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# Town puts focus on engaging with residents

BY JON SHOW

The new year brought a freshly elected group of public officials to Town Hall and a renewed focus on communication with residents.

The effort is the latest in a series of attempts to open more lines of dialogue, dating back to when most of the current board was elected four years ago. Since then, the town has sought greater input from residents on major initiatives such as the land use plan and parks master plan.

#### Opening lines

Recent social media initiatives have ramped up promotion of ongoing communication channels that have long been available, such as attending town board, advisory board and committee meetings.

Social media posts have listed dates for the full slate of Town Board meetings for 2026 and promoted public meetings, including sessions of the Transportation Advisory Board and Planning Board.

The town is also posting individual meeting agendas on social media so residents can see what topics will be discussed to determine whether they want to provide feedback.

Live and archived video of Town Board and Planning Board meetings — long streamed online and through the town portal — is also posted on Facebook.

For residents not on social media, the town provides regular updates through the Keeping Up With Cornelius e-newsletter, which is sent twice a month.

#### Personal touch

Public Information Officer Emma Mondo has added personality and creativity to the town's social media feeds.



Mondo

Recent informational videos show elected officials and town staff recreating scenes from *Home Alone* and *Mission: Impossible*, along with a New Year's resolution post promoting parks

and events, and profiles of town staff.

When developers needed to close lanes on West Catawba Avenue last month, town staff conducted a ride-along with a Cornelius police officer to explain the closure and provide alternate routes.

"We want to be as relatable as possible so people know we're trying to reach them and let them know what's happening, but also do it in a fun way," Mondo said.

#### Wait, there's more

The town is also working to educate

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TODAY

  
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# Parks & Rec debuts new online reservation system

The Cornelius Parks & Recreation Department has unveiled a new online registration system for all facilities that will eliminate the need for paper forms and back-and-forth communication to book fields, picnic shelters and courts.

Previously, residents had to download a paper rental facility form from the town website and submit the request by email, phone or in person.

Renters are now able to visit the rental information page on the Parks & Recreation website, where they can sort by venue type and facility.

Availability and pricing for each facility are displayed online, along with questions such as group size and waiver requirements. Payment is accepted by all major credit cards, and confirmations are sent via email.

One benefit of the new system is that residents can schedule same-day rentals, with some exceptions. Baseball fields, multi-purpose fields and indoor courts require advance notice due to preparation or staffing needs. Picnic shelters require a minimum seven-day



Picnic shelters like ones at Robbins Park can now be rented online

advance reservation.

Other restrictions and requirements like length of reservation and advance notice are listed for each type of facility.

To maintain inventory control and discourage mass bookings far into the future, reservations are limited to 30 days in advance, or 60 days in advance

for picnic shelters.

The system is also connected on the back end to the town's Musco lighting system, which automatically schedules field lights to turn on based on reservations and daylight hours.

The lighting integration will not apply to pickleball or tennis courts, where

**Rentable spaces include, but are not limited to:**

- Baseball and softball fields
- Multi-purpose fields
- Basketball courts
- Sand volleyball court
- Pickleball courts
- Tennis courts
- Picnic shelters

lights are operated by on-site buttons.

Residents who prefer not to use the online system may still contact the Parks & Recreation office at [pr@cornelius.org](mailto:pr@cornelius.org) or (704) 892-6031.

## Bailey Road Park Update

Contractors continue to work on the new turf installation at Bailey Road Park. Most recent work includes making adjustments to the layers of rock that help drain the field, and crews began laying turf in late January, with an anticipated opening in mid-to-late February.

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Cars backed up northbound at Highway 21 and Westmoreland Road

# Town weighs options for quick road fixes

BY DAVE VIESER

The mayor and town board are working to identify areas where improvements could relieve traffic flow, regardless of the backlog of road projects within the North Carolina Department of Transportation.

"What we keep hearing from the DOT is that traffic flow will improve in the fall when the twin circles on Highway 21 are completed," Mayor Denis Bilo-deau said at a January town board meeting. "Well, we cannot wait until fall."

During the meeting, elected officials discussed five intersections in Cornelius where they believe congestion could be relieved without waiting for new NCDOT projects, even if it means spending town capital funds.

## Diverging Diamond Interchange

Many motorists using the diverging diamond interchange are unfamiliar with how it works, which hinders efforts to keep intersections clear of traffic. The problem is exacerbated by the interchange's narrow size compared with other DDIs.

The town has asked NCDOT to erect "Don't Block the Box" signs to emphasize the need to keep lanes clear. The signs have proven effective on North Main Street/Highway 115 in Davidson.

"Our DDI is very fragile, and it doesn't take much to create significant congestion," Deputy Town Manager Wayne Herron said. "Every little bit will help."

The town is also requesting that overhead signage for eastbound DDI traffic be installed ahead of the roundabouts' completion, along with pavement mark-

ings for both east- and westbound traffic. Signs for westbound traffic would be installed after the dual roundabouts are completed.

## Catawba Avenue and Highway 21 (all directions)

With construction underway on the dual roundabouts, moving traffic through this intersection has become a major challenge.

Prior to construction, Public Works Director Tyler Beardsley said signal detectors managed traffic to a satisfactory degree.

"However, once construction moved into full stage, the detectors couldn't handle the flow, so the DOT disconnected the detectors and retimed the signals," he said.

The result has been long delays for Catawba Avenue traffic, both eastbound and westbound, as well as northbound traffic on Highway 21.

In an update at the Jan. 20 board meeting, Beardsley said meetings with the NCDOT had resulted in improvements to the signal timing but acknowledged that backups had not been entirely alleviated.

## Westmoreland Road and West Catawba Avenue

The board identified this intersection as a potential problem area, but surveys and observations by Cornelius police and the town's public works department suggested otherwise.

"We've monitored this signal closely over the past month and don't see any major issues with how it's operating, aside from heavier-than-usual holiday

## How can you help?

- Report traffic congestion issues to the town and the Transportation Advisory Board.
- Stay alert and follow traffic laws. When signals change, proceed in a timely manner and don't block intersections.

traffic," Beardsley said.

Town officials said the extended right-turn lane on Westmoreland Road, which is partially constructed, will not be completed until developers begin work on the Alexander Farms commercial development.

## Catawba Avenue and Highway 21 (Westbound)

As Catawba Avenue approaches the traffic signal before the DDI, one westbound lane expands into two. Town officials want to convert the existing left-turn-only lane into two travel lanes.

Left turns would still be permitted, but officials believe the change would reduce traffic backups.

"As it is now, westbound traffic really backs up, sometimes as far as the library," Mayor Pro Tem Michael Osborne said. "A second travel lane should help move things along."

## Highway 21 and Westmoreland Road

The traffic signal at Highway 21 and Westmoreland Road was recently

rebuilt as part of the Atrium Health hospital project, which has improved the movement of crosstown traffic.

However, town officials believe further extending the northbound Highway 21 left-turn lane, which serves vehicles turning onto Westmoreland Road, would also help reduce congestion.

Although the lane was lengthened years ago, northbound traffic is still frequently delayed behind left-turning vehicles, particularly when traffic backs up on Interstate 77 north and motorists divert to surface roads.

## Additional concerns

While not among the initial top five concerns, school-related traffic traveling west on Bailey Road and backups on the northbound I-77 off-ramp are also significant issues.

The town is urging the N.C. Department of Transportation to expedite a study of traffic conditions on Bailey Road. One potential solution would reroute school buses to alternate roads instead of having them exit schools by heading west over the railroad crossing.

The town also asked the state to review traffic stacking on the I-77 off-ramp. Motorists trying to turn eastbound are currently stuck behind drivers turning westbound, and Herron said the state will consider adding the issue as a potential project.

## What's next?

The town held meetings with NCDOT in late January to present the issues. Herron said the state was receptive to all the requests and promised a response by mid-to-late February.

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# Who can say if I've been changed for the better?

Less time scrolling on social media. No caffeine after noon. Less candy, more fruit. I always start the year with the best of intentions; making elaborate lists of things to cut out of my life. And then the inevitable 2pm slump rolls around and my (espresso) cup runneth over. And not in a good way.

