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## AI, Crypto Data Centers Could Raise Electricity Costs Up to 57% For Some

The Conversation—A new modeling study by researchers at North Carolina State University and Carnegie Mellon University projects that the rapid expansion of data centers supporting artificial intelligence and cryptocurrency mining could raise wholesale electricity costs by as much as 57% in some U.S. regions by 2030.

The study, published in Environmental Research Letters, also estimates that power-sector carbon dioxide emissions could be up to 28% higher compared to a future without new data center growth. The findings highlight localized pressure points, particularly in Northern Virginia, where a concentration of data centers already strains the grid.

Data Center Electricity Demand Projected to Quadruple

According to the study, U.S. data centers consumed 176 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity in 2023, representing about 4.4% of total national power use. Under a middle-of-the-road growth scenario, the researchers estimate that total electricity demand from data centers and cryptocurrency mining could reach approximately 790 billion kilowatt-hours by 2030 -- more than four times the 2023 level. To arrive at their projections, the team tested 13 different scenarios that varied data center growth rates, geographic siting, natural gas prices, and the presence of federal clean energy incentives.

"When pushed, the grid doesn't reach for the cleanest options first. It reaches for what's available and cheap," the study authors wrote, as



cited in the research. Under the mid-growth scenario, coal contributes between 12% and 14% of the additional electricity generated to meet data center demand, while natural gas supplies between 64% and 76%. Most of that extra fossil-fuel power comes from running existing coal and gas plants harder rather than building new facilities.

Regional Impact: Coal Plants in Ohio, West Virginia Fill Northern Virginia Demand

The most pronounced regional findings involve Northern Virginia, where a concentration of data centers draws power from aging coal plants in neighboring Ohio and West Virginia. The researchers describe this phenomenon as "carbon leakage," where emissions are effectively exported from the demand center to wherever cheaper, dirtier power is generated. In Texas, the grid accommodates data center growth primarily through expanded natural

gas generation, reflecting a different resource mix and grid structure.

Retail electricity rates in major grid regions from Illinois to New Jersey already rose between 23% and 40% from 2020 to 2024, according to figures cited in the study. Data center demand is a key driver of these increases. According to a report by Consumer Reports, massive data centers are "gobbling up resources across the United States" and consumers may be paying the bill. TechCrunch reported in May 2024 that PJM Interconnection, the largest U.S. grid, saw wholesale power prices nearly double year-over-year, with the independent market monitor pointing to data centers as the culprit.

Policy Implications: Federal Clean Energy Tax Credits Can Shift Fuel Mix

The study models the effect of reinstating federal clean energy tax credits from the Inflation Reduction

Act. When these incentives are in place, natural gas's share of new data-center electricity drops from 70% to 41%, with wind and solar filling a much larger portion of the gap. The analysis also reveals a counterintuitive dynamic: low natural gas prices are associated with higher incremental emissions from data centers, because cheap gas keeps coal plants idle, but when data center demand surges, those parked coal plants become the go-to source of extra power.

"Proactive planning and targeted policy" are needed to manage growth, the study authors said. Without deliberate intervention, continued data center expansion could pressure electricity bills and reverse years of progress on power-sector emissions. According to the independent news outlet Watts Up With That?, data centers driving up energy costs have become a major public concern, with consumers resenting energy-price jumps exacerbated by the spread of data centers.

Without Deliberate Planning, Costs and Emissions Rise

Under the mid-growth scenario, the additional CO2 emissions tied to data center demand in 2030 would total 330 million metric tons -- larger than the annual emissions of many entire countries. The Pew Research Center reports that one study from Carnegie Mellon University estimates data centers and cryptocurrency mining could lead to an 8% increase in the average U.S. electricity bill by 2030, potentially exceeding 25% in the highest-demand markets of central and northern Virginia.



## Support Danya Perry: A Heart for the Community Needs a New Heart

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

If you know Danya Perry, you know he is a man who leads with his heart. As the first-ever Director of Equitable Economic Development for Wake County, Danya has spent years ensuring that Raleigh's growth is fair and inclusive. From corporate inclusivity to citizen mobility, his people-focused approach—informed by a background in sociology rather than just business—has made him a champion for those often left behind. He doesn't just see data; he sees stories and people.

Whether he's hosting the Triangle DEI Alliance conferences or launching "Black Business Momentum" seminars in community centers across Garner and Rolesville, Danya is always building bridges. He believes that true equity is about making sure everyone has a way to get to the dance. Now, our beloved Danya needs us to build a bridge for him.

Though he has metaphorically one of the biggest hearts in our community, Danya literally needs a new one. His heart challenges began in 1997 due to a virus and a genetic disorder. For over 20 years, he has persevered through pacemakers, ablations, and procedures, never letting his health slow down his dedication to service. Unfortunately, his heart muscle has now deteriorated.

(See **DANYA PERRY**, P. 9)

## Part One: Meet Ms. Gwendolyn White

Analysis  
By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Ms. Gwendolyn White has been seeking justice for racially targeted harassment since 2020. Her alleged actions on Friday, May 21st, are unacceptable; at the same time, all Americans should understand the backstory and the need for law enforcement and judicial system reform for all of our protection. What happened to Ms. White and her mother is un-American and should never happen to another tax-paying citizen who depends on the law for justice. As Americans, we often recite the Pledge of Allegiance, which states, "liberty and justice for all." Justice was denied to Ms. White, and the collusion that has occurred makes this situation much bigger than one incident. Evidence has been suppressed and destroyed.

We started receiving emails from Ms. White in August of 2024. She continuously shared emails of police reports, court documents, and photos of her mother's physical deterioration as she went through litigation to stop the harassment and retrieve her stolen property. Ms. White shared with us that, in December of 2019, she and her mother moved to Rolesville, NC. The move was meant to be final as Ms. White shared she had recently retired from a government career with high-security clearance, which elevated her technological abilities. A career auditor at the federal and state levels, Ms. White demonstrated a savant-like memory for dates, times, and anything number-related, as she

spent her career documenting IT infrastructures, data centers, and servers. This sought-after skillset earned her a comfortable living and valuable insights that the people harassing her were aware of. Working with numerous banks in the space of anti-money laundering and fraud, when we first spoke, it became obvious Ms. White had highly sought-after insights.

In December of 2019, while out shopping, Ms. White was informed by her elderly mother that people were coming into the house when she was not home. At first, Ms. White did not believe her mother initially, blaming her observation on old age. Then she installed CPI and received confirmation from other neighbors. Things escalated quickly with the home invasions in Rolesville, which we will address in due time. After meeting and interviewing Ms. White, I felt she was of sound mind. In August of 2024, she was detailed, educated, and competent. She was at that time afraid for her life and her mother's. She documented the evidence over years and years despite medical setbacks brought on by life circumstances and harassment. Ms. White maintained records outlining the exact dates and times of occurrences, with dozens of witnesses, neighbors, officers, photos, and audio recordings. Much of this evidence can be found in the inbox of area media organizations that are currently cherry-picking what they share to frame the narrative they would like to promote. Ms. White informed me that she approached every media outlet in the area, and I was one of the few who responded, which led to our



sit-down interview in the fall of 2024. You can find the first five minutes of this interview on *The Carolinian* YouTube Channel. As far as I know, *The Carolinian* is the only news platform to interview Ms. White and share her story in her own words. It is an explosive two hours outlining the reason Ms. White was targeted by the Rolesville Police Department and a chronological explanation of the events and harassment that led to where we are now.

An important documented fact is that at one point during this ordeal, Duke University revised Ms. White's online medical records after fraudulent elements were added by hackers and shared without her permission, violating her HIPAA rights in efforts to encourage the public to question her mental fitness. After years of evidence suppression, injustice, and legal rigmarole, Ms. White decided to hurt

people after being hurt for years. This is not a decision *The Carolinian* supports; however, the truth must accompany this new chapter of a years-long story.

Now the community is seeing the very media outlets that ignored Ms. White's outreach interviewing people who claim to be Ms. White's legal representation. To be clear, Ms. White sought legal representation from a variety of lawyers over the course of this systemic harassment by organized bodies. Still, the very people picking through her story, claiming she has frivolous lawsuits, never spoke to her directly or to the Rolesville PD when given direct information from Ms. White. The only persons whom Ms. White states who represented her for any length of time were the late James Ferguson, George Young, and James Little of Hatch, Little, and Bunn. In 2024, Ms. White shared audio recordings of James Little warning her to be careful and that he would be praying for her safety. Clear and present danger towards Ms. White and her mother's life were well documented.

Buying a house in Rolesville destroyed Ms. White's life and ended her mother's life in a painful and inhumane way. All the subsequent events, which will be outlined at the appropriate time point to her Rolesville move as an inciting incident that led to massive amounts of litigation, theft, destruction to her property, her body, and her mother's heartbreaking death. We do not condone violence, we do encourage truth and transparency. More to come regarding Ms. White.

## Why Trump's Allegations That White People Are Being Persecuted In Africa

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) — U.S. President Donald Trump has expanded the number of refugee places available for white South Africans, saying there have been "recent increases in the incitement of racially motivated violence" against them by their Black-led government and other political parties.

It's not clear what incitement Trump was referring to when his administration made the announcement Tuesday of 10,000 additional places for white South Africans in the refugee program this year to raise it to 17,500.

It's Trump's latest contention that minority white Afrikaners are being persecuted, which the South African government denies.

Here's a look at what Trump says is happening to white people in South Africa to justify their resettlement and why his position that they are being persecuted is condemned as baseless:

Attacks on farmers

Trump laid the foundation for the resettlement of Afrikaners in an executive order last year that said they were victims of racial violence fueled by government actions.

Afrikaners are white South Africans descended from mainly Dutch and French settlers who first came to South Africa in the 1600s.

The U.S. has cited a small number of home attacks on white farmers as evidence of racial persecution. The South African government and analysts say that's a distortion of the facts, because Black farmers and farmworkers are also killed and injured in what are largely violent robberies and not racial attacks.

It's true that South Africa has a violent crime problem that affects all races, including white farmers.

There were more than 23,000 homicides across South Africa from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, ac-

ording to official annual crime statistics, affecting all races but mostly the poor Black majority. In comparison, there were 29 homicides on farms in 2025, according to the Afrikaner lobby group, AfriForum. Farm killings represent about 0.1% of homicides.

South African police say Black people were also killed in those farm homicides, though they don't typically break rural crimes down as a separate category or by the race of victims.

AfriForum, the Afrikaner group at the forefront of raising concerns over rural crimes, also doesn't publish how many Black farmers and farmworkers were killed, saying it "does not racialize the issue."

Anti-white rhetoric

The Trump administration said that a recent increase in incitement to racial violence by the South African government and other politicians led to "an unforeseen emergency refugee situation" and "grave humanitarian



## Key Party Switch Helps GOP Override Stein Veto

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

North Carolina House lawmakers on Wednesday voted to override Gov. Josh Stein's veto of House Bill 87, a measure that would align the state with a new federal tax credit scholarship program and allow families to benefit from up to \$1,700 annually in tax credits tied to educational expenses. The override passed 73-46, with unified Republican support and key backing from two now-unaffiliated lawmakers.

The legislation, known as the Educational Choice for Children Act, enables taxpayers to receive credits for donations to nonprofit scholarship-granting organizations. Those funds can then be used by eligible families—generally households earning less than 300% of the area median income—to cover a wide range of education-related costs, including private school tuition, tutoring, transportation, technology, after-school programs, and special education therapies. Supporters argue the program expands access to educational opportunities across public, private, charter, and home school settings without direct cost to the state.

Rep. Neal Jackson, a Republican sponsor of the bill, framed the measure as a broad-based benefit. He said the program "allows taxpayers to voluntarily fund student scholarships" and increases access to quality learning environments for all students.

House Speaker Destin Hall echoed that sentiment after the vote, calling the override "another major win for North Carolina students and parents."

The vote hinged in part on a notable reversal by Rep. Nasif Majeed of Mecklenburg County, who had opposed the bill nine months earlier but voted Wednesday to override the veto. Majeed, along with Rep. Carla Cunningham, recently left the Democratic Party and registered as unaffiliated after losing their primary elections. Their votes proved decisive, as House Republicans are one seat short of a supermajority and must rely on at least one non-Republican to override gubernatorial vetoes.

Rep. Shelly Willingham, another Democrat who has occasionally sided with Republicans, was absent for the vote.

Democrats strongly opposed the measure, arguing it could undermine public education by redirecting resources and reducing federal tax revenues that support state budgets.

Rep. Julie von Haefen of Wake County warned that "all voucher programs direct funding and resources away from underfunded public schools," adding that the policy could ultimately harm students who rely on public education systems.

In his veto message issued last year, Stein said he supports school choice in principle but could not back the legislation in its current form. He expressed concern that it would disproportionately benefit families already sending children to private schools while failing to adequately support public school students. Stein also indicated a willingness to opt into the federal program once clearer guidelines are established and if it can be structured to provide more direct benefits to public education.

The federal tax credit program underpinning the bill was created through recent federal legislation backed by President Donald Trump. However, questions remain about how the program will ultimately be implemented, as the U.S. Treasury Department has yet to finalize rules governing its structure. Education Secretary Linda McMahon has indicated that states may have some authority to set conditions on participating scholarship organizations once federal guidelines are in place.

The bill now returns to the North Carolina Senate, where Republicans hold a supermajority and are widely expected to override Stein's veto, which would allow the measure to become law. If approved, the policy would take effect immediately.

Wednesday's vote marks the first successful veto override after months of deliberation by House leadership, which has kept several other vetoed bills on the calendar. Those include measures limiting diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives, loosening concealed carry permit requirements, and increasing cooperation between state and federal immigration authorities. The prospects for overriding those vetoes remain uncertain, as some of the same crossover votes that enabled passage of House Bill 87 may be harder to secure on more contentious issues.

# NC Bill Proposes Data Center Regulations, And Would Keep Local Governments From Offering More Incentives

NC NEWSROOM - House Republicans have proposed a slate of rules governing development of data centers that use at least 100 megawatts of power in an effort they say is intended to protect electricity users from paying for development of the facilities and to protect against potential negative impacts.

"Everybody in the world is concerned about data centers making their rates go up, so we're being proactive to protect the ratepayers," Rep. Dean Arp, R-Union, who helped craft the new language, told the NC Newsroom.

The proposed committee substitute for Senate Bill 730 says that data centers that use at least 100 megawatts of power in a month must use closed-loop cooling systems to limit water consumption; need to conduct site assessments to determine the impact their noise could have on nearby homes and businesses; and prevent local governments from providing subsidies to data center developers to entice them to locate there.

The bill would also require that utility contracts with such data centers last at least 15 years with provisions meant to protect ratepayers if the contract is terminated or one

of the parties defaults on the agreement. And it would mandate that contracts with data centers be designed so that the data center pays any costs associated with providing electricity to the facility.

Utilities like Duke would also need to file their contracts with data centers with the N.C. Utilities Commission and share them with the N.C. Public Staff. Duke or the data center developer would be able to designate those contracts as sensitive or confidential business information, keeping them out of public view.

And under a state-mandated long-range electricity generation plan filed with the Utilities Commission, the bill would require Duke to include an analysis of contracted demand for each data center versus its actual demand for each of the three previous years.

Last October, Duke officials told the N.C. Utilities Commission that data centers could make up as much as 80% of the energy the utility needs to add to support economic development projects in the coming years, even though the facilities only make up about 30% of the projects eyeing its North and South Carolina service territories.

"North Carolinians are facing ris-



ing electricity bills and this bill puts ratepayers first by requiring data centers to pay their own way, protecting our water resources, strengthening energy reliability and preventing cost shifts onto families and small businesses," Rep. Matthew Winslow, R-Franklin, told the committee.

Under the bill, local governments would be empowered to ask data centers to conduct site assessments looking at the facilities' impacts to ground and water resources, air quality, heat in the surrounding area, agricultural resources, parks, historic sites and nearby forests.

If local officials required those assessments, they would need to use them to determine whether a data

center was consistent with its local ordinances and comprehensive land use plan.

Rep. Pricey Harrison, D-Guilford, has introduced several bills seeking to address data centers this session.

During Wednesday's committee meeting, Harrison praised the data center portion of the bill, saying, "I am so grateful for the work on the data centers and your thoughtful approach to this."

Re-examining 2050 net neutrality law

The bill would also direct the Legislative Services Office to issue a request for proposals for a study evaluating how efforts to reach North Carolina's goal of net zero carbon

emissions laid out in 2021's House Bill 951 are impacting or could impact electric bills.

The goal, Arp said, is to find ways to lower power bills that have steadily risen in recent years.

"We don't want rigid adherence to something just because we passed it in the past. We want data to provide us the roadmap that helps us make important decisions, so one of them is what is the effect of the 2050 goal?" Arp said.

Last year, the General Assembly eliminated a 2030 target from that legislation of a 70% reduction in Duke Energy's 2025 carbon dioxide emissions by 2030.

Harrison did express concern about anything that would move North Carolina's power generation further away from the state's carbon neutrality goals.

"I appreciate anything we're doing to reduce energy bills, but I also am mindful that we've got this big, looming problem with climate that is changing. And it's affecting us now, and it's pretty serious," Harrison said.

The study would also look at what policies North Carolina could implement to limit the impacts of large electric customers, including potentially mandating that they generate some of their own electricity or that they limit use at certain times when demand is high across the grid.

The House Energy and Public Utilities Committee voted to approve the bill Wednesday, referring it to the House Rules Committee.

There was no public comment at Wednesday's meeting.

Banning local incentives

Local governments frequently provide data centers and other economic development projects with incentives, sometimes including property tax breaks. Arp's stance is that because utility rates are set statewide, the state government has an interest in determining what incentives should be available for the projects.

"Data centers affect the rates for everybody in North Carolina because of the demand. Therefore, we've got to settle that question at the state level and its impact. That's not just a local (question). No locality is an island unto themselves when you're talking about energy consumption," Arp said.

