

# Tampa zoo rushes Chompers the porcupine and others to safety as Milton nears

October 8, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Gerard MARTINEZ| Section: National | 490 Words OpenURL Link

With carrots and strawberries, zookeepers lure Chompers the porcupine into an animal carrier, hoping to keep the creature -- and all the rest of the inhabitants of Zoo Tampa -- safe from the fury of Hurricane Milton.

Orangutans watch the flurry of activity before allowing their keepers to move them to safety, while African elephants are herded gently to the protected areas.

Tiffany Burns, director of animal programs at the zoo, says it has a few hurricane-proof buildings where they will move all the animals -- very carefully.

"We hope that the animals have very minimal stress, that's always our goal," the 41-year-old says.

Florida's west coast is still digging out from the devastation of Hurricane Helene, which roared onshore as a Category 4 storm on September 26, causing widespread devastation.

Now, with the debris from Helene still strewn about, the battered region is bracing for Milton -- a potentially catastrophic Category 5 storm taking aim at Tampa.

Residents are bracing for the worst storm the city has faced in years -- perhaps a century.

The city of roughly 400,000 people, separated from the Gulf of Mexico by Tampa Bay, faces the worst impact from storm surges and flooding.

Burns explained that staff have tried to maintain a positive attitude as they prepare the zoo, but fear the impact of Milton on their own homes.

"It's really hard to see such a big storm coming back toward us so soon," she says.

They are not alone.

- 'Too much' -

Ernst Bontemps boarded up the windows of his medical clinic in the nearby city of St. Petersburg for the second time in two weeks.

"This is too much," sighed the 61-year-old gastroenterologist.

"It's painful because last time we had complete devastation everywhere in St. Petersburg. And here we go again."

The entire Tampa Bay metropolitan area -- which includes the eponymous city, St. Petersburg and Clearwater -- still bears the scars of Helene, which left more than 230 people dead across the southeastern United States.

On Treasure Island, located in the Gulf of Mexico and accessible via a bridge from St. Petersburg, the streets remain littered with debris.

Helene caused flooding in most of the homes and businesses on the island, leading inhabitants to pile up everything damaged by the water in front of their residences, including mattresses, refrigerators, televisions and more.

David Levitsky looked at the pile in front of his own home on the island.

"All this stuff is just wind fodder that's going to just be blowing down the street and hitting who knows what," the 69-year-old retiree said.

Like other Treasure Island residents, Levitsky is trying to protect what little survived Helene before he evacuates.

"Being on the water is a joy, but obviously, with the joy comes a lot of possibilities on the other side of that spectrum," he said.

In St. Petersburg, meanwhile, Bontemps fears that repeat hurricanes are the new normal for this part of Florida.

"I've been here for 22 years and we've never been hit by hurricanes twice in one year," he said.

# gma/nn/jgc/st/ssy

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# Those affected by Hurricane Helene receive tax extension

October 8, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Shirleen Guerra | The Center Square | Section: National | 280 Words OpenURL Link

(The Center Square) – The Internal Revenue Service has announced tax extensions to those affected by Hurricane Helene and terrorist attacks in Israel.

Taxpayers who had requested an extension earlier in the year to file their 2023 tax return are scheduled to file by Tuesday, Oct. 15. Deadlines have been adjusted in some areas of the country.

According to a release, the convenient electronic filing option and IRS Free File are still available.

The IRS encourages those with extensions to file before the deadline to avoid possible penalties while also giving disaster-area taxpayers and military members more time.

The Category 4 hurricane made landfall in Florida on Sept. 26. Now, individuals who have businesses or reside in those affected areas could be hit with more storms as Hurricane Milton heads for Florida this week.

Those already affected by Hurricane Helene with addresses recorded in the areas hit will have until May 1 to file.

Taxpayers affected by the terrorist attacks in Israel have until Sept. 30, 2025, according to the release. Military members usually have 180 days after they leave a combat zone to file.

Depending on the county, some places in Arkansas, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas and West Virginia have until Nov. 1 to file.

While those in some areas of Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, Louisiana, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, Virgin Islands, and Washington state have until Feb. 3.

Earlier this week, the IRS also issued more than 500 customer service representatives from both Dallas and Philadelphia to help with FEMA phone operations to help the victims of Hurricane Helene.

 $IRS\ employees\ take\ calls\ for\ FEMA\ from\ disaster\ victims\ for\ initial\ information\ to\ receive\ federal\ relief\ assistance.$ 

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# Hurricane Milton roars towards storm-battered Florida

October 8, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Gerard Martinez, with Lucie Aubourg in Orlando and Michael Mathes in Washington Section: National | 649 Words OpenURL Link

Hurricane Milton barreled towards Florida as a weakened but still major Category 4 storm on Tuesday, threatening the US state with a second ferocious hurricane in as many weeks.

Forecast to batter Mexico's Yucatan peninsula as it churns eastward, Milton triggered evacuation orders and warnings of savage conditions on Florida's west coast.

"If the storm stays on the current track, it will be the worst storm to impact (Florida's) Tampa area in over 100 years," the National Weather Service said.

The storm's maximum sustained winds were near 155 miles (250 kilometers) per hour, it said -- weakening slightly from earlier in the day to a Category 4, the second highest on the scale.

Communities hit by the deadly Hurricane Helene, which slammed Florida late last month, raced to remove debris that could become dangerous projectiles as Milton approaches.

"All this stuff is just wind fodder that's going to just be blowing down the street and hitting who knows what," said David Levitsky, a retired homeowner on Treasure Island, in Pinellas County.

Residents on the low-lying island have been piling up debris from Helene's flooding in their front yards for removal.

The back-to-back hurricanes have ignited political bickering ahead of the upcoming US election.

Governor Ron DeSantis DeSantis, a conservative known to clash with the federal government, came under fire after broadcaster NBC reported he was ignoring phone calls from Vice President Kamala Harris on the Helene recovery.

DeSantis did speak to President Joe Biden about the Milton preparations, the White House said late Monday.

Harris slammed the Republican governor for "playing political games."

"It is about political gamesmanship, instead of doing the job you took an oath to do, which is to put the people first," she told reporters, while also criticizing Trump as "extraordinarily irresponsible."

Former president Donald Trump has tapped into real frustration about the federal response after Helene and fueled it with disinformation, falsely claiming federal disaster money had been spent instead on migrants.

Researchers say climate change likely plays a role in the rapid intensification of hurricanes, because there is more energy in warmer oceans for them to feed on.

- Worst hit in 100 years -

Florida authorities have issued mandatory evacuation orders for areas including some parts of Tampa, a metropolitan area of more than three million people that could take a direct hit.

A major storm surge for Florida's west coast is forecast for Tuesday night or early Wednesday, and Tampa could suffer an influx of water up to 15 feet (4.5 meters) above ground.

Rainfall of up to 15 inches (38 centimeters) is expected to cause severe flash flooding.

In the central city of Orlando, under gray skies, hundreds of cars lined up to collect sandbags.

"We might evacuate, me and my pets, we might go to Georgia," Tony Carlson, 32, told AFP. "People think it's going to be pretty bad."

Maria Torres, 29, said her family was not planning to leave, but had prepared with a generator, food and water.

The Disney World theme park said on its website that it would remain open Tuesday, though a few resort areas were closing ahead of the storm.

In Tampa, zookeepers rushed to get the animals -- from porcupines to elephants -- inside protected areas.

In Mexico's Yucatan, workers boarded up glass doors and windows, fishermen hauled boats ashore and schools were suspended.

In the southeastern United States, emergency workers are still struggling to provide relief in the aftermath of Helene, which killed at least 230 people across several states.

Helene hit the Florida coastline on September 26 as a major Category 4 hurricane, causing massive flooding in remote inland towns in states further north, including North Carolina and Tennessee.

Deanne Criswell, head of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), warned Monday that "these storms are bringing more water than they ever have and so while we have the wind risk, the water is what's killing people."

Helene was the deadliest natural disaster to hit the US mainland since 2005's Hurricane Katrina, with the death toll still rising.

# bur-st/ssy/lb

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# Harris, Trump trade blows in US election media blitz

October 8, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Charly Triballeau, with Michael Mathes in Washington | Section: National | 654 Words OpenURL Link

Kamala Harris and Donald Trump exchanged barbs over the airwaves Tuesday as they reached out to the few remaining undecided voters in the final stretch of an election seen as one of the closest in modern US history.

