YOUR NONPROFIT, COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER SINCE 1997

The Fairview Town Crier

NOVEMBER 2026 VOL. 30, No. 11 | FAIRVIEW, NC | fairviewtowncrier.com



Fairview Christmas Parade Set for Charlotte Highway

SAVE THE DATE!
December 12

The Fairview community, led by Cory Wall, came together after Helene to organize a holiday parade that reflected the spirit of unity and resilience our community displayed after the storm. Last year's parade, on Charlotte Highway, was a big success, but the organizers needed the county's approval to use the highway route again this year. And just like in 2024, our community members, once again led by Cory Wall, showed their spirit by making the case to the county. And, so, holiday floats will be back on Fairview's main drag next month!

Businesses, churches, civic groups, schools, families and other community members can start planning floats and other parade entries. Volunteers are also needed to help make the event run smoothly, from organizing participants to assisting with event-day logistics and cleanup. Local businesses and individuals can help by sponsoring the parade or making donations to offset the costs of putting it on.

For information about participating, volunteering, sponsorships and donations, visit corywall.exprealty.com/fairview-christmas-parade. The *Crier*'s December issue will have a more detailed guide, with additional information to help participants and spectators prepare for the big day.

We're Brewing Something New!

We're making room for a little more conversation in Fairview! Introducing the Crier's Coffee Corner, a new opportunity to connect with the *Town Crier* in a relaxed, informal setting.

Starting this month, Lisa, our community engagement manager, will settle in at a local café on the second Monday of alternating months, ready to chat about all things Fairview. Have an idea for a story? A question about the paper? Something happening in the community you think we should know about? We'd love to hear it.

No agenda, no presentations, and no need to RSVP. Just stop by when you can, pull up a chair, and join the conversation. Whether you have something to share or simply want to meet a neighbor or two, you're more than welcome.

Watch for announcements of upcoming dates and locations. We hope to see you over coffee!



Join Lisa for a cuppa!

November Crier Coffee Corner
Monday, Nov. 9, 8–9:30 am
Daymoon Coffee & Books
381 Old Charlotte Highway

A Little Ornament with a Lasting Memory

by Betty Lynne Leary







One of the best things about prepping for the holidays each year is unpacking decorations that hold special memories. For Jenny Brunet, owner of Cool Mountain Realty & Construction and a long-time advertiser with the *Fairview Town Crier*, unwrapping one particular Christmas ornament each year always makes her smile.

The ornament was hand painted in 1999 by Terri Hornsby, who helped launch the *Town Crier* in 1997. Hornsby (shown at right) played a pivotal role in finding advertisers to get the publication rolling. As a small thank you, she painted ornaments for all the advertisers that year. Hornsby, who passed away in 2018, was a lively character who, according to Brunet, threw her heart and soul into every project she tackled and especially so with the *Crier*. Brunet places the special ornament on her tree each year and wonders if any other *Crier* advertisers still have theirs. If you do, please send us a photo, as we'd love to share!

Help the Crier Keep Fairview Connected

Life feels busier these days, and most of us have a lot to juggle. Finding the time to get involved in the community or help bring people together can be a challenge.

That's one reason the *Crier* is here. We want to make it easier to stay connected to what's happening in Fairview and to support the people, businesses and activities that make this community feel special.

This year, we've been working on a number of ways to do just that. Here are a few examples:

- Adding almost 1,000 households in Reynolds to our coverage area (and the printing and mailing costs that go along with that).
- Helping to sponsor movie nights at Spring Mountain Community Center.
- Sponsoring the Fairview Farm Friday events at Root Cause Farm.
- Holding an event at the Fairview Library so that readers can meet our staff and writers.
- Paying local writers to cover our business community.
- Hosting the Fairview Christmas Parade.

DONATE TODAY!
Your support matters

- **Online** tinyurl.com/donateftc
- **Mail** The Fairview Town Crier
  PO Box 1862
  Fairview, NC 28730
- **Drop** Blue dropbox at 1185 Charlotte Highway (between ESCO and Urgent Care)

Producing a free newspaper and supporting community activities takes resources, and costs keep rising. We've worked hard to keep the paper free for readers and advertising affordable for businesses. If you value what the *Crier* brings to Fairview, please consider making a donation. Every contribution helps us keep the paper going and to continue supporting and promoting the community we love.

— Clark Aycock, editor and publisher

The Town Crier is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All donations are tax-deductible.

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COMMUNITY EVENTS & UPDATES

All events in Fairview unless noted.

ANNOUNCEMENTS
New Parkinson's Single Social Group looking for members. Meet for coffee, dinner and events in the spirit of creating community and support. Call Tess at 450-9304.

NOVEMBER 1, 1–2 PM
Origami Fun for Kids at Turgua Brewing. First Sunday of every month. For more info, visit turguabrewing.com. 3131 Cane Creek Rd. $10 per child.

NOVEMBER 1, 1–5 PM
Garren Creek Market, first Sunday of the month at the Garren Creek Community Barn. 1198 Garren Creek Road. For more info, go to garrencreek.org. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 3, 6:30 PM
WNC Prostate Support Group. Medical professional speakers. Free via ZOOM and First Baptist Church of Asheville. 5 Oak Street, Asheville. wncprostate@gmail.com.

NOVEMBER 3, 4–5 PM
Elderflower Community Dementia Support Group. First Tuesdays. For those with dementia and those supporting loved ones. elderflowercommunity.org. 1611 Charlotte Hwy. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 6, 3–4:30 PM
Community Engagement Market. A free farmers' market-style food distribution from MANNA FoodBank, along with community resources. Everyone needs a little extra help sometimes, and there's no income requirement or judgment, just fresh food and neighbors helping neighbors. At the library, 1 Taylor Rd.

NOVEMBER 7, 12–4 PM
Moving On Sale at Wilderness Muse. Rummage-style sale with knickknacks, market vendor displays, and lots more. 1536 Cane Creek Road. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 7, 5:30–7 PM
Garren Creek Fire Department Turkey Dinner. Everyone is welcome and donations are accepted. Fundraiser for the Auxiliary, supporting firefighters and rescue workers. For more information, call or text Elizabeth Simmonds at 230-3986. 10 Flat Creek Road.

NOVEMBER 9, 2 PM
Fairview residents support Stitches of Love, a small group of stitchers creating handmade items that are donated to local charities. For more information, call Janet at 575-9195. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 9, 6:30 PM
Spring Mountain Community Center monthly board meeting. Open to the public. 807 Old Fort Rd.

NOVEMBER 13, 7 PM
Live Music with John Keck Band at The Joint Next Door. 1185 Charlotte Hwy. On Facebook, search "The Joint Next Door" for more info and other events. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 14, 11 AM–4 PM
8th Annual Sausage Festival at Hickory Nut Gap. Oktoberfest and fall-themed costumes encouraged. Visit hickorynutgap.com for more information and registration. 57 Sugar Hollow Rd. $12 to attend.

NOVEMBER 14, 9 AM–2 PM
Gift Fair at the Fairview Community Center. Lots of new vendors, free parking, lunch for purchase, 50/50 raffle. 1357 Charlotte Hwy. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 14, 10 AM–3 PM
Rusty Dog Arts & Craft Show. Featuring local vendors and crafters. 379 Charlotte Hwy. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 17, 6:30–8:30 PM
Trivia Night at Whistle Hop Brewery. Every Tuesday with new topics and prizes. 1290 Charlotte Hwy. FREE to play.

NOVEMBER 19, 6 PM
Community Dinner and Barn Jam at the Garren Creek Foundation Barn. 1198 Garren Creek Rd. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 20, 4–6 PM
The Brue at Cultivated Cocktails. Visit cultivatedcocktails.com for more information. 161 Charlotte Hwy., Asheville. FREE to attend.

NOVEMBER 21, 5:30 PM
Annual Thanksgiving Meal at Bethany United Methodist Church. Meal and fellowship are free. Bring a dish to share, but not required. Call 691-0611 for more information. 212 Bethany Church Road

NOVEMBER 28, 12–2 PM
Terramonga Tunes: Pickin' on the Porch, a weekly live music series every Saturday. 14 Bonn E Ln. On Facebook, search "Terramonga Store and Deli" for more information. FREE to attend.

Support the Angels of Fairview

from the board of Angels of Fairview

The holidays are a time for sharing a good meal and making memories with the people we love. Through its Annual Holiday Meal Drive, Angels of Fairview helps make that possible for local families who could use a little extra support this season.

A $70 donation provides a complete holiday meal for a family, including a 10- to 12-pound turkey, two side dishes, rolls and dessert. Your generosity can help ensure that more Fairview families have a special meal to share this holiday season.

Every donation makes a difference. Tax-deductible contributions are accepted through December 31. You can send a donation to your child's FES or CCMS teacher, mail a check payable to "Angels of Fairview" to PO Box 94, Fairview, NC 28730, or donate online at angelsoffairview.org/donate.

We have been able to fund our endeavors because of your generous donations. From our family to yours, thank you for your continued support of Angels of Fairview! Contact Laura Booth at 216-6002 or Jennifer Gortney at 775-0488 with any questions.

The Fairview community remains in our hearts and prayers as we continue to recover from Hurricane Helene. Fairview Strong!

Angels of Fairview is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization made up of community members dedicated to helping local families in need. Families are referred through the counseling departments at Fairview and Cane Creek Schools. Assistance ranges from holiday meals and gifts to help with essential expenses, including electricity bills, car repairs, prescriptions and eyeglasses. We have also supported families recovering from house fires and continue to assist residents affected by Hurricane Helene.

In 2026, Angels of Fairview has helped meet a variety of needs in the community, including:

- Providing new clothing for the Cardinal Care Closet;
- Supplying students with educational and sensory-support materials, including noise-canceling headphones;
- Covering school-related expenses, such as field trips and media costs;
- Providing alarm clocks to help students establish morning routines;
- Assisting families with head lice treatment and home insect extermination;
- Providing Thanksgiving and Christmas meals for families;
- Sponsoring holiday gifts for children and families.

FOOD PANTRIES

Food for Fairview, Fairview Community Center, 1357 Charlotte Hwy., Fairview. Mondays 3–6 pm.

Root Cause Farm, 26 Joe Jenkins Rd., Fairview. Tuesdays 3–4:30 pm.

Garren Creek Foundation, 1198 Garren Creek Rd., Tuesdays 4:30–6:30 pm.

Trinity of Fairview, 646 Concord Rd., Fletcher. Wednesdays 9 am–12 pm.

The Place Fellowship Church, 2 Laura Jackson Rd., Fairview. Wednesdays 4–5 pm.

MORE EVENTS ARE LISTED IN OUR ONLINE CALENDAR
@ FAIRVIEWTOWNCRIER.COM

IDENTIFICATION STATEMENT The Fairview Town Crier is a 501 (c) (3) company that publishes a monthly community newspaper. Twelve issues per year are delivered free on or about the first of every month to around 11,000 households. Distribution is limited to Fairview, Gerton, and contiguous parts of Reynolds and Fletcher, NC.

The Fairview Town Crier may be reached by mail at PO Box 1862, Fairview, North Carolina 28730. Correspondence, submissions and payments may also be placed in our dropbox at 1185-H Charlotte Highway, Fairview. Subscriptions may be purchased for $35 per year and will be mailed First Class postage on or about the first of each publication month. Visit fairviewtowncrier.com for details or to order online. For additional info, please visit fairviewtowncrier.com or see page 31.

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A Full November Lineup

We enjoyed seeing so many of you at Fairview Public Library during early voting! We're glad our community room could serve as a gathering place for this important civic activity, and we look forward to welcoming you back for books, programs and time together.

Our November lineup includes a favorite community event, the WNC Repair Cafe's Sewing and Mending Clinic, along with storytimes, a stuffed animal sleepover, creative activities, book discussions, and more. Our programs are free, and everyone is welcome!

The library will be closed on Wednesday, November 11, for Veterans Day.

YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

Ongoing Programs for Little Ones

Baby Play Time
Wednesdays, 10:30–11:30 am.
For babies ages 4–24 months and their caregivers.

Preschool Story Time
Thursdays, 10:30–11:30 am.
For ages 3–6.

Toddler Story Time
Fridays, 9:30–10:30 am.
For ages 18 months–3 years.

Afternoon Art Experience *Friday, November 13, 3:30–4:30 pm.* Learn about artists and their work and dabble in a variety of art media. Participants will leave each session with artwork of their own creation.

Fire Safety for Kids *Saturday, November 14, 2–3 pm.* Meet local firefighters, tour a fire truck, and learn about fire safety with the Fairview Fire Department. This fun, informative program is designed for kids and their grown-ups.

Stuffed Animal Slumber Party *Wednesday, November 18.* Send your favorite stuffed animal or doll on an overnight library adventure! Drop off one stuffie between 9 am and 6 pm on Wednesday, November 18. Pick it up on Saturday, November 21, between 9 am and 5 pm. We'll send your friend home with photos of their library shenanigans! Please choose a stuffie you can do without for a couple of days.

ADULT & TEEN PROGRAMS

Tech Support *Weekly on Wednesdays, 10 am–12 pm.* Having trouble with your phone, laptop, tablet, Kindle or an app? Stop by for free, one-on-one basic tech help with Angie. She can help you get started with Libby, access our NC Cardinal library catalog, and navigate smartphone quirks. Please arrive by 11:30 am. Help is first come, first served. Bring your account username and password if needed.

Mindfulness Meditation *Weekly on Thursdays, 3–4:30 pm.* Explore practical tools for well-being by building awareness of your body, mind and emotions. Instructor Dr. Mattie Decker teaches mindfulness meditation and mindfulness-based stress reduction. Wear comfortable clothing and bring a towel or yoga mat. A limited number of mats are available.

Book Club *Wednesday, November 4, 6 pm, online; Friday, November 6, 11 am, in person.* Join us to discuss Crying in H Mart by Michelle Zauner, a moving memoir about family, grief, food and Korean-American identity. Newcomers are always welcome. Email jen.waite@buncombenc.gov for the online meeting link.

Paper Play, Decoupage on Glass *Tuesday, November 10, 1–3 pm.* Create decorative lanterns from repurposed glass containers and colorful tissue or napkin paper. Materials are provided, and clean jars from home are welcome. Registration is full, but you can ask to join the waitlist. The same class will be offered again on Wednesday, December 2, with separate registration.

