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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Happy Independence Day!



Please share your stories and photos with us by scanning the QR code here and tagging us on social media @strollballantynecountryclub.

Dear Neighbors,

As we celebrate Independence Day this July, we also begin recognizing a historic milestone for our nation, America's 250th birthday. For two and a half centuries, the United States has been shaped by the people, communities and values that continue to make it strong today.

Here in our neighborhood, we see that spirit every day through neighbors helping neighbors, local businesses supporting our community and families creating memories together. As you gather with

friends and loved ones this summer, we hope you'll take a moment to reflect on the freedoms we enjoy and the many reasons we are grateful to call this country home.

Wishing you a safe, happy and memorable Fourth of July.

Warmly,

Ashley and Nathan Grimm

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IMPORTANT CONTACTS

PUBLISHERS	Ashley and Nathan Grimm ashley.grimm@n2co.com nathan.grimm@n2co.com
AD COORDINATOR	Julia Riddle - ballantyneads@n2co.com
ADVERTISING SALES	Ashley Grimm - ashley.grimm@n2co.com
CONTENT COORDINATOR	Delia McMullen - ballantyne@strollmag.com
CONTENT ASSISTANT	Andrea Powell
PUBLISHING ASSISTANT	Cynthia Grimm
PARTNER COORDINATOR AND RESIDENT REPORTER	Michelle Lynch
RESIDENT REPORTERS	Allison Parker Yumo Yuan
PHOTOGRAPHERS	Leah Custer Nicole Daw



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704-544-1404 x409	COUNTRY CLUB Membership Director Katie Robinson krobinson@ballantyneclub.com
704-544-9755	Family Activities Center
704-805-1781	COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT Community Manager, Liza.McMahan@fsresidential.com
704-227-0897	Community Assistant lenny.forbes@fsresidential.com
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Ashley Grimm
Publisher
ashley.grimm@n2co.com



Delia McMullen
Content Coordinator
ballantyne@strollmag.com



Julia Riddle
Ad Coordinator
ballantyneads@n2co.com



Andrea Powell
Content Assistant
apowellc@gmail.com



Brynn Dombroski
Marketing and Events Coordinator
Brynn.Dombroski@n2co.com



Allison Parker
Senior Resident Reporter
ajtparker1@yahoo.com



Charisma at A Brew & You Headshots
charisma@abrewandyou.com



Yumo Yuan
Resident Reporter



Cynthia Grimm
Publishing Assistant



Emma Horiuchi
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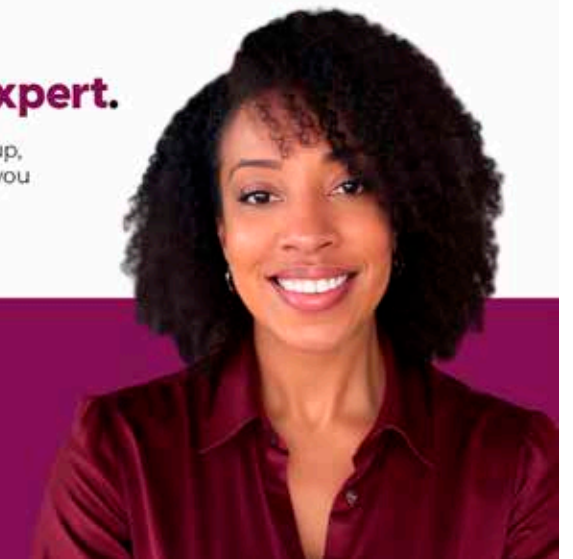
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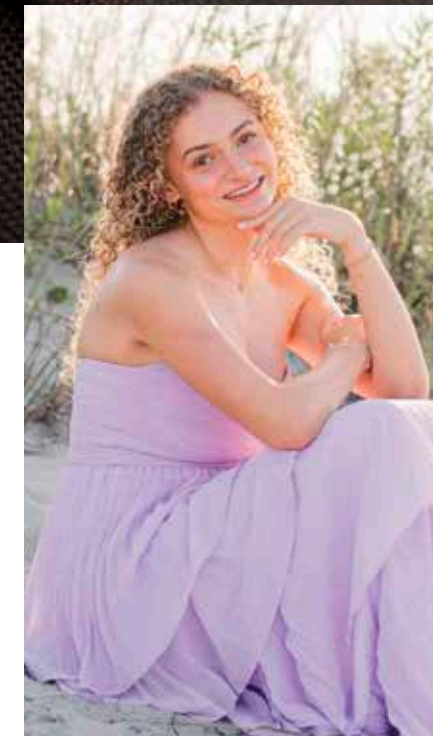
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SENIORS**

Congratulations to Our 2026 Graduates! We are so proud of BCC's 2026 high school graduates! What a great group of young men and women!

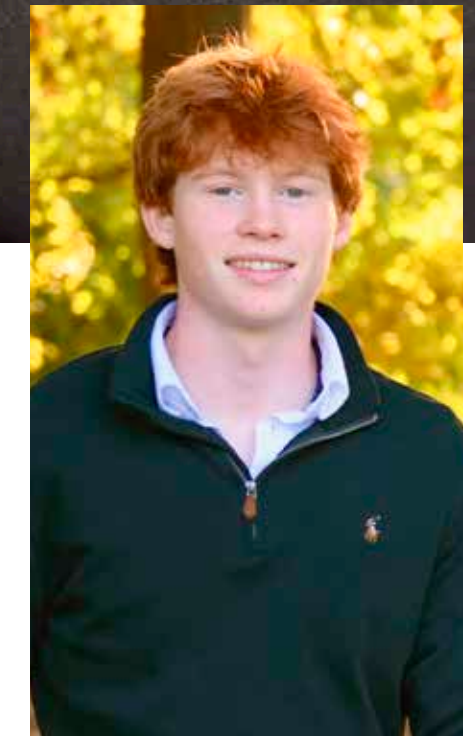
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Bryce Littlejohn
Ardrey Kell, ECSU School of Aviation
(Photo by CADY)



Ella Davis
Charlotte Catholic, University of Tennessee
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Owen Gillespie
Christ School, Saint Bonaventure University
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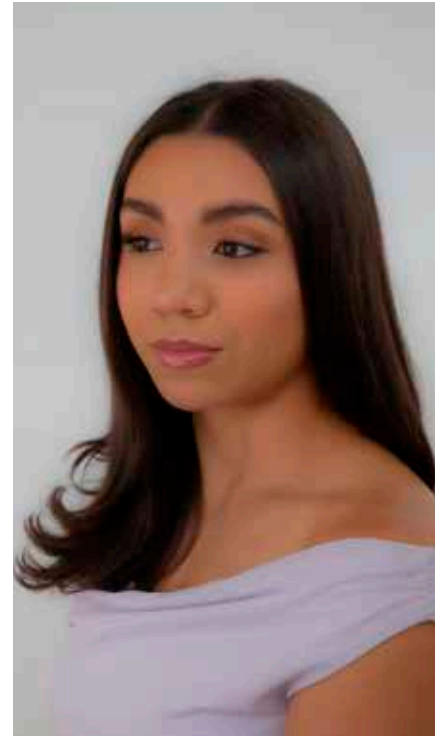
Caitlin Ledford