Harris has maintained a lead of two-to-three points in national polling since mid-August, despite presidential and vice presidential debates, encouraging jobs data, an interest rate cut, escalating international crises and a devastating hurricane.

"I literally lose sleep -- and have been -- over what is at stake in this election," the Democratic vice president, 59, told radio icon Howard Stern in a 70-minute live interview.

A poll from Siena College and The New York Times out Tuesday highlighted the deadlock, finding Harris ahead of her Republican rival by 49 percent to 46 percent -- although it had the pair in a dead heat in September.

Poll-watchers expect the stalemate to break only in the last couple of weeks before election day on November 5, as the small fraction of wavering Americans who will decide the election break one way or the other.

In the seven battleground states seen as likely to determine the election, the race is even tighter.

The new poll gave Trump the edge on who is the stronger leader but, crucially, revealed that registered voters see Harris as the change candidate.

- 'Loser' -

Harris -- who has spent much of the campaign under pressure to sit down for more interviews -- is spending the week targeting women, Latinos and young voters through traditional media and via appearances on influential podcasts and YouTube shows.

"The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," a staple of the evening comedy talk show circuit, was set to air a prerecorded interview late Tuesday with Harris -- and in excerpts shared ahead of the broadcast she called Trump a "loser."

Trump "openly admires dictators and authoritarians," she said during a weighty section of what was, at times, a light-hearted conversation in which both host and interviewee sipped beer.

"He has said he wants to be a dictator on day one if he were elected again as president. He gets played by these guys. He admires so-called strongmen and he gets played because they flatter him or offer him favor," she said.

Earlier, on popular ABC television show "The View," she talked about campaigning recently with Republican former congresswoman Liz Cheney.

There are more than 200 former officials from past Republican presidents George W. Bush and George H.W. Bush, as well as officials tied to Republican heavyweights John McCain and Mitt Romney, who have endorsed her, Harris said.

"We really are building a coalition around some very fundamental issues, including that we love our country and that we have to put country before party," she said.

- 'Don't tax the rich' -

Trump meanwhile maintained his aggressive posture, attacking Harris as a "very low intelligence person" on conservative influencer Ben Shapiro's podcast.

The 78-year-old Republican claimed she had been "missing in action" over the federal response to Hurricane Helene -- even though Harris visited the disaster zone last week.

Trump, who was on a blitz of several media organizations, then criticized Harris in an interview on right-wing network Newsmax over her plans to pay for her agenda, telling viewers: "You don't tax the rich... the rich pay most of the tax in the country."

And, in a more personal moment, he told Los Angeles radio station KFI AM 640 he sees campaign interviews as therapeutic.

"You know what this is for me? Therapy, okay? I'm speaking to a smart man. This is like, some people go to a psychiatrist. I don't have time so this is, like, my therapy," he told host John Kobylt.

Both candidates were due to appear on the influential CBS show "60 Minutes" this week and while Harris fulfilled her commitment, Trump backed out, offering shifting explanations for his about-face.

He was mocked by Democrats and responded with a campaign statement demanding the transcript of the Harris interview be released, claiming that it had been "deceptively edited."

#### mlm-ft/bjt

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# Election 2024: Polling favorable for Stein to win governor's race

October 8, 2024 | Courier-Times, The (Roxboro, NC) Author: Elyse Apel | The Center Square | Section: State | 408 Words OpenURL Link

(The Center Square) – As voting in North Carolina has already begun, Republican Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson's campaign for governor has taken an even steeper uphill climb to the governor's mansion.

Voters only three times since the 1896 election have chosen a Republican. If he wins, Robinson would be the first black man elected governor in North Carolina.

Recent polls have him trailing Democrat Josh Stein, bidding to be the first of Jewish faith to win the seat, by anywhere from 12% to 19%.

Earlier this year, Robinson led Stein. In the summer, the shift began by 5% or less. The separation was growing and then came Sept. 19, when CNN released a report from CNN tying Robinson to an internet porn chat room.

Robinson called the report "lies" and says he's pursuing litigation against the network.

Labeled one of the most expensive and competitive governor's races in the nation, both candidates brought in millions of dollars.

Stein's fundraising has more than doubled Robinson.

Much of that support for Stein came from out-of-state donors, with the Democrat bringing in 545% more than Robinson in out-of-state contributions in the second fundraising quarter.

Robinson says he will provide North Carolina with strong leadership.

"We'll back law enforcement, reduce violent crime, and hold officers to the highest standards," he says on his campaign website. "Our plan invests in education, boosts teacher pay, and expands career opportunities for students. For our veterans, we'll make North Carolina the gold standard in care, with health care close to home. And we'll ease inflation, reform regulations, and cut taxes for families and businesses."

Stein is prioritizing the economy, education, and jobs, along with more progressive goals like abortion access and LGBTQ+ rights.

He has labeled Robinson an "extremist."

"I've said it before - and I'll say it again: Mark Robinson is unfit to become NC's next Governor," he said on social media.

In the wake of the storms in North Carolina, Robinson has said it is time to put "people ahead of politics." He has called out the federal response to the disaster following Hurricane Helene.

"It shouldn't have to be that way. Our taxpayers deserve to know that when disaster strikes our government will be there to keep us safe," he said. "To say that they have failed us this time would be a tremendous understatement."

According to a forecast from Race to the White House, Stein has a 96.5% chance of winning the governor's race. This forecast is based on polling and "fundamentals" and is updated daily.

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# The great floods of 1916 and 2024

October 8, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: D.G. Martin Columnist| Section: News| 727 Words OpenURL Link

One of Miss Letitia Currie's favorite topics in her history class in the 1950s at Davidson Junior High School was the Great Flood of 1916.

Miss Currie was the daughter of a Davidson College professor.

Many of her students also knew what she was talking about because their parents had experienced that 1916 flood and talked about it whenever rain poured down hard.

Today, many of Miss Currie's students, their parents and grandparents, great grandparents, and their children and grandchildren are having a similar experience dealing with the flooding that followed Hurricane Helene.

And they will be talking about it for the rest of their lives, calling it "The great flood of 2024."

"News of Davidson," the news outlet in my hometown, published the following account by Gatewood Payne Campbell, granddaughter of Davidson professor Gatey Workman and niece of the late, great opera singer William Workman. Gatewood and her husband Johnny live near Black Mountain.

"Life has stopped. We don't know dates or times. Sirens are 24 hours a day. It's relentless. Helicopters invade our sky. Chainsaws sound nonstop and we run outside in hopes it's in our neighborhood. ...

"Let me back up. We awoke around 6 Friday morning without power. The storm was loud and pounding but we didn't know where we were in the storm. We could not get updates. Around 8:30 we lost internet across cell lines. I called a friend and got her to look at radar and let me know an ETA on rain ending. That was the last call I was able to make. By 9:30 ALL cell signal was completely lost. The rain was increasing. We could see the creek rising. Johnny stepped outside under the porch and was soaked from head to toe after 30 seconds.

"Around 11 we felt like we could go out and survey the neighborhood. We began to feel the weight of the destruction, yet we had NO clue. The creek had turned into a river greater than 50 yards wide. The noise of water heaters, propane tanks, bikes, grills, construction supplies and yard equipment banging on the rails of our bridge to Black Mountain was deafening. We saw two neighbors with trees on their homes and knew they were taking on water."

Meanwhile in Asheville, Bryan King and his wife Angela Koh are assessing the damage to their 12 Bones Smokehouse on Foundry Street in the River Arts District. As I wrote in my book, "North Carolina's Eateries," "Even if 12 Bones had not been made famous by Barack Obama's visits there, it would be a 'must-do' in Asheville."

When I first visited 12 Bones several years ago, it was located closer to the French Broad River. Had Bryan and Angela not moved the restaurant a few blocks up the hill it would have been completely washed away. At its current location they may be able to repair and survive.

Angela's sister writes, "As the floodwaters recede, we see catastrophic damage to homes and businesses, including the River Arts District, where 12 Bones was founded. Entire livelihoods have been lost. In nearly every direction you look, everything is caked in mud and scattered debris. Broken wood and mangled wiring now stand where intersections once existed."

Coincidentally, on October 15, the publisher Blair is releasing "River Road," a book of poems by mountain author

Wayne Caldwell. His fine poetry describes the power of the flooding waters on the French Broad as shown in the following excerpt:

SELECTION FROM "RIVER ROAD" BY WAYNE CALDWELL

The French Broad, being a river, floods.

