

Life!

THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2026 SECTION B

Why has blood testing become so popular?

BLACK PRESS USA

There are several reasons to get regular blood testing beyond your annual primary care doctor visit. Doctors can run blood glucose tests to assess diabetes risk, use lipid panels to check cholesterol levels, or perform a comprehensive metabolic panel that includes 14 tests to evaluate liver and kidney health.

The importance of regular blood tests lies in gaining insight into better prevention and early detection of potential issues. For example, according to the American Diabetes Association, over 40 million Americans have diabetes, with over 115 million being prediabetic. However, staying on top of blood glucose level checks, which you can do at home, can indicate pre-diabetes risk, so you can make lifestyle and diet changes to prevent it.

Learn how testing specific components of your blood, ranging from chemicals to enzymes to hormones, can supercharge your health through monitoring, diagnosis, and prevention.

What types of tests are available?

There are tests for measuring blood cell counts, sugar levels, specific disease or infection risks, hormones, and more.

Your options include:

Blood enzyme: Enzymes are proteins that aid various chemical processes, and elevated levels can indicate anything from inflammation to cancer to a previous heart attack.

Blood glucose: Glucose is another word for sugar

Please see **BLOOD TESTING** | 2B

« BLACK BRILLIANCE »



U.S. TENNIS ASSOCIATION

Arthur Ashe was the first Black man to win a Grand Slam tennis tournament when he took the 1968 U.S. Open. He also won the Australian Open and Wimbledon.

Arthur Ashe a giant on and off the tennis court

BRITANNICA

Arthur Ashe (1943-1993) was an American tennis player and civil rights activist who was the first Black player to win a major men's singles championship, the U.S. Open in 1968.

Ashe later won the Australian Open (1970) and Wimbledon (1975), and he remains the only Black player to have won the men's singles title at those Grand Slam events.

Ashe began to play tennis at the age of 7 in a neighborhood park in Richmond, Virginia. He was coached by Walter Johnson of Lynchburg, Virginia, who had helped tennis champion Althea Gibson. Ashe moved to St. Louis, Missouri, where he was coached by Richard Hudlin, before he entered the University of California at Los Angeles on a tennis scholarship. In 1963 Ashe won the U.S. hard-court singles championship; in 1965 he took the intercollegiate singles and doubles titles; and in 1967 he won the U.S. clay-court singles championship. In 1968 he captured the U.S. (amateur) singles championship, and later that year he won the singles title at the first U.S. Open in the modern open era. He played on the U.S. Davis Cup team (1963-70, 1975,

Please see **ARTHUR** | 2B

« RIDES »

Want practicality with some edge? That's VW's Golf GTI

By Winfred Cross
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

There is still a group of people who want a small car that handles well and runs like a scalded dawg but is still a bit on the practical side.

Volkswagen has that car for you - the Golf GTI.

Yes, the five-door hatch is still around and it's as frisky as ever. It's gotten on the pricey side but it still provides a lot of fun for the money.

If you bought a Golf GTI last year you will be glad to know that not much has changed. If you are looking to get a 2026 Golf GTI now, it's got a lot to offer. Five door hatches are not plentiful these days. Most of

them are called crossovers but aren't much more than hatchbacks. The Golf has a fairly large hatch storage area with the seats up. The hatch lid opens high and the load height is low. Drop the back seat and the roam becomes far more generous.

If you need to carry five people you can so long as the back seat passengers like each other. Two will be most comfortable in the rear with enough room even if they are on the tallish side. If you get the top dawg Autobahn edition those two get heated seats, a third climate zone and USB ports.

Drivers and front passengers get heated and

cooled leather seats that are power operated. The GTI got a new infotainment system in 2025 and a few more tweaks which is why there's nothing new this year. The 12.9-inch touch screen has sharp, up to date graphics and responds quickly. It's easy to find what you are looking for in a menu, but there are a few actual buttons (a volume button is included). There is also a clear, head up display and better controls on the heated steering wheel.

There is no plain Golf anymore and no manual transmission. Both the GTI and the uber Golf R get a seven-speed automatic transmission with paddle



VOLKSWAGEN

Volkswagen's 2026 Golf GTI

shifters for manual-like use. That slick-shifting transmission is paired with a turbo-charged four-cylinder the makes 241 horsepower and 273

pounds-feet of torque. This engine makes the GTI feel frisky. There is enough oomph to zip through traffic with ease and pass like the dickens. Put the trans-

mission is sport mode and the transmission shifts quicker and more crisply. The brakes work wonderfully, giving you short, Please see **WANT** | 2B



TIKY SWAIN DDS

Dr. Tiky Swain owner of Dasling Dentistry in Charlotte and Doby's Bridge Dentistry in Indian Land, South Carolina, examines a patient.

Dentist is 'motivated to pay it forward' in service

Dr. Tiky Swain reaches out to community as professional, mentor

By Charles K. Harris
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Growing up in rural Windsor, North Carolina, Dr. Tiky Swain became certain of two things early.

"I knew I had to get out," she said. "But I [promised] I wouldn't forget."

Over the last two decades Swain has kept her word as a dentist and entrepreneur. In between working at her

Charlotte office, Dasling Dentistry, and her Indian Land location, Doby's Bridge Dentistry, Swain prioritizes gratitude and giving back.

"They really go hand and hand," she said. "When I reflect on all I have to be grateful for, I'm motivated to pay it forward."

Much of Swain's gratitude is born from her humble origins. The oldest of three children she recalled a childhood rooted in close family connections and bucolic normalcy.

