

# Chatham News + Record

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## A 'CLUCKING' GOOD TIME

### Siler City gears up for Spring Chicken Festival

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff



SILER CITY — The mouth-watering smell of fried foods, the laughter of children on a Ferris wheel, the sound of guitars and harmonized vocals, accompanied with the sight of colorful vendors' tents with a wide array of goods will soon fill downtown Siler City.

The town's 5th annual Spring Chicken Festival — known for its "eggs-cellent" atmosphere, as well as its ability to bring thousands of people downtown — is set for Saturday, May 6.

Siler City Parks & Recreation Director Jack Clelland hopes this year's

festival will be bigger and better than ever after the 2020 and 2021 events were canceled by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We anticipate somewhere around 5,000 people, if not more, to attend,"

See CHICKEN, page A7

## 'ALL ABOUT THE KIDS'

### ClydeFest to bring joy of arts to local families

BY BEN RAPPAPORT  
News + Record Staff



PITTSBORO — Gilda McDaniel keeps games like "Mailbox Madness" and "Fowl Shot" in her garage all year round. Strewn next to the games are dozens of painted wooden critters and beanbags of all shapes and colors.

While she may sound like some kind of hoarder, her garage is stocked in preparation for a single day each year: ClydeFest.

"This day stays with me all year," McDaniel said. "It's so special for so many reasons."

McDaniel, who also serves as the board president of the Chatham Arts Council, has assisted with the local arts

festival for families for more than 20 years, and her favorite day of the year is quickly approaching. The event, which this year will be on Saturday, April 22, combines her three favorite things: her dear friend Clyde Jones — the namesake of the festival — the Chatham Arts Council and Chatham County.

"The event follows the inspiration of

See FESTIVAL, page A7

## Student-designed car ready to compete at N.C. Gravity Games

BY BEN RAPPAPORT  
News + Record Staff

SILER CITY — Leah Riggsbee has always wanted to get thrown down a hill.

She's about to get her chance. Riggsbee is part of the Chatham School of Science & Engineering Gravity Games team. The team designed, and will soon drive, a gravity-powered car to compete in the N.C. Gravity Games.

The five-student Chatham County team is among the more than 50 teams from throughout the state slated to compete on Saturday, April 29, in downtown Lenoir as part of the 10th running of the N.C. Gravity Games, a STEM-education racing event sponsored by Google, Appalachian State University and the N.C. Science Festival.

Riggsbee, a CSSE sophomore, will be the driver behind the unique contraption the CSSE team devised. They call it "The Mouse Trap." The triangular prism-shaped vehicle is meant to cut through the air and propel Riggsbee down the hills of Lenoir, hopefully on her way to victory.

"I'm really excited for that hill," she said. "I wanted to try something different, this is definitely different."

#### Driven designers

CSSE will be competing in the engineering division, which means their

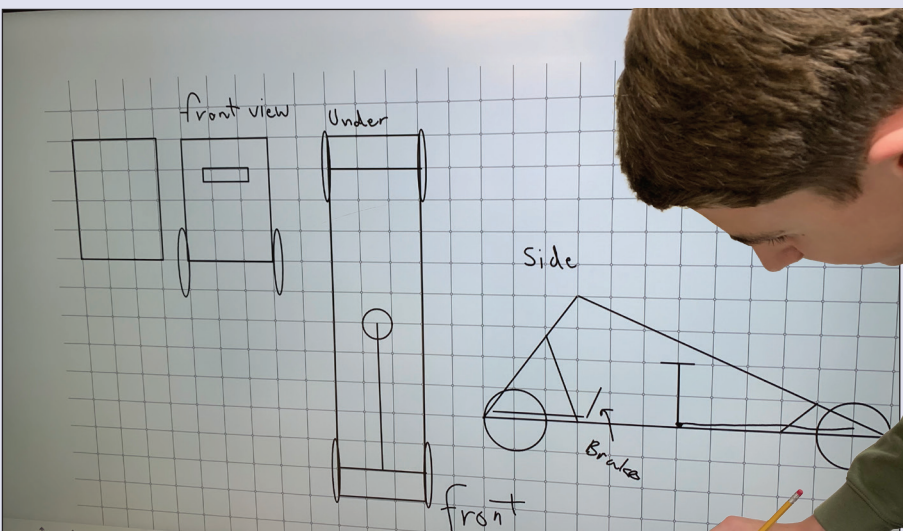


Photo by Kevin McDaniel

The blueprint for "The Mouse Trap," the car five Chatham School of Science & Engineering students will race when they compete in Lenoir on April 29.

car must be built from scratch, with their own sourced materials. While there are no specific requirements on used materials, the blueprints and final cars are subject to safety inspections. It also means the assembled car, weights, wheels, safety equipment and driver cannot exceed 300 pounds.

The team of five — Riggsbee, sophomore Caden Bailey, sophomore Nickleus Castevens, sophomore Blake Green and freshman Dominick Pietryga — was gifted \$1,000 to build the car

courtesy of the Morehead Planetarium and Science Center in Chapel Hill. The funds have covered all necessary expenses for the construction of the car; leftover funds will go toward lodging, transportation and other Gravity

See GAMES, page A12

## CN+R Q&A

### Maynor steps into Chief Deputy role

Says position is 'about listening, nurturing'

BY BEN RAPPAPORT  
News + Record Staff

From narcotics to special operations, when it comes to operations in the Chatham County Sheriff's Office, Steve Maynor has done it all.

The veteran officer has been on the force for more than 20 years, and last month he received a new title: Chatham's Chief Deputy.

Maynor faces a variety of challenges in his new role, including increased prevalence of guns in schools, a rising opioid epidemic and managing crime in a county with a growing population when recruitment for police has struggled.

This week, we speak with Maynor about his new role, the history it carries, and his goals for the position.



Maynor

#### How did you get the appointment of Chief Deputy?

After the recent retirement of Chief Deputy Tracy Kelly, I was appointed by Sheriff Mike Roberson to serve as his Chief Deputy for the Chatham County Sheriff's Office. I am thankful for the opportunity to serve the Office and the citizens of Chatham in this capacity for Sheriff Roberson.

#### What are some of the responsibilities of your new role that differ from your previous work with the department?

The responsibilities of Chief Deputy are to support and assist Sheriff Roberson in managing the daily operations of the Sheriff's Office; to make strategic decisions within the Sheriff's vision and goals for serving the citizens of Chatham County; to act as a liaison for the office between the community and other agencies.

Previously, my role has been to manage personnel and resources within the Field Operations Team of the Sheriff's Office. In my new role I will oversee the daily operations of the entire office, working closely with our leadership team. The Sheriff's Office has a talented group of men and women who serve this community every day.

See VETERAN, page A3

## 'LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM JAIL'

### Pastors observe anniversary with reading of MLK Jr. letter

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff

This week marks the 60th anniversary of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s arrest in Birmingham, Alabama — one of 29 times the Civil Rights leader was jailed in the course of coordinating protests, sit-ins and other such acts of civil disobedience before his 1968 assassination.

The Birmingham arrest, though, on April 12, 1963 — he'd violated an anti-protest injunction in what he described as "a faith act" — became particularly significant historically because of what King did while jailed: he composed a letter from his prison cell in response to criticism from eight white church leaders who'd described him as an "outside agitator."

The Birmingham clergymen, writing in an open letter in a local newspaper,

said King's resistance and protest strategies in the South's most segregated city were "unwise and untimely."

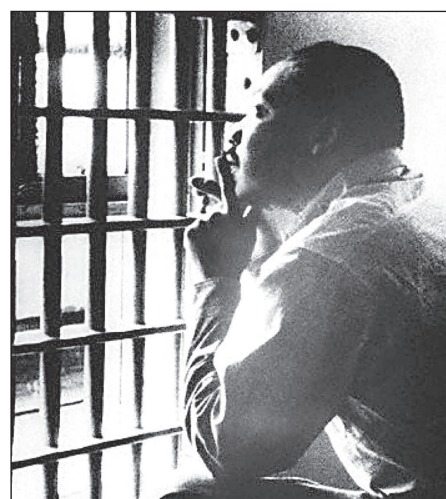
King disagreed.

His response, which came to be known as the "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," became one of the classic documents of "the Movement" and is still published and read widely today. On Sunday, a group of 10 Chatham County pastors — some Black, some white — will participate in a reading of the letter in its entirety.

The reading, set for 5 p.m. via Zoom, is being presented by the Community Remembrance Coalition — Chatham and Chatham's two NAACP branches in conjunction with the Chatham Community Library.

"As Dr. King said, 'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice every-

See PASTORS, page A6



Fair use image

Martin Luther King Jr. in a photograph taken at Jefferson County Jail in Birmingham, Alabama.



108 ACRES, AND FULL OF POTENTIAL

# TLC purchases land in Chicken Bridge Forest

BY BEN RAPPAPORT  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — There's a delicate balance occurring in Chatham County that will set the stage for generations to come.

On the one hand, businesses, developers and economic opportunities create the chance for jobs and investment in the county. On the other, those growth pressures threaten the resources and rural areas that

have defined a way of life.

Triangle Land Conservancy, an organization working to protect natural habitats in North Carolina, understands that balance. Since its start in 1983, TLC has conserved more than 23,000 acres in six N.C. counties — Chatham, Durham, Johnston, Lee, Orange and Wake.

In Chatham County, TLC recently purchased 108 acres of land off of Chicken Bridge Road, which they hope will be

used to improve the Haw River Trail corridor.

"The property has been used for forestry for at least the past decade, which has caused some habitat degradation, making it an excellent candidate for restoration," TLC said in a statement.

In purchasing land like this property — which TLC is calling "Chicken Bridge Forest" — the organization

See **BRIDGE**, page A12



TLC photo by Olivia Garcia

Triangle Land Conservancy has purchased 108 acres in Chatham County which includes this stream.

## VETERAN

Continued from page A1

The team we have is dedicated to serve with a servants' heart making decisions with compassion and what's best for all involved. We have a great leadership team who cares and understands both the community and the team we have recruited to serve you. The team we have strives everyday to abide by our mission statement: "To provide exemplary law enforcement service achieving the Best Possible Result."

Together, we will continue to build on the positive relationships that bridge the Sheriff's Office with the citizens of Chatham. This allows us to serve you with a professional sheriff's office that is the example for other law enforcement agencies to emulate. Together we will serve the citizens of Chatham County with professionalism while

continuing our recruiting efforts to hire the best of the best. We will continue working to get our pay competitive for the market so we can recruit and retain the talented team we have working at the Sheriff's Office. We will maintain our path to accreditation, reviewing our policies and keeping them up to date with the constant changes in laws.

**Why do you think you were selected for the position? What does this title mean to you?**

Sheriff Roberson made the appointment and I am honored for the opportunity to serve in this capacity. As for what this title means to me, it's responsibility and what's best for the Sheriff's Office and the citizens of Chatham County. The title is also about listening, nurturing and enhancing both our team and citizens as I take this journey, making sure what we as an Office are doing is right even when no one is looking. It's

about growing the next leaders and helping our team reach personal and professional goals. It's about representing Sheriff Roberson with professionalism and integrity holding myself and our team accountable to the policies, procedures and goals we are entrusted to with our oaths of office.

**What's sustained you in your career — what keeps you going, what do you love (and maybe don't love) about the job?**

What I believe has sustained me in my career begins with how we were raised growing up and having a mom and dad who believed in me and my brother. They challenged us to try new things, be committed to the things we did do and to not quit when we felt pressure.

As kids, our parents did not jump around with jobs. They were committed and gave their all each day even in tough times. As I began my career, I relied on what we ob-

served in our family and instilled the same morals and ethics as what my parents taught us.

My wife and my kids keep me going, standing by my side and supporting me each day. This profession takes a supportive family and I have the best! They care and understand the demands that take me away at times so others can be helped. My strong faith drives me and I truly believe my purpose is to serve others in my work as a first responder. The team I work with each day are great people and they're my family away from family. We laugh and sometimes cry, yet through it all we come together to support one another in service. There isn't another job I'd ever want to do. I love interacting with people, helping solve problems, hearing others' testimonies and supporting others while celebrating positive life-changing moments.

I don't love the daily attacks on the profession as a whole. The quickness of society to offer their opinions without having the full story is frustrating — for every situation we have to remember, it's not TV and this real life story has real life humans in it on all sides of an event. If it were an easy job more would be lining up to join. It's far from easy but it's very rewarding despite how it is portrayed.

**How have previous Chief Deputies influenced you?**

Each one has had a different influence on my growth in positive ways. I've worked with four: Gary Blankenship, Sheriff Roberson, Charles Gardner and Tracy Kelly. I also have close relationships with others in surrounding counties. I value what I have taken away from each one of these current and former Chief Deputies. I hope I

can be an influence for others just as these men and women have influenced me in continuing to support growth while others seek their own professional and personal growth. Being a listener and someone who others can rely on to guide them through their career just as they have been to me.

**There's been increasing difficulty in recruiting for law enforcement positions. How should the department incentivize potential officers?**

It is extremely difficult in today's time to recruit. We have done well and will continue to seek new ideas for the changing climate surrounding the Law Enforcement profession or just the overall job market as other professions and industries are competing for the same people to come work for them. We have put into practice new ways to recruit by offering recruit positions, hiring and paying the recruits while they're in school. When you look at the Basic Law Enforcement Training programs across the state, schools are struggling to meet the minimum to hold classes. The pay has become a competition with many municipalities paying higher starting salaries which pull from the pool of applicants that are attending school. To recruit and retain is a daily conversation for us, our surrounding agencies and across the state. Chatham is in a unique market, and we will have to begin comparing ourselves to the higher paying agencies next to us to get an increase in the applicants we are trying to attract. Our pay is low and our staff struggles to be able to afford rent or to buy a home in Chatham with the increasing cost of living. Our staff can't afford to live where they work. Pay is going to have

to get competitive to be competitive in recruiting.

**What would surprise people about your work?**

How rewarding of a career it actually is. It's not TV or social media where it's always action or bad things happening. Most days it's about the conversations and the interactions that take place, listening to people who are doing great things. There is more good in the world than bad. We see good each day. We live in the best community and have the best citizens supporting the work being done by the team we have.

**We've seen increased instances of guns in schools, including last month when a man brought a gun on the premises of Chatham Central High School. How much does that concern you as a law enforcement officer?**

It is very alarming and creates worry for me surrounding what could happen if a student were to bring a gun to school. As a parent who received a call earlier this school year regarding a firearm being found on a student in my daughter's school, I felt the same emotions as other parents who were also affected in this situation. It caused anxiety, questions about what could have happened and questions about why or how did this happen.

We are going to respond to every school or situation as if our own family were there. It is a complex and serious issue for our society that is going to take a strategic approach by all not just law enforcement or the school systems to eradicate this behavior in our society. We will have to begin with addressing the root causes of violence such as poverty, social isolation and trauma. Addressing the mental health situation facing our communities will have to be a priority for law makers.

**You've said before there's more good in the world than bad, do you still believe that to be true? What do you value about your journey?**

I value each day that I get to see as we are not promised tomorrow. As I reflect back over work life I am thankful for the people who have guided and supported me along the way. I often put into practice things I learned from my many mentors and leaders I've been fortunate to work with, from my first job at Byrd's Foods and the store managers who believed in me and have stayed in contact throughout the years, to the Chief of Police, Sheriffs and supervisors I have worked with in law enforcement. I have been blessed to have been able to have the right people placed in my life to help guide me along this journey.

**Siler City Fire Department's**

# ANNUAL Barbecue PLATES

**11 a.m. - 7 p.m.  
\$10<sup>00</sup> / Plate  
(with drink)**

## APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup>

**PICK UP AT: The Fire Dept.**



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# VIEWPOINTS

GUEST COLUMN | DENNIS STREETS

## Next national emblem?

Most everyone knows that our national bird is the American bald eagle. It was placed on the Great Seal of our country by the Second Continental Congress in 1782.

Fewer may know that President Reagan designated the rose as the national flower in 1986 — with these words: “More often than any other flower, we hold the rose dear as the symbol of life and love and devotion, of beauty and eternity ... We see proofs of this everywhere.”

More recently, the oak was declared the national tree by Congress in 2004 for its strength, endurance, longevity, shade and foliage. Nearly 90 different types of native oak trees can be found across the U.S.

In 2016, the American bison was named our national mammal. They represent a great conservation success.

You may not have heard about the latest call for a national symbol. In February, Alabama Congressman Barry Moore introduced a bill to make the AR-15 rifle the “National Gun of America.” The bill was quickly co-sponsored by such fellow republicans as George Santos, Andrew Clyde (a gun store owner from Georgia), and Colorado Congresswoman Lauren Boebert, who ran a gun-themed restaurant called Shooters Grill.

The response of those suffering the loss of loved ones slaughtered in mass shootings tied to the use of AR-15s was swift and sharp. The mother

of a Parkland, Florida, teacher killed on Valentine’s Day in 2018 shared her view of the bill, while holding an image of her son: “That AR-15 that they want to make a national gun murdered my son. This is the last second before the AR-15 was fired, and Scott was still standing in the doorway trying to close his classroom door.”

That her son Scott did not have time to avoid the bullets that took his last breath is not surprising. The AR-15, as a military-style rifle whose history goes back to machine guns used by Nazis in World War II, enables rapid firing.

All too often we hear how the AR-15 was the weapon of choice for those committing mass shootings across the

nation. In 2022, the Buffalo, Uvalde and Colorado Springs shooters used their AR-15s to kill 36, injure more, and leave families and communities in grief. And we cannot forget the 2012 massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary.

Most recently, the Covenant School shooter in Nashville used an AR-15-style rifle to kill six innocent elementary students and school personnel. As Dr. Cornelia Griggs, a pediatric and critical care surgeon at Massachusetts General Hospital, remarked, “Disturbingly, in mass shootings, the AR-15 or the AR-15-style rifle seems to be the weapon of choice. When we see a child who has been shot with an AR-15-style rifle, there is often very little hope.”

Clyde and Boebert were three of 21 House Republicans to vote against a resolution to honor the police officers who defended the U.S. Capitol against the Jan. 6 insurrection. Hopefully they will find themselves once again among a very small minority.

And hopefully we will never find cause to add any weapon to the list of emblems to symbolize who we are as a nation, much less the AR-15. For now, let’s stick to our flag, the eagle, the bison, the oak and the rose — and decide next on the national fish. It appears that the striped bass is presently in the lead.

*Dennis Streets is the retired director of the Chatham Council on Aging.*

## The next dalai lama at Disney World?



**ANDREW TAYLOR-TROUTMAN**  
Hope Matters

It must have been the magic in the air that caused me to think of spiritual matters while waiting to ride the legendary Space Mountain at Disney World.

