

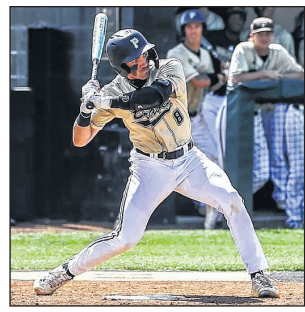
Inside today  
**Destination  
UNCP**



Event connects students, families with campus organizations. **News 3A**

AND...  
Yes, boldly  
go to the  
moon and  
beyond  
**Opinion 4A**

In today's paper  
**SPORTS:**  
Braves  
battle No. 4  
Trailblazers  
**Page 1B**



# THE ROBESONIAN

Serving Robeson County Since 1870

Wednesday, April 15, 2026 • Issue 28, Volume 157

[robsonian.com](http://robsonian.com)

A Fresh Perspective

Local  
NEWS

\$1.50

## City Council approves food truck park ordinance



Chris Stiles | The Robesonian  
Lumberton City Councilmen John Cantey, second from right, and Eric Chavis, second from left, have a discussion during Monday's meeting at City Hall.

**Chris Stiles**  
The Robesonian

LUMBERTON — Lumberton City Council approved a new ordinance which will allow for and regulate food truck parks in the city, voting unanimously in support of the measure during its regular monthly meeting Monday at City Hall.

Some moderate discussion had been held in previous board meetings,

but Monday's vote came with no comments from either the board or the public during a public hearing.

City Planning Director ArTriel Kirchner drafted the ordinance after researching similar ordinances in other municipalities. This comes after a request from Stuart McNeill to amend the Land Use Ordinance to create a standalone ordinance regarding food truck parks. The city's

planning board previously unanimously voted in favor of the ordinance.

Food truck parks will be allowed within the B-4 (business general commercial), B-7 (business general commercial/manufactured home sales) and M-1 (light manufacturing) zonings and will be allowed with a special use permit within the B-1 (downtown) and M-2 (manufacturing) zonings. The hours of opera-

tion must be between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m., seven days a week. Outdoor seating will be allowed more than 100 feet from any single-family residential zoning district, and food trucks must not be within 15 feet of the street or the lot boundary, fire hydrants, utility boxes and within 10 feet of handicap ramps, sidewalks, building entrances or emergency exits.

See ORDINANCE | 9A

## UNCP to offer free bioprocessing training for entry-level biomanufacturing jobs

**Mark Locklear**  
For The Robesonian

PEMBROKE — UNC Pembroke offers a free, two-week bioprocessing course to prepare individuals for entry-level roles in the biopharmaceutical manufacturing industry.

UNCP collaborates with five biopharmaceutical industries, including Amgen, Biogen, Novo Nordisk, Pfizer and Fujifilm Diosynth. The next training will be held from June 15-26 at the Biotechnology Research and Training Center, 115 Livermore Drive, Pembroke, in the Carolina Commerce and Technology Park (COMtech).

The course runs daily from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and is open to adults aged 18 or older who have earned a high school diploma or GED.

With only 12 spots available, early registration is recommended. To sign up, visit the biomanufacturing registration page.

Enrollees must complete five online modules before the in-person training. Those who finish the program will receive several certifications, including an advanced credential in biopharmaceutical manufacturing.

This initiative is part of Accelerate NC-Life Sciences Manufacturing, a statewide effort supported by a \$25 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration's Build Back Better Regional Challenge. The program, led by the North Carolina Biotechnology Center, aims to strengthen regional

See JOBS | 9A



Chris Stiles | The Robesonian  
Motorists travel along Interstate 95 near exit 19 in Lumberton on Monday, as cranes and other construction equipment sit on the roadside as part of the project to widen and elevate the highway.

## Construction continues on I-95

**Chris Stiles**  
The Robesonian

LUMBERTON — Construction is continuing on Interstate 95 through much of its span in Robeson County, as the N.C. Department of Transportation and its contractors work to widen the highway throughout the work zone and also to elevate it through the City of Lumberton.

The project is divided into multiple sections: miles 13-21, through the city of Lumberton; miles 21-29, from the northern limits of Lumberton to just south of St. Pauls; and miles 29-37, from south of St. Pauls up to right around the Robeson County line.

The section of miles 13-21 in Lumberton is considered to be about 60% complete, according

to project engineer Joe Bailey; however, that figure includes design work, as it is a design-build contract, and the actual construction is about one-third complete, he said.

From miles 22-29, firm Flatiron Construction is about 50% complete by dollar value, according to Gabe Shoffner, resident engineer with NCDOT overseeing miles 22-37; Webber is about 70%

complete on its portion from miles 29-37.

In all three sections, the highway is being widened to eight lanes, with four going in each direction.

In the City of Lumberton, the highway is also being elevated, an effort to avoid the road flooding as it did during Hurricane Matthew in 2016 and Hurricane Florence in

See I-95 | 8A

**ServiceMaster Restore**  
Service Master by ERS Inc.  
Fire & Water Damage and Mold Restoration  
910-7333808 • 1-833-761-2030  
[www.servicemasterrestore.com](http://www.servicemasterrestore.com)

**TODAY'S FORECAST**  
High 91, Low 60 – Partly sunny and hot with the temperature approaching the record high of 92 set in 2006; caution advised if doing strenuous activities outside

**A NEWS**  
Obituaries: 2  
Editorial: 4  
Comics: 5  
Classifieds: 6, 7, 8

**B SPORTS**

**JOIN THE CONVERSATION**  
What's your take on today's news? Go to [robsonian.com](http://robsonian.com) and visit us on facebook to share your thoughts.

1 83176 00025 5

[f](https://www.facebook.com) [X](https://www.x.com) [i](https://www.instagram.com)



Contributed photo | Britt's Township Fire Department  
Firefighters work to contain a blaze at the Long Branch Mobile Home Park southeast of Lumberton on Sunday.

## Several homes damaged in mobile home park fire

Staff report

LUMBERTON — A fire at a mobile home park southeast of Lumberton resulted in seven homes being damaged and a barn burning to the ground.

No injuries, to civilians or firefighters, were reported.

The fire began on Sunday afternoon in the barn, located at the Long Branch Mobile Home

See FIRE | 9A

**Your Future is looking bright!**  
**Summer classes begin May 26th!**  
**Register now!** [www.robeson.edu](http://www.robeson.edu) **ROBESON COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

## EDITOR'S NOTE

No obituaries were received for this edition of The Robesonian. Find the latest obituaries as they are received at [robesonian.com](http://robesonian.com). Obituaries can be submitted to [robobits@cmpapers.com](mailto:robobits@cmpapers.com).

# Fairmont to host job fair

Victoria Sanderson  
The Robesonian

FAIRMONT — Mayor Charles Kemp said that at least 13 employers will be at the town's job fair on Wednesday during the JOBS team meeting on Monday.

The job fair will be held at the Fairmont Heritage Center on April 15, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and is open to all seeking a new career. Senior class students from Fairmont High School will also have an opportunity to take a bus to the fair.

Additionally, Town Manager Jerome Chestnut said the planned opening of "The Capitol of Fairmont" restaurant is being delayed due to a permit issue. The restaurant is still anticipated to open, but at the time of writing, a new grand opening date has not been decided.

There will also be a Contractor Seminar with the Lumbee Tribe at UNC Pembroke on April 24 from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Contact Victoria Sanderson at [vsanderson@robesonian.com](mailto:vsanderson@robesonian.com).

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

EDITOR'S NOTE: Send your Community Calendar items to Editor Chris Stiles at [cstiles@robesonian.com](mailto:cstiles@robesonian.com).

**Bunco Bash, 6 p.m., April 17:** The Lumberton Woman's Club is sponsoring a Bunco Bash, a fundraiser for the Rape Crisis Center of Robeson County. Purchase advance tickets only by emailing your request to [LumbertonWC@gmail.com](mailto:LumbertonWC@gmail.com). No experience needed to play, as instructions will be provided. Fantastic prizes provided for the winners! Drinks & Snacks are available for purchase. Tickets are \$10 each. The event is in the church's fellowship hall.

**Glow Run, 7 p.m., April 17:** The Robeson Road Runners invite you to a free event. The Glow Run is a 5K and a 1-mile fun run. Assemble at the pavilion by the Silo at Raymond B. Pennington Park @ 7:00 p.m. Enjoy!

**Cowboy Mounted Shooting, 9 a.m., April 17:** Details to be announced! The Cowboys and Cowgirls are competing at the Southeastern NC Agricultural Events Center.

**Art Class, 10 a.m. to 12 p.m., April 18:** In this guided workshop by Jill Vickers, A Guided Journey in Mindful Art, you'll create a small mindful art piece using watercolor washes, layered collage papers, and simple meditative drawings. Together, we'll explore gentle art techniques that allow color, texture, and meaningful materials to come together in a relaxed and reflective way. The cost of the class is \$45 with a maximum seating of 10, so register early. Visit the RAG website link for more details.

**Cruise In, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., April 18:** Jack Pait Strawberry Farm is hosting its First Annual Cruise In. Antique cars, maybe a tractor or two and free food. Check out this inaugural event. Enjoy the friendly and welcoming atmosphere at the farm.

**Rob Cole - Carter's Restaurant, 7 p.m., April 18:** Enjoy an evening of live music with Rob Cole. Munch some delicious food, relax and enjoy the evening. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. and the concert starts at 8:15 p.m. Carter's Restaurant is located at Pinecrest

Country Club.

**Soul Serenade, 7 p.m., April 18:** Take a choral journey through the 70's and 80's with Damion Murrill & Friends. Wear your best 70's and 80's outfit to the event. Space is limited, and pre-sale tickets are required as tickets will not be available at the door. For more information, call 910-317-0372. Tickets are \$30 each.

**Spring Fling, 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., April 18:** Spring is here at the Oasis, a Spring Fling event with vendors, food and lots of fun. Entry is \$10. The petting zoo is available during the Spring Fling, so book it in advance.

**Pickleball, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., April 19:** USA Pickleball presents the Lumberton Invitational Open. The event is being played at Meadow Road Park, 3924 Meadow Road, Lumberton, NC 28358. Follow instructions for registration by using the QR code on the above flyer, or contact Austin Babb, 910-670-6229, or email: [a\\_babb@msn.com](mailto:a_babb@msn.com).

**DIY & Unwind, 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., April 22:** The Robeson County Public Library is hosting an adult crafting event. Be creative and make a stamped tea towel. All supplies are provided; just show up and enjoy making the project. Call 910-738-4859 for more details.

**Always A Bridesmaid, 7 p.m., April 24:** SAVE THE DATES! April 24, 25, 26 and May 1, 2 and 3. Times of performances to be released soon! Purple Door Productions is presenting this hilarious comedic romp, in which four friends have sworn to keep the promise they made on the night of their Senior Prom: to be in each other's weddings ... no matter what. More than thirty years later, these Southern friends-for-life are still making "the long walk" for each other, determined to honor that vow. This is a laugh-out-loud comedy that will definitely entertain.

**Forever Motown, 7:30 p.m., April 24:** Forever Motown is a celebration of Motown's influence and impact on popular music, with a focus on the beloved songs and performances of art-

ists like The Four Tops, The Temptations, The Supremes, Smokey Robinson, Marvin Gaye, and more. The show will be at UNC Pembroke's Givens Performing Arts Center.

**Fall Family Fun Fly-in, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., April 25:** Remote control airplane hobbyists are invited to the Mt. Elim Remote Control Airplane and Boat Club, located at 13799 N.C. Hwy. 72 East in Lumberton, for their semi-annual Fall Family Fun Fly-in fundraiser. The event will feature local area pilots showcasing their flying skills, food and a raffle. For more information, contact Don Valentine at 910-887-5056 or [donpaul.val@gmail.com](mailto:donpaul.val@gmail.com).

**16th Annual Shortest Parade, 10 a.m., April 25:** Welcome once again to the shortest parade!

We will have our traditional, always exciting parade, unexpected surprises, BBQ plate fundraiser for the Patrick Pait Memorial Scholarship, local vendors, and farm animals to pet. Bring your family, bring your friends, and come out for a great way to make a memory! It's a unique and fun experience! The parade will be at Jack Pait's Strawberry Farm at 1561 Old Allenton Road in Lumberton.

**Friends of Main Street Presents Tonya Holy Elk, 3 p.m., May 3:** Tonya Holy Elk and her son, Lakoda John will share poetry and music on Sunday, May 3, at 3 p.m. at The Kinship NC, 304 North Elm Street, Lumberton. This is an event of Stories and Sounds Downtown, funded through the NC Arts Council Grassroots funds coming to the Robeson County Arts Council.

## ONGOING

**Children's Storytime — Lumberton, 10:30-11:00 a.m.** on Tuesdays and Fridays, Robeson County Public Library, 101 N. Chestnut St., Lumberton.

**Children's Storytime — Pembroke, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** on the third Wednesday of the month at the Pembroke Library, 413 Blaine St, Pembroke.

**Music, Rhymes, and Storytime, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** on the third Thursday of each month, Robeson County Public

Library, 101 N. Chestnut St., Lumberton.

**Children's Storytime — Red Springs, 10:30-11:30 a.m.** on the third Friday of each month at McMillan Memorial Library, Red Springs.

**Children's Storytime — Fairmont, 4:30-5:30 p.m.,** on the fourth Tuesday of each month, at the Hector MacLean Library, 106 S. Main St., Fairmont.

**Children's Storytime — St. Pauls, 10:30-11:30 a.m.,** on the fourth Wednesday at the Annie H McEachern Library, 223 W. Broad St, St Pauls.

**Farmers Market: Wednesdays, 3 p.m. to 6 p.m.:** On Wednesdays, the Robeson County Farmers Market features vegetables grown in Robeson County and neighboring counties. Local craft vendors are welcome additions to the market, and we encourage you to take the time to get to know them.

The market is open every Wednesday from 7 a.m. to noon and on Saturdays through November, or until vendors sell out.

**Music Jam Session:** Bring instruments and songs to The Barn at Risen Farms from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on the first Friday of each month to jam the night away. There might be a dance or two.

**Music, Rhymes and Storytime: 10:30-11:30 a.m.** on the first Thursday of each month at the Robeson County Public Library, 101 N. Chestnut St., Lumberton.

**Thursday Music Night at Your Pie:** Your Pie Pizza hosts live music every Thursday night.

**Flock Swap — Robeson Co. Farmers Market:** The Farmers Market will host a Flock Swap from a.m. to 5 p.m. every third Saturday of the month. The Swap will be held in the adjacent lot, next to Market Street and Water Street. For more information, don't hesitate to contact Marie at [robesoncofarmersmkt@gmail.com](mailto:robesoncofarmersmkt@gmail.com).

**Lumberton Horse and Tack Auction:** The Horse and Tack Auction is held on the first Monday night of each month. Mark your calendars for this recurring event. All events are held at the Southeastern NC Agricultural Events Center in Robeson County.

HAVE YOU CHECKED OUR CLASSIFIEDS?

Get the required dose of information you need to keep you informed by reading our newspaper weekly.



**Floyd Mortuary & Crematory, Inc.**  
809 EAST 5TH STREET,  
LUMBERTON, NORTH CAROLINA  
(910) 738-8144 | [www.floydmortuary.net](http://www.floydmortuary.net)

## THE ROBESONIAN

Champion Media  
(USPS 467-40)

910-739-4322

Publishes every Wednesday and Saturday  
eEdition and in print.

If you have a newspaper delivery concern  
please call weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Prices are subject to change at any time.

### CONTACT US

**REGIONAL PUBLISHER:**  
Denise Ward  
910-416-5867  
[dward@robesonian.com](mailto:dward@robesonian.com)

**EDITOR:**  
Chris Stiles  
910-416-5847  
[cstiles@robesonian.com](mailto:cstiles@robesonian.com)

**ADVERTISING:**  
Denise Ward  
[dward@robesonian.com](mailto:dward@robesonian.com)

**CIRCULATION:**  
Marty Deaver  
910-416-5447  
[mdeaver@robesonian.com](mailto:mdeaver@robesonian.com)

Caroline Arrington  
[carrington@robesonian.com](mailto:carrington@robesonian.com)

**CLASSIFIEDS/LEGALS**  
Linda Currie  
910-739-4322  
[lcurrie@robesonian.com](mailto:lcurrie@robesonian.com)

Dee Dee Prevatte  
[dprevatte@bladenjournal.com](mailto:dprevatte@bladenjournal.com)

**OPERATIONS DIRECTOR:**  
Mike Skipper

2175 N Roberts Ave., Lumberton, NC 28358  
Periodical postage paid at Lumberton, NC

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to  
The Robesonian, 2175 N. Roberts Ave., Lumberton, NC 28358-1028

## Woman sentenced in fraudulent COVID loan scheme

Staff report

NEW BERN — A federal judge sentenced Erica McMillan, a Robeson County woman, to 10 months in prison, followed by three years of supervised release for her role in submitting a false application to the Small Business Administration's to receive an Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

On April 7, the Department of Justice announced the creation of the National Fraud Enforcement Division. The core mission of the

Fraud Division is to zealously investigate and prosecute those who steal or fraudulently misuse taxpayer dollars.

"We are proud to prosecute this case as a part of the president's Task Force to Eliminate Fraud," said U.S. Attorney Ellis Boyle. "This office will continue to hold accountable anyone who defrauds any of our taxpayer funded programs. This Covid fraudster has learned the lesson — Cheaters. Never. Win."