"It was very simplistic living," Swain said. "We were surrounded by cotton fields and tobacco fields. It was authentic country living. We were poor. But most [in the community] didn't have much either."

While Swain recognizes that material possessions were in short supply, she doesn't view her upbringing as destitute.

"I didn't know what I didn't know," she said. "[But] I remember having an innate desire to learn

Please see **DENTIST** | 2B

Spring is near. Check out Charlotte.

By Jaslynn Vorachith
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

As spring approaches, here are several places in Charlotte to enjoy nature's beauty and warmer weather.

UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens
9090 Craver Road

UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens recently introduced a newly surfaced trail extending from Bonnie Cone's historic homestead site into the Glen. The path allows limited mobility access to parts of the garden. However, due



UNC CHARLOTTE

UNC Charlotte Botanical Gardens.

to the natural terrain and slopes, it is not fully ADA compliant. Parking is avail-

able in East Deck 1. The annual spring plant sale will be held April 10,

from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., and April 11 from 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Please see **SPEND** | 2B

Dentist is 'motivated to pay it forward' in service

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more. I knew there was something bigger. And I knew I wanted to be out of eastern North Carolina."

As the eldest, Swain carried a sense of obligation that further propelled her ambition.

"I was leading by example. I had to create my own pathways," she said.

Blazing the trail, however, would be no easy task in a family where none of her predecessors attended college. Swain also had to contend with anemic educational resources all too common in small, rural, isolated communities, particularly with large Black populations.

Still, Swain deciphered that fierce academic achievement was essential to her success.

"I didn't want to fail," she said. "I knew this was my only way of going to college."

As a high school senior armed with an impressive transcript and unflinching ambition, Swain earned a scholarship to UNC-Chapel Hill, 140 miles west.

"It was scary," she said. "I felt pressured to win. I needed to win for myself. I was setting the bar. ... It was just over a two-hour drive, but it seemed like another planet in comparison. I felt like I was starting behind the eight ball, so I always had to stay 10 steps ahead so I wouldn't get lost."

Despite her scholarship, Swain admits she still lacked confidence.

"I decided to be a physical therapist with hopes of working in sports medicine," she said, "because in my mind I didn't think I didn't have what it took to be a doctor. Physical therapy was big enough to me."

However, a chance encounter proved a turning point.

"I bumped into my friend Rob who was already in dental school," Swain recalled. "And he said, 'Why don't you check this out? I know you could do this.' And after brief consideration I decided to go for it."

After graduating UNC School of Dentistry with honors in 2006, Swain set about paying it forward. Her first job was working in Anson County public health.

"My desire was to give back," Swain said. "I wanted to share it with the people who need it the most. Watching people get what they really need is always satisfying and rewarding."

After moving to Charlotte in 2008 to work at Dasling Dentistry, Swain bought the practice five years later. In 2020, she added Doby's Bridge Dentistry.

"It's definitely been a labor of love," she said. "I never thought I could have built multiple locations."

But saving smiles is just the start. Swain was, and still is, intent on opening doors for other aspiring dentists, particularly women of color.

"I didn't have the resources growing up that allowed me to even visit somewhere that I might see a Black female dentist," she said. "That would have meant so much. 'My aim has

been to bring these resources back to rural areas. These small community kids deserve just as many resources as Mecklenburg County."

Said Kimberly Anderson DDS, a colleague and longtime friend of Swain's: "Dr. Tiky understands the importance of not just looking back but taking action to help others achieve their dreams. She's a shining example of how hard work and dedication can truly change one's life."

Despite her success and expansion, Swain says being a Black woman dentist is still somewhat of an anomaly.

"It's interesting in 2026 I still have people say, 'You're my first Black dentist or my first female dentist, isn't it?'" she asked. "It is still a male dominated industry. 'I suppose there are a few more hurdles as women, some different challenges. People may be quick to question your ability more readily than they would a male dentist.'"

But Swain is unfazed. "I'm not one to listen to naysayers," she said "I know now that I'm enough. I know I'm worthy."

And that's a message Swain constantly looks to promote.

"We have to be able to tell little Black girls 'Just because you look like you, doesn't mean you can't do whatever you aspire to do,'" Swain asserts. "Black women professionals have to demand to be seen, so little girls can see us."

In this regard, Swain puts her money where her mouth is. All 13 of her Dasling Dentistry employees are women.

"As women we have to create opportunities for other women," she said. "Mentorship helps to elevate women, and that's beautiful."

Swain says mentoring is "oh so rewarding" and some of her greatest professional joys have been watching women she's coached progress.

"When they have very specific goals and dreams that they are able to realize it's even more fulfilling," Swain declares.

"She has been one of my biggest supporters," Anderson said. "Her encouragement has helped me to achieve some of my own career goals. She exemplifies everything that is possible for women."

With an 18-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter at home, Swain's passion and purpose don't stay behind when she leaves work.

"The challenge for me is to be the mother I want to be and still be a successful business owner," she said. "I love being a dentist, don't get me wrong. But as a mother my greatest ministry is my family. I want my kids to be able to look at me and say, 'My mom did this thing.'"

Even the bumps Swain acquired from the backwater to the business world are tools she uses to help others.

"There were a lot of things I had to learn via trial and error," she said. "Hard knocks, you know? But I just use it as part of my testimony."

Arthur Ashe: Champion, activist

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1977-78) and helped the U.S. team to win the Davis Cup challenge (final) round in 1968, 1969, and 1970. In the latter year he became a professional.