As background, you need to know that the dalai lama, spiritual leader of Tibetan Buddhism, is not an inherited position like a monarch. Neither are prospects weighed according to their credentials, as in the election of the pope. The next dalai lama is simply a boy, like anyone else, and goes about his early life in ignorance regarding his eventual calling. Senior Tibetan monks identify the next incarnation of their leader through oracles, visions, prayers and rituals.

Maybe roller coasters? What if the next dalai lama visited Disney World? What if he was there in line with me, waiting to board Space Mountain?

I looked over the children. There was one especially excited kid giving strangers enthusiastic high-fives! An unmistakable charisma to that boy.

I noticed another child taking deep breaths with his eyes closed. He appeared Zen-like to me.

Or, maybe the dalai lama was the little dude with his face buried in his mama’s leg. Maybe a true spiritual leader is not always calm, but aware of his vulnerability and fears.

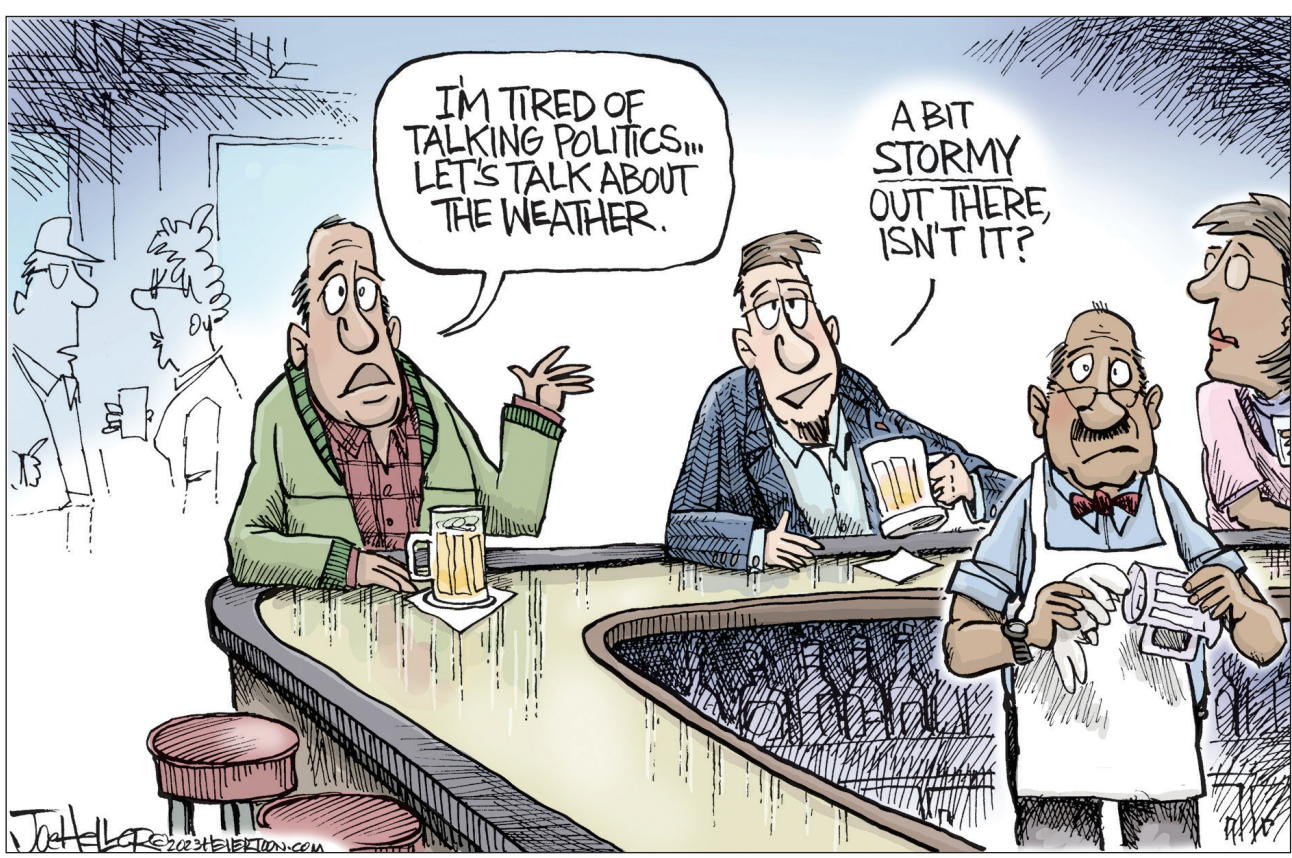
Who’s to say that the next incarnation of the spiritual leader wasn’t the little one whining about the wait?

“How much longer?”  
“Probably 20 minutes,” his dad replied.  
“That is like forever!”  
He knew that time is relative!

One thing is certain — I am not the next dalai lama. But imagining who might be did cause me to look at my fellow Disney patrons in a different light. To view others with more curiosity, empathy and compassion. This seems like a good spiritual lesson for all of us.

For the record, I decided that, if the dalai lama was in that particular line, he was most likely to be the kid surreptitiously eating a bag of Cheetos, one at a time. He was savoring each bite, including licking the orange off his fingertips. That dude knew how to be in the moment.

*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.”*



## Kids’ ball games offer more than wins, losses



**BOB WACHS**  
Movin’ Around

The poet tells us that in spring, “a young man’s fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.”

I know that to be true because it’s happened to me twice — and both times when it did, I was a young man.

The first was when I convinced Better Half to become my better half. I know when that happened; it was in 1970.

The other was before that, but I don’t really remember the year or many of the details. But I know I did fall in love — with baseball.

I wasn’t very good at it: some Little League games in the wayback of growing up in Pittsboro; many a backyard game after school or on Sunday afternoons. I didn’t play in high school; not very athletic and as soon as I turned 14 and got a worker’s permit, I went to work for Dave Roberts at his jewelry store/soda shop.

I appreciated his confidence in me, but now I wish I had played more sports and worked less, since you work all your life and today, thanks to repeated shoulder surgeries, I couldn’t throw a baseball from here to there if my life depended on it.

But I still love it. Love high school and college games. And as far as I’m concerned Major League Baseball should leave major league baseball alone. The new rules this year on pitch clock, bigger bases and such aren’t helping the game.

But as I watch more ball, notably right now summer

rec league softball with my five little princesses who are playing on four different teams, I have already, in the infancy of the season, seen something that definitely isn’t helping those games.

Parents. I can’t quote it exactly but there’s a sign on one of the dugouts at a field at Siler City’s Bray Park. Basically, it tells parents to cool it with the negative vibes and foul language because, as the sign says, “No college scholarships are going to be awarded tonight.”

Several days ago, at a game between two teams, which shall remain nameless, at a local park, which shall also remain nameless to keep from further embarrassing an individual, a classic display of poor sportsmanship was shown for child and adult alike to see. That event should have been embarrassing enough on its own.

Not going to describe any details, again so as not to publicly call out anyone, but suffice it to say the tone and level of volume was notable enough to be heard at other fields in the complex.

So, here’s my question: what benefit did that serve? To show the youngsters how some adults behave? To present a model to the little folks? Hopefully, maybe “yes” to the first and “no” to the second and by the way, youngster, don’t be thinking you need to adopt that behavior.

Here’s a thought for these games: pull for your team but encourage all the youngsters. Speak kindly. Cheer loudly. Have a hot dog... or two.

No college scholarships are going to be awarded this summer.

## The 2024 Governor’s race is shaping up



**TOM CAMPBELL**  
N.C. Spin

We are 20 months away from the 2024 elections and already candidates for governor have declared they are running. In a normal cycle, candidates

are spending these months quietly trying to determine their viability, contacting potential donors and supporters, talking to consultants, and developing position strategies long before ever making public declarations.

The big noise and emphasis in 2024 will obviously be the

presidential race, so some of the announced candidacies might be attempting to get some attention and name recognition before the national political tsunami takes all the air in the room.

Political pundits are asking why Dale Folwell is running and why he announced so soon. The two-term treasurer would be a shoo-in for a third term, so why run? A two-word answer to both questions is: Mark Robinson, who is expected to make a formal announcement of his candidacy later this month. Perhaps Folwell has long dreamed of becoming governor, but I don’t believe he would have chosen this moment to run if not for

Robinson, a MAGA/Trump/far-right cult member. I think the treasurer is convinced, as I have often stated, that if Mark Robinson wins the Republican gubernatorial nomination it will ensure that North Carolina elects another Democrat as governor, regardless of who that person might be.

Next year’s Republican primary could be quite entertaining, featuring a policy wonk (Folwell) against a morality firebrand (Robinson). There’s no question the outcome will be a defining moment for the GOP in North Carolina. Many of the Holshouser-Martin-Broyhill Republicans have either left the party or have been hibernating since 2017.

This gubernatorial primary will draw a line in the sand, forcing those in the party to choose sides.

Early polling is certainly not reliable, but a December poll among Republicans indicated Robinson had a 60 percent vote to 8 for Folwell. Don’t pay too much attention to this. Folwell, a forensic accountant, certainly doesn’t. He told The Assembly’s Steve Riley he wasn’t a gambler ... Not when he ran for school board, for the legislature or when he ran for Treasurer. He doesn’t consider the race for governor a gamble, either.

Folwell told me his campaign theme was going to be: “The best governor money can’t

buy.” As treasurer, he has clearly eschewed big donors, corporate or individual. He has been unafraid to challenge big corporations, politicians, investment houses and others, demonstrating that he won’t be a pawn for big money lobbyists and donors. But Folwell is naïve if he doesn’t recognize that a successful primary and general election campaign is going to cost millions. Perhaps not the \$40 million raised by Roy Cooper or even the \$11.7 million Dan Forest spent in the 2020 election, but millions, nonetheless.

The Republican gubernatorial primary could also impact See **RACE**, page A5

# VIEWPOINTS

## LETTERS

### Siler City needs to do the right thing

#### TO THE EDITOR:

In response to the article entitled “Siler City residents voice concerns over high water bills” (CN+R, Oct. 20-26, 2023). Yes, it’s just not right! I am a Siler City resident who received a high-water bill in the month of February. I reached out to the water department and like a few others, were told similar explanations such as you may have a leak; then was told we had used 39,000 gallons of water in one month. Lastly, I

was told that in May and June of 2022 that we were undercharged. I was very disturbed by the responses and how I was treated over the following weeks. My calls and emails were ignored. The staff’s responses seemed scripted. As a customer one expects their meter to be read correctly. As Ashley Hicks points out in the article, “something is shady.” Or as one Facebooker mentions, it could be a “deceptive way to have enough funding to pay for infrastructure needed for the big plant.”

In a November 3, 2022, article, the town manager, Hank Raper admits there may be a system error. After explaining what appears to be happening with the communication of the software system, he says, “that’s still unacceptable.” He also says the town will work with customers to amend billing discrepancies. No one has reached out to me. What happened to “we want to work with our customers”? No one wants to make it right! I would like Mr. Raper to explain why some residents’ bills have been adjusted and

not others? We are customers! Consider other businesses. If a restaurant, airlines, or hairstylist for example were to undercharge their clients, they would not contact that client after they have eaten, flown, or had their hair styled, especially several months later (and in my case almost a year) and ask for their money. They would have to concede. The unfortunate reality with water usage is there is not another water service one can switch to for better service. So, is that fair to hold Siler City residents hostage? No, it

just is not right! We want our town to grow and flourish. Let this not be another reason why residents have moved away. Make it right! I recently was advised on behalf of the town manager that my bill will not be reversed. Every customer should have their bill reversed due to the system error! Town of Siler City, do the RIGHT thing! I hope that other residents will speak up and out. I am encouraging residents to come out and voice their concerns.

**Robin Martin**  
Siler City

# Blue Cross bill makes good sense



**JOHN HOOD**

John Locke Foundation

How often do the majority and minority leaders of any legislative chamber in America agree on a significant policy change? You can probably count those occasions on your fingers without putting down your coffee cup. But one such example is unfolding right now in our state capital. Rep. John Bell (R-Wayne) and Rep. Robert Reives II (D-Chatham) are two primary sponsors of House Bill 346, which would loosen some state controls on the operations of Blue Cross NC. Bell and Reives are also, respectively, the majority and minority leaders of the North Carolina House. Critics of the bill argue it represents a back-door attempt to transfer the value of the nonprofit health insurer into private hands. Back in the late 1990s, some of these critics helped block a major effort to convert Blue Cross into a for-profit entity. The result was a 1998 law that requires the proceeds of any such sale to private owners to flow into

a charitable foundation. That was my position in 1998, too. While Blue Cross NC had by then become a fully taxed entity, much of its assets had been accrued during an earlier period when it benefitted from sizable tax breaks and other state assistance. If it were sold to private firms or shareholders, who would the buyers pay? Surely not themselves, the state, or the former executives or directors of the nonprofit. It seemed prudent at the time to require any such for-profit conversion to result in an independent foundation dedicated to the health and well-being of North Carolinians. It remains the prudent policy today. The bill Bell, Reives and dozens of other state lawmakers are sponsoring this session wouldn’t change it. If the leaders of Blue Cross NC decide to sell, the proceeds will go to a foundation. Where I differ from the critics is that I see House Bill 346 as making a sale less likely. Right now, Blue Cross is the dominant player in North Carolina’s market for private health plans. Indeed, it’s the only insurer selling policies in all 100 counties. But health care is undergoing

rapid change. Both federal legislation and industry trends have created increasing returns to scale. Local hospitals and other providers are merging, becoming parts of national chains. Insurers are also scaling up, in part to compete for the business of employers who operate across the country. Among other benefits, these scaled-up companies can invest productively in new technologies, massive databases, artificial intelligence and other lines of business that enhance their ability to control insurance premiums and promote wellness. Generally speaking, however, the insurers don’t make investments directly, which would quickly run up against state-imposed caps on the investment of their assets. Instead, they are organized as holding companies that own both the tightly regulated insurance company as well as affiliated subsidiaries. Under current law, Blue Cross NC can’t do that. Moreover, as a “hospital service corporation” under state law, it faces not only a 10% cap on how much of its assets can be invested in non-insurance ventures, but also an automatic trigger to convert to a for-profit

company if it ever sold a significant interest in such a venture. House Bill 346 would permit it to reorganize as a nonprofit holding company that would continue to own the nonprofit Blue Cross insurer as well as other affiliated companies and investments. The bill also stipulates that no current executives receive equity-based compensation from any subsidiaries created by the holding company and that any subsequent sale of Blue Cross would still put all the proceeds of that sale — from all lines of business — into a foundation. The way I see it, the critics are mistaken about the bill. It would reduce the probability that some out-of-state entity will end up owning and controlling North Carolina’s largest health insurer. That’s one of the reasons both Republican and Democratic leaders in the General Assembly have lined up behind it. They see it the same way.

*John Hood is a John Locke Foundation board member. His latest books, Mountain Folk and Forest Folk, combine epic fantasy with early American history (FolkloreCycle.com).*

# Gene Nichol — disturber and prophet



**D.G. MARTIN**

One on One

North Carolina has its own Old Testament prophet. Maybe you remember from Bible study those prophets who preached about the people’s responsibility to care for the poor. Elijah, of course, fearlessly stood up to the authority of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel and the prophets of Baal. (I Kings 18). One of the most famous prophets is Micah, known for his oft-quoted direction to “do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8). He also condemned those who mistreated the poor. Isaiah demanded, “Is it not share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter?” (Isaiah 58:7). Jeremiah condemned those who “oppress the poor and needy and deprive them of justice.” (Jeremiah 22:3). Amos condemned those who “trample on the poor and force

them to give you grain.” (Amos 5:11). In his new book, “Lessons from North Carolina: Race, Religion, Tribe, and the Future of America,” Gene Nichol takes on the role of North Carolina’s prophet. He writes about the abuses by those in power. He writes most eloquently about the poor and North Carolina’s exploitation and inattention to them, condemning other ways the state’s powerful oppress the powerless. Nichol is a professor and former dean at the UNC Chapel Hill Law School. He served as law dean at the University of Colorado (1988-1995) and was president of the College of William & Mary (2005-2008). He served as the director of UNC’s Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity until it closed in 2015. The new book, published by Blair, is scheduled for release at the end of this month. In Chapter 1, “Rejecting the American Promise, The Reembrace of Racial Supremacy,” Nichol attacks the actions of the state legislature for having “blown through” the barriers which had seemingly been set

**Nichol is a professor and former dean at the UNC Chapel Hill Law School. He served as law dean at the University of Colorado (1988-1995) and was president of the College of William & Mary (2005-2008). He served as the director of UNC’s Center on Poverty, Work and Opportunity until it closed in 2015.**

in stone. They included “the right to vote, majority rule, free and fair elections, freedom of speech and religion, equal protection of the laws, unnecessary separation of powers, and an independent judiciary to keep the channels of democracy open and guarantee the rule of law.” According to Nichol, “a lot of these barriers have been freely and purposely blown through in the last decade.” In Chapter 2, “Politics, Tribe and (Un)Christian Religion,” Nichol asserts that “the chasm between the political agenda of most white Christian evangelicals and the teachings of Jesus is wide — beyond wide.” In Chapter 3, “Politics and Poverty,” Nichol, like the Old Testament prophets, points out that North Carolina has some of the developed world’s

education, the environment, and even democracy itself.” In Chapter 6, “The Limits of Law,” Nichol mourns the takeover of the U.S. Supreme Court by the “originalist adventurism” of former Justice Antonin Scalia and the current Supreme Court justices. He mourns particularly the high court’s voting “with seeming nonchalance to literally gut the Voting Rights Act of 1965.” In his final chapter, Nichol addresses “Democracy, Equality, and the Future of America.” Speaking of the choices before the legislature, he writes “if they have to choose between white ascendancy and the Declaration of Independence’s commitment to the equal rights of humankind, then apparently, it’s an easy choice. Power, not democracy, is what matters.” Like the prophets of old, Nichol stirs the pot. Maybe too much. Maybe not enough.

*D.G. Martin, a lawyer, served as UNC-System’s vice president for public affairs and hosted PBS-NC’s North Carolina Bookwatch.*

## RACE

Continued from page A4

Democrats if that party doesn’t venture too far from center. Some disenchanted Republicans might switch parties. The only declared candidate for governor is Josh Stein, the two-term attorney general. Stein is considered very progressive, a darling of the far-left faction of the party. Some longtime Democrats are quietly trying to find a more centrist candidate to run against him in the primary. Stein has been quietly

raising money for months and reportedly has millions in the bank preparing for the run. He raised \$12 million in his 2020 campaign for attorney general and will likely need to raise three or four times that amount in 2024. What could we expect if Stein and Robinson do end up becoming the nominees? “The center voter doesn’t have a good choice for Governor,” seasoned political campaign consultant Brad Crone told me. “The two party front-runners represent the polar extreme in our politics today.

