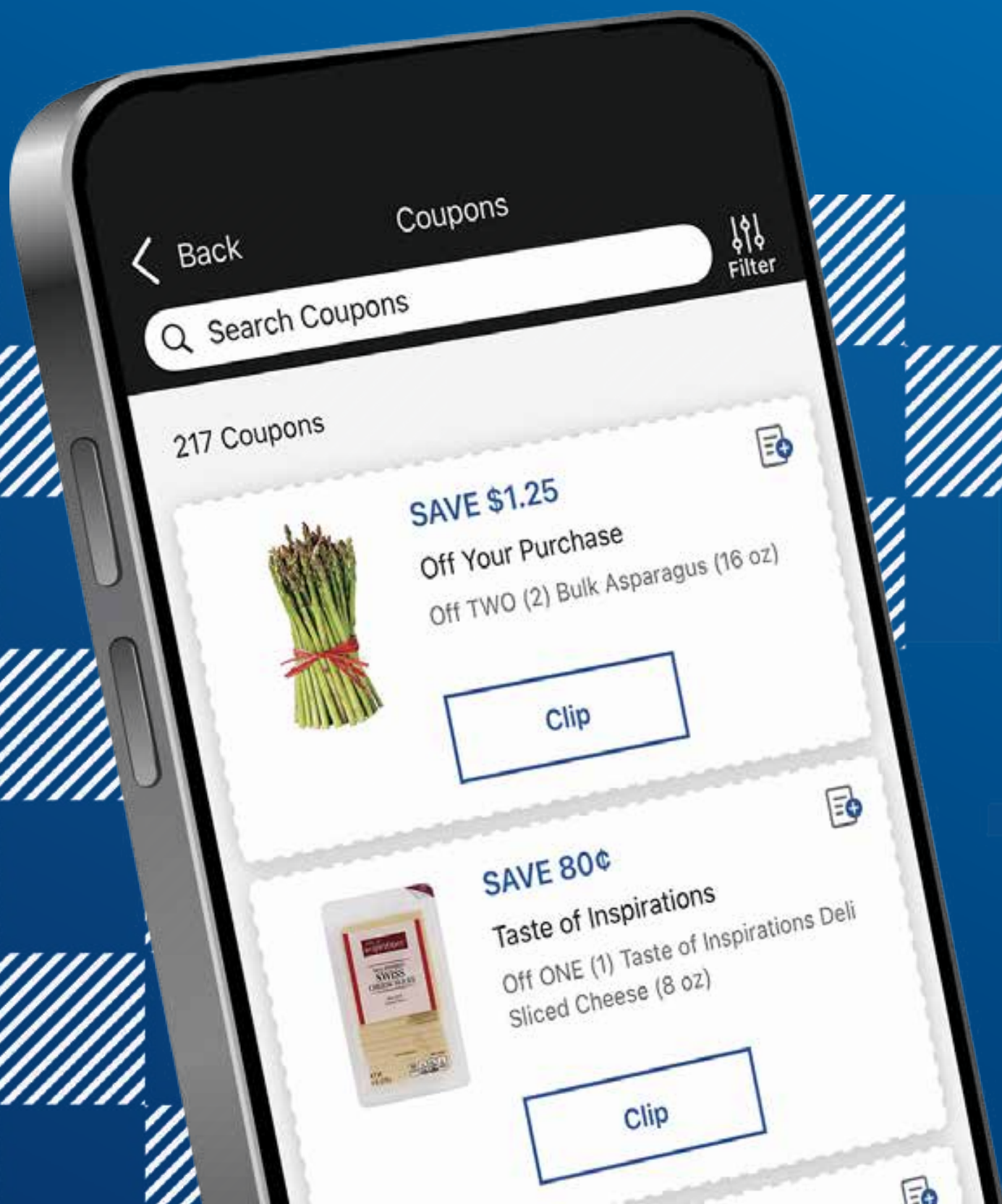
An increase in drug use and drug problems is being seen in older people of all races and ethnicities. Over the past two decades, substance use treatment admissions have increased among people aged 50 and over. In older adults, the risk of problematic opioid use is raised by chronic illness, and pain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

As people age, they may start to lose partners and social contacts. A recent National Academies report identified social isolation as a major contributing factor to illness and poor quality of life in older people; it particularly impacts men, who tend to have fewer social supports in later life than women. Loneliness and social isolation are well-known risk factors for substance use, and in an analysis of substance use patterns among older people with varying degrees of social connectedness and perceived loneliness, those who lived alone and felt lonely had the highest rates of nonmedical drug use. Although Black and Hispanic older adults have lower odds of social isolation than white older adults, as well as lower rates of alcohol use, one analysis of overdose deaths among middle-aged and older adults in Illinois identified a common profile of socially isolated, predominantly Black men who had alcohol in their system when they died.

Health and other social disparities likely contribute to escalating overdose rates among older Black men. Black people face discrimination and implicit bias in healthcare settings, including significantly longer wait times for emergency treatment of health problems. Black patients tend to be undertreated for pain, compared to white patients.

# FOOD LION

Clip coupons  
picked just for you



**Reliable Jewelry & Loan**  
Diamonds - Estate Jewelry  
Color Stones - Watches

P.O. Box 6 Tel. (919) 832-3461  
345 S. Wilmington Street Fax (919) 833-4662  
Raleigh, NC 27601 Toll Free (877) 287-5140  
email: [reliableloan@nc.rr.com](mailto:reliableloan@nc.rr.com)  
[www.reliablejewelry.com](http://www.reliablejewelry.com)

# Arts & Culture

## The State Of The Schools Address — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Dr. Taylor reaffirmed that "learning becomes hard" when students carry the burdens of mental health or safety concerns. The district has expanded its mental health program to 150 schools, with a goal of reaching every campus. The address detailed safety measures, including a clear bag policy for events, a new visitor management system, and the "Say Something" anonymous reporting tool. This "Say Something" tool has already proven useful. Officer Marcus Kirk was recognized for his role at Millbrook High School, where

his relationship with students led to the successful reporting and intervention of a potential threat.

Despite the accolades, Dr. Taylor did not shy away from the financial "reality we must face together." He noted that the cost of maintaining current service levels is outpacing available funding. Many school buildings are aging and require major renovations or replacement to keep up with population growth. With federal funding projected to adjust and the state budget finalized, the district has already made \$17

million in strategic reductions. With no true ability to impact the funds allocated to the school system, Dr. Taylor called on the community and the North Carolina General Assembly to sustain the investments that have made WCPSS a "trusted voice" in public education.

"Strong schools build strong communities... Excellence doesn't maintain itself; it must be sustained year after year." Dr. Robert P. Taylor emphasized. The 2026 State of the Schools Address served as both a victory lap for a district performing at

historic levels and a rallying cry for continued community investment. Dr. Taylor concluded with a standing ovation, urging the audience to remain united in the belief that the "best days for the Wake County Public School System are ahead of us."

Duke University plans for its HomeGrown initiative to last until 2029. Klein, Duke's economic development VP, said his team will be coming back to the community annually with updates on how it is progressing.



## Afroman Is Triumphant In His Lawsuit

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Adams County, Ohio - Afroman or Joseph E. Foreman successfully defended his First Amendment freedom of speech and expression against a lawsuit from Ohio's Adams County Sheriff's Office. In 2022, Afroman's house was raided, robbed, and vandalized based on suspicion of kidnapping and narcotics from an individual known to the Sheriff's Office. As an artist, musician, and American Afroman, he elected to "Turn my bad times into a good time," and create a series of songs and videos demonstrating his "proof on the internet." What resulted was the public shaming and humiliation of the very deputies who raided the home. Songs like "Lemon Pound Cake," "Will You Help Me Repair My Door," and even the mental health hit "I'm A Have A Good Time," and the fan favorite "Randy Walters is a Son \* \* \* \* \*" a YouTube exclusive.

The three-day trial was accessible via social media and sent the internet



into a frenzy. Afroman has been famous to the MTV or Napster generation for decades. His song, "Because I Got High," did more for drug aware-

ness than its contemporary program D.A.R.E. which has recently come under fire. According to a 2023 NPR report, "numerous studies published in

the 1990s and early 2000s concluded programs like D.A.R.E. had no significant impact on drug use. And one study actually found a slight uptick in drug use among suburban students after participation in D.A.R.E." "Because I Got High" features a simple yet memorable melody and tells the story of the lack of productivity often associated with drug use. The repetition and the honesty in the lyrics make it relatable and timeless. This is why it was so easy for folks across the internet to champion Afroman and his successful demonstration of our First Amendment right to free speech.

This trial was bigger than rap; this speaks to the corruption and harassment that Black men in particular are experiencing with law enforcement. This situation also speaks strongly to qualified immunity and how reform and diversity are needed in law enforcement. Afroman is an elite storyteller and a phenomenal veteran of the music industry. Can't wait to see what he shares next!

## Knight Brings History to Life in Exhibit

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Artist Derwin Knight's work took center stage last Thursday at the Durham Main County Library, where visitors gathered for a showcase with his distinctive paintings and storytelling.

Born in Long Island, New York, Knight studied at the State University College of New York at Old Westbury before graduating from North Carolina Central University. He joined the military in 1986, and it was during his time stationed in California that he first developed an interest in art, particularly glass painting.

After moving to High Point in 1996, Knight began refining his craft with the help of his sister, Janis Allen.

His work is known for its striking three-dimensional quality, layering



imagery in a way that brings scenes vividly to life. Many of his pieces explore themes of religion and African American history, offering both visual depth and cultural reflection.

Knight's art has been widely recognized and exhibited across North Carolina and beyond. His work has appeared at institutions including the North Carolina Museum of History bookstore, the African American Atelier, North Carolina Central University, the Hayti Heritage Center, Bennett College, Duke University, the North Carolina Museum of Art, North Carolina A&T, and the Congressional Black Caucus in Raleigh.

The Durham showcase offered attendees a chance to experience Knight's work up close, where the layered glass technique and powerful subject matter created an immersive artistic experience.



**Marbles Kids Museum, Blue Cross NC and Wake County Social Services to Provide Free Museum Memberships for Wake County Foster Families**

RALEIGH, N.C. – Foster families across Wake County will now have greater access to joyful, hands-on play thanks to a new partnership between Marbles Kids Museum, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) and Wake County's Department of Social Services. Foster families licensed through Wake County will receive a membership to Marbles that provides free museum admission for foster parents and all children in the household.

Designed to support stability and belonging for children in foster care, this powerful example of public, private and nonprofit collaboration removes barriers and creates meaningful opportunities for families to connect, learn and grow together. The membership provides year-round access to Marbles' hands-on exhibits, early museum entry, member-only events and exclusive discounts to the Marbles PlayStore, IMAX theater, camps and more. Not only is this partnership designed to serve current Wake County foster families, it also offers a tool for Wake County Social Services to recruit new foster families to help fill a critical community need.