WNC Repair Cafe Sewing and Mending Clinic *Thursday, November 12, 4–7 pm.* One of our favorite events! Have a shirt with a hole, a missing button, curtains that need hemming, or a stuffed animal that needs repair? Skilled volunteers will help with sewing and mending. Repairs are free, though not guaranteed. This is a drop-in event, first come, first served. Please arrive before 6:15 pm. To volunteer, email wncrepaircafe@gmail.com.

Fairview Library Fiber Arts Club *Thursday, November 12, 5–7 pm.* Bring your knitting, crochet or other fiber craft and enjoy an evening with fellow enthusiasts. This is a casual social gathering, not an instructional class. Newcomers are welcome!

Grief 101 *Tuesday, November 17, 10–11 am.* Four Seasons presents a free community program exploring grief, common misconceptions and healthy ways to navigate loss.

Intro to Rhythm and Drumming *Tuesday, November 17, 4–5 pm.* Join us for a free, guided hand-drum session exploring the foundations of rhythm. No experience is needed. This program is best suited for ages 12 and up. Registration is required to reserve a drum, but you don't need to register if you bring your own.

Jen Waite is the branch manager of the Fairview Public Library. Contact her at Jen.Waite@buncombecounty.org or call 250-6496.

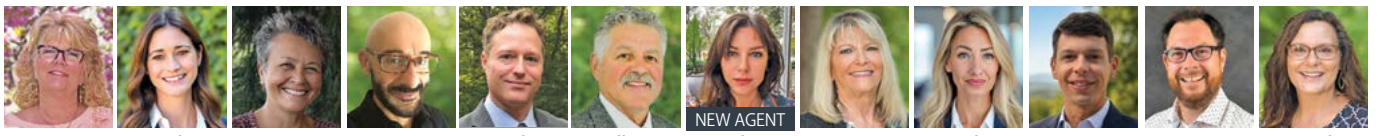


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NEW LISTING **ASHEVILLE** $429,900



3 BR/2 BA | 1,070 SQ FT | .22 ACRES

NEW LISTING **ASHEVILLE** $325,000



4 BR/2 BA | 1,539 SQ FT | 1+ ACRES

NEW LISTING! **FLETCHER** $450,000



3 BR/2 BA | 1,274 SQ FT | 1 ACRE

NEW LISTING! **FAIRVIEW** $420,000



2 BR/2 BA | 1,745 SQ FT | 1.1 ACRES

COMMERCIAL **ASHEVILLE** $1,200,000



3,000 SQ FT | .53 ACRES

REDUCED **FAIRVIEW** $699,000



3 BR/3 BA | 3,173 SQ FT | 1.38 ACRES

COMMERCIAL **FAIRVIEW** $300,000



700 SQ FT | 1.4 ACRES

TOWNHOUSE **ARDEN** $215,000



2 BR/1.5 BA | 1,006 SQ FT | .02 ACRES

• LUXURY!

REDUCED **FLETCHER** $1,200,000

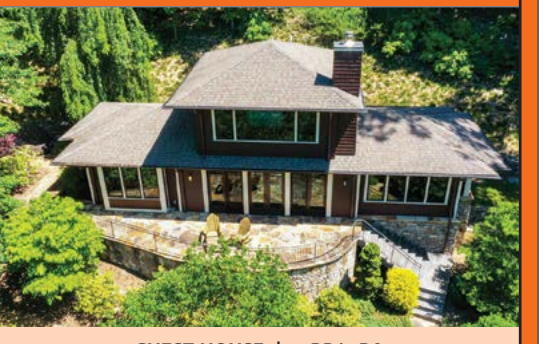


5 BR/3.5 BA | 3,814 SQ FT | 1.5 ACRE

REDUCED **ASHEVILLE** $1,550,000



MAIN HOUSE | 2 BR/2 BA



GUEST HOUSE | 2 BR/1 BA

• LAND LISTINGS

21 ACRES, CITY WATER, PUBLIC SEWER, FLETCHER, $2,000,000

31 ACRES, LANSING, NC $240,000

2.90 ACRES MARS HILL $65,000

10 ACRES OFF 74A $979,000

1.62 ACRES, MARS HILL $35,000

1.28 ACRES, MARS HILL REDUCED $30,000

2.93 ACRES, FAIRVIEW $55,000

1.79 ACRES, FAIRVIEW FOREST 1,200 min square feet to build, $79,900

LAND **FLETCHER** $687,000



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Music and Musicians of Fairview

Welcome to a brand new column in the *Town Crier.* Among other things (like being a father and geologist), I am a musician and music promoter, and someone keenly interested in building community. This column will be dedicated to highlighting musicians, musical events and musical places that help make Fairview the wonderful place that it is—an unincorporated rural hamlet with a unique sense of community.

Wherever I've lived, I've found that the flourishing of a robust local, live music scene corresponds directly with the strength of the sense of community. For example, all over Britain, one can find open jam sessions at a local pub several nights a week. These pubs (public houses) are some of the "third spaces" of a community, where strangers become neighbors until everybody knows your name. (The first and second spaces are work and home—private spaces.)

Fairview is lucky to have not only a bounty of excellent musicians but also "third spaces" for neighbors to gather and get to know each other. One example is Turgua Brewing. Did you know that every Tuesday, Turgua hosts an open jam session with a rotating theme? Doug Norton, who hosts the Americana song circle on the third Tuesday of the month, knows that more than just song-swapping happens at these sessions. "Sometimes a certain song will lead someone to tell a story…we've had some amazing things happen," he recalled.

Shared stories, through music and conversation, are the fabric that create emotional resilience in a community. In the months following Helene, Turgua's sessions became a place for neighbors to gather, process the emotional trauma of the hurricane, find ways to help each other out, and even co-write songs about the experience. Doug co-wrote a song with neighbors Zoe and Cloyd called "Linemen," inspired by the hard work the electrical linemen were doing all over WNC. Singing songs of resilience and hope at community events reminds us that others have come before us and survived tragedy and heartbreak too.

In the aftermath of the storm, community building has happened through live music at Root Cause Farm. Not only during Fairview Farm Fridays, but each Tuesday during the weekly food distribution, live music is provided by volunteer musicians who add a free smile to the faces of children and adults picking up delicious fresh produce. At the Garren Creek Foundation's monthly potluck, a jam session follows the meal. These are some of the musical "third spaces" that exist in our community, helping bring musicians together and providing an emotional depth for the neighbors who have come to eat, drink and get to know each other. I firmly believe that live music adds something precious, fleeting and beautiful to these moments of gathering. Or, at least, the music calls our attention to those things that are already present.

Beyond jam sessions, which are essential for creating shared repertoire and giving novice players opportunities to try new styles and learn from other players, local pub venues like The Joint Next Door are also essential parts of the musical ecosystem. Jay Poe, who manages the bar and books the musical acts, is proud of the fact that they offer quality live music six nights a week. "Fairview is a close-knit community, and we strive to be a small town neighborhood bar," he said. Whereas open jam sessions give musicians a space to build relationships and often give birth to fledgling bands, small, easy-going venues like the The Joint Next Door give those bands opportunities to hone their performance chops and prepare to wow bigger audiences at well-paid, higher-stakes gigs. Jay loves to book up-and-coming local talent and help send them on their way, always ready to welcome them back to Fairview.



John Templeteon

In closing, I hope this column will help Fairviewians better understand the music, musicians and musical "third spaces" that help make our community the special and close-knit place that it is. If you have ideas for future columns, please send me an email at dr.john.templeton@gmail.com.

John Templeton is a professional geologist, and unprofessional theologian, banjo player, soccer teammate and father of James and Eloise. He lives in Fairview.

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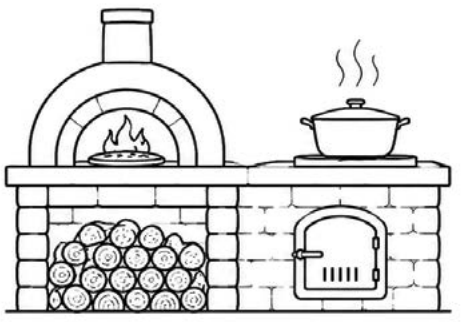


FIREPLACES

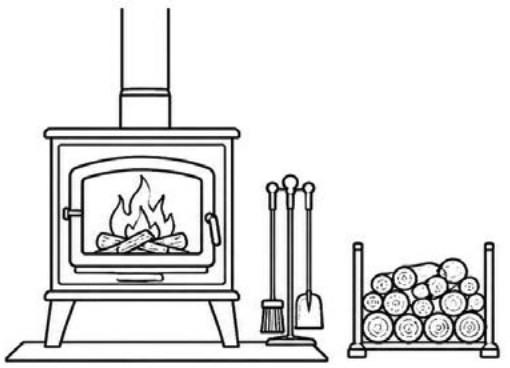
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Isaias Paid a Visit Before Cold Temps Arrived

Sometimes, the weather runs in patterns, and October can be feast or famine for rainfall. Last month, we were impacted by tropical systems that brought some much-needed rainfall, like with Hurricanes Delta and Zeta in October 2020. Hurricane Isaias didn't produce the destructive winds we got from Helene two years ago, but it did dump major rainfall in the region, with many places in Fairview getting 4 to 6 inches. The amounts were less toward Marshall and higher with some flooding in Lake Lure, Old Fort and Marion. Hurricanes or remnant tropical systems are often our rainmakers for October, and if we don't get them, the month can be really dry. Also, one or two cold fronts from Canada crossed the region and brought our first major cold shot, with some lows at night dropping into the 30s along with some scattered frost in the coldest spots. We will continue our slide to more fall and wintry weather in November.

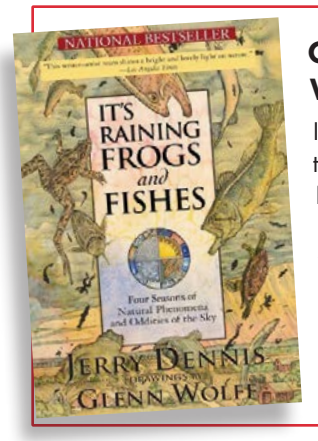
It's not too early to talk about snow. In any given November, about an inch of snow falls across the area. So, on average, we do see some of that white stuff, which happens more toward the middle to end of November. I am reminded of the November 1 snowfall back in 2014, which brought 3 to 5 inches to Fairview.

Average daily high temperatures start around 63 at the beginning of November and drop to 53 by month's end. The lows drop from 40 at the start of the month to a frosty 32. The warmest day on record was 83 degrees on the first of the month in 1950; the coldest was a numbing 8 degrees on the 25th, also in 1950. Precipitation averages about 4 inches in any given November, and this calendar year has been normal to low. We may end up with a year of average-to-below-normal precipitation. Time will tell which side of normal we will be on by the end of the year.

Some of the latest trends and forecasts are predicting a strong El Niño for the winter months. This usually translates to roughly average precipitation and a better chance for below-average temperatures, according to the North Carolina Climate Office. These are just broad-brush comments on the overall winter. Some of the long-range forecasts are also predicting above-normal snowfall. In fact, if you do a web search on "Winter Weather forecast 2026–2027" or something similar, you will find numerous forecasts and probably one to your preference.

Back in the July issue of the Crier, I gave an analysis of two super El Niño winters, in 1982–1983 and 1997–1998. NOAA is predicting this could be the strongest one in the last 75 years. In both years listed above, precipitation for the six-month period was 4 to 5 inches above average, but at different times during the season. Snowfall was between 20 and 24 inches, which is well above the 12-inch average. In 1982–1983, January and February were the snowier months, and in 1997–1998 December and January were. If 2026–2027 is a strong El Niño on par with the two presented above, then we may have a reliable predictor for a cold and snowy winter. At least that's my forecast, so stay tuned. However, meteorologists always have a caveat—a record El Niño raises the chances of these patterns occurring but doesn't lock them in.

CONTEST



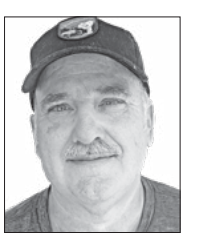
Can you predict when we'll see this Winter's first snowfall?

Instead of a weather question this month, we are featuring a weather forecasting contest. You have until November 15 to send your snowfall guess prediction to fairviewsnowfall@gmail.com. You are guessing which date the first inch of snowfall will be recorded this winter at the Asheville Airport. The person who guesses the date or closest to it will receive a copy of a unique book, *It's Raining Frogs and Fishes*. Good luck, and get those guesses in by November 15!

Last Month's Trivia Question

What is the scientific name for a soft, whispering or sighing sound made by air moving through leaves and branches?

The scientific name for this sound is *psithurism*. This beautiful, lesser-known word comes from the Ancient Greek word psithuros, which means "whispering."



Meteorologist Tom Ross managed the Climate Database Modernization Program at the National Climatic Data Center.

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Thank You for Trying Something New

When I opened Wilderness Muse, I invited this community to try something new with me. Walk into a new shop. Get to know a new artist. Sign up for something you've never done before. Trust your time and attention and creative curiosity with a community that was still finding its footing.

And you did.

You brought friends, came back with family, learned our artists by name and remembered their work. You shared our posts, attended our markets, and made room for us in your lives.

Now, as I prepare to close Wilderness Muse at the end of this year, I keep thinking about everything that happened because people were willing to give something new a chance. And that includes me.

This business has asked me to learn things I never expected to need to know. Opening a storefront, navigating the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Helene only six days later, helping operate a donation center, and finding ways to keep moving through an economically difficult year (to say the least) has forever changed me.

There has been a lot of figuring it out. Late nights, rearranging, recalculating and getting up the next morning to try again. You have been a part of that effort. Volunteers showed up from across town



and across the country to help us care for our neighbors. Artists trusted us with their work and stayed beside us through so much uncertainty. Customers kept finding reasons to visit. My fiancé Gleb stood beside me through the work and worry that happened behind the scenes.

I am grateful for all of it.

In October, we tried something new again: Fairview's Own Candle Bar. We invested in equipment and supplies with careful thought because we wanted to give people another way to enjoy this place and experience the creativity that fills it up. I pictured a dining room table during the holidays where someone pulls up another chair as a conversation gets going. I wanted people who have been busy to finally sit down together and create.

