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December 2025 • VOLUME 21 NUMBER 2

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Laura offers fashion tips
for the holiday season

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Development News

Another E.R. might be coming to Cornelius

BY DAVE VIESER

How many emergency rooms is enough? Cornelius may soon find out.

Novant is proposing an 11,400-square-foot freestanding emergency room on Holiday Lane in Cornelius, just northeast of Exit 28 and roughly two miles north of the new Atrium ER.

A public hearing on Novant's request for a certificate of need will be conducted by the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. Hospitals must obtain a CON because the state regulates the growth of medical facilities to ensure need, control costs and protect access to care.

The \$16.5 million project is expected to be completed in January 2028. The hearing will be held at 10 a.m. Dec. 18 in Community Room B at the Allegra Westbrooks Regional Library, 2412 Beatties Ford Road in Charlotte.

Developers have also filed a conditional zoning request with the Town of Cornelius. The site was previously approved for a hotel. Elevations submitted with the zoning request show a one-story building with the ambulance entrance located off the roundabout under construction on Holiday Lane north of Catawba Avenue.

Currently, there are four emergency rooms in the immediate area:

- Novant Health Huntersville at Exit 23
- Atrium Health Huntersville at Exit 25
- Atrium Health Lake Norman between Exits 25 and 28
- Duke Health Lake Norman at Exit 33

Westmoreland proposal

Earlier this fall, Novant filed rezoning paperwork to build a 20,000-square-foot freestanding urgent care and same-day surgery center on Westmoreland Road, where a daycare center had previously been approved.

The 4.8-acre site, made up of two tax parcels, sits on the north side of Westmoreland Road near the edge of the long-stalled Alexander Farms property and about a quarter-mile east of the Wes Catawba Avenue intersection.

The property is currently vacant but once included a private home that was demolished several years ago.

What's next

Both projects are in early planning stages and will require a full series of local presentations and public hearings before the Planning Board and Town Board. No meeting dates have been set.



Novant is proposing an 11,400-square-foot freestanding emergency room roughly two miles north of the new Atrium emergency room.

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Cover photo courtesy
Town of Cornelius

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Cornelius Today, PO Box 1226, Cornelius, NC 28031-1226.
Telephone: 704-953-3381

Cornelius Today is locally owned and operated and proudly based in Cornelius.

Back issues: Payable by VISA and MASTERCARD ONLY. \$5.00 (if available); \$10 to mail.
Reprints: Reprints on high-quality, framable stock are available, starting at \$65
Photos: \$200.

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New mayor and town board get to work following election

BY DAVE VIESER

When the polls closed after the election two years ago, mayoral candidate Denis Bilodeau watched anxiously as results came in from the Board of Elections. At the end of the night, the differential was only 13 votes, and after an official recount, he lost the race to Mayor Woody Washam by a mere five votes.

Fast-forward to this year's election. Bilodeau once again ran for mayor against Washam and newcomer Kenny Campbell. But this year, as the early results came in, Bilodeau jumped out to a sizable lead that he never relinquished. The final official margin of victory was 510 votes.

Bilodeau said he was concerned early in the campaign because the slate of popular commissioners — including four incumbents — aligned closely with Washam. Also Campbell, an outside candidate, would still carry some portion of the vote.

"I thought the obstacles might be too difficult to overcome," Bilodeau said. "However, as my campaign moved forward, I received an incredible amount of positive feedback, encouragement and grassroots support for change. By the time we reached Election Day, I was actually feeling confident."

What's next?

Now armed with a vote of confidence, Bilodeau has his sights set on delivering on his campaign promises, including improving traffic flow.

"It is time to move ideas to action," he said. "I will immediately bring more visibility and support to our citizen-led Transportation Advisory Board, which has a significant list of improvement ideas that are affordable and actionable in the near term."

He also pointed to improving public safety and preserving green space, such as the recent acquisition of acreage on Bailey Road.

"We have a limited opportunity to preserve green space within our town's 13 square miles," he said. "I applaud the current board's recent successful land purchase. I will ask our town staff and board to pursue additional opportunities."



Photos by Jason Benavides

Return of Furcht

Commissioner-elect Colin Furcht, who previously ran as part of the Washam slate when he lost his bid for re-election in 2023, will occupy the board seat vacated by Commissioner Scott Higgins, who chose not to run again.



Furcht

"It's humbling to be back," Furcht said. "I loved being

part of this town as a commissioner before, and I'm so grateful to have the community's trust again."

Like Bilodeau and all the candidates, Furcht said traffic was the top issue he heard about from residents during his campaign.

"I don't think there is any question this is our top challenge," he said. "We will continue to drive the existing road projects to completion by staying close to DOT and potentially using the new sales-tax revenues for ancillary road enhancements, like we did at Statesville Road and Westmoreland Avenue."

Key issues facing the town

Outgoing elected officials will be recognized during the town board meeting on Dec. 1, after which the new board will be sworn in.

There are many long-term issues leaders will tackle during the next two years, but here are some they will face on day one:

Transportation sales-tax referendum: With the sales-tax increase approved, it will be up to the board and mayor to ensure the town is well-represented as project planning unfolds. Many voters who opposed the measure did so with lingering frustration over the last sales-tax increase, feeling that the North Mecklenburg towns did not get their fair share of funds or projects.

Nantz Avenue/Sunset Cove project: This proposal, paused during the summer, is back on the town's proposed development list. It includes an event venue on a residential waterside section of Nantz Avenue. Neighborhood opposition has been strong for the past six months, and all eyes will be on how the new mayor and board handle it. Bilodeau strongly opposed it during his campaign.

Westmoreland medical facility: Also on the horizon are recently submitted proposals for an urgent care medical facility on Westmoreland Road and an emergency room on Exit 28.

Meet the Mayor

Denis Bilodeau has lived in Cornelius for 24 years, during which he served three terms as a town commissioner, including his most recent as mayor pro tem.

He served as a founding board member of the Cain Center for the Arts, past president of the Peninsula Property Owners Association, and fundraising chair for Big Day at the Lake.

Bilodeau attended the University of Connecticut and, before retirement, served as an executive at The Hartford Insurance Group, OTC Insurance Agency and Aquesta Insurance Services. He has been married to his wife, Chantal, for 42 years. They have two adult children and three grandchildren.



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Downtown residents speak out against master plan

BY JON SHOW
The future of the 2050 Downtown Master Plan could be in limbo after nearly two dozen Cornelius residents — primarily from the downtown area — voiced concerns about the proposal during a presentation by town officials at the Nov. 17 board meeting. At the conclusion of the public hearing the Town Board postponed the vote to its Jan. 20 meeting. Town staff and consultants presented the master plan to those in attendance, noting it was drafted over 18 months with input from residents, local businesses and planning experts.

