

This notebook computer is a very expensive paperweight

By Christopher Elliott
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Tracey Croisier bought a high-end Lenovo laptop expecting a powerhouse, but the battery died faster than a cheap phone.

After five repair attempts and some truly bizarre advice from tech support, she's stuck with a "portable" computer that only works when it's plugged into a wall. Is it time for the company to give her money back?

Q: I paid \$1,866 for a new Lenovo Yoga 9 a little over a year ago. I'm a writer and keynote speaker, so I need a device that works when I'm on the move. Less than a year after I bought it, the battery started crashing. It would go from 100% to 30% in just two hours.

Lenovo sent an in-home repair technician who replaced the battery and the motherboard, but the problem didn't go away. Every time I call tech support, they run diagnostics, tell me they fixed it, and then the battery crashes again a few weeks later. I have six different repair ticket numbers.

Lately, the laptop is getting very hot to the touch. My own diagnostics showed a peak temperature of 134 degrees. When I told a Lenovo representative that the battery dies while I am driving 10 miles to my writing class, he actually suggested that I should consider turning the laptop off while I'm in the car.

I didn't pay nearly \$2,000 for a desktop computer. Lenovo specs claim a 15-hour battery life, and reviews say it should last even longer. I've done everything they asked, including mailing it back for more "diagnostics." I want a full refund so I can buy a computer that doesn't burn my hands or die in the middle of a presentation. Can you help me get my money back? — Tracey Croisier, Bellevue, Wash.

A: Lenovo should have replaced your laptop or refunded your money long ago. When you spend \$1,866 on a laptop, you're paying for portability and a reasonable amount of battery life. If a computer can't survive a 30-minute car ride without losing most of its juice, it's defective.

Most manufacturers offer a one-year limited warranty that covers defects in materials and workmanship. When a company tries to fix the same hardware issue four or five times without success, it's considered a lemon. At that point, the repair cycle needs to end and a replacement or refund should begin.

I liked the way you kept a paper trail. You had a clear chronology of every repair attempt and every promise made by tech support. That's exactly what you need when a case short-circuits, like yours. If you ever find yourself in a similar spot, you can also escalate your complaint to the executives at Lenovo. I list the names and email addresses for the company on my advocacy site, Elliott.org.

The suggestion to turn off your laptop during a 10-mile drive to save battery life is one for the Hall of Fame of bad tech support advice. It's right up there with "have you tried using it as a paperweight?"

Most troubling was the sudden temperature increase when you turned on the laptop. If you ever experience something like that again, shut down the computer until a qualified technician can take a look. This could have ended badly for you, and I'm glad it didn't.

So how did it end? I contacted Lenovo on your behalf. I shared your history of failed repairs and the concerning temperature readings.

You received an email from a corporate representative offering you a choice between another repair or a full refund. You took the refund. It's a shame I had to get involved for Lenovo to do the right thing, but at least you can now buy a laptop that really is portable.

Christopher Elliott is founder of Elliott Advocacy (elliottadvocacy.org), a nonprofit that helps consumers solve their problems. Email chris@elliott.org or <https://elliottadvocacy.org/help/>



TROY HULL | THE CHARLOTTE POST

Kenneth Robinson, founder and president of New Chapter Alliance, a Charlotte nonprofit that helps vulnerable communities access housing, including the formerly incarcerated.

Rebranded nonprofit widens housing mission

Freedom Fighting Missionaries rebrand to New Chapter Alliance

By Cameron Williams
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A Charlotte re-entry organization has a new name and expanded mission.

Freedom Fighting Missionaries is now New Chapter Alliance. Its goals remain the same: help people with housing as well as re-entry for the formerly incarcerated. The nonprofit is adding programs for low-income seniors and McKinney-Vento Act housing-insecure youth.

"I would often get calls from

people that would say they were struggling to meet rent costs, but they didn't fit the criteria of [formerly incarcerated]," said Kenneth Robinson, president and founder of New Chapter Alliance.

The rebranding process came about when Robinson headed to New York for a presentation to new funders. The owner of a billion-dollar company who Robinson said asked to remain anonymous if he'd consider a rebrand that he would pay for it.

"This company has \$70 billion in

assets, 7,000 employees, and offices in 70 countries, so they're huge," Robinson said. "They have their own branding and marketing department. However, they assigned their director to work alongside me on this project, and I requested that we choose a local Charlotte company. I issued a [request for proposal]. Several different local branding companies responded, and ultimately, we selected one, BRK Marketing, who has over 20 years of experience in

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Dorm reboot industry hasn't reached NC

By Tess Alongi
UNC MEDIA HUB

As \$20,000 dorm rooms make headlines and dorm designing emerges as a new career path, the trend has yet to make as big, or costly, of an impact in North Carolina.

At least for now.

