

Petition of citizens concerns leads to questions about employment rights at local animal shelter

BY WENDY CARD

Citizens petitioned the Craven County Board of Commissioners on March 6 asking them to grant permission for the Craven County Sheriff's Office to manage the Craven Pamlico Animal Services Center. They stated a former Craven County employee lied to Sheriff Chip Hughes about the disposition of an animal in their custody and made other statements.

New Bern Now has not been able to confirm accounts through interviews with first-hand witnesses or by public record requests.

The CC Health Department responded to NBN's initial public record request on March 7 within an hour and provided the most recent Facility Compliance Inspection report by the Animal Welfare Section of NC Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services dated Feb. 1, 2023. The inspector noted, "I performed an annual



Craven Pamlico Animal Services located on Old Airport Rd. PHOTO: WENDY CARD / NEW BERN NOW

inspection today. The facility was clean and the animals appeared healthy and well cared for. This annual inspection is noted as approved."

CPASC personnel are employed by the county and are protected by employment laws.

The Craven County Sheriff, like all sheriffs in North Carolina, is an elected official and has the right to hire and fire anyone without cause including deputies, jailers, and

school resource officers along with any employees who are not protected by the same county employment laws.

At the time of publishing, NBN had not received public records requests submitted to the sheriff's office or follow-up requests made to the health department.

Wendy Card is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. She can be reached at wendycard@nclifemedia.com or (252) 259-6853.

City attorney shoots down RDC plan for Jones St. rental housing; New Bern business owner makes new bid

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

After being rejected in his first attempt, a New Bern business owner has made a second bid for property the New Bern Redevelopment Commission previously earmarked for affordable housing rental units. The offer comes after the commission was notified that they do not have the authority to rent property on a long-term basis.

Pete Frey, owner of Brewery 99, appeared before the redevelopment commission on March 8 to present a plan for the properties at 203 and 207 Jones St. that were purchased by the RDC in July 2021 for \$38,000.

Frey placed an initial bid of \$15,000 on the two lots last November for construction of a single-family home within the next two years to be used as

his primary residence. Based on a recommendation from the RDC's Housing Workgroup subcommittee, Frey's bid was voted down during their Dec. 2022 meeting, with the explanation that the RDC was considering the property as a site for affordable housing rental units.

At that meeting, subcommittee member Beth Walker said the RDC had received a verbal commitment from an unnamed investor to fund the construction of three rental houses on the property. She said accepting Frey's bid would mean the RDC would realize a net loss of about \$48,000 on their investment in the property, including the cost for demolition of an existing structure.

"We do not believe that it (Frey's bid) will provide the

highest and best use of the land being that it would be a single home as a residence versus the three homes that we are planning to put there," she commented.

Another subcommittee member, Steve Strickland, said he fully expected the offer being discussed with the investment group would allow the project to break ground "in a matter of a couple of months."

RDC Vice Chairman Kip Peregoy said he felt 95% sure that the financial backing was going to "come into play and be real" and that a plan would be in place by January 2023.

At the New Bern Board of Aldermen's Jan. 10 meeting, Ward 3 Alderman Bobby Aster said plans for the project had

CITY ATTORNEY Continued on page 3

Craven School Board votes to support controversial 'Parents' Bill of Rights' Senate bill

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

The Craven County Board of Education has voted to adopt a resolution in support of N.C. Senate Bill 49, known as the "Parents' Bill of Rights." While Senate Republicans have argued the legislation is needed to safeguard the role of parents in their children's education, opponents say it poses a danger to LGBTQ young people and their relationship to educators.

Among other provisions, the bill impacts the right to direct a child's moral or religious training, the ability to access education and medical records and the right to make medical deci-

sions for a child.

Senate Bill 49 passed the state Senate in February and was sent to the House of Representatives for consideration.

Gov. Roy Cooper has come out against the bill and is expected to veto it. However, Republicans have a veto-proof majority in the Senate, and would need the support of only one Democratic legislator in the House to override a potential veto there.

The bill was filed by senators Amy Galey, Michael Lee, and Lisa Stone Barnes.

The Craven BOE's resolution in support of Senate Bill

49 reads, "BE IT RESOLVED, that the Craven County Board of Education applauds Senators Galey, Lee and Barnes and encourages the General Assembly to pass this bill and encourages Governor Cooper to sign the bill into law."

Senate Bill 49 can be viewed in its entirety at ncleg.gov/Bill-LookUp/2023/s49.

During the Craven County Board of Education's March 14 meeting, Dist. 4 board member Jennifer Dacey said the bill was the result of concerns expressed by parents over matters such as whether their children should

SCHOOL BOARD Continued on page 4



Gene McLendon, executive director of Hope Mission of Carteret County, discusses the nonprofit's plans for grant funds it was recently awarded through the CarolinaEast Foundation. PHOTO: TODD WETHERINGTON/NEW BERN NOW

'Good People Doing Good Work:' Local Nonprofits Get Financial Gift From CarolinaEast Foundation

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

Twelve local nonprofits have been gifted with funds that will help them expand the reach of their healthcare-related charitable work in the community.

On Feb. 14, the CarolinaEast Foundation presented a total of \$140,000 to the nonprofits as part of its second grant cycle for fiscal year 2023. Last September, the foundation distributed checks for more than \$132,000 to local organizations for its first grant cycle.

During Tuesday's event, Jared Brinkley, CarolinaEast Foundation executive director, said the donor dollars come largely from the monies donated during CarolinaEast's Employee Campaign.

"We're very proud of our staff and what they contribute. This past year the employee campaign raised over \$409,000," Brinkley said. "It's humbling and it's a testament to the type of people we have."

Brinkley said the CarolinaEast Foundation received more than \$350,000 in requests from nonprofits this year. He noted that CarolinaEast Health System covers 100% of the foundation's overhead.

"Every single dollar that we raise goes back into the community and to our healthcare organizations," Brinkley said.

The CarolinaEast Foundation grants will support a wide variety of nonprofit health programs, from CarolinaEast EMS's efforts to combat the growing problem of substance abuse, to efforts to provide improved services for the homeless and those living with autism and Parkinson's disease.

Ruth Powers, director of Backpack Blessings, said the funds will be used to facilitate a summer food program. Powers said the CarolinaEast Foundation has been instrumental in

CAROLINA EAST Continued on page 2



Dennis Bucher, vice-chairman of the Craven County Commissioners, speaks during a discussion of the county's property revaluation process. Photo: TODD WETHERINGTON / NEW BERN NOW

Commissioner says county will lower tax rate in response to property revaluation

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

The Craven County Board of Commissioners plans to lower county tax rates in response to the recent surge in local property valuation, according to Vice Chairman Dennis Bucher.