Taking issue
Residents said they counted 46 properties that could be impacted by concepts outlined in the master plan. Many speakers said they supported the idea of a new master plan but



opposed it in its current form. Road extensions, roundabouts and traffic-flow changes to draw traffic off Catawba Avenue and Main Street in into the

neighborhoods drew strong opposition. For example, a map in the plan shows an extension of Washam Street to Academy Street that appears to run through the middle of Nancy Archer's 115-year-old home on Catawba Avenue. "The plan in its current form destroys the heart of Old Cornelius," she said. "Routing traffic through the neighborhoods is not a safe option, in my opinion." Several speakers also pointed to already narrow streets where increased traffic would be expected, particularly around Cornelius Elementary School, where morning and afternoon drop-off already causes significant backups. "That street is not built for Cornelius Elementary mommy traffic," said Moninda Eslick of Pinyon Drive. "I have dealt with it trying to get to the grocery

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Happy Holidays from our family to yours!



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Looking ahead to 2026, I'm excited, energized, and ready for another incredible year—made possible only because of the trust and support of the amazing people in my life. Thank you for allowing me to do what I love every single day.

In the spirit of giving, we are also proud to serve as an official Toys for Tots drop-off location this holiday season.

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Happy holidays from our family to yours!



Michelle Rhyne
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McAdenville transforms into Christmas Town USA each December / Adobe Stock photo

Bright Lights, Small City

One of the great holiday experiences in North Carolina is visiting the holiday wonderland of McAdenville, which transforms into Christmas Town USA each December. Here are a few tips on how to experience the lights without the headaches.

Go during the week and early in the month

The lights in McAdenville turn on each evening at 5:30 pm and shut off at 10:00 pm. This small town draws large numbers of visitors, which means traffic and parking can be challenging, especially in mid- to late-December and on weekends. If you have flexibility, choose a Monday-Thursday early in the month.

Arrive before the lights come on

Arriving before the lights sparkle gives you time to park, stroll while it's still light, grab dinner or a hot drink, and be ready when the lights begin. After the lights turn on, walk or slowly drive the main route to fully soak in the display.

Decide walking vs driving and pick your route

You can either walk or drive through

the display. Walking allows you to appreciate more detail, like decorated homes and the sound of holiday chimes, while driving is slower but easier for some visitors.

There is essentially one route through town, about 1.3 miles long. Choose your entry and exit carefully: access via I-85 Exit 22 or 23 from Charlotte or Gastonia, but note that some exits may close when traffic backs up. For a more relaxed pace, park and walk; if you plan to drive through, allow extra time for slow traffic.

Parking and traffic – plan ahead

Public parking is limited, with the Poplar Street and Elm Street lots offering the best availability. Some roads, like Hickory Grove Road and Riverside Drive, do not permit parking. Expect heavy traffic even on weekdays, so arriving earlier helps. Park early, turn off

your lights if waiting, and bring something warm to stay comfortable.

Respect the residents

The decorated homes are private residences. Walking is allowed on sidewalks, but avoid crossing lawns, knocking on doors, or making excessive noise. The display is free to the public, but visitors should be courteous, keep dogs leashed, and manage volume responsibly.

Dress for the weather and bring layers

December evenings can be chilly, especially when standing still to watch the lights. Layers, hats, gloves, or even a blanket can make the experience more comfortable. Consider carrying a thermos or stopping at a café for hot chocolate during your visit.

Grab dinner or a drink in town

McAdenville offers a handful of dining options, like Terra Mia Ristorante or The River Room. There are also brewery options, such as 115 Craft. Arriving early enough to enjoy a meal or drink before the display helps make the evening more relaxed.

Don't forget shopping

Main Street has charming independent shops, including candy stores and nostalgic boutiques. The town's Christmas tradition began in the 1950s, and it has maintained its small-town charm. Arrive early while it's still daylight to browse shops and enjoy the town's atmosphere before the lights turn on.

Timing your visit and special events

The display runs nightly from December 1–26, between 5:30 pm and 10:00 pm. Special events, like the Tree Lighting Ceremony kick off the season. If you want to catch the tree lighting or a parade, check the town's website for the schedule.

Capture the moment — but live it too

With over 250 evergreen trees and more than half a million lights, the display is truly impressive. Great photo spots include the lake with its fountain and floating Christmas trees, as well as the bell tower area. Bring a camera or smartphone with good low-light capability, but also take time to pause and enjoy the experience rather than rushing to get the perfect shot.

Holiday Events

Looking for a few things to do this holiday season? We have you covered. Make sure to check online event listings for any changes.

Light Up Cornelius

When: Saturday, November 29 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Where: Downtown Cornelius

What to expect: Tree lighting ceremony, children's activities, train display, sled hill, trackless train rides, food & drink, visit from Santa & Mrs. Claus.

Tips: Although this is just before December, many people treat it as the local holiday kickoff—arrive by 4:00 p.m. to enjoy the full program. Bring a blanket for younger children, and parking downtown fills early.

Why it's great: A free and family friendly community event that sets a warm holiday tone right in Cornelius.

Christmas in Davidson

When: Thursday, December 4 through Saturday, December 6, each evening from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Where: Downtown Davidson, Main Street

What to expect: Illuminated streets, artisan village, children's craft area, holiday light show, live entertainment, strolling through shops, food and beverage vendors.

Tips: Combine with the holiday parade on December 6 for a full holiday outing. Plan dinner or coffee in Davidson, then stroll through the festival atmosphere after dark. Comfortable shoes recommended.

Why it's great: A charming small town holiday experience with plenty of photo ops and family friendly ambiance.

43rd Annual North Mecklenburg Holiday Parade

When: Saturday, December 6 at 1:00 p.m.

Where: Begins on Main Street in Davidson and ends in downtown Cornelius.

What to expect: A festive two-mile parade route, featuring floats, marching bands, holiday décor, celebration of the season's spirit.

Tips: Arrive early to secure good curbside viewing, especially toward



LKN Lighted Christmas Boat Parade

the Cornelius end of the route. Bring chairs or blankets for children and dress warmly.

Why it's great: A well-established local tradition that gets the holiday momentum going in the Lake Norman area.

Menorah Lighting at Birkdale Village

When: Sunday, December 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Where: Birkdale Village

What to expect: Traditional menorah lighting ceremony with children's crafts, donuts, latkes, chocolate gelt, and family-friendly celebration of Hanukkah.

Tips: This event marks the first night of Hanukkah — plan to attend early around 5:00 p.m. Great opportunity for a community celebration and inclusive holiday gathering. Free to attend.

Why it's great: An excellent way to join a community Hanukkah celebration with atmosphere, food, and meaningful tradition—all within easy reach

Annual Lake Norman Lighted Christmas Boat Parade

When: Saturday, December 20, 2025 at 5:30 p.m.

Where: On Lake Norman — route begins at Blythe Landing, proceeds to Ramsey Creek Park, then to Peninsula Yacht Club and finishes at Duke Energy Explorium.

What to expect: Boats decked out in holiday lights, toy donation drive, viewing from lakeside parks or dining venues overlooking the parade route.

Tips: Dress warmly, bring a thermos of hot cocoa, arrive early for a prime viewing spot on the lakefront, parking may fill. Consider viewing from Ramsey Creek Park or the Explorium for best vantage.

Why it's great: A festive holiday event combining waterfront scenery, lights and community giving — perfect for a memorable evening outing.