The trend took off in 2020, when Mississippi moms, Tamara Wingerter and Stephanie Swendenburg King created the Facebook Group "Dorm Rooms of Mississippi and Beyond." Since then, the group has grown to 80,000 members, while a quick "Designer Dorm Rooms" search on TikTok garners hundreds of videos with millions of likes.

While social media has helped turn dorm decorating into a billion-dollar business, North Carolina's version of the trend remains much different than \$20,000 makeovers.

Walking into Maryvan Gardner and Mae McCloskey's room in Chapel Hill, the green monogrammed bed curtains hang behind the head, framing what could be a window. Vintage Carolina Magazines line the wall. "The First State University," authored by William S. Powell, sits among a four-book display



UNC MEDIA HUB

Dormitory room makeovers have exploded into a cottage industry, but five-figure upgrades haven't showed up on North Carolina college campuses.

that holds the matching bedside lamps.

The carefully coordinated decor almost makes you forget what's beneath it all: a concrete floor, a concrete ceiling and most noticeably, no windows.

However, the room wasn't decorated by a professional dorm designer, instead the room was

crafted by Maryvan's mom, Mara Gardner, a kitchen and bathroom designer from Winston-Salem.

During the summer, Gardner scoured her local Goodwill and incorporated old pieces from home for the room. Their room offers a distinctly UNC version of a trend that has exploded on social media.

An \$8 piece of Goodwill artwork became wall decor, paired with leftover wall-paper from Gardner's garage. Frames from Goodwill turned into bulletin boards where Maryvan and Mae hung photos from their earlier lives. Above her desk, Gardner framed the covers from Carolina

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Travel like a foodie: Try these helpful tips for planning a culinary vacation

BRANDPOINT

One of the best parts of vacation is experiencing local foods, fresh ingredients and related customs, but how do you find authentic spots and dishes? According to people who work in the food business, there are a few tricks to uncovering great culinary moments while traveling.

1. Eat the season: Align your trip with the harvest. Epicureans don't just ask where to eat; they ask when. Timing your travels to the harvest or what's in season offers a more flavorful experience. In Michigan, the second most agriculturally diverse state in America, this means seeking out peaches and sweet corn in the late summer or earthy dishes featuring foraged ramps and morels in the spring.

"I tell people to plan around produce, from spring rhubarb and asparagus to the last autumn apples and winter squash – even maple tapping season," said cookbook author and baker Martin Sorge. "Check with local farmers to confirm when peak season is to plan your trip and remember northern Michigan can be several weeks behind other areas of the Midwest. You'll find the best northern Michigan cherries mid-to-late July, for example."

"There's an incredible sense of pride, community and connection to nature in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, so I aim to let the land tell the story and guide the menu by using hyperlocal, seasonal produce and foraged goods," said Carrie Masters, chef and owner of Bird & Toad

in Marquette. "My favorite meals are often pieced together from local purveyors, and they are always best enjoyed out in nature right where the ingredients came from."

2. Map the cultural diaspora

Authentic food cultures thrive within regional enclaves. Seek out areas where immigrant populations have come to anchor the local cuisine or create fresh fusion experiences, like Detroit-area Levantine bakeries and cafés.

"Detroit has become like a mini-Los Angeles, with pockets of truly surprising and authentic international cuisine and fusions, like Mexican, Cantonese and amazing Korean-American chefs cooking the foods of their home, and adopted city," said Matt Rodbard, an award-winning food and



PURE MICHIGAN

People enjoying the autumn harvest at Chateau Chantal winery on Traverse City, Michigan's Old Mission Peninsula.

culture writer and editor of Taste.

Use slow travel principles to anchor your itinerary around regional celebrations, such as harvest and

food and wine festivals.

3. Anchor travel around food-centric festivals

Rather than rushing between scattered dining spots, use slow travel prin-

ciples to anchor your itinerary around regional celebrations, such as harvest and food and wine festivals, like the November Art

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Rebranded nonprofit

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the local Charlotte area, founded by a guy named Jack Burke. ... They helped lead the rebranding efforts."

Robinson added the rebrand process was worth \$35,000 including logos, company website and brand guidelines. There are plans in place to do an official unveiling event. A documentary on the company is in production and will be released later.

"We will have an event around the documentary," Robinson said. "We will do the documentary screening and show it probably at the Independent Picture House and make more of a grander announcement, but now the work is done at the marketing company. Secretary of state work is done, so we are moving forward ahead of that big announcement."

Robinson founded Freedom Fighting Missionaries in 2020 to support justice-impacted individuals. The rebranding reflects the organization's evolving impact, expands reach and

the depth of mission centered on "people and possibility."

"This represents an opportunity for us to serve more people within our community," he said.

Everything New Chapter Alliance builds moving forward is designed to create pathways to stability, opportunity and belonging.

