NOVEMBER 2026

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MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

The Chandra-Halder Family

&

Precious Pets:
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Bullseye APR
Switchin' Kitchens

Making a Difference:
The Crisis Assistance Ministry

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Community News and more!



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$337.08	96.77%	27	$1,338,363
AVERAGE $/SF OF SOLD HOMES	AVERAGE % LIST PRICE TO CLOSED PRICE	AVERAGE DOM OF CLOSED HOMES	AVERAGE PRICE OF A SOLD HOME IN PREVIOUS 6 MONTHS

*Statistics are through 9/30/26

HOMES FOR SALE

Mls Status	Street #	Street Name	Total Primary HLA	Beds Total	Baths Total	Original List Price	Close Price	Close Date	$/SqFt	DOM
Active	5617	Providence Country Club	5511	5	5	$2,350,000.00			$426.42	2
Active	12656	Lahinch	3603	4	4	$1,650,000.00			$457.95	13
Active	6605	Saunton	4467	5	4	$1,325,000.00			$296.62	14
Active	12035	Olympic Club	3942	4	4	$1,360,000.00			$316.84	99

HOMES UNDER CONTRACT

Mls Status	Street #	Street Name	Total Primary HLA	Beds Total	Baths Total	Original List Price	Close Price	Close Date	$/SqFt	DOM
Under Contract-No Show	12783	Tom Short	4930	5	4	$1,250,000.00			$223.12	45

HOMES RECENTLY SOLD

Mls Status	Street #	Street Name	Total Primary HLA	Beds Total	Baths Total	Original List Price	Close Price	% List Price	Close Date	$/SqFt	DOM	Off Market Date
Closed	11609	Glenn Abbey	3630	4	4	$1,295,000.00	$1,320,000.00	101.93%	9/14/2026	$363.64	2	9/14/2026
Closed	5500	Bellerive*	3412	4	3	$1,200,000.00	$1,225,000.00	102.08%	8/27/2026	$363.64	0	
Closed	11423	Colonial Country	3642	4	3	$1,600,000.00	$1,480,000.00	92.50%	8/27/2026	$406.37	19	8/27/2026
Closed	12801	Tom Short	3702	5	4	$995,000.00	$990,000.00	99.50%	8/12/2026	$267.42	0	8/12/2026
Closed	12509	Pine Valley Club	4607	5	6	$1,630,000.00	$1,375,000.00	84.36%	7/27/2026	$298.46	23	7/27/2026
Closed	12414	Three Lakes	4311	5	5	$1,325,000.00	$1,325,000.00	100.00%	7/23/2026	$307.35	3	7/23/2026
Closed	11924	Shoal Creek	4662	5	4	$1,499,000.00	$1,495,000.00	99.73%	7/21/2026	$320.68	5	7/21/2026
Closed	12665	Lindrick	4165	4	4	$1,145,000.00	$1,145,000.00	100.00%	6/30/2026	$274.91	2	6/30/2026
Withdrawn	5216	Sunningdale	4212	4	4	$1,540,000.00				$365.62	5	8/26/2026
Withdrawn	11920	Three Vistas	3769	5	4	$1,600,000.00				$397.98	42	6/26/2026
Withdrawn	6605	Saunton	4467	5	4	$1,375,000.00				$302.22	48	7/16/2026

* Listed by Erin in Compass Private Exclusive - See it First

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Delivering Neighborhood Connections
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We are always looking for residents to follow up on leads, find great stories and send us ideas. Let's celebrate the great things happening in our community! No contribution is too small. Please email: Leda.newman@n2co.com with your pictures, suggestions, or requests.

If you or your child would like to become part of the writing team please email Leda at Leda.newman@n2co.com.



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BEFORE THE RUSH

November deserves more than being a pass-through to December.

Before the lists grow long and the calendar fills with obligations, November asks us to slow down and mean it. It asks us to be grateful. To notice what is already here, and what we already have. November isn't performative; it's pensive.

That looks different for everyone. For some, it's a Saturday (and Sunday) spent entirely on the couch, a bowl of chili in hand, and football on the television with nowhere else to be. For others, it's pulling out a worn copy of Harry Potter or Little Women and remembering why certain stories feel like home. There is nothing trivial about choosing stillness over activity. In fact, I might argue it takes more discipline to be still than to move on to the next activity.

This year, as you're preparing your grandmother's stuffing recipe, or picking up your pumpkin pie from the baker, take time to think about how you're choosing stillness. Are you prepping that dish ahead of time, so you can participate in family game night later? Are you choosing a grab-and-go dinner, so less time is spent in the kitchen, and you have more time for recalling (and making) favorite memories?

This issue is an invitation to inhabit November fully, before December asks everything of you. How will you RSVP?

