

COPING WITH HELENE

October 10, 2024 | News & Record (Greensboro, NC)

Author: TOM FOREMAN JR. Staff Reporter | Section: Main | 1579 Words

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BOONE - The late John Facenda, whose deep voice graced NFL Films for years, once put the game of football in a proper perspective.

"It's a game, not a war," Facenda said. "It's for win or lose, not life or death."

In the last 10 days, those words have been especially applicable. Hurricane Helene decimated a wide area of western North Carolina. Towns were wiped off the map by raging floodwaters that also rendered roads and bridges useless. Some residents are trapped in their homes because the way to safety has been washed out. People are without electricity and water and, in some cases, it could be some time before services are restored. They can't call friends or loved ones because there's no cell phone service. Football is about the last thing on their minds.

The town of Boone wasn't spared. Video showed the main street through the downtown area submerged under rushing flood waters. Appalachian State University was also hit hard, leading officials to cancel classes until repairs to the infrastructure can be completed. A tour of the downtown area reveals that many businesses are closed, and the usual stream of students strolling through the area has dwindled to the occasional pedestrian. There's almost nowhere to go because about everything is closed.

Helene had an impact on the football team as well. The Mountaineers lost a home game with Liberty, which was scheduled less than 36 hours after the storm's wrath and all that came with it. App State officials are now trying to determine where to play their next home game, with Winston-Salem or Charlotte as potential relocation sites. No decision has been made.

For two members of the team, wide receiver Kaedin Robinson and offensive lineman Garner Langlo, Helene hit close to home.

Robinson is from Asheville, and he spent part of last Friday trying to get in touch with his family to ensure all was well with them. Langlo, who came to App State through a transfer from Auburn, had spent some time in lineman school - not learning to be a football lineman, but a utility lineman. He would follow in the footsteps of his brother, who is a lineman in Florida, where residents who are just getting over Helene are bracing for Hurricane Milton, which was packing substantially more power as it approached Florida's west coast on Wednesday evening.

Football has been secondary because of the turmoil the storm left in its wake, but Robinson and Langlo have their own perspectives as they and their teammates prepared this week to face Louisiana in the second of two straight road games.

Concerned about Asheville

Robinson flashed a smile when asked how things are going.

"I'm good. I'm maintaining," he said after Tuesday's practice. "I know my area got hit with the hurricane and everything. So all of my family, friends, close friends (are) good. So, I'm good."

As far as his immediate surrounding, Robinson said he didn't think the storm would be as bad as it turned out to be.

"Honestly, I remember the rain was coming. It was a loud thunderstorm," said Robinson, who admits he slept

through the storm that surely either kept people awake or awakened them from sleep.

"I just woke up the next morning and the whole town was flooded. I'm like, 'Whoa!' So I just tried to call my people to make sure everyone was straight," he said of his family in Asheville. "But they didn't have cell service for a day or two. So, that was rough for me because I didn't know anything. I was just stuck up here, couldn't get down there, and that was a rough part for me."

As for his own surroundings, Robinson said the home he lives in wasn't impacted. He only lost power for an hour, and after he took a nap, he noticed that the lights in the house were still on.

Robinson saw the impact of pre-Helene rains in the Asheville area, with flooding occurring in the Biltmore Village area. His concerns were heightened.

"Maybe this will get kind of bad, and then I woke up the next morning and just couldn't communicate with anybody," he said.

One call to his mother did get through, but the connection was spotty. "So, that was the tough part for me."

When his calls finally got through and the signal held, Robinson spoke to his father.

"He was just like, 'Man, we're fine here. You just worry about what you got to worry about up there,' which is school and ball and getting this thing on the right track," he said. "And that's been my main focus."

One reason that Robinson is maintaining, to cite his word, is being with his teammates.

"These guys keep all of us going," he said. "We're laughing. We're still having fun, trying to make the situation better than what it is. And I think that's what's keeping me going, honestly."

There's also the possibility that he's played his last game in Boone, given the possibility that the town might not be ready to handle an influx of fans.

"That's the hard part for the guys," Robinson said. "So, as a captain, I just try to keep encouraging, like everything's OK. We'll figure it out. We always have, we always will."

A different kind of lineman

Langlo was an Auburn Tiger for two years. Then, he walked away from the game and decided he wanted to do what his brother was doing.

"That was a big factor in what I wanted to do," he said. "And I was just following in his footsteps."

In choosing the path, Langlo drew the parallel between the groups of people trying to restore power to affected areas, and the group of athletes looking for success on the field each weekend.

"It was like I was on another team again. And I know those guys are working on a team, and they got their leader and it's just cool," he said. "It's like football, but in a different form, and that's what made me happy."

Soon, Langlo decided he wasn't just going to be a lineman. He put a competitive spin on it and he had one goal.

"I just thought about how I had to be better than him," he said, referring to his brother. "That made me a little bit faster than some of the other guys climbing the pole and all that. But that school really taught us the base level stuff and you just feel fulfilled after. That's a job that you get down with, and at the end of the day, you've made somebody's day better, and now you feel better. And that's something I was looking for and found."

Langlo drew a bit of a comparison between restoring power to utility customers and trying to win a football game. For one, not everybody can show gratitude for the hard work, he suggested.

"You don't get no love. Nobody's holding your hand. You're in silence. You got people yelling at you to turn your power on, you got people yelling at you in the stands," he said. "It's very similar. And to tell you the truth, I think those guys got it a little tougher because that's life and death every once in a while. But, if you're smart, you'll be safe."

Langlo, like Robinson, wasn't too inconvenienced by Helene, but he ventured out beyond the Boone city limits and saw the extent of damage to the surrounding area.

"I truly didn't know how bad it was until I stepped 20 minutes out of Boone, when I got to the parkway, when I got to Valle Crucis," he said. "Roads were gone. There were telephone poles snapped in half. I look at stuff like that, I don't even know where to start. And just knowing that somebody knows what to do there helps you sleep at night, knowing that guy's going to get power soon."

Gray Langlo is a lineman for Duke Energy. For sure, he will be busy beginning Thursday or Friday trying to restore power in the wake of Hurricane Milton. Garner won't be there to help or try to outdo him, but his spirit will be with him.

"I pray for him," Garner said, "but I know that he got in that position because he worked hard and he's smart, and I know that he's just going to keep doing that and looking out for his guys."

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One year later, the Triad mourns a life lost too soon. News, A2

NC legislature unveils \$273M in initial funding for Helene relief. News, B2

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Agency taking control of site

October 10, 2024 | News & Record (Greensboro, NC) Author: KEVIN GRIFFIN Staff Reporter | Section: Main | 443 Words

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The Federal Emergency Management Agency will soon be taking control of the former American Hebrew Academy in Greensboro for potential use in Hurricane Helene recovery efforts.

The agency confirmed the plans in a statement.

"As part of our effort to ensure that every available resource is mobilized, FEMA will soon sign an agreement with the Department of Health and Human Services to transfer the Greensboro Facility in North Carolina, previously operated by HHS, to FEMA," according to the release. "The Greensboro facility will be another resource to ensure that FEMA has access to a wide array of assets and resources should they be needed for the recovery."