Robinson is far-right and Stein is too liberal. We will also have to watch the African American voters to see if they are willing to support the first Black. But the lieutenant governor is also the most conservative candidate and often opposes much of the policy agenda supported by communities of color.” Here’s my spin: Democrats are praying that Donald Trump will be the GOP presidential nominee and Mark Robinson the gubernatorial candidate. They see that as their best chances for big blue victories in 2024.

I don’t see either Trump or Robinson becoming their party’s nominees. I foresee Republicans having a “come to Jesus” epiphany to avoid an apocalypse. I’m not certain who the presidential nominee will be but believe Dale Folwell will be the Republican nominee for governor. Another note worth mentioning. State Senator Rachel Hunt, a Democrat from Mecklenburg County, declared her intent to run for lieutenant governor. It has been almost thirty years since a Hunt was on the statewide ballot. Jim Hunt, the

four-term governor had clearly the most effective political machine of the 20th century. If Hunt supporters show up to vote Democrats could see a big boost in turnout. The stars are aligning for the 2024 elections to be extremely interesting.

*Tom Campbell is a former assistant N.C. State Treasurer and was the creator/host of N.C. SPIN, a weekly statewide television discussion of N.C. issues that aired on UNC-TV until 2020. Contact him at tomcamp@carolinabroadcasting.com.*

## Chatham News + Record

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### What’s on your mind?

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# This Chatham woman lived in Birmingham when King composed his 'Letter.' She also heard him speak.



Staff photo by Matt Ramey

**Marcia Herman-Giddens of Chatham County experienced many of the 'appalling events in Birmingham,' the Alabama city in which she grew up.**

**BY MARCIA HERMAN-GIDDENS**

I lived in Birmingham, Alabama, during the infamous year of 1963, for 17 years before that, and for three years after.

That year is especially seared in the conscience of the world as well as my own. I didn't know it when the year began, but that September would be the only time I ever heard Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak in person.

Here in 2023, as this Easter season passes and our community reflects on the 60th anniversary of King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail," I think back to how Gov. Wallace began 1963 declaring, "... segregation now,

segregation tomorrow, segregation forever." In early April sit-ins began in earnest. Eight moderate white clergy write King disapproving of his leadership advising more patience and more waiting. King leads a march and is arrested and put in solitary confinement where he writes his famous "Letter." In early May, white police direct snarling dogs and hard blasts of water from fire hoses against Black children who have joined the struggle for rights and freedom. The motel where Dr. King stayed is bombed along with his brother's house. Sit-ins continue, in the summer plans are made to desegregate the schools. Arson

and bombings continue.

Then, on September 15, the Klan bombs the 16th Street Baptist Church and kills four young girls. Dr. King returns to Birmingham to speak at the funeral for three of the girls. The pall of terror over the city is smothering.

I was one of a small group of whites who went to the funeral. The FBI was taking down license plate numbers. Thousands of people crowded outside. Arriving very early, I had gotten a seat inside. Surrounded by sorrow and disbelief, I heard Dr. King's unmistakable voice but remember not a word he said. I think my mind was too consumed with fear and

chaos. My toddler was at home with his father. Was there to be only an ugly, unjust future?

I recently listened to King's eulogy which began, "These children — unoffending, innocent and beautiful — were the victims of one of the most vicious and tragic crimes ever perpetrated against humanity."

I learned that my body had not forgotten.

*Chatham resident Marcia E. Herman-Giddens is a retired medical educator and researcher and author of the recently-released memoir, "Unloose My Heart: A Personal Reckoning with the Twisted Roots of My Southern Family Tree."*

## PASTORS

Continued from page A1

where," CRC-C and East Chatham NAACP President Mary Nettles said. "It was a call to engage in nonviolence direct action. The Birmingham letter was written to all clergymen, Black and white. The insight of ministers is valued by many local citizens. The community needs to know if they feel things have changed in the last 60 years."

### The letter

King's 7,000-word letter is a defense of his policy and practice of non-violent resistance as he fought to end segregation and the Jim Crow practices of the time, suggesting that unjust laws can't be considered laws at all. Written on scraps of paper while he was isolated in his cell, King's missive provides a passionate defense of his tactics — particularly those in the "Birmingham Campaign," a series of actions designed to put moral pressure on the city's merchants during a busy Easter season to help end segregation practices.

"Never before have I written so long a letter," King penned. "I'm afraid it is much too long to take your precious time. I can assure you that it would have been much shorter if I had been writing from a comfortable desk, but what else can one do when he is alone in a narrow jail cell, other than write long letters, think long thoughts and pray long prayers?"

In the letter, King explained that his strategies — nonviolent, but direct — were intended to create crisis situations where inequality and unfairness existed. His hope was that resultant conversations and negotiations could help create change.

Change, he explained, that was far overdue.

### Its legacy

King's words, written six decades ago, are still relevant today. For many, its subject serves as a grim reminder of how far U.S. society still has to go to achieve real equity.

Chatham County pastor Dr. Mark Royster, one of the pastors who will recite a portion of King's letter, said it was an attempt to respond to the concerns of the Birmingham pastors. But Royster said King ultimately stated he was disappointed in the church as an organization for its passiveness during the Civil Rights movement.

The Haw River Baptist Church pastor said King emphasized the importance of the church's role in the fight for equality and justice, especially as King believed the church had an obligation to have an active role in the Civil Rights Movement.

"The church in and of itself has been the catalyst for justice as it relates to freedom," Royster said. "Jesus dealt with justice ... If you look at what his mission was, he said, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to preach the gospel, to set the captives free,' and all of those people are the disenfranchised ... if you say you are Christian, then you should be following the example of Jesus Christ, and he dealt with injustice of individuals."

Mt. Sinai AME Church Pastor Shontea Smith also felt King's disappointment in the church in his writing, saying she felt the letter served as "a call to action."

"Later on, he just starts to address poverty in general, and the role that the church should play, particularly as Jesus was an advocate for those who were oppressed in his community," Smith said. "It's a call for us to stand up on behalf of those who are being oppressed."

When Smith reads the letter today, she feels the issues addressed are just as prevalent as they were in 1963.

"I think it's sad that we still have to remember these words because things have not really changed," she said. "Once you get into the nitty gritty, you realize that we're not past racial civil rights. All these things are very much relevant, and we need to organize and

operate as a community more than ever."

Pittsboro Presbyterian Church Pastor Rev. Evan Harrison will also be participating in Sunday's reading of the letter. He said while racism isn't as overt as it once was in 1963, there are still systems built off of those beliefs he said American society needs to address.

"We still see the effects of racism in disparate outcomes in every system — education, wealth, housing, how many people are retained in this community, and more," Harrison said. "Less and less African Americans are living here and are able to come back to the place they grew up and afford a house here. Even in the Maternity Center ... there are disparate outcomes around birth, health and safety, across races, so racism is still here."

Harrison said it takes more than being a tolerant person to fight what he believes to be a systemic issue.

"I think a lot of people including myself, used to think, 'I'm not a racist, so I'm okay,' and that's not enough," he said. "We have to go beyond just not being racist. We have to go and actually look at the systems and do the work to undo the disparate outcomes."

Nettles said this continuing fight for justice is the reason the CRC-C and Chatham County's NAACP chapters decided to host an event around the anniversary of the writing of the Letter from a Birmingham Jail.

"History helps us avoid some of the injustices of the past," she said. "What is important is to implement the suggestions that Dr. King offers in the Birmingham Letter."

Chatham County has its own history involving segregation and racial discrimination, but in recent years, government bodies have worked to address the tarnished past. From removing the Confederate monument from in front of the county courthouse to installing signage memorializing the lives of those who were lynched in Chatham, Royster said the county is moving toward making progress.

"I believe there is certainly a movement to embrace all individuals," he said. "If we don't keep in the forefront what has gone on in our past, or we don't remember what has gone on in our past, we are subject to make the same mistakes."

Smith said while she's only been a pastor in Chatham County for about a year, she's witnessed positive changes. Still, she said it's important to remember segregation and discrimination still exist, even in Chatham.

But it's not always on the basis of race.

"My concern is probably housing in Chatham County, because when I have my conversations with people that's where their concern is," Smith said. "Chatham County is becoming a place that can market itself in an appeal to the wealthy, but the people who are lower income who've been in the county for some time feel like they're being left behind."

Smith hopes by taking part in Sunday's reading, people can walk away with ideas of how to make their community a peaceful, equitable place to call home.

"I want people coming in looking for or coming in and leaving looking for ways that we can help to shape Chatham County so that everybody is able to thrive regardless of what neighborhood you live in," she said.

For Royster, he says he wants people to come into Sunday's event with an open mind and be receptive to not just the words written by King, but also to joining in the fight for justice and equality.

"We cannot sit back and believe that everything is well," he said. "Maybe they don't hear the bad things, maybe they don't see the bad situations, but it does not mean that it's not happening ... This event is not just another program ... If you expect to be inspired, you will be inspired, so if you come with an open mind and come with the expectation that something good is going to come, it is going to come."

To register for the event, go to crc-c.org and click on "events" and then "upcoming events."

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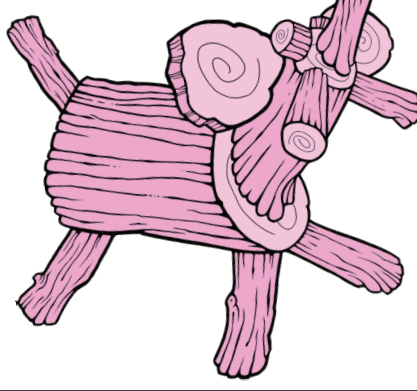


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**Agriculture &**  
**Conference**  
**Center**



Rain date: Sunday, April 23



# CHICKEN

Continued from page A1

he said. “This is definitely our biggest event, and it’s important to us because we get to show off Siler City ... We get to find people that are from all over to come check out our downtown, check out our merchants to see what Siler City has to offer.”

The planning process for the Spring Chicken Festival begins 11 months before the first Saturday in May, according to Clelland.

“We started planning early June ... getting our big ticket items and making sure we’ve got stages secure,” he said. “We start searching our bands, amusement rides, things of that nature.”

The first Spring Chicken Festival after pandemic restrictions were lifted occurred last year, but activities were cut short halfway through the day because of inclement weather. Clelland said he hopes this year, the weather will hold out to have the true return of the poultry-themed extravaganza.

The all-day festival will start at 10 a.m. and go until 6 p.m., with musical guests The Embers featuring Craig Woolard and Gypsy Danger. The Embers is a well-known beach music group and have been named “North Carolina’s Official Ambassadors of Music.”

Clelland said one of the most-anticipated events for 2023 is the Chicken Pickin’ contest sponsored by Mountaire Farms.

“Contestants are given a whole, cooked bird that’s been cooled down, and the goal is to remove as much meat from it as possible,” he said. “Whoever removes the most meat in a certain amount of time is declared the winner of

that.”

Mountaire will have monetary prizes for contest winners, and elected officials will participate in their own poultry pickin’ competition for both money and bragging rights.

“They have done local official rounds where local government officials or local commissioners can compete against one another and will actually donate to an organization of their choosing,” Clelland said. “This is a big, new thing for us this year.”

The event also will feature many Chatham- and Siler City-based businesses at various booths and tents scattered around downtown. Festivalgoers can take an opportunity to shop around and see what unique businesses Siler City has.

“We get vendors from all across the state, but we really focused on trying to get our downtown merchants involved,” Clelland said. “We have great participation from them. We’re really trying to highlight downtown, especially with the expansion and revitalization is getting underway out there.”

There will be something for everyone at the Spring Chicken Festival, from carnival rides to live music and vendors. Clelland said patrons will be sure to find something to enjoy.

“If you want to go shopping, that option is there,” he said. “If you want to bring the kids out and walk around, you can do that as well. We tried to make it as inclusive as we could to give everybody that option to do what it is they’ve been wanting to do.”

Mountaire Farms, the primary sponsor of the Spring Chicken Festival, was one of the driving forces in the festival’s return. It’s now one of Siler City’s most-attended events and also brings



CN+R file photo

**A child takes a climb on the rock wall set up on Chatham Avenue at 2019’s Spring Chicken Festival.**

### IF YOU’RE GOING

**WHAT:** Spring Chicken Festival  
**WHEN:** Saturday, May 6; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Downtown Siler City  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**PARKING:** Some streets will be blocked off; parking available in public spaces around downtown

thousands of people to the downtown district. The festivities showcase more than just good food and fun, it also presents non-residents and residents alike the opportunity to see Siler City and what makes it the community it is.

“I hope people come out and have a good time,”

Clelland said. “I hope they see how invested the town is to providing some type of opportunity for them to come out and visit downtown. We just want to enjoy have a good time as a family.”

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

# FESTIVAL

Continued from page A1

Clyde, whose motto was always, ‘It’s all about the kids,’” McDaniel said.

Jones, she added, was the type of old-fashioned man who said we should go back to the “horse-and-buggy days.” He craved a simple outdoor life and wanted kids to experience the joys of getting messy while making art. It was in this spirit that ClydeFest was born all those years ago.

The event originally got started when Jones approached Chatham Arts Council pushing for a festival for kids in the Bynum area. Since then, it’s evolved into a unique event for the county, and the state. CAC brings in performers, artists and nonprofits from as far away as Georgia to participate in the festivities.

“Clyde is the most open-minded, kind and generous person,” McDaniel said, who’s been a close friend of Jones for many years. “That is really the nature of this event, it comes from the heart all the way through.”

Jones recently celebrated his 86th birthday on April 1, and plans to attend this year’s event to cap his month of celebrations.

### New location, same passion

This year, the 21st annual ClydeFest, is moving away from its longtime home of the Bynum ballfield and to Pittsboro’s Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center.

The change in location was made to improve accessibility to the event, according to

Cheryl Chamblee, CAC’s artistic director. She said the rising attendance at the festival meant there was a need for more parking space than Bynum could accommodate. The new location is also more centralized for more Chatham residents, meaning more locals could experience the arts festival.

Last year, the event had more than 2,000 attendees and organizers are expecting more this year with the larger location.

“Being at the Bynum ballfield for all these years has been super magical,” Chamblee said. “And we are incredibly grateful to the Bynum community because it’s a big deal for them to have so many people in their community on a weekend.”

But as much love and magic as that ballfield holds, Chamblee said it just doesn’t hold the number of people — or parking spaces — needed for an event that has gotten as big as ClydeFest.

### Accessible arts

While navigating the logistics of the new location hasn’t been easy, Chamblee said she believes it will pay off because the event will be accessible to more people.

Providing increased access and reducing potential barriers to the arts has been a longstanding goal of CAC. Last year’s event marked the first time ClydeFest was free to all participants, which is continuing this year.

One of the reasons the event is able to be open to all is because of sponsors like The

See **FESTIVAL**, page A12

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- Ray Posada | Coldwell Banker HPW

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# OBITUARIES

## DENNIS HAROLD SAWYER



July 16, 1931 ~ April 7, 2023  
Dennis Harold Sawyer was born July 16, 1931, in Arkadelphia, Alabama. He passed away on April 7, 2023, in his home of many years in Siler City surrounded by his son, Michael Sawyer and his daughter, Gina Sawyer Tessener along with other loving family members who visited with him during his final days.

Dennis was preceded in death by his beloved wife and life companion, Nina Sanford Sawyer. He loved her

more than anything. Their relationship began when they were high school sweethearts and their love never wavered.

Dennis brought himself up through the most humble of circumstances. His mother, Mayzepple Burger, set the example of thorough work ethic, entrepreneurship, relationship building and soaring intellect.

At age 8, Dennis began his own entrepreneurial endeavors when he started a paper route and quickly turned it into a business by hiring his friends to handle routes that he acquired. He later used earnings from the paper route to pay for his college education.

An accomplished student, Dennis graduated as valedictorian of his high school, college, and law school. While in college, he joined the Air Force with the dream of becoming a pilot. During testing however, Dennis learned he was color blind and never got to fly. Instead, he was stationed as a quartermaster in Cheyenne, Wyoming. After his time in the service, he obtained his B.A. from Birmingham Southern. Later, he enrolled in law school at the Birmingham School of Law while working at Jim Dandy Dog Food.

After law school, he continued working for Jim Dandy Dog Food before going to work for the Wells Division of the National Pet Food Company in Illinois. Between 1972 and 1974, he increased sales of the Wells Division by 100% and increased profits 1,847%.

Dennis moved to Siler City in 1974 to take over operations of Siler City Mills. He quickly grew the company which, due to his leadership, became the largest producer of animal feed east of the Mississippi. He was known throughout the country for his leadership in feed production and management and for his loyalty to and from his co-workers.

After Dennis retired from Siler City Mills at the early age of 54, he was selected as part of a delegation to China to teach manufacturing techniques. After retiring from the mill, he taught Park Scholars from N.C. State, mediated disputes at the local Community College, and then bought the two rival hardware stores in Siler City.

Siler City Ace Hardware was Dennis' greatest venture. The store was more than a business to the Sawyers, it was a family environment that he and Nina built and loved dearly. Their kids and grandkids worked at the store running the cash registers, helping customers and sweeping the floors. Dennis and Nina cared for the store's employees as if they were family. A sign outside of the office at the store said "Free Advice" and he had an open door policy giving advice to friends, family, or anyone who asked him for help.

Dennis loved Siler City and contributed to the community in many ways including spearheading the creation of murals throughout the town as president of the Siler City Mural Society, serving as president of the Chatham Hospital Board, and being active in the Rotary Club. He was a stalwart member and supporter of Siler City Methodist Church where his children were married and his grandchildren and great-grandchildren were baptized.

Dennis and Nina were long time members of Siler City Country Club. Dennis took up golf in his 40s. He was a clutch player that never missed a high pressure putt. Dennis and Nina held an annual Frogmore Boil party during the Member-Guest tournament that was a highlight of the year. The party brought together family and friends from all over. Dennis was renowned for his betting techniques at the annual member-guest Calcutta tournament.

In a life lived worthy of celebration, Dennis and his loving wife had a marriage of over 60 years. Together they raised two wonderful children, Michael Sawyer (Carol) and Gina Sawyer Tessener (Chris), and had six grandchildren, Lindsey Sawyer Norman (William), Cameron Tessener, Nicholas Tessener (London), Nina Michelle Sawyer Passmore (Brian), Madison Tessener Antami (Kameel) and Mack Sawyer, and had eight great-grandchildren.