"We have created a pathway for people that makes it possible to obtain permanent housing within their income levels," Robinson said. "Based on the vouchers received, we receive the rental subsidies and additional community support. The service worker can afford to live here according to their income, which means that a family at \$20 or \$21 an hour would have a reduced rate because they're a service worker, not because they're a drug addict or they're formerly incarcerated, but because we need people to work in the grocery stores and at the gas stations."

Travel like a foodie: Try these tips for a culinary vacation

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Coast Food and Wine Festival in Saugatuck Douglas. These events allow visitors to sample a wide range of local flavors at their peak.

4. Be part of the meal prep

True food travel means getting your hands dirty. Seek out u-pick farms and orchards, foraging walks with resort chefs or creamery workshops, like those offered throughout Michigan's wine coast at properties like Black Star Farms. Participating in the harvest or subsequent meal preparation builds a tangible connection to the land and makes the final dish more rewarding.

"The best culinary experiences give you a sense of place," says Danny Simmons, director of culinary and events at Black Star Farms. "We believe in the idea that what grows together, goes together, and we build our food and wine experiences around what Northern Michigan is giving us in that moment alongside wines grown

and made here.

"Through experiences like our hands-on cooking classes, dinners and other culinary programs, we invite guests to be part of that connection rather than simply observe it, gaining a deeper understanding of the land, the season and what pairs well together."

5. Embrace unexpected and interesting pairings

Instead of getting that wine you always get, lean into the local beverage terroir. Pair a funky Michigan washed-rind cheese with a dry heirloom hard cider, or local Great Lakes whitefish with a crisp Old Mission Peninsula Riesling. Local wines, beers and aged ingredients are truly an artifact of the landscape.

Keep these tips in mind as you plan your next vacation. You don't need to work in the culinary industry to uncover vibrant flavors and authentic experiences when traveling.

Dorm room reboot industry hasn't reached North Carolina

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Alumni Review, which she had been saving in her house for years.

"You don't want to spend money on things that you're going to throw away," Gardner said.

Instead, Gardner says that students, and parents, should buy things that they would use again, look for second-hand items and bring objects sitting in basements and garages at home.

"You don't have to spend thousands of dollars," Gardner said. "Look in places in your hometown for things that are unique. Look at people getting rid of really nice stuff all the time. People throw away nice stuff and give it to Goodwill. Look at Goodwill."

Gardner's approach to dorm rooms contrasts with the social media trend taking over online; however, Gardner doesn't dismiss the trend. She said when she was in college, students didn't have social media to show how everyone was decorating.

"It's a fun trend and the girls enjoy it," Gardner said. They have these beautiful things."

She said the elaborate rooms in the SEC are fun. But when she asked Maryvan and Mae if they actually needed their desks the answer was obvious: they did.

Ultimately, Gardner said the goal was to create a place where Maryvan and Mae could study, get ready and feel like home.

For Maryvan it was that feeling of home that mattered the most.

"Living in college can be hard and your room is your place to go at the end of your day and enjoy it and not feel stressed," Maryvan said.

The design for the dorm room also has practical purposes. Because the room has no windows, Maryvan said adding color, especially light green and Carolina blue, makes the space feel a lot lighter.

Maryvan and Mae weren't involved in the designing of the dorm room. Both girls were away working during the summer, so Gardner surprised them with the finished room.

"I feel like it's special for Mae and I because it was just kind of all natural," Maryvan said. "We weren't necessarily going for a certain look, but we both love it and it reflects us."

For Mae, the difference between her room this year and last year is quite noticeable.

Last year, Mae and her roommate picked out their bedding and pillows about a month before school and didn't put much thought into their decorations.

"The difference this year is that it's a lot

more put together," Mae said. "I feel like it's a lot more of a home."

The experience of having such a coordinated and well-designed dorm room isn't very typical at UNC.

"I think it's very heavily like SEC schools and not as much like the UNC vibe of people doing it," Mae said. "So, I guess I don't see it often down here."

The difference raises a larger question: Is North Carolina actually much different from the dorm design trend taking over the internet?

According to Shelly Gates, a Mississippi-based interior and custom dorm room designer, while the trend is primarily in the Deep South at the moment, she sees a future for custom dorm room designs across the country.

"I think in the South, it's almost an expectation to have a beautiful dorm room," Gates said. "Whether I do it or mom does it or whomever, they're all so pretty when you get to the school. It's just so pretty. I don't know if it has caught on just yet at other schools across the country, but each year I get more and more requests from different places."

Gates, a former teacher, founded Mary Margaret Designs after helping decorate her daughter's room. What started as a part-time summer job has evolved into her full-time career. Gates, along with her team of movers, carpenters and other workers, travels across Southern colleges to decorate rooms.

Gates and her team install the entire room, so while many girls help with the design process, they don't see the final product until they walk into their room. Gates also makes sure to decorate the room with practical pieces.