"Marbles is a place for joy and connection," said Jonathan Frederick, CEO of Marbles Kids Museum. "For years, we have imagined a way for foster families to have more access to Marbles, a safe and welcoming place to experience the power of play. Now, thanks to Blue Cross NC and Wake County Social Services, this program is a reality."

"Wake County's Foster Care Program plays a vital role in helping and nurturing children in need. Our mission is to strengthen foster families and provide children in foster care with the experiences they need to thrive. Access to places like Marbles provides a sense of community inclusion and celebrates all family structures," said Rene Whitehead, Child Welfare Cross-Function Program Manager at Wake County Social Services.

Arif Khan, Chief Strategy and Performance Execution Officer at Blue Cross NC and a member of the Marbles Board of Directors, spoke at the event celebrating the partnership. "At Blue Cross NC, we know that play, social connection and learning are essential for all children, but especially those experiencing foster care," Khan said. "Supporting this program aligns with our commitment to improving health and well-being of communities across North Carolina."

## Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Mid-Atlantic Region Paints The Town Pink & Green

By Jheri Hardaway

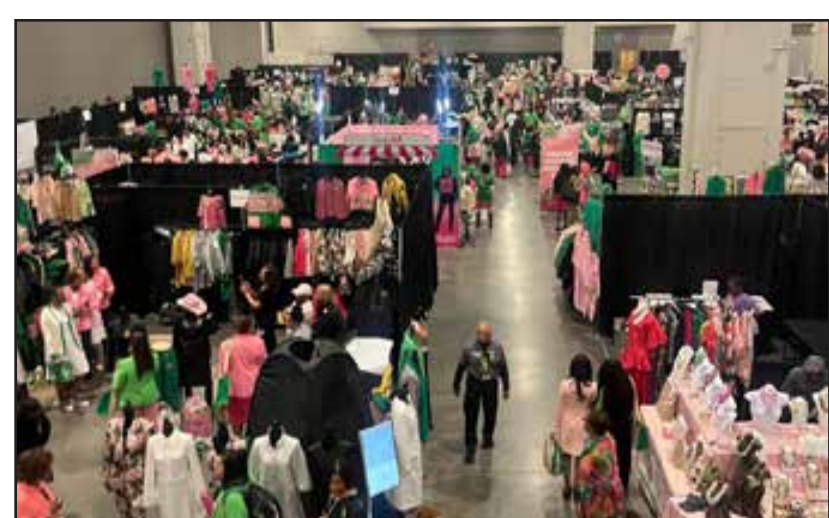
Staff Writer

Raleigh, NC - The 73rd Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference, themed "Legendary," welcomed a pretty girl takeover of downtown Raleigh with a focus on sisterhood and service to all mankind. The weekend featured dynamic trainings, impactful workshops, and signature events, each thoughtfully curated with the membership in mind.

A major highlight of the event was a keynote by outgoing Mid-Atlantic Regional Director Nadine Vargas Stewart. Stewart shared that during her 2022-2026 administration, the Mid-Atlantic Region demonstrated exceptional commitment to six programmatic targets, including strengthening our sisterhood, empowering our families, building economic wealth, enhancing our environment, advocating for social justice, and uplifting our local community. Through the empowering families initiative, chapters have distributed Childhood Hunger Initiative Power Packs (CHIPP) to students in need. Through our environmental enhancement initiatives, 4,739 trees have been planted, 116,614 pounds

of paper shredded at community events, and 22,949 electronic items collected and recycled. Under the umbrella of advocating for social justice, 5,833 letters were written to elected officials advocating for Black maternal health, mental health, gun violence prevention, and voting rights. Finally, through the uplift of our local community, 108,724 volunteer service hours were completed. Another notable data point shared by Regional Director Vargas Stewart was that 85% of undergraduate members across the region maintained cumulative grade point averages of 3.0 or higher during this administration. Even undergraduate members distinguished themselves by maintaining a perfect 4.0 grade point average.

With over 20,000 members in attendance, the music, the information, and the vibe made the 73rd Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference truly Legendary and an important experience for the dedicated membership. The unity was palpable and refreshing during these trying times. These days, it is essential to align with like-minded people so we can work towards a better tomorrow together.



**MERIDIAN**  
ROGERS BRANCH

[www.MeridianAtRogersBranch.com](http://www.MeridianAtRogersBranch.com)  
 Ready to book your tour? Call us at 984-271-5884  
 1120 Meridian Branch Drive, Wake Forest, NC 27587

**B2 Floorplan 2 Beds 2 Baths 1098 Sqft**

*Home Features*

- Built in Desk
- Spacious closets
- Laundry room with in home W/D

# Community

## 'Wandering Officers' widespread across NC — CONT. FROM PAGE 2

in another state or those dismissed for misconduct while working for a federal agency, such as the Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

Even so, this problem persists throughout North Carolina and can still be quantified in a few valuable ways.

Known wandering officers cases across NC

CPP's analysis showed that as of 2022, at least 679 active law enforcement officers whose previous agencies had dismissed them were working again at 327 agencies in North Carolina.

That means that a previous agency had fired about 2%, or one out of every 50, of the 31,898 active North Carolina officers in the 2022 DOJ employment dataset.

Of those wandering officers, agencies had dismissed 69 of them at least twice during their careers. The most egregious of them had been fired at least five times from five different agencies and still managed to find work carrying a badge and a gun.

Wandering officers are located in all regions of the state, from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Piedmont to the Coastal Plain.

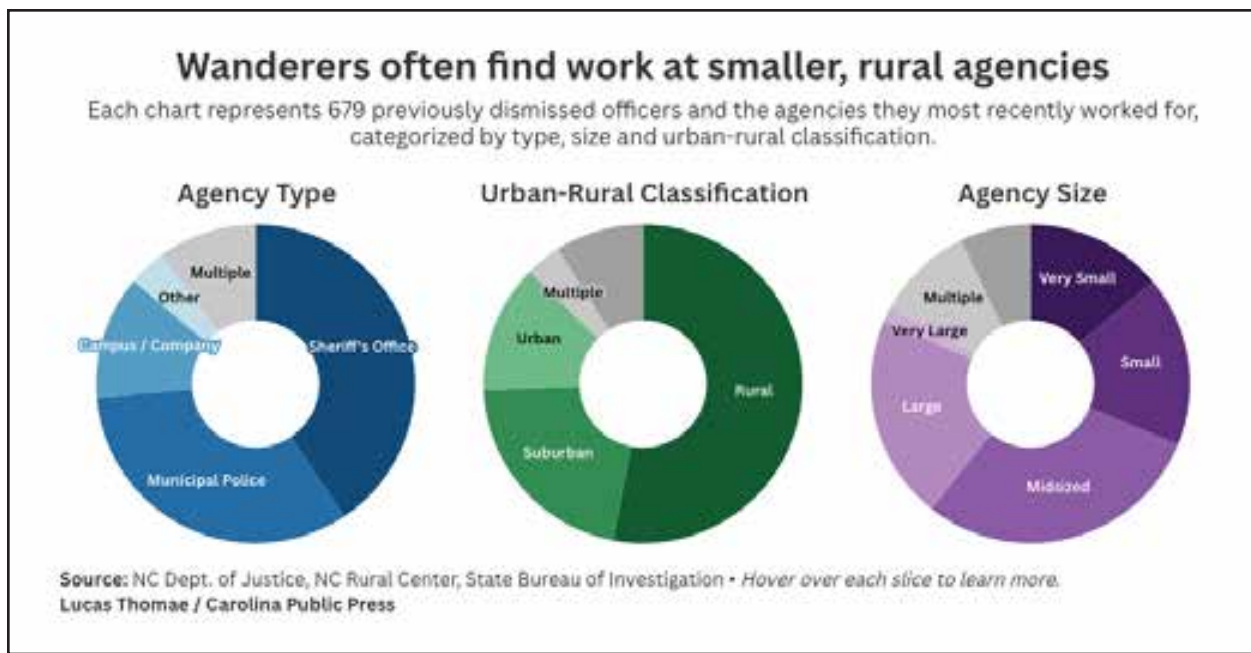
The harm they cause is difficult to measure, but lawsuits, administrative court filings and archival media reports reveal the potentially devastating consequences of allowing them to remain in law enforcement.

Mark Anthony Russell currently works as a Transylvania County sheriff's deputy. The Henderson County Sheriff's Office fired Russell in 2011 after he was charged with violating a domestic violence protection order. The Brevard Police Department dismissed Russell again in 2014, DOJ data shows.

Douglas Strader joined the Graham Police Department in 2021, after the Greensboro Police Department had previously fired him for discharging his firearm at a fleeing vehicle. Strader was also one of eight Greensboro officers involved in the 2018 death of Marcus Smith, who died in police custody after officers used a "hogtie" restraint to subdue him.

In the case of Jeffrey Edwards, the State Highway Patrol fired him in 2010 for misconduct, only for Edwards to end up as a deputy at the Washington County Sheriff's Office.

Washington County later fired him



in 2022 after he made a violent arrest, dragging a handcuffed detainee down the stairs of the courthouse.

The detainee in that case, who received treatment at a hospital for injuries sustained during the arrest and later had his charges dropped by the district attorney, sued Edwards in 2024 with the help of the National Police Accountability Project and eventually settled out of court.

Edwards still works in law enforcement today as a deputy with the Tyrrell County Sheriff's Office.

Some who wander become boss  
In some cases, wandering officers failed upwards into leadership positions, often at small departments. Such was the case with both of Oakley's bosses in Warrenton and Littleton, who hired him after he resigned from Roanoke Rapids.

Former Warrenton Police Chief Goble Lane lost his job with the Franklinton Police Department in Franklin County in 2005, then went on to work at three more agencies over the next five years before settling in Warrenton.

A 2025 civil lawsuit accuses Lane of protecting Oakley despite persistent complaints from civilians and fellow officers. According to the lawsuit, Lane once instructed another police officer to alter paperwork related to a separate incident to make it appear that Oakley was not at fault.

The lawsuit, which brought legal

claims against not just Oakley and Goble but the Town of Warrenton itself, accused Goble of retaliating against other officers who reported Oakley's misconduct.

"There's many instances where there's a 'rogue officer,' or someone who acts alone and the supervisors have a very good case to make that they really didn't know what was happening," said Abraham Rubert-Schewel, the attorney representing the plaintiffs who claimed Oakley used excessive force against them.

"But here, the facts really show something different."

