

Life!

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2025 SECTION B



PETER SAFIR

Wellness Without Walls brings mental health treatment to homeless people in Mecklenburg County.

Mental health initiative hits Charlotte streets

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

Mental health treatment is going into Mecklenburg County's streets.

Wellness Without Walls, a pilot psychiatry program sponsored by A Home For All, launched last week to increase access to care people may not seek or get otherwise. Gifts totaling \$200,000 from SteelFab and Duke Energy to street outreach partners Roof Above and Hearts for the Invisible, who will work with Atrium Health and Alliance Health. Another \$100,000 from The Meranca Foundation to MedAssist supports medication management for patients and \$3,000 from Molina Healthcare, along with supplies.

Street psychiatry programs have spread across the U.S. in recent years, with cities often collaborating with hospitals, community outreach initiatives and shelters. Started in Pittsburgh in 1992, street medicine has evolved nationally and has become an initiative that provides communities and clinicians with expert training, guidance and support to develop and grow their street medicine programs.

"Street psychiatry is not just a service, it is a life-line," said Breanna McGowan, outreach clinical director at Hearts for the Invisible. ... "We have seen firsthand how meeting people where they are, with compassion and clinical care, transforms lives. This initiative is deeply personal to us. It is about restoring dignity, building trust, and ensuring that those

Please see NEW | 2B

Junior League puts thrift shopping at center of giving

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

Thrift shopping is at the center of the Junior League of Charlotte's community outreach.

The nonprofit is marking the run-up of its 100th anniversary with a tribute to its thrift store, The WearHouse with a popup shopping event Oct. 24-25 at the Junior League of Charlotte Building, 1332 Maryland Ave. The thrift sale and community resource showcase are open to the public and proceeds will go to JLC initiatives.

The two-day event consists of:

- Sip & Shop Event (Oct. 24): The ticketed event includes women's and children's clothing (all seasons and sizes) and accessories in consignment-grade, gently used, or like-new condition. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased at charlotte.jl.org/events/register-clothing-for-a-cause-shop-and-sip.

· Community Resource Showcase Oct. 25: The league is connecting Charlotteans with resources they need most. Participants can learn more about serving while shopping.

"Generations of Charlotteans remember shopping at The WearHouse, whether for a stylish outfit, a family necessity, or simply the fun of finding something unique," Junior League of Charlotte President Amanda Kohout said in a statement. "This pop-up

Please see JUNIOR | 2B

«RIDES

GMC AT4 takes a more robust tack, although small SUV needs engine variety

By Winfred Cross

FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

GMC is the upscale truck division of General Motors.

You can find a less shiny (and less expensive) version at your Chevrolet dealer but those versions are a bit more pedestrian.

GMC not only wants to be more upscale but also more robust. The division has added an AT4 trim to its Terrain SUV.

The Terrain is the smallest SUV GMC makes. It was redesigned in 2025 so this added trim level is the biggest change. Unfortunately, the AT4 trim package doesn't come with an engine upgrade. All Terrains are powered by a 1.5-liter, turbocharged

four-cylinder engine that makes 175 horsepower. Torque depends on front wheel drive or all-wheel drive configurations. The AT4 comes standard with AWD so torque is 203 pounds-feet. The transmission is upgraded to an eight-speed automatic. Towing capacity jumps to 1,500 pounds.

The AT4 trim package also gives you dark-finished 17-inch wheels with all-terrain tires, off-road tuned suspension, front skid-plates, roof rails, trailer hitch, power adjustable driver's seat, dual zone-climate control, wireless smartphone charging, power, hands-free liftgate and automatic wipers.

Does any of this make this version of the Terrain drive any differently? Maybe. It's certainly more confident on slippery roads with AWD. The retuned suspension feels fairly smooth on the highway, which is where the AT4 Terrain will ultimately spend most of its time. There is enough sound deadening material to keep noise levels at moderate despite the all-terrain tires. Wind noise is also kept at acceptable levels.

The eight-speed automatic transmission shifts crisply and never seems to hunt for a gear. It's far better than the CVT found in the Elevation, the base model. There are also four



GMS

The 2025 GMC AT4 SUV adds spice to the design, but has just one engine size.

selectable drive modes to help with adverse conditions.