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services had earmarked the property at 4334 Hobbs Road for use as a facility housing migrant teens without parents or guardians.

However, the site has not been used for that purpose so far. Last week, officials such as Greensboro Mayor Nancy Vaughan raised the possibility of using the site as a potential shelter for people displaced by Helene.

U.S. Rep. Kathy Manning, who has also been advocating for the site as a possible resource in the recovery, said in a statement Wednesday that she was pleased the agencies were coming to an agreement.

"In this moment of urgent need for food, health services and housing for our neighbors in western North Carolina, I am fully committed to mobilizing resources swiftly and ensuring they reach all those impacted by this unprecedented storm," Manning said via the statement.

It is not clear how many people the site might hold as a shelter, though it was set up to accommodate 800 residents and 1,500 workers when it was slated to serve as the migrant teen center.

When asked about the possibility of the site being used as shelter, some neighbors said they had not heard about that possibility.

One neighbor who lives near the property who declined to give his name said he felt it would be an inappropriate use. The neighbor said the site was suitable for use as a school but not much other than that.

"Anything beyond that, especially anything that requires special services or special care especially with either younger populations or older populations, it's not suited for that in the middle of a residential district," the neighbor said.

However, at least some of the neighbors were more supportive of the idea of the site being used for hurricane response.

Melba Brown said she had not heard about the site being possibly used as part of the storm response but that she would be in favor of the idea.

"I think it would be a great idea for people that don't have anywhere to go from the hurricane," Brown said.

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Storm changes NCHSAA schedule

October 10, 2024 \mid News & Record (Greensboro, NC) Author: BRYANT ROCHE Staff Reporter \mid Section: Sports \mid 824 Words

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The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has changed its fall sports calendar in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Helene in western North Carolina.

"Changes to the fall calendar are difficult as well as complex but necessary," NCHSAA president Stephen Gainey and association commissioner Que Tucker said in a joint statement. "Keeping our student-athletes safe as we try to minimize risk of injury was central to any decisions made. We commend the work of the NCHSAA staff in its research, the Board of Directors in making time to consider these changes and the willingness of our host partners to accommodate any changes and make their venues available."

The football schedule has been pushed back a week for each round. State championships will occur on Dec. 20 and 21. The reporting deadline has been moved from Nov. 1 to Nov. 9, with seeding occurring on Nov. 10. The first round is scheduled for Nov. 15 and subsequent round following each week.

The new state championship football schedule conflicts with the annual HAECO Invitational basketball tournament, currently scheduled for Dec. 19-21. Of the participating schools, Greensboro Day, an NCISAA member, is the only one of the eight participants that doesn't have football.

Dudley is likely to be affected the most. While basketball hasn't begun, based on last year's rosters, four projected key players - Jerron Blackwell, CJ Neely, Nasir Newkirk and Andrew Rogers - are also key starters for the Dudley football team which is 6-0.

The Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas is also scheduled for Dec. 21, with Blackwell and Newkirk having been selected to play.

The North Carolina Coaches Association said its East-West All-Star Game in Greensboro is still scheduled for Dec. 22. The NCCA said that players chosen for that game and are involved in the NCHSAA state championships will be replaced, and that head coaches for the all-star game will be replaced by an assistant and reassigned for the 2026 game.

Dudley coach Steven Davis was selected to coach the West team, and Southeast Guilford coach Earl Bates is an assistant. Player rosters for this game have not been announced.

The Frank Spencer Holiday Classic, a traditional Winston-Salem boys basketball tournament, is scheduled for Dec. 18-21. Mount Tabor's Virginia Tech recruit Shamarius Peterkin has excelled in both football and basketball for the Spartans.

The NCHSAA is allowing teams to participate in one additional contest for all sports with a season limit. In this case, the contest must receive prior approval from the NCHSAA. It can't exceed daily or weekly limitations and the contest can't exceed the season limit for both schools. Statistics from the added game cannot be entered into MaxPreps.

The volleyball reporting deadline has been moved back three days to Oct. 19 with seeding to be announced on the next day. The new schedule puts the first round on Oct. 22, the second round on Oct. 24, the third round Oct. 26 and the fourth round on Oct. 29. Regionals will be on Oct. 31 and state championships on Nov. 2.

The weekly limitation on volleyball has been modified to allow for eight matches to make up for postponements, but the weekly limitation remains the same.

The boys soccer reporting deadline has been moved from Nov. 31 to Nov. 6, with seeding on Nov. 7. The first round of the playoffs is set for Nov. 9, the second round Nov. 12, the third on Nov. 14 and the fourth on Nov. 16. Regionals are set for Nov. 19 and state championships are to take place on Nov. 22 and 23. The weekly limitation is modified to make up games but can't exceed four in a week, with the daily limitation being the same.

The girls tennis individual tournament reporting deadline is the only one that remains on the same day, Oct. 14, but the time has been shifted from 3 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. Regionals are on Oct. 18 and 19 and the state championships are on Oct. 25 and 26. However, the dual team reporting deadline has been modified from Oct. 10 to Oct. 17, with seeding on Oct. 18. The first round is on Oct. 21 with the second round two days later. The third round is set for the 28 and the fourth on Oct. 30. Regionals are to be held on Nov. 5 and state championships on Nov. 9.

The cross country reporting deadline has been pushed back three days from Oct. 22. Regionals are to be held on Oct. 26 and state championships on Nov. 2.

Cheerleading and girls golf are the only sports not to undergo a calendar change, but for girls golf, the minimum number of nine-hole rounds to qualify for regionals is revised from five to three.

The association didn't announce any changes for winter or spring sports. For state playoffs, there have been no venue changes.

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NC lawmakers to pass \$273M Helene relief bill

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC)

Author: Dawn Baumgartner Vaughan and Kyle Ingram; Staff Writer | Section: News | 1289 Words

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RALEIGH North Carolina's lawmakers are ready to rush the first round of Hurricane Helene relief to the western part of the state devastated by flooding caused by the storm.

The General Assembly is expected to pass a \$273 million bill that leaders describe as a "first step."

Back in Raleigh for a one-day session Wednesday, Republicans, who control the legislature, released the bill Wednesday about an hour before it was expected to pass both the House and Senate quickly and be sent to the desk of Democratic Gov. Roy Cooper. The bill, called the Disaster Recovery Act, replaces the previous version of House Bill 149, and only requires a yes or no vote, without any amendments.

Senate leader Phil Berger said in a news conference that the bulk of the money will go to state agencies for spending flexibility, rather than specific earmarks to districts. Berger and House Speaker Tim Moore announced there will be another legislative session on Oct. 24 to pass another round of funding.

"This is not all of it, not by a long shot," Berger said about the state money. He said the federal government will be providing most of the relief.

Lawmakers will work to figure out what FEMA is paying for, and what it's not, when they come back for the additional session later in the month, said Sen. Kevin Corbin, a Republican whose district spans seven Western North Carolina counties.

Corbin was among several Republican lawmakers who spoke at the news conference about the damage and response in their districts.