Dennis will have a lasting legacy and will be remembered for his economic and community impact, his intelligence, business savvy and milestone accomplishments in life. His family will remember his booming laugh, mischievous spirit and how he strove to give them all a better life through love, hard work, advice and constant self improvement.

The visitation will be held Monday, April 10th from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Smith & Buckner Funeral Home and the funeral service will be Tuesday, April 11th, at the First United Methodist Church at 2 p.m. with the graveside service to follow immediately after at the Chatham Memorial Park. The family asks that you send remembrances or donations to Gentiva Hospice, the First United Methodist Church or flowers for the service.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the Sawyer family.

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

## LAURA DIXON ROBERTS ROBARDS CARLTON

November 5 1926 ~ April 8, 2023  
Laura Dixon Roberts Robards Carlton, 96, of Siler City, passed away Saturday, April 8, 2023.

Mrs. Carlton was born in Chatham County on November 5, 1926, daughter of Wade V. and Myrtle Sink Dixon. She was a member of Oakley Baptist Church. She retired as a telephone operator with Carolina Telephone. Laura enjoyed cooking, reading, gardening, and doing arts and crafts. In addition to her parents, Laura is preceded in death by her sisters, Linda Eller, Emogene Gaines, and Frances White.

She is survived by a son, Glenn "Steve" Roberts and wife, Vickie of Siler City; grandson, Stephen Trent Roberts and wife, Debra of Siler City; and great-grandchildren, Bradley and Ashley Roberts

A graveside service will be held on Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 2 p.m. at Oakley Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. Bob Wachs officiating. Mrs. Carlton laid in repose on Tuesday, April 11, from 1 to 5 p.m.

Memorials may be made to Oakley Baptist Church.

Smith & Buckner Funeral Home is assisting the Carlton family.

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

## DORIS FAEDENE BROWER



November 14, 1929 ~ April 5, 2023  
Doris Faedene Brower, age 93, of Asheboro passed away on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at the Randolph Hospice House.

Ms. Brower was born in Randolph County on November 14, 1929, to Clay and Ardena Yow Brower. Faedene was the owner/operator of Asheboro Paint Center for 35 years. In addition to her parents, Faedene was preceded in death by her husband, George Jones, one brother,

and seven sisters. She was the former chairperson of the Randolph County Democratic Party. A talented seamstress, she enjoyed making clothes for her family.

She is survived by her daughter, Sharon Thomas Church of Asheboro; sons, Craig Thomas (Carol) of Siler City and Kenneth "Kenny" Thomas of Siler City; grandchildren, Mandy Frank (Matt), Kimberley Mathis (David), Kris Thomas, Casey Hardin (Zac), and Holly Sorenson (Cody); 14 great-grandchildren; and special friend, Kathy Allen.

Faedene's urn and flowers were available for viewing on Monday, April 10, 2023, from 1 to 5 p.m. at Pugh Funeral Home, 437 Sunset Avenue in Asheboro. A memorial graveside service was held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023, at 2 p.m. at the Old Whynot Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to the Randolph SPCA, 300 W. Bailey St., Asheboro, N.C. 27203.

## CAROLYN L. EUBANKS



Carolyn L. Eubanks, 80, died Monday, February 20, 2023, of multiple complications at her home in the Bronx, New York.

Carolyn was a native of Bynum, North Carolina. She attended Pittsboro High School and went on to study Mathematics at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. After college, Carolyn joined the Peace Corps and served in the Philippines. She also obtained her Master's degree from the City College of the

City University of New York. After spending time in New York, Atlanta and Houston, Carolyn made her home in the Bronx. She taught math at John F. Kennedy High School for 23 years and retired in 2007. Carolyn was passionate about human rights and fought oppression of any kind, particularly as it concerned women and the rights of workers. She traveled extensively, including many trips to Palestine and other destinations where she made a difference in the lives of many.

Carolyn was preceded in death by her parents, Roy Lee and Beulah Eubanks. Surviving are her brother, Roy L. Eubanks III and wife Cathy; niece, Angela Eubanks Fowler, husband Jason Snipes and great-niece Lily Fowler. Carolyn is also survived by her dear friends and "adopted" NYC family, Shahaira (Sherry) Pimental and children Ramel, Savannah, Shalimar and Roman. Carolyn leaves behind many wonderful friends and loved ones in New York and around the world. Her legacy will continue through everyone she touched during her life — her home was always open to those in need and she was a beloved mentor, friend, sister, mother figure and adopted grandmother.

A graveside service will be held on April 22, 2023, at 2 p.m. at Bynum United Methodist Cemetery, with the Rev. Bob Wachs officiating. The family will host a reception to follow at the Bynum United Methodist Community Center (formerly Bynum Ruritan Building). A memorial is planned for a later date in the Bronx.

## JACQUELINE O'QUINN THOMAS

December 16, 1933 ~ April 6, 2023

Jacqueline O'Quinn "Jackie" Thomas, 89, of Broadway, passed away on Thursday, April 6, 2023.

The family received friends on April 10, 2023, at Juniper Springs Baptist Church. The funeral service was at 2 p.m. with Rev. Wayne O'Quinn

and Rev. Eddie Thomas officiating. Burial followed in the Broadway Town Cemetery.

She was the daughter of the late D. Herbert O'Quinn and Flennie Hallman O'Quinn. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband, Mack J. Thomas; one grandson, two great-grandchildren and siblings, Mack O'Quinn, Jimmy

O'Quinn, Sammy O'Quinn, Michael O'Quinn, Cinda Turnage and Edna Wilson. Jackie was a member of Juniper Springs Baptist Church and retired from Moen.

Surviving is her son, Jamie Thomas of Sanford; daughters, Donna Gendics and Susan Diggs, both of Sanford, Lisa Suggs of Broadway; sister, Janet Childress of Lemon Springs; nine grandchildren, 18 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to the Juniper Springs Baptist Church Choir, 852 Buckhorn Road, Sanford, N.C. 27330. Online condolences can be made at [www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com](http://www.smithfuneral-homebroadway.com).

## TARASA 'TARA' RUTH JONES

Tarasa "Tara" Ruth Jones, 49, died April 7, 2023 at her home in Sanford.

The family received friends on April 11, 2023, at Shallow Well Church. The memorial service will be on Friday, April 14, 2023, at 3 p.m. Shallow Well Church with Dr. Eric Burmahl and Pastor Robbie Gibson presiding. Burial will be in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church cemetery.

She was the daughter of Catherine Marie Brooks and the late Terry Lynn Jones of Sanford. She was the granddaughter of the late Samuel Lynn and Aileen White Jones and Joyce Simpson Brooks and the late Edwin Hayes Brooks.

She graduated from Vance-Granville Community College and was a stay-at-home mom for many years. In 2013 she accepted a position with Lowe's Home Improvement and has worked for them for the past 10 years.

She is survived by her son, Justin Lynn Chapman of Marion; a daughter, Hailey Brooks Chapman of Sanford; her mother, Catherine Brooks Jordan of Sanford; step-brother, Kevin Alan Jordan of Norfolk, Virginia; sisters, Jolene Roxanne Jones and Alicé Leuchte of Sanford; grandmother, Joyce Simpson Brooks of Sanford.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Make-A-Wish Eastern North Carolina, 3809 Computer Drive, Suite 201, Raleigh, N.C. 27609, or the National Kidney Foundation, 30 East 33rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10016-5337.

Arrangements are by Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home.

See **OBITS**, page A9



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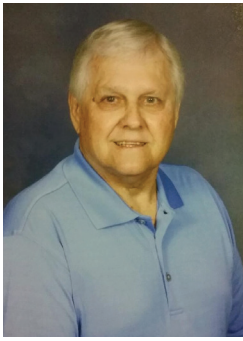
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**JACKY LEROY COOPER**



Jacky Leroy Cooper, 81, of Staley, died Monday, April 3, 2023, at his residence.

Funeral services, are scheduled for 2 p.m., Saturday, April 8, 2023, at Staley Baptist Church, Staley, with Rev. Roger Carlson and, Rev. Garry Arnett officiating. Burial will follow in The Staley Cemetery, with military honors by the Randolph County Honor Guard.

Jacky was a native and lifelong resident of Staley in Randolph County, a member of Staley Baptist Church, and a veteran of the United States Army, having served in Korea. He retired as a truck driver with Harris Teeter, was an avid mechanic, and loved sports. He was preceded in death by his parents, Palmer and Cora Turner Cooper, sister, Fama Wayne Brinkley, and brother, Charlie Cooper.

Survivors include daughter, Kristen C. Bare and husband, Stephen of Siler City; son, Dr. Brent Cooper of Staley; sisters, Patsy Beard of Staley, Mary Lois Clark of Siler City; grandchildren, Ally Bare, Jackson Bare; and former wife of 30 years, Beverly Sprinkle Cooper.

Visitation will be held from 12:30 to 1:45 p.m. Saturday, Staley Baptist Church, Staley, and other times at the residence.

Condolences may be made online at [www.loflinfuneralservice.com](http://www.loflinfuneralservice.com).

Arrangements by Loflin Funeral Home & Cremation Service, Ramseur.

Memorials may be made to Staley Baptist Church, P.O. Box 126, Staley, NC 27355; First Christian Church, P.O. Box 531, Ramseur, NC 27316; or to Piney Grove Methodist Church, 2343 Piney Grove Church Road, Siler City, N.C. 27344.

years.

Ronnie is survived by his children, Donna Kaye Cotten, Ron Cotten, Jr. and Heath Cotten, all of Myrtle Beach, S.C. and Dana Ponsell of Sanford; step-mother, Naomi Cotten of Sanford; sister, Rebecca Ree Cotten Yarnell of Sanford; seven grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home to help cover expenses for the funeral.

**LINDA K. CLARK BLACKBURN GARRETT**

March 23, 1938 ~ April 9, 2023  
Linda K. Clark Blackburn Garrett, 85, of Sanford, passed away Sunday, April 9, 2023, at First Health Hospice House in Pinehurst.

The visitation was held Tuesday, April 11, 2023, from 6 to 8 p.m. at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home. The funeral service will be held Wednesday, April 12, 2023, at 2 p.m. at Jonesboro Methodist Church with Rev. Bob Albritton and Rev. Becky Albritton presiding. Burial will follow in the Johnson Grove cemetery.

She was the daughter of the late Ike Clark and Elsie Spivey Clark. Linda worked making custom window coverings and draperies. She was preceded in death by her first husband, Benjamin Freeman Blackburn, a son, James Anthony Blackburn, and a grandson, Michael Wayne Blackburn.

Surviving relatives are her husband, Wiley Thomas Garrett of the home; a son, John Blackburn of Sanford; daughters, Joye Burroughs of

Morganton and Diana Glasson of Sanford; brother, Thomas Clark of Sanford; six grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Condolences may be made at [www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com](http://www.bridgescameronfuneralhome.com).

**CATHERINE 'GAIL' OLDHAM**

November 15, 1953 ~ April 9, 2023

Catherine "Gail" Oldham, 69, of Carthage passed away on Sunday, April 9, 2023, at her home.

The funeral was held at 1 p.m. on Tuesday, April 11, 2023, at Putnam Friends Church with Rev. Robert Kidd presiding. The family received friends from 12:00-12:45 p.m. at the church prior to the service.

Gail was the daughter of Vernon and Angie Mashburn Oldham. She was a member of Putnam Friends Church and retired as the Carthage Branch Vice-President of BB&T, after over 40 years of service. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her sister, Brenda Upchurch.

Gail is survived by her son, Charles Childress of Aberdeen; sister, Pam O. Brady of Carthage; two grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.

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

**THOMAS CECIL CRAVEN**

June 30, 1938 ~ March 30, 2023

Thomas Cecil Craven, 84, passed away on Thursday, March 30, 2023, at UNC Hospi-

tals in Chapel Hill.

The funeral service was held at 2 p.m. Thursday, April 6, 2023, at St. Matthews AME Zion Church with burial following in the church cemetery.

**SARAH LOU MOFFITT JACKSON**

Sarah Lou Moffitt Jackson, 100, of Sanford passed away on Monday, April 3, 2023, at Central Carolina Hospital.

The funeral service was held Saturday, April 8, 2023, at 2 p.m. at First Calvary Baptist Church, with burial in Lee Memory Garden.

**GEORGE HOWARD**

December 2, 1954 ~ April 5, 2023

George Howard, 68, of Sanford, passed away on Wednesday, April 5, 2023, at his residence.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

**JOHN RAY ROBERSON**

March 8, 1943 ~ April 5, 2023

John Ray Roberson, 80, of Sanford, passed away at his home on Wednesday, April 5, 2023.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

**JAVIER HERNANDEZ LOPEZ**

December 13, 1971 ~ April 7, 2023

Javier Hernandez Lopez, 51, passed away on Friday, April 7, 2023, at Central Carolina Hospital.

Services entrusted to Knotts Funeral Home.

**OBITS**

Continued from page A8

**RONALD COTTEN**

March 5, 1952 ~ April 9, 2023

Ronald Cotten, 71, of Sanford, passed away Sunday, April 9, 2023, at UNC Hospice House in Pittsboro.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, April 13, 2023, from 11 a.m. until

12:50 p.m. at Bridges-Cameron Funeral Home. The funeral service will follow in the chapel with Rev. Larry Murchison officiating. Burial will be in Buffalo Cemetery.

Ronald was the son of Robert Max Cotten and Anna Bearl Batchelor. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Dianne Cotten Scarbrough. Ronnie retired from Honeywell Inc. after 40+

**Chatham County Schools announces new district staff**

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Board of Education approved three new district employees on April 3.

John V. Wood was named the new public

information officer. Wood currently serves as the assistant principal of Clayton High School. He has served as educator and coach for Durham and Johnston County

schools for the past 15 years. Wood also has several years of broadcast journalism experience, serving as assignment editor and news producer for several stations across the

country. Wood is currently in the process of getting his doctorate in education for K-12 Public Administration from N.C. State.

"Chatham County is one of the fastest growing counties in North Carolina, and I am grateful for and humbled by the opportunity to join this amazing school district," Wood said. "I bring 30 years of journalism and

educational leadership experience to this position, and I hope to continue highlighting the incredible things our students, staff and community stakeholders are already doing. Being visible and available to our stakeholders is a goal of mine, and I look forward to seeing every CCS campus."

Diane Sloan was named the executive assistant

to the superintendent/board clerk. Sloan has served Chatham County Schools in various capacities over the past decade, most recently as licensure/benefits specialist. Sloan has over 30 years of experience serving in bookkeeping and office management roles for accounting and business firms, managing finances and client tax files.

"As a parent of two Northwood graduates and a Pittsboro resident, I have always felt a deep sense of loyalty and dedication to this community," Sloan said. "I feel confident that I can contribute to what makes Chatham County Schools a special place to work, live and raise children. I hope that my efforts will help facilitate the processes, practices and policies that help make Chatham County Schools a critical part of the larger community."

Melody Dark was named the program coordinator for One Academy. In this new role, Dark will lead the district's nontraditional programs that provide support to students who need an alternative pathway to their high school diploma. Dark has 18 years of service as an educator, all with Chatham County Schools.

**Investment Ideas for Business Owners**

By definition, business owners put a lot of their financial resources into their enterprises. But as an owner, you may need to invest in more than inventories and payroll to help achieve the future you've envisioned.

Here are a few investments you may want to consider:

- Retirement account – Depending on the nature of your business and how many employees you have, you can choose from a variety of tax-advantaged retirement plans, such as an owner-only 401(k), an SEP-IRA and a SIMPLE IRA. By contributing regularly to one of these accounts, you can avoid being entirely dependent on the sale of your business to pay for your retirement years.

To fund your 401(k) or other retirement plan, you'll have many investment options — stocks, bonds, mutual funds and so on. And if you "max out" on your retirement plan, you may even be able to build a separate investment portfolio. In any case, keep in mind that you're already putting a lot of money into your business, so, to achieve a level of diversification, you may want to concentrate your investment choices in areas outside your industry. However, while diversification can help reduce the impact of market volatility on your portfolio, it can't guarantee profits or protect against losses in a declining market.

- Property – Your physical space is a key part of your business' success. So, you may want to invest some time in comparing the pros and cons of renting versus owning. Of course, owning your building may require a big financial commitment, and it may not be feasible, but it could free you from worrying about untimely rent increases.

- Disaster protection – If a fire or a weather-related disaster should strike your business, would you be prepared? It's important for you to create a disaster recovery plan, which can include business interruption insurance to pay for your operating costs if you're forced to shut down for a while.

- Emergency savings – While a disaster protection plan with appropriate insurance can help keep your business afloat, it's unlikely to cover other types of emergency needs, such as a major medical bill or an expensive repair to your home. For these unexpected costs, you may want to build an emergency fund covering at least a few months' worth of living expenses, with the money kept in a liquid account. Without such an emergency fund, you may be forced to dip into your 401(k), IRA or other long-term investment vehicle.

You'll also want to invest the time and energy into creating a business succession plan. Will you keep the business in your family? Sell it to outsiders or a key employee? If you do sell, will you do it all at once or over time? Clearly, the answers to these types of questions will make a big difference in your ultimate financial security.

Finally, invest in help – Enlist the services of a financial advisor and business-planning professional, so you'll be able to make the decisions that work best for your business and you.

Your business may well be a lifelong endeavor — so make sure you're investing whatever it takes to earn a lifetime of benefits.

*This article was written by Edward Jones for use by your local Edward Jones Financial Advisor. Edward Jones, Member SIPC*

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**Teachers, get your applications in for a Bright Ideas education grant!**

Teachers, are you looking for new opportunities to fund projects for your classroom? Central Electric is awarding up to \$15,000 in Bright Ideas education grants to local educators in K-12 classrooms for the 2023-2024 school year.

The final deadline for all grant applications is Sept. 15, but don't wait to apply. Applications submitted prior to the early-bird deadline on Aug. 15 will be entered to win one of five \$100 Visa® gift cards. Scan the QR code or visit [NCBrightIdeas.com](http://NCBrightIdeas.com) for more information or to apply!



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# GAMES

Continued from page A1

Games expenses. Thus far, the team has purchased 3D printer filament for the car's gears, ball bearings, plexiglass and wooden panels. Castevens said the design for The Mouse Trap came from throwing ideas at the wall and seeing what stuck. "The design isn't quite a right triangle because that would create too much drag," he said. "We wanted to go for something that could reduce that air resistance as much as possible." They determined designing a vehicle with a rounded front cone, like many of the ones pictured prominently on the Gravity Games website, would be difficult because it would require bending wood and plexiglass and keeping it in place.