Many Craven County residents got an unwelcome shock last week when they received their new property revaluation forms in the mail. According to Craven County Tax Administrator Leslie Young, local property valuation increased an average of 42.03%.

Young emphasized that the number represented a county-wide average percentage increase in 2022 taxable real estate valuation.

COMMISSIONER Continued on page 3

Letter from the Editors: Support local, independent news

BY WENDY CARD AND TODD WETHERINGTON

For the first time in 14 years, New Bern Now has a three-person newsroom.

We are committed to bringing our readers the most diverse, in-depth news coverage available in our area, but we can't do it alone.

If you like what you see, consider contributing to our campaign to fund operations. Our success depends on community support.

Make a one time or monthly contribution by visiting: givebutter.com/dqwbhy, send a check to NC Life Media, LLC, P.O. Box 13614, New Bern, NC, 25861 or scanning the QR code.



New Bern Now hosts Community Listening Forum



New Bern Now hosted the NC Local News Workshop with Executive Director Shannan Bowen from Elon University on Feb. 9, 2023. Thanks to La Casetta Restaurant as they sponsored the event in their event center located at 2503 Neuse Blvd.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- MARCH**
- 21 – 31:** Honk! JR, New Bern Civic Theatre, 412 Pollock St.
- 23 – 25:** Hallowed Ground Lantern Tour, 6 – 9 p.m. New Bern Battlefield Park
- 25:** Annunciation Catholic School's Angels & Saints Boots & Bowties Gala Fundraiser. 6:30 p.m. – 10:30 p.m. Click here for more information.
- 28:** Craven Community Concert Band presents free concert at 7 p.m. in the Grover C. Fields auditorium, 2000 Dr. MLK Blvd.
- April**
- 1 – 2:** Honk! JR, New Bern Civic Theatre, 412 Pollock St.
- 7:** LLC International Film: Indian Horse, 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Orringer Auditorium, 800 College Court.
- 15:** Navy League Golf Tournament, 9 a.m. at the Harbour Pointe Golf Club. Call 252-631-1570.
- 22:** New Bern Historical Society's 100th Anniversary Exhibit Opens at The Duffy Gallery located in the North Carolina History Center at 529 South Front Street.
- 26:** Craven Concerts presents performance by Judy Carmichael at 7:30 p.m. in the Orringer Auditorium at Craven Community College.
- 28-29:** 2023 Neuse River Bridge Run at Union Point Park. Tickets and information available here.
- 29:** Tryon Civitan Club Charity Golf Tournament, 1 p.m. at The Emerald Golf Club. Call 252-672-5482.

Meet New Bern musician and luthier James "Wick" Wickline

BY JOANNE FRIEDMAN

Wick is a well-known musician around New Bern, but did you know his real name is James Thomas Edward Wickline? As a kid he was JT, before he picked up the family nickname he now goes by.

Wick was born in Jacksonville, Fla. but the family traveled most of his early life with his biological dad in the Navy, then his stepdad in the Marines. They settled here when his Dad was stationed in Cherry Point. Wick was a high school freshman and said he was not moving anymore.

The family has stayed in New Bern and all live close to one another in the "compound," which includes his parents and his younger sister. Wick lives with his wife, Stephanie, who he met working at Captain Ratty's and married 14 years ago. They have a son Keagan, age 12 and a stepson Zander who is 19 years old and now lives with his biological Dad.

Wick said he came to love music when he was age 8 and watching MTV (he wasn't supposed to be watching that), where he saw musicians who rode motorcycles, hung out with girls, and partied...that was what he wanted to do. Growing up, music was also a part of his life; his grandmother played the piano and guitar in a gospel group, and his parents listened to a variety of music from classical to oldies to Willie Nelson and Chaka Khan.

Wick now listens to all kinds of music and especially likes heavy metal and hip-hop. At age 14 he got his first guitar and learned on his own with the help of friends. He didn't mind getting grounded for bad grades because it gave him time to listen to the radio and play the guitar.

Wick feels fortunate in that he "always found a way to do what I want and make money doing it." He worked at various jobs in New Bern, from Applebee's to landscaping,

to be able to afford his music. He started out in a band called Joker and when the bass player quit, he took up the bass. Wick liked the bass and figured everyone needs a bass player. He has always been comfortable on stage and calls himself "kind of an extravert."

He always had trouble reading music and has since found out he has dyslexia.

Wick went on to plan in a band called Far From Nowhere for five years, doing a lot of traveling. When asked about his most memorable music moments, Wick talks about that band playing three tours in Korea MWR (morale, welfare, recreation). In 2003 he played in Korea to about 4,000 people as their first heavy metal band, which was a great experience, he said.

Wick next played in a successful beach, wedding-style band called Johnny Dollar. He was making good money and traveling to Charlotte on the weekends to play but was bored during the week and applied for a job at Fullers Music in New Bern. He started in sales and Dave, the current owner, saw he was interested in fixing instruments. He trained Wick to be a luthier (a person who fixes stringed instruments) and he has been there now for 13 years. They train at the University of New Hampshire for a week in the summer. Wick has been there seven times and said he always learns something new.



Seven years ago he and his current band members, Josh Overby and Mike Lancaster, were drunk on the back porch and decided to name their band the Bi-Polar Express. They mostly cover Van Halen-like songs from the '80s.

Wick met Josh at Mulligans and Mike while working at Fuller's. Mike had come back to town after working as a recording engineer in Nashville. They obviously love what they do and have become great friends. The band has expanded into sponsorship and Wick says "it's all about selling beer".

Talking to Wick made it clear he is a genuine, kind, and talented person.

He has influenced many musicians in this town and is a great resource to have an instrument repaired professionally right here in New Bern.

Wick is living his passion for music and working at something he cares about.

CAROLINA EAST - Continued from page 1

helping Backpack Blessings distribute nearly 900 food boxes each summer to children across Craven, Jones and Pamlico counties who are food insecure.

"This is a huge problem in our area and it's just getting worse and worse," Powers said. "You do not have to go far to figure out why kids are food insecure when you look at the prices in the grocery stores."

Religious Community Services of New Bern will spend its grant money to provide recuperative care for those that come through its homeless shelter, according to Executive Director Zeb Hough. The money will also go to maintain RCS's existing programs that serve Pamlico, Jones and Craven counties through homelessness prevention services, case management and a community kitchen.

"This year we're partnering with CarolinaEast and a number of other organizations to bring recuperative care right here in Craven County," Hough said.

Victor Anderson of Reviving Lives Ministries, a program that helps those dealing with substance abuse, said the grant funds will enable the nonprofit to maintain its transitional housing and life skills programs.

"We love the men and women we serve until they learn to love

themselves," he commented. "We look at them as caterpillars and we're a cocoon."