Inmate McMillan submitted a fraudulent



McMillan

EIDL loan application for a fictitious business located in Robeson County. To obtain the \$150,000 loan, McMillan made false representations concerning

the number of employees and gross revenues of the business. She also submitted false and fraudulent tax forms and bank statements. Following approval of the loan application, funds were disbursed into a personal account controlled by Inmate McMillan.

McMillan's case is part of a broader investigation into a scheme to

defraud the Small Business Administration's EIDL and Paycheck Protection Programs. That scheme resulted in the disbursement of \$542,288 in fraudulent COVID loan proceeds. Former Robeson County Sheriff's Office deputy Ricky McMillan, 50, his wife Erica McMillan, 46, and their two sons, Dwayne McMillan, 29, and Derian McMillan, 27, have all been convicted in the scheme.

W. Ellis Boyle, U.S. Attorney for the Eastern District of North Carolina, made the announcement after U.S. District Judge Louise W. Flanagan sentenced McMillan to prison. The FBI and IRS-CI investigated the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Ethan Ontjes prosecuted the case.

Ricky McMillan served nearly 22 years with the Robeson County Sheriff's Office, from Dec. 2003 until his retirement on Sept. 1, 2025. He was a sergeant and worked as the head security for the Robeson County Department of Social Services, RSCO says.

**Jesus Loves You**

**Enchanted Florist & Gifts**

611 Union Chapel Rd  
Pembroke

Owner: In-House Designer  
Canadee Marie Yanick

910-521-0907  
910-316-0851

Open Monday-Sunday  
Flowers For All Occasions

**We care like family!**

We offer quality short-term and long-term care.

**GlenFlora**

Private Baths  
Homelike Atmosphere

- Assisted Living
- Skilled Care
- Rehabilitation
- Physical Therapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Therapy

5701 Fayetteville Road, Lumberton NC 28360  
910-739-2821

# 'Destination UNCP' event connects students, families with campus resources

**Mark Locklear**  
For The Robesonian

PEMBROKE — The University of North Carolina Pembroke is inviting prospective students, current students and their families to campus for Destination UNCP.

Destination UNCP is a special event designed to connect attendees with campus resources while enjoying a night of Braves baseball. The event will take place on Friday, April 24, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Sammy Cox Field and is coordinated by the Office of Financial Aid & Scholarships.

As part of the experience, attendees will receive free admission to the UNCP Braves baseball game against the Barton Bulldogs at 6 p.m. Destination UNCP offers a unique opportunity for students and families to explore the university in an engaging, relaxed setting.

Representatives from key campus departments will be on-site to answer questions and provide valuable information about the college experience.

Participating departments include:

- Undergraduate Admissions
- Financial Aid & Scholarships
- Student Orientation
- Center for Student Success
- Academic and Military Outreach
- Office of Global Engagement
- Career Center

Whether students are just beginning their college search or preparing to enroll, the event provides access to important resources, guidance and support in one convenient location.

"Destination UNCP is a great opportunity for students and families to connect directly with the people and resources that will support their success," said Joshua Oxendine, assistant director for Financial Aid & Scholarships. "We're excited to welcome the community to campus for an evening that combines helpful information with the fun and energy of a Braves baseball game."

Admission to both the event and the game is free and open to the public.

For more information, contact Joshua Oxendine at 910-521-6613.

Mark Locklear is a public communications specialist with UNC Pembroke communications & marketing. Reach him by email at mark.locklear@uncp.edu.

## FROM THE LEGISLATURE

# Rouzer lauds tax relief as filing deadline hits

WASHINGTON — As the deadline to file income taxes looms on Wednesday, U.S. Rep. David Rouzer (R-NC7), whose district includes some northern and eastern areas of Robeson County, touted the tax relief for Americans that was included in legislation passed last year in a newsletter to his constituents on Monday.



Rouzer

The newsletter reads:

"Republicans in Congress delivered by passing legislation, leading to bigger paychecks and historic tax savings. This past July, I proudly supported the Working Families Tax Cuts Act, also known as the One Big Beautiful Bill. These tax cuts help you keep more of your hard-earned income, support families, and provide greater financial security at every stage of life.

"These changes provide meaningful relief where it matters most — for you and your family. Read more about how these changes may impact you below or visit the IRS website.

"For families, the standard deduction for married couples filing jointly has been raised to an unprecedented \$31,500, which means simpler filing and real savings.

"No tax on tips and overtime mean more of your hard-earned money

stays where it belongs — with you. Whether you're picking up extra hours or earning tips through great service, you deserve to keep every dollar you earn.

"Supporting families remains our top priority, and we've taken meaningful steps to ease

the burden of childcare costs. Our childcare tax relief provides an annual tax credit to help make quality care more affordable and accessible for families.

"For seniors, the standard deduction has been raised to \$6,000 — helping those on fixed incomes keep more of what they've earned over a lifetime of work.

"The Working Families Tax Cuts Act builds on the successes of past tax reform and makes these benefits permanent for you and your family, because you know how to spend your money better than Washington does.

"It's your money and with the help of the Working Families Tax Cuts Act you can keep more of what you have earned. This way you can save and invest more to build a stronger future for you and your family."

Items for the "From The Legislature" column come from press material submitted by local, state and federal elected officials.

# Southeastern Integrated Care, Trillium opening first behavioral health urgent care facility in Lumberton

Facility will serve adults and children, regardless of insurance, seven days a week

Staff report

LUMBERTON — Southeastern Integrated Care (SEIC) and Trillium Health Resources have announced the opening of the first behavioral health urgent care facility (or BHUC) for adult and children in Robeson County. The facility will serve people regardless of county of residence or payer, and will be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

NCDHHS provided \$2.2 million in funding for the facility as part of a historic mental health investment from the North Carolina General Assembly. This is the eighth of a planned 13 new or expanded

BHUCs to open as a result of this investment. SEIC will operate the facility, employing staff capable of providing urgent behavioral health care in compliance with the service definition and state regulations. Staff are trained in urgent care protocols, mental health assessments, and patient management.

SEIC has already served their region for years, offering primary care, medication monitoring, and more. Their local connections allow them to work with local emergency services and healthcare providers to ensure seamless integration and coordination of care.

The BHUC will also serve individuals presenting with any diagnoses, including mental health, intellectual/developmental disabilities, substance use disorder or traumatic brain injury.

"Southeastern Integrated Care is honored to join forces with Trillium Health Resources to deliver a vital behavioral health urgent care center to Robeson County. This partnership embodies our commitment to partnering for life with our community members, ensuring the best possible environment for managing behavioral health crises and supporting the well-being of our members in Robeson and surrounding counties," shared Nanci Brewington Agostinelli, CEO at SEIC. "We are excited to have NCDHHS leaders as well as Lumbee



The Robesonian file photo

Southeastern Integrated Care will open a mental health urgent care facility at this location on Farmbrook Drive in Lumberton.

Tribal leadership represented in this project as well, showing commitment to supporting this critical access to mental health services in our communities."

Trillium and SEIC will host a ribbon cutting at 12 p.m. Friday at Southeastern Integrated Family Medicine at 105 Farmbrook Drive in Lumberton.

# Ex-Army contractor, accused of leaking classified information, to be released to home detention

**Gary D. Robertson**  
Associated Press

RALEIGH — An Army veteran accused of revealing classified information about an elite commando unit — members' names, tactics and a unit alias among them — to a journalist and on social media will be released awaiting a possible trial, a judge ruled Monday.

Courtney Williams, 40, who is charged with four counts of communicating and disclosing national defense information about a "special military unit" at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, after working for it as a civilian, appeared in federal court in Raleigh.

U.S. Magistrate Judge Brian Meyers agreed to release Williams, who was arrested last week and wore a striped jumpsuit in court, under home detention and location monitoring. She's barred from having contact with the media or using social media, Meyers said.

Williams attorney, Christian Dysart, declined to comment after the hearing, which came more than a week after a criminal complaint was filed in her case.

The complaint was unsealed last week on the same day a grand jury indicted Williams and the U.S. Justice Department announced her arrest. An FBI official said then her alleged disclosures put "our nation, our warfighters, and our allies at risk." Each count is punishable by up to 10 years in prison, the government says, along with monetary penalties.

Court documents say Williams, who was hired as a defense contractor in 2010 and became a Department of Defense employee months later, worked for a "special military unit" at Fort Bragg until 2016 and held a top-secret security clearance.

Although the reporter and unit are not named in the court filings, dates and details match an article and book about

the Army's secretive Delta Force written by Seth Harp.

Williams, who lives about 35 miles (56 kilometers) from Fort Bragg, was the focus of a 2025 Politico article with the headline: "My Life Became a Living Hell: One Woman's Career in Delta Force, the

Army's Most Elite Unit." The article, which describes Williams as serving previously in the Army as an interrogator and Arabic linguist, coincided with the release of Harp's book, "The Fort Bragg Cartel," which alleges sexual harassment and discrimination.

**Dog Has Styl Pet Salon**  
Paula Lewis  
(910) 740-7857  
Brandy Church  
(321) 320-2081

Luxury Shampoo, Conditioner & Cologne Available  
Large Selection Of Pet Safe Vegan Colors

Accepting New Clients  
208 South Main Street  
Fairmont, NC 28340

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK

**SECURE YOUR HOME & BUSINESS**

- Camera Systems
- Security Systems
- Access Control Systems
- Monitored Smoke & CO Detectors
- UL Fire Protection Systems
- Keyless Door Locks
- and more for your peace of mind

**Holmes Security Systems** LOCAL & FAMILY OWNED SINCE 1908

We have the only UL-listed, 5-diamond central monitoring station in Eastern NC. Our team is here for you 24/7/365 with exceptional service.

**LET OUR FAMILY FEED YOUR FAMILY!**

**Pier 41 SEAFOOD**

Providing Exceptional Seafood & Service in Our Hometown

2401 East Elizabethtown Road  
Lumberton, NC  
**910-738-8555**  
Mon-Tues: Closed  
Wed-Sat: 11am - 9pm • Sun: 11am - 8pm

www.pier41seafood.com "God has truly blessed our business to Him we give all the glory"

**FREE**  
3ct lab grown Center stone  
with purchase of any Fana semi-mount purchase.

limited time!

**FANA | Bob's Jewel Shop**  
Where quality has made the difference since 1884

\*See store for details.

# Editorial

4A Wednesday, April 15, 2026

The Robesonian

## OPINION SHAPER

### Yes, boldly go

So much for journalistic objectivity. The BBC science editor covering the launch of Artemis II couldn't contain her enthusiasm when the first plumes of smoke spread out from the launch pad. "Oh, my goodness! Oh, my goodness!" she exclaimed, clapping like a schoolgirl. As the rocket lifted off, she got visibly emotional: "It's not just what you see and you hear as the rocket lifts off. You can feel the force of it through your body. This is the most powerful rocket that NASA has ever built!"

Rebecca Morelle can be forgiven for falling in love with the subject of her story. A rocket launch is an awe-inspiring event — a controlled explosion hurling a gigantic projectile into the ether. There's the sheer power, the unavoidable risk, the questing spirit. A rocket feels and looks like the future, and there's something very human about gazing into the sky in wonder. NASA hasn't been glamorous in decades. Once upon a time, kids were putting up glossy photos of Apollo rockets and astronauts on their bedroom walls. But the Apollo program was killed long ago — civil-rights activists were among those mobilizing against it, oddly enough — and nothing has captured the imagination the same way since.

The space shuttle made space flight routine and boring, and there was nothing particularly ambitious about the International Space Station. Rovers and telescopes were worthy endeavors, but not thrilling. There is no substitute for manned space flight. The Artemis project is not exactly boldly going where no man has gone before, since it seeks to return to the moon after we were there half a century ago. But sending astronauts 250,000 miles from Earth as part of a project to eventually set up a base on the moon is the most enterprising NASA project since Apollo.

This is all to the good, but Artemis has been plagued by delays and cost overruns. NASA hasn't been able to replicate the urgent, mission-driven approach that characterized the Apollo program. It took eight years to get to the moon the first time, while Artemis has been going for nine years and we still aren't back.

NASA projects tend to get caught in a cycle: One president proposes a big new initiative, only for it to get canceled by his successor, who proposes his own initiative that is canceled in turn. The worst case scenario is that a Democratic president elected in 2028 nixes Artemis because President Trump favored it.

That said, the space expert Robert Zubrin notes that space is particularly appealing to Americans as a people defined, in part, by the frontier. JFK talked of "the New Frontier," and the famous open of the TV show "Star Trek" called space "the final frontier."

Certainly, the American space program is a marked contrast with that of the Europeans, the European Space Agency. NASA's budget is several times larger. We've sent men to the moon, whereas they haven't. And we've sent multiple successful landers and rovers to Mars (the first lander in 1976, the first rover in 1997), whereas the ESA has only managed two unsuccessful landers.

Getting back to the moon is nice, but it is a manned mission to Mars that should be our ultimate objective. It would truly be another giant leap for mankind, opening up a vista of homo sapiens as a multi-planetary species. The technological challenge would be significant, requiring Apollo-like exertions, while there's much of scientific importance to be learned on the Red Planet.

Right now, the most popular movie in America is "Project Hail Mary," a sci-fi thriller about a desperate mission into space. The film plays to our inherent interest in journeys into the unknown, and to our admiration for those who have the courage to explore new worlds, from Francis Drake to Neil Armstrong.

Artemis II tapped into the same thing, which is why that BBC reporter — and so many of the rest of us — were so moved.

Rich Lowry is editor of the National Review.

## LETTERS POLICY

The Robesonian welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be about issues of general interest, brief and to the point. We reserve the right to refuse letters longer than 400 words; poetry; letters that are in bad taste or libelous; and letters from outside our readership. Letters may be edited, but content will not be altered.

Letters should be original. They must be signed. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Street addresses and phone numbers will not be published. A photograph of the writer will be used if provided.

Send letters to: The Robesonian, P.O. Box 1028, Lumberton, NC 28359, or fax them to (910) 739-6553. Letters can be sent via email to [cstiles@robsonian.com](mailto:cstiles@robsonian.com).



## CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS

### PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF ROBESON COUNTY

John Simmons, Dist. 1, [john.simmons@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:john.simmons@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Melissa Ocean, Vice Chairman, Dist. 2, [melissa.ocean@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:melissa.ocean@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Linda Emanuel, Dist. 3, [linda.emanuel@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:linda.emanuel@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Terry Locklear, Dist. 4, [terry.locklear2@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:terry.locklear2@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Craig Lowry, Dist. 5, [craig.lowry2@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:craig.lowry2@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Crystal Weindel Monroe, Dist. 6, [crystal.monroe@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:crystal.monroe@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Bradley Phillips, Dist. 7, [bradley.phillips@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:bradley.phillips@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Tre' Britt, Chairman, Dist. 8, [tre.britt@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:tre.britt@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Kristy Fields, At-Large, [kristy.fields@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:kristy.fields@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Vonta Leach, At-Large, [vonta.leach@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:vonta.leach@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
Henry Brewer, At-Large, [henry.brewer@robeson.k12.nc.us](mailto:henry.brewer@robeson.k12.nc.us)  
**LUMBERTON CITY**

### COUNCIL, 910-272-1346

Bruce Davis, Mayor, [bdavis@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:bdavis@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Leroy Rising, Precinct 1, [lrising@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:lrising@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Melissa Robinson, Precinct 2, [mrobinson@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:mrobinson@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
John Carroll, Mayor Pro Tem, Precinct 3, [jcarroll@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:jcarroll@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Karen Higley, Precinct 4, [khigley@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:khigley@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
John Cantey Jr., Precinct 5, [jcantey@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:jcantey@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Alfred Douglas, Precinct 6, [alfred.douglas@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:alfred.douglas@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Eric Chavis, Precinct 7, [echavis@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:echavis@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
Owen Thomas, Precinct 8, [othomas@ci.lumberton.nc.us](mailto:othomas@ci.lumberton.nc.us)  
**ROBESON COUNTY**  
Wixie Stephens, Dist. 1, [wixie.stephens@robeson.nc.us](mailto:wixie.stephens@robeson.nc.us)  
Pauline Campbell, Dist. 2, [pauline.campbell@co.robeson.nc.us](mailto:pauline.campbell@co.robeson.nc.us)  
John Cummings, Dist. 3, [john.cummings@co.robeson.nc.us](mailto:john.cummings@co.robeson.nc.us)

Faline Locklear Dial, Vice Chairman, Dist. 4, [falinedial907@gmail.com](mailto:falinedial907@gmail.com)  
Judy Sampson, Dist. 5, [judy5rcc@gmail.com](mailto:judy5rcc@gmail.com)  
David Edge, Chairman, Dist. 6, [dedge53@yahoo.com](mailto:dedge53@yahoo.com)  
Tom Taylor, Dist. 7, [district7@co.robeson.nc.us](mailto:district7@co.robeson.nc.us)  
Lance Herndon, Dist. 8, [lance.herndon@co.robeson.nc.us](mailto:lance.herndon@co.robeson.nc.us)  
**NORTH CAROLINA (State Offices)**  
Sen. Danny Earl Britt Jr., R-Dist. 24 (Hoke, Robeson, Scotland), 300 N. Salisbury St., Room 525, Raleigh, NC 27603, [919-733-5651](mailto:919-733-5651)  
Rep. John Lowery, R-Dist. 47 (Robeson), 300 N. Salisbury Street, 306B2, Raleigh, NC 27603-5925, [919-715-0875](mailto:919-715-0875), [John.Lowery@ncleg.gov](mailto:John.Lowery@ncleg.gov)  
Rep. Brenden H. Jones, R-Dist. 46 (Robeson, Columbus), 16 W. Jones St., Room 1227, Raleigh, NC 27601-1096, [919-733-5821](mailto:919-733-5821) or [919-733-5821](mailto:919-733-5821)  
**UNITED STATES (Federal Offices)**

U.S. Sen. Thom Tillis, R-N.C., 310 New Bern Ave. Suite 122, Raleigh, NC 27601, [919-856-4630](mailto:919-856-4630), or 113 Dirksen Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510, [202-224-6342](tel:202-224-6342)  
U.S. Sen. Ted Budd, R-N.C., B85 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510, [\(202\) 224-3154](tel:(202) 224-3154)  
U.S. Rep. Mark Harris, R-N.C., 8th Dist., 126 Cannon House Office Building, [202-225-1976](tel:202-225-1976)  
U.S. Rep. David Rouzer, R-N.C., 7th Dist., 2333 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515, [202-225-2731](tel:202-225-2731)  
U.S. Pres. Donald Trump, Comments: [202-456-1111](tel:202-456-1111), Switchboard: [202-456-1414](tel:202-456-1414); Leave a written message: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/>. Mailing address: The White House, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20500.  
U.S. Capitol Switchboard, [202-224-3121](tel:202-224-3121).  
White House Switchboard, [202-456-1414](tel:202-456-1414).