The group also decided it wanted Riggsbee to be fully inside the vehicle, so they'll build a door on the outside for her to climb into. Their hypothesis is that the human body has too many different angles, which if exposed would make the car less aerodynamic. By putting her inside the car, the team can also make the floor lower to the ground, which lowers the center of gravity and allows less air to flow under the bottom of the vehicle. The hardest part of the design, Castevens said, was the braking system. The final blueprint, which was approved by professors at Appalachian State University for safety, included a lever inside for Riggsbee to pull with her hand. The brake lever will stop the movement of the back axle because the pressure from the lever forces a brake pad against it, eventually slowing the car.

**Off-roading**  
"There was a lot of back-and-forth discussions," said Kevin McDaniel, CSSE math teacher and the group's supervisor. "They ran into a lot of problems initially asking things like, 'How does a car move? How do you steer an axle?'" Eventually, the team figured out how to make the vehicle steer and brake, at least on paper. Without all the material in hand, construction is still yet to begin on The Mouse Trap. In fact, one of the pieces needed for the steering mechanisms won't arrive until about a week before the competition. "It's been difficult because we can't practice on the exact hill," Bailey said. "It could be a flier on whatever we test on, but totally different in Lenoir because of the conditions." But rest assured, team members remains confident they'll be ready to go on race day.

Because the design of the gravity racer has been entirely student-driven, any problems the small group encounters they've had to work through themselves. "I've really tried to step back and let them troubleshoot this," McDaniel said. "These students, being at CSSE, wanted something more than just sitting in the classroom and learning from the textbook, and that's what this is." Many of the problems the group has had to troubleshoot in the design stage revolve around the mathematics and physics of the car. For example, the original concept had to be significantly altered once they determined Riggsbee would be the person driving because the vehicle needed to fit her exact measurements. "We had to make it comfortable enough for her body," Bailey said. "But not so comfortable that it loses its efficiency." The 2023 Gravity Games marks the first time a Chatham County

team has competed in the event. It's also the first time the event has been held since 2019, since the Covid-19 pandemic. McDaniel said his goal for the group is to have a car that makes it to Lenoir and across the finish line. For their first attempt, he said that would be a major accomplishment and something students could build on in future years. He said he hopes other schools in the county get involved in the contest in the years to come. So as Riggsbee lives out her dreams, rolling The Mouse Trap down the hills of Ashe Avenue in downtown Lenoir, she'll be driving with the spirit of her school, and the county behind her. For more information about N.C. Gravity Games visit [www.ncgravitygames.com](http://www.ncgravitygames.com).

Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at [brappaport@chathamnr.com](mailto:brappaport@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter @b\_rappaport

# FESTIVAL

Continued from page A7

Jester Group at Baird, a family wealth management firm in Chapel Hill. The firm has been the naming sponsor of the festival for the past four years. Tracie Legg, who works at Jester Group, has volunteered at ClydeFest with her family for several years. She said she finds the event valuable because of the way it engages all generations. "My kids, who are grown now, still have their painted critters on the shelf," she said. "We know how important the arts can be and this event just really embodies everything you think kids should be doing these days." The new location also provides opportunities for innovations to the two-decade-old festival including new performing artists like a youth sitar ensemble, a West African drum circle and a performance

by the Jordan-Matthews High School a cappella group the Golden Notes. The festival will also feature artists who have become ClydeFest staples like the Bouncing Bulldogs jump rope team and bluegrass duo Carolina Lightnin'. Alice Zincone, who plays standup bass for the duo, says the group has played the festival for more than a decade. "We aspire to have a sense of kid-like enjoyment in our music," Zincone said. "I think that's what Clyde inspired in us, and what he provides to families across the county with this event." **Broad strokes**  
The magic of ClydeFest also fits into the broader work of CAC. The council aims to foster a passion for the arts among all residents in the county through intentional arts investments and educating kids through the arts. ClydeFest fits both of those

**IF YOU'RE GOING**  
**WHAT:** ClydeFest  
**WHEN:** Saturday, April 22 (rain date Sunday, April 23); 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.  
**WHERE:** Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center  
**ADMISSION:** Free  
**PARKING:** Parking near the field is free and accessible for all abilities.

"During a time when mental health for kids and mental health for grownups is really challenged, the arts can be a big part of the solution there." The data supports Chamblee's hypothesis. According to a 2016 Drexel University study, making art for at least 45 minutes, especially in group settings, significantly reduces levels of the stress hormone cortisol in participants. ClydeFest offers the opportunity to do exactly that — make art with other people. "This is a one-day intervention," Chamblee said. "It is community building, it is place-making, it is super unique and there is nothing else like it." Volunteers and participants in the event agree with Chamblee's praises. Debbie Bousquet has volunteered with the event since 2003. She comes every year because ClydeFest is what she calls "a special, magical festival." "The day just really embodies Clyde Jones," Bousquet

said. "He feels very passionately that this is for the 'youngins,' as he would say, and I think everyone who volunteers, participates and performs lives up to that model." All told, the event takes more than 200 volunteers to pull off. Bousquet, who has been the volunteer coordinator for this year's event, said the setup for the Saturday event begins on the Thursday prior with more than 150 people setting up tents, tables, art supplies and vendor stations. The day of the event has more than 60 volunteers from a plethora of local organizations who exchange three-hour shifts, beginning at 7:30 a.m. with field setup and ending with takedown which usually ends around 6 p.m. "You see kids that were little kids 20 years ago who are now coming back to volunteer," Bousquet said. "That tradition being something that families want to continue to be involved in is really cool."

# BRIDGE

Continued from page A3

hoping to achieve some of its four core objectives: supporting local farms, connecting people to nature, safeguarding clean drinking water and protecting wildlife habitats. The last two are especially important in this case. The land first came to the attention of TLC from Gretchen Smith, president of Friends of the Lower Haw. Smith said the land off Chicken Bridge Road was intriguing because it was near a paddle access area in the Haw River that's difficult to use. "It was just kind of lucky that I found out about it," she said. Smith happened to be friends with a member of the Carolina Canoe Club who had toured the Chicken Bridge property years ago, and knew they were interested in

selling. When Smith saw the land was for sale, she passed the information to TLC. Margaret Sands, land protection manager at TLC, oversaw the acquisition of the Chicken Bridge property. She said the purchase was atypical for the organization because of the cooperation and desire of the private landowners. The property had been on the radar of Sands and TLC because of its proximity to the Haw River Trail. It's also listed in the Natural Heritage Program. Most recently, Chicken Bridge Forest came to TLC's attention through participation in Haw River Trail Conservation Committee meetings to identify important parcels for a Haw River Trail Master Plan. So when the land was put up for public sale last year by Chatham County residents Alys and Alex Protzman, Sands said the organization jumped at

the opportunity. "Usually when something is listed publicly as a typical real estate transaction, we aren't going to be able to move fast enough or accrue enough funding to be competitive in that market," Sands said. Because TLC is a 501c3 nonprofit, it can't bid above appraised market value for land when it's put up for sale. That makes it difficult when TLC is competing against developers, for example, who could build housing or commercial real estate on the property and bid well above the market value. In this case, the Protzmanns reached out to TLC first because they had a personal passion for conservation. "During this era of rapid growth in Chatham County, we are proud to support the Triangle Land Conservancy's mission to preserve this sensitive ecosystem along

the Haw River for future generations," the Protzman family said in a statement. Being proactive allowed TLC to make this land purchase much quicker than usual, Sands said. She added that this was especially important because the land was on the open market, making it at higher risk for conversion to a non-conservation use. The future of Chicken Bridge Forest is largely unknown at this time because of ongoing studies around the nearby Haw River Trail. Sands said the property could be used as an access point to the Haw River Trail, despite not having direct water frontage. The 108 acres could also be used for trails or habitat restoration to repair the clearcut forest. Next steps for the land will be determined by the Haw River Trail master

plan, which is currently seeking public input. Ben Rippe, Chatham County Parks & Recreation trails and open space planner, said the land is an important acquisition for the county because of the existing growth pressures. "Preserving the river corridor is a high priority for our residents — to protect the river as well as the scenic landscape which contributes to a rural quality of life," Rippe said. "While the property does not have river frontage, it does have potential for the Haw River Trail, but this will depend on working with adjacent landowners to ensure connectivity." For now, Sands said TLC is primarily focusing on the habitat management of the property to ensure the existing ecosystems in the Haw River corridor are represented in this parcel. That management includes strategies including prescribed burning and selective thinning of invasive species, which both encourage forest regrowth. In addition to collaborating with local partners and organizations around water protection, such as the Jordan Lake One Water initiative, and practicing and encouraging land management that supports streams, TLC also looks for opportunities to protect land along key streams and watersheds. "Chatham is facing a time of transition and growth," Sands said. "We want to make sure that we can conserve as much land as we can while there's still rural landscapes and connectivity to be had." For more information about TLC visit [www.triangleland.org](http://www.triangleland.org)

Reporter Ben Rappaport can be reached at [brappaport@chathamnr.com](mailto:brappaport@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter @b\_rappaport

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# SPORTS NEWS & ENTERTAINMENT

APRIL 13 - 19, 2023 | chathamnewsrecord.com/sports | SECTION B

## BOYS LACROSSE

# Senior core have Northwood closing in on program wins record

BY EVAN ROGERS  
News + Record Correspondent

The Northwood boys lacrosse team's standout season has been a long time coming.

In fact, following the Chargers' 18-7 win over Seaforth last Thursday — which improved Northwood to 11-1 overall — senior defender Taylor Zelfhof noted that the root of this year's success dates back before most of the team was even in high school.

"We've been playing for like six years, most of us, together since 6th grade," he said. "The chemistry on this team is unreal. It's the best we've had

in my four years here. I feel like we all know each other's tendencies and what we want — and we just want to win."

From the first face-off Thursday, the seamless connection between the Chargers was on full display. In the game's initial period, Northwood found the back of the cage six times. One quarter later, its goal total had already jumped into the double digits.

Yet, despite the Chargers finding success near the crease early and often, Seaforth clawed its way back. The Hawks registered five goals of their own in the first two quar-

See SENIORS, page B2



Staff photo by Matt Ramey  
**Northwood junior defender Coltrane Northington (6) kneels as he waits to take the field in last week's win over Seaforth.**



Staff photo by Matt Ramey

**Northwood senior Will Smith (2) greets head coach Randy Cox after the Chargers' 18-7 win over Seaforth last Thursday.**

## CLIPBOARD Q&A | SEAFORTH GOLF'S BOBBY STEWART

# Young Hawks enter break riding high



Photo courtesy of Bobby Stewart

**The Seaforth boys golf team, from left to right: head coach Bobby Stewart, J.T. DeLoach, Campbell Meador, Ty Willoughby, Gray Stewart, Griffin Ching.**

BY JEREMY VERNON  
News + Record Sports Editor

In a sport highlighted by individual performances, Seaforth boys golf coach Bobby Stewart has preached a team mentality with his nine golfers this spring.

The point of emphasis has clearly gotten through to the Hawks, who are in the middle of a highly successful season in just their second year as a program. On top of performing well in Mid-Carolina 1A/2A Conference matches, Seaforth took down defending 1A state champion South Stanly with a low score of 151 earlier this season.

Leading the charge for the Hawks this season are sophomores Griffin Ching and Gray Stewart and freshmen Campbell Meador and Ty

Willoughby. Ching, Meador and Willoughby each shot a 37 on nine holes against South Stanly, while Stewart was close behind with a 40. For the season, Ching leads the team with a nine-hole average of 38.4. Meador (38.4), Stewart (39.0) and Willoughby (39.4) are also all under 40 for the year.

Seaforth hopes its young core will carry the team to success come the 2A state tournament, which will be held at Longleaf Golf & Family Club in Southern Pines. The Hawks didn't place as a team at last year's championships, but Ching finished tied for 11th with a two-round, 36-hole score of 158. Stewart finished tied for 44th with a score of 175.

Earlier this week, Stewart spoke with the News + Record

about his team's early-season success and his excitement for the rest of the year.

**How do you feel like your team has performed this season? How did it feel to beat defending state champion South Stanly earlier this season?**

BOBBY STEWART: The season has been going really well. We have a young but talented team. I kept nine on the team, but the top six have remained fairly steady all year. It's been great to watch the young guys come together and enjoy playing together as a team. We're very talented, but we're young and we're trying to figure out what that means and how we exactly compete. It was a tremendous honor to get to play against South Stanly and get to see how these guys do when they're competing

against a team of that quality. All in all, I'm very pleased with how the season is going. I think the team is very pleased and having a lot of fun. We're looking forward to keeping the season going as long as we can keep it going.

**What is it like have a core group of players who are both young and also very talented?**

This top four, we've interchanged how they've stacked up each week. The team voted early on to do challenge matches every week and let that stand for who plays one through six, and we've been following that. It's a lot of fun, I have to be honest. This team, they're all really good kids. They really have fun playing golf, and they really

See HAWKS, page B3

# Athletes, teams to watch in spring



JEREMY VERNON  
Sports Editor

Spring break is finally here for Chatham County Schools, and apart from offering students respite from the day-to-day demands

of classes, this week is a pivotal point in the athletics schedule.

Many sports' regular seasons close at end of April, and many programs have half a dozen or fewer games remaining before the start of the postseason. The next few weeks should feature some of the fiercest competition we've seen all school year as teams try to win conference championships or play themselves onto the right side of the bubble.

With that in mind, here are my five student athletes/teams to watch during the rest of the spring regular season.

### Lucas Smith, junior, Chatham Charter

The athlete with arguably the most productive last few weeks in Chatham County, Chatham Charter junior Lucas Smith has been on a tear for the Knights' track and field team.

A short-distance specialist,

See SPRING, page B4

## BASEBALL

# Northwood keeps 'foot on the gas' in its latest win



Staff photo by Nikki Witt

**Northwood freshman Camden Miller started on the mound Monday against East Chapel Hill.**

BY SHELBY SWANSON  
News + Record Correspondent

CHAPEL HILL — East Chapel Hill sophomore Sam Smith stared down at the dirt below him. As he stood behind home plate, several paces from where the Northwood Chargers tagged him out in a pickle, he kicked the red soil with his cleats.

Desperation was beginning to set in for the Wildcats.

Smith was in a prime scoring position when the Chargers took advantage of an errant base-running mistake in the bottom of the fifth. In the previous two innings, a combined

three Wildcats were stranded on base.

"Plays like that, that gets our energy up, that gets the momentum going in our favor a bit," Northwood head coach Kyle Robinson said.

Flipping the momentum was absolutely necessary for the Chargers as they fought back from their two-run deficit to defeat East Chapel Hill, 6-3, on Monday evening. After the Wildcats took an early lead in the second inning, Northwood held the Tigers scoreless for the rest of the game. The Chargers, on the other hand, scored four runs across the third and fourth innings.

After two extra-innings

losses to Person and Southern Lee earlier this season, both of which saw Northwood relinquish two-run leads in late-game scenarios, the Chargers held a team meeting. Robinson implored his squad to adopt a new mentality — they needed to take the game from their opponents.

Down by two runs in the third Monday night, Northwood tied the game at 3-3 after a double from senior outfielder Nate Davis scored senior utility Jackson Shaner. Nate Davis was promptly scored by first-year catcher Robert Tripp, whose grounder dribbled past

See BASEBALL, page B5

**SCORES & SCHEDULES**

**SCORES**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 4**

**Girls soccer**

Asheboro Hybrid Academy 6, Chatham Charter 1  
Woods Charter 3, Uwharrie Charter 1

**Track and field**

Seaforth finishes first, Chatham Charter second, Woods Charter fourth in both boys and girls team competition against Research Triangle, and Eno River Academy

**Softball**

Gray Stone Day 11, Chatham Charter 4  
Western Alamance 10, Northwood 0

**Baseball**

Seaforth 12, Cummings 2 (Game 1)  
Seaforth 12, Cummings 0 (Game 2)  
Chatham Charter 4, Gray Stone Day 3  
Bartlett Yancey 5, Chatham Central 3

**Boys tennis**

Seaforth 6, River Mill 3  
Jordan-Matthews 8, Chatham Central 1

**Boys lacrosse**

Northwood 17, Cedar Ridge 2

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5**

**Track and field**

Northwood girls finish first, boys finish second in Central 3A Conference meet

**Boys tennis**

Jordan 9, Northwood 0  
Jordan-Matthews 8, Graham 1

**Softball**

Cedar Ridge 11, Seaforth 1

**Baseball**

Wheatmore 9, Jordan-Matthews 0  
Northwood 11, River Mill 1  
Clover Garden 3, Chatham Charter 2

**Girls soccer**

Western Alamance 7, Northwood 1

**Girls lacrosse**

Northwood 20, Riverside-Durham 1

**THURSDAY, APRIL 6**

**Boys lacrosse**

Northwood 18, Seaforth 7

**Softball**

Chatham Charter 17, River Mill 1  
Chatham Central 10, Bartlett Yancey 0

**Baseball**

Northwood 7, Seaforth 5  
Providence Grove 13, Jordan-Matthews 0

**Girls lacrosse**

Chapel Hill 18, Seaforth 0

**Girls soccer**

Woods Charter 2, Northwood 2

**MONDAY, APRIL 10**

**Baseball**

Northwood, East Chapel Hill

**SCHEDULES**

**TUESDAY, APRIL 11**

**Boys tennis**

Chatham Charter at North Moore (4 p.m.)

**Baseball**

Chatham Charter at Southern Wake Academy (5 p.m.)

**WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12**

**Boys tennis**

Chatham Charter vs. Southern Wake Academy (4 p.m.)

**Girls soccer**

Chatham Charter vs. North Moore (4:30 p.m.)

**Softball**

Chatham Charter vs. Ascendant Leadership Academy (5 p.m.)

**Baseball**

Jordan-Matthews vs. Southwestern Randolph (7 p.m.)

**THURSDAY, APRIL 13**

**Baseball**

Chatham Central vs. Jordan-Matthews (7 p.m.)

**FRIDAY, APRIL 14**

**Baseball**

Chatham Charter at Triangle Math & Science (4:30 p.m.)  
Jordan-Matthews vs. Chatham Central (7 p.m.)

**Girls soccer**

Woods Charter at Franklin Academy (5 p.m.)

**SATURDAY, APRIL 15**

**Track and field**

Seaforth at Apex Relays (TBA)

**MONDAY, APRIL 17**

**Boys golf**

Chatham Central, Seaforth and Jordan-Matthews vs. North Moore at Beacon Ridge (3:30 p.m.)