Certification records indicate that Lane currently works at the Middlesex Police Department in Nash County and in Henderson with the Vance-Granville Community College Police Department.

Meanwhile, Oakley's other boss, Phillip Trivette, who isn't named in the civil lawsuit, had been dismissed from three departments before becoming chief of police in Littleton.

In 2016, an administrative law judge affirmed a decision by the NC Sheriff's Standards Division to deny Trivette's application for certification with the Halifax County Sheriff's Office, based on four prior misdemeanor convictions for worthless checks. He was later hired in Littleton.

In an interview with the News & Observer, Trivette defended his decision to retain Oakley after he'd been fired

from Warrenton, claiming that he'd never had any problems with Oakley at his department.

Trivette announced his retirement as chief in 2025, several months before Oakley was arrested. Littleton's website shows that Trivette still works there as a police officer.

In another case, Orlando Rosario Jr., an officer who had been dismissed from three different agencies in his career, became the police chief in the tiny town of Stantonsburg in Wilson County.

The Goldsboro Police Department hired Rosario in 2008, after four short stints at other police departments, one of which fired him. In 2009, the Goldsboro News-Argus reported that Rosario caught heat from the local NAACP chapter for telling a trainee during an arrest at an apartment complex to "shoot (anyone in the crowd of onlookers) in the f—ing head if he gets any closer."

Goldsboro later dismissed Rosario in 2011. The Black Creek Police Department then fired him from his next job in 2015. But he managed to stick with Stantonsburg, where he worked for 10 years before resigning as chief in 2025.

Employment records indicate that Rosario currently works as an officer with the Knightdale Police Department, his eighth agency in 25 years.

None of the departments where Rosario, Trivette or Lane currently work responded to CPP's request for com-

ment before the publication of this story.

Public and private, rural and urban, large and small

The data shows that all types of law enforcement agencies hire wandering officers, including sheriff's offices, municipalities, state agencies and specialized departments within

college campuses, hospitals and airports.

Of the 327 agencies in North Carolina that employed wandering officers in 2022, Allied Universal Company Police, which is operated by a private security company based in Pennsylvania, had the most with 23 previously dismissed cops.



**Triangle Math and Science Academy Middle School Boys Basketball Team Completes Historic Undefeated Season**

Apex, NC – Triangle Math and Science Academy (TMSA Triangle) proudly celebrates a historic achievement by its Middle School Boys Basketball Team. The Tigers completed the 2025 season with a perfect 12–0 overall record, including an outstanding 10–0 conference record, and captured the GTAC Championship Title—marking the first undefeated season and championship victory in the program's history.



**Beta Phi Chapter - Talent Hunt**

On Saturday February 07, 2026, The Durham Chapter of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity held its annual Talent Hunt Program. The event was held at St. Joseph AME Church in Durham, N.C. The Talent Hunt Program is one of the Fraternity's International mandated programs. Established in 1946 to provide youth with opportunities to showcase their artistic and creative talents. This year's participants are sitting in the front row. L-R: Jaden Jampayas-1st place, Ashton Jampayas-4th place, Siena Geddes-3rd place & Raphael Mouawad-2nd place. The other 2 participants are Hallett Ray & Caroline Hobbs.

## Fire Damages Helping Hand Mission

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

A fire that broke out the morning of March 1 has left significant damage to Helping Hand Mission, a longtime Raleigh nonprofit that has served families in need for decades. Firefighters responded to the organization's building on Rock Quarry Road, where large flames and heavy smoke were seen coming from the roof. Roughly 40 firefighters initially arrived on scene, with an additional 25 personnel called in due to the size of the building and the amount of materials inside. Crews were able to bring the fire under control in about 45 minutes, preventing it from spreading further, and no injuries were reported.

In a social media post, the Raleigh Professional Fire Fighters Association praised the response, calling it "phenomenal work by all crews on scene battling a tough fire in even tougher conditions."

The blaze caused extensive damage to the mission's office and primary storage facility, destroying large quantities of donated goods including clothing, furniture, toys, and pre-packed supplies intended for families.

Founder Sylvia Wiggins, who learned of the fire early that morning,



noted that volunteers had prepared around 100 bags of food and toys just a day earlier, all of which were lost in the fire. The building has since been deemed unsafe, with significant structural and interior damage, and much of the organization's records and operational materials were also destroyed.

Founded more than 50 years ago, Helping Hand Mission has long served as a lifeline for individuals

and families facing poverty, homelessness, and crisis in the Raleigh area. Established by Wiggins in the early 1970s after she overcame her own hardships, the organization has grown into a wide-reaching, community-supported operation that now serves more than 1,300 people.

It provides food, clothing, furniture, and shelter assistance, as well as transitional housing through its New Bern House program for families

working to regain stability. Entirely reliant on donations and volunteers, the mission operates multiple locations and runs a range of programs supporting children, seniors, and vulnerable populations year-round.

Beyond its direct services, the organization has become a fixture in the community through partnerships and outreach efforts, including holiday food drives, cold-weather initiatives distributing heaters and clothing, and collaborations with local groups such as the Carolina Hurricanes and other nonprofits.

In the immediate aftermath, volunteers and community members began arriving with donations and offers to help rebuild, even as families in need continued to seek assistance. A GoFundMe campaign has been launched with a goal of \$300,000 to help restore operations and replace lost supplies.

Despite the setback, Wiggins emphasized that the organization's mission will endure. "We would never let this go. This is bigger than me, bigger than a building," she said. "We are very resilient, and we're going to continue."

As the mission begins the long process of recovery, including potential demolition and rebuilding of parts of the facility, its role in the community remains unchanged.



**Wake County Libraries launch program aimed at making books accessible to those with disabilities**

WUNC - The State Library of North Carolina is now in a partnership with Wake County Libraries aimed at bridging the gap to make reading books more accessible to people with disabilities.

"This partnership helps to ensure that a person's physical condition or location never limits opportunities for lifelong learning," said Safiyah Jackson, the vice chair of the Wake County Board of Commissioners, in a press release.

The State Library of North Carolina's Accessible Books & Library Services is providing the service, which is available at all 23 public libraries in Wake County. Joshua Berkov, its Assistant Director, said one barrier that they have removed is helping those who are homebound not have to catch a ride to the library.

"Because everything gets sent out in the mail via USPS, through a service called 'Free Matter for the blind,' which the Library of Congress pays for," he told WUNC. "What better service than to have books delivered right to your doorstep?"

People can also request books they want to read from any collection by phone, mail, chat, email or the online catalog. Berkov said trained Wake County library staff can guide eligible people through the application process.

"Residents of North Carolina can become eligible for our services if they have a qualifying disability," he said. "And those disabilities include blindness, visual impairments, certain physical disabilities that prevent people from holding a book and turning the pages."

Berkov said in North Carolina, only 10,000 are currently using the library service. He estimated about 300,000 people across the state potentially qualify for this library service. For more information, visit Wake County's website.

## Sigma Gamma Rho to Host Sexual Assault Awareness Program

The GREATER women of the Beta Lambda Sigma Chapter of Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. will host Know. Protect. Defend., a community program focused on raising awareness of sexual assault on Saturday, April 4, 2026, in recognition of Sexual Assault Awareness Month.

The program is designed to educate and empower women by providing information that helps identify

sexual assault, understand available resources, and learn strategies for personal safety. The event will begin with a panel discussion featuring representatives from the Special Victims Unit of the Raleigh Police Department, WakeMed, and InterAct, who will share insights on prevention, advocacy, and support services available in the community.

Following the panel discussion,

participants will take part in a self-defense class led by LaShonda Hopkins, offering practical techniques to help strengthen awareness, confidence, and personal protection skills.

The event will take place at 5857 Barwell Park Drive in Raleigh and is open to women ages 18 and older. Tickets are \$15, and space is limited.

Community members interested in attending can purchase tickets by

visiting: <https://www.raleighsrho.org/event-details/know-protect-defend-self-defense-class>

Through programs like Know. Protect. Defend., the Beta Lambda Sigma Chapter continues its commitment to community service and empowerment by providing education and resources that support the safety and well-being of women throughout the Raleigh area.



# SALTWATER RESTAURANT OPEN

SEAFOOD & FRY SHACK

TUESDAY-FRIDAY 10:30am - 6:30pm SATURDAY 10:30am-5:30pm

**BONE-IN FISH SPECIAL**

**\$8.50**

MARKET OPEN

MARKET HOURS. T-F 9:00-7:00/SAT. 8:30-6:00 SUNDAY 9:00-4:00

4 FENTON STREET RALEIGH, NC 27604

**919.834.1813**

[www.saltwaterseafoodnc.com](http://www.saltwaterseafoodnc.com)

# Church

## How Religious Is North Carolina?

NC ED – North Carolina is the seventh most religious state in the country, according to a data visualization tool released by the Pew Research Center last month.

Each state's religious profile, created from Pew's 2023-24 Religious Landscape Study, includes four factors: importance of religion, religious attendance, frequency of prayer, and belief in God. Here's a look at how North Carolinians responded to the survey:

51% said religion is very important in their lives,

39% say they attend religious services at least monthly,

54% say they pray daily, and

65% say they believe in God or a universal spirit with "absolute certainty."

The 2023-24 landscape study was conducted in English and Spanish from July 17, 2023, to March 4, 2024, among a nationally representative sample of nearly 37,000 respondents. It compares all 50 states and Washington, D.C.

According to the results, 41% of adults in North Carolina are "highly religious." Across the country, states ranged from 13% in Vermont to 50% in Mississippi.

Overall, the landscape study found that religious identity is fading in many countries.

In the article, Pew cited a new academic paper by a group of international scholars, which proposes that drops in religious affiliation "happen in the medium and late stages of a 'secular transition' process. This transition unfolds slowly, as generations are replaced by less religious ones."

The authors propose that religion often declines between generations in

three steps:

People participate in worship services less often.

The importance of religion declines in their personal lives.

Belonging to religion becomes less common.

According to the paper, many African counties are currently in the early stage of "secular transition," while the United States and many other countries in the Americas and Asia are in the medium stage. Many counties in Europe have reached the late stage, the researchers say, as "attendance at religious services and self-assessments of the importance of religion are low among people of all ages."

"This secular transition isn't completely uniform, and it may not be inevitable everywhere," the Pew article says.

Specifically, the article notes some exceptions to the model, including Eastern European post-communist countries with Orthodox or Muslim majorities, and Israel, the world's only Jewish-majority country.

And in the United States, for Christians specifically, the landscape survey found that after many years of steady decline, the share of Americans who identify as Christians shows signs of leveling off, at least temporarily. (Importantly, identifying with a religion is different than saying that religion is very important to your life.)