Ardrey Kell, Furman University



Cayden Caudil

Ardrey Kell, UNC Wilmington



Dayanara Lorenzo

Ardrey Kell, University of Central Florida
(Photo by Evie Lee)



Luciana Tapias

British International School of Charlotte,
Fordham University (Photo by St
John Photography)



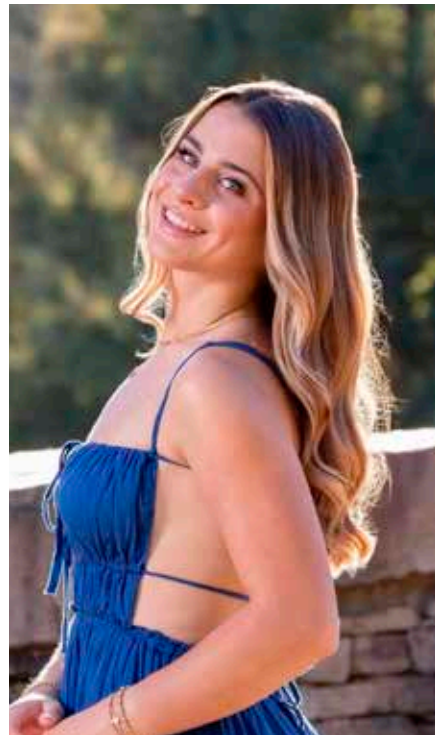
IT'S NOT TOO LATE!

If we missed your senior, we would love to include more graduates in our August issue. Please email Delia at ballantye@strollmag.com with name, high school, college attending (or other plans) and a high-resolution photo (1 MB or greater). Or scan this QR code.



George Couchenour

Providence Day School, Dickinson College
(Photo by St John Photography)



Lauren Parrish

British International School of Charlotte,
University of South Carolina (Photo by
Leah Custer Photography & Design)



Moses Rutledge Watrous

Ardrey Kell, NC State, Poole College of
Management (Photo by CADY)



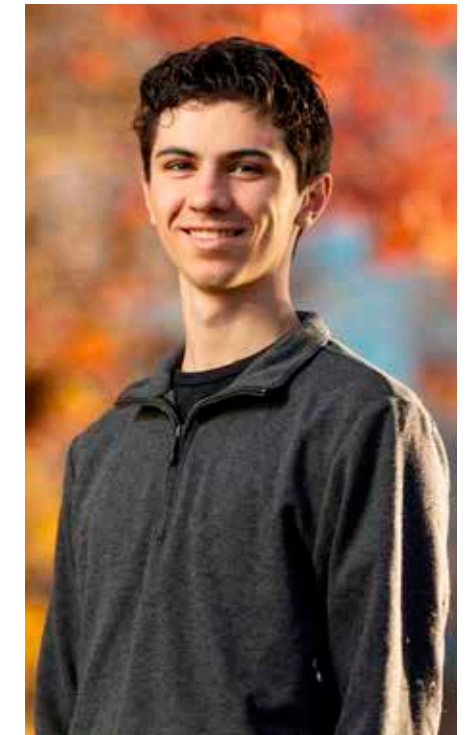
Cooper Gornet

Charlotte Catholic, NC State University



Elizabeth (Wren) Rachal

Ardrey Kell, UNC Chapel Hill (Photo by
Nicole Daw, KLYX Photography)



Alex Whitmore

Ardrey Kell, University of South Florida

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“

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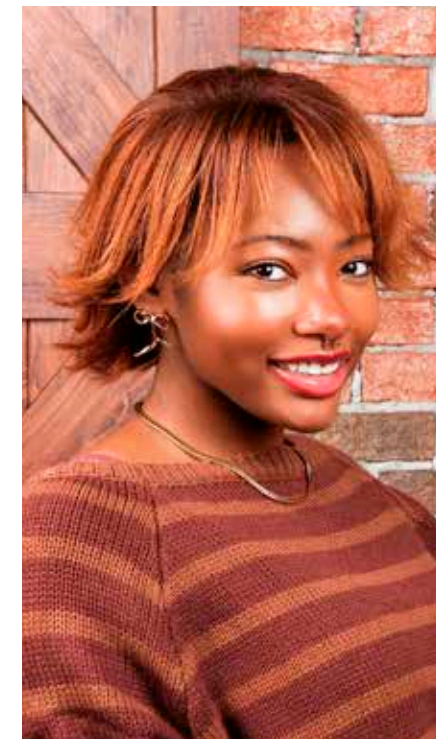
Nick Solosky

Ardrey Kell, East Carolina University
(Photo by Beverly Wright)



Logan Nichols

Charlotte Catholic, University of Miami
(Photo by Carolyn Ann Ryan)



Lauren Chisolm

Ardrey Kell, Northeastern University
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Patrick McCluer

Ardrey Kell, High Point University



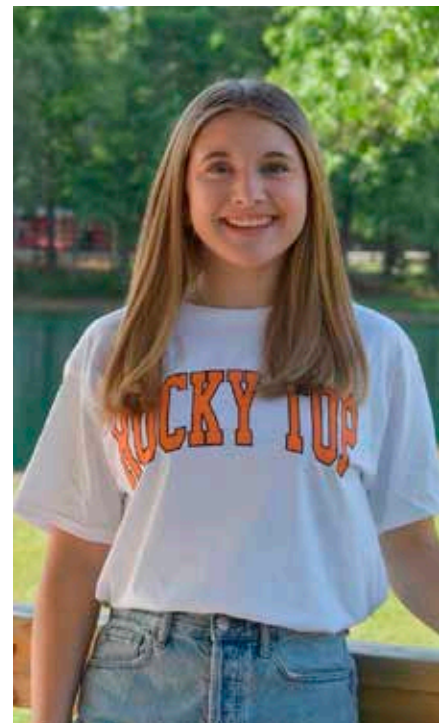
Alex Merritt

Metrolina Christian Academy, University
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Jack Nichols