**Boys tennis**

Seaforth vs. Jordan-Matthews (4:30 p.m.)  
Chatham Central at Graham (4:30 p.m.)

**Girls soccer**

Woods Charter at Clover Garden (4 p.m.)  
Jordan-Matthews vs. North Moore (6 p.m.)  
Seaforth vs. Bartlett Yancey (6 p.m.)  
Northwood at Williams (6:45 p.m.)

**Softball**

Jordan-Matthews vs. Northwood (6 p.m.)

**Girls lacrosse**

Seaforth at Carrboro (5 p.m.)



Staff photo by Matt Ramey

**Northwood sophomore defender/long-stick mid Ethan Kuball (right) hounds a Seaforth attacker during the Chargers' 18-7 win last week.**

**SENIORS**

Continued from page B1

ters of play, including a first-half hat trick from sophomore attackman Cameron Exley.

In the first meeting between the two teams this year in mid-March, the Hawks only scored four goals. It was that stark difference in goals allowed that prompted Zelhof to remind his back unit of a point of emphasis they have preached throughout the year. "One thing we've been trying to work on is playing really tight and having communication," Zelhof said. "In the first half we didn't talk."

As Northwood's defense regained its confidence out of the halftime break, the Chargers continued to pick apart Seaforth on the attacking end. For a squad that's seen 10 different players score goals this season, the unit is undoubtedly

headlined by seniors Will Smith, Taylor Laberge and Jason Walden — who have combined for 88 goals and 38 assists this season.

The trio served as Northwood's top scorers last year, but all three have upped their play in their respective senior seasons.

Most importantly — like most of Northwood's roster this season — the three seniors have played with each other for multiple years.

"They carry the mail for us and they're great leaders," head coach Randy Cox said. "We've tried to emphasize that since they were at the (Chatham) Cardinals. They've been a part of the Northwood program for the last four years."

The Chatham Cardinals are the name of teams run by North Chatham Youth Lacrosse, which offers leagues and camps for boys in kindergarten all the way through 8th grade.

According to its website, NCYL — which is run out of Chapel Hill — is "dedicated to promoting the game of lacrosse in Chatham County and surrounding areas."

Smith serves as the shifty midfielder who can attack any defender in space. Laberge and Walden, on the other

hand, feed off one another to form a potent duo in Northwood's attack. Laberge's laser-quick release allows him to fire heaters from upwards of 10 meters out, while Walden's ability to probe and spin from behind the cage helps him create short-range opportunities.

Both Walden and Laberge found the back of the net within the first four minutes of the third quarter, leading the way in a second half that saw Northwood outscore Seaforth by a dozen points.

According to Zelhof, many of the Chargers are simply "cherishing" their final year together as Northwood hits the home stretch of the regular season. The Chargers hope the next several weeks bring them more late-season success than they had last spring, when they lost in the first round, 12-10, to conference foe Williams.

But for a team that has already won 11 games —

one shy of the program record of 12 set back in 2018 — its core of players who have spent

almost a decade together just want to make the most of their final games as teammates.

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# HAWKS

Continued from page B1

have fun playing golf together. For me, it's just been a ton of fun watching them play. I've been a part of a ton of teams in my past. I've coached high school and college basketball, some high school tennis and all sorts of stuff. But this team is really unique and fun. When I ride up to a player during the match, the first thing they do is ask how everybody else is doing, which is a lot of fun. It's not a bad gig

to watch some high-quality golf each week.

**How does it feel knowing that you're in the unique position of having no seniors and that you'll have the opportunity to build something beyond this year?**

It should be an amazing three years, to be honest with you. Of our top six, we've got two freshmen, three sophomores and one junior. If we have these six stay together, and then we have a couple of kids right behind them who are getting better by the day, this core group should

be able to do some really amazing things. One of the reasons we wanted to play against South Stanly is because that program has been so well-established for so long and has had great teams and great individual players over the years. For me, it's going to be fun to see if Seaforth can build a program like that. There's certainly enough quality golfers in our area that should be coming to Seaforth over time. It will be fun to build something that can last and be sustainable over time.

**What do you want to see from your team the rest of the season before regionals?**

Number one, I'd like to see them continue to stick together and want to be part of the team. A long, long time ago, I was a very good tennis player and I was part of a team that was fortunate, in South Carolina, to win a state title. We've been talking a lot about maintaining that team connectivity in the midst of an individual sport. Number two, we've been talking a lot about them understanding that every shot every day in practice and every match oppor-

tunity really matters. I'd like to see them focus down the stretch on committing to move on to the next shot no matter what happens and just maintaining a high level of fun. We get on the bus every day and the first thing we talk about is, "We're going to a golf course. It's a beautiful spring day. What could be better?" That's sort of been their approach. They're just having fun and enjoying the process.

*Sports Editor Jeremy Vernon can be reached at [jeremy@chathamnr.com](mailto:jeremy@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at [@jbo\\_vernon](https://twitter.com/jbo_vernon).*

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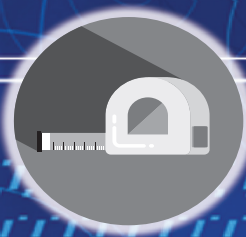
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Staff photos by Peyton Sickles

## A DAY OF UNITY

On April 4, Seaforth High School hosted its second Unified sports event of the school year. The event had a focus on track-and-field events, and offered student-athletes without intellectual disabilities and students with intellectual disabilities to come together and compete in different sporting events. Among the events were the 50-yard walk, 50-yard run, softball throw, tennis ball throw and the long jump. On a side field, Seaforth staff set up other sporting equipment, such as footballs, soccer balls and corn hole boards. Seaforth is one of over 8,000 schools across the United States with a Unified program.



## SPRING

Continued from page B1

Smith won the 100-, 200- and 400-meter dashes at the Chatham County Championships on April 1, and he followed it up by winning the same three events at his next meet at Seaforth on April 4. In four total meets this season, Smith has nine first-place finishes, including four wins in the 400-meter.

While Smith looks like a seasoned sprinter, this is actually the first season competing with the Knights' track and field team. Last spring, Smith played baseball for Chatham Charter, batting .412 with 14 hits, 14 RBI and 18 runs scored over 19 games.

Smith's season-best times in the 100-, 200- and 400-meter dashes are 11.44, 23.19 and 53.07 seconds, respectively. Those times would have placed fifth, seventh and ninth at last spring's 1A state championship meet.

This year's 1A mid-east regionals take place at Pender High in Burgaw on May 13, while the 1A state championships will take place the following weekend on May 20. Smith figures to be a competitor to take a podium spot in both meets.

**Matt Murchison, sophomore, Chatham Central**

No baseball player in the

Mid-Carolina 1A/2A Conference has more RBI than Chatham Central's Matt Murchison. In 14 games this season, the Bears' sophomore has plated 26 runs, 11 more than the next closest player and the second-highest mark of all batters in the 1A classification this season.

On top of batting .375, 10 of Murchison's 18 hits this season have been for extra bases. His six triples are also the most of any player in the 1A east this spring.

Last season, his first with the Bears, Murchison played 25 games, batting .419 with 31 hits, 25 RBI, seven doubles and two home runs. At his current pace, he would have 32 hits, 46 RBI, seven doubles and 10 triples if Central plays the same number of games as it did in 2022.

Of course, the Bears want to play more games than that. Last season, Central lost in the fourth round of the 1A state tournament to Perquimans, 7-0. If Murchison continues to produce runs at this pace for the Bears, they could make it even farther in the playoffs this year.

**Mia Collins, senior, Northwood**

The top player for Northwood's girls lacrosse team this season in terms of points (63), senior Mia Collins has really saved her best season for last. After totaling 28 goals and

two assists as a sophomore and 46 goals and 12 assists as a junior, Collins already has 51 goals and 12 assists in 12 games played this season. Her knack for finding the back of the net has helped the Chargers to an 8-4 record entering the break.

This is Northwood's fifth season as a program. The school record for wins in a year is 12, which the Chargers set while going 12-4 last spring. Northwood lost in the second round of the playoffs to Holly Springs, and Collins had one goal and one assist in the game. So far this spring, Collins has scored fewer than two goals in a game just twice. On the other hand, she's tallied six games with at least five goals.

Right now, the Chargers are ranked as the No. 23 team in the state by MaxPreps and could secure a first-round playoff game with a solid close to the regular season. Northwood should be OK in that regard considering how Collins is playing.

**Woods Charter girls soccer**

Despite its winning streak coming to an end last Thursday with a 2-2 tie vs. Northwood, the Woods Charter girls soccer team has arguably the best chance of any Chatham County team to win a state championship this spring.

Last season, the Wolves made it all the way to the 1A

state finals before losing to Christ the King. The 2022 team had three players with at least 20 goals scored over 23 games, led by Leyla Noronha's 50.

Entering their Tuesday game at Franklin Academy, this season's Woods Charter team (10-0-1) has featured a more balanced attack, with five players scoring at least seven goals through the team's first 10 games. And while Noronha is doing her part so far with 10 goals and eight assists, junior Sienna Gray and freshman Amanda Cherry lead the way with 16 goals each so far this season. In net, freshmen Wesley Oliver and Paige Apolito have combined for a goals against average of 1.315.

The girls soccer regular season lasts longer than most, with the official last contests coming on May 11. Between now and then, the Wolves will play 10 more games, including a pair of tough games with non-conference opponent Cornerstone Charter (9-2-2).

Woods Charter is ranked as the top team in the 1A east in MaxPreps' latest rankings. If they maintain that mark, they will play at home in the playoffs all the way up to the state championship round.

**Jordan-Matthews boys tennis**

While the top team in the Mid-Carolina 1A/2A boys tennis standings is Seaforth,

right behind the Hawks with an 8-3 overall record and a 6-1 league mark is Jordan-Matthews.

The Jets have six of their past seven matches, including a pair of 8-1 wins over Chatham Central and Graham last week. This year's Jets have already matched the win total of last year's team (8-5), and they need three more victories to equal their program record of 11 that they set in 2018.

The top two singles players for Jordan-Matthews this spring have been Weldon Thornton and Paul Lujan, who are 5-4 and 8-3, respectively, across the No. 1 and 2 singles spots. Ricardo Rocha Benitez has a 9-2 record, including a 7-2 mark at No. 3, while Angel Gonzalez Surarez has gone 9-2 overall and 7-2 at No. 4.

In doubles play, Lujan and Thornton have a 4-2 record as the Jets' No. 1 team, while Gonzalez Suarez and Rocha Benitez are 3-0 at No. 1 and 5-3 at No. 2.

Last spring, Jordan-Matthews lost in the first round of the 2A state playoffs to Washington after a 16-day gap following their final regular season game. This time around, the Jets will have a smaller period of time between games, an edge they hope will lift them to a deep postseason run.

*Sports Editor Jeremy Vernon can be reached at [jeremy@chathamnr.com](mailto:jeremy@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at [jbo\\_ernon](https://twitter.com/jbo_ernon).*



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BOYS BASKETBALL

# Northwood center Parrish still mulling college decision

BY JEREMY VERNON  
News + Record Sports Editor

At 7-feet flat, Northwood senior Kenan Parrish isn't used to looking up, but this season the Chargers boys basketball team brought on someone the 2023 graduate could look up to — literally and figuratively.

Northwood was aided by former UNC-Chapel Hill standout and NBA player Tyler Zeller, who served as an assistant coach during the Chargers' run to the 2023 3A boys state title game.

Standing just a shade taller than Parrish, Zeller knows what it takes to play the center position at the next level. And Parrish did all he could to soak up the big man's knowledge of the game.

"It was awesome having him around," Parrish said. "He's been to every single level that I want to be at. The biggest thing I took away from him is how physical the game can be. He's a really strong guy, and he used that to his advantage."

Playing in all 31 games this season, Parrish was third on the team in points (9.3) and rebounds (5.1) per game. On the offensive end, he made 59.8% of his shots from the field and knocked down five of the 11 3-pointers he attempted. Perhaps even more remarkable is that he shot 78.5% from the free-throw line, a mark of consistency most big men struggle with.

Parrish said his shooting touch is one thing that separates him from some other taller



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Northwood senior Kenan Parrish scored 10 points and had five rebounds in the Chargers' loss to Central Cabarrus in the 3A state finals.**

forwards and centers, and it's an ability that makes him stand out among his peers. Another underrated aspect of his game is his ability to pass the ball. Whenever opposing teams would throw a zone defense at Northwood, it was often Parrish manning the soft spot at the top of the key, catching entry passes before dishing to cutting teammates or open shooters in the corners.

While he only had 25 assists this season, seven of them came during Northwood's run in the state playoffs.

"(Being a good passer is) very important, and I think that helps me be a little different from other bigs," he said. "I watch (Nikola) Jokic a lot. I watch a ton of him. He's really good in the middle of the court and at finding teammates. He's someone I look up to."

Jokic, who won back-to-back MVP awards with the Denver Nuggets in 2020-21 and 2021-22, is by no means a traditional big man, known for cleaning the glass and scoring points in the paint. The special parts of Jokic's game is his ability to find open teammates and operate more like the team's point guard despite standing 6-foot-11.

Parrish said he wants that same impact on the court. Among his chief focuses this offseason have been improving his conditioning and strength, which he hopes will allow him to stay on the court for longer stretches. While effective in his time on the floor this past season, Parrish rarely played more than 15-20 of the 32 total minutes in a game.

Despite having some areas of his game that

need improvement, college coaches are starting to see the potential a player like Parrish can bring to the table with his size and skillset.

Parrish already had offers from Army and Navy, and since this season ended he's added two more: one from Wingate and the other from Appalachian State. The 7-footer visited the Mountaineers' campus a few weeks ago and enjoyed what he saw, but he's still not ready to make a decision on where he'll play college ball.

"I'm also doing AAU, so things are pretty busy right now," Parrish said. "I'm just trying to see how things shake out before the late signing, when I'm going to have to make a decision."

The final day of the Division-I basketball signing period is May 17. From now until then, Parrish could very well pick up more offers as college scouts find more tape on him or see him play with his AAU team, Boo Williams.

Regardless of where he ends up, Parrish could be a diamond in the rough for a program if he continues to work on his strength, conditioning and shot-making. He should certainly benefit from a college-level training staff, who might allow him to reach his full potential sooner than people think.

Sports Editor Jeremy Vernon can be reached at [jeremy@chathamnr.com](mailto:jeremy@chathamnr.com) or on Twitter at @jbo\_ernon.



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Northwood senior Kenan Parrish (shooting) averaged 9.3 points and 5.1 rebounds for the Chargers this past season.**



Staff photo by Simon Barbre

**Northwood senior Kenan Parrish has college scholarship offers from Appalachian State, Army, Navy and Wingate.**

## BASEBALL

Continued from page B1

the outstretched glove of junior East Chapel Hill third baseman Hueston

Gorham. The Chargers took a two-run lead of their own

in the fourth inning. Senior Sal Delgado worked his way to a full count be-

fore knocking a blooper just over the head of East sophomore pitcher Sam

Lang, scoring sophomore Kaleb Howell. Sophomore Omar Gallegos scored the Chargers' fifth run of the game from third after Lang threw the ball to second base, attempting to pick off a steal.

Junior Jake Leighton's diving catch in center field to end the sixth inning, and an insurance run from Nate Davis in the seventh inning, served as an exclamation mark on the night.

"Tonight, we didn't get comfortable with the lead," said senior Seth Davis, who finished the game with two runs and two hits. "We kept fighting, we kept pushing, we kept advancing the lead, which allowed them to be uncomfortable and allowed us to be more comfortable."

Aside from the Chargers' grit on the offensive end, Delgado's performance on the mound in relief was crucial to Northwood's win. The senior entered the game in the third inning and heeded his coach's advice to "shut 'em down."

"Just being able to come in the game," Seth Davis said, "I mean, he pitched his heart out."

Delgado gave up zero runs over five innings pitched. He allowed four hits and two walks but also managed to strike out five batters. In the back of his mind throughout the night was the message from the Chargers recent team meeting — don't let off the gas.

Now, thanks to Northwood's efforts against East, the Chargers enter Spring Break riding the high of a three-game win streak. The team will return to action on April 18 to face Orange, the squad Robinson cites as "the team to beat" in Northwood's conference.



Staff photo by Nikki Witt

**Northwood enters spring break on a three-game winning streak, including Monday's 6-3 victory over East Chapel Hill.**

**2023**

*Chatham County*  
**SENIOR GAMES**  
*at SilverArts*

**SAVE the DATE**  
April 28 — May 11, 2023

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**Registration Deadline: March 31, 2023**  
Register Online: <http://torch.ncseniorgames.org>

**For More Information:**  
Liz Lahti, 919-542-4512 ext. 228  
[liz.lahti@chathamcountync.gov](mailto:liz.lahti@chathamcountync.gov)

**Events Offered**

**April**

- 18 Archery
- 24 SilverArts Intake
- 28 T-Shirt and Packet pickup
- 29 Track & Field

**May**

- 1 Golf
- 1 Basketball Shoot
- 1 Cornhole
- 2 SilverArts Open House & Reception
- 2 Swimming
- 2 Tennis—Women's Singles/Men's Doubles
- 3 Cycling
- 3 Tennis—Men's Singles/Women's Doubles
- 4 Women's Bocce
- 4 Horseshoes
- 4 Fun Walk
- 4 Tennis—Mixed Doubles
- 5 Disc Golf
- 5 Football/Soffball Throw
- 5 Bowling
- 8 Croquet
- 9 Pickleball—M/W Singles, M/W Doubles
- 9 Table Tennis
- 10 Pickleball—Mixed Doubles
- 11 Men's Bocce

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# POLICE REPORTS

From Chatham County Sheriff's Office

On April 3, Krystal Shirid Jones, 47, of 3283 Buckhorn Road, Sanford, was arrested by Deputy Zackary Gross for embezzlement. She was issued a written promise and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 24.

On April 3, John Walter Mason, 38, of 3283 Buckhorn Road, Sanford, was arrested by Deputy Gross for conspiracy to obtain property by false pretenses and false pretenses/swindle/confidence game. He

was issued a written promise and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 24.

On April 3, Phillip Andrew Jones, 42, of 1394 Silk Hope Road, Siler City, was arrested by SSgt. Ashley Ellington for failure to appear — child support. He was issued a \$1,000 cash purge payment and does not need to appear in court.

On April 3, Ashley Shanta Brewer Harris, 31, of 1003 Devon Close St., Lot 47, Siler City, was arrested by Cpl. Michael Cox for two counts of failure to appear. She was issued a \$2,500 secured bond and is scheduled

to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 6.