## HIS VIEW

### State isn't prepared for bad times

RALEIGH — Is there an immediate prospect of resolving the budget stand-off between the North Carolina Senate and House? I hear conflicting signals.

When fiscal analysts for the governor and legislature recently updated their consensus revenue forecast, both sides claimed vindication. Senate leaders pointed to higher-than-expected General Fund collections in this fiscal year (plus-\$370 million) and 2026-27 (plus-\$951 million). As the economy continues to expand, they argue, state government can deliver its core services while continuing a rapid reduction in income-tax rates.

House leaders pointed to the same numbers but observed that General Fund collections are still projected to decline in 2026-27 (by \$359 million) and that nearly all the above-baseline revenue will be immediately consumed by higher Medicaid spending. Let's keep reducing the personal-income tax, they argue, but at a slower pace to leave fiscal room for other fiscal priorities.

While state government is not operating without a budget — the law allows ongoing expenditures based on the last enacted budget — there are many compelling reasons for state

lawmakers to strike a deal. This dispute is not, at its root, a sharply ideological one. The Senate still wants to maintain public assets and raise salaries for correction officers, teachers and other public employees. The House still wants to strengthen our state's competitive position and let North Carolinians keep more of what they earn.

I am told that talks continue. I hope they prove fruitful. And I hope that the final deal takes another factor into consideration: the incalculable uncertainty of our present moment.

No one can say for sure when traffic through the Strait of Hormuz will return to normal. No one can reliably forecast what the Trump administration's tariff policies will be in a year, a month or even a week, or when it will refund some \$160 billion in illegally imposed import taxes. No one has a firm handle on the short-term employment effects of artificial intelligence.

If the national economy were to falter, for whatever reason, North Carolina wouldn't follow its own path. Our economy would stumble, too. Households

and businesses would suffer. So would public revenues, while demands for public spending would intensify.

Although it may seem that state government is a strong position to ride out such a storm, given the billions of dollars stashed in North Carolina's rainy-day fund and other reserves, that's not what the latest data from the National Association of State Budget Officers

show. When analysts from the Pew Charitable Trusts compared the overall fiscal position of all 50 states — representing not just formal rainy-day funds but other savings and the unreserved credit balance in each state's equivalent of a General Fund — they found that North Carolina had about 53 days worth of state spending in the bank.

That is well below the national median of 92 days. Among our immediate neighbors, only Virginia is in a weaker position, at 48 days. Tennessee (72 days), Georgia (147 days), and South Carolina (174 days) are much better prepared, as are Pennsylvania (79), Florida (125), Texas (129), and even the likes of California (84) and New York

(198).

The Carolina Comeback that began 15 years ago is a product of political courage and fiscal discipline. The conservatives now leading the North Carolina General Assembly continue to exhibit courage, across a range of issues. Now is the time to deploy it in the service of fiscal discipline.

Dozens of powerful interest groups lobby constantly for state expenditures. And taxpayers, understandably, want to spend their own money on their families, communities, and other priorities instead of surrendering it to government. There is, however, no extensive political constituency in favor of state savings — despite the fact that, should another natural or economic disaster strike, we'd all be immensely thankful for 90-to-120 days worth of state spending squirreled away for just such an eventuality.

Fiscal restraint is what has made it possible to reform and reduce taxes while preserving core state functions. Restraint, in turn, requires fortitude.

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).



**John Hood**  
Contributing columnist

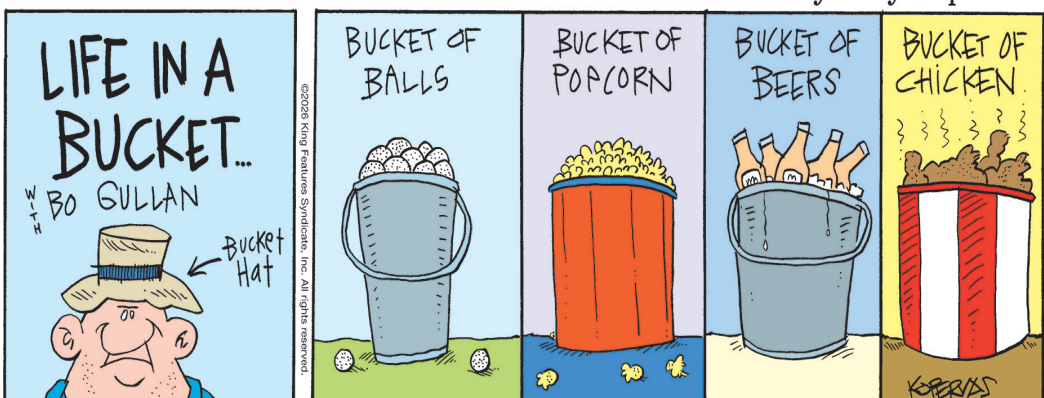
# Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



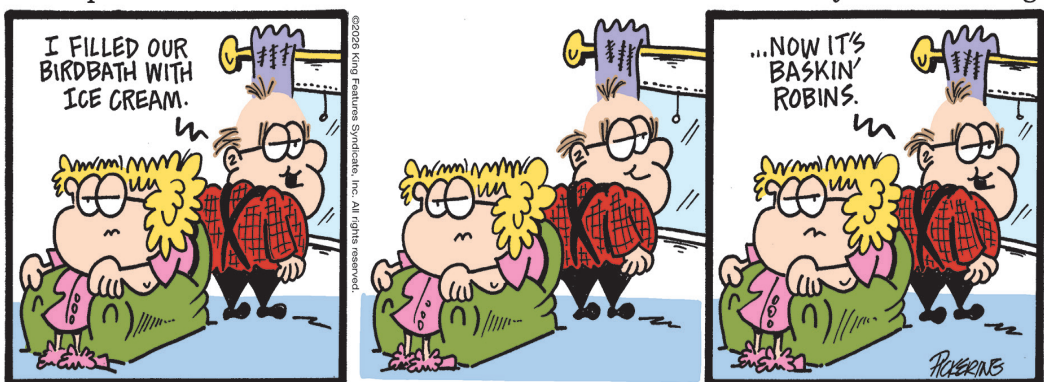
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



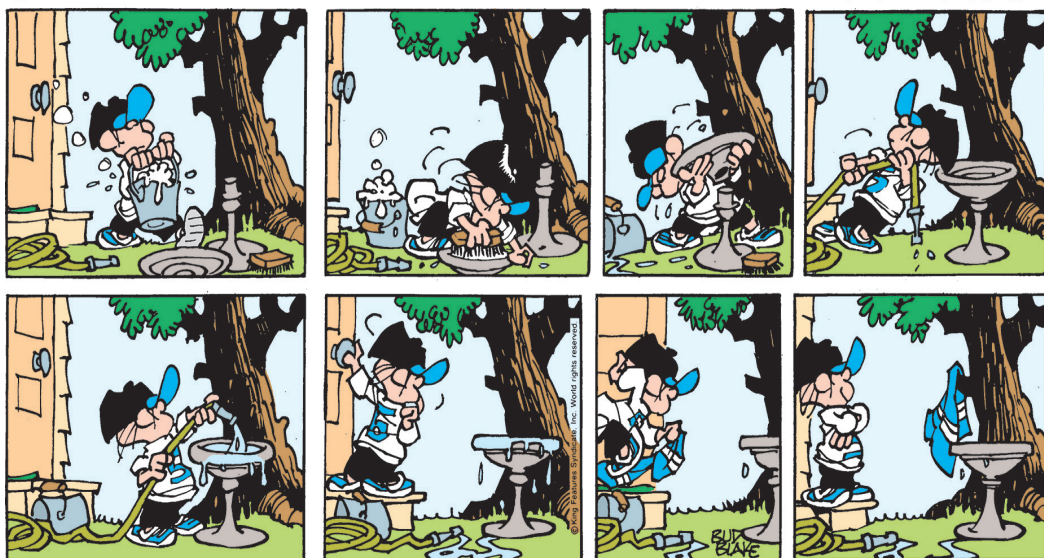
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



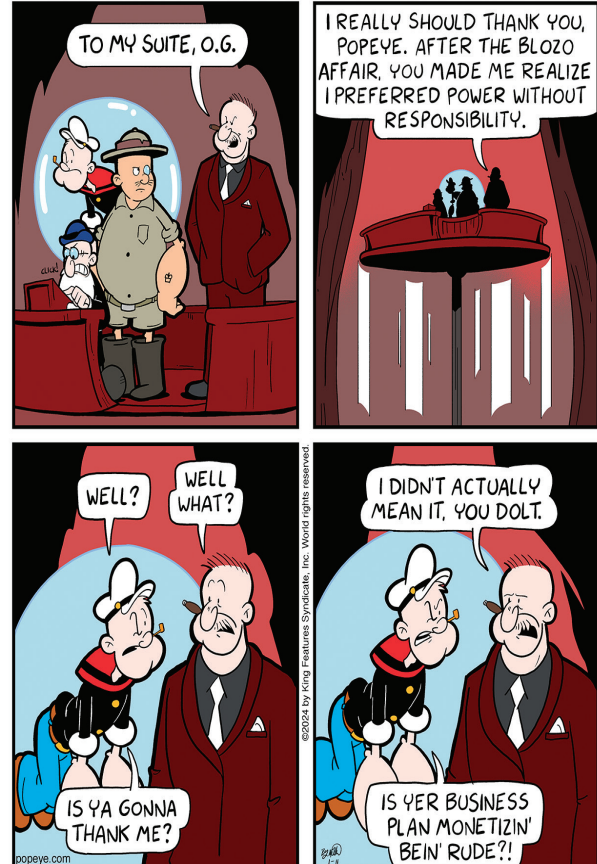
# TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



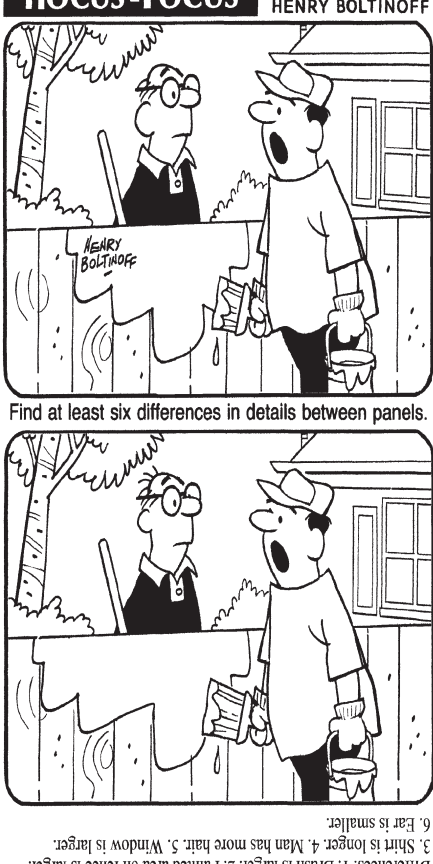
OLIVE & POPEYE

By Randy Milholland



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTIHOFF



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



## CryptoQuip

This is a simple substitution cipher in which each letter used stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Solution is accomplished by trial and error.

Clue: Y equals S

MOX MT TVFX EMCVXY MT  
JZXHI HGZH PZOR HRSXY  
LMWDC GZFX DXZIOXC ZEMWH  
ER JZHLGVON "YXYZPX YHIXXH":  
DZSX XIOVX.

©2026 King Features Synd., Inc.



## SCRAMBLERS

Unscramble the letters within each rectangle to form four ordinary words. Then rearrange the boxed letters to form the mystery word, which will complete the gag!

Mug

Flat

Grand

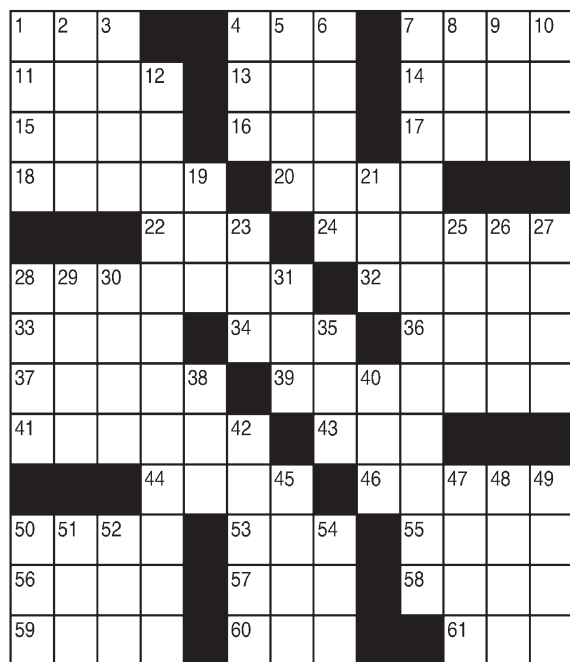
Bubble

**TODAY'S WORD**

# King Crossword

## ACROSS

- 1 Soak (up)
- 4 "Nova" channel
- 7 South Pacific nation
- 11 Grouch
- 13 Ump's call
- 14 Tehran's country
- 15 Rights org.
- 16 Peyton's brother
- 17 Dweeb
- 18 Spars
- 20 Boast
- 22 Prom outfit
- 24 TV detective Remington
- 28 Shirt parts
- 32 Flynn of film
- 33 Frankfurt fellow
- 34 Cleaning cloth
- 36 Fine cotton
- 37 "Shake —" (Taylor Swift hit)
- 39 "Be serious!"
- 41 More of a snoop
- 43 Hosp. scan
- 44 Inert gas
- 46 Accord
- 50 Pizzazz
- 53 Bro, maybe
- 55 Half a sextet
- 56 Actress Falco
- 57 — tizzy (worked up)



- 58 Lingerie fabric
- 59 Beloved
- 60 A gazillion
- 61 Park — -joon of "The Marvels"
- 9 Pickle holder
- 10 Hoosier st.
- 12 Crunchy candy bar
- 19 Minivan alternative
- 21 Consumed
- 23 Gen- — (baby boomer's kid)
- 25 One of HOMES
- 26 — Linda, Calif.
- 27 Mideast airline
- 28 Tibia's place
- 29 Jared of "Panic Room"
- 30 Cupid's alias
- 31 Droop
- 35 Tiara jewel
- 38 Service charge
- 40 Capote nickname
- 42 Wartime riveter
- 45 Boy, in Barcelona
- 47 Showy flower
- 48 Scrabble piece
- 49 Singer Ono
- 50 Last letter in London
- 51 Chemical suffix
- 52 Actress Long
- 54 Prohibit

## DOWN

- 1 Con job
- 2 Killer whale
- 3 Buddies
- 4 "The Raven" writer
- 5 Future tulip
- 6 Mixes up
- 7 Crime-solving aids
- 8 Rage

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

## Weekly SUDOKU

		9	3	4	8	1	7	
3		1		9		4		
8	7		1					3
					8			
4	2			3		5	9	
	9	8	5	2	4			6
			1	2		3	4	
4		6		9			8	
3		4	8		6		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!

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

## ? Trivia test

by Fifi Rodriguez

1. GEOGRAPHY: Which country is also known to residents as Hellas?
2. U.S. STATES: Which state is the least populated?
3. ENTERTAINERS: Which show launched the career of comedian/actor Jim Carrey?
4. MOVIES: What museum is featured in the movie "Night at the Museum"?
5. HISTORY: When was Earth Day first celebrated?
6. MUSIC: Which song begins with the lines, "Is this the real life? Is this just fantasy"?
7. TELEVISION: Who starred in the title role of the TV drama "Designated Survivor"?
8. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What is the only sport that has been played on the moon?
9. LITERATURE: What is the name of the language used in the novel "1984"?
10. ANIMAL KINGDOM: What is a group of giraffes called?

© 2026 King Features Synd., Inc.

## FiveSpot™

Fairy tale

C	H	I	L	D

Lowest cost movie ticket

Roadside excavation

Bronze metal winner

Top

Not quite there

Building floor

Solve each row by replacing one letter from the answer above or below and scrambling to make a new word. When complete, the top and bottom words will have no letters in common.

FiveSpot is a trademark of Michael McLinden  
See more at [www.sproutsuzzle.com](http://www.sproutsuzzle.com)

02635

## GOLDEN

Today's Word

1. Teacup; 2. Prone solution
3. Large; 4. Dome

## SCRAMBLERS

S	T	O	R	Y
S	H	O	R	T
S	H	I	R	T
T	H	I	R	D
D	I	T	C	H
C	H	I	L	D

Solution

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

Answer

## King Crossword — Answers

Solution time: 22 mins.