The AT4 package adds available with a two-tone spice to the Terrain and paint color scheme.

Please see GMC | 2B

An public opening event marked the launch of Lucille's Kitchen, a space for food service education and restaurants at 2300 Beatties Ford Road.

On the menu: Support for food service industry

Developer launches Lucille's Kitchen in Beatties Ford corridor

By Ken Koontz
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

Developer Shawn Kennedy is cooking up a new way to support the food service industry.

Kennedy hosted an open event for Lucille's Kitchen at the redeveloped former site of McCarron's Catering at 2300 Beatties Ford Road. That business shut down several years ago when its owner retired. Kennedy said his real estate development company, Kennedy Property, bought the site three years ago but was uncertain about what to do with it.

"I ultimately recognized the great potential for economic development along the Beatties Ford Corridor and a need to have positive impact on that area," he said.

"And having some considerable background on hospitality and food service industries, the light went off in my head, and I knew instantly what I was called to do in this area and for its surrounding communities.

"I personally took on the financing side and then along came The Park Community Development Corporation as a major and significant partner on community outreach. "And with them on board, we're off."

The Park CDC and Kennedy have history together in housing, which made their venture in this deal easy. The vision for Lucille's Kitchen includes a full commissary kitchen that will allow food truck vendors to have qualified

and certified space for their food preps. The areas outside allow for such vendors to set up and cater or sponsor their own events with food. The grounds around them can accommodate tents and seating. One side of the building fronting Dr. Spurgeon Webber Way will incorporate a walk-up window featuring food to go.

Kennedy says the name Lucille's Kitchen was inspired by his mother, who operated a beauty salon for more than 35 years in his hometown of Springfield, Massachusetts. At 85 now, she still works.

Kennedy's mother, who was born in Tillery, North Carolina, where her family was share-

Please see LUCILLE'S | 2B

Cops on ketamine? Hurdles for treatment

By Katja Ridderbusch
KFF HEALTH NEWS

ASHEVILLE — A few months ago, Waynesville Police Sgt. Paige Shell was about to give up hope of getting better.

The daily drip of violence, death, and misery from almost 20 years in law enforcement had left a mark. Her sleep was poor, depression was a stubborn companion, and thoughts of suicide had taken root.

Shell, who works in a rural community about 30 miles west of Asheville, tried talk therapy, but it didn't work. When her counselor suggested ketamine-assisted psychotherapy, she was skeptical.

"I didn't know what to expect. I'm a cop. It's a trust thing," she said with a thin smile.

Combining psychotherapy with low-dose ketamine, a hallucinogenic drug long used as an anesthetic, is a relatively new approach to treating severe depression and post-traumatic stress, especially in populations with high trauma rates such as fire-



KATJA RIDDERBUSCH | KFF HEALTH NEWS

Rick Baker, CEO and founder of Responder Support Services, which provides ketamine-assisted psychotherapy and other treatments to first responders in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee, says ketamine provides a potential shortcut into trauma memory and works like an accelerant to psychotherapy.

fighters, police officers, and military members. Yet evidence of the efficacy and safety of ketamine for treatment of mental health conditions is still evolving, and the market remains widely unregulated.

"First responders experi-

ence a disproportionately high burden of trauma and are often left without a lot of treatment options," said Signi Goldman, a psychiatrist and co-owner of Concierge Medicine and Psychiatry in Asheville, who began including keta-

mine in psychotherapy sessions in 2017.

Law enforcement officers in the U.S., on average, are exposed to 189 traumatic events over their careers, a small study suggests, compared with two to three in

Please see POLICE | 2B



An artist's rendering of Lucille's Kitchen, a food service business and education hub on Beatrice Ford Road.

Lucille's Kitchen launch adds to taste of westside

Continued from page 1B

coppers, was also the go-to person for big family meals. "My grandfather soured on sharecropping and moved up north looking for a better opportunity," Kennedy said. "He learned auto mechanics and honed his skills and ultimately opened his own shop. He opened his shop after working for somebody else's for 15 years. He wanted and carved out a much better life for his family as an entrepreneur along with his wife's operating her business. Those were my role

models."