His criticism of South African apartheid racial policy led to denial of permission to play in that country's open tournament, and, as a consequence, on March 23, 1970, South Africa was excluded from Davis Cup competition. In 1975, when he won the Wimbledon singles and the World Championship singles, he was ranked first in world tennis.

After retiring from play in 1980, he became captain of the U.S. Davis Cup team,

a position he held from 1981-85.

Ashe underwent coronary bypass operations in 1979 and 1983. In April 1992 he revealed that he had become infected with the virus that causes AIDS, probably through a tainted blood transfusion received during one of those operations.

For the remainder of his life, Ashe devoted considerable time to efforts to educate the public about the disease. Shortly after his death in 1993, Ashe was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

The main court of the U.S. Open was named Arthur Ashe Stadium in his honor; it opened in 1997.

Want practicality with some edge? That's VW's Golf GTI

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straight stops.

The GTI handles very well due to a four-wheel independent suspension with adaptive suspension dampers. This helps with the cars sharp handling. Twisty road and sharp corners do not intimidate this car. It's front wheel drive (get the R for AWD) but feels a little like a rear-wheel driven car. It doesn't matter what road you put in front of the GTI - it slices it to pieces.

You can get special versions of Honda Civic, Toyota's Corolla and even some Hyundais and Kias that do about what the GTI does for less money. None of them have the feel of

this German hot hatch. You can cut the price by going for the base S version or the middle SE.

They have less equipment but the same engine and transmission. You don't get the adaptive suspension which means you'll lose some handling and ride comfort, but maybe not much.

The S version starts at \$34,590 and comes with a lot of standard equipment such as adaptive cruise control, lane keeping assist, keyless entry, heated steering wheel, folding power mirrors and keyless ignition. The SE adds a Harmon/Kardon stereo with subwoofer, 12.9-inch infotainment touch screen,

two-way power adjustable driver's and passenger's seat.

The SE starts at \$39,080. The Autobahn version is \$42,480 and adds adaptive suspension, eight-way power adjustable driver's seat, ventilated leather seats, leather wrapped steering wheel and power glass moonroof.

Pros:
 • Strong turbo engine
 • Slick shifting transmission
 • Sharp handling
 • Comfortable ride
 • Good cargo space
 Cons:
 • Pricey
 • No manual transmission

Blood testing can pinpoint the state of personal health

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in the blood, so this test can measure diabetes risk.

Thyroid panel: This test evaluates your metabolic function by measuring thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH).

Lipid panel: Check for the amount of cholesterol and triglycerides that can clog arteries and put you at greater risk of heart disease.

Coagulation panel: Blood clotting is vital for stopping you from bleeding out after a cut, but it's deadly when a clot happens within the artery/vein system. This test measures how well and how timely your blood can clot.

Basic metabolic panel (BMP): This test checks compounds such as potassium, sodium, calcium, creatinine, and electrolytes.

Complete blood count (CBC): Measures the amount of red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets in the body. A low white blood cell count can warn patients of viral infection risk.

Comprehensive metabolic panel (CMP): This series of 14 tests checks liver and kidney health, along with glucose and electrolyte amounts.

DHEA-sulfate serum test: Your adrenal glands produce DHEA hormones, and these tests check if those levels are too high or low. Low levels in men may indicate kidney disease or Type 2 diabetes, whereas high levels in women may cause excess body hair.

Benefit from blood testing

The numerous health benefits of blood testing include screening and prevention, particularly with high cholesterol, blood glucose, and elevated hormone levels. By analyzing your blood test results, doctors can pinpoint the cause of symptoms like fatigue.

Certain blood tests diagnose cancer and measure how various treatments are effective to see what adjustments may be necessary. A blood test can also ensure that your organs are functioning correctly, which makes them a safety net when using medication.

With so many organic elements in your blood, one test alone isn't enough to screen for every condition.

When to test

Get blood screenings annually as part of your regular primary care. However, you may need to get blood work every 3 to 6 months to manage chronic conditions. You should also seek out more blood screenings if you're experiencing symptoms like unexplained weight changes and unusual fatigue.

Choose Health at-home tests for easy

monitoring you can do anytime from the comfort of your home. These kits provide fast and simple insights into your endocrine, liver, metabolic, and hormonal health.

Blood test preparation tips

Interpreting blood test results can be affected by what you consume, so many blood tests advise fasting for several hours beforehand. Otherwise, food consumption may cause temporary spikes in triglycerides and blood sugar, thus creating inaccurate results.

Frequently asked questions

Benefits of donating blood

Blood donation may help the donor as much as the recipient. From being revived with fresh blood production to burning calories, the pros include:

1. Donating blood acts as a free health screening for the donor.

2. Reducing excess blood can lower certain cancer risks.

3. You can lower your blood pressure and cholesterol when you donate blood, which helps your cardiovascular health.

4. Managing excess iron production matters as an overload can damage the heart and liver.

5. Your body must replenish donated blood, so it stimulates fresh production.

6. You may burn as many as 650 cal by donating 1 pint.

7. This element provides a life-saving element for accident victims, patients receiving treatment, and those in surgery.

8. Enjoy peace of mind knowing that you're helping to possibly save a life.

Facts about blood

Blood isn't boring. This element contains a precious metal and isn't always the same color. Facts you should know include:

1. It's made of mostly liquid, not cells, as it contains over 50% plasma, which is actually a yellowish liquid.

2. Blood contains actual gold, amounting to about 0.2 mg.

3. All blood isn't red; it's blue in spiders and octopi, whereas worms have green blood.

4. A single blood cell moves as fast as lightning, as it can travel from the heart through the body and back between 20 and 60 seconds.

