

Life!

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026 SECTION B



IFAW

Mecklenburg County Public Health confirmed the fourth case of rabies in 2026 when a coyote exposed a human and pet on June 6.

Mecklenburg's fourth case of rabies in 2026

By Herbert L. White
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

Mecklenburg County's fourth confirmed case of rabies in 2026 involved a coyote in Huntersville.

The county public health department confirmed the case on June 6 involving a coyote that exposed a human and pet. The human and pet are undergoing treatment. The coyote exposure is the first among that species in the county since 2018.

Rabies, a viral disease that is fatal if left untreated, can be prevented through vaccination. Healthy animals and humans can be infected through a bite, scratch or licking by a sick animal. Rabies most often occurs in wild animals such as bats, foxes, raccoons and skunks.

After a confirmed case and exposure, the county public health department conducts contact tracing and alerts neighborhoods impacted through canvassing and social media. When there is potential for wider exposure, the county will issue an alert.

People should never approach, contact or feed wild animals, even if they appear friendly or need medical attention. Also, public health officials encourage parents talk to their children about not touching wildlife and make sure pets are up to date on their rabies vaccinations.

If you or your pet is bitten, scratched, or exposed by a coyote, contact Public Health at (704) 336-6400. Also, if you see a stray or wild animal acting sick or erratically, call Animal Care and Control at 311.

Avoid tree root conflicts in soil

By Melinda Myers
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Roots erupting through the soil surface beyond the tree trunk irritate gardeners when trying to grow and mow grass under trees.

Save time, reduce frustration and be kind to your trees when dealing with these surface roots. These roots are a normal part of aging for shallow rooted trees and are important to their health and stability.

As roots age, they increase in circumference just like the tree's branches and trunk. The upper portion of the roots eventually appear above the soil surface. Covering the roots with soil is only a temporary solution and adding too much, even a couple inches, can be detrimental to the health of the tree. Your tree may look fine the first few years after installing that raised planting bed, but eventually the tree's leaves get smaller and drop earlier in the fall. And after five or 10 years the tree may even die.

Do not cut, dig up or shave off these important roots. Damaging the roots creates entryways for insects and diseases to move in and cause trees to decline and possibly shorten their life.

Mulch is a simple solution. Use a 2-to-4-inch layer of organic mulch like leaves, evergreen needles and woodchips on the soil surface surrounding the tree. The finer the mulch material the thinner the layer needed. Apply the mulch throughout the area under the tree's dripline, if possible, or in a circle extending at least 3 feet all the way around the tree. Pull the mulch away from the tree trunk to avoid insect, disease and rodent problems.

Eliminating grass and covering the soil with mulch
Please see **AVOID** | 28

« RIDES »

Cadillac Escalade IQ takes electric power to new performance and luxury levels

By Winfred Cross
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

How much does \$154,495 buy?

Even in this economy, it can buy a lot. If you live in Laurel, Mississippi, you can still buy a house, if you believe what you see on HGTV. It will probably need some renovations but still, it would be yours.

Or you can buy a Cadillac Escalade IQ Premium Sport, the company's electric SUV. You get a lot of vehicle that can go a long way on a single charge. And I mean a long way.

How far can it go on a full charge, you ask? Cadillac estimates 465 miles. My test car was registering 535 miles of range when it was delivered. The range

on this thing is amazing considering its size and weight. Believe it or not this is the shorter version.

The Escalade IQ is powered by two electric motors - one each on the front and back wheels. Total horsepower is estimated at 750 with 785 pounds-feet of torque. This 2-ton Tessie can haul itself to 60 miles per hour in 4.7 seconds - ridiculously fast for a full-size EV.

Boy, is this thing fast. When you ask for power, you get it instantly from electric motors that deliver optimal torque. Passing power is top notch and you can beat most cars on the road off the line at a stoplight. The rear motors give AWD, which works won-

derfully in wet weather and helps with stability when dry.

You will be surprised at how well the Escalade handles. This is the luxury sport model, but its size would make you believe it would be overwhelming on the road. Nope. This Caddy is road friendly, and well, sporty. There are driving modes, one of which is sport. To wring the most power out of this beast go for Velocity Max, which gives you all the available horsepower and torque and allows you to hit 60 mph in 4.7 seconds. You get to speed in absolute silence or if you are using Velocity Max, it gives you a throaty engine sound.

The Tour mode is going

to give you the best ride, which can be described as buttery. An air-ride adaptive suspension is standard which adjusts to road imperfections. Magnetic Ride Control is also standard, and General Motors seems to have perfected this. You can't ask for a smoother ride.

Driving a vehicle this big turned out to be a lot of fun but I had some fear about parking. My fears were gone once I discovered Cadillac Arrival Mode. Four-wheel steering allows the vehicle to be more maneuverable at speeds below 35 mph. Parking was actually easy. The live feed rear-view mirror was really helpful.

The Escalade's interior is



CADILLAC

The 2026 Cadillac Escalade IQ is pricey, but its electric powerplant produces top of the line performance and range.

amazing. Upscale finishings abound. There isn't a piece of cheap anywhere to be found. The seats are covered in soft, creamy leather. The front seats offer a massage mode, heating and cooling. Each is power adjustable and

Please see **ESCALADE** | 28



TONY NEWBERNE

Tony Newberne, a Charlotte-based personal trainer, is a survivor of multiple myeloma, a rare blood cancer.

Cancer survivor pushes men to take control of their health

Tony Newberne shares experiences and importance of advocacy

By Cameron Williams
cameron.williams@thecharlottepost.com

Life can come at you fast. That's why taking control of your health is crucial.

Tony Newberne, a Charlotte-based personal trainer, was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, a rare blood cancer, at 39 years old. By the time of diagnosis, he'd gone eight years of unexplained symptoms.

"I had never heard of multiple myeloma before," Newberne said. "I had no idea what it was, and at that time I was a personal trainer.