Heather Bryner of Shake The Ground Ministries arrived at Tuesday's check presentation still dressed in the apron and work clothes she wore while serving meals to residents in need that morning.

In June 2022, Bryner opened a community kitchen, The Gathering Place, in Havelock, which served nearly 4,000 meals last year and is on track to serve over 20,000 this year. Bryner said the grant money would go towards the installation of a commercial kitchen to replace the small stove she has been using.

"The need unfortunately has skyrocketed recently," she said. "We served 146 meals today. We are very excited about these funds."

In closing Tuesday's event, Brinkley said he was proud that the CarolinaEast Foundation could assist the efforts of the numerous nonprofits assisting local residents.

"We're so lucky to live in a community that has so many good people doing good work," he said.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.

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Electric substation in Eastern North Carolina.
PHOTO: WENDY CARD / NEW BERN NOW

Duke Energy Progress proposed rate increases, N.C. Utilities Commission conducts public hearings

BY WENDY CARD

Duke Energy Progress, LLC, filed an application with the North Carolina Utilities Commission to adjust the electric service rates and charges in October 2022. According to NCUC’s website, DEP requested permission to increase electric service charges and rates of about 18% over current revenues.

NCUC issued an order scheduling investigation and hearings, establishing intervention and testimony due dates and discovery guidelines, and requiring public notice. New Bern Now obtained a copy on March 10.

The commission is conducting public witness hearings of Duke Energy Progress Application to raise electric rates. Three were held in Waynesville, Roxboro and Raleigh.

The following is a schedule of upcoming public witness hearings:

March 20 at 7 p.m. in the Greene County Courthouse, 301 N. Green

Street, Courtroom 1, Snow Hill.

March 21 at 7 p.m. in the Robeson County Courthouse, 500 N. Elm Street, Courtroom B, Lumberton (this was initially scheduled for Feb. 21).

An expert witness hearing will begin on May 1. The public may attend but will not be able to comment.

If approved, the rate changes will only affect customers who receive a Duke Energy Progress bill.

If you live in New Bern, if the proposed rate increase is approved, it may or may not affect you. If you pay Duke Progress Energy directly it will affect you. If you receive an electric bill from the City of New Bern it will not.

The city of New Bern is a member of the N.C. Eastern Municipal Power Agency and set its own rules.

Wendy Card is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. She can be reached at wendycard@nclifemedia.com or (252) 259-6853.

CITY ATTORNEY - Continued from page 1

been shared with a general contractor, who came back with a price tag of approximately \$500,000. Aster asked that the board provide around \$75,000 in seed money to get it off the ground. The board unanimously approved a motion to bring the budget amendment back before the board on a future agenda.

However, at the RDC’s March 8 meeting, Assistant City Attorney Jaimee Bullock-Mosley explained that, according to her consultation with the UNC School of Government, the commission can only lease property on a temporary basis to a person or persons who have been displaced due to one of the RDC’s ongoing rehabilitation projects.

“So, you have the ability in a very, very narrow context,” she told the commission.

The information effectively prohibits the RDC from following through with their plans to build rental housing on the Jones St. property.

During the March 8 meeting, Frey appeared with George Tosato, an agent with Keller Williams, and presented the board with a new, updated plan for the property. Frey said he had put in a new bid of \$14,415 for the two lots and was seeking permission to build both a single-family home as his residence and a second home to be used as a residential tenant property.

Additionally, Frey pledged to donate the approximately \$10,000 of projected annual revenue from the rental to the Stanley White Recreation Center for local recreation programming.

Frey said he wanted to build a home in the neighborhood where he has lived for the last decade be-

cause it is close to his business on Pollock St.

“I really love this neighborhood. I moved my business there. I use that (Leander Morgan) park almost every day and I want to be close to my business,” he said. “That’s why this property means so much to me.”

Frey said his new plan would hopefully entice investors and residents to purchase property from the RDC and build more homes in the area.

“You have over 150 other properties where you could build those (rental) homes,” Frey told the commission. “If you did what you want to do on different properties, and I did what I wanted to do on those properties it would be a win-win for everybody.”

New Bern Ward 1 Alderman Rick Prill, an ex-officio member of the RDC who has been critical of the commission’s rental plan, asked if the commission was working on a different concept for the Jones St. lots. He said he was surprised there had not been any discussion on the part of the commission as to their plans moving forward.

Peregoy said the RDC was now working on a plan to develop homes for sale on the Jones St. property as opposed to rental housing and had completed survey work on the site. He said the change of direction meant a new budget would have to be developed for the work.

Peregoy said he expected a presentation on the new plan would be made at the next RDC meeting on April 12 at 6 p.m. in the city hall courtroom.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.

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“What that number represents is an average, that means there’s highs, lows and all in between in the valuation,” she noted.

Property taxes are calculated by multiplying the appraised value by the county tax rate, which will be determined during the board’s annual budget process in late spring and will become effective July 1, 2023.

The current county tax rate for fiscal year 2022-23 is \$0.56 per \$100 valuation.

During the board of commissioners March 6 meeting, Bucher said he had received a number of calls from citizens concerned that the rise in their appraised property value would lead to a significant increase in their property taxes.

Bucher said the county planned to lower the tax rate during their budget process to address those concerns.

“So while someone’s home may have gone up 43%, we’re going to lower the tax rate. I can’t say it will be 43% but it will definitely come down,” Bucher said. “So, you’re not going to pay 43% more in taxes than you did this past year...That’s an important point that everyone needs to understand.”

Board Chairman Jason Jones said some properties his family owns had increased nearly 100%. He said he was “greatly concerned” that many homes in the rural areas of the county that had not seen significant increases before had witnessed their property valuations soar from 60%

to more than 100%.

“That’s a lot of concern to me, it’s a big concern,” he commented.

Commissioner Beatrice Smith said she had received questions from members of her district asking how an appraised value can be assigned when they are unaware of an appraiser ever visiting their property.

“At some point an appraiser has been to their property. I can’t tell you the exact day or time,” Young responded. “Oftentimes the owner may not be at home because remember, we do not go inside houses.”

Young said between March 1, when the notices went out, and March 6 her office had received 180 appeals from Craven County residents regarding their property valuations.

“I’ve been very encouraged that of the 180, 33 have come in by submitting an appeal online, a new feature for Craven County,” Young said.

Residents who wish to appeal their property valuation can do so through a form included with their valuation notice or online at the Craven County Tax Administration website, cravencountync.gov/220/Tax-Administration. The website also contains Young’s informative Feb. 20 presentation to the board of commissioners concerning the revaluation.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.