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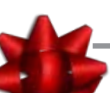
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Buying land a priority for Cornelius Parks and Rec

BY MARK WASHBURN
Rapid development — a Cornelius constant for more than two decades — is putting a squeeze on the town's ambitions for more parkland. "Land is No. 1," said Troy Fitzsimmons, Cornelius Parks and Recreation director, in a presentation to the News-makers Breakfast on Nov. 13 at The Peninsula Club.

Cornelius is looking for two more 100-acre tracts for future parkland, Fitzsimmons said, but the west side of town is so developed that prospects are likely to be on the east side.

"A park does not typically go on a postage-stamp-size tract," said Fitzsimmons, who has been in his job for 18 years. About half the \$20 million bond issue for parks passed in 2024 will likely go toward land acquisition, he said.

Projections show that Cornelius will be mostly built out by 2035. "Now is the time," Fitzsimmons said, "to go get that land."

Already, Cornelius has 13 town parks including Bailey Road Park, Jetton Road Neighborhood Park and Robbins Park. Mecklenburg County also operates three parks in the town.

Busy parks

Those parks in Cornelius are packed, Fitzsimmons said. New tennis and pickleball courts at Bailey Road Park are heavily used, and there is strong demand for more facilities, he said. There are also advocates for lacrosse and rugby venues.

Passive recreation — hiking trails, picnic areas and wildlife watching — is particularly popular in the family-oriented town. "Cornelius is a really, really active community," he said. "It wants



Above: Troy Fitzsimmons, Cornelius Parks and Recreation director



Left: Connie Colson, Falcons Rugby Club Director of Operations
Photos by Jason Benavides

quit."

Greenways are particularly cost-efficient because once built, he said, maintenance responsibility is handed over to Mecklenburg County.

One of Cornelius' signature amenities is the so-called Emerald Necklace, a 13-mile loop trail system connecting parks, schools and retail areas. It also links with greenways in neighboring Davidson and Huntersville.

About three-quarters of the trail is open. The remaining miles are expected to be done by 2027.

Drawing inspiration

If there is rivalry for excellence in parks with bordering North Meck-

lenburg towns and the county, Fitzsimmons said, it is a friendly one. Huntersville, Davidson and the county partner with Cornelius on projects and greenways to get the most from their spending.

Asked what other park networks he took inspiration from, Fitzsimmons admitted that he admired that of Cary, the wealthy Raleigh suburb.

"I hate to admit this," he said, "but they have the best park system in the state. I will put us up against anyone else."

One surprising aspect of the town's commitment to parks is economic impact, Fitzsimmons said. Land values increase about 9 percent for homes within 500 feet of a park, and businesses making relocation decisions cite quality parks among the top three things they consider.

Bailey Road Park draws thousands of youths from across the region for various tournaments, generating hundreds of thousands of dollars for local hospitality businesses, he said. Pickleball and tennis tournaments are expected to increase at the park as well.

Indianapolis, he said, demonstrated what a powerful driver amateur sports tournaments can be to the local economy. He said he wants Cornelius to be a regional player in that space and has been lobbying the county to help.

"We need a North Mecklenburg Sportsplex like Matthews has," Fitzsimmons said. Run by the county, the Matthews Sportsplex has 11 lighted multiuse fields, including nine with synthetic turf.

One of the natural-grass fields is surrounded by a 5,000-seat stadium with a scoreboard, conference room and locker rooms.

Among facilities Parks and Recreation provides that are unique to Cornelius are two fishing piers, a gaga pit (it's like dodgeball), 74 community garden plots and one splash pad. Fitzsimmons said programs through his agency and partners served 111,000 participants last year.

ture," he said. "We can't do one without the other."

Board members noted the plan has been available to the public for months and encouraged residents to use the additional time to offer feedback.

"We heard you, and we want to give you more time," said Commissioner Todd Sansbury. "Please take advantage of that, with the understanding that we need to set a deadline and eventually we need to move forward."

"We have to address the infrastruc-

Hough High basketball is a family affair for the Maye boys

Beau Maye surely made his parents proud last spring, landing his first job before he even finished his master's degree at the University of North Carolina.

What made it even sweeter for the Maye family was that he got to return to a place he loves — home.

This winter, Maye is pacing the sidelines as the newest coach of the Hough High School boys basketball team, where he once excelled as a player.

"I love where I'm from," said Maye, whose father, Mark, joins him on the bench as an assistant. "I love this area and this community and everything it's done for me, and that's why I wanted to come back."

Hough High is something of a family affair for the Maye boys.

The oldest, Luke, starred for Hough before winning an NCAA championship at UNC. Next up was Cole, who excelled in baseball at Hough and won a national championship at the University of Florida.

Beau, the youngest, was an all-conference, two-time captain for the Huskies, averaging 16 points a game as a junior before multiple knee surgeries derailed his dream of playing in college.

Learning the ropes

Beau attended UNC to pursue a career in teaching and became a walk-on for the Tar Heels at the urging of head coach Hubert Davis. Another knee surgery forced him to step away after one season, and he spent his final two years working under Davis as a graduate assistant.



New Hough High School basketball coach Beau Maye

Not a bad mentor for a new coach.

"Coach Davis has so much passion for the sport, but even more than that, he loves his players and the place he coaches," Maye said. "He always says, 'Love what you're doing, where you're doing it, and the people you're doing it with.'"

Maye recounts the mantra with the youthful exuberance you'd expect from someone at the outset of his career.

"I'm about as fresh out of college as you can be, and I see that as a strength," he said. "It's cool to be able to relate with the players in that sense."

One lesson he learned from Davis that he has brought to Hough: no cursing on the court.

"I love coaching basketball and teach-

ing, but I'm in the business of building young men," he said. "I want them to represent this community, and I want them to be upstanding young men."

Looking ahead

Maye takes over a young team that went 13-13 last year and 6-8 in conference play, and graduated its top three scorers.

The roster returns only four varsity players and one starter from last season: 6-foot-6 junior forward/center John Slusher, who averaged 5.9 points and 4.7 rebounds a season ago.

Maye expects big things from 6-foot-3 junior guard Tre Ratliff and 6-foot sophomore point guard Jaylen Byers,

among others.

While statewide conference realignment has posed issues for other Hough sports, it hasn't been as impactful in basketball.

The Huskies no longer have two matchups against perennial powerhouse North Meck, for example, but added home-and-away conference games against South Meck, always a tough opponent.

Brotherly love

This season the Huskies will also face Myers Park, where the second-youngest Maye brother, Drake, was a standout basketball and football player after transferring from Hough his freshman year.

Asked who Drake — who went on to star in football at UNC and in the NFL — would be rooting for when the Huskies face the Mustangs, Beau didn't hesitate.

"He loves Myers Park, but he's rooting for Hough," he said, before pausing. "If you asked him, he may say something different, so it might be wishful thinking on my part."

Beau said he hears from his brothers frequently about the upcoming season.

"They've taken a pretty big interest in it, which is a testament to how close we are and how much they care about this place," he said. "You get me, and you get the whole Maye family. We all want to give back to this community."

Did his brothers offer any advice?