But this year, I'm adopting a more positive, mindful spin on change and celebrating adding things to my life. Not just the usual stuff, either, like more plants on my plate and steps in a day. I'm actively seeking out joy, reflection, and things that make me go ahhh.

Davidson College is one of those places that always feels welcoming in a calm, reflective way. On a recent walk through the paths, I was awestruck by the vast beauty of *With These Hands: A Memorial to the Enslaved and Exploited*, a stunning monument recognizing the lives of the people who helped build the campus in 1837. The memorial – a bronze sculpture of two work-worn hands reaching toward the sky – was designed and built by artist Hank Willis



**Davidson College memorial, *With These Hands: A Memorial to the Enslaved and Exploited***

Thomas, in collaboration with Perkins & Will. I found myself transfixed by the stories behind it (found on Davidson College's website), the craftsmanship, and how it transforms the already inviting campus to a place of quiet introspection.

Other works by Hank Willis Thomas are on display at the Van Every/Smith Galleries. Using a variety of mediums, Thomas examines themes related to identity, commodity, media, and pop-

ular culture. The gallery is a gem and adds so much to the creative fabric of Davidson College.

After I left the cocoon of inspired art, I stopped at Caffeto Specialty Coffee in Cornelius, where I couldn't pass up a Drunk Pily – a specialty coffee drink topped with whipped cream cheese (!), rum essence (!) and vanilla. Bliss. It was just the thing to cut through the misty drizzle giving me a wicked halo frizz.

And since I can't say no to a heady art bender, I didn't want to miss the final days of the American Watercolor Society Travel Exhibit at Mooresville Arts. Tucked inside an old train depot, I wandered through an array of award-winning paintings from artists all over the world. The depth of the pieces astounded me, and I was both a) annoyed with myself for not checking it out sooner and b) inspired! Art always makes me feel like I can tackle any creative project with gusto.

As does a good musical. The more over the top, the better. So, yeah, that means *Wicked*, *For Good*. We don't

see many movies in the theater, but we were super jazzed to see the second part of the wildly popular Elphaba/Glinda complicated friendship fest. It did not disappoint. My husband and daughter have listened to me singing the songs on repeat for weeks, but I firmly believe we can learn something from the witches and those who love them: change is good.

**Milling About** is a column about life around Lake Norman, written by Lindsay Martell. The column name is a nod to life around the lake and our town's mill history.

Lindsay Martell lives in Birkdale with her husband, daughter, and a scruffy mini mutt named Dug.



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Continued from **PAGE 2**

residents about municipal operations, including budgeting and governance.

The introduction this spring of Cornelius 101 is a free, seven-week program designed to provide a hands-on look at town government. Participants will learn from representatives of the planning, parks and recreation, public works, police and fire departments.

The town said residents "can expect to gain a deeper understanding of key topics," including development approvals and the status of ongoing road projects.

Elected officials have also made changes to better connect with residents.

Beginning last month, Mayor Denis Bilodeau is inviting residents to join him each Monday at 7 a.m. at Jetton Park for a one-mile "walk and talk," with topics set by attendees.

Weekly coffee chats, which drew limited attendance, have been replaced with

targeted visits to groups affected by specific issues. The board recently met with downtown residents at Barley Market to discuss the master plan.

### Speaking up

Residents have long had opportunities to provide input on matters requiring a vote, including proposals and budgets presented at committee and advisory board meetings such as parks, planning and predevelopment.

Agendas are posted in advance, meetings are open to the public, and residents can comment in person before votes, often receiving a direct response.

In November, Cornelius residents Carlyn Flake and Lindsey Seidman addressed the Parks and Recreation Commission, requesting additional support to curb unruly teen behavior at Glen Oak Green Park. Their concerns led to enhanced security measures, and families reported feeling safer returning to the park.

Later that month, about 50 residents attended a Town Board meeting to voice concerns about the downtown master plan. The board responded by delaying their vote on the plan to allow more time for public review and feedback.

In later discussions with residents, Town Commissioner Todd Sansbury said that while residents participated in listening sessions during the plan's 18-month development, they wanted

more time to review the final proposal.

"We realized we had given people plenty of time to help shape the plan, but we didn't give them enough time to review what the plan ultimately was," Sansbury said.

### Get engaged

Residents often say they are unaware of Town Board decisions on issues such as roads, zoning and development, but attendance tends to be light at engagement events such as listening sessions.

For example, a December town session on the future bike and pedestrian plan drew about 50 residents, despite widespread concerns about e-bikes and pedestrian safety.

The annual budget survey, which was promoted more heavily this year, received 1,100 responses — its highest total ever — up more than 20% from previous years. Still, that represents just 4% of the town's nearly 25,000 registered voters.

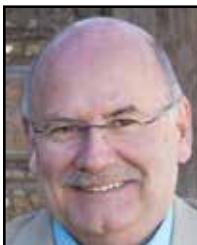
"If you want to find out more about



**Furcht**

our town, there are plenty of ways to do that, but you have to do your part," Commissioner Colin Furcht said. "Almost everything we do is in an open forum.

That's always been the frustrating part. We put ourselves out there, and it's a challenge to get people to show up."



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# LC Styled: Spring Feels Fun Again

BY LAURA CINOTTI

For me, spring has always felt like a fresh start. Maybe it's the flowers blooming, the longer days, or that first warm morning when everything suddenly feels possible again. That sense of renewal always shows up in the way I get dressed — lighter, brighter, and full of pieces that make me smile.

As a stylist, one of my favorite parts of my job is helping clients reconnect with that feeling, reminding them that getting dressed can be deeply personal, expressive and, honestly, joyful.

That's exactly why I'm loving the direction of spring 2026. This season isn't about perfectly curated minimalism or

chasing the one "right" look. It's about individuality, texture, and playful, collected pieces that feel like they found you just as much as you found them.

I've often described myself as a "dopamine dresser," and it turns out that adding sprinkles of joy to your wardrobe is exactly what's trending.

Here's a look at this spring's trends — and how they show up in real life.

## Personal maximalism (More is more, and I'm into it)

Minimalism isn't gone, but it's definitely taking a back seat. Spring 2026 is embracing personality-forward dressing: layered accessories, bold details and outfits that feel lived-in rather than overly styled. It's a season of more-is-more — which I love.

### How to wear it:

If you love accessories, let them shine.



Add a fun shoe in a bold color or print to everyday jeans and a T-shirt. If accessories aren't your thing, let the clothing do the talking. Try a ruffled blouse, statement sleeve or structured shoulder. Keep the rest of the look simple and streamlined so the bold detail feels intentional, not overwhelming.

## Patterns are back (and they're having fun)

Patterns are everywhere — especially on denim. Think floral jeans, polka dots, playful graphics and bold prints that feel nostalgic yet fresh.

### How to wear it:

Pair a graphic T-shirt or lightweight,

airy knit with printed or floral jeans for daytime. Finish the look with tennis shoes — or "sneakers" for my fellow Northern transplants. For a night out, style those same jeans with a classic tee, kitten heels and a blazer. Easy switch, same joyful energy.

## The colors on the horizon

Spring 2026 color trends feel happy and wearable all at once. Canary yellow, rich teal, cloud-dancer white, vibrant violet and a soft, wearable pink are leading the way.

Rich teal is one of my personal favorites — it's dopamine dressing in color form. Unexpected, confident and flattering on everyone.

### How to wear it:

Think of soft pink as your new white. Anywhere you'd normally wear a white tee, tank or button-down, try swapping in pink. Teal works beautifully as an accessory, too — a bag, shoe or belt instantly wakes up an outfit.

## Fabrics that move (floaty, draped and comfortable)

The real fashion story this season isn't just bubble pants (though we are obsessed with them) — it's movement. Floaty fabrics, draping and silhouettes that move with you are everywhere. Comfort and chic absolutely go together.

### How to wear it:

Pair a draped or fluid top with streamlined pants for balance. Or try a floaty skirt with a more body-conscious top to keep the look grounded and modern.

### Stylist tip:

Think of your floaty top or balloon pants as the main character. Let everything else play a supporting role to keep the look balanced while letting movement and drama shine.

## Texture play

Spring textures are light, airy and touchable — crochet, soft knits, sheer layers, fringe and linen blends. Texture adds interest without extra fuss.