I was living an active lifestyle, helping others improve their health and planning for the future. What I didn't realize is that my body had been giving me warning signals for years. That is kind of how my journey began."

What is multiple myeloma?

The cancer develops in plasma cells of the bone marrow, where it multiplies rapidly and uncontrollably. They crowd out healthy blood cells that our bodies use to make antibodies. It ultimately leads to weakened bones, kidney damage and weakened immune

system.

For Newberne, it came out of nowhere.

"I saw my primary care doctor regularly," he said. "I did my labs and everything, but my physicals didn't pick up the multiple myeloma. Even way back in 2005 when I first noticed these blood spots under my tongue, that was my body giving me a warning sign. I went to the emergency room... and basically, I found out I had low platelets. ... I was what they call smoldering throughout

Please see **CANCER** | 28

NC's Medicaid work rule plans upended

By Jaymie Baxley
NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH NEWS

North Carolina's Department of Health and Human Services waited nearly a year for federal guidance on implementing the Medicaid work requirement approved by congressional Republicans last summer.

The mandate, passed in the summer of 2025 as part of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, takes effect on Jan. 1. It will force many of the more than 750,000 adults who became eligible through the state's expansion of the government-

Please see **MEDICAID** | 38



JAYMIE BAXLEY | NORTH CAROLINA HEALTH NEWS

NC DHHS officials Debra Farrington, left, Michael Leighs and Melanie Bush at the i2i Center for Integrative Health's spring conference in Raleigh on June 9, 2026.

Cancer survivor urges men to advocate health

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the whole process before I was officially diagnosed."

CAR-T to the rescue

Chimeric Antigen Receptor T-cell therapy, or CAR-T, is a groundbreaking personalized immunotherapy that can genetically reprogram white blood cells to target and destroy cancerous cells. It is most frequently used for patients with relapsed refractory blood cancers such as leukemias, lymphomas and like in Newberne's case, multiple myeloma.

"There's a lot of layers to CAR-T," Newberne said. "CAR-T therapy, in my experience as a multiple myeloma patient, after years of multiple myeloma and more than a decade of going through several lines of treatment, I experienced cerebral blasphemy. At that point, my healthcare team and I discussed CAR-T therapy as a treatment option, and the process required preparation, patience, and close monitoring, but it also gave me another opportunity when I needed it. After nearly 12 years of continuous chemotherapy, I am grateful for the opportunity to be off treatment now."

Newberne said his experiences are why he advocates for people to stand up for their own health.

"I want other patients to have the opportunity to discuss all available treatment options with their healthcare teams," he said. "Today, I remain grateful for the care I receive, and for the opportunity to have had access to this treatment. What CAR-T has done for me is provide hope and allow me to look toward the future with optimism."

Speak up and be heard

Newberne was pronounced cancer free in September 2025, and it was a pivotal moment.

"After nearly 12 years of continuous

chemotherapy, I am grateful to be off treatments," he said. "Experiences like mine are why I advocate so passionately. I want other patients to have the opportunity to discuss all available treatment options with their healthcare teams. It is pretty remarkable to me what CAR-T did, but everyone's experiences are different. That is why it is important to speak up and talk with your medical team to find out what works best for you individually and what will get you back to your best health."

Experiences like mine are why I advocate so passionately. I want other patients to have the opportunity to discuss all available treatment options with their healthcare teams. It is pretty remarkable to me what CAR-T did, but everyone's experiences are different. That is why it is important to speak up and talk with your medical team to find out what works best for you individually and what will get you back to your best health.

Cancer survivor **TONY NEWBERNE**



MELINDA MYERS

Hostas planted in between tree roots.

Avoid tree root conflicts in soil

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is also better for the tree and less work for you in the long run. Grass competes with the tree for water and nutrients and as you may have discovered, growing grass in the shade of some trees can be challenging. You also eliminate the need to hand trim grass growing near the tree, saving you time while protecting your tree from weed whip and mower damage.

Consider shade-tolerant perennials and groundcovers if mulched beds do not fit your design style. These plants eliminate the need to mow over surface roots. They are less competitive than lawn grass, protect the soil from erosion, help manage storm water and add seasonal interest to your landscape.

Select plants suited to the growing conditions and hardy for your climate. Use caution when planting under mature trees. Avoid deep tilling that can damage not only the surface roots, but also the fine feeder roots that absorb water and nutrients. Instead, dig relatively small holes between major roots and allow the

plants to fill in the area.

Mulch the soil surfaces around these groundcover plants with leaves, evergreen needles or other organic mulch. Water thoroughly once the plants are in the ground and often enough to keep their roots slightly moist throughout the summer. Gradually extend the time between watering to encourage the plants to develop a robust root system.

Invest a bit of time now to reduce ongoing maintenance, improve the health of your trees, and add beauty to your landscape.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the *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 TV & radio program*. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine. Her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

The Creatives:
A podcast about Charlotte's most creative people

On SoundCloud, Apple Podcasts and Spotify

Escalade EV sets even higher Cadillac standard

Continued from page 1B

has enough room the largest of frames.

The second row of seats can move forward and backwards and can flip forward for access to the third row. My test car was equipped with a second-row entertainment system with tablet size monitors to stream pretty much anything you want. The sound will come through a 38 speaker AKG audio system that is one of the best original equipment systems I've heard. If you want privacy, a set of AKG headphones are included. The system also uses Dolby Atmos, a premier sound processing system.

Most folks will easily notice the Escalade's most prominent feature - the 55-inch digital screens. It looks like one piece but it's actually three screens. The first section is the gauge cluster which is configurable to a verity of settings. The second section is the touch screen that has several different screens to scroll through.

Lots of things to control in this vehicle. The third screen sits in front of the front passenger and can stream YouTube videos, Tubi or a variety of other streaming services. The vehicle is also equipped with 5G WiFi.

