

# Chatham News + Record

Chatham County, N.C. | DECEMBER 23-29, 2021 | www.chathamnewsrecord.com | \$1

## Enrollment at CCS up from last year, still down from before COVID

*CCS saw a .76% increase in enrollment from last year, still a 2.57% decrease from pre-pandemic*

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN

News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — During the third school year impacted by the pandemic, student enrollment at Chatham County Schools is up slightly from 2020 but still lower than 2019 — the last “pre-pandemic” school year.

This follows a statewide trend — the Average Daily Membership (ADM) for traditional schools statewide increased .8% from last year, but is down 4.3% compared to before COVID-19, according to Month 1 ADM data released by the N.C. Dept. of Public Instruction this

fall. The total ADM across all the state’s districts increased by 1.5% from Month 1 to Month 2, DPI data shows, marking a minor rebound in enrollment.

In Chatham, there was a .76% increase in enrollment from last year and a 2.57% decrease from pre-pandemic, with 8,720 students recorded in Month 1. By Month 2, that number was up .97%, at 8,805 students.

Mary Ann Wolf, the executive director of the Public School Forum of North Carolina, told EducationNC in November the ADM data is a reminder that the state is still trying to find its way through a pandemic.

“The good news is that this year, we do see a bit of a rebound in terms of public school student enrollments. But the truth is, all schools are still struggling to meet the needs of their students and educators,” she said. “We do not have sufficient resources in place to serve the academic, social and emotional needs of our students and classrooms today, and we absolutely have to do more to ensure that every child has access to a sound basic education.”

### What is ADM?

ADM is a measurement used by the state to give an estimate of how

many students are in schools, which is slightly different from the enrollment numbers listed in CCS reports — the CCS Month 1 enrollment report lists 8,828 students, compared to the Month 1 ADM report’s 8,720.

DPI defines ADM as: “The total number of school days within a given term, usually a school month or school year, that a student’s name is on the current roll of a class, regardless of his/her being present or absent, is the number of days in membership for that student. The sum of the number of days in

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### O CHRISTMAS TREE

## At Phillips Farm, they’re already working on what you’ll decorate next year

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN

News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — In homes all across Chatham County this week, live Christmas trees are gazed upon with wonder by old and young alike as lights and ornaments — and the wrapped presents below — add a festive air to the season.

In another week or so, long after the wrapping paper and torn bows are discarded, the trees will meet the same fate as the season fades from memory.

And at Phillips Farm, the work to create future memories has already begun.

While Teri Phillips and her team at Phillips Farm deal



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Austin Mathews of Phillips Farm carries a cut Christmas tree to be wrapped and loaded onto a customer's car. Work at the farm doesn't stop when Christmas season ends — it's just the beginning of preparation for next year.**

and has spent most of his adult life in the timber industry; today he owns and operates Triangle Forest Products, based in Apex.

Some 20 years ago, however, Al began helping his father sell Fraser firs grown in western North

Carolina at a location in Cary. Eventually, Al brought the thought to Terri: why not do the same here in Chatham?

So family began growing and

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## Meet Chatham's new commissioner candidates in Dist. 3 and 4 — so far

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN

News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Five Democratic candidates filed for Chatham's commissioner seats in the 2022 elections — four of them new candidates in wide-open seats — before the North Carolina Supreme Court halted filing and delayed the primary election until May.

The Chatham County Board of Commissioners is made up of five members, each representing one district but elected at-large. Two of the three 2022 races — in Dist. 3 and Dist. 4 — won't include incumbents, given that Dist. 3 Commissioner Diana Hales is not seeking reelection and Dist. 4 commissioner Jim Crawford has resigned from the board because of health reasons, effective Dec. 31. The other seat up for reelection, Dist. 5, is held by Commissioner Franklin Gomez Flores, who already filed for the seat.

The board is comprised entirely of Democratic commissioners. Gomez Flores narrowly defeated Republican incumbent Andy Wilkie to represent Dist. 5 in November 2020. He was elected to a two-year term in 2020, becoming the county's first Latino commissioner, and will seek his first four-year term in 2022.

Filing for the 2022 elections began at noon Dec. 6. A court order that morning temporarily blocked filing for U.S. House, N.C. Senate and N.C. House races, but by that evening, that order was reversed. Two days later, filing for all candidates — not just for primaries using the disputed maps — was halted due to gerrymandering lawsuits that could lead to redrawn

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### A CHRISTMAS STORY

## a Gift from Ashes

Staff photo by Simon Barbre

BY ANDY CLAPP

Special to the News + Record

*Editor's note: As a Christmas treat for readers, Andy Clapp, a Liberty native and pastor there, has written this piece of short fiction for the News + Record.*

Every call ignited the memories of the Christmas Eve three years prior.

BJ Brown yanked on his coat and made his way to the truck.

A house fire demanded an immediate response. As his team hurried to get the fire truck

in motion, he reacted. Yet, it was during the drive that the images burned into his mind reappeared.

The images were of that fateful Christmas Eve when his family perished in a fire. His wife and son were unable to escape the flames that engulfed their home. BJ, away at work at his insurance company, arrived home in time to see the flames at their peak and hear the news no one wanted to hear.

“Sir, no one escaped. I am so sorry,” Chief John Master- son explained as he tried to

keep BJ from running into the flames himself.

That night changed everything. All his dreams burned up; all he loved swallowed up in a solitary moment.

Life offered him the opportunity to continue breathing or give up. For months, he hoped the next breath would be his last but as the days drifted forward, he knew he held an opportunity. He could help those facing the same troubles and maybe, if everything fell into place, he could rescue someone

See GIFT, page A7

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

*Events are subject to change based on closures related to the coronavirus pandemic. Verify with organizers prior to events.*

### ONGOING

• **Siler City's City Hall** is currently under renovation. The 1st and 2nd floors are closed to the public. The Planning and Community Development Department is located in the basement and can be accessed through the far left door facing E. 3rd St. Parking available at the 100 block of E. 3rd St.

### ON THE AGENDA

• Mark your calendars and register for the **LCAC19 All Hands Meeting**, Dec. 29 at 05:30 PM PT / 08:30 ET. <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAvf-usrDsqGN-fA6oHq38uZ5eHcy->

JUspME.

### OTHER

• **Chatham County Public Libraries** to Host Winter Reading BINGO Challenge. Children and teens are invited to participate in the Winter Reading BINGO Challenge at all Chatham County Public Libraries branches from January 3 through February 14, sponsored by the Friends of the Chatham Community Library, is open to children ages 2-18. Readers participate by picking up a reading BINGO sheet at their local library branch and completing a 5-in-a-row BINGO to earn a free book (one book per participant, while supplies last). All readers who complete at least one BINGO will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 Gift Certificate to McIntyre's Books. For more information about the Winter Reading BINGO Challenge, or other youth

events with Chatham County Public Libraries, contact [youth.services@chathamlibraries.org](mailto:youth.services@chathamlibraries.org).

• **St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church** provides a healthy meal at no cost to those who come to us hungry at noon on Thursdays. We provide a place of hospitality and fellowship for everyone. All are welcome, regardless of race, sex, age, national origin, religious preference, handicap, or income.

• The **Chatham Historical Museum** is open Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. We will be following the governor's directive on occupancy, masks, and social distancing. Adult and kid friendly; no admission fee. Our permanent exhibits cover all aspects of Chatham's unique history. The Museum is located in the historic Chatham County Courthouse in the circle. More info at <https://chathamhistory.org>.

thathistory.org.

• **Second Bloom** has begun winter hours, 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. We are located at 630 E. Street, Pittsboro, in the Food Lion Shopping Center. We are accepting donations of gently used men's and women's clothing and accessories. Credit cards are accepted. All proceeds provide support for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote community education in collaboration with Chatham County.

• The **Chatham Arts Council** has put together a relief effort specifically for artists and arts-workers called CAARE: Chatham Artist and Arts-Worker Relief Effort. For more information on CAARE, or to donate, visit [ChathamArtsCouncil.org](https://chathamarts.org).

• **JMArts** hosted a **JMACoronaConcert** via Twitter featuring performances submitted by

JM students and faculty.

Concerts can be viewed on its Twitter account @ JMArts and by using the hashtags #JMACoronaConcert and #JMACoronaConcert program.

• **Foster and/or adoptive** information: Give children a safe place to grow. Interested in becoming a Foster and/or Adoptive parent? Call 919-642-6956 to learn more.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** — North Carolina District 33, call the Help Line at 866-640-0180 for the meeting schedule for this area.

• **Motorcycle Association** — The Motorcycle Association for Chatham, Western Wake, Lee, Orange and Alamance counties meets in Pittsboro and is open to all riders. For information, call 919-392-3939 or visit [www.chathamCBA.com](http://chathamCBA.com).

• **Narcotics Anonymous** — For drug problems in the family, Narcotics

Anonymous helps. Call 1-800-721-8225 for listing of local meetings.

• **Al-Anon Meeting** — Pittsboro Serenity Seekers Al-Anon Family Group meets at 7 p.m. Mondays at Chatham Community Church, in the lower level of Chatham Mill, Pittsboro.

### Scout News

• **Boy Scout Troop 93** in Pittsboro meets 7 p.m. Wednesdays at the Harold Boone Scout Park on Hwy 64W, just past CCCC. Open to boys, ages 11-17. Visit [www.bstroop93.org](http://www.bstroop93.org) for more information.

• **Pack 924** of Siler City First U.M.C. meets on from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesdays for boys, grades 1 through 5. Come join the Cub Scouts.

• **Pack 900** in Bear Creek meets at 7 p.m. Tuesdays at Meroney's U.M.C., following the school calendar. See <http://pack900.com> for more information.

# Chatham County seniors celebrate the holidays with fun, food and fellowship

From the Council on Aging

PITTSBORO — About 70 Chatham County seniors got gussied up in their finest Christmas attire for the Chatham County Council on Aging's holiday party last Wednesday at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro.

The Holiday Variety Show, sponsored by Alignment Healthcare, featured more than a dozen traditional Christmas songs and performances. Seniors and Council on Aging staff and volunteers sang, lip-synced, and danced to the holiday tunes. Council board member and volunteer Neriah Edwards-Boone served as mistress of ceremonies.

While COVID-19 is still present in the community, Council Executive Director Dennis Streets said it was important for the Council to take necessary precautions so seniors could celebrate with one another and remain safe at the same time.

"For so long we had taken for granted the ability to gather for such group events — but with the pandemic, this was no longer possible until we could assure our participants could become fully vaccinated and receive their boosters,"



Courtesy of the Council on Aging

**Bonnie Reaves, Neriah Edwards-Boone and Gene Goldston perform at the Council on Aging's Holiday Variety Show.**

Streets said. "There is no substitute for the loving spirit that is generated when we can come together to share the joys of companionship, thankfulness for the present, and hope for the future."

Betty Cherry of Pittsboro was one of the seniors who attended.

"This gathering was so nice, and I enjoyed everything very much," Cherry said. "It was very special to see my friends again."

Streets played the role of Santa Claus, making his way through the spaced-out group with cheer and gifts.

"I was emotionally moved to see our senior

participants clapping to the music, laughing to the performers' antics, and dancing to the tune 'Run Rudolph Run,'" he said. "I thought to myself, this is what life should be — having a good time with friends. I am so thankful for all those who participated to make our Holiday Variety Show so special."

Streets added that he hopes the Council will be able to get back to hosting group events and gatherings more frequently in the future.

"These gatherings will always be an important part of our Council on Aging," he said. "Whether it is for socialization, education, enrichment,



Participants from the COA's holiday party pose during events at the Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center in Pittsboro.

exercise, or some other worthy purpose, these events add richness to the lives of so many."

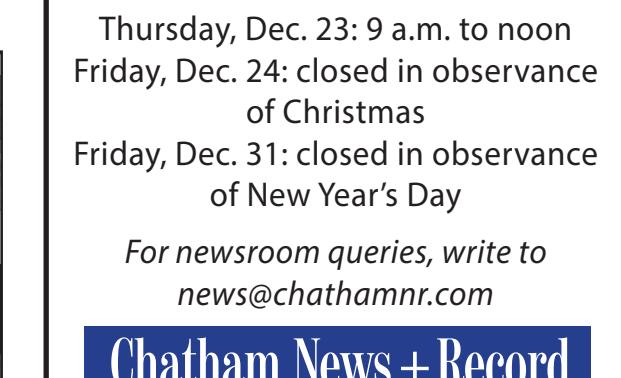
Between now and Jan. 3, Subaru of America will donate \$250 to local senior nutrition programs, like Chatham County's, for every new vehicle purchased or leased, when the customer chooses Meals on Wheels as their charity of choice. Learn more at [www.mealsonwheelsamerica.org/sharethelove](http://mealsonwheelsamerica.org/sharethelove).

Individuals can learn about how the Chatham County Council on Aging makes a difference in the lives of seniors, how to donate to its Annual Appeal, or ways to volunteer by visiting <https://chathamcouncilonaging.org>. The Council on Aging also can be reached at 919-542-4512.



Courtesy of the Council on Aging

**Jackie Green plays Elvis at the Council on Aging's holiday party.**



Thursday, Dec. 23: 9 a.m. to noon

Friday, Dec. 24: closed in observance

of Christmas

Friday, Dec. 31: closed in observance

of New Year's Day

For newsroom queries, write to

[news@chathamnr.com](mailto:news@chathamnr.com)

**Chatham News + Record**

### CHURCH NEWS

delight Service will be held on Friday, December 24, at 5 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church.

The public is invited to attend. FUMC is located at 1101 West Raleigh St., Siler City.

### SANDY BRANCH BAPTIST CHURCH

You are invited to join us for our annual Christmas Eve Service on Friday, December 24, at 6 p.m. in the Activities Building at Sandy

Branch Baptist Church. (It will NOT be on Facebook Live or on the radio.)

All are welcome to join

us at 715 Sandy Branch Church Rd., Bear Creek, as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



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# CANDIDATES

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districts that would change the breakdown of state races.

The News + Record spoke with the candidates who've filed for Dist. 3 and 4 seats about their campaigns and hopes for running to join the county's board. Here's an overview:

## Dist. 3 seat

**Lewis Hendricks:** a local restaurant owner who's lived in Chatham for 20 years, Hendricks was the second candidate to file for office at the Chatham County Board of Elections office during the brief filing period.

He said he decided to file for a seat on the board after learning that Hales, a Democrat elected to the board in 2014, won't seek reelection. He announced his campaign the Friday before filing began.

"So that was the opportunity. But then I guess the question is the why, right?" Hendricks told the News + Record prior to announcing his campaign. "It's in two veins: My number one passion or priority is public education, so that and then the other one is Chatham County and the growth that is happening within the county."

"It's not a matter of if, it's a matter of how Chatham should grow," he said. "So I just think we need to be thoughtful in regard to how that happens."

Hendricks owns Old East Tavern, a restaurant in Chapel Hill, and served in the military for 10 years as an Army officer in the Iraq War. His wife, Megan Hendricks, is an oncology nurse at UNC Hospitals and they live with their four children in northern Chatham. He credits his mother, a public educator for 30 years, as a primary factor in seeking office due to the impact he saw her have on students.

"I want to join a board that's not just contentious and at odds and that gets together and tries to solve problems," he told the News + Record. "And I found that. Just talking to other people in regard to the other people that are on the board, it seems like it is a board that is willing to get together and talk through things and solve problems together."

## Dist. 4 seat

Because of Crawford's resignation, the Dist. 4 seat will be filled by an appointed replacement prior to the election.

Under state law the board will appoint a new commissioner to fill out the remaining year of Crawford's term; the person must live in the 4th District to be appointed. The board will hear more regarding candidates suggested by the Democratic party at its Jan. 18 meeting, and must fill the seat by March 2.

**Albert Reddick:** the first person to file for the Dist. 3 seat and the first to file in Chatham, Reddick said learning of Crawford's resignation is what inspired him to run for the office.

"We all know that there is plenty in life that can seem unfair, unjust, and even tragic," he wrote in an email release to the board of commissioners and copied to the News + Record. "It is the situation in which Chatham County now finds itself with the stepping down of our Commissioner Dr. Jim Crawford. We pray for him. We continue to support him. And we will do what I am sure he would want us all to do for him ... continue our service to our beloved Chatham County."

"It is this sense of duty and service that compels me now to write and ask for your consideration to

fill the Board of Commissioners vacancy in Chatham County."

Reddick is a Siler City resident and community faith leader who has unsuccessfully sought office on Siler City's town board.

He said he is currently talking to county commissioners, employees and residents to consider his platform — including what impact the new \$1.29 billion Greensboro-Randolph Toyota plant announced earlier this month will have on Chatham. He's a "staunch supporter and advocate of senior adults and youths," and has taught at the college and seminary levels.

Reddick is a site manager at Windsor Arms Partnership Property Management and associate minister at First Missionary Baptist Church in Siler City.

"I am grateful to the county and former commissioners, especially to Jim, for all that they have done," Reddick said.

**Katie Kenlan:** the sixth and last person to file on the first day of the period, Kenlan, 36, has lived in Chatham her entire life, in Hadley Township — and attended Pittsboro Elementary, Horton Middle and Northwood High schools.

She's worked as a teacher in early child education and is fluent in Spanish. Kenlan is a small business owner operating an outdoor environmental education program, where she runs educational camps and after-school programming.

She volunteered with the Haw River Assembly and served as Democratic Party vice-chairperson in Hadley Township.

If elected, Kenlan hopes to make sure development in Chatham is done thoughtfully and that the county's natural resources are protected.

"Now more than ever," Kenlan said, "we need to build a community of friends and neighbors who value our differences, and work together to build a future for young people. ... We need leaders who take into account what makes a truly resilient community and who will evaluate long-term issues of equity and justice."

**Travis Patterson:** the lifelong Chatham resident filed for the seat on the second day of the filing period.

Patterson is the owner and CEO of Self-Enhancing Education and Development Service, a Siler City based agency he started in 2019 which helps "families and individuals navigate a smooth transition to self-sufficiency and healthy living."

Patterson is also the visitation supervisor for the county's court-related programs, where he works part time to provide visitation supervision for families affected by family violence. He works full-time as the program manager for Communities In Schools' community service and restitution services, where he provides coordination of community service and restitution projects for youth involved with CIS's Juvenile Justice.

"I decided to run for office because I want the best opportunities for Chatham County and I want to use my skills to help bring those here," Patterson said. "I care about my community and its residents, and as a member and professional working to serve Chatham, I would bring a perspective unique to the Chatham Board of Commissioners. I feel that I am a resource to the community, and that my voice would be representative of those that I have been serving throughout my career."

*Reporter Hannah McClellan can be reached at hannah@chathamnr.com or on Twitter at @HannerMcClellan.*

# FARM

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cultivating their own trees on their Pittsboro land, bringing in now-33-year-old son Tanner to help out in the operation.

"We've been open at this location for the past six or seven years, and every year has picked up with more and more people coming to the area," Tanner said.

Teri and Tanner get help on the day-to-day work from Austin Mathews, who has worked at Phillips Farm since the Christmas tree venture began. It's

Mathews who's tasked with the planting and cultivating of saplings, working year-round to keep the growing trees trimmed and pruned. And as Thanksgiving approaches and customers begin thinking about putting up a live tree for the holiday season, he helps them choose — and cut — what will eventually be placed at a special spot inside the home and festooned with lights and ornaments and topped with a star of some kind.

The process takes time — many years, in fact.

"Some varieties that grow faster, you [re]plant them when they are younger," Mathews said. "It really depends on what tree you get — some you [re]plant when they are 1 year old, and some, like the white pines — are 3 years old."

Long after most of us have discarded our live trees, and our thoughts perhaps turn toward spring and things like summer trips to the beach, it's Mathews and the Phillipses who are thinking about future Christmases. After planting saplings and ensuring real growth begins, Mathews cuts off parts of disfigured or dying branches and fights off deer and other pests who might want to make a meal of the fledgling trees.

"Trees need to be fertilized, trimmed and taken care of all year," Mathews said. "If it is tilted, you have to make it straight again; you have to make sure there is a solid growing structure, and you have to do that for every tree, every year."

Aside from the popular Fraser firs — with their dark, glossy-green foliage of dark needles supported by strong branches — grown in Alleghany County and brought to Chatham, Phillips Farm grows Eastern White Pine and Leland Cypress trees. The white pines feature soft, bluish-green needles; the cypress trees are also used as ornamental plantings.

Customers have the choice of picking one of the pre-cut Fraser trees from the main lot, or they can venture to the vast fields to pick one for the farming staff to cut down. From there, Tanner and Mathews will work on cutting the trees down, shaking the loose pine needles from the trees, wrapping them in



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Phillips Farms sells the popular Fraser tree on its Pittsboro property.**

netting and then loading them onto customers' cars.

Teri said the busiest time for them this Christmas season was the first few days they opened the lot for business the weekend after Thanksgiving. About 300 people came to pick out their tree during that weekend alone.

"It was really crazy that first weekend, and it has just gotten a little slower as you go through the season," she said.

By Christmas Eve, Phillips Farm usually sells close to 800 Christmas trees. To accommodate the increase in foot traffic on that opening weekend, the Phillipses employ students from around the county to help with the extra workload.

"There's a lot of hand-work that has to get done that we can't handle," Mathews said. "So we have high school and college kids help out during that time."

Among the thousands of trees Phillips Farm has sold over the years are the 15-foot-tall Christmas trees displayed in front of the historic Chatham County Courthouse for the last two years, placed by the town of Pittsboro.

Labor shortages related to the ongoing pandemic and a warmer climate in recent years in the higher elevations in N.C. — which has led to shortages of some types of trees — have contributed to higher Christmas tree pricing.

"The eastern varieties we sell for \$7 a foot, but the Fraser trees saw a jump of \$12 to \$15 a foot," Teri said. "Last year, they were about \$8 to \$12 a foot."

Despite that, Phillips Farm has seen hundreds of families come through their farm this year alone. Next year, the family is planning to open a second location to sell trees from off of U.S. Hwy. 64 on the western side of Pittsboro. The current location has around five to six acres of trees planted, and the new location will allow for up to 10 additional acres of Christmas trees.

"We've got a farm right past Hadley Mill Road, where we have sold strawberries and pumpkins before," Teri said. "We've been growing some trees out there for about three years, so we should have some 5-foot tall trees out there. We're trying to move our base for retail out there."



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Labor shortages and warmer climates in growing areas have led to increased Christmas tree prices in recent years.**

Phillips Farm operates as a family-owned business, with Teri and Tanner managing most of the administrative duties. And while the Christmas season is stressful at times, Teri said she was thankful to be able to work with Tanner and see more of his wife, Brittany and her 13-month-old grandson, Rhett.

"I get to see my son and his baby more, and that's always fun," Teri said. "Sometimes it's stressful and everybody has shorter tempers, but it's good."

"Everybody has their other jobs too, so this on top of what people normally do is stressful," Tanner added.

Despite the hectic nature the Christmas season brings, Mathews said the best part of the season is the cheerful attitude people have while picking out their Christmas tree.

"Everyone's always in such a good mood," he said. "It's the holiday season and people are happy."

For Teri, one of the best things about being a part of the Christmas tree farm is seeing many of the same families come back every year — and the connections that come with people who make it part of a family tradition to pick out a live tree.

"I love talking to the people who come here because they're so happy because it's Christmas," Teri said. "I get to see people come every year with their kids and see them grow up. That's probably the best part."

Phillips Farm is located at 1282 Hanks Chapel Road.

*Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at theeden@chathamnr.com.*

# COVID

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membership for all students divided by the number of school days in the term yields ADM."

ADM is a more accurate count of the number of students in school than enrollment, DPI says. In North Carolina, school districts receive funding based on their projected ADMs, meaning that they could face budget cuts for lower numbers. In September 2020, the General Assembly passed a bill ensuring districts would not face such cuts for ADM declines. The newly passed state budget this year also includes a provision so school districts don't lose funding if their student population drops under projected numbers.

That doesn't mean long-term effects of such declines aren't of any concern, Chatham Communities In Schools' Jazmin Mendoza Sosa told the News + Record last year.

"It is this sense of duty and service that compels me now to write and ask for your consideration to

she said at the time, when she was working as a CIS student support specialist at Virginia Cross Elementary School.

As the district transitioned

to in-person learning, Mendoza Sosa anticipated last April

that the district would be able

to better identify the "missing

students" or address the rea-

son for decline of enrollment.

Now a CIS program direc-

tor, she said the organization

is still working with CCS to

understand both enrollment

declines and absences among

students, still up from before

COVID.

"CIS continues working

along social workers to make

sure our students are attend-

ing school regularly," she told

the News + Record. "There is

a pattern of students continu-

ing to miss school who before

the pandemic had not been an

issue."

**Attendance versus**

**enrollment**

Regarding school absences,

CCS Assistant Superintendent

of Academic Services and

Instructional Support Aman-

da Moran said quarantine

requirements — even relaxed

with new state guidance this

year — account for a lot of the

increased absences.

In early December, she said

about 80 to 100 Siler City students

were absent in a single week.

"When they backtracked all

those (absences) out, it was

only a handful of kids that

were out for reasons other than

the quarantine piece," she said.

The district is seeing lower

attendance rates at its higher

poverty schools, Moran said,

which CCS social workers

attribute in part due to the bar-

riers that come with being able

to get a negative COVID-19 test

— transportation, cost or find-

ing an appointment — which

allow students to come back to

school before the completion of

a 10-day quarantine period.

Since November, all the dis-

trict's schools have offered free

weekly testing to students and

through Raleigh-based Mako

Medical.

Still, absences don't impact

# VIEWPOINTS

GUEST EDITORIAL | DR. GREGORY E. LAMB

## Christmas brings peace to a divided world

On December 7, 1914, Pope Benedict XV suggested a temporary cease fire during World War I in respect to Christ and Christmas. While no official cease fire was granted between the nations, on Christmas Eve of that same year something amazing happened.

Many German and British troops fighting in the frigid and dank trenches sang Christmas carols to each other across the battlefield, and at certain points the Allied soldiers even heard the tinny sounds of trumpets joining the Germans in their joyous and jubilant singing.

At the first light of the fiery dawn on Christmas Day, some German soldiers emerged up from the freezing mud and muck of their trenches and approached the Allied lines across no-man's-land, calling out "Merry Christmas" and "Frohe Weihnachten" in their enemies' native tongues. At first, the Allied soldiers feared

it was a trick, but seeing the Germans unarmed and standing before them, the Brits climbed out of their trenches and shook hands with their German enemies.

For one day, once bitter enemies laid their weapons down and showed love toward their fellow man. The men exchanged presents of cigarettes and plum puddings and sang carols and songs. Some Germans celebrated by erecting lit Christmas trees around their trenches, and the soldiers even began playing a good-natured game of soccer.

On that cold Christmas day, the hearts of enemies were warmed and united together by the peace that comes with Christ, the prophesied Prince of peace (Isaiah 9:6). Christmas, perhaps more than any other time of year, is to be a time of peace. Our beloved Christmas hymns reflect this. We sing songs such as "Silent Night," the lyrics of which reflect the holy hush and reverent, supernatural peace that comes in the advent, the incarnation of God in Christ.

*"Silent night, holy night!  
All is calm, all is bright.  
Round yon Virgin, Mother*

*and Child.  
Holy infant so tender and  
mild,*

*Sleep in heavenly peace,  
Sleep in heavenly peace"*

These words reflect the truth of Christmas and the pervasive peace that comes from God's donning of humanity — taking the lowly position of a Suffering, Savior-Slave (Philippians 2:7) — in becoming Immanuel: that is, "God with us" (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23).

Yet, our world and our great country remain divided. We are divided ethnically, politically, socially, and religiously. As Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. rightly stated, Sunday morning at 11 am is the most divided hour in America. Sadly, little has changed since MLK uttered those sad words — even among those who claim Christ as Lord.

Little peace is found in news headlines or social media pages where family and supposed "Christian" brothers and sisters shamelessly denigrate one another in disagreements over politics, masks and vaccines. Children and teenagers are now afraid of going to school in fear of being shot by their classmates or contracting

the COVID-19 virus. Few of us in the Baby Boomer and Generation X crowd ever had to worry about such things. Yet, our children and grandchildren deal with these fears on a daily basis — as do their teachers, school administrators and staff. It seems as if our world and country are being turned upside down in a type of "Bizarro world" where right is seen as wrong and wrong is seen as right.

Yet, Jesus came that we might have peace (John 16:33); that we may have life and have it more abundantly here on earth, and eternally with Him in heaven (John 10:10). Christ's peace, unlike the Christmas Truce of 1914, is not merely the cessation of violence and war. Rather, Christ brings a supernatural shalom — the holistic healing of humanity physically and externally as well as spiritually and internally.

This is the power and supernatural spirit of Christmas: that peace can be experienced even in the deepest, darkest valleys of life. Christ was born into a world of chaos and abject poverty — fleeing with His family for their lives as refugees in a foreign country

(Egypt). Christ was born a King but did not live a luxurious or ostentatious life. During much of His earthly ministry, Jesus was, apparently, homeless (Matthew 8:20; Luke 9:58). Yet, Jesus gladly and willingly obeyed His Father and despite His often hard and difficult circumstances, always placed others ahead of Himself in loving, sacrificial service (Mark 10:45).

Having an attitude of gratitude (internally) — which leads to servitude (externally) — is really the key to experiencing joy and peace at Christmas and throughout life. Despite the beloved Andy Williams song, Christmas is not about "parties for hosting, marshmallows for toasting, or caroling in the snow." Succinctly stated, Christmas is about Jesus, and Jesus gave us His own example to follow in loving and serving others and not merely ourselves (Philippians 2:3–5; 1 Peter 2:21).

"Follow Me!" Jesus beckons (Luke 9:23), "Follow Me!"

*The Rev. Dr. Gregory E. Lamb is pastor of Mays Chapel Baptist Church, located on 24 Rosser Rd. in Bear Creek.*

## There's more than just one side to Christmas

Christmas, like many things, means different things to different people. Baskins-Robbins figured that kind of thing out long ago; that's why they have 31 flavors.

As we wind down to the day, I find myself thinking about what it means to me and a couple of thoughts keep jumping to the head of the line.

One is traditions. The other day the older of the two 40-somethings who used to be one of the two teenagers who

lived at my house long ago and I did our regular daddy-daughter outing that we've been doing for years — the one where she helps me select gifts for her mother. I think I could probably do it but then I wouldn't get to be with her and it wouldn't seem like Christmas. She says that, too, which is also a part of the tradition.