"One of the things that we do differently is that we provide a turnkey room, but we also look at it as an investment in four years versus nine months," Gates said. "So the majority of things that I use in a room can be used all four years of college and even into their first home."

Even for families that can afford it, professionally designed dorm rooms take a lot of work out of the already stressful college move-in process. But while the custom dorm room industry continues to grow across the Deep South, it has yet to expand as heavily into North Carolina.

For families like the Gardner's there are still ways to create a beautiful room without a hired designer or designer budget.

Maryvan's and Mae's room wasn't built around an elaborate plan or online aesthetic; it was built around them and for them. They say it feels like home.

Gen Z the loneliest singles

STAFF REPORTS

A new report from BLK, the largest dating app for Black singles, finds that nearly 7 in 10 Black Gen Z singles (68%) feel lonely at least sometimes.

Four in 10 say they feel that way often or very often.

When BLK asked its community how they were really doing, what came back was a generation still very much looking for its people, and not always sure where to find them.

"Gen Z gets called the loneliest generation a lot, and our community is feeling that, too," BLK Head of Brand Amber Cooper. "What gives me hope is that lonely doesn't mean done. They want real connection, and they want it badly. They're just looking for a better way in."

When loneliness hits, Black Gen Z singles are three times more likely to scroll social media than to reach out to someone. Thirty-seven percent say they scroll when they feel lonely, compared with 12% who text or call a friend. Only 1 in 7 (14%) try to make plans to get out.

"Scrolling is easy, and it asks nothing of you, so it makes sense that it's where people land at the end of a long day," Cooper said. "But it rarely leaves you feeling better. Connecting takes a little more effort, and it's worth it when it's with people who actually understand you. That's the experience we built BLK around."

Asked what would help them feel more connected this year, respondents didn't ask for more options or more matches. The top answer was meeting people who get them (57%), and more than 4 in 10 (41%) said they want places that feel like their community.

"Black folks have always found each other in community, at the cookout, at homecoming, at the young adult service on Sunday," Cooper said. "A lot of our parents met that way. This generation still wants that. What they're telling us is that they don't always know where those

rooms are anymore, and that's the gap BLK exists to close."

Nearly two thirds (65%) say they want to build real connections a lot, and more than a third (36%) say they want it more than anything. What stands in the way is practical as much as emotional:

- Nearly 6 in 10 (59%) say they don't know where to meet people.
- Half (52%) say they feel nervous putting themselves out there.
- Nearly half (45%) say they don't have anyone to go with.
- A third (32%) say going out costs too much.

Tips for making real connections

- Start with people who get you. More than half of respondents said meeting people who understand them would help most.
- Reach out instead of zoning out. When the loneliness hits, send one message before you open social media. A voice note or a meme counts.
- Pull up to the yard. Plot parties, step shows, BSU meetings, your NAACP chapter, the gospel choir. Campus life runs on showing up, and seeing the same faces week after week is how strangers become your people.
- Bring someone with you. Nearly half said they don't have anyone to go with. Find one friend in the same spot and agree to try one new thing a week together.
- Keep it affordable. A third said going out costs too much. Free campus events, study sessions, potlucks and park hangs all count as plans.
- Start planning for homecoming. It's one of the biggest reunions of the year and one of the best places to meet someone. Get your crew together early.
- Take it offline sooner. If a conversation is going well, suggest something low-pressure like coffee, a walk or a campus event. It's the most popular way our community says they want to meet, and it's perfectly fine to be the one who asks.





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Bridge between military experience, civilian careers

FEATURE IMPACT

Every year, approximately 200,000 service men and women transition from military life to corporate America.

Finding the right civilian career is a transition, but it's an opportunity to leverage military leadership and mission-driven talent.

Traditional hiring processes often focus on conventional resumes, but forward-thinking organizations recognize military experience as a competitive advantage in today's workforce. The resilience, integrity and adaptability of America's veterans and military families make them uniquely positioned to drive growth and innovation in their communities.

"Veterans bring unmatched discipline, adaptability and a results-driven mindset that directly translates to high-impact corporate careers," said Drew Matheson, senior director at Capital One's Commercial Bank and retired U.S. Army infantry officer. "While military experience doesn't always fit perfectly on a traditional paper resume, employers like Capital One who know how to decode these unique leadership skills are able to unlock an incredible pipeline of proven performers."

To help transitioning service members successfully navigate this career pivot, military community leaders at Capital One offer these essential tips for service members entering the civilian workforce:

1. Start with what you've already earned

Opportunity starts with preparation. Beyond the well-known Post-9/11 GI Bill, which can cover tuition, housing and books, transitioning service members can look into vocational rehab or the SkillBridge program, which allows them to do civilian



SHUTTERSTOCK

Approximately 200,000 service members transition from the military to corporate America.

internships during the last 180 days of service. Many employers also offer internal tuition reimbursement programs.