S	O	P	P	B	S	F	I	J	I		
A	C	L	U	E	L	I	N	E	R	D	
C	R	A	B	O	U	T	I	R	A	N	
D	E	A	R	E	A	R	E	O	N	S	E
Z	I	N	G	S	I	B	T	R	I	O	
E	D	I	E	I	N	A	S	I	L	K	
S	E	O	N	E	O	N	S	E	O		

## CryptoQuip

One of five bodies of water that many lakes could have learned about by watching "Sesame Street":  
Lake Erie.

Answers

1. Crece
2. Wyoming
3. "In Living Color"
4. The American Museum of Natural History in New York City
5. April 22, 1970
6. "Bohemian Rhapsody" by Queen
7. Kiefer Sutherland
8. Golf
9. Newpeak
10. A tower

# CLASSIFIEDS

**LEGALS**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

The Robeson County Board of Commissioners will hold a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. on Monday, April 20, 2026 in the County Administration Center, 550 North Chestnut Street, in the City of Lumberton, North Carolina. The purpose of this hearing is to consider the following requests:

Case # 2026 – 963369 – Elliot's Auto Sales, Orrum Twp. District 7. Consideration of a Special Use Permit to allow for the establishment of a Used Car Lot in a Residential Agricultural District (R-A) on 2.65 +/- acre tract more or less, located on 223 Byrd Road; Submitted by Elliott's Auto Sales (Applicant); Ashley McCumbee & Hsb. Michael McCumbee (Owner); Tax Parcel # 1208-01-01302.

Case # 2026 – 963087 – Autry Grading Inc, Parkton Twp. District 8. Consideration of an Amendment to an existing Special Use Permit, Deed BK: 2187 PG: 561, to allow for the expansion of an existing mining pit in a Residential Agricultural District (R-A) on a combined 58.62 +/- acre tract more or less, located on 1830 Davis Bridge Rd; Submitted by Autry Grading Inc (Applicant/Owner); Tax Parcel # 1301-01-003, 1302-01-00214.

A copy of this request is available for review at the office of the Clerk to the Board of Commissioners, at 550 North Chestnut Street, City of Lumberton, North Carolina.

THIS the 1st day of April, 2026.

TAMMY S. FREEMAN, CLERK ROBESON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

4/8 4/15 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.**

**HEIRS OF FRED ROBERTS (DECEASED 05.09.1976) AND LUCILLE ROBERTS, AND HEIRS OF FRED ROBERTS, JR. (DECEASED 06.08.2019), HEIRS OF CLARA ROBERTS CULMER (DECEASED 12.29.2013), HAYWOOD ROBERTS, PATRICIA A. ROBERTS, MARIA GANTT, FRED ROBERTS, III AND FRED SPOUSES, IF ANY, AND IF they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventre sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.**

**NOTICE**  
Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to: **HEIRS OF FRED AND LUCILLE ROBERTS;** that a judgment of foreclosure will be docketed against the property described below on or after May 4, 2026.

**PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**  
**PARCEL #370603013, PART OF LOTS 1 & 2 OF BLOCK CC, MAP #1 @ 75. CORNER OF HICKORY AND MCCORMICK.** Execution will be issued on the judgment, and the real property will be sold as provided by law. The tax lien, including interests and costs, may be paid before the judgment is docketed and at any time thereafter as allowed by law.

**Robert Conner Robeson County Tax Administrator**

4/8 4/15 2026

**online**

**mobile**

**in print**

**YOUR LOCAL NEWS. YOUR WAY.**  
To find out more, call or go online and subscribe today!

**LEGALS**

**NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION**

**IN RE: KHAIZA CUMMINGS, JUVENILE**

**TO: UNKNOWN FATHER**

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of the relief sought is as follows:

For the Court to determine if the juvenile is neglected as defined by N.C.G.S. 7B-101 (15).

You will further take notice that the undersigned will appear before the Juvenile Court of Robeson County forty (40) days or more after this first date to such pleadings by said time, upon your failure to do so, the undersigned will apply to the Court for the relief sought.

If you are indigent, you are entitled to court appoint counsel. You may contact the Robeson County Clerk of District Court, Juvenile Division and request counsel.

This the 23rd day of March, 2026

Jose A. Coker  
N.C. Bar No. 28478  
The Charleston Group  
Attorneys for Robeson County Department of Social Services  
Post Office Box 1762  
Fayetteville, NC 28302-1762  
Telephone No.: (910) 485-2500  
Telecopier No.: (910) 485-2599

4/1 4/8 4/15 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.**

**HEIRS OF MILDRED DENT (DECEASED: 02.19.2006) AND HEIRS OF LORA ANN MCINNIS (DECEASED: 01.27.2026) AND, TOWN OF ROWLAND, NORTH CAROLINA, LIENHOLDER, ) AND )**

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventre sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to: **HEIRS OF MILDRED DENT (DECEASED: 02.19.2006) AND HEIRS OF LORA ANN MCINNIS (DECEASED: 01.27.2026) AND THE TOWN OF ROWLAND, NORTH CAROLINA, LIENHOLDER, AND**

If they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventre sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; 2026.

That a judgment of foreclosure will be docketed against the property described below on or after May 22, **PROPERTY DESCRIPTION**  
**PARCEL #370401049**  
Lot 4 Block C-1 Plat of Rowland 104 Chapel Street, Rowland Traditional dwelling listed on property in below average condition  
0.260 acres +/-  
Execution will be issued on the judgment, and the real property will be sold as provided by law. The tax lien, including interests and costs, may be paid before the judgment is docketed and at any time thereafter as allowed by law.

**Robert Conner Robeson County Tax Administrator**

4/15 4/22 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF TERRY TERRELL BROWN DECEASED FILE NUMBER 22 E 918**

The undersigned having qualified as Administrators, of the estate of TERRY TERRELL BROWN, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 18th day of JULY 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 15th day of APRIL 2026

FRANETTE LATORIA SMITH  
272 BRANDIE ROAD  
MAXTON NC 28364

4/15 4/22 4/29 5/6 2026

**LEGALS**

**NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE**

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION BEFORE THE CLERK 25SP001350-770**

**IN THE MATTER OF THE FORECLOSURE OF A DEED OF TRUST from Michelle April Mason, an unmarried woman to Grady I. Ingle and Elizabeth B. Ellis, Trustee, dated April 20, 2015, recorded in Book D 1990, Page 231, Robeson County Registry Pursuant to an order entered February 9, 2026, in the Superior Court for Robeson County, and the power of sale contained in the captioned Deed of Trust (the "Deed of Trust"), the Substitute Trustee will offer for sale at auction (the "Sale"), to the highest bidder for cash on:**

**APRIL 27, 2026, AT 11:00 A.M. ROBESON COUNTY COURTHOUSE 500 NORTH ELM STREET, LUMBERTON, NORTH CAROLINA 28359**

the real estate and the improvements thereon secured by the Deed of Trust, less and except any of such property released from the lien of the Deed of Trust prior to the date of said sale, lying and being in Robeson County, North Carolina, and being more particularly described as follows (the "Property"): **BEING ALL OF LOT NUMBER TWO (2), AS SHOWN ON THAT CERTAIN MAP ENTITLED, "MAP OF HICKORY HILLS SUBDIVISION", PREPARED BY POWERS LAND SURVEYING, P.A., RECORDED IN MAP BOOK 37, AT PAGE 51, ROBESON COUNTY REGISTRY. A.P.N. 21160200101 AND 21160200101**

**The record owners of the Property not more than ten (10) days prior to the date hereof is Michelle April Mason. Parcel ID: 21160200101**

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

A five percent cash deposit, or a cash deposit of \$750.00, whichever is greater, will be required of the last and highest bidder. The balance of the bid purchase price shall be due in full in cash or certified funds at a closing to take place within thirty (30) days of the date of sale. The Substitute Trustee shall convey title to the property by non warranty deed. This sale will be made subject to all prior liens of record, if any, and to all unpaid (ad valorem) taxes and special assessments, if any, which became a lien subsequent to the recordation of the Deed of Trust. This sale will be further subject to the right, if any, of the United States of America to redeem the above-described property for a period of 120 days following the date when the final upset bid period has run. The purchaser of the property described above shall pay the Clerk's Commissions in the amount of \$.45 per \$100.00 of the purchase price (up to a maximum amount of \$500.00), required by Section 7A-308(a) (1) of the North Carolina General Statutes. If the purchaser of the above-described property is someone other than the Beneficiary under the Deed of Trust, the purchaser shall also pay, to the extent applicable, the land transfer tax in the amount of one percent (1%) of the purchase price. To the extent this sale involves residential property with less than fifteen (15) rental units, you are hereby notified of the following:

(a) An order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to Section 45-21.29 of the North Carolina General Statutes in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold; and  
(b) Any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement upon 10 days' written notice to the landlord. Upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

The 11th day of February 2026. John W. Fletcher III, Substitute Trustee (NCSB No. 15503) Fletcher, Tydings, Williams-Tracy & Gott, PLLC 100 Queens Road, Suite 250, Charlotte, North Carolina 28204 704-334-3400 / jfletcher@fletcher tydings.com

4/15 4/22 2026

**Reach potential buyers! Post your home in the classifieds!**

**LEGALS**

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; VS.**

**Plaintiff, HEIRS OF LUKE MCCROWRE (DECEASED 12/16/2019) AND WIFE, JOSEPHINE MCCROWRE (DECEASED) 01/21/2003), HEIRS OF RONALD MCCROWRE, SR.) (DECEASED 08/03/2022) AND WIFE, DIANE MCCROWRE (DECEASED 2018), HEIRS OF JERRY ODELL MCCROWRE (DECEASED 12/29/2004) AND THE TOWN OF SAINT PAULS, NORTH CAROLINA, LIENHOLDER; IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION FILE NO.: 25M001198-770 AMENED NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND UNDER EXECUTION AND**

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventre sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title) to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

To the Clerk of the Superior Court of Robeson County: By virtue of a certain execution directed to the undersigned from the Superior Court of Robeson County in the action entitled County of Robeson v. Heirs of Ronald McCrowre and wife, Diane McCrowre, this office will hold an execution sale pursuant to Article 29B of Chapter 1 of the NC General Statutes. Said sale will take place on April 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Robeson County Courthouse door, in the city of Lumberton, State of North Carolina. Said sale shall be to the highest bidder FOR CASH to satisfy the execution on the parcel of real property described following the name of the judgment debtor hereinafter set out.

The execution was issued pursuant to judgment duly recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Robeson County, and the execution is in the amount specified in this case and the description of the real estate, plus costs of sale, follows: The following described property is located within the Town of St. Pauls, Robeson County, North Carolina and owned by the Heirs of Ronald McCrowre and wife, Diane McCrowre: **DESCRIPTION**  
**PARCEL #381102040**  
**LOT #4 FR. KEITH PROPERTY - TOWN OF SAINT PAULS 312 KEITH STREET, SAINT PAULS, NC**  
**OLD STYLE DWELLING ON PROPERTY LISTED IN POOR CONDITION - GRADE E** The above tracts or parcels of land are subject to all right-of-way and easements of record.

The highest bidder at public sale shall be required to pay IN FULL the amount of the successful bid at the conclusion of the execution sale (subject to the confirmation of the sale as by law provided). The successful bid amount shall be paid in cash or certified funds (payable to Robeson County Tax Administration). Robeson County Tax Administration, in its discretion, determine and allow a reasonable time within which to deliver the successful bid amount to that office.

Amount due under judgment, including costs: \$3,234.47. The sale will be made subject to 2026 ad valorem taxes, any and all existing liens, and all outstanding taxes and all local improvement assessments against the above-described property not included in the judgment in the above-entitled cause.

In accordance with NCGS 105-375(i) this Notice of Sale has been sent to the taxpayer and any lienholder(s) of record by first class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested; and will be posted on the property. The Notice of Sale will be published as required by NCGS 1-339.52.

This 20th day of March, 2026. Deidre Howell Deidre Howell, Deputy Sheriff Robeson County Badge No.: 501

4/8 4/15 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF BOBBY RAY CREECH DECEASED FILE NUMBER: 25 E 001315-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Executor, of the Estate of BOBBY RAY CREECH, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of JULY 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 8th day of APRIL 2026.

VICTORIA LYNN SUTTON, EXECUTOR c/o RORY C EDDINGS, ATTORNEY P.O. BOX 10415 GOLDSBORO NC 27532 (919) 759-0455

4/8 4/15 4/22 4/29 2026

**LEGALS**

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF MARTHA LEE CREECH DECEASED FILE NUMBER: 26 E 000320-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Executor, of the Estate of MARTHA LEE CREECH, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 8th day of JULY 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 8th day of APRIL 2026.

VICTORIA LYNN SUTTON EXECUTOR c/o RORY C EDDINGS, ATTORNEY P.O. BOX 10415 GOLDSBORO NC 27532 (919) 759-0455

4/8 4/15 4/22 4/29 2026

**LEGALS**

**NORTH CAROLINA**

**ROBESON COUNTY**

**IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE**

**SUPERIOR COURT DIVISION**

**BEFORE THE CLERK**

FILE NO. 26SP000028-770

**IN THE MATTER OF THE FORECLOSURE**

**OF THE DEED OF TRUST EXECUTED BY**

**DAPHNEY LAKEITA WASHINGTON, unmarried,**

Recorded in Book 2191, Page 573,

Robeson County Registry

**NOTICE OF**

**FORECLOSURE SALE**

**DEED OF TRUST BEING FORECLOSED:**

The Deed of Trust being foreclosed is that Deed of Trust executed by DAPHNEY LAKEITA WASHINGTON, unmarried, to Jay B. Green, Attorney at Law, PC, Trustee, dated August 12, 2019 and recorded in Book 2191, Page 573 in the Robeson County Registry of North Carolina.

RECORD OWNERS OF THE REAL PROPERTY:

The record owner(s) of the subject real property as reflected on the records of the Robeson County Register of Deeds not more than 10 days prior to the posting of this Notice is or are Daphney Lakeita Washington.

DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF SALE:

The sale will be held on April 29, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at the door of the Robeson County Courthouse, Lumberton, North Carolina.

PROPERTY TO BE SOLD:

The following real property to be sold "sight unseen" together with any improvements is located in Robeson County, North Carolina and is believed to have the address of 149 Huggins Road, Lumberton, NC 28360

and is otherwise more particularly described as follows:

**BEING ALL OF LOT 15, AS SHOWN ON SURVEY ENTITLED "RICHFIELD ESTATES", PREPARED BY POWERS SURVEYING DATED JANUARY 18, 2019 AND RECORDED IN MAP BOOK 53, AT PAGE 176, ROBESON COUNTY REGISTRY.**

Included is a 2019 Clayton manufactured home bearing serial no. OHC028915NC.

TERMS OF SALE:

Pursuant to the provisions of N.C.G.S. §45-21.10(b) and the terms of the Deed of Trust, any successful bidder may be required to deposit with the Trustee or Clerk of Superior Court immediately upon the conclusion of the sale a cash deposit to be determined by the greater of 5% of the bid or \$750.00. Unless the Substitute Trustee agrees otherwise, the successful bidder will be required to tender the "full purchase price" so bid in cash or certified check at the time the Trustee tenders to him a Deed to the property or attempts to tender such Deed, and should the successful bidder fail to pay the full amount, then the successful bidder shall remain liable as provided for in N.C.G.S. §45-21.30. A tender of Deed shall be defined as a letter from the Trustee to the successful bidder offering to record the Deed upon receipt of full purchase price as described herein and listed in said letter. **PAYMENT IN FULL SHALL BE DUE UPON CONFIRMATION OF THE SALE AND WITHIN 10 DAYS FOLLOWING THE TENDER OF DEED.** The Trustee receives the funds and records the foreclosure deed. If the trustee is unable to convey title to this property for any reason such as a bankruptcy filing, the sole remedy of the successful bidder is the return of the deposit. As to any manufactured home, the following shall apply: Any not considered real property is being foreclosed pursuant to N.C.G.S. §25-9-604, if necessary; there is no warranty that any is actually located on the subject tract; and there is no warranty given by the Substitute Trustee as to whether said home is real property or personal property. There is no warranty of title and the sale will be made subject to all prior liens, unpaid taxes, assessments, restrictions and easements of record, if any.

**ADDITIONAL NOTICE:**

Take notice that an order for possession of the property may be issued pursuant to G.S. 45-21.29 in favor of the purchaser and against the party or parties in possession by the clerk of superior court of the county in which the property is sold. Take further notice that any person who occupies the property pursuant to a rental agreement entered into or renewed on or after October 1, 2007, may, after receiving the notice of sale, terminate the rental agreement by providing written notice of termination to the landlord, to be effective on a date stated in the notice that is at least 10 days, but no more than 90 days, after the sale dates contained in the notice of sale, provided that the mortgagor has not cured the default at the time the tenant provides the notice of termination. This notice further states that upon termination of a rental agreement, the tenant is liable for rent due under the rental agreement prorated to the effective date of the termination.

This date being March 10, 2026

**THE GREEN LAW FIRM, P.C.**

By: S/ Jay B. Green

Jay B. Green, Attorney at Law

The Green Law Firm, P.C.

Attorney for Trustee

908 E. Edenton Street

Raleigh, North Carolina 27601

Telephone: 919-829-0797

4/15 4/22 2026

**Buy & Sell In the Classifieds**

LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

HEIRS OF ORIE MCGEE (DECEASED) 06/15/2005) AND WIFE, ELLA L. MCGEE

AND If they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown, resident) or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action;

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION FILE NO.: 25M001202-770 AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND UNDER EXECUTION Defendants.