Rep. Ray Jeffers, R-Person, expressed concern that commissioners in his home county would not be able to offer incentives to Microsoft for its planned data center on a 1,350-acre megasite.

"We have not gotten to the point, the commissioners haven't gotten to the point of — the commissioners haven't gotten to the point of what's going to be built, what's the investment and all of that. If this passes before then, then that will restrict them on possibly maybe even completing or actually coming to the site," Jeffers said.

The effort to ban local incentives is taking place as there is also an effort afoot to limit the type of state-level incentives that are available to data center developers.

## We've Moved



After 86 years of serving the African American community in North Carolina, *The Carolinian* is still going and still growing! *The Carolinian* newspaper continues to evolve so that we can keep our communities connected, enlightened and prospering. Starting Monday May 4th, 2026, our office will be located at 1015 Cross Link Road in Raleigh. We are leaving our old building, but we are never leaving our community!

## Gibson Broke Barriers In Tennis, Golf

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Althea Gibson was one of the first Black athletes to cross the color line of international tennis and golf, becoming one of the most historically significant figures in sports.

Born on August 25, 1927, in Silver, South Carolina, Gibson was the daughter of sharecroppers before her family relocated to Harlem during the Great Migration. There, she grew up in a working-class neighborhood and developed an early talent for athletics, first excelling in paddle tennis before transitioning to lawn tennis through the support of community members who recognized her potential.

Despite a turbulent childhood that included dropping out of school and periods of instability, Gibson's athletic ability quickly distinguished her, and by her teenage years, she was winning local and national titles through the American Tennis Association (ATA), a circuit established for Black players excluded from white-only competitions.

Gibson's ascent came at a time when segregation defined much of American life, including sports. Although she dominated ATA competition throughout the 1940s, she remained effectively barred from elite national tournaments due to systemic exclusion. That barrier began to break in 1950, when, after public pressure and advocacy from prominent figures in tennis, Gibson became the first Black player invited to compete in the U.S. National Championships at Forest Hills.

Her debut drew national attention and marked a turning point in the integration of professional tennis, drawing comparisons to the earlier desegregation of Major League Baseball by Jackie Robinson.

## Women's Pro Basketball Back In QC

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The purple glow sticks lit up the arena before tipoff Thursday night as fans wearing paper crowns filled the stands for the Charlotte Crown's historic home opener against the Jacksonville Waves. Outside the arena, families gathered around inflatable games, face painting stations, balloons, and photo areas decorated for the inaugural UPSHOT League season.

By the time the game began, the energy inside the building was impossible to ignore.

It had been nearly 20 years since Charlotte last had professional women's basketball. On Thursday night, the Queen City made it clear it had been waiting for its return.

A sold out crowd packed the arena as the Crown defeated Jacksonville 103-95 to secure the franchise's first home victory in league history. From the opening minutes to the final buzzer, the atmosphere felt more like a celebration than simply a basketball game.

Fans screamed as the team's mascot sprinted across the court in a purple tutu, dancing and throwing shirts into the crowd between timeouts. Music blasted through the speakers while smiles stretched across faces throughout the arena. Every possession seemed to carry extra meaning for a city reconnecting with women's professional basketball.

Head coach Sam Hyman said even

Building on that breakthrough, Gibson steadily rose through the international ranks.

She competed at Wimbledon for the first time in 1951 and, by the mid-1950s, had established herself among the world's top players. In 1956, she made history by becoming the first Black athlete to win a Grand Slam singles title at the French Championships, a victory she complemented with a doubles title the same year. Her dominance peaked in 1957 and 1958, when she won consecutive Wimbledon and U.S. National singles titles, becoming the first Black champion at either tournament.

In 1957, she was seeded first at Wimbledon and went on to claim the title, later receiving the trophy from Queen Elizabeth II—an iconic moment that underscored the social barriers she had overcome. That same year, she was honored with a ticker-tape parade in New York City, one of the first Black athletes to receive such recognition.

Over the course of her amateur career, Gibson won 11 Grand Slam titles, including five in singles, five in doubles, and one in mixed doubles. She was ranked the world's top female player in both 1957 and 1958 and was named the Associated Press Female Athlete of the Year in consecutive years.

Despite her success, Gibson's career was shaped by the financial limitations of amateur tennis in that era, which offered little prize money or endorsement opportunities. After retiring from amateur competition in 1958, she struggled to translate her dominance into financial stability. She briefly toured as a professional tennis player in exhibition matches and pursued opportunities in entertainment, recording an album and making television appearances.



before the game started, she could already envision the excitement surrounding the moment.

"All I can think about right now is how many fans are going to be here, desperate fans, just yearning for basketball to be back here in the Queen City," Hyman said before tipoff.

"I am envisioning how packed it is going to be, how much excitement everyone is going to go through and how lit it is going to be."

The excitement became reality almost immediately.



In 1964, she broke another racial barrier by becoming the first Black woman to compete on the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) tour, where she played for more than a decade.

Beyond competition, Gibson dedicated much of her later life to public service and youth development. She worked as a coach, ran tennis outreach programs in underserved communities, and held leadership roles in sports administration, including serving as New Jersey's athletic commissioner—the first woman to hold such a position.

She also made a foray into politics, running for a state senate seat in New Jersey in 1977.

In her later years, Gibson faced strokes and mounting medical expenses. Support from the tennis community, including fundraising efforts led by former doubles partner Angela Buxton, helped provide relief. Gibson died on September 28, 2003, at the age of 76.

Gibson's achievements paved the way for generations of athletes, including stars like Venus and Serena Williams, and reshaped the landscape of professional tennis and golf. Inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame in 1971 and the International Women's Sports Hall of Fame in 1980, she remains widely recognized for breaking barriers that extended far beyond the court.

jumped from their seats reacting to the ankle-breaking play.

Kelly later reflected on the meaning of the UPSHOT League opportunity, acknowledging every player arrives with different motivations and dreams.

"Everyone has different goals and reasons for playing UPSHOT," Kelly said.

For many players and coaches, the league represents another chance to continue careers while helping grow the women's game in cities hungry for basketball.

Hyman said accepting the opportunity to lead Charlotte felt like discovering her purpose. She described the Crown with words like excitement, fortitude, resilience, and talent — qualities that were fully displayed throughout Thursday's opener.

As the final seconds ticked away in the 103-95 victory, Crown players celebrated together by performing their signature "crowning" gesture on their heads while fans stood cheering around them.

The moment symbolized more than a single win.

Thursday night represented a new beginning for women's professional basketball in Charlotte. In a city deeply connected to the sport, the Crown's inaugural home opener proved the passion for the women's game never disappeared.

It simply waited for its crown to return.

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# Business & Finance

## Gas Prices Soar, But EV Car Sales Dip

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

Rising gas prices are often expected to accelerate a shift toward electric vehicles, but recent U.S. market data suggests the transition is more complicated.

Even as fuel prices climbed above \$4.50 per gallon nationally and more than \$4.20 in North Carolina, new electric vehicle sales declined in April, according to estimates from Edmunds and Cox Automotive. Depending on the dataset, EV sales fell between roughly 6% and 18% compared to March 2026, the month the war started.

Despite that drop in sales, consumer interest has not disappeared. Industry analysts say online engagement with electric and hybrid vehicles has remained strong, but that curiosity is not translating into purchases.

"There was a lot of window shopping," said Ivan Drury, director of insights at Edmunds. "It did not translate to tire-kicking and purchases."

At the core of the hesitation is cost. While electric vehicles are often promoted as a long-term savings option due to lower fuel and mainte-

nance expenses, the upfront price remains a significant barrier for many buyers. Cox Automotive estimates that the average EV transaction price in April was more than \$6,000 higher than comparable internal combustion vehicles.

The financial equation can also be harder to calculate than many consumers expect. Even with higher gas prices, analysts estimate that a driver would need to travel well over 40,000 miles in a typical 30-mile-per-gallon vehicle to offset the higher purchase price of an EV through fuel savings alone. That calculation becomes even more complicated when factoring in home charging installation, electricity rates, and insurance premiums.

"It's very difficult for people to wrap their heads around," Drury said. "It requires a bit more math than most people want to go through."

As a result, many consumers are turning to a middle option that offers fuel savings without major lifestyle changes: hybrid vehicles.

Hybrids combine gasoline engines with electric assistance to improve fuel efficiency by roughly 25% to 45%, without requiring drivers to plug in or install charging equip-



ment. That simplicity has helped drive strong demand.

Industry data shows hybrid sales are up about 20% year-over-year and nearly 50% since February, when global oil concerns and geopolitical tensions contributed to rising fuel prices. Automakers have responded by expanding hybrid offerings and, in some cases, shifting entire models toward hybrid-only production, including popular vehicles like Toyota's Camry and RAV4.

"I think this is going to be a hybrid moment," said Stephanie Valdez, CEO of Cox Automotive. "There are a lot of options."

The used EV segment is showing

steady growth, driven largely by falling prices and increased availability. Many of these vehicles are entering the market after lease expirations tied to earlier federal incentives, creating a larger pool of lower-cost options for buyers. Nevertheless, used EV prices have dropped significantly compared to the previous year.

Charging infrastructure continues to be a major concern, especially outside urban areas, and many potential buyers still worry about range limitations during long trips. Higher insurance costs and uncertainty about resale value also factor into decision-making.

Globally, the trend looks different. Europe has seen stronger EV adoption, while China continues to expand both production and exports at record levels. In the United States, however, experts say the transition is likely to remain gradual rather than sudden.

Meanwhile, rising fuel prices continue to strain household budgets in North Carolina and beyond. Some drivers report that filling up their tanks now costs nearly twice what it did just a few years ago, forcing adjustments in commuting and discretionary spending.



## Private Equity Companies Buy More Apartment Units

NC NEWSLINE - Private equity firms own nearly 3 million apartment units, about 13% of the total apartments across the country, according to a new analysis from watchdog group Private Equity Stakeholder Project.

And most have been fairly recent purchases. The companies acquired more than 1.7 million of those, or 57%, since 2018, and about 45% of them since 2021, the report found.

More than two-thirds of those units are located in just 10 states: Texas, Florida, California, Georgia, North Carolina, Colorado, New York, Arizona, Virginia and Washington.

Texas has the highest number of private equity-owned apartments, the analysis said, with more than 1,900 properties and nearly 580,000 units.

Private equity firms own nearly 1 in 3 apartment units in Georgia and almost 1 in 4 in North Carolina, the report found.

Private equity firms use pooled investments from funds, endowments and wealthy individuals to buy a controlling stake in a company, try to maximize its value — often by cutting costs — and then sell it at a profit.

The metropolitan areas of Atlanta; Austin, Texas; Charlotte, North Carolina; Dallas-Fort Worth; and Orlando, Florida, have private equity ownership shares above 30%.

Many of the states with the highest private equity ownership also have seen some of the largest increases in "cost-burdened" renters, the report said, meaning they spend at least 30% of their income on rent and utilities. Arizona, Nevada, Georgia, Texas and Florida were among the six states with the biggest increases in such renters.

## NC State Fair Vendors Fear New Pricing Model Could Push Small Businesses Out

By Judaea Ingram

Special To The Carolinian

RALEIGH, N.C. — For many North Carolinians, the State Fair experience begins with food.

From turkey legs and funnel cakes to deep-fried desserts and fresh lemonade, food vendors have long been one of the fair's biggest attractions. But now, some vendors say major pricing changes could threaten whether smaller businesses can afford to return at all.

The North Carolina State Fair is moving away from its longtime flat-rate vendor fee system and replacing it with a percentage-based model that will require food and beverage vendors to pay 15% of their gross sales.

The announcement came in a letter sent to vendors in April, which stated, "The required license fee will be 15% on gross sales after sales tax is deducted in lieu of the flat rate fee paid in the past."

Previously, vendors paid a one-time fee based on the size of their setup. The cost was \$180 per foot of frontage at the fair, meaning a food truck with 10 feet of frontage would pay approximately \$1,800 to operate during the fair's 11-day run.

Now, many vendors worry the new percentage system could dramatically increase costs, especially for small and family-owned businesses.

Some business owners say the change marks the end of an era for vendors who have participated in the fair for years under the older pricing structure. Others fear it could even-



tually price out smaller operations while favoring larger companies that can better absorb the additional expense.

When October arrives, fairgoers may notice some familiar vendors missing entirely.

State Fair manager Kent Yelverton defended the decision, saying the updated system creates a more balanced partnership between the fair and vendors.

"We're going to industry standard, which is percentage, and we're going in at the low end of the range," Yelverton said. "If they're paying that much more under that, they were getting a bargain."

According to WRAL Investigates, North Carolina's new policy now aligns with several other states that also charge vendors 15% of gross food sales, including South Carolina, Ohio, and Tennessee. Other states charge even more, including Iowa at 19.5% and Colorado at 25%.

Still, vendors argue that comparisons to larger fairs in other states do not necessarily reflect the financial realities many North Carolina businesses face. Profit margins for food vendors can already be unpredictable due to rising supply costs, staffing expenses, travel, and weather concerns during outdoor events.

The debate comes as the N.C. State Fair continues to grow in popularity, drawing nearly one million visitors each year. Fair officials say the additional revenue could help fund long-needed upgrades across the fairgrounds, including restroom renovations, improved air conditioning, and plans for a new indoor food hall.

But for many vendors, the concern goes beyond profits.

The State Fair has long been built around tradition. Families return each year for favorite food stands they have visited for generations, creating memories around familiar

flavors and longtime local businesses. Vendors worry that if smaller operations are forced out, the identity of the fair could begin to change along with it.

For many small business owners, the fair is not just a tradition but one of the most important revenue opportunities of the year. Losing access to the event could have major financial consequences.

As preparations continue for the next State Fair season, vendors are left weighing a difficult decision: absorb the higher costs, raise prices for customers, or walk away altogether. And for fairgoers, the changes may ultimately reshape one of the most beloved parts of the annual tradition — the food.

## Property Tax Levy Limit Could Hurt Budgets In Small Counties

NC NEWSLINE - Tyrrell County Manager David Clegg watched closely last week as lawmakers debated the merit of a constitutional amendment to limit the rate at which local governments' can increase property taxes. Clegg says voter approval of a levy limit will rob the tiny, rural county of 3,000 residents of desperately needed tax revenue.

With a budget of approximately \$10 million a year, the county runs on one of the smallest county budgets in North Carolina. It's a fraction of the billion dollar-plus budgets taxpayers help fund in large, urban counties.

"Tyrrell County is providing the baseline human services and quality of life services that just keep us going," Clegg said. "If you start cutting at that all of a sudden, you're cutting social services, law enforcement, health, emergency medicine because there's nothing else to cut."

Clegg said the county doesn't have an airport, convention center or recreation center, so when you take a scalpel to Tyrrell County's budget, "You're cutting flesh, you're not trimming hair."

The N.C. Housing Coalition, a Durham-based housing advocacy group, estimates that a strict levy limit could cost Tyrrell County about 11% of its annual budget while only saving the average taxpayer about \$120 a year.

The lost tax revenue would amount to a little more than \$1 million, which Clegg says would be devastating for a county that's already struggling to make ends meet and

one that must share the cost of some essential services with neighboring counties.

"I'm trying to run a paramedic level EMS service with Washington County and because there's no hospital anywhere close, you have to take people to Greenville or take them to Washington [NC] or Edenton, (and) that costs nearly a million dollars," Clegg said.

Clegg says he spends lots of work hours chasing grant dollars to help pay for county capital projects. In the 13 years that he's served as county manager and county attorney, Clegg said he's managed to land more than \$100 million in grants.

"It's a struggle every day," he said. "The county basically lives on a very active grant search to fund projects. There is no way the county could possibly issue bonds for anything. There's simply no tax base there to do it with."

Clegg explained that nearly half of the land in the environmentally sensitive county defined by pocosin wetlands is owned by federal and state governments and therefore exempt from property taxes. And predominant land uses — agriculture and forestry — are taxed at lower rates than residential or other commercial properties.

"It's the only place in the world where red wolves run free and it's an important environmental jewel and so it presents a unique set of challenges to our government when you have a state government that views Tyrrell in the same lens as Wake and expects me to do the same thing as Wake County does," Clegg said.

Hudson Vaughan, director of the Community Justice Collaborative at the housing coalition, said a \$120 in property tax savings for homeowners would be a "pretty substantial tradeoff" if Tyrrell County lost nearly 11% of its property tax revenue under a levy limit.

"I think that's where [rural counties] would see the most devastating impact because they have the least ability to make up for that loss," Vaughan said. "Bigger counties, a lot of them would be forced into adopting fees and other things but they can make up for that in some form or fashion."

In Winston Salem, a strict levy limit would have saved a homeowner paying \$3,000 in property taxes just over \$200, according to the coalition's analysis. Meanwhile, it would have cost Winston Salem and Forsyth County more than \$45 million in property tax revenue, it said.

And in downtown Raleigh, an apartment complex would have seen its tax bill reduced by \$125,000 under a levy limit, while a property owner with a \$2,000 bill would have only seen it drop by \$175, the housing coalition said.

"What we're seeing is that actually, the huge landowners and luxury apartments will be the ones who will get the biggest benefit from this," Vaughan said.

Alternative solutions

The housing coalition's leaders say the property tax dilemma is best solved by expanding the state's property tax relief programs — particu-

(See **NC PROPERTY TAX**, P. 4)

## Classifieds

### REQUEST FOR BID

#### REHAB OF 638 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BOULEVARD

The City of Raleigh will accept sealed, written bids for the rehabilitation of the property located at 638 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Raleigh, NC 27601 until June 26, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. (EST). Bids can be submitted at the City of Raleigh's Housing and Community Development Department at 421 Fayetteville St, Suite 1200, Raleigh, NC 27601 at which time and place bids will be publicly opened and read aloud for the construction of the Rehab of 638 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard project.

A mandatory on-site pre-bid meeting will be held on June 2, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. (EST) at 638 Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, Raleigh, NC 27601. Information is also posted on the North Carolina Electronic Vendor Portal (eVP): <https://www.evp.nc.gov>. The City reserves the right to reject all bids.