At the candle bar, you choose a vessel, take a seat and explore fragrances. You smell, compare and experiment until you find a combination you love. We guide you through measuring, mixing, time, temperature and pouring. You don't need to know anything about making candles—you just learn as you go! It's a bar-style experience where everyone makes at their own pace, you can mingle, ask questions, and take your time deciding.

Moments like this are still available in our shop through the end of the year, and they have brought me so much joy.

Trying something new can feel surprisingly vulnerable as an adult. We are used to knowing what we're doing, or at least trying to look like we do. It feels good to have a place where you can ask a basic question, experiment and enjoy being a beginner.

As we head into the holidays, I hope that our table gives you time with someone you love. I hope that you make each other gifts or come on your own and enjoy a conversation that you didn't expect. Maybe you'll discover that you like making things more than you remembered.

Wilderness Muse will remain open through December. Making the decision to close this venture has been extremely difficult, and I'm giving these remaining months my full effort. We will be open Friday to Sunday, and it is my goal to sell every piece of art in this building. There is beautiful work here, made by people who deserve to be celebrated. And there are still many experiences for us to share this holiday season. Thank you for helping make this place possible. Thank you for showing up through circumstances none of us could have planned for.

Most of all, thank you for being willing to try something new. I hope you leave Wilderness Muse with something you love, a good memory, and a little more confidence to try the next thing that catches your curiosity.

I will be doing the same.



Leigh Shultis loves the unpredictable magic of the creative process. She is the owner of Wilderness Muse, 1185 Charlotte Highway Suite W. 458-4107.

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What to Know About Grape/Raisin Toxicity in Pets

While humans enjoy grapes and raisins as healthy snacks, ingestion of these fruits by pets, particularly dogs, can have serious consequences due to their species-specific toxic effects. Grape/raisin ingestion remains one of the more unpredictable threats to pets, as no definitive dose-response relationship for grapes/raisins has been established. This prevents pet owners and their vets from knowing with certainty whether a pet has ingested a safe or toxic amount. Recent investigations point to tartaric acid, which is found at higher concentrations in grapes than in other fruits, as the likely toxin, but this has not been definitively proven. Further complicating researchers' ability to determine a safe number of grapes or raisins for pets is that the concentration of tartaric acid varies considerably with grape variety and ripeness.

All types of grapes and raisins may cause toxicity in pets, including organic and seedless grapes, raisins, sultanas, and Zante currants (a type of raisin and not a true currant). Ingestion of grape juice, jelly, leaves or grape seed oil is not concerning, as there are no reports of toxicity in pets. Since grape jellies, jams and many wines are detartrated, this may explain their lack of toxicity, though in the case of wine, alcohol toxicity could occur. Furthermore, the presence of grape pomace in dog food does not appear to be a concern, nor does a pet-specific blend of grape and blueberry extracts.

Because grapes and raisins can cause stomach irritation in cats and dogs, vomiting is the most common symptom of grape/raisin toxicity. Pet owners often report seeing parts of grapes in their pets' vomitus. Other symptoms include diarrhea, lethargy, loss of appetite and abdominal discomfort. Symptoms generally occur within 24 hours of ingestion.

Importantly, the ingestion of grapes or raisins can result in more severe health consequences for dogs than other pets. This is thought to be due to differences in metabolism in dogs, which allows the build-up of tartaric acid in the kidneys, leading to kidney failure in some dogs. While there are reports of grape/raisin toxicity in cats resulting in gastrointestinal distress, there are currently no documented cases of kidney failure resulting from grape or raisin ingestion. This may be because cats can metabolize tartaric acid and tend to ingest fewer grapes than dogs due to their lack of sweet taste receptors. Fortunately, not all dogs that ingest grapes or raisins will develop kidney failure, but given this potential, any ingestion of these foods must be taken seriously in this species.

Because of the potentially severe consequences of grape or raisin ingestion in dogs, treatment of grape or raisin ingestion by dogs often involves immediate decontamination through induced vomiting and aggressive intravenous (IV) fluid therapy for at least 48 hours. Bloodwork on hospitalized pets is performed to determine when it is safe to discontinue treatment. Given the apparent lower risk of kidney toxicity in cats, a cat may receive less aggressive treatment than a dog that eats grapes, but it is still important for cats with symptoms of gastrointestinal distress, such as vomiting, to receive prompt veterinary care.

Steps pet owners should take to keep their pets safe include keeping all grapes, raisins, Zante currants and food containing these fruits out of reach of their pets, and never intentionally sharing food containing raisins, such as cookies and granola bars, with pets. Pet owners should prevent access to food thrown into trash cans or compost piles and remove any grapevines from areas accessible to pets. No treats with raisins, such as fruit cakes and chocolates, should be accessible to pets during the holidays, including presents under Christmas trees.

Ingestion of grapes or raisins is a medical emergency for pets. Pet owners who observe their pet eating grapes or raisins, or find evidence that their pet has ingested them, should contact their veterinarian, an emergency veterinarian, or the ASPCA poison control hotline at 888-426-4435 as soon as possible. Although there isn't published data on the potential toxicity of a given number of grapes/raisins relative to a pet's weight, there are guidelines professionals use to determine the relative risk of toxicosis for an individual pet. For dogs in particular, the prognosis is best with prompt treatment.



Dr. Elaine Klesius grew up on a farm, where she discovered her passion for working with animals when she was very young. She is the owner of Fairview Animal Hospital. 867A Charlotte Hwy., Fairview. 628-3557.

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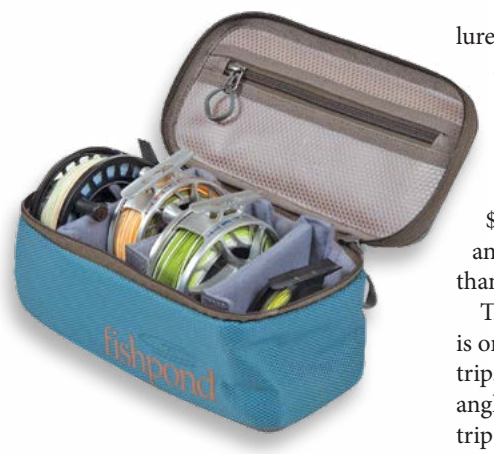
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Christmas Ideas for the Angler

If you like to fish, you've probably received a gift for your birthday or Christmas and thought, "What was this person thinking?" If you've bought a gift before for someone who is an angler, you've probably thought about how hard it is to buy for them. People who don't fish and try to buy gifts for those who do often fail. My worst gifts have usually come from the "Secret Santa" gift exchange that is so popular. Most people will gift a fishing starter kit or some entry-level combo package that has no use for an experienced angler. However, sometimes a non-angler gets it and will gift something that is useful. My mother-in-law is the best fishing gift giver I know, but she fishes very little. I think she pays attention when she is around me on a fishing trip and stores away that information. Her gifts are loved and well used.

In this column, I'd like to focus on advice for the non-angler and suggest some gift-giving ideas for this Christmas. In this column, we will talk about four practical, useful and thoughtful gifts that you can give to an angler this year. We will showcase some of the "nice" options and also some more affordable options.

My most-used Christmas gift may seem silly to some, but if you fish, you'll get it. Of course, this one came from my mother-in-law, whom I was bragging about earlier. About five years ago, I opened my Christmas gift from my wife's family and was unsure what it was from the outside. However, after opening and examining the gift, I realized that it was a reel case.



A reel case like this one makes an excellent holiday gift for the angler in your life.

Any angler will be quick to tell you how important it is to have an arsenal of fishing reels when taking a multiday fishing trip. Different situations call for different types of line and reel sizes. The reel case I received has room for about six fly reels or three to four spinning reels. There are also some pockets for storing lures and extra line. The company that made that particular case is no longer making them, but you can find comparable cases from Bass Pro Shops and another company called Fishpond. Prices range from $40 to $50 and up. It's a great gift that a lot of anglers won't buy on their own but are thankful when someone buys it for them.

The next gift I would recommend that is on the nicer side is a guided fishing trip. This is the perfect gift for any angler because a novice can take this trip and learn how to improve, and an experienced angler may be able to go somewhere they normally could not or would not go. I highly recommend a float trip down a river if you can afford it for your gift recipient. Many anglers I know don't own a boat, and if they do, they are thankful for a day off when someone else can row or run the boat. It's best to give these trips as a gift certificate and let the angler work with the guide service or shop on a booking date that works best for them. The average cost for a guided trip starts at about $250. I recommend working with one of our local fly-fishing shops in WNC because they can also consult with you on the best trip to choose.

The third gift I recommend is the most affordable of all. Every angler needs a tool that will do it all. From a pair of pliers to cutting tools, a mini saw, and everything in between, a multitool can be an angler's best friend. Gerber Knives has some great options in the $30 range.

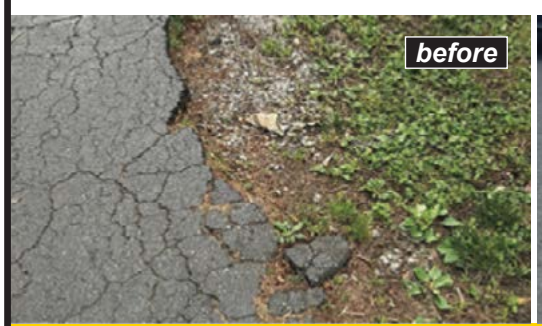
The last gift I recommend is on the nicer side. Many anglers know how important sunglasses are but often go with the more affordable options. Polarized sunglasses are very important for an angler to wear. Not only do they protect the eyes in bright sunlight, but they also cut through the glare on the top of the water when the sun is out. This means that the angler can see more fish. Sight fishing and spotting fish can greatly increase fish counts on a fishing trip. There are many good brands out there, but I recommend Costa. Prices start at $130 and go up from there.

I hope these gift ideas have been a help to you. I say a big thank you to my mother-in-law for helping me realize how important a good gift is for an angler!

Seth Rhinehart is a fly fishing guide, local musician, and an HR professional with a local organization. He is proud to have fished much of the US and nine different countries. He welcomes any questions you may have at sethrhinehart@ymail.com.

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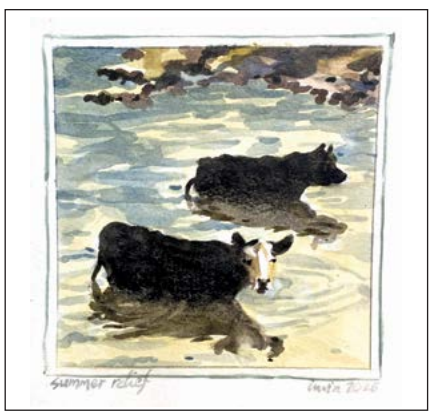
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Small Talk – A Visual Conversation at Re.Imagine

By Fleta Monaghan

Fairview's local art gallery is presenting a small works show, opening on November 22, with a reception the same day from 1–5 pm. Besides all-new art from many artists in the region, including Fairview visual artists, the reception will feature Fairview artists in other genres.



DANA IRWIN

Chris Cisneros, an accomplished guitarist and Fairview resident, will provide music at 3 pm. Re.Imagine always throws a great party too, with lots of good food and drink.

Small art works have made a big resurgence in the art world, replacing much of the massive art works and installations that are beyond most folk's wall space and pocketbooks. Artnet reported the shift starting in 2022 to smaller-sized—and even miniature—formats. Economy, high shipping costs, storage, high costs of materials and soaring prices for original art of grand scale became much less desirable to buyers, not to mention the effect on shipping and storage for artists.

This makes a small works show featuring all original works so special. Sized at 14 x 14 and smaller, the art invites the viewer in for a more intimate "conversation"—and an affordable price tag too.

The show runs from November 22 to February 5 at Re.Imagine Gallery, 15 Spivey Lake Drive, Fairview, right next to Spivey Lake. Hours are Friday to Monday, 1–5 pm.

Book Debut

Author Mary Alice Ramsey will sign copies of her debut novel, *Speaking of Dinners*, with readings at 2 and 4 pm followed by a Q & A. The novel is about a 40-year-old woman trapped in an abusive marriage while her best friend faces breast cancer. Fear and uncertainty are constant companions, but they are encouraged and strengthened by elderly Aunt Pearl. Set in 1990s WNC, locals will recognize familiar places mentioned throughout the novel, making it extra special for those of us who live in the mountains. You can read an excerpt on page 12.

Witnessing an Understated Act of Patriotism

By Mary A. Spivey



Way back in August, during the "dog days of summer" when the air was hot, still and thick with moisture, we witnessed an act of humility and patriotism on our street by our FCC trash collectors.

It was a Thursday. A hot, damp, Thursday. The air shimmered. It was good day to be on the porch reading, not tossing garbage cans into a truck, especially in the afternoon when the heat was at its worst. My husband was in the yard when the small FCC truck rumbled up our single-track gravel road. Because we have such a narrow street with several tight curves, FCC sends a smaller truck that navigates the road better than a large one. The smaller truck lacks the automatic arms to lift the cans, meaning the driver and his (occasionally her) partner manually load the cans into the back of the truck.

The truck stopped by our corner where three families place their cans. They lifted and tossed each can into the truck's bin and then stopped. They were standing behind the truck out of eyesight, and my husband wandered over to say hello and ask if all was ok. He rounded the truck and saw they were standing about four feet apart, facing each other, carefully folding a tattered American flag. They folded it the traditional way, into a triangle.

"I can't just throw a flag into the trash. If I see one, I have to fold it and dispose of it properly," said the driver when he saw my husband. That was all. They went on their way, through the shimmery heat waves, and onto the next street.

I'm not sure why this small act continues to affect me so much, other than it seems so many acts of patriotism these days are done for social media or to attract attention. Few are simply actions of love of country and to do what is right. These gentlemen, standing in the shade of their trash truck, quietly folded an American flag that was destined for the dump so that it could be disposed of respectfully.

An understated act of patriotism.

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"Hope and History"

The following is an excerpt from the new novel, Speaking of Dinners.

Frequent billowy clouds took turns with the sun, tempering the July heat. Annie knelt beside Aunt Pearl's wheelchair in the grass of the courtyard and looked up into her face. "Can I get you anything else? Do anything for you?"