5. The human body produces as many as 2 million red blood cells per second.

The benefits of blood

Your blood vessels are a transportation network delivering essential elements, such as oxygen and nutrients, and hormones around the body. Blood also helps to carry waste products out, like carbon dioxide.



Patricia McDowell McNair

Charlotte, North Carolina

October 16, 1943 - March 4, 2026

Mrs. Patricia McDowell McNair, 82, of Charlotte, NC went home to be with the Lord on the evening of March 4, 2026. She leaves to cherish her memory, the love of her life, John (Jack) McNair, and her loving daughter, Maia McNair.

After managing the family business, McNair's Auto Glass Service, with her husband for many years, she went on to work as an Advertising Sales Executive with the Charlotte Post Newspaper in 1994, where she retired in 2011.

Mrs. McNair was a life-long member of Greater Bethel AME Church in Charlotte, NC and served on various committees in the church. She was also active with local community organizations and the West Charlotte Senior High Class of 1961 Alumni Association, where she served as Class Vice President for many years. Many adored Patricia, and her presence will truly be missed.

The celebration of life will be a memorial service on Saturday, March 14, 12 noon at Greater Bethel AME Church, 5232 The Plaza, Charlotte, NC 28215. Rev. Devin D. Paylor is the pastor. The family asks that you consider joining them by wearing purple in her honor.

Flowers and cards may be sent to the church or Roseboro Mortuary and Cremation, 4300 Statesville Rd, Charlotte, NC 28269.





MELINDA MYERS

A bee on Kalm's St John's Wort.

Boost landscape's beauty with bee-friendly shrubs

By Melinda Myers
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Plant a variety of bee-friendly shrubs and enjoy year-round beauty and loads of pollinator appeal. Include a mix of spring, summer and fall bloomers, providing nectar and pollen for visiting bees throughout the season.

Selecting bee-friendly shrubs suited to the growing conditions and the available space also boosts your landscape's beauty and reduces maintenance.

Start the season off with dwarf fothersgilla (*Fothergilla gardenia*). Its honey scented white flowers first appear before the leaves, offering food to early foraging bees and other pollinators. The blue-green leaves turn shades of red, orange and yellow in the fall.

Include black (*Aronia melanocarpa*) and red chokeberries (*Aronia arbutifolia*) with white flowers in spring, great fall color and the black or red fruit that persists into winter. These plants tolerate some shade, wet and occasionally dry soil.

Grow the native ninebark (*Physocarpus opulifolius*) in those sunny well-drained locations. This durable drought-tolerant shrub also tolerates occasionally wet soil. White flowers with a pinkish tinge appear in late spring and the rugged exfoliating bark adds texture to the winter landscape.

If you are dealing with black walnut toxicity and dry locations, consider planting New Jersey Tea (*Ceanothus americanus*). This North American native shrub is deer-resistant and prefers full-sun and well-drained soil. White flowers appear in summer that not only support bees and other pollinators, but this plant is also a host for several butterflies.

Your garden will be abuzz with bee activity when growing Kalm's St. John's Wort (*Hypericum kalmianum*). This small shrub is covered with bright yellow flowers in mid-summer. Grow this drought-tolerant shrub in full to part sun and well-drained soil.

For moist to wet locations consider Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*). Its round white flowers appear

mid-summer, inviting a variety of pollinators to the garden.

Summersweet (*Clethra alnifolia*) and Virginia sweetspire (*Itea virginica*) are two more summer-blooming shrubs that are shade and moist to wet soil tolerant. Look for varieties of these deer-resistant shrubs that fit your available space and garden design.

For dry shade consider dwarf bush honeysuckle (*Diervilla lonicera*). This is not one of the invasive honeysuckles but rather a native plant with yellow summer flowers and leaves that turn from yellow to orange and red then purple in fall.

Brighten your late summer and fall landscape with Rose of Sharon (*Hibiscus syriacus*). This large shrub appeals to several specialized bees, prefers full sun to partial shade and is moderately deer resistant.

Finish off the season with Seven-sun flower (*Heptacodium miconioides*) considered a large shrub or small tree. You and the many visiting pollinators will appreciate the late season fragrant white blossoms. The rosy-purple calyx persists and the attractive exfoliating bark extends its ornamental appeal through winter.

Protect shrubs that are susceptible to animal damage with an organic repellent like Plantskydd (plantskydd.com). It is safe for pollinators and rain and snow resistant, which means fewer applications are needed. Apply any repellent you select before animals start feeding and according to label directions for best results.

Adding bee-friendly shrubs is an excellent way to support these important members of our community. Don't stop there. Consider including some pollinator-friendly flowers in your gardens to further extend the bloom time and beauty of your landscape.

Melinda Myers has written over 20 gardening books, including *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything"* streaming courses and the nationally syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment* radio program.

Spend spring in Charlotte

Continued from page 1B

Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, 6500 S. New Hope Road

Recently rebranded from The Gardens at Stowe, this scenic destination spans hundreds of acres with formal display gardens, woodland trails, and a large orchid conservatory. Trails connect up to 8 miles to the Carolina Thread Trail.

Featured areas include the Four Seasons Garden, Canal Garden, Perennial Garden, and the children's garden, Lost Hollow.

Uptown Farmers Market, 300 Davidson St.

Located in Charlotte's central business district, the weekly Saturday market operates from 8 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. during spring and summer. Vendors offer fresh produce, meats, baked goods, and hand-made goods.