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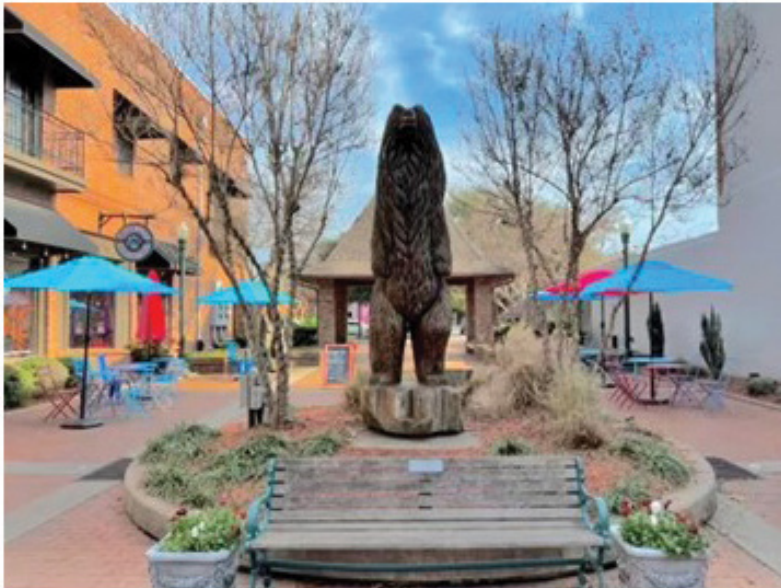
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Caleb King's return as Havelock High head football coach voted down by board of ed

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

Reports of a former Havelock High School head football coach returning to helm the team were premature, according to a statement from the Craven County school district.

During a March 1 special called meeting of the Craven County Board of Education, the board went into closed session to discuss Human Resources Services Report 9A, which concerned the 2023-24 Havelock High head football coach contract for Caleb King.

When the board returned to open session they voted 6-1 to not accept the report, with Naomi Clark being the lone yes vote.

King previously served as the Rams' head coach and worked as the team's offensive coordinator during the 2022 season.

The announcement that King would be switching roles with head coach Allen Wooten was made on King's Facebook page on Feb. 17 and has been reported by several local media outlets.

"I feel extremely blessed to say I am the Head Football Coach at Havelock High

School," King wrote. "My good friend, Coach Wooten, and I will be switching roles. Thank you to Coach Wooten, Coach (Tameka) Wiggins (athletic director), and Ms. (Claudia) Casey (principal), for blessing me with this opportunity!"

But according to a statement released March 6 by the school district, the move has not been approved by either Craven County Schools or Havelock High and the current coaching contracts will remain in place for at least another four months.

The statement reads in full: "Craven County Schools and Havelock High School did not make an official announcement regarding the head football coaching position. When it was shared that a change was being made regarding the head coach and the assistant coach position, it had not been presented to the Board of Education for approval.

"The current coaching positions are under contract for one year with the term ending June 30, 2023. The next steps will be

under the direction of Ms. Claudia Casey, Principal-Havelock High School."

New Bern Now reached out to Casey by phone and email Monday but had not received a reply.

King's previous tenure as the Rams' head football coach during the 2017-18 seasons was marked by success after success, with the team racking up a record of 27-3. In 2017, the Rams fell to Charlotte Catholic in the 3A state championship. The following year, Havelock made it back to regionals but lost to Jacksonville 41-34.

In 2109, King left for a job in South Carolina but returned to serve as offensive coordinator at J.H. Rose before coming back to Havelock last year.

This is a developing story and New Bern Now will post updates when new information is available.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.



Epiphany varsity men's tennis team
COURTESY PHOTO

Epiphany men's varsity tennis team wins over East Carteret

BY WENDY CARD

The Epiphany School of Global Studies varsity men's tennis team defeated East Carteret HS 7 – 2 on March 13.

Singles winners: (1) Davis Hall, (2) Zarek Felter, (4) Garrett Austin, (5) Markus Soreff and (6) Hilliard Thompson.

Doubles winners - (1) Hall and Felter (3) Soreff and Thompson.

By Matt James, Director of Athletics

CAROLINA CRYPTOGRAM

This puzzle is a simple substitution cipher, where every letter of the alphabet is replaced by a different letter. For example: 'CAROLINA' becomes 'EMFBY-WXM', where J = M. Every quote is sourced from a famous North Carolinian.

BAF'ET OAK WGHS. - TSXAAI TIXGMID

Key: O = G;

SCHOOL BOARD Continued from page 1

be required to wear face masks if directed to by a school system.

"I think the gist of the bill is something that really needs to be considered and supported," she commented. "It's got a real focus on parental engagement which I think needs to be a huge focus for us as we try and get our parents reengaged after COVID and play a more active role in their kid's education."

Dist. 3 board member Carr Ipock, who sits on the board of directors for the N.C. School Boards Association, said that although the 30-member, nonpartisan board was not opposed to a parents' bill of rights, they were concerned about certain parts of the Senate Bill 49. Ipock said the SBA were in active negotiations with the general assembly to "tailor and refine the language" of the bill.

According to Ipock the SBA's priority is to en-

sure that laws contain language that will be actionable in school systems "without a lot of problem areas that are going to crop up after the fact."

"It's from that standpoint that I think we may be a little bit premature...I want to make sure this is something we can work with and not create additional problems, not only in our system but across the state," Ipock said.

Dist. 7 board member Naomi Clark said she was an advocate of parental rights but was troubled by parts of the board's resolution.

Clark said she took issue with a section of the resolution stating that the bill would require schools to notify parents of any issues involving their child's physical or mental health.

"Some folk would argue that perhaps this would circumvent or present a barrier for children who are subject to neglect and abuse," Clark commented.

Clark said she also had a problem with a part of the resolution recognizing that the bill "prohib-

its students in Kindergarten through fourth grade from receiving organized instruction on gender identity, sexual activity or sexuality, whether from school personnel or outside parties."

"No one in this county thus far has been able to show me where our teachers in schools are showing Kindergarteners through fourth graders things on gender identity or sexual activity," Clark said. "There's parts of this bill I think are wonderful but other things I think are premature."

Ipock moved that the board table the discussion of Senate Bill 49 until their April meeting. The motion failed on a 5-2 vote, with Ipock and Clark voting yes.

Dist. 5 board member Kelli Muse then made a motion that the board adopt the resolution in support of Senate Bill 49. The motion passed 5-2, with Ipock and Clark voting no.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.



"Cucumbers en route to pickledom" by Stacy Spensley is licensed under CC BY 2.0.

Get Noticed with a Press Release

BY JANE MAULLUCCI, THE REACTIVE VOICE

New Bern Now is ready to promote your next event. All you need to do is send us a press release. We specifically ask for a press release because it is the best way to efficiently and correctly transfer your information onto NewBernNow.com, multimedia platforms and/or to be published in The Navigator.