Taking the time to proactively map out these benefits ensures you aren't leaving valuable opportunities or money on the table.

2. Find employers with veteran support structures

With almost half of veterans leaving their first post-military job within a year, according to research published by the Institute for Veterans and Military Families and VetAdvisor, finding the right culture and community is key to a successful transition. Look for employers with active veteran networks and dedicated mentorship.

For example, Capital One's Salute Business Resource Group serves as a thriving internal community of more than 6,000 members, offering peer support, year-round professional development and mentorship for veterans, reservists and military spouses.

3. Lean into and translate soft skills

Veterans bring a distinct

competitive advantage to the applicant pool. You should confidently lean into the cross-functional "soft skills" learned in the line of duty such as risk management, crisis resolution and building trust under high-pressure scenarios.

The trick is translating these capabilities out of military jargon on your resume. Swap military terms like "NCOIC" for "Operations Manager" or "commanded" for "directed." To make this easier, look for military-friendly employers that employ dedicated military recruiters who specialize in decoding military resumes to align skills with the right roles.

4. Prioritize support for the whole family

Military service is a family commitment, and the transition out of uniform affects everyone. Military spouses often face unique career hurdles, including frequent relocations and employment gaps. When evaluating employers, look for companies that offer holistic benefits and flexible structures.

« BLACK BRILLIANCE »

Nathan Green: Master distiller earns his due

WHISKEY UNIVERSITY

The story of Nathan "Nearest" Green went mostly untold until a short blurb about an enslaved man named "Nearis" was referenced in a 2016 The New York Times article.

On its 150th anniversary, Jack Daniel's used the occasion to reveal to the public that Daniel did not learn distilling from Reverend Daniel Call, but was taught by an enslaved man, Nathan "Nearest" Green. This version of the story was never a secret, but it is one that the distillery has only recently begun to embrace, provisionally, in some of its tours, and in social media and marketing campaigns.

The Times article inspired author and entrepreneur Fawn Weaver to set out on a quest to reveal Green's full story. It encompassed a 12-month research project involving more than 20 historians, archivists, archaeologists, conservators, and genealogists.

Uncle Nearest, as his family and friends in his hometown of Lynchburg, Tennessee, called him, was the first known African American master distiller. Born in Maryland around 1820, Green's enslavers were a firm known as Landis & Green, who "leased" Nearest Green for a fee to local preacher, the Rev. Dan Call. Green then began working on the farm of the country preacher and distiller in what was then Lincoln County.

Green was known as a skilled distiller who specialized in the process of sugar maple charcoal filtering, now known as the Lincoln County Process that gave Green's whiskey a unique smoothness. According to Michael Twitty, a food historian, Green probably would have drawn on generations of liquor-making skills: enslaved Africans who were brought to America had their own traditions of alcohol production, going back to the corn beer and fruit spirits of West Africa, and many Africans made alcohol illicitly while being enslaved.

"There's something to be said for the fact that Africans and Europeans were both people in the Southeast who carried with them ancient traditions for making alcohol," Twitty said.

Years after Green was working on

the Call farm, Jack Daniel, a 7-year-old white orphan, was sent to the Call farm to be a chore boy. He was the 10th child in his family and lost his mom to a sudden illness when he was four months old.

Daniel worked for the preacher, milking and feeding cows and pigs, getting water from the springhouse, and all the other chores that farm hands did. Jack was not a privileged boy; he was a worker, and like Green, was already proficient at distilling from a young age.

Eventually, Daniel became Green's apprentice and was taught the Lincoln County Process - which differentiates bourbon from Tennessee whiskey - making Green responsible for the Tennessee whiskey known today.

According to a 1967 biography, "Jack Daniel's Legacy," by Ben A. Green (no relation to Nearest), Call told [Nearest] to teach Daniel everything he knew. "Uncle Nearest is the best whiskey maker that I know of," the book quotes Call as saying. Although no images of Green exist, a photo of Daniel and his workers taken in the late 19th century a photograph shows one of his Nearest's sons, George, sitting to the immediate right next to Daniel.

In 1865, the 13th Amendment was ratified, and Nearest Green agreed to be Daniel's master distiller as a free man. Daniel's asking Nearest to be his first master distiller was an extraordinary request for such a time and place.

Green's name, legacy, and contribution to whiskey were largely unknown to anyone outside Lynchburg for several decades. However, according to census data, after the Civil War, Green and his family-owned sizable plots of land and were wealthier than most other families, white or Black, living in Lynchburg.

Over time, Jack Daniel moved from the property and took his burgeoning whiskey business with him. Although Green retired and did not go to the new distillery, his sons, Lewis, Eli, and George, all continued the tradition of making the best whiskey in the area and went to work with Daniel at his new place.