The center's first religious landscape study (RLS), conducted in 2007, found that 78% of United States adults identified as Christians.

"The latest RLS, fielded over seven months in 2023-24, finds that 62% of U.S. adults identify as Christians.

That is a decline of 9 percentage points since 2014 and a 16-point drop

since 2007," a February Pew article says. "But for the last five years, between 2019 and 2024, the Christian share of the adult population has been relatively stable, hovering between 60% and 64%."

Approximately 40% of United States adults are Protestants, the data found. Another 19% are Catholic, and people who identify with other Christian groups (Greek and Russian Orthodox churches, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc.) total about 3%.

As the percentage of United States adults who are Christian has leveled off, the study found the share of Americans who identify with a religion other than Christianity has been trending upward.

Approximately 7% of United States adults now identify with a religion other than Christianity, the study found.

At the same time, religiously unaffiliated adults (who identify as atheists, agnostics, or as "nothing in particular") make up 29% of the country's population.

Interestingly, many "nones" across the world still hold spiritual beliefs, the Pew survey found, but at a lower rate than people who identify with a religion.

In the United States, for example:

86% of religiously unaffiliated adults believe people have a soul or spirit in addition to their physical body;

83% believe in God or a universal spirit;

79% believe there is something spiritual beyond the natural world, even if we can't see it; and

70% believe in an afterlife (heaven, hell, or both).

## Practical Biblical Principles

### WORTHY IS THE LAMB PART 2

#### Read: Revelation

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor  
New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral

When we speak of one being worthy there is a need to clarify what that person is worthy of. The Book of Revelation speaks of Jesus being worthy. There is much praising and worshiping in heaven which amplifies the fact that our Lord alone is worthy. The worshipping crowd around the throne of God is declaring that Jesus, the Lion of Judah, the Seed of David is worthy to open the seals of the scroll which the Lamb removed from the right hand of Him (God) who sits on the throne.

Believers, traditionally know that Jesus, the Lamb, which was slain, is worthy because He died for the sins of the world and offered salvation to all who would come to the Father through Him in repentance.

The Word of God contains absolutely no evidence that there will be any hope for those who reject Christ as their Savior after the day of grace is over. If the Rapture should occur today, those who have heard but rejected the gospel will be ushered into the Tribulation falling under the delusion of the Antichrist.

It is imperative that we do a closer study as to why Jesus is worthy. It is assured that Jesus is worthy to break the seven seals of that scroll Book which tells of the coming Judgments to this fallen world. Each of these seals do not carry any blessings only hurt, pain, suffering and death. This is not good news to the world today.

The scripture shows us that the Son of God, the Healing Savior, the Lover of all mankind, who died for our sins is about to let loose the deluge of death, hell, and destruction upon the earth without hesitation. When we really think about this it may appear that our Sweet Jesus can be put in the category of Dr. Jekel and Mr. Hyde- being two faced. Not so! We must all understand the fact that Jesus is also worthy to bring death, hell, and destruction to all who have offended the Father.

The scriptures speak often of God's wrath. Where did God's wrath come from. In the Old Testament God often forgave his people when they sinned and turned to other gods for worship.

When sin completely separated

the Israelites from God, He often asked them to come back to Him and He would love, bless, and forgive them and still be their God who would care for them as a good mother would care for her child. But where does the wrath of God come from?

The answer is simple. It is not because the people killed Jesus. It was God's plan and will that His Son should die on the cross for the sins of man.

This is how God showed His love for the world to have His only son die this way. Jesus is God's one-time gift to the world. God's wrath is full because, first, God's own people, Israel, rejected all the forgiveness and salvation work Jesus offered them and at the same time ignoring all the suffering and pain our Lord went through to bring them the gifts, salvation, and eternal life.

God's wrath comes from the fact that after He had given His Son to the world, the world rejected Him (Jesus). And in doing so, they rejected God's love for them also. This in a sense is blasphemy. A sin that will never be forgiven. This is when one rejects any offer of mercy and grace God has to offer.

In short, Jesus is worthy to bring hell and judgment upon sinful man. This is what He is doing when He (Jesus) breaks the seals of the scroll which holds the hellish destiny of sinful man.

Each time Jesus breaks one of the seven seals all hell breaks loose upon mankind, especially the Jews who rejected Jesus as the promised Messiah. Is there any excuse when the coming of the Messiah is foretold and repeated in the Old Testament prophecies over and over again.

Horses represent conquest, battle, and war. The first seal the Lamb breaks sends out a white horse, which will be the antichrist coming to deceive the world by faking to be Christ.

The second seal sees a red horse bringing conflict on the earth taking away all peace replacing it with people killing one another.

The third seal is a black horse coming to bring famine to the earth where food will be scarce and people will starve to death.

When Jesus breaks the fourth seal it releases a pale horse (light green) whose rider is death itself. And he

comes to kill a fourth of the world's population.

The breaking of the fifth seal reveals the cries and pleas of the martyrs who have been killed serving God. The cries of the saints are asking God how long Lord until You avenge our deaths by evil people. A white robe is then given to the saints and are told to be patient until all of their fellow brother's deaths are completed. Not only is rejecting God's Son displeasing to God, but killing His servants, who were tasked to preach about the coming Messiah is not acceptable to God either.

When Jesus breaks the sixth seal the earth begins to decay. The sun is blacked out; there are earthquakes and there's the fallen stars and moon. The sky is rolled back, the mountains are moved out of place, then men hid in caves and mountains asking the rocks to fall upon them.

Men being so afraid of the One who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb. For the great day of God's wrath has come which raises the question who will be able to stand? Nobody!

When Jesus breaks the seventh and last seal, we see God's mercy and grace once again breaking upon the earth. God sends 144,000 preaching Jews, 12,000 from each tribe of Jacob, two great prophets, Moses and Elijah giving His Jewish people, who rejected the Messiah, a last chance to be saved. God commanded the four angels assigned to destroy the world, to hold off until the Jews finally come to the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

After the seventh seal is broken, the world is then handed over to Satan when the seven trumpets are sounded by the four angels of destruction. God is now finished with His wrath. The New Testament believers have been raptured. The only ones left on the earth are the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

The Antichrist now takes over. The sounding of the seven trumpets represents the coming destructive work of the Antichrist upon the disbelieving Jews left upon the earth who are hated by the Antichrist. The antichrist will kill a third of the Jews before Christ intervenes in the last battle between good and evil, the battle of Armageddon.

## Obituaries

### CELEBRATING THE LIFE OF JESSE EDWARD MEADOWS JR.

Jesse Edward Meadows Jr., affectionately known as "Lil Jesse," was born on September 23, 1954, the eldest of nine children, to the late Jesse and Edna Meadows. He departed this life on March 16, 2026, at University Health & Rehabilitation Center in Durham, North Carolina. Jesse was raised in the historic St. Theresa's Community and educated in Durham Public Schools, where he formed lifelong bonds and cherished memories that stayed close to his heart throughout his life. He later attended the U.S. Job Corps, where he trained as an auto mechanic. Like his father, Jesse had a natural talent for working with his hands and a gift for creativity. He enjoyed fishing and camping. A man of deep passion and appreciation for culture, Jesse had a special love for music. He took great pride in his vinyl album collection and was a true connoisseur of jazz, blues, and a wide range of musical genres. His admiration for legendary artists such as Miles Davis, Thelonus Monk, Jimi Hendrix, Bob Marley, and Earth, Wind & Fire reflected his rich musical taste and vibrant



spirit. Jesse devoted many years of faithful and committed service to Duke University before retiring. Following his retirement, he embraced the simple joys of life, spending meaningful time with family and friends.

Jesse was preceded in death by his beloved son, Ramel "Dinky" Carpenter. Jesse leaves to cherish his memory his loving wife, Regina Carpenter Meadows, whom he mar-

ried in the summer of 1983; his sons, Marlon Carpenter and Jesse Carpenter (Stephanie); his baby girl, Ihisha Carpenter; eight siblings: Annette Williams (Clarence), Sheila Williams (Roger), Jeffrey Meadows, Darren Meadows (Cheryl), Kenneth Meadows (Monica), Michael Meadows (Lisa), Maurice Meadows (Shava), and Alexia Davis (Damien); seven grandchildren: Shyheim, Ramel (Hope), Raekwon, Corey, Daeshawn (Jessica), Jessie, and Morgan; six great-grandchildren: Seven, Jyce, Hayden, Legend, London, and Serenity; along with a host of nieces, nephews, relatives, and dear friends. Jesse will be lovingly remembered for his unwavering love for his family, his sense of humor, his deep appreciation for music, and the lasting impression he made on all who had the privilege of knowing him. His legacy of love, strength, and connection will continue to live on in the hearts of those he leaves behind. Funeral Arrangements: Tuesday, March 24, 2026 | Visitation: 12:00 noon | Funeral: 1:00 pm Place of Service: Bethel Family Worship Center | 515 Dowd Street, Durham, NC 27701 Interment: Glennview Memorial Park.

## SERMON of the WEEK



### SERMON OF THE WEEK

Family and Friends Day Celebration Uplifts Lincoln Park Holiness Church

Lincoln Park Holiness Church hosted a powerful and spirit-filled Family and Friends Day on Sunday, March 22, 2026, under the leadership of Pastor William "Billy" Eli Ratcliff.

The service opened with a warm and heartfelt welcome from Sister Alteen Horton, Sharon Chavis, and Sherita McCullers, setting the tone for a memorable celebration of faith, fellowship, and encouragement. The Eli Ratcliff Singers ushered in the presence of God with uplifting and worshipful music that resonated throughout the sanctuary.

The theme for the day, "There's Nothing Too Hard for Our God: We Serve a Merciful God of Plenty," was woven throughout the service and reinforced through a series of impactful mini sermons delivered by associate ministers, all rooted in Zechariah 1:17.

Evangelist Selena Hunter reminded attendees that even in moments of discouragement, God has not forgotten His people. She emphasized the importance of aligning with God through prayer and fasting, seeking His will, and remaining steadfast while running the race with patience. Evangelist Bertha Williams spoke on "Restoration," highlighting that God's promises are fulfilled through His strength, power, and authority. She encouraged believers to trust that God is actively working on behalf of those who follow Him.

General Mother Belinda McKoy delivered a reassuring message, declaring that God is always present and in control. She affirmed that there is nothing too difficult for God and encouraged the congregation



to keep their hands in the Master's hands.

Evangelist James Waddell reinforced the theme by proclaiming that what may seem impossible for man is always possible with God. He reminded attendees that God is both able and willing to provide for every need.

Elder Demetrius Hunter challenged listeners to expand their faith, urging them to stop asking God for small things and begin trusting Him for greater blessings. His message encouraged the congregation to walk in victory and expect transformation.