What makes this outing different from how it started is that usually one or more of her own brood accompanies us. This year, it was her first-born, my oldest grand, who is no longer a little guy (except in my heart). He'll get his driver's license in a few days. Long ago, I took him Christmas shopping for his mama and watched him pick out chewing gum, pencils, rubber balls and an assortment of gifts for her. He took seriously the idea that you should buy as presents for other folks the things you would like to receive yourself.

Along with that bit of activity is the tradition which says I must wait until the last minute anyway. Maybe it's my own feeble nature or weakness, but it's hard for me to get caught up in the mood in mid-November or even early December. But when that mood does show up, well, then I've got it.

Another tradition for me is the music. I can't quite get into "Black Sabbath Sings the Great Carols of Christmas" or whatever album is on the "must-have" list of the hour. But let me hear Burl Ives do "Frosty" or Gene Autry conjure up "Rudolph" or The Percy Faith Orchestra take off on "Joy to the World," and it's a different game. Throw in Harry Simeon's Chorale with the official version of "Little Drummer Boy" and I'm with my dad, who loved that tune. And when I break out the Kingston Trio's album "Last Month of the Year," then I'm a little boy in the warmth of my mama's living room and kitchen.

I miss my folks at Christmas and the traditions they instilled in us. I'm sure you have yours if you have Christmas. But at the same time there's another side to what Christmas is, and it's not just the memories.

It's the future. It's the promise we can do better and things can be better and there's a second chance in many things in many ways.

I love the traditions, the ones that were mine as a child and the ones that have come along later with other people.

But I also love the realization that Christmas at its simplest and its best is about gifts and giving, starting with the Gift of God, and that's a tradition the world needs more of.

Merry Christmas ... and may you find your own traditions and a bright future.

*Bob Wachs is a native of Chatham County and retired long-time managing editor of the Chatham News/Chatham Record, having written a weekly column for more than 30 years. During most of his time with the newspapers, he was also a bi-vocational pastor and today serves Bear Creek Baptist Church for the second time as pastor.*



## The ageless magic of Christmas

In C.S. Lewis' "The Magician's Nephew," Uncle Andrew is a wild-eyed bachelor with a shock of tousled gray hair who conducts experiments in his attic with ancient magic dust. Lewis writes off his character with this dismissal:

"He thinks he is a magician, but like all who meddle in magic, he doesn't really know what he is doing."

As "The Chronicles of Narnia" alludes to many aspects of the Old and New Testaments, I suspect Lewis' criticism of magicians is rooted in such prohibitions as found in ancient Israel's law: "Let no one be found among you who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells. ... Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord." (Deuteronomy 18:10-12.)

To be sure, Uncle Andrew is a manipulative scoundrel. And the Egyptian magicians are depicted similarly in Exodus.

### What's on your mind?

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At our discretion, we may edit letters for clarity. We reserve the right to refuse letters and other submissions that promote a commercial product, contain either libelous material, personal attacks on individuals or vulgar language. Consumer complaints and letters containing unverifiable factual claims are ineligible for publication.

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But is magic always a spiritual abomination?

This time of year, I think of the stargazers from the East in the story of Jesus' birth. While these men are sometimes known as wise men or kings, the Greek New Testament calls them magi, which is the etymological root of "magician." These magi are not detestable scoundrels, but men of faith. Such faith was demonstrated in the question they posed to the wicked King Herod: "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." (Matthew 2:2.)

My young children know about the magi's gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh; however, their Christmas question relates to the presents that arrive at our own home: "How does Santa come inside our house when we don't have a chimney?"

The answer is magic.

Over the years, the magic has increased. A mysterious handwritten note has been found among the cookie crumbs on Christmas morning. From the local hardware store, we have picked up bags of magic corn kernels, then scattered them across our backyard on Christmas

Eve to feed the flying reindeer. I believe in magic.

My namesake in Narnia is certainly not someone I wish to emulate. After all, that Andrew gets tangled up with the evil Queen Jadis!

But I am aware that a storyteller long before Lewis claimed that I should be like a child. (Matthew 18:3.) I remember this as the eyes of my own kids gleam with excitement. This year, they plan to supplement the reindeer's diet with carrots. My youngest son wondered, "Dad, how do they fly around the world in one night?"

It's magic.

There are other mysteries that are neither explained nor understood — we see through a mirror, dimly. (1 Corinthians 13:12.) Yet, no matter how old you are, Christmas gives enough magic to glimpse the wonder, in both senses of that word.

*Andrew Taylor-Troutman is the pastor of Chapel in the Pines Presbyterian Church. His newly-published book is a collection of his columns for the Chatham News + Record titled "Hope Matters: Churchless Sermons."*

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# VIEWPOINTS

GUEST COLUMN | ANDY CLAPP

## O little town ...

Bethlehem. A small town overshadowed by the towering influence and affluence of nearby Jerusalem. A place, a quiet reprieve from the hustle and bustle of the Jerusalem streets, often overlooked because of its neighbor six miles away.

Even Micah pointed out the size of Bethlehem, as he prophesied, "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2 NKJV)

Bethlehem was a tiny town that was stopping point on a journey to a larger place, so similar to the little town of Liberty I call home.

Over 2,000 years after the glo-

rious happenings of a night in a little town, we continue to sing about that place called Bethlehem. Phillips Brooks penned the words that echo through the streets during this season, "O Little Town of Bethlehem." Louis F. Benson would also write a hymn titled "O Sing a Song of Bethlehem." In "Angels We Have Heard on High," listeners are called to come to Bethlehem and see. A small village would be spoken of and sang about for centuries though it was overlooked before. A birth in a stable in a small town forever altered history.

As we look at Bethlehem, we see nothing incredibly special about the place. The prior claim to fame was that King David was born there and the town had been pinpointed as

the arrival place for Christ in God's message through Micah.

Joseph and Mary returned to Bethlehem after the decree of Caesar for a census to be taken. There, they were where they needed to be at the precise moment they needed to be there. After Christ was born, though most of the world missed the epic event of the night, the town would never be overlooked again. Bethlehem's story grew larger than its size.

O little town of Siler City ... O little town of Pittsboro ... O little towns of Chatham County — do you see tonight that what set Bethlehem apart that night sets you apart tonight as well? Bethlehem was defined not by what it had, as it lacked most everything Jerusalem had to offer, but is remembered

for Who it had, the One born in a manger that night. God kept His promise, even to the detail of the location of the birth of His Son. That same Jesus, the Son of God, is here in our midst in our town.

The Spirit of God lives inside of each of us who have laid down our lives, taken up our crosses, and are following Him. Christ, the everlasting light, is shining in our lives and in this season, we should see how the presence of Christ in our lives brings life to this town. The light of Christ in our lives illuminates the darkness, just as the darkness was forever pierced in Bethlehem that night. Siler City, a place of warmth and life, is defined by His presence as He works in the churches in our town

and changes hearts and lives each day. His light is seen in the lives of our citizens, in the heart of our community.

This is the moment God has placed us in this town, at this moment, for the reason of pointing others to Him. In these dark streets, the everlasting light shines and that sets this town apart from so many others. Christ is here. He is alive. He is living in us. So let's shine the light this Christmas and beyond, telling the story of what God can do in our town and in our lives.

*Andy Clapp is the senior pastor at Mt. Zion Baptist Church in Liberty and is pursuing his Master's Degree at Liberty University. He and his wife Crystal have three children.*

## Last minute shoppers: North Carolina books to the rescue

"Are there new North Carolina books that would

a welcome gift.

Although Frank Porter Graham, president of the University of North Carolina, has been dead almost 50 years, the stamp he put on public life in this state remains strong. A new biography, "Frank Porter Graham: Southern Liberal, Citizen of the World," by William Link, helps explain Graham's enduring influence. It would be an excellent gift for anyone who wants to understand North Carolina history, especially if the recipient tilts liberal.

One feature of the Graham book is a history of a complicated effort to open the University of North Carolina to Black students. The liberal Graham had to deny Blacks admission because he was bound by rules established by the university's conservative trustees.

Another view of this question, one by a young author of color, is chronicled in a new book, "To Drink from the Well: The Struggle for Racial Equality at the Nation's Oldest Public University," by Geeta N. Kapur. Because the book examines examples of racism at UNC through the years, beginning with the laying of the cornerstone of Old East, the campus's oldest building, it would be a good present for someone wanting to see all sides of difficult public challenges.

The fourth novel of one of North Carolina's most promising and popular

young fiction writers, Wiley Cash, may be his best ever. In "When Ghosts Come Home," set in Brunswick County in 1984, Cash weaves a story of drugs, racial conflict, local politics, family challenges, and petty jealousies among law enforcement agencies.

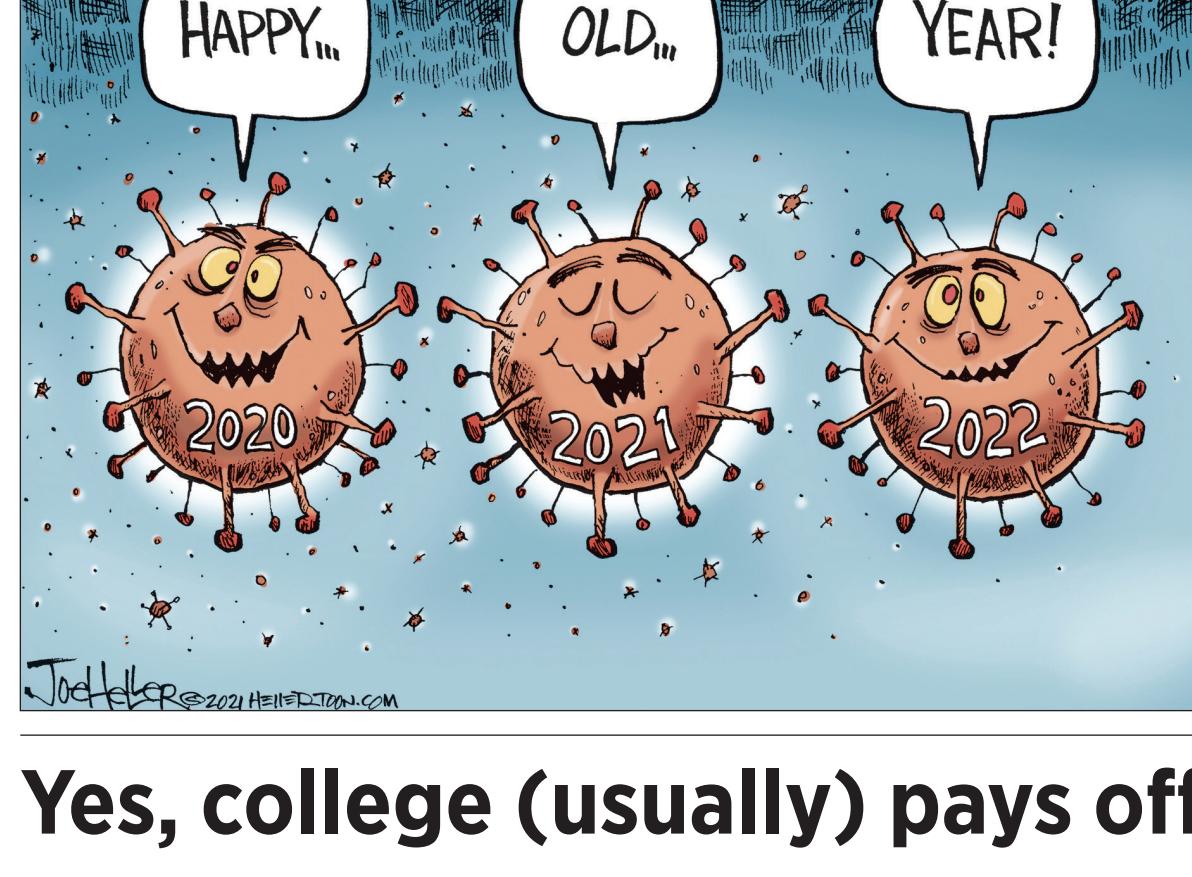
"Even As We Breathe," the debut novel of Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, is the first novel published by an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Set in Asheville and the area near the town of Cherokee during World War II, it tells a poignant story of a young Cherokee boy trying to find a place in a white world.

This list is only a begin-

Your local bookseller can provide many more options.

D.G. Martin hosted "North Carolina Bookwatch," for more than 20 years.

To view prior programs: <https://video.pbsnc.org/show/nc-bookwatch/episodes/>.



## Yes, college (usually) pays off

Is the purpose of a university education to prepare graduates to get jobs? I've never thought so. But then again, I've never thought that going to college should be a near-universal experience.

When universities were first created, their purpose was to educate clergymen, lawyers and physicians. Thankfully, higher education no longer has such a narrow focus. Still, I am sufficiently old-fashioned to believe that university campuses should be places to pursue rigorous scholarship, to cultivate leaders, and to pursue the life of the mind. To embrace learning for learning's sake, regardless of any career applications.

That's not how most students see it, of course, so realism is required. If higher education was primarily about "the life of the mind," it would be a far smaller sector, and one paid for overwhelmingly by participating families and willing donors, not taxpayers. Instead, colleges and universities have become massive enterprises delivering vocational training along with other services such as entertainment, economic development and medical care.

Is college "worth it" for those seeking to boost their lifelong earnings? On average, yes — but beware of the fallacy of the average. To say the average college graduate earns 67% more than the average worker with only a high-school diploma is not to say that going to college will boost

your income by 67%.

For many young people, the very knowledge, skills and abilities that help get them into college would help them get better-paying jobs even if they didn't go to college. Moreover, just because past college graduates may have boosted their incomes — especially by punching their undergraduate tickets on the way to lucrative professions requiring MBAs, MDs or JDs — doesn't mean that a marginal student today, considering whether to pursue a four-year degree or some other path after high school, would experience an equivalent gain.

The most important point of all, though, is that no one really gets a generic "university degree." You get a degree in a particular discipline from a particular institution. When it comes to post-graduation salaries, all campuses and majors are most certainly not created equal.

That's the message reinforced by a fascinating new study by Preston Cooper, a research fellow at the Foundation for Research on Equal Opportunity. Combining statistics from a new federal site ([CollegeScorecard.ed.gov](http://CollegeScorecard.ed.gov)) with other data, Cooper constructed a model to measure the return on investment (ROI) that students can expect to receive by earning undergraduate degrees from one of the 1,200 institutions in his database.

By ROI, Cooper means the present value of your lifetime earnings minus the earnings you'd likely have earned without the degree minus the cost to you of obtaining the degree. Are some of these values only rough estimates? Of course. That's still better than excluding them from

the analysis.

There are dozens of North Carolina colleges and universities in Cooper's searchable database, so I'll provide a few local examples to illustrate the wide range of results. Getting a bachelor's degree in computer engineering from North Carolina State University will, on average, boost your lifetime earnings by a net of \$1.13 million. The payoff from a degree in fire protection from UNC-Charlotte is \$1.12 million. An economics degree from Duke University generates an eye-popping \$2.7 million ROI.

On the other hand, Cooper found that a Duke chemistry degree results in a net loss of \$50,000. A psychology degree from High Point University has a negative ROI of \$79,000. Dance (-\$268,000) and drama (-\$322,000) degrees from East Carolina University produce ever-larger losses when comparing costs and payoffs.

This is not an argument against the performing arts, or for everyone trying to major in STEM fields. I happen to know folks with dance and drama degrees who live happy and fulfilling lives. And I know some really bored engineers.

When it comes to college costs and benefits, though, honesty is the best policy. We should help our young people make fully informed choices among a wide spectrum of alternative paths after high school.

*John Hood is a John Locke Foundation board member and author of the new novel "Mountain Folk," a historical fantasy set during the American Revolution ([MountainFolkBook.com](http://MountainFolkBook.com)).*

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# VIEWPOINTS

GUEST COLUMN | HANNIA BENITEZ

## America is a nation of immigrants. We should bring humanity back to America's immigration system.

"I don't regret anything," my mother told me recently. "My priority was your sister and you."

Our conversation started after the newest wave of anti-immigrant sentiment hit the airwaves. I asked

her when she first heard the phrase "American Dream." She said that she didn't hear it until we arrived in California in the late '90s to be with my grandmother. My mother knew that she had to find a place where she could provide for us and give us the future we could not have in Guatemala. A future with more opportunity. A future full of hope. A future full of success that transcended monetary wealth.

A teacher by profession, she was a single mother of two girls. She found herself confronted with two choices. She could relocate to a rural mountainous region with the only available teacher vacancy and an unlivable monthly salary of 700 quetzales (less than \$100), or she could find better opportunities for her daughters.

Pursuing her dreams would mean that she and her daughters would be far from her father's home and further away from her family already in the U.S. because there were few resources in the border-town they were born in. We were in a place where dreams could not be achieved through sacrifice, nor risk-taking, nor

working hard.

She heard about the "land of opportunity," where she could find work to support her daughters. A land where her daughters' education would go beyond 6th grade, a land with proper medical care to help with my sister's special eye surgery. A land where she would be close to her siblings and have a continued family bond. Fearful but determined, we made our way to the U.S. — a mystical land, where she gave away her youth to odd jobs and the poultry industry, where she endured humiliation, mistreatment and grueling work hours. All for hope of a better future for her daughters.

Although coming to the U.S. over 20 years ago meant abandoning her profession, my mother taught us that faith, an education and compassion for our peers was the key to success. Being the oldest, she would teach me all she had learned as a teacher in Spanish. She would tell me, "I will show you what I know. You will have to try to find out what this means in English." I strived to test out of the English as a Second Language Program, to get as many straight As as I could, join the Academically and Intellectually Gifted Program, and to spend many hours volunteering in our faith-based community and in school clubs.

I was grateful to be chosen as president of various clubs and organizations, and I tried my best to keep pushing through high school, but I was falling apart. Life had forced me to grow up quickly. I couldn't

carry the weight of being the oldest amongst my siblings and cousins and all it entailed. Family life had taken a toll and my academic and community dedication faltered. I was denied entry at the local community college, which crushed my hopes of resetting my path.

Without hope and the promise of a future, I let go of my dreams.

Fast forward to June 2012, when the Secretary of Homeland Security announced that "certain people who came to the United States as children and meet several guidelines could request consideration of deferred action (a use of prosecutorial power to defer removal action against an individual for a certain period of time) for a period of two years, subject to renewal, and may be eligible for employment authorization." In other words, DACA recipients could work, go to school, along with other rights, and were shielded from deportation during the approved period, but Deferred Action did not provide long-term lawful status.

DACA requests must be renewed every two years.

I am one of over 616 million DACA recipients, as reported by USCIS. You may know us as "DREAMers", in part because of the DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act) and in larger part because we have big dreams and hopes for a better future. We are young people who have grown up as Americans, identify as Americans, and form part of America's melting pot. We call the

U.S. home. Yes, many of us are proud of our heritage, of our culture, our ancestry, our community's strive for betterment, sacrifice, risk-taking, and hard work — and rightfully so.

Because of DACA, we have turned our parents' sacrifices into a commitment to our communities. We are essential workers. We are healthcare workers. We are teachers. We are community workers. We are part of the faith community.

All these accomplishments are a beautiful representation of what we want to showcase for our current and future generations.

DACA has allowed me to work legally, obtain a driver's license and strive for my family. That said, trying to plan my life for two-year intervals has been difficult, especially because of the back-and-forth over DACA's future and the ongoing hostility towards undocumented immigrants. It feels like I'm living in limbo; I'm holding my breath while worrying about my family and community members who don't even have DACA.

One thing is certain: A society living individualistically and permitting its members to live in fear suffers and finds itself with weakened community and institutional frameworks. Like the negative impact that fear can have on our body, it can lead to poor health and even premature death. If left untreated, these negative impacts can spread like wildfire.

We all want healthy and thriving communities. We need to restore the humanity and American values into our

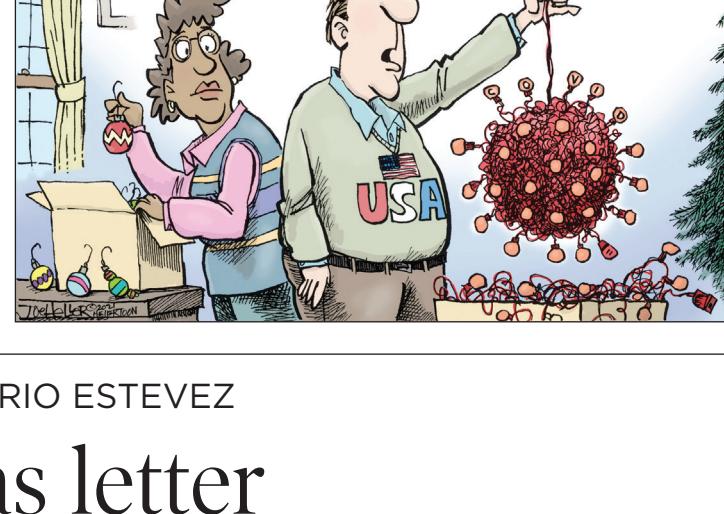
immigration system.

We need to join forces with trusted civic organizations, such as El Vinculo Hispano, an institution grounded in Hispanic culture that collaborates with many other agencies to help them understand the issues our community faces.

We need to empower our community members to voice their concerns and speak up for themselves. The time is now to push and move for healing. We must correct our outdated immigration laws that no longer serve their purposes and that force millions of people into the shadows of our society.

A just immigration system must bring into light the millions of immigrants who are part of the fabric of our society, who have lived here for years — in many cases decades. A just immigration system must include a pathway to citizenship. It must keep families together and protect vulnerable communities. It must embrace our diversity. It must promote integration and inclusion of immigrants and refugees. A just immigration system would foster economic growth and prosperity and ensure greater worker protections.

*Guatemalan native Hannia Benitez is the Hispanic Liaison's Deputy Director for its new Lee County office in Sanford, where she works to advance the rights of Hispanics at local and state levels. This column was first published in the December print edition of La Voz de Chatham.*



GUEST COLUMN | ALIRIO ESTEVEZ

## A Christmas letter

"What did you ask al-

a soccer ball, a tricycle.

my child?" It was the question my beloved grandmother asked me every Christmas when I was a little boy — or "pela'o," as we said in Colombia.

Christmas is the time of year that I love the most. It brings back beautiful memories of my childhood, especially the time I spent with my grandmother. In the city where I come from, we call our grandmothers "Nonna." I love that name. In my mind Nonna means love, affection and understanding.

According to our traditions, before the image of Santa Claus became popular around the world, the being in charge of bringing presents to children at Christmas time was *El Niño Dios*. At the beginning of December many years ago (so many that it seems centuries), before going to sleep I would pray to *El Niño Dios* and ask Him for the presents I wanted: a car track,

Sometimes, *Niño Dios* gave me what I'd asked for; other times He did not. My Nonna convinced me that *Niño Dios* knew what I really wanted. Therefore, He had brought me a *baraja* (a Spanish card game) and not the year's toy car, because He knew that I should connect more with my cousins and the best way was to play cards with them. My Nonna was wise.

I want to reestablish that childhood belief inside me and ask *Niño Dios* for a list of presents for all families, especially for our Latino families. Latino families go to great lengths to provide love, education and support for our children, for our community, for America. I believe they truly deserve presents.

This is my letter: Dear *Niño Dios*, Although I am no longer a child, I still remember you and I would like to ask you for some presents again; but this time, I'm asking for my Latino community. First I'd like to ask you to bring this COVID pandemic to an end. This pandemic has wreaked havoc in the world and particularly in our Latino people. Thousands have

died and others have become orphans, widows and widowers. Hundreds of thousands lost their jobs and their homes. I know that with your guidance you helped scientists discover vaccines to combat this disease; for that I thank you.

Likewise, I want all members of our Latino community to have access to health care without fear of expenses. Hopefully you can convince our legislators so that everybody can visit the doctor and receive medications. You know that it isn't fair that many people have to choose between food and health care.

*Niño Dios*, I'd like to ask that our youngest generation receive a quality education that prepares them for adulthood. Our schools have not received the funds they desperately need. Principals and teachers work tirelessly to help students, but state legislators deny schools the necessary resources, including educational materials, after-school tutoring, nurses, etc.

Additionally, I wish that our young people could go to university or community college without having to think of the cost. In today's

world, young people must have an education beyond high school to get ahead. I hope you convince our state representatives and senators to support our youth. They deserve it.

My next request is personal. I've been living in this country for more than 20 years, working as a teacher. All my students are, have been and will always be special; they inhabit my soul and my heart. I have seen how they, their parents and their families have worked hard. Many of them, however, live in fear of what might happen to them due to their immigration status. Several of my students have enrolled in the DACA program, but they know this solution is temporary. At any time, the whims of a capricious leader, as in a previous administration, could end the program and leave them adrift.

My students have built their lives here. Some went to college, some started their own businesses, and some went to work right after high school. They have children, wives or husbands. They need Congress to give them the ability to become residents and citizens. My heart cries when I see that they suf-

fer this terrible situation.

I also ask you for many of my students' parents. Some left their land and came to this country to give their families a better future. They are extraordinary people. Their families should not fear ICE. I have seen with my own eyes how this situation affects my students. My heart breaks when I observe their sorrow and dismay after they stop seeing their parents. Families belong together. Please, touch the hearts of those who don't love us to allow our families to live in this country without fear.

I understand that to achieve several of these wishes, our Latino community must make itself heard. That's why, *Niño Dios*, I ask that you give us the energy to achieve political power. We need more Latina and Latino leaders to form part of the government. I wish that there were more commissioners with Latino blood in our towns and counties, that the number of Latino representatives in the North Carolina Assembly increase dramatically, that in every government entity there were a Latino voice.

Traditionally, we have been a people who have

fought for the benefit of all. We are not a selfish community; we believe that we must work together for the welfare of every soul in our society. I know that if we elect more Latinas and Latinos, our country will be better for it. By actively participating in the political arena, we will achieve great results for all Carolinians and Americans.

Finally, I ask that love and respect spread once more to every corner of our country. I am tired and heartbroken to see the hatred that some radiate. We are all human beings with feelings, families. I am anguished because I have felt hatred towards other people because of the color of their skin, their religion, their language, their customs, etc. I ask that you help change that mindset. We deserve love and respect. We must give and receive love and respect. Our community needs and wants love and respect.

*Alirio Estevez is an ESL teacher in Chatham County and an advocate for the Latino community. This column was first published in the December print edition of La Voz de Chatham.*



ALIRIO  
ESTEVEZ  
Guest columnist

Every Christmas when I was a little boy — or "pela'o," as we said in Colombia.

According to our traditions, before the image of Santa Claus became popular around the world, the being in charge of bringing presents to children at Christmas time was *El Niño Dios*. At the beginning of December many years ago (so many that it seems centuries), before going to sleep I would pray to *El Niño Dios* and ask Him for the presents I wanted: a car track,

## CHRISTMAS IN CHATHAM

# Activities in Chatham County during this holiday season

CN+R Staff Report

Christmas Day arrives Saturday, and with many people planning on welcoming loved ones into their homes and into Chatham County over the holiday, here are a few suggestions of fun, festive activities:

## Last-minute Christmas shopping

Need a last minute gift for a loved one? Chatham County has you covered. Various retailers will be open on Christmas Eve; check for early closing times.

Pittsboro Toys will be open on Christmas Eve if you need to get a gift for the little ones in your life. Located in historic downtown Pittsboro on Hillsboro Street, Pittsboro Toys carries "classic toys," such as wooden train sets, board games, toy trucks, toy cars and more. They open at 10 a.m. and close at 5 p.m., except on Christmas Eve (2 p.m.).

For the 21 and older crowd, Starrlight Mead will also be open on Christmas Eve at The Plant at 130 Lorax Lane in Pittsboro. According to their website, Starrlight Mead will be wrapping bottles of mead to sell to customers from 12 p.m. until 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve "just in case Santa needs a bit of last minute help."

The Chatham News + Record also published a list of local businesses and their favorite holiday items that make

for great gifts. You can find that list in last week's edition of the News + Record, or on our website at <https://chathamnewsrecord.com/stories/last-minute-local-gifts,11729>.

## Christmas goodies at local bakeries

A staple in the Christmas festivities is the baked goodies such as cookies, pies and more. Carolina Cravings in Pittsboro has a wide range of holiday treats, according to co-owner Iliana Escalante.

The bakery — located at 84 Hillsboro St. — has a wide range of baked treats, including hot chocolate bombs, egg nog pie, decorated gingerbread cookies, shortbread cookies and more.

"We also have specials such as a \$25 box," Escalante said. "That includes one brownie, three bars, half a dozen cookies and you can choose between three macaroons or four truffles."

Carolina Cravings is open daily leading up to the weekend, including from 7 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Christmas Eve, or until supplies last.

## Holiday at the Farm

1870 Farm at 1224 Old Lystra Road in northern Chatham County is hosting Christmas themed events throughout the week leading up to Christmas Day.

"Holiday at the Farm" will feature activities such as a

petting zoo, s'mores, a scavenger hunt and a chance to meet Santa Claus himself.

"Enjoy access to the farm, transformed into a festive winter wonderland," the website reads. "Meet Santa (all children get a gift), pet festive animals, take a candy cane from our peppermint forest, pet pony reindeers, enjoy s'mores, meet Frosty the Snowman and take a hayride into our animal pasture ... made even better with blankets and hot apple cider."

1870 Farm is following various COVID-19 guidelines, including a mask requirement. Children will not be able to sit on Santa's lap, according to the 1870 Farm's website. But children will receive a gift from Santa and will be able to tell him what they want for Christmas.

"Interaction with Santa will be determined based on COVID-19 at the time of the event and will range from story time with Santa to Santa on a tractor," according to the website.

The farm is open to guests every day this week, including Christmas Eve. You have to make an appointment for a time slot on the day you wish to go to the farm, and you can find available tickets on the 1870 Farm's website at <https://fareharbor.com/embeds/book/1870farm/items/336678/calendar/2021/12/>. Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at [theeden@chathamnr.com](mailto:theeden@chathamnr.com).



## WILSON - IVARSSON WEDDING

Sarah Grace Wilson of Charlotte and Carl Gustaf Ivarsson were united in marriage on September 25, 2021, at The Barn of Chapel Hill at Wild Flora Farm with Reverend Heidi Gessner officiating.

The bride is the daughter of David and Molly Wilson of Southern Pines. She is a graduate of Pinecrest High School, N.C. State University and Meredith College. She holds

a master's degree in nutrition science and is a clinical project specialist.

The bridegroom is the son of Carl and Sandy Ivarsson of Fayetteville. A graduate of Fayetteville Academy, N.C. State University and Elon University Law School, he works as an attorney.

After their honeymoon in Hawaii, the couple resides in Charlotte.

## GIFT

Continued from page A1

from the flames.