We need to know the who, what, when, where, and how of your big event. For example, let's imagine Peter Piper is having a pickle seminar -

Who: Peter Piper's Pickle Gallery
What: Pickle Planting Planning Program
When: February 30, 2023, 1 - 3 p.m.
Where: 123 Gherkin Ave., New Bern, N.C.
Why: To learn how to plant cucumbers for pickling.

How: Sign up online or call Peter to reserve your spot.

Now that you have your facts laid out turn it into a quick narrative that will use all the information and make people want to participate.

Headline: Peter Piper's Pickle Planting Planning Program

Content: Peter Piper wants to help you get ready for your spring pickle planting by offering this special Pickle Planting Planning Program for new and experienced gardeners. This event will be held at his Pickle Gallery, 123 Gherkin Ave., New Bern, NC, on February 30, 2023, 1 - 3 p.m. Peter will explain how to choose the right types of cucumbers to grow for each type of pickle, and he will detail the soil preparation and site selection. He'll also give great tips for watering and trellising your pickle plants. Reserve your spot by calling Peter at (274-2553) or registering online.

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Trenton native works to uncover local history buried for decades

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

A Trenton native is working against time to find funding to recognize a historic Black graveyard that was all but forgotten for nearly 70 years.

Located at the end of a dirt path that runs beside a cotton field near the Jones County Transportation Department, the Barber Graveyard dates back nearly a century and a half but hasn’t been maintained since at least 1955.

And while there are no headstones or other markers to indicate burial sites on the half acre, triangle-shaped plot of land, Sam Barber said he has death certificates for 21 of his kin who are interred at the cemetery, which was incorporated in 1915 and is still owned by the Barber family.

Barber can trace the history of his family’s graveyard back as far as 1880 to the burial of his great-grandfather, Peter Barber, a man born into slavery who was one of the county’s first black commissioners.

Barber said preserving sites such as the Haiti Cemetery and Barber Graveyard are an important part of ensuring that the secrets of the past aren’t allowed to simply fade away.

“Back at that time poor folks didn’t have money to buy headstones or caskets,” he commented.

Barber believes most of his relatives would have been buried in wooden or cardboard boxes, which would leave behind few remains.

“I remember my sister had a still-born baby and my dad brought it back here and buried it in a shoebox. I remember that very well,” Barber recalled. “And there are probably

others who were not listed at the courthouse.”

A retired educator who now lives in Greenville, Barber grew up among a family of farmers in a home just west of the graveyard before leaving Jones County in 1949 to attend college. In 2020 he had the Barber Graveyard property surveyed and cleared of trees and began making plans to have a bronze plaque made to commemorate the site.

Asked why he decided to take on the cemetery project after so many decades, Barber commented, “It’s family tradition and also primarily because of my great-grandfather. When he died there was no mention of him in the (commissioners) minutes or anywhere else. The only way I know he died in 1880 is because of the census.”

For the last three years, Barber, who will be 92 in June, has taken on the mission of cleaning up the Barber Graveyard and searching for the proper way to memorialize the site.

According to Barber, he has formed a committee that has gathered several memorial designs, with poverty and justice as the main themes. He said the design the committee has chosen depicts a Black man and woman standing outside of the Jones County Courthouse.

Barber said the committee has raised \$50,000 of the bronze memorial’s approximately \$500,000 cost so far.

“That’s a lot of money to put in an area like this,” he admitted. “But what I’m thinking is not only can we do that in terms of building up the cemetery but as a tourist attraction for Trenton. If we can get folks interested in coming out to Jones County, it might be worthwhile to go ahead and build a real nice one here.”

Barber said once the memorial design is finished the committee will need to decide where to place it. The land is surrounded by fields on two sides and is bordered on one end by a narrow branch of the Trent River, a former fishing spot which Barber remembers his father referring to as the “Deep Hole.”

Barber said he would like to place



Jones County native Sam Barber stands near the site of his family's graveyard in Trenton that dates back to the late 19th century. Barber is working to get the plot cleaned up and recognized with a memorial marker. PHOTO: TODD WETHERINGTON / NEW BERN NOW

state and U.S. flags between two trees that frame the bank of the river.

“My dad wouldn’t let us come fishing down there because it was too dangerous. I had a relative who drowned here so that ended that,” he recalled.

Barber said he is unaware of anyone else, even family remembers, who recall the graveyard.

“A lot of the old folk are gone and no one knows much about what’s going on over here. My cousin remembered but she’s gone on now. All we have now is the few records that we can find,” he said.

Barber is no stranger to local efforts to preserve historic burial grounds. He played a key role in getting Trenton’s Haiti Cemetery officially recognized with a dedication ceremony in 2021. The burial ground sits in the heart of the town’s former Haiti (pronounced Hay-Tie) community, one of Trenton’s oldest historically segregated neighborhoods.

Barber estimated that at least 30 of his own relatives are buried in Haiti Cemetery. Among them is Isaac Strayhorn, his uncle. Strayhorn rests beside his wife, Bettie, who, according to Barber, received the call sometime after Christmas in 1942 that her husband, who had been missing for about a week, had been found just offshore at the nearby Brock’s Mill Pond.

According to his account, Barber, who was 11 years old at the time, accompanied his aunt and other family members to the site and was present when Strayhorn’s body, bound in chains and weighted down by cinder blocks, was pulled from the water.

Asked about the aftermath of the death, Barber replied, “Nothing happened. It was a hush-hush situation because there was nothing we could do and nothing my aunt could really do. For a long time, it was not discussed, to my knowledge, in the family.”

Barber said preserving sites such as the Haiti Cemetery and Barber Graveyard are an important part of ensuring that the secrets of the past aren’t allowed to simply fade away.

“We will need some major support in order to complete the project,” Barber noted. "Most black folk back then were either thrown in the river or just buried as animals were buried, just thrown out. Luckily, my family was able to set aside some property, but so many others were just lost.”

For more information on the Barber Graveyard or to make a donation, contact Sam Barber at 252-714-4739.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.

ON THE FIELD WITH THE BEARS

PHOTOS BY WENDY CARD/NEW BERN NOW



New Bern Bears JV Baseball Team



New Bern Bears varsity baseball team



New Bern Lady Bears softball

Consultant says Trent Court demolition, funding efforts hitting reset after ‘mixed up and misconstrued’ process

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

Nearly four and a half years after Hurricane Florence flooded New Bern’s Trent Court apartments, efforts to demolish the complex’s flood damaged buildings and procure funds for rebuilding efforts appear to be back at step one.

During the New Bern Housing Authority Board of Commissioners’ Feb. 20 meeting, the board heard from Valarie Philipp, an associate managing director with Witt O’Brien’s who specializes in FEMA public assistance grant management. Philipp, who began working with the housing authority last December, updated the board on what has transpired since Hurricane Florence in Sept. 2018 and where things stand with the housing authority’s FEMA grant process.