The introductory event featured invited Westside vendors who provided complimentary samples of their food. Each vendor had a chance to introduce their cuisine and invite the estimated 200 attendees to stop in and enjoy their fare. In addition to other Kennedy-involved corporate partners, elected officials from City Council, Mecklenburg County commissioners and the school board were on hand to show support and offer best wishes for Lucille's Kitchen's success.



JUNIOR LEAGUE OF CHARLOTTE VIA FACEBOOK

The Junior League of Charlotte's WearHouse thrift store is one of the nonprofit's longest-running initiatives. The shop was founded in 1936, a decade after the league's launch.

Junior League puts thrift shop at center of giving

Continued from page 1B

event allows us to honor that legacy while celebrating the spirit of giving back — because every purchase truly supports a cause."

JLC, which was founded in 1926, is one of Charlotte's oldest and most influential nonprofits. Its history includes the launch

of Charlotte's first Baby Home in 1927, the Children's Service Bureau and Nature Museum at Freedom Park. In 1936, the league opened its first thrift shop, now known as The WearHouse as a space where affordable clothing is made available with the proceeds going to community programs.

GMC AT4 takes a more robust tack but needs engine variety

Continued from page 1B

makes it a little more appealing but there are a lot of small SUVs on the market with as much if not more for about the same price. The AT4 package gives the Terrain more appeal and even better off-road chops.

GMC needs to offer other engine options with more power to set the Terrain apart from the crowd. The current engine is fine, but it didn't get any improvement from the last generation Terrain's. A hybrid or

an EV could give this vehicle some much needed personality.

The Terrain AT4 starts at \$38,600. The base price includes aforementioned equipment as well as a 15-inch diagonal touch screen, remote start, keyless entry, heated front bucket seats, heated steering wheel and front fog lamps.

My test vehicle was also equipped with a panoramic sunroof, traffic sign recognition, HD surround camera, two-tone paint and

a floor liner package. The as-tested price for my test vehicle was \$43,650.

Pros:

- AT4 Package
- Excellent off-road capabilities

• Quiet ride

• Comfortable ride

• Handsome styling

• Modern interior

• Eight-speed transmission

Cons:

• No engine choices

• So-so fuel economy

• Needs more power

New psychiatric initiative hits Mecklenburg streets

Continued from page 1B

too often forgotten receive the mental health support they deserve. Just as importantly, it is about connecting individuals to vital resources such as housing, healthcare, and community support that provide the stability needed for long term healing and hope."

Said O'Shauna Hunter, director of housing solutions at United Way of Greater Charlotte: "Wellness Without Walls is a powerful example of what happens when the community leads the way. United Way worked hand in hand with community voices and cross sector partners to design this pilot, an innovative approach that not only addresses urgent needs but also showcases the true power of our community to create solutions that make a lasting impact."

Wellness Without Walls has been in development over the last year when United Way of Greater Charlotte brought together private and public partners to address mental health disorders among the unsheltered and homeless. The pilot program was designed through com-

munity collaboration to overcome barriers to accessing treatment through traditional services at brick-and-mortar buildings. The collaboration between street outreach organizations and community-based housing initiatives aims to reduce those barriers and improve engagement with behavioral health services.

An Atrium Health psychiatrist and registered nurse will be in the community two days a week for the first year of the program. These positions are funded by Alliance Health, who will also participate in workflow development related to addressing unmet social needs and coordinating care with community organizations that provide other behavioral health services.

"We believe every person deserves compassionate, high-quality care — no matter their circumstances," said Kate Rising, vice president and facility executive at Atrium Health Behavioral Health Charlotte. "This partnership reflects our deep commitment to reaching members of our unsheltered community before they face a health crisis. By

meeting people where they are, we're creating opportunities to improve health and well-being in meaningful, lasting ways."

Wellness Without Walls targets homeless people age 18 and older with a diagnosed or undiagnosed behavioral health issue. The goal is treating 20 unique patients per month over the first year, the program aims to lower emergency department utilization and ensure clients positively exit unsheltered homelessness.