Charlotte Catholic, University of Oklahoma



Michaela Carney

Ardrey Kell, University of Tennessee



Mason Croft

Ardrey Kell, Virginia Tech (Photo by
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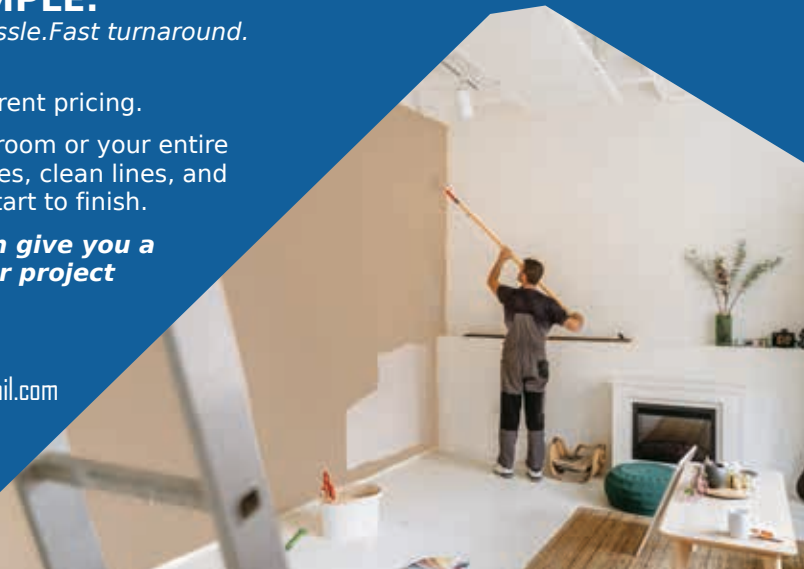
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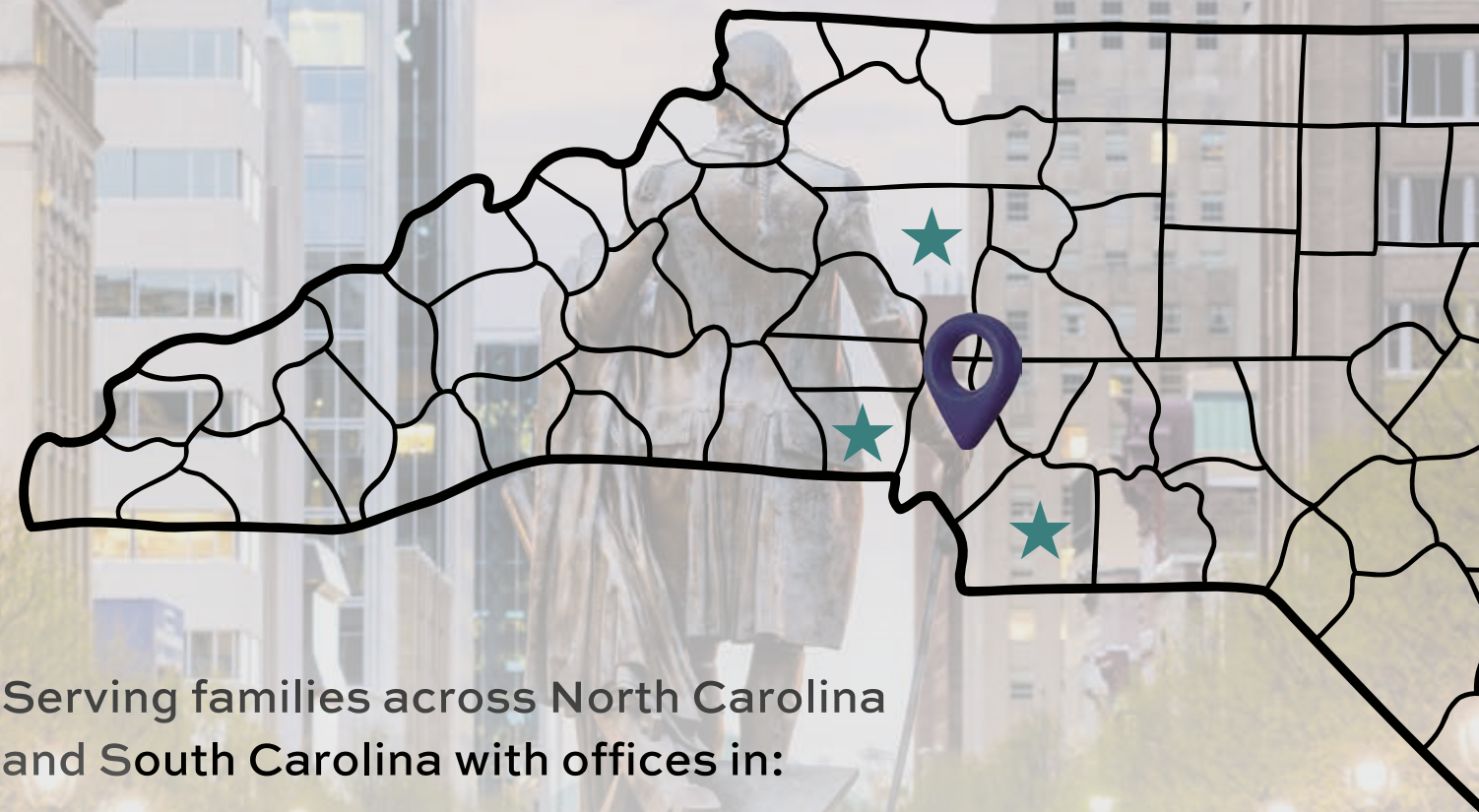
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NothingPink

BY KELLY KASHMER, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR & FOUNDER

AT 31, LIFE FELT FULL and predictable for Kelly Kashmer—a young mom raising her daughters, healthy, active and years away from her first recommended mammogram. Cancer wasn't on her radar. But one decision—to pursue genetic testing—changed everything.

Kelly tested positive for the BRCA2 gene mutation and was diagnosed with Stage II Triple Negative Breast Cancer. What followed was a whirlwind of chemotherapy, hospital stays and uncertainty. In the middle of it all, one truth became clear: no one should have to navigate this alone—and too many people were.

Out of that realization, NothingPink was born.

Founded in 2015, NothingPink supports individuals and families impacted by hereditary breast and gynecological cancers across the greater Charlotte region and York County, South Carolina. The organization focuses on education, support and access—helping people understand their risk and take proactive steps.

But just as importantly, NothingPink walks alongside individuals during diagnosis and treatment, when life feels the most overwhelming. From the moment someone hears the words “you



have cancer,” the organization provides tangible and emotional support—care packages during chemotherapy, post-surgical meals for recovery and medical planners to help patients organize appointments, medications and next steps. Support groups offer a safe space to process fear, ask questions and connect with others who truly understand.

NothingPink also supports “previvors”—those who carry a genetic mutation but have not been diagnosed—helping them navigate difficult decisions about prevention with confidence and clarity.

In 2024, that support found a physical home with the opening of The Roots at NothingPink—a space filled with connection, understanding and hope. It's where stories are shared, fears are voiced and no one feels alone.

Each year, the NothingPink Gala brings this mission to life in a powerful way. More than an event, it's a night that honors strength, raises critical funds and reminds the community what's possible when people come together. Every dollar raised supports programs that provide real help in real moments—when it matters most.

NothingPink is changing lives—not just by supporting those facing cancer, but by helping others take control of their future. Because no one should face cancer—or the risk of it—without support.

To learn more, get involved, or support the upcoming Gala, visit NothingPink.org.

There is nothing “PINK” about breast cancer.



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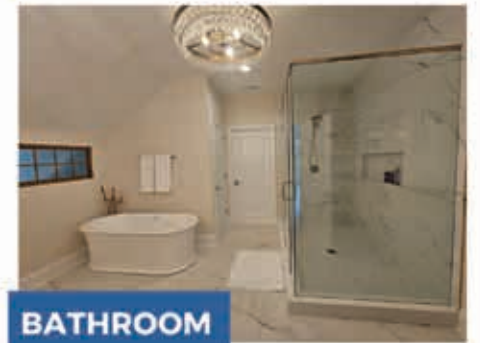


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Sweet &
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CUSTOM CAKES, COOKIES
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WITH HEART

BY CONTENT COORDINATOR DELIA MCMULLEN

When Tasha Boone first launched Sweet & Elegant Delights in 2012, it began as a creative outlet and supplemental income while she worked long days in the nursing profession. Today, her Charlotte-based home bakery continues to grow in exciting new ways while still maintaining the personal touch and artistry that have become the heart of her business.