To the Clerk of the Superior Court of Robeson County: By virtue of a certain execution directed to the undersigned from the Superior Court of Robeson County in the action entitled County of Robeson v. Heirs of Orie McGee, this office will hold an execution sale pursuant to Article 29B of Chapter 1 of the NC General Statutes. Said sale will take place on April 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Robeson County Courthouse door, in the city of Lumberton, State of North Carolina. Said sale shall be to the highest bidder FOR CASH to satisfy the execution on the parcel of real property described following the name of the judgment debtor hereinafter set out.

The execution was issued pursuant to judgment duly recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Robeson County, and the execution is in the amount specified in this case and the description of the real estate, plus costs of sale, follows: The following described property is located within East Howellsville Township, Robeson County, North Carolina and owned by the Heirs of Orie McGee: DESCRIPTION PARCEL #070502020 East of SR #1955 and North of SR #1959 - Regan Church Road/Grant Street Vacant Woodland -3.0 acres +/- Grant Street, Lumberton The above tracts or parcels of land are subject to all right-of-way and easements of record. The highest bidder at public sale shall be required to pay IN FULL the amount of the successful bid at the conclusion of the execution sale (subject to the confirmation of the sale as by law provided). The successful bid amount shall be paid in cash or certified funds (payable to Robeson County Tax Administration). Robeson County Tax Administration, in its discretion, determine and allow a reasonable time within which to deliver the successful bid amount to that office. Amount due under judgment, including costs: \$1,438.10. The sale will be made subject to 2026 ad valorem taxes, any and all existing liens, and all outstanding taxes and all local improvement assessments against the above-described property not included in the judgment in the above-entitled cause. In accordance with NCGS 105-375(i) this Notice of Sale has been sent to the taxpayer and any lienholder(s) of record by first class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested; and will be posted on the property. The Notice of Sale will be published as required by NCGS 1-339.52. This 20th day of March, 2026. Deidre Howel Deidre Howell, Deputy Sheriff Robeson County Badge No.: 501

4/8 4/15 2026

**NORTH CAROLINA ROBESON COUNTY IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE SUPERIOR COUT DIVISION BEFORE THE CLERK FILE NUMBER: 26 E 000182-770 EXECUTOR'S NOTICE**

In the Matter of the Estate of **HEAVERD DOBBER OXENDINE, JR.** Deceased.

The undersigned, having qualified as Executor of the Estate of Heaverd Dobber Oxendine, Jr. deceased, late of Robeson County, North Carolina, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said Estate to present them to the undersigned on or before July 1, 2026 (which is three (3) months after the day of the first publication of this notice), or this notice will be pleaded in bar of their recovery. All persons, firms and corporations indebted to said estate will please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

THIS the 1st day of April, 2026.

Melissa Oxendine, Executor of the Estate of Heaverd Dobber Oxendine, Jr., Deceased c/o J. Thomas Neville Yarborough, Winters & Neville, P.A. P.O. Box 705 Fayetteville, NC 28302-0705

4/1 4/8 4/15 4/22 2026

**Check out our Classifieds for bargains!**

LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION FILE NO.: 25M001200-770 HEIRS OF TIMOTHY MICHAEL VERNON (DECEASED) 12/13/2016); AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND UNDER EXECUTION AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

To the Clerk of the Superior Court of Robeson County: By virtue of a certain execution directed to the undersigned from the Superior Court of Robeson County in the action entitled County of Robeson v. Heirs of Timothy Michael Vernon, this office will hold an execution sale pursuant to Article 29B of Chapter 1 of the NC General Statutes. Said sale will take place on April 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Robeson County Courthouse door, in the city of Lumberton, State of North Carolina. Said sale shall be to the highest bidder FOR CASH to satisfy the execution on the parcel of real property described following the name of the judgment debtor hereinafter set out.

The execution was issued pursuant to judgment duly recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Robeson County, and the execution is in the amount specified in this case and the description of the real estate, plus costs of sale, follows: The following described property is located within Smyrna Township, Robeson County, North Carolina and owned by the Heirs of Timothy Michael Vernon: DESCRIPTION PARCEL #240103002021 SOUTH OF AND ADJACENT TO SR #2208, SMYRNA TOWNSHIP 282 WIRE GRASS ROAD, LUMBERTON - 1.57 acres +/- SINGLEWIDE MOBILE HOME W/ADDITION - GRADE C- The above tracts or parcels of land are subject to all right-of-way and easements of record. The highest bidder at public sale shall be required to pay IN FULL the amount of the successful bid at the conclusion of the execution sale (subject to the confirmation of the sale as by law provided). The successful bid amount shall be paid in cash or certified funds (payable to Robeson County Tax Administration). Robeson County Tax Administration, in its discretion, determine and allow a reasonable time within which to deliver the successful bid amount to that office. Amount due under judgment, including costs: \$3,360.39. The sale will be made subject to 2026 ad valorem taxes, any and all existing liens, and all outstanding taxes and all local improvement assessments against the above-described property not included in the judgment in the above-entitled cause. In accordance with NCGS 105-375(i) this Notice of Sale has been sent to the taxpayer and any lienholder(s) of record by first class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested; and will be posted on the property. The Notice of Sale will be published as required by NCGS 1-339.52. This 20th day of March, 2026. Deidre Howell, Deputy Sheriff Robeson County Badge No.: 501

4/8 4/15 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF JERREL ANN RICHARDSON LENNON DECEASED FILE NUMBER: 26 E 000286-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Administrators, of the Estate of JERREL ANN RICHARDSON LENNON, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 13th day of JULY 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

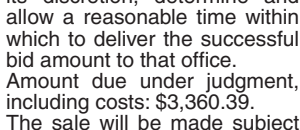
This is the 8th day of APRIL 2026.

RHONDA L BRUCE EXECUTOR 65 VOLLIE DR LUMBERTON NC 28360

GLORA L HUNT HARDIN CO-EXECUTOR P.O. BOX 1143 LUMBERTON NC 28359

4/8 4/15 4/22 4/29 2026

**Check out our Classifieds! So many bargains!**



LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION ) NOTICE JOSEPHINE BUTLER a/k/a JOSEPHINE CHAVIS BUTLER) HARRIS and BLEECKER OLDS BUICK GMC, INC.,) Lienholder, AND ) )

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to:

HEIRS OF TIMOTHY MICHAEL VERNON (DECEASED) 12/13/2016); AMENDED NOTICE OF SALE OF LAND UNDER EXECUTION Defendants.

To the Clerk of the Superior Court of Robeson County: By virtue of a certain execution directed to the undersigned from the Superior Court of Robeson County in the action entitled County of Robeson v. Heirs of Timothy Michael Vernon, this office will hold an execution sale pursuant to Article 29B of Chapter 1 of the NC General Statutes. Said sale will take place on April 21, 2026, at 10:00 a.m. at the Robeson County Courthouse door, in the city of Lumberton, State of North Carolina. Said sale shall be to the highest bidder FOR CASH to satisfy the execution on the parcel of real property described following the name of the judgment debtor hereinafter set out.

The execution was issued pursuant to judgment duly recorded in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court for Robeson County, and the execution is in the amount specified in this case and the description of the real estate, plus costs of sale, follows: The following described property is located within Smyrna Township, Robeson County, North Carolina and owned by the Heirs of Timothy Michael Vernon: DESCRIPTION PARCEL #240103002021 SOUTH OF AND ADJACENT TO SR #2208, SMYRNA TOWNSHIP 282 WIRE GRASS ROAD, LUMBERTON - 1.57 acres +/- SINGLEWIDE MOBILE HOME W/ADDITION - GRADE C- The above tracts or parcels of land are subject to all right-of-way and easements of record. The highest bidder at public sale shall be required to pay IN FULL the amount of the successful bid at the conclusion of the execution sale (subject to the confirmation of the sale as by law provided). The successful bid amount shall be paid in cash or certified funds (payable to Robeson County Tax Administration). Robeson County Tax Administration, in its discretion, determine and allow a reasonable time within which to deliver the successful bid amount to that office. Amount due under judgment, including costs: \$3,360.39. The sale will be made subject to 2026 ad valorem taxes, any and all existing liens, and all outstanding taxes and all local improvement assessments against the above-described property not included in the judgment in the above-entitled cause. In accordance with NCGS 105-375(i) this Notice of Sale has been sent to the taxpayer and any lienholder(s) of record by first class and Certified Mail, Return Receipt Requested; and will be posted on the property. The Notice of Sale will be published as required by NCGS 1-339.52. This 20th day of March, 2026. Deidre Howell, Deputy Sheriff Robeson County Badge No.: 501

4/15 4/22 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF JACQUELYN SIMMS THOMPSON DECEASED FILE NUMBER 26 E 000023-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Administrators, of the Estate of JACQUELYN SIMMS THOMPSON, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 29th day of JUNE 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 25th day of MARCH 2026.

ANGUS BOAZ THOMPSON JR 2130 KENTUCKY CIR LUMBERTON NC 28358

3/25 4/1 4/8 4/15 2026

**Get the most BANG for your buck... ADVERTISE!**

LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

HEIRS OF FUSHIA GAIL LOCKLEAR (DECEASED: 11.12.2008), AND IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION ) NOTICE HEIRS OF FUSHIA GAIL LOCKLEAR (DECEASED: 11.12.2008), AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to:

HEIRS OF FUSHIA GAIL LOCKLEAR (DECEASED: 11.12.2008), AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; 2026. That a judgment of foreclosure will be docketed against the property described below on or after May 22. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION PARCEL #271504003 Union Township, East side of SR #1003 102 and 130 Strolling Lane, Rowland 31 x 30 Canopy listed on property, Grade C 1.0 acres +/- Execution will be issued on the judgment, and the real property will be sold as provided by law. The tax lien, including interests and costs, may be paid before the judgment is docketed and at any time thereafter as allowed by law. Robert Conner Robeson County Tax Administrator

4/15 4/22 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF JACQUELYN SIMMS THOMPSON DECEASED FILE NUMBER 26 E 000023-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Administrators, of the Estate of JACQUELYN SIMMS THOMPSON, deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 29th day of JUNE 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This is the 25th day of MARCH 2026.

ANGUS BOAZ THOMPSON JR 2130 KENTUCKY CIR LUMBERTON NC 28358

3/25 4/1 4/8 4/15 2026

**Get the most BANG for your buck... ADVERTISE!**

LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION ) NOTICE HEIRS OF JOYCE DIANE EDWARDS MCRAE (DECEASED:) 04.09.2020), AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to:

HEIRS OF JOYCE DIANE EDWARDS MCRAE (DECEASED: 04.09.2020) AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; 2026. That a judgment of foreclosure will be docketed against the property described below on or after May 15. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION PARCEL #112001006 Maxton Township, Both Sides of NC HWY 83, 1.65 acres +/- Ranch dwelling listed on property in average condition 2921 NC HWY 83, Maxton PARCEL #112001008 Maxton Township, East Side of NC HWY 83 Vacant Land 0.69 acres +/- Execution will be issued on the judgment, and the real property will be sold as provided by law. The tax lien, including interests and costs, may be paid before the judgment is docketed and at any time thereafter as allowed by law. Robert Conner Robeson County Tax Administrator

4/8 4/15 2026

Town Council Members of the Town of Pembroke, North Carolina

RE: Notice of Special Meeting of the Town of Pembroke

Dear Council Members:

Pursuant to Chapter 2, Division 2, Section 2-24 of the Code of Ordinances for the Town of Pembroke, I hereby give you notice that there will be a special meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Pembroke, North Carolina, on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 at 6:00 pm at Pembroke Town Hall. The purpose of the special meeting is a budget work session to discuss FY 2026-2027 Budget. Please make arrangements to attend this meeting.

Sincerely, Allen G. Dial ALH

Pc: All Town Council Members (Email or Hand Delivered) Posted at the Pembroke Town Hall, 98 Union Chapel Road 9:00 am. on the 10th day of April 2026.

4/15 2026

**Check out our Classifieds for bargains!**

LEGALS

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON, a political Subdivision of the State of North Carolina; Plaintiff, VS.

IN THE GENERAL COURT OF JUSTICE DISTRICT COURT DIVISION ) NOTICE HEIRS OF JOHN MCEACHERN and wife, ROSIE) MCEACHERN and MAUDE KENT MCMILLAN A/K/A MAUDE FOXWORTH MCGARR, AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives,) heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown,) resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; Defendants.

Pursuant to the requirements of G.S. 105-375(c)(4)b, notice is hereby given to:

HEIRS OF JOHN MCEACHERN and wife, ROSIE MCEACHERN and MAUDE KENT MCMILLAN A/K/A MAUDE FOXWORTH MCGARR AND

If they be deceased then their legal representatives, heirs and assigns; and any and all other interested persons, whether sane or insane, adult or minor, in esse or en ventral sa mere, known or unknown, resident or non-resident, live corporations or dissolved corporations, who might have or claim any right or title to the property which is the subject of this action; 2026. That a judgment of foreclosure will be docketed against the property described below on or after May 22. PROPERTY DESCRIPTION PARCEL #380403009 and PARCEL #380403008 Lots 35 and 36, J.M. Butler Subdivision Addition St. Pauls Township, Alford and George Streets Vacant 50 ft. x 135 ft. Lots Execution will be issued on the judgment, and the real property will be sold as provided by law. The tax lien, including interests and costs, may be paid before the judgment is docketed and at any time thereafter as allowed by law. Robert Conner Robeson County Tax Administrator

4/15 4/22 2026

**STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA COUNTY OF ROBESON NOTICE TO CREDITORS AND DEBTORS OF DENISE MICHELLE BRITT ALLEN DECEASED FILE NUMBER 26 E 000304-770**

The undersigned having qualified as Administrators, of the Estate of DENISE MICHELLE BRITT ALLEN deceased, late of ROBESON COUNTY, this is to notify all persons, firms and corporations having claims against said estate to exhibit them to the undersigned on or before the 29th day of JUNE 2026 or be barred from their recovery. All persons indebted to said estate are asked to please make immediate payment to the undersigned.

This the 25th day of MARCH 2026.

LESTER MITCHELL ALLEN 239 CEMETERY STREET PARKTON NC 28371

3/25 4/1 4/8 4/15 2026

**Check out our Classifieds for bargains!**

Notices

ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

**Owner: Town of Pembroke**

**Project: Lumbee Tribe Culture Center Wastewater Extension**

Separate sealed Single Prime Bids for the above referenced Project will be received at **Pembroke Town Hall, 98 Union Chapel Road, Pembroke, NC until 11:00 am on Tuesday, May 5, 2026.** At that time the Bids received will be publicly opened and read aloud at the above address.

The general project scope consists of the complete installation of a sanitary sewer pump station, potable water and sanitary sewer infrastructure, and all other miscellaneous items as listed on the construction plans and in the project manual, needed to complete the project.

PRE-BID CONFERENCE

A **mandatory** pre-bid conference will be held on Wednesday, April 22, 2026, at 2:00 pm at the Lumbee Tribe Cultural Center, 207 Terry Sanford Dr, Maxton, NC 28364. Bids will not be accepted from Bidders that do not attend the mandatory pre-bid conference. Contractors will be allowed to view and walk the site afterwards.

INSTRUCTIONS TO BIDDERS

Small, minority-owned, and women-owned businesses are encouraged to submit proposals. For all further requirements regarding bid submittal, requirements, qualifications, procedures, and contract award, refer to the Instructions to Bidders that are included in the Bidding Documents. Owner reserves the right to waive all informalities in bids, to accept any bid, or any portion thereof, or to reject any or all bids should it be deemed in its best interest to do so and allowed by General Statute.

OBTAINING THE BIDDING DOCUMENTS

Bidding Documents may be obtained upon request from the Issuing Office, **Locklear, Locklear & Jacobs (LL&J) at 114 W 3rd Street, Pembroke, NC 28372. (910) 774-9306.** Anyone wishing to access this information shall submit a request for information email to: **mirandahorne@llandi.com.** The email request shall contain the following items so that an accurate Bidder and Plan Holder list can be maintained:

Company Name	Phone Number
Contact Person	Address

Hard copies of the Bidding Documents may also be purchased from LL&J. The cost shall be based on LL&J's 2026 Printing Rates. The purchase of any Bidding Documents shall be non-refundable.

Note

1. All RFI's shall be received on or before 5:00 pm on Thursday, April 30, 2026, via email or letter.
2. Any verbal responses or comments are non-binding, and only written requests are contractual.

Advertisement is Issued By:

Tyler Thomas, Town Manager

Town of Pembroke

98 Union Chapel Road



## Ordinance

From page 1A

Food truck parks will be required to submit site plans to the city's Planning Department.

### City to apply for CDBG grant for South Lumberton sewer improvements

Council also approved a resolution authorizing the city to apply for Community Development Block Grant-Infrastructure (CDBG-I) funding to help fund a sewer rehabilitation project in South Lumberton.

The CDBG-I funding, if granted, would be up to \$3 million.

The proposed project includes the rehabilitation of approximately 7,330 linear feet of gravity sewer piping, 28 manholes and 72 service laterals in multiple areas. All improvements will be on a "like-for-like" basis and there will be no increase to the system's capacity. The project would take place in the areas of Steele Street, Marion Road, MLK Jr. Drive, Chambers Street, Crandemire Road, Caple Street, McCollum Street, Walker Street and along an outfall between Chambers, Walker and Caple streets, according to Josh Outlaw, an engineer with The Adams Company.