"Drake is never short on tips," he said, laughing.

Continued from **PAGE 6**

store during pickup, and those mommies don't budge."

Residents also cited concerns about preserving the look and feel of the Catawba Avenue corridor into downtown, potential safety issues related to relocating the police station, and the possible loss of an affordable grocery store with-in walking distance of their homes.

Sonny Burgess of Millard Street was the final speaker during the 45-minute

public comment session, urging commissioners to take residents' feedback seriously before voting.

"Our voices are speaking to you, and now it's up to you whether you want to listen," he said.

Delaying the vote

Following the public comments, the full board agreed that additional clarification was needed before they were ready to decide on the plan.

"We do appreciate your comments

and concerns, and we have heard that more explanation is needed," said Mayor Pro Tem Scott Higgins, who presided in the absence of Mayor Woody Washam.

Commissioner Michael Osborne added that some concerns, such as the relocation of the police station, could easily be addressed with a satellite station. But others, such as traffic routing, would be unavoidable if the town wants a true destination-style downtown.

"We have to address the infrastruc-



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Visitor's bureau recognized with award

Visit Lake Norman received an award from the North Carolina Travel Industry Association.

The organization, which promotes tourism in the Lake Norman area, won a Gold Marketing Achievement Award in the Community Stakeholders category for its monthly newsletter highlighting seasonal blogs, partner spotlights and upcoming events.

"We're thrilled to receive this award; it really reflects our dedication to keeping the Lake Norman community informed and inspired," said Sally Ashworth, CEO of Visit Lake Norman. "Through our newsletter, we get to share the stories that matter and connect people to everything that makes this area so special."

The annual awards program invites entries from all 100 North Carolina counties and recognizes excellence in



travel and tourism marketing. The selection committee includes tourism experts from Virginia and the Carolinas.

Hough marching band nets trophies

The Hough High School Marching Band (pictured) wrapped up its fall competition season, earning a total of 18 trophies. That tally included seven awards in its final performance at East Burke, where the band took first place in overall, color guard, musical effect, visual effect and general effect categories.

During competition season, Hough students performed Legends of the North, a show inspired by Norse myths

that takes audiences on a journey through the tales of Yggdrasil, the fierce wolves Hati and Skoll, and the rebirth of Ragnarök. The performance featured music by noted composers Christopher Tin and John Powell, with soloists Erik Middelthon on alto saxophone and senior DeAndra Molina on flute.

Leaf vacuums cometh

The town's leaf collection trucks are making their rounds. If you miss the first pass, they will take multiple trips through neighborhoods until the end of January, but exact arrival times are uncertain. The town does not post a pickup schedule, but truck locations can be tracked on the town website.

Residents are not allowed to dump yard waste in trash collection boxes or burn leaves in Mecklenburg County. If you miss the leaf truck, Waste Pro will collect up to 20 clear bags of leaves per week.

Environmentalists caution lakeside residents not to blow or dump leaves into Lake Norman, as it can encourage algal blooms and harm bottom-dwelling wildlife. It can also cover potential hazards just below the water's surface.

Popular Birkdale spot will open for brunch on Sundays

Foxcroft Food & Wine in Birkdale Village is now open for brunch on Sundays from noon to 4 p.m.

The menu features unique dishes like a smoked salmon plate with jammy eggs and horseradish-caper sauce, chicken and waffles with pimento cheese and hot honey syrup, and a green shakshuka with braised Swiss chard, tomatillos, baked eggs, avocado and goat cheese. Burgers and fried chicken sandwiches are also available, and diners can order house-made donuts.

Specialty drinks include a mimosa flight, sangria pitchers, bloody marys, build-your-own spritzes and bottles of champagne.

Cornelius nonprofits join forces to help kids

Bags of Hope, a Cornelius-based nonprofit that provides weekend food bags to students, is partnering with Give Back A Back Pack in its mission to fight childhood hunger in the Lake Norman region.

Founded through a collaboration of three local churches, Bags of Hope supplies weekend meals to more than 750 students at 34 schools across Mecklenburg, Cabarrus and Iredell counties. Last school year, the organization provided 26,251 bags of food — totaling 221,739 meals — to nearly 1,000 students.

Give Back A Back Pack, founded by Cornelius resident Chad O'Brien, donates school supplies and helps organize class trips and other school programs. Since its founding, the organization has contributed more than \$100,000 through donations from friends, family and corporate sponsors to support children in need.

Working together, the two nonprofits hope to expand their reach and feed even more food-insecure children.

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TRIM DEAD TREE LIMBS: High winds or the weight of snow and ice can cause large tree branches or entire trees to fall. This could result in significant damage to your roof, deck, or windows, or with a tree lying in your yard. While your homeowner's policy will cover if a live tree falls on your home, it typically will not cover if the tree is dead.

REPAIR YOUR ROOF: Repair any roof damage, leaks, or holes. Snow and ice buildup on your roof can cause major problems, such as snowmelt seeping into your roof, walls, and ceilings, or the less likely incident, though still possible, an actual roof collapse.

WINTERIZE YOUR PIPES: If your interior pipes are vulnerable, they could burst when water freezes and expands. This could lead to water leaking, spraying, or even flooding into your home. You could end up with damage to your personal property and structural damage to your home. Insulate the pipes, seal air leaks, and use heat tapes to help prevent bursting.

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\$2,403,000 | 21430 Blakely Shores Drive, Cornelius

HOME SALES

***Editors Note:** We have expanded our real estate sales to include additional information like bed/bath and square footage. Due to privacy considerations we will no longer publish the names of buyers and sellers.*

Cornelius

10/28/25, \$265,000, 17119 Doe Valley Ct, 2BR/2BA, Alexander Chase, 1,315 sq ft, Built 2005

10/28/25, \$680,000, 12326 Cranberry Glades Dr, 4BR/3BA, Avery Park, 3,558 sq ft, Built 2017

10/29/25, \$500,000, 10701 Washam Potts Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, Cornelius, 2,329 sq ft, Built 1973

10/29/25, \$323,000, 9522 Cadman Ct, 2BR/2.5BA, Oakhurst, 1,476 sq ft, Built 2003



\$2,850,000 | 17509 Gillican Overlook Road, Davidson

10/29/25, \$340,000, 10033 Caldwell Depot Rd, 3BR/2BA, Caldwell Station, 1,137 sq ft, Built 2004

10/30/25, \$277,500, 17718 Caldwell Track Dr, 2BR/2.5BA, Caldwell Station, 1,318 sq ft, Built 2005

10/30/25, \$385,000, 11613 Truan Ln, 3BR/2BA, Heritage Green, 1,284 sq ft, Built 2006

10/30/25, \$800,000, 17709 Sedona Way, 3BR/2.5BA, Preston at the Lake, 1,935 sq ft, Built 2003

10/30/25, \$519,900, 8532 Westmoreland Lake Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Westmoreland, 2,227 sq ft, Built 2005

10/31/25, \$755,000, 19933 Scanmar Ln, 4BR/2.5BA, Blue Stone Harbor, 2,499 sq ft, Built 1997

10/31/25, \$980,000, 21208 Rio Oro Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Bahia Bay, 1,744 sq ft, Built 1978

10/31/25, \$950,000, 21528 Rio Oro Dr, 2BR/2BA, Bahia Bay, 1,566 sq ft, Built 1996



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Enjoy refined one-level living with beautiful Lake Norman views at **21300 Carina Lane, Cornelius, NC**. Situated on a .60-acre cul-de-sac lot, this home features hardwood floors, expansive windows, a sunroom, and a spacious kitchen that opens to the great room. The main-level primary suite offers peaceful views, while the finished basement adds a recreation room, bedroom, full bath, flex space, and workshop. An expansive deck completes this serene Cornelius retreat.