Known for her beautifully detailed custom cakes, dessert shooters and celebration sweets, Tasha has recently added a new offering to her lineup: gourmet cookies. Available monthly, the specialty cookie collections have already created excitement among loyal customers eager to see what flavors and designs she releases next. Subscribers to her email list receive updates each time the cookie shop opens.

While Sweet & Elegant Delights continues to serve weddings, birthdays and celebrations throughout the Charlotte area, Tasha has also experienced major growth behind the scenes through her educational platform for fellow bakers and entrepreneurs. One of her biggest milestones this past year was receiving a second trademark for her business academy, where she teaches online cake decorating and business classes and offers digital products designed to help other bakers build successful businesses.

Tasha recently collaborated with eight other bakers for an online wedding collective, where she taught a class focused on wedding contracts for bakers — blending her creative expertise with practical business knowledge.

As trends continue to evolve in the baking world, Tasha stays true to her own artistic style while still embracing customer requests. She says whimsical floral cakes and dramatic table cakes are especially popular right now, though she admits she is selective about which trends she chooses to incorporate. “I’m not a trend follower, at least not initially,” she says with a laugh. “If a customer requests a trending cake, then I guess that makes me a trend follower.” Some trends, however, she politely declines to create, including burn cakes and glitter blow cakes, citing safety concerns and, in the case of glitter, the simple fact that it’s just too messy.

Despite the continued growth of her business, Tasha says family remains her greatest priority. Working from home gives her the flexibility to step away from a project when needed and spend meaningful time with her children and grandchildren when they drop by. “I’m really a homebody,” she shares. “Working from home gives me the opportunity to



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take a break from what I’m doing and enjoy those special moments with family.”

Looking ahead, Tasha is intentionally keeping Sweet & Elegant Delights focused on quality over expansion. While she may grow the cookie line (depending on demand), her goal is to continue creating meaningful desserts and memorable experiences for her clients without losing the personalized service that defines her brand.

For Tasha, Sweet & Elegant Delights has always been about more than desserts. It’s about creativity, connection and celebrating life’s special moments one beautifully crafted treat at a time.

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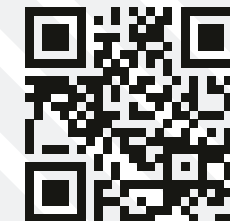
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4th of July Sugar Cookie Bars

RESIDENT RECIPE

These red, white and blue cookie bars are the perfect patriotic dessert! You can try this recipe for your sugar cookie base or use your favorite prepared cookie dough.

RECIPE COURTESY OF YOUR CUP OF CAKE

Makes 24 slices

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 egg, room temperature
- 1 egg yolk, room temperature
- 1 ½ tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 tsp. almond extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- ¼ tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. salt
- ¼ cup sprinkles (optional)

Frosting

- ¾ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 2-3 cups powdered sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees and line a 9x13 inch casserole dish with parchment paper. Lightly grease the sides of the pan. (I use parchment paper to easily lift my cookie bars out after they have cooled.)

2. Using a stand mixer, beat butter and sugar for 3 minutes. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.
3. Add egg, egg yolk, vanilla and almond extract. Mix again. (To get room temperature eggs fast, place eggs in a bowl of warm-hot water for a few minutes.)
4. In a separate bowl whisk together flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt.
5. Slowly add in dry ingredients to wet, then add sprinkles and mix only until combined. Dump into prepared pan and press flat.
6. Bake for 16 to 20 minutes. The edges will just barely start to turn golden. Take out of oven and place the pan on a cooking rack.

Frosting:

1. Beat butter, vanilla and 2 cups powdered sugar. Continue to add powdered sugar until you like the sweetness level. The frosting should still be soft enough to easily spread on your bars with a knife. If it gets too thick, add 1 or 2 tablespoons of milk.
2. Once your bars have cooled, lift up the parchment paper to remove them from the pan. Frost and top with strawberries and blueberries for a red, white and blue look. If you want to add sprinkles instead, immediately add sprinkles after frosting (if you wait, they won't stick!), and then cut into bars.



To share your recipe, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.

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The Elegance of Travel

*Beyond the Destination:
The Elegance of Access*

BY SHELLEY AND ALBERTO BENITEZ, CO-FOUNDERS



AT THE ELEGANCE OF TRAVEL, we have always believed that luxury travel is about far more than where you stay. It is about how an experience makes you feel, the memories it creates and the rare moments that stay with you long after you return home.

That is why we are excited to share our new partnership with **CurEnt Group**, a global experience company specializing in highly customized access across sports, entertainment, music, fashion, art, film and private events. Through this partnership, The Elegance of Travel now has an expanded ability to design experiences that go beyond the expected and into the extraordinary.

As Ryan Widick, Head of Sales for CurEnt Group, shares, this collaboration gives our team direct access to some of the most exclusive experiences in sports and entertainment. From courtside NBA tickets, 50-yard-line NFL suites and premium seats at global tennis tournaments to invite-only galas, award shows, after-parties and private sessions with legendary athletes, each experience can be thoughtfully customized around the client, the occasion and the desired level of access.

For music lovers, this could mean more than attending a concert. It could mean prime seats, VIP access or an intimate moment connected to a favorite artist. CurEnt Group's approach is designed to make music feel more personal, transforming a night out into a story worth remembering.

For sports enthusiasts, the possibilities can be equally remarkable. Imagine premium seats at the French Open, a private tennis lesson inspired by the greats, a golf experience

with a legendary player, access to a championship-level event or a hosted game-day experience that places you closer to the energy, emotion and excitement of the moment.

Fashion lovers may dream of stepping beyond the velvet rope. Through CurEnt Group, experiences can include access to coveted Fashion Week events, private atelier tours, tailored shopping outings, post-show conversations or curated moments with designers and fashion insiders. It is a way to experience fashion not only as a spectator, but as an invited guest.

For those drawn to television and film, the experience may take you behind the scenes of an industry that has shaped so much of our culture. From set visits and red-carpet premieres to award shows and private after-parties, CurEnt Group helps bring clients closer to the world of entertainment in ways that feel polished, memorable and deeply personal.