How many times over the millennia has it left its banks

and moved whatever was swept up in it

To some far away (and sometimes ridiculous) place?

Perhaps thousands. And each time it returned to its placid face.

The worst (in the last century) was in July 1916.

Asheville's Riverside Park was washed away.

Parts of which one could have seen rushing by my house

Had it been there then. (Even this relatively high ground

Would have been inundated for several days.)

Only a half dozen people died in Asheville,

Which I'd consider a small miracle. Thanks to the telephone,

Warning came to Marshall, and only two or three drowned,

Even though the courthouse was about the only thing left

On Main Street. Fifty-Three houses disappeared.

From high ground one could have seen rushing by

Bales of cotton, houses, mules, gas tanks,

Vehicles, sheds, chickens, roosting on pieces of roof,

Tires, fences, trees, pigs, dogs, cats,

Anything not tied down -- and many things that were.

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# Michael Nicklas: Climate change is here; it's costly, devastating

October 8, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Bobby Burns| Section: News| 672 Words OpenURL Link

Hurricane Helene carved a path of unprecedented destruction across six states in our region. We are still assessing our tremendous losses, giving thanks to first responders, celebrating every life that was spared and mourning those who we lost.

Now, as we dig out and begin to rebuild, we must take a sober look at what factors caused this devastation. What lessons can we apply from this tragedy to increase our resilience in the face of climate change caused by the burning of fossil fuels over the past century?

Climate scientists have long predicted intensification of hurricanes, floods and disasters similar to Helene because of climate change, and now North Carolinians are paying the price for decades of climate change denial made possible by the fossil fuel industry and its well-paid lobbyists in Washington.

As a citizen, a taxpayer and a voter, I want to know why Republicans have for decades ignored — and continue to ignore — the urgent warnings from climate scientists. I want to know:

Why does Donald Trump call climate change a "hoax" and why does Mark Robinson call climate change "junk science?"

Why does Project 2025, the blueprint for a new Trump administration, eliminate most of the federal government's climate initiatives while abolishing the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which provides timely, life-saving weather information that the nation relies upon?

Why would Trump overhaul the U.S. Department of Energy to promote oil and natural gas while de-emphasizing our abundant, affordable and reliable renewable energy resources such as solar?

Why did Trump recently promise the well-heeled chief executives of oil and gas companies that if they gave him a billion-dollar contribution, he would "significantly deliver for them once elected?"

Why did every Republican in Congress oppose legislation providing over \$425 million in funding to support communities to prepare for and adapt to worsening threats brought on by the climate crisis?

And perhaps most importantly for North Carolina, why did Donald Trump deny 99 percent of federal recovery funds requested for North Carolina in 2017 after Hurricane Matthew struck Robeson, Cumberland, Edgecombe and Wayne counties?

Why? Because our governor was a Democrat! Of the more than \$900 million requested by our state for this disaster, Donald Trump's administration approved only \$6.1 million. This is brazen, unacceptable conduct for a president of the United States.

Trump sees hurricanes and natural disasters as opportunities to divide our country even further. Look at how he has already exploited the aftermath of Hurricane Helene for political gain, spreading malicious lies about the federal responses. This only underscores the former president's unfitness to hold office or any position of responsibility ever again.

North Carolina experienced 67 climate-driven disasters between 2010 and 2023, and each one had financial losses totaling over \$1 billion. Taxpayers in North Carolina and around the country are footing the rapidly increasing bill for

climate disasters around the country.

The impact of climate disasters on North Carolinians is consistently one of the most significant in the country. In 2018, when comparing the financial losses of climate disasters in relation to each state's Gross State Product, North Carolina experienced the highest disaster costs of any state in the nation, placing the damage between 3% to 5% of our GSP.

And these numbers do not even tally the enormous human costs that we have seen with Helene.

I am sick and tired of Republican politicians like Donald Trump and Mark Robinson denying climate change in one breath and then expressing "thoughts and prayers" for the victims of climate change in the next breath.

Happily, a recent poll (conducted before Hurricane Helene smashed into our region) showed that 72% of North Carolinians believe that action to address climate change is needed today. The great majority of Americans, including 66% of "moderate" Republicans, want our politicians to act now to reduce the amount of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions being dumped into our atmosphere.

When you cast your ballot for all elected offices this year, please remember who would support policies to protect you, your property and your loved ones from future climate-induced disasters.

Hint: It's not Republicans. And that should scare us all.

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# What's Up

October 8, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Julian Eure | Section: Whats Up | 1580 Words OpenURL Link

**TODAY** 

Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host one-on-one computer assistance today and a program on Excel 2 on Thursday. Both programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

Donations for western NC

Food Bank of the Albemarle is accepting donations of non-perishable food, personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies for delivery to western counties in North Carolina hard hit by Tropical Storm Helene. Items will be accepted Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: 252-335-4035.

Library storytime

The Pasquotank County Library will host a storytime program on the theme "Dance, Dance, Dance" for kids ages 1-2 today and kids 1 and younger on Thursday. Both classes at 10 a.m.

**Programming Room** 

The East Carolina Digital Literacy Program will host a basic computer skills class at the Pasquotank County Library from 10 a.m. to noon. Students will learn how to use the basics of a computer, word documents, and how to set up email. To register, call the library at 252-335-7536 or visit https://bit.ly/47CNVIw.

Texas Roadhouse

The Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Texas Roadhouse at 3720 Patrick Way, Elizabeth City, from 1 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.

**THURSDAY** 

Pasquotank GOP

The Pasquotank County Republican Party will meet at 405 E. Main St., Suite E, in Elizabeth City, at 7 p.m. Featured speakers will be Republican candidates for commissioner Jonathan Snoots and Jeffrey Motichka; Penny Newbern for register of deeds; and Angelique Boylan for the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Board of Education.

**FRIDAY** 

**EC Morning Rotary** 

The Elizabeth City Morning Rotary Club will meet at The Pines of Elizabeth City at 8 a.m. Gene Foster, governor of Rotary International District 7720, will be the speaker.

Shrimp by the Bay

The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce will host the 23rd annual Shrimp by the Bay fundraiser on the green of the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tickets sold only in advance. Call: 252-482-3400.

#### ECHNA's Ghost Walk

The Elizabeth City Historic Neighborhood Association's Ghost Walk will be held in Elizabeth City Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$15, and may be purchased at Arts of the Albemarle, which will serve as Ghost Walk headquarters during the event, as well as at Muddy Waters Coffeehouse, The Recycled Reader, and the EC Mailbox Center. The latter only accepts cash.

#### **SATURDAY**

'Trial by Fire' at COA

College of The Albemarle will host "Trial by Fire: Journey Tribute" in the Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for military personnel and senior citizens, and \$6 for students and staff.

#### VFW Oyster Roast

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6060 will host its annual Oyster Roast at 1433 N. Road St., Elizabeth City, from noon to 3 p.m. Doc Perkins will perform live music. Advance all-you-can-eat oyster tickets are \$35; the fried oyster sandwich plate tickets are \$20; and fried chicken plate tickets are \$15. All tickets day of the event will cost \$5 more.

#### Dismal Day

The 10th annual Dismal Day will be held at Dismal Swamp State Park in Camden County from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Festivities will include music, nature and heritage exhibits, a bounce house, wagon rides, a scavenger hunt, kids crafts, face painting, live animals from OBX Lizard Land and the Aurora Fossil Museum. A free 5K Fun Run/Walk on the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail starts at 9 a.m. No registration is required.

# SUNDAYRed Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross will host blood drives at Durants Neck Ruritan Club in Hertford, Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; the Camden Middle School auditorium Monday from noon to 5 p.m.; and Fellowship Baptist Church fellowship hall in Moyock, Thursday, Oct. 17, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

#### **MONDAY**

## Alzheimer's support

The Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group for Caregivers and Family members meets at Hertford United Methodist Church, 200 Dobbs St., Hertford, at 1 p.m. Contact: 252-404-7090 or 252-333-7774.

# **UPCOMING**

## Secure Access Self Storage

The Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce will host a ribbon cutting for Secure Access Self Storage at 1100 Megan Drive, Elizabeth City, Tuesday, Oct. 15, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

# Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host computer assistance program on Excel Monday, Oct. 14; Google Drive on Tuesday, Oct. 15; Google Docs on Wednesday, Oct. 16; and Word 1 on Thursday, Oct. 17. All programs at 4 p.m. and require pre-registration by calling Mike at 335-7536.