Charlotte Regional Farmers Market, 1801 Yorkmont Road

Operated by the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, the market features produce, meats, baked goods, plants, and crafts. Open Wednesday through Sunday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Spring trails

Little Sugar Creek Greenway, 1133 Metropolitan Ave. This greenway stretches more than 17

miles from Brevard Street toward the South Carolina state line, connecting sections of the Cross Charlotte Trail. Ideal for walking, running, and biking.

Seven Oaks Preserve Trail, 6900 S. New Hope Road Located near Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, this approximately five-mile loop trail takes about two hours to complete.

Latta Nature Preserve, 6345 Sample Road

Offers multiple trail options ranging from short one-mile walks to longer 6.5-mile hikes, making it accessible for various skill levels.

Garden shops and resources

Blackhawk Hardware & Garden, 4225 Park Road

At the Park Road Shopping Center there is a local favorite for home and garden supplies, plants, and unique gifts. Staff are known for being welcoming and helpful, especially for beginner gardeners.

Oakdale Greenhouses LLC, 5626 Statesville Road

One of Charlotte's largest retail greenhouses, offering tropical plants, succulents, bonsai, landscaping plants, and aquatic features such as koi fish.

For gardening assistance, contact the Mecklenburg County Extension Master Gardener Program at (980) 314-1409 or MeckMasterGardeners@gmail.com.

The Charlotte Post presents

Conversations: HER Story

West Boulevard Library | 2157 West Blvd.
All programs start at 6 p.m.

MARCH 3
Ayisha Cravotta

MARCH 10
Monique Couvson Ed.D.

MARCH 17
LaRita Barber

MARCH 24
Deborah Mann Gibbs

"The Voice of the Black Community"

Stop sniffles with sick day soup

FEATURE IMPACT

Coughs and sniffles don't have to derail you for long - not with a fresh, homemade stockpot full of Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup.

Loaded with rotisserie chicken, celery and carrots, it's sure to warm you from the inside-out as a warm, comforting meal. Plus, with eight servings, this dish can help solve dinnertime dilemmas throughout the week by storing leftovers in the refrigerator and reheating on the stove.

Warm up your winter meals with more comforting ideas available at Culinary.net.

Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup
Recipe adapted from Tastes Better from Scratch
Prep time: 20 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Servings: 8
1/2 tablespoon butter

2 ribs celery, diced
3-4 large carrots, diced
1 clove garlic, minced
10 cups chicken stock or broth

1/8 teaspoon dried rosemary
1/8 teaspoon dried thyme
1/8 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

salt, to taste
pepper, to taste
chicken bouillon cubes (optional)
4 cups dry egg noodles
3 cups cooked rotisserie chicken

In large stockpot over medium-high heat, saute butter, celery and carrots 3 minutes. Add garlic and cook 30 seconds.

Add chicken stock or broth and season with rosemary, thyme and crushed red pepper. Add salt and pepper, to taste.

Taste and add chicken bouillon cubes, if desired, for flavor.

Bring to boil. Add noodles and cook until al dente. Remove from heat once noodles are tender.

Add chicken. Taste and adjust seasoning as desired.



SHUTTERSTOCK

Sick Day Chicken Noodle Soup.

Women's History Month Event

Book Talk

Dr. Monique Couvson
Author, Documentarian, President & CEO of G4GC

Dr. Jimmeka Anderson
Founder & Executive Director
Black Girls Film Camp

Date: March 28, 2026
Time: 6pm
Location:
Charlotte Post Event Center
5118 Princess St. Charlotte, NC 28269

Ticketed Event. Secure Tickets on Eventbrite
<https://WHMDrMoniqueCouvson.Eventbrite.Com>
RSVP: 704.376.0498

Free Admission | VIP Available



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« MUSIC REVIEW »

Harry Styles swings and surprises

By Maria Sherman
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

There is one experience Harry Styles will never get to have, though he's been asked about it ad infinitum: Communing in the crowd at a Harry Styles concert.

On "Kiss All the Time. Disco, Occasionally," the superstar's fourth solo album and first full-length project in four years, Styles aims to soundtrack the anonymous exhilaration of being in the audience. It's a bold choice, following 2022's synth-pop "Harry's House," which earned him album of the year at the 2023 Grammy Awards, with bolder reference points.

Styles started working on the 12-track album in early 2025 in Berlin, with his longtime producer Kid Harpoon and Tyler Johnson. The location proved to be a source of inspiration for him: Styles' listening habits became more electronic, in line with the German capital's reputation. His running playlists featured acts like Four Tet, Floating Points and Jamie xx as well as techno DJs Ben Klock and Fadi Mohem. Repetitive, physical productions — synths that rumble with arpeggios and bass kicks — get very close to meditation. That's clear on "Kiss All the Time. Disco, Occasionally," a remarkably consistent album dead-set on evoking mood without sacrificing music.

The first taste arrived in the form of "Aperture," a Styles' opening track if there ever was one, a five-minute slow-burn built of accelerating synths. He said the song was at least partially inspired by seeing LCD Soundsystem live and listening to '80s English post-punks The Durutti Column. Freedom, he seemed to be teasing, comes from anonymity, a dance floor, and braking as music speeds.

And it does, with some restraint. Spirited experimentation carries throughout the album, in particular, its stellar

Please see **HARRY** | 6B

Live Nation reach deal over illegal monopoly

By Alanna Durkin Richer and Larry Neumister
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — The Justice Department touted a tentative settlement of its antitrust lawsuit against Ticketmaster and parent company Live Nation Entertainment on Monday as a victory for consumers that would end an illegal monopoly over live events in America, but over two dozen states planned to keep fighting the companies in court.