Dr. Derrick Sauls concluded the series with a message centered on God's abundance. He reminded the congregation that God provides more than enough, while also guiding His people toward what is truly needed. His closing words echoed a powerful truth: the same God who worked miracles in the past is still working today.

The Family and Friends Day celebration was a glorious and spiritually enriching occasion, leaving attendees encouraged, inspired, and reminded of God's limitless power and abundant grace.



"Our family serving your family for 110 years"

www.haywoodfh.com

2415 S Wilmington Street Raleigh, NC 27603

919-832-2835

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

SUBSCRIBE TODAY

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

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

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to The Carolinian Newspaper

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



# Editorials

## Editorial Policy

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



A screenshot from an AI-funded ad in support of North Carolina congressional candidate Valerie Foushee. (YouTube)

## AI Is the New AIPAC

By Usamah Andrabi

The Nation Magazine

Corporate and right-wing lobbies in American politics are like hydras: When one head is cut off, two appear in its place. That’s why taking one lobbying giant down is not enough—and why we always have to keep our eyes out for new forces trying to distort our democracy.

Right now, the biggest lobbying boogeyman on the street is undoubtedly AIPAC. As popular opinion around Israel undergoes historic transformations, the pro-Israel lobby has become increasingly toxic, with unprecedented numbers of congressional candidates refusing to take its money. AIPAC has had to resort to using shell PACs and covert tactics to stay relevant. That is a direct result of our movement’s organizing against and exposing AIPAC and its allies through coalitions like Reject AIPAC.

This is undoubtedly a victory for our democracy and the fight against Big Money in politics. But even as AIPAC’s influence begins to fade, new lobbies are embracing its flood-the-zone strategy in primary elections to make mass inroads for corporate agendas.

In 2026, a new giant has surfaced, one sitting at the crossroads of some of our most important policy fights on affordability and foreign policy: the AI lobby. Like AIPAC, and the crypto lobby, which emerged around the same time that AIPAC began ramping up its campaign spending in 2022, the AI lobby has burst onto the scene in this cycle by spending millions of dollars in primaries. And like AIPAC, it is largely doing so by using opaquely named super PACs and flooding the airwaves with ads that don’t mention AI at all.

Through new super PACs, AI corporations like OpenAI (Leading the Future, Think Big, and American Mission PAC), Meta (Forge the Future Project, Making Our Tomorrow, American Technology Excellence Project, Mobilizing Economic Transformation Across California), and Anthropic (Jobs and Democracy PAC and Defending Our Values PAC) are all spending millions of dollars to influence our elections and AI policies.

While each corporation tries to convince us they are the good ones, they are all opposing candidates promising to take on the AI lobby like Nida Allam in North Carolina and Junaid Ahmed in Illinois. They are turning our elections into a for-profit pissing match between Big Tech billionaires. The first AI primary fight of the cycle came in North Carolina’s Fourth Congressional District. Anthropic’s super PAC, Jobs and Democracy PAC, spent over \$1.6 million in the final week of the race to boost incumbent Representative Valerie Foushee over progressive primary challenger and Durham County Commissioner Nida Allam. Foushee was appointed by Hakeem Jeffries to the Democrats’ commission responsible for creating a framework to regulate AI—and then was bankrolled by the very lobby she was supposed to create guardrails around. None of the pro-Foushee ads mentioned AI; instead, they portrayed Foushee as an anti-Trump, anti-ICE fighter. They also failed to mention that Allam (who was backed by Justice Democrats, with whom I work, along with other progressive groups) favored a federal ban on new AI data centers, while Foushee opposed a ban. Foushee wound up winning the race. This is exactly the sort of pay-to-play politics that voters are so fed up with and exactly the point of the AI lobby’s influx of spending this cycle. Affordability and forever wars will be at the center of every election this year. The future of AI policy plays a central role in both of these fights.

No matter what votes they take or tweets they post, any candidate backed by AI super PACs is complicit in Trump’s warmongering and the facilitation of US imperialism abroad. Despite media narratives praising Anthropic for standing up to the Trump administration, Trump used Anthropic’s Claude model to plan and conduct 1,000 strikes on Iran—including the elementary school bombing that killed over 100 children. Before that, Claude was used to help the Trump administration kidnap Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro and conduct a military coup in the country. In the midst of all that “fighting with the Pentagon,” Anthropic even dropped its flagship safety policy that it said differentiated it from companies like OpenAI. At home, AI corporations are trying to evade responsibility for the harm their data centers cause to communities across the country. Research clearly shows that AI data centers raise utility rates for the areas they’re in through their massive consumption of electrical power. They also use inordinate amounts of water to cool their computers, threatening access to water and raising bills, while poisoning the air with toxic pollutants.

Numerous localities have successfully organized to prevent proposed data centers from coming to their districts, and some have been able to pass local moratoriums on the construction of any new data centers. Unsurprisingly, the AI lobby would rather not have too many politicians representing these views in the halls of Congress. It bears reminding that the data centers that power Crypto mining create the same resource constraints and cost increases for surrounding communities, which is exactly why many of the billionaires funding Crypto super PACs are also funding the AI super PACs. These AI corporations are raising our utility costs and facilitating forever wars that nobody wants. Not to mention that they are coordinating with Palantir, which is powering ICE’s terror, threatening the future of jobs and entire industries, being used to harass people with deepfakes and disinformation, endangering children online, and using racially biased algorithms. Like AIPAC and Crypto, AI super PACs are an existential threat to our democracy, and we should all be united in opposition to their involvement in our elections. The left should view all three of these lobbies the same, because they are. These are right-wing lobbies, pushing right-wing interests, to protect their own bottom lines, and they are doing so by electing the weakest Democrats in the bluest seats. The left is admittedly behind on coming together for real policy solutions and regulations to ensure that AI is being used to serve the interests of the people, not the billionaire class. We cannot let AI super PACs guide that conversation.



## RISKY BUSINESS

Risk Management is a big thing at my job. When I first started last year, there was a guy whose office was near mine whose job title was “Risk Management.” It was a term I associated with the insurance industry, but I didn’t understand its application in what we do. Now I’m on the Risk Management Committee and I see risk management everywhere. I know the term sounds like something for Wall Street or Washington, not for people like us who have lived through enough realworld risks to fill a textbook. But let me put it plainly. Risk is anything that could go wrong. Risk management is thinking ahead so we’re not blindsided. That’s it. No fancy language needed.

Government agencies practice risk management daily. FEMA studies flood zones, the CDC tracks outbreaks, cities reinforce bridges — that’s Risk Management. They’re looking at what might happen and preparing so the damage is minimal if it does. For seniors, this matters more than we sometimes realize. Emergency plans determine whether our neighborhoods get evacuation routes, cooling centers, or storm shelters. Public health planning affects whether we get early warnings about flu season or contaminated water. When government manages risk well, our communities stay safer.

Businesses use risk management to stay afloat. They ask questions like: What if our supplier shuts down? What if our data gets hacked? What if customers stop buying? To protect themselves, they diversify, save, insure, and plan. And honestly, those same strategies work beautifully in our personal lives. Diversifying income — even small side earnings or parttime work can cushion a surprise expense. Insurance — health, home, and life insurance are all forms of risk protection. Savings — an emergency fund is one of the strongest tools we have. Backup plans — just like businesses, we need a Plan B for major life events.

Let me break down a few simple terms in plain language: • Risk: Something that might happen and could cause harm. • Mitigation: Steps you take to reduce the chance or the damage. • Contingency: Your backup plan. • Probability: How likely something is. • Impact: How bad it would be if it happened.

Once you understand these, you can see how we apply them to almost every part of senior life. We juggle health risks: We know our bodies don’t bounce back the way they used to. But we owe it to ourselves to do the best we can with what we have to work with. Regular checkups, keeping medications organized, staying active, eating for energy, not just convenience, keeping emergency contacts and medical info in one place. That last one is a contingency plan — and it can save your life. We also deal with financial risks: many of us live on fixed incomes, and one unexpected expense can throw everything off. Risk management helps us stay steady. The experts advise keeping debt low, watching for scams, reviewing insurance yearly, setting aside even small amounts for emergencies and making sure someone trustworthy knows where important documents are. These aren’t luxuries — they’re protections. In our homes, there are safety risks: falls, power outages, and home repairs can be major risks as we age. We can reduce them by installing grab bars, improving lighting, keeping walkways clear, having a storm kit ready, using automatic bill pay to avoid missed payments. These small steps can provide big peace of mind. Loneliness, isolation, and stress are risks too — and seniors feel them deeply. Managing these risks means intentionally staying connected, setting boundaries with people who drain us, asking for help when we need it, finding purpose in hobbies, volunteering, or caregiving. Emotional risk management is just as important as financial or physical.

Here’s the truth: seniors are some of the best risk managers around. We’ve raised families, survived losses, worked through hard times, and adapted to a world that changes faster every year. We know how to prepare because we’ve lived through enough to understand what matters. Risk management isn’t about fear. It’s about dignity. Independence. Peace of mind. It’s about making choices today that protect our tomorrow.

I won’t live in fear, waiting for the other shoe to fall, but I also don’t want to live unprepared. Risk management gives me balance. It reminds me that while I can’t control everything, I can control how ready I am. And the beautiful part is this: we’ve been doing it all along. Every time we saved a little extra, kept a spare key, or taught our children to “look both ways,” we were practicing risk management. Now we’re doing it with intention — and with the wisdom only age can give.



## "I AM GLAD HE IS DEAD"

This was the comment of the President of the United States of America in 2026, in response to the death of former FBI Director Robert Mueller. He said, “I’m glad he can no longer hurt innocent people.”

I was appalled. Surprise and disbelief? No. Not anymore. When a man believes he alone can fix everything, whatever “fix it” means to him, then we are witnessing someone who sees himself as a savior. When someone believes that, you cannot expect them to

have a filter or a conscience. And he does not appear to have anyone around him willing to hold up a mirror. Those who are around him are either afraid, have lost their conscience, or agree with him.

He thinks he is smart, and he is not. He thinks he is innocent, and he is not. To me, he is an example of the kind of debasement God allows us to witness so that we understand what it looks like. He does not believe in the Constitution of the United States, so why do we expect him to follow it?

He loves power, but not the kind that builds strength, awareness, perception, and insight. He seeks the kind of power rooted in control, coercion, and misdirection. One is formed by the Spirit. The other is formed by ego, a misunderstanding of who he is.

He calls people low IQ, thugs, pigs, and worse. He only praises those who praise him. Those compliments are not genuine. They are manipulation. His insults are not random either. He insults those he fears. John McCain, Barack Obama, Joe Biden, Martin Luther King Jr., soldiers, women. The list goes on.