Overall, 108 of Trent Court’s 218 units were impacted by flood waters from Hurricane Florence. Twelve buildings at the site were permanently closed and recommended for demolition. The Housing Authority’s former office at Trent Court was also damaged beyond repair.

Since that time, the housing authority has worked with various state and federal agencies, including FEMA and HUD, to receive approval and funding for the demolition work and rebuilding at the site.

In 2019, a development firm in-

Involved in plans for the refurbishment of Trent Court, the Pennsylvania-based Pennrose Properties, pulled out of the venture due to a “high level of frustration,” according to former housing authority executive director Martin Blaney.

In July 2022, the city hired a company to perform an environmental review of the demolition area.

During the Housing Authority’s Feb. 20 meeting, Philipp told commissioners a handful of issues have caused delays in the funding and demolition process, including changes in the housing authority administration over the last several years. Current Executive Director Tiffany Askew came on board in June 2021. She took over from Tharesa Lee, who served as the housing authority’s interim director when Blaney stepped down in Feb. 2020.

“That has not helped because the historical knowledge of things that have transpired in the past have left, so it’s almost led to a need to start over every time there’s a change in administration,” Philipp said.

Philipp said staffing changes have also occurred within FEMA and state agencies that have slowed the process.

“Every time there’s a change-over in staff people are relying on looking at information that’s been

TRENT COURT - Continued on page 7

N.C. 43 connector, New Bern roundabout highlight \$800M Craven road projects

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

Craven County has a number of major N.C. Department of Transportation road projects planned over the next several years, from ongoing road improvements and bypass construction to future roundabouts.

During the Feb. 20 meeting of the Craven County Commissioners, Jeff Cabaniss, NCDOT division engineer, informed the board about ongoing and planned county projects that he said would total at least \$800 million.

“In my 31 years with NCDOT I don’t know of any other county with as much construction going on as close together as Craven does right now,” Cabaniss said.

“In my 31 years with NCDOT I don’t know of any other county with as much construction going on as close together as Craven does right now.”

- Jeff Cabaniss, NCDOT division engineer

N.C. 43 Connector

NCDOT has been working to extend N.C. 43 from U.S. 17 Business in New Bern to south of U.S. 70/U.S. 17. The \$27 million project will create an extension from U.S. 17 that will connect from Trent Creek Rd. in New Bern to the south of U.S. 70. The project is proposed as a four-lane, median-divided highway. Trent Creek Rd. will also be widened to four lanes.

Cabaniss said right-of-way acquisition is still ongoing for the project, which is scheduled to be awarded to a contractor by Dec. 2024.

According to NCDOT, the project is based on the economic development of Craven County, projected traffic volumes and continued needs for connectivity in the area. The goals of the project are to alleviate existing and future congestion, provide connectivity between the community and local destinations, and reduce congestion-related accidents.

Cabaniss said NCDOT has acquired three-quarters of the required right-of-ways for the project so far. “That’s important because once we get that we can start coordinating the utilities to start getting moved,” he said.

The N.C. 43 Connector project was added to NCDOT’s Statewide Transportation Improvement Program in 2017. Construction was scheduled to begin nearly four years



Jeff Cabaniss, an engineer with the N.C. Department of Transportation, discusses NCDOT projects planned for Craven County, including the N.C. 43 Connector, Havelock Bypass, and a future roundabout in New Bern. PHOTO: TODD WETHERINGTON / NEW BERN NOW

ago, but was paused due to financial shortages experienced by the agency in 2019-20.

James City Project

This ongoing project is designed to improve traffic flow and add vehicle capacity along the U.S. 70 corridor in the James City area in order to upgrade the highway to interstate standards for the future I-42.

The \$322 million project will improve traffic on a 5.1-mile stretch from east of Thurman Rd. to the Neuse River Bridge. The work will include the elimination of the existing traffic signals at intersections at

Williams Rd., Airport Rd., Grantham Rd., Taberna Way and Thurman Rd. in James City. U.S. 70 will have overpasses with exit and entrance ramps at each of the five interchanges and service roads for local business and community access.

The project was awarded to the construction group Balfour Beatty in Sept. 2019 and is approximately 33% complete. Stage 1 of construction began in the spring of 2021 and the entire project is expected to be completed in late 2024, according to Cabaniss.

NC 43 connector - Continued on page 8

Craven County moving forward with new CARTS, DSS facilities recommended in master plan

BY TODD WETHERINGTON

Craven County is moving forward with a number of local projects to update its aging facilities and infrastructure over the coming year.

New facilities that will house the county’s Craven Area Rural Transit System program and a county consolidated fuel station are currently under construction at the Craven County Judicial Center on Clarks Road in New Bern.

The \$1.8 million CARTS building, which broke ground last October, will house the county’s CARTS administration and is projected to be finished by July or August 2023, according to County Manager Jack Veit.

A new county consolidated fuel station being built just across the road will serve the county’s vehicle fleet and provide a reserve fuel source in the event of a gas shortage, hurricane or other unforeseen problem, Veit said.

The project is tentatively set to be completed in February 2023.

The new CARTS facility is among the top priorities the county is pursuing based on recommendations from the Craven County Facilities Master Plan and Space Needs Assessment that was commissioned from Oakley Collier Architects. The recommendations, which cover priorities stretching over a 10-year window, were presented to the Craven County Board of Commissioners in 2019.

According to Veit, initial work is also underway on another of the plan’s recommendations — the expansion of the county Department of Social Services building on Neuse Blvd. in New Bern.

Veit said the county is planning to use approximately \$10 million in American Rescue Plan money for the DSS expansion project, which calls

for a two-story building on the existing site that would measure 20,000 square feet on each floor.

Veit said he hopes to see the construction of the new DSS building begin by the fall of 2023.

The project is currently in the design work phase, which is expected to be completed by this spring.

A Priority 2 recommendation included in the master plan that is currently underway is the renovation of the old sheriff’s office and jail behind the county courthouse.

According to Veit, the approximately \$8.9 million project will change some aspects of the courthouse’s exterior appearance while providing Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant accessibility. The work will also raise all the exit doors of the building above the floodplain, Veit said, making it more secure from natural disasters.

One master plan proposal that is not being pursued is the relocation of the county administration and its emergency operations center to the Craven County Judicial Center. The estimated \$14 million plan was put on hold indefinitely after initial discussions and was likely made obsolete by the county’s \$6 million purchase last December of the New Bern waterfront property owned by the Sudan Shriners. The property consists of four pieces of land on the corner of Broad and East Front streets, including the iconic Sudan Shriners Temple at 403 E. Front St.