"We're in a long-term recovery," said Sen. Ralph Hise, a Spruce Pine Republican, who represents a devastated area. Hise said "there's a lot of distrust in the areas I have."

Sen. Tim Moffitt, who represents Henderson, Polk and Rutherford counties, said the bill is "a first chapter of a very long book to rebuilding the mountains."

Asked about Democrats' involvement in the bill, Berger and Moore said they had met with the Cooper administration, Senate Democratic Leader Dan Blue and House Democratic Leader Robert Reives.

New Helene Fund

The bill creates a new Hurricane Helene Fund with \$273 million from the state's saving reserve fund.

* \$250 million will go to the Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management, to provide the state's match to federal disaster relief funds.

The bill says "a portion" of the money will be used to establish a revolving loan program to help local government and state agencies with cash flow while they are waiting for reimbursement from the federal government.

Moore said they expect the federal government to pay 90% to the state's 10% in storm relief, and "don't want to supplant those federal dollars with state dollars if we're not required to. And then there's language in the bill, too,

that points out that we want to be careful on how the money is spent, that we don't forfeit the ability to get those federal dollars."

Help on schools, infrastructure, IDs

Here's what else the bill does:

- * \$16 million to the Department of Public Instruction for "lost compensation of school nutrition employees due to school closures resulting from Hurricane Helene."
- * Grants school calendar flexibility to public schools by allowing them to make up or mark as completed any number of the days or hours missed. It also allows the schools to use up to 30 remote instruction days towards required instructional days.

However, the bill did not grant other funding requests from the education agency.

- * Provides flexibility for infrastructure projects. Berger said the flexibility should not "impair the health, the safety, the required building requirements" but "a lot of it has to do with procurement and the way that you decide how to deploy the dollars to someone so something could get built."
- * Allows the governor to waive fees assessed by the Division of Motor Vehicles for things such as obtaining a duplicate driver's license, obtaining an identification card and more.
- * Provides \$2 million for grants to the North Carolina League of Municipalities, the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners and the North Carolina Association of Regional Councils of Governments "to provide technical assistance with local recovery funds. In providing this assistance, these entities shall prioritize grants to counties with a population of less than 250,000." The Office of State Budget and Management will run the program.

What the bill does about Election Day

The bill also includes \$5 million for the State Board of Elections, plus a variety of temporary election law changes to make it easier for residents of Western North Carolina to vote.

"The hurricane has dealt a serious blow to what may very well be the ability to conduct elections in the disasterrelated counties," Berger said.

The bill would allow the western counties hit by Helene to change polling sites that were rendered unusable by the storm, give counties more flexibility in how they hire election workers and give affected voters more options to get absentee ballots in.

Most of the bill's election measures codify changes already approved by the State Board of Elections on Monday. However, while the board's resolution only applied to the 13 counties hit hardest by the storm, the bill includes all 25 western counties in the federally declared disaster area.

Any changes to early voting or Election Day polling sites would require a bipartisan majority vote of the county board of elections.

The state's election appropriation is nearly \$3 million more than what the state board requested.

Moore said that, in addition to helping the state carry out the election, the money will also go to county governments attempting to hire election workers and secure new polling sites.

"You have poll sites that literally no longer exist," Moore said. "... A fire department or church or community building - that building is no longer there."

The money would also be used to conduct outreach efforts to voters in western counties and establish a voter hotline.

The bill does not change the deadline for counties to receive absentee ballots, which is 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. However, it will allow voters from the affected counties to turn in their absentee ballot in any county in the state.

What Gov. Cooper requested for Helene relief

The Office of State Budget and Management, which is part of Cooper's administration, sent its proposal on Monday to Berger, Moore and others.

Cooper requested the \$250 million that the bill provides for the Helene Fund.

The proposal, sent in a letter from Budget Director Kristin Walker, also says that the state has "already obligated tens of millions of dollars in the first week of response," and while "much of that will be reimbursed by FEMA," the state needs to be able to move money quickly and "without red tape or unnecessary delay."

The budget proposal to legislative leaders also included:

- * Up to \$100 million to the Department of Transportation from the State Emergency Response and Disaster Relief Fund to deal with more than 600 roads closed and "catastrophic" damage to transportation networks.
- * A request to amend the Emergency Management Act to "facilitate necessary executive response to emergencies so that a state of emergency can extend as long as necessary to respond to the emergency without enactment of a general law by the General Assembly."

In response to Cooper's emergency management request, the bill extends the statewide declaration that Cooper already issued until March 1. That order had concurrence from the rest of the Council of State, which is made up of 10 statewide elected officials. State law changed to limit the duration of states of emergency after Cooper issued a continuing series of orders during the coronavirus pandemic.

Reporter Luciana Perez Uribe Guinassi contributed.

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Speaker Johnson please don't play politics with Helene aid

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Issac Bailey | Section: Editorial/Opinion | 734 Words Page: 9A OpenURL Link

Speaker of the U.S. House Mike Johnson's time would be better spent reconvening Congress to consider more disaster aid than surveying Hurricane Helene damage in western North Carolina this week. The speaker should not wait until after the election, as he reportedly plans to do.

That's a mistake. A huge mistake.

Americans suffering from billions of dollars in damage don't need another politician smiling in their faces. This is not a slight against politicians who show up in the aftermath of natural disasters. Such visits can be reassuring and put a spotlight on vulnerable areas that need the attention. Democrats President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, Republican former President Donald Trump, and a bevy of other officials have made such trips the past two weeks.

Johnson's trip would be in line with those, which serve the dual purpose of politicking and serving constituents in need. That's not the problem. The problem is unnecessarily waiting to recall the nation's leaders to begin legislation that will fund the next stages of recovery. The urgency has increased as yet another historically-strong storm lurks in the Gulf of Mexico and is forecast to hit Florida - a state also reeling from Helene - sometime this week. Hurricane Milton, which has become one of the strongest hurricanes ever, had scarily-fast 160 miles per hour sustained winds at the time of this writing.

The damage from Helene and Milton will be several billion dollars. Johnson reportedly said Congress can wait until after the election because we don't yet know the price tag. But we don't have to know a precise number to understand the need. Every day of delay could lead to more hardship.

The Biden-Harris administration has warned Johnson the Small Business Administration's disaster relief program may run out of money before Congress returns from recess, which could mean forgoing "longer-term recovery activities in favor of meeting urgent needs."

House Republicans turned down requests from the administration for disaster relief funding after the Maui fires, the collapsed Francis Scott Key Bridge in Baltimore and tornadoes that hit multiple states. I don't know why. I'll assume Johnson and other Republicans had good reason to deny that funding. I don't want to believe they would play partisan politics with such important decisions.

I'm going to assume Sen. Thom Tillis didn't attack Harris on X, formerly Twitter, just to get in a political jab instead of remaining focused on what's best for Tar Heels who remain in harm's way. I'll assume Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has decided not to return Harris's phone calls for reasons that aren't political. I'm going to believe it has nothing to do with what happened to Gov. Chris Christie in 2012 when he warmly greeted President Barack Obama after Superstorm Sandy hit New Jersey a week before the 2012 election. His once-promising career as a Republican was effectively ended because of an imaginary "hug" with a Democrat.