### NCDOT HOSTING A PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE A PROPOSAL TO REPLACE THE BRIDGE ON VANDORA SPRINGS ROAD OVER U.S. 70 IN WAKE COUNTY

#### STIP Project No. B-5681



**GARNER** - The N.C. Department of Transportation is hosting a public meeting to discuss the proposal to replace the bridge on Vandora Springs Road over U.S. 70 in the Town of Garner. The purpose of this meeting is to provide interested citizens with information on the project and gather public input on the proposed design.

Project details and maps can be found on NCDOT's project input website at [publicinput.com/vandoraspringsrd-us70](http://publicinput.com/vandoraspringsrd-us70). The information will be available at the meeting allowing for one-on-one discussions with NCDOT staff, but there will be no formal presentation.

The meeting will be held from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. on June 9 at Garner Town Hall, 900 7th Avenue, in Garner.

People may also submit comments by phone at 984-205-6615 project code 6509, email [vandoraspringsrd-us70@publicinput.com](mailto:vandoraspringsrd-us70@publicinput.com), or mail at the address shown below by July 1, 2026.

By Mail: **Martha Hodge, AICP, PMP**  
NCDOT Project Management Unit –  
Project Manager  
1582 Mail Service Center  
Raleigh, NC 27699-1582

NCDOT will provide auxiliary aids and services under the Americans with Disabilities Act for disabled people who wish to participate in this meeting. Anyone requiring special services should contact Tony Gallagher, Environmental Analysis Unit, at 1598 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-1598, 919-707-6069 or [magallagher@ncdot.gov](mailto:magallagher@ncdot.gov) as early as possible so arrangements can be made.

Those who do not speak English, or have a limited ability to read, speak or understand English, may receive interpretive services upon request prior by calling 1-800-481-6494.

Aquellas personas no hablan inglés, o tienen limitaciones para leer, hablar o entender inglés, podrían recibir servicios de interpretación si los solicitan llamando al 1-800-481-6494.

# New Student Loan Limits Challenged By Democratic AGs And Governors

WASHINGTON — A coalition of Democratic attorneys general and governors sued the U.S. Department of Education on Tuesday over forthcoming regulations that will impose new borrowing limits for students pursuing certain advanced degree programs.

The lawsuit — filed in the U.S. District Court for the District of Maryland — challenges a portion of the incoming federal student loan system overhaul that sets stricter loan caps for students partaking in postbaccalaureate degree programs that do not fall under the department's "professional" classification, such as nursing, teaching and social work.

The department finalized regulations, published May 1, that implement the student loan overhaul outlined in congressional Republicans' mega tax and spending cut bill signed into law by President Donald Trump last year. Most of the student loan provisions will

take effect July 1.

The forthcoming regulations eliminate the Grad PLUS program, which allowed graduate and professional students to borrow up to the full cost of attendance.

Graduate student loans will have a \$20,500 annual limit and \$100,000 aggregate cap. Professional student loans will have a yearly limit of \$50,000 and aggregate cap of \$200,000.

However, the programs that fall under the department's "professional" category — and thus are eligible for the higher borrowing limit — are limited to pharmacy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, chiropractic, law, medicine, optometry, osteopathic medicine, podiatry, theology and clinical psychology.

"Professional degree" definition at issue

The states allege that the department "unlawfully altered" the "professional degree" definition "by adding new requirements and nar-

rowing eligibility in ways Congress never authorized," per a press release regarding the lawsuit.

The states also argue that the "professional degree" definition will harm them by "reducing funding for many State institutions of higher education and impeding the States' abilities to meet critical workforce needs and provide services to their residents."

The states also allege that the regulations will threaten their "ability to meet critical workforce needs, especially in healthcare," and that the forthcoming reduced loan limits will "likely cause students to graduate with more debt, discouraging them from finding less remunerative jobs in rural areas or the classroom."

The lawsuit included attorneys general in Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota,

Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin, in addition to the governors of Kentucky and Pennsylvania.

Administration defends loan caps

Under Secretary of Education Nicholas Kent said that "after decades of unchecked student loan borrowing that gave schools no reason to control costs, these commonsense loan caps — created by Congress — are already incentivizing colleges and universities to lower tuition," in a statement shared with States Newsroom.

"Clearly, these Democratic governors and attorneys general are more concerned about institutions' bottom-line rather than American students and families' ability to access affordable postsecondary education," Kent added.



## Legacy Committee Considers Ligon Middle Design Options

By Karl Cameron

Special To The Carolinian

A Ligon Legacy Committee, formulated by Wake County Public School Superintendent Dr. Robert Taylor, has had two meetings to "Provide cultural insight, historical context, and community perspective in telling the story of J.W. Ligon Jr./Sr. High School and provide inspiration for the reimagined Ligon Middle School." The Committee is composed of the WCPSS Superintendent, two WCPSS Board members, two City Council Members, three Ligon Middle School Students, WCPSS Staff (School, Facilities), five J.W. Ligon Alumni, two County Commissioners, three Ligon Middle School Staff Members, two Ligon Middle School Parents, and the Design Team and Historian.

The Committee is looking at Three Preliminary Design Concepts: Scheme A: Aligning With Haywood Street; Scheme B: Facing MLK Jr. Boulevard; and Scheme C: Facing the Original J.W. Ligon Campus. None of these concepts will have the school rebuilt facing Lenoir Street. What will now be facing Lenoir Street will be the ballfields. Notably missing was the inclusion of a Pavilion honoring the J.W. Ligon Jr./Sr. High Legacy, which was mentioned in Listening Sessions leading up to the committee formulations.

The initial meeting was held at John Chavis Community Center, 505 MLK, Jr. Blvd. on Aril 21st with 24-attendees. Committee Members were given one-minute each to introduce themselves, and answer the question: What does success look like in 20 years for the Ligon re-build project?

Committee members expressed that the legacy must be inherent to the school in a way that cannot be removed (plaque), painted over or covered up later. There should be a palpable understanding of where you are, furthermore: If WCPSS staff and design team incorporates ideas of committee members, the end product would be a school that honors history.

Another notable comment was, "We need to honor the past while visioning for the future. There are still open wounds, and the community wants to be heard in the process. There are generations of young learners that provide innovation. Students need a space that represents community focus and centers on all that is great."

Dr. Taylor outline Committee members Responsibilities as follows: To endeavor to attend one meeting per month over the next six months, Serve as a positive sounding board for ideas related to aesthetics, naming, memorialization and cultural representation through design elements, Connect the historian with other alumni, community members, and local historians, Share updates with others, encourage participation and help build trust and transparency, provide feedback on community concerns or questions, and participate respectively and collaboratively: all members are valued.

When the Committee met on May 13th at the John Chavis Community Center they viewed takeaways from the first meeting, including that emphasis should be on Black excellence as a foundation, but shared excellence going forward, and that the community wants tactile connection to the past, and not abstract ideas. The Committee focus is on experiences that can become physical space.

Concept Design Updates the meeting were n Scheme A and Scheme B by LS3P Associates. Scheme C: Facing the Original J.W. Ligon Campus, appears to be a lesser consideration.

There are also things the Committee needs to know in the process, includ-

(See LIGON MIDDLE, P. 9)

# NC Property Tax — CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

larly the Homestead Exclusion and Circuit Breaker programs for elderly and permanently disabled homeowners. The age-and income-based programs reduce or delay property taxes for homeowners on fixed incomes.

Improving the two programs would help more North Carolinians facing property tax burdens without undermining property tax revenue, especially in low-wealth counties, the coalition said. The coalition shared its concerns and recommended solutions in a paper titled "Meaningful Property Tax Reform & Relief in NC."

Political motivations or much needed relief?

Clegg and Vaughan both said the amendment was politically motivated.

"It's a way to get people to the polls, I think," Clegg said, noting that state law already prohibits counties from setting a tax rate of more than \$1.50 per \$100 of property valuation.

But Republican lawmakers in the House and Senate, who voted

overwhelmingly to put the amendment before voters, contend it is a response to taxpayers' complaints about rising county and municipal property taxes, which they say can push taxpayers, seniors in particular, out of their homes.

"For years we've seen some municipal and county governments impose exorbitant tax rates on their residents with little to no regard for fiscal restraint," Sen. Tim Moffitt (R-Henderson), said in a statement.

Moffitt's remarks parrot those of House Speaker Destin Hall (R-Caldwell) and Senate leader Phil Berger (R-Rockingham). Both GOP leaders formed committees to examine rising property taxes. Hall and Berger contend the state's rising property taxes are due to overspending by local governments.

"Families are getting ripped off as some, but by no means all, local governments rake in billions more than inflation and population growth warrant," Hall said in a recent press release.

Sen. Dan Blue (D-Wake) was the

lone Democrat to vote in favor of placing the amendment on the ballot, citing concerns about gentrification in downtown Raleigh. Blue told reporters that rising property values and tax increases are putting financial pressure on longtime residents who are now paying high taxes on homes they've lived in for decades.

"This doesn't give us any power we don't already have," Blue told NC Newsline. "It doesn't do anything specifically, except to say, 'We'll do our job.' And our job ought to be how to figure out how to solve these problems on affordability, because that's really what it's all about."

Blue's Democratic colleagues have argued that the current property tax crisis is due to the General Assembly's chronic underfunding of local governments.

"They've [GOP lawmakers] underfunded our schools, our emergency management divisions, our court systems and our district attorneys," said Rep. Eric Ager (D-Buncombe). "Additionally, we've continued to pass unfunded mandates, costs that

our local governments are forced to fund. They don't have a choice."

Lawmakers and advocates on both sides on the issue agree that it won't be hard to sell North Carolina taxpayers on the idea of lowering property taxes.

Rep. Julia Howard (R-Davie), who co-chairs Hall's property tax committee, told colleagues in March that she is certain that a constitutional amendment would pass if placed on the ballot because North Carolinians are "very concerned about their property tax."

Vaughan said Howard is probably right but believes taxpayers might vote differently if given all of the facts.

"I think that if people were aware of what it really does, then I think that the average voter would vote against it," Vaughan said. "If we look at bond years where people are voting to increase their taxes a little bit to get a big return collectively for services that they want ... those bonds almost always pass in North Carolina."



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# Health and Wellness

## Delayed, Denied, Diffused: Many Families Face An Uphill Battle In Proving Nursing Home Malpractice Court Cases

NC HEALTH NEWS - When first responders responded within minutes to a 911 call from Clayton Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center in Johnston County, they arrived to find that resuscitation had not yet begun. The resident was pronounced dead just over 30 minutes after the call.

At the same nursing home, a resident asked for her wound dressing to be changed after reporting pain and a foul odor. Staff allegedly declined the request. The next day, she saw maggots crawling from the pressure sore.

A resident at Wayne County's Goldsboro Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center died after he aspired food that had allegedly been set in front of him by a nurse aid who then left to deliver other trays. His chart noted severe cognitive delays, difficulty swallowing and the need for staff assistance for eating.

These are just a handful of cases drawn from 53 recent state inspection and complaint reports across North Carolina, where such allegations appear with unsettling regularity. In state inspection and complaint reports, the details are clinical. For families, these reports are often the first official record of injuries for their loved ones.

In North Carolina, many nursing home harm cases are classified as medical malpractice rather than ordinary negligence. The courts have defined malpractice as claims involving clinical judgment or professional skill, while negligence involves more straightforward acts of carelessness.

Successfully making a medical malpractice claim in North Carolina is hard, requiring plaintiffs to show that a provider breached the accepted standard of care — typically through expert testimony obtained before a case can even be filed, according to Elizabeth Todd, a Raleigh-based attorney with Todd Law Offices who specializes in nursing home abuse and negligence.

That process alone can cost thousands of dollars, creating an early barrier for families considering legal action. Even for cases that move forward, a 2011 state law limits how much plaintiffs can recover for non-economic damages such as pain and suffering. To go beyond the cap of \$712,847, which was adjusted by the Office of State Budget and Management in 2026, plaintiffs have to prove both of the following:

The plaintiff suffered disfigurement, loss of use of part of the body, permanent injury or death.

The defendant's acts or failures, which are the proximate cause of the plaintiff's injuries, were committed in reckless disregard of the rights of

others, grossly negligent, fraudulent, intentional or with malice.

The "grossly negligent" standard drew criticism back when the bill was being discussed on the Senate floor by now Gov. Josh Stein, a senator for Wake County at the time.

"Essentially for you to sustain a case of gross negligence you have to show that the doctor was drunk or was on drugs, it requires a willfulness and intentionality to have reckless disregard for patient safety," he said.

A medical malpractice claim also comes with a time clock of three years from when the incident occurred, with a few exceptions. The result, policy experts have noted, is a system where relatively few cases are filed compared to the number of reported medical injuries.

For the cases that do move forward, legal challenges can extend well beyond filing a case.

Immunity and delay  
In responses to lawsuits filed, some facilities continue to cite COVID-19 era statutes which gave them immunity from prosecution, despite the fact that the state of emergency around COVID in North Carolina expired in 2022.

North Carolina lawmakers enacted legal protections for health care providers during the pandemic. To make sure that providers weren't unfairly penalized for issues arising as they treated the new disease, lawmakers granted immunity for acts or omissions that occurred in the course of providing care during COVID-19 called the Emergency or Disaster Treatment Protection Act as part of a COVID omnibus bill.

The National Consumer Voice, a national advocacy group, was among early critics of such immunity clauses, passed at the federal level and in multiple states in the early days of the pandemic when there were many unknowns. In a statement the group expressed concern that, "whistleblower suits brought against entities for fraud or abuse may be placed in jeopardy."

Early challengers of the law included the family of Durham resident Palestine Howze who died, allegedly, from complications of a pressure sore. Her daughter's suit alleged the sore had not been timely or properly treated. The case was dismissed. While the public health emergency has expired, the continuing effect of the law is unclear and the statute is still being referenced in recent court cases.

"A lot of things went on during COVID to protect systems that were falling apart to be able to cover anyone and all people about everything health-related," said Rep. Donna



White (R-Clayton), a registered nurse. "But a lot of those restraints and policies have been pulled back because they were not needed anymore."

Nonetheless, the COVID-19 era statute was recently cited by Portopiccolo Group, a private equity firm based in New Jersey that's linked to

more than 30 North Carolina nursing homes, in their response to a lawsuit pending against one of their facilities. Portopiccolo was named in the suit, as were a subsidiary and related entities working with the company.

The case was filed in December 2025 by Michael Sabino on behalf of

his sister, Francine Sabino, who was a resident of the Citadel at Myers Park from December 2019 to November 2024.

During her time at the Citadel at Myers Park, the lawsuit alleges, Francine Sabino experienced multiple urinary tract infections, a systemic infection, dehydration, a fall, contractures to both her legs, inappropriate touching by another resident, multiple skin wounds including a large right buttock abscess, a blister to the side of her left foot, a deep wound to the same foot that penetrated to the bone, serious pressure wounds to her coccyx and left thigh where it was difficult to determine degree of injury, pain, suffering and mental anguish — which the lawsuit claims severely impaired her physical functioning and quality of life and accelerated her physical decline.

The first three defenses outlined by Portopiccolo, et al, in their response to the lawsuit, point to the state's malpractice law and the Emergency Disaster Treatment Protection Act, pleading immunity.

Additionally, Portopiccolo's response attributed the resident's decline to underlying conditions among the pandemic-era challenges. But the scope and severity of the complications — many considered preventable under federal care standards — raise questions about whether those outcomes were truly unavoidable.

Federal regulations require facilities to prevent pressure ulcers unless they are clinically unavoidable, a standard that requires proper staffing, regularly repositioning the patient, proper nutrition and hydration, ongoing monitoring and appropriate pressure-relieving equipment, such as special air mattresses. The Sabino lawsuit alleges most of those measures, including the necessary mattress designed to prevent pressure wounds, were not provided in the case of Francine Sabino.

While a single complication may be attributed to underlying illness, multiple conditions seen as preventable — such as dehydration developing into severe conditions — can signal broader systemic failures, according to federal regulations.

## Using Art, Healing, And Community To Transform Mental Health Dialogue



By Judaea Ingram

Special To The Carolinian

RALEIGH, N.C. — Music filled the air as families danced through the crowd, children gathered around activity stations, and community members explored wellness resources from local organizations. Black-owned businesses lined the streets while people stopped for chair massages, conversations, and moments of connection inside the wellness suite.

At the center of the event stood a simple but powerful reminder: "You Matter."

For Darkness RISING, those words represent far more than a slogan. They reflect the organization's mission to break the stigma surrounding mental health in the Black community while creating spaces centered on healing, honesty, and hope.

Operating at the intersection of the arts and mental health, Darkness RISING uses music, storytelling, wellness programming, and community engagement to inspire healing while addressing barriers that have historically prevented many Black Americans from accessing mental health support.

The organization hosts a variety of programs and events throughout the year, including block parties, wellness workshops, mixers, kickoff events, community classes, and Darkness RISING: Live — a free annual arts and wellness festival now celebrating its ninth year.

The festival combines entertainment with healing-centered resources, featuring live music, dancing, singing, food trucks, Black vendor shopping, children's activities, mental health resources, wellness spaces, and opportunities for open conversations surrounding mental health.

While the events may feel celebratory on the surface, organizers say the deeper purpose is creating safe spaces where people can feel comfortable discussing mental health without fear of judgment.

Darkness RISING also provides free nationwide resources including a Black Mental Health Resource Packet, a Black Mental Health Provider Da-

(See MENTAL HEALTH, P. 9)

# FOOD LION

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# Arts & Culture

## A Wake County Library's Mollie Huston Lee Collection: Reflecting On Writings Of George Washington Williams

By Jheri Hardaway

Staff Writer

Mollie Huston Lee was the first African American librarian in Wake County and the founder of the Richard B. Harrison Wake County Library Branch. Not only did she leave behind a legacy of helping others and encouraging a love of literacy, but her treasured collection is a rare and special intellectual treat she left for us to share, analyze, and dissect. Mrs. Lee started and maintained a collection chronicling the African American experience locally, nationally, and internationally on the history of the African Diaspora. The literary collection comprises both adult and juvenile nonfiction, fiction, and journals. Images documenting the lives of African Americans in Raleigh are also digitized and available via the North Carolina Digital Heritage site.