According to Veit, the county plans to use the property as a parking area for the Craven County judicial system and government activities and to provide a footprint for future growth in downtown New Bern.

“To keep the court system working and the



A new facility to house Craven County’s CARTS program is just one of the projects outlined in a facilities master plan that is currently under construction or in the planning stages. PHOTO: TODD WETHERINGTON / NEW BERN NOW

county operations working we had to make sure we protect the parking,” Veit commented at the time of the purchase. “It’s a commitment by Craven County to continue in our operations in downtown New Bern. It’s a future footprint of Craven County government on this site.”

Among other projects on the county’s radar is the replacement and mitigation of Lawson Creek Park’s Water System Booster Station.

The \$10.5 million project will build up the facility and replace an interim pump that was installed a year ago to replace an underground system damaged in Hurricane Florence.

According to Veit, a contractor has placed the order for the equipment, which will take roughly 6 months for fabrication.

Phase 2 of the project will replace outdated copper telephone lines connecting the county’s water system with new fiber optic cables.

Assistant County Manager Gene Hodges said the county will be laying approximately 25 miles of new fiber cable. He estimated the project should be completed within a year to 18 months.

The county plans to use its remaining ARP money to fund this project as well.

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TRENT COURT - Continued from page 5

collected in the FEMA grant portal online and other historical notes to try and see what’s going on and what direction they need to go,” she commented.

'The buck has been passed'

Philipp said there has also been confusion about which entity, HUD or FEMA, should take charge of the process involving the implementation of funding and environmental reviews. She said going forward there would be a “multi-agency implementation” that would involve feedback from all agencies involved, with FEMA taking primary responsibility for funding.

“The buck has been passed around many times and even since I’ve been involved it’s been passed around,” she commented. “So, there’s some pushing off of those responsibilities to different agencies that are not taking responsibility. I believe that we’re trying to get on the correct path now,” she said.

Philipp admitted that in the past there had been no clear consensus on how to approach the demolition and reconstruction efforts.

“We have phone calls, we get on the same page with one agency and then a few days later we get an email that changes direction,” she noted. “So it’s been very difficult to try and round up everybody into one thought and have a consistent determination and process and a clear path to move forward.”

Philipp said various parties within FEMA seem to have “mixed up and misconstrued” what needs to happen in a FEMA project worksheet, which is meant to fund only the repair or replacement of the damaged Trent Court buildings. In the past, FEMA teams have confused that process with plans for the reconstruction of Trent Court’s Charles Taylor

building and other issues, Philipp said.

“It really muddled the waters and made for a very convoluted, confusing project application process for the housing authority,” she noted.

Philipp said she feels there may have been some progress in the past few weeks, however, and thinks the entities involved now have a better understanding of the priorities of the city and the housing authority. She said once Trent Court’s damaged buildings are demolished a new housing authority administration building can be rebuilt on-site and a master plan can be created to address the future of the property.

“I believe we have a good state team and a good FEMA team on board at the moment. It doesn’t mean they will remain there but I think everyone understands the priorities and the path to getting projects obligated,” Philipp said.

Commissioner Zeb Hough said he had been “absolutely flabbergasted and frustrated” during a recent call with FEMA and thanked Philipp for her help in getting the process back on track.

Philipp said the demolition and funding process had gone “backwards to step one” and will take time to work through before it filters up to FEMA’s Consolidate Resources Center in Virginia, which will grant final approval for the project.

Phillip stressed that FEMA has received all the information that the housing authority was required to submit at this point.

“I do believe we will have the assistance of FEMA and the state to try to help that process move forward,” she said.

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.



Gas line flags on Trent Creek Road and the entrance to Craeberne Forest subdivision taken on March 13, 2023. PHOTO: WENDY CARD / NEW BERN NOW

Property taxes on parcels in 43 Connector’s right-of-way list mayor’s home address on bills

BY WENDY CARD

Three quarters of the required 43 Connector right-of-ways have been acquired by NCDOT. Some of the properties are owned by Patrick McCullough of McCullough Farms and P & J of New Bern LLCs who lives in the Philippines and is New Bern Mayor Jeffrey Odham’s ex brother-in-law. The LLCs had not paid over \$3,700 in property taxes on 27 of their parcels as of March 15. The mailing address listed on all tax bills is the mayor’s home address.

On June 12, 2018, then alderman Jeffrey Odham made a motion for the Board of Aldermen to adopt a resolution in support of the Highway 43 Connector project that was unanimously approved.

During the September 13, 2022, BOA meeting, Odham told City Attorney M. Scott Davis that he was listed as the manager for McCullough Farms and P & J of New Bern LLCs. He claimed that he was no longer associated with the companies. The BOA voted unanimously to recuse him from voting. They did not recuse the mayor from leading the discussion.

During the public hearing, Craeberne Forest residents expressed concerns with rezoning of 413.39 +/-

acres of land. They questioned the management practices, stormwater issues, ingress and egress for Craeberne Forest, Acadia Village, and Trent Park subdivisions and lack of transparency.

Brandi McCullough spoke on her father’s behalf, repeatedly saying the rezoning would create “affordable housing.”

Citizens asked board members to visit their neighborhood and see the issues for themselves before deciding to rezone the land. Aldermen Aster, Brinson, Kinsey and Prill voted to rezone, Aldermen Best and Royal voted no.

Entering Trent Creek Road on March 13, New Bern Now noticed a sign stating “Craeberne Forest New Homes -- Grand Closeout by Jackson Homes, LLC.” It did not appear there were any new streets added to the subdivision since the rezoning. Piedmont Gas utility signs were noticeable on Trent Creek Road and at the entrance of Craeberne Forest and Acadia Village subdivisions.

Odham did not respond to requests for comment.

Wendy Card is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. She can be reached at wendycard@nclifemedia.com or (252) 259-6853.

Registration Open for Neuse River Senior Games



Register for the Neuse River Senior Games that will take place in New Bern April 24 through May 3. For more information, please contact the Local Games Coordinator, Andrew Kendall, at 252-636-6606 or visit ncseniorgames.org/neuse.



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Proud parents Ted Bundshuh and Nicole Kirch are happy to announce the birth of their son Zuko Bundshuh

Born on Feb. 24, 2023 at 8:07 p.m.
at Carolina East Medical Center in New Bern, N.C.
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BSH Home Appliances Corporation celebrates 25th anniversary of New Bern campus



Over 700 people attended BSH Home Appliances 25th anniversary celebration of the New Bern Campus on Feb. 16, 2023. The factory was filled with employees, members of the community, local and state officials and international BSH executives.

PHOTOS BY WENDY CARD / NEW BERN NOW

NC 43 Connector Continued from page 6

Utility relocation is underway and new service roads are being constructed, he noted.