"I don't need nothin', honey. But just set down here. Set beside me in the grass. I've got somethin' to give ye."

Annie sat cross-legged in the warm, dry grass at Pearl's feet. The older woman checked the knot of her head scarf, tucking it securely. She folded her hands and looked down at Annie. "You settin' in that grass is like when you's a little girl settin' at my feet while I was peelin' apples with my mamma's ol' paring knife. An' ever so often, I'd give you a slice of apple to eat. Remember that?"

Annie nodded.

"Well, I've got somethin' else here to give ye."

From the depth of her pocket, Aunt Pearl pulled out two wadded tissues, three bingo chips, a bobby pin, a flattened miniature Milky Way bar, and a closed pocketknife. "Here."

Annie felt heat rise from her chest to her neck. Her open palm shook slightly as she took the knife.

"Why would you give me this?"

"Because it belonged to your daddy. That's why."

The knife remained in Annie's hand, but her fingers would not close around it. "He… do you know he frightened us with this knife? Do you know he controlled Mama with intimidation and threats?"

Pearl's expression was solemn. "I do know your daddy could be a cruel man. He was my sister's young'un an' she loved him, maybe like only a mama could. But I could see how he was. Now, maybe he cared about his family in his own way, or maybe he didn't know how to care."

"I *know* that he was cruel to Mama, and I *know* we lived in fear. I *know* we went without shoes while he bought huntin' dogs and I *know* I had to beg for lunch money. He took delight in controlling everything and everybody."

"You're right, honey," Pearl nodded, "about ever' bit of that."

"Did you know he tried to make me quit high school? And that he shamed and ridiculed me for even talking about college? If I hadn't had the drive to put myself through school, I wouldn't have gone at all."

"Now, that wasn't right! But did you know I heard him tell a feller once that he was scared of you?"

"Scared… of me?" Annie shook her head. "He made sure I was scared of him, but he was *never* afraid of anything about me!"

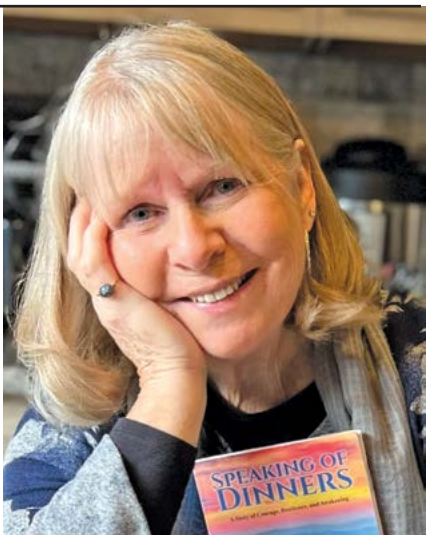
"Honey, he was scared of you movin' away… maybe takin' your mama or the other young'uns with you. He knowed you was smart and could get educated, and he was scared of that!"

"I… just…"

"He knowed you had the strength to make your own way. An' a strong woman is *scary* and threatenin' to a weak man!"

Annie's focus turned to Aunt Pearl. She looked intently at the angular chin and firmly set mouth below a prominent nose. She saw pale eyes behind tan-framed glasses, set beneath white eyebrows. She saw lines and creases in a pale face. She saw her grandmothers and her mother. And she saw herself. She saw her daughters and their daughters. Annie saw wit and wisdom. She saw hope and history. The filament of love that connected her to this frail and powerful woman was knotted with both inspiration and trepidation. Annie closed her eyes.

"Listen to me!" Aunt Pearl closed Annie's fingers around the knife. "Take this. It's your history. Keep it or get rid of it. You decide. But be sure you know this… it wasn't the sharpness of this blade that brought fear to you. It was the man. My mama's old parin' knife that I used to peel them apples brought nourishment to ye, and good memories. Sometimes, somethin' that's been used for bad… can be changed to good."



Annie slid the knife into her pocket, "Maybe."

Aunt Pearl's hands beckoned. "Scooch on over here, honey. Set close. Let me pet your head like when you was a young'un."

Annie rested her head on Aunt Pearl's knee as weak fingers gently stroked her hair.

Speaking of Dinners can be purchased at either authormaryaliceramsey.com or Amazon.com.

Mary Alice Ramsey is a lifelong resident of Fairview. She is a retired A.C. Reynolds High art teacher, artist, storyteller, performance poet, award-winning cook and member of the Southern Highland Craft Guild. She lives in our community with her husband, Terry.

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Exercise Three Days a Week

As the holiday season approaches, our calendars quickly fill with family gatherings, shopping, cooking, decorating and celebrations. But how often do we stop to appreciate something we use every day and may easily take for granted: our ability to move?

Walking through a store, climbing stairs, reaching into a cabinet, playing with grandchildren, or taking the dog outside are everyday activities that depend on our strength, balance, flexibility and endurance. Maintaining the ability to move independently is one of the most valuable gifts we can give ourselves, and regular exercise is an important part of preserving it.

This holiday season, consider making movement a priority by exercising at least three days a week.

Our bodies are designed to move. When we remain inactive for extended periods, our muscles can weaken, joints may become stiffer, and our cardiovascular endurance can decline. Over time, these changes may make everyday activities more difficult and increase the risk of falls, injuries and loss of independence.

Regular exercise helps counteract these effects. Strengthening exercises help maintain the muscles needed to stand from a chair, climb stairs, carry groceries and get up from the floor. Cardiovascular activities, such as walking, swimming, or cycling, support heart and lung health while improving stamina. Balance exercises help us respond to changes in our surroundings and reduce the likelihood of falling. Gentle stretching and mobility exercises can help maintain the range of motion needed to dress, reach, bend and turn comfortably.

Rather than attempting an ambitious program that becomes difficult to maintain, spreading activity throughout the week can make exercise feel more achievable. It also allows time for recovery.

For general health, adults should aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity aerobic activity each week, along with muscle-strengthening activities on two or more days. Three days of exercise is an excellent starting goal. The most important step is to begin at an appropriate level and keep going.

The benefits of exercise extend well beyond physical strength. Regular physical activity can improve sleep, support mood, reduce stress and help us maintain the energy needed to participate in the activities we enjoy.

The holidays can be joyful, but they can also bring stress, busy schedules, and emotional challenges. A walk outside, a short exercise session, or a few minutes of gentle movement can provide a welcome break. Physical activity can create an opportunity to clear our minds, reconnect with nature, and return to our responsibilities feeling refreshed.

Exercise can also be a social activity. Invite a friend to walk, take a family stroll after a holiday meal, dance to favorite seasonal music, or participate in a community fitness class.

During the holiday season, gratitude often focuses on family, friends, health and home. We can deepen that gratitude by recognizing the movements that allow us to participate in everyday life.

If you can bend down to hug a child, carry a dish to the table, or stand long enough to prepare a favorite family recipe, take a moment to appreciate those abilities. This is especially meaningful for those who have experienced an injury, illness, surgery or a period of reduced mobility.

Gratitude does not mean ignoring pain, physical limitations, or the challenges of aging. It means recognizing what is possible today and taking reasonable steps to preserve or improve those abilities. Progress can mean different things to different people.

Finding time to exercise during a busy season does not require a gym membership or expensive equipment. Start with activities that fit your current fitness level and interests.

Consider scheduling a 20- to 30-minute walk three days a week. Add simple strengthening exercises, such as sit-to-stand repetitions from a sturdy chair, wall push-ups, or light-resistance exercises. Practice balance near a stable support surface if appropriate for your abilities. When weather permits, explore a local trail or neighborhood. When it does not, walk indoors, follow a suitable exercise video, or dance in your living room.

Break activity into shorter sessions if a longer workout feels overwhelming. Even brief periods of movement can contribute to your overall activity level.

If you have chronic health conditions, significant pain, balance difficulties, or recent surgery, consult a healthcare professional about the safest activities and appropriate starting intensity.

This season, give yourself the gift of movement. Set aside time at least three days a week to build strength, improve endurance and maintain balance. Celebrate the small accomplishments, invite loved ones to join you, and be thankful for every opportunity to move.



Allison Fender is the owner of Unified Therapies, located at 145 Charlotte Highway, Suite 40. She has a Doctorate of Science in Physical Therapy with a concentration in Neurology. Learn more at unifiedtherapies.com or 414-2368.

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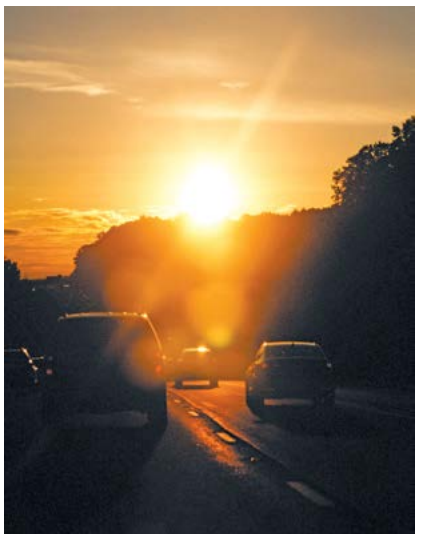
LOVELACE LAND WORK

Near-miss Accidents

Have you ever had a close call, or near-miss accident, where life and limb were at risk? These can and should be taken seriously. Often, an accident is considered a careless act or mistake. A near-miss accident is an object lesson. I have made some mistakes, and experienced a near-miss accident that still gives me shivers when I think about it.

The sun setting at dusk can be beautiful but also blinding when driving. One fall evening, while driving back to Louisville from Cincinnati, I experienced a life-threatening near-miss incident. I needed to get some gas and exited the expressway up a ramp to a single-lane road. The gas station was to my left. Slowly coming to a stop, I looked left, where I noticed a bright reflecting glare off my window, and then looked right. There appeared to be no traffic. Looking right again, while gradually moving forward, I glanced left and suddenly out of the sun's glare roared a massive semi-truck carrying logs. I was just able to stop as this enormous vehicle shot past the front of my car, inches away from the front bumper.

I sat there for what seemed like an eternity. I was a bit dazed and literally shivered while considering how close I came to getting t-boned by this gigantic truck. Before proceeding, I looked left and right again. I noticed the sun's glare had hidden the small hill of the overpass. What I thought was a straight road was not. The sun's glare made the oncoming truck virtually invisible. More than 40 years later, this near-miss accident is fresh in my mind. Even now, when I consider that incident, I am aware of more factors that might have cost me my life or serious, life-changing injuries.



The sun's glare can create life-threatening hazards on the road

I would encourage anyone who has experienced a near-miss accident, or any accident, to learn from it. It is important to note that research indicates that more than 95% of all accidents are caused by unsafe behavior, as opposed to unsafe conditions. Therefore, when thinking about an accident or near-miss incident, think first about the circumstances as they relate to your conduct relative to the conditions and your state of mind.

For example, in my incident, I had worked all day and was driving back in the late evening. A certain level of fatigue existed. While I do not recall being in a hurry, any of us working late will always have a sense of urgency or longing to get home. Often, we can be very complacent when driving, especially if we have been driving for many years. In addition, when heading out to travel any distance, it is helpful to check fuel levels and perhaps other factors like oil, tire pressure and wipers. In my situation, filling up before getting on the highway would have prevented me from having to stop.

The bottom line is this. If you experience an accident or a near-miss incident, take the opportunity to evaluate, consider and learn from the incident. The most important issue is to analyze your state of mind and the how that played into your incident. Our state of mind is a contributing factor to every accident. When we are rushed, frustrated, fatigued or complacent, we are contributing to our risk of injury.

Attention = Prevention

- Learn from mistakes.
- Evaluate personal behaviors.
- Consider your state of mind.

Continually check your state of mind. Rushing, frustration, fatigue and complacency are all states of mind that are distracting and increase the risk of accidents.

Watch for more tips in future issues of the Crier.



Mike Kleier is a retired Loss Control Manager for a workers' compensation insurance provider. Contact him with your comments, questions or suggestions for safe practices at mwkmichaelmike@gmail.com.



Rosa Lee Geradot



"The farthest I've ever traveled is Missouri," young musician Rosa Lee Geradot told me. Rosa Lee, having lived all her 13 years in Fairview, clearly delighted in the memory of the adventure. "I went to the Laura Ingalls Wilder museum there!"

Let that sink in. Rosa Lee, born after Facebook had already become a household name, recalled with great fondness a trip to visit a museum in Missouri. Moreover, this museum's subject, author of eight semi-autobiographical children's novels written in the 1930s and '40s, has not been truly popular since the 1970s TV show based on her life. We're not talking Taylor Swift here, folks.

Obviously, Rosa Lee is not your average teenager. She's an 8th grade homeschooler who is inquisitive and outgoing, athletic and intelligent. She is also a dedicated musician skilled in multiple instruments. "Let's see," she said, ticking them off. "Mandolin, violin, stand-up bass, banjo, guitar, piano," she paused, thinking. "Oh! And I sing."

Plus, she dances. "The physical aspect of dance benefits my music," she said. "Modern (sometimes called modern ballet) is my favorite; it's kind of a rebellion against ballet. We don't care about straight lines in modern dance. We push the boundaries of ballet and break the rules."

It makes sense that a dance tradition that applauds new versions of expression would appeal to Rosa Lee. "I could read music before I could read words," she said. "Reading is hard for me because I have dyslexia." But music has always made sense to her. "Being dyslexic means your brain is stretchier. It doesn't want to stay within the lines. I think it is easier for me to think critically about things than it is for people without dyslexia. Things occur to me that others don't seem to think about."

For example, in her homeschool network, Classical Conversations, Rosa Lee's group was tasked with discussing the literary classic Where the Red Fern Grows. Published in 1961, it's the story of a boy and his two prize-winning coonhounds. "No one could think of a topic for discussion, so I said, 'Why don't we talk about why the boy should not have bought dogs in the first place?'" I've known that book since I was younger than Rosa Lee and I have never considered that possibility. What a fascinating idea!

Still, it does take Rosa Lee longer to read books than it does her peers. "I am thinking so hard about reading the words that I sometimes miss the content," she said. "Sometimes I read books two or three times so I can understand them."

She's certain, though, that dyslexia would be a bigger problem for her if it were not for her music. "My dyslexia worsens without music. My music helps my brain to organize thoughts. If I'm having a hard day, I sit down and play a while and things get better. Music is just everything for me."