"Thank you for doing all of that," said Councilman John Cantey. "Our citizens are in dire need of that grant in that particular section, and we thank you and the city and Rob and Brandon and the manager."

Outlaw was asked if residents in the area are concerned about the project, and said

that they're mostly just pleased with getting new infrastructure in their area.

Much of the work will be done with a process called sliplining, in which a smaller pipe is inserted within the existing pipe to reinforce it. Asked about the lifespan of sliplining, compared to a brand new pipe, Outlaw said it is "not a bandaid fix" and has essentially the same long-term outlook as a new pipe would.

### Other matters

In other business, Council:

— Approved a contract with Patterson and Associates to perform financial audits for the city and the Lumberton Regional Airport. The three-year contract totals \$117,000; W. Greene, PLLC, which is the city's current auditor, had the lowest bid at \$87,000; however, the firm has been late submitting the audit for three straight years, and after a discussion in the meeting with Finance Director Hank Lewis and City Manager Wayne Horne, the board decided to pick the Patterson bid; Lewis said that while the contract is more, it may ultimately benefit the city as it may be eligible for more grants and other funding if audits are completed in a more timely manner.

— Approved an ordinance which states the city's policy for renaming a street. A brief discussion centered around a criteria that a street will not be named for someone who is currently living.

— Approved for the Robeson County Farmer's Market to use the Dick Taylor Plaza in downtown Lumberton

on a temporary basis in 2026, which will provide more visibility than the market's currently location in the parking lot at the corner of Third and Water streets, which has road closures nearby due to the Fifth Street bridge construction.

— Approved a \$14,750 contract with In-Depth Inc., of Florida, to inspect and clean inside the four-million-gallon clear well at the city's Water Treatment Plant. While there is no requirement to do so, Deputy Public Works Director Corey Walters said that the tank has not been cleaned or inspected since it was built in 1992, and it currently has some sediment buildup, of which up to three inches will be removed during this project.

— Voted to reject all bids from March 31 on the Linkhaw Road culvert replacement project and reopen the bidding. This is after a technical error in the bidding process where not all interested parties received pertinent documentation, Walters said, for the \$1.1 million project.

— Approved a contract amendment for \$995,000, to be paid for from a \$1 million grant from the N.C. Department of Water Infrastructure, for phase four of the city's lead service inventory, in which it is taking inventory of water piping throughout the city. The Wooten Company, who is performing the first three phases, will continue its work into the fourth phase after it was awarded the contract.

— Was informed by Shalonda Regan, chair of the Lumberton Juneteenth Committee, that this year's event theme

will be "Homecoming" and extended a formal invitation for members of the board to participate in the celebration, while also asking for financial support.

— Appointed Patricia Terrell to the Library Board, replacing Bruce Huggins, who resigned. Council also, as part of the consent agenda, ratified the appointment of Richard Pate to the ABC Board.

— Was advised by Deputy Manager Brandon Love that a community meeting will soon be held in South Lumberton to discuss the project to build an educational center from the existing structure at the former Scottish Packing Co. location, along Kinlaw Street, near a recently completed boat ramp into the Lumber River. A specific date and time are still to be announced, Love said.

— Approved the following allocations of Community Revitalization Funds: \$1,200 to Borderbelt AIDS Resource Team (BART); \$900 for Robeson County Relay for Life; \$900 for B.B. Thompson Young People's Choir for its 50th Golden Anniversary event; \$850 for the Omega Psi Phi Nu Chapter Scholarship Program; \$800 for the Cape Fear Council Boy Scouts of America for a character luncheon; \$500 for the Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament; \$500 for a Community Day in Precinct 4; \$500 for the Oakridge Homeowners Association; \$400 to the Kiwanis Kids Day at the Park; and \$280 for Cruising Second Street Again.

Editor Chris Stiles can be reached at 910-416-5847 or by email at cstyles@robsonian.com.



Contributed photos | Britt's Township Fire Department  
Firefighters work to contain a blaze at the Long Branch Mobile Home Park southeast of Lumberton on Sunday.

## Fire

From page 1A

Park, on N.C. Highway 72 at West Ethridge Lane.

The Britt's Township Fire Department had just completed working another call, Chief Steven Callahan said, when they were paged for this fire; it was described by dispatch as a "brush fire," but Callahan could see the smoke at the station, about a mile away, and could tell it was a structure fire.

"It was burning pretty good," Callahan said. "We could see the smoke from our station, they could see it from Deep Branch, they could see it from 95. It was a pretty big blaze."

The flames from the barn fire did not hit the damaged homes, Callahan said, but the heat from the fire caused the

damage.

Three families were displaced due to the damage to their homes. One of the seven damaged mobile homes was abandoned.

The cause of the fire is under investigation by the Robeson County Fire Marshal.

Eight fire departments responded to the call, all from Robeson County. This included departments with which Britt's Township Fire Department has a mutual aid agreement, plus a few more, Callahan said. "Everybody responded pretty quickly and did a great job of containing it," Callahan said.

North Carolina remains in a statewide burn ban, which went into effect on March 28, due to the increased risk of wildfires. This is due to dry weather conditions across the state in recent weeks.



# 7-Eleven expects to close hundreds of its stores in North America this year

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Convenience chain 7-Eleven expects to close hundreds of its locations this year.

According to earnings filings published last week, 7-Eleven's North American operator plans to close 645 stores in the 2026 fiscal year — outpacing the 205 locations it forecasts it will open during that same time.

Seven & i Holdings Co., the Japan-based parent of the convenience chain, noted that these closures "include the conversion to wholesale fuel stores." Financial documents show that 7-Eleven Inc. has steadily opened new wholesale fuel stores in North America over recent years, which accounted for more than 900 locations as of December 2025.

The company did not immediately explain the closures or specify which locations could be impacted. The Associated Press reached out for further information.

According to the company's website, there are over 86,000 7-Eleven stores across 19 countries today. 7-Eleven Inc., the brand's North American operator based in Texas, oversees more than 13,000 locations in the U.S. and Canada.

The convenience giant has closed hundreds of underperforming locations over the years, and the latest cuts arrive as higher prices strain consumers world-

wide. The U.S. and Israel's war against Iran has especially rattled energy markets, with drivers now facing soaring gas prices.

Consumers were facing stubborn inflation even before the war. In North America specifically, Seven & i noted in its April 9 report, "although the economy remained robust, personal consumption also began to soften" for the 2025 fiscal year — "particularly among low-income households, as inflation continued to weigh on spending."

Openings for Seven & i subsidiaries outside of North America are set to outpace the stores they're closing — including Seven-Eleven Japan, which expects to close 350 stores and open 550 locations, per financial filings.

Seven & i expects its revenue to fall 9.4% for the current fiscal year, totaling a projected nearly 9.45 trillion yen (about \$59.5 billion).

The company has been looking for new opportunities for growth, and last year outlined a wider transformation plan aimed at boosting its convenience store offerings. Among goals, Seven & i has said it would invest in more fresh food offerings and expand its "7NOW" delivery service.

The changes also arrive under new leadership. Stephen Hayes Dacus became Seven & i's CEO last spring.

## Jobs

From page 1A

economies through workforce development.

Now in its sixth round since its Jan. 2024 launch, the course offers a valuable opportunity for hands-on training and industry-recognized certifications.

Mark Locklear is a public communications specialist with UNC Pembroke communications & marketing. Reach him by email at mark.locklear@uncp.edu.

**Jlocal BS** Find your new career in the Classifieds!

**QUALITY** Switch providers today at [www.switchtoquality.com](http://www.switchtoquality.com)  
**RELIABLE PROPANE DELIVERY**  
Serving Richmond, Scotland, Robeson, Anson and surrounding counties.

**BEER, BBQ AND MUSIC FESTIVAL**

**SUDS & SWINE**  
Laurinburg Rotary

**FRI & SAT**  
**APRIL**  
**17 & 18**

Laurinburg After 5 & Competition Kickoff Friday

Sponsored by Rotary Club & Smithfield Foods

**AWARD WINNING BBQ & STREET FESTIVAL SATURDAY**  
LIVE MUSIC & FOOD TRUCKS ALL WEEKEND

Visit [suds-swine.com](http://suds-swine.com)  
Suds & Swine in Laurinburg on Facebook

Smithfield Good food. Responsibly.

Pre-order your BBQ at [www.orderyourbbq.com](http://www.orderyourbbq.com)

# US Catholics dismayed by Trump's unprecedented broadside at the first American pope

David Crary, Peter Smith and Steve Peoples  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A majority of U.S. Catholic voters supported Donald Trump in his 2024 presidential victory. Yet across the broad Catholic political spectrum — even among conservative-leaning bishops — there is dismay over Trump's unprecedented verbal assault on Pope Leo XIV, the first American to lead their church.

Leo says he is sharing a Gospel message and not directly attacking Trump or anyone else with his appeals for peace and criticism of attitudes fueling the war.

Criticism of Trump came from Archbishop Paul Coakley, head of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and from Minnesota-based Bishop Robert Barron, who only a few days ago was applauding Trump as an Easter guest at the White House. Barron called the president's remarks "entirely inappropriate and disrespectful" and urged him to apologize.

The dismay extended into an even more solid base of Trump support — conservative Christian evangelicals. Many were appalled that Trump followed his Truth Social attack on Leo by posting an image depicting himself as a Christ-like savior.

"TAKE THIS DOWN, MR. PRESIDENT," posted David Brody, a prominent Trump-supporting commentator with the Christian Broadcasting Network. "You're not God. None of us are. This goes too far. It crosses the line."

By midday Monday, the image had been taken down from Truth Social. And speaking at the White House, the president claimed that he never intended to liken himself to Jesus when he posted the picture.

"How did they come up with that?" he asked. "It's supposed to be me as a doctor, making people better. And I do make people better. I make people a lot better."

## Trump: No apology needed

On his clash with the pope, Trump was equally defiant: "There's nothing to apologize for. He's wrong."

The president's feud with American religious communities comes just six months before voting begins in this fall's midterms as Trump grapples with low approval ratings and dissension from his MAGA base over the war with Iran. But few groups of voters have been more loyal to Trump — and important to his political success — than those on the religious right.

For now, some Trump allies are optimistic that the dispute will soon be forgotten.

"There is a deep reservoir of appreciation for the president and his faith-based policies that transcends and eclipses any disagreement over a social media post," Ralph Reed, who sits on the president's faith advisory board, told The Associated Press.

Through American history, numerous U.S. presidents have had policy differences with various popes. But experts on the Vatican and religious



Alex Brandon | AP Photo

President Donald Trump speaks outside the Oval Office of the White House Monday in Washington.

history could recall no exchange comparable to the back-and-forth between Trump and Leo over the pope's condemnation of America's role in the Iran war.

"This is unprecedented criticism of a Pope from a US president," David Campbell, a political science professor at the University of Notre Dame, said via email.

"As to whether it will have a big effect on how US Catholic voters regard Trump, that is an open question," Campbell added. "Given that attitudes toward the president are driven largely by people's party preference — which is hard to move — it probably will not have a huge impact on Catholics' attitudes toward Trump."

David Gibson, director of Fordham University's Center on Religion and Culture, noted that many lay Catholics have been standing by Trump in recent weeks and have been critical of their bishops who critique the president.

"If this attack on the pope does not shift that dynamic in a marked way it will truly be a watershed moment ...

with American Catholics choosing a Catholic-baiting president over their own pope," Gibson said.

Looking far back into world history, Trump's attempt to "strong-arm Pope Leo" isn't anything new, said Kathleen Sprows Cummings, a professor of American Studies and History at Notre Dame.

"Emperors, monarchs, and despots have long threatened popes in an effort to force them to bend to their will," she said via email. "In an American context, however, Trump's invective does represent a historic reversal."

"For most of this country's history, Americans viewed the pope as war-mongering, money-grubbing, anti-democratic menace who had designs on the White House," she added. "Today, the menace is in the White House, and the pope is the one defending the ideals of liberty and human dignity."

At a prayer service Saturday, the pontiff denounced the "delusion of omnipotence" that he said was fueling the war with Iran. Without citing Trump or the U.S. specifically, the pope said:

"Enough of the display of power! Enough of war!"

On Monday, he was specific in responding to the president's criticisms, saying "I have no fear of the Trump administration."

## Questions arise about Catholic convert JD Vance

There was no immediate comment about the pope-Trump rift from Vice President JD Vance, a Catholic convert who occasionally has sparred with Catholic leaders over their criticism of the Trump administration's immigration crackdown.

Catholics Vote Common Good, a nonprofit group that generally supports progressive causes, urged Vance to speak out on the rift.

"At a moment when the Holy Father is being attacked and the dignity of the Church is being undermined, silence is not neutrality. It is complicity," said Denise Murphy McGraw, the organization's national co-chair.

Some vocal evangelical supporters of Trump criticized the meme depicting him as healer apparently resembling Jesus, even while maintaining support for Trump himself.

"It isn't hard to condemn this outright," said Willy Rice, a candidate for president of the Southern Baptist Convention and pastor of Calvary Church in Clearwater, Florida.

"Many Christians appreciate the President's administration and have supported him in meaningful ways, but this is wrong," Rice posted on X.

Also weighing in was Doug Wilson, co-founder of the Communion of

Reformed Evangelical Churches, a staunchly conservative Calvinist denomination with an outsized influence in the current administration. Its churches' members include Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

"I was very grateful to see how many conservative Christians immediately denounced the blasphemous Jesus/Trump image," Wilson posted on X.

Megan Basham, a conservative evangelical commentator, posted that she agreed with Trump's criticisms of Leo as "Weak on crime, and terrible for Foreign Policy." But she assailed his meme as "OUTRAGEOUS blasphemy" and urged Trump to "ask for forgiveness from the American people and then from God."

## A look at the numbers for religious blocs as election nears

Such public dissension against Trump from evangelical leaders is rare.

In 2024, white evangelical Protestants were a significant component of Trump's winning coalition, according to AP VoteCast. About one-third of Trump voters, 34%, identified as white evangelical or born-again Christians, compared with only 8 percent of Harris voters. White evangelicals made up about 2 in 10 voters that year, and the vast majority, 79%, voted for Trump.

A February AP-NORC poll found that about two-thirds of white born again Protestants approve of how Trump is handling his job as president, while about one-third disapprove.

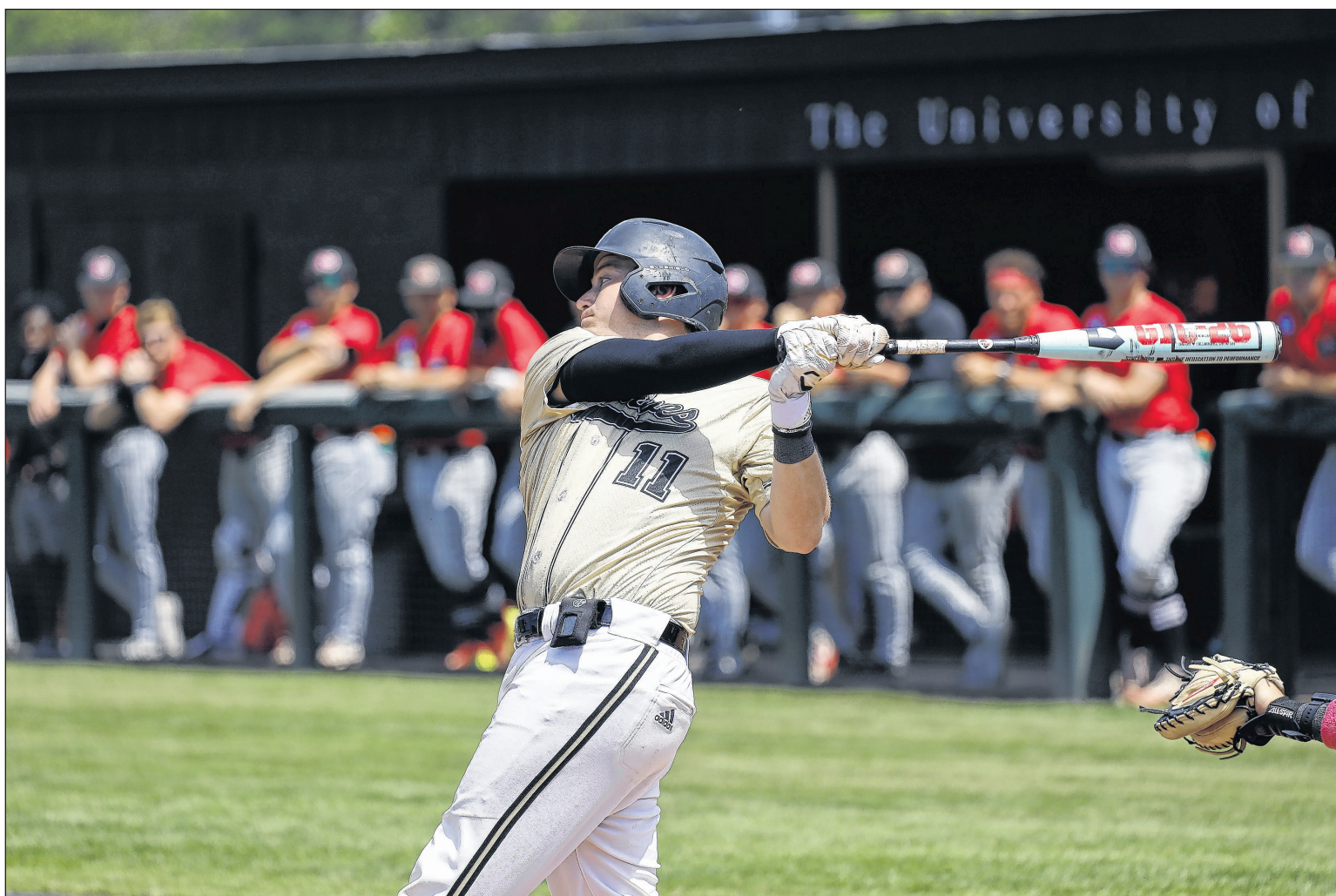
**MAKE IT YOUR NATURE**

The outdoors is really a reflection of you. It's up to all of us to do our part to help preserve the natural beauty of our state. Join us in following the 7 Outdoor NC Leave No Trace Principles, so our spaces can remain beautiful and enjoyable for years to come.