What else does your \$154,495 et you? Super Cruise is included which means the car can drive itself on certain stretches of

highway. The vehicle will also change lanes on its own when needed. An ambient light system with a ridiculous amount of color choices is standard. There are also heated seats in the second row. The front trunk or "frunk" holds as much stuff as the rear lift gate section. Twenty-four-inch wheels are standard as well as an illuminated Cadillac emblem on the grille. The doors, lift gate and frunk can be power operated.

The Cadillac Escalade IQ Premium Sport is one heck of a vehicle. The range is unbelievable, the ride is surprisingly pleasant and the look is stately. The price is out of reach for many, but those who choose to indulge will be happy. This is an automotive achievement.

Pros

- Absolutely stunning looks
- Impressive power
- Great handling
- Extended range
- Ear-pleasing AKG sound system
- Loads of technology
- Exceptional interior
- Creamy ride quality
- Five-zone climate control
- Comfortable seating
- Easy access

Cons

- High price
- Limited storage in rear

« BLACK BRILLIANCE »

Eva Clayton, first Black woman to represent NC in Congress

By Herbert L. White

herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

Eva Clayton, a 1955 Johnson C. Smith University graduate, is the first Black woman to represent North Carolina in the United States House of Representatives.

Clayton, who earned a master's degree at North Carolina Central University in 1962, earned recognition in civil rights organizing in the 1960s before transitioning in the early 1970s, to work at several public and private initiatives, including the North Carolina Health Manpower Development Program at UNC Chapel Hill. In 1974, she cofounded and was executive director of Soul City Foundation, a housing organization that renovated dilapidated buildings for use as homeless shelters and daycare centers. Clayton worked on the gubernatorial campaign of Jim Hunt, who later appointed her assistant secretary of the state department of natural resources and community development from 1977-81. In 1982, she won election to the

Warren County Board of Commissioners, which she chaired until 1990.

In 1992, Clayton campaigned in the Democratic primary to fill the unexpired term of Rep. Walter Jones upon his retirement in the 1st Congressional District. She won the special election to fill the last two months of his term in 1993 and beat Republican Ted Tyler for a full two-year term.

In four re-election bids, Clayton won with 60% or more of the votes cast. While in Congress, she served on Agriculture and Budget committees and ranking member of the Agriculture Department's Operations Oversight, Nutrition and Forestry Subcommittees as well as chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation.

Upon her retirement from Congress, Clayton completed a three year-assignment with the Food Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Rome, in 2006 as assistant director-general and special adviser to the director-general. In that post, Clayton helped to establish alliances and partnerships in over 24 countries to fight hunger and poverty including the United States.

« SPONSORED CONTENT »

One decision could change the next 10 years of your life

By Marlon Smith

SPEAKER AUTHOR BLUEPRINT

Think back to the most significant turning points in your life.

Perhaps it was meeting a mentor.

Starting a business.

Taking a new job.

Attending a conference.

Making a courageous decision despite uncertainty.

Most breakthroughs begin with a single decision.

The Speaker Author Blueprint Summit (TheSpeakerBlueprintSummit.com) on Saturday, June 27, may become one of those decisions.

Why?

Because we are entering a new era where knowledge, communication, visibility, and personal branding are becoming some of the most valuable assets a person can possess.

The old economy rewarded people primarily for what they did.

The new economy increasingly rewards people for what they know and how effectively they communicate it.

People are building businesses, brands, and additional income streams through speaking, coaching, consulting, books, online education, and digital platforms.

Many are leveraging artificial intelligence to scale their impact faster than ever before.

The question is no longer whether opportunity exists.

The question is whether you are positioned to capture it.

At the Speaker Author Blueprint Summit, attendees will discover proven strategies for:

- Turning expertise into influence
- Building a powerful personal brand
- Writing books that open doors
- Generating speaking opportunities
- Leveraging AI to save time and increase productivity

· Expanding income streams

· Creating a lasting legacy

Perhaps even more valuable, attendees will be surrounded by growth-minded professionals who are actively investing in themselves and their future.

Environment matters.

The people you meet can influence the opportunities you see.

The ideas you learn can shape the direction of your next decade.

The confidence you gain can unlock possibilities you never imagined.

Too often people delay opportunities because they believe there will always be another chance.

Sometimes there is.

Sometimes there isn't.

The future belongs to individuals who are willing to invest in growth before they feel fully ready.

The room matters.

The relationships matter.

The knowledge matters.

The decision matters.

On June 27, you have an opportunity to place yourself in a room designed to help you expand your influence, increase your impact, and elevate your future.

One decision can change everything.

Reserve your seat now at: www.TheSpeakerAuthorBlueprint.com.

Your next chapter may begin the moment you walk through the door.

Marlon Smith is an international keynote speaker and best-selling author whose presentations have inspired audiences in 45 states and 19 countries. For more than 34 years, he has helped leaders, entrepreneurs, educators, and professionals increase their impact, visibility, and success. As founder of the Speaker Author Blueprint Summit, he is on a mission to help people transform their knowledge, experiences, and stories into greater influence, income, and legacy. Learn more at www.TheSpeakerAuthorBlueprint.com.

Medicaid work rule plans upended by feds

Continued from page 1B

funded health insurance program to prove they are working, volunteering or attending school for at least 80 hours a month to retain their coverage.

The number of beneficiaries this would affect, exactly, had been uncertain.

Earlier this month, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services offered some clarity — and introduced new complications — in a lengthy policy document, known as an interim final rule, that was more restrictive than state health officials had anticipated.

State officials and lawmakers had known from the start that children, pregnant women, disabled veterans and members of federally recognized tribes would not be subject to the requirement. But Melanie Bush, head of North Carolina's Medicaid program, said CMS threw states a "curveball" in its guidance for a harder to define population: enrollees who are medically frail.

Speaking at a conference organized by the i2i Center for Integrative Health in Raleigh on June 9, Bush explained that, according to the interim final rule, an exemption for medically frail beneficiaries applies only to people who can demonstrate they are unable to work.