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A copy of the complete RFQ may be obtained by sending
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Upon request, this information will be made available in an
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A copy of the complete RFQ may be obtained by sending
an official **Notification-of-Interest via mail or** email to:
Ljubica Dekic Blagojevic – Project Manager, Mecklenburg
County Asset & Facility Management, 3205 Freedom
Drive, Suite 6000, Charlotte, NC 28075

Email:
Ljubica.DekicBlagojevic@mecklenburgcountync.gov

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Mecklenburg County, North Carolina

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of HVAC equipment and controls at the Hal Marshall
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experience with chilled and hot water HVAC system
replacements in occupied buildings.

A copy of the complete RFQ may be obtained by sending
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Kallam at: Joshua.Kallam@MecklenburgCountyNC.gov
Submittals must be received by Mecklenburg County Asset
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BIDS

NOTICE TO BIDDERS

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County Asset & Facility Management Department, 3205
Freedom Drive, Suite 6000, Charlotte, NC 28208**, for the
construction of the Charlotte Mecklenburg Government
Center 2nd floor Conference Center at which time and
place Bids will be opened and read aloud. Single-prime,
lump sum bids will be taken for construction as indicated in
the bidding documents. Proposals must be made on
standard forms furnished by the County. The project is
located at **Charlotte Mecklenburg Government Center,
600 E 4th St., Charlotte, NC 28202.**

The Contractor can obtain the Bid Documents digitally at
no cost from the County's **Authorized Design
Consultant:**

Gensler
101 South Tryon St. Suite 2100
Charlotte, NC 28280
Contact:
Jaren Wells | jaren_wells@gensler.com | (704) 338-0205
Weston Ellerbrake | weston_ellerbrake@gensler.com |
(704) 338-0250

Prime Contractors wishing to submit a bid for this project
must provide a **MANDATORY written Letter-of-Interest** to
the County's **authorized Design Consultant** at least **72
hours** in advance of the bid opening in order to be placed
on the official Bidders List for automatic distribution of
potential addenda and offered consideration by the County
as a responsive bidder. **Bids submitted by Prime
Contractors that have not provided a Letter-of-Interest
may be considered non-responsive.**

Bid, Performance, and Payment & Material bonds shall be
required for this project.

A mandatory pre-bid meeting shall be held on **Monday,
October 19th at 2 pm, at Charlotte Mecklenburg
Government Center, 600 E 4th St., Charlotte, NC 28202**

Upon request, this information will be made available in an
alternative format for persons with disabilities. Please call
980.314.2500 for assistance.

EMPLOYMENT

Brightspeed Management LLC seeks **SAP Basis &
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resume: tammy.sneed@brightspeed.com.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NORTH CAROLINA IN THE GENERAL COURT OF
GUILFORD COUNTY JUSTICE
 DISTRICT COURT DIVISION
 26 JT 000298-400

IN THE MATTER OF:
L.M.E.
A male juvenile, born April 22, 2022
in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina.

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF PROCESS BY PUBLICATION

TO: The UNKNOWN putative father of the juvenile,
Respondent Father

TAKE NOTICE that a Petition seeking to terminate the
parental rights of the UNKNOWN FATHER of the above
juvenile L.M.E. was filed on August 31, 2026, with the Clerk
of Superior Court, District Court - Juvenile Division,
Greensboro, Guilford Co., NC. The mother's name is
Kerstin Avery Parrish.

You must answer this Petition within 30 days of **October 8,
2026**, exclusive of that date. Upon your failure to answer
the Petition within time prescribed, your parental rights to
the juvenile(s) shall be terminated. You are entitled to
attend any hearing affecting your rights. You are entitled to
appointed counsel if you cannot afford to hire one;
however, you must call the Juvenile Clerk at (336) 412-
7555 immediately to request a court appointed attorney.
The next hearing is scheduled to be heard on October 13,
2026, or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard.

This the 8th day of October, 2026.

Heather D. Deal, Sr. Deputy County Attorney
P.O. Box 3427, Greensboro, NC 27402

LEGAL NOTICES

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE MARION SUPERIOR
) COURT
) SS:
COUNTY OF) CAUSE 49D15-2606-JC-005665
MARION) NUMBER:

IN THE MATTER OF: SUMMONS FOR SERVICE
WM - DOB 9/21/2008 BY PUBLICATION & NOTICE
A CHILD ALLEGED TO BE OF CHILD IN NEED OF
A CHILD IN NEED OF SERVICES HEARING
SERVICES

TO: Santos Rene Medrano and
 Any Unknown Alleged Father
 Whereabouts unknown

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the above noted parent
whose whereabouts are unknown, as well as Any Unknown
Alleged Fathers, whose whereabouts are also unknown,
that the Indiana Department of Child Services has filed its
Verified Petition Alleging the child to be in Need of
Services, in accordance with I.C. 31-34-9-3, and that an
adjudication hearing has been scheduled with the Court.