**PLAN AHEAD AND PREPARE**  
**STICK TO TRAILS AND OVERNIGHT RIGHT**  
**TRASH YOUR TRASH**  
**LEAVE IT AS YOU FIND IT**  
**BE CAREFUL WITH FIRE**  
**KEEP WILDLIFE WILD**  
**SHARE OUR TRAILS**

OUTDOORNC.COM  
#MAKEITYOURNATURE

LEAVE NO TRACE



UNC Pembroke's Landon Lucas swings at a pitch during Saturday's game against North Greenville in Pembroke.

UNC Athletics

## UNCP drops doubleheader, suffers series sweep against North Greenville

Jacob Husson  
The Robesonian

PEMBROKE — The UNC Pembroke Braves lost both games in a Saturday baseball doubleheader against the North Greenville Trailblazers, as they were swept in a three-game weekend series. They were outscored 11-4 in Saturday's games as the Trailblazers showed why they're ranked in the top-five nationally.

"It's disappointing," UNCP coach Paul O'Neil said. "They outplayed us today. They were the better team. We had some plays we had a chance to make and we didn't make

them on our end."

The Braves dropped the first game of the day, 7-2, thanks largely to the Trailblazers scoring five runs in the first two innings. Kasen McCawley pitched five innings for the Braves, allowing five runs on seven hits, while striking out seven batters.

The Trailblazers' Bennett Roemer pitched all seven innings, allowing two runs and striking out eight batters.

North Greenville scored its final two runs in the seventh inning.

UNCP's Daniel Stephens had a hit and a run scored, while Jackson Crute had a hit, a run

scored and an RBI.

North Greenville's CJ Dean was critical to the game one win, collecting two hits, three RBIs and a run scored. Skylar Hegler had two hits, an RBI and a run.

### Braves drop game two as Trailblazers rally late

Despite leading 2-0 heading into the third inning, UNCP dropped the series finale against North Greenville Saturday, 4-2. The Trailblazers scored three runs in the sixth and seventh innings to power their way to victory before adding another in the ninth.

"It teaches them

they've got to get better at their game," O'Neil said. "You can't have holes in your game if you want to beat really good people. You have to play at a really high level, you can't play at an average level."

UNCP reliever Ryan Wells took the loss, pitching 2/3 of an inning, allowing two runs to score.

North Greenville's Ben Leikam improved his record to 2-0 this season, pitching two scoreless innings in relief of Oliver Adams and striking out five batters. The Trailblazers' Caleb Cox earned his first save of the season, pitching the

last 1 1/3 innings without allowing any baserunners.

Josh Foulks was essential for North Greenville in this game, finishing with two hits, including a home run, two RBIs and a run scored. Jan Pospisil had a hit, an RBI and a run scored.

UNCP's Landon Lucas was their best hitter in this contest, finishing with two hits, a home run, an RBI and a run scored.

The UNCP Braves begin a three-game series visiting the King Tornado on Friday at 3 p.m.

Jacob Husson can be reached at 910-816-1977 or by email at [jhusson@robsonian.com](mailto:jhusson@robsonian.com).

### UNCP ROUNDUP

## Braves softball sweeps doubleheader against Belmont Abbey

Staff report

PEMBROKE — The UNC Pembroke softball team used timely hitting and capitalized on errors to sweep Belmont Abbey on Saturday afternoon at Willoughby Softball Field.

The Braves were held to just three hits to start the day, but a three-run homer from Chloe Locklear in the bottom of the seventh inning gave UNCP a 6-5 win over the Crusaders. Belmont Abbey committed five errors in the second game of the doubleheader and helped fuel a four-run sixth inning to complete the sweep with a 7-4 victory.

Summer Bullard got the start for the Braves in game one, allowing three earned runs and striking out five batters over 5 1/3 innings. Rachel Mori (5-2) earned the win in relief, pitching the last inning and 2/3 without allowing a run and striking out one.

Chloe Locklear went 1-for-3 with a home run and three RBIs in game one for UNCP (31-17, 18-8 Conference Carolinas). Emma Wrenn went 1-for-

2 with a triple and an RBI, while Maddie Gerovac went 1-for-2.

Belmont Abbey (21-21, 13-11 CC) put runners on first and second in the top of the sixth inning and scored the tying run on a throwing error. Ella Crowe hit an RBI single and Kennedy Teasley hit a sacrifice fly to give the Crusaders a 5-3 lead.

In the bottom of the seventh, Alex Serbio and Emma Wrenn both drew walks before Chloe Locklear walked it off with a three-run home run.

Madison Davis earned the win for UNCP in game two, her first this season. Katie Neel earned her first save this season in relief.

Alona Hanna went 3-for-3 for UNCP and Kaitlyn Hunt went 2-for-2 to lead the team in game two. Maggie Cunningham went 1-for-2 with an RBI.

In the top of the sixth inning, the Crusaders loaded the bases with a trio of singles from Casey Laing, Megan Towery, and Kennedy Teasley. A throwing error by UNCP allowed one run to score and a bases clear-

ing triple from Ava Elkins put Belmont Abbey ahead 4-3.

In the bottom of the sixth, Alona Hanna beat out an infield single and reached third on a single from Maggie Cunningham. Alex Serbio reached on a fielder's choice that scored both runners, as Serbio would score on a passed ball. UNCP Pembroke loaded the bases after a single from Kaitlynn Hunt, and Chloe Locklear and Summer Bullard both reaching via errors. A passed ball moved the runners and allowed Hunt to score.

### 14-year-old school record falls at Trojan Relays

Comfort Agwu broke a 14-year-old UNCP school record in the women's discus to highlight action Saturday at the Trojan Relays.

Agwu posted a mark of 43.64 meters to break the record set by Katherine Davis in 2011.

On the women's side, Janaya Davis-Gainer ran a personal-best 11.98 to take second in the 100-meters, while Kyleigh Pollock was third in the triple jump (11.65 meters) and fourth

in the long jump (5.47 meters). Amanda Sacoto posted a personal-best mark of 11.81m to finish fourth in the shot put, while McKylee Mosby crossed in 1:09.54 to take fourth in the 400m hurdles and Ta'Niyah Glaspie ran a 12.27 to take fifth in the 100-meters to round out the top-five finishers.

On the men's side, Eli Pineda crossed in 14.76 to take first in the 110-meter hurdles, Quinten LeMay ran a personal-best 58.28 to finish third in the 400-meter hurdles, while Jacobe Jones finished fourth in the 200-meters at 21.44. Jaiden Hannah posted a mark of 1.92 meters to take fourth in the high jump, with Kell Simpson taking fifth in the 400-meter hurdles at 58.46 to round out the top-five finishers.

The Braves combined to turn in 21 new personal bests at the event.

Both squads will now turn its attention to the Conference Carolinas Outdoor Championships, set for April 23-25. The three-day event will be held at Doug Shaw Memorial Stadium in Myrtle Beach.

## UNCP golf 9th following second round of Conference Carolinas Tournament

Staff report

SPARTANBURG, S.C. — Marta Ortega logged a team-best six-over-par round in the second round as UNC Pembroke is in ninth place heading into Tuesday afternoon's final round of the Conference Carolinas Tournament at The Carolina Country Club.

Ortega (10 over par) climbed the leaderboard into 10th place and is 10 strokes behind Belmont Abbey's Ella Wiklander who remains the leader of the individual tournament with an even par. Catherine DeSiena (12 over) is one of three golfers tied for 11th place, while Maya Fitzgerald (28 over) is in a four-way tie for 40th place. Melissa Guerra Landa (33 over) is in 48th place, while Ella Woo (24 over) is currently 62nd.

The final round of the Conference Carolinas Tournament was Tuesday at The Carolina Country Club in Spartanburg, South Carolina; the result was unavailable at press time.

## RCC wins baseball series over Richard Bland

Staff report

PRINCE GEORGE, Va. — The Robeson Community College Diamond Eagles won two out of three in a weekend series at Richard Bland College, as part of a 3-1 week.

On Saturday, the Eagles (13-26, 12-18 Region X) earned a 12-2 win over Richard Bland (13-26, 9-21 Region X) behind Jorge Torres' four RBIs and contributions from Owen Noonan, Noah Hince and Lezlie Jackson. Noah Christensen earned the win while Tashaun Stocks threw two scoreless innings in relief.

Robeson fell 6-2 in game two, with Hince hitting a two-run homer. David Ramsey struck out six and Jackson led with two hits.

The Eagles closed the weekend with an 18-11 win on Sunday. Jack Carela hit two home runs while Noonan, Messiah Miller and Nemo Chavis also went deep. Cooper Strickland earned the win in relief, and Nick Widenor got the start. Noonan, Torrest and Ayden Wall led the offense, while Ty Lee and Hince added walks.

On Wednesday, the Eagles defeated Fayetteville Tech 15-5, fueled by a nine-run first inning.

# McIlroy a Masters champion again, and the chase is on for more majors

**Doug Ferguson**  
AP Golf Writer

AUGUSTA, Ga. — Rory McIlroy went from becoming the sixth player with the career Grand Slam to only the fourth player to win the Masters two years in a row. Jack Nicklaus and Tiger Woods are the only other players to occupy both clubs.

Elite company, indeed. If joining the first group wasn't difficult enough for McIlroy — 11 years of trying to get the final leg of the Grand Slam — then winning his second Masters green jacket was a clear reminder of how hard it was to get there.

"I thought it was so difficult to win last year because of trying to win the Masters and the Grand Slam," McIlroy said. "And then this year I realized it's just really difficult to win the Masters."

So where does he go from here? McIlroy went into a funk last year after fulfilling a lifelong dream. He became irritated by endless questions about what would motivate him, which mountain was next to scale, when all he wanted to do was soak it all in. He finally got back on track at the Irish Open.

That doesn't sound like it will be a problem this time around.

"I felt like the Grand Slam was the destination, and I realized it wasn't," McIlroy said after ending another wild Sunday afternoon at Augusta National with a one-shot win over Scottie Scheffler.

"I just won my sixth major, and I feel like I'm in a really good spot with my game and my body," he said. "I don't want to put a number on it, but I feel like this win is just ... I don't want to say a stop on the journey, it's just part of the journey."

Trying to put a number on how many majors he will win began long before he won his first Masters, much less the second one. McIlroy won his first major in the 2011 U.S. Open at Congressional by shattering the 72-hole scoring record at 268.

That prompted Padraig Harrington to say, "If you're going to talk about someone challenging Jack's record, there's your man."

Nicklaus has the gold standard of 18 majors. Woods is next at 15. McIlroy is at six, tied with Nick Faldo, Lee Trevino and Phil Mickelson.

Fred Couples piled on this week when he said on Thursday, "By the way, Rory may never lose this thing again after last year." And the following day Couples added, "I mean, he really could win five more of these."

Easy, right? "Yeah, I don't make it easy," McIlroy said. "I used to make it easy back in my early 20s when I was winning these things by eight shots."

He still holds the PGA Championship record for margin of victory when he won at Kiawah Island by eight shots in 2012, the year after his eight-shot victory at Congressional.

"No, it's just hard. It's



Rory McIlroy celebrates after winning his second straight Masters Tournament Sunday in Augusta, Ga.

Gerald Herbert | AP Photo

hard to win golf tournaments, especially around here," he said. "You've had maybe a couple of runaway winners over the years, but it always seems to be a very tight finish at this golf course."

It wasn't easy a year ago when he lost a Sunday lead once on the front nine and twice on the back nine before beating Justin Rose in a playoff. And it didn't look that way this time when he lost a six-shot lead on Saturday, and then twice found himself two shots behind different players, Cameron Young on the front nine and Justin Rose on the back.

Scottie Scheffler was in range and had to settle for making 11 straight pars. Young had birdie putts on eight straight holes on the back nine

and converted none of them.

And then McIlroy was a whisker away from trouble over the final hour — the wedge that barely cleared the false front on the 15th, a sporty up-and-down from off the 17th green that gave him a two-shot cushion going to the last hole, and a drive so far right McIlroy wasn't sure where it was when he walked off the tee.

It ended with more joy than relief, a big difference from a year ago. The only tears came when he spoke to his parents, who were not at Augusta a year ago and had to be persuaded to come this year because they didn't want to jinx him.

With a bogey on the last hole he could afford, it ended with a one-shot

advantage over Scheffler, the No. 1 player in the world. This was the first time since the 2002 U.S. Open the top two players in the world — Woods and Phil Mickelson at Bethpage Black — were the top two at a major.

McIlroy and Scheffler have combined to win four of the last five majors. Scheffler is a U.S. Open short of joining the career Grand Slam club, and his position at No. 1 in the world is not threatened even after McIlroy's latest Masters title.

"I've competed against him for a long time, and you don't win the amount of tournaments that he's won out here without being pretty resilient," Scheffler said.

McIlroy is the first player since Adam Scott in 2013 to have taken three

weeks off before winning the Masters. There's a sense that will be part of his plan going forward when possible. He felt like more than an honorary member as many trips as he took to Augusta in the last few weeks.

"I think it's a good blueprint," McIlroy said. "I'm not going to take three weeks off before every major. ... When I've talked to Jack Nicklaus over the years how he prepared for majors, and he would go the week before, and he would simulate a tournament."

"I think that's certainly a good way to prepare going into the next majors."

The next one starts May 15, another stop in the journey without needing to set a target for how many.

## RCC

From page 1B

Wall and Carela each homered, while Miller, Jackson and Nemo Chavis drove in key runs.

Davin Roush earned the win, with Noonan, Jackson, Wall, Miller and Chavis all collecting multiple hits. Ty Lee added three walks.

RCC plays Fayetteville Tech at 6 p.m. Wednesday at Segra

Stadium. The Diamond Eagles will then travel to Bryant and Stratton for a three-game weekend series, with a doubleheader Saturday beginning at 12 p.m. and a single game on Sunday, also at 12 p.m.

**Attorney JENNIFER A. CLAY**  
"LEGAL ANGEL"  
PERSONAL INJURY

411 N Elm Street 910-720-5028  
Lumberton, NC 28358 attorneyjaclay@gmail.com

**SUBSCRIBE TODAY**  
Current news and great deals delivered right to your door!

**RHCC**  
Your Health Care Guardian  
www.rhcchealth.org

**ACCEPTING NEW PATIENTS**

**HEALTH CENTERS**  
Dr. A.J. ROBINSON HEALTH CENTER (910) 370-0815  
\* JULIAN T. PIERCE HEALTH CENTER (910) 521-2816 | (910) 521-2876 Pharmacy  
MAXTON MEDICAL CENTER (910) 644-5253  
\* RED SPRINGS HEALTH CENTER (910) 227-2850 | (910) 586-0030 Pharmacy  
\* SCOTLAND HEALTH CENTER (910) 628-6711 | (910) 535-1003 Pharmacy  
\* SOUTH ROBESON MEDICAL CENTER (910) 241-5042  
ST. PAULS HEALTH CENTER (910) 241-5042  
LUMBERTON HEALTH CENTER (910) 739-1666 | (910) 674-3174 Pharmacy  
\* Locations with Pharmacy Services

**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH FACILITIES**  
• GRACE COURT (910) 618-9912  
• CAMBRIDGE PLACE (910) 988-8114  
• THE VILLAGE (252) 752-5555  
• OUR HOUSE (910) 521-1464  
• MEN'S RECOVERY HOME (910) 738-6545

**FAIRMONT FAMILY DENTAL**  
210 South Walnut Street Fairmont, NC 28340 Phone: 910-668-6534

**RED SPRINGS WALK IN**  
Unexpected injuries and illnesses  
302 Mt. Tabor Road Red Springs, NC 28377  
Phone: (910) 227-2850  
Monday-Friday (10am-7pm)  
Saturday and Sunday (10am-2pm)

Providing Mental Health & Substance Use Disorder Services at all Health Centers.

*"Your Health is our highest priority, let us be your Health Care Guardian"*  
Robeson Health Care Corporation Corporate Headquarters  
60 Commerce Plaza Circle • Pembroke, NC 28372 Ph: (910) 521-2900  
To learn more about  
<https://www.rhcchealth.org/>

**CASH IN**  
**ON YOUR YARD SALE**

Planning a yard sale?  
Boost your profits with an ad in the Classifieds. It's an easy and affordable way to bring more business to your door!

## ROBESON COUNTY ATHLETIC SPOTLIGHT

**PURNELL SWETT HIGH SCHOOL**

**DAKOTA LOCKLEAR**  
Baseball

In just his third varsity appearance, Purnell Swett sophomore Dakota Locklear pitched 5 1/3 scoreless innings against St. Pauls as the Rams came from behind to earn a 6-5 win in the Robeson County Slugfest semifinals. He allowed two hits and no walks with four strikeouts, earning All-Tournament honors for the tournament runners-up.

**PURNELL SWETT HIGH SCHOOL**

**BRACI WOODS**  
Softball, Volleyball

Purnell Swett's Braci Woods was the Robeson County Slugfest MVP, allowing just two earned runs over 15 innings pitched through three tournament games. This includes five innings without a hit allowed in a first-round win over Heide Trask and a three-inning shutout of St. Pauls. She is 8-4 with a 1.56 ERA this season.