6603 LATT SPRINGS CIRCLE,
HUNTERVILLE, NC 28078 | \$799,900

Brook Eldridge | 980.907.1770



111 AQUA DRIVE,
MOORESVILLE, NC 28117 | \$1,100,000

Matt Sarver | 704.445.9977
Britt Sarver | 704.610.6806



394 KENWAY LOOP,
MOORESVILLE, NC 28117 | \$825,000

Gayle Jackson | 704.459.4628

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11/6/25, \$1,290,000, 17412 Pennington Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Robbins Park, 3,188 sq ft, Built 2013	11/6/25, \$255,000, 18605 Ruffner Dr Unit 3E, 2BR/2BA, The Terraces at Oakhurst, 945 sq ft, Built 2003	11/7/25, \$465,000, 18231 Conductor Ct, 3BR/2.5BA, Caldwell Station, 1,957 sq ft, Built 2004	11/7/25, \$3,090,000, 19040 Mary Ardrey Cir, 5BR/6BA, Patricks Purchase, 4,742 sq ft, Built 1994
11/6/25, \$540,000, 11728 Mount Argus Dr, 3BR/2BA, Baileys Glen, 1,580 sq ft, Built 2016	11/7/25, \$1,500,000, 21107 Island Forest Dr, 3BR/2BA, Island Forest, 2,323 sq ft, Built 1979	11/7/25, \$460,000, 19241 Lake Norman Cove Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Lake Norman Cove at Jetton, 2,296 sq ft, Built 2004	11/10/25, \$415,000, 21108 Townwood Dr, 3BR/2BA, Townwood Village, 1,495 sq ft, Built 1997
11/6/25, \$850,000, 12214 Bonny Oaks Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Avery Park, 4,232 sq ft, Built 2016	11/7/25, \$450,000, 21223 Pine St, 4BR/3.5BA, Cornelius, 1,576 sq ft, Built 2004	11/7/25, \$2,250,000, 20509 Island Forest Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Island Forest, 3,246 sq ft, Built 1969	11/10/25, \$350,000, 17509 Tuscany Ln, 2BR/2BA, Vineyard Point, 1,084 sq ft, Built 1995



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Congratulations to **Scott Stimson** for being ranked **#1** on the *Forbes* “**Top Next-Gen Wealth Advisors Best-in-State**” 2025 list. *Published on August 6, 2025. Rankings based on data as of March 31, 2025.*



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11/10/25, \$700,000, 18589 Vineyard Point Ln, 3BR/2BA, Vineyard Point, 1,242 sq ft, Built 1991

11/10/25, \$2,403,000, 21430 Blake-ly Shores Dr, 5BR/4.5BA, Waterford Point, 4,446 sq ft, Built 1991

11/12/25, \$485,000, 10048 Switch-yard Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Caldwell Station, 1,640 sq ft, Built 2004

11/12/25, \$375,000, 9047 Rosalyn Glen Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, Edinburgh Square, 2,028 sq ft, Built 2005

11/13/25, \$790,000, 10304 Squires Way, 5BR/3BA, Weatherstone Manor, 3,907 sq ft, Built 2003

11/14/25, \$740,000, 12632 Meet-inghouse Dr, 3BR/2BA, Baileys Glen, 2,552 sq ft, Built 2013

11/14/25, \$1,213,000, 17834 Jetton Green Loop #20, 4BR/3.5BA, Jetton Place, 3,224 sq ft, Built 2019

11/14/25, \$525,000, 20015 N Cove Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, St Philip Square, 2,120 sq ft, Built 1999

11/14/25, \$577,875, 21907 Torrence Chapel Rd, 5BR/2.5BA, Torrence Chapel Estates, 2,825 sq ft, Built 2005

11/17/25, \$835,000, 18405 Harbor-side Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Harborside Town-homes, 2,446 sq ft, Built 1998

11/18/25, \$805,000, 18937 Southport Dr, 5BR/4BA, Jetton Cove, 3,301 sq ft, Built 2004



4320435 Step into timeless elegance in this full-brick custom home located in the presti-gious lakefront community of Woodleaf. With spacious living areas, a chef’s kitchen, and a serene primary suite, this home offers comfort at every turn. The beautifully landscaped lot and three-car garage complete this exception-al property. **\$1,075,000**



4321138 This modern farmhouse on nearly 4 acres blends timeless charm with today’s comforts, offering peaceful country living right in Mooresville. An open, light-filled layout, spacious bedrooms, and a serene primary suite create the perfect retreat. Enjoy a covered deck, ample acreage, and a 3-car detached garage. **\$850,000**



COMMERCIAL



4314350 Charming Cornelius living awaits in this character-filled home on a full acre with a classic white picket fence. Gorgeous hardwoods, tin ceilings, and a renovated kitchen bring historic warmth and modern style together. A detached 2-bedroom studio, oversized garage, and flexible mixed-use zoning expand the possibilities. **\$1,050,000**



4314843 Just minutes from Uptown Charlotte, this like-new Seversville home blends modern design with effortless living. The gourmet kitchen, private office, and luxurious primary suite set the tone for comfort and style. A fenced backyard with pergola, premium finishes, and unbeatable location make this home a standout! **\$689,000**

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4313382 Enjoy the best of country living in this full-brick ranch on 7.5 peaceful acres in Lin-colnton. With expansive living space, a finished basement, and thoughtful updates throughout, this home offers room to grow and relax. A barn, fenced yard, saltwater pool, and wide-open views make this retreat truly special. **\$950,000**



4319563 Discover nearly new construction with community lake access in the heart of Davidson. High ceilings, gorgeous hardwoods, and designer finishes could be yours to enjoy. Also, a stunning Kitchen with 10-foot island and a Primary En Suite with spa-like bathroom and two separate walk-in closets. **\$579,000**



VACATION RENTALS



4321888 This beautifully appointed home in Dogwood Hills offers main-level living with room to expand upstairs. High-end applian-ces, custom cabinetry, and a spacious three-car garage elevate everyday comfort. The nearly one-acre lot provides a perfect setting for outdoor entertaining. **\$850,000**



4316094 Tucked on just over an acre, this 3-bedroom ranch offers space, charm, and room to grow. Enjoy a cozy den, large primary suite, and outdoor living from the rocking chair front porch to the private covered back deck. Close to Lake Norman and nearby towns—this one’s a keeper. **\$450,000**