"Wellness Without Walls, our new street psychiatry program, is really innovative," said Malia Suhren, A Roof Above's director of unsheltered housing navigation. "In Charlotte, we have such great healthcare partners who collaborate with us on a regular basis.

It's important for us to be adaptive in our solutions. So, for our healthcare partners to be flexible and adapt this program to serve the needs of our neighbors is a huge and tremendous feat. It will be exciting to see new relationships grow and people receive life-changing treatment."

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"This is a situation where the clinical practice is probably ahead of the evidence to support it," said John Krystal, chair of the Department of Psychiatry at the Yale School of Medicine and a pioneer of ketamine research.

Krystal has studied the effect of ketamine on veterans and active-duty military members — a population comparable to first responders in their exposure to trauma. While research shows strong evidence of ketamine's antidepressant effects, he said further studies are needed on its potential role in PTSD treatment.

The regulatory environment for ketamine also remains a concern, Krystal said. State oversight varies, and federal regulations don't outline dosing, administration methods, safety protocols, or training for providers.

In this regulatory patchwork, more than 1,000 ketamine clinics have sprung up across the country. At-home ketamine treatments have flooded the market, prompting the FDA to issue a warning.

Side effects of ketamine can range from nausea and blood pressure spikes to suppressed breathing. The

death of "Friends" actor Matthew Perry in 2023, which was attributed to ketamine use, further tainted the drug's reputation.

But starting with a 1990 animal study and followed by a landmark human trial, research has shown that low doses of ketamine can also rapidly reduce symptoms of depression. In 2019, the FDA approved esketamine — derived from ketamine and administered as a nasal spray — for treatment-resistant depression.

All other forms of ketamine remain FDA-approved only for anesthesia. If used to treat psychiatric disorders, it must be prescribed off-label.

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Tackle game day gatherings with these superstar dishes

FAMILY FEATURES

Creating a winning game day gathering means good times with fans of your favorite team, but it starts with a game plan that includes delicious appetizers, snacks and finger foods to make pregame, halftime and postgame the highlight of the party.

Start with a star ingredient like fresh, versatile California grapes, which are ideal for snacking on their own or pairing with meats and cheeses for a go-to-anytime platter. Better yet, incorporate them into satisfying recipes like these that fuel your crowd for the action on the field.

To find more game day dishes worth sharing with your teammates, visit GrapesFromCalifornia.com.

1. Game Day Grape Football Bowls - A perfect fit for a football watch party, these delicious bowls are a winning way to kick off game day. Just warm and stretch waffle cone bowls slightly into football shapes, fill with fresh red grapes and top with white chocolate laces to get your crowd ready with a sweet treat.

2. Guacamole with grapes - No tailgate or homegate is complete without chips and dips. This all-star version of guacamole calls for fresh grapes to add championship flavor and texture instead of tomatoes, keeping guests coming back for more during all four quarters.

3. Sweet and spicy nachos - Loaded with chicken, jalapenos, diced



GETTY IMAGES

Prosciutto, red grape and Pecorino flatbread.

avocado and halved grapes then drizzled with chipotle barbecue sauce, these nachos are filling and flavorful. Don't wait - they'll be gone before halftime.

4. Fresh grape salsa - Skip the storebought salsa for this fresh, homemade version where California grapes replace tomatoes as the star of the show.

The MVP of your party, grapes' juicy sweetness balances the bite of chopped green onion, Anaheim chilies, cilantro and more.

5. Korean barbecue-spiced flank steak and grape skewers - If a heartier solution is called for to match the excitement on the gridiron, these spicy-sweet steak skewers can be your secret weapon. Requiring only 6-8 minutes on the grill, you can prepare them well before

game time and cook right before kickoff for a sizzling main course.

6. Prosciutto, red grape and Pecorino Flatbread - Perhaps no finger food pairs with football quite like pizza or flatbreads, and this version offers a twist on traditional game day fare.

Made with prosciutto, pecorino cheese and fresh grapes, it offers a light yet satisfying bite to munch on throughout the game.