This is not ordinary fear. It is the fear of what he lacks, what he does not understand, what he cannot become. It is jealousy. Like a child who trips the teacher’s favorite student and then does not understand why he is punished. He is the bully who targets the one person who can stand alone.

He speaks constantly about winning. But in his mind, winning means hurting others. Because of this, he rejects anything that could genuinely benefit the country. “Good” to him means his name on a building or his slogan on a hat, especially if it replaces someone else’s name.

Good to him means control. Control of outcomes. Control of narratives. Control of people. And to achieve that, he uses misdirection.

Take the so called SAVE Act he is pushing through Congress. It is framed as election security, but it is really about control. He knows he lost the election to Biden, but he refuses to accept why. So he accuses others of doing what he himself would do.

He claims illegal immigrants are voting. They are not. Yet he wants to require birth certificates, passports, and photo identification to vote. He understands who does not have easy access to those documents. Married women who changed their names could be excluded. Others without documentation could be excluded.

This is not about security. It is about limiting who can vote. He is trying to get this done before the next election because he fears losing control of Congress. He fears investigations. He fears accountability.

The same pattern shows up elsewhere. When funding decisions are made, when agencies are restructured, when policies are reframed, the goal remains the same. Control.

So when he tells you that life is more affordable, that healthcare will improve, or that war is necessary for your safety, remember who is speaking.

This is the same man who said he was glad Mueller was dead. And while he speaks as if he has unlimited time and power, the truth is simple. At nearly 80 years old, his time is not expanding. It is shortening, just like everyone else’s.

If you are ever tempted to believe him, compare his promises to reality. Look at the cost of food. Look at healthcare. Look at the promise of no wars.

Then decide for yourself what “winning” really means.



## LIFE WITHOUT NONPROFITS

Gas prices are up. Groceries cost more. Wages are frozen. Some government employees are not being paid. Major employers are “restructuring,” laying people off at an alarming rate. Funding from government agencies is changing and too often disappearing from our communities. Too many of our neighbors are hiding in their own homes for fear of being swept off the street and deported. Jewish institutions are targeted for hate and violence. What is going on? And who can help?

One answer: nonprofits, big and small. They have always sought to fill the void, and they continue to do so. They may not be visible, but they are everywhere. They are feeding and providing meals to the working poor, those who have lost their jobs, and those who are not currently receiving wages while working. They operate clinics that provide health care and mental health services to those who can no longer afford health insurance. They are offering spiritual assistance as people turn to faith organizations for emotional, mental, and spiritual support and health care. They help the growing number of people experiencing intimate partner violence. They are our nonprofits, and they are serving us.

Nonprofits are organizing and informing us about what we can do within our democracy to stop the cruel exertion of power against “the people” instead of the considered use of power “for the people.” They are rescuing animals that people can no longer afford to care for. They are opening their arms to homeless and exploited children and teenagers, and not turning away those who are LGBTQ. They are innovating education, helping to ensure all of us have access to an education and the skills to earn a livable wage. They are teaching English to those who are new to our country and communities. They are helping people transition to life in the USA, sharing information about their legal rights and how to navigate the system. They research cures for cancers and other illnesses that literally steal life from us. They are our nonprofits, and they are serving us.

They are not just serving us, they are us. They represent the best of who we are and who we can be. As we can, we have to step up to support these organizations financially and with our time and resources. They need our support more than ever, and we need them more than ever. Let us support those who have been standing in the void and are equipped to do so. Let us ask, how can we be of service? Better times are coming, and we can prepare for them by caring for each other. We are all in this together.

# Classifieds

## DURHAM COUNTY

### STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

File No.: 26E000339-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CARL DENNIS PARKER, JR., 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 29, 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 March, 2026.

Annette P. Adkins, Executor  
2613 Fitzford Ct.  
Durham, NC 27712

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000216-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of DOVIE LEE GADDY, 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 29, 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 March, 2026.

Valerie Gaddy Terrell, Executor  
3915 Wake Forest Hwy  
Durham NC 27703

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000306-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BARBARA J. PIERCEY, 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 29, 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 March, 2026.

Bruce Piercey, Executor  
728 S Lee St  
Alexandria, VA 22314

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000305-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of FLOYD HARRIS, 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 29, 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 March, 2026.

Cornelia J. Harris, Executor  
1 Brightfield Ln.  
Durham, NC 27712

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E001210-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KATHLEEN ANN SMITH, 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 29, 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 March, 2026.

Eric Tanuan, Executor  
c/o Monks Law Firm, Steve Monks, Attorney,  
Monks Law Firm  
6613 Speight Circle  
Raleigh, NC 27616

3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF DURHAM

### NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

RESOLUTION CAPITAL GROUP VS.  
MARGARET D. YOUNG, ET AL.  
To Celester Jackson:

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought against you is as follows: Petition to Partition or Sell Property in Lieu of Partition.

You are required to make such defense to such pleading not later than May 5, 2026, and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This the 26th day of April, 2026.

Daron D. Satterfield  
Satterfield Law, PLLC  
307 Meadowlands Drive, Suite 101  
Hillsborough, NC 27278

Published: 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000085-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JEAN HOWELL REESE, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.

Cheryl Messer, Executor  
3324 Belmont Mt. Herman Rd. Lot 8  
Burlington, NC 27215

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E000948-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of FRANCES LOUISE HARRIS, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.

Joyce Harris, Executor  
7508 Russell Rd.  
Durham, NC 27712

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 22E000620-310  
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JUDITH S. FORD AKA JUDITH SPENCER FORD, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.

Connie K. Ford, Administrator  
c/o Law Offices of Kenneth J. Steinberg, P.A.  
3215 Guess Road, Suite 110  
Durham, NC 27705

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS In the General Court of Justice,

### Superior Court Division Before the Clerk

File No.: 25E000192-310  
Having qualified as EXECUTRIX of the Estate of ANTHONY WARASH, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
Candance J. Warash, Executor  
Law Offices of Kenneth J. Steinberg, P.A.  
3215 Guess Road, Suite 110  
Durham, NC 27705

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 24E000229-310

Having qualified as EXECUTRIX of the Estate of ROBERT R. WILLIAMS, SR., 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
Shirley D. Williams, Executrix  
Law Offices of Kenneth J. Steinberg, P.A.  
3215 Guess Road, Suite 110  
Durham, NC 27705

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000332-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of MABEL OLIVIA ROYAL, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
Myra Lovelle Royal, Administrator  
305 Starling Lane  
Durham, NC 27713

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000290-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of BABETTE GOODMAN BLAUG, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
Amy Oates, Executor  
259 Duck Pointe Dr.  
Roxboro, NC 27572

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000282-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ERIC RASHARD BANKS, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
Eric Rashard Banks, Administrator  
c/o Law Offices of Kenneth J. Steinberg, P.A.  
3215 Guess Road, Suite 110  
Durham, NC 27705

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
In the General Court of Justice,

This the 19th day of March, 2026.  
Bonswa D. Banks, Administrator  
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.  
McKissick & McKissick  
835 N Mangum Street  
Durham, NC 27701

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000263-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of LINDA BARNETT, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.

Vanessa Barnett-Loro, Executor  
4100 Thetford Rd.  
Durham, NC 27707

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000262-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of ELIZABETH OLDHAM MESSER, 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 22, 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 March, 2026.  
William Robert Oldham, III,  
Executor

c/o Ethan C. Timmins  
Patrick Law, PLLC  
3805 University Drive, Suite A  
Durham, NC 27707

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS ESTATE OF WALTER JOSEPH PSOTER AKA WALTER J. PSOTER FILE NO. 26E000234-310

ALL PERSONS, firms, and corporations having claims against WALTER JOSEPH PSOTER aka WALTER J. PSOTER, deceased, of Durham County, N.C., are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 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 of March, 2026. Jodi A. Psoter, Executor of the Estate of Walter Joseph Psoter aka Walter J. Psoter, c/o Amanda Honea, Attorney, 1255 Crescent Green, Suite 200, Cary, NC 27518.

3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E001330-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JOHN HENRY WALLER, JR., 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Maxine Graham, Administrator  
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.  
McKissick & McKissick  
835 N Mangum Street  
Durham, NC 27701

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E001469-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of RICHARD FERGUSON JR., 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Allie Williams and Ramonica C. Cannon, Administrators  
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.  
McKissick & McKissick  
835 N Mangum Street  
Durham, NC 27701

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E001469-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of RICHARD FERGUSON JR., 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 15, 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 March, 2026.

Allie Williams and Ramonica C. Cannon, Administrators  
c/o Floyd B. McKissick, III, Esq.  
McKissick & McKissick  
835 N Mangum Street  
Durham, NC 27701

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 25E001562-310

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of MARVA LOUISE BURNETT, 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Germaine Burnette, Administrator  
5306 Rose Garden Lane  
Durham, NC 27707

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS 26E000229-310

All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against CHARLES ALVIN COOK, deceased, late of Durham County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 15th day of June, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 12th day of March, 2026.  
Jennifer S. Cook, Administrator  
CTA

c/o Hemphill Gelder, PC  
PO Box 97035  
Raleigh, NC 27624-7035

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

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

File No.: 26E000136-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of KATHERINE WILLIAMS AUSTIN, 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Mary Moorefield Gravitt, Executor  
1110 Stallion Court  
Summerfield, NC 27358

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS All persons, firms and corporations having claims against

JOHNSIE DAVIS EGERTON, DECEASED, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 10, 2026, or this notice along with the appropriate general statute will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the deceased are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12 day of March, 2026. All correspondence should be to the Estate of Johnsie Davis Egerton, c/o Florence A. Bowns, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### Estate/Creditor Notices ESTATE OF PANDORA FRAZIER 26E000261-310

All persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the Estate of Pandora Frazier, deceased, are hereby notified to present said claims to the undersigned Co-Executors of the estate on or before the date required by law, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the estate are requested to make immediate payment to the

undersigned.

This the 12 day of March, 2026.

Teresa Crumpler, Co-Executor  
1423 Copper Creek Dr.  
Durham, NC 27713  
Diane Voss, Co-Executor  
1825 Old Red Mountain Rd.  
Rougemont, NC 27572  
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

### NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division File # 26CV000431-310

[CHILD CUSTODY PROCEEDING]  
WEATHERSPOON, Plaintiff v.  
SEALS and ANTONIO, Defendants.