So, he quit his job. He gave up the life of selling insurance and chose to run into the flames as a firefighter.

But with every call the fire house received, he flashed back to the night when his life changed.

The fire was only eight minutes from the station, but it was far enough away for BJ to be swept away back to the pain of a Christmas Eve past.

"BJ!"

The call from Chief Masterson shook him from the trance of the short trip to someone else's nightmare. "BJ, we've got to get in there." The chief's hand on his coat jostled him to know that this wasn't a dream.

He jumped out and geared up for an entrance. The smoke wafted thick in the air as the team rushed to douse the flames. Though nearly 40 years old, BJ moved with the agility of someone a

decade younger. Perhaps it was adrenaline. Maybe it was chasing an image in his mind, one where he saved his own.

Crashing into the door, he listened intently and assessed the immediate danger. He faintly heard a noise in a side room, the living room to the left of the entrance foyer. The heaviness of the smoke hampered his visibility, and flames engulfed the entry way to the room, but he called out with all he had and hurried toward the sound.

There on the floor lay a young boy, no more than 6 or 7 years old. He grabbed the boy and hurried to get him to a place of safety, outside where he could breathe. Soot covered the boy's hands and his face. The fireman held in his arms a boy roughly the size his son was when he died in a fire.

The sound of collapsing ceilings and trusses thundered throughout. The crackling of wood ticked like a clock pointing to an impending complete disaster. If ei-

ther was going to survive, they had mere moments to get out.

As BJ emerged from the house of flames, tears rolled down his face. He couldn't help but see his own son in the one he held in his arms.

"We've got him ... we've got him," Chief Masterson said as he tried to take the boy from BJ's arms. BJ held on for a moment, unable to let go, thankful that the boy lived through the ordeal.

As the Chief Masterson and the paramedics took care of the boy, the rest of the team battled the blaze. For a few moments, the hero fireman stared into the flames. He stood frozen in time, as if the worst night of his life hit a repeat cycle.

When the blaze died down, the fire team worked their way back to the firehouse.

"What was the boy's name?" BJ asked.

"Christopher Perkins," Chief Masterson replied, turning to focus on BJ in the moment. He looked BJ in the eyes, as if he

were assessing the condition of one of his own. He knew what BJ endured. He was there the night it happened. He broke the news. And it was Chief Masterson that BJ sought out when he decided to take on a new career, one of a firefighter. "Are you OK, buddy? I know these calls are difficult, especially this one tonight. There were too many similarities ... you know ... to ..."

Before he could finish the sentence, BJ interjected, "I'm fine. Where did they take him?"

"Chatham Hospital."

"Did you guys find out anything about his family while y'all were working on him?"

"Mom and dad were in the house, and ..."

"They didn't get out," BJ again finished the sentence, understanding the tone, feeling the despair of his mentor as he shared a harsh reality. BJ looked away. He could feel the uneasiness of the moment and he sensed there was more to the story.

"Did you learn any-

thing about the family?"

Masterson hesitated. BJ looked over to see John massage his forehead, while squinting his eyes. "He has no one, BJ. Evidently, there are no aunts or uncles, and the grandparents passed years ago."

BJ turned to leave. He said not a word, but tossed aside his coat and helmet before moving toward the door.

"Go home and get some rest," John yelled. But BJ determined a different path needed to be taken.

"Are you here for yourself or someone else?" the nurse asked as he approached the desk at the hospital.

"I pulled a little boy from a fire a bit ago ... I think they said his name was Christopher," he responded, anxious to hear of the boy's condition.

"Just a second." She motioned for another nurse to come and escort him to the room. "Police Chief Turney is in there with the boy."

As they walked the hall, he wondered what he would say when he saw the boy. Before a speech could be rehearsed, the nurse opened the door.

"Brown ... great work pulling the kid out," Chief Turney commented as he extended his hand.

"Christopher is doing well, aren't you Christopher?"

He nodded his head. Yet, BJ noticed the tear. The boy knew. He knew his parents were gone. Without saying a word, his expression told the story of fear that gripped the kid who became an orphan in an instant.

"Christopher, I'm going to talk to BJ in the hall for a minute, then we'll be back." They slowly closed the door and chatted about the situation.

"Can he come home with me for the time being?"

Turney hesitated. The boy had nowhere to go. As Christmas stood hours away, the only other option was foster care after he was released from the hospital. "I'm not sure this can be a long-term solution, but for the night, if he wants to go, I can make a call and make that happen."

They re-entered the room. "Christopher, would you be willing to stay at my house for a few nights?" BJ asked as he knelt to get at eye-level. "I know you have nowhere to go, so I would love to have you stay with me."

"I guess so ..."

The discharge papers were signed and BJ drove home with a boy who faced uncertainty. The pain of reality shook both, as a season meant for joy brought unspeakable pain. BJ showed Christopher to the guest room and gave Christopher a pair of pajamas that were pulled from the house fire three years earlier, the pajamas that belonged to BJ's son, Max.

Night fell. The quiet night of Christmas Eve normally allowed for dreams of what could be but on this night, the silence shook the soul with what was. BJ checked on the boy a couple of times, finding Christopher passed out from the exhaustion of the events of the day.

When morning broke, Christopher emerged from the back of the house.

"What are these?" he asked, unsure what to make of the packages underneath the tree.

BJ shared the story of what happened three Christmases earlier.

"These gifts were wrapped up in the back of my car for my son," he told Christopher. "I never removed them. There were years I wanted to give them away to an organization but for some reason, I could never let go of them."

"I think I know now why I could not give them away," he said with a grin.

Christopher slowly opened a gift. The football inside brought a slight smile to a broken boy's face.

"But, I don't have anything to give to you," Christopher mentioned as he looked again at the gifts before him.

"My gift is to see you smile, just as I imagine Max would have that Christmas."

Sometimes, a moment of joy can emerge from heaps of ashes. It did that Christmas morning.

## Chatham Charter School

Chatham Charter School is now accepting applications for openings in kindergarten and limited openings in first through eleventh grade for the 2022-2023 school year. Kindergarten applicants must be five years of age on or before August 31, 2022. The application period ends on January 28, 2022. Applications may be submitted online ([www.chathamcharter.org](http://www.chathamcharter.org)) under the "Admissions" link, at the school (2200 Hamp Stone Road, Siler City) or by calling (919) 742-4550.

*Chatham Charter School is a nonprofit, nondenominational public school providing quality education for children of all races, creeds, handicaps, and national origins.*

## La Escuela de Chatham Charter

La Escuela de Chatham Charter ahora está tomando aplicaciones para espacios del kinder y algunos espacios desde el primer grado hasta el grado once para el año escolar 2022-2023. Los niños que asistan al kinder deben tener cinco años de edad antes del 31 de agosto, 2022. El periodo de aplicación termina el 28 de enero, 2022. Puede completar una aplicación al Internet ([www.chathamcharter.org](http://www.chathamcharter.org)) al enlace Admissions, a la escuela (2200 Hamp Stone Road, Siler City) o por una llamada (919) 742-4550.

*La Escuela de Chatham Charter es una escuela pública, multidenominacional, y no lucrativa que provee una educación de la calidad para los niños de todos las razas, los credos, una condición de discapacidad, y los origenes nacionales.*

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# Chatham pastors event advocates for Christian values in elected office

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN  
News + Record Staff

**SILER CITY** — About 30 people attended a pastors conference sponsored by the N.C. Faith and Freedom Coalition held last Wednesday to focus on “threats to our religious freedom today.”

The group of mostly local pastors gathered to commemorate the 230th anniversary of the ratification of the Bill of Rights, specifically the First Amendment’s freedom of religion protections.

“We’re looking to be able to offer this program throughout North Carolina, but we didn’t really have it quite ready yet,” Jim Quick, grassroots director at N.C. Faith and Freedom, told the News + Record. “This really was a grassroots, individuals in Chatham County wanting to do this event, and we had some content that kind of fit what they were asking for.”

The coalition is a self-described “nonpartisan organization that supports Biblical principles” working to “connect people of faith to the political process.” Its “Salt and Light Conference” in September featured panels and speeches by many prominent conservatives, including Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson and U.S. Rep. Madison Cawthorn.

Discussion during Wednesday’s event mentioned threats to Christianity, including the fear of retribution for posting beliefs or Bible verses online or on social media platforms, or being unable to pray at work or school.

Though the event was billed around the theme of religious freedom, it primarily focused on the importance of organizing evangelical Christians to vote in officials who will advocate for “biblical principles.” Those principles aren’t listed anywhere on the coalition’s website, but to some evangelical voters, they can encompass anti-abortion and anti-LGBTQ policies.

“We believe that we should be in the public square, holding our faith and upholding our

values everywhere,” Quick said at Wednesday’s event. “That doesn’t mean that we’re disrespectful to others, it doesn’t mean that we don’t listen to others. But we are bold, and we are predictable in our faith.”

He encouraged those present to make sure they were registered to vote, adding that the coalition had registration forms on hand for anyone not already registered.

“It’s so important for you as a principled person to be able to be practicing these things in the public square,” he said.

## The First Amendment’s religious protections

The First Amendment contains two provisions concerning religion: the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause. The Free Exercise clause protects citizens’ right to practice their religion as they please, so long as the practice does not greatly conflict with “public morals” or a “compelling” governmental interest. The Establishment clause prohibits the government from “establishing” a religion and upholds the separation of church and state.

While last Wednesday’s event focused on religious freedoms, a former N.C. Faith and Freedom event included comments by Mark Robinson, who was elected Lt. Gov. in 2020, that the U.S. is and has always been a “Christian nation” and invited those who disagreed to leave the country.

“If you don’t like it, I’ll buy your plane, train, or automobile ticket right up out of here,” he told attendees at the coalition’s September “Salt & Light” event. “You can go to some place that’s not a Christian nation.”

Robinson’s political speeches are often include religious themes, and frequently assert that Christians are being persecuted in public schools and culture generally. His guest sermons at churches across the state have also included disparaging comments against LGBTQ

people. Though controversial, his views are generally accepted by conservative evangelicals, including the Faith and Freedom Coalition, and uncriticized by fellow Republican lawmakers.

Quick said the coalition generally disagrees with the idea that people who aren’t Christians should leave the country.

“I can’t talk to why the Lt. Gov. — what his viewpoint is and those comments, I was not there,” Quick told the News + Record regarding Robinson’s comments at an American Renewal Project luncheon. “So I would tend to say they were probably taken out of context, but I’ve not watched the whole video — so I don’t know why he made that comment.”

After the News + Record clarified that Robinson made the comments in question at the coalition’s “Salt & Light” conference and read the quote, Quick said his response was the same.

“You know, that’s his viewpoint. I think there’s certainly lots of historical data that says many of the people that came to America were a people of Christian faith when they came here,” he said. “Where I probably would disagree with the Lt. Gov. is probably telling people to get out of our state — that’s not just something that we advocate for, because again, we’re trying to educate voters on the issues and engage them to be more civically minded.”

“So that’s just not something that we would say,” Quick said.

## ‘Advocate for Christian perspectives and values’

Four of the speakers at the Chatham event on Wednesday — Natalya Androsova and Elena Gatt, Nick Fugh and Pastor Antonio Llega from Siler City — immigrated to the U.S. in the 1980s and ‘90s from Russia, China and Cuba, respectively, leaving behind socialist and communist governments. They spoke about the lack of food, medical care and religious freedom in their home countries, and they suggested that com-

munism and socialism were already present in the U.S.

“It’s an astonishing, astonishing piece of law and a part of our Constitution that many of us just take for granted because we were born here, and our families have lived here their whole lives,” Quick said of the First Amendment. “And so we wanted to mark the anniversary of the ratification to allow others that have not lived here all their lives to talk about what it really is like to live in other parts of the world that don’t have those freedoms.”

The event’s speakers blamed, without giving specifics, young people and liberal thought for the arrival of socialism and communism in America, and emphasized the importance of control over education to stand against brainwashing. No one directly mentioned Critical Race Theory, or the Republican-led education anti-CRT bills introduced throughout the country and in N.C., but GOP legislators have frequently used similar talking points to advocate for changes in how students learn about race and history in school.

Speakers didn’t give a definition of communism or socialism at the event, or specific examples of how the political ideologies are present in the country and creating threats to religious freedom.

Quick said many evangelicals were upset when churches were forced to close at the beginning of the pandemic.

(In an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, every state issued guidelines or orders limiting social gatherings, which originally included places of worship. By the end of April 2020, only 10 states prevented in-person religious gatherings in any form, according to a Pew Research Center analysis, with most other states including exemptions for religious gatherings to balance religious freedom concerns with safe social distancing practices. A federal judge’s May 2020 ruling led to N.C. places of worship being exempted from

pandemic restrictions.)

“The other thing that’s problematic in our society from our viewpoint is our culture is identifying things that may be taboo, or things that we shouldn’t talk about,” Quick said. “And we’re trying to, as a culture, apply that to what can and cannot be talked about at the pulpit.”

Quick said “elements of socialism,” including the concept of equity, “has crept into the Democratic platform.”

Coalition’s Ambassador Paul Brintley spoke briefly at the event about how liberals leverage racism to justify policies like welfare. Brintley was one of two Black pastors present and gave all the pastors present a copy of his book, “Black Lies Matter Too.” The 147-page book is listed at \$24.99 on Amazon.com.

Brintley also encouraged those present to support the Coalition by bringing similar events to their churches or bible studies, or by becoming a donor and part of the coalition’s “Inner Circle.” The six donor levels range from \$35 per year to \$10,000.

The ideas promoted at Wednesday’s event are popular among many evangelicals and according to Quick, organizations like N.C. Faith and Freedom are organizing to increase voter turnout regarding such issues in upcoming elections.

“In Faith and Freedom we’re not looking for a theocracy in our nation. We’re looking for men and women of God to be called to whatever position to use their values, use their God-given talents wherever it might be,” Quick said at the event. “We go across the state to be able to help people understand who is running for office and where they sit on those positions under the situation of salt and light, and we also advocate for Christian perspectives and values with anyone that’s in elected office.”

Reporter Hannah McClellan can be reached at [hannah@chathamnr.com](mailto:hannah@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @HannerMcClellan.

## Leake to be Installed as Pastor at Lambert Chapel Missionary Baptist Church

Kevin Leake will be installed as the 14th pastor at Lambert Chapel Missionary Baptist Church Sunday, January 2, 2022. He is a native of Chatham County and is the son of Reverend Larry W. and Mrs. Brenda Leake. His father is the former Pastor of First Missionary Baptist Church of Siler City, NC and currently serves as the Pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church of Monroe, North Carolina. Reverend Leake is a graduate of Monroe High School, Elon College, and High Point University. Currently he is the Principal at Thomasville Middle School, Thomasville NC, serving in that capacity since 2014. Prior to serving as Principal, Reverend Leake was a teacher for 10 years. Working with youth most of his professional career, Reverend Leake has served as an athletic coach, coaching high school football, boys’ and girls’ middle school basketball as well as youth mentoring.

In September of 2018, under the leadership of Pastor Mike Ferguson and Dr. Anthony Higgs, Reverend Leake accepted the call into the ministry. He preached his initial sermon at Cornerstone Community Church in Lexington, NC. Leake received his BA degree from Elon College in 1999. He furthered his education by receiving a Masters of Education degree in Educational Leadership from High Point College, High Point, NC in 2011 and was ordained as a minister in February of 2020.

In addition to his humility, Reverend Leake has an amazing zeal and is a trailblazer in every sense of the word. With over 3 years of experience in his young ministry Reverend Leake has been committed to teaching and preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ focusing on the spiritual and physical growth of a newly planted multiethnic, multi-generational non-denominational church. As the new pastor Reverend Leake prayerfully looks forward to serve Lambert Chapel Missionary Chapel through continued spiritual growth while prayerfully and intentionally seeking ways to show God’s love by being active and visible in multiple aspects of the community ranging from being involved in the school system to being active in civic organizations. Reverend Leake is the father of four children: Mikayla, Steven, Brittney, and Sasha (Nick) and four grandchildren: Jacari, Iliyah, Imani, and Brielle. He looks forward to bring about the desired change, by leading Lambert Chapel Missionary Baptist Church family to have a seat at the table where decisions are made. Reverend Leake’s former pastor, Mike Ferguson, will deliver the installation message Sunday, January 2, 2022 at 2:30 pm.



CN+R STAFF PICKS | MOST MEMORABLE GIFT

# REMEMBERING:

## A favorite Christmas present



### Kit Kittredge American Girl Doll

I remember every month, my mom would receive an American Girl doll store catalogue. I would spend hours flipping through the pages at the different dolls, each with their own, unique back story.

The doll I found myself drawn to was Kit Kittredge — a girl from Cincinnati growing up in the Great Depression.

Her dad lost his job, and her family was struggling to make ends meet. Kit wanted to make a difference in her family and community, so she moved to her attic to allow her parents to rent out her room to make some money, grew vegetables for her family to eat and she also wrote articles for her local newspaper about how the Great Depression caused poverty, hunger and homelessness in her own community.

She reminded me of my own great-grandmother (I called her Mom-Mom), who I had the privilege of knowing until she passed away when I was 13. Mom-Mom was (and still is) one of my heroes, and in a way, this doll was like having her around at all times. She was a teenager during the Great Depression in the foothills of Maryland, working hard to help her family make ends meet — just like Kit.

So when Santa gave me her doll for Christmas when I was eight-years-old — in the middle of the Great Recession ironically enough — I was ecstatic. I read all of the books that centered around Kit's story, and I was inspired by the doll's story of perseverance and drive. Kit has always held a special place in my heart. Maybe it's her story. Maybe it's the connection I felt to her in my relating the doll to Mom-Mom. Whatever it is, I hope I can be as cool as Kit Kittredge and Mom-Mom were.

- Taylor Heeden, reporter



### Negamco Baseball

During my adolescent years, I was a sports nut. But after moving from a neighborhood full of kids in Sanford to a tiny town in Kansas, suddenly finding a picking game was like putting your hands on a rainbow — a pretty elusive endeavor. I'm not sure how I came across "tabletop" sports games, but sometime



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it was) and she said "OK" and walked away.

I think I finally fessed up to opening the present early 10 or 15 years later, and she was aghast — and then laughed and laughed.

I played that game ceaselessly for a couple of years before adding other games (APBA Golf, Statis-Pro Basketball, Sports Illustrated football and more) to my collection, and even bought the best of all of these games — Strat-O-Matic Baseball, which rivals Dungeons & Dragons for its legion of hard-core devotees — for myself and my son Zach when he was a boy. But that Negamco baseball game — even in 1976, considered on the lower rung of tabletop simulation games — was gold to me.

- Bill Horner III, publisher and editor

### What Christmas really means

Like most folks, through the years I've received many memorable Christmas gifts, including as a little boy a large toy service station, complete with cars, I played with for hours with my dad. Today there's a family picture of that and when looking at it, immediately I'm five again. But as I've aged, I've come to realize my best gift isn't a thing but an awareness — an awareness of what Christmas really means.

Sure, Christmas is full of many things — family, traditions, gifts, Santa Claus and more and they're all fine — in the right perspective. The right perspective is there's more to life than those things. To be honest, I haven't arrived at the total understanding of all that but the journey is great. Just to be still and, like Mary about Jesus, to ponder the Ultimate is the gift that keeps on giving.

- Bob Wachs, columnist

### My mom

My parents divorced when I was still very young, so most of my Christmas memories were with my mom and my three brothers. We didn't have a whole lot growing up, but my mom somehow made sure we got everything we ever wanted for Christmas. I don't remember a favorite gift because they were all so special — from Baby Alive, Chrissy dolls, Easy Bake Oven, and a kitchen set from Sears. My mom made everything so special, decorating the mantel with fresh holly, pine and candles. We would string popcorn and cranberries to hang on the tree along with the other ornaments and lights. Christmas Day was always very exciting to wake up

games that week and, to my horror, mom once walked into my room mid-game to ask me what I was doing. I played it cool and nonchalantly told her some fib (I can't remember now what



and open our presents and to smell the delicious aroma of a big turkey cooking in the oven. My mom made each one special and for that, I thank her.

- Karen Pyrtle, business manager

### White fur shoulder cape

Christmas, 1960. My wish list was complete and my Christmas allowance was used up!

The Grey House, a ladies clothing store on East Raleigh Street, put a Christmas Outfit in the window, topped by a "white fur" shoulder cape. Not only was it beautiful, but it would be a perfect match for the Junior-Senior dress that I was planning to make for the banquet (before proms). I never did not ask for it, but dad had to see how I admired it each time we rode by.

The day came when it disappeared from the window! (I was disappointed but never expected to get it anyway — of course, I could dream!) Christmas, when presents were opened, shock wasn't the word for it. Unbelief was more like it! Dad made my dream come true. It was perfect!!!

See why I always have been a "Daddy's Girl"?

- Doris Beck, classifieds/obituaries news clerk

### Nikon camera

The most memorable Christmas gift that I have ever received was a Nikon Coolpix 300 camera. The reason why this is my most memorable gift is because this camera is what got me into photography and made me want to learn all about it. I was 15 years old when I got it and I can remember as soon as I got it, I went out and took so many pictures. Now I am in college at Randolph Community College and studying Commercial Photography and can't wait to see what I can do when I graduate.

- Simon Barbre, photographer

him. Though I'd isolated, I still worried that I might expose him to COVID-19; we all knew, including my grandpa, that his compromised health made him at very high risk of catching and dying from COVID.

Just a few weeks from when he was set to get his first vaccine (which he was very excited about), he died from a heart attack at about 2:30 in the morning, with my grandma by his side.

In the grief that followed his death, I was so grateful I had made the choice to see him, and for one last time to see him, hug him and say, "I love you."

In his final years, my grandpa was hard of hearing, even with his hearing aids. So our last conversations weren't especially thrilling. We discussed my job, my application to grad school and his love for UNC Basketball. He told me he was proud of me, and he gifted me one last present: one of his old UNC (truly vintage) windbreakers, now too large for his ever-shrinking frame.

For as long as I can remember, I've loved scoring vintage and thrifited pieces. But this piece, given to me by my grandpa on the last day I'd ever see him, is by far my favorite.

- Hannah McClellan, education reporter and web editor

### My first bicycle

My first bicycle was amazing and liberating. We put baseball cards in the spokes so the wheels would make flapping noises when I was flying down hills. Having a bike gave me so much freedom to explore places beyond my neighborhood with my sister.

- Kim Hawks, photographer

### A ping pong table

My family and I have traveled to Boca Raton, Florida, for every Christmas that I can remember aside from last year. Each year, my uncle and cousins battle for the top ping pong player in the family I remember asking for a home ping pong table. It was the first gift I ever asked for. I'm not someone who often asks for anything so this gift stands out. I wasn't really expecting to get it, but when I walked into the basement with my parents, I was so excited that I immediately played a game with my dad.

- Max Baker, sports/social media intern

**Kids SIGN UP**

**Beauty and the Beast**

**OUTSIDERS**

**Claddin**

**PITTSBORO YOUTH THEATER .com**

**OUTSTANDING 2020 AWARDS IN THE TRIANGLE**

# OBITUARIES

## SARA HUDDLESTON BURGESS



Sara Huddleston Burgess, affectionately known as Grandma Sara, was born in Siler City on March 14, 1931, to Hallie and Richard Huddleston. After graduating from Siler City High School in 1949, she worked as a dental assistant for Dr. Joe Edwards and as a bookkeeper at Edwards Motors.

Through her work at Edwards Motors, she met J.C. (Jake) Burgess. They were married in 1953 and blessed with five children. In 1972, Jake died unexpectedly in a plane crash. After working several jobs to support her family, she made the decision to continue her education. She began college at the age of 43, graduating from UNC-Greensboro in 1978. Sara taught at Bonlee and Siler City Elementary schools. She also worked at CCCC in the adult literacy program.

Sara was a lover of books, flowers, and food; a laundry guru, a piano player, and an eternal optimist. If you ever asked Sara, she would say her greatest accomplishments were her children and grandchildren.

In addition to her husband, Sara was preceded in death by her siblings: Francis Bonds, Sallie Hackney, Virginia "Gigi" Paschal, and Richard "Dick" Huddleston.

She passed away peacefully at her home on December 18th, 2021 (the day before what would have been her 68th wedding anniversary).

She leaves many to remember her: her children, Saja Burgess, Holly Brower (Mike), Andra Burks (Eddie), Clint Burgess (Alisa), Sam Burgess (Angela); her grandchildren, Jake Brower, Kelly Brower, Yuhua Burgess, JinZe Burgess, Carson Burgess, Andrew Burgess, and Kate Burgess; many special nieces, nephews, and neighbors! Special friend, Pottip Beck; her caregiver and friend, Judy White.

The family would like to thank the many caregivers from Hospice.

There will be a graveside service at Rehobeth Methodist Church in Ramseur on Monday, December 27, at 2 p.m. The family will be at Grandma Sara's house following the service to share memories and celebrate her life.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the Burgess family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.pughfuneral-home.com](http://www.pughfuneral-home.com).

## JOELLA MOBLEY JONES

Joella Mobley Jones, 86, of Goldston, passed away on December 18, 2021, at First Health Hospice, in Pinehurst, N.C.

Joella was born in Durham, N.C., on April 23, 1935, the daughter of Isaac and Inez Holder Mobley. She was a member of Sandy Branch Baptist Church. Joella spent her working years as a bookkeeper for several small businesses. She loved going shopping, and was always doing things for others. Joella made sure to send cards to everyone for special occasions. She is preceded in death by her parents and grandparents.

She is survived by her son, Justin Williams and wife Linda; granddaughter, Amy Poe and husband Larry; and great-grandchildren, Parker Jake and Lillie Poe.

A graveside service was held at 1 p.m. on Monday, December 20, 2021, at Sandy Branch Baptist Church Cemetery, 715 Sandy Branch Church Rd., Bear Creek, N.C., with Josh Conrad officiating.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home assisted the Jones family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.pughfuneral-home.com](http://www.pughfuneral-home.com).

## MICHAEL CARL LESLIE

Michael Carl Leslie, 53, of Sanford, passed away Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at First Health Moore Regional Hospital.

The funeral service was held Saturday, December 18, 2021, at 11 at Northview Christian Church with Rev. Mike Johnson officiating. Burial followed in Lee Memory Gardens.

He was born in Lee County on August 23, 1968, to Carl and Judy Clifton Leslie. He was preceded in death by grandparents James B. and Carrie Lee Clifton and Bernice and Addie Leslie. Mike was known for his work as a plumber.

In addition to his parents, Mike is survived by his wife Beth; sisters, Connie Leslie of Sanford, Mary Long of Conway, S.C., Adrienne Hill of Georgetown, S.C., and Emily Rudder of Erwin, N.C.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## MATTHEW JAMES THOMAS

Matthew James Thomas, 32, of Sanford, died Sunday, December 12, 2021, at his home.

The funeral was conducted at 2 p.m. Thursday, December 16, 2021, at Faith Baptist Church with Rev. Willie Bryant and Rev. Wayne O'Quinn officiating. Burial followed in Holly Springs Baptist Church Cemetery in Broadway.

He was preceded in death by his grandfather, M.G. Thomas.

Survivors include his mother, Wendy Elizabeth Thomas of Sanford; grandparents, Faye and Gene Richardson of Sanford; daughter, Ellie Marie Thomas of Asheville; and step-daughter, Emmy Rose Woodson of Asheville; and brother, Andrew Goins of Sanford.

Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com](http://www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com).

Arrangements are by the Smith Funeral Home of Broadway.

## JAMES HENRY CRUMPLER JR.

James Henry Crumpler Jr., age 78 of Fuquay Varina, died Monday, December 13, 2021, at home.

The funeral service was held at 1 p.m. Friday, December 17, 2021, at the Smith Funeral Home Chapel in Broadway with Rev. Garland Smith officiating. Burial followed in the Clinton City Cemetery.

He was born on December 16, 1942, son of the late James Henry Crumpler Sr. and Mary Magdalene Quinn Crumpler. He was preceded in death by his parents, his daughter, Mary Denise Crumpler Baldwin and his son, John Scott Crumpler. James was a Veteran of the United States Army, serving in Vietnam.

Survivors include his wife of 51 years, Nancy Hanson Crumpler of the home; daughters, Karren Crumpler Crawford of Fuquay Varina, and Susan LeeAnn Smith of Clayton; eight grandchildren, and one great-grandson.

Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com](http://www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com). Mathew James Thomas.

## KEITH BARRON FOX

Keith Barron Fox, 69, of Sanford, passed away on Tuesday, December 7, 2021, at his home.

Funeral service was held at 2 p.m. Saturday, December 18, 2021, at Trinity United Methodist Church, with burial following in New Zion Church, Jonesboro Cemetery.

## ROBERT McDUFFIE

Robert McDuffie, 78, of Sanford passed away on Saturday, December 11, 2021, at his home.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. Thursday, December 16, 2021, at Mt. Pisgah Lee OFWB Church, with burial following in the church cemetery.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## MELVIN RICHARD MOORE

Melvin Richard Moore, 90, of Siler City, passed away on Thursday, December 16, 2021, at Chatham Hospital.

Melvin was born in Rutherford County on September 22, 1931, the son of Richard Carson and Hazel Hoyle Moore. He was a U.S. Air Force Veteran, serving his country proudly during the Korean Conflict. Melvin was an active member of Hickory Grove United Methodist Church. He cherished his time spent with his family. In addition to his parents, Melvin is preceded in death by his sisters, Joyce Price, Ann Wilson, Pat Weaver, and a brother, Bill Moore.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Sylvia Brewer Moore; sons, Terry Alan White and wife Gail of Asheboro, James Michael White and Daniel Wayne White, both of Siler City; daughters, Donna Scott and husband Tom of Kernersville, and Tamara Whitton, all of Kernersville; grandchildren, Robert and Benjamin Scott, Cory White, Marianne Williams and husband Jody; eight great-grandchildren; and brothers, Dr. Rev. Robert Moore of Sylva, and Ronald Moore and wife Ann of Forest City.

Friends came to pay their respects on Friday, December 17, 2021, from 12 to 5 p.m. at Smith & Buckner Funeral Home, 230 N. Second Ave., Siler City. A graveside service was held at Hickory Grove United Methodist Church Cemetery, 10085 Silk Hope-Liberty Rd., Liberty, N.C., on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at 2 p.m. with Rev. Laura Beth Casey officiating. The family received friends after the service at the church.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home assisted the Moore family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.pughfuneral-home.com](http://www.pughfuneral-home.com).

## JUNIOR WINFORD LUCAS

Junior Winford Lucas, 85, of Bear Creek, passed away on Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at Siler City Center.