7. Dill pickle marinated grapes and cheese - The No. 1 rule of homegating: Keep it simple. Marinate grapes, leftover pickle juice, onion, olive oil, Havarti cheese and red pepper overnight then thread the grapes and cheese onto toothpicks before your fellow fans arrive for an easy, delicious snack.

The Charlotte Post
Voice of the Black Community

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- **Thursday, November 6, 6-7 p.m.:** Credit & Budgeting
- **Thursday, November 13, 6-7 p.m.:** Mortgage Process
- **Saturday, November 15:** 8-hour Virtual Workshop[†]
- **Thursday, November 20, 6-7 p.m.:** Homebuying Partners / Graduation

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Visit fnb-online.com/homeseminar to learn more.

[†] Virtual workshop required for HBE certification. Spanish translation and interpretation services available during seminars.

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FNB helps make owning a home possible with FNB Home Ownership Plus, an affordable mortgage solution and closing cost grant, and FNB Community Uplift, a down payment assistance* program.

Classifieds

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

PAGE 4B Thursday, October 16, 2025

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BIDS

INVITATION FOR BIDS

Mecklenburg County Asset and Facility Management will receive sealed bids for Carolina Place Parkway Connector, until 2:00 PM, November 20, 2025 at which time bids will be opened at Asset and Facility Management offices located in Suite 6000 at Valerie Woodard Center, 3205 Freedom Dr., Charlotte NC 28208. Bid, performance, and payment & material bonds are required. NC law and applicable regulations of various licensing boards will be observed. A prebid meeting will be held on October 28, 2025 at 11235 Carolina Place Parkway at 10:00 AM. The project is located along Carolina Place Parkway from HWY. 51 to Park Road. Scope of work includes a sidewalks and signal work.

Electronic plans and specifications can be obtained from Aaron Wagoner at LandDesign, at awagoner@landdesign.com. Mecklenburg County reserves the right to waive technicalities and to reject any or all proposals. This information will be made available in an alternative format for persons with disabilities by calling 704-575-4947.

EMPLOYMENT

Engagement Manager positions avail w/ McKinsey & Co, Inc. US in Charlotte, NC. Lead teams of consultants to resolve business probs for variety of clients/ industries. Req's Master's in Bus Admin, Fin, Econ, or non-bus adv degree, & 1 yr exp as Associate-level mgmt consultant w/ a major top-tier int'l mgmt consulting firm. Telecommuting permitted. Domestic & int'l travel typically required. Dest & freq impossible to predict. Email resume to CO@mckinsey.com and refer to CHA10EM. Multiple positions.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Honor Prep Public Notice

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-Part B, Public Law 108.446) Project is presently being amended. The Project describes the special education programs that Honor Prep proposes for Federal funding for the 2025-2026 School Year. Interested persons are encouraged to review amendments to the Project and make comments concerning the implementation of special education under this Federal Program. All comments will be considered prior to submission of the amended Project to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in Raleigh, North Carolina. The IDEA-Part B Project is open to the public for review and comments during the following dates October 24 and October 25 in the office of located at 9108 Mallard Creek Road, Charlotte, NC 28262.

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LEGAL NOTICES

NOTICE OF SERVICE OF
PROCESS BY PUBLICATION
STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DURHAM COUNTY DISTRICT COURT
FILE NO.: 25-CV-010033-310
Child Custody Complaint
Jessica Merary Martinez Soto -v- Jose Efrain Escalante Martinez
To: Jose Efrain Escalante Martinez

TAKE NOTICE that a pleading seeking relief against you has been filed in the above entitled action. The nature of relief being sought is: the custody of your children, **Delsy Nathalia Escalante Martinez**, **Marcel Emilian Escalante Martinez, and Nayely Siloe Escalante Martinez**

You are required to make defense to this pleading no later than forty (40) days from the date of first publication and upon your failure to do so the party seeking service against you will apply to the court for the relief sought. This the 1st day of October, 2025.

H. Esteban, Attorney at Law

211 E. Six Forks Road, Suite 122
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MISCELLANEOUS

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Prior to Thursday's Edition

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DANIEL COSTON | THE CHARLOTTE POST

Charlotte Symphony conductor Kwame Ryan is a leading figure in the region's music community. The Charlotte Music Census aims to count individuals, businesses and institutions involved in the local music industry.