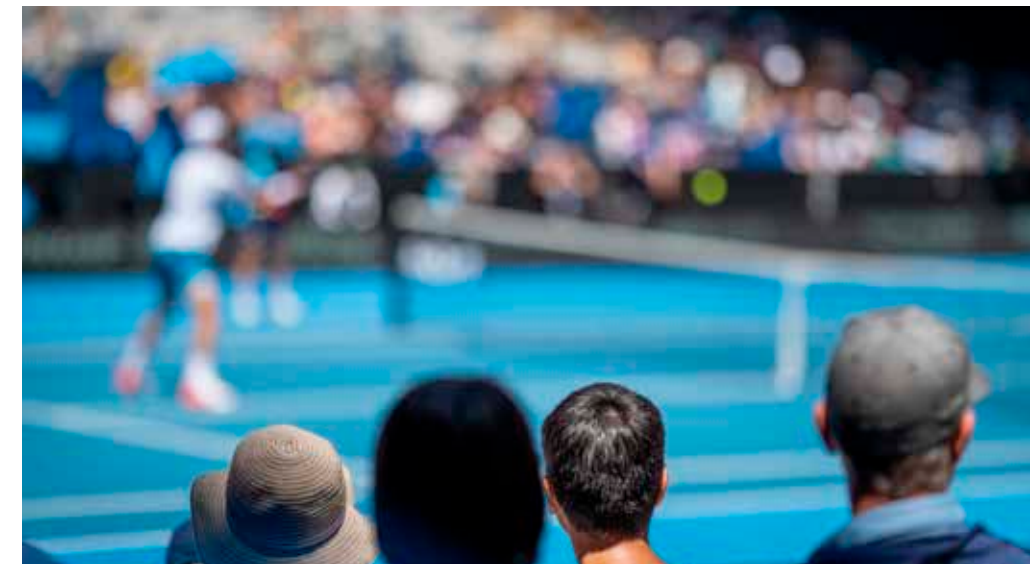
Art collectors and enthusiasts may also discover new opportunities through private gallery access, international art fairs, museum experiences and curated introductions within the art world. Whether it is a private viewing, a VIP experience at a major art event or behind-the-scenes access to a meaningful collection, the goal is to create a moment that reflects the client's personal interests and passions.

For The Elegance of Travel, this partnership represents an exciting expansion of what luxury travel can become. A vacation no longer has to be built only around a destination. It can be designed around a moment: a match, a concert, a private dinner, a gallery opening, a red-carpet event or a once-in-a-lifetime celebration.

Our role is to listen carefully, understand what matters most to each client and connect the right destination with the right experience. Sometimes that may be a beautiful resort, a private villa or a seamless itinerary. Other times, it may be access to something rare, emotional and impossible to duplicate.

In a world where so much can be searched online, true luxury still comes from relationships, discretion and thoughtful design. Through our partnership with CurEnt Group, The Elegance of Travel is proud to offer our clients new ways to experience the world — not just by going somewhere extraordinary, but by becoming part of an extraordinary moment.

If there is a moment you have always dreamed of experiencing — a championship event, a world-class concert, a private cultural experience, a red-carpet evening or something entirely your own — we would be honored to help explore what may be possible.



At The Elegance of Travel, we believe extraordinary travel begins with a conversation. Whether you are planning a milestone celebration, a family getaway, a couples' escape or a once-in-a-lifetime experience, our role is to help bring the right destination, the right access and the right details together with care.

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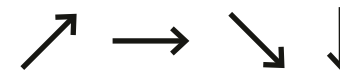
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A Holistic Approach to Clearer Skin

Why I Have Dedicated the Last 26 Years to Helping Teens Regain Their Confidence

BY PRITI PATEL, LE PETIT SPA

FOR MANY TEENAGERS, acne is more than a skin condition. It can impact confidence, self-esteem and the way they see themselves.

As a teenager, I experienced this firsthand. Struggling with acne helped shape my journey into skincare and eventually led me to found Le Petit Spa. Those early experiences gave me a deep understanding of how closely skin health and confidence are connected.

For the past 26 years, I have had the privilege of helping hundreds of teens and adults navigate their skin journeys. One thing I have learned is that there is no such thing as a one-size-fits-all solution.

Every person is different. Their lifestyle, habits, stress levels, activities and skincare routines all play a role in the health of their skin. That's why we begin with a thorough consultation and take the time to understand the individual before creating a personalized plan.

Having struggled with acne myself, I understand that the emotional impact often extends far beyond the skin. That's why every consultation begins with listening, educating and creating a plan tailored to the individual—not just the condition.

My approach has always been holistic. Rather than focusing solely on the breakout itself, I believe in looking at the bigger picture and identifying the factors that may be contributing to the condition. By understanding the whole story, we can create a path forward that is realistic, sustainable and tailored to that person's unique needs.



Many of our teen transformations were achieved without Accutane or prescription medications. Through personalized care, professional treatments, education and consistency, many families are surprised by what can be accomplished through a customized approach.

The greatest transformation isn't clearer skin—it's seeing a teenager smile more, feel more confident and become comfortable in their own skin again. Those moments are what make this work so rewarding.

Acne Awareness Month is a reminder that no one should feel alone in their skin struggles. With the right guidance, support, and individualized care, healthy skin is possible.

My mission remains the same today as it was 26 years ago: helping people feel confident in the skin they're in.



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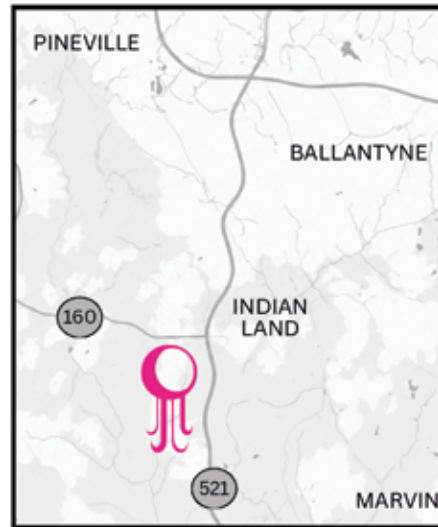


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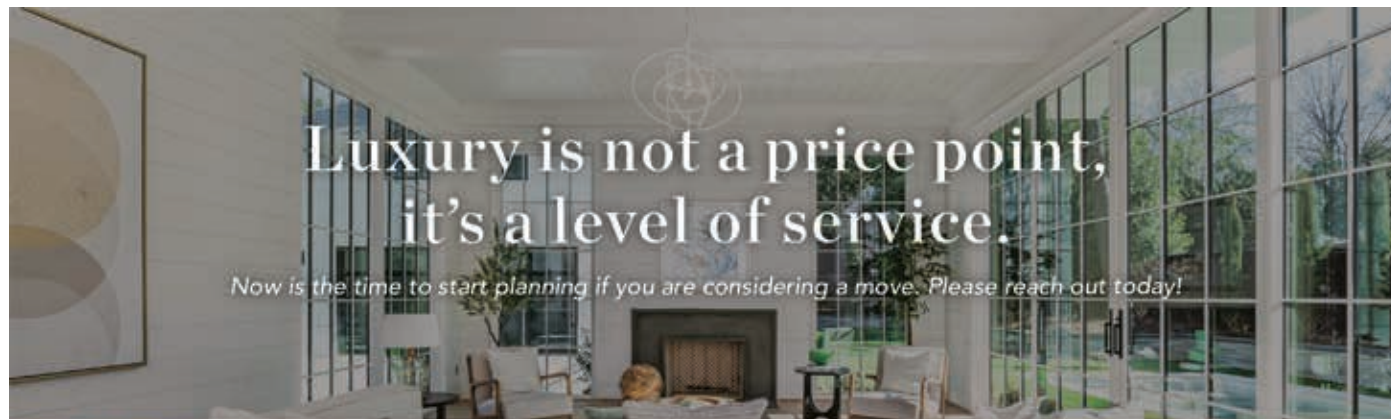
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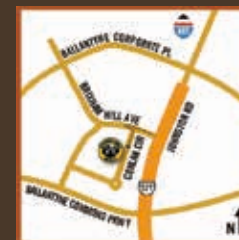
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Sip & Stroll draws 300-plus neighbors to Ballantyne Country Club

PHOTOS BY CHARISMA AT A BREW & YOU HEADSHOTS



“The people, the pours, and the easy conversation made this event feel less like a function and more like a reunion.”