The negotiations leading up to the agreement drew criticism from the judge who would have to approve any deal as soon as a government lawyer revealed it in Manhattan federal court, where testimony began last week before a jury at an antitrust trial. Throughout the day, various state attorneys general issued statements criticizing the agreement.

A "term sheet" spelling out details of the pact said Live Nation had agreed to let venues reach deals that would let a certain portion of tickets be sold by entities other than Ticketmaster. It also would let up to 50% of all tickets to be sold through any ticketing marketplace at amphitheaters that Live Nation owns, operates or controls.

The term sheet also called for Ticketmaster to cap its service fees at those amphitheaters at 15% and to divest ownership or control of 13 amphitheaters, including venues in Milwaukee, Cincinnati, Syracuse, New York, and Austin, Texas. It said Live Nation will create a \$280 million settlement fund to settle claims or pay civil penalties to states.

The settlement includes an eight-year extension of the company's consent decree with the Justice Department, enabling continuing oversight.

Praise from Justice, criticism from states

A senior Justice Department official spoke effusively of the looming settlement on the condition of anonymity Monday during a phone call with journalists under terms set by the department to release some information about the proposed settlement. At least 10 states were expected to join the deal, the official said.

Please see **LIVE** | 6B

« ON THE MARQUEE »



WIKIPEDIA

R&B singer Leela James brings her 2BHonest Tour to Carolina Theatre on March 12.

R&B singer Leela James plays the Carolina Theatre

2BHonest Tour star has a pair of No. 1 Billboard tunes in her songbook

By Herbert L. White

herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

The latest events from stage, screen and exhibits in Charlotte:

March 12

Leela James plays the Carolina Theatre at 8 p.m. as part of the 2BHonest Tour.

James, who has released seven LP albums, channels some of the all-time R&B/soul greats with performances that are equal parts church and blues club. James has eight top-20 R&B radio singles, including two No. 1 tracks on the Billboard charts. Her 2021 single Complicated topped the Billboard Adult R&B songs chart for three straight weeks.

Tickets are \$68-\$122 and available online at Ticketmaster.com.

March 15

Independent Picture House hosts its annual Oscars Viewing Party & Fundraiser at 4237 Raleigh St.

The party, emceed by "Positively Charlotte" hosts Alicia Quarles and Liza Mahachek, raises money to support the cinema's operations, programs, and mission to educate and engage the community through film. Live music, complimentary food and drink, silent auction and trivia are among the festivities.

Information: independentpicture-house.org.

Emmy and Grammy winner Braxton Cook (Not Everyone Can Go) plays Middle C Jazz, 300 S Brevard St. Tickets available at middlecjazz.com.

March 20

Saxophonist Mike Phillips plays 2026 Project Preview at Middle C Jazz, 300 S Brevard St. Tickets available at middlecjazz.com.

March 20-21

Charlotte Symphony Orchestra presents "Encanto in Concert" at

Belk Theater, 130 N Tryon St. The Oscar-winning Walt Disney Studios movie tells the tale of the Madrigals, a family living in a magical house in the mountains of Colombia. Watch the entire feature-length film as the symphony performs the score live.

Tickets: tix.blumenthalarts.org.

March 26

Selwyn Birchwood ("Electric Swamp Funkin' Blues") at Middle C Jazz, 300 S Brevard St. Tickets: middlecjazz.com.

March 28

"Chain of Ideas: An Afternoon with Dr. Ibram X. Kendi," Carolina Theatre, 2 p.m.

Kendi, a historian and leading antiracist scholar, is a professor of history and founding director of the Howard University Institute for Advanced Study, an interdisciplinary research enterprise examining

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« MOVIE REVIEW »

'The Bride!' is a Frankenstein riff with a pulse

By Jake Coyle

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Bride

2.5 stars

Maggie Gyllenhaal's "The Bride!" is a big, brash swing at a new "The Bride of Frankenstein" that struggles to cohere its many parts. But I'll say this for it: It's alive.

Just months after Guillermo del Toro presented his lavish "Frankenstein," Gyllenhaal, in her follow-up to her excellent 2021 directorial debut, "The Lost Daughter," has set her sights on reimagining 1935's "The Bride of Frankenstein." The sequel starred Boris Karloff and, in the dual role of the Bride and Mary Shelley, Elsa Lanchester.

But in "The Bride of Frankenstein," the shock-haired Bride is only on screen for a handful of minutes at the end of the film. Gyllenhaal, who also wrote her film, has corrected the imbalance, refashioning the story from the Bride's perspective and concocting a protagonist of unfiltered feminist fury. As played by Jessie Buckley, she is both a victim of male control and a reanimated avenging angel.

Buckley is also, like Lanchester was, Shelley. In the movie's opening moments, Shelley speaks from the beyond directly to us. She has a story, she says, that's been stuck inside her, like a dream or a tumor. "What I wanted to say, I couldn't," she says. "I couldn't even think it."

So Gyllenhaal has placed her story not in the early 19th century, when "Frankenstein" was written, or in the present day, but in the 1930s, around when "The Bride of Frankenstein" came out. When Frankenstein's monster, here simply "Frank" (Christian Bale), stumbles along, he's been lonely for not just a few years but a century.