"It's not simply based on a diagnosis," she said. "It's also verifying that this condition prevents you from working or doing community engagement."

That's a significant departure from how states had expected to administer the exemption. In crafting the original legislation, Congress left the definition of medical frailty to the states, giving them latitude to set their own standards — an approach North Carolina and others had been counting on.

"Now we have to sort of go back to the drawing board and figure out how we're going to link medical frailty criteria to ability to work," Bush said. "That's something that we hadn't necessarily planned on, so we are re-baselining our implementation plans, our timelines [and] raising questions to CMS."

A heavy lift for counties

The work requirement extends to the 40 states — along with the District of Columbia — that expanded Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, something North Carolina did in late 2023. (Wisconsin and Georgia, two non-expansion states that broadened eligibility through waiver programs, are also included.)

Carrying out the requirement will require more than determining who qualifies for an exemption. States must also conduct eligibility reviews frequently, checking at least twice a year that beneficiaries still meet the standards so they continue to qualify.

Unlike most of the other affected states, eligibility determinations in North Carolina are handled at the county level. This means the weight of implementing the requirement will fall largely on local social workers.

"A lot of this is really dependent on our county divisions of social services," Bush said. "They are going to be bearing an untold burden doing the eligibility determinations for these folks."

The mandate comes as county social services offices are already stretched thin. About 10 percent of local social services positions dedicated to Medicaid statewide are vacant, according to NC DHHS.

Through 2027, beneficiaries in most states will be allowed to self-attest that they are medically frail. They won't have to prove their condition prevents them from working until 2028, at which point they'll be forced to provide documentation every six months.

However, North Carolina is one of two states, along with Utah, where lawmakers passed legislation prohibiting self-attestation in the requirement's first year.

House Bill 696, which was signed by Democratic Gov. Josh Stein in April, prevents "DHHS or county departments of social services from accepting self-attestation as the only evidence in verification of Medicaid eligibility requirements, except as required by federal law."

The law also requires beneficiaries to satisfy the work requirement retroactively. To enroll, they must show they complied during the three

months before their eligibility determination. It's a hurdle that healthcare advocates say could keep eligible people from getting or maintaining coverage simply because they cannot document past employment or volunteer activity.

Taken together, the federal rule's heightened frailty standard and the state law's lookback clause and ban on self-attestation put North Carolina's county offices in a particularly demanding position compared with most other states.

"Our county DSS [offices] are going to need a lot of support," Bush said. "It's going to be completely overwhelming for them to take this on."

She added that NC DHHS plans to automate the determination process "as much as possible" with existing data from sources such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which could relieve some pressure on county workers.

More than Medicaid

The Medicaid work requirement is not the only provision of the federal budget reconciliation bill straining the state's social services infrastructure.

The same law reshaped SNAP as well, raising the long-standing age limit from 54 to 65 for people to be excused from that program's work requirement. It also imposes more frequent eligibility checks and introduces new exclusions for people who aren't U.S. citizens.

Michael Leighs, deputy secretary for opportunity and well-being at NC DHHS, said the SNAP changes took effect earlier than those for Medicaid, forcing his team to rapidly update policy, overhaul the state's eligibility system and send out guidance to counties.

"Since the passage of the bill last July, we really, really focused on putting in the changes to our systems," said Leighs, who also spoke at the i2i conference.

More than 1.25 million North Carolinians rely on SNAP, Leighs said, and half of the recipients are children. About 159,000 are older adults, and 46,000 are veterans. The program is also a major economic driver, particularly in rural areas where retailers may derive up to 20 percent of their sales from SNAP purchases.

For state officials, the challenge extends well beyond adapting to new eligibility rules.

There is a looming financial threat tied to what Leighs called the program's "error rate" — a measure of how often benefit amounts are higher or lower than they should be. Such errors, he noted, are typically minor miscalculations rather than fraud: a worker who forgot to ask about a deduction, or an applicant who failed to report a few months of income from a side job.

Under the new law, states with error rates above a certain threshold will be required to cover an increasingly large share of SNAP benefit costs — costs that have historically been paid entirely by the federal government.

North Carolina's annual SNAP benefit total is roughly \$2.8 billion. Leighs said a 15 percent cost share, which would apply to states with the highest error rates, could cost North Carolina as much as \$420 million.

"That's going to have huge ramifications if we land there," he said. "Not just for our program, but for the state budget in general."

Debra Farrington, the deputy secretary of health and chief equity officer at NC DHHS, meanwhile, offered what she described as a "small beacon of light" amid the cuts.

In January, North Carolina was awarded \$213 million by the federal government to set up the state's Rural Health Transformation Program, which is aimed at improving access to care in rural communities. The state hopes to receive additional annual payments totaling \$1 billion for the initiative over the next five years.

The money, Farrington said, presents "a wonderful chance" to improve health outcomes in rural areas, which often have higher rates of chronic disease and infant mortality than their urban counterparts.

Still, she cautioned against overstating what the new program can accomplish in the face of broader federal cuts. North Carolina stands to lose as much as \$50 billion in federal funding over the next decade, Farrington said, making the rural transformation grant "a drop in the bucket."


The Charlotte Post presents a
Breast Cancer Awareness Conversation

Join us for a powerful breast cancer awareness webinar designed to educate, empower, and support our community. We'll break down what every woman should know about risk, early detection, screening options, and treatment pathways with a special focus on the unique challenges facing Black women.


You'll hear from medical experts, survivors, and advocates as they share practical guidance, real stories, and resources that can save lives. This is more than a conversation. It's a call to action for our mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends.
Together, we can change the story.

June 30, 2026
6:00 p.m.