THANK YOU, BALLANTYNE AND FIRETHORNE. The second annual Sip & Stroll brought more than 300 neighbors to the Ballantyne Country Club event lawn in May.

Sip & Stroll spilled across the Ballantyne Country Club event lawn on Thursday, May 28, and more than 300 of you turned out for it. You raised a glass, found your neighbors and turned a warm Thursday evening into the kind of night the whole neighborhood will be talking about all summer.

To everyone who came: this one was yours. A year ago, Sip & Stroll was a first try. This year it felt like a tradition. See you at the third.



To share your photos, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.



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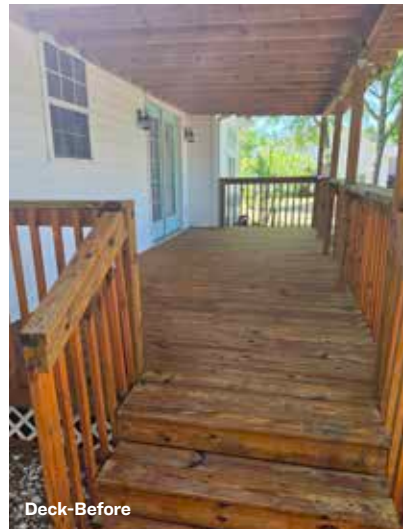
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CAIL PRESSURE PRO

BY CONTENT COORDINATOR DELIA MCMULLEN



Deck-Before



Deck-After

For Jeremie David Cail, family has always been the driving force behind every major decision. After spending 11 years driving 18-wheelers and spending long stretches away from home, he knew he wanted a different path—one that would allow him to provide for his family while being more present in their daily lives. That desire led him to launch Cail Pressure Pro LLC.

Jeremie was born and raised in West Africa as the son of missionaries and spent the first 12 years of his life overseas. Since returning to the United States, he has called the Charlotte region home, living in several communities throughout the area before settling in Sharon, SC. Today, he and his wife are raising their six children on a small country property where they enjoy homeschooling, caring for animals and giving their children plenty of room to explore and play.

While pressure washing is at the heart of the business, Cail Pressure Pro offers a wide range of exterior home services, including house soft washing, roof cleaning, concrete cleaning, deck and fence cleaning and staining, window cleaning, gutter cleaning, paver sanding and sealing, and basic handyman work. Jeremie adds, “We’re excited to extend our services this year by offering full roofline displays and custom holiday setups, along with professional installation, maintenance, and takedown. Get booked today, and let us help you make this holiday season truly unforgettable.”

What sets Jeremie apart is his commitment to doing things the right way. He continually invests time in learning proper techniques and industry best practices to ensure customers receive quality workmanship and lasting results. “My genuine



Steps-Before

Steps-After



GOOGLE REVIEWS OF CAIL PRESSURE PRO

“I hired Jeremie to come out and pressure wash my house (including front porch), driveway and our camper. Jeremie gave me a very detailed quote and we set up an appointment. He arrived when he said he would and did a fantastic job. We couldn’t be happier with the results. This is a wonderful local small business that I definitely recommend. We will be repeat customers!” –Scott H.

“I highly recommend Cail Pressure Pro. Jeremie Cail gave me a very reasonable quote. He prepared and thoroughly cleaned my brick home, driveway and patio. Jeremie moved and returned the patio furniture to its original location. After he finished, he walked us around our home for an inspection. Our brick home looks like new! Importantly, Jeremie is both very polite, and knowledgeable in his craft.” –James W.

“Jeremie did a concrete driveway project for us and did a great job. He was very professional, and started and finished the project on time. We will use him again.” –Pamela D.

desire is to provide exemplary service and finished products,” he says. “I honestly want to deliver value to the customer.”

Jeremie believes exterior maintenance is about much more than appearance. Regular cleaning and upkeep can help homeowners protect some of their biggest investments by extending the life of roofs, decks, fences, windows and gutters while helping prevent costly repairs down the road.

Rather than focusing on rapid growth, Jeremie’s goal is to build lasting relationships with clients who value quality service and trust. He prefers developing a loyal customer base he can serve well instead of becoming so large that personal attention is lost.

Faith remains central to both his family and his business. Jeremie says honesty, respect and integrity guide every interaction and every job. “We will treat you the way we want to be treated,” he says. “I will strive with all that I am to earn your trust and your business the right way.”

For more information about Cail Pressure Pro call or text 704-620-1602, email cailpressureprollc@gmail.com or visit cailpressurepro.com.

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Megan Donoho

GEICO Local Office

Where are you from? Where did you go to school and how did you end up in Charlotte?

I grew up in Anchorage, AK, then moved to Tampa, and I ended up going to Elon for school. From there, life and opportunity eventually brought me to Charlotte, and it quickly felt like the right place to build both a business and a life. Charlotte has the perfect combination of growth, community and energy, which made it a natural fit.

How did you get into the insurance business?

Insurance has always been part of my family's story. My father spent 50 years with GEICO, so I grew up around the business and saw firsthand how important it is to take care of people during some of life's more stressful moments. What started as a family connection became a career I genuinely care about.

What types of insurance do you offer?

Do you have a specialty?

We offer auto, homeowners, renters, motorcycle, boat, RV, umbrella and other personal insurance products. While we help with many different needs, we place a strong focus on bundling coverage properly — especially auto and home — so clients are not just insured, but insured thoughtfully.

What does GEICO offer that sets you apart from other insurance firms?

GEICO combines national strength with local service. Clients get the benefit of a well-known, financially strong company, but they also have access to a local office where real people can help explain options, answer questions and make the process less overwhelming.

Why should someone choose you to assist them with their insurance needs?

Because we care about getting it right. Insurance can be confusing, and most people don't want to spend their day decoding coverage language — shocking, I know. Our job is to make it easier, explain

things clearly and help clients feel confident about their choices.

How do you offer a positive customer experience?

We focus on being responsive, approachable and clear. Whether someone is buying a new home, adding a teen driver, moving to the area or just trying to understand their policy, we want them to feel taken care of rather than rushed through a transaction.



Megan and her staff

Who are your typical clients?

We work with everyone—homeowners, renters, families, young drivers, retirees, small business owners and people who are brand new to Charlotte. People's insurance needs change through every stage of life, so we try to meet our clients where they are.

What's the one piece of advice you offer every client?