YOU ARE FURTHER NOTIFIED that a hearing has been
scheduled regarding these matters in the Marion Superior
Court a(n) Trial Hearing on 12/2/2026 at 9:30 AM.

• Pursuant to Administrative Rule 14, arrangements have
been made for you to participate in this hearing by phone
or video. You will receive instructions prior to the hearing
instructing you on how to participate in the hearing. It is
your responsibility to provide your Family Case Manager
with a working phone number. **YOU ARE HEREBY
COMMANDED** to participate telephonically or by video for
this hearing. You should not appear in person.

This hearing is being held virtually. DO NOT appear in
person. To appear virtually, go to www.webex.com to enter
your meeting number and password or use the toll-free
number below to join by phone. Please join the hearing five
(5) minutes before your hearing is scheduled to begin. You
will be admitted to the hearing room once the Court is
ready to begin. Meeting number (access code): 2337 174
8252 Meeting password: 49Judge15 (48583431 from
phones) Join by phone: 1-844-992-4726, PIN 48583431.

At said hearing, the Court will consider the Petition and
evidence thereon and will render its decision as to whether
the above named minor child is child in need of services
and shall enter adjudication accordingly. Your failure to
participate after lawful notice will be deemed as your
default and waiver to be present at said hearing.

**UPON ENTRY OF SAID ADJUDICATION, A
DISPOSITIONAL HEARING** will be held in which the Court
will consider (1) Alternatives for the care, treatment, or
rehabilitation for the child; (2) The necessity, nature, and
extent of your participation in the program of care,
treatment, or rehabilitation for the child; and (3) Your
financial responsibility for any services provided for the
parent, guardian or custodian of the child including child
support.

YOU MUST RESPOND by appearing virtually or by an
attorney within thirty (30) days after the last publication of
this notice, and in the event you fail to do so, an
adjudication on said petition, judgment by default may be
entered against you, or the court may proceed in your
absence, without further notice.

Clerk

John Martin, 37489-49
Attorney, Indiana Department of Child Services
3838 Madison Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46227

MISCELLANEOUS

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Martin Lawrence unleashes his comic chops Oct. 8 at Owens Auditorium as part of the “Y’all Still Know What It Is!” Tour.

It’s comic giant Martin Lawrence for Charlotte stop

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

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

Oct. 8
Martin Lawrence, Owens Auditorium. The comic adds Charlotte to the “Y’all Still Know What It Is!” Tour.

Select dates will feature special guest appearances from comics Nate Jackson, Karlous Miller and Desi Banks. Loni Love and Benji Brown are set to appear at every stop. Tickets available via Ticketmaster.

Oct. 10
Daley, Neighborhood Theatre at 8 p.m.

The British singer, songwriter and creative artist has worked with Stevie Wonder, Damon Albarn, Marsha Ambrosius, Robert Glasper, Jill Scott, Pharrell Williams and Jessie J. He’s worked his way to Billboard chart success in the U.S. and critical acclaim from the Grammys, BET and Soul Train Awards.

Tickets: neighborhoodtheater.com.

Oct. 16-17
The Music of Tina Turner by Charlotte Symphony, Knight Theater.

The Charlotte Symphony celebrates music of Tina Turner featuring songs that defined her career, including “Proud Mary,” “What’s Love Got to Do with It,” “Disco Inferno,” and “Son of a Preacher Man.” Vocalists: LaKisha Jones, Nova Payton and Armando Imagines. Oct. 16 concert at 7:30 p.m., Oct. 17 at

Please see **COMIC** | 6B

Revealing the tender heart of a former child soldier

BLACK PRESS USA

Finally, after so much work, you’ve left your past behind.

That’s what you tell yourself: what’s done is done and you can’t undo history. It’s over. You try not to think about last month, last year, a decade back because what does it matter? As in the new novel, “Laws of Solomon” by Eriq La Salle, remembering is too full of pain.

The monsters that came to him early in his sleep were the easy ones. It was the later demons that stole Solomon Nangobi’s sleep, the spirits of all the people he killed when he was a child soldier in Uganda, and when he was a fixer in New York as an adult. Their ghosts called to him with urgent voices, though he left that life behind long ago.

Now, his days were filled working the soil in gardens near Malibu, and he loved the quiet life.

Still, he kept his lungs.

And he was glad: when Solomon recognized two Zeta gunmen stalking a well-dressed man, woman, and child through the gardens, he couldn’t walk away. He stopped the gangsters with bullets, but not before the adults and their bodyguards were dead. The child, an 8-year-old boy named Gaby, was safe, but Gaby couldn’t tell Solomon what was going on.

What became quickly certain, however, was that Solomon was now Gaby’s guardian, and the Zeta crime boss wanted them dead, too.