In a moment like this, I'm trying to refuse to think the worst of people, including everyday Americans who have spread so much misinformation that it has affected relief efforts, and elected officials who have short- and long-term incentives to politicize a natural disaster that has killed more than 230 people and left an unknown amount of damage in its wake, which could worsen in coming days if Hurricane Milton makes landfall.

I have to refuse to think of the worst of people. To believe otherwise is to think a nation that holds itself as great is

so broken, its social fabric so tattered and strained at the seams, it may never be able to repair itself.

We can't be so far gone that though we are staring in the face death and destruction on a Biblical scale we remain locked in partisan corners even as our brothers and sisters suffer and need our help.

That's why I won't assume Johnson is refusing to reconvene Congress early because he doesn't want to give the Biden-Harris administration a political "win" before the election.

That simply can't be. It must not be.

Issac Bailey is a McClatchy Opinion writer in North and South Carolina.

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NCHSAA extends football season after Hurricane Helene

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Langston Wertz Jr.; Staff Writer | Section: Sports | 540 Words

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The N.C. high school football season will extend a week after Hurricane Helene caused severe damages to many schools in the western part of the state.

The N.C. High School Athletic Association announced the change Wednesday, which was approved by its board of directors. The playoffs will begin on Nov. 15 and end with state championships on Dec. 20-21.

Originally, the playoffs were set to start on Nov. 8 and conclude on Dec. 13-14.

In addition, the NCHSAA board approved pushing most playoffs for fall sports back and approved one additional contest for all sports with a season limit. But that additional game - which could be added to avoid an open week at the end of the regular-season - must be approved by the NCHSAA.

That additional game cannot exceed daily or weekly game limit rules. It must also exceed the season limit for both participating schools. Lastly, that additional game cannot be entered into MaxPreps and will not count towards postseason qualifying.

The NCHSAA also said that, effective immediately, a minimum of 72 hours must occur between football games, a move that could allow schools to make up some missed contests.

"Changes to the fall calendar are difficult as well as complex but necessary," said NCHSAA President Dr. Stephen Gainey and NCHSAA Commissioner Que Tucker in a joint statement. "Keeping our student-athletes safe as we try to minimize risk of injury was central to any decisions made. We commend the work of the NCHSAA staff in its research, the Board of Directors in making time to consider these changes and the willingness of our host partners to accommodate any changes and make their venues available."

Other changes announced:

- * The reporting deadline for boys' soccer was pushed back a week to 11:59 p.m. on Nov. 6. The first round will be Nov. 7, followed by rounds on Nov. 9, Nov. 12, Nov. 14 and Nov. 16. The regionals will now be played Nov. 19 with state finals on Nov. 22-23.
- * For girls' golf, the minimum number of 9-hole scores require to qualify for regionals was revised from five to three.
- * The girls' tennis regionals reporting deadline was extended to 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 14. Originally, that deadline was 3 p.m. Regional play is scheduled for Oct. 18-19. State finals are scheduled for Oct. 25-26.
- * The dual team tennis reporting deadline was moved from Oct. 10 to Oct. 17. The first round will begin Oct. 18 with state finals now on Nov. 9.
- * The volleyball reporting deadline was moved back to 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 19, instead of Oct. 16. The first round will now begin Oct. 22, instead of the original Oct. 19 date.

The remaining rounds will play on a more condensed schedule: Oct. 24, second round; Oct. 26, third round; Oct. 29, fourth round; Oct. 31, regional round.

The state finals will be held Nov. 2 as originally scheduled.

* Cross-country reporting deadline for regional qualifying was moved back to 11:59 p.m. on Oct. 22. It was originally scheduled for Oct. 19. The regionals will be held Oct. 26 with state finals Nov. 2.

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Musician Ben Folds to hold concert benefiting Western NC. Here's when & where

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Renee Umsted; Staff Writer | Section: News | 325 Words Page: 2A OpenURL Link

Ben Folds will hold a concert later this month benefiting North Carolinians affected by Helene.

The concert, scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 29 in Wilmington, will also feature musicians from Western North Carolina.

All proceeds from the event will support charities helping with food, housing and home repairs via the North Carolina Disaster Relief Fund, managed by United Way of North Carolina.

"I'm honored to share the stage and stand in unity with other North Carolina music artists to help those whose lives and livelihoods have been tragically lost or forever altered by the horrific events triggered by Hurricane Helene," Folds, who grew up in Winston-Salem, said in a statement. "Our goal with this benefit concert is to raise awareness and funds to support the massive rebuilding efforts now underway, and that will be ongoing for months and years to come."

Tickets are now on sale for "From Wilmington, With Love," which will be held at Wilmington's Greenfield Lake Amphitheater.

This is not the first time Folds has used his musical talents to support a cause. In 2020, he was among several other North Carolina artists who participated in "Under One Roof," which asked viewers to donate to the North Carolina Arts Foundation, The News & Observer previously reported.

Folds is also not the first musician to hold a benefit concert following Helene, a storm that has left more than 100 people dead in North Carolina alone.

Luke Combs and Eric Church, along with James Taylor and Billy Strings, are giving a concert at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte on Saturday, Oct. 26.

"I'm glad we can help, but ... I wish we were never here," Church previously told The Charlotte Observer. "So now it's a matter of trying to figure out the best way that we can rebuild where we're both from ... the place that made us who we are as artists."

Tickets for the "Concert for Carolina" go on sale at 10 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 10.

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• Citation (aglc Style)

Renee Umsted, Staff Writer, 'Musician Ben Folds to hold concert benefiting Western NC. Here's when & where', *Herald-Sun, The* (online), 10 Oct 2024 2A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?
p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C21F66BB599698>



After harrowing trek to escape flooding, man maps new start

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Gavin Off; Staff Writer | Section: News | 743 Words

Page: 1A OpenURL Link

Danny Mancini knew it was time to take his chances in the river when Helene's floodwaters started shaking his home early Saturday.

Between midnight and 8 a.m., the Broad River flooded Mancini's Subaru WRX to the roof. Then it climbed 18 feet up a slope to the modular home Mancini built in Black Mountain two years ago.

For a few minutes after Mancini woke up, the 41-year-old south Florida transplant thought he could stay in the house.

Then water slowly seeped in and his home began loosening from its concrete foundation.

"That's when I panicked," said Mancini, an owner of four Buncombe County smoke shops.

Some days since have been a blur, Mancini said. After he escaped his home, he hiked down a mountain, hitchhiked to Asheville, slept and ate little but eventually made his way to Matthews, where he's been living in a hotel.

Like many Western North Carolina people whose homes were harmed by Helene, he's a temporary refugee, living with little more than the clothes he escaped in and the help of family and friends.

"It hasn't been easy," Mancini said, of the start of his quest to try to put his Black Mountain life back together. "I'm just grateful to be alive."

A leap into the river

When Mancini's one-story home began to move under his water-soaked shoes the morning of Sept. 28, he grabbed his phone and gold necklace and hurried out his front door onto a wooden porch left wobbly by rushing water.