Don't just shop for the cheapest policy. Make sure you understand what you're buying, what is covered and what could leave you exposed. Price matters, of course, but coverage matters when you actually need it.

What about your business are you most proud of?

I'm most proud of the team and the culture we've built. We work hard, we care about our clients and we try to do business in a way that feels personal and honest. I'm also proud to continue a family legacy with GEICO while building something of my own here in Charlotte.

What about your business would you most like to get across to readers of Stroll magazine?

That we are local, accessible and here to help. We know insurance is not exactly everyone's favorite dinner party topic, which is fair. But when people need guidance, we want them to know they have a local office they can call, text or visit.

What are your interests outside of work?

I have a passion for rescuing animals and supporting cancer awareness, two causes that are very close to my heart. I also enjoy spending time with family and friends, supporting local businesses and being part of the Charlotte community. I'm grateful to live and work in a city that continues to grow while still feeling connected.

Is there anything else you'd like to add?

I'm thankful for the opportunity to serve the Charlotte area and for the clients who trust us with something as important as protecting their homes, cars, families and futures. We don't take that lightly.

Megan would love to help with your insurance needs. You can reach her by calling 704-523-2886 or emailing megdonoho@geico.com.

To have your business featured in an upcoming issue, please email Zane at zane.odom@strollmag.com.



Megan and her family at a recent conference celebrating her 20 years and her father's 50 years with the company!



Megan's fur babies, Jerry and Peeps!



Q&A with Megan Donoho

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Megan Donoho

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RUDY “ROO” PITT



For Ashley, Dave and 8-year-old Brady Pitt, their beloved Maltipoo Rudy—better known as “Roo”—is much more than a pet. He’s a cherished member of the family.



Like many dogs, Roo loves treats but he has a particular weakness for bananas. During breakfast, he can often be found standing patiently on his hind legs, waiting for someone to share a small piece from their plate.

He also believes he deserves a seat at the table. “Rudy likes to jump into a chair and put his paws on the table while we’re eating,” Ashley says. “We feel like he’s part of the family, so he always has a seat at our table.”

Roo is equally enthusiastic about car rides. Mention those two magic words and he comes running at full speed. He frequently accompanies the family on school drop-offs and pickups at Ballantyne Elementary and never misses an opportunity to ride along.

Over the years, Roo has brought countless laughs, cuddles and companionship to the Pitt family. “Dog people will understand that we treat Rudy like a real member of our family,” Ashley says. “He makes us laugh every single day with his silly antics, and we’re always snuggling with him.”

If you spot the Pitts enjoying a family walk or visiting Brick Church Park, be sure to say hello. And if you see Ashley carrying Roo, don’t worry—he’s probably just decided he’s walked far enough and would prefer a ride home.

To recommend a pet to be featured, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.



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The Pitts welcomed Rudy into their lives 11 years ago after finding him through another family in Fremont, California. At just 12 weeks old, the tiny pup quickly proved he was the perfect fit for their busy lifestyle. “At the time, Dave and I were living in a small townhome in the East Bay of San Francisco before having kids,” Ashley says. “We knew we wanted a little dog, and the second we met Rudy, we knew he’d be perfect for us.”

Named after the beloved Notre Dame-inspired movie *Rudy*—a nod to Dave’s South Bend, Indiana roots—Roo has spent the past decade traveling the country with his family. From California and Florida to Ohio and beyond, he has logged plenty of frequent-flyer miles for a little dog.

At home, Roo is happiest wherever his people are. Ashley describes him as a “Velcro pet” who faithfully follows family members from room to room. One of his favorite spots is perched on the back of the couch, where he can keep an eye on all the activity downstairs. When the family is away, he can often be found waiting patiently on the laundry room floor near the garage door, ready to greet them the moment they return.

Roo’s toy basket is another source of joy. His favorite treasures include a stuffed donut and a stuffed squirrel, and Ashley says the first thing he does after returning home is run over to make sure all his toys are still there.

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“Do I Need a Trust?”

Ways to avoid probate in North and South Carolina

BY HEATH MYERS, PARTNER, MORTON & GETTYS



As an estate planning attorney, one of the most common questions asked is whether a client “needs” a trust. A trust is

a legal agreement allowing you to control how your assets will be managed, protected and distributed both during your life and after death. There are many different types of trusts, each tailored to accomplish different goals and requirements. A common objective for clients is avoidance of probate. A properly funded trust can be an effective, and often recommended, way for individuals and families to privately distribute most assets to their beneficiaries without the involvement of a probate court. A trust may also allow you to provide for your loved ones, protect your assets, and control who receives those assets and when they are received.

WHAT CAN I PUT IN A TRUST?

Once you’ve decided whether a trust is appropriate, the next step is determining what to put in your trust:

- **Real Property and Improvements:** All real property can be conveyed to your trust by signing a deed to the trustee of your trust. Failure to properly title your property in your trust may subject the property to probate.
- **Investments and Financial Accounts:** Ownership of all stocks, bonds, mutual funds and other securities, as well as individual bank accounts – including checking, savings and money market accounts – may be transferred to your trust, either during life or after death, by updating account titles or completing institution-specific forms. Please contact your financial advisor or institution to discuss the appropriate steps to ensure these are properly transferred.

- **Life Insurance:** You may designate the trustee of your trust as the beneficiary of most life insurance policies by contacting your life insurance broker to obtain a “change of beneficiary” form.
- **Personal Property:** Personal property and vehicles are not typically transferred to a trust unless extremely valuable. To transfer these assets, an assignment or bill of sale should be prepared along with naming the trustee of the trust on the vehicle title. If the property is insured, you should notify the insurance company of the change in ownership of the property. However, there are additional ways to transfer your vehicle(s) outside of probate.

In North Carolina, titling a vehicle in both owners’ names is insufficient to avoid probate. Instead, vehicle owners may title their automobiles as “Joint Tenants with Right of Survivorship” (or JTWRoS)

to transfer title to the surviving co-owner without the requirement of probate. South Carolina allows owners to designate a “Transfer on Death” (TOD) beneficiary to their vehicle titles. Such transfer is not subject to probate and may include vehicles, RVs and watercraft.

Estate planning decisions are deeply personal, and the right approach depends on your unique situation. If you have questions about whether a trust is right for you or how to best protect your assets in North or South Carolina, Heath Myers is here to help. Contact him at 803-366-3388. To learn more about Morton & Gettys, visit mortongettys.com.

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the GLOW UP LASER SPA

For Alissa Mariello, beauty and wellness are about much more than appearances—they're about confidence, freedom and helping people feel their best every day.

BY CONTENT COORDINATOR DELIA MCMULLEN, PHOTOS BY CHARISMA AT A BREW & YOU HEADSHOTS

AS THE FOUNDER AND CLINICIAN behind The Glow Up Laser Spa in Blakeney Town Center, Alissa specializes in advanced laser hair removal and electrolysis services for both women and men. While her career path may seem unexpected, it was shaped by a combination of personal experience, professional expertise and a passion for helping others.