## Library storytime

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Julian Eure, 'What's Up', *Daily Advance, The* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C161F72F7932C0>



# What's Up

October 8, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Julian Eure | Section: Whats Up | 1526 Words OpenURL Link

**TODAY** 

Computer help

The Pasquotank County Library will host an Excel 2 program today at 4 p.m. Pre-registration required by calling Mike at 335-7536.

Donations for western NC

Food Bank of the Albemarle is accepting donations of non-perishable food, personal hygiene items and cleaning supplies for delivery to western counties in North Carolina hard hit by Tropical Storm Helene. Items will be accepted Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Contact: 252-335-4035.

Pasquotank GOP

The Pasquotank County Republican Party will meet at 405 E. Main St., Suite E, in Elizabeth City, at 7 p.m. Featured speakers will be Republican candidates for commissioner Jonathan Snoots and Jeffrey Motichka; Penny Newbern for register of deeds; and Angelique Boylan for the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Board of Education.

**FRIDAY** 

**EC Morning Rotary** 

The Elizabeth City Morning Rotary Club will meet at The Pines of Elizabeth City at 8 a.m. Gene Foster, governor of Rotary International District 7720, will be the speaker.

Shrimp by the Bay

The Edenton-Chowan Chamber of Commerce will host the 23rd annual Shrimp by the Bay fundraiser on the green of the 1767 Chowan County Courthouse from 6:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Tickets sold only in advance. Call: 252-482-3400.

ECHNA's Ghost Walk

The Elizabeth City Historic Neighborhood Association's Ghost Walk will be held in Elizabeth City Friday and Saturday from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Tickets are \$15, and may be purchased at Arts of the Albemarle, which will serve as Ghost Walk headquarters during the event, as well as at Muddy Waters Coffeehouse, The Recycled Reader, and the EC Mailbox Center. The latter only accepts cash.

**SATURDAY** 

'Trial by Fire' at COA

College of The Albemarle will host "Trial by Fire: Journey Tribute" in the Performing Arts Center at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for military personnel and senior citizens, and \$6 for students and staff.

## VFW Oyster Roast

Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 6060 will host its annual Oyster Roast at 1433 N. Road St., Elizabeth City, from noon to 3 p.m. Doc Perkins will perform live music. Advance all-you-can-eat oyster tickets are \$35; the fried oyster sandwich plate tickets are \$20; and fried chicken plate tickets are \$15. All tickets day of the event will cost \$5 more.

## Dismal Day

The 10th annual Dismal Day will be held at Dismal Swamp State Park in Camden County from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Events will include music, nature and heritage exhibits, a bounce house, wagon rides, a scavenger hunt, kids crafts, face painting, live animals from OBX Lizard Land and the Aurora Fossil Museum. A free 5K Fun Run/Walk on the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail starts at 9 a.m. No registration is required.

## SUNDAYRed Cross blood drives

The American Red Cross will host blood drives at Durants Neck Ruritan Club in Hertford, Sunday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; the Camden Middle School auditorium Monday from noon to 5 p.m.; and Fellowship Baptist Church fellowship hall in Moyock, Thursday, Oct. 17, from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m.

## **MONDAY**

## Alzheimer's support

The Alzheimer/Dementia Support Group for Caregivers and Family members meets at Hertford United Methodist Church, 200 Dobbs St., Hertford, at 1 p.m. Contact: 252-404-7090 or 252-333-7774.

# **UPCOMING**

# Secure Access Self Storage

The Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce will host a ribbon cutting for Secure Access Self Storage at 1100 Megan Drive, Elizabeth City, Tuesday, Oct. 15, from 4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

## Splash Week

Arts of the Albemarle will host the annual Splash Week artists retreat in Elizabeth City's downtown Tuesday through Saturday, Oct. 15-19. Events will include the first-ever Splash Art Fair on North Poindexter Street on Saturday, Oct. 19, from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Artists and artisans are invited to sell their work at the fair. The event will also feature free music, family activities and crafts.

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# Tom Campbell: Helene brings out the best — and worst — in us

October 8, 2024 | Daily Advance, The (Elizabeth City, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 790 Words OpenURL Link

You can learn a lot about people when they are under stress. We see them at their best — or worst. Hurricane Helene is revealing both.

My family has experienced what it is like to be without power, water and refrigeration, with mud and debris in your home. You feel alone, overwhelmed and sad. We have also rejoiced when strangers we never met came to help muck out the house, haul out furniture and belongings that must be discarded, do carpentry work and saw tree limbs. Their biggest contribution is to provide comfort.

We can't thank these heroes enough. But they aren't looking for thanks. They see this as their responsibility, a calling to help another in times of distress.

These are the people the musical group Alabama sang about in their wonderful song, "Angels Among Us:"

"I believe there are Angels among us,

"sent down to us from somewhere up above.

"They come to you and me in our darkest hours

"To show us how to live, to teach us how to give.

"To guide us with the light of love."

We are blessed by many angels. But times of distress also show the worst side of some.

We all remember when President Trump went to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. His response to the devastation was tossing paper towels into the crowd. It took him weeks to release federal funding for the territory.

His response to Helene wasn't much better. Trump instructed his staff to find a place where the storm had ransacked a business and it was surrounded by rubble. With cameras rolling, he declared his visit wasn't political, then started criticizing Governor Roy Cooper for doing a terrible job and "going out of their way to not help people in Republican areas."

The claim was totally fabricated. It was disgusting political pandering. This is no time for politics.

As has always been the case, there will be scammers preying on the elderly or those desperate for help, charging them outrageous prices. It is sometimes hard to distinguish between genuine helpers and those trying to make a quick buck. True volunteers won't ask for money. Much as you might need help, be cautious.

Those devastated by Helene are wondering why it is taking so long for help to arrive. Our federal and state government could perhaps have been better prepared to respond. They knew by Wednesday that Helene was going to impact Western Carolina and forecasters predicted it was going to be bad.

But no one could ever have imagined just how devastating this storm was going to be. Not since 1916 has the western section of our state had an event so destructive. By Friday afternoon and evening, when it was obvious how bad the damage was going to be, it was too late to put resources in place without potentially endangering their

lives. Surging waters and sheets of rain destroyed roads, landslides demolished buildings and houses were swept away — some with people inside. The death count is far greater than is being reported.

Media coverage has been uneven. Reporters, photographers and news crews were not allowed into many rural areas because of potential danger. Even so, most of the news coverage has focused on Asheville. It had great damage, but the media has largely neglected a great deal of suffering in smaller communities like Linville, Spruce Pine, Banner Elk, Swannanoa and less populous counties.

Folks are desperate for basic needs. They urgently need water — to drink, to wash themselves and flush toilets. Wipes, toilet paper, paper towels and even diapers are needed, along with non-perishable food like pop-top tins of chicken, tuna, beans, applesauce and peanut butter. Granola and protein bars and crackers are very welcome. Candles and flashlights with batteries are essential.

Our western neighbors need the "right here, right now" kind of help. Saying help is on the way when you are thirsty, alone and in darkness doesn't help with immediate basic needs.

There are many ways you can help. Please don't just hop in the car and head west. DOT says heavy traffic on damaged roads is overwhelming efforts to repair roads. But groups of people can band together, accumulate supplies and transport them to coordinated safe staging areas, where they can be transferred to areas of most need. Have a plan for where you take supplies. Recognized charitable organizations will also welcome help.

Money is also badly needed. Fortunately, our state has several billion dollars in "rainy day funds" and the federal government will also provide large amounts of funding. But it is going to take more than money to help restore life for those affected. Regardless of your beliefs, praying for their safety and wellbeing will help.

We are North Carolina, the "goodliest land," with the goodliest people. Let us all do our best to help our neighbors. Copyright © 2024 The Daily Advance. All rights reserved.

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# Gov. Cooper visits Chimney Rock, Lake Lure; talks rebuilding more 'resilient' infrastructure

October 8, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: ETHNAN BENFIELD ebenfield@thedigitalcourier.com| Section: Helene | 804 Words OpenURL Link

RUTHERFORD COUNTY — North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper visited Chimney Rock and Lake Lure Monday to assess damage and speak with local officials and residents about the long road to recovery ahead.

Cooper first arrived at the Chimney Rock Fire Department just before 2 p.m. where he personally spoke to first responders and residents whose homes and businesses were destroyed or heavily damaged by the storm. He spoke with Mayor Peter O'Leary and village administrator Stephen Duncan about the village's needs for recovery. According to O'Leary, 46 people in the area are still unaccounted for, which is down from over 1,000 last week.