On April 3, Clarence Reid Montgomery, 34, of 180 Fallen Oak Lane, Chapel Hill, was arrested by Deputy Alberto Estrada for assault on a female. No bond was set and he is scheduled to appear in Durham County District Court on April 19.

On April 4, Ronald Lamonte Pass, 34, of 41 William Goins Drive, Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Rami Amer for assault on a female. He was issued a written promise to appear, GPS monitoring, and pre-trial release conditions. He

is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 25.

On April 4, Thomas Max Valdivia, 32, of 5400 Quail Creek Court, Raleigh, was arrested by SSgt. Cox for misdemeanor larceny. He was issued a written promise and is scheduled to appear in Wake County District Court on May 2.

On April 5, Tawana Lynn Sanford, 39, of 151 Elder Road, Siler City, was arrested by Deputy Conner Bussey for unauthorized use of motor vehicle. She was issued a written promise and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County

District Court on April 26.

On April 5, Lakeem Henderson, 33, of 243 St. Cloud Village, Kissimmee, Florida, was arrested by Cpl. Robert Pelkey for failure to appear. He was issued a written promise and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 5.

On April 5, Dwight Leander Solomon, 49, of 1471 Taylors Chapel Road, Sanford, was arrested by Deputy Bussey for failure to appear — release order. He was issued a \$50,000 secured bond and is scheduled to appear in Chatham County District Court on April 24.

## CHATHAM CHAT | 'BOOST YOUR BUDGET' FOR SENIORS

# Council on Aging sponsors week offering money-saving tips

Many senior citizens struggle with budgeting after finding themselves on a fixed income. The Chatham County Council on Aging is partnering with the National Council on Aging to offer a program to help.

This week, we speak with Jimmy Lewis, the COA's grants and communications specialist, about the "Boost Your Budget" week endeavor and more.

heating and cooling costs during extreme temperature periods.

Survey respondents did not apply due to four key reasons: they weren't aware of the program in the first place, they assumed the application process would be too difficult, they didn't know where to apply, and lastly, they thought others needed the help more than them. Among program interests were help to pay for food costs, help to pay for heating and cooling, help to pay Medicare premiums and help to pay Medicare drug costs.

It's important to note that \$30 billion dollars in benefits go unclaimed every year because older adults who would be otherwise eligible are simply unaware that the programs exist or how to apply.

### How can Chatham County older adults assess their eligibility for these programs?

The NCOA has a specialized website at [benefitscheckup.org](http://benefitscheckup.org). On the home page, you can explore available benefits by simply entering your ZIP code. From there, you can click on the types of benefit programs you're interested in — from health care & medication, food & nutrition, housing and utilities, income, long-term care and more. Then check out the program options.

Here's a fun fact: I entered a Chatham County zip code into the search engine, highlighted all the categories, and it returned 100 different programs across 11 different categories. Keeping up with 100 different programs can be hard enough for anybody, let alone our older adult population.

As always, we at the Chatham County Council on Aging are here to assist with questions. Give us a call at one of our two senior centers in Pittsboro 919-542-4512 or Siler City 919-742-3975 or visit us online at [www.chathamcouncilonaging.org](http://www.chathamcouncilonaging.org).

**What if prospective participants want to check eligibility for benefits, but they don't have access to a computer?**

If you don't have access to a computer or internet capability, the NCOA has a helpline that can answer your questions. Call 1-800-794-6559 between 8 a.m. and 7 p.m. weekdays.

### What other upcoming events are in store at the Council on Aging?

We are getting ready to hit one of the most exciting times of the year, with the opening ceremonies of Chatham County Senior Games on Friday, April 28, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Eastern Chatham Senior Center in Pittsboro.

The games will run through May 11 as over 300 athletes age 50 and over will compete for the chance to represent Chatham County at the State Games in Raleigh later this year. The interest explosion in Senior Games has been phenomenal to observe, as we have set participation records in each of the last two years. Earlier this year, Chatham County Senior Games was presented with the "Thrive in Five Award," marking a significant increase in participation over the past five years.

Prior to reaching the 300-participant mark this year, we had 262 sign-ups in 2022 and just 108 in 2017. While Chatham County is getting older by any objective metric, it is also prioritizing its health and wellness alongside this. Certainly, we should take a moment to recognize the tireless efforts of our volunteers. Our work could not be accomplished at the scale and scope that it is without the Meals on Wheels drivers, volunteer tax preparers and those folks that are always willing to lend a hand to our exercise and educational programming. We are proud to honor these individuals with a Volunteer Appreciation Banquet on Friday, April 21, from 1-3 p.m. at Chatham County Agriculture & Conference Center.



**Find Ways to Boost Your Budget**

**ncoa** | BoostYourBudget  
national council on aging

**RYLA** rotary youth leadership awards Applications Still Open!

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**Rotary Club of Pittsboro**

### Why don't more older adults take advantage of these opportunities?

In 2016, the NCOA commissioned a nationwide study to find out why this may be the case. They spoke with over 1,000 adults over the age of 60 by phone who had incomes below 250% of the federal poverty line to discover their thoughts about benefit programs that can assist those with fixed incomes. They were keenly aware of programs such as Medicare, Medicaid and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, but some other programs that help older adults — like the Medicare Savings Program or the LIHEAP (Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program) were less known. Just over half of the respondents had knowledge of LIHEAP, which can assist with

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**NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

Supported by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services, with funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Opioid STD/Cares Grant #14Y70002375 and SP-RR (Grant #1U795902208).

# Council on Aging Weekly Activities Calendar

Monday, April 17

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 a.m. - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 9 a.m. - **Chair Yoga w/Liz (at Chatham Grove Community Center and on Zoom)**
- 10 a.m. - **Arthritis Exercise w/Jackie**
- 11 a.m. - **Sr. Games Practice w/Alan (Bocce, Cornhole, Horseshoes); Golf at Siler City Country Club**
- 2 p.m. - **Table Tennis; Senior Games Croquet Practice (Central Carolina Community College, Pittsboro)**
- 3 p.m. - **Caregiver Support Group**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 10 a.m. - **Cornhole**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Brody McCurdy, Voices of Chatham**
- 2 p.m. - **Geri-Fit**

Tuesday, April 18

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 9 a.m. - **3G's Men's Group**
- 10 a.m. - **Woodcarvers; Bingo w/Joe**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Gym Orientation**
- 11 a.m. - **Chatham Striders Walk & Learn**
- 1 p.m. - **Rummikub**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9:45 a.m. - **Chair Exercises (in-person and Zoom)**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Ping Pong**
- 1 p.m. - **Rook/Phase 10/Rummikub; "Bring Your Own Project" Gathering**
- 2 p.m. - **Fitness Room Orientation**

Wednesday, April 19

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 a.m. - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 10:00 a.m. - **Chair Yoga w/Liz; Coffee & Games w/Pittsboro Police Department**
- 1 p.m. - **Open Art Studio (Learn to Basket Weave w/Carolyn, RSVP with Jackie required)**
- 6:30 p.m. - **League of Women Voters: "How the Court System Works" (via Zoom)**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 10 a.m. - **Bible Study**
- 11:30 a.m. - **Nutrition Education w/Ann Clark**
- 2 p.m. - **Crafting w/Kathryn**
- 3:30 p.m. - **Beginning Quilting**

Thursday, April 20

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 a.m. - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 10 a.m. - **Crafts & Chat; Chair Volleyball**
- 11 a.m. - **NC Legal Aid w/Allison on Wills, Healthcare Proxy, Power of Attorneys, Living Wills**
- 1 p.m. - **Games/Cards**
- 1:30 p.m. - **Line Dancing**
- 3 p.m. - **Gentle Yoga w/Liz**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9:00 a.m. - **Men's Coffee & Conversations**
- 10 a.m. - **Bocce & Horseshoes; Music Jam Session**
- 1 p.m. - **Book Club**
- 2 p.m. - **Geri-Fit**
- 3 p.m. - **Thursday Social (Bocce and Horseshoes)**

Friday, April 21

Eastern Chatham Senior Center

- 8:15 a.m. - **Body Conditioning w/Jackie**
- 10 a.m. - **Arthritis Exercise w/Jackie**
- 11:15 a.m. - **Cornhole & Shuffleboard**
- 1 p.m. - **Games/Euchre**

Western Chatham Senior Center

- 9 a.m. - **Strong & Fit w/Olivia**
- 10 a.m. - **Shuffleboard, Beginning Quilting; Grief Support Group**
- 10:30 a.m. - **Drawing with Lacy**
- 1 p.m. - **Volunteer Appreciation Banquet, Ag Center**
- 7 p.m. - **Friday Night Dance (fee required for participation)**



For more information on these and other programs, call our centers Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Eastern Chatham Senior Center  
919-542-4512

Western Chatham Senior Center  
919-742-3975

Visit our website at [www.chathamcoa.org](http://www.chathamcoa.org)

## PITTSBORO COMMISSIONERS

# Board OKs land use plan, adopts system development fee

BY TAYLOR HEEDEN  
News + Record Staff

PITTSBORO — The town's board of commissioners approved a new future land use plan and adopted a system development fee at its regular meeting Monday evening.

The land use plan was discussed during a public hearing, where acting Planning Director Janie Phelps introduced the item to the board.

"This has been a lot of discussions, meetings, but they've all been very profitable," she said. "We've had a lot of input from the community through surveys ... the community was involved."

The last time the land use plan was updated was in 2012. Because Pittsboro looks different than when the plan was last considered, town staff felt it was important to return to it and see what needed to be changed.

Jake Petrosky is the director of Stewart, the engineering firm contracted to draft a land use plan for Pittsboro. He gave a presentation on what the proposed land use plan looks like and what changes have been made since 2012. Petrosky went into detail on how public input helped to shape the land use plan draft, which helped to create four priorities to consider when adopting the plan.

"The priorities that we heard from the survey folks were the improvement of utilities and infrastructure, environmental protection and conservation, preservation of character and growth management," he said.

The proposed land use plan will have four main components: land use and housing, downtown, infrastructure, and natural resources conservation. Petrosky said each component has a list of priorities the board can use when granting zoning requests. By using those priorities suggested by the public, the board can make sure Pittsboro matches the vision they and the residents want to see.

Commissioner Kyle Shipp said he's glad to see the updated land use plan, as one of the main reasons he ran for

office was to create a new plan.

"I think the important thing to remember ... is that it (the future land use plan) is abstract," he said. "I think it's important for us to have it, to update it and to continue to look for updates."

Commissioner Jay Farrell thanked Phelps and her staff for the work they completed and how it will help future boards legislate down the road.

"This one is much better and easier to maneuver," he said. "I thank y'all very much."

The board also adopted a new system development fee (SDF) to be a combined value of \$11,000 to tap into both the town's water and sewer systems. The move came after multiple public hearings on the item.

SDFs are one-time payments made by developers to municipalities during construction to connect to water and sewer systems. The fees help pay for the connection, as well as to fund projects the town will need to take on to improve existing infrastructure to handle more residents using town facilities.

Engineering firm Freese and Nichols conducted a study to help determine the maximum SDF Pittsboro could charge per service unit. Currently, the town charges \$4,200 to tap into the water and wastewater system. Freese and Nichols calculated Pittsboro could charge up to \$39,000 per service unit, more than nine times the current fee.

Interim Town Manager Kent Jackson presented the board with two models for the SDF: a high option and a low option. The high option would have the SDF set to \$26,353.50 per service unit while the low option would cost \$10,638 per service unit.

"We were trying to examine and flesh out as many different perspectives and considerations as we could," Jackson said.

Shipp said he thought the town should aim lower when it comes to establishing a SDF because it will help

See **BOARD**, page B8



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NEWS BRIEFS

**CMG's Mann recognized as a Scotsman Guide Top Originator**

Chet Mann, a distinguished area sales manager at CMG Home Loans, has been recognized as a Scotsman Guide Top Originator for 2022. For Mann, who has offices in Pittsboro and Sanford, the award is a notable industry benchmark for residential mortgage originators across the country and is largely recognized as the industry's most comprehensive list of verified rankings. To make the list, originators must secure \$40 million or more in production or have closed 100 or more loans within the previous calendar year. The 2022 calendar year marks Mann's sixth consecutive Scotsman Guide Top Originator award.

In 2022, Mann and his team helped 336 families with their home loan and totaled over \$82 million in loan volume. He has proudly served the greater North Carolina area for the past 12 years and boasts 74 five-star reviews from happy clients and 224 Testimonial Tree reviews. Mann and his team specialize in a wide variety of loan programs, including the All In One Loan, VA Loans, investment property loans, N.C. Housing first-time home buyer programs, and all forms of Conventional Loans. Through CMG Home Loans, he also offers competitive rates, quick closings, reliable preapprovals, and down payment assistance options.

"I am humbled to be recognized in the Scotsman Guide again this year," Mann said. "I love serving families and helping them build wealth through home ownership. Being a mortgage advisor and consultant to people who want to buy and own real estate is what drives me. Seeing them close on their new home is what keeps me doing it day after day. There is no greater feeling. I have an amazing local team and an incredible company that support my efforts and provide the ultimate customer experience. Our referral partners are second to none and with them I am proud to do our part to build the communities we serve, one customer at a time."

Mann's offices are at 212 Hawkins Avenue in Sanford and 367 Freedom Parkway, Suite 110, in Pittsboro.

**Interactive map offers a way to share location-specific ideas and comments.**

PITTSBORO — The Chatham County Parks and Recreation Department is working with Triangle J Council of Governments (TJCOG) and Alta Planning + Design to conduct a feasibility study for the Haw River Trail.

This study will identify opportunities for the development of land-based trails along the Haw River from the Alamance County border to Jordan Lake. It will also identify opportunities for further development of the paddle trail along the Haw River in Chatham County.

The study is in the public input phase, and an interactive map offers a way to share location-specific ideas and comments. Individuals can suggest destinations, routes or features for the trail and identify barriers to trail development by dropping pins or drawing lines on the interactive map. Comments and suggestions can be seen by other users of the

map. It is optional for survey respondents to provide their name with their input.

The map will be available online until late spring/early summer when the draft of the study will be released. The study draft will be available for public review and comment in early summer.

Individuals are asked to visit the interactive map and leave their comments at: <https://hawrivertrailstudy.altaplanning.cloud>.

For more information and to stay up to date with the Haw River Trail feasibility study, individuals may visit: <https://www.chathamcountync.gov/HawRiverTrailStudy> or contact Ben Rippe, Chatham County trails and open space planner, at [ben.rippes@chathamcountync.gov](mailto:ben.rippes@chathamcountync.gov) or 919-545-8553.

**Library hosts 'Poetry off the Page'**

In recognition of National Poetry Month, Chatham Community Library will host "Poetry off the Page (POP)" with Robin Hall from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, April 20, in the Holmes Family Meeting Room.

Poetry off the Page is an open mic event to celebrate and share words that move us. Poetry isn't on the page — it only visits. Poetry is in us. Be bold. Be heard. And have fun! Share your own work or any piece that moves you. If you feel like singing, please do. Come experience a night of poetry magic as poetry moves off the page and into our hearts.

Arrive at 6:30 p.m. for poetry creation stations, including blackout poetry, post-it note poetry, a haiku poster and art-inspired poems. Explore your creativity with no pressure. The open mic will begin at 7 p.m., and each reader will have five to eight minutes to perform.

Sign up in advance at <https://tinyurl.com/poetryoffthepage> or sign up in person on the day of the program. This program is best suited for 16-year-olds and up.

Robin Hall holds an MFA in Writing from Vermont College of Fine Arts. Her debut picture book, *The Littlest Weaver*, will release in fall 2023 from Familius, an imprint of Hachette Publishing. She teaches creative writing and yoga to all ages, and lives in North Carolina on a tiny farm with one husband, five children, four dogs, three looms and too many chickens to count.

This program is free and open to the public and is made possible with the generous support of the Friends of the Chatham Community Library

**Library hosts 'Discovering Your Own Backyard' event**

In recognition of Earth Day on April 22, Chatham Community Library will host, "Discovering Your Own Backyard: A Brief Guide into North Carolina's Natural World" with Alexis Longmire, from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Thursday, April 13, in the Holmes Family Meeting Room.

As North Carolina inhabitants, we are all familiar with the iconic flora and fauna of our state: black bears, loblolly pines, white-tailed deer, bass, and more. However, many underestimate the true uniqueness of N.C., which some have claimed to be the most biodiverse state in the country. From the caves and old-growth forests of our mountains to the fire-dependent prairies and woods of the

piedmont and even to the carnivorous plant bogs and beaches of our beloved coast, come learn about N.C.'s amazing natural world and how we can better live within it.

Longmire is a second year PhD student in ecology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She currently researches estuarine ecology off the coast of N.C., specifically looking at juvenile marine animal habitats and marine landscape patterns. She received her Bachelor's degree in marine science and biology from the University of Alabama, where she also aided in researching the effects of damming on freshwater communities and the behavioral ecology of an important mangrove fish species. She also did a brief stint in South Dakota working with fisheries scientists but is originally from East Tennessee.

This program is free and open to the public and made possible with the generous support of the Friends of the Chatham Community Library.

**Soil and Water Conservation District welcomes residents to Creek Geeks Field Day**

SILER CITY — Community members of all ages are invited to join the Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District for Creek Geeks Field Day from 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 22, at Boling Lane Park located at 302 South Fir Ave. in Siler City. This event is free and open to the public. The rain date for this event is April 23.

The town of Siler City installed Best Management Practices (BMPs) at Boling Lane Park such as wetlands and riparian buffers. Chatham Soil and Water Conservation staff will provide tours of the park, where they will discuss the BMPs, native vegetation and the overall benefits for the Loves Creek Watershed.

Attendees will be able to participate in several interactive activities including:

- Explore some of the techniques used in stream health assessment and water quality testing in the creek running along Boling Lane Park
- Search for macroinvertebrate critters living in the creek
- Measure chemical and physical parameters to assess the water quality
- Using an EnviroScape watershed model, learn how nonpoint source pollutants affect waterways
- Learn how to make small changes, as individuals and collectively, which add up to a large impact

Each of these activities will repeat every 45 minutes to give attendees a chance to visit all of them. The Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District will distribute educational activity books as well.

Residents who wish to attend are asked to register online at: [https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScPpUYRYYoF7hx8ljY0jX9DER\\_mnIAeE-jBoiDzLE79NQCviUw/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScPpUYRYYoF7hx8ljY0jX9DER_mnIAeE-jBoiDzLE79NQCviUw/viewform?usp=sf_link). Please be prepared to sign waivers at check-in on the day of the event.