He left the door open so Layla, his corgi, could escape too.

Not far downstream, he saw the top of a then-flooded tree poking out of the swollen river. So he jumped in. Just as Mancini hoped, the water rushed him directly to its branches.

From there, he could hold on, stretch his leg toward the slope and make a push for drier land.

Mancini's home, with all of his possessions, was teetering on the hill.

One of his cars, with his wallet, was submerged and the other had disappeared to who knows where.

"If I had to guess, Lake Lure," he said during a recent interview. "A 20-minute drive."

Now what?. he asked himself.

Alone, Mancini walked in the rain, through mud, around fallen trees and over landslide debris, he said.

Five hours later, around 1 p.m. Saturday, a rescue crew found Mancini on North Carolina Highway 9 and took him to

a firehouse in Fairview.

But he didn't stay long. He wanted to get off the mountain before nightfall to reach a place where there would be electricity and roads leading to family members, he said.

So Mancini walked 10 miles to U.S. 74. There, he hitchhiked to Asheville arriving around 7 p.m., and fell asleep inside one of the smoke shops that he owns.

Challenged but grateful and optimistic

At some point - Mancini doesn't know when - the Broad River took his home.

He's seen it since, ripped open and laying on top of the Subaru and halfway down the hill it once sat on. His vegetable greenhouse is gone. Same with his camper and a metal outbuilding that was his office.

Despite losing almost everything, Mancini said he can't help but to feel lucky.

None of his four Plug Smoke Shops, which he opened in the past two years, were damaged. Layla somehow made it safe to a neighbor.

His 4-year-old daughter, who was supposed to spend the night of the flood with Mancini and had never missed a scheduled night with him, was safe at her mother's house when Helene hit.

And FEMA inspectors have already visited what's left of his home. They've deposited some \$54,000 into his account - certainly not enough to replace everything he lost but more than he ever expected, Mancini said.

Mancini said he'll likely stay at a hotel in Matthews a few more days. Then he'll go to his girlfriend's in Flat Rock, a town with power, water and internet.

After that, Mancini is not sure. But he doesn't assume the worst.

"This is going to be good for me somehow," Mancini predicted.

What will he do with his property after he removes the tattered remains of his home?

He might turn it into a campground to pay the mortgage. But he won't live there.

"I'm pretty traumatized by that river and that property," he said.

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Gavin Off, Staff Writer, 'After harrowing trek to escape flooding, man maps new start', *Herald-Sun, The* (online), 10 Oct 2024 1A https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/news/document-view?p=AMNEWS&docref=news/19C21F669F489F08>



Problems with USPS might disrupt mail-in voting, elections officials say. Could it affect NC?

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Renee Umsted; Staff Writer | Section: News | 743 Words Page: 4A OpenURL Link

Elections officials from across the United States, including North Carolina, are concerned about the ability of the U.S. Postal Service to handle mail-in votes this year.

In a Sept. 11 letter to U.S. Postmaster General Louis DeJoy, the National Association of Secretaries of State and National Association of State Election Directors outlined widespread issues with the mail system that could affect the election. The letter was signed by state election officials in many states, including Sara LaVere, the president of the North Carolina Association of Directors of Elections.

DeJoy said in response that the Postal Service is equipped to handle the election mail, that it will collect and deliver mail ballots more often in the days ahead of the Nov. 5 election and that it will keep processing centers open Sunday, Nov. 3, according to the Associated Press.

What are elections officials' concerns with the mail system?

The Sept. 11 letter describes a few issues that state and local elections officials believe could affect the upcoming general election.

Inconsistent training for Postal Service workers: Staff are uninformed about the service's policies regarding election mail, which has led to ballots being delayed, held deliberately or processed improperly.

Long delivery times: In the past, local officials have received timely postmarked ballots after Election Day and outside the Postal Service's First Class delivery window.

Increase in mail returned as undeliverable: Mail sent to voters or ballots sent to election offices are returned to sender, marked as undeliverable, even when mail is addressed properly or voters haven't moved. Voters may be disenfranchised or be put on the path to having their registration record canceled.

According to a report from the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General released July 2024, an audit found "processes and policies that could pose a risk of delays in the processing and delivery of Election and Political Mail," along with issues that "pose a risk of individual ballots not being counted."

The report observed 15 mail processing facilities and 35 delivery units in 13 states and Puerto Rico, including one mail processing center and two two delivery units in North Carolina.

Will issues with the mail system affect NC voting?

The Postal Service is able to work with county boards of elections across the state, said Karen Brinson Bell, the executive director of the North Carolina State Board of Elections.

"Delivery and receipt of mail seems to be happening with all county boards of elections at this point," she said during a meeting with the press on Monday, Oct. 7.

The state board has a "good working relationship" with the Postal Service and meets with the service regularly to discuss issues regarding the sending and receiving of absentee ballots, Patrick Gannon, the public information director for the North Carolina State Board of Elections, told The News & Observer in an email.

There is a distinction, however, between the Postal Service's accessibility to county boards of elections and the service's accessibility to communities, said Paul Cox, general counsel for the state board. Especially after Helene, some communities may be difficult for the Postal Service to reach.

The state board will not change deadlines for receiving mail-in ballots.

"The messaging is already out there that these are the deadlines, and because of some of the communication channel issues, difficulty in cell service and internet connectivity, it is very hard to communicate a different deadline to voters," Brinson Bell said Oct. 7.

All absentee ballots must be received by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, which is Tuesday, Nov. 5.

What can voters do to mitigate USPS issues?

Voters are encouraged to return ballots to their county board of elections as quickly as possible, Danner McCulloh, the public records coordinator for Wake County Board of Elections, told The N&O.

Ballots may be returned by mail or in person.

* If returning in person, ballots may be dropped off at the voter's county board of elections office or to an early voting site between Thursday, Oct. 17 and Saturday, Nov. 2. Absentee ballots may be returned to a voter's county board of elections office on Election Day, but voters may not return the ballot to a polling place on Election Day.

Voters should mail their completed ballot at least one week before their state's deadline, DeJoy wrote in the letter responding to elections officials.

How many people vote by mail in North Carolina?

During the 2022 general election, 187,746 people voted by mail, according to the State Board of Elections.

In the 2020 general election, 18% of ballots cast in North Carolina were absentee by mail votes.

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With Hurricane Milton aimed at Florida, NHL's Tampa Bay Lightning head to Triangle early

October 10, 2024 | Herald-Sun, The (Durham, NC) Author: Chip Alexander; Staff Writer | Section: Sports | 814 Words Page: 2B

OpenURL Link

Morrisville The Carolina Hurricanes and Tampa Bay Lightning will open the 2024-25 NHL hockey season Friday at the Lenovo Center. That much we know.

And beyond that? Who can say?

The Hurricanes and Lightning are scheduled to play again Saturday night at Amalie Arena in Tampa, Florida. But with Hurricane Milton set to slam into western Florida, with evacuation orders in place, there is much uncertainty about such things as hockey games.