When asked about her musical influences, Rosa Lee had a ready list of names. "Bill Monroe and the Blue Grass Band, Patsy Cline, David Holt, and of course Doc Watson and his wife Rosa Lee, who I was named after." Not artists you'll hear on America's Top 40 these days, but they are heroes among the musicians in Rosa Lee's circles.

Each week, Rosa Lee has seven different music lessons. She also plays with several bands. "In the Blue Ghost Valley Band, I play mandolin or stand-up bass. We play mostly bluegrass and old country—before 1990. We all come together and bring things we like to play," she said. This six-piece band is made up of students ages 10 to 14 years old. They practice at the Asheville Music Academy at First Baptist Church of Asheville under the director Josh Goforth, a local musician with nationwide acclaim.

Rosa Lee also plays with old-time bands Snap Strings and Old Charlotte Highway Men. "Old-time music was never really meant to be performed," she explained. "It's the music that people who immigrated to the US played when they were hanging out on the back porch with neighbors. When it got too dark to work but was still too early for bed, they made music." Old-time is a genre influenced by Celtic, African and Native American music that includes a bit of bluegrass, a touch of gospel, and a hearty dose of Appalachia.

"The lyrics address what people were facing. Their music was a way to process life's experiences," Rosa Lee said. She continued, clarifying: "For example, a farmer forced to leave his cabin might sing a song about the struggles of moving away from home and the difficulties of living in the city." But most of the songs, according to Rosa Lee, have a more macabre theme. "Probably 90 percent are murder ballads," she said, laughing. "Something like, 'I killed my spouse and I'm leaving. I threw the body in the river." Her eyes twinkled and she shrugged, "I guess that's what they were going through so that's what they wrote about."

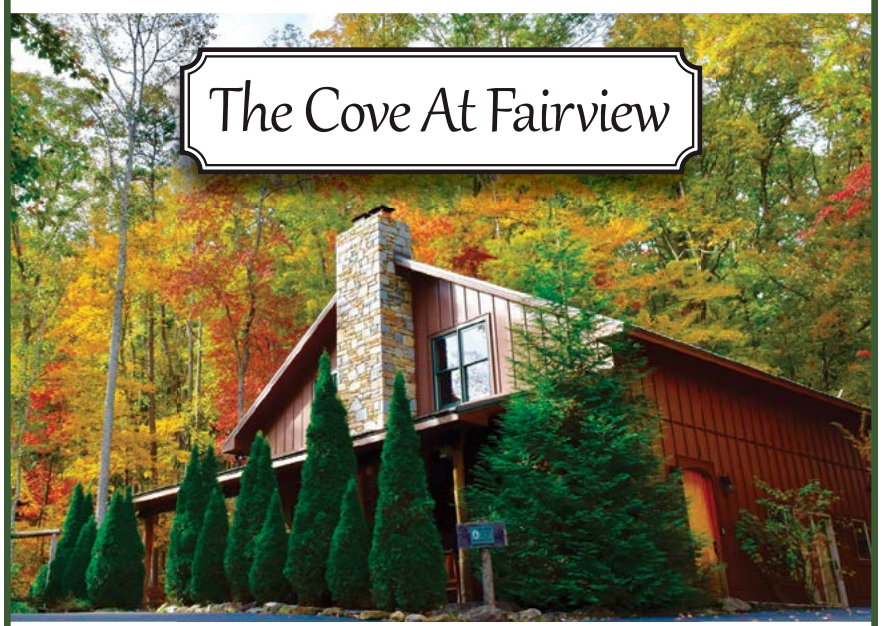
As much as she enjoys playing music and performing, Rosa Lee does not participate in contests. "I don't love competing. I think everyone has their own strengths and weaknesses. It's not really something you can judge." It's as if, for Rosa Lee, music transcends fabricated metrics that attempt to assess talent and ability. "When I play music, I'm the happiest I ever am. It's the part of my life that gives me the most joy. Music is a part of me, and I wouldn't be me without it." And Fairview is a better because Rosa Lee Geradot is exactly who she is.



Rev. Dr. Aileen Mitchell Lawrimore is the pastor of Ecclesia Baptist, which meets at 607 Fairview Road. She blogs at aileenmitchelllawrimore.com.

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The Worst Marine Invasion You've Probably Never Heard Of

By Stacy Frank

I have been a scuba diver since I was 18, and the ocean has been part of my life for more than half a century. My brother, Courtney Platt, became a distinguished underwater photographer, and I have often served as his underwater model. Together, we have watched reefs change—sometimes in beautiful ways, but increasingly in troubling ones.

That history is why the lionfish invasion feels urgent to me. Lionfish are beautiful, with flowing fins, bold stripes and an almost regal appearance. In their native Indo-Pacific waters, they are part of a balanced ecosystem. In the Atlantic, Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico, however, they have few natural predators, and their beauty hides an enormous appetite.

In 2012, my longtime friend, screenwriter James V. Hart, Courtney and I founded the nonprofit Lionfish University. The invasion was spreading rapidly, and we wanted to educate people, support research and help protect vulnerable reefs.

Today, I run our international conservation organization from Fairview, which is proof that you can help save the ocean from anywhere.

Some of my most memorable experiences have happened underwater. In Little Cayman, we watched Nassau grouper appear to cooperate with divers hunting lionfish. The grouper had learned to point divers toward a hidden lionfish—much like a pointer dog—and wait for it to be speared.

In 2015, Jim filmed something even more extraordinary: a grouper hunting and eating an invasive lionfish in open water without a diver's assistance. It is still believed to be the first video documentation of its kind.

Before releasing the footage, we asked scientists to evaluate it. That introduced us to Dr. Steve Gittings, then Chief Scientist for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. Scientists confirmed the video's importance. It has received more than three million views, and Steve became Lionfish University's chief science advisor, a collaborator and, most importantly, a close friend.

Steve often says, "Leave your campsite better than you found it." That philosophy perfectly expresses why I care so deeply about this work.

The invasion is believed to have begun with aquarium releases in Florida waters, where the first recorded Atlantic lionfish sighting occurred in 1985. Lionfish have since spread along the eastern US, throughout the Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean, and south into Brazil. A separate invasion has entered the Mediterranean through the Suez Canal.

Lionfish reproduce at an astonishing rate, releasing tens of thousands of eggs every few days. They consume juvenile fish and crustaceans, including algae-eating species



that help keep coral reefs healthy. Because lionfish do not travel in schools, they cannot be removed with large nets. Divers hunt them individually with small spears, and consistent removal can make a meaningful difference on frequently culled reefs.

Our work has taken us throughout the invaded range. In Fethiye, Turkey, at an event sponsored by the United Nations, we joined scientists, divers and residents confronting the Mediterranean invasion. We removed lionfish, spoke with the public and showed our film "East Meets West."

Experiences like that have taught me that the invasion is not only a story of ecological damage. It is also a story about people. We call that part "The Silver Lining."

Through this work, I have met scientists, dive professionals, filmmakers, artists, cooks, educators and volunteers whom I never would have encountered otherwise. Political and social differences tend to disappear when people are together on a boat working toward the same goal. The reef becomes the focus.

The invasion has also inspired ingenuity. People sell lionfish, create cookbooks, make jewelry from their fins and develop specialized equipment. Lionfish is a mild, flaky white fish that is safe to eat after its venomous spines are removed. Every lionfish taken from an invaded reef is one less predator consuming native species.

I remain an avid diver and traveler and continue to learn from the remarkable people this work has brought into my life. Lionfish are unlikely to disappear completely from invaded waters, but removal, education and collaboration can protect individual reefs and help native fish populations recover.

You do not have to be a diver—or live near the ocean—to help. You can learn about the invasion, share accurate information, support responsible removal and order lionfish when you find it on a restaurant menu.

The ocean belongs to all of us. Even from a mountain home in Fairview, we each have an opportunity to leave our shared campsite a little better than we found it.

To learn more, visit lionfishuniversity.org, watch Lionfish University's films on YouTube or contact LionfishU@gmail.com.

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PNEUMONIA Age 50+

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REGISTRATION

The deadline to register was October 9. If you missed the deadline, you can still register and vote at an early-voting site through October 31. You will need to provide proof of where you live and show an acceptable photo ID.

YOUR INFORMATION

To confirm your registration status and to find your senate and house districts and polling place, go to vt.ncsbe.gov/RegLkup and enter your name, then click on your name on the next screen. You will also find a sample ballot there. You can also call the county's Election Services at 250-4200.

IDENTIFICATION

Voters will be asked to show a photo ID when voting in North Carolina, so make sure yours is acceptable and up to date. If you do not have an acceptable photo ID, you can still vote. You may complete a Photo ID Exception Form or vote a provisional ballot and provide an acceptable photo ID to the county Board of Elections by the applicable deadline. Your photo ID does not have to show your current address.

Acceptable forms of ID include a North Carolina driver's license, certain military and veterans' IDs, and approved college and public-employee IDs, among others. For a full list of acceptable forms, go to tinyurl.com/ncvoteid.

ABSENTEE / MAIL VOTING

Absentee ballots must arrive at the Buncombe County Election Services office (35 Woodfin St., Asheville) by 7:30 p.m. on November 3. ***A November 3 postmark is not sufficient.*** You can return your ballot in person to Election Services or at an early-voting site in Buncombe County. You cannot return an absentee ballot to an Election Day polling place. Follow the ballot instructions carefully, including the photo ID requirement. If you have questions, call Election Services at 250-4200.

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

On Election Day, you must vote at your assigned precinct. If you go to another precinct on November 3, you may have to cast a provisional ballot, and your vote may not count in every race. During early voting, however, you can vote at any designated early-voting site in Buncombe County.

Has your district changed? Many Fairview residents previously voted in NC Senate District 49 and NC House District 114, and now some residents may be in NC Senate District 46 and NC House District 115. Check your voter record to confirm your districts.

Get unbiased, nonpartisan information about registration and voting from the county's Election Services by calling 250-4200.

You can get a sample ballot at the link listed above. You can also find a list of candidates and other ballot items in last month's issue—either the print edition or on our website.

LOCAL PRECINCTS

PRECINCT 37.1
Garren Creek Fire Department
10 Flat Creek Rd., Fairview

PRECINCT 38.2
Cane Creek Middle School
570 Lower Brush Creek Rd., Fletcher

PRECINCT 38.3
Trinity of Fairview Church
646 Concord Rd., Fletcher

PRECINCT 39.2
Spring Mountain Community Center
807 Old Fort Rd., Fairview

PRECINCT 39.3
Fairview Community Center
1357 Charlotte Hwy., Fairview

PRECINCT 57.1
Cane Creek Community Center
1370 Cane Creek Rd., Fletcher

PRECINCT 60.2
AC Reynolds Middle School
2 Rocket Drive, Asheville

PRECINCT 60.4
AC Reynolds High School
1 Rocket Drive, Asheville

DO YOUR HOMEWORK

Research races and candidates at the following websites, which offer nonpartisan voter information.

Votesmart.org

Ballotpedia.org

League of Women Voters (*lwvab.org*)

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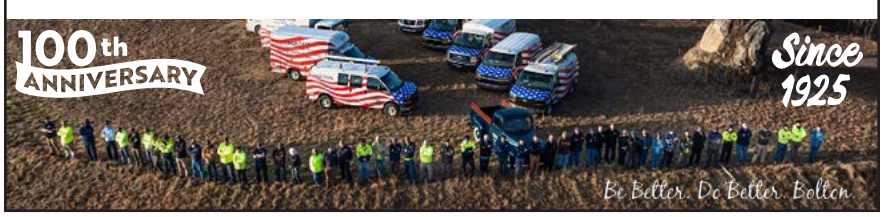
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—Jo T., July 2025



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Our People Make the Difference for ACRHS Students

There are so many things that make A.C. Reynolds High School (ACRHS) a special place. Our traditions, accomplishments and 70 years of history are certainly worth celebrating. And as our kids' high school principal, when I reflect on what makes Reynolds truly an exceptional place for them, I always come back to one thing: our people.

Because there are so many people, in various jobs, in different settings, that surround and interact with our teenagers in incredibly meaningful and positive ways every day. Adults who genuinely love and care about them. Teachers, coaches, counselors, support staff, parents, families and community members who give so much of themselves, often without recognition, simply because they believe in our Rockets. They believe in their future. These people show up for our Rockets on the good days, the difficult days, and all the ordinary days in between. It's an encouraging word, a listening ear, a second chance, or simply reminding a teenager that they're still a kid, that they are loved, and that someone believes in them. As parents, we do this all time. And though they may seem like small moments, as their principal I have seen how these moments affect them. These moments become the feelings that our Rockets will carry with them for the rest of their lives.



Our alma mater speaks of the Cedar Cliffs looking down upon our school, where "they echo back the songs that we sing them." I love those words. They represent something far greater than the walls of our high school. They represent generations of Rocket families, friendships, memories and a community whose love for our school continues to echo from one generation to the next.

I am so very proud and genuinely grateful to be a Rocket and part of our extraordinary community. But above all, I am profoundly thankful for the unwavering commitment to everyone who makes Rocket Country and Big Green Country so much more than a school.

Seventy years of teenagers have walked our halls, and behind each generation have been countless people who helped them find their way.

Not just as a principal, but also as a dad whose own children will one day walk these same hallways, this means something seriously personal to me. I often think about the kind of adults I hope will surround my own children as they grow up and navigate their teenage life. I want them to have people who see their potential, celebrate their successes, help them through their struggles, and love them enough to hold them accountable. And when I look around Reynolds, I see our entire community at so very many school events, and I realize how blessed our Rockets are to have *you*. What I want for my own children is exactly what I want for every Rocket who walks through our doors.

One day, our students will graduate and leave the familiar view of our Cedar Cliffs behind.

They will forget assignments, lessons, the score of a game, their part in a performance, or the grades they received. But they will never forget how they were treated, how people believed in them when they needed it most, or how it felt to be a Reynolds Rocket and a part of a community that loved them so.

During this season of thankfulness and with the holidays approaching, I want to say thank you to every person in our community who has ever poured into the life of our teenagers. Though you may never fully know the difference you have made, I hope that you know how much showing up for them has mattered. Our school is a better place, and our teenagers have brighter futures, because of you.