Counting Charlotte's music-related community

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

From holes in the wall to grand venues, Charlotte's counting its music community.

The Charlotte Music Census, a regional partnership between Music Everywhere CLT, Austin, Texas-based Sound Music Cities is an initiative that focuses on the experiences of people who make, support, and sustain local music by gathering data to guide community-led growth and investment.

The census, which launches this month, will collect information from a range of individuals, including musicians, educators, DJs, engineers, producers, businesses and promoters. The Arts and Science Council, Charlotte is Creative, Charlotte Regional Visitors Authority, Fair Play Music Equity Initiative, and Tosco Music are partners.

Please see **BIG** | 6B

The War and Treaty share Neighborhood Theatre stage

By Nikya Hightower
FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST

The War and Treaty are spreading love.

The country duo of Michael and Tanya Trotter are coming to the Neighborhood Theatre, 511 E. 36th St., on Oct. 19. Since 2014, their career has been rising from performing on "American Idol" to a pair of Grammy nominations.

"This is, I think, our third time coming to the Neighborhood Theatre. And the last time we were there, it was just a party. I mean, it was a love fest," Tanya said. "It was great, and we expect that to be the same thing, bringing that energy, bringing the love, everyone just loving on each other."

The couple met at the Love Fest music festival in 2010. A friend pointed out how their voices work together, which led to Michael writing the song "I Am Love," which they performed together at a church.

"I couldn't believe the response that the song got because it was not the typical song you would do for the church," Tanya said. "You know, we didn't say 'Jesus.' I even said the word 'sexy' in the song, in church. And the crowd loved it. So, we explored from there."

The singers described their path into the country and Americana genre as being chosen for them in a way. "Americana grabbed us," Michael said. "Country grabbed us. They haven't let go and we grabbed hold of them and haven't let go since."

Being married brings a chemistry to the duo's music that fans receive as almost spiritual. "Fifteen years in and I'm learning now what I should have learned on day one," Michael said. "And it's two things. The first thing is: take your cues from your wife, take your cues from leading ladies in your life. And then the second part goes hand in hand. Learn how to shut up."

Please see **THE WAR** | 6B



DAVIDSON COLLEGE

Hank Willis Thomas' "What Happened On That Day Really Set Me on a Path" is among the art on exhibit through Feb. 1, 2026 at Van Every/Smith Galleries at Davidson College.

Davidson College exhibit reimagines, repairs history

Hank Willis Thomas' 'We The People' re-examines relationship to race

By Herbert L. White
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An exhibit at Davidson College looks at art's role in reimagining history, memory and repair.

"We The People," on display at Van Every/Smith Galleries through Feb. 1, 2026, is a solo exhibition by Hank Willis Thomas that explores the role of art as cultural institutions to examine their own histories. The exhibit coincides with the dedication of "With These Hands: A Memorial to the Enslaved and Exploited," a permanent campus memorial that tells Davidson's slave-related history more fully by acknowledging the labor of enslaved people who helped build and sustain the college.

Davidson didn't own slaves outright, but its founders, early presidents, and faculty did. It paid local slave owners for the labor of enslaved people for maintenance and

domestic work.

"We The People," the culmination of 15 years of work across sculpture, textiles, neon, lenticular and retro-reflective installations, conveys how collective memory is constructed and who has been excluded, while looking toward repair and reconciliation.

While the exhibit's words affirm that U.S. government power is legally derived from its citizens, at the nation's founding large swaths were locked out — namely the enslaved, indigenous people, and women.

Other exhibition highlights include:

The primary subject of "What Happened On That Day Really Set Me on a Path" is 15-year-old Dorothy Counts, captured in Don Sturkey's 1957 Charlotte Observer black-and-white photograph as she desegregated Harding High School as its first Black student.

Counts withdrew after four days due to intense harassment.

The piece "Justice" is composed of red and white stripes of decommissioned U.S. flags. When viewed up close, they look like geometric quilt designs but at a distance, the viewer is reminded of the power of perspective to alter an experience.