Presenters:




Mel Toran
 Executive Director for Western NC & SC
 American Cancer Society




Deborah Crawford, RN
 Novant Health

Link for Webinar



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Classifieds

To Place An Ad:
Call 704-376-0496

Classified Deadline: Monday at noon, prior to Thursday's edition

BIDS

Sealed bids for a qualified engineering firm for the Preliminary Engineering Report, Design and Construction for the Lower Cedar Valley Road Industrial Park Project will be received by Caldwell County (Owner) at Caldwell County Chambers, 905 West Avenue NW, Lenoir, NC 28645, until 2:00 p.m. (local time) on July 6th, 2026. At that time and place, bids will be opened and read aloud in public.

Caldwell County is seeking a qualified engineering firm for the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER), Design, and Construction Services for the Lower Cedar Valley Road Industrial Park Project. The project site is located on Lower Cedar Valley Road near US-321 in the Town of Sawmills, NC.

Caldwell County requires a PER to evaluate options for early site work to include demolition and removal of an existing structure, clearing and grubbing, erosion control measures, installation of stream crossing infrastructure, mass grading, and connection to an existing water tap. The Owner reserves the right to reject any or all bids or any part of a bid, and to waive informalities and technicalities in the bid.

Publish Date: June 13, 2026

Closing Date: July 16, 2026, at 2:00 PM (Proposals received after this time will not be considered.)

Submission Format: TWO (2) hard copies of the proposal (no more than 30 pages double-sided) and ONE (1) electronic copy on a flash drive.

Submission Details and Requirements

Contact for Specific Questions:

Ashley Bolick, Economic Development Director

Telephone: (828) 728-0768

Email: abolick@caldwellcountync.org

Submit To: Ashley Bolick, Economic Development Director

Mailing Address: RFQ 26-0706

PO Box 2200

Lenoir, NC 28645

Physical Address: RFQ 26-0706

1909 Hickory Blvd SE

Lenoir, NC 28645

Caldwell County encourages small, female, minority and local contractors to bid on this project. The County also promotes fair housing, is an equal opportunity employer, and encourages others to provide equal employment opportunities.

EMPLOYMENT

R&D Team Leader wanted by Elkem Silicones USA Corp. in York, SC. Lead innovative projs for the dvlpmnt of new mdl grade silicones. Respsbl for all aspects of people mgmt incl leading & dvlpng ind covering the life cycle of an employee. Approx 5-10% trvl is req for in-field trials of prdcts under dvlpmnt & cmpny meetings. **Reqs:** Bachelor's or higher deg (U.S. or frgn equiv) in Materials Science & Engg, Chemistry, Chem Engg or closely rtd field & five yrs of exp in job offered or as R&D App Analyst or in similar pos(s) in the silicones or mdl device mfg industries. 40 hours per wk, Monday through Friday (9:00am-5:00pm). To apply, please send resume to nacareers@elkem.com referencing R&D Team Leader.

AVP Mgr-Data Engineering at Moody's Investors Service, Inc. (Charlotte, NC). Lead, mentor, & inspire the data eng team in the design & implementation of robust, fault-tolerant data pipelines using AWS services such as Glue, Kinesis, Lambda, & EMR. Reqs: Bachelor's deg or foreign equiv in Comp Sci, Eng, or a rel technl fld + 5 yrs of progr resp exp performing software development & designing tech solutions. Anticipated hiring base salary range: \$156,166 to \$203,350/yr. To apply, please submit resume through careers.moody.com or via e-mail at hrbox28@moody.com. Please refer to Job Ref. 13444.

Senior Software Engineer at Moody's Investors Service, Inc. (Charlotte, NC). Develop & implement a modern technology ecosystem to support various functions. Reqs: Bachelor's deg or foreign equiv in Comp Sci, Eng, Info Tech, or a rel technl fld + 5 yrs of prog resp exp performing software development & designing technl solutions. Anticipated hiring base salary range: \$154,669 to \$169,000/yr. To apply, please submit resume through careers.moody.com or via e-mail at hrbox28@moody.com. Please refer to Job Ref. 13462.

Software Engineer at Moody's Investors Service, Inc. (Charlotte, NC). Contribute to ongoing feature development of web applications based on service-oriented architecture, involving UI, Services & databases. Reqs: Bachelor's deg or foreign equiv in Comp Sci, Eng, or a rel technl fld + 5 yrs of prog resp exp performing software development & designing technl solutions. Anticipated hiring base salary: \$154,669/yr. To apply, please submit resume through careers.moody.com or via e-mail at hrbox28@moody.com. Please refer to Job Ref. 13656.

EMPLOYMENT

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Digital Media Specialist: Define and implement brand positioning, messaging, and communication strategies to strengthen recognition. Oversee the website and social media platforms to ensure consistent visuals, tone, and storytelling. Conduct market and audience research to identify trends and growth opportunities and develop long-term brand narratives aligned with business goals. Lead the full creative process from concept and scriptwriting to art direction and final content delivery. Produce diverse formats including videos, photography, graphics. Introduce innovative storytelling techniques to enhance audience engagement. Work with sales, design, and product teams to align messaging and campaigns. Plan and execute brand promotions, product launches, and marketing campaigns, tracking performance to inform strategy and optimization. Job in Charlotte, Req: M.S. in Fine Arts, media or related field. Send resume to: Homemart Cabinetry Inc. 1810 W Pointe Dr. Charlotte, NC 28214

Financial Analyst: Prepare monthly analysis of budget/plan to actual revenue and expenses for the company and generate reports, graphs, and charts of developed data to lead business improvement and cost reductions. Identify, adjust, and review forecast and budget issues with the cost report to confirm proper recognition of cost and revenue. Generate financial reports to provide insights into the company's financial performance. Develop PowerBI dashboards to visualize trends of Sales, Inventory, Break-even, Labor Costs, COGS, Contribution Margin and other relevant KPI's and maintain a direct line of communication with management for major changes. Perform advanced reporting and analysis using Excel, including macros, indexes, conditional lists, arrays, pivots, and lookups to assess present and future financial performance. Req: M.S. in Business Analytics, finance or related field. All Jobs in Charlotte, NC. Send resume to: Homemart Cabinetry Inc. 1810 W Pointe Dr. Charlotte, NC 28214