But first we meet Ida, a Chicago party girl who, out one night with a table full of gangsters, experiences a sudden eruption of raw honesty — the words spurt out of her uncontrollably — that quickly gets her killed.

When Frank turns up at the office of Dr. Euphronios (Annette Bening), his request of a companion is at first poorly received. "Give me a break, Frank," she retorts. "Everyone's lonely." But Dr. Euphronios, too tempted to push scientific (and ethical) bound-



WARNER BROS ENTERTAINMENT

Christian Bale and Jessie Buckley in a scene from "The Bride!"

aries, decides to do it, and quickly enough they've dug up a corpse (Ida's) and electrified her back to life. Easy peasy.

But as soon as she comes to, it's clear Ida — with platinum blond hair and an ink-blot stain on her cheek from the IV drip — isn't so keen on the plan. Informed that she's to be his bride, she spits up blood and laughs. Get married? "Frankly, no," she says.

In her new life, Ida is reinvigorated as much by Shelley's spirit as Dr. Euphronios' lab. She speaks full of puns and quips and literary references. Coming off her award-winning performance in "Hamnet," Buckley clearly relishes the role, turning Ida into an unruly and raw vessel of female emancipation.

But while "The Bride!" very definitely has gender politics on its mind, Gyllenhaal is as set on having fun as much as she is prodding dated notions. This is a movie with an exclamation point in its title, after all. And Gyllenhaal delights in sending Ida and Frank on a fantastical adventure that pays as much homage to "Bonnie and Clyde" as it does "Frankenstein."

As much as they get off on the wrong foot, Ida and Frank are drawn together out of outcast necessity. And, after a night at a dance club that turns darkly

sinister, Ida realizes that sexual assault is more of a threat from other men than it is from her presumptive groom. Frank, played with endearing earnestness by Bale, is more of a big softie than a monster. His favorite things in the world are musicals.

Frank and Ida frequently stop in at movie theaters on their journey, which takes them to New York. (A lightbulb-festooned Times Square is vividly rendered in Karen Murphy's lush production design.) The movie star Frank is most fond of, Ronnie Reed, is played by Maggie's brother Jake Gyllenhaal, whose frequent on-screen appearances add another dose of levity to "The Bride!"

So do the detectives on the pair's trail (Peter Sarsgaard, Penélope Cruz), whose dynamic is another, more real-world commentary on gender roles. The whole group comes together around the time Frank leads a song-and-dance routine to "Puttin' on the Ritz," a nod to Mel Brooks' "Young Frankenstein" (1974).

Led by a careening, foot-stomping Bale, the scene could well be about when the feeling takes hold of "The Bride!" being just a little too much. The tonal extremes and multilayered theat-

Please see **MAGGIE** | 6B



MIDDLE C JAZZ

Grammy nominee Maysa returns to Charlotte on April 11 for a show at Middle C Jazz.

Grammy nominee Maysa at Middle C

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global racism. Tickets are \$68-\$82 and available at Ticketmaster.

April 3

Keyboardist Nicolas Cole ("Blue Magic") takes the stage at Middle C Jazz, 300 S Brevard St. Tickets: middlecjazz.com.

April 7

Contemporary soul trio Moonchild plays Knight Theater at 7:30 p.m. as part of the Waves Tour.

The Los Angeles-based threesome of Amber Navran, Andris Mattson and Max Bryk combines neo-soul, jazz and electronic music into a genre-fluid sound.

Tickets start at \$52.77 and available at blumenthalarts.org/events/detail/moonchild-waves-tour

April 11

Two-time Grammy nominee Maysa ("Milestones") returns to Charlotte for a show at Middle C Jazz, 300 S Brevard St. Tickets: middlecjazz.com.

Through April 26

"In Pursuit of Home" at Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture, Levine Center for the Arts, 551 South Tryon St.

Artist Mario Moore's exhibit encourages viewers to reflect on how the meaning of home is changing in modern America and the inequalities intertwined with its pursuit.

The exhibition explores the desire for homeownership in the United

States, particularly among people in their 20s and 30s, and the barriers that make achieving it more challenging.

Information: ganttcenter.org/exhibitions/in-pursuit-of-home.

May 2

R&B icons October London and Lalah Hathaway take over Owens Auditorium, 2900 E Independence Blvd. for a concert event celebrating love, soul and timeless music. Showtime is 8 p.m.

Tickets presale on Jan. 28 at 10 a.m. local time. The general sale begins Jan. 30 at 10 a.m. local time on Ticketmaster.com.

May 5

The Robert Cray Band, 7:30 p.m. Carolina Theatre, 230 N. Tryon St.

The blues-rock standout first picked up a guitar after seeing The Beatles on TV then, having witnessed Jimi Hendrix perform in Seattle, determined his destiny would follow a similar path. Cray's developed into one of American music's top music artists over the last half century.

Tickets range from \$55-\$174 and available at ticketmaster.com.

June 6

Grammy-nominated R&B singer Ari Lennox brings her North American tour to Skyla Credit Union Amphitheatre. The show is in support of her third studio album *Vacancy*. Tickets available at livenation.com.

Harry Styles' latest album swings, sweats, surprises

Continued from page 5B

back half. The gamble pays off on the funky "Dance No More," a loose rush of dopamine. (It takes a strong party to press play and not come off wanting to join in the chant, "Gotta get your feet wet / Respect / Respect your mother!," recalling both Rick James' "Super Freak" and drag culture all in one.) Or the maximalist production and Spanish guitars of "Ready, Steady, Go!," or the suggestive "Pop," a lustful, electric good time. The 2010s dance-punk band Hot Chip feels like a direct source of inspiration.