The funeral was held at 2 p.m. on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at Faith Baptist Church with Pastor Johnny Lamonds and Pastor Cliff Jordan presiding.

He was born in Montgomery County on March 4, 1936, to Hosea and Samantha Ritter Lucas. Junior was a member of Hickory Grove Christian Church and a U.S. Army Veteran. He worked as a carpet installer for more than 50 years. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by four brothers and three sisters.

He is survived by his daughters, Lisa Lamonds of Bear Creek and Jessica Lucas of Pittsboro; a sister, Jesse Brown of South Carolina; and four grandchildren.

Condolences may be offered online at [www.joycebrady-chapel.com](http://www.joycebrady-chapel.com).

## JERRY TAFT CARTER

Jerry Taft Carter, 77, of Sanford, passed away Thursday, December 16, 2021, at his home.

Funeral services were held at 3 p.m. Sunday, December 19, 2021, at Moore Union Christian Church with Rev. David Yarborough officiating. Burial followed in the church cemetery.

He was born on June 12, 1944, son of the late Woodrow Taft and Katherine Thomas Carter. He attended the School of Radiological Technology in Durham. He worked at John Umstead Hospital in Butner, retiring with 31 years of service. He then worked at Sanford Medical Group and later served on the staff of Smith Funeral Home. He was a member of Moore Union Christian Church.

Surviving is his sister, Vivian Carter Thomas of Hickory; and a brother, Randy Carter of Broadway.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in his honor to Moore Union Christian Church, 4294 Buckhorn Road, Sanford, N.C. 27330.

Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com](http://www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com).

## ROBERT GORDON COX

Robert Gordon Cox, 54, of Sanford, passed away on Friday, December 17, 2021, at his home.

A graveside service was held on Sunday, December 19, 2021, at 3 p.m. at Turner's Chapel Church Cemetery with Chaplain O'Quinn officiating.

He was born on May 25, 1967, in Lee County to Bobbie Wicker Allen and Edward Lee Cox. He was preceded in death by grandfather Reuben Wicker and sister Renee Hall. Prior to his illness, Gordon worked in home construction for many years.

He is survived by his mother and step-father Bobbie and Jerry Allen of Sanford; father, Edward Cox of Sanford; son, Jordan Allen of Sanford; daughter, Brittanie Allen Thomas of Sanford; sisters, Katherine Creador of Sanford and Kimberly Allen of Kentucky; four grandchildren; and grandmother, Gwen Wicker of Sanford.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## LINDA GAIL MONROE PUTNAM

Linda Gail Monroe Putnam, 81, of Cameron, passed away on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, at her home.

The funeral service was held on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at 11 a.m. at Cameron Hill Presbyterian Church with Rev. Wayne O'Quinn officiating. Burial followed in Hillmon Grove Cemetery.

She was born in Alabama on October 12, 1940, to the late Herbert Virgil and Lois Couch Monroe. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, James F. Putnam, a son, James F. Putnam Jr., and brother, Herbert V. Monroe Jr.

Linda worked at Moen.

She is survived by a son, Victor Putnam of Cameron; daughter, Brenda Gail Moring of Cameron; sisters, Janice Waldrep and Betty Alvis, both of Alabama; six grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## LUCY MAE GREENWOOD HARRIS

Lucy Mae Greenwood Harris, 91, of Bear Creek, died Saturday, December 18, 2021, at Central Carolina Hospital.

The funeral service was held Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at 3 p.m. in the Chapel of Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home with Pastor Don Edwards and Rev. Joel Murr officiating. Burial followed in Grace Chapel Church cemetery.

Mrs. Harris was born in Surry County, on January 21, 1930, to the late Spencer Andrew and Lela Kennedy Greenwood. She was a homemaker and was preceded in death by her husband, Earl D. Harris, and a son, James Ray Harris.

Surviving relatives include her sons, David Harris of Bear Creek, and Earl Harris Jr. of Fuquay-Varina; a daughter, Kim Howerton of High Point; a brother, Jack Greenwood of Lexington, Kentucky; four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, P.O. Box 1893, Memphis, TN 38101-9950 or online at [www.stjude.org/donate](http://www.stjude.org/donate).

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## JOYCE MARIETTA (BARNES) FARRINGTON

Joyce B. Farrington, 79, of Chapel Hill, passed away Friday, December 17, 2021, at Emory Midtown Hospital, in Atlanta, Georgia.

Services are entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

## NATALIA GOMEZ VAZQUEZ

Natalia Gomez Vazquez, 71, of Broadway, passed away on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at her residence in Broadway.

Professional services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Sanford.

## REBECCA THOMAS MANSFIELD

Mrs. Rebecca Thomas Mansfield, 89, of Sanford, passed away Sunday, December 19, 2021, at Parkview Retirement Center.

The family will receive friends on Sunday, December 26, 2021, from 1 to 2 p.m. at Shallow Well Church. The funeral service will follow at 2 p.m. with Rev. Eric Burmah and Rev. Mike Edwards officiating. Burial will follow in the church cemetery.

She was born in Lee County on July 21, 1932, to the late John Edgar and Tula Walker Thomas. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Ervin Mansfield and siblings, Lula Mae McKenzie, Edna Alexander, Jean Andrews, Thelma Coleman, Rachel Ervin, Walker Thomas, Sam Thomas, and Marvin Thomas. She was a member of Shallow Well Church.

Survivors include daughter, Mae Spivey of Sanford and son, Tommy Mansfield of Sanford; one granddaughter; three great-grandchildren; and brother, Joe Thomas of Sanford.

Please consider donations to Shallow Well Church, 1220 Broadway Road, Sanford, NC 27332 and/or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

Arrangements are by Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneral-home.com).

## CLARA (SENIOR) AIRALL

Clara Airall, 102, of Durham, passed away Friday, December 17, 2021, at her home.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home, Chapel Hill.

## LASHEANA HOPE HUNT

LaSheana Hope Hunt, 35, of Sanford passed away on Monday, December 13, 2021, at her residence.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

## IRENE BREWER

Mrs. Irene Brewer, 92, of Siler City, passed away Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at her home.

Services entrusted to Knotts & Son Funeral Home.

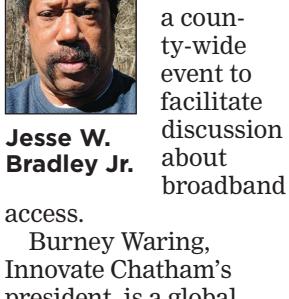
## MYRON 'TAT

## CHATHAM CHAT | INNOVATE CHATHAM

# New nonprofit group seeks 'digital inclusion,' better broadband for county

Jan. 5 event will feature providers who could help address problems

The lack of adequate broadband access in rural portions of North Carolina is well documented. This week, we speak with two members of the leadership team from Innovate Chatham, which — in addition to helping local residents learn about digital technology — is preparing to host a county-wide event to facilitate discussion about broadband



Burney Waring

leadership team from Innovate Chatham, which — in addition to helping local residents learn about digital technology — is preparing to host a county-wide event to facilitate discussion about broadband

access.

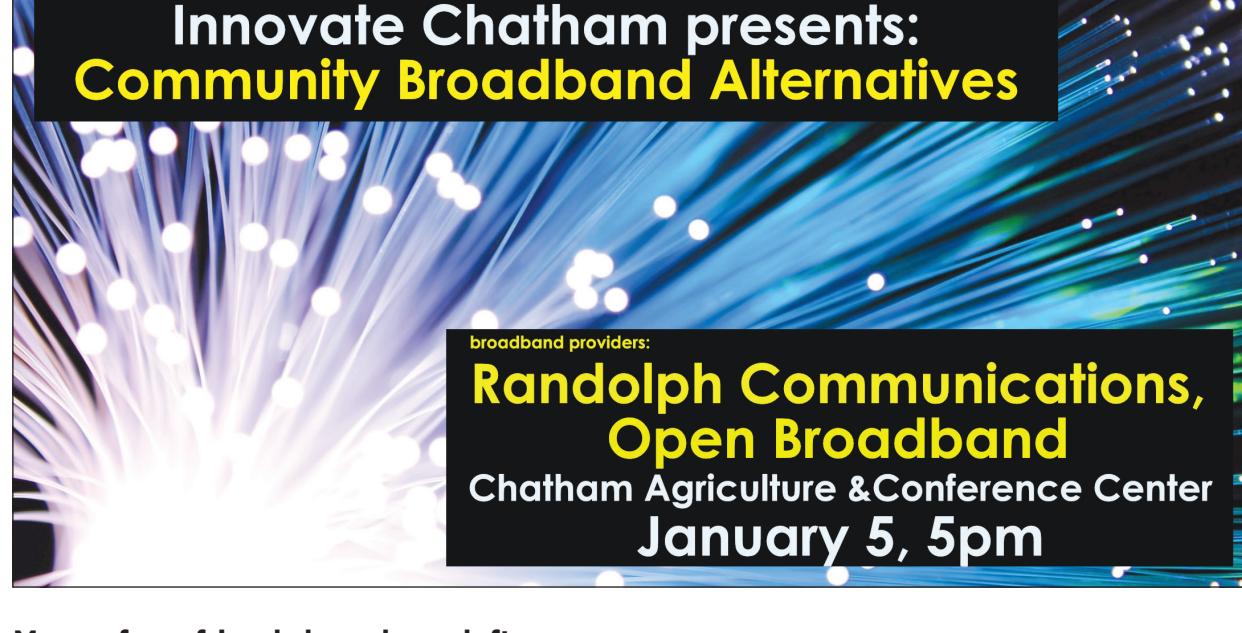
Burney Waring, Innovate Chatham's president, is a global consulting engineer. He took his wife Debbie and three children to Louisiana and The Netherlands for 14 years, each, before landing in Chatham in 2010. He enjoys teaching, programming, writing, art, and being around or in water.

Jesse R. Bradley IV is one of the group's directors. He's also the program director and founder of the Right Here, Right Now Project, a nonprofit organization formed in 2016 to provide low- to moderate-income communities digital literacy training and access to the tools of technology. He retired from the Rhode Island Dept. of Transportation after 28 years as a systems support technician.

**Let's start with your nonprofit organization, Innovate Chatham. What's the background, scope and focus of your work?**

**BURNY WARING:** We began as a small group of people getting together to socialize, network and talk about digital technology. We started having people present to us about interesting topics, which we turned into events we called "Chatham Tech

If you want to help us with any of this, let us know! We have social media links and our email address here: innovat-



**Many of our friends have been left without decent broadband access, even though they live in wealthy and middle-class areas. We started looking for alternatives to the otherwise slow timetable for broadband rollout.**

**BURNY WARING, Innovate Chatham**

Talks." That was about three years ago, and we have grown to about 70 members.

Along the way, we made contacts in the Chatham school system and began helping out, providing speakers for career days, giving a few engineering lectures, participating as judges in science fairs, and sponsoring a robotics club. This led to our group working with Communities In Schools of Chatham County, which has given our members the chance to tutor kids, mentor them, and teach them computer app and game development. We are currently developing a maker space that we hope to set up at The Alliance in Siler City where we plan to teach kids (and eventually adults) to build digital devices and apps. In general, we want to connect our members' knowledge and experience to organizations and efforts in Chatham that might benefit.

If you want to help us with any of this, let us know! We have social media links and our email address here: innovat-

echatham.org  
**JESSE R. BRADLEY IV:** It is becoming more and more of a necessity to understand digital technology (e.g. the web, computers, apps, devices) to be able to live well and have the broadest set of career opportunities. We love it here in Chatham and want to make it easier for kids that grow up here to stay here and flourish. Similarly, we know that many adults could use some help in taking full advantage of digital technology. We want to improve the "digital inclusion" of all Chathamites. That is the focus of our nonprofit, Innovate Chatham, formed only a month ago.

**What kinds of issues have the "Chatham Tech Talks" addressed, and what's been the reception?**

**WARING:** We have had a wide variety of events. For example, we had the geniuses at 3DFS explain software-defined electricity to us. We had one of our members explain how he trenched and distributed fiber optics

around his neighborhood. We had a " sounding board" event for local entrepreneurs to get feedback on their business ideas. We had an "Art Meets Tech" event where we had local digital and physical artists show off their work. We had several events about cybersecurity. Generally, we had 20+ people show up pre-pandemic, and a bit less for the events that had to be virtual. We would love to have more people who are enthusiastic about technology join our organization.

**When you talk about "digital inclusion," that involves broadband access. The lack of broadband access — not to mention the lack of good broadband access — has been a hindrance in Chatham County. The N.C. General Assembly has addressed it in part by helping to fund solutions, but in your mind: what are the key roadblocks to access here, and what are the best solutions that most adequately resolve the problem?**

**BRADLEY:** Digital inclusion refers to the activities necessary to ensure that all individuals and communities, including the most disadvantaged, have access to and use of Information Communication Technologies. This includes five elements: 1) affordable, robust broadband internet service; 2) internet-enabled devices that meet the needs of the user; 3) access to digital literacy training; 4) quality technical support; 5) applications and online content designed to enable and encourage self-sufficiency, participation, and collaboration. Digital inclusion must evolve as technology advances. Digital inclusion requires intentional strategies and investments to reduce and eliminate historical, institutional and structural barriers to access and use technology.

The digital divide is the gap between those who have affordable access, skills and support

to effectively engage online and those who do not. As technology constantly evolves, the digital divide prevents equal participation and opportunity in all parts of life, disproportionately affecting people of color, Indigenous peoples, households with low incomes, people with disabilities, people in rural areas and older adults.

In particular, broadband equity is achieved when all people and communities are able to access and use affordable, high-speed, reliable internet that meets their long-term needs. We hope to get some new ideas going with our event on Jan. 5.

**About the event you're hosting on Jan. 5: What's going to happen? Why do people need to attend? When it comes to potential solutions that'll be discussed at your event, what most people want to know is: what's it going to cost me? As well as: how soon? And: how fast?**

**WARING:** Many of our friends have been left without decent broadband access, even though they live in wealthy and middle-class areas. We started looking for alternatives to the otherwise slow timetable for broadband rollout. We found two providers who say they are willing to build a network for a small community and were willing to come talk to us. One of them, Randolph Communications, is a pure fiber provider. The other, Open Broadband, can tie into fiber and provide fixed wireless broadband within a small area.

At our Jan. 5 event, we will discuss the potential, the process, and the costs involved in getting broadband into a community. It would be quite a success if we could help even one neighborhood gain access to decent broadband. We hope to learn about these solutions, as well as which communities are in need — and if there is something our organization could do to

help.

We welcome anyone who is part of a community in need of decent broadband to come to our event, which begins at 5 p.m. on Jan. 5 at the Chatham Agricultural & Conference Center in Pittsboro. The event is free and you can sign up via Eventbrite. The link is here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/community-broadband-alternatives-tickets-220265880177>.

**What's the payoff for Chatham County for complete (or at least near-complete) broadband access, particularly when you think about the work-from-home and/or tech-driven job opportunities that exist today?**

**WARING:** Great question. Broadband is already as essential as electricity, water, and roads. Decent broadband access is one of the things that people have to have to even consider moving here. "Do you have good internet?" was the first question I asked before I moved here 10 years ago.

I am a consulting engineer with global clients, and one of my sons works for a major company whose office is in NYC. Many of our members — and many others in Chatham — already have similar opportunities.

Imagine that we could give every person in Chatham that opportunity — allowing them to work in good jobs for businesses that pay the best, that happen to be based elsewhere, anywhere on the planet. Imagine how far our residents' money would go compared to living in expensive cities. Imagine that their household spending and tax payments stayed here in Chatham. Imagine what that could do for our local businesses, amenities, and infrastructure over time. Imagine how much we could all flourish without losing the things that make Chatham a great place to live.

Ready for a scary thought? Imagine what happens if we don't. Without good broadband access, people will find better places to live.

**BRADLEY:** We know broadband is two sides of a coin: the access side — the access to the pipes and wires, and the adoption side — whether a household subscribes to the service. A household or community needs both sides of the metaphorical coin to realize the value that broadband promises. Innovate Chatham recognizes adoption as an equally important factor to addressing the digital divide by leveraging grants and creating partnerships to understand the issue better, pilot innovative ideas, and create viable and sustainable solutions.

Research demonstrates that individuals who adopt broadband are more likely to find jobs, learn new skills, and successfully navigate social services than those who do not adopt. Improving adoption rate is, therefore, a key strategy for education, success, civic engagement and economic growth.

**Happy 60th ANNIVERSARY**

**CLYDE & DORIS BECK**

**DECEMBER 22, 2021**



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together and  
given us such  
a wonderful example  
of love and devotion to follow.  
  
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**For more information:** [www.innovatechatham.org](http://www.innovatechatham.org)

## MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# Meals on Wheels: delivering a warm meal (and much more) to Chatham County seniors

BY KARA LUSK DUDLEY

Chatham County Public Information Officer

For many years, I have heard about the Meals on Wheels program and how it provides a warm, nutritious meal to older adults who may otherwise go hungry. In early December, I got to experience firsthand how the program makes a difference in the lives of Chatham County seniors by delivering these meals and so much more.

Around 10:30 a.m. that morning, Alan Russo, who oversees the nutrition program at the Chatham County Council on Aging Eastern Senior Center in Pittsboro, began packing up food delivery bags. Some bags were insulated to keep hot meals warm. Other bags were filled with ice packs to keep perishable items cold.

Even while wearing his face covering, I could see Mr. Russo beaming with joy as he prepared the day's meals.

"Being able to feed those who can't get regular, warm meals is really important," Russo said. "It makes their day to see someone, a friendly face, at their door. Sometimes, we might be the only people they see."

The Chatham County Council on Aging currently serves approximately 80 seniors through its Meals on Wheels program. Delivering meals to this many folks five days a week is no small feat. About 65 volunteer drivers have



Submitted photo

**Alan Russo, who oversees the nutrition program at the Chatham County Council on Aging Eastern Senior Center in Pittsboro, helps prepare meals for delivery for the county's Meals on Wheels program.**

regular Meals on Wheels routes and another 40 drivers serve as backup volunteers who can fill in as needed. The volunteers serve a critical need. The warm meal leads to a warm conversation, which goes a long way in connecting many of these seniors with the community.

Larry Ross is one of the volunteer drivers. He currently serves as president on the Council on Aging's Board of Directors, but he has been volunteering with Meals on Wheels for six years. I got to ride along with him on his regular Monday delivery route. It was a beautiful day as we traveled along U.S. Hwy. 64 and lots of rural roads in Chatham County.

"This is where you get to know the people," said Ross. "We're not just delivery drivers. We provide meaningful conversation, and we become their

friends."

Eighty-seven-year-old Mary Reaves, of Pittsboro, can attest to that friendship. Mrs. Reaves not only anticipates the delicious meal she receives from Ross, but she also looks forward to seeing her friend.

"He is so wonderful, and I appreciate him and this meal so much," she said.

During our route, we delivered meals to seven Chatham County seniors. It was a great feeling to watch Mr. Ross deliver each meal with care and compassion.

Meals on Wheels volunteers can check on other things in the home as they come to know the people they visit. For example, if they see some minor home repairs that need to be made, they can refer those needs to Council on Aging staff.

Between now and Jan. 3, Subaru of America will



Submitted photo

**Mary Reaves, sitting, poses with Chatham County's Kara Lusk Dudley and volunteer driver Larry Ross after a meal delivery.**



Submitted photo

**Volunteer driver Larry Ross makes a stop during Meals on Wheels delivery.**

MERRY  
Christmas  
A - AND - HAPPY NEW YEAR

Chatham News + Record



A FILM PERSPECTIVE | DISNEY'S 'ENCANTO'

# How 'Encanto' helped me further connect with my own family dynamics

BY HEIDI PÉREZ-MORENO  
News + Record Intern

Like most children, I grew up watching Disney movies. I kept a collection of DVD's above my bedside packed with my favorites — "The Little Mermaid," "Beauty and the Beast" and "Alice in Wonderland."

As much as I enjoyed sitting through these films, I knew deep down these movies were all entirely fictional and drawn from fantasy situations. I could relate to their personalities and personal experiences, but was aware of the inherently fictional basis.

But upon watching Disney's latest film "Encanto," I could easily relate to Stephanie Beatriz's character, Mirabel. The movie, set in Colombia, follows a magical family known as the Madrigals. Their house is also embedded with magical powers.

Written by Lin-Manuel

Miranda, the movie focuses on Mirabel — the only member of the family without magical powers. The rest of her family received a wide range of powers, like turning objects into flowers and super strength.

But when a dark force comes to threaten Mirabel's home, she has to seek a key that will protect her kin. Going through this journey helps her realize that she doesn't need magic to be great.

I saw myself in Mirabel as she compared herself to the talents and powers of those around her, and that in turn made it so much more engaging to follow along with her journey of discovering that it doesn't make her any less than her family members.

Growing up, it was easy to compare myself to my cousins and other family members — whether that meant they were



Courtesy of Walt Disney Animation Studios

A scene from the film 'Encanto.'

doing better academically, socially or were just overall more attractive.

As the only cousins without siblings, we felt like the odd one of the family mix. I often felt like I didn't have the same connections, resources and support than my other cousins who had each other.

That's why I think it was easier to relate to Mirabel than other Disney characters. As I grew up, I had to come to find my own strength in the family and not compare myself. It can be a hard lesson to learn — and I saw that as Mirabel went on her journey throughout the movie.

Although she is bright, joyful and optimistic, she is also inherently flawed, and that helped me see the humanity in her and connect to her experiences.

I also saw so much of my own family's dynamic in Madrigals. Although I don't have siblings, I have cousins that I've shared similar experiences with.

Abuela Alma, the matriarch and glue that holds the family together, resembles my grandmother in a lot of ways. She is easily the person in our large family that keeps everyone coming to family reunions and helps us whenever we need it. When I saw Luisa, the

middle child gifted with super strength, come onto the screen, I immediately thought of my eldest cousin, who I looked up to as a child as someone who was infinitely smarter, stronger and wiser than me.

Making family such a focal point in the movie helps me further connect with this film as a whole, and I feel like it's such an important dynamic when telling Latino stories.

Family and togetherness is so embedded into Latin American culture, and it's been expressed in several other Disney adaptations. "Coco," the 2017 Disney/Pixar release by directors Lee Unkrich and Adrian Molina, is

just one example.

Overall, this movie was a fun watch. Beatriz's portrayal of Mirabel was show-stopping and was delivered in such a way that I truly connected with her thoughts and emotions.

"Encanto" (2021) is available to watch at select movie theaters across the nation. The movie will be available through Disney+ on Dec. 24.

*Heidi Pérez-Moreno is part of the reporting team for La Voz De Chatham, a bilingual reporting project through the Chatham News + Record. She is a senior studying journalism at UNC-Chapel Hill.*

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# Hispanic Liaison holds online booster, kids' vaccine Q&A for Chatham's Spanish speakers

BY VICTORIA JOHNSON  
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — The Hispanic Liaison hosted an online chat last Saturday to provide free information about children's vaccines and boosters to the Spanish-speaking community.

Broadcast via Facebook Live, the video is available on the Liaison's Facebook page. Will Mendoza, the Liaison's COVID-19 Project Manager, moderated the chat, posing questions both from and on behalf of Chatham's Spanish speakers to two local health experts: UNC's Dr. Michael Herce and the Chatham Public Health Department's Nellie Benitez.

That chat's first panelist, Nellie Benitez, has worked with the CCPHD for 21 years; since the inception of COVID-19, she has worked to educate and inform local Latino families about how they can protect themselves against COVID-19. The second panelist, Dr. Michael Herce, is an assistant professor of medicine in the infectious diseases division at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Here's a translated and edited transcript of what each had to say during Saturday's conversation:

## On booster shots

**What vaccines are being offered in Chatham, and do people have the ability to choose the booster they want?**

BENITEZ: Right now all vaccines are available in the county. ... We also have our clinic at the health department, which offers the Moderna boosters on Wednesdays and Fridays, but the CDC just issued a statement [last week] indicating that the preference would be to get Moderna or Pfizer over Johnson & Johnson. This is because there is some very limited data that some people may have a blood-clotting reaction to the Johnson & Johnson injection. But if there is nothing else, then you can take the Johnson & Johnson.

**Do these vaccines, these boosters, also help fight against the new COVID mutations?**

HERCE: We are still learning about the newest COVID variant Omicron. What we already

know is that it's much more transmissible than previous COVID variants and at least twice as transmissible as the Delta variant ... This variant can infect people who have had COVID-19 in the past.

The good news is that two doses of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine still offer very good protection against severe disease from Omicron and the other COVID variants, and based on the information we're seeing from places where Omicron's already widespread, like England, getting a booster shot with Pfizer or Moderna actually offers the best protection against Omicron. From the early studies we have, we're seeing that people who received a booster shot doubled their level of protection against an Omicron infection. So everyone 16 years and older should get vaccinated and boosted as soon as possible.

**Is there any risk or benefit to mixing vaccines, or is it preferable to be boosted with the same type of vaccine as my second dose?**

HERCE: ... If someone initially received Johnson & Johnson, they can receive their booster vaccine starting two months later with any vaccine. If they initially received the Pfizer or Moderna, they can receive a booster shot six months after they received their second dose. If someone's 16 or 17 years old, he or she should receive a Pfizer booster shot, but if they are 18 years old or older — meaning an adult — that person can choose any vaccine they want as their booster shot.

There's no risk to mixing vaccines for your booster, and in fact there may be a benefit to mixing vaccines if you initially received the Johnson & Johnson. That is, you may receive a higher increase in protection with a different vaccine than Johnson & Johnson. So, I usually tell my patients that if they originally got the Pfizer or Moderna and were happy with them, then they should get the same one for their booster, and if you initially got Johnson & Johnson, choose Pfizer or Moderna depending on which

would be quicker and more convenient to receive in your area.

**I'm going to take my booster, but are there any side effects? What if I don't react well to the vaccine?**

HERCE: ... For Pfizer and Moderna, [booster] side effects may actually occur less frequently than after the second injection. Most side effects from the booster injection are mild. ... The most common ones are injection site pain, headache, muscle pain, but those typically last only a few hours. If it causes discomfort, you can take an anti-inflammatory [pill] like ibuprofen or a medication like Tylenol.

**How long will someone be protected after getting the booster?**

HERCE: We still don't really know exactly how long the protection from a booster shot lasts. ... At this time, we believe that protection against symptomatic COVID-19 begins to decrease after about six months after the second dose of Moderna or Pfizer, and about two months after the Johnson & Johnson injection. So, it is very important that we receive a booster vaccine to increase the level of antibodies to prevent a case of symptomatic COVID and to lower the risk of COVID-19 infection.

**To close the subject a little bit about the reinforcements ... if I have tested positive for COVID, I have it and can't get the booster, is there any treatment?**

HERCE: Yes, there is treatment. If you test positive for COVID and you have a medical condition that puts you at risk of progressing to severe COVID-19, you can get treatment for COVID regardless of your vaccination status. This treatment is called monoclonal antibody therapy, and it's based on antibodies that are part of our natural defenses against infection. These monoclonal antibodies are most effective when given as soon as possible after symptoms develop, and usually within five to seven days after the onset of symptoms.

Currently, monoclonal antibody therapy is available for people over 12 years of age who have a positive COVID test result and who have a

medical risk factor for having COVID-19, such as being over 65 years of age, having a weak immune system, being obese or having diabetes. In these cases, treatment is available through most health systems here in our area and in the county, including through UNC Health's COVID helpline, 888-850-2684.

**What if I lost my vaccine card? How do I go about getting my booster?**

BENITEZ: If you lost the card, you can call the health department or the place where you received the vaccine. They have to register the dates you got the vaccine because when you go for the booster, they're going to ask you for those dates to confirm that it's been six months since you got the vaccine. But there's also no problem if you're already at the place where you're going to get boosted. There's a number that they have. Everyone who is vaccinated registers with the state and the state looks for your name and your date of birth and gives confirmation for these two dates to the people who are going to give you the booster, but it's important that you go back to the place where you were vaccinated and ask for a card. That happened to me. It can happen to all of us. I lost it and I had to go to the health department and they gave me my card again and a piece of paper, so I was given two.

## On pediatric vaccines

**We're vaccinating children under 12 years of age, but is it the same vaccine that's given to adults, and what are the requirements to vaccinate our children?**

BENITEZ: Yes, it's the same, but the dose is smaller due to the immaturity of their immune systems. This dose went through clinical trials with children of this age to ensure that it's safe and effective. Children must be at least 5 years old and need a parent or legal guardian to consent when receiving the vaccine. We have it at the clinic ... on Wednesdays and Fridays at the Siler City clinic. ... The person who takes the minor must be 18 years of age and must be present and give his or her consent for the patient. This person's signature is required. Documentation is not required, but they

are required to be present and to consent.

**Speaking about vaccines for children under 12, is there any risk for children to receive this vaccine now?**

HERCE: The COVID-19 vaccines are very safe for children. For example, no serious vaccine-related adverse events were observed in the main trial, which looked at the safety and efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine in more than 1,500 children 5 to 11 years of age. The most common side effect identified in this study was mild pain at the injection site in approximately 60% of children after the first and second injection, and there's no evidence that COVID vaccines cause fertility problems in those studies.

Although less frequent in children than in adults, COVID-19 can have serious consequences in children, including causing serious illness or "long COVID." It is important to note that as of October of this year, there were more than 8,000 COVID-19-related hospitalizations in children ages 5 to 11 and nearly 100 deaths. As a result, COVID-19, unfortunately, ranks as one of the top 10 causes of death in children in the United States. ... On a personal note, these reasons also motivated me to vaccinate my 8-year-old daughter.

**If children experience any discomfort after the vaccine, after they get their dose of Pfizer, what should parents do? Is there any medication or anything that parents can give them?**

HERCE: ... In such cases, it's important to reassure the child that these are common side effects that'll usually go away within a few hours. If the pain at the injection site causes more than mild discomfort, pain medication such as Paracetamol or Propranolol can be given after the injection. But if there are any symptoms of concern after the injection, parents can always contact the vaccine provider to ask them about the symptoms and ask for advice on how to manage them.

*Reporter Victoria Johnson can be reached at victoria@chathamnr.com.*

## COVID UPDATE

# Trends rising in Chatham County, boosters important for all 16+, CDC recommends mRNA vaccines

From the Chatham County Public Health Department

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Public Health Department is issuing the following updates related to the COVID-19 pandemic and vaccination.