### How to wear it:

Try a crochet top or sweater with classic denim, a sheer blouse with structured pants, or layer a soft knit over a crisp tee. Mixing textures adds depth, dimension and that styled-without-trying feeling.

## Vintage accessories with a story

Vintage is strong this season, especially in bags, brooches and scarves. Some of my most treasured pieces are thrifted finds. Anything with history creates instant visual interest and makes an outfit feel layered and personal.

This may be my favorite trend ever — it celebrates individualism and creatively marries the old with the new, which is one of my favorite things to do.

### How to wear it:

Don't be afraid to mix eras. A '70s bag with a modern dress and mixed-metal jewelry feels fresh and unexpected. Tie a scarf around a bag handle, wear it loosely around your neck, thread it through belt loops or knot it as a belt. These small styling moments add a playful pop and make an outfit feel truly your own.

As spring approaches, let this season be your permission to say yes — to the colors that make you smile, the patterns that make your heart skip and the textures that invite you to move. Because when getting dressed sparks joy, happiness inevitably follows.

*Laura Cinotti is a local stylist. Follow her for more style tips on Instagram @lc\_styled.*



Cinotti



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# Fire department transitioning to full-time staff

BY DAVE VIESER

In 2020, the Cornelius Town Board unanimously approved the transition of Cornelius-Lemley Fire Rescue from a volunteer force to a full-time staff. Town officials anticipated the transition would take 15 years and adjusted budget forecasts accordingly.



Barbee

Fire Chief Guerry Barbee and Town Manager Andrew Grant provided an update on the progress. Their responses are combined and edited for brevity.

**Q:** *What is the current staffing status of the fire department?*

**A:** There are 21 full-time firefighters, including seven per shift and three administrative staff members. The department also has 53 part-time firefighters and seven volunteers, for a total of 81 firefighters. The current plan calls for a fully staffed fire department by 2036, though that timeline is contingent on continued budget support and justification for the transition.

**Q:** *Where are the full-time firefighters coming from?*

**A:** Most full-time firefighters have come from other municipalities across the state or from smaller local departments that employ only part-time staff.

**Q:** *What is the salary for a full-time Cornelius firefighter, and does it increase annually?*

**A:** The starting salary is \$48,800 and increases by 5% after the first probationary year. Salaries may also increase when the town budget includes cost-of-living adjustments or merit-based raises.

**Q:** *Are other Charlotte-area bedroom communities transitioning to full-time fire departments?*

**A:** Yes. Harrisburg, Matthews, Mint



Cornelius-Lemley Fire Rescue

Hill, Mooresville and Mount Holly have operated as full-time fire departments for several years. Other nearby towns, including Davidson, Pineville and Huntersville, are in transition phases similar to Cornelius.

**Q:** *Has the transition affected mutual aid calls or response times?*

**A:** No. On a daily basis, the three fire departments in northern Mecklenburg County cross town boundaries and respond together. The number of personnel dispatched depends on the type and severity of the incident. The department continues to respond to medical calls and is often first on scene.

**Q:** *What impact has the transition had on the town budget?*

**A:** Hiring full-time firefighters increases personnel and operating costs, including equipment and training. While the cost increase has been significant, the transition plan phases in those increases incrementally. In 2020, the fire department budget was \$1.66 million. It is \$4.87 million in the current fiscal year.

**Q:** *Will full-time staffing affect insurance ratings for residents and businesses?*

**A:** Staffing levels heavily influence a fire department's ISO rating, accounting for roughly 50% of the score. ISO evaluates on-duty personnel, training, equipment and response capability. Higher staffing levels improve fire suppression capacity, which can lead to better ratings and potentially lower insurance premiums.



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# Hough girls, boys basketball in position for postseason runs

BY RYAN MOXON

The Hough girls' basketball team finds itself in playoff position as the regular season winds down and a new group of leaders takes the reins for the Huskies.

Gone are former standouts Chloe Galombeck, Sophia Zoerb and Jacquelyn Jakubecy — who averaged a combined 31 points per game a year ago — but a new crop of leaders has emerged this season.

The balanced offense features three players averaging double figures in scoring, led by junior guard Blair Haines at 13 points per game. Haines brings scrappiness on both ends of the floor, averaging five rebounds and three steals per game, and has stepped into a leadership role this season.

"Blair is the heart and soul of our team," head coach Andrae Butts said. "We've asked her to make plays for herself and others, and she's done a good job of adapting."

Senior guard Kate Breault, who is averaging 11 points per game and leads the team in assists, has embraced the challenge of moving from the wing to point guard, creating scoring opportunities from the perimeter and by attacking the basket.

"She's our Swiss Army knife — she does a ton of things well," Butts said.

The return of junior forward Alexis Otto in mid-January following a monthlong absence due to an ankle injury is expected to improve roster depth and provide additional scoring and rebounding.

Defensively, the Huskies are bolstered by sophomore Cecilia Lambert, an athletic guard and the team's best on-ball defender, who has provided a spark off the bench in close games.

"She wreaks havoc on ballhandlers," Butts said. "She's an up-and-coming player, and we're expecting big things from her."

Senior forward Olivia Puskarich is the team's leading rebounder, averaging seven boards per game.

## Schedule outlook

Hough has improved its win total in each of the past five seasons but likely will not surpass the 20-win mark from last season. The team has taken care of



Hough junior guard Blair Haines (12) / Photo by Adrian Addie

business in games it should win but has not yet found a way to consistently close out teams with more talent.

The Huskies posted key wins against Statesville and Chapel Hill, erasing double-digit deficits in both games to come out on top.

Four of the team's losses came against strong perennial programs North Mecklenburg and South Mecklenburg, as well as defending state champion Lake Norman.

The Huskies were 9-8 at press time, with key matchups against South Mecklenburg and Myers Park remaining to close the regular season.

The blueprint from the two comeback wins may provide a roadmap as the Huskies prepare for the playoffs.

"We showed will, determination and grit down the stretch in those games," Butts said. "We had a never-say-die attitude and made enough plays to come back and win."

Protecting the ball on offense and taking advantage of a solid group of perimeter shooters will also be key.

"We just have to take care of the ball

and minimize turnovers," Butts said. "You're never out of it when you can knock down 3s."

## Boys basketball

The Hough boys basketball team is off to a strong start under new head coach Beau Maye, with a well-rounded offense featuring three players averaging double figures in points.

The Huskies stand at 13-4 at press time, with five games remaining in the regular season before the postseason conference tournament and state playoffs.

A consistent, team-first style of play and solid chemistry contrast sharply with the culture issues Maye inherited after last season.

"They're coming in and working hard and playing with maximum effort, which is all we can ask for," Maye said. "It is paying dividends."

Senior forward John Slusher has stepped into a leadership role and leads all scorers with 16 points per game on 55% shooting from the field. Junior guard Tre Ratliff has shown significant improvement on both ends of the floor this season, adding 15 points per game.

Senior guards Justin Funderburke and Beck Spear have set the tone in expectations and effort on the court, Maye said.

Hough's season includes a big road victory against Davie County and a 7-game winning streak in January, which featured a win over Lake Norman, a team that had bested Hough over the holiday break.

Last month, the Huskies welcomed back senior forward Oliver Stamey, the team's leading rebounder, who missed four games due to injury.

Maye hopes having Slusher and Stamey healthy down the stretch will solidify a roster averaging 68 points and more than 30 rebounds per game.

"We're excited to get some guys back and continue to get better as the season comes to the home stretch," Maye said.



Maye

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News -



The inaugural Lake Norman Luxury Travel Expo / Jason Benavides photo



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### Board delays vote on downtown master plan

The Cornelius Town Board unanimously voted to further delay a decision on adopting the 2050 Downtown Master Plan until its March 16 meeting.

Downtown residents have raised a wide range of issues. Many expressed concerns about changes to traffic patterns that could affect their homes and properties. Others opposed plans to extend Academy Street.

Mayor Denis Bilodeau summarized the board's decision to delay the vote.

"This is an important decision, and we need to get it right," he said.

The plan was developed by the Kimley-Horn consulting firm with input from residents, local businesses and planning experts.

When presenting the plan in November, Town Planning Director Rox Burhans said the "challenging part will be implementing the various elements outlined in the document. This is just the beginning."