To explore the collection is to take a walk back in time and view the world through the eyes of many of America's best authors. With permis-



sion from the Wake County Library leadership, researchers can view signed and first editions, which make the collection even more priceless to those who value American history in its entirety.

One of the signed and excep-

tional texts I reviewed was written by Journalist and Politician George Washington Williams. Williams was a soldier in the American Civil War and in Mexico before becoming a Baptist minister, politician, lawyer, journalist, and leading writer on the

subject of African-American history. He served as the first Black elected official in the Ohio House of Representatives. Called the greatest historian of the race by W.E.B. DuBois, George Washington Williams wrote the first comprehensive history of African Americans from their own point of view. His preeminent text, *History of the Negro Race in America From 1619 to 1880. Vol 1: Negroes as Slaves, as Soldiers, and as Citizens* was published in 1885.

*History of the Negro Race in America From 1619 to 1880* stood out to me because I was seeking texts that spoke to African American involvement in the American Revolution. Perusing the table of contents, I observed an entire chapter on the subject and an impactful note in the preface, "THE NEGRO DURING THE REVOLUTION, I found much of an almost romantic character. Many traditions have been put down, and many obscure truths elucidated. Some persons may think it irreverent to tell the truth in the plain, homely manner that characterizes my nar-

ative; but, while I have nothing to regret in this particular, I can assure them that I have been actuated by none other spirit than that of candor. Where I have used documents, it was with a desire to escape the charge of superficiality. If, however, I may be charged with seeking to escape the labor incident to thorough digestion, I answer that, while men with the reputation of Bancroft and Hildreth could pass unchallenged when disregarding largely the use of documents and the citation of authorities, I would find myself challenged by a large number of critics. Moreover, I have felt it would be almost cruel to mutilate some of the very rare old documents that shed such peerless light upon the subject in hand."

Of the documents from then General George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and other founding fathers that George Washington Williams used a first hand sources, many no longer exist. Williams due diligence to tell the story of African American Revolutionary War Veterans is one of our earliest and most

vivid accounts outside of pension papers filed by veterans of all races from 1815 through the 1840s. There were non-African American fighters who put pen to paper describing the extraordinary efforts of Black soldiers. Williams ends the chapter with a powerful and impactful statement, "Enlistment in the army did not work a practical emancipation of the slave, as some have thought. Negroes were rated as chattel property by both armies and both governments during the entire war. This is the cold fact of history, and it is not pleasing to contemplate. The Negro occupied the anomalous position of an American slave and an American soldier. He was a soldier in the hour of danger, but a chattel in time of peace."

Mollie Huston Lee has given us a pathway towards our history and our collective American truth. Authors like George Washington Williams and his historic text deserve the history and protection granted by the library. Looking forward to sharing more stories from the Mollie Huston Lee Collection.

## Wiggy Stardust! A Mind-Blowing Hair Artist

THE GUARDIAN - Taiba Akhuetie's art is uncomfortable to look at. This is mostly because you're not sure whether you're in the presence of something alive or dead. She uses hair as her medium, constructing mundane items out of synthetic and human locks. Handbags, mirrors, rocking chairs and umbrellas are adorned with long, chunky braids and loose, pin-straight strands. The result is that these inanimate objects take on the eerie quality of taxidermy.

Akhuetie, whose work is about to go on show at the Sarabande Foundation in London, has memories of being fascinated by hair in her childhood. "We used to go to my mum's friend's house ..." She stops and quickly corrects herself. "My auntie's - she would be called auntie, obviously." Akhuetie would watch her "auntie" braiding her sister's hair, taken aback by how quickly her fingers moved. She also remembers doing plaits for her friends at school in Kingston, Surrey, and feeling that she was naturally good at it.

Yet for much of her childhood, Akhuetie didn't like having her hair in braids. "I grew up in a white, middle-class area and wasn't from money," she says. "I started to realise that my insecurities were due to comparing myself to people that weren't like me - and wanting to be like them." When made to feel different due to her Blackness, she felt "gaslit" and dismissed. She decided to surround herself with people who made her feel secure in her identity.

A shift in her perception of braids ensued. "I really started looking at them as something incredibly beautiful and therapeutic," says the 34-year-old. In 2014, she launched Keash Braids with her schoolfriend Jessy Linton: part pop-up braiding service, part creative brand. Akhuetie "hustled



my ass off" to build up clients, eventually establishing a permanent salon in Peckham, London. This was when braids were having a renaissance among Black women, in part sparked by the natural hair movement of the 2010s, when we put down our straighteners in favour of different, less damaging styles.

Then, when lockdown hit, Akhuetie had to find a new way to earn a living from braiding, with human contact not allowed. Was this even possible? "I was like, 'You know what? I'm just going to do an installation out of these scraps of hair in my house and this random stool.'" The metal stool was wrapped in braids and teased hair, embellished with flowers and a bee. "That's when I realised I could really use this as a medium 'off the head.' I knew that was my path. I was like, 'This is it. This is what I'm meant to do.'"

Akhuetie, who is based in Hackney, made her name with one piece in particular: a large umbrella affixed with abundant wefts of dirty-blond hair. She'd got inspiration when heading out one rainy day and looking for a broly. The creation notched up 100,000 views on TikTok. And the world of couture has naturally taken interest in her wearable art, with Vogue praising her "super textural and avant-garde garments", saying they give new meaning to the term "body hair".

Akhuetie has been a stylist and now works with brands, happy to construct custom-made, wearable pieces to order. But she is adamant that she is not a fashion designer. Her work connects with a wide range of people and, while Black hair is clearly a direct inspiration, she describes her work as being "for everyone".

In 2021, Akhuetie received an Ins-

tagram message from Rihanna asking for a bespoke piece and had to reassure herself that it wasn't some kind of prank. The result - a braided Louis Vuitton handbag - is so intricate that, at first, it just looks like a handbag. Akhuetie has also dressed the Nigerian singer Tems for a Met Gala afterparty, as well as the film star Cate Blanchett.

Yet Akhuetie, who comes across as familiar and relaxed as we chat by phone, is careful to avoid getting too swept up by high-profile collaborations. "I don't think you should fixate on celebrities," she says. "It can be easy to be like, 'Oh my God, a famous person really likes my work! I want to do something with them.' But you have to ask yourself, 'Would it really make sense if I made something for this person? Or am I just doing it to get two steps ahead faster?'" She pauses and adds: "If someone is wearing my pieces, it has to be someone that embodies my work as art."

When I ask where Akhuetie sources her hair, I expect her to mention one of the emerging upmarket braiding hair brands that few women can afford. But I'm surprised to find it's my local, Pak's in Dalston, which gives her a discount because of how much she buys. The brands she lists - Impression, X-Pression - are all products that have recently been in my own hair, too.

This brings a groundedness, an authenticity, to Akhuetie's creations, as well as a mirroring between the work and any potential viewer - a sort of cannibalistic gaze. "It's the same hair I use on my own head," says Akhuetie, who has also adorned a number of actual mirrors with braiding hair - perhaps playing on, and deconstructing, the idea of looking at one's own hair in the mirror.



## Movie Review: 'Is God Is' Stakes Its Female Rage Claim

AP NEWS - As playwright Aleshea Harris tells it, something felt missing when she first sat down to write her searing and startling play "Is God Is," which made waves off-Broadway in 2018.

Harris was writing an epic story of Black female revenge, one that drew on Greek tragedy and mythology, but also spaghetti westerns and a liberal dose of Quentin Tarantino, among other things. There was a hero character, but it wasn't enough. That's when Harris realized it should be a story of sisters. Twin sisters.

Twins, Harris theorized, bring immediate and profound drama, What's similar about them, and what's different? How often do they agree, and what happens when they don't? It was a crucial creative decision both for the Obie-winning play and now, the movie adaptation Harris has written and directed - a no less startling piece of work, eight years later.

And so we have Racine and Anaia, one of the more fascinating sets of twins to grace a movie screen. Racine (two-time Tony winner Kara Young, funny and fierce), is expressive, emotional, aggressive, sometimes joyful. Anaia (newcomer Mallori Johnson, deeply moving), is quieter, more deliberate, ostensibly meeker.

At age 21, they share everything: a living space, clothing, the same blond braids. They speak and even think in tandem, to the point where regular dialogue is sometimes replaced, cleverly, with subtitles - their communicating doesn't need words. Heck, they can even pee at the same time.

More profoundly, they share similar, horrific scars - suffered in a fire set by their father when they were small girls, in an attempt to kill their mother. Racine's scars cover her arm and travel onto her back, while Anaia's cover her face, permanently altering how the world sees her.

In the prologue, we learn that Racine has been avenging her sister, whenever she's called ugly because of those scars, since they were children. Then, back to present time. The twins receive a letter they never expected.

"We got a mama!?" they exclaim. They'd thought she'd died in the fire.

## A Night of Fine Arts in MarrKens' Learning Academy Museum



By Steve Worthy

Photographer

At the MarrKens Learning Academy in Method Community in West Raleigh on May 21, 2026, an evening of art, MarrKens' Museum, was on display by the youth who are students in the Academy. The works of the proud students were on display throughout the center along with a silent auction conducted on some of the artwork relating to the Academy.

The MarrKens Academy, originally known as the Cross Link Learning Center, then later as the Vital Link Academy, was founded by Margaret Rose and Kenneth Murray in 1964. Today, it is in the Method Community in West Raleigh and currently owned by their daughter Rhonda Muhammad, with Wanda Lyons-Boone, as the long-time director of the Academy.



# Community

## Heart to Home Meals Expands Into Durham And Raleigh

By Jordan Meadows

Staff Writer

The expansion of Heart to Home Meals into Durham reflects a growing response to one of North Carolina's most significant demographic shifts. With one in five residents now aged 65 or older and projections reaching nearly 2.7 million seniors by 2040, demand is accelerating for services that help older adults remain independent in their homes. Across the Research Triangle, that demand has translated into steady franchise growth, following an earlier entry into Raleigh and now an expansion into Durham.

Though the brand is relatively new in the United States, its foundation is decades in the making. The company originated in Canada in 2007 and operates under the Global Apetito Group, a Germany-based, family-owned food producer that has specialized in nutrition-focused meals since 1958. The organization now operates across multiple countries and serves a wide range of institutions, including hospitals, schools, care facilities, and home-delivery programs serving seniors and vulnerable populations.

As Senior Director of Franchise Development Richard Peroe explained, "And they're in about seven different countries right now, and most of them in Europe." He also described the scale of the parent organization more broadly: "They truly are a global food producer."



That international structure directly shapes how the U.S. model operates. Rather than building from scratch, the American rollout draws on established systems used in Canada and the United Kingdom, where home-delivered meals have operated at scale for years. Peroe noted that early U.S. development required refinement before expansion, stating, "We took a year to get all the lessons learned."

The COVID-19 period further shaped the U.S. approach, slowing franchising plans but also revealing gaps in senior care and post-discharge support. That led to a more targeted rollout beginning in 2024, with North Carolina emerging as one of the earliest and most active growth markets.

A key difference in the U.S. system is

how quickly it has integrated with local healthcare and funding pathways compared to earlier international expansions. In North Carolina, for example, Medicaid approval processes allowed faster onboarding than in some Northeastern markets, enabling earlier reach into communities with high senior populations and limited access to traditional meal programs.

The food itself also reflects a distinct advantage tied to the company's Canadian production system. Much of the meal supply originates from Canada, where ingredient standards are stricter in certain categories than in the United States. This results in meals with fewer additives and preservatives, which supports the company's positioning around medically aligned nutrition for

older adults. The product line is designed around health-specific needs, including low-sodium, diabetic-friendly, renal, and heart-focused diets.

Peroe emphasized the customization built into the system: "We have meals that are high in fiber, as you'd imagine." He added, "We have meals that are low in sodium." He also noted, "We have meals that are specific for heart-friendly diets," and "We have renal-friendly diets." Together, these options allow seniors and caregivers to tailor meal plans based on medical needs rather than a one-size-fits-all menu.

That flexibility extends into how meals are selected and delivered. Customers can adjust ordering based on preference and dietary requirements, creating what Peroe described as a system where "you can really kind of cut and slice and dice your meal plan as you'd like to."

North Carolina has become a central testing ground for this model. The first U.S. franchise launched in the Rocky Mount-Raleigh region, led by a former pharmacist who recognized the gap in care for seniors transitioning from hospital to home.

That early success helped establish a broader footprint across the Research Triangle, now extending into Durham as part of continued statewide growth.

For Peroe, the appeal of the franchise model is rooted in both business opportunity and personal impact.

"I love franchising. I love helping people get involved in businesses. I love seeing them start and chase a dream.

And being able to support them and help them grow a business and really, truly make a difference."

He also tied the company's mission directly to its community role, stating, "And Heart to Home Meals truly is making a difference in the communities."

Operationally, the service goes beyond food delivery. Drivers are trained not only to deliver meals but to bring them inside, interact with customers, and support consistent check-ins with seniors who may be living alone. That relationship-based approach has become a defining feature of the brand as it expands into new regions.

In North Carolina specifically, franchise operators have reported that demand has exceeded early expectations, particularly in rural counties where access to traditional meal ser-

vices is limited.

Looking ahead, company leaders see North Carolina as a cornerstone of their U.S. growth strategy, with additional expansion already being explored in markets like Wilmington, Charlotte, and the Triad. "We've got more to come in North Carolina," Peroe said.

For families and seniors, access remains straightforward: users enter a ZIP code at [hearttohomemeals.com](http://hearttohomemeals.com) to determine availability, browse meals online, and place orders without subscriptions or minimum commitments. Those on Medicaid can be guided through case managers who can determine eligibility for in-home support services. Franchise opportunities remain open through Heart-to-HomeMealsFranchiseUSA.com or by contacting Peroe directly at [richard.peroe@hearttohomemeals.com](mailto:richard.peroe@hearttohomemeals.com)

### Raleigh-Wake Eagles Join "Pearley's Pearls" for Race for the Cure



Linda Bailey, an alumnus of North Carolina Central University (NCCU), is a distinguished member of the Raleigh-Wake chapter of the NCCU Alumni Association, Inc. For several years, Linda and her team, "Pearley's Pearls," have participated in the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. The 2026 Race for the Cure took place on April 25th at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park in Durham, North Carolina. Linda's team, "Pearley's Pearls," is named in honor of her first cousin, Pearley Yelverton, who is a remarkable 50-year cancer survivor.

The Raleigh-Wake Chapter of the NCCU Alumni Association proudly supported Linda's remarkable team, dedicated to raising vital funds for breast cancer research, patient care, and the ultimate goal of eradicating breast cancer. The partnership between "PEARLEY'S PEARLS" and the Raleigh-Wake Chapter highlights the critical role that community engagement plays in combating this disease. The Durham Race for the Cure not only raised funds but also significantly boosted awareness of breast cancer. Remarkably, Linda's team exceeded their ambitious \$10,000 fundraising goal by an astounding \$10,701.25! The Raleigh-Wake Chapter is proud to support Linda and is immensely proud of the achievements of her team, "PEARLEY'S PEARLS."

## The Little Washington Growing Group Grows Food & Education In Goldsboro

By Judaea Ingram

Special To The Carolinian

GOLDSBORO, N.C. — Cheryl Lewis Alston did not plan to become a farmer. A retired educator, she first brought gardens into classrooms as a way to teach science through hands-on learning. Today, that approach has grown into a community farm project that blends food production, education and access on city-owned land in Wayne County.

Alston, founder and director of the Little Washington Growing Group, has built her work around the idea that food production can also function as education and community building. With a background in science education, she spent years teaching in local schools before expanding into agriculture and food systems. That shift came through school gardens used in classroom instruction, where science, reading and math were taught through planting and harvesting. Over time, that approach grew into broader community-based food work across Wayne County.

"She encouraged me to start my own farm," Romaine Barnett said. "Now I'm doing it." Barnett now

runs WildRoot Fresh Farms, and said Alston served as a mentor in helping her take that step into farming.

According to regional agricultural documentation, Alston's work has included partnerships with schools and local organizations focused on food access and education, including leadership connected to the Wayne Food Initiative and later development of the Little Washington Growing Group, which focuses on growing and distributing fresh produce in underserved areas while teaching agricultural skills.

That educational foundation is still visible in the work taking place on the farm today. Volunteers, family members and collaborators move through planting beds and work areas where production and learning happen side by side.

"It's not just coming out here to farm," one volunteer said. "You're learning why things grow the way they do, and you're learning it together."

Among those working on site is DyNasia Dawson, who manages the farm's chicken operation. The chickens provide eggs while also serving as part of the group's hands-

on learning environment. During a recent visit, Dawson's daughter was also present and actively involved, including operating a tractor to help maintain and mow portions of the land for continued planting.

The work is highly collaborative, with roles shared across generations and skill sets. Volunteers describe the environment as productive but also social, with laughter, joking and conversation woven into the workday.

Tim Norris, who previously worked with Alston through the Wayne Food Initiative, has contributed to the group's soil and sustainability practices. His work includes using organic and repurposed materials to improve soil health, part of a broader effort to reduce waste while strengthening growing conditions.

"A lot of what we're doing is about rebuilding the soil and not just taking from it," Norris said. "If you take care of the land, it takes care of you."

The educational aspect of the initiative also extends beyond agriculture. Shirley Sheread, a retired teacher who worked with Alston at the same school, remains connected to the project. Her background in education reflects the group's broad-

er belief that learning does not stop in the classroom and can continue in community spaces like the farm.