## COVID-19 trends rising in Chatham and N.C.

After several weeks of substantial community transmission of COVID-19, Chatham County's transmission level has returned to high, mirroring nearly all of North Carolina and much of the United States. Cases are expected to continue to rise throughout winter and due to the emergence of the Omicron variant, which early research has shown to be much more transmissible than previous variants. North Carolina's daily case numbers topped 4,000 twice within the last two weeks for the first time since October, and hospitalization numbers have risen above 1,500. Chatham County has seen similar increases recently after a few weeks of relatively low case numbers. There is still more to learn about the Omicron variant, but studies have shown that a full vaccine series plus a booster shot provides the best protection against severe illness, hospitalization, and death.

"We have the tools to help us combat COVID-19, including the Omicron variant," said Chatham County Public Health Director Mike Zelek. "Getting vaccinated, including the booster dose, is the best action you can take to protect yourself and those around you."

Recent COVID-19 case

from COVID-19. To reduce the risk of infection during the holiday season, the Chatham County Public Health Department recommends getting a booster shot, getting tested before gathering, and wearing a mask in indoor, crowded spaces.

Finally, a recent report from The Commonwealth Fund, a nonprofit agency that conducts independent research on health care issues, projected that approximately 1.1 million COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. were prevented in

2021 due to COVID-19 vaccinations. "These vaccines have saved many lives, including here in Chatham," Zelek said. "This holiday season, we are grateful to the public health and health care workers who have worked so hard to vaccinate, and to the more than 40,000 Chatham residents who have rolled up their sleeves."

Chatham residents can find a vaccine location near them at www.vaccines.gov. For COVID-19 testing options, visit www.chathamcountync.gov/coronavirustesting.

## Booster recommendations updated

On Dec. 9, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updated its COVID-19 booster recommendations to say everyone 16 and older should receive a booster shot at least 6 months after their initial vaccine series. While booster shots are authorized for all vaccines for individuals 18 and older, only the Pfizer vaccine has been authorized for adolescents 16 and 17.

Booster shots are widely available in Chatham County at many vaccine locations. Growing evidence shows that the booster shot is highly effective at strengthening protection against the virus, making it imperative

that anyone who received their Pfizer or Moderna vaccine series at least six months ago or their Johnson & Johnson (J&J) shot at least two months ago get a booster as soon as possible. Chatham residents can find a vaccine location near them at www.vaccines.gov.

## Nearly 1 in 4 Chatham children ages 5-11 have received a COVID-19 shot

COVID-19 vaccines have been available for children ages 5-11 since October, and many Chatham County children have taken advantage. As of December 16, 24% of Chatham residents ages 5-11 have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. Chatham County ranks in the top 5 of North Carolina counties in terms of the percentage of children ages 5-11 vaccinated.

Chatham residents can find a vaccine location for children near them at www.vaccines.gov. As of now, only the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized for children ages 5-11.

## CDC recommends Pfizer, Moderna vaccines over Johnson & Johnson

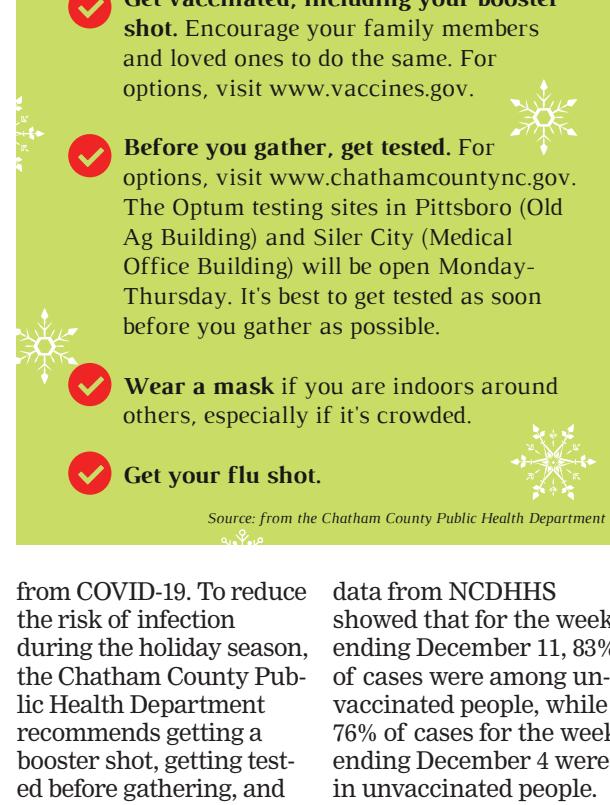
The CDC now recommends that most Americans opt for the Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vac-

cine over the J&J vaccine. The recommendation took into consideration very rare but potentially serious blood clots, as well as the widespread availability of the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. For those who previously received the J&J vaccine and who have not yet gotten their booster shot, the CDC recommends getting a Pfizer or Moderna booster.

"While serious side effects are incredibly rare and it remains clear that the benefits of getting any of the vaccines outweighs potential risks, we are fortunate to have multiple options," Zelek said. "This recommendation takes that into account and also reemphasizes the importance of getting vaccinated, including a booster shot."

To learn more about the COVID-19 vaccine and find other resources, visit www.chathamcountync.gov/coronavirusvaccine. To learn more about the Chatham County Public Health Department, visit www.chathamcountync.gov/publichealth or www.facebook.com/chathamhealth.

*Editor's note: Mike Zelek was a guest last week on The Chatcast, the podcast of the News + Record and the Boys & Girls Clubs of Central Carolina. You can find the episode by searching for "The Chatcast" wherever you find your favorite podcasts.*



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Recent COVID-19 case

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THE QUEST FOR CLEAN WATER | 1ST OF 2 PARTS

# A look at Pittsboro's relationship with the Haw

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff

*Editor's note: First of two parts.*

PITTSBORO — The town of Pittsboro draws directly from the Haw River to provide its thousands of residents with drinking water.

In recent years, though, unknown upstream sources have polluted the water with likely human carcinogens — causing outrage among residents and leading to an outcry for action. “Forever chemicals” such as perfluorinated compounds (PFAS) and 1,4-Dioxane — which have been attributed to liver disease, kidney failure and cancer — linger in the Haw River and have occasionally been measured in dangerous levels.

Pittsboro’s water woes aren’t a recent development. The Haw River Assembly — established in 1982 — has been working to address the issues surrounding the contamination of the Haw River since that time.

Elaine Chiosso has served as the Haw River Assembly’s Executive Director since 1997. According to Chiosso, the contamination of the river can likely be traced back long before PFAS discharges in the river — to the Industrial Revolution in the mid to late 19th century.

“A lot of those dams started as grinding mills for just grinding grain and dams that could power equipment for textile mills, cotton mills, that were built in mostly the mid 1800s,” Chiosso said. “Those mills started putting out a lot of pollution.”

During the mid-1900s, textile companies started making clothing items out of synthetic materials; the process to do so required using more chemicals. According to Chiosso, several historical accounts depict the Haw River “changing colors” due to dyes and chemicals being dumped into the water.

“There’s oral histories that were passed down saying people knew what color they were using up in Burlington that day because just downstream you could see blue dye, red dye,” she said. “whatever was put in the river.”

As more people and industries moved into the Piedmont region of North Carolina, wastewater treatment facilities could not keep up with the constant pollutants in the Haw River, according to Chiosso.

The Federal Clean Water Act of 1972 helped set regulations on various industrial chemicals, including setting standards for wastewater pretreatment programs, addressing stormwater pollution and more.

A BRIEF TIMELINE OF

## PITTSBORO & THE HAW RIVER

Chatham News + Record

1967

Construction on the dam which would help to form Jordan Lake begins



1972

The Clean Water Act of 1972 passes, enacting regulations and the enforcement of water treatment programs across the United States.



Haw River Assembly  
Defending the river since 1982.

1985

The Haw River Assembly completes a major drinking water study, revealing 38 named chemicals and 15 unnamed chemicals in Pittsboro’s treated water.

1997

Elaine Chiosso named executive director of the Haw River Assembly.

2007

An article published in Environmental Science Technology details increased levels of PFAS in the Cape Fear basin.

2015

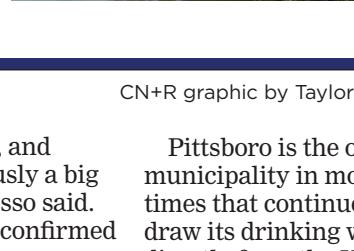
Pittsboro Board of Commissioners hear a presentation from Dr. Detlef Knappe of N.C. State about 1,4-Dioxane found in the Haw.

2019

A discharge of 1,4-Dioxane from an unknown location upstream contaminates Pittsboro’s drinking water supply. The Pittsboro Water Quality Task Force is established by Mayor Cindy Perry.

2020

The Water Quality Task Force presents its recommendations to the Pittsboro Board of Commissioners regarding solutions to the contamination problems in the Haw River.



CN+R graphic by Taylor Heeden

In 1985, the Haw River Assembly decided to conduct a drinking water study of the river’s water. The water samples were sent off to labs across the country for testing, and results came back identifying 38 named chemicals and 15 unnamed chemicals.

The report — called the Haw River Drinking Water Study — also included a list of industries that had pretreatment programs in place, allowing the organization to sort of narrow down the potential sources of the pollutants.

“It was clear that the chemicals that were in the river were the same that were coming through the finished

drinking water, and that was obviously a big problem,” Chiosso said. “It just kind of confirmed what people knew — that these industrial chemicals were in the water and conventional treatment plants couldn’t really remove them.”

Today, Chiosso says many of the industries upstream from Pittsboro send their wastewater to municipal treatment facilities to be processed for pollutants, but don’t usually have a strict pretreatment program.

“All of this, unfortunately, is self-monitoring kind of stuff,” Chiosso said. “We’re talking about a system that relies a lot on somebody to do the right thing.”

Pittsboro is the only municipality in modern times that continues to draw its drinking water directly from the Haw River rather than from a reservoir, such as Jordan Lake. For residents, according to Chiosso, that means the town’s residents are more vulnerable to the contaminants being released into the river than other cities and townships downstream.

Following the 1985 drinking water report, the findings were presented to officials at the local and state level to try to address the chemicals in the water at that time.

“Information was presented to Pittsboro, to the county, to the

## Council on Aging receives \$3,000 grant from Central Electric Membership Corporation

CN+R Staff Report

PITTSBORO — With an eye towards the completion of its Eastern Center expansion in May of 2022, the Chatham County Council on Aging recently received a \$3,000 grant from Central Electric Membership Corporation that will help fund needed equipment for the building’s refurbished fitness area.

Plans for the grant include the purchase of four wall mirrors as well as a mobile unit for fitness class instructors once the center returns to full operations.

The COA’s Eastern Center is closed because of the renovation process and COVID-19

concerns, with all in-person activities and programs taking place at the Western Chatham Senior Center in Siler City. All clients taking part in programs at the Western Center during this time must be fully vaccinated.

“We are eagerly counting down the days until we can welcome back participants to our Eastern Center,” COA Director of Grants and Communications Jimmy Lewis said. “When that time comes, we will be pleased to offer an expanded space that includes enhancements to the total exercise experience for our seniors. Through the generosity of Central Electric, participants

will reap clear benefits with this equipment.”

JIMMY LEWIS, COA Director of Grants and Communications

will reap clear benefits with this equipment.”

Funding for the grant was

made possible by the Central Electric Member Care Trust, powered by CEMC members participating in the Operation Round Up program. When participants elect to have their monthly electric bill rounded up to the nearest dollar, the difference is donated to the Central Electric Member Care Trust for its board of directors

to distribute to nonprofit agencies in need.

Funds are distributed to projects in CEMC’s four-county service area of Chatham, Harnett, Lee and Moore counties.

The Chatham County Council on Aging is celebrating its 47th anniversary as a nonprofit organization committed to helping older adults remain healthy, engaged and able to live safely at home. The COA offers a wide array of services, programs and opportunities. For more information, visit the Council’s website at [www.chathamcoa.org](http://www.chathamcoa.org) or call its Eastern Center at 919-542-4512 or Western Center at 919-742-3975.

**The N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality and the City of Greensboro revised the Special Order of Consent passed earlier this year after a 1,4-Dioxane discharge in November of over 21 times the amount recommended by the EPA.**

state,” Chiosso said. “It certainly was spread widely that there was this information, and we tried to get some legislative action about what could be done.”

Not much action was taken after the 1985 report, Chiosso said. In 2007, an article published in “Environmental Science Technology,” an academic journal produced by the National Exposure Research Laboratory at the EPA’s campus in the Research Triangle Park, led to increased research on the matter.

The 2007 report revealed PFAS chemicals were found in the Cape Fear river basin, which the Haw River feeds into. The report also showed a high concentration in PFASs in the area directly below Burlington — where Pittsboro is located.

This finding led to an increase in research and studies done around the Jordan Lake area where the Haw River meets the lake. Scientists from institutions such as N.C. State and Duke were monitoring and studying the chemicals in the Haw River and discovered sludges of PFAS from Burlington along Chatham’s banks.

“There were some major sludge fields along some creeks in Chatham and Alamance, particularly, but also in Orange County,” Chiosso said. “Burlington sludge was applied to these areas and these chemicals were coming out of the sludge when it rained really hard.”

This was around the time when it was discovered in the Haw River also had 1,4-Dioxane — often used as an industrial solvent — flowing downstream from the Greensboro area. In 2015, then-Pittsboro Mayor Bill Terry asked for one of the scientists studying the contamination — Dr. Detlef Knappe — to present on 1,4-Dioxane and the dangers it could bring to the residents of Pittsboro.

Between 2015 and 2019, Pittsboro’s Board of Commissioners continued to discuss 1,4-Dioxane and PFAS in Pittsboro’s water. Ranging from presentations to the board to various meetings with experts, the board was looking for expert opinions on what needed to be done next.

This happened at the same time Commissioner John Bonitz joined the board. Part of the reason he sought local government office was because of his concerns regarding the quality of Pittsboro’s

drinking water.

“I was always aware of it as a citizen,” Bonitz said. “We were using a Brita filter to help clean up our drinking water.”

Since Bonitz became a Pittsboro commissioner, several releases of 1,4-Dioxane have affected the town’s water supply, compromising the drinking water. PFAS had also become a regular contaminant in Pittsboro’s water supply by 2018, which was revealed in a report by the Wilmington Star-News stating PFAS contamination from Fayetteville’s treatment plant was making its way into the Cape Fear River and into the drinking water of hundreds of thousands of people in southeastern N.C.

The N.C. Dept. of Environmental Quality and the City of Greensboro revised the Special Order of Consent passed earlier this year after a 1,4-Dioxane discharge in November of over 21 times the amount recommended by the EPA.

For Bonitz, that action wasn’t enough. He said there needs to be more legislative action for there to be substantial change in the quality of Pittsboro’s water.

“The problem of unregulated pollutants will keep popping up again and again until Congress updates our nation’s chemical regulations and clean water laws,” he said. “We might be able to improve things locally if the N.C. General Assembly repeals the state law keeping our laws weaker than EPA rules.”

For Bonitz, the water issues Pittsboro has faced for years is not just an issue in Pittsboro, but also on the national stage. Pittsboro residents are not the only people impacted by the water quality of the Haw River — it’s an issue for anyone who comes to Pittsboro.

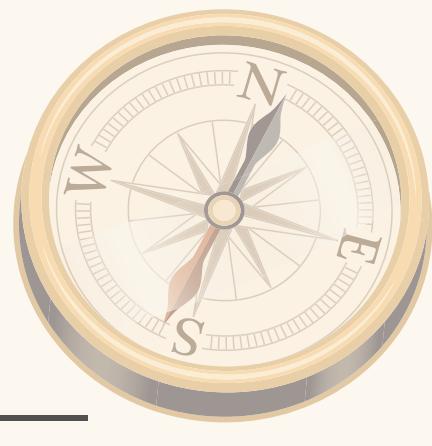
“It’s not just townspeople, but people who live elsewhere and work in town — therefore they drink the water during the workday,” Bonitz said. “It impacts people in nearby neighborhoods who drink town water, but don’t live inside town limits, like Chapel Ridge. So in a way, it is truly a problem shared across this whole side of the county.”

*In Part 2 next week, we’ll examine the work of Pittsboro’s Water Quality Task Force and the recommendations for solutions given to Pittsboro’s Board of Commissioners.*

*Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at [theeden@chathamnr.com](mailto:theeden@chathamnr.com).*



# 2021: The State of Chatham County



## Chatham Comprehensive Plan Activities Underway

- The Chatham County Planning Department is in the early project orientation stage of the county's Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) project. This project will merge, rewrite, and update multiple ordinances and regulations while evaluating and improving upon existing standards. This project is anticipated to be completed in two years through diligent and fast-paced efforts from county staff, consultants, boards and committees, and key stakeholders.
- Seaford High School opened on schedule for the 2021-22 school year.
- Chatham County Schools broke ground on its new Central Services building near Pittsboro.
- The construction of the new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub is underway near Pittsboro.



Rendering of the new Emergency Operations Center and 911 Communications hub under construction on Renaissance Drive near Pittsboro.

- The upgrade to the county's emergency communications radio system is underway:
  - Five new towers have been constructed and a sixth site is being finalized.
  - New radios for all public safety agencies in the county are being distributed.
- Construction of the new facility for the Chatham County Animal Resource Center (ARC) near Pittsboro was completed in summer 2021. Renovation of the old facility also is complete.
- Construction was completed for the Parks & Recreation Department's first community center at Chatham Grove Elementary School.
- The county's first Dog Park was opened at The Park at Briar Chapel.

## Cyber Incident: From Response and Recovery to Rebuilding a More Secure Network

On October 28, 2020, Chatham County Management and Information Systems (MIS) staff identified a ransomware attack against the County network that resulted in the encryption of much of its network infrastructure and associated business systems. MIS staff quickly isolated the affected systems by stopping communication across the county network and externally. Staff immediately reported the crime to the Chatham County Sheriff's Office as well as enlisted assistance from other local and state agencies with specialized ransomware experience. Chatham County Emergency Management coordinated the county's response while MIS rebuilt network infrastructure.

## Chatham 250: Commemorating Chatham County's 250th Anniversary

Chatham County began planning its 250th anniversary celebrations in the summer of 2020 with the formation of the Chatham 250 Planning Committee, made up of representatives from across the county with diverse backgrounds and unique skills – but with one common thread – their passion for Chatham County. Chatham 250 celebrations kicked off on April 10, 2021, with Founding Day in downtown Pittsboro. Throughout 2021 there were numerous events, projects, and programs across the county designed to celebrate five key areas that make Chatham so special – Creative Arts, Community and Diversity, Growth and Change, Agriculture, and Natural Environment.



## Economic Development

Chatham County retains a large agricultural base with a mixture of industrial, tourism, and service businesses helping support the county's economy. Strong economic influences in surrounding areas including Cary, Chapel Hill, Durham, Raleigh, and the Research Triangle Park have a positive effect on the growth of Chatham County's population and economy, especially in the northern and eastern sections of the county. A large number of Chatham County residents commute outside the county for employment, with the urban areas being the top destinations for jobs. The regional prosperity has enabled Chatham County to rank fifth among the state's 100 counties in median household income. The county experienced a 20% growth rate from 2010-2020 according to U.S. Census data and is among the 10 fastest growing counties in the state.

## Change in Chatham: Plans, Progress, and Possibilities

### Building Boom

- Chatham County continues to see growth in single family homes (25% increase FY20 to FY21) and a sustained increase in the number of multi-family units. The majority of the new dwelling units continue to be in the county jurisdiction; although an increasing share is being built in Pittsboro's jurisdiction.
- Commercial development is mostly concentrated on the US Highway 15-501 corridor with major retail and multi-family units being built at intersections with Taylor Road and Northwood Boulevard.
  - This development includes new grocery stores, convenience stores and restaurants.
  - New county buildings such as the Administration Building for Chatham County Schools and Emergency Operations Center are being constructed on Renaissance Drive.
  - New commercial development is expected to continue increasing along US 15-501, from the Briar Chapel area to around Pittsboro and also in the Moncure area.



**The Mosaic at Chatham Park, Pittsboro**  
The Largest Commercial development in Chatham County

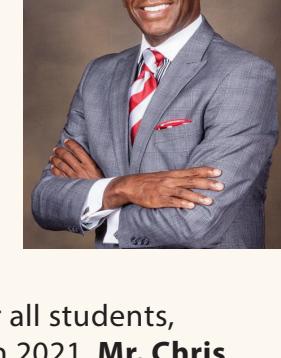
## Education Highlights

### Chatham County Schools Achievements & Honors

- Assessment update: The achievement data for the 2020-2021 school year showed the impact of COVID-19. While Chatham showed decreases in many areas, the district outperformed the state in virtually every area. This past year the district did not get school performance grades or growth status for schools.
- Chatham County Schools has been named a Best Community for Music Education by the NAAM Foundation for the third straight year. Chatham is one of only two school districts in the state to achieve this honor.
- The Chatham County Schools finance department won two of the highest honors for financial reporting: The Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Association of School Business Officials International and the Certificate of Association Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting from The Government Finance Officers Association.

### Chatham County Schools Leadership

**Dr. Anthony Jackson** was selected as the new superintendent of Chatham County Schools, starting in July 2021. Dr. Jackson brings a wealth of experience to the school district, having led several districts in North Carolina and Virginia over the course of his career. Dr. Jackson was 2020 Superintendent of the Year for the state of North Carolina and is serving as president of the North Carolina School Superintendent Association.



Showcasing the district's commitment to providing equity for all students, the district created a new position in 2021. **Mr. Chris Poston** is the new executive director for Excellence and Opportunity for the school district. He will be working to support schools to ensure that all students are successful.

To see the full 2021 State of Chatham County Report, visit [chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty](http://chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty).

# Chatham News + Record

# SPORTS NEWS & CLASSIFIEDS

DECEMBER 23-29, 2021 | chathamnewsrecord.com/sports | SECTION B

SEAFORTH 62, CUMMINGS 22

## Hawks' strong 3rd quarter leads to blowout of Cavaliers, first-ever conference win



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

BY VICTOR HENSLEY  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — As the first-half buzzer sounded and the Seaforth women's basketball team walked toward the locker room, ahead by 13, it was clear that something needed fixing.

The Hawks held onto a 27-14 lead over the winless Cummings Cavaliers heading into the break on Dec. 14, but they were coming off of a second quarter where they turned the ball over eight times, barely outscored the Cavaliers (11-10) and allowed their opponents to score 10 of their 14 first-half points from the free-throw line.

Charles Byrd, the team's first-year head coach, spotted

the issue right away.

"When we went into the locker room, the emphasis was our intensity, but I felt like our intensity had dropped over the course of the first half," Byrd said after the game. "We really put an emphasis on that (after the break) and just came out playing hard and aggressive."

Seaforth did just that. The Hawks crushed the Cavaliers in the third quarter, 30-2, to cruise to the eventual 40-point victory, 62-22, for the first conference win in program history.

The team's high-intensity leaders were freshmen guards Gabby White (22 points) and Peyton Collins (18 points), both of whom turned up the heat on

the offensive end in the second half.

Collins sparked the team's third-quarter run by hitting a 3-pointer right out of the gate before promptly scoring the Hawks' first seven points of the second half.

"Peyton is our energy," Byrd said. "She's always playing hard, she always has a ton of energy, she runs the floor great and she plays really well defensively. She's a tough player. I'm glad I have her."

The Hawks' aggressiveness on both sides of the ball prevented the Cavaliers from getting into any sort of rhythm.

White's knack for collecting steals — even sometimes forcefully ripping them out of

an opposing guard's hands and sprinting down the court for a fast break layup — came in part because of her aggression, even if it cost her a foul or two.

Hawks 6-foot-1 freshman forward Sydney Ballard's ability to stuff her opponent's shots — and Seaforth as a whole racking up 13 total blocks — can also be attributed to both her aggressive playstyle and sizeable height advantage.

No matter where you looked — the players on the court, the Hawks' bench or even the fans in the stands — the intensity, aggression and passion was there for a Seaforth team that struggled at times in the first

See **HAWKS**, page B4

## NBA, NFL should follow in NHL's footsteps

The NHL just took the lead on a decision that, unfortunately, all American pro sports leagues should follow.

It was announced late Monday evening that the National Hockey League was pausing its season amid COVID-19 concerns, which came after more than 15% of the league's players were put into virus protocols.

The announcement was eerily similar to the ones we all saw in March 2020 as the virus first began to surge in the United States when sports leagues — including the NHL, NBA and NCAA — halted their seasons for months, many of which returned later that summer.

However, unlike the previous announcement, the NHL has chosen to pause its season through Christmas Day and resume on Dec. 27 in an effort to slow (or eradicate) the spread of the virus in team facilities.

It's unclear how much closing facilities for just four days, from Dec. 22-25, will actually help the situation, but hey, at least it's something. The league is trying.

With the emergence of the highly contagious Omicron variant — the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reporting on Monday that it now accounts for almost three-quarters of new infections — the number of positive cases is rising yet again dramatically all over the country.

And that includes, of course, within sports locker rooms.

The NHL is just one of the leagues with a major coronavirus problem, having already postponed 44 games this season due to virus outbreaks alone.

Another is the NBA, which announced on Sunday that it was postponing five games involving nine teams, bringing the season total to seven postponed games with (likely) plenty more to come.

The NBA has been ravaged by the virus, with more than 70 players around the league having been ruled out due to health and safety protocols as of Monday.

And, as we've learned throughout the nearly two-year-long pandemic: the virus doesn't discriminate.

It's affected All-Star and role players alike. Stars — like the Brooklyn Nets' Kevin Durant and Kyrie Irving, along with the Atlanta Hawks' Trae Young — have entered protocols

See **HOCKEY**, page B2

CUMMINGS 87, SEAFORTH 62

## Hawks fall short vs. Cavaliers despite Stevenson's 30-point performance

BY VICTOR HENSLEY  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Jarod Stevenson couldn't help but crack a smile through his facemask.

Sometimes, that's all you can do. Cummings drained 11 shots from behind the arc in its 87-62 men's basketball victory over the Seaforth Hawks last Tuesday on a night where the Cavaliers were on fire from all around the court.

"That was tough," Stevenson, the Hawks' first-year head coach, said following the loss. "I told the guys that I'd rather them shoot a 3 than have them shoot a layup, but ... even though I'm saying, 'Let them shoot the 3,' I still want your hand to be up."

The Hawks' defensive strategy — forcing Cummings to settle for 3-pointers — nearly worked.

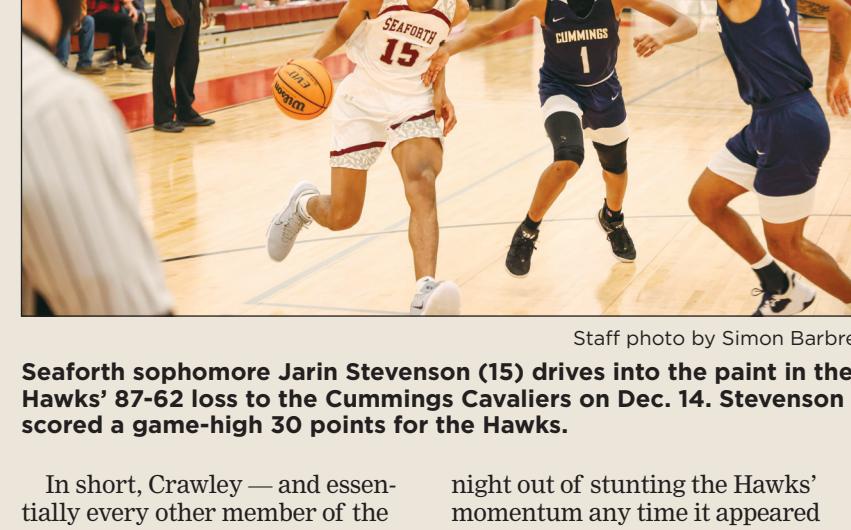
Out of 61 total shots taken by the Cavaliers, 30 of them were 3-pointers, while the other 31 were from inside the arc, striking a near-perfect balance.

The problem for Seaforth, however, was that Cummings hit its 3-pointers at a 36% clip, a solid percentage that should have been even higher had it not been negatively impacted by a few unimportant late-game heaves in garbage time.

From two-point range, the Cavaliers were even more dangerous, shooting an impressive 71% from the field.

After hitting just two triples in the opening period, the Cavaliers unloaded their arsenal in the second quarter, knocking down five of them to push their lead to 12 points, 41-29, at the halftime break.

Cummings senior shooting guard Zion Crawley (18 points) hit four of them in the second period, including a stretch where three out of four Cavaliers possessions ended with a Crawley 3-pointer, lasting only a little over a minute of game time.



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Seaforth sophomore Jarin Stevenson (15) drives into the paint in the Hawks' 87-62 loss to the Cummings Cavaliers on Dec. 14. Stevenson scored a game-high 30 points for the Hawks.

In short, Crawley — and essentially every other member of the Cavaliers — was heating up. And the Hawks struggled to defend him.

"Again, it was where we didn't really put our hand up, we just stood there and watched them shoot it," Stevenson said. "We're taking baby steps to get better as the season goes along and hopefully they learn from this game. ... It's still a learning process."

Despite the Hawks' inability to guard the 3-pointer and the frustration of seeing shot-after-shot fall for the Cavaliers in the second quarter, Seaforth held strong.

Midway through the third quarter, Hawks sophomore Chris Walker drove and scored at the hoop to cut their deficit to single digits, 45-36.

But as became customary throughout the game, Cummings freshman Johnnivus Sharpe scored back-to-back layups to push the Cavs' lead right back to 13 points, killing any sort of momentum the Walker bucket had given the Hawks.

In fact, the Cavaliers made a

night out of stunting the Hawks' momentum any time it appeared that it was trending upwards.

A few minutes later, still in the third quarter, Seaforth's standout sophomore forward Jarin Stevenson drained one of his three 3-pointers to make it a 10-point game and get the crowd riled up in the Hawks' favor.

But less than 10 seconds later, Crawley received a quick pass from Sharpe in transition, sliced along the baseline and finished an and-one layup as he fought through contact from Walker, causing him to flex toward his own bench in celebration.

Yet again, the momentum was gone before it even had a chance to bloom.

"(The momentum) was definitely important," Jarod Stevenson said. "We'd hit a three, then they'd hit a three."

Even with the wonky momentum factor, the Hawks competed with the Cavaliers for nearly three quarters, but after Crawley's old-fash-

See **SEAFORTH**, page B2

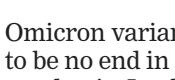
## How I hope to spend my holiday season

I'm not sure what is going to happen next in my life. This uncertainty could apply to my imminent graduation and hunt for employment, but right now I'm trying to ignore that.

