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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

Start the Conversation

Dear Neighbors,

Something I've been thinking about often lately is how easy it is to assume that the people around us may not fully understand what we're going through.

But when you really stop and think about it, we live in the same neighborhood, our kids go to the same schools, our families are navigating many of the same stages of life and chances are, we've experienced more of the same highs, lows, worries and joys than we realize.

Sometimes all it takes is a conversation.

A quick hello at the mailbox. Sitting next to someone at a school event. Checking in with a neighbor you haven't seen in a while. What starts as small talk can turn into a real connection.

We may all be in different stages of parenting and different seasons of life,

but there is still so much we can relate to. Maybe one neighbor has already walked through something you're just beginning, or maybe you're both figuring it out at the same time.

There's something comforting about realizing that the people living right around us often understand more than we think.

Sometimes we just have to start the conversation.

We may all have different stories, but we share a lot more than just an address.

Warmly,

Ashley and Nathan Grimm

Publishers, *Stroll*



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

SPECIAL NOTE: We're kicking off the holiday season with a festive *Stroll* Holiday Party on Thursday, November 5, at Zinicola in Ballantyne Village! Join us for an evening of food, music, door prizes and community fun — and be sure to scan the QR code to RSVP.



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After more than a decade serving in the military and law enforcement, Owner Nick Stewart continues to serve his community through EverPeak Roofing and as a high school football coach at Marvin Ridge High School.

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Owner



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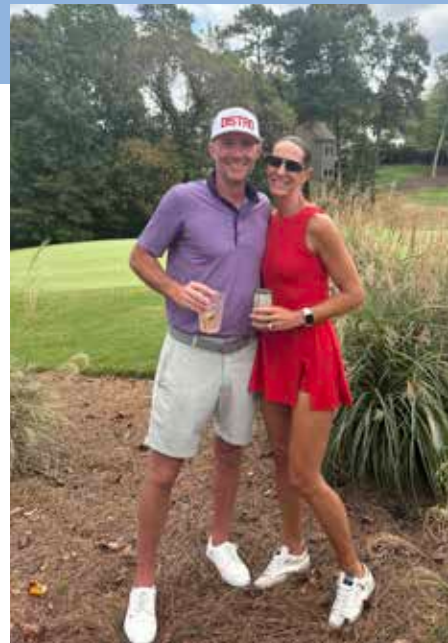


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MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

THE Shealy family

ROOTED IN FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND A CAUSE CLOSE TO THEIR HEARTS



After living in several parts of the country, Danielle and Joe Shealy found their way back to the Carolinas in 2018. Today, the longtime Clemson Tigers are happily settled at Firethorne, where golf, tennis, community involvement and family time fill their days.

Originally from Greenville, SC, Danielle and Joe met at Clemson University in 2001 and married shortly after graduation. They bought their first home in Greenville and welcomed their two oldest children there. A job-related move later took them to Tampa, FL, where their youngest child was born. After five years in Florida and five years in Bentonville, AR, the Shealys were ready to return to the Carolinas.

Now eight-year Firethorne residents, they appreciate the community, excellent schools and proximity to the mountains, lakes and coast. Eventually, they hope to retire in the Lowcountry of South Carolina.

Their three children are each pursuing their own interests and finding ways to contribute to their communities. Samantha, 19, is a sophomore at NC State University. Brooks, a senior at Marvin Ridge High School, works at the YMCA, plays golf at Firethorne and participates in club basketball. A member of the Young Men's Service League, he also volunteers in the community. Harper, a Marvin Ridge sophomore, is a cheerleader,

"We love our friends and support system here."

THE SHEALYS

a member of the varsity game day competition team and a varsity lacrosse player. She also loves to babysit in the neighborhood.

Joe recently celebrated 20 years with The Wine Group and serves as general manager of its East Region. Danielle, a former elementary school assistant principal in Greenville, later had the opportunity to stay home and raise their children. She now devotes significant time to Breakthrough T1D, whose mission became personal after Samantha's type 1 diabetes diagnosis in 2016.

Danielle captains several tennis teams at Country Club of the Carolinas, while Joe is an avid golfer and coaches basketball through the Wesley Chapel-Weddington Athletic Association. The family enjoys golf, tennis, the beach, the lake and time with their dogs. When schedules allow, the Shealys enjoy relaxing together with their dogs. Danielle also loves to cook.