Our Cedar Cliffs have stood watch over generations of Rockets. The songs that echo back from them will always tell





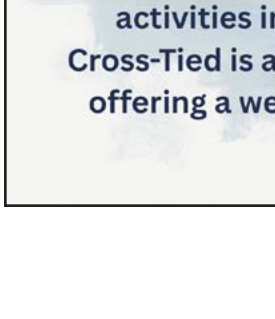


the story of a community that loved its kids tremendously.

I am so very proud and genuinely grateful to be a Rocket and part of our extraordinary community. But above all, I am profoundly thankful for the unwavering commitment to everyone who makes Rocket Country and Big Green Country so much more than a school. And together, just like our alma mater says, may we always keep our hearts brave and strong. Happy Thanksgiving AND GO ROCKETS!

Benjamin Alexander is the principal of A.C. Reynolds High School.

ACRHS STUDENT OF THE MONTH **Olivia Hazelton**



Olivia was nominated by Kennedy Hendrix, her Foods teacher. Ms. Hendrix said, "Olivia came into high school facing some significant challenges. She has worked hard to grow, mature and learn from those experiences. It has been rewarding to watch her blossom into a responsible, compassionate, and confident young woman. Olivia's journey is a wonderful example of personal growth and the positive changes that can come with perseverance, reflection and maturity. We are so proud you're a Rocket. *All winners receive a special mug from the Crier. Congrats, Olivia!*

PARENTING POINTS TO PONDER

YOU MATTER AND YOU BELONG



Do you remember being a teenager and wondering where you fit in? If you were like me, you probably compared yourself to other kids and worried about what people thought of you or if you were good enough. One person's comment could lift you up, while another could leave you questioning yourself for days.

The world may look different today, but those feelings haven't changed much.

Beginning around age 11 and extending into the 20s, kids move through a particularly vulnerable season of life. Beneath the changing moods, the desire for independence, and sometimes the slammed bedroom door are two important questions: Do I matter? Where do I belong? As parents, we can offer them something powerful: a place where they know they are loved, just because they are ours. Home can be a place where they can make mistakes, ask hard questions, and keep discovering who they are without having to wonder whether they still belong.

Think about what that looks like in everyday life. It's listening when your teen wants to talk, even when you disagree. It's making room for their opinions, even when their ideas differ from yours. And it's reminding them, through both words and actions, that a poor choice or a disappointing grade doesn't change their worth.

Belongingness sounds like: I am loved. I am accepted. I am part of this family, even when I make mistakes.

Significance sounds like: I matter. My voice is heard. I have something meaningful to contribute.

It is natural for our kids to continue searching for belonging and significance as they grow. Our hope is that, over time, they move from needing others to reassure them of their worth to carrying a deep belief in their souls that no one can take away. They know they matter. They know they belong. And in that knowing, there is peace.

Christi Hurd is a PCI Certified Parent Coach and retired educator who helps parents build stronger relationships and find more joy in the parenting journey. Learn more at grace2growfamilycoaching.com.

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Inspiring People at Cane Creek Middle

It's true confession time. Though I started working in a restaurant as a busboy when I was 14, cleaning up the trash people left, cleaning urinals and toilets, and jumping up and down in dumpsters (competing with seagulls) filled with food that I wished had gone someplace else to die, it was not to be my last job. But it could have been. I had aspirations. I wanted to be the hot dog cook! To get there, I had to earn my way up the ladder. As a busboy, I got paid 75 cents an hour. As the hot dog guy, I could make as much as 85 cents an hour.

There were hurdles over which I had to leap. First, I had to learn how to make change and count it back to customers. No small task, there! In high school, I failed Algebra 1. Then, I failed Algebra 2. Then I failed geometry. (As a side, I also failed French 1 and 2 and had to retake those classes.) In fact, I got to take all those classes again. Anyway, math was not and is not my strong suit.

My boss eventually promoted me to work at the cold drink fountain. I guess it was there that I acquired a taste for root beer. My manager, Gene, felt compelled to remind me that we were not to drink the profits.

Dogs loved me! I always smelled a bit like fried kibble. So, what has this to do with Camp Lymelight?



CCMS is blessed to have an inspirational staff of inspired and inspiring teachers.

Just before the end of my senior year (1969), my mother conspired, with my aunt, to get me to leave home and go to Camp Lymelight as an assistant counselor. I figured, what the heck? Spending the summer in the sun next to the Lyme River sounded like a relaxing way to make some money. Everyone who eventually becomes a teacher has been inspired to find summer work, whether you want to or not. Poverty can make you find second jobs and summer work. So, that summer, Camp Lymelight inspired me to give up hot dogs and try to become an educator.

Here at Cane Creek Middle School (CCMS), we are blessed to have an inspirational staff of inspired and inspiring teachers. I always wonder what drives people to go to college to become an educator. This school year, the CCMS community has been triple blessed as three new staff members—inspiring people all—have joined the Hurricane family. They are all experienced people. Mr. Capps joins us from the Nesbitt school downtown, where he was a counselor. Before that, he was doing the same job in the Erwin District. Now, he joins us as a middle school counselor. That is no small task! If you have a hormone-challenged teen in your home, you know what I am writing about.

We also have Mr. Thrasher, another well-experienced educator, joining us. He will be giving our tweens and teens an opportunity to experiment with career choices through his "Project Lead the Way" classes. I have personally witnessed his great juggling skills. Project Lead the Way is a complex program requiring the sort of excellence Mr. Thrasher brings to the table.

Adding to our glorious music program is Ms. Warnke. She comes to us all the way from Colorado. Anyone who knows CCMS knows that our choral, band and strings programs are extraordinary, and require the talent of fine teachers. Ms. Warnke will add to the richness of chorus classes and exciting performances. Trust me—she is so talented!

Working as a teen taught me that any work that's honest is good work. Camp Lymelight served profoundly handicapped campers, and my experience there inspired me to become a teacher. I loved those campers.

Without education, there would be no doctors or lawyers or car mechanics or teachers. Together, we will make this a great school year.

Norm Bossert is an Assistant Principal at Cane Creek Middle School.

Plant Based
COOKING CLASS

Thanksgiving

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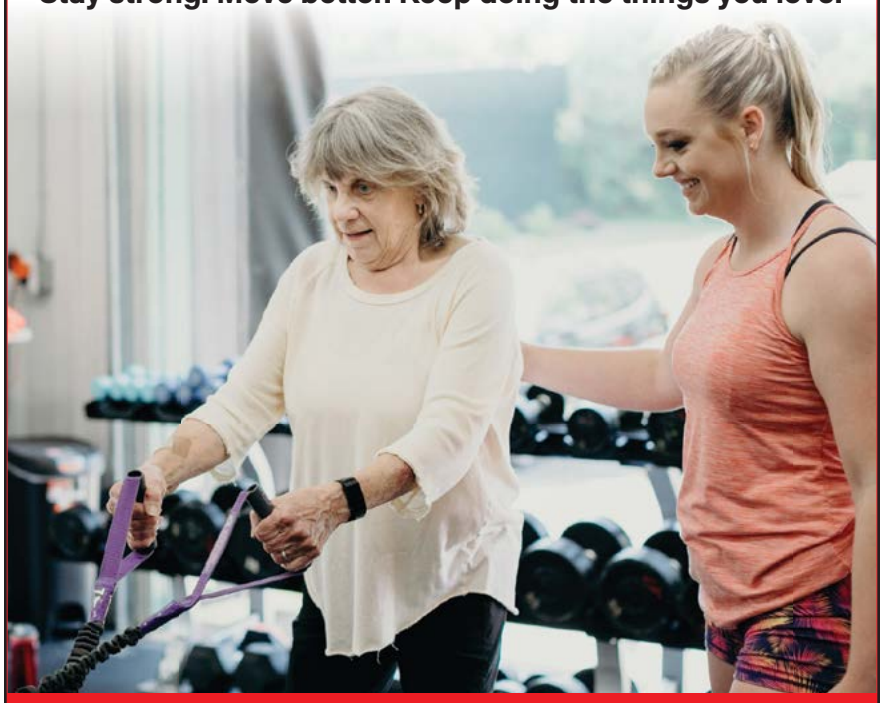




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19 Kristie Scott Lane, Fairview *behind KD's gas and Trout Lily*

How Fairview Taught Me How to Find My Community

I live at my high school. It's a public school, four hours away from Fairview. I can't have a car there, and I come home for one weekend every month. I learn, eat, sleep and explore all in Durham: a lot of my life is there. I am often asked: "Isn't it hard to find people like you at school? Don't you get lonely?"

When I think about my friends, "like me" is one of the last descriptors I might use, but it's always been that way. I moved to Fairview Elementary in third grade, and my typical worries about being the new kid quickly dissipated when I found a great friend group. It's hard for 9-year-olds to have vastly different convictions, but we'd been raised in our own homes, with different values emphasized by different parents who all wanted to do the best for their kid. We went to different places of worship, were allowed to eat different amounts of junk food, and as we got our first devices, we listened to different music.

Bonding Over Reading

We first met in our assigned reading group, where we bonded over our love of the book we were reading, *The Mixed Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler*, a chapter book from the 1950s in which two siblings run away to New York City. Our willingness to talk about what we were reading at recess was the foundation of our sisterhood and intellectual engagement with each other. We'd all grown up reading, exposed to different book series, from cats living in political societies to teenagers fighting mythological monsters. Someone would bring in a book she was excited about, and we'd check out every copy the Fairview Elementary Library had, racing each other to finish the series.

New Ideas Together

Sharing these books provided months of insightful discussions. We knew each other as friends before we put any kind of label to a belief, and when somebody explained a difference, whether it be a blueberry allergy, their family structure, or a difference in their thoughts, we listened, with as much respect and perspective as 9-year-olds could have. I've been friends with these girls since. We've been so good for each other precisely because we supported each other's learning and exposed ourselves to new ideas together.

When I first left home to go to my boarding school, I was scared that people might be too different. I wondered if I wouldn't be smart enough when I was in classes with kids who had taken calculus in middle school, or if classmates from urban hubs like Raleigh and Charlotte would notice my Appalachian accent. I met classmates of dozens of different religions and cultures, but I think it's easy to overestimate how different those aspects can make people. I have found an incredible community, just like the one in Fairview, whose people use their differences to learn more about each other and about ourselves.

"Nazar"

My friend Anjali is very busy, but she is thoughtful, down to earth, and always excels in what's important to her. One day, when I was overwhelmed with my own schoolwork and clubs, I asked her about how she does it all while being so accomplished at what she does. She is Indian, and explained to me a concept from her culture called *nazar*, which says that telling everyone about your goals before you achieve them can invite envy and even prevent them from coming to fruition, so she only discusses an accomplishment once she's done it. She said, "I know there's no magic force that's going to come and get me if I talk too much, but I think it's still good to keep things private." I carry a similar ideal, but from my Appalachian upbringing. I hadn't thought of how someone could invite envy and thus interference with their goals, but my father always impressed upon me the value of humility. When I was a toddler, he explained that anyone can isolate themselves by being too prideful, so bragging is a danger that's safer to just avoid. Even though Anjali and I have different upbringings, we expand each other's way of looking at things. I'm never bored when I can exchange ideas about every topic from lifestyle to philosophy with people who are different from me. I'm never lonely when I have friends willing to take the time to understand me.

I'm grateful for everyone I know, from here to Durham, because each person has a unique way of seeing things and each perspective has something to teach me. I'd be bored and stagnant with only myself to learn from; it's variety that makes life so vibrant!



London Jackson lives in Fairview with her parents and Yorkshire terrier and is a senior at the North Carolina School of Science and Mathematics.





Talking Turkey Paste

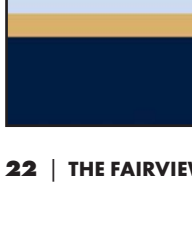


That headline got your attention, right? December. A couple of feasts, a party night, and 28 days of what's for dinner.

If you've been to the meat counter over the past month, you know that what's for dinner is growing prohibitively expensive. I hear ground turkey sales are up quite a bit. Is this a choice? Is it necessity? I don't know. I do know this: ground turkey is not a very good substitute for ground beef. They're quite literally two different animals.

The ground turkey or ground chicken you will find at your supermarket is a paste. That's what it takes to make ground poultry resemble ground beef. When browned, this paste becomes dense, mushy and dry.

In an effort to do better, I'm serving up a delicious, flavorful, moist, non-pasty, turkey meatloaf with a tasty glaze. I suggest you do, too.



James Burgess wishes for a larger kitchen. You can reach him at ohnonotinmykitchen@gmail.com.

Turkey Meatloaf

For the meatloaf

3 tbs butter

1 small onion, finely chopped

Baking soda (softens the onion and helps turkey stay moist)

1 garlic clove, minced or pressed

1 tsp fresh thyme or rounded ¼ tsp dried thyme

Worcestershire sauce (I like a bit less than a tablespoonful.)

3 tbs quick oats (solves the pasty problem by breaking up the turkey. Old-fashioned oats will do.)

2 tsp corn or potato starch

3 large egg yolks (adds richness)

2 tbs Dijon mustard (use a brand with mustard seeds as the first ingredient)

2 lbs ground turkey (85% lean works best)

½ C freshly grated Parmesan cheese

1 bunch French parsley, chopped (French parsley packs more flavor)

For the glaze

1 C ketchup

¼ C dark brown sugar

2–3 tsp apple cider vinegar

Hot sauce (your preferred brand is fine; at least ½ tsp, although I use two or so)

Directions

Place oven rack in upper third of oven. Preheat to 350. Oil a broiler pan or line a wire rack with aluminum foil and place rack on a rimmed sheet pan.

Melt butter in skillet over low heat. Whisk in baking soda. Increase heat to medium. Add onion and a pinch of salt (¼ tsp if using unsalted butter) and stir as the onion softens and begins to brown (onion develops a melting consistency due to the soda). Add garlic and thyme, cooking for 1 minute. Add Worcestershire sauce and scrape browned bits from the bottom of the skillet, cooking another 1–2 minutes to reduce. Scrape mixture into a large mixing bowl to cool.

Whisk the glazed ingredients in a saucepan over medium heat. Cook to dissolve sugar and reduce liquids, 4–5 minutes. Remove from heat. Set aside.