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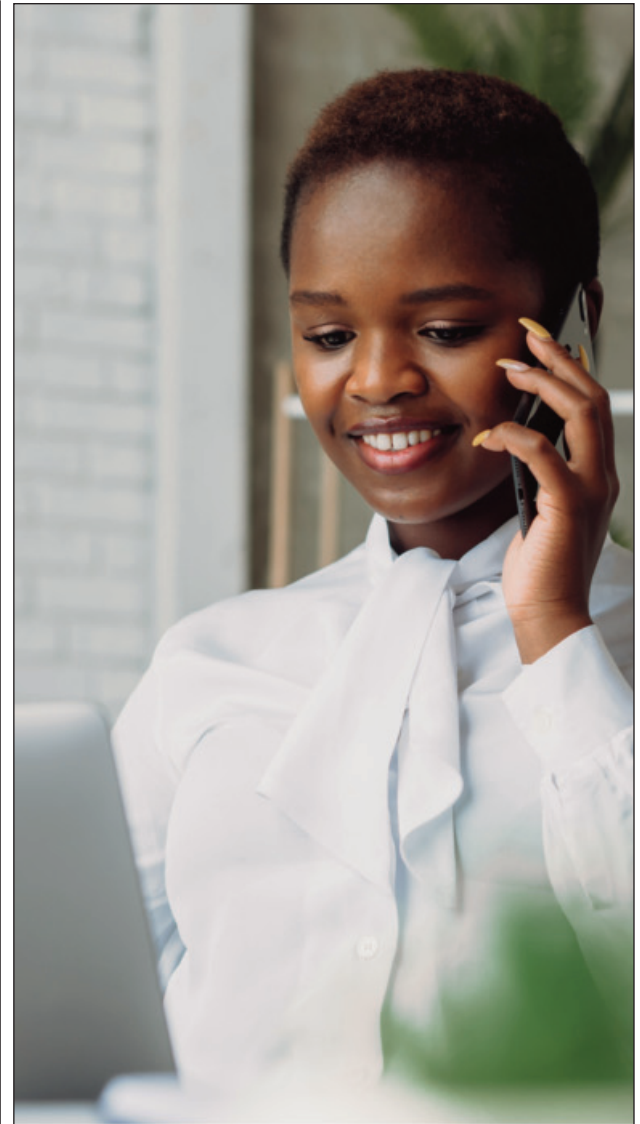
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THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2026 PAGE 5B



HARVEY B. GANTT CENTER

The Gantt Center is hosting a slate of activities for Juneteenth, including arts and crafts for children.

At the Gantt Center for Juneteenth

By Herbert L. White
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

The Harvey B. Gantt Center for African-American Arts + Culture is making a day of freedom, culture, and community for Juneteenth.

The center will host a four-hour block of free activities and programs on June 19 from 12-4 p.m., including the exhibition, *Beyond Boundaries: Black Abstraction in the Elliot and Kimberly Perry Collection*. The exhibit, which spans the Gantt's three galleries, charts mid-20th-century and contemporary abstracts by Black artists.

"We are thrilled to present Juneteenth at the Gantt 2026, a vibrant celebration honoring the spirit of freedom through art, music, and community connection," public programs manager Kayla Allen said in a statement. "All are invited to join us in commemorating the heritage of strength and freedom and to enjoy the day's cultural experiences."

The program schedule:

Soul Bistro Food Truck, 12-4 p.m.,

The food truck will be stationed outside of the Gantt's main entrance. Southern staples, including barbecue, seafood, and soul food, will be available.

On The Net
ganttcenr.org

Community Book Club & Vendor Pop-Up, 12-4 p.m.

Archive CLT will host a pop-up at the Gantt's Museum Store for a holiday-themed book discussion. Café drinks, including chai and iced coffee, will on sale through the afternoon.

Vendor Marketplace, 12-4 p.m.

Vendors, including Sweet Imalda's, In Due Time, and Kkunda, will be in the mezzanine area on the third floor.

Kids Arts & Crafts, 12-4 p.m.

Please see GANTT | 6B

College theater partnership for stage debuts

By Herbert L. White
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

Common Thread Theatre Collective is showcasing new North Carolina playwrights for its summer programming.

The stage collaborative founded by faculty at Davidson College and North Carolina A&T State University will present "The Race," written by Brian Daye and "Group Massage Therapy" by David Schoenfeld. The plays will be shown at Davidson's Barber Theater, 310 North Main St., June 20 at 7:30 p.m. and 2 p.m.

June 21. The stage shifts to Greensboro and A&T's Dudley Building, 202 University Circle, on June 28 at 7:30 p.m. and 2 p.m. June 29.

All performances are pay-what-you-can. Tickets can be reserved at etix.com or call (704) 894-2912

The showcase is in keeping with the initiative's goal of focusing on under-represented voices and stories. The company cultivates the talents of students from both schools as actors, managers, designers, and technicians.

"The Race" centers on a Black criminal defense attorney who represents a white supremacist on death row after a wrongful murder conviction. The lawyer is the inmate's last hope for clemency.

"Group Massage Therapy" focuses centers on four women therapists facing challenges like blurred professional boundaries, emotional labor, and client entitlement that affect their work and personal lives. Together, they explore the meaning of healing and self-protection.

A reception will be held before the Saturday readings and afterward a discussion to engage the playwrights, directors, and actors.



Daye



Schoenfeld

« ON THE MARQUEE »



SAMANTHA COLE

The cast of "Beehive: The '60s Musical" at City Stage in Greenville, S.C., is an homage to pioneering women vocal groups and solo acts that took popular music to new levels during the decade.