To Guillermo Martinez Antonio:  
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: that legal custody of the minor child Abigail Grace Martinez Seals, born on 6/12/2010, be granted to Plaintiff.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than April 21, 2026, said date being forty (40) days from the first publication of this notice. Upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 12th day of March 2026.  
Chelsea Fuller of JusticeMatters, Inc., Attorney for Plaintiff  
P.O. Box 199, Durham, NC, 27701  
919/794-7511, Ext. 013.

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

**DURHAM COUNTY**

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

**GUILFORD COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
GUILFORD COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 25E002482-400  
Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR of the Estate of JERRARD WHITTED, deceased, late of Guilford 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 15, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

**ORANGE COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF ACTION FOR PUBLICATION**

In The Circuit Court Of The Eighteenth Judicial Circuit  
In And For Brevard County, Florida  
In Re: Termination Of Parental Rights For The Proposed Adoption Of The Minor Child: Milanee Mona Bell, Dob: 07/26/2008  
CASE NO.: 05-2025-DR-037416-XXDR-BC, DIVISION: F  
GEORGE BELL, Petitioner  
TO: Gail Villanueva  
Address: 447 Ballantyne Common Circle, Apartment 103, Hendersonville, North Carolina 28792

YOU ARE NOTIFIED that an action for the proposed adoption, including a claim for termination of parental rights, has been filed against you. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to this action on Jessica D. Thomas, Attorney for Petitioner, GEORGE BELL, whose address is 253 N. Orlando Ave., Suite 204, Maitland, FL 32751, on or before March 11, 2026, and file the original with the Clerk of this Court at 425 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida 32801, either before service on Petitioner's attorney or immediately thereafter; otherwise, a default will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the Petition.

WARNING: Rule 12.285, Florida Family Law Rules of Procedure, requires certain automatic disclosure of documents and information. Failure to comply can result in sanctions, including dismissal or striking of pleadings.

DATED this 20th day of February, 2026.

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT  
By: Debbie Huff  
Deputy Clerk  
Published: 3/26, 4/2, 4/9, 4/16, 4/23, and 4/30/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
ORANGE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

FILE NO. 26E000076-670  
The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of LINDA ANN DESROSIERS, Deceased, late of Orange County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate to exhibit the same on or before 6/17/26, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This is the 19th day of March, 2026.

Julie Warwick, Executor  
c/o Attorney Heather Hazelwood  
P.O. Box 61182  
Durham NC 27715  
3/19, 3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
ORANGE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 24E001765-670  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES WC PENDERGRAFT, deceased, late of Orange 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.  
James Scott Pendergraft, Executor  
103 Prince St.  
Carrboro, NC 27510  
3/5, 3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

**WAKE COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 25E004791-910  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of JAMES MONROE, 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 29, 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 March, 2026.  
Mary Ann Monroe Williams  
Executor  
1324 Wrentree Circle  
Raleigh, NC 27610  
3/26, 4/2, 4/9, and 4/16/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In the General Court of Justice  
District Court Division  
FILE NO.: 25CV023263-910  
DESTINY DUPREE, Plaintiff v. JOSHUA PELLTO, Defendant  
TO: JOSHUA PELLTO  
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: child custody and child support, including temporary and permanent custody, visitation, and support obligations for a minor child.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that this matter has been scheduled for hearing:

Date: April 29, 2026  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Location: Wake County Courthouse, Courtroom 2B

This case has involved multiple attempts at service, including alias and pluries summons issued and returned unserved.

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Destiny Dupree  
Plaintiff, Pro Se  
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In the General Court of Justice  
District Court Division  
FILE NO.: 14-CVD-7000  
ANTHONY STEWART, Plaintiff v. CICELY CRUTCHFIELD, Defendant and ANTONIO TURNER, Defendant (Address Unknown)  
TO: ANTONIO TURNER

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: a Motion to Intervene in a child custody matter, including the addition of Cicely Crutchfield as a party and issues related to the custody of a minor child.

The Plaintiff asserts that the minor child desires to reside with his mother and that circumstances regarding care and custody have changed.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that a hearing on this matter has been scheduled as follows:

Date: May 18, 2026  
Time: 9:00 AM  
Location: Wake County Courthouse, Courtroom 2C  
316 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, North Carolina

This the 26th day of March, 2026.

Anthony Stewart  
Plaintiff

3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In the General Court of Justice  
District Court Division  
FILE NO.: 24CV035824-910  
STEVEN J. ELLIOTT, Plaintiff v. TIFFANY L. ELLIOTT, Defendant  
TO: TIFFANY L. ELLIOTT

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: absolute divorce.

The Plaintiff alleges that you and the Plaintiff were married and thereafter separated and have lived continuously separate and apart for a period of at least one (1) year prior to the filing of this action.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Steven J. Elliott, Plaintiff  
P.O. Box 323  
Fuquay Varina, NC 27526  
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

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: 25CV021563-910

TO: MARLA FERNANDA PARRAL-GOMEZ and UNKNOWN FATHER

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: custody of a minor child, including temporary and permanent custody.

You are required to make defense to such pleading no later than 40 days after the first publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the party seeking service against you will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

Further, take notice that a Custody Mediation Orientation and Parenting Education session has been scheduled for:  
Date: April 29, 2026  
Time: 10:00 AM  
Location: Via Zoom (Wake County Custody Mediation)

Failure to comply with the Court's orders may result in sanctions, including contempt of court.

This, the 26th day of March, 2026.

Lucero Gomez  
Plaintiff, Pro Se  
3/26, 4/2, and 4/9/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In the General Court of Justice, District Court Division  
FILE NO.: 20CVD013438-910  
IN THE MATTER OF: WILLIAMS AND WILLIAMS v. WILLIAMS AND UNKNOWN FATHER

To: Unknown Father of M. M. W, a male child born of Morgan Brittany Williams on 09/23/2016 in Wake County, NC.

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 child custody. You are required to make defense to such pleading within 40 days of service on or before April 28, 2026. If you fail to respond, the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This, the 19th day of March, 2026. You should provide a copy of any response to the attorney for the Plaintiffs at Melissa Stuckey, McNeil Law Firm, PLLC; 226 W. Millbrook Road, Raleigh, NC 27609, 919-803-6778.  
3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000411-910

Having qualified as ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate of JOSANDRA MOUNT, 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Daryl Tracy Mount  
Administrator CTA  
c/o Marion Law Office, PLLC  
2741 University Drive  
Durham, NC 27707

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 25E004272-910

Having qualified as CO-ADMINISTRATORS of the Estate of HOPE YVETTE RALEY HOUSE, 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Geneva Mizelle, Co-Administrator  
3200 Stream Side Road, Apt 33  
Raleigh, NC 27613  
Cornelius Railey, Co-Administrator  
905 North Fayetteville Ave.  
Dunn, NC 28334

3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 25E004660-910  
Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of CAROLYN DOLAN SMITH, 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 15, 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 March, 2026.  
Leo Walter Smith, Executor  
c/o Jeffers Law Firm  
PO Box 761  
Raleigh NC 27602  
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against GWYNNETH GAYLE BROOKS STANBACK, DECEASED, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before June 10, 2026, or this notice along with the appropriate general statute will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the deceased are asked to make immediate payment. This the 12 day of March, 2026. All correspondence should be to the Estate of Gwynneth Stanback, c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717.  
3/12, 3/19, 3/26, and 4/2/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court Of Justice  
District Court Division  
Small Claims  
File No. 25CV046643-910  
LENORA MITCHELL, Plaintiff v. JEFF WILLIAMS, Defendant  
TO: JEFF WILLIAMS

Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action in the General Court of Justice, District Court Division, Wake County, North Carolina. The nature of the relief being sought is as stated in the Complaint filed in this action. You are required to appear before a magistrate in Wake County District Court, located at 316 Fayetteville Street, Raleigh, North Carolina, on April 6, 2026 at 9:30 a.m., and answer the complaint or otherwise respond. If you fail to appear and defend against the claim, judgment will be entered against you for the relief demanded in the complaint.

This the 12th day of March, 2026.  
Lenora Mitchell, Plaintiff  
1023 Tarford Place  
Knightdale, NC 27545  
3/12, 3/19, and 3/26/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In the District Court Division  
File No. 25CV046587-910  
MARCIAL V. TORRES  
TO SILVANO DOMINGUEZ TORRES: Take notice that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above-entitled action. The nature of the relief being sought is for child custody. You are required to make a defense to such pleading no later than April 21, 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, LUCERO GOMEZ MARCIAL, will apply to the court for the relief sought.

This, the 12th day of March, 2026.

Yvonne Armendariz, Esq  
Attorney for Plaintiff  
Armendariz Law Office, PLLC  
6110 Lake Wheeler Road  
Raleigh, NC 27603  
Office: (919) 656-1524  
Yvonne@armendarizlaw.com  
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, 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



“With regard to wealth-building strategies, have you tried working?”

# Classifieds

## FORECLOSURE

### NORTH CAROLINA DURHAM COUNTY NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE Special Proceedings No. 25SP001037-310

Substitute Trustee: Philip A. Glass  
Date of Sale: April 8, 2026  
Time of Sale: 3:00 p.m.  
Place of Sale:  
Durham County Courthouse  
Description of Property:  
See Attached Description  
Record Owners: Jamilah Simon  
Address of Property:  
109 S. Maple Street  
Durham, NC 27703  
Deed of Trust:  
Book : 9595 Page: 238  
Dated: January 24, 2022  
Grantors: Jamilah Simon, an  
unmarried person  
Original Beneficiary: State  
Employees' Credit Union

#### CONDITIONS OF SALE:

This sale is made subject to all unpaid taxes and superior liens or encumbrances of record and assessments, if any, against the said property, and any recorded leases. This sale is also subject to any applicable county land transfer tax, and the successful third party bidder shall be required to make payment for any such county land transfer tax. It is the intent of the holder of the above Deed of Trust that the execution, delivery and recordation of a Trustee Deed to the holder as high bidder shall not merge with any superior Deeds of Trust held by the holder of the above Deed of Trust, and that the holder of said superior Deed of Trust shall continue to enjoy all rights and remedies set forth in said superior Deed of Trust, including the right to foreclose either by judicial action or under power of sale contained in the superior Deed of Trust.

The property to be offered pursuant to this Notice of Sale is being offered for sale "AS IS, WHERE IS." THERE ARE NO REPRESENTATIONS OR WARRANTIES relating to the title or to any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being offered for sale, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such condition are expressly disclaimed.

A cash deposit of 5% of the purchase price will be required at the time of the sale. Remote bidding will not be accepted pursuant to North Carolina General Statutes Section 45-21.25 (a). Credit bids on behalf of the Noteholder will be accepted. Any successful bidder shall be required to tender the full balance of the purchase price so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Substitute Trustee tenders to him a deed for the property or attempts to tender such deed, and should said successful bidder fail to pay the full balance purchase price so

bid at that time, he shall remain liable on his bid as provided for in North Carolina General Statutes Section 45-21.30 (d) and (e). This sale will be held open ten (10) days for upset bids as required by law.