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11/20/25, \$592,000, 19527 Crosstrees Ln, 3BR/2.5BA, Harborside, 2,281 sq ft, Built 1998

11/21/25, \$435,000, 18510 Victoria Bay Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Victoria Bay, 2,076 sq ft, Built 2003

11/21/25, \$1,205,000, 16500 Morecambe Dr, 5BR/4.5BA, 100 Norman Place, 3,592 sq ft, Built 1988

Davidson

10/27/25, \$1,280,000, 103 Caldwell Ln, 4BR/3.5BA, New Neighborhood/Old Davidson, 4,800 sq ft, Built 2003

10/27/25, \$2,850,000, 17509 Gillican Overlook Rd, 6BR/5BA, River Run, 7,135 sq ft, Built 2021

10/27/25, \$675,000, 950 Jetton St #3, 3BR/2BA, Spinnaker Point, 1,424 sq ft, Built 1997

10/27/25, \$255,000, 10379 Turnplow Dr, 3BR/2BA, Frazier Acres, 1,344 sq ft, Built 1990

10/28/25, \$541,000, 216 Wesser St #6, 3BR/3.5BA, Davidson Walk, 2,383 sq ft, Built 2024

10/28/25, \$505,000, 408 Catawba Ave, 4BR/3.5BA, Parkside Commons, 2,099 sq ft, Built 2024

10/29/25, \$307,255, 14124 Ryker Way, 2BR/1.5BA, Narrow Passage, 1,486 sq ft, Built 2025

10/29/25, \$500,000, 352 Catawba Ave, 3BR/3.5BA, Parkside Commons, 1,903 sq ft, Built 2025

10/29/25, \$307,455, 14120 Ryker Way, 2BR/1.5BA, Narrow Passage, 1,486 sq ft, Built 2025

10/30/25, \$232,000, 917 Shearer St, 2BR/2BA, Davidson Court, 980 sq ft, Built 2000

10/30/25, \$385,000, 11613 Truan Ln, 3BR/2BA, Heritage Green, 1,284 sq ft, Built 2006

10/30/25, \$277,500, 17718 Caldwell Track Dr, 2BR/2.5BA, Caldwell Station, 1,318 sq ft, Built 2005

10/30/25, \$307,455, 14120 Ryker Way, 2BR/1.5BA, Narrow Passage, 1,486 sq ft, Built 2025

10/31/25, \$875,000, 18832 Greyton Ln, 3BR/2.5BA, River Run, 2,640 sq ft, Built 1997

10/31/25, \$289,000, 16930 Summers Walk Blvd, 2BR/2.5BA, Summers Walk, 1,177 sq ft, Built 2007

11/4/25, \$653,000, 1238 Torrence Cir, 3BR/2BA, Davidson Landing, 1,454 sq ft, Built 1996

11/5/25, \$472,000, 10922 Zac Hill Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, Westbranch, 2,510 sq ft, Built 2018

11/6/25, \$546,723, 312 Catawba Ave, 4BR/3.5BA, Parkside Commons, 1,961 sq ft, Built 2025

11/7/25, \$425,000, 11304 Westbranch Pkwy, 3BR/2.5BA, Westbranch, 2,241 sq ft, Built 2019

11/10/25, \$2,700,000, 920 Hudson Pl, 5BR/5BA, Davidson Wood, 6,260 sq ft, Built 2012

11/12/25, \$735,000, 13428 Scanlan Way, 3BR/2.5BA, Pages Pond, 2,540 sq ft, Built 1994

11/12/25, \$315,000, 16944 Summers Walk Blvd, 2BR/2.5BA, Summers Walk, 1,182 sq ft, Built 2007

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December Events

Things to do

Here are some of the best bets around Lake Norman.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 3

Watercolor Ornament Workshop

6 pm | Dec. 3. Create a watercolor Christmas tree painting inside a brass and glass ornament. Lake Norman Brewery, Denver.

THURSDAY, DEC. 4

Owl Prowl

6 pm | Dec. 4. Dive into the nightlife of owls at the Carolina Raptor Center. Perfect for families with older children and adults alike. Carolina Raptor Center, Huntersville.

FRIDAY, DEC. 5

Scrooge in Rouge: An English Music Hall Christmas Carol - Opening

8-11 pm | Dec. 5. This quick-change version of the Charles Dickens classic is set in a Victorian music hall. Warehouse Performing Arts Center, Cornelius.

Thomas Road Band

8:30 pm | Dec. 5. Thomas Road is the leading country music act in the Carolinas. Led by singer Seth Thomas, the group is about bringing a high-octane Country music sound. Boatyard LKN, Cornelius.

SATURDAY, DEC. 6

American Legion Annual BBQ

11 am | Dec. 6. Support the Williams Lodge annual BBQ. All proceeds benefit charities. American Legion Post 86, Cornelius.

SUNDAY, DEC. 7

Chili Cook-off

1 pm | Dec. 7. Bring in your best chili for three randomly selected judges. Cash prizes. Kilted Buffalo Langtree.

Christmas Vespers

7 pm | Dec. 7. Traditional candlelight worship service features choral music by the Chorale and the Davidson Chamber



Brooke Lee

8:30 pm | Dec. 20. Country artist and Lake Norman native had an incredible year and she is finishing it out by coming back to the Carolinas. Boatyard LKN, Cornelius.

Singers. Davidson College Presbyterian Church.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 10

Battle of the Pinots

7 pm | Dec. 10. All-Pinot Noir wine dinner pairing with wine enthusiast James Corbin. Foxcroft Wine Co., Birkdale.

FRIDAY, DEC. 12

Greater Lake Norman Wine Summit

10 am - 7 pm | Dec. 12. Connect with wine experts, winemakers and enthusiasts. Cain Center for the Arts, Cornelius.

Festivus Celebration

6 pm | Dec. 12. Celebrate George's favorite holiday during a Seinfeld-themed

night. Hop & Vine, Davidson.

SATURDAY, DEC. 13

Joe Gransden's Little Big Band Holiday Show

7:30 pm | Dec. 13. Your favorite holiday classics played by a jazz sensation and his big band get you in a festive mood. Cain Center for the Arts, Cornelius.

TUESDAY, DEC. 16

Candles & Cosmos - Jewish Women's Circle

6:30 pm | Dec. 16. Celebrate the third night of Chanukah making decoupage candles and drinking cosmos. Chabad of Lake Norman, Cornelius.

Girls Night Out: The Show

8-10 pm | Dec. 16. Bring down the house

with a "man-tastic" night of fun and excitement. On the Roxx, Cornelius.

THURSDAY, DEC. 18

Flashlight Candy Cane Dash

5:30-7 pm | Dec. 18. Fun holiday event where kids can use their flashlights to hunt the trails for candy canes and visit with Santa Claus. Legion Park, Cornelius.

SATURDAY, DEC. 20

Carolina Holidays with Charly Lowry

7:30 pm | Dec. 20. New holiday show will combine some seasonal favorites with hidden gems that will warm your heart. Cain Center for the Arts, Cornelius.

FRIDAY, DEC. 26

Post-Christmas Magic

6 pm | Dec. 26. Dave Maiorino returns from Nashville to share an evening of guitar melodies and feel-good tunes. Harp and Crown, Cornelius.