In a second mixing bowl, combine starch, oats, ½ tsp finely ground black pepper, and a scant tsp of salt. Set aside.

Stir egg yolks and mustard into the cooled onion mixture. Add turkey, oat mixture, parsley and grated cheese. Using your hands, mix until well combined. Wash hands well.

Transfer mixture to prepared pan. With wet hands, shape loaf into a 5" x 9" rectangle. Wash hands well. Spread ½ of the glaze over the top and sides of the loaf. Use a pastry brush, offset spatula or table knife.

Place loaf in heated oven and bake for 40 minutes. Spread remaining glaze over loaf and bake until a thermometer, inserted into the center of loaf, reads 160. This will take about 40 more minutes. Don't rush by raising the oven temperature, as the glaze will burn.

Allow the loaf to rest for 15–20 minutes, then slice and serve.

Notes

Make two. Fully cool one loaf and freeze.

Change up the glaze. Melt and strain ¼ cup of cherry or apricot preserves. Reduce ketchup to a few tsps, add a tsp or two of Dijon, toss in a pinch of salt.

Mixture can be made into meatballs. Simmered in your favorite sauce, they're tasty.

Check seasoning before forming by sautéing a patty made from 1 tbs of the meat mixture.

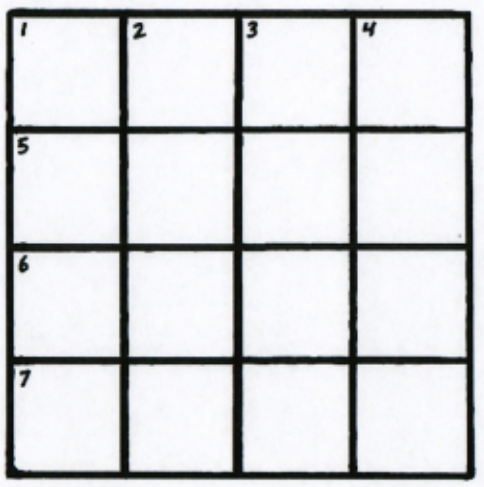
Ground chicken works too.

Want variety? A touch of sage, rosemary—or allspice, anyone? Dried cranberries, chopped dried apricots, and toasted walnuts or pine nuts make nice additions.





THE ITSY-BITSY CROSSWORD (#218) LUKE WANDER



Across

1. Building block of all matter
5. Halt, to a horse
6. Bears _____ National Monument
7. Jedi's nemesis

Down

1. Stuns, in a good way
2. ภาษาแม่ของเรา
3. Dutch astronomer with a cloud named after him
4. Banger's companion

The Itsy Bitsy Crossword is a puzzle designed to tickle the mind. If you can't solve it on your own, ask a friend for help. If together you can't quite finish it, ask a stranger, or, as a last resort, ask the internet! Sometimes the clues are wickedly difficult, and other times delightfully easy. Luke Wander grew up reading the Town Crier *and it will always be his hometown paper. These days, he is a teacher living in Colorado with his wife and editor, HH, his son, Wayne, and his cat, Esme.*

Find the answers at the back of this issue.

BYTES BILL SCOBIE

Backup Your Cloud Data

We don't live near any war zones, but those relying on data centers in the Middle East permanently lost hosted data after Amazon data centers were bombed some months ago. This illustrates that not even cloud services are perfect as a single location for your data. For example, if you have a Google account, aka Gmail, you should use Google Takeout to grab a copy of needed or all data stored with Google takeout.google.com). You can set up scheduled "takeouts"—and remember: they are only safe if you download them to your computer. Microsoft 365 does not have a similar feature. You have to export your email, calendar and contacts and copy OneDrive, OneNote and Edge password and bookmarks separately. You can see what information they collect under their Microsoft Privacy Dashboard at account.microsoft.com/privacy. Most web-based services will have similar functionalities. Find out and decide if you need to add this to your backup routine.

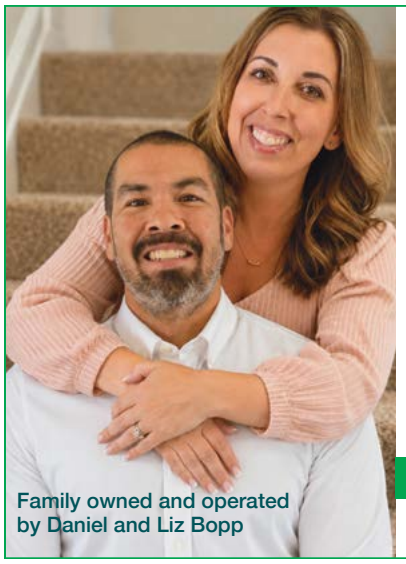
In the category of news in the way far future, at least in the computer world, Google has moved closer to the end of life for ChromeOS, affecting those who have Chromebooks. June 2034 is the new end date for ChromeOS, so if you recently purchased a Chromebook with the promise of 10 years of ChromeOS updates, you now have less. Of course, how many laptops survive eight years of use and abuse anyway? Googlebooks, running traditional Android, is the up-and-coming replacement attempt, featuring higher-end hardware at higher cost and the ability to run all the same software as your Android phone.

You may have already discovered that AI-assisted searches—all the rage now—don't always return accurate information. You can add a phrases such as "use up to date sources," "are you sure," and "use verified authoritative sources" to let your LLM (large language model AI) know which sources you don't want it to use or those you want it to consider first. YouTube and Reddit are two that come to mind to either include or exclude.

Micron and Samsung, major memory providers, are confirming that RAM will still be in short supply through 2028, as they pivot to higher-profit RAM for AI servers.



Bill Scobie fixes computers and networks for small businesses and home. Contact him at 628-2354 or bill@scobie.net.



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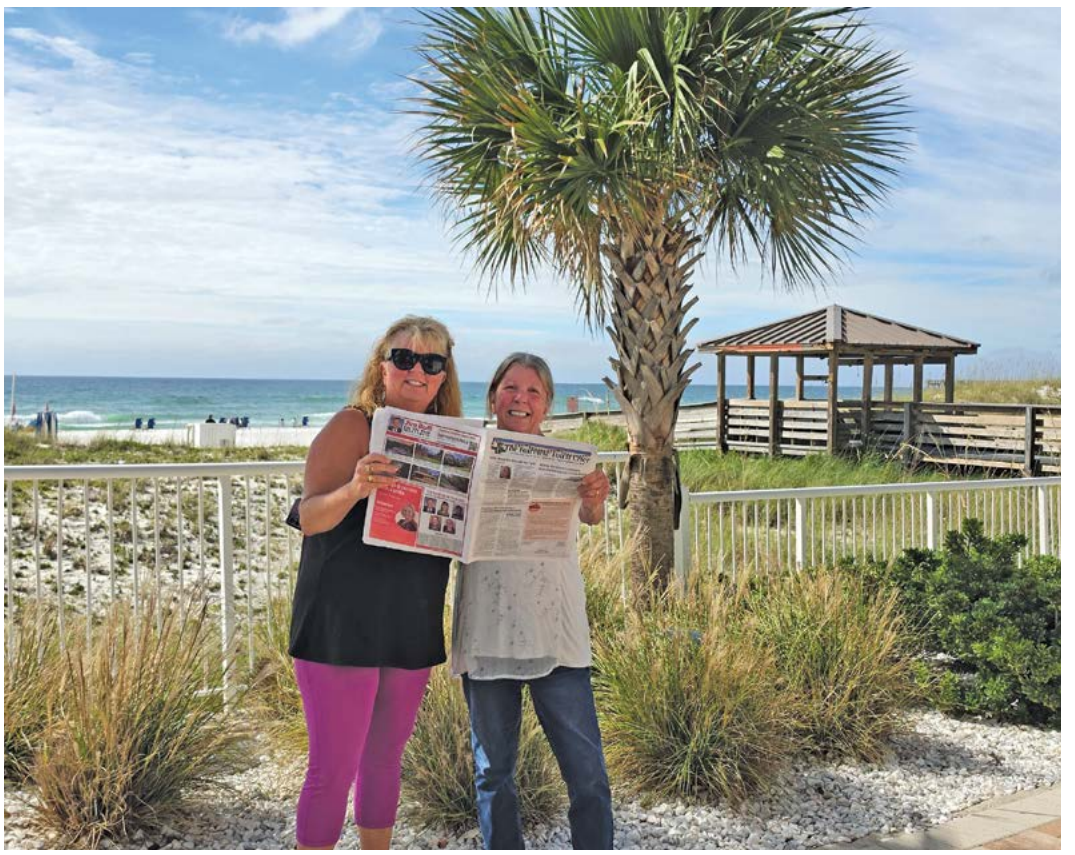
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Last Days of Summer



Jenny Brunet (at left, above) took the *Crier* to Pensacola Beach. Pictured with Jenny is Cindy Harrington, the former owner of Steam Master Carpet and Upholstery in Fairview.

From Croatia



Kevin Mathis sent us this photo from KRKA National Park in Split, Croatia. His cruise also took him to Greece, Montenegro and Venice.

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Celebrating American Education Week

During November, our country celebrates the historic "American Education Week" to lift up the importance of public education and the educators who support students across our country. This year, there is a special focus on Education Support Professionals (ESPs) who play a vital role in our schools every day, such as custodians, bus drivers, school nurses, school resource officers, administrative assistants and maintenance workers. It truly "takes a village" to support our students every day on their educational journey. Any time you walk into a public school, you will see caring professionals across many specialties, pouring their hearts and knowledge into their job. If you know someone who works in our school system in any capacity, I encourage you to take a moment to say "thank you" and recognize what they do for our community.

American Education Week has an interesting history. During World War I, it was discovered that 25% of the country's draftees were illiterate and 9% were physically unfit to serve. In a call to address this issue, representatives of the National Education Association (NEA) and the American Legion met in 1919 to seek ways to generate public support for education. The first nationwide observance of American Education Week occurred in 1921, sponsored by the US Office of Education in coordination with the NEA, American Legion, and National PTA. The founding resolution called for "[a]n educational week ... observed in all communities annually for the purpose of informing the public of the accomplishments and needs of the public schools and to secure the cooperation and support of the public in meeting those needs."

Recent Accomplishments across BCS

Buncombe County Schools (BCS) recently shared several very positive metrics that reflect a positive and productive learning environment in our schools. Our cohort graduation rate of 91% continues to exceed the statewide average of 88%. Reading proficiency has reached its highest level on record in grades 3 through 8. Likewise, math proficiency is at its highest level ever recorded in grades 5 and 6. Just over 95% of our 45 schools improved their proficiency scores year over year. Also notable is that 95% of teachers responded in the NC Teacher Working Conditions survey that they felt our BCS schools were a good place to work and learn. Lastly, BCS has focused heavily on expanding our Career Technical Education (CTE) offerings over the last few years and are proud to report that, last year, 4,859 students earned industry-supported workplace credentials while in high school. These metrics reflect a very supportive "village" here in Buncombe County—a village that shows up to support each and every student, every single day, with a caring and productive learning experience.

Dr. Jennifer Reed Appointed Superintendent

In October, our Board of Education concluded its months-long superintendent search process. There were many applicants from across our state and from multiple other states across the country. We took time to listen, learn and reflect on the needs of our students, staff and community who participated in multiple surveys. After three months of careful discernment, we unanimously agreed to appoint Dr. Jennifer Reed as our next superintendent of BCS. Many readers remember Dr. Reed from her time as principal of Fairview Elementary. She grew up in Buncombe County, graduated from Enka High and studied Education at UNC–Chapel Hill while playing in the marching band too! After returning home from college, she began her teaching career and later obtained her Doctorate of Education from Western Carolina. Since then, Dr. Reed has spent her career serving students and educators across WNC. She becomes the 23rd superintendent of BCS and the second woman to hold the position. Ethel Terrell, who served from 1919 to 1921 was the first female superintendent in North Carolina and, like Reed, was a Buncombe native widely known as a highly professional, experienced and respected educator. If you know Dr. Reed, you know she cares deeply for our students and staff, their wellbeing, and educational achievement. We are excited as a board to work with Dr. Reed as our new superintendent.

I hope all of our BCS families and students have a fantastic fall.



Rob Elliot is the Reynolds District School Board Representative. Contact him with questions or concerns about school-board related items at rob.elliot@bcsemail.org or call/text 828-222-4874.

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The Murder of Luther Merrill

Everett Williams gave me some information on a murder that took place in the Fairview area in 1921.

Luther H. Merrill was born in the south section of Fairview in 1886. He was the son of William B. Merrill (1856–1942) and Rebekah Garren (1855–1894). Luther married Ada Cunningham, who died in 1914. He then married Melissa ("Lissie"). After serving in World War I, Luther returned to Buncombe County. He rented a farm in the Concord Road/Merrill's Cove and Williams Road area. He also began turning in moonshine stills for extra money. The reward at that time was $10 for every still (around $200 in today's money).

Two brothers, Solomon and Latt Slagle, lived near the Merrills. Latt had also just returned from the war, bringing his Army pistol with him. The Slagles believed that Luther had turned in their still at least once.

Solomon stopped by Luther's house one day. He invited Luther to come with him to his still and have a drink of liquor. Luther left home around 2 pm on January 31, 1921, with Solomon and never came home again.

Onie Kilpatrick and his father Eli both testified that they were eyewitnesses to the murder of Luther Merrill. Eli said, "I was on the other side of the branch from the still, within 25 or 30 yards of it. I saw Sol and Latt and Luther Merrill there at the still. Luther Merrill was sitting down when I first noticed him, and Sol and Luther were arguing someway or another. I could not understand exactly what they were saying. They were arguing and Luther raised up and Latt shot him. Luther just raised and began to turn like he was going to run, and when he did that, why he just lit in shooting him, Latt did. I saw him until the shooting was over and he fell; and I just went on home, moved pretty fast. I didn't go back up there. I never said anything to either one of the Slagle boys about it. I stayed at home that night."

It was also said that Luther got down on his knees and begged Solomon not to shoot him. But he shot him anyway, and the bullets went through the palms of Luther's hands and destroyed all the bones is his arms up to his shoulders. Early the next morning, the Slagles loaded Luther's body on a wagon. They hauled the body across Williams Road to Mills Gap Road and down toward Cane Creek. They intended to take the body to a mill pond and dump it in. The horses became restless and daylight was coming, so they decided to turn aside and dump the body in a field near Lower Christ School Road. A rabbit hunter came by a short time later and found the body.