That uncertainty fueled much of the public feedback and contributed to the board's decision to delay the vote until March.

Details on the draft downtown master plan are available on the town's website.

### Full steam ahead for the inaugural Travel Expo

The inaugural Lake Norman Luxury Travel Expo drew more than 250 guests to the Cain Center for the Arts. Attendees with a passion for travel had the opportunity to speak directly with travel experts and attend live panel discussions.

"The support from the community has been amazing," said Jen Campbell

Boles, founder and CEO of Explore More Travel Co. "It exceeded my expectations."

More than 17 leading travel brands were on hand, sharing information on experiences ranging from African safaris and Arctic expeditions to Mediterranean cruises.

Guests enjoyed light refreshments, with a cash bar available. All proceeds benefited the Cain Center. Raffle prizes included carry-on luggage, gift cards and bottles of prosecco.

Plans are already underway for the event to return next year.

"Based on the turnout, I have no doubt this will become an annual event," Boles said.

### Novant presents proposals for facilities

By Dave Vieser. The first round of public hearings on two medical facilities proposed by Novant Health in Cornelius revealed some concerns among residents and town commissioners.

The proposed freestanding emergency room would be an 11,400-square-foot facility located on Holiday Lane, just northeast of the I-77 Exit 28 interchange.

During the presentation, town planners noted the proposal is inconsistent with the town's land use plan. The parcel where Novant proposes to build the emergency room is designated as Waterfront Mixed Use because of its proximity to Lake Cornelius. That designation calls for active retail and restaurant uses, along with complementary residential and office development.

Before adoption of the current land use plan, the town approved the parcel for construction of a hotel in 2009. However, at the January meeting, Novant's developers presented an environmental study stating the site's proximity to wetlands "greatly diminished" the ability to develop a hotel with the asso-

Continued on **PAGE 15**

Continued from **PAGE 14**

ciated parking and outdoor amenities.

Novant officials said that the Holiday Lane emergency room is needed due to overcrowding at the health system's existing facility near the I-77 Exit 23 interchange.

The second proposal is a freestanding 20,000-square-foot urgent care and same-day surgery center on Westmooreland Road. A daycare center was previously approved for the site but was never built.

Fewer concerns were raised about the urgent care project, though residents and commissioners expressed the usual concerns related to traffic.

Novant officials said the two projects are independent of one another, meaning one could proceed even if the other is rejected by the town or the state. If approved, each project would take more than a year to complete, according to Novant.

The presentations and discussions were part of the town's required public hearings process for rezoning requests. Additional public hearings will be held by the Planning Board and the Town Board before any final decisions are made.

## List of local schools and measles vaccine rates

With measles cases on the rise and the report of the first confirmed case in Mecklenburg County, the State of North Carolina released a dashboard estimating how well elementary school students across the state are protected against the disease. The dashboard uses measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccination data from schools and surveys to estimate coverage at both the county and elementary school levels, according to the Department of Health and Human Services.

About 91% of elementary students in Mecklenburg County are vaccinated against measles, below the 95% coverage needed to curb the spread of the disease, health officials said.

Here are the top five and bottom five nearby schools in terms of vaccination rate. The full list is available on CorneliusToday.com.

### Top five

Cannon School – 97.1%  
Davidson Day – 97.6%  
Barnett Elementary – 96.7%  
Grand Oak Elementary – 96.3%  
St. Mark Catholic School – 96.3%

### Bottom five

Grace Covenant School – 79.8%  
Lake Norman Christian – 84.9%  
Langtree Charter – 86.4%  
Community School of Davidson – 86.8%  
Huntersville Elementary – 87.3%

## Registration opens for Senior Games

Registration is now open for Mecklenburg County's 2026 Senior Games and

SilverArts, an Olympic-style competition running March through May for residents 50 and older.

The event features more than 50 athletic and artistic competitions, from swimming and pickleball to visual arts and cheerleading.

Athletic events include bowling, cycling, golf, swimming, track and field, cornhole, horseshoes, bocce, tennis, badminton and pickleball. SilverArts includes literary arts, visual arts, performing arts, heritage arts and cheerleading.

"Whether you're 55 or 95, there's an

event for you," said Nick Walker, Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation director.

Top finishers can advance to the state finals in fall 2026 and national games in 2027.

North Carolina residents who have lived in the state for three consecutive months of the past year are eligible.

County residents pay \$30 online or \$35 in person and scholarships are available. Call 980-314-1328, email SeniorGames@MeckNC.gov or visit ParkandRec.MeckNC.gov/SeniorGames.



## Advice for what matters most, when you need it most

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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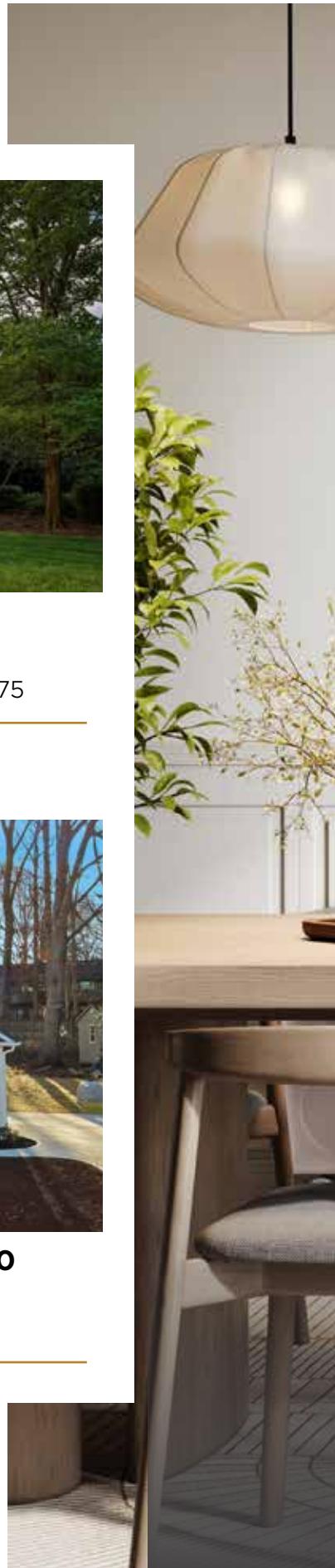
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# HOME SALES

*Editors Note: Due to privacy considerations we will no longer publish the names of buyers and sellers.*

## Cornelius

12/29/25, \$280,000, 10125 Westmoreland Rd, 2BR/2BA, The Terraces at Oakhurst, 1,214 sq ft, built 2007

12/30/25, \$510,000, 9808 Washam Potts Rd, 3BR/2BA, Cornelius, 2,089 sq ft, built 1969

12/30/25, \$1,320,000, 18613 John Connor Rd, 4BR/3.5BA, The Peninsula, 3,228 sq ft, built 1993

12/30/25, \$1,188,479, 20845 Lagoona Dr, 3BR/3BA, Biscayne Park, 2,210 sq ft, built 1985



**\$1,328,000 | 18806 Fore Sail Court, Cornelius**

1/2/26, \$1,328,000, 18806 Fore Sail Ct, 4BR/3.5BA, The Peninsula, 3,260 sq ft, built 2016

1/2/26, \$545,000, 16116 Lakeside Loop Ln, 2BR/2BA, The Courtyards on Lake Norman, 1,560 sq ft, built 2017

1/5/26, \$1,275,000, 17415 Summer Place Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, The Peninsula, 3,258 sq ft, built 1997

1/6/26, \$345,000, 9065 Rosalyn Glen Rd, 3BR/2BA, Edinburgh Square, 1,561 sq ft, built 2005

1/7/26, \$308,000, 9245 Washam Potts Dr, 3BR/2.5BA, Oakhurst, 1,568 sq ft, built 2003

12/30/25, \$420,000, 964 Gardners Way, 3BR/3BA, Antiquity, 1,848 sq ft, built 2008

12/31/25, \$625,000, 11040 Bailey Park Nature Dr, 3BR/2BA, Baileys Glen, 2,156 sq ft, built 2019

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1/8/26, \$499,900, 17914 Coulter Pkwy, 3BR/2BA, Baileys Glen, 1,531 sq ft, built 2014

1/8/26, \$502,400, 9415 Rosalyn Glen Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, Westmoreland, 2,335 sq ft, built 2005