Boxers hold a special place in their household. The family currently has two of the energetic, athletic dogs – Berkeley and Roxy. Berkeley was named after Danielle's Clemson apartment



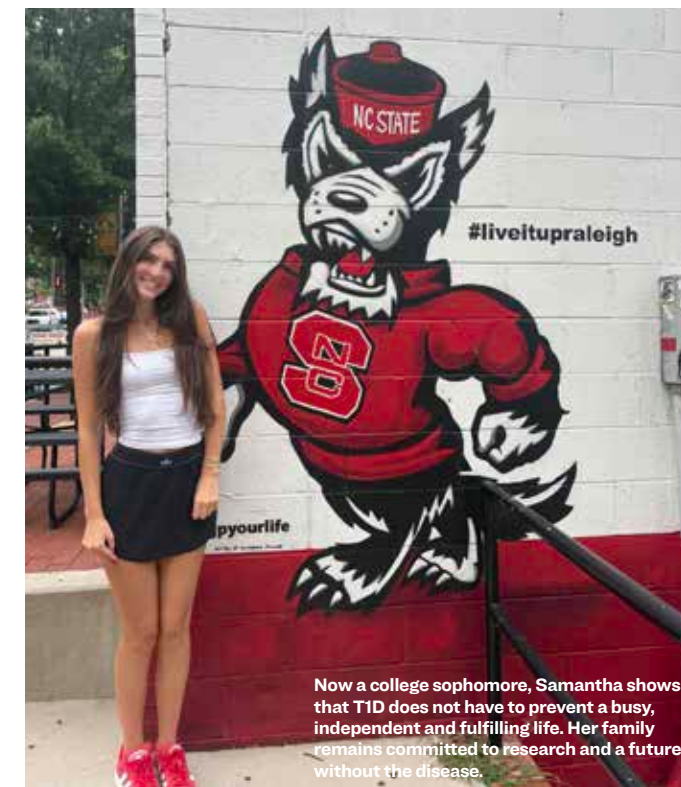
complex. The dogs' playful personalities keep everyone busy and laughing.

Travel is another shared passion. Favorite family trips include Costa Rica and Hawaii, while a recent active vacation in Whistler, Canada, brought beautiful scenery and bear sightings. Danielle and Joe especially enjoyed Florence and Tuscany, Italy, and love exploring wine regions around the world. Next is Greece, where they plan to celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary.

Wherever they've lived, Clemson football has remained a family tradition. Even from Florida and Arkansas, they traveled to several Tigers games each season.

For the Shealys, returning to the Carolinas meant coming back to familiar roots and building a full life at Firethorne. Through sports, service, travel and time together, they have found a community where each family member can pursue what matters most.

To recommend a family, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.



Now a college sophomore, Samantha shows that T1D does not have to prevent a busy, independent and fulfilling life. Her family remains committed to research and a future without the disease.

TURNING A T1D DIAGNOSIS INTO ACTION

Life changed for the Shealys in 2016 when Samantha was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes, or T1D. With no family history of the disease, the diagnosis brought many questions and required an entirely new approach to daily life.

T1D is an autoimmune disease in which the body attacks the pancreas's insulin-producing cells. It can affect anyone and is not caused by diet or lifestyle. Samantha's doctors believe a virus may have triggered the autoimmune response behind her diagnosis.

Over the past decade, the Shealys have witnessed remarkable advances in T1D management technology. They have also used their experience to support other families and the search for better treatments and a cure.

Danielle volunteers with Breakthrough T1D and serves on its gala fundraising committee. The family has raised more than \$50,000 for T1D research. Samantha served as a Breakthrough T1D youth ambassador for eight years, increasing awareness and helping raise research funds.

The organization's 25th gala, held at The Revelry at Camp North End, welcomed more than 700 guests and raised over \$2.14 million.

For more information, visit breakthrought1d.org and click on the Charlotte and Western NC chapter.

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NALA

When Angela and Ron Barthel moved to Firethorne, they hoped their oldest son Rhys would become involved in the neighborhood's summer swim league. To encourage their reluctant 7-year-old to give it a try, they made a promise they never expected would change their family forever. "We told him, 'If you just go to practice, we'll get you a cat,'" Angela says with a laugh. "As one of my dear neighbors, Michelle, said, 'You promise him a goldfish for something like that, not a cat!' We really didn't think he would stick with it."

But Rhys did exactly what he promised. He completed the summer swim league and the Barthels kept their word, adopting Nala, a snow lynx Bengal cat, in August 2018.

Angela still remembers walking to the pool with her grumpy young swimmer one day when he said, "Well, I sure am earning that cat!"