The Lightning left Florida on Monday to come to the Triangle, canceling a final preseason game against Nashville. The team is staying in Chapel Hill after some hastily made reservations and practiced Tuesday at Invisalign Arena in Morrisville.

The players were allowed to bring their families and pets with them to North Carolina, Lightning general manager Julien BriseBois said Tuesday. All of the staffers also made the extended trip, he said.

For now, no one can say if the game Saturday in Tampa can or will be played. Or what will happen if it's not played..

"This is not ideal," BriseBois said.

N.C. State has a football game against Syracuse on Saturday night at Carter-Finley Stadium, which could create logistical problems with holding a game at the Lenovo Center.

Playing Sunday at Lenovo Center might be an option. But BriseBois noted that should Hurricane Milton preclude a return to Florida because of extensive storm damage, the team likely would not be in the proper mindset to play Sunday.

"It's unfortunate what's going on, right, but what I see out of the guys is it's a burden being disrupted in what we're doing but we have the ability to bring our families and loved ones and pets with us," Tampa Bay coach Jon Cooper said Tuesday. "There is a bigger picture, as I told our guys. We got to get away. There are a lot of people at home who haven't been able to get away, so a lot of our thoughts are that hopefully everybody is going to be OK and what can we do when we get back to help everybody out."

For now, so much remains in flux.

"I've heard they might not be going back after our game, so whether that means we'll be playing here, I'm not quite sure how it will unfold," Canes captain Jordan Staal said Tuesday. "It's part of the gig when things like this happen, and you battle through big things and small things and how schedules work. We'll play the game (Friday) and figure it out as we go.

"It's not just our team but their team, too. Obviously they're displaced from their homes and going through a lot more stuff than we are."

Staal noted his parents had a Florida vacation home near Naples, saying he was "praying for everyone that it

doesn't look as bad as it does right now."

First there was Hurricane Helene, which worked its way north and into Western North Carolina, leaving behind much destruction and loss of life. Now, Hurricane Milton, which rapidly became a Category 5 storm in the Gulf of Mexico and was growing in intensity at an explosive rate.

The storm was expected to make landfall on Florida's Gulf Coast on Wednesday, the projected path taking it near Tampa, an area that has not had a direct hit from a major hurricane since 1921.

"At the end of the day as long as your family is safe that's the most important thing," Tampa Bay forward Luke Glendening said Tuesday.

The Lightning took the ice at noon for its practice. Missing was forward Jake Guentzel, who played for the Canes last season before being traded to Tampa Bay and then signed, but Cooper said he expected Guentzel to be ready for the opener.

The Hurricanes did not practice Tuesday but held team meetings at Invisalign.

"We planned it this way," Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said Tuesday. "Obviously you don't want to practice four days in a row going into a game. We'll get in a couple of practices, then drop the puck.

"I think everybody has been ready and itching for a while to play a real game, so I think we'll be ready to roll."

Many NHL teams will have played their season openers before Friday, leaving the Canes somewhat antsy about getting on the ice, getting started.

The Canes took a trip Monday to Fort Liberty in Fayetteville. Later Monday, a 25-man roster for opening day was turned into the league.

"For me, going there was important just to show our appreciation for what those guys do for us," Brind'Amour said. "It's very understated, in my opinion. It's nice to kind of be in their area and hang out with those guys a little bit. To get our guys around that environment is always good."

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Long View teams up with Burke church to aid Hurricane Helene victims

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Sarah Johnson | Section: Local | 633 Words OpenURL Link

Hurricane Helene has given Christians a chance "to be the hands and feet of Jesus," a Burke County youth pastor said on Tuesday.

Amherst Baptist Church Youth Pastor Braxton Ervin was speaking about continuing efforts to help western North Carolina. He said the heavily impacted communities will need help for months.

"Missions is not only across seas," Ervin said. "It's right here at home, as well."

The Long View Police Department took a utility trailer full of canned foods, toiletries and clothes to Burke County to help victims of Hurricane Helene.

The Long View donations were taken to Amherst Baptist Church in Morganton on Tuesday. Amherst has been distributing hot meals in Morganton and taking donations to western North Carolina. The church is located at 1024 Amherst Road in Morganton.

The donations are going to Columbus, a town in Polk County, Ervin said. Columbus is roughly 30 minutes south of Lake Lure. Amherst Baptist Church is partnering with a church in Columbus which has a pastor who is originally from Burke County, Ervin added.

Long View Public Information Officer Heather Minor said 13% of the town of Long View is in Burke County. She said most of the donations have come from citizens and businesses in Long View, along with some donations from Granite Falls.

"Through all of this I have felt really blessed and lucky," Minor said. "And then there's a sense of guilt with it, too, because we did come out so unscathed and 30-45 minutes up the road, it's just like total devastation."

Two churches in Long View donated a total of \$1,460, which was used to buy supplies. The Word of Life Church donated \$960, Minor said. Another church gave \$500 on Monday, Long View Town Manager James Cozart said.

"What we are understanding is the need is changing to stuff to keep warm like blankets, gloves, hats," Cozart said. "We took that (\$500), and our deputy finance director went shopping with it. She just piled her cart full of throws, blankets, all that stuff. She got to the register at Walmart in Hickory. The cashier was checking her out and she said 'Now, when I get to \$500 or close to \$500 stop.' Everything in that buggy went through except for one little throw. She hit the total button. It was exactly 500 bucks."

Minor said the town of Long View will continue to accept donations at their town hall. Ervin said Amherst Baptist Church will continue accepting donations, too. Donations can be taken to Amherst Baptist Church at 1024 Amherst Road in Morganton from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. each day, Ervin said.

"(The donations) are very much appreciated," Long View Mayor Marla Thompson said. "We're hoping that they get to the people that need them. If anybody wants to donate, please feel free to drop off at any time."

Long View plans to bring another load of donations later in the week. Minor said a local manufacturing company is donating a 53-foot trailer filled with supplies.

"(A man) just called us and said, 'I live in Burke County. I work in Conover and my company wants to help,'" Minor

said. "We were like, 'Yes, send it.'"

Minor said it has been incredible seeing her small town pouring out support for their neighbors. She said Long View has a significantly smaller tax base than Hickory. Long View had an estimated population of 5,207 in 2023 and Hickory had an estimated population of 44,415 people, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

"We had a mom, and her several young children come by, and each child got to donate an item," Minor said. "And then our town manager got the opportunity to explain to them why they were needing to donate these items. It was incredible to see them come together."

Long View Town Hall is located at 2404 First Ave. SW in Hickory.

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Hurricane Milton offers a catastrophic reminder

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 623 Words OpenURL Link

Less than two weeks ago, Hurricane Helene rav-aged southern Appalachia with unprecedented floods and claimed hundreds of lives. Now Hurricane Milton has targeted the west coast of Florida, which is still cleaning up from Helene's glancing blow. And less than a month from now, voters will choose between Democrats who accept the reality of climate change and Republicans who do not.

These are not the "normal" hurricanes of the past. Hurricanes are not supposed to retain catastrophic power as they race far inland from the Gulf of Mexico, dumping a Noah's flood of rainfall all the way to Tennessee, the way Helene did. Hurricanes are not supposed to grow from newly formed tropical storm to Category 5 monster in less than two days, the way Milton did — intensification so lightning-fast that it stunned experts.