Lissie Merrill was taken on February 2 to the place where the body was found, lying 116 yards from the public road. Luther's hat and an extra pair of shoes were placed next to his body, with his overcoat thrown over him.

The law found out that Solomon Slagle had threatened Luther the previous year, saying that if Merrill ever fooled around with him, Solomon would kill him. The law said Sol Slagle, Charlie Slagle, and Latt Slagle were operating a still near their home with Eli Kilpatrick. It was in a dugout on the side of a creek and covered with leaves.

Deputy Dillingham discovered where a wagon had been backed up against a bank. The horse prints showed the horses had been standing there quite a bit of time. Dillingham followed a little ravine near where the wagon had been, which led to the dugout and still. It was 238 steps from the still to where the wagon had been. The deputy examined the red clay dirt in the back of the wagon. He found well-defined tracks of a man in the soft earth. He compared a shoe he had gotten at Sol Slagle's house with these tracks and it was a match. Dillingham compared the width of the wagon wheels at the scene with the wheels of Sol Slagle's wagon, and they were a match. The deputy noticed the horse prints. He could tell two new nails had been driven into a horse's shoe sometime after they had been originally put on. This caused them to stick out further than the other nails. He checked Solomon Slagle's horses and one of their shoes had two new nails in one shoe.

Deputy Dillingham also found blood in the back of Sol Slagle's wagon and on Sol's jacket.

Latt and Solomon Slagle were both convicted of the murder. Years later, Latt broke out of prison and came to his sister's house on Old Concord Road. Her husband drove him to South Carolina. Latt was never recaptured and lived the rest of his life a free man. He was probably taken to rhw area known as the "Dark Corner" of South Carolina (the far northwest counties). The law seldom entered this area. When they did, they were often never seen again. Solomon served his time. He moved to Swannanoa upon his release. I can remember him, but I never knew all this at the time. Jail never hurt him much. He died two weeks before his 91st birthday.

Bruce Whitaker documents Fairview-area genealogy. This column was originally published in November 2018.

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Coffee (noun): A person who is coughed upon.

*

Healthy Eating Tip of the Day ...
I pick fresh vegetables every day.
I feed them to my pig.
He turns them into bacon.

*

Before I got married,
I drove without a warning system.
Now she sits right next to me.

*

Mahatma Gandhi walked barefoot most of the time, which produced calluses on his feet. He also ate very little, which made him rather frail. And he suffered from bad breath. This made him a super-calloused-fragile-mystic-hexed-by-halitosis.

*

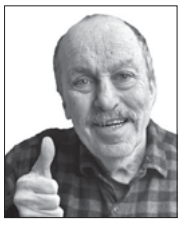
During labor, the pain is so great that a woman can almost imagine what a man feels like when he has a cold.

*

in a span of 17 years, 114 people died in accidents while at the gym. In the same 17 years, only one man died while eating a donut. Life is about the choices you make. Now you know why I get my cardio at Dunkin'.

*

Our local bridge was closed today.
I still can't get over it.



Blaine Greenfield hosts BLAINESWORLD, a webcast, and he also publishes a blog with the same name. You can reach him at bginbc@aol.com.

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Staghorn Sumac

Staghorn sumac is one of the more common and lovely shrubs seen along roadsides and open thickets in WNC. It is easy to recognize with its brilliant red, cone-shaped berry clusters that are a gorgeous addition to the stark winter landscape, and they provide a wonderful addition to a wild edibles menu.

Years ago, I went on a winter hike off the Blue Ridge Parkway on a frigid, crystal-clear day. The air was cold and crisp, and the morning light was luminous. I stopped to drink in the beauty of the mountain views and noticed a large stand of staghorn sumac covering a hillside. There were about 50 shrubs, 6 to 10 feet high, clustered together, as sumacs usually spread and propagate from long underground runners, as well as through their berries, which are a favorite of many birds. The sunlight had set the red clusters of berries on fire, but I soon saw a sight that took my breath. There were over a dozen bluebirds darting in and out of the sumacs, feasting on the tasty berries. The contrast of electric blue and crimson red was a glorious sight.

Bluebirds, robins, mockingbirds and other bird species depend on wild berries as part of their diet. Humans have also used sumac berries for centuries. Many people panic when they hear me talking about using sumac berries either as a decoration or a food source, as all they can think about is poison sumac, which does indeed cause a very nasty allergic reaction similar to poison ivy. But the good news is it is simple to distinguish between the edible and poisonous varieties of sumac. Poison sumac has drooping clusters of white berries and prefers moist habitats, whereas all species of edible sumac have red berries.



In our herb pantry, we have two small containers of ground red sumac that we bought at a Lebanese market in California. Sumac is frequently used in Middle East cooking on meats, and we enjoy it sprinkled lightly on fish and rice, as it adds a tangy, lemony twist.

The sour flavor reminds most people of lemon, and one of the nicknames for red sumac is "Indian Lemonade." I had my first taste of this delicious beverage when I was 19 on a backpacking trip in West Virginia. The trail we were on crossed a railroad track, and there was a large stand of staghorn sumac growing on the embankment. It had been hot and dry for several days, so it was the perfect time for harvesting the berries. We clipped seven big, cone-shaped clusters of red, sticky seedheads and tied them onto our packs.

Later that day, when we were setting up camp, we squeezed each head to bruise the berries and dropped them into a pot of boiling water, adding some maple syrup as a sweetener. A few hours later we had a cup of delicious sumac tea that tasted just like lemonade!

The key to harvesting sumac berries is to make sure it has not rained for a few days, as water rinses off the prized, acidic ingredients.

I found out the hard way, pun intended, that the ground sumac powder one finds in Middle Eastern markets comes from a different species of sumac. The berries of red sumacs growing in North America have hard, stony seeds inside the berries and one has to work a bit harder to grind them into a powder, winnowing and separating the tasty chaff from the hard seed kernels.

The young shoots of sumac can be used as a potherb and make a tasty vegetable. Sumac is exceptionally high in vitamin C and has a long history as a valuable medicinal plant. Sumac is an astringent and has been used in herbal medicine as a tonic and an antiseptic. Native Americans chewed the root to treat swollen and infected gums and applied sumac compresses to burns and cuts, as it helped stop bleeding and reduced inflammation.

A word of caution: Sumac is related to cashews and mangoes, so if one has an allergy to either of these plant species, it would be wise to avoid the use of sumac as a wild edible plant.



Contact Roger at rogerklinger@charter.net.

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Eidson Named New President of Business Association

Zach Eidson has stepped in as the new president of the Fairview Business Association (FBA), succeeding Liz Bopp. Eidson thanked Bopp, who will remain on the FBA's board, for her leadership and the time and effort she has devoted to the organization.

Eidson plans to focus on fulfilling the association's mission and providing greater value to the community, particularly its members. Among the ideas he is exploring are morning meetings for members who prefer to connect before their workday gets started, virtual meetings to provide additional opportunities for participation, and skill-sharing sessions where members can learn from one another.

He welcomes input from members about how the FBA can better serve their needs and encourages them to reach out with suggestions. He can be reached at zach@thgrowthlabavl.com.

Eidson is the owner of The Growth Lab, which helps small business owners



streamline operations, develop better systems and build sustainable businesses while making more time for life outside work.

His wife, Valerie McElreath Eidson, grew up in Fairview. The couple has three children who attend Cane Creek Middle and Fairview Elementary.

What Is the FBA?

We keep things simple, low-key and focused on what matters most—helping local businesses connect and grow. No stuffy meetings or red tape, just neighbors supporting neighbors and finding ways to keep Fairview thriving. Come find out what we're all about!





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Fall Is the Perfect Time to Test Your Soil

As the garden winds down, it's time to check in on your soil. Healthy soil isn't just dirt–it's alive; home to myriad fungi, bacteria, earthworms, and root systems. At Root Cause Farm, caring for our soil is essential to growing food for our neighbors facing food insecurity right here in Fairview.

Test your soil's pH, which affects how easily plants can take up nutrients (most garden crops do best at 5.5–7). It also measures key nutrients like phosphorus and potassium and recommends how much, and what type, of fertilizer to add. The Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services soil tests are affordable—find instructions on their website. Sample containers and forms are also available at the Buncombe County Cooperative Extension office at 49 Mount Carmel Road in Asheville. If your soil needs lime (common here), it takes months to work, so testing now means better soil by spring.

Protect what you've got! Rain on bare ground erodes and breaks down precious soil structure, so cover beds this winter with mulch, leaves, or a cover crop.

Happy gardening!

Sedona Lewis is the Fundraising and Communications Coordinator at Root Cause Farm. For info, visit rootcausefarm.org. 26 Joe Jenkins Road, Fairview.

Homeowner Liability for Holiday Visitors

Chances are you're making arrangements for the upcoming holiday season. You'll plan the turkey and Black Friday shopping, but what if a holiday guest gets hurt?

What if Uncle Matt trips over an extension cord and breaks his wrist? Or what if your usually very friendly and docile dog bites a visitor? Medical bills and potential lawsuits will quickly become expensive.

Homeowners liability coverage may help with legal defense and damages when you're responsible for a covered injury. Policy limits and exclusions apply, of course.

Make sure your policies are up to date. For example, does your insurance company know you own a dog? Inquire about animal exclusions now. And before those holiday guests arrive, be sure to clear walkways, secure cords, and give pets a quiet space.

Umbrella insurance isn't just for wealthy people. It can provide extra liability protection beyond home or auto limits for covered claims. You don't need a mansion to face a costly lawsuit.

Joanne Winkler is the owner of ESCO Insurance Agency and lives in Fairview. Call her at 231-6577 or visit esco1960.com.

What September's Home Sales Tell Us

Our most recent real estate sales data is in, and Fairview's September sales reflect a very wide range of homes and price points. Preliminary figures for ZIP code 28730 identified 15 residential sales totaling approximately $11.1 million, with prices ranging from $185,000 to $2.7 million.

The median sold price was $769,000, meaning half the homes sold above that amount and half below. The average sold price was $738,600.

What does this mean for you? For sellers, pricing should reflect comparable homes with similar location, acreage, condition and features. For buyers, the broad price range shows why looking beyond the overall average matters.

These figures provide a snapshot of completed sales. Comparing these figures with those from previous months, available inventory and days on market help determine whether prices are rising or falling and how quickly homes are selling.

Jenny Brunet is a Fairview resident with decades of experience in real estate and construction. She shares practical, local insights to help neighbors better understand the community. Cool Mountain Realty & Construction. 628-3088. coolmountainrealty.com.

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A Silver Lining, a New Challenge

We are all feeling a little tighter in our budgets as gas, groceries and health insurance costs rise. The $40 to $50 that used to fill the car now seems closer to $60 to $75. We eat out less, work out at home, and put off vacations to afford necessities. Then someone breaks a bone or ends up in the hospital, and the medical bills add another layer of stress.

Many factors influence the cost of healthcare. Let's take a look at a major change affecting everyone with Medicare: the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 and its impact on prescription drug coverage.

The silver lining is that, beginning in 2025, the law introduced a significant improvement to Medicare Part D, which covers prescription drugs. Before this change, people with expensive prescriptions could face thousands of dollars in annual out-of-pocket costs. The familiar "donut hole" was part of a complicated system of coverage phases that could leave beneficiaries paying substantial amounts for their medications.

Now, there is an annual limit on what people pay in out-of-pocket expenses for covered Part D prescriptions. That limit was $2,000 in 2025, $2,100 in 2026, and will be $2,400 in 2027. Once beneficiaries reach that limit, their covered Part D medications cost them nothing more for the remainder of the year. This is meaningful financial protection, particularly for those managing chronic conditions or taking expensive medications.

And the new challenge is that these changes have ripple effects throughout the insurance market. For people with Original Medicare, a Medicare Supplement, and a stand-alone Prescription Drug Plan (PDP), the biggest changes are generally in the drug plan. Premiums, deductibles and copays vary by plan, and some insurers are adjusting their offerings to manage the new costs.

Medicare Supplement coverage itself is largely separate from these prescription drug changes.

For those enrolled in Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug plans (MAPD), prescription and medical coverage are bundled together. Insurers are balancing these costs while deciding what benefits to offer. Depending on the plan, beneficiaries may see changes to copays, deductibles, premiums or extra benefits such as dental, vision, hearing and fitness.

The good news is that stronger prescription drug protections can make a real difference for people who need them most. The challenge is understanding how the broader changes affect your own coverage.

As we move forward, it is more important than ever to know how your plan works, review your options each year, and prioritize the coverage you truly need over extra benefits that may look attractive but aren't essential.

Aaron Richard is president of Prime Time Solutions, a seniors-oriented insurance agency offering local, free, no-obligation consultations. 273-1805 or arnrichard1@gmail.com.

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PUT SUCCESS ON YOUR SIDE!
Call the Jim Buff Team Today! 771-2310



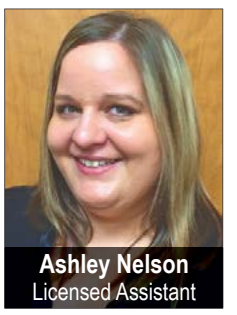
Jim Buff
Sales



Tammy Checca
Sales



Jameka Johnson
Sales



Ashley Nelson
Licensed Assistant



Tammy Radford
Office Assistant

RESULTS

38 Folsom Dr.....Pending in 4 days	39 Tampa Ave.....Pending in 1 day
234 Brickton VIllage .....Pending in 1 day	131 Vinewood Circle.....Pending in 7 days
37 Beechwood Rd.....Pending in 2 days	4 Cub Rd.....Pending in 4 days
87 Huntington Drive.....Pending in 10 days	51 Florian Lane.....Pending in 6 days
1445 Newstock Rd.....Pending in 2 days	44 Pharis Place.....Pending in 8 days
103 Cimarron Drive.....Pending in 4 days	61 & 63 Salem Ave.....Pending in 1 day
93 Stafford Court.....Pending in 4 days	894 Weston Rd #3.....Pending in 11 days
2 First Street.....Pending in 1 day	38 Cloverfield Rd.....Pending in 4 days

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