The family could never have predicted where that first season of swimming would lead. Today, Rhys is a highly competitive swimmer who trains seven days a week with SwimMAC in Charlotte.

Ron discovered Nala's name while researching "jungle cat" names, a fitting choice for a Bengal, a domesticated hybrid of the Asian leopard cat. True to her exotic heritage, Nala is no ordinary house cat. "She is definitely a high-maintenance girl," Angela says. "She uses all of her toys, beds, towers and equipment. Bengals are much more similar to dogs than cats in a lot of ways. They need to be socialized, engaged and entertained because if not, they can be a bit wild."

When Nala was a kitten, Angela and Ron encouraged their boys' friends to come over after school and play with her so she would become comfortable around people. Their efforts paid off, and Nala has grown into a social cat who loves being surrounded by her active family.

With Angela and Ron, along with sons Rhys (15), Sebastian (13) and Nico (6), there is rarely a quiet moment — and that is exactly how Nala likes it.

Unlike many cats who hide when children become loud and playful, Nala runs toward the excitement. She loves chasing the boys around the house and happily joins in their games.

Nala is also quite the conversationalist. "Bengal cat sounds range from out-of-tune meowing to howling to chirping," Angela says. "Unfortunately, this can be at 3 a.m. sometimes."

Her dramatic vocal performances have even interrupted work meetings. "I had a Zoom meeting once and the person said to me, 'I'm sorry, but is someone in distress in your home? What's that noise?'" Angela says. "Oh, just our cat! She is highly dramatic!"

For a family with three energetic boys, Nala has proven to be the perfect fit. "She is very independent but is not afraid of a noisy and busy family," Angela says. "She loves to always be where the action is."

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Stroll Into Wellness at Ballantyne Country Club

PHOTOS BY CHARISMA AT A BREW & YOU HEADSHOTS

Stroll Into Wellness was such a great night! We loved bringing together 25 incredible local wellness and beauty businesses for an evening dedicated to connection, self-care and community. Residents came out to mingle, discover some amazing local businesses, win fabulous raffle prizes and enjoy the beautiful sounds of Irena Violin throughout the evening. It was simply a great night out with neighbors, friends and some of the best local businesses in our community. A huge thank you to everyone who participated, attended and helped make Stroll Into Wellness such a special evening!

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



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For Nick Stewart, owning a roofing company is about much more than roofs; it's another way to serve the community he calls home.

Nick is the owner and founder of EverPeak Roofing, a Veteran-owned Charlotte company built around a simple philosophy: homeowners deserve honesty, integrity and straightforward communication when making decisions about one of the most important parts of their home.

Service has been a constant throughout Nick's career. Before entering the roofing industry, he served in the United States Army and later worked as a police officer. After gaining experience with larger roofing companies in the Charlotte area, Nick began to see an opportunity to do things differently. "I wanted to bring true honesty and integrity into an industry that sometimes gets a bad name," Nick says.

That vision became EverPeak Roofing.

What makes EverPeak unique is also what keeps the business intentionally personal. When a homeowner calls the company, they speak directly with Nick. He personally conducts the inspections, prepares the estimates and remains

the homeowner's point of contact throughout the entire process. "You're never going to be passed off to someone else within the company," Nick explains. "Communication is key, and it comes directly to and from me."

That hands-on approach allows Nick to build genuine relationships with his customers while also helping homeowners make informed decisions. EverPeak assists with both insurance-related roofing projects and out-of-pocket repairs and replacements. Nick is especially careful not to encourage homeowners to file an insurance claim when one isn't warranted. "Not every roof has storm damage, and not every roofing issue requires an insurance claim," he says. "Sometimes the right answer is simply giving the homeowner an honest assessment of what they actually need."

Originally from St. Clair Shores, MI, Nick first came to North Carolina while stationed at Fort Bragg during his military

service. It was there that he met his wife, Sarah. The couple returned to the Charlotte area in 2020 and have made the community home ever since.

Nick's connection to the area extends beyond his business as well. He serves as an assistant football coach at Marvin Ridge High School, another role that allows him to invest in the people and families around him.

Launching EverPeak Roofing is something Nick is especially proud of because it allows him to provide what he describes as "white glove treatment" to every homeowner.

His advice to neighbors is simple: before making a major roofing decision, have the roof inspected by someone you trust. "My inspections are completely free, and I'll always give you an honest assessment," Nick says. "Whether you need work now, later or not at all, I want you to have the information you need to make the right decision for your home."

For Nick, that commitment to honesty is not simply a business strategy; it's the foundation EverPeak Roofing was built on.