In "Powerless," Thomas creates a printed image that changes when viewed from different angles. As the viewer moves, the text transforms; from one angle, the word "powerful" appears while "powerless" is seen from another.

A neon piece alternates between the words "off-white" and "pitch-black" in "Pitch Blackness Off Whiteness," which exposes the instability of racial signifiers and the ways identity can be flattened through language.

MOVIE REVIEW

3 riveting perspectives of a doomsday scenario

By Dwight Brown
BLACK PRESS USA

A House of Dynamite

4 stars

"Object remains inbound!"

Those aren't the words you want to hear when a nuclear missile is headed your way.

Yet that's the ominous news that bombs government officials in this very imaginative, pulse-quickening thriller. News that brings astonishment, audacity, mystery, dread and a disarray that's alarming. In the hands of some directors, the bomb's explosion would be the point of a far-fetched and frenzied disaster movie.

Instead, the goal of this thoughtful script by Noah Oppenheim ("Jackie"), is to scare the bejesus out of audiences in another way.

By suggesting that if there was an impending nuclear attack, things might not go as planned. That the world's strongest military force and most formidable super power might flounder. It's feasible enough to be intriguing. The plotline, as interpreted by Oscar®-winning director Kathryn Bigelow ("The Hurt Locker"), offers three perspectives of the same astounding incident. A Roshomon technique that's discernible, but let's a little bit of air out of the tire. A nail-biting journey that starts with a bang, splinters and ends with a haunting finale.

Up at the Fort Greely Army Base in Alaska, Major Daniel Gonzalez (Anthony Ramos, "Hamilton") sees a blip on a screen that's concerning. He and his crew can't believe their eyes and tracking instruments. Some country, which they can't discern, has launched a nuclear missile in the Pacific Ocean. North Korea? Russia? China? Previously, these test missiles landed in the sea. But this time the warhead is traveling east, on a trajectory that leads to Chicago. A metro area of 10 million people. Officials are called, messaged and warned.

A defense team assembles in offices or remotely: Captain Walker (Rebecca Ferguson) senior duty officer of the Situation Room; the Room's commander Admiral Mark Miller (Jason Clarke); Sec-



NETFLIX

Idris Elba takes a presidential turn in the Netflix drama "A House of Dynamite."

etary of Defense (Jared Harris), General Brady (Tracy Letts) who leads U.S. Strategic Command; Deputy National Security Adviser Jake Baerington (Gabriel Basso) and of course the President of the United States (Idris Elba). They're all in lock step, so you'd think. All doing their jobs and trying to solution their way out of this crisis. But s—t happens.

One of the first lines of defense against an attack is a Ground-Based Interceptor. A missile taking out another missile. With the greatest technology in the world, that should work, right? The Secretary of Defense is incensed: "This is what \$50 billion buys us!!" When it's explained to him it's like trying to stop a bullet with a bullet, that explanation and its imagery are not consoling.

All on view, as directed by Bigelow, is perfectly choreographed. It's a skill she displayed best perhaps in her film "Zero Dark Thirty." There is never any confusion with her storytelling technique. It's easy to discern what's going on. Easy to ascertain the major players' and their jobs. They seem earnest, yet like they're fallible human beings. People worried as much about saving millions of citizens from a bomb as

they are about protecting their own families.

It's only a movie, but it poses the kind of questions one would fathom if pondering how the nation would respond under serious attack. Would everything work perfectly to avert a disaster? The storyline says, maybe, maybe not. And that's why it's so damn engrossing.

Judging by how the government is run these days, there's just enough plausibility here to give audiences in theaters or on Netflix the chills. Adult audiences more so than young ones. For 112 minutes they'll be spellbound, wondering, waiting and anticipating.

There's little time to breathe because Bigelow and editor Kirk Baxter (Oscar winner "The Social Network") don't take their feet off the gas. No lapses, no fat. Just footage that compounds the feeling of fear. Barry Ackroyd's ("The Hurt Locker") cinematography chronicles jets in space, a president's intimate back-of-limousine conversations and daily family life with equal clarity.

While production designer Jeremy Hindle makes the offices, control rooms and homes look as tidy as they should be.