Alston's daughter, Joanne Spruill, also plays an active role in the operation. During a recent workday, she was on a tractor mowing sections of the land, helping prepare space for expansion and ongoing planting. Her presence reflects the family's continued involvement in the project and its generational approach to land stewardship and food access.

The initiative builds on earlier regional food work, including efforts tied to the Wayne Food Initiative, which focused on addressing food insecurity through local production and distribution networks. Those efforts helped shape the foundation for Alston's current work, which combines production, education and community distribution on a smaller but active local scale.

Today, the Little Washington Growing Group continues to expand its vision for the site. Plans include a dedicated produce pickup area, expanded crop production and future additions such as beehives for honey and additional livestock integration.

The project is rooted in addressing food insecurity in Goldsboro and surrounding areas while also rebuilding hands-on knowledge of growing food. Alston's long-term vision includes producing vegetables, eggs and honey that can be distributed directly back into the community through an on-site pickup system.

"We want people to be able to come in, get what they need, and go," she said. "Fresh food should be accessible."

As the group finished labeling trays of seedlings, the tables were lined with small pots, each marked with a date, a name and a future harvest.

In a region where access to fresh produce remains uneven, the project reflects both necessity and hope, a belief that food systems can be built locally and knowledge grows when it is shared.

"We're going to keep building. One plant at a time," Alston said.



### The Champs Are Here



**GOLF CHAMPIONS** — Siblings Paul and Juliana Ross were both crowned tournament champions on Saturday May 23rd. They competed in the US Kids Greenville Spring Tour that began in February and concluded last Saturday.

Juliana won the tour championship tournament in the girls 13-14 division with a score of 80, and came in second in the points race.

Paul won the tour championship tournament in the boys 13-14 division with a score of 72. He won both the tour championship tournament, and was crowned the overall tour champion. Congratulations Golfers!



**Participate in a Beyond the South Wake Landfill Study Info Session**

We want to hear from you! Learn more, ask questions, and share feedback about future waste disposal options for Wake County at one of our upcoming info sessions.

Learn more or share your thoughts online at [www.wake.gov/BeyondtheSWLF](http://www.wake.gov/BeyondtheSWLF)

June  
**2**  
Tuesday  
Northern Regional Center  
350 E Holding Ave  
Wake Forest, NC 27587

June  
**4**  
Thursday  
Southern Regional Center  
130 N. Judd Pkwy NE  
Fuquay-Varina, NC 27526

June  
**18**  
Thursday  
Eastern Regional Center  
1002 Dogwood Dr  
Zebulon, NC 27597

June  
**23**  
Tuesday  
Downtown Cary Park (Academy Pavilion)  
327 S. Academy St  
Cary, NC 27511

June  
**25**  
Thursday  
Walnut Creek Wetland Center (Neuse Room)  
950 Peterson St  
Raleigh, NC 27610



**Drop by anytime between 5-7 p.m.!**

# Church

## Pope Leo XIV Compares AI To The Industrial Revolution

THE CONVERSATION - With the release of his encyclical letter Magnifica Humanitas on May 25, 2026, Pope Leo XIV has signaled that he wants the church to respond to artificial intelligence much as a predecessor, Pope Leo XIII, responded to upheavals during the Industrial Revolution over a century ago.

Since the first act of his papacy - choosing his name - the current pope has repeatedly invoked the earlier Leo's 1891 encyclical Rerum Novarum. That document, which waded into the political and economic debates of the time, denounced the excesses of the Gilded Age and pointed toward a more just social order. Now, Leo XIV has used his first major statement to the world to present a new Rerum Novarum for the age of AI.

Rerum Novarum was more than just a theological text. It helped reshape economic policy around the rights of workers, serving as a spiritual foundation for European social democracy and the 1930s New Deal programs that still undergird economic life for working Americans today. It also spurred a movement of entrepreneurs to transform the economic system from within.

Understanding its influence is key to seeing the potential of Leo XIV's encyclical.

From guilds to cooperatives in the industrial era

In his time, Leo XIII rejected both unfettered capitalism and revolutionary socialism. He invoked the medieval guilds, in which craftspeople self-organized, and asserted the rights of industrial workers to organize as well. This was a radical statement at a time when unions often faced violent suppression from employers and police.

But in contrast to communist agitators, he didn't want to do away with private property. He argued that to bring out the best in human beings, as creatures made in the image of God, governments should "induce as many as possible of the people to become owners."

This was more of a vision than a detailed plan, but Catholics in many countries started trying to figure out what the vision meant in practice.

The English writers G.K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, for instance, tried to systematize his vision in a movement they called "distributism," which proposed policies for land redistribution and a revival of guilds. In the United States, economist and Catholic priest John A. Ryan argued in favor of cooperatives - businesses that could be co-owned by workers, consumers or small-business owners.

Ryan went on to be an important

adviser for the New Deal in the United States, which used cooperatives as a powerful tool for economic development through farmer co-ops, rural electric associations and the credit union system.

The spirit of Rerum Novarum continued to spread. Starting in the 1950s, the largest network of worker cooperatives in the world, the Mondragon Corporation in Spain's Basque region, was founded by a Catholic priest. It was a direct result of Leo XIII's encyclical.

My own career has been in its shadow. As a media scholar and a Roman Catholic - and an advocate for efforts to build cooperative tech platforms - I sometimes think of my own work as applying Rerum Novarum to the online economy. With Magnifica Humanitas, the pope appears to be making a similar argument for the age of artificial intelligence.

A tale of 2 cities

Once again, society is going through an economic upheaval: New technologies are changing the nature of work, political systems are under strain, and wealth inequality is staggering. In Magnifica Humanitas, Leo XIV argues that an intervention akin to Rerum Novarum is needed.

The guiding metaphor of Magnifica Humanitas is the choice between two

biblical scenes: the Tower of Babel and the rebuilding of Jerusalem under the prophet Nehemiah.

The first is a story about the dream of a city that sets out to erect a single building as high as the heavens. Babel, as Leo XIV writes in the encyclical, is a city "built on pride and the claim to self-sufficiency." In the biblical account, the project collapses as the world's common language is scattered into many diverse ones.

The pope contrasts this with the story of the Hebrew prophet Nehemiah, who lived in the fifth century B.C.E., when Jews were returning from exile to a ruined Jerusalem. Nehemiah organized the city's rebuilding through a collaborative process based on shared responsibility. While united in prayer, the city's various families and professions could each put their distinctive marks on their work.

The current AI industry, he argues, is in danger of becoming a new Tower of Babel. Just a few companies control this powerful technology supposedly poised to transform work, politics and society for everyone.

He warns that many AI leaders are enthused by ideologies that propose to trade human limits for the godlike powers of machines. Some are even cheerfully embracing a world where human labor is no longer central

to the economy. Leo also fears that human choice is becoming more removed from the execution of war.

In the face of all this, the encyclical calls on people everywhere to adopt "the pressing duty to remain profoundly human" - to be neither "spectators" nor "commentators" but to take an active role by participating in what he calls "the construction sites of history." Some already are.

Construction sites for a different kind of AI

It is easy to see the emerging AI industry in Babel-like terms - a few massive tech companies build the models and provide access to them on their terms. But other paths are still possible. My colleagues and I have been documenting cases that could be the germ of a different kind of AI industry - one more aligned with what the pope is calling for.

Just as during the Industrial Revolution, a more just future begins with workers resisting against the abuses of the present. From Hollywood to Nairobi, workers have been fighting for dignity as AI changes their professions. Magnifica Humanitas stresses the importance of decent jobs to a healthy society, and workers' demands can help identify what the future of work should look like. Other approaches begin among AI

developers themselves. In Switzerland, a collaboration between government and academia has produced Apertus, a foundational model based on fully documented designs and data sources - a far cry from the opaque and at times illegal practices of leading AI companies. Some of Apertus' developers have created a consumer cooperative, enabling users to co-own their interface with the model.

Cooperative ownership like this allows users to tune AI experiences more intentionally toward their needs. The large U.S. farmer co-op Land O'Lakes, for example, has created AI-enabled tools that provide analysis and guidance for its members based on the data that they collectively co-own. The more nascent Transkribus in Europe is co-owned by research institutions that collectively train their AI software to transcribe texts for historical research. These kinds of systems follow Leo XIV's call to "manage data as a common or shared good."

It is telling that even among leading AI companies such as OpenAI and Anthropic, the founders attempted to build unusual corporate governance structures to insulate their products from profit motives. Governments could encourage more appropriate ownership designs or outright require them for high-risk industries like AI.

## SERMON of the WEEK



**HAVING THE WISDOM OF GOD TO DO JUDGEMENT**  
By Bishop-Elect William Eli Ratcliff, Sr.

Text: 1 Kings 3:16-28

In 1 Kings 3:16-28, we find one of the most well-known examples of wisdom in the Bible. God gave Solomon the ability to judge rightly and lead His people, but with leadership came difficult situations and messy problems. One thing I have learned is that whenever God gives someone authority or responsibility, they should expect challenges to follow. You do not have to be a pastor—you can simply be a doorkeeper—but if God places something in your hands, trouble will eventually knock at your door.

This passage contains tension, confusion, lying, deceit, conflict, and painful mistakes. In many ways, it sounds a lot like life itself. Many of us have made more mistakes than we care to admit, and all of us have needed God to straighten some things out along the way.

The Bible says two women came before King Solomon, both claiming to be the mother of the same child. Scripture identifies them as harlots, or prostitutes. Yet what stands out to me is that Solomon did not focus on their past. He focused on the problem standing before him. I thank God that He can deal with our present situation without always throwing our past failures back in our faces. The truth is, every one of us has flaws, weaknesses, and areas where we have fallen short.

The situation was heartbreaking. One mother accidentally rolled over on her baby during the night, and the child died. While the other woman slept, the living child was switched, leaving two women claiming the same baby. Solomon now

had to judge a case with no witnesses, no evidence, and no clear proof.

My first point is simple: people that steal will lie, and people that lie will steal. When people are caught doing wrong, they often deny it. If they are not caught, they continue living the lie as though nothing ever happened.

Imagine the scene: two women standing before the king arguing over one baby. Solomon's problem became dealing with their problem. There were no witnesses to call. No one was rushing forward to testify on behalf of either woman. Yet despite their reputations, Solomon still listened to them and heard their case. That is powerful to me because it reminds us that God's wisdom is not reserved only for perfect people. God will hear the cries of people others overlook or dismiss.

Earlier in the chapter, God asked Solomon what he desired, and Solomon did not ask for riches, fame, or revenge against his enemies. He asked for wisdom. Solomon understood that leadership without wisdom is dangerous.

Today we are living in a world filled with influence but lacking discernment. We see titles without integrity and positions without wisdom. We do not simply need intelligent people—we need godly people with wisdom. People may manipulate others, deceive others, and fool others, but nobody can outsmart God because God knows the truth.

The second lesson from this text is that God's wisdom reveals what people try to hide. There were no DNA tests, fingerprints, photographs, or cameras in Solomon's day—only confusion. But God is not the author of confusion.

Solomon called for a sword and instructed that the living child be divided between the two women. Immediately, the true mother cried out and begged the king not to harm the child. She would rather lose custody of the baby than see him die. At that moment, Solomon knew who the real mother was.

Real love would rather suffer loss than destroy what it loves. That is why loving parents sacrifice so much for their children. It is also why people who truly love the church do not want to see the church divided. Wisdom reveals what appearances often hide. Some people speak loudly but have no love in their hearts. Others appear spiritual on the outside

while carrying jealousy, selfishness, and bitterness within. Man may look at the outward appearance, but God looks at the heart.

Now more than ever, we need wisdom in government, in churches, in homes, in relationships, and in raising children. Without godly wisdom, people make emotional decisions that lead to destructive consequences.

The final lesson from this text is that God is still a defender of the helpless. The baby in this story could not speak for himself. He was vulnerable, innocent, and dependent on someone else to protect him, yet God used wisdom to preserve his life.

That truth still encourages me today because God continues to care for people society often overlooks. God still watches over single mothers, grieving parents, broken families, grandparents raising children, and people simply trying to hold themselves together through difficult seasons of life.

We don't need a bunch of TV judges. We don't need judges like Joe Brown, Judge Hatchett, Judge Maybelle, Judge Mathis, or Judge Judy. We need a HEAVENLY JUDGE!

There's no need for the church to cry "Judy, Judy, Judy"—but we all need to cry "Jesus, Jesus, Jesus!" Here, Solomon judged one case—but Jesus will judge the whole world.

The baby in this text was almost divided by a sword—But Jesus shed His own blood, and instead of dividing us, He brought us together.

Thank God for the blood today! Thank God for His Blood Today! For the blood saves, the blood heals, and the blood delivers us from our mess of iniquity; the blood covers our sins. If you've got a problem today that nobody can solve, TAKE YOUR CASE TO THE KING! Won't He ease troubled minds? Won't He fix troubled hearts and save lost souls? Won't He make a way? He's the true and RIGHTEOUS JUDGE, the King of Kings, Lord of Lords! He's my judge; only God can truly judge me! To experience the full message, please visit [www.youtube.com/@lincolnparkholinesschurch1913](http://www.youtube.com/@lincolnparkholinesschurch1913) and watch this week's Sermon. We encourage you to Like, Subscribe, and share your thoughts in the comments so we can connect and grow together in faith. We look forward to hearing from you.

## Practical Biblical Principles

### WHEN THE CHURCH IS ATTACKED

By John L. Caldwell, Pastor

New Jerusalem Baptist Cathedral  
How can we protect our church when it is attacked by the devil? First, we must be spiritually discerning enough to know when the church is being attacked. The devil times his attacks on the church when it starts growing in any spiritual area and especially in the early growth moments of church growth. The devil looks for the opportunity to stop any church growth before it starts. The New Testament Church had many obstacles in the way as the Holy Spirit spearheaded the growth of the early church.

It appears that before the Holy Spirit grew the early church, it first went about filling the people with the Holy Ghost before the churches grew. This makes sense, the church are the people and not the brick and mortar. If the people are filled first with the Holy Spirit, this becomes the source from which the church grows.

We read in Acts 10 :44 when the Holy Spirit fell upon those who heard the word when Peter was preaching and began speaking in tongues (Acts 10:44-46). Not only did they speak in tongue they were also baptized upon Peter's recommendation (Acts 10:47-48).

The word had spread about the Gentiles receiving the word of God. That was the problem. The Gentiles were not circumcised. Peter was the blame and there was contention about this matter in the church (Acts 11:1-3). At this point, the devil is beginning to work against the church.

However, Peter immediately spoke against the uproar by explaining to the people that he had a vision while in the city of Joppa. The vision consisted of unclean animals on a sheet. And He was told by the Spirit to rise and eat (Acts 11:4-7). Peter said he rebelled against the vision, but was told to him by the Holy Spirit, Peter, "What God has cleansed you must not call unclean." This was Peter's call from God to go and begin ministering to the Gentiles. The devil did not want the Gentiles to hear the Gospel, but the Holy Spirit prevailed (Acts 11:18).

As the New Testament Church grew, the Jews and Gentiles were called Christians. This was a derogatory term. Before this point the people in the church were addressed as disciples, followers, brethren, saints, but not Christians. Again, the devil is at work.

When the news arrived at the Jerusalem Church that those who were scattered, due to the persecution in Jerusalem, and were rounded up, so

to speak, by Stephen as he traveled throughout the country side preaching to those who were scattered, the church sent Barnabas and Saul out to help with the preaching (Acts 11:19-20). Again, the devil attempted to scatter the newly growing church when it was being persecuted. However, due the efforts of Barnabas and Saul preaching in Antioch for more than a year, the two preachers were able to assemble a church at Antioch and further the gospel. And the disciples were first called Christians at Antioch. This church growth began to over come the stigmatization of the Word "Christians," and the name soon became sanitized, so to speak. And began to be an acceptable name for Christians-followers of Christ.

Church, can you recall when the devil started attacking this church? It was soon after we broke ground to start the construction of our worship center. Our "Ground-Breaking" celebration day was a Spirit filled and glorious event held on April 17, 1988. It wasn't long before the rumors went out that our church was a White sponsored and controlled church. Not so! This was a church built with money loaned from a white Southern Baptist Association. The church went this route simply because the only local Black bank refused to give us a construction loan. Since then, the loan has been paid off by the church, and the church has been debt free now for more than twenty years. We still praise God for this blessing.

Shortly after the foundation was laid and the initial plumbing was started, the plumbing contractor skipped town without delivering to the church its paid-up plumbing supplies. However, the church prevailed, recovered the loss and was able to finish the plumbing work without any cost over runs. The devil was at work. Next was the grape-vine rumors that our church had run into a large cost over-run and couldn't continue the construction. This untruth was also communicated to our loan institution, which was ignored.

The truth of the matter was that there was a long 30-day raining period which lasted off and on for more than a month, which did not allow for any construction progress on the worship center. The church then fell behind in its "progressive" payments. Progressive payments mean the bank calls for monthly payments only when the construction work progresses. Since we couldn't work on the church due to wet weather, the bank required that we pay only the interest and not the principle-this was God in action. This church has always been able to make its payments on time and has never been in any financial trouble. But the wide-

spread rumors said otherwise. The devil was at work.

The devil didn't stop there. The church had to file legal suits against the painting, electrical, and parking paving contractors, as they attempted to "rip-off" the church, so to speak. However, the church prevailed. There were no financial setbacks for the church from these legal actions. The church construction was finished on schedule. The devil did not want us to go into our church and start giving God the praise, which we did on August 19, 1990.

Our new church grew in numbers because the Holy Spirit directed souls to the church. Our 15,000 plus square feet church area was funded, founded, and constructed with just twenty-three initial members. To God be the glory. Great things He has done.

After the initial growth period of our church, the devil soon got into the Sunday school due to the fact there was no true leadership. Teachers who were not qualified to teach were teaching they didn't fully know the bible. It was the devil's objective to get the church to operate on the lack of God's word.