Questions about this event may be directed to Brandy Oldham, Chatham Soil and Water Conservation District administrator and education coordinator, at 919-545-8440 or [brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov](mailto:brandy.oldham@chathamcountync.gov).

**'Broadway Our Way' set for Saturday, April 15**

BROADWAY — When the population

of a town quadruples in two hours, it is sure to be for a fantastic event. With five bands, 92 vendors, a loaded kid's zone and a food truck rodeo, the 2023 Broadway Our Way festival scheduled for April 15 is lining up to be one of the most popular events the town has seen.

Headlining this year's festival at the Jammin' on Main Street Dance is The Main Event Band. Billed as "the ultimate party band," the group performs R&B, soul, beach, country, and funk, and will perform on the Main Stage beginning at 7 p.m.

The Main Stage will also host Sweet Potato Pie, Tonk Honky, The Simpletones, and The Dalton Davis band with concerts throughout the day.

Festival goers can participate in a cornhole tournament (registration on site), a car show (registration on site), or enjoy a wealth of culinary choices across a food truck rodeo and five downtown restaurants. The street will be filled with vendors offering crafts, handmade items, services and custom items. All street fair events begin at 10 a.m.

This year's kid's activities include inflatables, princesses, heroes, face painting and area college mascots.

For a full lineup of events, with times, go to [visitsanfordnc.com/signature-events](https://visitsanfordnc.com/signature-events).

**CCCC Summer Youth Camps offer fun, learning**

SANFORD — Central Carolina Community College Summer Youth Camps not only provide children and youth with an entertaining learning experience, but also lifetime interests and experience with a possible professional career.

The offerings vary, but all are available at a reasonable price or free.

**Culinary**

Junior Chef Baking Camp: A class for students ages 9-14 who share a passion for cooking and possibly a career as a Pastry Chef. Students will learn to prepare various items, including sweet and savory appetizers, breads, and desserts.

Junior Chef Cooking Camp: A class for students ages 9-14 who share a passion for cooking and possibly a career in culinary arts. Students will prepare various items including entrees, appetizers, and desserts.

Kids Cooking Camp: A cooking class for Post K to 9 years old who share a passion for cooking. Students will prepare various items including healthy snacks, lunches, and desserts.

**STEM**

STEM Academy - Health Sciences (rising 6th-9th graders): A camp experience for students interested in exploring STEM skills used in careers in Health Sciences, including Dental Hygiene, Dental Assisting, Nursing, Medical Assisting, Sonography, Veterinary Medical Technology, Health Information Technology, Human Services, and Health & Fitness Science. Campers will take part in hands-on STEM learning with CCCC faculty in these areas by conducting experiments/research, observing demonstrations, and using tools of the trade. Registration fees for this camp are waived through a grant from the Pentair Foundation. This camp includes an off-campus field trip on Friday.

**BOARD**

Continued from page B7

make them competitive with surrounding

communities like Apex, Sanford and Fuquay-Varina.

"Even at \$10,638, that's higher than almost everywhere around us," he

said. "So if somebody is looking to build a new development or bring a new grocery store, and they're looking between Pittsboro and Fuquay, what

we decide tonight could be the tipping factor for that."

Jackson explained because of the N.C. General Assembly passed the SDF bill stating municipalities had to review SDFs every five years five years

ago, many jurisdictions surrounding Pittsboro are set to reexamine and, most likely, increase their SDFs.

"It's been accurately and well stated that that comparison doesn't have bearings on the fee that

we set," he said. "There may be benefit to sharing information, being very aware of what others are doing."

Reporter Taylor Heeden can be reached at [thead-eden@chathamnr.com](mailto:thead-eden@chathamnr.com).

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**BEST OF CHATHAM 2022 READERS' FAVORITE**

**Amber Waves** by Dave T. Phipps

ISN'T THIS NICE. WE FINALLY HAVE A NICE DAY FOR A PICNIC.  
I LOVE THIS. ENJOYING OUR MEAL SITTING IN THE GRASS WITH NATURE ALL AROUND.  
THIS IS JUST HOW ALL THE SETTLERS ATE THEIR MEALS.  
YES, ASIDE FROM THE COOLER, TUPPERWARE AND PLASTIC SPOKS...JUST LIKE THIS.

**Out on a Limb** by Gary Kopervas

FASTER THAN A SPEEDING SCQUIRREL... MORE BENEVOLENT THAN A LINGING LEMUR... ABLE TO LEAD SMALL CHILDREN IN A SINGLE BOUND. LOOKS UP IN THE SKY...  
I'D HAVE GOTTEN HERE SOONER BUT I HAD TO GO ACROSS TOWN TO MY APARTMENT TO CHANGE INTO MY TIGHTS AND CAPE IN MY BATHROOM.  
LOW SELF-ESTEEM SUPERMAN

**The Spats** by Jeff Pickering

TIME FLIES WHEN YOU'RE HAVING FUN.  
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...TIME'S FUN WHEN YOU'RE HAVING FLIES...

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**PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo**

**ACROSS**

- 1 Milk-Bone products
- 10 Legendary masked swordsman
- 15 "Getting out of it is not possible for me"
- 20 Stat for a baseball pitcher
- 21 Mountain nymph of Greek myth
- 22 Can't get out of it
- 23 Start of a riddle
- 25 Santa's little helpers
- 26 "Delicious!"
- 27 Insect snares
- 28 Told fibs
- 29 Attempts to hit, as a fly
- 31 Hair fixative
- 32 Ryder Cup org.
- 33 Manipulator
- 34 Prefix with angle
- 35 Felt concern
- 38 Riddle, part 2
- 43 Supreme
- 44 California vineyard
- 45 Joust verbally
- 46 Words before "dream" or "be different"
- 47 Jazz pianist
- 48 Loft
- 50 In a very uncordial way
- 52 City in Iowa
- 53 Riddle, part 3
- 57 Not docile
- 58 Serpentine fish
- 59 Above, in poetry
- 60 Gabrielle of volleyball
- 64 Vietnamese New Year
- 65 Grad's gala
- 68 Flop
- 70 Indian royal answer
- 72 Caméra — (Cannes award)
- 73 Wear down
- 75 Actor
- 77 Space
- 79 Big city in Ontario
- 81 Riddle, part 4
- 86 Utah winter vacation spot
- 89 From Tehran or Tabriz
- 90 Ladle, e.g.
- 91 Concerning
- 92 Iris coverer
- 94 With 108-Down, "Piece of cake!"
- 96 Memorable periods
- 97 Squint
- 98 End of the riddle
- 101 Cottage cheese bits
- 102 Hit the slopes
- 103 Alternatives to coffees
- 104 Part of LAPD
- 105 Perp catcher
- 106 Like fishes without appendages
- 108 Casino fixture
- 110 Holier-than- —
- 112 Rock's Reed
- 115 Make irate
- 116 Riddle's answer
- 120 Crouch down
- 121 Fill with panic
- 122 Vacant elected positions
- 123 1,000-kilo metric unit
- 124 Conical tent
- 125 Analyzed to detect the presence of
- 126 Like a wet lawn at dawn
- 127 Waikiki locale
- 3 Protein unit
- 4 Blasting stuff
- 5 Kept in check
- 6 1950s Ford
- 7 "I smell —!"
- 8 Yanks
- 9 — cone
- 10 Astrological diagrams
- 11 Writer Sarah — Jewett
- 12 Scan or skim
- 13 Aries animal
- 14 Ukraine port
- 15 "Tell me about it!"
- 16 Ale grain
- 17 Generalized rivalry situation
- 18 Zinc — (cosmetics ingredient)
- 19 Brand of tortilla chips
- 24 Gymnast
- 30 Competitor of McDonald's and Burger King
- 31 Big Swiss city
- 32 Extol
- 33 Toward a stream's source
- 35 Calculate
- 36 Ornament hanger, e.g.
- 37 Italian rice dish
- 38 Lot in life
- 39 Makes the decision
- 40 Sheriff Andy Taylor's boy
- 41 PC shortcut code
- 42 Barter
- 44 Consumer advocate
- 49 Signaled, as an actor
- 51 Pre-euro Italian money
- 54 Bank of China Tower architect
- 55 Power connectors
- 56 One of the Muses
- 61 He played Santa in "Elf"
- 62 Recoiled in fear
- 63 Blackboard clearer
- 66 Baltic Sea feeder
- 67 Tile designs
- 69 Blocks up
- 71 — Hopkins University
- 74 Clog-clearing brand
- 76 Year division
- 78 Writing assignments
- 80 Cause to stumble
- 82 Keaton and Sawyer
- 83 Not yet final, in law
- 84 Folk stories
- 85 Bank offering
- 86 Gets on it right away
- 87 Investigate
- 88 Checking the fit of
- 93 One of the Muses
- 95 1984 comedy starring Steve Martin and Lily Tomlin
- 99 React to with a quick breath
- 100 Inflict upon
- 101 Meal division
- 105 Tally up
- 107 Boxer
- 108 See
- 94-Across
- 109 Apollo's instrument
- 110 Variety
- 112 Gardening tools
- 113 Bread unit
- 113 Film director
- 114 Khrushchev's fed.
- 117 Corrida cheer
- 118 Decay
- 119 Actor Danson

**TYKES IN THE SADDLE**

**DOWN**

- 1 Like a wet lawn at dawn
- 2 Waikiki locale

Solution for the puzzle in last week's edition.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| R | A | G | A |   | E | N | A | M | O | R | E | D |   | P | O | P | T | A | R | T |   |   |   |
| A | W | O | L |   | R | A | N | A | R | A | C | E |   | A | V | O | I | D | E | R |   |   |   |
| W | A | L | T | E | R | P | I | D | G | E | O | N |   | L | O | W | T | I | D | E |   |   |   |
| E | R | D | O | C |   | A | N | A |   | N | A | E |   | U | D | O | N |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| R | E | S | H | O | T |   | M | I | S | T | Y | C | O | P | E | L | A | N | D |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | O | R | E | O | S |   | D | O | W | S | E |   | O | C | A | S | E | Y |
| A | L | F | R | E | D | M | O | L | I | N | A |   | L | I | A | R |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| L | E | A | N | S | I | N | T | O |   |   |   | I | C | O | N | S |   | W | H | O |   |   |   |
| E | T | C |   | O | U | I |   | G | I | L | S | C | O | T | T | H | E | R | O | N |   |   |   |
| S | T | A | R | M | A | N |   | C | E | L | E | S | T | A | R | I | M | E |   |   |   |   |   |
| O | R | B | I | T |   |   | O | N | A | D | I | E | T |   | R | I | S | E | S |   |   |   |   |
| N | O | O | N |   | D | E | T | E | N | T | E |   | A | F | F | E | C | T | S |   |   |   |   |
| C | L | O | T | H | I | N | G | S | T | O | R | E |   | R | A | D |   | P | A | S |   |   |   |
| E | L | K |   | E | S | T | O | S |   |   |   | P | A | I | N | T | B | A | L | L |   |   |   |
|   |   |   |   | O | S | S | O |   | M | A | N | I | L | A | F | O | L | D | E | R |   |   |   |
| A | P | A | C | H | E |   | A | I | O | L | I |   | P | R | I | M | E |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| L | I | S | T | E | D | C | O | M | P | A | N | Y |   | C | A | W | A | N | I | N | G |   |   |
| L | E | I | A |   | A | K | A |   | A | M | I |   | T | A | N | E | Y |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| I | R | A | N | A | I | R |   | G | E | L | A | T | I | N | P | O | W | D | E | R |   |   |   |
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## Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 |   |   |   | 6 |   |   |   | 8 |
|   |   | 4 |   |   | 2 | 7 |   |   |
|   | 5 |   | 1 |   | 9 |   |   | 6 |
| 8 |   |   |   |   | 3 |   |   | 9 |
|   | 4 |   |   | 1 |   |   | 8 |   |
|   |   | 6 | 5 |   |   | 4 |   |   |
|   | 7 |   |   | 2 |   |   |   | 5 |
|   |   | 9 |   |   | 7 |   |   | 4 |
| 5 |   |   | 3 |   |   | 1 |   |   |

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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## MAGIC MAZE ● PORTS OF JAPAN

Y R N J F C Y U Q N J F C Y V  
R I O L H E B X U R O L I E B  
**Y O K O H A M A** O M O R I Y V  
S Q A A N K H E B Y W R T R O  
L J G B S E B Y W U I R P O N  
K I G D O A B Z U H O X A V S  
Q O M K M T W T S R K N K I G  
E C A Y A I O A W U A S A Q P  
N L J H J K B Y K N Y T S F E  
C A Y U Y A X V K I I G O U S  
Q P K O N M K J H F M E C B Z

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions forward, backward, up, down and diagonally  
Unlisted clue hint: CAPITAL OF JAPAN

- |          |        |       |          |
|----------|--------|-------|----------|
| Abashiri | Kuji   | Nanao | Soma     |
| Akita    | Kyoto  | Ogi   | Toba     |
| Aomori   | Mikawa | Osaka | Yokohama |
| Kawasaki | Miyako | Otaru |          |

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**TIGER** by BUD BLAKE

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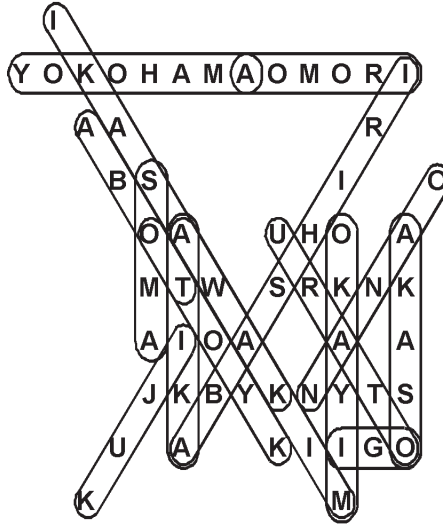
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- ✓ Tile and Grout
- ✓ Cabinetry
- ✓ Doors and Windows
- ✓ Deck Maintenance
- ✓ Garage Organization
- ✓ Shelving and Storage

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**PORTS OF JAPAN**



**Weekly SUDOKU**

Answer

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 4 | 8 |
| 6 | 9 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| 7 | 5 | 8 | 1 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| 8 | 1 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 9 |
| 9 | 4 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 6 | 5 | 9 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| 4 | 7 | 3 | 9 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 5 | 6 |
| 1 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 2 | 3 | 8 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 7 |

## Eggs, crispy onions and salt. Score!



**DEBBIE MATTHEWS**  
 The Curious Cook

One is a relative newcomer that comes with many names and in many colors.

The second is so ubiquitous at the holidays that it has become almost an American inside joke.

And the third has been around since before time.

It's a possibility that

you are sick of me waxing away about how wonderful eggs are; how healthy, how nutritious, how versatile, and still, even now, how inexpensive.

And it's also possible that this week I am pushing the limits of your culinary patience concerning eggs.

But wait, there's more!

I know I gave you an easy way to soft boil eggs which makes cleanup and peeling simplified.

And you can live your entire life using that method and leave this earth as a happy, fulfilled ovum eater.

Recently, though, I purchased a product that hath left me shook.

I'm not a big fan of the Tik Tok and Tik Tok product recommendations. I'm not a fan of fad kitchen products. And I'm not a fan of unitaskers.

But what I bought was all three — and I love it.

It's an egg cooker.

If you type egg cooker into an Amazon search bar, many products will pop up. They go by brand names such as Chefman, Bella, Evolooop. I purchased a Dash. Because it was on sale for \$12. I figured if I was buying an egg-cooking lemon, I wasn't going into debt for it.

It's just a simple heating element with an insert that holds the eggs. You put a pinhole in each shell, add some water, cover, and start. When the water cooks off, the eggs are done.

The more water you add, the harder cook you get. You can go from liquid yolk to yolk cooked through.

Why is this so much better than the old school way?

Speed and ease of use are biggies. I can soft boil half a dozen eggs in less than five minutes using just one small

plug-in appliance.

But as good as that is there's an added bonus that I didn't know about until I cooked my first batch. Using this gadget makes peeling the eggs supernaturally easy. I have undercooked the eggs and still, even with a fully liquid yolk, the shell slips off like a French nightgown. It literally pulls away from the egg and rarely takes any white with it.

I love this machine and will fight anyone who tries to take it away.

Number two: crispy onions — you know, the stuff that tops that annual green bean casserole?

I bought it because I planned on making Monterey Spaghetti (see my column from October 2022) when I had Covid and they were part of the recipe.

I made the dish and it was really tasty. But there were leftover onions. So, what's a girl with a carb fixation and a hatred of wasting food to do?

Well, this girl began liberally sprinkling them on pretty much everything savory in my apartment.

They are terrific on salad. They add both crispiness and an onion kick. Even The Kid, who normally has no love for onions, loves them.

I like them sprinkled on open faced sandwiches, like avocado toast. They're great on soup. Use them in place of bread or cracker crumb topping. I throw them in any foods that can take a little onion flavor and wants their unique crispy texture.

I use them so much, I purchase in large quantities. Costco stopped carrying the giant sacks of oniony goodness after the holidays, so now my friend Mr. Bezos at Amazon has them regularly shipped to me.

And finally: all salt is sea salt.

Even if it's mined from deep in the earth or gathered from the Himalayas, which couldn't be further from the sea.

But once, back millions of years ago, there was an ocean in what is now the sky. And that ocean left behind caverns made of NaCl.

Six thousand years before the Common Era, humans were refining and producing salt. The vast majority of salt used in food is iodized salt, uni-



Courtesy of Debbie Matthews

**Eggs and crispy onions can dress up many meals.**

form in size and flavor. This is not a bad thing. The iodine added to the salt almost completely eradicated goiters, the disfiguring neck growths that come from a lack of that iodine.

But like a huge swath of food and cooking, salt has gotten glamorous.

Varieties, such as untreated sea salt in many different grinds, are readily available, as well as Kosher salt, a coarser, larger grain that is so beloved of cooks of all stripes.

But there is another kind of salt: finishing salt. Large flakes of diamond-clear salt that is perfect sprinkled on top of a finished dish. When eaten like this one gets a salty hit and a

crunch that adds so much to the enjoyment of the food.

It also makes a visually impressive finish to sweets such as chocolate and/or caramel.

So, no recipe this week, but an assignment for you, Gentle Reader.

If you try one of these products, let me know how you liked them.

If you have a terrific new food/cooking acquisition, let me know what it is and what you think of it (even duds can teach us something, but if not, at least possibly function as a hilarious cautionary tale).

Thanks for your time.

Contact me at dm@bullcity.mom.



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