Alissa's roots in the Ballantyne area run deep. Her family moved to Ballantyne Country Club in 1996 when the neighborhood was still in its early stages. Her father Ronald Mariello served as president of Ballantyne Country Club from 2006 to 2012, and her mother was a beloved kindergarten teacher at St. Matthew's for 11 years before her retirement in 2016. Alissa herself graduated from Providence Day School before heading to Boston, where she earned a degree in English, later adding a graduate certificate from Harvard University and an MBA from Boston University.



After building a successful career in marketing and business, raising her daughter Athena and eventually returning to Charlotte in 2024, Alissa decided to pursue a new dream.

"I wanted to create the kind of laser spa I'd want to go to," she says. "Laser hair removal was absolutely life-changing for me, and I wanted to pass that forward."

A Category of One in the Queen City

Today, The Glow Up Laser Spa, which has quickly earned a reputation for excellence and maintains a five-star rating on Google, offers a highly personalized, upscale experience that sets it apart from other Charlotte aesthetic spas. Every client works directly with Alissa, a North Carolina Board Certified laser hair practitioner and electrologist, from consultation through treatment completion.

Her boutique studio features the FDA-approved Lumenis SplendorX laser system; Alissa is currently the only practitioner in the Charlotte area to offer this revolutionary platform.

Unlike traditional lasers that can only fire one wavelength at a time, the SplendorX utilizes a patented, synchronized dual-wavelength system. It fires both Alexandrite and Nd:YAG wavelengths simultaneously, allowing Alissa to customize treatments for each client, regardless of skin tone, with mathematical precision. "As the only spa in Charlotte with this advanced technology, we can safely and effectively treat all skin tones all year round—even accommodating sun-kissed summer skin," Alissa explains. "Our clients don't have to delay their hair removal journeys or compromise the efficacy of their treatments during summer just because they've spent some time outdoors. It's a total game-changer for safety and consistency."

Clinical Excellence Meets High-End Hospitality

While the technology is powerfully effective and remarkably gentle, the experience is pure luxury. Located inside Sola Salons in Blakeney Town Center, the studio balances advanced medical physics with elite clinical standards. The Glow Up Laser Spa operates under strict, physician-supervised safety protocols, including a brief, seamless



TESTIMONIALS

"Alissa is awesome! She is extremely knowledgeable about her services and makes you feel at home in her studio. Can't recommend enough!"

"After interviewing three businesses in South Charlotte, I quickly concluded that Alissa's knowledge, care and expertise would be the best choice! I had my underarms and bikini done today and I am astonished at how painless the experience was—I barely felt anything and the treatments went so quickly! I cannot recommend Alissa enough—she is so trusting, caring, kind and attentive, and will make you feel totally comfortable and confident in your experience!"

"Alissa is amazing! Very knowledgeable and explains what to expect very well. Also has experience working with women with PCOS, which made me feel so much more comfortable. Can't wait to see her again!"

"Alissa is amazing! I just started my laser journey, and she has made it a breeze. Extremely knowledgeable and makes you feel so comfortable."

pre-treatment virtual safety review with Alissa's supervising physician to ensure every client is medically cleared for optimal results.

With a continuous, gliding handpiece, treatments themselves are rapid—an underarms session takes approximately five minutes and a Brazilian session only takes about 15 minutes—and are surprisingly comfortable thanks to the synchronized dual-laser technology and built-in cryo-cooling system. But the bespoke touches are what truly define its boutique space. For example, following every treatment, clients are treated to chilled, lavender-infused aftercare towelettes and a calming spring water mist to instantly soothe the skin and elevate the sensory experience.

The spa also reinforces its clinical integrity through seamless online booking, transparent pricing, flexible financing options and a strict no-tipping policy. "An investment in your outer self is an investment in your inner self, and vice versa," Alissa says. "I want every client who walks through my door to feel deeply cared for by me and by themselves."



To have your business featured in an upcoming issue, please email ashley.grimm@n2co.com.

Education Over Hype

For neighbors considering permanent hair reduction, Alissa notes that the recent explosion of trendy, at-home IPL (Intense Pulsed Light) or handheld laser devices deserves a major word of caution. “At-home devices are gaining massive popularity online, but they simply lack the power of medical-grade technology,” Alissa explains. “Because they emit low-level energy, they often fail to destroy the hair root entirely to deliver permanent results. Even worse, on certain areas like the face or neck, this low-level heat can actually trigger a condition called *paradoxical hypertrichosis*—meaning it accidentally stimulates the fine hair follicles to grow back thicker, longer and darker than before.”

To avoid these costly skin setbacks, Alissa encourages consumers to prioritize proper education when choosing their permanent hair reduction solution. “Always ask about the exact technology being used and the credentials of the person operating it,” she says. “True clinical results require specialized training and medical-grade engineering. The right

technology and a certified practitioner can make all the difference between a frustrating or unsafe experience and a positive, life-changing result.”

When she’s not helping clients achieve lasting smooth skin, Alissa enjoys spending time with her 14-year-old daughter Athena and reconnecting with the community she has called home for much of her life.

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The Glow Up Laser Spa
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resident business guide

This is a current list of business owners and professionals from our neighborhood. It is an opportunity to network, qualify and potentially build a business relationship with other successful individuals who also live here. To be included in the Resident Business Guide, email your name, business name, phone number and email address to Ashley.Grimm@n2co.com.

- | | | | | |
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STROLL BALLANTYNE COUNTRY CLUB IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD PICTURES!

Follow us on social media! Instagram and Facebook: @strollballantynecountryclub

Stroll Ballantyne Country Club is your neighborhood publication. Break out your cameras and share your pictures with us for our August 2026 issue. Please send pictures to Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com for our upcoming issues.

Attention Students – We are looking for Resident Reporters for Stroll BCC! Build a stronger resume and gain experience writing by joining our staff! We need students to take photos around the neighborhood and write articles on the people, places and events in our community. Please email ballantyne@strollmag.com for more info!

Here are a few suggestions for photo submissions:

- **Graduations** – It's time to celebrate our youths' academic achievements as they graduate to new and exciting challenges ahead. Share your graduation photos and celebrations with us.

- **Memorial Day** – Show your patriotism! Share with us how you paid your respects to our military heroes on Memorial Day.
- **Father's Day** – Dads are special for so many reasons. Show us how you celebrated your dad!
- **4th of July and Summer Shots** – Happy birthday, America! Fireworks, flags flying, picnics and parades are favorite ways to celebrate our country's birthday. Send us your favorite Independence Day pictures and show us your best summer action photos!
- **Milestone Celebrations** – Do you or a loved one have a milestone birthday or anniversary coming up? Send us a memorable photo!
- **Weddings** – We'd love to share photos from spring and summer weddings in our community. Share the love by sending your special wedding day pictures to us!

- **Military, Veterans and First Responders** – We'd love to honor our local heroes—please send us your article ideas or photos of Veterans to feature in our upcoming issues!
- **Family and Neighborhood Gatherings** – Stroll Ballantyne Country Club is all about family and community. Our favorite photos are those of kids playing, birthday parties and neighborly gatherings.

NEW TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Are you and your family new to Ballantyne Country Club? If so, welcome! Please send your contact info to ballantyne@strollmag.com to be added to our email list. To submit an idea, photo or article, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com!

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