"I can't even find the right adjective," University of Pennsylvania climate scientist Michael Mann said Monday about Milton. And Mann — author of the famous "hockey stick" graph showing the human-induced rise in global temperatures — pointed me to a Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory study reporting that rainfall from Helene was boosted 50% by climate change.

Understanding why hurricanes now behave diff erently is a matter of "basic physics," Mann said. Warmer temperatures provide more energy and moisture to serve as fuel for hurricanes, making them bigger and wetter. It's not that there are more hurricanes. Rather, the ones that do form tend to be stronger and release much more rain. Counting Helene, the United States has seen eight Category 4 or Category 5 landfalls since 2017 — the same number as during the previous 57 years.

Milton could make it nine, though forecasters expected the storm to diminish slightly in wind speed before it lands. Another impact of climate change — roughly half a foot of sea level rise in the Gulf since 2010 — makes storm surge and coastal fl ooding much worse. Residents of low-lying areas in the Tampa Bay area have been told to leave their homes, and Tampa Mayor Jane Castor announced bluntly: "If you choose to stay in one of those evacuation areas, you're going to die."

Many Republicans are reluctant even to acknowledge climate change, much less do anything about it, because of politics, not physics.

Four of the states that suff ered fatalities and major damage from Helene — Florida, Georgia, South Carolina and Tennessee — have Republican governors and legislative majorities. Given all the death and destruction, you might think those officials would be clamoring for urgent action.

But the GOP's unchallenged leader, Donald Trump, has famously called climate change a "hoax" and frequently rails against clean-energy power sources such as solar and wind. He says he would dismantle the tax credits and incentives that encourage moving away from fossil fuels, vowing that his energy policy would be "drill, baby, drill."

In a July 2023 poll, The Washington Post found that 55% of Republicans and GOP-leaning independents believed that human activity is "causing changes to the world's climate, including an increase in average temperature." That is far less than the 93% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents who believe in climate change, but it's still a majority.

Those numbers suggest that Republican voters might be prepared to support policies to mitigate and adapt to climate change if the party's leaders proposed them. But GOP elected officials must take their cues from Trump, lest he turn on them.

Meanwhile, Helene and Milton and the supercharged hurricanes that will follow do not care whether the states they plow through are red or blue. Nor do the droughts, the wildfires or the punishing heat waves. Whether we like it or not, climate change is an area of common ground: We're all in this together.

Robinson writes for The Washington Post: eugenerobinson@washpost.com.

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Caldwell, Catawba blood drives set

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: SPECIAL TO THE RECORD | Section: News | 355 Words OpenURL Link

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, our teams are also on the ground providing vital relief — like food, water, shelter and support — in communities devastated by Hurricane Helene. Anyone able to help those impacted by disasters big and small across the country, like Helene, consider making a gift of any amount.

All who come to give blood, platelets or plasma Oct. 1-31 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.

Granite Falls,,

•Oct. 24: 3-7 p.m., Dudley Shoals Elementary School Gym, 1500 Dudley Shoals Road

Lenoir

- "• Oct. 17: 3-7:30 p.m., Trinity United Methodist Church Lenoir, 901 Seehorn Road "
- •Oct. 19: 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Gamewell United Methodist Church, 2897 Morganton Blvd.

Claremont "

•Oct. 29: 1:30-6 p.m., Bethel Lutheran Church, 5759 Bolick Road

Conover

"•Oct. 14: 2:30-7 p.m., St. Johns Lutheran Church, 2126 St Johns Church Road

Hickory

- Oct. 21: 2-6:30 p.m., St. Stephens Lutheran Church ELCA, 2259 12th Ave. "
- Oct. 24: 2:30-7 p.m., Corinth Reformed Bost Hall, 150 16th Ave. NW "
- Oct. 31: 4-8 p.m., Valley Hills Mall, 1960 Highway 70 SE

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Catawba County fall sports schedules get more breathing room in wake of Hurricane Helene

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: BRYANT ROCHE Staff ReporterGreensboro News & Record | Section: High School | 796 Words OpenURL Link

The North Carolina High School Athletic Association has changed its fall sports calendar in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Helene in western North Carolina.

"Changes to the fall calendar are difficult as well as complex but necessary," NCHSAA president Stephen Gainey and association commissioner Que Tucker said in a joint statement. "Keeping our student-athletes safe as we try to minimize risk of injury was central to any decisions made. We commend the work of the NCHSAA staff in its research, the Board of Directors in making time to consider these changes and the willingness of our host partners to accommodate any changes and make their venues available."

The football schedule has been pushed back a week for each round. State championships will occur on Dec. 20 and 21. The reporting deadline has been moved from Nov. 1 to Nov. 9, with seeding occurring on Nov. 10. The first round is scheduled for Nov. 15 and subsequent round following each week.

The new state championship football schedule conflicts with the annual HAECO Invitational basketball tournament, currently scheduled for Dec. 19-21. Of the participating schools, Greensboro Day, an NCISAA member, is the only one of the eight participants that doesn't have football.

Dudley is likely to be affected the most. While basketball hasn't begun, based on last year's rosters, four projected key players — Jerron Blackwell, CJ Neely, Nasir Newkirk and Andrew Rogers — are also key starters for the Dudley football team which is 6-0.

The Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas is also scheduled for Dec. 21, with Blackwell and Newkirk having been selected to play.

The North Carolina Coaches Association said its East-West All-Star Game in Greensboro is still scheduled for Dec. 22. The NCCA said that players chosen for that game and are involved in the NCHSAA state championships will be replaced, and that head coaches for the all-star game will be replaced by an assistant and reassigned for the 2026 game.

Dudley coach Steven Davis was selected to coach the West team, and Southeast Guilford coach Earl Bates is an assistant. Player rosters for this game have not been announced.

The Frank Spencer Holiday Classic, a traditional Winston-Salem boys basketball tournament, is scheduled for Dec. 18-21. Mount Tabor's Virginia Tech recruit Shamarius Peterkin has excelled in both football and basketball for the Spartans.

The NCHSAA is allowing teams to participate in one additional contest for all sports with a season limit. In this case, the contest must receive prior approval from the NCHSAA. It can't exceed daily or weekly limitations and the contest can't exceed the season limit for both schools. Statistics from the added game cannot be entered into MaxPreps.

The volleyball reporting deadline has been moved back three days to Oct. 19 with seeding to be announced on the next day. The new schedule puts the first round on Oct. 22, the second round on Oct. 24, the third round Oct. 26 and the fourth round on Oct. 29. Regionals will be on Oct. 31 and state championships on Nov. 2.

The weekly limitation on volleyball has been modified to allow for eight matches to make up for postponements, but

the weekly limitation remains the same.

The boys soccer reporting deadline has been moved from Nov. 31 to Nov. 6, with seeding on Nov. 7. The first round of the playoffs is set for Nov. 9, the second round Nov. 12, the third on Nov. 14 and the fourth on Nov. 16. Regionals are set for Nov. 19 and state championships are to take place on Nov. 22 and 23. The weekly limitation is modified to make up games but can't exceed four in a week, with the daily limitation being the same.