O'Leary then led Cooper around the village to assess damage, walking inside and around businesses like the Broad River Inn, Chimney Rock Gem Mine and the mayor's own Bubba O'Leary's General Store, which were all still standing but heavily damaged by the storm. Many of the businesses the governor looked at were businesses he and his wife patronized on a trip weeks before the storm. Cooper said he has hope for the future of the area because he believes the people of the village will be determined to rebuild it to its former glory.

"The thing that has been so obvious to me is the courage, determination and compassion of the people here in Western North Carolina," Cooper said. "They are leaning on each other, they are there to help each other, and they are determined to come back in a smarter more resilient way."

Cooper said work is still being done to restore water, power, and cell service to the people of Western North Carolina. He said that the state is also still committed to doing welfare checks and making sure everyone is accounted for before the next steps in rebuilding begin. He spoke about the importance of the area for the state's tourism, as most business owners in the village rely on visitors for their income.

"Western North Carolina is going to come back," he said. "I feel confident that. Not only is it important to the people here, it is also important for the entire state. It is important for us economically that this area comes back."

Cooper then took questions from local and national media. He addressed rumors of help being turned away, which he called "absolutely false", and he spoke about the unprecedented nature of the storm and what will need to be done to prepare the area for if something as severe as Helene happens again.

"Usually in this part of the state you deal with snowstorms, you don't deal with hurricanes and 106 mile per hour winds at the top of Mount Mitchell or 29 inches of rain in a 72-hour period," Cooper said. "It is unprecedented and also very complex because of the topography and nature of Western North Carolina. The beauty that we all love and the isolation that many of us seek when we come up here is part of the challenge now in recovery. What I envision is rebuilding with the recognition of what can happen, rebuilding these water systems to be more resilient. The challenge is you need to invest more, and it might take a little bit longer to do because you are making it in a stronger more resilient way."

Cooper then visited Lake Lure and Mayor Carol Pritchett to assess damage and discuss recovery efforts. Pritchett requested help in building a stronger emergency service in the town, and with safely cleaning the lake of the pollution caused by the damage and debris so that they could safely reopen it for public use and tourism.

"Our business here is tourism," Pritchett said. "If we do not have the infrastructure for the people who come here and are attracted to us for our lake, we will not be able to redevelop."

Cooper then took further questions, speaking again on the long road to recovery, the importance of tourism, how

rebuilding efforts must take into account what hurricanes are capable of this far inland, and how the state delegates the money that will be used to fix tourist areas like Lake Lure and Chimney Rock compared to Asheville which has more residential areas.

"There are different lines of funding, and our priority is making sure is to work to bring back all of the communities in Western North Carolina, making sure the power is back on, and they have communication," Cooper said. "We are beginning the process to help people get money to fix their homes through FEMA and state legislature, but we know we also have significant infrastructure needs. One of my main priorities here is to make sure we draw down as much federal money as we can to invest in a more resilient way, we have to be smart about how we use this money to build the infrastructure back knowing what these storms can do."

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ETHNAN BENFIELD ebenfield@thedigitalcourier.com, 'Gov. Cooper visits Chimney Rock, Lake Lure; talks rebuilding more 'resilient' infrastructure', *Daily Courier, The* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?</a> p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1B363CED06B60>



# Faith, hope and love

October 8, 2024 | Daily Courier, The (Forest City, NC) Author: ANN EVERHARDT SMITH Columnist | Section: Archives | 653 Words OpenURL Link

Without question our hearts are broken as we learn more about our neighbors who suffered devasting loss from hurricane Helene. Many people in my small hometown of Hudson, along with other neighbors in our county, lost power, internet, and phone service. Duke and Blue Ridge Electric, along with power companies who have come here to help them from other states and areas, have worked hard to help restore it. Compared to the loss and devastation in our beloved Blue Ridge Mountains, the events we have suffered cannot in any way be compared to the loss of loved ones and complete loss of property and everything families owned. Those who now have power and the internet; there are still pockets of people in our community who do not, can see the devastation our North Carolina brothers and sisters are enduring, and it is absolutely breaking our hearts.

Jesus said in Matthew 22 verses 37-39, "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important. 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' I know many of you, like me, are seeing others act on this scripture every day, including yourself. Churches and their members, community organizations, organized volunteer groups, firefighters, police officers, and so many other volunteers that I can't name them all, have stepped up to help others in their community and in neighboring communities. Caring souls all around us are living out this scripture, doing whatever they are capable of to help each other and other communities.

I have also read Facebook posts and have seen neighbors reaching out to others who need help with their animals, whether it's offering a pasture for cattle or horses, providing temporary or permanent homes for dogs and cats that have been displaced, orphaned pets who have lost their families, or as our town manager shared with us, rescuing a baby beaver found by a local rescue team. There really is no end to the needs that have been and will continue to be identified in the coming hours, days, months, and years. All of God's creation needs our help.

If you want to physically volunteer and are looking for an opportunity, contact a local church or local authorities. In addition to dropping off supplies to be packed and sent to designated areas, there are other needs volunteers can help with. People willing to help individuals' clear trees from their property is a need I continue to read about and see on social media. Dropping off food for animals and other supplies to shelters would also be appreciated. We are asked to identify the need first rather than drive into a community where a plan has already been established.

I come from a family that loves to hug other family members and friends. I find myself now wanting to as one of my aunts used to say "hug your neck off" when I see you. In your senior years you realize how precious every day is, and you don't want to waste even one of them. As Paul said in First Corinthians 13:13 "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love." It is my prayer that your faith will remain strong in hope for tomorrow. Love is a gift from God and meant to be shared with others as he shared it with us. Let someone who is hurting know they matter and that they are loved.

In the coming days and weeks, I know you will have new stories to share with me. I'm here to listen to all of them, whether it's by email or talking to you in person, I pray that you will find some joy in each day. That joy can simply be listening to or helping a friend or neighbor. Email me ibelieve1068@gmail.com or stop me to talk when we see each other in the community,

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#### • Citation (aglc Style)



# The Yellow Jacket Report: Together we succeed: Spotlighting CTE

October 8, 2024 | Daily Herald (Roanoke Rapids, NC) Author: Julie Thompson, Ed.D. | Section: Columns | 924 Words OpenURL Link

Roanoke Rapids Graded School District completed another strong week! I enjoyed the opportunity to ride our school buses both to pick up students and to take them home from school. We are so blessed at RRGSD to have such amazing students, and I loved making new friends as we rode. I am also very thankful for our bus drivers and bus monitors who arrive early and leave late to ensure each student is taken care of and transported safely to and from

## Supporting Western North Carolina

Our students, staff, and families demonstrated their values of kindness and hard work this week as they collaborated to support our neighbors in Western Carolina and send supplies for the Hurricane Helene drive. We are blessed to be a part of such a caring and supportive community as we work together to support those in need.

## Roanoke Rapids High School CTE Programs

This week, I want to spotlight Roanoke Rapids High School's Career and Technical Education programs, which offer students hands-on experiences that lead to practical skills and career readiness. For the 2024-25 school year, students had the opportunity to sign up for 32 different courses from 10 career clusters including architecture and construction; business management and administration; health science; hospitality and tourism; human services; information technology; law, public safety, corrections, and security; manufacturing; marketing; and transportation, distribution, and logistics. The mission of our CTE program is to empower students to be successful citizens, workers, and leaders in a global economy. Our CTE programs are designed to contribute to the broad educational achievement of students, including basic skills, as well as their ability to work independently and as part of a team, think creatively and solve problems, and utilize technology in the thinking and problem-solving process.

Among some of our newest courses are Introduction to Heavy Equipment Operations, Drone Technology, and Welding Technology, which are preparing students to enter high-demand industries with a competitive edge. We also have been able to enhance our Health Science and Public Safety courses through the purchase of state of the art equipment.

Heavy Equipment Operations offers students the chance to operate industrial machinery used in construction and logistics. Students gain real-world experience in controlling bulldozers, excavators, and other essential heavy machinery, preparing them for careers in construction, transportation, and other sectors where these skills are invaluable. As with many of our CTE courses, students have the opportunity to earn Heavy Equipment certification via the National Center for Construction Education and Research at no cost to the student. As part of this course, students learn through virtual reality using two Cat® Simulators, which feature authentic Cat controls from Caterpillar, Inc. Students learn the same procedures as in the actual machine using genuine controls and buttons to match each machine. Each Cat Simulator features the same genuine controls as found in the actual machine which means operators can make a seamless transition to the field.