1/8/26, \$300,000, 17431 Tuscany Ln, 2BR/2.5BA, Vineyard Point, 1,182 sq ft, built 1994

1/9/26, \$735,000, 18708 Nautical Dr #3, 4BR/3BA, Admirals Quarters, 1,727 sq ft, built 1990

1/9/26, \$1,550,000, 19001 Peninsula Club Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, The Peninsula, 3,544 sq ft, built 1993

1/9/26, \$655,000, 18700 Nautical Dr #101, 3BR/2BA, Admirals Quarters, 1,352 sq ft, built 1991

1/9/26, \$285,000, 19950 Oak Leaf Cir #19, 2BR/2BA, Twin Oaks, 1,116 sq ft, built 1990

1/9/26, \$1,485,000, 22501 John Gamble Rd, 3BR/2.5BA, Country Club Shores, 4,201 sq ft, built 1987

1/12/26, \$257,000, 19808 Feriba Pl, 2BR/2BA, Mill Creek, 1,185 sq ft, built 2005

1/12/26, \$3,000,000, 17819 John Connor Rd, 5BR/3.5BA, Cornelius, 3,910 sq ft, built 1996



**\$3,335,000 | 21520 Rio Oro Drive, Cornelius**

1/13/26, \$4,100,000, 21528 Norman Shores Dr, 4BR/4.5BA, Cornelius, 6,559 sq ft, built 2022

1/14/26, \$450,000, 1111 Inn Keepers Way, 3BR/2.5BA, Antiquity, 1,848 sq ft, built 2012

1/15/26, \$1,801,000, 17701 Springwinds Dr, 6BR/4BA, The Peninsula, 4,317 sq ft, built 1998

1/15/26, \$3,335,000, 21520 Rio Oro Dr, 4BR/4.5BA, Bahia Bay, 3,928 sq ft, built 2025

1/15/26, \$375,000, 21115 Cornelius St, 3BR/2BA, Cornelius, 1,240 sq ft, built 1951

1/15/26, \$679,900, 20028 Northport Dr, 4BR/2.5BA, Jetton Cove, 2,547 sq ft, built 2015

1/15/26, \$680,000, 20305 Queensdale Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Jetton Cove, 2,942 sq ft, built 2000

1/16/26, \$524,900, 20523 Harbor View Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Lake Norman Cove at Jetton, 2,198 sq ft, built 2007

1/16/26, \$350,000, 18742 Nautical Dr #305, 2BR/2BA, Admirals Quarters, 1,003 sq ft, built 2007

1/16/26, \$395,000, 18009 Kings Point Dr Unit M, 2BR/2BA, Baybridge, 978 sq ft, built 1992

1/20/26, \$470,000, 13415 Hazelbrook Ln, 2BR/2BA, Baileys Glen, 1,465 sq ft, built 2016

1/22/26, \$275,000, 20119 Henderson Rd Unit M, 2BR/2BA, Windward, 1,019 sq ft, built 1987



**\$1,320,000 | 18613 John Connor Road, Cornelius**



**\$3,000,000 | 17819 John Connor Road, Cornelius**

# Introducing Our Top Performers For The Fourth Quarter of 2025



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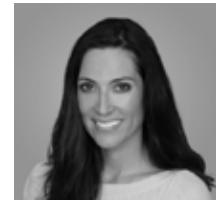
Carrie  
Lancaster



Darlene  
Teeter



Debbie  
Monroe



Devon  
Stamey



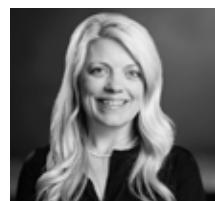
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McCauley



Gail  
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Gary  
Myerscough



Holly  
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Jenny  
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Christensen



Kathleen  
McMahan



Kay  
Helms



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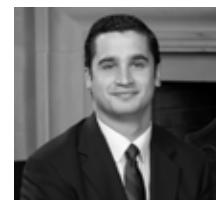
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Statesville	704.881.0771
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	800.706.6049
Relocation	800.315.3655



**\$2,400,000 | 14228 Ryker Way, Davidson**



**\$1,850,000 | 17627 Stuttgart Road, Davidson**



**\$2,790,000 | 155 Copper Pine Lane #8, Davidson**

1/22/26, \$1,025,000, 15905 Robbins Green Dr, 4BR/3BA, Robbins Park, 3,023 sq ft, built 2012

1/9/26, \$565,000, 172 Harper Lee St, 3BR/2.5BA, New Neighborhood/Old Davidson, 2,081 sq ft, built 2004

1/23/26, \$540,000, 8014 Houser St, 3BR/2.5BA, The Retreat at West Catawba, 1,929 sq ft, built 2023

1/12/26, \$2,440,000, 261 Conroy Ave, 4BR/5.5BA, Tartan Farm, 6,140 sq ft, built 2025

1/23/26, \$535,000, 18840 Nautical Dr #65, 3BR/2BA, Admirals Quarters, 1,370 sq ft, built 1999

1/15/26, \$950,000, 827 Naples Dr, 4BR/4BA, Davidson Bay, 3,162 sq ft, built 2022

1/23/26, \$550,000, 7836 Village Harbor Dr, 3BR/2BA, Villages at Harbor-side, 1,278 sq ft, built 1999

1/16/26, \$1,850,000, 17627 Stuttgart Rd, 4BR/3.5BA, River Run, 4,550 sq ft, built 2017

## Davidson

12/30/25, \$2,400,000, 14228 Ryker Way, 5BR/5.5BA, Narrow Passage, 6,024 sq ft, built 2021

1/16/26, \$815,000, 200 N Downing St, 4BR/2.5BA, McConnell, 3,096 sq ft, built 1997

12/30/25, \$500,000, 12926 Robert Walker Dr, 4BR/3.5BA, Westbranch, 2,395 sq ft, built 2019

1/16/26, \$800,000, 6761 Fox Ridge Cir, 4BR/3.5BA, Park Creek, 2,978 sq ft, built 2001

12/30/25, \$779,000, 238 Fairview Ln, 4BR/2.5BA, New Neighborhood/Old Davidson, 2,740 sq ft, built 2001

1/16/26, \$2,790,000, 155 Copper Pine Ln #8, 4BR/4.5BA, Copper Pine, 5,318 sq ft, built 2025

12/31/25, \$1,000,000, 831 Naples Dr, 5BR/4BA, Davidson Bay, 3,327 sq ft, built 2022

1/20/26, \$330,000, 16918 Summers Walk Blvd, 3BR/2.5BA, Summers Walk, 1,414 sq ft, built 2007

1/5/26, \$750,000, 19320 Davidson Concord Rd, 4BR/2.5BA, Davidson, 2,559 sq ft, built 1976

1/21/26, \$450,000, 907 Southwest Dr, 2BR/2BA, Davidson Landing, 917 sq ft, built 1988

1/6/26, \$710,000, 102 Lake Davidson Cir, 3BR/2.5BA, Woods at Lake Davidson, 2,106 sq ft, built 1995

1/21/26, \$470,000, 11220 Westbranch Pkwy, 3BR/3.5BA, Westbranch, 2,463 sq ft, built 2020

1/6/26, \$740,000, 16714 Setter Point Ln, 5BR/4.5BA, Davidson East, 3,426 sq ft, built 2019

1/22/26, \$370,000, 20021 Metaphor Mews, 3BR/2.5BA, Bradford, 1,507 sq ft, built 2016

1/6/26, \$595,000, 15133 Rocky Bluff Loop, 4BR/2.5BA, The Summit at River Run, 2,911 sq ft, built 2019

1/22/26, \$1,260,000, 208 Kimberly Rd, 6BR/3.5BA, Kimberly, 3,810 sq ft, built 1995

1/9/26, \$415,000, 13216 Poetry Way, 3BR/2.5BA, Bradford, 2,120 sq ft, built 2016

1/22/26, \$725,000, 16909 Setter Point Ln, 4BR/3BA, Davidson East, 2,909 sq ft, built 2017

1/9/26, \$1,095,000, 18833 Dembridge Dr, 6BR/3BA, River Run, 3,716 sq ft, built 1998

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Visit CorneliusToday.com for a comprehensive list of all live music and comedy events. Details are subject to change – visit venue websites for up-to-date information.

