

Today in  
Money

EDITION READERS GET MORE

Subscribers have access to this additional bonus content online at [charlotteobserver.com/edition](http://charlotteobserver.com/edition)



via Stocker

Cracks appear in how consumers handle debt, with younger borrowers being hit the hardest.

**In today's paper**  
**SPORTS:** Panthers won't get better until faltering defense is fixed.  
**Scott Fowler, 1B**



BOB DONNAN Imagin Images



Our website features local news and sports content important to you.  
[charlotteobserver.com](http://charlotteobserver.com)

FOUNDED 1886  
VOLUME 155, No. 259

[FACEBOOK.COM/THECHARLOTTEOBSERVER](https://facebook.com/thecharlotteobserver)  
[TWITTER.COM/THEOBSERVER](https://twitter.com/theobserver)

READ BY 1 MILLION+  
IN PRINT AND ONLINE

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2024

\$3.00

# The Charlotte Observer

[CHARLOTTEOBSERVER.COM](http://charlotteobserver.com)

## Warning horn never sounded at site of fatal SouthPark fire

BY GAVIN OFF  
[goff@charlotteobserver.com](mailto:goff@charlotteobserver.com)

Several missteps at the site of last year's fatal fire in SouthPark may have contributed to conditions that killed two men and required emergency rescues of many more, newly obtained state records show.

For one, an air horn — a loud device

commonly used at construction sites to warn workers of emergencies — never sounded, according to state Department of Labor records obtained by The Charlotte Observer through a public records request.

The five-alarm blaze, Charlotte's biggest in recent history, killed Reuben Holmes and Demonte Sherill, two men installing windows on the sixth floor of the rising apartment building.

In April, Department of Labor officials fined three companies more than \$56,000 for a series of violations related to the monstrous fire.

The 169-page file recently released fills in more details on how safety code violations at the site likely slowed the escape of some of the roughly 35 workers at the job site, or — in the case of the

**SEE WARNING HORN, 7A**

## Helene aftermath: Funerals to be held instead of wedding

BY THÉODEN JANES  
[tjanes@charlotteobserver.com](mailto:tjanes@charlotteobserver.com)

In their imaginations, Knox Petrucci and Alison Wisely were at their wedding — dancing.

Perhaps cheek to cheek, to a cherished song of Knox's, like Langhorne Slim's "Changes" or JFDR's "White Sun." Or maybe to a tune Knox had penned for the self-produced folk-rock album he'd been recording. Or, more likely, to a party favorite they could both just let loose to; with laughter cascading out of their mouths; surrounded by Alison's sons Felix (9) and Lucas (7), friends from all over Western North Carolina's Yancey County, and relatives from all over the country.

In their imaginations, this dancing would have followed a show-stopping speech by the precocious Felix, who was planning to kick off his remarks to their 50 or so guests with: "Thank you, everyone, for joining us on this auspicious evening..."

Which would have followed a big Italian feast. Which would have been preceded by Knox — in a brand-new navy-blue suit and an ascot — and Alison — in an embroidered top and white pants — standing in the shadow of Mount Mitchell and professing their undying love for each other.

They had been daydreaming about these moments for more than a year. And in some ways, it was more than just a wedding. More than just a joyful excuse to assemble the people they treasured most.

It would be a moment of triumph, a climb to the top of their own personal mountains after years of tribulations. For Knox, who in recent years had reestablished a close relationship with his older sister Briana Yarbrough after a long, sorrowful estrangement. For Alison, who in the wake of a painful divorce had formed a healthy co-parenting situation with their devoted father, Lance Wisely.



Courtesy of Lance Wisely and Briana Yarbrough

"It's heartbreaking," "like I'm not talking about real life right now": Knox Petrucci, left, his fiancée Alison Wisely, and her sons Felix, second from left, and Lucas all died after being swept away by floodwaters last month.

But on Sept. 27, just over six weeks before they were to be married, Hurricane Helene unleashed a deluge that caused the normally peaceful river in front of their Green Mountain home to

become a ferocious — and deadly — ocean.

So ferocious and so deadly, in fact,

**SEE HELENE, 6A**

### UNIQUELY CHARLOTTE

## Riccio's Italian Restaurant closes after 62 years

BY MELISSA OYLER  
[moyler@charlotteobserver.com](mailto:moyler@charlotteobserver.com)

For a restaurant to exist for even a handful of years in Charlotte's ever-changing food scene is a sign of success.

So when a local restaurant stays open for 62 years, serving generations of families, that's a real win.

Riccio's Italian Restaurant, which has been feeding Charlotte for more than six decades, announced via an

Instagram post on Wednesday that it has closed. "Thank you Charlotte for supporting us over the last 60 years," the eatery posted unceremoniously, using a black background with simple white text to announce the news.

But there is so much more to Riccio's story.

**RICCIO'S ITALIAN RESTAURANT: BUILD-YOUR-OWN PASTA, PIZZA AND CHICKEN PARM**

The second-generation, family owned

Italian restaurant was nestled in its last location in a corner of Touchstone Village for the past few decades. The no-frills, casual spot was known for its classic dishes like chicken parm, with boneless breast fried and topped with tomato sauce and melted mozzarella. Build-your-own pasta was also on the menu, as were pizza and wings.

Peggy and Jerry Segal, Ricky Segal's parents, opened the restaurant in 1962. Ricky was 5 at the time, according to Charlotte Observer archives, and he would go on to take the the reigns in 1979.

**THE LOGISTICS:** The restaurant was on **Scaleybark Road** in 1962, then moved to the Taipei Express location on **Providence Road**, then to **Middleton Drive**, Ricky's daughter, Elizabeth Se-

**SEE RESTAURANT, 6A**

**SEE PIZZA HUT, 10A**



We're dedicated to delivering the journalism you rely on. Discover the stories that matter to you inside. Subscribers, explore more stories and features like puzzles and games at [charlotteobserver.com/edition](http://charlotteobserver.com/edition).

**CUSTOMER SERVICE**  
800-532-5350  
[charlotteobserver.com/customer-service](http://charlotteobserver.com/customer-service)