The contract for the work was divided into two sections: a 2.6-mile stretch of U.S. 70 from east of Thurman Rd. to Garner Rd. and a 2.5-mile stretch of U.S. 70 between Garner Rd. and the Neuse River Bridge

Havelock Bypass

Construction is underway to build a bypass on the southwest side of Havelock and U.S. 70 beginning north of the Havelock city limits at Pine Grove and extending south approximately 10 miles to just south of the Craven-Carteret County line.

Funded for \$221.5 million, the Havelock Bypass will be a four-lane, median-divided highway designed to provide a high-speed alternative to using U.S. 70 through Havelock, which is hampered by numerous traffic signals at intersecting side streets.

According to NCDOT, the roadway will help improve traffic and freight movement along the U.S. 70 corridor, which is a major connection from the Morehead City Port to Raleigh, and assist economic development in eastern North Carolina's rural areas.

According to Cabaniss, the project is 58% complete. Construction began in the fall of 2019 and is expected to be completed in the spring of 2024.

U.S. 70 Upgrades

Planning and development are underway to upgrade U.S. 70 to interstate standards, from the Havelock Bypass to east of Thurman Rd. The project, funded at \$275.1 million, will include three new interchanges over 6.6 miles at Camp Kira Rd., Fisher Ave., and Stately Pines Rd.

The work was awarded to Balfour Beatty in January.

Cabaniss said NCDOT is currently coordinating with the U.S. Forestry Service-District Ranger Station as well as the Federal Highway Administration on

land transfers for the project.

Cabaniss noted that the same contractor, Balfour Beatty, is working on the Havelock Bypass, James City project, and U.S. 70 upgrades.

"That's very attractive to us. We're glad that worked out because they can make it all work seamlessly," Cabaniss said. "We're hoping this project will dovetail right in between Havelock and James City."

Maple Cypress Road Bridge Replacement

NCDOT has replaced the bridge over the Neuse River on Maple Cypress Rd. Cabaniss said the project is running approximately one year ahead of schedule. The new bridge is already in place and the old one is in the process of being torn down.

FUTURE PROJECTS

Looking to the latter half of 2023 and beyond, Cabaniss outlined a number of NCDOT projects that include new roundabouts in the New Bern and Vanceboro areas, as well as highway widening and road improvement work.

New Bern Roundabout

A planned roundabout at the intersection of Neuse Blvd. and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. is scheduled to go under contract in the summer of 2028. According to Cabaniss, the \$4.5 million project will be significantly larger than the existing roundabout at the end of Broad St.

"The design that we use is for the tractor-trailers, school buses, and any kind of emergency vehicles," he said. "The good thing about this design is it has free-flowing lanes, so if you're not going to turn left you'll just stay in the outside lane and go on through."

River Road Roundabout

NCDOT also plans to construct a roundabout at River Rd. and Nelson Rd. at an estimated cost of \$1.4 million. The project is scheduled to go under contract in April, with construction scheduled to begin this summer. The roundabout is set to be completed by Dec. 2023

Widening U.S. 17

Scheduled for spring 2028, this project will widen U.S. 17 from two 12-foot lanes to four 12-foot lanes with a 30-foot grass median. The project, which is estimated to cost \$87 million, will tie into the recently widened section of U.S. 17 at Bridgeton and provide 9 miles of a continuous four-lane roadway to Spruill Town Rd. The addition of a median will limit left turns into most driveways along the corridor. U-turn areas will be included to allow turn-around movements at various locations.

Havelock Road Widening

With a scheduled start date of fall 2028, this estimated \$37 million project will widen Miller Blvd. and Fontana Blvd. from Lake Rd. to Outer Banks Dr. in Havelock to four lanes and add a roundabout at Miller Blvd./Lake Rd.

River Road Resurfacing

Set to go under contract this spring, this NCDOT project will resurface 14.31 miles of River Rd. from N.C. 118 to N.C. 43 and widen the road by 2 feet on either side.

Cabaniss said the resurfacing process would involve grinding the existing asphalt and dirt and injecting concrete into it.

"What it does is make a foundation where the road's never really had a foundation," he said. "We don't do many of these because of the expense. Once it's finished it will be a very good road for a long time."

Todd Wetherington is Co-Editor of The Navigator and NewBernNow.com. He can be reached at todd@nclifemedia.com or (252) 673-5162.

Lee W. Horne Memorial Golf Tournament The First 19 Years

BY BOB GILLHAM

The 20th annual Lee W. Horne Memorial Golf Tournament sponsored by the Coastal Carolina Council of the Navy League of the United States will be held on Saturday, April 15, at the Harbour Pointe Golf Club. The format is a four-person super-ball (with handicaps), with flights for men, women, and couples. Registration begins at 8 a.m. with a 9 a.m. shotgun start followed by dinner and prizes. Entry fee is \$80 per player, \$50 for members of the Harbour Pointe Golf Club, and \$50 for active-duty military members, which includes green and cart fees, dinner, and prizes. Non-golfers may attend the dinner at 1 p.m. for \$15. The entry deadline is April 7.

Proceeds from the event will benefit the council to provide financial support to local Marine, Navy, and Coast Guard personnel and their families in addition to supporting local NJROTC and Sea Cadet units, the Wounded Warrior Battalion-East, participation in veterans' events, support of the Cricket II which supports fishing trips for wounded warriors, veterans and disabled vets along with other community events and services. This event has raised over \$81,000.

The major financial benefactors have been the area youth in the NJROTC programs at Havelock, New Bern, Pamlico, and West Carteret High Schools and Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, receiving over \$46,000 in contributions and college scholarships. The financial contributions assist these units in meeting operating expenses, and recipients of the Culler-Schwab Scholarships have pursued a variety of studies ranging from law school to divinity school to the performing arts, and a few have gone on to graduate or medical school. Several have joined the military following completion of college.

The proceeds from this tournament also enable the CCC to provide support for it's sea service personnel and their families. CCC sponsor the Family Day Cruise on the USCGC Maple or USCGC Richard Snyder and honors the Sailor-of-the-Quarter on the adopted ships. The organization also funds the Military Family of the Quarter and the Enlisted Spouse Volunteer-of-the-Year at MCAS Cherry Point. The Navy League also sponsored the commissioning of the USCGC Glen Harris.

Contact Bob Gillham at 252-631-1570 or e-mail robertgillham5144@gmail.com for more information.

New Bern's 2023 Black History Month Parade



New Bern's 2023 Mardi Gras Parade



PHOTOS BY TODD WETHERINGTON/NEW BERN NOW

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Wendy Card
Owner, NC Life Media and Co-Editor
Todd Wetherington
Co-Editor
Becky Wetherington
Creative Director
Laura Johnson
Special Advisor and Distributor
Nicole Kirch
Education and Sports

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