There were eighteen deacons and deaconesses appointed having been given more than 13 weeks of formal training. Only to have more than half to be eventually removed from the board due to the lack of spiritual commitment. The devil at work. But the other deacons compensated by putting their shoulders to the wheel, so to speak, and the church had its spiritual needs serviced and the church continued to grow.

Last, but not least, the devil attacked the three churches' adult choirs, but not the children's choir. There arose too many devas and egos in the adult choirs because there was no real leadership in the adult choirs. This trouble came about due to the failure to follow the pastor's instruction.

The church soon began to birth strong leadership in all the spiritual areas, thus giving the pastor much help and the church grew strong and in the spirit. Foreign missions were started and the church was able to send missionaries to Africa, Europe, Southeast Asia, South and Central America. Praise God. Since the start of our missionary work, our church has never been the same. Our spiritual level has grown and is still growing. Praise God. God and the Holy Spirit were at work all the way, even until today, to grow our church in a spiritual sense.

The word of God is true. And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, the church (Matthew 16:18). To God be the glory!



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

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# Editorials

## Editorial Policy

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

## Even Republicans Are Rebelling at Trump's Blatantly Corrupt 'Anti-Weaponization Fund': Using Taxpayer Money to Reward the President's Allies Has Nothing to Do With His Claims Against the IRS

By Jacob Sullum

Last week, Republican senators grilled Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche about the \$1.8 billion "Anti-Weaponization Fund" created by President Donald Trump's settlement of his lawsuit against the IRS. About 45 senators attended the meeting, and "at least half of them were blasting the attorney general," Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) reported. "They were pissed."

It is not hard to see why. The lawsuit that provided the pretext for using taxpayer money to compensate purported victims of "lawfare and weaponization" was legally dubious, the fund has nothing to do with Trump's claims against the IRS, and the main beneficiaries are apt to be the president's allies and supporters.

The lawsuit pitted Trump against agencies he oversees, represented by government lawyers who are forbidden, under an executive order that Trump issued in February 2025, to "advance an interpretation of the law" that "contravenes" the president's position. That bizarre situation prompted the federal judge overseeing the case to question whether it involved a genuine controversy between adverse parties, as required for the lawsuit to proceed.

The lawsuit was provoked by IRS contractor Charles Littlejohn's illegal leaking of Trump's tax returns. But Trump filed his complaint too late: more than two years after Littlejohn pleaded guilty to what Trump's personal attorney accurately called "an egregious breach."

According to Trump's May 18 settlement agreement with the IRS, Littlejohn's leaks, which included confidential information about thousands of wealthy Americans, epitomized Democrats' use of government power to "target individuals, groups, and entities for improper and unlawful political, personal, and/or ideological reasons." Although that is a counterintuitive way to describe the conduct of a rogue contractor who was prosecuted by the Biden administration, it is the only attempt to justify the Anti-Weaponization Fund as a logical result of Trump's litigation.

It is highly unusual for the Justice Department to settle a lawsuit by agreeing to pay people whose grievances are completely unrelated to the plaintiff's claims, which in this case involved the IRS's allegedly lax oversight of its contractors. Such settlements, in fact, are prohibited by a rule that the Justice Department issued during Trump's first term.

That rule, which Pam Bondi, then the attorney general, reaffirmed in February 2025, generally prohibits settlement payments to "a non-governmental person or entity that is not a party to the dispute." There are a few limited exceptions, none of which seem to apply in this case.

Trump's settlement agreement arbitrarily assigns \$1.776 billion to the Anti-Weaponization Fund — a reference to the nation's founding year that it preposterously claims is "based on the projected valuation of future claimants' claims." The five members of the board charged with doling out that money will be appointed by the attorney general and can be removed by the president "without cause" at any time.

Although the Justice Department says "there are no partisan requirements to file a claim," it seems clear the process will favor Trump's friends. The board, the composition of which is completely subject to Trump's control, will "cease processing claims" a month and a half before he leaves office, and the settlement agreement describes "lawfare and weaponization" as abuses peculiar to Democrats.

"I am helping others, who were so badly abused by an evil, corrupt, and weaponized Biden Administration, receive, at long last, JUSTICE!" Trump explained on Friday. Those "others" presumably include the 1,600 or so Trump supporters who were arrested (and later pardoned by Trump) for participating in the 2021 Capitol riot.

The prospect that the fund "could potentially compensate someone who assaulted a police officer" is "absurd," Sen. Thom Tillis (R-N.C.) remarked last week. Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) likewise said "a slush fund to pay people who assault cops" was "utterly stupid" and "morally wrong."

"I'm supposed to work out a settlement with myself," Trump acknowledged a few days after suing the IRS. The upshot of his admitted self-dealing is an arrangement so brazenly corrupt that even Republicans are having trouble accepting it.

Jacob Sullum, a senior editor at Reason magazine

## How Resilient Black Women Turn Job Loss into New Ventures

By Tashi McQueen

AFRO Staff Writer

In the aftermath of mass layoffs in 2025, many Black women are turning uncertainty into opportunity by launching businesses, strengthening professional networks and being innovative. Through resilience, creativity and community support, they are carving paths to stability and success in a shifting economy.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, in 2025, the employment rate for Black women decreased by 1.4 percentage points to 55.7 percent. The employment-to-population ratio for Black women with a bachelor's degree dropped 3.5 percentage points over the past year, a larger decline than any other education group, including those without a college degree.

"Black women are in professions that have been targeted," said Mary-Frances Winters. Winters noted that Black women disproportionately occupy diversity, inclusion, and equity, human resources, and government roles, which have been targeted and eliminated under the 47th president's administration.

Since the federal ban on diversity initiatives, many organizations have cut chief diversity officer positions and related inclusion programs, leaving Black women in these roles suddenly jobless or facing insecure employment. Winters, who still works in diversity, inclusion, and equity, said entrepreneurship has been a key solution.

"What we find that Black women do is that they leave and start their own businesses," she said.

According to the 2025 Wells Fargo Impact of Women-Owned Businesses report, Black women-owned businesses are a key engine of economic growth in the U.S., overseeing 2



million businesses that employ more than 647,000 people.

Winters emphasized that these challenges predate the administration's crackdown and are systemic.

"I could only stay in corporate for 10 years," she said. "The microaggressions, the discrimination that I faced...when people see a Black woman—the assumption is you're not as good, you're not as smart, and you have to be twice as good."

Winters added that this experience leads to burnout.

"Black women are at the bottom when it comes to salaries, getting promoted, being seen, being appreciated, being valued and recognized for their talent," she said.

"I know several of the women who did occupy chief diversity officer roles left on their own," Winters said, noting that some resigned because promoting inclusion in the current political environment became overwhelming. "Trump has the thing around it's about merit... what's the message there? That we aren't of merit?"



By Judykay Jefferson

## STILL FIGHTING

It drives me crazy that in 2026 we're once again fighting for "no taxation without representation." It's like Nettie Stowers used to say, "The more things change, the more they stay the same." Here we are again, fighting 1950s and 1960s fights only this time with only a virtual army. This may be the one thing AI can't do for us. We must have real people, putting in real work, fueled by real outrage and a refusal to be distracted, intimidated, or oppressed.

The reality is democracy doesn't disappear all at once. It erodes in inches—quietly, slowly, and often under the polite cover of "procedure." That's why every time I hear about another round of redistricting or another attempt to chip away at the Voting Rights Act, I feel the same knot in my stomach. It's the feeling that something fundamental is being rearranged while we're told it's all just routine housekeeping.

Let me be clear: drawing voting districts is not just a technical exercise. It is an exercise of power. And when those lines are drawn to dilute the voices of certain communities—especially Black, brown, rural, or low-income voters—it becomes something far more dangerous. It becomes a way to choose who gets heard and who gets ignored.

Here's another fact: legality and morality are not the same thing, and history has shown us that the law can be bent, rewritten, or hollowed out until it barely resembles the protections it once offered.

That's exactly what has happened to the Voting Rights Act. When it was passed in 1965, the VRA was a lifeline—a shield for communities that had been systematically shut out of the democratic process. It required states with long histories of discrimination to get federal approval before changing their voting rules. That safeguard prevented countless abuses.

But in 2013, the Supreme Court struck down the formula that determined which states needed oversight. Overnight, the strongest protections of the VRA were gone. And almost immediately, states began passing laws and redrawing maps in ways that disproportionately affected voters of color. Some called it coincidence. Many of us knew better.

Today, we're watching the consequences unfold in real time. Districts are being sliced and stretched into shapes that make no sense except for the political advantage they create. Communities that share schools, roads, and daily life are split apart, while distant neighborhoods with nothing in common are stitched together. The goal isn't representation—it's control.

And here's the part that worries me most: these changes don't announce themselves with fanfare. There's no siren that goes off when a district is quietly redrawn to weaken a community's influence. There's no headline that says, "Your vote will matter less next year." Instead, the impact shows up slowly—fewer competitive races, fewer candidates who reflect the community, fewer elected officials who feel accountable to the people they serve.

The dismantling of the Voting Rights Act and the manipulation of district lines are not separate issues. They are two sides of the same coin. Weakening the VRA removed the guardrails. Aggressive redistricting is what happens when the guardrails are gone.

And the consequences reach far beyond election day. When people feel their vote doesn't matter, they disengage. When communities lose representation, their needs go unmet. When elected officials know their seats are safe, they stop listening. Democracy doesn't collapse—it calcifies.

But here's the truth I hold onto: none of this is inevitable. The same way democracy erodes in inches, it can be rebuilt in inches. Communities can organize. Courts can intervene. Legislatures can pass stronger protections. Voters can demand transparency and fairness. And we can remind our leaders—loudly—that the right to vote is not a bargaining chip.

I believe in the power of the people, but that power only works when the system honors it. Redistricting should strengthen representation, not weaken it. The Voting Rights Act should be restored, not remembered like a relic. And every voter—regardless of race, ZIP code, or political party—should have an equal voice in shaping the future.

Because when the lines move, our power moves with them. And if we don't pay attention, we may wake up one day to find that the map no longer includes us at all.

## DANYA PERRY

Continued from page 1

rated to the point where a transplant is necessary.

While Danya is grateful for the support of his workplace, insurance simply cannot cover the staggering costs of post-operative care, immunosuppressant medications, and rehabilitation. We are asking for your financial support to help Danya and his family navigate this challenging journey. Every contribution helps ease the burden so Danya can focus on his recovery and eventually return to the work he loves.

Beyond financial gifts, you can support Danya and others by registering as an organ donor here. Your prayers and patience are also deeply appreciated as he navigates the long waiting list. Let's show Danya the same compassion and collective "team sport" spirit he has always shown Wake County. Together, we can help him get his "new heart" and keep his vital legacy growing.

## MENTAL HEALTH

Continued from page 5

tabase, and its "Find Me a Therapist" initiative, which helps connect individuals with culturally competent care.

The organization's work is rooted in addressing longstanding inequities that continue impacting mental health access within Black communities.

Historically, segregation, redlining, racial discrimination, incarceration, poverty, and unequal healthcare access have contributed to higher rates of behavioral health challenges while simultaneously limiting access to proper treatment and support. Darkness RISING approaches those issues through what organizers describe as a transformative justice lens, focusing on healing rather than punishment and creating equitable wellness opportunities for marginalized communities.

Its REBUILD program specifically supports justice-involved and formerly incarcerated people of color through free therapy and wellness support, while the REBUILD Youth program focuses on young people impacted by Adverse Childhood Experiences, also known as ACEs.

For Rudolph, therapy became life-changing after decades of incarceration and years of rejection after returning home.

"Came home in 2015, started my own computer company, investing in real estate, do the normal thing and get some jobs here and there and was met with rejection after rejection and people telling me I am not a good person," Rudolph shared. "Even had a rejection in church."

He said one of the hardest battles became overcoming the mental barriers created during incarceration.

"I got in touch with a couple of friends and they explained to me how I had to get over the mental hurdles and get rid of the way my prison mindset was in order to survive and become successful," he said.

Rudolph later moved to North Carolina hoping for a fresh start, but the struggle continued.

"Things were looking bad," he said. "Could not get a job. The struggle was real."

Eventually, therapy and support through organizations like Darkness RISING helped begin his healing process. He said working alongside other justice-involved men through therapy gave him the ability to rebuild mentally while finding community with people who understood his experiences.

Stories like Rudolph's reflect the foundation behind Darkness RISING's mission: ensuring people feel seen, supported, and worthy of healing regardless of their background or circumstances.

Community members who attend the organization's events often describe them as emotionally transformative.

Some participants say Darkness RISING encouraged them to seek therapy for the first time, while others say the organization gave them a safe space to openly discuss struggles they previously kept hidden.

"I have been encouraged by the beautiful, generous, brave and open individuals who come together and use their talents to create art, share personal experiences and provide hope to those who may be struggling with mental health," one participant shared.

By combining art, wellness, education, and community outreach, Darkness RISING continues changing how mental health conversations happen within the Black community.

Not through silence. But through healing, honesty, connection, and joy.

## LIGON MIDDLE

Continued from page 4

ing names of individuals (living or deceased) tied to: Teaching and administration, Student Leadership, Athletics and Arts, and the 1971-1973 transition period. Also, names of families with multiple generations connected to Ligon, and specific memories tied to physical spaces: Entryways, Classrooms, Gymnasium, Auditorium, Outdoor spaces.

The committee also wants to know, How to distribute an Alumni Questionnaire? Where to distribute the questionnaire? Could one place be at the Annual J.W. Ligon Alumni Reunion set for July 4th at the First Cosmopolitan Baptist Church Fellowship Hall? This cannot be the only method for information gathering. The committee must offer additional options for community input.

The committee's next meeting date is June 10th. Future meetings will be held September 2026 and November 2026.

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# Classifieds

## BEAUFORT COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
COUNTY OF BEAUFORT

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
**DANIELLE CARAMANICA**  
In The General Court of Justice  
District Court Division  
File No: 26-Ja-000012-060

IN RE: V.H.C., minor child.  
TO: DANIELLE CARAMANICA,  
mother of a Caucasian Female  
child born on or about August  
13, 2013, in Wake County, North  
Carolina.

TAKE NOTICE that a Juvenile  
Summons and Petition has been  
filed for the above-described  
juvenile, who is alleged to be  
neglected.

You must prepare and file with  
the Clerk of Superior Court of  
Beaufort County a written answer  
to the petition within 30 (THIRTY)  
days of the first date of publication  
of this summons, the 14th day of  
May 2026. You must also serve  
a copy of the answer on the  
petitioner or its attorney.

The Beaufort County Department  
of Social Services has alleged that  
the above named juvenile is in  
need of protective services. The  
Court will conduct a hearing to  
determine whether the juvenile is  
in need of protective services. Notice  
of the date and time and location  
of the hearing will be mailed to you  
by the petitioner after you file an  
answer.

If you fail to file an answer, the  
relief sought will be granted. The  
petitioner will apply to the court for  
the relief demanded in the petition.

You have a right to be  
represented by counsel. If you  
want a lawyer and cannot afford  
one, the Court will appoint you one.  
Matthew W. Jackson  
Attorney for the Petitioner,  
Beaufort County DSS  
632 West Fifth Street  
Washington, NC 27889  
Dates of publication:  
5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

## CHATHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
In the District Court  
Custody Complaint  
26 CVD 000405-180

**Defendant: Sergio Alvarado Lopez**  
Take notice that a pleading  
seeking relief against you has  
been filed in the above-entitled  
custody action. The nature of the  
relief being sought is as follows:  
permanent custody.

You are required to make  
defense to such pleading not later  
than July 15, 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 28th day of May 2026.  
Contact Attorney:  
Hila Moss Law Firm LLC  
PO Box 260  
Moncure NC 27559  
(919) 322-9402  
hmosslaw@gmail.com  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
In the District Court  
Denuncia de Custodia  
26 CVD 000405-180

**Acusado: Sergio Alvarado Lopez**  
Por la presente se le notifica  
que se ha presentado un  
escrito solicitando una medida  
judicial en su contra dentro de  
la acción de custodia titulada  
supra. La naturaleza de la medida  
solicitada es la siguiente: custodia  
permanente.

Se le requiere que presente su  
defensa frente a dicho escrito a  
más tardar el 15 de Julio de 2026;  
en caso de no hacerlo, la parte que  
solicita la notificación en su contra  
solicitará al tribunal la medida  
pretendida.

Este, el 28th día de Mayo, 2026  
Abogada de Contacto:  
Hila Moss Law Firm LLC  
PO Box 260  
Moncure NC 27559  
(919) 322-9402  
hmosslaw@gmail.com  
5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
District Court Division  
File No.: 26CV000351-180

TO: SEGUNDO GUEVARA

EUCEDA, Defendant.

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

This, the 21st day of May, 2026.

Aneta Paval  
Paval Law Offices, PLLC  
Telephone: (919) 410-6690  
5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
In the General Court of Justice  
District Court Division  
File No: 26CV000546-180

To: JULIO CESAR HERNANDEZ-  
MADRID, Defendant.

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

This, the 21st day of May, 2026.

Aneta Paval  
Paval Law Offices, PLLC  
Telephone: (919) 410-6690  
5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

## CURRITUCK COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
CURRITUCK COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS:**  
RE: THE ESTATE OF Sally Carroll –  
26E000060-260

Having qualified as Administrator  
of the Estate of SALLY CARROLL,  
deceased, Currituck County, North  
Carolina, the undersigned does  
hereby notify all persons, firms,  
and corporations having claims  
against the estate of said deceased  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 5th day of August,  
2026, or this notice will be pleaded  
in bar of their recovery. This the 5th  
day of May, 2026.