Please see **RIVETING** | 6B

The War and Treaty share Charlotte stage Oct. 19

Continued from page 5B

Coming from two different backgrounds allows the musicians to bring different strengths to the sound of The War and Treaty. Michael, a retired veteran, and Tanya, who grew up in the entertainment industry, both bring something distinct.

"I told him this the day I met him," Tanya said. "I never experienced a songwriter like him that can take a song and not just write the song, but you hear everything at the same time. You hear all the drums, the guitar, everything."

Said Michael: "What Tanya brings is impossible. Like, whatever I believe I can't do, I'm like, 'It's impossible.' And then Tanya comes and it's like, 'Oh, I used to think it was impossible.'"

As Black artists in the country genre, it's not only created more representation it's been rewarding. With three Country Music Association Award nominations and two Academy of Country Music Award



WILFRED MENDOZA

Michael and Tanya Trotter make up the country music duo The War and Treaty.

nominations, the couple describe their experience as being positive.

"It's exposure and I think that the experience has been once people see you, once they experience you, they don't even realize that they love it." Tanya said.

Riveting perspectives of doomsday in 'A House of Dynamite'

Continued from page 5B

This is high quality ensemble acting. The actors feign anxiety, shock and horror well enough to make viewers feel like their concern is real. As danger gets closer and closer the looks on their faces get more and more serious. Like there may be no way back from this looming apocalypse. Ferguson feels like the strongest contributor.

A generous and sensitive boss who breaks the rules to show her staff compassion. Yet as tough as nails when dealing with superiors. Harris as the enraged Defense Secretary gives the most memorable performance because he expresses the anger viewers will feel when defense systems fail.

Elba plays the POTUS with Obama's casualness and George W. Bush's unpreparedness. He doesn't seem military trained, like an Eisenhower. It's a modern and odd interpretation of the highest office in the land. A quirkiness U.S. audiences have come to expect these days from presidents.

Anyone who knows the real mechanics of America's defense system and government may find errors. But those who love thrillers that involve military and political intrigue will be fascinated at how this tale pulls the different departments together and makes them all look like deer caught in the headlights. For almost two hours!

Prepare to have your nerves frayed in ways you can't imagine by a film that doesn't spill one drop of blood but leaves you as devastated and emotionally battered as you would be if you'd watched the "Texas Chainsaw Massacre."

Bigelow, Oppenheim's script and a talented cast take you there. By film's end you'll need a stiff drink, some strong weed or a calming walk around the block. That's the mark of a riveting thriller. That's what's coming in bound.

Visit film critic Dwight Brown at DwightBrownInk.com.

OUT & ABOUT

PHOTOS BY DANIEL COSTON | FOR THE CHARLOTTE POST



Larry Braggs, former vocalist for the Temptations and Tower of Power, played two shows at Middle C Jazz on Oct. 3.



Natalie Frazier-Allen and Alicia Quarles welcomed patrons back to the Mint Museum Uptown for the annual Arts Empowerment Project gala, held on Oct. 1.

Big and small, census counts music industry

Continued from page 5B

Census results will be released publicly in early 2026 and will inform strategies to support live music, improve access to professional development for the music community, boost audience engagement, support inclusivity, and guide future investment.

"To shape the future of our music scene, we have to start by understanding the present," Rick Thurmond of Music Everywhere CLT and Charlotte Center City Partners said in a statement. "The Charlotte Music Census helps shine a light on the people and places that make our creative community thrive—and ensures they're part of the city's vision going forward."

The census is open to anyone 18 or older who works in any music capacity, paid or unpaid, in the Charlotte

area, including performance, production, entrepreneurship, education, and administration.

The census is also calling for community engagement partners and ambassadors to raise awareness and participation in the initiative. Interested individuals can sign up at CharlotteMusicCensus.org for toolkits and support.

"Charlotte's music community is vibrant and diverse, and to truly support it, we need to understand it," said John Tosco, founder and executive director of Tosco Music. "The Charlotte Music Census gives us that opportunity. ... We want all voices to be heard, and we encourage everyone involved in Charlotte's music scene to participate so we can all build a more inclusive, connected community through music together."

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