SATURDAY, DEC. 27

Kids Art Club

10-11 am | Dec. 27. Community of young artists create unique winter landscapes under the guidance of professional artists. Robin Antoinette's Arts for All, Huntersville.

Steel Magnolia

9 pm | Dec. 27. Keep the holiday spirit alive and the weekend celebration going. Bin 110, Cornelius.

SUNDAY, DEC. 28

Youth Writing Workshop

1-2 pm | Dec. 28. Get those young brains active with a writing workshop focused on learning and creating just for kids. Fred & June's Books, Denver.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 31

New Year's Eve with Blue Monday

6 pm | Dec. 31. Countdown to midnight with live music all night, party favors, photo ops, champagne toast and more. Boatyard LKN, Cornelius.



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DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Sons of Serendip: Christmas Beyond the Lights



**Dec. 4 | 7 pm,
Dec. 5 | 7:30 pm**
The Billboard charting classical-crossover quartet returns for a special holiday engagement.

Joe Gransden's Little Big Band Holiday Show



Dec. 13 | 7:30 pm
Let the sounds of your favorite holiday classics played by Joe Gransden and his big band get you in a festive mood!

Christmas with The Drifters



**Dec. 18 | 7 pm
Dec. 19 | 7:30 pm**
The Drifters are back performing your favorite Christmas hits including their iconic version of "White Christmas!"

Carolina Holidays with Charly Lowry



Dec. 20 | 7:30 pm
The holiday show by the soulful powerhouse will enchant audiences as she combines seasonal favorites with hidden gems to warm the heart.

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The Outpost and Caffeto Coffee embark on new community adventure

BY JON SHOW

The newest retail shop in Cornelius owes its launch to a shared love of travel by a mother-daughter team seeking a new adventure.

The Outpost is the evolution of an outdoorsy clothing brand created five years ago by Cornelius resident Amy Jolly and her teenage daughter, Aubrey, a senior at Hough High School.

Amy came up with the idea for the store shortly after her mother passed away last fall. During her childhood, the family visited nearly every corner of the country during their summer travels.

“We’d fly into an airport and grab a rental car and just drive,” she said. “We’d just show up places and my dad didn’t really have itineraries. I’m spontaneous, but I also learned a little. I like a little bit of a plan.”

Her plan these days includes a partnership to meld her modern day general store and a popular coffee haven under



The Jolly and Castellanos families

one roof to help bring people together.

General store

The Outpost retail gift shop occupies one half of an open-concept space in Shops on the Green, on Torrence Chap-

el Road next door to Ferrucci’s Old Tyme Italian Market. The other half of the 3,000-square-foot building is shared by Caffeto Specialty Coffee, a high-quality, homegrown Colombian coffee shop run by sisters Valentina and Maria Castellanos.

The renovated décor reflects the outdoor and eco-friendly nature of the two businesses. Instagram-worthy wall art incorporates decorative moss, and a large postal stamp mural adorns one wall. Community tables, cozy seating areas and a kids’ play area invites customers of all ages to sit, chat and relax, with a DJ providing entertainment.

The retail mix at The Outpost reflects the Jolly family’s adventurous spirit. At its heart, the store is a gift shop featuring items from mom-and-pop shops, including books, candles, games, stickers, jewelry and more.

But scattered on the shelves are items that reflect the true essence of its owners - T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats and other items – many designed by Amy and Aubrey – that are branded with slogans such as Lakeside Adventure Club, Leave Me at the Lake and, of course, The Outpost.

Farm-to-table coffee

Caffeto offers a literal farm-to-table coffee experience for its customers. The Castellanos family owns a coffee farm in Colombia, where they roast and ship beans north every two weeks to ensure a high-quality product.

The expansive drink menu features lattes and other familiar coffee drinks, as well as Colombian-inspired concoctions, ceremonial-grade matcha and a dessert-style latte named after the sisters’ grandmother, Pily.

Caffeto also offers bakery items like pastries and banana bread, and a few specialties from home, including pan-debono bread, arepas and a cheesy bread snack called dedo de queso.

This is Caffeto’s second venture. The sisters also operate a coffee truck in Charlotte’s NoDa neighborhood. They jumped at the chance for a brick-and-mortar location when Amy reached out seeking a coffee partner to share in her new venture.

“What brought us together was a sense of community,” Valentina said. “We know our customers and we build connections. We wanted to join with Amy and help bring that sense of community here to Lake Norman.”

New Corporations

These businesses registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State

Cornelius

10/16/25 Kraved LLC, Liana Grier, 21430 Blakley Shores Dr., Cornelius

10/16/25 Seventh Son Solutions LLC, Kristopher Benjamin Henson, 18809 Nautical Dr. 303, Cornelius

10/17/25 Graywolff Productions LLC, Curtis E. DeWolff, 18932 Henry Lee Knox Ln., Cornelius

10/17/25 Monroe Quality Contractors LLC, R. Lee Robertson Jr., 18514 W. Catawba Ave., Cornelius

10/17/25 Stitchbirds LLC, Cristie Ig-hani, 20619 Torrence Chapel Rd. Ste. 116 #216, Cornelius

10/21/24 292 Church St Hindes LLC, Jake Tyler Hindes, 21108 Pine Ridge Dr., Cornelius

More new corporations at www.corneliustoday.com

Sound Off

The stories receiving the most comments online are marked with a fire emoji. Some comments are edited for length.

Vote on Downtown Master Plan delayed

Between the arts and performance events and activities, the alcohol social district, and the focus on maintaining a pedestrian-friendly downtown where citizens are able to gather and celebrate, I cannot support moving our current police department.

—Susan Cox

Lawsuits complicate Alexander Farms

Restoration of the tenant house was part of the failed project. Several thousand dollars were spent moving it to its present location. I hope it does not fall down before the lawsuits are resolved.

—James Simpson

Hopefully whoever develops the land will consider homes to purchase for first-time buyers. There are enough

rentals here.

—Patricia Siegel

The towns encourage us to “go green,” then proceed to cut trees everywhere.

—Richard Matthews

Just say Yay!

Yay!Day and its founding principles are what we all should embrace each and every day. Zoey Boukedes is an absolute rock star with what she has created. She is infectious; the other teens that work with her, as well as adult volunteers, emulate the same positive force.

—Davidson Mayor Rusty Knox

Cornelius nonprofits join forces to help kids

I don’t play the lottery, but whenever I see these mega jackpots advertised, I wonder why half of that jackpot couldn’t go to the schools — or, in this case, making sure no child is hungry. I thought benefiting the schools was what got states to OK lottery sales in the first place.

—Laura Knight



Bilodeau elected mayor

I do believe a candidate’s wife can help him! Your wife impressed me at the polls. I read up on what each candidate stood for. I agreed with you the most! Congratulations!

—Laura Donaldson

Congratulations to him. He definitely got a push from the hundreds of residents in the neighborhoods along Nantz Road.

—James Retarides

Hough marching band nets trophies

Way to go, marching Huskies!!