Big hair and iconic tunes on stage with 'Beehive'

1960s musical at Center Stage showcases the decade's pioneering women

By Herbert L. White
herb.l.white@thecharlottepost.com

The latest events, productions and exhibits in Charlotte and beyond:

Through July 9

The rebranded *Uptown Live* series kicks off at Truist Center Plaza from 5-9 p.m. with a DJ, live band, and food and drink for sale. The after party will continue at neighboring Fifth Street District, the largest concentration of locally owned bars and restaurants in Charlotte.

The lineup:

• June 25: Bourbon Sons and Out-run the Weekend

• July 2: Sol Fusion

• July 9: Spiked featuring DJ Elixir

June 18

"*Trouble So Hard - Song & Stories of Slavery, Freedom, & Civil Rights*," a live performance at Tyvola Senior Citizen Center, 2225 Tyvola Road. Performances are free, but registra-

tion is required at www.troublesohard.com/reserve.

• **Juneteenth celebration with Jay Ward**, 6 p.m., Charlotte Studio Artists, 3045 N. Davidson St.

An evening with Charlotte's poet laureate honoring Juneteenth. Following the reading, there'll be engagement in a community discussion. Artists from the "250 Years of Becoming: The American Journey" exhibition will also be on hand to reveal insights into their work and the stories behind their pieces.

June 19

Juneteenth Art Fest, 4-8 p.m., Shoppes at University Place 8931 JM Keynes Drive.

Second annual Juneteenth Art Fest celebrates the vibrant culture and history of Juneteenth with art, music, and community. The family-friendly event is free and features

local artists, live music, dance performances, and a marketplace showcasing small, minority-owned business.

• **Lullabies and Life: A Poetic Juneteenth Celebration**, 7:30 p.m., Bell Place, 230 N Tryon St. Featuring Jay Ward, MrWitzthePoet, Blue, Kyla "Cookie" Jones and Jay Smalls accompanied by Charlotte Strings Collective. Tickets are \$23-\$57 at Ticketmaster.com.

June 20

For The Struggle salutes freedom, culture and community at its seventh annual Juneteenth Celebration from 2-6 p.m. at West Charlotte High School, 2219 Senior Drive. The celebration is free but registration via Eventbrite is required.

• **Historic Rosedale** celebrates Juneteenth 12-3 p.m. The free program includes reflection, storytelling

Please see JAZZ | 6B

The truth has arrived with 'Disclosure Day'

By Dwight Brown

NATIONAL NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION

Disclosure Day
3 stars

"Are they people?"

No, not really. Though they may be back in the galaxies they came from.

Director Steven Spielberg's fascination with life from other worlds dates to 1977's "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and continued with 1982's "E.T. the Extra-Terrestrial." In 1993 his sensibility for the persecuted was manifested in "Schindler's List." While his gift for action-adventure filmmaking and thrilling audiences was honed through "Jaws," "Raiders of the Lost Ark" and "Jurassic Park," those films, their vibrancy and his artistry have led up to this moment. Now his fascination with alien life has evolved into a work shaded by modern anxieties about governmental wrongdoing. And it's a whopper.

Dr. Daniel Kellner (Josh O'Connor), a scientist and cybersecurity expert, is being stalked. Why? Because he has something his old boss at a secret research firm, Noah Scanlon (Colin Hirth), desperately wants. Scanlon's henchmen hunt him like prey. It wasn't Daniel's idea to involve his girlfriend Jane (Eve Hewson), but there she is beside him and on the run too. Fortunately, Hugo Wakefield (Colman Domingo) coaches Daniel by phone, providing just enough information to keep him ahead of his adversaries.

Margaret Fairchild (Emily Blunt) is a weather forecaster at a Kansas City TV station. A prima donna of sorts, she's in love with her boyfriend Jackson (Wyatt Russell), who plays second fiddle to her ego. All that changes one day on her local broadcast when she perceives herself speaking normally but



UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND AMBLIN ENTERTAINMENT

Colman Domingo in a scene from Steven Spielberg's science fiction thriller "Disclosure Day."

others don't - they think it's gibberish. Before she can make sense of it, she's also on the run.

The premise is born from Spielberg's imagination. The inking of his story is courtesy of screenwriter David Koepp, who worked with the director on "Jurassic Park" and "War of the Worlds."

Expect the complex plotting to have more twists, turns, subplots and red herring detours than most movies. Lots of it is intriguing enough to keep audiences fascinated as the mystery that drives all is revealed in pieces. The drama and action it generates are well measured throughout. Some will marvel at the philosophical discussions about God and the ethics of withholding or dispensing information.

Some will ignore the implications, sit

back and enjoy an attention-grabbing sci-fi/thriller.

For those who haven't experienced a Spielberg film in a while, be prepared for the bigness of it all. Nothing is subtle. Jolting opening scenes feature startling violence. He directs with overwhelming force, relying heavily on cutaways and metaphorical imagery. It's all captured by the very fluid cinematography of Janusz Kamiński ("Schindler's List"), whose camera dances around characters so much it could give viewers whiplash. Hardly subtle but often effective. The musical score seems gigantic as it drains away any realism, but that's the trademark of veteran composer John Williams.

Most of the clothes are unnoticeable. Please see DISCLOSURE | 6B

Jazz and breakfast with Vanessa Bell Calloway

Continued from page 5B

ing, and celebration with speakers and performers include Friendship Missionary Baptist Church Deacon Mary B. Starnes, Drums 4 Life drum circle, Moving Spirits, Inc. dance company, and Poet Laureate Jay Ward. Guided house tours will be available separately for the general tour fee of \$15 for adults and \$13 for students, military/veterans and people 65 and older. Children under 5 are admitted free.

June 25–July 12

Centre Stage production of *"Beehive: The '60s Musical,"* is at the theater company's headquarters, 501 River St., Greenville, S.C. Tickets are on sale at centrestage.org or by calling the box office at (864) 233-6733. Reservations are encouraged. Tickets range from \$33-\$38.

Showtimes are Thursday-Saturday at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m.