Elsewhere, Styles' voice is sacrificed, buried beneath his ambitious production, like on "Season 2 Weight Loss." In others, he's front and center, as on "Coming Up Roses," written by Styles alone and featuring a 39-piece orchestra arranged by conductor Jules Buckley.

A familiar Styles, too, emerges in spurts, like in that song's romance, or the album's two lyrical references to Simon & Garfunkel on the closer "Carla's Song" and "Dance No More." There's also the late-'60s, early-'70s channeling "Paint By Numbers," his acoustic guitar, singer-

songwriter, "Matilda" moment.

"Oh, what a gift it is to be noticed," he sings. The simple statement becomes an existential revelation, Styles' realizing his fame is a conduit for community, not its source: "But it's nothing to do with me."

"Kiss All the Time. Disco. Occasionally" takes big swings, but Styles' approach is often understated — like on "Are You Listening Yet?," which never really resolves but satiates, or the midtempo "American Girls."

The freedom Styles appears to have been chasing has built a subversive album, one that doesn't play into any contemporary pop star rule book. It'll prove to be divisive for his loyal listeners, or at the very least, unexpected. Still, risk doesn't mean "Kiss All the Time. Disco. Occasionally" is wholly unrestrained, which may be its central hope. Because at the end of the day, even in the early morning haze of a sweaty nightclub, strangers' bodies holding strangers' bodies, he is still Harry Styles.

But the effort to unshackle himself from expectation? That sounds like elation.

Maggie Gyllenhaal's 'The Bride!' a Frankenstein riff

Continued from page 5B

ricality of Maggie Gyllenhaal's movie-mad movie are, by any measure, a lot. But I would argue such ambitious gambits are exactly the kind that a filmmaker in their sophomore outing ought to be taking. "The

Bride!" feels constantly like an act of plate-spinning that's about to collapse. That it doesn't is a fever-dream feat, one that makes me eager to see what Gyllenhaal does next.

"The Bride!," a Warner Bros. release, is rated R by

the Motion Picture Association for strong/bloody violent content, sexual content/nudity and language. Running time: 127 minutes. Two and a half stars out of four.



Live Nation, feds reach deal over illegal monopoly case

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The official called it a "win-win for everybody," bringing immediate relief to consumers and protecting venues from retaliation when they choose Live Nation's competitors to handle tickets or promote events.

In a statement, Live Nation Entertainment said it was pleased with a settlement that will let other promoters decide how best to distribute up to 50% of tickets at some venues and limit ticketing service fees.

"We have never relied on exclusivity to drive our ticketing business, it has simply been the result of having the best products, services and people in the industry," said Michael Rapino, president and CEO of Live Nation.

The process leading to the deal brought immediate criticism from Manhattan Judge Arun Subramanian, who called it "entirely unacceptable" that nobody told him what was going on until late Sunday, even after the term sheet was signed Thursday.

States: Deal won't break monopoly

New York Attorney General Letitia James said in a statement that the pact "fails to address the monopoly at the center of this case."

"My attorney general colleagues and I have a strong case against Live Nation, and we will continue our lawsuit," James said.

A release containing her statements said other states rejecting the settlement included Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, Wisconsin, Wyoming and the District of Columbia.

North Carolina Attorney General Jeff Jackson called the agreement "a terrible deal" that was hidden from the states until the last minute.

"This case is about Live Nation and Ticketmaster harming consumers, trapping artists, and driving up ticket prices. We will see them back in court, shortly," he said.

Washington State Attorney General Nick Brown said the bipartisan group of state attorneys general who joined the Justice Department's lawsuit in May 2024 would continue because the "case against Live Nation is strong, and the state coalition is

committed to holding the company accountable for its illegal behavior, protecting consumers and restoring competition to this market."

A \$280 million fund to pay states is criticized as too little

Stephen Parker, executive director of the National Independent Venue Association, said in a statement that the \$280 million fine represented about four days of Live Nation's 2025 revenue.

"They could potentially make it back by this Friday," Parker said, speaking for thousands of independent venues, festivals and promoters nationwide.

"The reported settlement does not appear to include any specific and explicit protections for fans, artists, or independent venues and festivals," he said, calling the agreement "a failure of the justice system."

Adam Gitlin, a lawyer for the District of Columbia, told Subramanian that several states had not decided what they would do, including Florida, Louisiana and Texas, which he said had expressed "serious concerns" about the deal.

In court, Subramanian told jurors of the agreement, saying the trial would resume next week with some states pressing the claims first brought under President Joe Biden's administration in 2024.

Trial set to resume for states unwilling to settle

Now, states will be left to press claims that Live Nation was squelching competition and driving up prices for fans through threats, retaliation and other tactics to "suffocate the competition" by controlling virtually every aspect of the industry, from concert promotion to ticketing.

The states accuse Live Nation of engaging in a slew of practices to maintain a stranglehold over the live music scene. They say the company uses long-term contracts to keep venues from choosing rival ticketers, blocking venues from using multiple ticket sellers and threatening venues that they could lose money and fans if they don't choose Ticketmaster.

Live Nation has maintained that artists and teams set prices and decide how tickets are sold.

Ticketmaster and Live Nation Entertainment, based in Beverly Hills, California, have a long history of clashes with major artists and their fans, including Taylor Swift and Bruce Springsteen.

Ticketmaster, which was established in 1976 and merged with Live Nation in 2010, is the world's largest ticket seller across live music, sports, theater and more.

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