The girls tennis individual tournament reporting deadline is the only one that remains on the same day, Oct. 14, but the time has been shifted from 3 p.m. to 11:59 p.m. Regionals are on Oct. 18 and 19 and the state championships are on Oct. 25 and 26. However, the dual team reporting deadline has been modified from Oct. 10 to Oct. 17, with seeding on Oct. 18. The first round is on Oct. 21 with the second round two days later. The third round is set for the 28 and the fourth on Oct. 30. Regionals are to be held on Nov. 5 and state championships on Nov. 9.

The cross country reporting deadline has been pushed back three days from Oct. 22. Regionals are to be held on Oct. 26 and state championships on Nov. 2.

Cheerleading and girls golf are the only sports not to undergo a calendar change, but for girls golf, the minimum number of nine-hole rounds to qualify for regionals is revised from five to three.

The association didn't announce any changes for winter or spring sports. For state playoffs, there have been no venue changes.

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Harrison Blount Weathers

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 704 Words OpenURL Link

Harrison Blount Weathers, 55, of Roswell, GA, died peacefully in his sleep on Wednesday, October 2, 2024, from congenital heart failure following a long illness.

Born May 21, 1969, in Hickory, NC, to Barbara Cantrell Weathers and Carroll Wayland Weathers, Jr., Harrison grew up in Hickory and graduated from Hickory High School in 1988. After high school, Harrison studied business at NC State University before transferring to Appalachian State University, where he graduated with a B.S. in History with a Minor in Political Science in 1994.

Harrison spent his entire professional career in the furniture industry, where he served in sales positions with Bassett Furniture industries, Magnussen Furniture and spent more than thirteen years with Alabama-based Harden Manufacturing.

Blessed with natural athleticism, Harrison grew up on the playing fields of Hickory's recreation leagues in baseball, football, and basketball, as well as the corresponding organized team opportunities his elementary, middle, and high schools provided. Once named, "The Home Run King" by the Hickory Daily Record's Sports Editor after yet another effortless night at bat while playing for Hickory High, Harrison took the praise in stride, barely noticing the accolades that came so frequently to him. In addition to his love of team sports, Harrison was just as often found swimming or water skiing on Lake Hickory, or playing a round of golf at Lake Hickory Country Club. It was more the norm, rather than the exception, to have him finish a golf match in an afternoon, then head over to a Legion baseball game on the same summer night, his motivation for the next event energizing his ability to complete it.

Harrison's competitive nature wasn't limited to athletics, he was also a studied and gifted competitor of board games of all kinds, with an affection for Checkers and a lethal win strategy with Chess. His joy for sporting victories of all kinds that came so easily to him were rarely mentioned, such was his humility for the gifts so freely given to him. Harrison loved his family's vacation home in Blowing Rock, NC, spending time in the Outer Banks of NC, and fishing in both places with his father and big brother. Harrison had a driving curiosity which was met in equal measure by a sharp and gifted intellect. A lifelong reader and passionate historian, Harrison devoured documentaries and volumes of world history and political events which he could recall by memory, reciting supporting dates, figures, places, and events without pause. He had also begun a recent study of biblical history to correspond with his Christian faith's own daily devotional time and Bible study meetings. Serving as the Weathers family's "Google," Harrison was a reliable resource for facts, where other members' memories grew fuzzy.

Of all the gifts Harrison possessed, the greatest wasn't his mind or his muscle, but the limitless expanse of his heart. He was quick to extend sincere praise or encouragement, and was as eager to help a loved one as he was a stranger in need with whatever resources he had at the given moment. Quick to forgive, and as quick to ask for forgiveness if a disagreement arose, he was a born mediator and peace maker. Loyal, devoted, compassionate, and kind, and filled with laughter and a brilliant sense of humor. Beloved son, brother, friend, and proud and loving father to the apple of his eye, his talented, Audrey. He was fiercely loved and unconditionally adored.

Harrison joins in Heaven his mother, Barbara, and father, Carroll, as well as his big brother, Carroll Wayland Weathers, III. He is survived by daughter, Audrey McLean Weathers, and former wife, Kathryn Cathey Weathers, both of Roswell, GA; brother, William Charles Weathers (Sarah) of Mt. Pleasant, SC; sister, Grace Weathers Saydlowski (John) of Charlotte, NC; and several adoring aunts, uncles, cousins, nieces, and a nephew.

A funeral service will be held at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Hickory, NC, at 2 p.m., Sunday, October 13th, officiated by the Rev. Monica Childers. The family will receive friends and guests immediately following the service

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Weathers, Harrison

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: Obituaries | 709 Words OpenURL Link

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A funeral service will be held at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, Hickory, NC, at 2 p.m., Sunday, October 13th, officiated by the Rev. Monica Childers. The family will receive friends and guests immediately following the service in the church parlor. In lieu of flowers, gifts can be made to the St. Luke's United Methodist Church Hurricane Helene relief fund: https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z47M/campaign/C-154ZK, or the Appalachian State University Hurricane Helene relief fund: https://securelb.imodules.com/s/1727/cg20/form.aspx? sid=1727&gid=2&pgid=392&cid=1011&dids=645&bledit=1&sort=1.

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Alex Lee donating \$500K to hurricane relief

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: Staff Writer | Section: News | 259 Words OpenURL Link

Alex Lee, the parent company of Lowes Foods, Kj's Market, MDI, W. Lee Flowers, Souto Foods, and Import Mex, announced that it will be donating \$500,000 to agencies actively responding to those affected by Hurricane Helene.

These agencies include Feeding America affiliates serving the impacted areas in the Carolinas and Georgia, and the Red Cross.

"As a company based in the Carolinas, we see the need firsthand," Brian George, president and CEO of Alex Lee, said in a news release.

"We have worked with our vendors and partner agencies to get urgent supplies to the affected areas, but we know that a monetary donation is the most efficient way for these agencies to have the biggest impact. We also know our guests want to make a difference, so we are accepting donations for the Red Cross at our registers. These organizations are equipped with the experience and infrastructure to most effectively help those in need."

Founded in 1931, Hickory-based Alex Lee is a family-owned and operated company that employs approximately 15,000 people. It serves as the parent company of Merchants Distributors, LLC, which provides full-service, wholesale distribution to supermarkets; Souto Foods, a distributor of authentic Hispanic foods; and Import Mex, a distributor of Mexican and Central American products. Alex Lee is also the parent company of Lowes Foods, which includes 82 full-service grocery stores in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. In addition, Alex Lee, Inc. is the parent company of W. Lee Flowers & Company, which operates approximately 60 IGA and KJ's Market grocery stores and provides wholesale distribution to supermarkets.

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Chapel Hill writer: The great floods of 1916 and 2024

October 10, 2024 | Hickory Daily Record (NC) Author: D.G. Martin | Section: Column | 720 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.

"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 restaurant 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 Oct. 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: A selection from "River Road" 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 thing not tied down — and many things that were.

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