EVERPEAK ROOFING

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EVERPEAK ROOFING



Village of Marvin Upcoming Events



Trick or Treat in the Park

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Lighting the Way Forward CHARLOTTE UNITES FOR LIGHT THE NIGHT



On November 14, Charlotte neighbors will gather in a powerful display of hope, remembrance, and resilience. Through glowing lanterns and shared purpose, Light The Night supports blood cancer patients, families and lifesaving research while reminding survivors they are never alone.

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER JENNY CROW

On a cool November evening, as the sun sets behind the Charlotte skyline, something powerful begins to take shape. Families gather. Colleagues reconnect outside the office. Friends arrive with purpose. Each person holds a glowing lantern, their faces illuminated with reflection, hope and pride. Survivors stand a little taller. And in that shared moment, under a sky slowly filling with light, a community comes together for something far greater than a walk.

This is Light The Night, a signature event supporting Blood Cancer United, and for many across Charlotte, it has become a meaningful tradition rooted in remembrance, resilience, and progress.

Helping lead this year's effort are *Stroll* neighbors Tracy Kerrins, Andrea Bierce and Jayne Borman, who serve on the executive leadership committee. Through their leadership

and dedication, they are inspiring participation, building momentum and expanding the reach of this important mission across our community.

For those who attend, Light The Night is deeply personal. Each lantern tells a story. White lanterns are carried by survivors, representing strength, courage and the progress made in treatment. Red lanterns shine with the support of family members, friends and colleagues walking in solidarity. Gold lanterns honor loved ones who are no longer with us, their memories continuing to fuel the fight for a cure.

As the walk begins and the lanterns move together, individual stories blend into a powerful collective message: no one faces blood cancer alone.

Beyond the beauty of that evening lies a lasting impact. Funds raised through Light The Night support groundbreaking research,

bringing new therapies and treatment options to patients who need them most. Survival rates for many blood cancers have improved dramatically over time, thanks in part to investment in innovation and discovery driven by events like this.

The impact, however, goes far beyond research. It is felt in the real lives of patients and families. It's the financial support that helps ease the burden of treatment. It's access to trusted information during moments of uncertainty. It's the connection to a community that understands the journey and walks alongside them every step of the way.

In Charlotte, Light The Night is also a reflection of who we are as a city. Companies rally their employees around a shared purpose. Friends and families build teams in honor of loved ones. Community leaders step forward to champion the cause, inviting others to join and take part in something meaningful. Leaders like Tracy, Andrea and Jayne embody that spirit, helping transform individual efforts into a united movement that continues to grow year after year.

There is a defining moment during the evening when the crowd pauses. Lanterns are raised. Stories are shared. Names are remembered. In that stillness, the true meaning of Light The Night becomes clear. It is about love. It is about resilience. It is about showing up for one another in a way that creates lasting impact.

And while we celebrate how far we have come, there is still work to be done. Too many families are still hearing life-changing diagnoses. Too many are navigating uncertainty and challenges no one should face alone. Light The Night ensures that research continues, support remains accessible, and hope continues to grow stronger.

On November 14, the Charlotte community will once again come together to light the way forward. We invite you to be part of this powerful evening. Walk alongside survivors. Honor those we have lost. Stand with families who need support today.

Together, we can make a difference that lasts far beyond one night.

**Blood Cancer
United**
Light The Night

GET INVOLVED

To learn more or to get involved in Light The Night on November 14, visit lightthenight.org or contact **Jenny Crow** at Jenny.Crow@bloodcancerunited.org.



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SHINE A SPOTLIGHT ON YOUNG ACHIEVERS!

Do you know a young neighbor who deserves to be celebrated? Whether it's sports, the arts, academics or giving back through community service, we want to hear about it!

Our *Athlete of the Month/Young Achiever* section is dedicated to highlighting the incredible talents and accomplishments of local kids and teens.

This is your chance to showcase their hard work, inspire others and give them the recognition they deserve. Submit your nominations, story ideas or even a quick note about your child's achievements—we'll take it from there!

Share your ideas with us today and help us feature standout kids and teens in our community.

Please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com with ideas!

VETERANS SPOTLIGHT

As America celebrates its 250th anniversary this year, we'd love to honor the Veterans in our neighborhood.

Whether you served in wartime or peacetime, at home or abroad, we invite you to share your story, military photos (past or present) and memories of your service. Help us recognize the men and women who have served our country and inspire future generations through their stories.

Email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com!



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Know Your Risk

When should you start breast cancer screening?