In the Drone Technology courses, students gain knowledge in the field of aviation and learn the skills needed to fly basic drones for recreational purposes. As students continue in the program, they also acquire basic information about the drone industry to gain an understanding of careers and skills in this field including manual flight and flight mapping software. As part of these courses, students earn Unmanned Aircraft System Remote Pilot Certification as well as their NCDOT NC UAS Operator Permit.

In the Health Sciences program, students explore careers in the medical field through courses that emphasize patient care, medical terminology, and basic health procedures. This pathway equips students with foundational

knowledge that can lead to careers in nursing, physical therapy, and various allied health professions. The program is a gateway for students interested in furthering their education in healthcare. We have been able to purchase an Anatomage table, which uses advanced 3D medical visualization technology, specializing in digitizing real human bodies into interactive, fully functional digital models known as Anatomage Bodies and has revolutionized the way students visualize, understand, and study human bodies.

Welding Technology courses offer both artistic and industrial skill-building opportunities. Students master techniques in metalworking, from basic welding to advanced fabrication, safety, tools and equipment, measurement, thermal cutting processes, base metal preparation and shielded metal arc welding enabling students to pursue careers in fields like automotive repair, manufacturing, and metal artistry. The welding program provides a critical trade skill, filling an ever-growing demand in the skilled labor market.

In addition to robust opportunities in our classrooms, our students can also compete against others with the skills they learn in SkillsUSA, a workforce development organization for students that empowers them to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members. Recently, members of the RRHS SkillsUSA Executive Board attended the State Leadership Conference at Camp Dixie. Over three days, they participated in various leadership activities designed to help them lead the chapter effectively. These student leaders have already begun planning for the prestigious Chapter Excellence Award, an honor that recognizes schools for outstanding involvement in SkillsUSA. Each board member was awarded the State Leadership Pin, the highest honor given by SkillsUSA North Carolina, signifying their growth in leadership and dedication to the chapter. The board consists of the following students:

President Jillian Ott
Vice President Maecy Garris
Secretary Morgan Beam
Treasurer Ayden Turner
Reporter Madison Jones

Historian Shandi Byrum

Their dedication and leadership will not only help the chapter excel but also contribute to the school's growing reputation for excellence in Career and Technical Education. With such programs and strong student involvement, we are shaping the future leaders of tomorrow's industries.

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# • Citation (aglc Style)

Julie Thompson, Ed.D., 'The Yellow Jacket Report: Together we succeed: Spotlighting CTE', *Daily Herald* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1620C4CFA3C30">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1620C4CFA3C30</a>



# The Herald Preps Report

October 8, 2024 | Daily Herald (Roanoke Rapids, NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: Local | 394 Words OpenURL Link

The following are scores from area games as reported from maxpreps.com:

Football

On Oct. 4, the Roanoke Rapids Varsity boys lost their game against Northern Nash High School by a score of 7-70.

On Oct. 4, the Northampton County Varsity boys lost their game against Warren County High School by a score of 0-41. They next face Rocky Mount Prep during an away game on Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. in Rocky Mount.

On Oct. 4, the Weldon Varsity boys lost their game against Wilson Prep High School by a score of 14-52. They next face Northwest Halifax in an away game on Oct. 12 at 4 p.m. in Littleton.

On Oct. 4, the Northwest Halifax Varsity boys lost their game against North Edgecombe High School by a score of 20-26.

On Oct. 4, the Southeast Halifax Varsity boys won their game against Rocky Mount Prep High School by a score of 64-0. They next face North Edgecombe in an away game on Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. in Tarboro.

On Oct. 4, the Halifax Academy Varsity boys lost their game against John Paul II Catholic High School by a score of 17-21. They next face Howard High School during a home game at 7 p.m. on Oct. 11.

On Oct. 4, the Hobgood Charter Varsity boys won their game against Columbia High School by a score of 34-26. They will next face Bear Grass Charter in an away game on Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. in Williamston.

RRHS scheduleRoanoke Rapids High School Athletic Director Mark Snead released the next schedule:

Oct. 8 Tennis at NC Wesleyan for the conference tournament all day.

Volleyball at home vs. Bunn starting at 4 p.m.

RRHS Powder Puff Football game at Hoyle Field starting at 8 p.m. Admission is \$7 with part of the proceeds going to help victims of Hurricane Helene.

Oct. 10 Tennis at NC Wesleyan for the conference tournament, with the time to be determined.

Golf at the River Golf Course at 2 p.m.

Cross Country at Nash Central at 5 p.m.

Soccer at Northern Nash at 6 p.m.

Oct. 10Volleyball at Nash Central starting at 4 p.m.

Oct. 11Football at home vs. Rocky Mount for Homecoming at 7 p.m.

Oct. 12Volleyball in the first round of the conference tournament, with the time to be determined.

# • Citation (aglc Style)

Staff Writer, 'The Herald Preps Report', *Daily Herald* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1620C69A99A88">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1620C69A99A88>



# New partnership, project progress, rezonings, and more from Monday's Onslow County Commissioners meeting

October 8, 2024 | Daily News, The (Jacksonville, NC) Author: Morgan Starling The Daily News| Section: News| 701 Words OpenURL Link

There was a change of scenery for Monday's Onslow County Board of Commissioners meeting as it took place in Jacksonville City Hall due to mechanical issues at the Onslow County Government Center.

Nonetheless, the board conducted the county's business right on schedule at 11 a.m. Monday morning. Board Vice Chairman Robin Knapp, however, was absent from Monday's meeting.

Board Chairman Tim Foster said during his comment period that Knapp was admitted to the hospital Sunday with some health issues. While there was some concern about his blood pressure and possible stroke symptoms, Foster said Knapp is doing well, tests are coming back positive, and he's ready to get back to work.

The agendaThe board first approved a couple of notable items as part of its consent agenda, the first being a Memorandum of Agreement between Onslow County Parks & Recreation and Marine Corps Installations East-Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune.

The MOA will allow the county to use certain Marine Corps Community Services recreation facilities aboard the base, such as for summer day camps and youth programming.

The commissioners also accepted grant funds from the North Carolina Arts Council's Grassroots Arts Program as part of the consent agenda, the award being in the amount of \$128,183, \$45,187 of which must be used towards multicultural events and/or artists.

Monday's meeting also saw several public hearings, the first two being rezoning requests that were approved unanimously by the board.

On behalf of Weg Mancor LLC, Tidewater Associates, Inc submitted an application to rezone 1.72 acres on the north side of Freedom Way in White Oak from Residential 8 Manufactured to Highway Business.

Additionally, on behalf of the Rolling Hills Estates subdivision owners, Ronald Van Peedin submitted an application to rezone 69.75 acres on the east side of Pony Farm Road from Residential 20 to Rural Agriculture.

Tidewater Associates also submitted an application to request a text amendment to Section 608.10 (Private Roads) of the Subdivision Ordinance to amend the requirements for private roads in major subdivisions.

According to Onslow County Planning and Development Director Carter Metcalf, as written, there are three criteria that have to be met in order for county staff to allow a private road to go through the subdivision process.

The subdivision would have to add a significant amenity, a creative design feature, and entrance gates. The ordinance amendment, which was unanimously approved by the board Monday, makes those criteria optional, not required.

Finally, the commissioners approved two contract amendments Monday regarding two major county projects. First, was the emergency operations center expansion and renovation project.

It's become time to begin incorporating the audio-video systems and equipment into the new EOC, so the county recently went through the formal bidding process, and the lowest responsible bid was \$643,560 with a 5% fee for

construction management services.

American Rescue Plan Act funds were set aside at the onset of the project to cover the costs, so no additional funds are necessary, but to proceed, an amendment to Clancy & Theys Construction Company's contract was necessary.

The other contract amendment dealt with the county's multi-purpose building renovation project. At the onset of this project, the plan was to house senior services in half the building, with the other half a shell space until needed.

However, the county changed course several months ago and made the decision to move the farm service agencies back into the building, as it's more functional and convenient for them.

As a result, additional design services were necessary to complete the work for the remainder of the building.

Smith-Sinnett Architecture, PA submitted a proposed amendment to the design contract to cover the additional cost at \$190,400, which is what was approved Monday.

"Some of the forward-thinking ideas that we're incorporating into the design with the teaching kitchen and with some of the other spaces for our seniors, I think you'll be really impressed with the opportunities we're going to be able to offer the community that we haven't been able to in the past," said Assistant County Manager Ben Warren to the board.