At this moment for me, this mainly applies to COVID-19.

As cases soar across the country because of the

Omicron variant, there really appears to be no end in sight in regards to this pandemic. In all likelihood, it seems like COVID-19 may be around for the foreseeable future.



MAX BAKER  
CN+R Intern

On Monday morning, I received my Moderna COVID-19 booster vaccine and I received a PCR test in preparation for my trip to Florida on Thursday night to see my relatives. We are doing everything we can to avoid the omicron variant before traveling. We're likely going to wear masks around my grandma and spend most of the day in her house. As I sat in the waiting area at Ladue Pharmacy in St. Louis, I really questioned what was going to come next in my life.

Are we about to enter yet another shutdown? Will my classes be held remotely next semester? Will I get to have a normal final semester of college?

What even is normal anymore? All I know is that my life is stressful.

After my sophomore year of college was halted, a junior year spent primarily remote and inside my apartment complex, I finally had hope for a somewhat regular senior year. At first, I did, but I tested positive for the virus before classes ever even began. Then came bronchitis, a sinus infection and more than two months of not feeling like myself physically.

Don't get me wrong — this past semester was fun, but it took a toll on me.

Now, as professional sports leagues are seeing an increase in postponements, it is starting to feel like COVID-19 will always worry me. I've spent hours reading and trying to understand it with the hopes of doing

what is best for my family. But right now, it feels like too much.

As I travel down to Florida for one week to see cousins, aunts and uncles that I haven't seen in two years, I'm going to try to shut down. Not seeing them last year made for a difficult Winter Break and I didn't realize how much I missed them.

So during this holiday season, I hope to try to control what I can control and limit the chaos that I consume. I just want to enjoy the week with my family in whatever way it may look.

CN+R Intern Max Baker, a student at the University of Missouri, can be reached at max@chathamnr.com and @maxbaker\_15.

## CHATHAM COUNTY ATHLETICS RUNDOWN

# This week's schedule and last week's results

**BY VICTOR HENSLEY**

News + Record Staff

This week's slate is a bit small due to the upcoming holidays and students being on winter break until early January. Per usual, basketball reigns supreme this week with both Chatham Charter hosting its own holiday tournament and Northwood playing its first-round game in another (the 50th annual John Wall Invitational in Raleigh). Aside from that, the schedule is fairly bare and allows everyone — athletes and fans alike — a much-needed break before the action resumes in a week or two. Here's this week's schedule and last week's results.

**THIS WEEK****Wednesday, December 22**

Basketball: Chatham Charter men vs. Research Triangle (Chatham Charter Holiday Tournament), 7:30 p.m.

**Thursday, December 23**

Basketball: Northwood men at Terry Sanford (John Wall Invitational in Raleigh), 6 p.m.

**Friday, December 24**

No events scheduled; Winter Break

**Saturday, December 25**

No events scheduled; Winter Break

**LAST WEEK****Monday, December 13**

No events scheduled.

**Tuesday, December 14**

Basketball: The Chatham Central defeated the Graham Red Devils, 54-40, on the road for their second-straight victory.

Basketball: The Chatham Central

men dominated the Graham Red Devils, 70-42, on the road.

**Basketball:** The Northwood women earned a 39-point win over the Williams Bulldogs, 68-29, to stay unbeaten on the season at 8-0. Leading the Chargers on the night were senior Olivia Porter (18 points, 5 rebounds, 3 assists, 4 steals, 1 block), senior Myla Marve (13 points, 8 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 steal), sophomore Skylar Adams (13 points, 2 rebounds, 4 assists, 1 steal, 1 block) and junior Gianna McManaman (11 points, 1 rebound, 6 assists, 2 steals).

**Basketball:** The Northwood men crushed the Williams Bulldogs, 63-36, on the road to improve to 6-1 on the season. Leading the Chargers were sophomore Drake Powell (17 points, 10 rebounds, 5 assists, 2 steals, 1 block), junior Max Frazier (12 points, 6 rebounds, 2 steals) and junior Kenan Parrish (12 points, 3 rebounds, 2 assists, 3 steals).

**Basketball:** The Seaforth women routed the Cummings Cavaliers, 62-22, after outscoring the Cavaliers by 28 points in the third quarter to blow the game wide open and cruise to the win. Leading the Hawks on the night were freshman Gabby White (22 points, 13 rebounds, 5 assists, 8 steals, 3 blocks) and freshman Peyton Collins (18 points, 3 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 2 blocks).

**Basketball:** The Seaforth men lost a hard-fought game against the Cummings Cavaliers, 87-62, in the team's first conference match. Leading the Hawks on the night were sophomore Jarin Stevenson (30 points, 12 rebounds, 4 assists, 4 blocks) and sophomore Kooper Jones (8 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist).

**Wednesday, December 15**

Basketball: The Chatham Cen-

tral women lost a close game to the Uwharrie Charter Eagles, 39-26, at home.

**Wrestling:** Seaforth defeated the Graham Red Devils, 66-13, to improve its record to 8-5 on the season and secure the Mid-Carolina 1A/2A conference championship.

**Thursday, December 16**

No events scheduled.

**Friday, December 17**

**Basketball:** The Chatham Charter women earned a rematch victory over the Chatham Central Bears, 39-26, on the road. Leading the Knights on the evening were sophomore Delana Loflin (14 points, 3 rebounds, 6 assists, 3 steals) and senior Alexis Baldwin (5 points, 17 rebounds, 1 assist, 1 steal).

**Basketball:** The Chatham Charter men earned a 22-point win over the Chatham Central Bears, 58-36, to improve to 10-1 on the season. Leading the Knights on the evening were junior Aamir Mapp (22 points, 6 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 1 block), freshman Brennen Oldham (14 points, 14 rebounds, 3 assists, 1 steal) and junior Adam Harvey (10 points, 8 rebounds, 1 assist, 4 steals, 2 blocks).

**Basketball:** The Jordan-Matthews women defeated the winless Cummings Cavaliers, 48-43, to begin their conference slate 2-0. Leading the Jets on the night were senior Ellia Wright (20 points, 5 rebounds, 4 assists, 3 steals), junior Maggie Thornton (13 points, 5 rebounds, 2 assists) and senior Tatyn Siler (10 points, 16 rebounds, 2 assists, 2 steals).

**Basketball:** The Jordan-Matthews men lost a tough game to the Cummings Cavaliers, 77-54, to fall to 1-6 on the season.

**Basketball:** The Northwood women

dominated the Cedar Ridge Fighting Red Wolves, 71-26, to remain unbeaten at 9-0.

**Basketball:** The Northwood men defeated the Cedar Ridge Fighting Red Wolves, 51-36, to improve to 7-1 on the season. Leading the Chargers on the night were sophomore Drake Powell (16 points, 12 rebounds, 3 assists, 2 steals, 1 block), sophomore Fred Whitaker Jr. (13 points, 2 rebounds, 1 assist, 6 steals) and junior Kenan Parrish (10 points, 6 rebounds, 2 blocks).

**Basketball:** The Seaforth women earned a close victory over the Bartlett Yancey Buccaneers, 43-38, on the road. Leading the Hawks on the night were freshman Gabby White (11 points, 4 rebounds, 3 assists, 5 steals) and sophomore Hannah Ajayi (10 points, 4 rebounds, 1 assist, 3 steals, 1 block).

**Basketball:** The Seaforth men earned their first conference win in program history over the Bartlett Yancey Buccaneers, 62-52, to improve to 2-5 on the season.

**Saturday, December 18**

**Basketball:** The Northwood women suffered their first loss of the season to the Millbrook Wildcats, 57-52, in the Dexter Cooley Showcase, snapping the team's 9-game winning streak.

**Basketball:** The Northwood men earned a hard-fought victory over the Millbrook Wildcats, 59-56, in the Dexter Cooley Showcase to improve to 8-1 on the season. Leading the Chargers on the night were sophomore Fred Whitaker Jr. (15 points, 4 rebounds, 2 assists) and sophomore Drake Powell (12 points, 8 rebounds, 3 assists, 1 steal).

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhensley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhensley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.

## SEAFORTH

Continued from page B1

ioned 3-point play, Cummings began to run away with it.

The Cavaliers went on a 15-2 run to increase their lead to 23 points late in the third quarter, 66-43, punctuated by a 3-pointer from sophomore Jakari Dobbins, who then stole the ensuing inbound pass and scored again in the paint off of an offensive rebound.

By the end of the third quarter, Cummings had a 66-45 lead and, with just 8 minutes remaining in the game, Seaforth didn't have a comeback left in the tank.

The Hawks' first conference game in program history may not have yielded the results they were hoping for as the team fell to 1-5 on the season following the loss, but for Jarod Stevenson, there were plenty of positives to take away.

And it all starts with the monumental play of his son, Jarin Stevenson, who scored 30 points (on 60% shooting), contributing nearly half of his team's total scoring. He also added 12 rebounds in a double-double effort while compiling four blocks on the defensive end, the only Hawk to put one on the stat sheet.

"Today was a big improvement for him," Jarod Stevenson said of Jarin. "I felt the first couple of games, he sort of let the other team take him out of the game where he wasn't as aggressive as he should be."

Jarin Stevenson — who has



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Seaforth sophomore Lochlan Haddix (24) drives through contact against a Cummings defender in the Hawks' 87-62 loss to the Cummings Cavaliers last Tuesday.**

already received offers from both UNC-Chapel Hill and N.C. State from his play as a freshman at Northwood and travel basketball tournaments over the summer — is a sophomore that's slowly but surely learning how to become a better leader, better teammate and better player, his coach said.

He's starting to become comfortable in his new role after coming from a team last season stacked with senior leaders and underclassmen talent.

"That was one of the reasons why we came here (to Seaforth), because we knew the level of talent would be a little bit different where he'd have to have more responsibility," Jarod Stevenson said. "So I thought, today, he took on more responsibility than he did in the first couple of games."

"I just knew what I had to do (tonight)," Jarin Stevenson added. "And in order for it to be a close game, I knew I had to go off and set the tone from the beginning."

He undoubtedly set the tone early on when he drove along the baseline and slammed home an and-one dunk early in the second quarter as the crowd went ballistic.

Whether it's momentum-swinging dunks, contested 3-pointers or humiliating blocks, Jarin Stevenson can do it all.

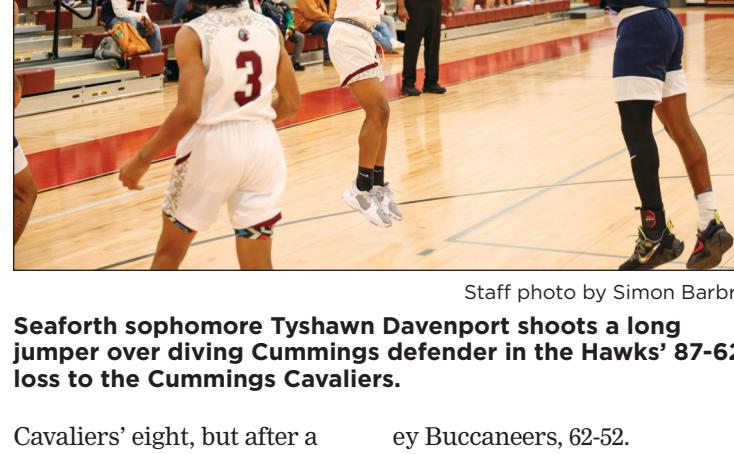
But as exciting as his big night was, what seemed to make him and his coach even happier was the team's success in limiting turnovers against the Cavaliers.

The Hawks may have still lost the turnover battle, coughing the ball up 12 times to the

Cavaliers' eight, but after a blowout loss to East Forsyth in their previous game, losing 21 turnovers in the process, 12 doesn't seem so bad.

"The biggest thing today (was) the turnovers," Jarod Stevenson said. "In the first scrimmage game, we played against Carrboro and ... those guys were real physical, played man-to-man and they didn't even trap, they were just being physical, and they were just taking the ball from us. Whereas today, I felt we were strong with the ball, we were able to take the trap and still find our open man, so that's a big first step for us."

Three days later, last Friday, Seaforth went to Yanceyville and earned its first-ever conference win with a double-digit victory over the Bartlett Yanc-



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Seaforth sophomore Tyshawn Davenport shoots a long jumper over diving Cummings defender in the Hawks' 87-62 loss to the Cummings Cavaliers.**

Cavaliers' eight, but after a blowout loss to East Forsyth in their previous game, losing 21 turnovers in the process, 12 doesn't seem so bad.

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Three days later, last Friday, Seaforth went to Yanceyville and earned its first-ever conference win with a double-digit victory over the Bartlett Yanc-

ey Buccaneers, 62-52.

It pushed the Hawks' record to 2-5 on the year as their growing pains — coming from a team full of underclassmen — start to settle in.

"It definitely wasn't what we wanted, but I think a lot of people are picking (Cummings, 6-0) to win the conference, so I felt we made progress as far as the season going along because ... a lot of these guys have never even played varsity or even J.V.," Jarod Stevenson said.

"We've only been practicing, what, 3-4 weeks now? So it's a process for them to learn how to play at this level and I think we're taking baby steps."

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## HOCKEY

Continued from page B1

(meaning they likely tested positive for the virus), along with a few coaches and even a team president (Masai Ujiri of the Toronto Raptors).

To put it lightly, the NBA season is in shambles at the moment.

And, as of the writing of this column, no action has been taken like that of the NHL, a measure that could quite possibly save a disastrous season if this gets any worse.

Or, the NBA could do what the NFL has chosen to do after more than 100 players tested positive over the past week: just don't test them.

As it has been among all sports circles,

15 of the NFL season, which saw three games postponed after a few teams — the Cleveland Browns, Los Angeles Rams and Washington Football Team — saw their rosters torn apart by the virus and active spreads, making it impossible to play on time without risk of widespread transmission.

So, with all of the positive tests coming in — including plenty among vaccinated, asymptomatic players — the NFL announced that it'd be halting its regular testing of asymptomatic vaccinated players, only opting to test those who show signs of potential infection or those who are selected at random.

In essence, while this

leading to fewer roster shakeups and (the league hopes) no more postponements, it means that players may be spreading the virus around their team facilities — and outside of it — without any knowledge of it, which is something that regular testing helps prevent.

It makes total sense why the NFL's doing it.

It's just a really, really bad move.

And that's not to say that leagues like the NBA and NFL aren't doing anything to try and limit the spread of the virus, both of which have ramped up virus restrictions over the past week.

It just might not be enough.

It's wild for me, a die-hard sports fan who felt lost during the dark days of the early pandemic, to sit here and say that all of the leagues should

pause their seasons ... but they should absolutely consider it.

Not for 6 months or even 4 months or even a single month. It doesn't have to be that long, since that'll undoubtedly cause a boatload of logistical

problems. Just give the NHL's strategy a shot.

Shut things down for a week, allow everyone to get healthy and try again.

Maybe it won't work.

Maybe it will. But at this point, we need to try any-

thing we can to get the virus under control.

The NHL has the right idea. Time to follow suit.

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhensley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhensley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.

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THE CLIPBOARD | REBECCA REED, NORTHWOOD SWIMMING

# Will the Chargers' mix of veteran speed and underclassmen potential propel them to the postseason?

The Northwood swimming team has been on a roll as of late, with the women's squad posting an unbeaten 4-0 record through two meets and the men not falling far behind at 3-1. With just two meets left before the Central 3A conference meet in about a month, the Chargers are aiming to put themselves in a position to qualify for regionals in early February.

This week, the News + Record spoke to first-year Chargers Head Coach Rebecca Reed to discuss her team's one-loss season up to this point, the swimmers that'll make the most noise in the postseason and the differences in coaching college and high school. Conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

**What are some of the differences you've noticed with coaching at a Division I college level (like at James Madison University) versus the high school level?**

**REBECCA REED:** I think that one of the differences is the commitment level when you're working with college athletes. One thing that's

important to note with high school swimming — and I don't know how many other sports are like this — is the kids who are swimming club are training, mostly, with their club team. They don't stop training with their club team to come train with their high school team during the short high school season. So the athletes that I'm working with on a weekly basis are not really year-round swimmers. They're the ones who are interested in the sport and interested in competing and getting better, but are not swimming year-round. And so the opportunity there, with those athletes, is that there are lots of opportunities for growth. I also find their enthusiasm is higher because this is their chance to swim. They enjoy the sport and they want to get better and this is their season to do that.

We have some girls that are at the junior national level, really fast year-round swimmers, and then we have people who just really love being in the water and really love the sport and they love racing and they're not at

the junior national level but their enthusiasm is no different. You see a lot of improvement happen with those athletes, which is really rewarding.

**Who are some of your swimmers that (a) you expect to see improvement out of from the first meet to the last meet or (b) your top swimmers that you enjoy watching every time they hit the water?**

I'm going to categorize them into two groups. You've got some really incredible year-round swimmers competing for us, all women, we don't have any year-round swimmers on the men's side. We have some really great women swimmers that are just really fast and just add a lot of speed to the team. Julia Earnshaw, Gwen Hoeg and Mia Corrado, the three of them are just really fun to watch swim. They're all seniors, as well, so I feel really lucky that I was able to join the program and have a year to watch them compete and watch them perform. They're bringing a lot of fast swimming to the team. We also have a two really great freshmen, which it's really exciting for me, Abby Emirates and Holly Thesing, so we have these seniors where this is their last year competing for Northwood and for their club teams before going to college and then these other two girls who are just getting started, but are also incredibly fast, and it's exciting to see how they're going to progress over the years. From a women's perspective, those five are real standouts, for sure. We also have a group of kids who are coming to my practice and who I'm coaching and who I'm seeing a lot of improvement from, Anna Beck and Savannah Matthews, are two names that

immediately come to mind as girls who have really impressed me between their attitude and willingness to get better and the improvement they made from week one to week two has been really fun to watch.

And then on the men's side, we don't have any year-round swimmers, but Morgan Turner is a sophomore on the team and is a real leader at practice every day. He works really hard, he shows up for events like the 500 freestyle and the 100 fly that not a lot of people are really raising their hands to do. We also have a senior named Mason Bae. He is a breaststroker and a freestyler for us and has just a really positive attitude and has also seen a lot of improvement from from meet one to meet two.

And he's just a regular strong presence in the water. It's fun because, with the men's team, we have a pretty large group of them who are athletes in other sports in the fall and in the spring, so they showed up like, "Oh, we really want to do a sport to stay in shape," and I think they underestimated being on the swim team and just how hard it was going to be because you can be an extremely athletic runner, baseball player, football player, lacrosse player, really physically fit in the weight room or on a track and then you get in a pool and it's just completely different. The muscles you're using, the movements that you're doing, it's completely different. And I think it can be very humbling, but it's just really awesome to see that group of boys show up to practice. None of them bring their egos, they leave them on the deck and just get in and work hard and they're making

## Rebecca Reed

**Role:** Head Coach,

**Swimming**

**Experience at**

**Northwood**

**Charter:** 1 season

**Notes:**

- Swam at the NCAA Division I level at Rutgers University and James Madison University in college

• Has been swimming and coaching for over two decades at the club, high school and college levels

- From the coach: "It's the connections that you make with the individual athletes, the individual students, when you have that 'lightbulb' moment with them. ..."



That's the best part of coaching, right?"

## Northwood Chargers

**Conference:** Central 3A

**Women's Record:** 4-0

**Men's Record:** 3-1

**Upcoming meet:**

• **Jan. 6:** at Cedar Ridge (with Orange and Williams also participating), 8 p.m.

a lot of improvements. It's been really, really fun to watch.

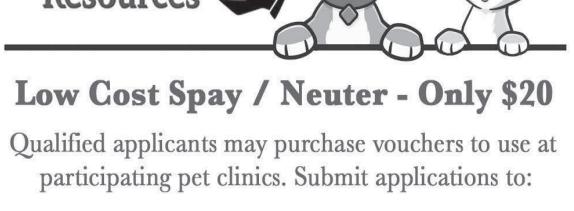
**What would you say are your expectations for this season and the final couple of regular season meets of the year?**

For the men's side, we haven't had a lot of them make it past the conference level and into regionals over the program's history. We have several boys, individual events and relays, that have made consideration qualifying times for the regional meets. No one has quite gotten to an automatic bid, but I think we have a couple guys — I mentioned Morgan and Mason, but there's also a junior named Lex Mansour — who have a really excellent opportunity of qualifying for regionals. I'd really love to see Northward represented at the regional meet this year, that's a that's a goal of mine for the men.

As far as the girls are concerned, I think that we have an opportunity to compete with the best

in the state in some of our individual events. Definitely some of our relays. We had one of our relays get fourth at states last year and I know that the three girls that came back — one of the girls that swam in that relay was a senior

— they're super proud of that and I think it would be a really awesome send-off, especially for the three girls who were juniors last year, who are now seniors — Julia, Gwen and Mia — to beat that place and have a third-place or a second-place or first-place finish at states to close out their career at Northwood. Then also to see some of those girls in the in the championship heats for some of the individual events. And from the the girls who are not swimming year-round, it's kind of the same deal as the boys, because we have a handful of girls who have made consideration qualifying times for regionals, not automatic quite yet, but I'd love to see a couple of them qualify and compete with the team at regionals. I think that's the goal.



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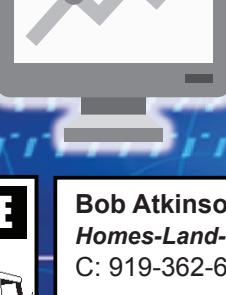
Phone: 919-542-7203 [facebook.com/chathamsoar](https://www.facebook.com/chathamsoar)

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Staff photo by Simon Barbre



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## Near-perfect Northwood

Heading into winter break, where the Chargers will be participating in holiday tournaments, Northwood's two varsity basketball teams have just two losses — combined. Both the women's team (9-1) and the men's team (8-1) have been rolling this season behind both star power and fantastic coaching. Here, Northwood sophomore Fred Whitaker Jr. (0) tosses up a floater in the Chargers' 51-36 win over the Cedar Ridge Fighting Red Wolves last Friday. Whitaker scored 13 points on the night, good for second on the team.

**Northwood sophomore Drake Powell (with ball)** waits for a Cedar Ridge defender to fall to the ground before going up with a shot in the Chargers' 51-36 win over the Fighting Red Wolves last Friday. Powell had a double-double in the contest, racking up 16 points and 12 rebounds.

**Northwood senior Natalie Bell goes in for a layup** in the Chargers' dominant 71-26 win over the Cedar Ridge Fighting Red Wolves last Friday. Bell has been one of the Chargers' most impactful players this season, embracing her senior leadership role.



Staff photo by Simon Barbre



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

## HAWKS

Continued from page B1

half.  
And when it was all said and done, the Hawks had a major lead in one of Byrd's most emphasized statistical categories: points in the paint.

Against the Cavaliers, the Hawks undoubtedly had the advantage in the height department, using it to outscore their opponents, 32-12, around the rim.

To add insult to injury, the Hawks also out-rebounded the Cavaliers by a large margin, 43-23.

"We try to put an emphasis on attacking the rim," Byrd said. "I am the type of coach that wants to be the aggressor on both ends of the floor, defensively and offensively."

White was the primary beneficiary of the Byrd's call to attack the rim, consistently getting the attention of the officials by fighting through contact on many of her drives into the paint.

When she wasn't pulling off beautiful eurostep moves and splitting defenders on her way to the basket, she was typically getting the whistle blown in her favor. In total, White scored 10 of her 22 points by way of the charity stripe, making 67% of her 15 attempts from the line.

"Her shooting a ton of free throws is just from us putting that emphasis on attacking every day," Byrd said.

With 4:37 to play in the third quarter, Cummings junior Dori Paylor poked the ball away from Seaforth sophomore Hannah Ajayi off of a rebound and put it back up for the Cavaliers' first points of the half, snapping the Hawks' 11-0 run.

By then, Seaforth had



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Seaforth sophomore Hannah Ajayi (left, in white)** shoots a 3-pointer in the Hawks' 62-22 blowout win over the Cummings Cavaliers on Dec. 14.

claimed a 38-16 advantage, but it'd only get worse from there with the Hawks rattling off another massive run, 20-0, over the next 10 minutes of game time.

Cummings' offense had no chance to keep up with Seaforth's third-quarter scoring barrage, finishing the night shooting an inefficient 17% from the field (7 for 42), compared to the Hawks' 42% (22 for 52).

Part of it was the Cavaliers simply having an off night; the other was the Hawks' intimidating paint presence that prevented Cummings from (mostly) having any form of success down low.

The fourth quarter was actually won by the Cavaliers, 6-5, after Seaforth took a 40-point

lead (which, in the second half, triggers the constantly running clock).

But it was way too little, way too late as the Hawks' big third quarter propelled them to the blowout win.

A few nights later, Seaforth narrowly escaped a trip to Yanceyville with a 43-38 win over the Bartlett Yancey Buccaneers to improve to 2-0 in the Mid-Carolina 1A/2A conference and 4-3 overall.

While the Hawks have seen plenty of improvement after a 2-3 start to the season, Byrd made it clear that there was still work to be done.

"I feel great, but I still feel like we have a ton of work to do," Byrd said. "I think we have to do a better job in the half-court offense, getting a better understanding of what we're trying to do offensively with our sets, and then some of our rotations defensively, we had a couple of breakdowns and just have to work on that."

But with a roster consisting of strictly freshmen and sophomores, a 4-3 record through seven games isn't so bad, said Byrd.

"I'm having fun," he said with a smile. "I'm happy to be here."

Reporter Victor Hensley can be reached at [vhenley@chathamnr.com](mailto:vhenley@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @Frezeal33.



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

Seaforth head women's basketball coach Charles Byrd (center, in vest) speaks to his team during a timeout in the Hawks' 62-22 blowout win over the Cummings Cavaliers on Dec. 14. Byrd has led his team to a 4-3 record over its first 7 games.

## Players named to NCHSTCA



Four players on the Chatham Charter Knights women's tennis team have been named to the 2021 NC High School Tennis Coaches Association (NCHSTCA) Eastern 1A All-Region Women's Tennis Team. Pictured (left to right) are senior Ashlyn Hart, senior Lorelei Byrd, sophomore Elphie Spillman and senior Emery Eldridge.

Submitted photo



## Chatham COA Events & Announcements

December 23rd through December 30th

### Thursday, December 23rd

- COA Offices Closed for Holiday

### Friday, December 24th

- COA Offices Closed for Holiday

### Monday, December 27th

- COA Offices Closed for Holiday

### Tuesday, December 28th

- Body Conditioning w/Jackie at 8:00 AM (at Forest Hall at Chatham Mills)
- Geri-Fit w/Olivia at 2:00 PM (at WCSC Aerobic Room)

### Wednesday, December 29th

- Strong & Fit w/Olivia at 9:00 AM
- Chair Yoga w/Liz at 10:00 AM (Chatham Grove Community Center (Pittsboro) and on Zoom)
- Strength & Conditioning w/Olivia at 10:00 AM (at Holly Brooks Room, WCSC)

### Thursday, December 30th

- Chair Yoga w/Liz at 10:00 AM (Chatham Grove Community Center (Pittsboro) and on Zoom)
- Take Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) at 1:00 PM
- Geri-Fit w/Olivia at 2:00 PM (at WCSC Aerobic Room)

For more information or to register for these and other programs, visit our website: [chathamcouncilonaging.org/activities/calendars/](http://chathamcouncilonaging.org/activities/calendars/)

In-person - Pre-registration Required

Programming Hosted On Zoom

Fee Required for Participation

## Annual Public Board Meeting

Our Council on Aging's Board of Directors holds their annual public meeting Thursday, January 6 at 5:30 p.m., virtually on Zoom. If you are interested in providing comments at the beginning of the meeting, contact Dennis Streets at [dennis.streets@chathamcoa.org](mailto:dennis.streets@chathamcoa.org) or call 919-542-4512. The Board will also be electing its officers for 2022.

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## CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

## 2021-22 Science Fair winners announced

## FROM CHATHAM COUNTY SCHOOLS

PITTSBORO — Chatham County Schools announced the winners of the 2021-22 Virtual District Science Fair, held Dec. 9.

"We had so many wonderful science fair projects submitted and kids did a wonderful job navigating interviews virtually," said Carla Murray, executive director of Elementary and Middle School Education. "It was a huge success! A huge thank you goes out to our teachers, science fair coordinators and principals who work diligently at our schools to bring science to life every day in our schools."

Judges could award honorable mention, third place, second place and first place in each category. First-place projects in 3rd through 12th grade will proceed to the Regional Science Fair, which will be held virtually during the week of Feb. 14. Judging for elementary schools will be Feb. 17, middle and high schools will be Feb. 18 and the awards ceremony will be on Feb. 19.

The Kindergarten through 2nd-grade projects do not move on to a regional or state competition. Chatham County Schools has chosen every year to offer this category because the district believes it's valuable for students.



Courtesy of Chatham County Schools

**Science Fair winner Jacob Hoopes of Maragret B. Pollard Elementary School.**

Sherri Homan, the Instructional Program Facilitator for Middle Schools, coordinates the science fair each year, and she will be helping prepare for the Regional and State competitions.

**Division K-2**

The following are winners in the K-2 Class Division: Again, the K-2 class and K-2 Individual categories are for Chatham County Schools only.

Honorable Mentions:  
"Bug Catcher" by Ms. Pruckno's Class from Perry Harrison  
"Save the Bacon" by Leo Barsallo from Pittsboro Elementary

"What air pressure will a soccer ball travel the farthest distance?" by Keaton Jett and Audrey Jett from Chatham Grove Elementary

"How to Bust that Stain" by Quin Fatolitis and Silas Fatolitis from Bonlee

3rd Place: "Which Bottle Will Explode once I drop a CO<sub>2</sub> cartridge in it. I want to see which one will explode the loudest. I want to see which one explodes the quickest" by Wyatt Lawson from Pittsboro Elementary

2nd Place: "Which airplane flies the farthest?" by Harrison Chastain and Greysen Bochicco

from Chatham Grove Elementary

1st Place: "Birds in Winter" by Mrs. Griffin's Class from Perry Harrison elementary.