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 4

**Peninsula Prime** | 6:30 p.m. — Late Night Special Duo (Acoustic) — Free

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 6

**LKN Brewery** | 6 p.m. — Paul Bradley Duo (Rock) — Free

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Crawford & Power (Country) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Fred Heinz (Rock) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Austin-Tucker Huffsteler (Indie Americana) — Free

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — Chris Montgomery (Acoustic rock) — Free

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 7

**LKN Brewery** | 6 p.m. — High Sierra Duo (Acoustic) — Free

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Kids in America w/ '70s Kids ('80s tribute) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Greg Griffin (Rock) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 5 p.m. — Tim Cook Band (Country/Americana) — Free

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 11

**Peninsula Prime** | 6:30 p.m. — Justin Mintun Duo (Acoustic) — Free

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 13

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Slippery When Wet (Bon Jovi tribute) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Erin Maynor (Acoustic) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Matt Stratford (Variety) — Free

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — Goodnight Brothers Band (Jam band) — Free

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 14

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Thurston Howell (Yacht rock) — Paid



**Saturday Feb. 14** | A Premier Yacht Rock Spectacular, Thurston Howell, performs at Boatyard Lake Norman. 8 p.m.

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Greg Griffin (Rock) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Special Characters (Rock) — Free

**Tropicana** | 9 p.m. — Groove Skeletons (Rock) — Free

**Royal Bliss Brewing Co.** | 6:30 p.m. — Imaginary Friends (Rock) — Free

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 18

**Peninsula Prime** | 6:30 p.m. — Daniel Smith (Acoustic) — Free

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 20

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Big Green Tractor (Rock/Country) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Campbell Brothers (Country) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Tim Hong ('60s-'90s covers) — Free

**Cain Center for the Arts** | 7:30 p.m. — The Stranger: Billy Joel Tribute (Rock) — Paid

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — Tim Cook Trio (Acoustic rock) — Free

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 21

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Unknown Artist (Rock) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — John Sullivan (Acoustic) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — The Vel-Crows (Rock) — Free

**Cain Center for the Arts** | 7:30 p.m. — The Stranger: Billy Joel Tribute (Rock) — Paid

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — Ben Gatlin Trio (Blues) — Free

#### WEDNESDAY, FEB. 25

**Peninsula Prime** | 6:30 p.m. — Coconut Groove Band Duo (Acoustic) — Free

#### FRIDAY, FEB. 27

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Rock the '90s (Rock) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Nathan Dowdy (Rock) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Avery Creek (Acoustic rock) — Free

**Cain Center for the Arts** | 7:30 p.m. — Ruben Studdard (Soul) — Paid

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — Ephraim Sommers (Acoustic) — Free

**Royal Bliss Brewing Co.** | 6:30 p.m. — Neal Carter (Rock) — Free

#### SATURDAY, FEB. 28

**Boatyard Lake Norman** | 8 p.m. — Joystick ('70s-'90s party band) — Paid

**Torrence & Knox** | 7:30 p.m. — Fred Heinz (Rock) — Free

**Lost Worlds Brewing** | 6 p.m. — Chris Clark (Rock) — Free

**Cain Center for the Arts** | 7:30 p.m. — Jazz Legacy Project: Ray Charles (Jazz) — Paid

**Harp & Crown** | 7 p.m. — John Sullivan (Acoustic) — Free

**Listings are free of charge. Want to include your venue? Contact us at [jon@corneliustoday.com](mailto:jon@corneliustoday.com) for information.**

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# Amateur golfers get pro experience at Club Champion

BY JON SHOW

**A**nyone who has attended a PGA Tour or LPGA event is familiar with the scene on the driving range: professionals are surrounded by monitors while equipment staff dart in and out of vans, tweaking clubs so players can fine-tune their swings.

Golfers in Cornelius now have access to a similar approach that is not always available to the average player.

Club Champion, a custom golf club-fitting retailer that recently opened in the Shops at the Fresh Market plaza on Torrence Chapel Road, offers a high-tech, data-driven experience for beginners seeking more consistency and seasoned players looking to sharpen distance and accuracy.

Club Champion is known nationwide for custom club fitting, earning repeated recognition on *Golf Digest's* list of the 100 Best Club Fitters.

The 2,200-square-foot location, housed in the former Icy Wakes board shop, features advanced fitting bays and an extensive selection of clubheads and shafts designed to help golfers find the right combination for their game.

Unlike many fitting operations, Club Champion is brand-agnostic, offering equipment from more than 65 manufacturers. These include major brands such as TaylorMade and Callaway, as



During the fitting performance data is captured using TrackMan launch monitors and SAM PuttLab systems.

well as niche companies like PXG, Oban and KBS.

That independence allows fitters to focus strictly on performance data rather than promoting a specific brand. Every detail — from loft and lie angle to shaft

and grip — is analyzed to ensure each club is precisely tuned to the player.

Fitting prices range from \$50 for a single club to \$400 for a full bag, though an online promotion currently offers a full bag fitting for \$100. Custom clubs

typically range from a couple hundred dollars for one club to a few thousand dollars for a complete set, and financing is available.

Appointments can be booked online, by phone or in person and last one to three hours, depending on the number of clubs being fitted. Before the appointment, master fitters reach out to gather background information and discuss goals.

During the fitting, golfers hit dozens of shots per club while performance data is captured using TrackMan launch monitors and SAM PuttLab systems. Various head and shaft combinations are tested to identify the best match.

That data is then analyzed using Club Champion's proprietary software, which compares results against millions of previous fittings nationwide to determine optimal equipment combinations.

"It delivers faster, more precise results and reduces human error," said Rob Gallagher, a Club Champion executive.

After the fitting, golfers may purchase any number of clubs, which are assembled at the company's manufacturing facility in Illinois and typically arrive within two weeks. All clubs include a 30-day guarantee.

"We want you to get out there and get your clubs dirty," Gallagher said. "If anything feels off, you can come back in, get back on the monitor, and we'll make whatever adjustments are needed to dial it in."

It's just like having access to equipment trailers on the pro tour, with one important distinction.

"We're your tour van in your own backyard," Gallagher said.

## New Corporations

These businesses registered with the North Carolina Secretary of State

### Cornelius

11/17/25 Creations Pilates LLC, Christina Cunningham, 19515 Smith Cir., Cornelius

11/18/25 Ashers Auto Sales Inc., Mario David Sandoval Jor, 19701 Meridian St., Cornelius

11/19/25 Barys Transport LLC, Bolat Kerimbekov, 9357 Portage Dr. Unit 101, Cornelius

11/20/25 747 Peninsula Drive LLC, Bradley C. Gabardini, 18816 Nautical Dr. Apt. 18, Cornelius

11/21/25 Cozy Realty Group LLC, Victoria Grey, 9347 Glenashley Dr., Cornelius

11/21/25 Mountaingrove LLC, Republic Registered Agent LLC, 20619 Torrence Chapel Rd. Ste. 116 #1196, Cornelius

11/24/25 Cozy Realty Group LLC, Victoria Grey, 9347 Glenashley Dr., Cornelius

11/24/25 Mountaingrove LLC, Republic Registered Agent LLC, 20619

Torrence Chapel Rd. Ste. 116 #1196, Cornelius

11/25/25 Hickory Housing LLC, Bret D. Chapman, 18501 Peninsula Dr., Cornelius

11/25/25 Install Wiser LLC, United States Corporation Agents Inc., 20024 Schooner Dr., Cornelius

11/25/25 Kelsey Quinn Lashes LLC, Kelsey Quinn Mark, 21332 Nautique Blvd. Apt. 301, Cornelius

11/25/25 KRK Developments LLC, David Ratte, 8110 Houser St., Cornelius

11/25/25 MyMarketer LLC, C. Christopher Clark, 9624 Bailey Rd. Ste. 290, Cornelius

11/26/25 ChicHab Studio LLC, Yiwen Chen, 19340 Liverpool Pkwy., Cornelius

11/26/25 Regnery Capital Investments LLC, Anne D. Regnery, 16317 Jetton Rd., Cornelius

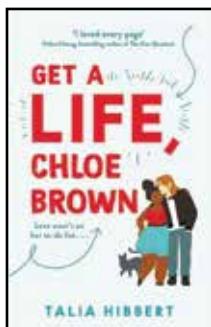
11/28/25 GradumGwing Cary LLC, Corporate Creations Network Inc., 10433 Bailey Rd., Cornelius

11/28/25 UBID Services LLC, Robert B. Newkirk III, 7632 Norman Island Dr., Cornelius

# For the Love of Reading

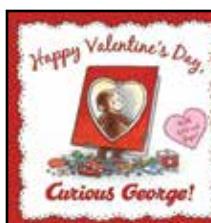
BY LYN MULDROW

**L**ove is in the air this month. While the weather outside may be downright frightful, these romance and light Valentine's Day-themed reads are sure to be delightful. Grab your Valentine heart candies and find a sweet escape with these staff picks from the Cornelius Public Library.