Residential real property with less than 15 rental units, including single-family residential real property: an order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to G.S. 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but not more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in the notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

Dated: 3/11/2026

Philip A. Glass, Substitute Trustee  
Nodell, Glass & Haskell, L.L.P.  
Posted on 3/11/2026

#### Exhibit A

BEGINNING at a stake on the east side of Maple Street (formerly called North Street) 104 feet in a northerly direction from the north side of Hart Street and running thence in an easterly direction 187 feet to a stake; thence in a northerly direction 56 feet to a stake; thence in a westerly direction 187 feet to a stake on the east side of Maple Street; thence along and with the east side of said Maple Street South 1 def. 30 min. West 56 feet to a stake; the point of beginning and being a portion of Lot No.7 (also referred to as Lot No. 8 in an unrecorded map) in Block A of THE DRIVER LAND of Durham Land and Security Company as per plat and survey thereof now on file in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County Plat Book 5, at Page 59, to which reference is hereby made for a more particular description of same. See Deed Book 162, Page 138, Durham County Registry.

Subject to easements, restrictions and rights of way of record, and utility lines and rights of way in existence over, under or upon the above-described property. PIN: 0831-53-4371

Property Address: 109 S. Maple St. Durham, NC 27703, which includes 109 S. Maple St. Unit A, Durham, NC 27703, and 109 S. Maple St. Unit B, Durham, NC 27703  
March 26, 2026 and April 2, 2026.

## FORECLOSURE

### STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF DURHAM NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE In The General Court of Justice Superior Court Division Before The Clerk 26SP000055-310

IN THE MATTER OF THE FORECLOSURE OF A DEED OF TRUST FROM KEVIN D JONES AND MAYA T JONES, HUSBAND AND WIFE TO THE SOUTH MOUNTAIN GROUP, INC., TRUSTEE, DATED FEBRUARY 17, 2023, RECORDED IN BOOK 9878, PAGE 194, DURHAM COUNTY REGISTRY

Pursuant to an order entered February 19, 2026, in the Superior Court for Durham County, and the power of sale contained in the captioned Deed of Trust (the "Deed of Trust"), the Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at auction (the "Sale"), to the highest bidder for cash on:

APRIL 6, 2026, AT 11:00 A.M.  
DURHAM COUNTY COURTHOUSE  
510 SOUTH DILLARD STREET,  
DURHAM, NORTH CAROLINA  
27701

the real estate and the improvements thereon secured by the Deed of Trust, less and except any of such property released from the lien of the Deed of Trust prior to the date of said sale, lying and being in Durham County, North Carolina, and being more particularly described as follows (the "Property"):

ALL THAT CERTAIN LOT OR PARCEL OF LAND SITUATE IN THE COUNTY OF DURHAM, STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA, AND BEING MORE PARTICULARLY DESCRIBED AS FOLLOWS:

BEING ALL OF LOT 2, BLOCK D, SECTION ONE, SOUTHERN TERRACE, AS SHOWN ON PLAT BOOK 42, PAGE 11, DURHAM COUNTY REGISTRY.

REAL PROPERTY  
ADDRESS: 2405 SOUTHERN  
DRIVE, DURHAM, NC 27703

The record owners of the Property not more than ten (10) days prior to the date hereof is Kevin D. Jones and Maya T. Jones. Parcel ID: 163272

Unless delayed by other sales held at the same place, the sale will be held at the fixed time, or as soon thereafter as practicable, but not later than 3 hours after the time fixed, as provided in Section 45-21.23 of the North Carolina General Statutes.

A five percent cash deposit, or a cash deposit of \$750.00, whichever is greater, will be required of the last and highest bidder. The balance of the bid

purchase price shall be due in full in cash or certified funds at a closing to take place within thirty (30) days of the date of sale. The Substitute Trustee shall convey title to the property by non warranty deed.

This sale will be made subject to all prior liens of record, if any, and to all unpaid (ad valorem) taxes and special assessments, if any, which became a lien subsequent to the recordation of the Deed of Trust. This sale will be further subject to the right, if any, of the United States of America to redeem the above-described property for a period of 120 days following the date when the final upset bid period has run.

The purchaser of the property described above shall pay the Clerk's Commissions in the amount of \$.45 per \$100.00 of the purchase price (up to a maximum amount of \$500.00), required by Section 7A-308(a)(1) of the North Carolina General Statutes. If the purchaser of the above-described property is someone other than the Beneficiary under the Deed of Trust, the purchaser shall also pay, to the extent applicable, the land transfer tax in the amount of one percent (1%) of the purchase price.

To the extent this sale involves residential property with less than fifteen (15) rental units, you are hereby notified of the following:

(a) An order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to Section 45-21.29 of the North Carolina General Statutes in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold; and

(b) Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement upon 10 days' written notice to the landlord. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

The 19th day of February 2026.

John W. Fletcher III, Substitute Trustee (NCSB No. 15503)  
Fletcher, Tydings, Williams-Tracy & Gott, PLLC  
100 Queens Road, Suite 250,  
Charlotte, North Carolina 28204  
704-334-3400  
jfletcher@fletcherdydings.com  
March 26 and April 2, 2026

**PAYING CASH AND BUYING  
OLD CASSETTE TAPES CALL  
MARVIN 919-268-7476 OR  
EMAIL ME AT  
WYCHEMARVIN4@GMAIL.COM**

## 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 I-95 Gravity Sewer Crossing and Pump Station No. 11 Replacement project for the Town of Smithfield which bids on April 2, 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 \* Town of Smithfield; Public Utilities Operations Center; 230 Hospital Road; Smithfield, NC 27577 \* The Wooten Company; 120 North Boylan Avenue; Raleigh, NC 27603 \* Dodge Data and Analytics website \* ConstructConnect website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, hauling, asphalt paving, striping, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, electrical, SCADA, jack & bore, bypass pumping, flatwork, and manhole lining. 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.

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.



New South-Right Build-Varnedoe, A Joint Venture

### NOTICE TO SUBCONTRACTOR BIDDER PRE-QUALIFICATION REQUEST FOR THE Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority Terminal 2 Restroom Refresh

New South-Right Build, A Joint Venture in Association with Varnedoe Construction is seeking to pre-qualify subcontractors to submit bids for the following project: RDU Terminal 2 Restroom Refresh. New South-Right Build has been selected as the Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) for the project and will receive bids from and contract with the principal contractors for the execution of the work. The preliminary budget for this project is \$28,000,000. Small Business participation will be required under RDU's Small Business program. Participation goals will be provided with the bid advertisement.

Similar project experience will be considered during prequalification. Anticipated Bid Date will be June 23, 2026. This is not a request for bid, however, only subcontractors who have completed a prequalification package, and been deemed prequalified for this project, will be considered for a bid on this project. Submittals for pre-qualification forms may be hand delivered, mailed, or submitted electronically. Deadline for prequalification submission is May 26, 2026 or 28 days prior to bid date. The CMAR and Authority reserve the right to reject any and all Pre-qualifications. The contracting method will be through Competitive Bid in accordance with Chapter 143 of the NC General Statutes. For further information or questions, please contact Scott Wolynech at (919) 683-1701, Dayshon Bynum at (919) 218-9539 or by email at:

prequalNSC@newsouthconstruction.com

Prequalification documents can be accessed through the New South/Right Build plan room under "RDU Terminal 2 Bathroom Refresh - PREQUALIFICATION" at the below link:

<https://www.planscope.com/projects/1497/details/raleigh-durham-airport-authority-terminal-2-restroom-refresh>

<https://www.rdu.com/do-business-with-rdu/business-opportunities/>

#### Prequalification Submission:

Prequalification packages should be submitted by emailing attachment to:

prequalNSC@newsouthconstruction.com.

Mailed or hand delivered submittals shall go to the following address:

Attention: Scott Wolynech or Dayshon Bynum

1715 Camden Avenue

Durham, NC 27704

## WAKE COUNTY

### 30-DAY PUBLIC COMMENT NOTICE DRAFT 2026 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN MARCH 30, 2026 - APRIL 28, 2026

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT Wake County will accept public comments for 30-days on the Draft 2026-2027 Annual Action Plan. The plan is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for the County to receive federal entitlement grant funds. The Annual Action Plan outlines proposed goals, programs, and funding priorities to address housing, homelessness, and community development needs in Wake County's jurisdiction for program year July 1, 2026 - June 30, 2027. Funding amounts included in the draft plan are estimates. The plan will be updated once HUD releases the final FFY 2026 entitlement allocations, and activity budgets will be adjusted proportionally to reflect the actual funding amounts.

The public comment period will start March 30, 2026 - April 28, 2026. The draft plan will be available online at: <https://tinyurl.com/4bn9r9b4>. Copies of the plan will also be available at the following locations: Wake County Housing (336 Fayetteville Street, Suite 440, Raleigh, NC 27602), Municipal Town Halls, Wake County Regional Centers, Homeless Service Centers, and other Wake County locations.

At the close of the comment period, Wake County will review and consider all feedback received before submitting the final plan to HUD. For more information or to submit a comment, please contact the Housing Department at (919) 856-5689 or via email [housing.info@wake.gov](mailto:housing.info@wake.gov). Accommodations for disabled or non-English speaking residents will be made available upon request. Speech or hearing-impaired persons may contact 1-800-735-2962 (TT) or 1-800-735-8262 (voice).

## D/M/WBE

### SUBCONTRACTORS/SUPPLIERS WANTED

Pipeline Utilities, Inc. (NC General Contractor License No. 325) is seeking certified DBE, MBE, and WBE subcontractors and suppliers for the GKN Pump Station 10" Force Main Replacement project for the City of Mebane which bids on March 26, 2026, at 2:00 PM. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: Pipeline Utilities, Inc.; 2204-F Associate Drive; Raleigh, NC 27603 \* Alley, Williams, Carmen, & King, Inc.; 740 Chapel Hill Road; Burlington, NC 27216-1179 or [www.awck.com/resources/bidding-plans](http://www.awck.com/resources/bidding-plans),

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, asphalt paving, erosion control, seeding, linework/pipe installation, and bypass pumping. Please contact Ethan Grissom (egrissom@pui-nc.com) if you are interested in submitting a proposal on any portion(s) of this project. Contact via phone 919-772-4310; fax: 919-772-3261; or email. All quotations will be accepted up to the closing time of the bid date. Pipeline Utilities, Inc. 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.

Opportunity Lives In The Pages Of  
The Carolinian