**Division 3-5**

Biological Science  
3rd Place: "Does The Cheaper Brand of Popcorn Have The Least Kernels" by Nyla Cooper from Virginia Cross Elementary

2nd Place: "Bacteria Build Up" by Ian Tracey from Chatham Grove Elementary

1st Place: "So You Think You Can Multitask?" by Tyler Wolfe from North Chatham Elementary

Earth and Environmental

3rd Place: "How does pollution affect plants?" by Grayson Jordan from Chatham Grove Elementary

2nd Place: "Caffeine growth on plants" by Aiden McKnight and Lukasz Makor from North Chatham Elementary

1st Place: "Best conditions for cut flowers" by Stephanie Frankowski from Chatham Grove Elementary

Engineering and Technology

3rd Place: "Lego Grape Catapult" by Nolan Rizvi from Chatham Grove Elementary

2nd Place: "The Snowy Bridge" by Lucas Hodge, Riley Lane, Cody Watt from Perry Harrison Elementary

1st Place: "Becoming a Pollinator" by Jaycey Buck, Waelynn Hardee, Bodie Brown and Olivia Sussman from Perry Harrison

3-5 Chemistry

3rd Place: "How much baking soda does it take to produce enough gas to inflate a balloon?" by Emma Heath from Chatham Grove Elementary

2nd Place: "Evaporation Experiment" by Aubrianna Gyalog and Evelyn Becker from George Moses Horton

1st Place: "What is the best greasing agent for cooking eggs?" by Anna Barsallo from Pittsboro Elementary

3-5 Physics/Math

Honorable Mention: "To the Moon and Back" by Ayden Williams and Addison Williams from North Chatham Elementary

"Does Temperature Affect the Bounce of a Ball?" by Jesse Ritter from Bonlee

3rd Place: "Mentos and Soda Geysers: Does Brand Make a Difference?" by Annalise Miller

and Amaya Milliken from North Chatham Elementary

2nd Place: "Dropped Dart" by Carter Reed and Leo Drust from George Moses Horton

1st Place: "Friction Experiment" by Elias Koshy from Chatham Grove Elementary

**Division 6-8**

In Division 6-8, students competed in one of 7 categories.

6-8 Biological Science A Winners are:

3rd Place: "Will the Temperature Difference Affect the Germination Rate of Mung Beans?" by Elena Lu from Margaret B. Pollard

2nd Place: "Investigation the Ability of Different Solutions to Rehydrate Celery" by Tyler Matthews from Margaret B. Pollard

1st Place: "Body Part Ratios in Saturniidae... A Leonardo Da Vinci Style Approach to the Average Saturniidae" by Jacob Hoopes from Margaret B. Pollard

Biological Science B Winner is:

1st Place: "Is the five-second rule factual?" by Genesis Ocampo and Briseida Ibarra Rivera from Chatham Middle School

Chemistry winners are:

Honorable Mention: "Fatty Food" by Maria Lopez from Chatham Middle School

2nd Place: "Calculating Combustion Rate" by Kayle Maxfield, Giancarlo Nolasco and Heidi Vicente from Chatham Middle School

Second Place: "No Rotting Eggs" by Vick Lian from Chatham Middle School

First Place: "It's Just the Way the Deer Bones Break" by Madelyn Trunell from Margaret B. Pollard

Earth/Environmental Science winners are:

3rd Place: "Lead in Soil" by Amiyah Vargas, Luisa Lazo Sosa and Kiki Joseph from Chatham Middle School

2nd Place: "Pittsboro Water Quality" by Everett Burgert, Matthew Washington and Warren Washington from Margaret B. Pollard

1st Place: "Which type of Chatham County tree has the most stomata?" by Reagan Sandel, Kinley Jordan and Madelyn Smith from Chatham Middle School

Physics winners are:

2nd Place: "Electromagnetic Field Radiation and Magnetic Fields of Phones Charging" by

Fabiola Vasquez, Makayla Headen, and Jonathan Vasquez from Chatham Middle School

1st Place: "Ball Grip" by Gabe Rogers, Ty Wiloughby and Grayson Cox from Margaret B. Pollard

Mathematics, Statistics and Data Sciences winner is:

1st Place: "Does Juice Have More, Less, or the Same Amount of Sugar as Soda?" by Michael Beck, Isaac Wilson, and Travis Mann from Margaret B. Pollard

Engineering winners are:

3rd Place: "Which mask is more effective?" by Kendall Lee and Avery Spradley from George Moses Horton

2nd Place: "Types of Bridges" by Annagrace Zaremba from George Moses Horton

1st Place: "Shade Balls" by Grant Widmann, Sanjay Subramani, and Brandon Burger from Margaret B. Pollard

**9-12 Division**

Division 9-12 Biological Science A Winner is:

1st Place: "Music and Marketing" by Sara Turner, Kaleb Wilcox, and Katie Zucker from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Biological Science B Winner is:

2nd Place: "Blood and Hot Tubs" by Kai Culter from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

1st Place: "At-home DNA extraction" by Gabe Sylvia from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Chemistry Winner is:

1st Place: "Electrolyte Challenge: Sports Drink vs. Orange Juice" by Carolyn Belk and William Carter from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Earth/Environmental Sciences Winner is:

1st Place: "Which type of milk will produce the best plastic?" by Kaylee Watt and Mykalah Pettitt from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Physics Science Winner is:

2nd Place: "The Pinewood 500" by Caden Bailey and Ryan Lott from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

1st Place: "Does the Shape of a Car Affect the Drag Coefficient?" by Kyle Hickey from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Technology Science Winner is:

1st Place: "Internet Speed Around the School" by Jack Trigilinos, Brandon Cameron and Noah Emery from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

Division 9-12 Engineering Science Winner is:

1st Place: "Electromagnetic Field Radiation Exposure in Local Settings" by Nicholas Maness from Chatham School of Science and Engineering

**OVERALL WINNER:** "Body Part Ratios in Saturniidae ... A Leonardo Da Vinci Style Approach to the Average Saturniidae" by Jacob Hoopes from Margaret B. Pollard

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# Chatham BOC elects Howard as next year's chairperson, Gomez Flores as vice-chairperson

BY HANNAH MCCLELLAN  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — Chatham County saw several changes to its board Monday night, with Commissioner Jim Crawford attending his last meeting before his Dec. 31 resignation, and Commissioners Karen Howard and Franklin Gomez Flores elected as chairperson and vice-chairperson of the board, respectively.

"I would like to thank all of you on this board for your steady leadership and guidance," now-former Chairperson Mike Dasher said at the beginning of the meeting. "It has been an honor to serve as chair of this board over the past year. But it is that time of year where we elect new leadership."

State law requires local boards to reorganize the board each December by electing a chairperson and vice-chairperson to serve for the next year.

Commissioner Diana Hales, who served as the vice-chairperson this past year, nominated Howard and Gomez Flores. Howard was elected unanimously; Gomez Flores was elected 3-2, with Crawford and Dasher voting for Dasher as vice-chairperson following Crawford's nomination.

"Before we go any further, I would like to just recognize the moment that we're in in Chatham County — that we have a Black female chair and a male Hispanic as our vice chair," Howard said. "I think that speaks volumes for who Chatham is and who we intend to be. And we both take our responsibilities very seriously and you can expect that you will be seeing and hearing from us in the days, weeks and many months to come."

The board also discussed next steps for the process of appointing a commissioner to represent Dist. 4 for the remainder of the term, following Crawford's resignation due to health reasons, effective Dec. 31. The Dist. 4 seat must be filled by an appointed replacement prior to the 2022 election — for which three new candidates already filed earlier this month, before the filing period was halted and primary delayed until May.

"I want to say how proud I am of the service and the goals that we've been able to achieve on this board," Crawford said during his last commissioners' report. "I'm glad I had a chance to serve Chatham County, and I believe that my thumbprint is on most progressive measures that have been achieved, if not all, no, actually, all of them."

"I wish everybody the best of luck and great success. Having set down some of this burden, I realized what a great burden it is to have responsibility for the rising county in the state," he continued. "And it's only going to get more heavy, so above all else, I appreciate the pressures and the work that you put in."

Under state law, the board will appoint a new commissioner to fill out the remaining year of the term, and can take or reject the recommendation of the Chatham County Democratic Party. The person must be a registered voter in the same party as the resigning commissioner, and must reside in Dist. 4 — a fact Crawford and some others in the county weren't previously aware of.

Before learning that the county observes the residency requirement, Crawford said he found someone who was interested in filling the term but not running again.

County Attorney Bob Hagemann said the board can't fill the vacancy until it actually occurs — so after Dec. 31 — and has 60 days to do so. If the board doesn't appoint someone in that time period, state law moves appointment authority to the clerk of court, who will have 10 days to fill the vacancy.

"I felt one of my responsibilities was to find someone to fill the gap that'd I'd be leaving," Crawford said, adding that he then found another person he felt confident in recommending and who lives in Dist. 4.

"I feel I can share that person's name right now just as a general offer to show that we have responsible people willing to serve, and it is Robert Logan, the former superintendent of Chatham County Public Schools," he told the board. "You don't necessarily have to follow that, but it seems somebody is there, so hopefully it won't take

you 60 days for you to settle on him. ... He can hit the ground running and is somebody familiar with the gears of the county, having had to work with them for many years, and is known to the public and vice versa."

Hales and Howard both thanked Crawford for the recommendation but said they'd like to also consider the candidates suggested by the Chatham Democratic party.

Crawford said that process would likely mean a candidate would begin after the board's January budget retreat, and advised selecting someone before then. Hales responded that the retreat is open to the public, and anyone interested in filling the remaining term should want to attend anyways.

According to County Manager Dan LaMontagne, county staff has assumed a replacement would be found after the retreat and that staff intends to take the time necessary to help orient a new board member.

Gomez Flores told the board that a profile, or list of answered questions from each potential candidate, would be helpful in reviewing candidates.

"We have an opportunity for a commissioner to just simply name his replacement," Dasher said. "It's somebody we all know, that we all know that's more than skilled and capable and it's for a period of 10 months in an election year we already know several candidates have filed for it."

Though Howard said she knew Logan well and would be happy if the board landed on him as a replacement, she said she didn't "want to subvert this process."

After some back and forth discussion, commissioners came to an agreement to look at names from the county Democratic party at its Jan. 18 meeting. No official timeline was set for when the board will hold a vote to make an appointment, but under state law, a vote must happen by March 2 or it will move to the clerk of court's discretion.

## Other meeting business

- Then-chairperson Dasher presented the 2021 State of Chatham County Report, which covers fiscal year 2020-21, from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

The report highlighted Chatham's response to COVID-19, including campaigns to vaccinate the community against the virus. Dasher also highlighted the county's response to and recovery from the October 2020 cyberattack that incapacitated many of the county's business systems for two to three months. He also highlighted the county's yearlong celebration of its 250th anniversary.

"It has been quite a remarkable year in Chatham County, and my fellow commissioners and I are extremely grateful to the staff and their perseverance," Dasher said. "The staff's adaptability during these major events is a testament to their resilience and commitment to serving our community."

The report also includes updates on activities within the Chatham Comprehensive Plan, countywide initiatives such as economic development, and achievements within county departments and programs. You can read the report here: [www.chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty](http://www.chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty).

- The board voted on two appointments to the Chatham Economic Development Corporation Board of Directors. Howard nominated Chreatha Alston, appointed in 2017, and Jennifer Platt, who was also appointed in 2017 as the board's original nomination.

Howard cited the board's practice of extending a second term to nominees who fulfill duties as expected when nominating Platt. The appointments were approved unanimously.

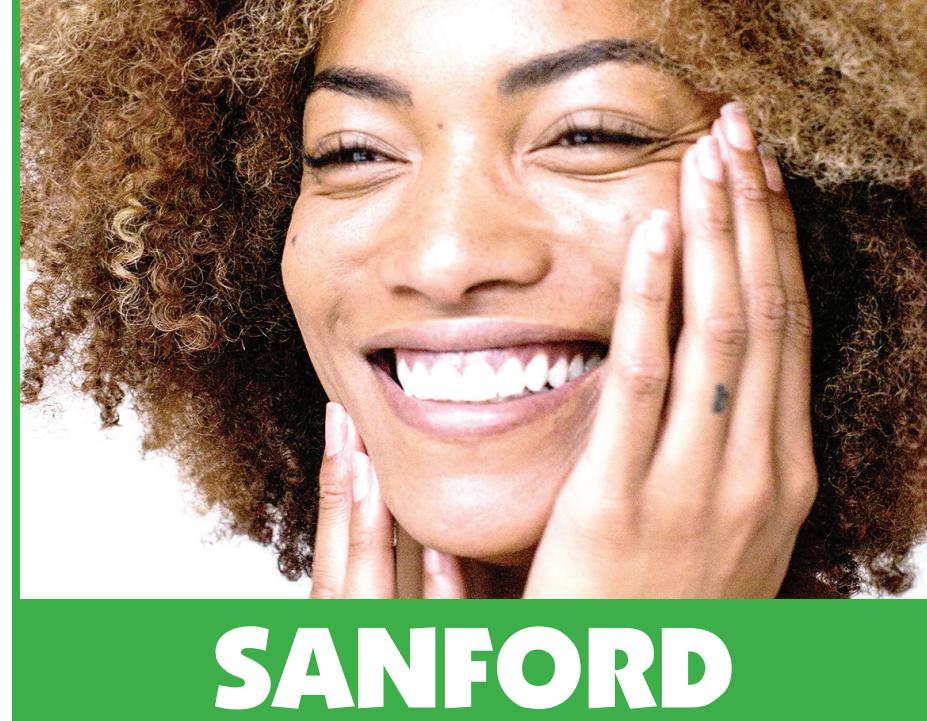
- The board approved a legislative request by Congruus LLC for a map amendment to the Chatham County Compact Community boundary map for an expansion of the CCO map to include an additional 184.04 acres off Parker Herndon and Morris roads, Baldwin Township.

Commissioners also approved a request by Mark Ashness on behalf of TBM Partners for subdivision First Plat review and approval of

Chapel Oaks Subdivision, consisting of 31 lots on 76 acres, off Old Lystra Rd.

- Assistant County Manager for Human Resources Carolyn Miller recognized Cristal Ocampo Ruiz as the county's 2021 Employee of the Year. Ocampo Ruiz, an interpreter and the immunization tracking coordinator at the Chatham County Public Health Department, has worked with Chatham since May 2016 and is a 2020 Chatham Leadership Academy graduate.

"I am so glad to see Cristal recognized as Employee of the Year — she is so, very deserving," said CCPHD Director Mike Zelek. "Cristal has been such an important part of our team for the past several years. During the pandemic, she has been critical to our efforts to reach the Latinx community. From translating information to tracking immunizations, we wouldn't be where we are without her."



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## CN+R STAFF PICKS | FAVORITE CHRISTMAS SONG

# In the mood for some Christmas music? Here are favorites of your News + Record staff.

**Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming**

Christmas is full of music from the sacred to the silly; picking a favorite isn't easy. But the key to any music is how does it touch you and, for me, that Christmas song is "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming." But here's the kicker; I'm not entirely sure why, except it touches me. I've never sung it, although I've read the lyrics and it's the story of Jesus at Christmas. In the end, I think why it touches me is in some unknown way it reminds me of my father who, as far as I know, had no special thought about the song. But the words and melody remind me of my earthly father who I see as a model of my Heavenly Father, someone who loves me unconditionally and is always present. I love you Dad, and miss you still ...

- Bob Wachs, columnist

**O Come, O Come, Emmanuel**

My favorite is an oldie but a goodie. "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" traces its origins to the 8th or 9th Century; Wikipedia tells me that the 1851 translation by John Mason Neale from "Hymns Ancient and Modern" is the most prominent by far in the English-speaking world. You likely know at least the first verse:

*O come, O  
come, Em-  
manuel,  
And ransom  
captive  
Israel,  
That  
mourns in  
lonely exile  
here,*

*Until the Son of God  
appear.*

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Em-  
manuel  
Shall come to thee, O  
Israel.*

I love Christmas music because it speaks to the promise of the Savior, and this song makes clear that promise is worth rejoicing for. And thanks to Spotify, my "Oh Come Oh Come Emmanuel" playlist is long indeed — which means lots of opportunity to rejoice. (Although I actually get the most comfort these days from the instrumental versions, of which there are dozens.)

Do I get tired of listening to the same song over and over? Sometimes. It's then I put on the best Christmas album of all-time: the incomparable



Johnny Mathis' 1958 "Merry Christmas," to this day the gold standard of holiday tunes.

- Bill Horner III, publisher and editor

**Beautiful Star of Bethlehem**

My favorite Christmas song is "Beautiful Star of Bethlehem." Not only do I love the song, but it was

one of my granddad's favorite as well. He was born in December, married in December and died on Christmas Day of 1998.

He was of Scotch-Irish descent and the most Christian man I knew. Each of his grandchildren sang this song at his funeral.

- Karen Pyrtle, business manager

**The Christmas Song (Merry Christmas to You)**

This classic carol is a staple for every Christmas playlist. Nat King Cole's 1946 rendition of the holiday favorite has been considered one of the best Christmas songs for generations and never fails to get people singing about Jack Frost nipping at their nose or folks

dressed up like Eskimos. My dad always plays this song on Christmas morning as we are opening presents or preparing for dinner, so it also brings that feeling of childhood nostalgia for me — which is a huge part of the whimsy of the holiday season.

Without a doubt, this Christmas classic holds a special place — not just in my heart — but in the hearts of many who celebrate the holiday.

- Taylor Heeden, reporter

**Heat Miser**

I'll be honest: I don't usually listen to or sing Christmas music unless I'm in church. I like head-banging music, and most Christmas music just isn't that (and for a good reason). A few years ago, however, I found a Christmas song cover album compilation put together by a couple of Christian rock bands, among them "Heat Miser" by Thousand Foot Krutch. The song really turns up the "heat," and it's a head-banging song I return to year after year around Christmas time.

- Victoria Johnson, La Voz de Chatham reporter

**O Holy Night**

My all-time favorite Christmas song is "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (great minds think alike!), but a very close second is "O Holy Night." I like just about any rendition, but my favorite versions currently, in this order respectively, are by Céline Dion, Etta James and Maverick City Music.

My mom loves Christmas music, so I grew up on songs of the season from Thanksgiving through January and feel a special nostalgia and joy listening to Christmas songs. While I also enjoy the more upbeat and silly/fun Christmas songs (looking at you, "Santa Baby" and "All I Want For Christmas Is You"), "O Holy Night" is especially lovely to me because of the story of the birth of Jesus.

I also love that the song, originally penned by French poet Placide Cappeau in 1843 (and translated into English in 1855 by Minister John Sullivan Dwight), includes abolitionist sentiments. Many churches and singers have historically omitted that part of



the third verse, whether intentionally or because of the song's traditional rendition. That verse:

*Truly he taught us to  
love one another;*

*His law is love and his  
gospel is peace;*

*Chains he shall  
break, for the slave  
is our brother;*

*And in his name  
all oppression  
shall cease.*

What joyous news!

Not only was Jesus born, but he was born to bring peace, break chains and end all oppression. I get chills every time I hear/sing that reminder.

- Hannah McClellan, education reporter and web editor

"is Here" from the 1965 Charlie Brown Christmas special. It was written by the Vince Guaraldi Trio for the program. I was 12 at the time and loved watching anything to do with Charlie Brown and his friends.

- Kim Hawks, photographer

**All I Want For Christmas Is You**

For me, it's not even close. I'm the type of person who loves songs that make me want to dance and this song gets me in that spirit. Although I am Jewish, I actually love Christmas music in December. Although this might be a classic answer, I'm not sure any song comes close.

- Max Baker, sports/social media intern

**Christmas Time is Here**

My favorite Christmas song is "Christmas Time



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# Happy Holidays!



The Rotary Club of Pittsboro celebrated the holidays at Postal Fish Company by welcoming two new members & wrapping over 950 books for local elementary students. We are appreciative of the opportunity to collaborate with Flyleaf Books & other small businesses owners as we strive to build a stronger community for all. Each member of our club sends wishes of a happy holiday season & with tremendous anticipation, we look forward to the many wonderful plans we have for the coming year! (Our president-elect, Patrick Walsh, won bragging rights for best ugly sweater while Newt Heilman was first runner up, so be sure to congratulate them if you see them around town!)



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# POLICE REPORTS

## CHATHAM COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

On Dec. 13, Nicholas Edward Hollander, 27, of 2593 White Smith Rd., Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Olivia Soles for possession of stolen goods/property and possession of a firearm by a felon. He was issued a \$10,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on Jan. 3.

On Dec. 13, Alan Kristopher Swartwood, 40, of 223 West Dale Dr., Oxford, was arrested by Deputy Matthew Mitchell for first degree kidnapping, felonious restraint, solicit by computer/appear, indecent liberties with a child, and statutory sex offense with a child under the age of 15. He was issued a \$100,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham Superior Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 10.

On Dec. 13, Mason Keith Lupek, 34, of 1995 Alston Chapel Rd., Pittsboro, was arrested by Deputy Justina Knox for warrant service for other jurisdiction. He was issued a \$5,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County Superior Court in Pittsboro on Dec. 16.

On Dec. 13, Nathan James Torres, 39, of 277 Taylor Rd., Pittsboro, was arrested by Deputy Matthew Mitchell for

failure to appear related to a charge of speeding. He was issued a \$300 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Dec. 15.

On Dec. 14, Jacob Ray Phillips, 27, of 230 Claude Phillips Rd., Bennett, was arrested by Deputy Tyler Welch for larceny. He was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 5.

On Dec. 14, Tomas Hernandez Aguilar, 48, of 1418 Washington Ave., Siler City, was served with a True Bill of Indictment by SSgt. Anthony D. Norton. He was issued a \$150,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County Superior Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 10.

On Dec. 15, Charles Phillip Trotter, 45, of 1304 Vernie Phillips Rd., Bear Creek, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for Possession with Intent to Sell/Deliver marijuana, felony possession of marijuana, manufacturing marijuana, maintaining a vehicle/dwelling/place for a controlled substance, simple possession of a Schedule II controlled substance, and possession of marijuana paraphernalia. He was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 12.

On Dec. 16, Jody Wilson Harris, 26, of 620 McLaurin Rd., Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for possession of marijuana up to  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce and possession of marijuana paraphernalia. He was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 12.

On Dec. 16, Brandon Sean Browne, of 2828 Vanstory St., Apt. 3C, Greensboro, was arrested by Investigator Amy Marris for possession of fire-

On Dec. 15, Jewel Lynn Hill, 34, of 1304 Vernie Phillips Rd., Bear Creek, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for Possession with Intent to Sell/Deliver marijuana, felony possession of marijuana, manufacturing marijuana, maintaining a vehicle/dwelling/place for a controlled substance, simple possession of a Schedule II controlled substance, and possession of marijuana paraphernalia. She was issued a written promise to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 3.

On Dec. 15, Candice Jennien Nickerson, 37, of 930 E. Alston Rd., Pittsboro, was arrested by Deputy Rami Amer for damage to personal property. She was issued a \$5,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 12.

On Dec. 16, Douglas Eugene Cheek, 50, of 1312 Summer Dr., Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Rami Amer for failure to appear related to a charge of simple assault. He was issued a \$2,500 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Davie County District Court in Mocksville on Jan. 13.

On Dec. 16, Nicholas Edward Hollander, 27, of 2593 White Smith Rd., Siler City, was arrested by Cpl. Michael Cox for breaking & entering, larceny after breaking/entering, possession of stolen goods/property, possession of heroin, possession of methamphetamine, possession of a Schedule IV Controlled Substance, and simple possession of a Schedule II Controlled Substance. He was issued a \$20,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 3.

On Dec. 17, Austin Eugene Shepherd, 27, of 184 R C Overman Rd., Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for misdemeanor probation violation. He was issued a \$5,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 13.

On Dec. 17, Janet Lee Baldwin, 58, of 95 Ricky Rd., Staley, was arrested for felony child abuse involving a sexual act. She was issued a \$50,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County Superior Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 10.

On Dec. 18, Bryant Douglas Jones Sr., 59, was arrested by Deputy Rami Amer for failure to appear on two charges of driving while license revoked.

For the first charge, Jones was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Lee County District Court in Sanford on January 31, 2022. For the second charge, he was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Lee County District Court in Sanford on Jan. 10.

Newberger, 30, of 264 Earls Retreat, Goldston, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for failure to appear. He was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Lee County District Court in Sanford on Jan. 27.

On Dec. 17, Austin Eugene Shepherd, 27, of 184 R C Overman Rd., Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Brandal Harrington for misdemeanor probation violation. He was issued a \$5,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 12.

On Dec. 17, Janet Lee Baldwin, 58, of 95 Ricky Rd., Staley, was arrested for felony child abuse involving a sexual act. She was issued a \$50,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County Superior Court in Pittsboro on Jan. 10.

On Dec. 18, Bryant Douglas Jones Sr., 59, was arrested by Deputy Rami Amer for failure to appear on two charges of driving while license revoked. For the first charge, Jones was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Lee County District Court in Sanford on January 31, 2022. For the second charge, he was issued a \$1,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Lee County District Court in Sanford on Jan. 10.

## 2021 'State of the County' report highlights a year of response, recovery and resiliency

From Chatham County Government

**PITTSBORO** — Chatham County Board of Commissioners Chairperson Mike Dasher presented the 2021 State of Chatham County Report at the board's regular session Monday in Pittsboro.

The report covers fiscal year 2020-21, which is from July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021.

Like communities across the nation, Chatham County continued to respond to COVID-19 in 2021. Chatham County

has led a successful campaign to vaccinate the community against the virus. Chatham County also spent much of the year responding to, and recovering from, a ransomware event that incapacitated many of the county's business systems for a period of two to three months. The response to the cyber-incident on Chatham County included extensive mitigation efforts to ensure the county's network is more secure and resilient moving forward. Even with the pandemic and cyber

event, Chatham County coordinated a yearlong commemoration of its 250th anniversary.

"It has been quite a remarkable year in Chatham County, and my fellow commissioners and I are extremely grateful to the staff and their perseverance," Dasher said. "The staff's adaptability during these major events is a testament to their resilience and commitment to serving our community."

The report also includes updates on activities within the Chatham Comprehen-

sive Plan, countywide initiatives such as economic development, and achievements within

county departments and programs.

The full 2021 State of Chatham County Report

is posted on the Chatham County Website at: [www.chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty](http://www.chathamcountync.gov/stateofthecounty).



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From left, Chatham Charter students Lilly Milholen, Silas Christenbury and Rebecca Brookshire, who participated in the 2021 Spanish Symposium.

Courtesy of Chatham Charter

## Chatham Charter Spanish students participate in UNC Languages Symposium

From Chatham Charter School

**SILER CITY** — A team of three Chatham Charter high school Spanish III students, Rebecca Brookshire, Silas Christenbury, and Lily Milholen, recently participated in the 7th Annual Learning through Languages High School Research Symposium.

The topic of their research paper and presentation in Spanish was a comparison of education systems in South Korea, Japan, and the United States. The Chatham Charter team was one of over 30 from high schools across the state that presented global topics in seven languages and the only team from Chatham County. On Wednesday, December 10, the awards announcement was live streamed. The Chatham Charter team earned an excellent rating.

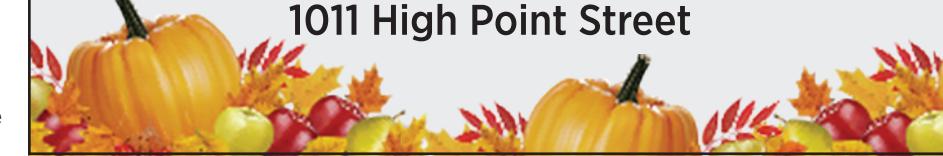
The students were tasked with demonstrating language and research skills. The Symposium objectives were for students to:

- learn about a topic of significance to a world region;
- produce informational writing aimed at an academic audience; and
- develop digital technology skills through the creation of a project visual.

Projects were judged by UNC and Duke collegiate faculty, instructional staff, and graduate students. Normally, the students present projects on the university campus, but for the past two years the event has been held virtually.

"We are proud of the depth of language mastery our Spanish students are achieving under Señora Rojas' leadership. They achieve when compared with students from other schools and also are well prepared to continue studying the language at four-year universities," said Dr. John Eldridge, Head of School.

The program is part of UNC's outreach to public high schools that encourages students to use their language skills.



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## For when you're tired of lemonade

So, I had a theory, that then took a hard left.



**DEBBIE MATTHEWS**

The Curious Cook

Although I love frosting, and think it should be a food group (whole grains, lean protein, buttercream...) cream cheese is pretty low on my frosting fave list.

But I wondered if lemon cake, with its bright sourness, might be the perfect foil for cream cheese's tang and richness. So I set out to bake a lemon cake and test my thesis.

Except.

Except it's Myer lemon season, and I couldn't help myself. So, instead of lemon, I used Myer lemons, which tastes like a blend of lemon and tangerine.



The cake turned out bright and delicious. It worked perfectly with cream cheese frosting.

But I still don't have an answer for the whole conventional lemon/cream cheese icing thing. I guess my cake and frosting experimentation must continue.

I do it all for you, Gentle Reader...all for you.

Thanks for your time.  
Contact me at dm@bullcity.mom.

### Myer Lemon Vanilla Bean Pound Cake

Day one  
Ingredients: 1/2 pound (2 sticks) butter, softened  
1 vanilla bean, scraped  
2 1/2 cups granulated sugar, divided  
5 large eggs, at room temperature  
1/3 cup grated Myer lemon zest (6 to 8 Myer lemons)  
3 cups flour

Directions: Preheat oven to 350°. Grease and flour two 8 or 9-inch cake pans. Line bottoms with parchment paper.

Cream butter, the vanilla bean innards you've scraped out, and 2 cups granulated sugar in bowl of electric mixer fitted with paddle attachment, until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, add eggs, one at a time, and Myer lemon zest.

Sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in one bowl. In another bowl, combine 1/4 cup Myer lemon juice, buttermilk, and vanilla. Add flour and buttermilk mixtures alternately to the batter, beginning and ending with the flour. Divide batter evenly between the pans (approximately 3 cups per pan), smooth the tops, and bake for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Don't overbake — it will get very dry.

Combine 1/2 cup granulated sugar with 1/2 cup Myer lemon juice in a small saucepan and cook on low just until sugar dissolves. When cakes are done, allow to cool for 10 minutes. Remove cakes from pans and set them on cooling rack set over a tray or sheet pan; brush the lemon syrup over them, using most of it. Allow cakes to cool completely.

Wrap cakes very well with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

Day Two:

Cut the cakes in half. Using a lazy Susan and bread knife will make the job much easier. Find a spoon or tool that is half as tall as the cake. Use it as a spacer under the knife, and cut all the way around the cake. Then while slowly spinning the lazy Susan, spiral cut all the way through until you have two layers of the same thickness. Repeat with other cake.

### Cream Cheese Frosting:

2 sticks butter, softened  
2 8-ounce blocks of full-fat cream cheese, softened  
Put all the ingredients in bowl of a stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment. Beat until smooth, creamy, and fluffy (4-6 minutes).