When he was the same age as Gaby, Solomon saw unspeakable things, the murder of his parents, the destruction of his homeland, and the atrocities that Uganda dictator Idi Amin’s soldiers committed. He learned to kill, he ob-

Please see **LAWS** | 6B



NATHANIEL PERRY

Charlotte poet and voice artist Nathaniel Perry launched Poem Cast as an immersive experience with dystopic and horror themes.

Scary prose reimagines interactive horror show

Nathaniel Perry’s Poem Cast connects audience to the darkest of arts

By Nikya Hightower
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Charlotte voice artist and poet Nathaniel Perry is turning poetry into an immersive experience.

His latest project, Poem Cast, explores horror and dystopian genres, which he always gravitated toward. Perry’s work can be followed online or in person on Wednesday nights at The Conspiracy, 412 W. Fifth St., Suite C120.

“I pick a horror movie over anything else, and I would pick up a book and read horror,” Perry said. “It’s a genre that I like the most.”

Poem Cast is set in a world with a hidden library beneath the mountains of Peru, where boxes hold the imaginations of everyone who has ever lived. Those imaginations become creatures and stories throughout each piece. One poem includes a vampire retelling of Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell Tale Heart.”

Perry, an alumnus of Emerson College in Boston where he double majored in communications and

theater, found inspiration in black box theater. His love for poetry began on campus when he started writing, performing and dabbling in voiceover.

“It was so intimate,” he said. “It was all about speaking clearly and articulately and making sure that people could hear you well and you could play with tones and whatnot.”

Around 10 years ago, Perry started writing poetry on his own and since has accumulated thousands of poems.

“The process is very erratic, like when an idea hits and it just hits at the most random times and I’ll just start scratching it out and writing,” Perry said. “It’s really just when the moment strikes me.”

Poem Cast is Perry’s showcase. The project includes original poetry that has been turned into a three-dimensional experience by adding audio with sound design, visuals and text.

“I am trying to make it a performance,” he said. “Taking poetry and



Taking poetry and making poetry an elevated art form because I’ve always thought that poems were really interesting and could move you in ways that other writings couldn’t.



Poem Cast creator
NATHANIEL PERRY

making poetry an elevated art form because I’ve always thought that poems were really interesting and could move you in ways that other

Please see **SCARY** | 6B

University City unveils storybook sculptures

By Ashleigh Fields
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

The new “Turning the Page” Storybook Sculpture Collection in University City boosts literacy awareness, community engagement and culture.

The art installation near University City Regional Library features characters inspired by “The Very Hungry Caterpillar,” “The Cat in the Hat” and the pigeon from “Don’t Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus.”

“Families are invited to explore the sculptures, take photos, visit the library and discover the joy of reading,” said Loan Lake, director of communications and engagement for University City Partners. “Turning the Page represents more than a collection of sculptures. It demonstrates how public art, literacy, placemaking and partnership can come together to create spaces that belong to the community. It also represents the continued evolution of the lake and University Place as a gathering place for University City — with more art, activation, experiences and investment still to come.”

Janeva Tyree was commissioned to complete the art with support from University City Partners, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Library and the city of Charlotte through the Urban Design Center’s placemaking grant. Approximately 80% of the installation is made from recycled or reclaimed materials, including reclaimed wood that creates the framing and interior structure of the sculptures, as well as fragmented recycled glass embedded into the interior base flooring, according.

“The sculptures also incorporate solar lighting, using energy from the sun to create a beautiful, illuminated display at night,” Tyree said. “Ultimately, the intention of the sculptures



EVERETT BLACKMON | UNIVERSITY CITY PARTNERS

Keith Stanley, (from left) University City Partners President and CEO; Lawrence Brinson, director of community outreach and engagement, Office of U.S. Rep. Alma Adams; artist Janeva Tyree; Charlotte City Council members Renee Johnson and Malcolm Graham; David Dillard, real estate director at Charlotte Mecklenburg Library and Debra Sharp, University City Regional Library branch manager.

is to create a bridge between imagination, literacy, childhood, and our connection to self - and to create a place where memories can be made for generations to come. I also hope they serve as a reminder that we can treat our planet with care and leave a beautiful place behind for future generations, both through our actions and through art,” she added.

It took over six months for Tyree to gain approval from book publishers to create the sculptures which unlocked another few months to develop sketches and gather community feedback on the popularity of the designs.

The idea to create the art installation originated with former University City Partners leader Darlene Heater, whose passion for childhood literacy included regularly reading to students at Governor’s Village STEM Academy.

“My mission as an artist has always been to create art that sparks conversation, connection, creativity, and community,” Tyree said. “When people engage with these sculptures, I hope the installation activates that engagement. Visitors can take pictures, walk around the sculptures for a full 360-degree experience, and see some of their

Please see **UNIVERSITY** | 6B