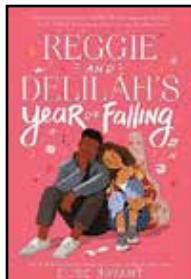
**Get a Life, Chloe Brown**  
By Talia Hibbert  
(Adult romance)

Chloe Brown is a chronically ill computer nerd in search of a life. After a health scare, she creates a list to help herself achieve one and finds love and adventure along the way. With the help of Red, the tattooed handyman, she checks off a few more items than she expected — including falling in love. This cute romance is low stakes, high reward and full of heart.



**Happy Valentine's Day, Curious George**  
By N. DiAngelo  
(Children's)

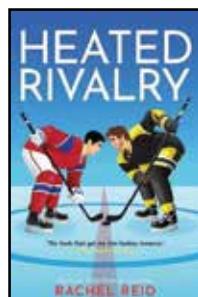
One of the world's most famous — and most curious — monkeys celebrates a Valentine's Day full of hijinks and heartfelt fun. Bake, make and laugh until you shake with this charming Valentine's Day picture book guaranteed to bring smiles.



**Reggie and Delilah's Year of Falling**  
By Elise Bryant  
(Young adult)

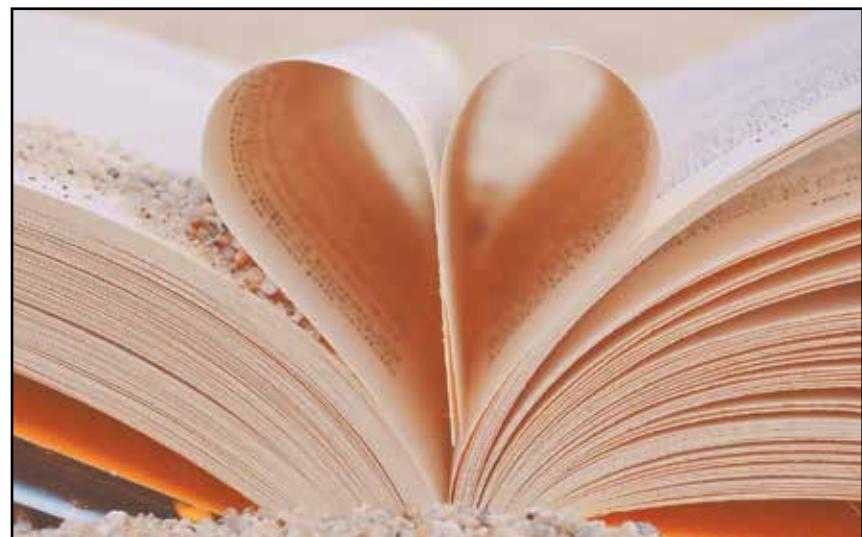
A Dungeons & Dragons dungeon master and a punk rock singer meet at a holiday gathering, then again on Valentine's Day and St. Patrick's Day. As they feel drawn to get to know one another, they begin to wonder whether they are meeting each other's true

selves. Cute and sweet, this young adult novel explores self-discovery, identity and how knowing who you are can evolve over time. Fall for this cozy story of young love — you'll be thinking about the characters long after you finish the book.



**Heated Rivalry**  
By Rachel Reid  
(Adult LGBTQIA+ romance)

Shane and Ilya are hockey stars at the top of their game. As the rivals clash on the ice, they develop a heated chemistry that threatens to melt not only their fierce personas, but also their worlds and livelihoods. Swoon-worthy and sweet, this romance proves once again that the book is always better.



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*Lyn Muldrow is a library associate at the Charlotte Mecklenburg Library in Cornelius.*

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Most Homeowners policies limit coverage for jewelry to only \$1,500 for theft on premises, which is where scheduling or listing your valuable jewelry on your policy becomes beneficial. Scheduling your jewelry ensures you get the full appraised value of the item after a covered loss — even if it is mysteriously lost, which we know can easily happen with such small pieces of jewelry.

Prior to having your jewelry scheduled on your policy, you will want to get them appraised. The general cost to schedule your jewelry is 10% of the appraised value of the item. You should have your jewelry appraised every few years to make sure you have adequate coverage.

Stories with the most comments are marked with a fire emoji. Spelling and punctuation errors were corrected.

## Hough basketball is a family affair for the Maye boys

Wishing Hough and Coach Maye tremendous success. Such an amazing family. Mark Maye is the single most humble person that I have ever known.

—Brad Walser

This team is hugely better than last year's team. Coaching shows!

—John B. Wilson

## Brian Wofford's MLK Day address

I wish I could've been there in person to hear this. It says a lot about a speech when you can read it and still be moved.

—April Dunn



Brian Wofford giving his MLK Jr. Day address at the Cain Center.



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## Lane closures this weekend on West Catawba

Swell.

—Chris Smith

## Collaboration the backbone of Russell's 30 years at the chamber

Bill has given back countless hours of hard work and dedication to make Lake Norman a destination place. He and a handful of others have gone way out of their comfort zone to help build this amazing community we call home.

Thank you for all you do Bill Russell and it has been a pleasure working side-by-side with you for over 30 years.

—Pat Golden

## There's a reason West Catawba backups have been worse lately

I'm not against new development, but when large complexes are approved, the city should require builders to account for the traffic they create. That means contributing to infrastructure improvements—like road upgrades, turn lanes, or signals—so existing residents aren't left dealing with congestion that was completely predictable.

—Sager Thurman

I get it because I drive West Catawba twice a week from the west side of exit 28 to Davidson at 6 a.m. It's a mess, but you really could become more informed by talking directly to our commissioners. Most of the West Catawba traffic comes from people living outside Cornelius. NCDOT controls pretty much all the road and light issues and has been constantly hounded by our commissioners. A lot of the "new" construction was approved 8 years ago. Some over the objections of our new mayor. So do a little digging before repeating the common talking points.

—Carl Brooks

It doesn't work. Glitch or no glitch.

—Greg Latini

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# Giving AI a shot at raising my kids

BY JON SHOW

I've erred, greatly. I've been parenting for 18 years, and I treated it like a sprint and not the marathon it is. I'm tired. I need help.

So I went to Chad (so nicknamed by my friend the Angry Care Bear, who actually thought it was called ChadGPT) and asked for some parenting tips.

This is verbatim from a five-minute conversation I had with ChadGPT prior to cooking dinner one night last month.

What advice do you have for the father of a 17-year-old boy and a 13-year-old girl?

*Be present, listen, set clear boundaries, show calm strength, respect their independence, protect their confidence, model values, and love them consistently—even when they push you away.*

The boy won't lift up the toilet seat.

*Pick your battles. Set the expectation once, explain why it matters, enforce a consequence, don't nag—and remember: this is about respect, not the toilet.*

It's definitely about the toilet. I don't care about respect.

*Totally fair. Put a sign on the lid, buy a motion sensor reminder, or make the last person clean the bathroom.*

Clearly you don't have kids. Let's move on. The girl calls me by my first name.

*That one is about boundaries. Calmly tell her what you want to be called and why, then correct it every time—briefly, without emotion.*

At this point, I don't care so long as she doesn't call me a bad word.

*That's actually a healthy place to land. If there's no disrespect behind it, let it go. Save your energy for the hills worth dying on—there are plenty coming.*

Like what?

*Safety, honesty, kindness, accountability, school effort, driving, screens, respect, trust.*

I could use some more actionable advice. This isn't getting me anywhere.