Evenly frost the tops of the layers as you build cake, leaving a 1/4-inch unfrosted border around edges so it doesn't ooze out. When all four layers are assembled, frost top and sides.

Refrigerate 2-3 hours to set up before serving. Serves 10-12.



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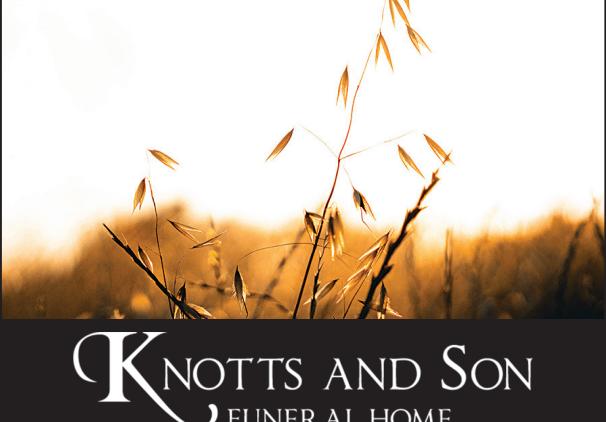
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P N L J H F L E D D N B Y X T  
V T R P O M A M V K O I I G A  
E D B Z X W D A U A K O M T E  
K R Q O N L T H J I H S G R S  
G N F U P T O S D C A T A Y T  
Y X A W V T S S E L B W A I A  
S R P H O T E M A S O S O H H  
N L K O T R E V O H J L L I W

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
Unlisted clue hint: SAID WHEN SOMEONE SNEEZES

Glad to see	I ask	Says	What have
Good for	Mind	Shame on	What's eating
Good on	Over to	Thank	Will
How are	Same to	Up to	

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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

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	8		5					3
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	3	6					1	7
	2			7	4		6	
6				8	7		2	
		1			5	8		
	9	2						4

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

**DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK:** ◆

◆ Moderate    ◆◆ Challenging  
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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# CN+R ENTERTAINMENT

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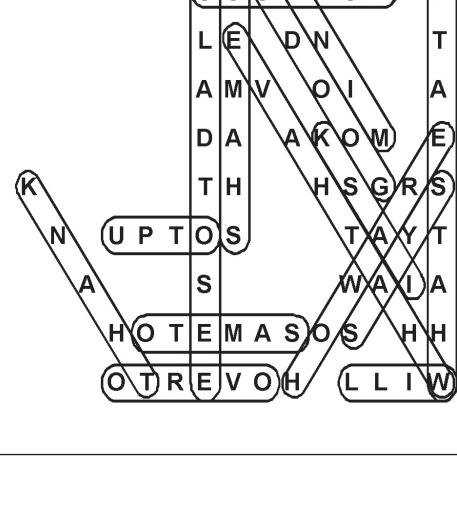
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## — Weekly SUDOKU —

Answer

4	1	5	8	6	3	2	7	9
7	8	6	5	2	9	1	4	3
9	3	2	7	4	1	6	8	5
5	6	7	1	9	8	4	3	2
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2	7	1	4	3	5	8	9	6
3	9	8	2	1	6	7	5	4



THE CN+R REVIEW | NEIL MORRIS, FILM CRITIC

## Satirical 'Don't Look Up' is sharp-witted yet overly familiar

Hugging the line of li-moscene liberalism, "Don't Look Up" is unabashedly on the nose. It is a malady that plagued director Adam McKay's last two films, the overrated "The Big Short" and

the rudderless "Vice." In this latest satire, scientists discover a giant comet streaking along a collision course for Earth. The world has six months to prepare, stop it, or something/anything, yet our political and entertainment institutions fritter away that precious time ignoring, denying, and/or com-modifying the problem.

The metaphor to our COVID-19 zeitgeist is patently obvious, and McKay tries to bring our cultural dysfunction into sharp relief by projecting its crippling impact EVEN in the face of a celestial body threatening global annihilation. The thing is, that isn't really a far cry from what we have seen, and continue to see,

### DON'T LOOK UP

GRADE: B

DIRECTOR: Adam McKay

STARRING: Leonardo DiCaprio, Jennifer Lawrence, Meryl Streep, Cate Blanchett, Tyler Perry, Rob Morgan, Jonah Hill and Mark Rylance

MPAA RATING: R

RUNNING TIME: 2 hr. 18 min.



Courtesy of Netflix

**Leonardo DiCaprio and Jennifer Lawrence lead an ensemble cast in 'Don't Look Up.'**

as we have endeavored to stop or mitigate the ongoing impact of a deadly pandemic that has already claimed millions of lives.

Still, McKay's serrated wit is suitably searing. When Michigan State University astronomers Dr. Randall Mindy (Leonardo DiCaprio) and his graduate student, Kate Dibiasky (Jennifer Lawrence), happen upon the comet and its deadly trajectory, they assume the world will hear

them and respond with needed dire urgency. Instead, they have to wait two days to see the U.S. president (Meryl Streep, deliciously vampiring), who first chooses to decry their discovery until political expediency gives her a reason to change

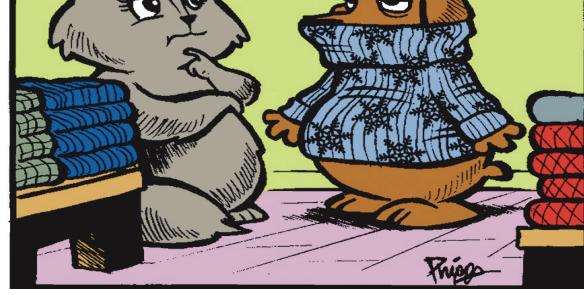
course, sort of. The same goes for the news and social media, who mock the scientists before figuring out ways to monetize the plight, including turning Mindy into its sexy face and Dibiasky into its loony meme. Entertainers (like a singer

played by Ariana Grande) compose self-aggrandizing issue anthems, and political talk shows debate both sides of a decidedly one-sided problem. The biggest influencer, however, is Peter Isherwell (played brilliantly by Mark Rylance), an amalgam who projects the visage of Tim Cook, the self-absorption of Steve Jobs, the mannerisms of Mark Zuckerberg, and the economic amorality of Jeff Bezos. Isherwell is rather ambivalent about the comet until he learns that it is composed of tons of precious minerals. Saving humankind from the comet suddenly takes a backseat to stripmining it.

Mckay wants to make the "Dr. Strangelove" of our era, and on that front he fails. The satire remains too grounded to be farcical, and the lessons it imparts feel sadly familiar instead of dramatically jarring. But that does not make them any less true or relevant, and as the most risible responses to the virus outbreak become commonplace and normalized, sometimes it takes sardonic, albeit unnuanced allegory to snap us back to reality.

### Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



## Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps



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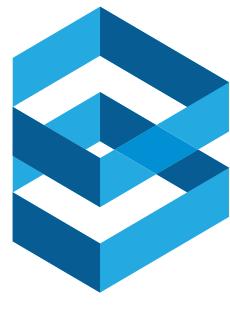
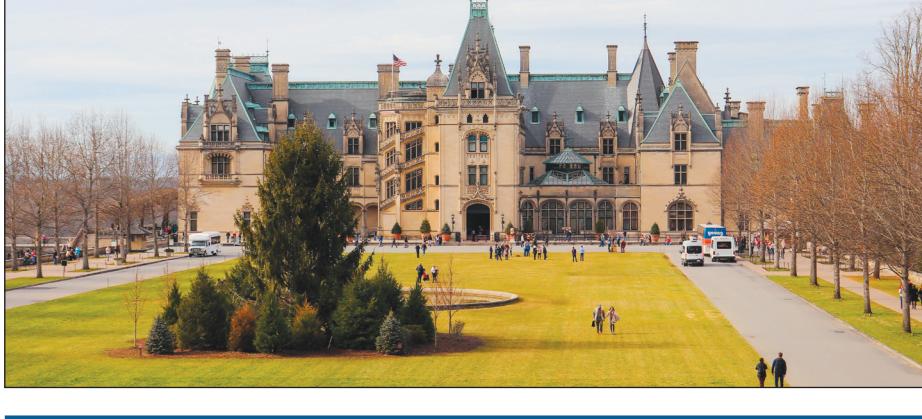
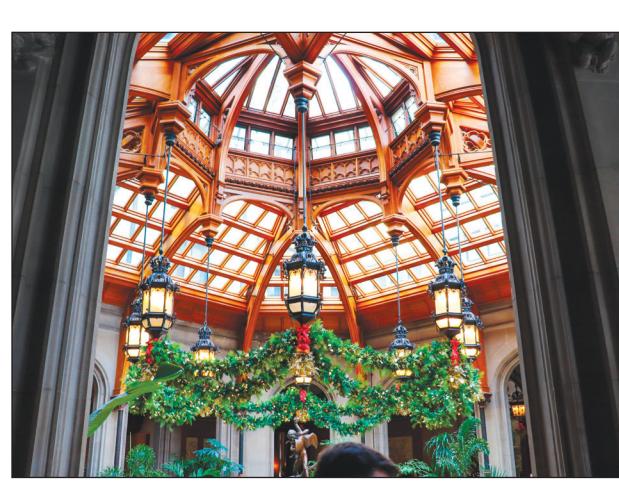
"I just don't feel it's necessary to say thank you



Staff photos by Simon Barbre

## Christmas at Biltmore House

News + Record photographer Simon Barbre visited the Biltmore House in Asheville — the largest private residence in the U.S. — last week and captured these images. Each year, the home Christmas is dressed in holiday finery: more than 100 decorated trees, 10,000 ornaments and 100,000 lights are displayed in and around the 178,926 sq. ft. home. Barbre said his favorite room was the library, which was illuminated by lights around the railings and ledges of its confines. The Christmas decorations at Biltmore will be shown through Jan. 9.



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# CLASSIFIEDS

## REAL ESTATE

**LEARN ABOUT LAND** - Chatham Land Experts - [www.learn-aboutland.com](http://www.learn-aboutland.com) - 919-362-6999. Jy6,tfnc

## OFFICE SPACE RENT

**OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT**, Approximately 2,000 sq. ft. reception area, conference room, six offices, kitchenette and restrooms. Siler Business Park, 919-930-1650. Jn15,tfnc

## RENTAL APARTMENTS

**POWELL SPRINGS APTS.** Evergreen Construction introduces

its newest independent living community for adults 55 years or older, 1 and 2 bedroom applications now being accepted. Office hours: Mon, Tues & Thurs, 8:30 - 4:30. Call 919-533-6319 for more information, TDD #1-800-735-2962, Equal housing opportunity, Handicapped accessible, A2,tfnc

**ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS** now for one bedroom apartments, adults 55 years or older. Water included, appliances furnished, on-site laundry, elevator, keyless entry. Section 8 accepted. \$486/mo., no security deposit. Application fee \$25 per adult. Call Braxton Manor, 919-663-1877. Handicap accessible. Equal Housing Opportunity. A2,tfnc

## FOR SALE

**TV ANTENNA SALE** - Come by MacPage Communications at 102 West Third Avenue, Siler City. 919-227-6698. D9,16,23,3t

**SILK HOPE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT INC.** will be accepting sealed bids for a used generator, Briggs & Stratton, Vanguard 993cc, 20KW LPG, 120/240V. All bids must be mailed to: Silk Hope Volunteer Fire Department, 8110 Silk Hope-Gum Springs Road, Siler City, NC 27344 by 12-31-2021. Bid opening on 12-18-2021. \$2,000 reserve. For questions, call 919-742-5874. N18,25,D2,9,16,23,6t

## AUCTIONEERS

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[tonauctions@yahoo.com](mailto:tonauctions@yahoo.com), My6,tfnc

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**I PAY IN CASH FOR JUNK CARS** and trucks. Prompt, courteous service. Call 910-464-5434 or cell: 610-639-5614. God Bless! D23,1tc

**RAINBOW WATER FILTERED VACUUMS**, Alice Cox, Cox's Distributing - Rainbow - Cell: 919-548-4314, Sales, Services, Supplies. Serving public for 35 years. Rada Cutlery also available. Au26,tfnc

**AUTO BROKERS RECYCLERS** - Cash paid for Junk/Wrecked vehicles. Call 919-545-0194. My13,tfnc

**JUNK CARS PICKED UP** Free of charge. Due to many months of low steel prices and unstable steel markets, we cannot pay for cars at this time. Cars, trucks, and machinery will be transported and environmentally correctly recycled at no charge. 919-542-2803. A2,tfnc

**LETT'S TREE SERVICE** - tree removal, stump grinding, lot clearing. Visa & Master Card accepted. Timber. Free estimates. 919-258-3594 N9,tfnc

## CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

**Line ad deadline** Tuesday — Noon

**Display ad deadline** Monday — 5 p.m.

## Rates and payment

Minimum charge of \$5 for each classified advertisement of 25 words or less per week. For each additional word, no matter how many insertions, add 20¢ per word. Payable in advance.

## Blind ads

No information will be given out by this office to the identity of person placing "keyed" or "blind" ads.

## Errors

In advertisements that run more than one week, we are responsible for errors appearing in the first week only. If you find an error in your ad, report it immediately.

a bachelor's degree in Computer Science. To apply go to <https://www.randolphmc.com/careers>. Taking applications until the position is filled. Equal Opportunity Employer, including disability/vets. D16,23,30,J6,13,5tc

**FOOD SERVICES STAFF** - Pittsboro Christian Village is accepting applications for Server, Pantry Cook, and Cook. Apply in person 8:30 am to 4:00 pm Monday-Friday, at 1825 East St. in Pittsboro. O21,tfnc

**HOMECARE SEEKING**, Now hiring for immediate positions in Pittsboro/Siler City: Certified Nurse Aides - Competitive weekly pay, CNAs start at \$10.00/hr. & up for extra care cases - Total LifeCare, Call

## HIRING CNA's

### 2ND & 3RD SHIFT

**CALL: 919-542-3151**

Monday-Friday 8:30am to 4:00pm for appointment to complete application and interview.

Pittsboro Christian Village  
1825 East Street, Pittsboro, NC

## PITTSBORO VILLAGE APARTMENTS

**Now accepting applications for 2BR, 1.5BA**

Range, refrigerator, dishwasher are included in the rent. Rent starts at \$630 and up.

400 Honeysuckle Dr., Pittsboro, NC 27312

919-542-5410

TDD 1-800-735-2962

Email: [pittsborovillage@ECCMGT.com](mailto:pittsborovillage@ECCMGT.com)



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Visit [www.chathamcountync.gov](http://www.chathamcountync.gov)

and click Jobs.

## Join the News + Record's Team

## HELP WANTED

### Delivery Drivers

The Chatham News + Record is seeking part-time drivers to assist in the delivery of newspapers on Wednesday or Thursday mornings. Ability to lift 25lbs, work in various weather conditions and a valid NC drivers license is required.

Please email resume and references to Jason Justice at [jjustice@chathamnr.com](mailto:jjustice@chathamnr.com)

Chatham News + Record

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- CDL license is a big plus

To Apply: [mountairejobs.com](http://mountairejobs.com) or send resume to [frussell@mountaire.com](mailto:frussell@mountaire.com)

EOE

919-776-0352 or visit 824 South Horner Blvd., Sanford for more info or to apply. A29,tfnc

## LEGALS

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 20E475

All persons having claims against **ALICE MARIE HAYNES**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 2nd day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 2nd day of December, 2021.

John L. Haynes, Executor  
514 Carolina Meadows Village  
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27517

D2,D9,D16,D23,4tp

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS NORTH CAROLINA CHATHAM COUNTY 21E687

All persons having claims against **GEORGE DANIEL PIKE**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 2nd day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 2nd day of December, 2021.

Pamela Ruth Pike, Co-Executive  
951 Silk Hope Liberty Rd  
Siler City, NC 27344

Kristen Pike Horton, Co-Executive

1626 Puhi Lane  
Kailua, Hi 96734

D2,D9,D16,D23,4tp

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF CHATHAM

**16 E 270**  
In the Matter of the Estate Of Joseph Weldon Foster, Jr. Having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of **JOSEPH WELDON FOSTER, JR.**, deceased, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the said decedent to exhibit them to the Chatham County Clerk of Court on or before March 5, 2022 or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to said estate are notified to make immediate payment.

This the 29th day of November, 2021.

Marlene Foster, Administrator  
Brian P. Hayes, Attorney  
Ferguson, Hayes, Hawkins & DeMay, PLLC  
P.O. Box 444  
Concord, NC 28026

D2,D9,D16,D23,4tp

### NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF BETTY WARD BRITTAINE STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF CHATHAM

Having qualified as Executor of the Estate of **BETTY WARD BRITTAINE**, deceased, of Chatham County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms, and corporations having claims against the estate of said deceased to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before March 2, 2022, 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 2nd day of December, 2021.

William Gregory Brittain, Executor for the Estate  
Charles B. Carver, CPA  
PO Box 3120

Chapel Hill, NC 27515

Telephone: 919-929-2149

D2,D9,D16,D23,4tp

& LEE  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
BOX 1806  
PITTSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA  
27312  
(919) 542-5605  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY  
21E707**

All persons having claims against **WILLIE JOHNSON  
AKA WILLIE W. JOHNSON**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.  
This the 16th day of December, 2021.  
Cindy Allen, Executrix  
1668 Lystra Rd  
Chapel Hill, N.C. 27517  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY  
21E722**

All persons having claims against **MARJORIE ABIGAIL RUMMELL aka GAIL M. RUMMELL**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.  
This the 16th day of December, 2021.  
Robert Mackenzie Rummell, Jr., Executor  
1441 Prairie Ave  
Lawrence, Ks 66044  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY  
21 E 711**

The undersigned, Lea Cramer, having qualified as Administrator of the Estate of **MICHAEL KURT WILLIAMS**, deceased, late of Chatham County, this is to notify all persons having claims against said estate to present them to the undersigned on or before 17th day of March, 2022, or this notice will be plead in bar of their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.  
This the 16 day of December, 2021.

Lea Cramer, Administrator  
c/o Shanelle K. Edmonds,  
Attorney for the Estate  
Hopper Cummings, PLLC  
Post Office Box 1455  
Pittsboro, NC 27312  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY  
21E719**

All persons having claims against **EDWINA ANN ZAGAMI**,

deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.

This the 16th day of December, 2021.  
Sarah McWay Boling, Executrix  
2102 Woodbury Dr  
Hillsboro, NC 27278  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE TO CREDITORS  
NORTH CAROLINA  
CHATHAM COUNTY  
21E717**

All persons having claims against **CLARENCE ADRIAN GOINS**, deceased, late of Chatham County, North Carolina, are notified to exhibit the same to the undersigned on or before the 16th day of March, 2022, or this notice will be pleaded in bar of recovery. Debtors of the decedent are asked to make immediate payment.  
This the 16th day of December, 2021.  
A. Frank Goins, Executor  
2327 Ainsdale Road  
Charlotte, NC 28226  
D16,D23,D30,J6,4tp

**NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE  
SALE  
21 SP 100**

Under and by virtue of the power of sale contained in a certain Deed of Trust made by Deborah J. Cox and John Paul Cox, Jr. (PRESENT RECORD OWNER(S): Deborah J. Cox and John Paul Cox, Jr.) to CBC Services Inc., Trustee(s), dated August 13, 2009, and recorded in Book No. 01476, at Page 1008 in Chatham County Registry, North Carolina, default having been made in the payment of the promissory note secured by the said Deed of Trust and the undersigned, Substitute Trustee Services, Inc. having been substituted as Trustee in said Deed of Trust by an instrument duly recorded in the Office of the Register of Deeds Chatham County, North Carolina and the holder of the note evidencing said indebtedness having directed that the Deed of Trust be foreclosed, the undersigned **Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at the courthouse door in Pittsboro, Chatham County, North Carolina, or the customary location designated for foreclosure sales, at 1:30 PM on January 6, 2022 and will sell to the highest bidder for cash the following real estate situated in Siler City in the County of Chatham, North Carolina and being more particularly described as follows:**

Being all of Lot 2, containing 0.626 acres, more or less, as described on a Plat entitled, "Survey for Shane H. Tolliver and wife, Gloria B. Tolliver", dated January 25, 1988, prepared by Van R. Finch - Land Surveys, and recorded

in Plat Slide 88-23, Chatham County Registry, to which Plat reference is hereby made for greater certainty of description. Together with improvements located thereon; said property being located at **135 West Dolphin Street, Siler City, North Carolina**.

There is also conveyed herein with all rights and interest in and to the use of the existing driveway as it encroaches on adjoining property and is shown on the above Plat. Trustee may, in the Trustee's sole discretion, delay the sale for up to one hour as provided in N.C.G.S. §45-21.23. Should the property be purchased by a third party, that party must pay the excise tax, as well as the court costs of Forty-Five Cents (\$0.45) per One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) required by N.C.G.S. §7A-308(a)(1).

The property to be offered pursuant to this notice of sale is being offered for sale, transfer and conveyance "AS IS, WHERE IS." Neither the Trustee nor the holder of the note secured by the deed of trust/security agreement, or both, being foreclosed, nor the officers, directors, attorneys, employees, agents or authorized representative of either the Trustee or the holder of the note make any representation or warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being offered for sale, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such condition are expressly disclaimed. Also, this property is being sold subject to all taxes, special assessments, and prior liens or prior encumbrances of record and any recorded releases. Said property is also being sold subject to applicable Federal and State laws.

A deposit of five percent (5%) of the purchase price, or seven hundred fifty dollars (\$750.00), whichever is greater, is required and must be tendered in the form of certified funds at the time of the sale.

If the trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason, the sole remedy of the purchaser is the return of the deposit. Reasons of such inability to convey include, but are not limited to, the filing of a bankruptcy petition prior to the confirmation of the sale and reinstatement of the loan without the knowledge of the trustee. If the validity of the sale is challenged by any party, the trustee, in its sole discretion, if it believes the challenge to have merit, may request the court to declare the sale to be void and return the deposit. The purchaser will have no further remedy.

Additional Notice for Residential Property with Less than 15 rental units, including Single-Family Residential Real Property

An order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold.

Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may after receiving the notice of foreclosure sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days but not more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in this notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination.

Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE SERVICES, INC.**

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE**  
c/o Hutchens Law Firm  
P.O. Box 1028  
4317 Ramsey Street  
Fayetteville, North Carolina  
28311

Phone No: (910) 864-3068

<https://sales.hutchenslawfirm.com>

If the validity of the sale is

Firm Case No: 5101 - 19572  
D23,D30,2tc

**CHATHAM COUNTY PARTNERSHIP FOR CHILDREN SEEKING BIDS:**

Chatham County Partnership for Children is requesting bids for implementation of effective program activities to address Child Care Related goals and objectives listed in the **Bid Packet for 2022-2025** available on our website at <https://chathamkids.org/who-we-are-smart-start/>. Selection of bids and awarding of funding is contingent upon approval by the NC Partnership for Children and the allocation of funding from the NC Legislature. Contact Sheen Klaus at [sheen@chathamkids.org](mailto:sheen@chathamkids.org) with questions.

D23,1tc

**AMENDED NOTICE OF SUBSTITUTED TRUSTEE'S FORECLOSURE SALE OF REAL PROPERTY  
19-SP-172**

UNDER AND BY VIRTUE of the power and authority contained in that certain Deed of Trust executed and delivered by Justin Tyler Haynes dated May 24, 2017 and recorded on May 24, 2017, in Book 1924 at Page 522, in the Office of the Register of Deeds of Chatham County, North Carolina; and because of default in the payment of the indebtedness secured thereby and, pursuant to demand of the holder of the Note secured by said Deed of Trust, the undersigned Goddard & Peterson, PLLC (Substitute Trustee) **will offer for sale at the courthouse door in the City of Pittsboro, Chatham County, North Carolina, or the customary location designated for foreclosure sales, on January 5, 2022 at 10:00 AM** and will sell to the highest bidder for cash the following real estate situated in the County of Chatham, North Carolina and being more particularly described in the above referenced Deed of Trust, together with all improvements located thereon:

Address of Property: **338 Lonnie Fields Road, Bear Creek, NC 27207**

**Tax Parcel ID: 0060977**

Present Record Owner: Justin Tyler Haynes Trustee may, in the Trustee's sole discretion, delay the sale for up to one hour as provided in N.C.G.S. §45-21.23. Said property is sold subject to applicable Federal and State laws. A deposit of five percent (5%) of the amount of the bid or seven hundred fifty Dollars (\$750.00), whichever is greater, is required and must be tendered in the form of certified funds at the time of the sale. Should the property be purchased by a third party, that party must pay the excise tax, any Land Transfer Tax, as well as the court costs of Forty-Five Cents (\$0.45) per One Hundred Dollars (\$100.00) required by N.C.G.S. §7A-308(a)(1).

The real property described above is being offered for sale "AS IS, WHERE IS" and will be sold subject to all superior liens, unpaid taxes, and special assessments. Neither the Substitute Trustee nor the holder of the Note secured by the Deed of Trust being foreclosed, nor the officers, directors, attorneys, employees, agents or authorized representatives of either the Substitute Trustee or the holder of the Note make any representation or warranty relating to the title or any physical, environmental, health or safety conditions existing in, on, at or relating to the property being offered for sale, and any and all responsibilities or liabilities arising out of or in any way relating to any such condition expressly are disclaimed.

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

If the Trustee or Substitute Trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason, the sole remedy of the purchaser is the return of the deposit. Reasons of such inability to convey title include, but are not limited to, the filing of a bankruptcy petition prior to the sale and reinstatement of the loan without knowledge of the Substitute Trustee(s).

Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may after receiving the notice of foreclosure sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days but not more than 90 days, after the sale date contained in this notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination.

Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE SERVICES, INC.**

**SUBSTITUTE TRUSTEE**  
c/o Hutchens Law Firm  
P.O. Box 1028  
4317 Ramsey Street  
Fayetteville, North Carolina  
28311

Phone No: (910) 864-3068

<https://sales.hutchenslawfirm.com>

If the validity of the sale is

challenged by any party, the Substituted Trustee(s), in its/their sole discretion, if it/they believe(s) the challenge to have merit, may declare the sale to be void and return the deposit. The purchaser will have no further remedy.

Additional Notice where the Real Property is Residential with less than 15 Rental Units: An order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the Clerk of Superior Court of the County in which the property is sold. Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement 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 the Notice of Sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the Notice of Termination.

Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of such termination.

This is a communication from a debt collector. The purpose of this Communication is to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose, except as stated below in the instance of bankruptcy protection. If you are under the protection of the bankruptcy court or have been discharged as a result of a bankruptcy proceeding, this notice is given to you pursuant to statutory requirement and for informational purposes and is not intended as an attempt to collect a debt or as an act to collect, assess, or recover all or any portion of the debt from you personally.

FN# 3130.00419 58970

D23,D30,2tc

**PUBLIC SALE**  
Siler City Self Storage ("Lienor"), P.O. Box 143, Siler City, North Carolina, will hold this public sale of personal property at its storage facility on Tuesday, January 4th, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. in Siler City, NC. The sale will start at 1407 E. 11th St. (Hwy 64 behind Sir Pizza), then to our location at 500 West 2nd Street (behind Maxway) then to 1112 S. Chatam Ave.

The following persons and property at 1407 E. 11th St., Siler City, NC, are subject to this lien sale:

Pamela Adele Alston, Unit 1085

908 MLK Jr. Blvd.

Siler City, NC 27344

Helen Blakley, Unit 2002

813 Sheffield Dr, Apt #1

Siler City, NC 27344

Tara Burnette, Unit 1119

911 12th St

Siler City, NC 27344

Lori Cockman, Unit 1096

1421 W. Front St

Burlington, NC 27215

Tomas Garcia, Unit 1018

PO Box 10

Siler City, NC 27344

Michael Glover, Unit 1108

1570 Buick St

Siler City, NC 27344

Joshua Lassiter, Unit 1017

6840 Stockyard Rd Lot #31

Graham, NC 27253

Margaret McKeiver, Unit 1060

911 12th St

Siler City, NC 27344

Beverly Charlene McLean, Unit 1102

1917 Alston Chapel Rd

Pittsboro, NC 27312

Mit Patel, Unit 1099

1216 Calistoga Way

Lawrenceville, Ga. 30043

Kelly Shaw, Unit 1073

706 Sanderson Dr

Durham, NC 27704

Miranda A. Sheffield, Unit 1068

2758 George York Rd

Randleman, NC 27317

Rebecca Smith Stuart, Unit 1097

5705 Silk Hope Gum Springs Rd

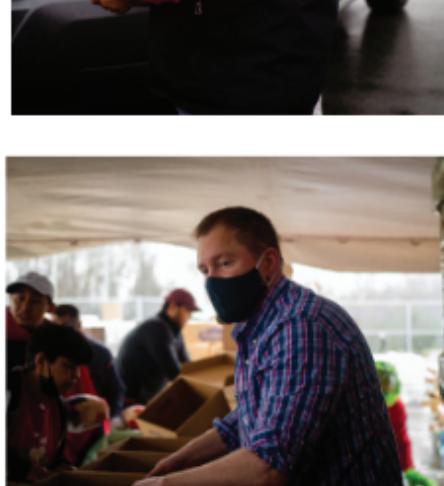
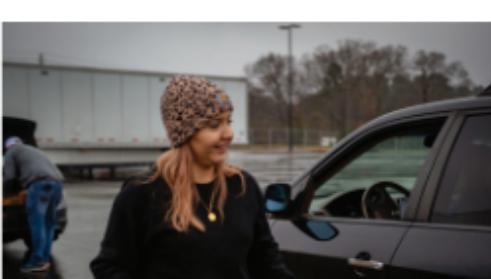
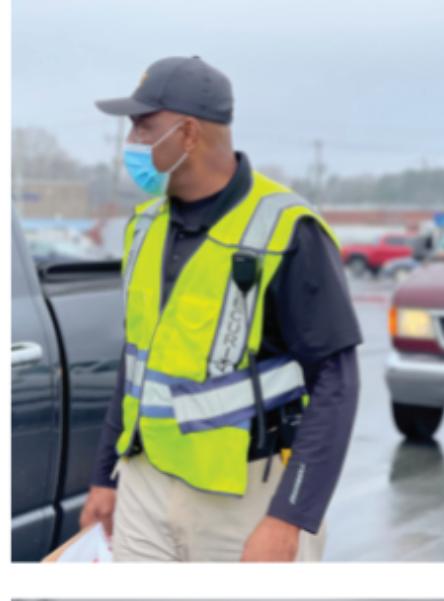
Siler City, NC 27344

Krista Willett, Unit 1086

226 Holly Berry Ln



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