BY STANLEY MADU NWABUDIKE, M.D.,
DIVISION OF HEMATOLOGY & ONCOLOGY,
MUSC HEALTH LANCASTER MEDICAL CENTER



Breast cancer is the most common cancer affecting women in the United States. About one in eight women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in their lifetime. The encouraging news is that when breast cancer is detected early, it is often treatable. Knowing your personal risk and understanding when to begin screening are important parts of your healthcare. As a medical oncologist, one of the questions I frequently get asked is, “When should I start getting mammograms?” The answer is not the same for everyone; it depends on your individual risk.

FOR WOMEN AT AVERAGE RISK

Many current guidelines recommend starting routine mammography at age 40 for women at average risk. How often you should be screened may vary based on the guideline, your age, your personal preferences and risk factors.

Importantly, you do not have to wait until you develop symptoms or feel a lump. Screening mammograms are designed to find breast cancer before it causes symptoms.

KNOW IF YOU ARE AT HIGHER RISK

Some women have a higher-than-average risk and may need to begin screening earlier or have additional testing such as breast MRI and genetic counseling/testing.

Some risk factors include:

- A mother, sister, daughter or other close relative with breast cancer
- A known inherited gene mutation such as *BRCA1* or *BRCA2*
- A strong family history of breast, ovarian cancer or prostate cancer
- Previous radiation treatment to the chest at a young age
- Certain personal, medical or reproductive factors



Having a family member with breast cancer does not mean that you will develop breast cancer. However, it is important to discuss your risks with your healthcare provider. For some individuals, genetic testing may help clarify inherited cancer risk. MUSC Health offers free genetic health screenings through the In Our DNA SC initiative, including screening for genetic variants such as *BRCA1* and *BRCA2*. Learn more at [musc.edu/community/in-our-dna-sc](https://www.musc.edu/community/in-our-dna-sc).

WHAT ABOUT BREAST SYMPTOMS?

A mammogram is an important screening tool, but you should also pay attention to changes in your breasts.

Contact your healthcare provider if you notice a new lump, a change in breast size or shape, skin changes such as dimpling or thickening, nipple inversion or discharge or persistent changes that are unusual for you.

Most breast changes are not cancer, but new or concerning changes should be evaluated.

DON'T LET FEAR KEEP YOU FROM SCREENING

It is understandable to feel anxious about getting a mammogram. Some people worry about discomfort; others are afraid of what the test might find. It is important to remember that an abnormal mammogram does not mean you have cancer. Additional imaging or a biopsy may be recommended, and many abnormal screening results ultimately turn out not to be cancer.

THE BOTTOM LINE

There is no one-size-fits-all approach to breast cancer screening. If you are 40 or older, talk with your healthcare provider about beginning or continuing regular mammography. If you have a strong family history or other risk factors, don't wait for

a routine screening appointment to bring it up. You may benefit from a personalized assessment of your breast cancer risk.

Know your risks. Get screened and don't wait for symptoms to act.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Stanley Nwabudike, MD, is a board-certified hematologist and medical oncologist with MUSC Health who specializes in diagnosis and treatment of cancer and blood disorders. He is committed to providing compassionate, patient-centered care and helping patients navigate every stage of their cancer journey, from diagnosis through survivorship. Dr. Nwabudike sees patients in Lancaster and will begin seeing patients at the MUSC Health Indian Land Medical Office Pavilion this spring. To learn more or schedule an appointment, call 803-313-3004 or visit [muschealth.org](https://www.muschealth.org).



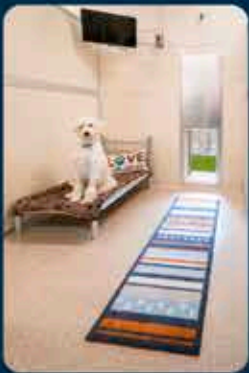
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WHAT WE'D LOVE TO SEE

- **Labor Day/Fall Break** – Long weekends are great for getting out of town for a few days. Whether an exotic getaway or a quick trip to our nearby mountains, lakes and beaches, we'd love to see how you made the most of these long weekends.
- **Panthers Pride** – Panthers home games are great for tailgating and connecting with friends. Send us your game day photos.
- **Breast Cancer Awareness** – October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. We'd like to see how you showed your pink ribbon support.
- **Halloween** – Haunted houses, block parties and costume parades... Please share your spookiest and kookiest Halloween photos with us.
- **Fall Sports** – Share your favorite fall action shots with us.
- **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 summer and fall weddings in our community. Share the love by sending your wedding day pictures to us!

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