During each of their public comment periods, all commissioners mentioned the work being done throughout Onslow County to assist those in western North Carolina impacted by Hurricane Helene. The next Onslow County Board of Commissioners meeting is scheduled for Monday, Oct. 21, at 6 p.m.

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# Clearing the road for recovery

October 8, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: KIM LAMBERT| Section: Opinion| 717 Words OpenURL Link

We've seen its images. We've been mortified by its mass destruction. Just 11 days ago, Hurricane Helene careened violently into Florida, debilitating much of the towns along the Gulf Coast. Little did we know that it would become the deadliest storm to pelt our nation's mainland since the 2005 Hurricane Katrina.

Little did we know the hurricane would drop 40 trillion gallons of rainwater in an unsuspecting area. Reports indicate 850,000 customers from seven states lost power. Not only were there outages, but officials from Duke Energy learned much of its power grids were completely wiped away.

At press time, there have been 215 confirmed dead. Unfortunately, hundreds of other residents' whereabouts remain unknown. We've watched the footage from mudslides slamming the mountainous terrain. News sources have inundated us with visuals of roadways totally obliterated. Homes have been upended, as have entire communities like Chimney Rock, washed away in rushing, muddied waters.

We've been disheartened to see dozens of residents whose homes and businesses have been desecrated. Our hearts and prayers have gone out to victims impacted by this powerful storm.

Did you realize that Hurricane Hazel walloped the Carolina coastline during 1954? Did you know that — precisely 35 years later — Hurricane Hugo catapulted into the Carolinas during 1989? Have you considered the irony that Hurricane Helene would wreak unprecedented havoc precisely 35 years later in 2024?

Torrential rains actually arrived days prior to the hurricane reaching North Carolina. The overpowering influx of rain in southern Appalachia became coined as a "once-in-a-thousand-years" anomaly. Impassable roads in western Carolina have somewhat stymied recovery and emergency aid. Eyewitnesses described discovering diseased bodies lying near riverbanks, inside their vehicles, in trees and in bushes.

First responders, troops, and volunteers have been challenged by thousands of downed trees, road closures, fallen power lines, along with roadways and railway systems buckling beneath the surface. Semi trucks were seen strewn like marbles while mobile homes and mountain cabins have been sent tumbling by the thrusting floodwaters.

Despite the unimaginable carnage, we have seen some glimmers of hope. National Park Service officials climbed atop the terrain at Chimney Rock — valiantly erecting an unfurled, American flag. During Saturday's football game pitting N.C. State against Wake Forest, marching bands honored hurricane victims with their rendition of "Amazing Grace."

Just this past Sunday, volunteers discovered 200 survivors nestled safely inside a church in Candler. Watauga High School officials reported that their entire 1,647-member student body, along with all of their 40 staff members, survived Helene.

Thousands of area churches, Christian organizations, volunteers, nationwide businesses, civic groups and private organizations are banding together, packing convoys filled with much-needed supplies. Celebrities including Dolly Parton and Morgan Wallen have donated millions of dollars to hurricane victims. Singer-songwriter Eric Church is donating all proceeds from his newly released single, "Darkest Hour," to those displaced by Helene.

Local residents like Heyward — a longtime employee at Rocky's Hot Chicken Shack in Arden — have been volunteering with the Crisis Responses's Mobile Kitchen. Heyward withstands the 100-degree kitchenette 10 hours each day, providing hot meals to 600-plus victims.

Chimney Rock residents Brett and Pam Johnson found their wherewithal to survive. Quoting Isaiah 41:10, the Johnsons keep the biblical instructions, "Do not be dismayed, for I am with you," to heart, they said. Volunteers from Mountain Mule Packer Ranch deployed several mules to aid in delivery of supplies to Black Mountain victims.

Big-box retailers have donated millions of hurricane relief items, enlisting dozens of 18 wheelers to transport goods. "Dr. Phil" McGraw accompanied Franklin Graham to view the devastation firsthand aboard a Blackhawk helicopter. Graham's Samaritan's Purse volunteers set up makeshift emergency facilities for victims. State, federal, and private plane charters — along with nationwide first responders — have worked incessantly in their search and recovery efforts.

Applicable to this catastrophic event, Kansas City attorney and published author Greg Kincaid poignantly addressed resilience saying, "No matter how much falls on us, we keep plowing ahead. That's the only way to keep the roads clear." We pray that those displaced victims will, indeed, keep plowing.

A rainbow captured on video Friday — dotting the blue skies of West Jefferson — serves as a promising reminder to displaced hurricane victims. Their road to recovery will be a long and arduous one, but with the residents' resilience, their drive, and most importantly, their faith, they will persevere.

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# Blood collection disrupted in Southeast

October 8, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: For the Record | Section: News | 377 Words OpenURL Link

Red Cross: Donors vital in response to Hurricane Helene impact

The American Red Cross continues to work to restock critically needed blood products uncollected due to the ongoing impact of Hurricane Helene's devastation in the Southeast. Donors outside of affected areas are encouraged to make an appointment to give now and help keep the blood supply stable in the weeks to come.

Since making landfall, the storm and its aftermath have led to the cancellation of more than 100 blood drives, causing thousands of blood and platelet donations to go uncollected. For so many people living with urgent medical care needs, blood transfusions are essential, and donations in the Southeast are key to keeping our nationwide network stocked. The Red Cross operates through a national inventory with the ability to move blood wherever and whenever it is needed most.

The time to give blood or platelets is now. Bring hope to those in need by visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-RED CROSS or by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App.

As the Red Cross continues to urge people to give blood or platelets now, its teams are also on the ground providing vital relief — like food, water, shelter and support — in communities devastated by Hurricane Helene. If you're able to help those impacted by disasters big and small across the country, like Helene, the Red Cross asks the public to consider making a gift of any amount.

All who come to give blood, platelets or plasma in October will receive a \$10 Amazon.com gift card by email, plus be automatically entered for a chance to win one of three \$5,000 gift cards. For full details, visit RedCrossBlood.org/Treat.

How to donate blood

Simply download the American Red Cross Blood Donor App, visit RedCrossBlood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Individuals who are 17 years of age in most states (16 with parental consent where allowed by state law), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. High school students and other donors 18 years of age and younger also have to meet certain height and weight requirements.

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For the Record, 'Blood collection disrupted in Southeast', *Daily Record, The* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C16168B98167B0">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C16168B98167B0</a>



# HELPING WITH HELENE: Local groups gather aid

October 8, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: Emily Weaver | Section: News | 928 Words

OpenURL Link

David and Lisa Farmer's daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren awoke to their 11th day without electricity or running water in their Black Mountain home Sunday morning.

"They said power would be restored tonight," Lisa Farmer said as she loaded a trailer with hurricane relief supplies in the Dunn Food Lion parking lot Sunday afternoon. "We'll see."

At least 97,000 properties remained without power in Western North Carolina Monday morning, much like Sunday and the day before and the Friday before that. Duke Energy officials issued an update that they "anticipate(d) restoring the vast majority of customers ... by midnight Tuesday." But it will take "an extended period of time" for some of them.

Lineman crews from all across the country have flooded in to help and the Farmers — like so many of their neighbors in Harnett County — want to do their part. Lisa Farmer's fellow Rotarians in the Dunn Rotary Club stacked water, food, toiletries, paper products, medical supplies and pet care items inside the trailer Sunday as David Farmer prepared for another run to the mountains.

The supply runs are a little easier now that some of the roads have reopened, but 596 of those routes remained closed on Monday. The total number of closures showed an increase from the 465 reported Thursday as crews were able to move into more areas and get a closer look at Helene's damage over the weekend.

Several public safety departments, nonprofit groups, organizations and volunteers continue to collect and deliver donations to help the survivors of Hurricane Helene recover in Western North Carolina.

The tempest toppled trees, muddled mountains and swept away anything in the path of creeks that became raging rivers. Hill sides became landslides. Roadways became no-ways. And cellphones grew silent. Helene killed more than 230 people in six states, including 117 alone in North Carolina as of Monday morning.

Hundreds remain unaccounted for as crews continue to search through the mud, debris and rubble left behind.

"The situation is dire for so many. There are so many people missing. I pray to God for that area and its people," Lisa Farmer wrote in an email to The Daily Record Sept. 29.

The Farmers went up to the mountains on Wednesday, Sept. 25, to move their camper to higher ground and away from the Catawba River before Helene officially hit. The storm didn't come until Thursday, but it was storming long before then.