Marvin Wilkerson, Executor  
DSR Legal, PLLC  
PO Box 51596  
Durham, NC 27717  
5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

## DURHAM COUNTY

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000146-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 20th day of May,  
2026, as Administrator of the  
Estate of ISAAC HARRIS AMADOR,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 29th day of  
August, 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 28th day of May, 2026.  
Emerson Bernabe Amador  
Administrator  
208 Lenox Ave., #238  
Westfield, NJ 07090  
5/28, 6/4, 6/11, and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 25E001313-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 13th day of  
October, 2025, as Executor of the  
Estate of ELAINE EVANS DURHAM,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 29th day of  
August, 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 28th day of May, 2026.  
Ashley Michelle Durham, Executor  
4430 Sunny Court  
Durham, NC 27705  
5/28, 6/4, 6/11, and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
The undersigned, having  
qualified as the Administrator of  
the Estate of WILLIAM LEONARD  
HARRELL, deceased, of Durham  
NC, hereby notifies all persons,  
firms, and corporations having  
claims against the said estate to  
exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before June 28th 2026, or this  
notice will be pleaded in bar of their  
recovery.

All persons indebted to the  
said estate will make immediate  
payment to the undersigned. This  
the 23rd day of May, 2026.

Shurlanduis Crump,  
Administrator of the Estate of  
William Leonard Harrell  
922 Armfield Ave  
Albemarle, NC 28001  
336-689-2742

5/28, 6/4, 6/11, and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000425-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 29th day of April,  
2026, as Administrator of the Estate  
of THOMAS CALVIN MARTIN,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 29th day of  
August, 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 28th day of May, 2026.  
Anthony Darryl Martin,  
Administrator  
8500 Duvall Meadow Lane  
Charlotte, NC 28216

5/28, 6/4, 6/11, and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 20th day of May  
2026, as Co-Limited Personal  
Representatives of the ESTATE OF  
SAMUEL BRUCE MANGUM A/K/A  
BRUCE MANGUM, 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 29th day of August 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 28th day of May 2026.  
DEBORAH MANGUM LOFLIN &  
DIORNE MANGUM HILL  
CO-LIMITED PERSONAL  
REPRESENTATIVES  
ESTATE OF SAMUEL BRUCE  
MANGUM  
A/K/A BRUCE MANGUM  
c/o E. J. Walker, Jr., Attorney  
Walker Lambe, PLLC  
Post Office Box 51549  
Durham, North Carolina 27717  
5/28, 6/4, 6/11, and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**  
In The General Court Of Justice  
District Court Division  
FILE NO. 25CVD00533-310  
SARAH CAROLINE LE SUEUR,  
Plaintiff v. STUART WADE  
BENNETT JR., Defendant  
TO: STUART WADE BENNETT  
JR.

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 Absolute Divorce.

You are required to make defense  
to such pleading not later than  
forty (40) days after the first date  
of publication of this notice, and upon  
your failure to do so, the Plaintiff  
will apply to the Court for the relief  
sought.

This the 28th day of May, 2026.  
Sarah Caroline LeSueur  
504 Watts Street, Durham NC  
27701  
5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

FLOW VOLKSWAGEN OF  
DURHAM VERSUS JESSICA  
MARSHA CARUTHERS NOTICE OF  
SALE Take notice that a public sale  
will take place on June 15th, 2026  
at 10:00 am to satisfy a lien on the  
following vehicle: 2013 Volkswagen  
VIN# WVWBP7AN3DE517454.

The location of the sale is Flow  
Volkswagen of Durham, 3823  
Durham Chapel Hill Blvd, Durham,  
NC 27707.

Published: 5/28 & 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000608-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 19th day of May,  
2026, as Executor of the Estate  
of LACY DOUGLAS TILLEY,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 22nd day of  
August, 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 28th day of May, 2026.  
Charles Howard Tilley, Executor  
6221 Horse Fly Trl  
Wake Forest, NC  
5/28, 6/4, 6/11 and 6/18/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000592-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 12th day of May,  
2026, as Executor of the Estate of  
ARTHUR JOEL PAGE, Deceased,  
of Durham County, North Carolina,  
does hereby notify all persons,  
firms and corporations having  
claims against said Estate to  
exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 22nd day of August,  
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 21st day of May, 2026.  
Susan Renee Marks, Executor  
3921 Pixley Pritchard Rd.  
Timberlake, NC 27583  
5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000572-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 7th day of May,  
2026, as Executor of the Estate  
of JOANN SANDLING ADCOCK,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 22nd day of  
August, 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 21st day of May, 2026.  
Edward Earl Adcock, Executor  
1412 Hounds Ear Rd.  
Hillsborough, NC 27278  
5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
The undersigned having  
qualified as Executor of the Estate  
of ROBERT S. GEBELEIN a/k/a  
ROBERT SEAVER GEBELEIN,  
Deceased, late of Durham County,  
North Carolina, this is to notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against the Estate to  
Exhibit them to the undersigned at  
the office of IDOL LAW, PLLC, PO  
Box 51759, Durham, North Carolina  
27717, on or before the 25th day  
of August, 2026, or this Notice will  
be in bar of their recovery.

All persons indebted to the  
Estate will please make immediate  
payment.  
This is the 21st day of May, 2026.  
Hilary Kerr Enyedy, Executor,  
Estate of Robert S. Gebelein a/k/a  
Robert Seaver Gebelein, Deceased  
Robert A. Idol, Esquire IDOL LAW,  
PLLC Attorney at Law  
PO Box 51759 Durham, NC 27717  
(919) 401.5151

5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
File No: 26E000540-310

All persons, firms and  
corporations having claims against  
FRED WILLIAM ASHCRAFT,  
deceased, of Durham County, North  
Carolina are notified to exhibit  
them to the undersigned on or  
before the 14th day of August,  
2026, or this notice will be pleaded  
in bar of recovery. Debtors of the  
decendent are asked to make  
immediate payment.

This the 14th day of May, 2026.  
Karen A. Cole, Administrator

Estate of Fred William Ashcraft,  
Deceased  
654 White Cross Road  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516  
5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
File No: 26E000562-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR  
of the Estate of VIRGINIA COOKE,  
deceased, of Durham, the  
undersigned does hereby notify all  
persons, firms, and corporations  
having claims against the estate  
of said decedent to exhibit them  
to the undersigned in care of the  
attorney for the estate on or before  
August 15, 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 14th day of May, 2026.  
Lorraine Cooke Rutt, Executor  
1814 Hideaway Lane  
Durham, NC 27712  
5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
File No: 26E000518-310

Having qualified as Administrator  
CTA of the Estate of ROY LEE  
BROOKS, deceased, of 701 Buxton  
Street, Durham County, Durham,  
NC 27713, the undersigned does  
hereby notify all persons, firms, and  
corporations having claims against  
the estate of said decedent to  
exhibit them to the undersigned in  
care of the attorney for the estate  
on or before August 15, 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 14th day of May, 2026.  
Jeffrey L. Austin  
Administrator CTA of the Estate of  
ROY LEE BROOKS  
Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin,  
PLLC  
500 Westover Dr. #32043  
Sanford, NC 27330

5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
File No: 26E000487-310

Having qualified as Public  
Administrator of the Estate of  
JOHN WESLEY LEE, SR.,  
deceased, care of Diamond View  
ll, 280 South Mangum Street, Suite  
130, Durham County, Durham,  
NC 27701, the undersigned does  
hereby notify all persons, firms, and  
corporations having claims against  
the estate of said decedent to  
exhibit them to the undersigned in  
care of the attorney for the estate  
on or before August 15, 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 14th day of May, 2026.  
Jeffrey L. Austin  
Public Administrator of the Estate  
of John Wesley Lee, Sr.  
Law Office of Jeffrey L. Austin,  
PLLC  
500 Westover Dr. #32043  
Sanford, NC 27330

5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000501-310

Having qualified as EXECUTOR  
of the Estate of PATRICIA LEE  
CHRISTIAN, 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  
August 15, 2026, or this Notice will  
be pleaded in bar of their recovery.

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

This the 14th day of May, 2026.  
Carolyn Pulley, Executor  
c/o Marion Law Office, PLLC  
2741 University Drive  
Durham, NC 27707  
5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 26th day of March  
2026, as Executor of the Estate  
of MYRA M. HALL AKA MYRA  
ANN MANESS HALL, Deceased,  
of Durham County, North Carolina,  
does hereby notify all persons,  
firms and corporations having  
claims against said Estate to  
exhibit them to the undersigned

on or before the 8th day of August  
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 7th day of May 2026.  
KATHRYN H. BONE AKA  
KATHRYN HALL BONE  
EXECUTOR

ESTATE OF MYRA M. HALL AKA  
MYRA ANN MANESS HALL  
c/o Shirley M. Diefenbach, Attorney  
Walker Lambe, PLLC  
Post Office Box 51549  
Durham, North Carolina 27717  
5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000473-310

THE UNDERSIGNED, having  
qualified on the 4th day of May,  
2026, as Executor of the Estate of  
MARGARET CHANDLER SMITH,  
Deceased, of Durham County,  
North Carolina, does hereby notify  
all persons, firms and corporations  
having claims against said Estate  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
on or before the 8th day of August,  
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 7th day of May, 2026.  
LANTY LLOYD SMITH  
EXECUTOR

ESTATE OF MARGARET  
CHANDLER SMITH  
c/o Jennifer Dalman, Attorney  
Walker Lambe, PLLC  
Post Office Box 51549  
Durham, North Carolina 27717  
5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000473-310

Having qualified as  
ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate  
of ELEANOR MIMS, 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 August 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 7th day of May, 2026.  
Cynthia Young, Executor  
2503 Davie Dr.  
Durham, NC 27704  
5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
File No: 25E001528-310

Having qualified as Administrator  
of the Estate of ALFRED  
FLESSNER, SR., deceased, of  
3007 Pickett Rd #218, Durham,  
NC 27705, the undersigned does  
hereby notify all persons, firms,  
and corporations having claims  
against the estate of said decedent  
to exhibit them to the undersigned  
in care of the attorney for the estate  
on or before August 8, 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 7th day of May, 2026.  
Kevin John Flessner and  
Cassandra Flessner Kaiser  
Administrators of the Estate of  
Alfred Flessner, Sr.  
c/o N. Vail Gardner, Esq.  
Vail Gardner Law, PLLC  
732 9th Street #621  
Durham, NC 27705  
5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026  
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA  
DURHAM COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**  
In the General Court of Justice,  
Superior Court Division  
Before the Clerk  
File No.: 26E000482-310

Having qualified as  
ADMINISTRATOR CTA of the Estate  
of KENNETH L. JONES  
A/K/A KENNETH LAMON JONES,  
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 August 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.

**DURHAM COUNTY**

This the 7th day of May, 2026. Joyce Jones, Administrator CTA c/o Law Office of Anne Page Watson 3400 Croasdaile Drive, Suite 205 Durham, NC 27705 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

**GRANVILLE COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA GRANVILLE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

File No: 26E000225-380 All persons, firms and corporations having claims against MAXINE GIBSON on or before August 15, 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 14th day of May 2026. All correspondence should be to the Byron E. Cash, Ancillary Administrator c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717. 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA GRANVILLE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

File No: 25E000541-380 Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of GLADYS CHRISTINE BLACKWELL, deceased, of 5205 Curl Lane, Creedmoor, NC 27522, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before August 15, 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 14th day of May, 2026. Dana Watson Welborn Administrators of the Estate of Gladys Christine Blackwell c/o N. Vail Gardner, Esq. Vail Gardner Law, PLLC 732 9th Street #621 Durham, NC 27705 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026

**NASH COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA NASH COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

All persons, firms and corporations having claims against BERTHA RUTH BATTLE, DECEASED, of Nash County, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before August 8, 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 7th day of May 2026. All correspondence should be to the Gerald Tyrone Battle, Administrator c/o Florence A. Bowens, Attorney, P.O. Box 51263, Durham, NC 27717. 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

**WAKE COUNTY**

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court Of Justice District Court Division FILE NO. 25CV036521-910 MARIELIS SABINA CABREJA HIDALGO, Plaintiff v. JORGE ANTONIO CARRILLO, Defendant TO: JORGE ANTONIO CARRILLO 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 Absolute Divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This the 28th day of May, 2026. Marielis Sabina Cabreja Hidalgo 4279 Lake Woodard Drive Raleigh, NC 27604 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 25E004341-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 23rd day of January, 2026, as Administrator of the Estate of CAREY ALPHONSO

WAINWRIGHT, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 22nd day of August, 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 21st day of May, 2026. Michelle Wainwright, Administrator 40 BP Court Rocky Mount, NC 27804 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

ALL PERSONS, firms and corporations having claims against BARBARA ANN HINTON, Deceased, of WAKE COUNTY, NC, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before AUGUST 21, 2026, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment. This is the 21st day of MAY, 2026. Sean C. Hinton, Administrator of the Estate, c/o MONROE JENKINS, PA Post Office Box 12534 Durham, North Carolina 27709 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 25E004045-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 12th day of November, 2025, as Executor of the Estate of MAJORIE LYNNETTE DEBNAM, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 22nd day of August, 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 21st day of May, 2026. Marie Georgette Debnam, Executor 1615 E. Davie Street Raleigh, NC 27610 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 25E002273-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 11th day of May, 2026, as Executor of the Estate of NATHANIEL GAY, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 22nd day of August, 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 21st day of May, 2026. Teresa Jacobs Gay Executor c/o Mitchell Law Group, PLLC 2530 Meridian Parkway, Suite 100 Durham, North Carolina 27713 5/21, 5/28, 6/4, and 6/11/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court Of Justice District Court Division FILE NO. 26CVD011579-910 KATRICE ORDONEZ AGUILAR, Plaintiff v. MARTIN ORDONEZ AGUILAR, Defendant TO: MARTIN ORDONEZ AGUILAR 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 Absolute Divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice, and upon your failure to do so, the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This the 21st day of May, 2026. Katrice Ordonez Aguilar, Plaintiff 2512 New Hope Church Rd Raleigh, NC 27604 5/21, 5/28, and 6/4/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 26E001197-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 10th day of April, 2026, as Executor of the Estate of VIRGINIA HALLOCK LIDDLE, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 15th day of August, 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 14th day of May, 2026. Roger F. Liddle, Executor 1101 Kinsdale Drive Raleigh, NC 27615 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 26E000473-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 4th day of May, 2026, as Executor of the Estate of BETTY SUE DAVIDSON A/K/A BETTY SHEPERD DAVIDSON, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 15th day of August, 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 14th day of May, 2026. Kevin Mansfield Pardue, Executor 1038 Branch Line Lane Apex, NC 27502 5/14, 5/21, 5/28 and 6/4/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court of Justice District Court Division File No.: 26CV008530-910 SONYA WALLACE, Plaintiff v. ANTHONY DURANOL WALLACE, Defendant TO: ANTHONY DURANOL WALLACE 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 Absolute Divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading within forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice, or the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 14th day of May 2026. Sonya Wallace, Plaintiff (Pro Se) 5145 Dezola Street Apex, NC 27539 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court of Justice District Court Division File No: 25CV025762-910 GLORIA AKPE, Plaintiff v. CHUKWUDI AKPE, Defendant TO: CHUKWUDI AKPE 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 Absolute Divorce. You are required to make defense to such pleading within forty (40) days after the first date of publication of this notice, or the Plaintiff will apply to the Court for the relief sought. This, the 14th day of May 2026. Gloria Akpe, Plaintiff (Pro Se) 1513 North Raleigh Blvd Raleigh, NC 27610 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION**

In The General Court of Justice District Court Division File No: 25CV000818-910 DIANA LAURA PEREZ, Plaintiff v. LUIS ALONSO GONZALEZ GUEVARA, Defendant TO: LUIS ALONSO GONZALEZ GUEVARA 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/Visitation. You are required to make defense to such pleading not later than forty (40) days after the first date of 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. This, the 14th day of May 2026. Diana Laura Perez 5352 Pelican Pl Raleigh, NC 27610 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 26E000188-910 Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of HENRY RUSSELL GATLING, 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 August 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 7th day of May, 2026. Elaine Jacobs Hampton, Executor 5501 Moss Hill Drive Raleigh, NC 27616 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of OLIVIA SEAGROVES JORDAN, deceased, of 320 Perry St, Raleigh, NC 27608, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before August 8, 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 7th day of May, 2026. Rachel Jordan Administrators of the Olivia Seagroves Jordan c/o N. Vail Gardner, Esq. Vail Gardner Law, PLLC 732 9th Street #621 Durham, NC 27705 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 25E003678-910 THE UNDERSIGNED, having qualified on the 8th day of April, 2026, as Executor of the Estate of DOROTHY MORAS ALTMAN, Deceased, of Wake County, North Carolina, does hereby notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of August, 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 7th day of May, 2026. Jane W. Maina, Executor 2010 Hodges Creek Dr. Apt 204 Raleigh, NC 27609 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

In The General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division Before the Clerk File No.: 26E000188-910 Having qualified as EXECUTOR of the Estate of HENRY RUSSELL GATLING, 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 August 8, 2026, or this Notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to the decedent or the Estate are

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS**

File No: 26E000701-910 Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of OLIVIA SEAGROVES JORDAN, deceased, of 320 Perry St, Raleigh, NC 27608, the undersigned does hereby notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said decedent to exhibit them to the undersigned in care of the attorney for the estate on or before August 8, 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 7th day of May, 2026. Rachel Jordan Administrators of the Olivia Seagroves Jordan c/o N. Vail Gardner, Esq. Vail Gardner Law, PLLC 732 9th Street #621 Durham, NC 27705 5/7, 5/14, 5/21, and 5/28/2026

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA WAKE COUNTY

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Said real property being believed, without representation or warranty, to be located at 2306 S. Roxboro Street, Durham, North Carolina 27707. The record owners of the real property as reflected on the records in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, NC not more than ten (10) days prior to the posting of this Notice is Ramarama Inc.

TERMS OF SALE: The purchaser of the real property must pay, in addition to the amount bid, the following items: (i) the fee required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7A-308(a)(1) of Forty-Five Cents (45c) per One Hundred Dollars (\$100) or major fraction thereof of the bid amount up to a maximum fee of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500), (ii) the excise tax on conveyances required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 105-228.28 et seq. of One Dollar (\$1) per Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) or fractional part thereof of the bid amount, and (iii) unpaid ad valorem taxes and assessments.