# Dallas Wings select Azzi Fudd of UConn No. 1 in WNBA draft

**Doug Feinberg**  
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK — Azzi Fudd is on her way to Dallas as the No. 1 pick in the WNBA draft with a \$500,000 payday waiting for the former UConn star. A record-setting six UCLA players followed her into the league.

“I’m not really sure I have words to describe that feeling, what that meant,” Fudd said of getting drafted. “I don’t think it’s fully sunk in. It’s nothing I could have imagined. The feeling of sitting with my family, with Morgan (Valley), hearing your name called, go up there. Such a surreal feeling.”

Fudd will pair again with former Huskies teammate Paige Bueckers, who was the Wings’ top pick last year. Bueckers — who along with Fudd gave UConn a record seven No. 1 selections — was in attendance at the draft along with Fudd’s Huskies teammates.

“Paige is an incredible player, everyone knows that,” Fudd said. “She’s someone that makes playing basketball with easy.”

UCLA stars Lauren Betts and Gabriela Jaquez went in the top five, a little over a week after leading the Bruins to their first NCAA championship.

Their teammate, Kiki Rice, went sixth to Toronto, the first pick for the expansion franchise. The Tempo chose to have the higher pick in the college draft after winning a coin toss, giving the Portland Fire the top choice in the expansion draft earlier this month.

UCLA broke UConn’s record of having four players drafted in the first round, a mark the Huskies set in 2002,



Pamela Smith | AP Photo  
UConn guard Azzi Fudd poses with WNBA commissioner Cathy Englebert after being selected first overall by the Dallas Wings in the first round of the WNBA Draft Monday in New York.

when Angela Dugalic went ninth to Washington, teaming her again with Betts. And, Gianna Kneepkens was chosen by Connecticut with the last pick of the opening round.

The Bruins later broke the mark for the most players drafted from one team when Charlisce Leger-Walker was selected by Connecticut with the third pick in the second round. Tennessee (1997, 2008), Notre Dame (2019) and South Carolina (2023) held the previous record with five players taken.

The new collective bargaining agreement that was ratified last month gave huge pay raises to rookies. Fudd will make nearly seven-times what Bueckers earned last season as the top choice.

The No. 2 and No. 3 picks will get \$466,913 and \$436,016, respectively.

Second- and third-round picks will make \$270,000 — which is more than the previous maximum salary in the old CBA.

“I’m just blessed and grateful to come at this time,” said No. 8 pick Flau’jae Johnson, who was drafted by Golden State before getting traded to Seattle. “The 30th season. My goal is to leave it better than I found it. It’s a gratitude thing, but also a responsibility thing. I’m taking that with full force.”

Minnesota took Olivia Miles of TCU with the No. 2 pick. Miles decided to stay in college last season instead of enter the WNBA draft. She transferred from Notre Dame to the Horned Frogs. She helped the team reach the Elite Eight for the second consecutive year.

“Deep breath that’s why I got emotional,” Miles said of finishing her journey. “It’s finally here, finally heard my name. This is what this was for.”

After Seattle took Spain center Awa Fam Thiam at No. 3, Washington selected the 6-foot-7 Betts before the Chicago Sky followed with Jaquez, who is the sister of Miami Heat player Jaime Jaquez Jr. She now has family bragging rights not only with a national championship, but also was picked higher than him. Jaime was taken 18th in the NBA draft in 2023.

Portland took Spanish guard Iyana Martin Carrion with its first-ever pick. Indiana took South Carolina’s Raven Johnson with the 10th pick and Washington drafted Cotie McMahon of Ole Miss next.

Connecticut took French player Nell

Angloma with the 12th pick. A second Gamecock went next with Madina Okot drafted by Atlanta. Seattle drafted Duke’s Taina Mair with the 14th choice.

The Sun closed out the first round choosing Kneepkens.

## International flavor

There were 11 international players taken in the draft who didn’t play at a U.S. college, including three in the first round with Fam Thiam, Martin Carrion and Angloma.

Fam Thiam was the highest selected player from Spain ever drafted in the league. Three Spanish players were taken in all.

“Incredibly excited for our country and the global game,” said Marta Suarez, who was drafted by Seattle in the second round before getting traded to Golden State. “The WNBA is growing, attracting talent from all over the world.”

WNBA Commissioner Cathy Englebert said in her pre-draft press conference that the league planned to play either an exhibition game or a regular-season game overseas next year.

## Mother-daughter combo

Fudd and her mother, Katie Smrcka-Duffy Fudd, became the second mother-daughter pair to have been drafted into the WNBA. Smrcka-Duffy Fudd was taken in 2001 by the Sacramento Monarchs in the fourth round, but never played a game. Pam McGee was taken second overall in the 1997 draft, also by Sacramento. Her daughter, Imani McGee-Stafford, was drafted 10th overall by Chicago in 2016.

# Tar Heels’ Caleb Wilson makes 1-and-done leap official as top NBA prospect

Associated Press

CHAPEL HILL — North Carolina freshman Caleb Wilson is headed to the NBA draft after what he called “the most fun year of my life” playing for the Tar Heels.

The program released a video statement Monday from the 6-foot-10 forward regarded as a top prospect in the June draft. That made Wilson’s one-and-done route official, coming after he had posted an “#8out” message on social media late last month indicating he was headed in that anticipated direction.

“I am grateful for the opportunity I had to represent North Carolina,” Wilson said. “Wearing No. 8, running out of that historic tunnel every day for practice and games, and I’m happy to say every day I gave it my all.”

Wilson averaged 19.8 points and 9.4 rebounds in a dynamic season was cut short by injury, first a broken bone in his left hand days after a thrilling win against rival Duke. Then, when he was on the verge of returning, he broke his right thumb in a non-contact drill to end his season on the eve of Round 2 with the Blue Devils.

Still, Wilson was named a second-team Associated Press All-American, a distinction that will ensure that he will be included among the honored jerseys in the Smith Center rafters.

## Stevenson returns, Malone lands transfer

UNC forward Jarin Stevenson will stay in Chapel Hill for the 2026-27 season, he announced Monday afternoon, giving North Carolina an experienced, versatile role player

heading into Year 1 under Michael Malone.

The 6-foot-10 junior from Chapel Hill started 25 games in his first season at North Carolina after transferring from Alabama. He averaged 8.1 points and 4.4 rebounds in 25.8 minutes per game at UNC.

Stevenson scored in double figures 10 times (seven in ACC play) and was one of the Tar Heels’ more reliable two-way options — particularly late in the season. He finished among North Carolina’s top five scorers for the 2025-26 campaign and showed plenty of growth over the course of the season as his confidence grew and physicality improved.

A former North Carolina Gatorade Player of the Year, Stevenson reclassified and skipped his

final year of high school to attend Alabama early.

Stevenson focused on becoming a more consistent player since returning home to Chapel Hill this past offseason. He closed his junior season with improved efficiency, shooting 47.2% overall (including 52.4% over his final nine games entering the NCAA Tournament) after shooting 42.9% in his year prior at Alabama.

His return will help stabilize UNC’s frontcourt for the upcoming season. And it’s only one piece of major North Carolina roster news as the Tar Heels have closed in on their first transfer portal addition under Michael Malone.

North Carolina landed a significant addition in the transfer portal with the commitment of Neoklis Avdalas, per multiple

reports Monday.

Avdalas is a versatile 6-foot-9 guard and rising sophomore who immediately bolsters the Tar Heels’ backcourt. The former Virginia Tech standout averaged 12.1 points, 4.6 assists and 3.1 rebounds last season, starting all 31 games he played for the Hokies while ranking among the ACC’s top playmakers. His combination of size, scoring ability and vision — he ranked eighth in the ACC in assists per game — made him one of the most sought-after players in the portal.

A native of Kalamata, Greece, Avdalas brings a professional background

that sets him apart. Before arriving in the ACC, he developed with Panathinaikos and earned Greek League Best Young Player honors in 2024 and 2025, along with Most Improved Player in 2025. That experience translated quickly to the college level, highlighted by multiple 30-point performances, including a 33-point outing against Providence.

Avdalas’ ability to handle, create and defend

multiple positions raises UNC’s ceiling entering the 2026-27 season and signals a strong start to Malone’s offseason roster building.

Luka Bogovac decided to enter the transfer portal, per multiple reports, over the weekend. Bogovac, a 6-foot-6 junior from Mojkovac, Montenegro, played in all 33 games for the Tar Heels last season, averaging 9.8 points, 2.5 rebounds and 2.2 assists in 24.3 minutes per game.

**Lincoln Heritage Funeral Advantage**

**Kary Wilkins Insurance Group**  
Regional Manager  
**Your Final Expense Solution**  
2175 N Roberts Ave, Ste. 203  
Lumberton, NC 28358  
**910-374-4523**  
pastorkarywilkins@yahoo.com

Welcome to your local Farm Bureau Insurance Agency!

**FARM BUREAU INSURANCE**  
Auto • Home • Life • Health • Bank

**ROBESON COUNTY**  
302 Bailey Road  
Lumberton NC 28358  
Monday-Friday  
8:30am-5:00pm

**FARM BUREAU BANK**  
1.866.645.8123  
farmbureaubank.com  
**(910) 738-7171**  
**(910) 521-3131**  
www.ncfbins.com

**DILLON TIRE SUPERSTORE**

- Lift Kits
- Leveling Kits
- Toolboxes
- B&W Hitches
- On-Site Mechanic
- Alignments
- Bed Covers

LET US TAKE CARE OF ALL YOUR AUTOMOTIVE NEEDS!  
306 E. Main St., Dillon, SC 29536  
**(843)-774-2146**

**POLARIS THE 2026 LINEUP HAS ARRIVED**

**YAMAHA OF LUMBERTON**

CHECK OUT OUR LOCAL INVENTORY. VISIT US AT:  
4401 FAYETTEVILLE ROAD  
LUMBERTON, NC 28358  
(910) 738-1454  
WWW.YAMAHAOFLUMBERTON.COM

Voted Best Florist in Robeson County

**Flowers By Billy**

Come Visit Our Vast Showroom Selection of Seasonal Designs and Beautiful Live Plants

2101-A North Pine St. • Lumberton • (910) 738-2279

**50 Years of Service**

**Southern Heating & A/C, Inc.**

**910-738-7000**  
www.southernheatingandac.biz

**PROUDLY SERVING ROBESON COUNTY**  
NOT FOR PROFIT PUTTING YOUR NEEDS FIRST

**When needed, Morrison Manor provides 24-hour inpatient care to keep your loved one close and out of the hospital.**

Morrison Manor is available to any Scotland Regional Hospice patient, who meets the criteria for inpatient care, regardless of the county they reside in.

A non-profit hospice provider since 1986

Proudly offering in-home care to residents of Robeson County

Accredited by the Accreditation of Commission for Health Care (ACHC).

Recognized by Strategic Healthcare Programs (SHP) as a ‘Superior Performer’ for providing high quality service to families and caregivers of patients receiving hospice care.



**“A Special Kind of Caring”**  
610 Lauchwood Drive  
Laurinburg, NC 28352  
(910)276-7176  
scotlandhospice.org

# Gibbs is having fun as a new NASCAR Cup winner while trying to maintain his low profile

Nate Ryan  
Associated Press

BRISTOL, Tenn. — Ty Gibbs has a famous last name and has spent much of his life in the spotlight, recently being unwittingly thrust into the center of a contentious court case.

The attention is less than comfortable for the grandson of Joe Gibbs, a Hall of Fame legend as a championship team owner in NASCAR and a Super Bowl-winning coach in the NFL.

"Yeah, I feel like I could be a lot bigger in the community than what I am," Ty Gibbs said about his place in NASCAR after his first career victory Sunday at Bristol Motor Speedway. "I just enjoy privacy. I don't really want to show off a lot, too. I just enjoy training on my bike, getting strong, working hard during the week. I'm not here to be a moving billboard. I don't really care. I don't have any social media on my phone at the moment. I just really enjoy racing and focusing on myself."

The focus at Bristol was squarely on the 23-year-old after he deftly fended off NASCAR champions Ryan Blaney and Kyle Larson on a two-lap overtime restart. The relief of finally breaking through in his 131st Cup start was evident. Gibbs celebrated by playfully crashing his grandfather's national TV interview and handing the checkered flag to his mother, Heather, before giving her a ride to victory lane in the No. 54 Toyota.

"It's just a thrill to see this happen because I don't know how to explain it," said Joe Gibbs, who has half of his eight grandchildren working at Joe Gibbs Racing, the team he founded 35 years ago. "It's just a special feeling for all of us. I called my wife, and she's crying. The whole family is crying. We love this. We really appreciate what today meant to us and the family."



Wade Payne | AP Photo  
Ty Gibbs, front right, celebrates with the trophy after winning Sunday's NASCAR Cup Series race in Bristol, Tenn.

The narrative was positive for the Gibbs organization, which has been ensnared in some unflattering headlines after suing former competition director Chris Gabehart for breach of contract.

In a court filing, Gabehart said he expressed "serious concerns" about team management after he felt pressured to help Ty Gibbs (and was moved to the No. 54 pit box to call strategy). Gabehart said Gibbs "was not held to the same meeting attendance standards as others on the team."

After the Bristol win, Gibbs made multiple references to "people saying false things" (without naming Gabehart) and steadfastly reaffirmed his work ethic.

"I've stayed after it the whole time," Gibbs said. "Obviously, people are going to say false things about how I wasn't present in meetings. I've been the same the whole time, just to clarify that."

But others have noticed a change in his demeanor. To defuse the driver's frustration during races, crew chief Tyler Allen said "a huge focus" entering 2026 was on keeping it fun because a "loose, fun Ty is a fast Ty."

During a stretch of four consecutive finishes of sixth or better before Bristol, Gibbs impressed his teammates by speaking up in debriefs with helpful advice.

"He's been in a good mood," JGR driver Christopher Bell said. "He's happy. Ty is killing it. It's fun to see his confidence is literally radiating from him. He's really switched on right now. He's taken a huge step, and he's a joy to be around right now."

Gibbs, who was involved in a run-in last year with teammate Denny Hamlin, was a little defensive about whether he had changed that much.

"I've always had fun," he said. "I think that's taken out of turn. I truly enjoy the

position I'm in. Obviously, being around such a great group of people is so much fun. These guys love racing as much as I do, or even more, and I know I love it a lot."

Joe Gibbs hopes more people see that side of his grandson.

"He's really, really got a good sense of humor," Gibbs said. "We laugh all the time. I think the farther we go in this sport, hopefully, his personality and everything come out, the kind of kid he is. When I'm around him, he's fun."

## Pit crew woes

Bristol runner-up Blaney's pit crew ranked 32nd of 37 teams in Sunday's race, raising questions about how long Team Penske can stay patient with a group that has squandered more than 80 positions on pit stops over the past seven races.

"We've got to get better for sure," said Blaney, who lost seven spots on two mediocre pit stops midrace at Bristol. "If we're going to keep competing and get cars that can win, we've got to clean that up."

## Hendrick struggles

A Martinsville Speedway win didn't provide much momentum for Chase Elliott, who finished 22nd after starting 18th. Teammates William Byron (30th) and Alex Bowman (37th) also struggled for Hendrick Motorsports, which has 13 top 10s among its four drivers through eight races.

Hendrick vice chairman Jeff Gordon addressed the slow start before Sunday's race. "We're being challenged right now, not that I don't like it, but also I love it because I know what we're capable of, and I love watching us do the climb," Gordon said. "It teaches us things about ourselves, and I think it only makes us stronger."

**HIS and HER**  
GREENHOUSE, INC.

Locally Grown Seasonal Vegetables!

910-739-2235  
2278 E. Powersville Rd., Lumberton, NC 28358

**DO YOU WANT TO AVOID KNEE SURGERY?**  
WE HELP THOSE WHO SUFFER BEFORE OR AFTER KNEE SURGERY

If you are experience any of the following

- Aching Knee Pain
- Grinding Sensation
- "Bone on bone"
- Arthritis
- Tendonitis
- Bursitis
- Cartilage Damage
- Weakness in your knees
- Sharp/Shooting Pain
- Muscles Spasms
- Burning

**LUMBERTON LASER PAIN CENTER**  
Affiliated with Dial Chiropractic  
Accident & Injury Center  
910-802-4034

**Adelio's**  
Italian-American Ristorante

Mention This Ad And Enjoy 5% Off Your Dinner Order Over \$30 Carry Out Or Dine In

111 West 3<sup>rd</sup> St • Lumberton, NC • (910) 671-4747

## Touch of Healing Hands Home Care, LLC.

IN GOD WE TRUST



"A Commitment To Quality"

## SERVICES PROVIDED

- Personal Care Service (PCS)
- Community Alternative Program for Disabled Adults (CAP-DA)
- Community Alternative Program for Disabled Children (CAP-C)
- Veteran Care Program (VA)
- Private Pay In-House Aide Services

## NOW SERVING 12 COUNTIES

Robeson, Hoke, Bladen, Scotland, New Hanover, Wake, Cumberland, Lee, Columbus, Moore, Richmond, and Harnett



Allow Us To be Your First Choice For Home Care!

LET'S TALK!

910.674.3057

325 East 4th St, Lumberton, NC 28358

www.touchofhealinghandshomecare.com

JOIN OUR TEAM TODAY!

NOW HIRING AVAILABLE POSITIONS CNA'S & PCA'S

\$15.00/hr - \$20.00/hr

SCAN ME