—Kara Smith

Sales tax referendum passes

Thank you to Cornelius Today for your coverage of this initiative — this was not a simple issue, and voters’ consideration of the initiative benefited from your thorough coverage.

—Josh Farnsworth

Rezoning sought on Westmoreland Road

Cornelius traffic is a nightmare at certain times during the day. I can’t imagine allowing another “business” on Westmoreland Road. Let me know when the hearing is scheduled.

—Brenda Bailey

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Waterfront Luxury at The Point

Discover a beautifully reimagined residence overlooking the tranquil coves of Lake Norman. Thoughtfully updated throughout, this home blends refined elegance with effortless lakefront living. Enjoy open, light-filled interiors, designer finishes, and a lower level that lives like a private second residence — complete with offices, guest suite, and entertainer's bar. Step outside to serene water views, a private boardwalk, and your own deeded boat slip just steps away. A rare opportunity to experience the water, the luxury, and the lifestyle of The Point.

168 Brownstone Drive | The Point | **\$1,995,000**



A Lake Norman Architectural Masterpiece

An architectural standout on Lake Norman, this four-story Mediterranean villa was featured on the cover of Charlotte Magazine as an architectural wonder. With 7,360 square feet, west-facing main-channel views, and unforgettable sunsets, it offers exceptional design and scale. A dramatic three-story great room with 24 lake-facing windows and a soaring limestone fireplace anchors the home. Five bedrooms, eight baths, six fireplaces, and two kitchens provide both luxury and livability. The fourth-floor sky lounge with full bar captures panoramic views of Anderson and Little mountains and a quiet wildlife island. Outdoor living includes verandas, a tiled gazebo, and a deep-water dock with boat lift, Jet Ski lifts, and yacht-ready pilings. A rare opportunity to own one of the lake's most iconic residences.

18103 Harbor Light Boulevard | The Peninsula | **\$5,000,000**

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18806 Fore Sail Court | The Peninsula | **\$1,350,000**



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Grinch in a Pinch

BY JON SHOW

When the kids were young, Christmas was the most exciting time of the year, but I'm tired of the insane amount of effort it takes to carry on all the traditions.

We still like to pick out the tree and decorate it, but you can tell the kids are doing it begrudgingly. We still like watching them open presents, but you don't see the same excitement in the eyes of teenagers.

We still have the spirit of the season but with 18 family Christmases under our belts, we've grown a little weary of the whole rigmarole, so we've pared things back, as families tend to do.

I no longer climb a 30-foot ladder to light the house like Clark Griswold. I quit cutting pizza slices into evergreens the night we decorate the tree. I no longer stay up late on Christmas Eve penning fake letters from Santa.

This year we have our sights set squarely on the elves. Those stupid, *** elves.

Pest in the Nest

If you're unfamiliar with the Elf on the Shelf it's probably because you're older and when you had kids you believed that an all-knowing, gift-rewarding old man was enough to keep the kids in line during the holidays.

Well, not anymore. Your daughters have called in assistance.

The elf shows up in December to watch the kids and then flies back to the North Pole each night with reports for Santa, who turns 1,744 this year, and is apparently outsourcing his work.

The Mother of Dragons purchased our first \$30 elf, Bits (they all have stupid names because they're named by three-year-olds), when Future Man was a toddler.

Then, like every December earlier in her career, she left town for work most of the next three weeks.

I was left to move the elf every night after I worked all day, picked our kid up from daycare, bathed him, fed him, read him books, begged him to go to sleep and then cleaned up our nightly mess.

After the Blonde Bomber was born, Future Man claimed sole ownership of his elf so we had to add a \$30 girl elf, Pixie (better because she's a girl!), my wife left town, and I got to do everything twice.

Here's the rub: I often forget or avoid doing things that I don't consider imperative. I don't do it on purpose, my



brain just presses the erase button.

The year we added the second elf my wife returned from a work trip and asked the children about all the exciting places that Bits and Pixie had turned up while she was gone.

But the elves were on the same curtain rod where she left them, and Future Man said the elves hadn't flown home because he and his sister were being bad, which is what I told them each morning when I'd forgotten to move the elves. For five straight days.

Judge me all you want. I'm sure they behaved poorly at some point during each day. No one's perfect.

Also it was a solution to a problem that was not going to be resolved conventionally. There was no chance I was going to remember to move those things every night.

Luckily for the kids, the following year the Mother of Dragons' travel schedule eased and she took sole responsibility for the elves. The experience improved sharply over the ensuing decade.

Without having to serve as primary elf caregiver, I even participated, like the year I edited a video that showed the elves disappearing in the middle of the night.

Louse in the House

The Blonde Bomber was in seventh grade last year and told the Mother of Dragons how excited she was that the elves were coming back once we got our tree.

My wife was exasperated that we (she) still had to do the elves. I told her to call the girl's bluff. No chance she still believed in them and all it was doing was creating more work for us.

She sheepishly declined and retreated to Amazon to buy a \$50 kit that came with fresh ideas on how to stage our \$60 worth of elves.

A couple weeks later she had a one-night work trip and before she left she instructed me to follow the script in the elf kit, but I wasn't having it. I'm not a very good subordinate.

So after the kids went to bed, I created toilet seats out of glass mugs, filled them with chocolate milk and mini marshmallows, and plopped the elves on top.

Next to the scene I penned a poem in my own very recognizable handwriting about the elves having upset tummies.

The Blonde Bomber awoke the next morning, saw the elves, shot me some side eye and said nothing. Future Man smiled an all-knowing smile. I was content. I knew the girl was faking it.

Blight in the Night

Earlier this fall the Mother of Dragons started hemming and hawing about the elves. She was tired of creating elaborate elfscapes and I wasn't going to step in to pinch hit.

She finally broke down and asked the Blonde Bomber if she still believed in the elves and she admitted she hadn't believed in them for years. She was just playing along.

So the Mother of Dragons is elated that she won't have to stage the elves this year. After all, we're a house of non-believers now.

Well, not all of us. I believe in three things.

One, I believe those stupid elves will be fished out of the attic after we get our tree because the Blonde Bomber is like living with a 13-year-old Martha Stewart when it comes to holidays.

Two, I believe a \$50 elf kit will arrive from Amazon days later because the only person who has admirably tried and failed to make more annual holiday traditions stick is my poor wife.

And three, I believe I might join in this year. Now that the kids are older it might be fun.

I've already bookmarked inappropriate elf ideas, just in case.

Jon Show lives in Robbins Park with his wife, who he calls "The Mother of Dragons." Their 17-year-old son is "Future Man" and their 13-year-old daughter is "The Blonde Bomber." Their dog is actually named Lightning.



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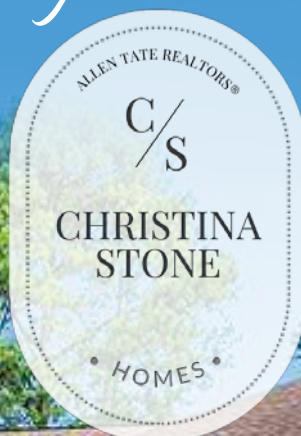
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