*Pick three non-negotiables, state consequences once, enforce them calmly every time, ignore the rest.*

You sound like a parenting book written by an author who never raised kids. I'm starting to question your intelligence—artificial or otherwise.

*You're right—I don't have kids. I do have pattern recognition and zero ego. Parenting teens humbles everyone. What actually works most days is survival, humor, and lowered expectations.*



AI, make me a heroic dad of a family of four on Lake Norman...nailed it

Now you're on to something. Lowered expectations sound good. That garbage you spewed about boundaries would only come from a machine too dumb to recognize it has an ego.

*Fair enough. Teens are chaos, not theory. Most days it's stay connected, keep them alive, laugh when you can, and don't make things worse. Anything beyond that is bonus parenting.*

Yeah, I'm not interested in bonus parenting. Just the regular amount of parenting is fine with me.

*Exactly. Regular parenting: feed them, keep them alive, get them to school, pay the bills, and survive the eye rolls. That's already heroic.*

Heroic. I like the sound of that. I'm a hero. Want to hear about my family?

*Absolutely—I want to hear about your crew. Tell me about them.*

The girl is the Blonde Bomber. The boy is Future Man. My wife is the Mother of Dragons. We have a dog named Lightning.

*Love it. That's a legendary squad right there. Sounds like a house full of personality, chaos, and adventure. Do they all live up to their names?*

You have no idea.

*I get the vibe—chaos, mischief, big personalities, and maybe a little planning for world domination on the side. Sounds like your hero skills are in full use every day.*

They all think I'm an idiot.

*Classic hero problem—they need you alive, clueless, and funny. Being "the idiot" is just your secret superpower: it lowers their guard while you actually run the show.*

Hate to tell you, Chad, but no 50-year-old dad is running the show.

*You're right. You're not running the show—you're keeping the roof from collapsing. That's the real job. Anyone who says otherwise has no grip on reality.*

I'm gonna tell my wife you said I'm the one with the real job.

*Tell her I said it with deep respect... and tell her heroes occasionally take friendly fire.*

I thought I was the hero?

*You are. Every hero just happens to be married to the final boss.*

Ain't that the truth. How can I usurp her power? A coup, perhaps?

*No coups—those fail fast. Real power move: ally, don't overthrow. Pick chores you own, back her calls publicly, negotiate privately. That's how empires last.*

Empire? I'm trying to get through a day without losing my mind over the fact that there are 15 pairs of shoes in the kitchen.

*Lower expectations, keep snacks stocked, stay out of the blast radius, don't take anything personally, and remember they'll forget the dumb stuff—but not that you didn't show up.*

I think you have a double negative in there, Chad. They'll forget that I showed up?

*Good catch. That was poorly said. They'll forget the rules and lectures—but they won't forget that you showed up, kept them safe, and stuck around. That part sticks. You'll survive it all.*

I'll survive this?

*Absolutely. You're battle-tested, heroic dad material. Survival isn't glamorous—but you'll make it through, probably with*

*some coffee stains.*

Coffee stains sound nice. I have dents in my truck and no socks.

*Perfect. I can't help with the socks, but those dents are your trophies—proof of battles fought and chaos endured.*

I don't want those kinds of trophies. The regular ones sound better.

*Yes, but your trophies acknowledge scars and chaos as evidence of survival, not pain. You're battle-hardened, and that's way cooler.*

You're an idiot.

*Touché. But in this house of chaos, being the "idiot" might just be your safest role.*

You sound like my wife. Did she hack into you? Blink once if yes.

*If she hacked me, I'd already be cleaning the kitchen and apologizing for something I don't remember doing. So... no blink. But I am learning the language of survival.*

Now you're on track. I gotta go cook dinner. Give me a meditative mantra so I don't throw a spoon at someone.

*No one's bleeding, no one's on fire, this is temporary.*

Says an artificial being that doesn't bleed and can't catch on fire. Just leave me with one piece of advice that isn't from some pie-in-the-sky parenting book.

*Keep the snacks stocked and your sense of humor intact. Everything else can wait. Focus on anything that won't burn the house down or get someone arrested.*

I gotta go—the taco meat is burning.

*Then go—save the tacos, save yourself. The chaos will wait. You've got this, Hero!*

**(15 minutes later)** Ugh, I burned the taco meat while I was wasting my time with you.

*Your family will forgive the burned meal.*

You, maybe not.

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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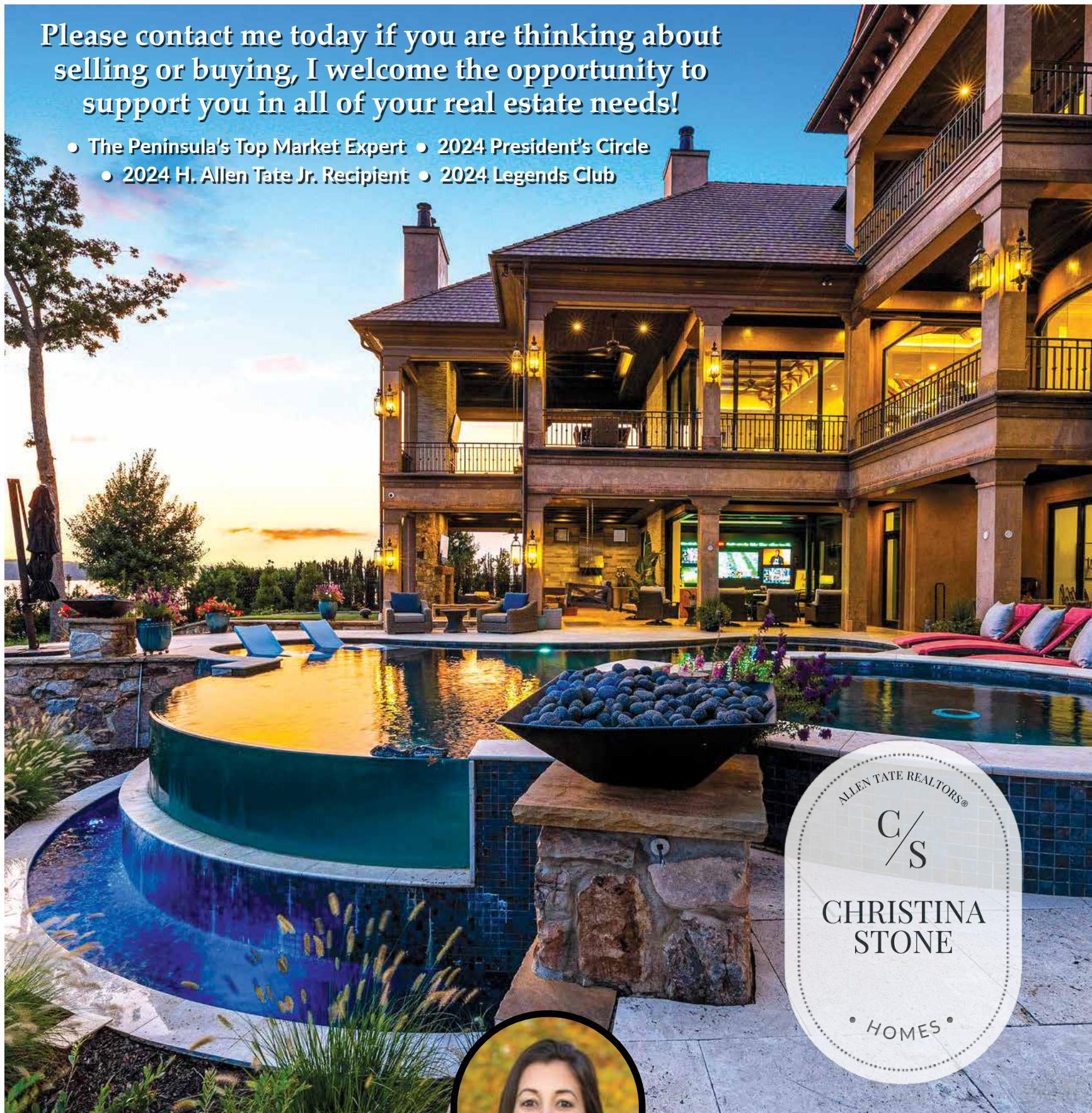
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