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.10(b), and the terms of the Deed of Trust, any successful bidder, other than the owner and holder of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust (the "Lender"), may be required to deposit with the Substitute Trustee immediately upon conclusion of the sale a cash deposit not to exceed the greater of five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid or \$750. If the Lender is the successful bidder, the Lender shall not be required to make any deposit with the Substitute Trustee. Any successful bidder, other than the Lender, shall be required to tender the full balance purchase price so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Substitute Trustee tenders to such successful bidder a deed for the real 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, such successful bidder shall remain liable on the bid as provided for in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-2.130(d) and (e).

The real property to be offered pursuant to this notice of sale is being offered for sale, transfer and conveyance "AS IS, WHERE IS." Neither the Substitute Trustee nor the Lender, nor the officers, attorneys, employees, agents, or authorized representatives of either the Substitute Trustee or the Lender make any warranty

relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health, or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the real 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. The real property is being sold subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, matters of survey, restrictions, leases and easements of record, unpaid assessments, and other matters of record, if any, which in each case may exist and be senior and superior to the lien of the Deed of Trust pursuant to applicable law.

SPECIAL NOTICE FOR LEASEHOLD TENANTS: If you are a tenant in the real property, be advised that an Order for Possession of the real property may be issued in favor of the purchaser. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving this Notice, 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 ten (10) days, but no more than ninety (90) days, after the sale date contained in this Notice, provided that the grantor/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.

This sale will be held open ten (10) days for upset bids as required by law. /s/ C.L. Leader Substitute Trustee Services, Inc. Substitute Trustee 201 S. Mcpherson Church Rd., Ste 201 Fayetteville, NC 28303-4995 Exhibit A - Legal Description LYING at the southwestern intersection of Roxboro Street and Pinecrest Drive, containing 9343.0 square feet, more or less, and being all of CITY TRACT NO. 950 as per plat and survey thereof on file in Plat Book 115 at Page 153 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, to which plat reference is hereby expressly made for a more particular description of the same. Publication: 5/28 & 6/4/2026

**FORECLOSURE**

**AMENDED NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY**

Durham County, NC 26 SP 00343-400 THIS AMENDED NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY (this "Notice") is given under and by virtue of an order of the Clerk of Superior Court of Durham County, NC entered April 28, 2026, authorizing foreclosure in the Special Proceeding entitled "In the Matter of the Foreclosure of the Deed of Trust from Ramarama Inc., Grantor" (the "Foreclosure Proceeding") which deed of trust was recorded in Book 9463, Page 454 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, NC (the "Deed of Trust") and the power and authority contained in the Deed of Trust; and after a hearing pursuant to the provisions of Article 2A of Chapter , 45 of the General Statutes of the State of North Carolina; and under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in the above-referenced Deed of Trust; and because of default in the payment of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust and failure to carry out or perform the stipulations and agreements therein contained and pursuant to the demand of the owner and holder of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust, the undersigned, Substitute Trustee Services, Inc., will expose for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 3:15 p.m, on the courthouse steps of the Durham County Courthouse, or otherwise at the customary place within such courthouse, located at 510 South Dillard Street, Durham, North Carolina 27701, the real property more particularly described as follows:

BEING all those certain lots, parcels, or tracts of land lying and being in Durham County, North Carolina, being more particularly described as follows: LYING at the southwestern intersection of Roxboro Street and Pinecrest Drive, containing 9343.0 square feet, more or less, and being all of CITY TRACT NO. 950 as per plat and survey thereof on file in Plat Book 115 at Page 153 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, to which plat reference is hereby expressly made for a more particular description of the same.

BEING all those certain lots, parcels, or tracts of land lying and being in Durham County, North Carolina, being more particularly described as follows: LYING at the southwestern intersection of Roxboro Street and Pinecrest Drive, containing 9343.0 square feet, more or less, and being all of CITY TRACT NO. 950 as per plat and survey thereof on file in Plat Book 115 at Page 153 in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, to which plat reference is hereby expressly made for a more particular description of the same.

## FORECLOSURE

### AMENDED NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY

Durham County, NC  
26 SP 00344-400

THIS AMENDED NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY (this "Notice") is given under and by virtue of an order of the Clerk of Superior Court of Durham County, NC entered April 28, 2026, authorizing foreclosure in the Special Proceeding entitled "In the Matter of the Foreclosure of the Deed of Trust from Ramarama Inc., Grantor" (the "Foreclosure Proceeding") which deed of trust was recorded in Book 9512, Page 150, in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, NC (the "Deed of Trust") and the power and authority contained in the Deed of Trust; and after a hearing pursuant to the provisions of Article 2A of Chapter 45 of the General Statutes of the State of North Carolina; and under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in the above-referenced Deed of Trust; and because of default in the payment of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust and failure to carry out or perform the stipulations and agreements therein contained and pursuant to the demand of the owner and holder of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust, the undersigned, Substitute Trustee Services, Inc., will expose for sale at public auction to the highest bidder for cash on Tuesday, June 16, 2026 at 3:15 p.m. on the courthouse steps of the Durham County Courthouse, or otherwise at the customary place within such courthouse, located at 510 South Dillard Street, Durham, North Carolina 27701, the real property more particularly described as follows:

BEING all those certain lots, parcels, or tracts of land lying and being in Durham County, North Carolina, being more particularly described on Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

Said real property being believed, without representation or warranty, to be located at 2300 Pinecrest Road, 2304 S. Roxboro Street, and 2302 B and C S. Roxboro Street, Durham, North Carolina 27707. The record owners of the real property as reflected on the records in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Durham County, NC not more than ten (10) days prior to the posting of this Notice is Ramarama Inc. as to most of the aforementioned Property, and Roxboro Durham Partners, LLC as to a portion of the Property.

#### TERMS OF SALE:

The purchaser of the real property must pay, in addition to the amount bid, the following items: (i) the fee required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 7A-308(a)(1) of Forty-Five Cents (45c) per One Hundred Dollars (\$100) or major fraction thereof of the bid amount up to a maximum fee of Five Hundred Dollars (\$500), (ii) the excise tax on conveyances required by N.C. Gen. Stat. § 105-228.28 et seq. of One Dollar (\$1) per Five Hundred Dollars (\$500) or fractional part thereof of the bid amount, and (iii) unpaid ad valorem taxes and assessments.

Pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.10(b), and the terms of the Deed of Trust, any successful bidder, other than the owner and holder of the indebtedness secured by the Deed of Trust (the "Lender"), may be required to deposit with the Substitute Trustee immediately upon conclusion of the sale a cash deposit not to exceed the greater of five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid or \$750. If the Lender is the successful bidder, the Lender shall not be required to make any deposit with the Substitute Trustee. Any successful bidder, other than the Lender, shall be required to tender the full balance purchase price so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Substitute Trustee tenders to such successful bidder a deed for the real 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, such successful bidder shall remain liable on the bid as provided for in N.C. Gen. Stat. § 45-21.30(d) and (e).

The real property to be offered pursuant to this notice of sale is being offered for sale, transfer and conveyance "AS IS, WHERE IS." Neither the Substitute Trustee nor the Lender, nor the officers, attorneys, employees, agents, or authorized representatives of either the Substitute Trustee or the Lender make any warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health, or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the real 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. The real property is being sold subject to all liens, encumbrances, unpaid taxes, matters of survey, restrictions, leases and easements of record, unpaid assessments, and other matters of record, if any, which in each case may exist and be senior and superior to the lien of the Deed of Trust pursuant to applicable law.

**SPECIAL NOTICE FOR LEASEHOLD TENANTS:** If you are a tenant in the real property, be advised that an Order for Possession of the real property may be issued in favor of the purchaser. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving this Notice, 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 ten (10) days, but no more than ninety (90) days, after the sale date contained in this Notice, provided that the grantor/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.

This sale will be held open ten (10) days for upset bids as required by law.

/s/ C.L. Leader  
Substitute Trustee Services, Inc.  
Substitute Trustee  
201 S. Mcpherson Church Rd., Ste 201  
Fayetteville, NC 28303-4995

Exhibit A - Legal Description  
TRACT 1:

**BEGINNING** at the northwest corner of Pinecrest Drive and Summit Street as shown on plat hereinafter referred to and running thence with Pinecrest Drive North 85 deg. 45' West 100 feet to an iron stake, the beginning of a curve; thence in a curved line in a clockwise direction having a radius of 240 feet a distance of 150 feet to an iron stake, the beginning of a curve; thence in a curved line in a counterclockwise direction having a radius of 240.5 feet a distance of 300 feet to an iron stake; thence continuing with said street South 70 deg. 15' West 180 feet to an iron stake, the beginning of a curve; thence continuing with said street in a counterclockwise direction having a radius of 240.5 feet a distance of 188 feet, more or less, to the center of a branch; thence up said branch as it meanders about North 57 deg. 30' West 150 feet, more or less, to the corner of Alton J. Knight as it appears from Deed Book 207 at Page 365; thence with his line North S3 deg. 3' East 318.3 feet to an iron stake; thence continuing with his line South 87 deg. 3' East 30 feet to an iron stake; thence continuing with his line South 87 deg. 18' East 630 feet to Summit Street; thence with said street South 2 deg. 30' West 160.7 feet to the beginning and being Lots 7, 8, 9 and 10 and other land as shown on a plat of the property of J.S. Stewart, et al, dated May 1970 by Credle Engineering Company to which plat reference is hereby expressly made. A reference is also made to plat of Pinecrest Heights recorded in Plat Book 9 at Page 99 and to Deed dated July 18, 1952, from Alton J. Knight and wife, to J.S. Stewart recorded in Deed Book 207 at Page 366 and to Deed dated July 18, 1952 from J.S. Stewart and wife to Alton J. Knight recorded in Deed Book 207 at Page 365, There is expressly excepted from the above property that triangular parcel of land at the northwest corner of Pinecrest Drive and Summit Street as shown on plat of property required for widening Roxboro Street dated January 14, 1971, by Joseph H. Hemmerle, RLS.

#### TRACT 2:

**BEGINNING** at an iron stake in the western property line of South Roxboro Street, being the southeast corner of Lot 18 as shown on plat hereafter referred to and running thence with South Roxboro Street South 20 deg. 20' West 347 feet, more or less, to the center of a creek or branch; thence up the meanders of said creek about North 45 deg. 30' West 500 feet to a point; thence continuing up said branch as it meanders about North 66 deg. West 250 feet, more or less, to the southeastern side of Pinecrest Drive; thence with said street as it curves in a clockwise direction having a radius of 240.5 feet, a distance of 158 feet to an iron stake; thence North 70 deg. 15' East 180 feet to an iron stake; the beginning of a curve; thence continuing with said street as it curves in a clockwise direction having a radius of 210.5 feet a distance of 163.75 feet to the northwest corner of Lot 18;

thence with said lot South 28 deg. 15' West 174 feet to the southwest corner of Lot 18; thence with said lot South 73 deg. 55' East 337.5 feet to South Roxboro Street, the point of beginning, and being other property as shown on plat of property of J.S. Stewart, et al, dated May, 1970, by Credle Engineering Company to which plat reference is hereby expressly made for a more particular description of same, **SAVE AND EXCEPT** (a) a strip of land 10 feet in width and extending along the northern edge of Lot 19 heretofore conveyed to Otelia J. Stewart, (b) a strip of land along the west side of South

Roxboro Street as shown on plat of property required for widening Roxboro Street recorded in Plat Book 75 at Page 74 and conveyed to the City of Durham in Book 400 at Page 109, Durham County Registry, (c) that property known as 2310 S. Roxboro Street and described in Book 2506 at Page 940, Durham County Registry, (d) that property known as 2312 S. Roxboro Street and described in Book 2506 at Page 364, Durham County Registry, and (e) that property known as 2314 S. Roxboro Street and described in Book 2506 at Page 953, Durham County Registry.

Publication: 5/28 & 6/4/2026

## 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 **Raw Water Transmission Line from Dixon Well Sites D4R and D12** project for **Onslow Water and Sewer Authority** which bids on **June 3, 2026, at 2:00 PM**. Plans and specifications for this project are available at the following locations: T. A. Loving Company; 400 Pate-town Road; Goldsboro, NC 27530 \* Onslow Water and Sewer Authority; 228 Georgetown Road; Jacksonville, NC 28540 \* Groundwater Management Associates, Inc.; 2205-A Candun Drive; Apex, NC 27523 \* Dodge Data and Analytics website \* ConstructConnect website \* Hispanic Contractors Association of the Carolinas website \* NC Institute of Minority Economic Development (NCIMED) website.

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, earth-work, erosion control, seeding, and linework/pipe installation. 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.

## 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 **10 Inch Water Main Replacement - Phase 2A** project for **City of Graham** which bids on **June 2, 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 \* www.awck.com/resources/bidding-plans/

Potential subcontracting opportunities include but are not limited to surveying, clearing and grubbing, hauling, asphalt paving, striping, traffic control, erosion control, seeding, linework/pipe installation, and flatwork. 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.

## 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 **Dixon Well Sites D4R and D12** project for **Onslow Water and Sewer Authority** which bids on **June 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 \* Onslow Water and Sewer Authority; 228 Georgetown Road; Jacksonville, NC 28540 \* Groundwater Management Associates, Inc.; 2205-A Candun Drive; Apex, NC 27523 \* Dodge Data and Analytics website \* ConstructConnect website \* Hispanic Contractors Association of the Carolinas website \* NC Institute of Minority Economic Development (NCIMED) website.

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

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



## A WELL DESERVED HONOR

Brother Nowell Brooks, principal of Advance Academy in Henderson, N.C., received the Dana King Leadership Award for excellence in the Distinguished Leadership in Practice (DLP) Program. This award is bestowed to a DLP cohort member who has stood out as a peer leader within the cohort and who has shown tremendous dedication to the DLP Program. Brooks has been described by his facilitators and peers as a model participant exemplifying all traits of a distinguished leader. His dedication and attentiveness to the program and his own professional growth, along with capacity for reflection and self-improvement are only two of the many qualities that stand out about Nowell said Adria Kempner, DLP Facilitator.

# Tribes Sue To Halt Exploratory Drilling Near Sacred Site



SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Nine Native American tribes in South Dakota, North Dakota and Nebraska are suing the federal government in a bid to stop exploratory drilling for graphite near a sacred site in the Black Hills.

A small group of opponents has been demonstrating at the drilling location and at the mining company's headquarters in what they call a land defense effort since they learned ground was broken on the drilling project in late April.

The tribes filed their federal lawsuit Thursday in South Dakota against the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture, alleging the agencies violated federal law by greenlighting a project near a site called Pe'Sla, a meadow in the central Black Hills used for tribal ceremonies, prayer and youth camps year-round. Buffalo regularly graze at the site, the suit said, adding the project poses a threat to wildlife.

Graphite has many industrial uses, including in batteries, lubricants, certain auto parts and in blast furnaces, according to website of the European Carbon and Graphite Association.

Land rights in the Black Hills  
The project is the latest point of tension between tribes and mining interests in the lush pine and spruce-covered Black Hills, which encompass over 1.2 million acres (485,000 hectares), rising from the Great Plains in southwest South Dakota and extending into Wyoming.

The region is a yearly destination for millions of tourists boasting such attractions as Mount Rushmore and wildlife-filled state parks. Yet for even longer, it has been sacred to Sioux tribes who call the area He Sapa and consider it "the heart of everything that is," according to the complaint.

Some of the landscape was altered by an 1870s gold rush that displaced Native Americans. And more recently, a new crop of miners driven by rising gold prices have sought to return to the landscape.

The 1868 Treaty of Fort Laramie granted the Sioux Nations rights to the Black Hills, but the U.S. broke the treaty after gold was discovered. Though the Supreme Court ruled the Sioux were owed compensation, they have not accepted it and consider it unceded territory.

The complaint said the project by Rapid City-based mining company Pete Lien & Sons would impact the use of Pe'Sla for traditional, cultural and religious purposes by the tribes, and that the Forest Service did not consult with the tribes before approving the project.

Tribes bought parts of Pe'Sla in 2012, 2015 and 2018, and an agreement between the tribes and the Forest Service established a two-mile (three kilometer) buffer zone on public lands around the site, according to the complaint.

Because Pe'Sla was not included as an affected area and no environmental review was conducted, the approval violates the National Historic Preservation Act and National Environmental Policy Act, the lawsuit alleges.

Pete Lien & Sons, which supplies materials like limestone, sand and gravel, did not return phone or email requests for comment Thursday, Sunday and Monday.

Oglala Sioux Tribe President Frank Star Comes Out said in a statement that the lawsuit is "a historic demonstration of unity" between the nine tribes. The tribes are separate, distinct federally recognized tribes sharing cultural and linguistic roots, but each with its own government and land base.

"We as Lakota people have been coming and praying and holding ceremony at these places for over 2,000 years," said Wizipan Garriott, president of Indigenous advocacy group NDN Collective and a member of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. "And so we being here is a continuation of countless generations before us. And it's important that these sacred places be protected for future generations to come."

The Forest Service granted a permit to the project in February without an environmental review because the agency said it qualified for a categorical exclusion by having a duration of less than a year and not posing impacts to environmental and cultural sites.

But tribal opponents disagree that those requirements were met and said drilling projects are often a first step leading to future mines.

Besides the lawsuit from the tribes, NDN Collective and other environmental groups have also sued to stop the project.

Some of the drilling pads are in the buffer zone around the site, according to NDN Collective. The project calls for the company to drill up to 18 holes down some 1,000 feet (300 meters) to collect samples.

On Thursday, opponents demonstrated with signs reading "Protect Pe'Sla" and "Sacred ground not mining bound" near two drilling pads to block access. NDN Collective said the Forest Service told them drilling was paused for the rest of the day and the contractors were sent home.

The Forest Service said it had no comment on the project because it is the subject of active litigation.

The NDN Collective said it will continue actions at the sites as needed to protect Pe'Sla.

"As Lakota, we pray as long as we need to," Garriott said.