They talked to their daughter on Thursday to make sure they were OK.

"We couldn't get in touch with her all day Friday and Saturday morning we still couldn't reach her so we took off to see if we could get to her," Lisa Farmer wrote in the email. "The roads were closed and we couldn't get there. Power was out in Marion and you could see where the businesses had been flooded. Saturday afternoon Alycia called using a neighbor's cellphone. They were OK, but had no power, water, gas and their home was flooded. We spent the night in the parking lot hoping she could reach us in Marion Sunday as we had gas, water, power, food and cash we brought. They turned them away on the interstate on-ramp to I-40."

The Farmers have reunited since then and their daughter's family is surviving in the new conditions, helping

neighbors who've helped them, too, along the way.

For those who want to help, the following drop-off locations are accepting donations:

Harnett County Schools is collecting water, diapers (for all ages), baby formula, individually packaged snacks, batteries, trash bags, bandages, toothbrushes, toothpaste, wash cloths, towels, socks, pet food and disinfectant wipes inside the Star Academy cafeteria between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 8, and Thursday, Oct. 10. Star Academy is located at 900 S. 11th St., Lillington.

Harnett County C.A.R.E.S. (Community Aid, Relief and Essential Support) drop off locations during business hours include the Harnett County Sheriff's Office, Harnett County Courthouse, all local police departments in Harnett County, the Dunn License Plate Agency, the Lillington Area Chamber of Commerce, Black River Fire Department and Mt. Pisgah Church in Erwin. Check donations should be made payable to DUMA (Dunn United Ministerial Association) with "Hurricane Relief" in the memo line. Deadline to donate is Oct. 21.

Benson Global Methodist Church is collecting supplies to send to Avery County. Paul Dunn with Mule City Feeds will be sending his truck. To drop off supplies, call the Rev. Billy Olsen at 910-544-6921. If you prefer to donate money to purchase supplies, write a check to Benson Global Methodist Church and put "For Hurricane Relief" in the memo line. Checks can be dropped off at the church office, 205 E. Church St., or in the mail slot at the Benson Area Chamber of Commerce office, 122 E. Main St.

North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund donation information is available by visiting nc.gov/donate. Donations made to the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund will go to nonprofits working to meet the immediate needs of storm victims such as food and water, cleaning supplies and other emergency supplies. All of the donations made will go to disaster relief. Donations can also be mailed to: NC Disaster Relief Fund, 20312 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, NC 27699-0312; or NC Disaster Relief Fund, c/o United Way of NC, 1130 Kildaire Farm Road, Suite 100, Cary NC 27511.

A wide range of groups are supporting the hurricane relief effort, including the American Red Cross, Baptists On Mission, Samaritan's Purse, the Salvation Army, United Way of North Carolina and Catholic Charities USA, just to name a few.

Visit www.ncdps.gov for more information and to find resources available to assist victims of Hurricane Helene.

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# In-person voting to begin in NC Oct. 17, despite storm damage

October 8, 2024 | Daily Record, The (Dunn, NC) Author: ELYSE APEL The Center Square | Section: News | 667 Words OpenURL Link

With just 10 days until in-person early voting begins in North Carolina, the State Board of Election voted unanimously to pass a resolution to assist with voting in the 13 most hard-hit counties.

Since Hurricane Helene first came ashore on Sept. 26, more than 230 lives have been lost across six different Southeastern states, with many still remaining missing. Damage estimates from the storm is in the tens of billions according to multiple analyses, with counties in western North Carolina being particularly devastated.

"This is an unprecedented amount of damage and destruction that's been caused by this storm," said board member Stacy Eggers, who lives in western North Carolina and gave an emotional statement during the board meeting. "Not only has it resulted in loss of life and personal property, but it has severely damaged the road systems, water systems, and communication systems up here in the High Country."

Despite the damage, the board says that voting will continue.

"We will begin early voting in all 100 counties in 10 days from now, and we will hold the election on Nov. 5 in all 100 of those counties," Eggers said. "We have a dedicated team of elections professionals across the state who are committed to making that happen."

The resolution grants a number of counties with significant storm damage ability to modify their early voting plans, Election Day precinct sites, and adjust poll worker assignments, all by a bipartisan majority vote of the county board of elections. The county changes are subject to state board approval.

This counties include Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga and Yancey.

"The resolution would provide flexibility to the county boards of elections to ensure that they do have in person voting opportunities available to all the voters, both with early voting and with Election Day voting," said Paul Cox, general counsel for the board.

The resolution will also allow displaced voters to drop off their absentee ballots in counties other than their own, as well as allow Multipartisan Assistance Teams to go into the devastated communities and receive absentee ballots to deliver to the county boards.

All absentee ballots must still be received by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day.

The board worked together, in conjunction with county boards, to refine the measures and make sure voters still have access to vote.

"We really have two critical issues here," said board Chairman Alan Hirsch. "One is to ensure that our citizens have access and that no one is denied the right to vote because of these logistical problems. And second, that we maintain the integrity to ensure that the count is correct and that everyone can have confidence in the ultimate outcome of the election."

Republicans and Democrats on the board came together to support the resolution. Eggers said he is confident in the resolution and its necessity.

"We will continue to make voting accessible to the voters, whether we need four wheelers, horses, or helicopters," he said. "This disaster highlights the need for consistency in our work and making sure that we get to the locations that the voters expect us to be."

Karen Brinson Bell, executive director of the board, said that progress is already evident as all county offices are now open again.

"We have had ongoing response efforts with these counties to assess what their needs are and to assess how we can best continue to deliver voting to all North Carolinians," Bell said. "We also plan to provide as many voting opportunities as we can for Election Day voting sites as well, recognizing that we may need to take voting to the people."

The board is also working with the North Carolina Division of Emergency Management to provide for election-related aid, including procuring temporary voting facilities, generators, temporary restrooms, and any other needs that may be required to set up voting facilities.

Bell said the board will continue to address any ongoing needs as needed.

Elyse Apel is an apprentice reporter with The Center Square, covering Georgia and North Carolina. She is a 2024 graduate of Hillsdale College.

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# Coltrain sworn in as new Williamston Chief of Police

October 8, 2024 | Daily Reflector, The (Greenville, NC) Author: John Foley | Section: Local | 382 Words OpenURL Link

A standing room-only crowd filled the Williamston's boardroom Monday evening to partake in history.

However, before cameras were focused, Williamston Mayor Dean McCall asked for a moment of silence for those devastated by Hurricane Helene.

The silence was replaced by applause once Williamston Police Captain Beth Coltrain was sworn in to become the town's first female chief of police. Chief Coltrain is also the first female chief in Martin County.

Local and county officials, the officers of the Williamston Police Department and representatives from the Edenton Police Department joined friends and family members to watch the ceremony.

Coltrain was surrounded by her husband, Eric, and her two children — Chase and Natalie — as District Court Judge Regina Parker administered the oath of office.

Following the ceremony, friends and fellow employees congratulated Coltrain and gathered for photographs with the first female chief, marking the historic moment.

While the room was filled with enthusiasm and excitement, there was a bittersweet moment.

Coltrain's appointment was an administrative line-up change. The chief's position became available in September when Williamston Police Chief Travis Cowan resigned after a 30-year career with the department. Simultaneously, Williamston Town Administrator Eric Pearson retired for the third time from that position causing the vacancy.

McCall commended Pearson on his service to Williamston and the strides the town made under his direction. Pearson was enthused about this particular official retirement.

"No, I don't think I will be returning for a fourth time, although I have enjoyed Williamston and I will be watching from afar," Pearson said.

The new chief is excited about her work.

"I am excited and grateful for the opportunity to continue to serve my hometown. I have always had a strong desire to serve others and to help those in need. God has opened doors for me and I have simply followed where I believe he has led me," said Coltrain. "Sir Isaac Newton stated 'if I have seen further [than others], it is by standing on the shoulders of giants,' I proudly stand on the shoulders of Chief Steve Smith and Chief Travis Cowan as I take the reins and continue that standard of excellence they set.

"I am proud of our department and I am honored to have this opportunity to continue to serve alongside my fellow officers as we continue our Community-Oriented approach to policing," she closed.

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John Foley, 'Coltrain sworn in as new Williamston Chief of Police', *Daily Reflector, The* (online), 8 Oct 2024 <a href="https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1A0DBA9D04CC8">https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C1A0DBA9D04CC8</a>