The show is a musical tip of the cap to top acts from Aretha Franklin to Martha Reeves and the Vandellas, Petula Clark and The Supremes who pumped out timeless classics like "Respect," "Be My Baby," and "Downtown."

June 27

Jazz and Breakfast with Vanessa Bell Calloway, Middle C Jazz, 300 South Brevard St., 9-11 a.m. Reserved seating is \$50 and general seating \$30. Tickets are available via Eventbrite and breakfast is included as part of Black Girls Film Camp Premiere Weekend.

Calloway, an actress, director and producer, is a BGFC board member with more than 150 television and film credits, including "Coming to America" and "What's Love Goto to Do With It?"

July 4

"An American Celebration," a day for family fun, food and music 12-2 p.m. at the Gaston County Museum of Art & History, 131 W. Main St., on the court square in Dallas, N.C.

The event is free and open to the public as the lead-in to Gaston County's 4th of July parade at 2 p.m. The celebration will include arts and crafts for children, a foam party play area, hot dogs and free Tony's ice cream, Karma cakes sale, a cooling down spray station, music by DJ Alfredo, and the Great American Apple Pie Bake-Off.

For information, visit www.gaston-countymuseum.org.

July 17-18

Usher and Chris Brown, Bank of America Stadium.

Grammy winners Chris Brown and Usher have a pair of Charlotte dates on their North American stadium tour. The tour follows record-breaking accomplishments for both artists.

At the end of 2024, the North American leg of Usher: Past, Present, Future sold over 1.1 million tickets. In October, Brown's Breezy Bowl XX World Tour was his highest-grossing and the highest-grossing tour ever by a solo Black American male, earning nearly \$300 million and drawing 2 million fans in North America, Europe, and the United Kingdom.

Tickets available at: raymondand-browntour.com.

July 25

Fetty Wap, The Fillmore. The double-Diamond-selling and Grammy nominated hip hop artist ("Trap Queen," "679," "My Way") brings the Nostalgia Tour to Charlotte. Tickets: livenation.com.

Aug. 12

P.J. Morton, Carolina Theatre, 7:30 p.m.

New Orleans-based Morton is a soul singer, songwriter, performer and producer who has earned six Grammy awards and 22 nominations while selling out venues around the world.

Tickets are \$82-\$135 and available at thecarolina.com.



Fetty Wap

Gantt Center celebrates Juneteenth, community

Continued from page 5B

Children of all ages can participate in arts and crafts on the top floor that include coloring pages and a craft stick pan-African flag activity.

Guided tours start at the second-floor visitor information desk, 12 p.m. and 1 p.m.

Learn about the history of the Gantt Center and the "Beyond Boundaries" exhibition.

"Juneteenth Faith & Freedom" screening, 12-1 p.m.

A documentary film follows the journey of a Black man as he travels Texas to learn more about the legacy of slavery in the U.S. and the Juneteenth holiday.

Painting activation with Curtis King, Harper-Roddey Grand Lobby, 12-2 p.m.

The Charlotte artist will host a live painting activation. Perfect for guests to

watch a painting come to life and ask questions throughout the process.

Juneteenth Mix with DJ Micki Blends, 1-2 p.m.

DJ Micki Blends will bring a summer soundtrack of classic cookout favorites, feel-good throwbacks, and crowd favorites.

Panel discussion: The History of Juneteenth, 2-3 p.m.

A discussion exploring the history of Juneteenth from the Emancipation Proclamation to federal holiday.

featuring local professors and historians Willie Griffin, Janaka Lewis and Earl Ijames.

A Sign of the Times, 3-4 p.m.

The Charlotte group will close the celebration in the Harper-Roddey Grand Lobby with a musical performance.

'Disclosure Day' a big budget sci-fi drama that really delivers

Continued from page 5B

which is a credit to costume designer Paul Tazewell. The exception is initial shots of an overdressed Firth in a navy-blue suit and a black turtleneck. Corporate devils dress more like librarians, not like GQ models.

Production designer Adam Stockhausen highlights the great divide between everyday American life and covert government activities when he contrasts houses, bedrooms and freight trains against high-tech control rooms with wall-to-wall monitors that stretch up to the ceilings. Visual effects designer Matthew Butler excels in a sequence in which bodies enter rooms as apparitions. He's far less successful with animal images, which all look hopelessly computer-generated.

Like Picasso or Renoir, Spielberg paints with the confidence of a master artist. Albeit with a heavy brush. Everything feels big and exaggerated. The production itself. The dialogue-heavy, exposition-laden, theater-like script that mires conversations. "Show us, don't tell us."

Also, on the heels of the very low-budget psych-thriller "Backrooms," which was just as scary on a minuscule budget, you might question if Spielberg's inability to think small is a hindrance. That skepticism fades at the 45-minute mark. After that you succumb. This is Spielberg's rollercoaster and you're happy to have a

front seat. Especially during some train escape scenes. That's Spielberg's wink and nod to his ability to still create great commotion and adventure.

Emily Blunt was cheeky in "Devil Wears Prada" and "DWP2," courageous in "A Quiet Place" and self-absorbed in "Smashing." She furthers her reputation for versatility as Margaret transitions from meteorologist to hero. The transformation is conveyed through her eyes, expressions and growing sense of wonder. Even when the film flounders, she is steadfast.

O'Connor is almost like the straight man to her heroics. Domingo's baritone voice is so soothing it's no wonder the two leads follow him blindly. A confrontation scene between Noah and Hugo hits a dramatic peak. Firth and Henry Lloyd-Hughes as his henchman Casper Boyd are suitably heartless. The supporting cast, whether playing stoic members of the resistance (e.g., Tommy Martinez as Santiago) or ruthless operatives, is equally effective.

Considering the huge talent on this project, there shouldn't be any blunders. Yet there are questionable moments. In a scene when the bad guys have surrounded a farmhouse, Daniel sneaks up behind them, and it isn't a credible moment. At such a short distance, it's unlikely he'd go unseen or unheard.

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