Leda Newman

Publisher
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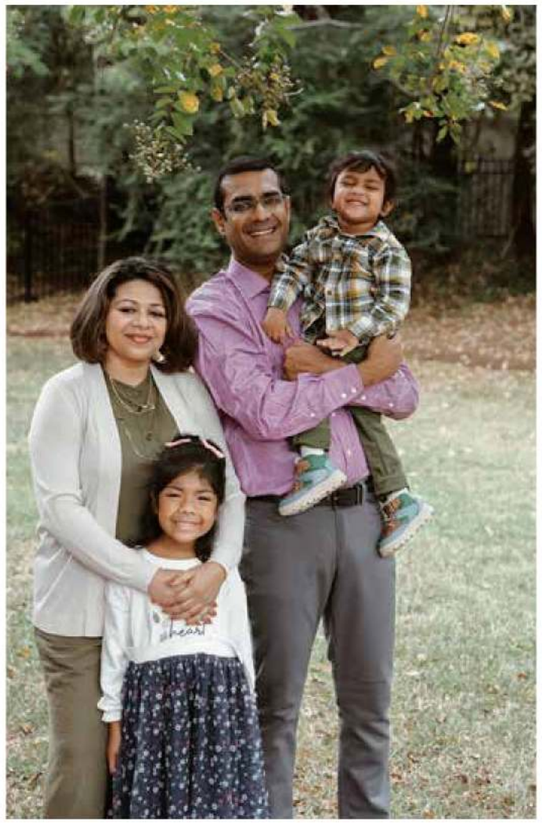
MEET THE chandra-halder FAMILY

Life, Work and the Journey to Charlotte

Both Amit and Meloni work for Corning Inc., a technology and manufacturing company with a strong presence locally, nationally, and around the world.

Our journey to Charlotte has taken us through several places and experiences. Amit and Meloni are originally from India. Amit pursued his doctorate at Cornell University and later earned an MBA from Duke University. Meloni completed her undergraduate studies in India, including an exchange experience in Singapore, before earning her MBA from Durham University in the United Kingdom.

Our careers have moved us around the United States. We spent several years in Upstate New York before moving to Durham, North Carolina. Four years ago, our careers brought us to Charlotte, and we have been fortunate to call this community home ever since.



Family Fun and Favorite Things

Our family enjoys a little bit of everything when it comes to entertainment. We love going to concerts and the theater, and every now and then, you'll find us at a stadium enjoying a sporting event.

Travel is another passion. We have been fortunate to visit India and explore destinations across Europe and the United States. Our travel wish list is still quite long, with Asia, Africa, Australia, and New Zealand among the places we'd love to explore next.

What we enjoy most about traveling is experiencing new cultures and cuisines. With the kids along for the adventure, our travel stories have increasingly centered around museums, planetariums, and marine destinations. Seeing the world through their eyes has made those experiences even more special.







When we're staying closer to home, our favorite meals to make together tend to be Indian and Italian. Both cuisines offer plenty of opportunities to gather around the kitchen and enjoy a good family meal.

We also believe in giving back to the community, and Meals on Wheels is a cause that is particularly meaningful to our family.

Our Neighborhood

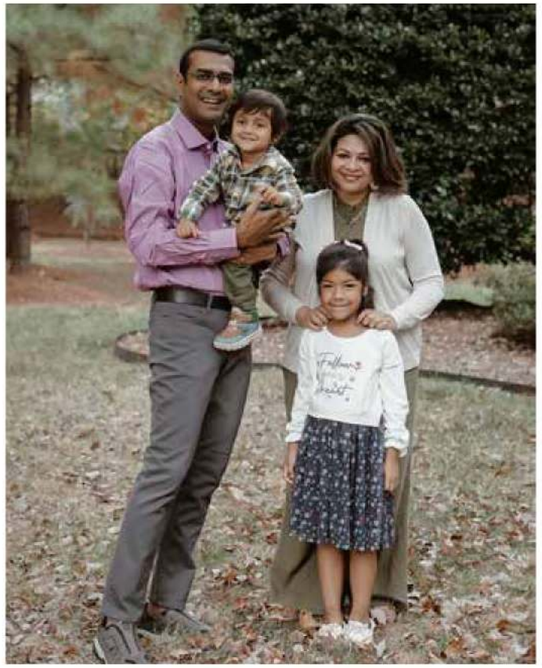
One of the things we appreciate most about our neighborhood is the sense of community. We especially enjoy the neighborhood's Fourth of July fireworks social, which gives us a chance to celebrate together and spend time with our neighbors.

But perhaps our favorite part of living here is something much simpler: the greenery, stunning golf courses and the people. We love the beautiful, green surroundings, but even more than that, we appreciate our wonderful neighbors, who are always looking out for one another.

After four years in Charlotte, we feel very fortunate that our careers brought us here. What started as another move for work has become a place we are proud to call home—a place where our children are growing up, our family is making memories, and we have had the opportunity to become part of a wonderful neighborhood community.

And, of course, any introduction to our family would be incomplete without mentioning Casper. Full of energy, always ready for an adventure, and equally ready for a cuddle, he makes sure life in our household is never dull!

We look forward to continuing to explore Charlotte, discover new places, traveling the world, and—most importantly—make many more memories with our family and neighbors.





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Switchin' Kitchens: Twenty Years of Putting Dinner on the Table

Kelsey Jolley and Theron Quill are stewarding a Charlotte favorite into its next chapter, one freezer-ready family meal at a time.



In a city that moves as quickly as Charlotte, the promise of a real, homemade dinner at the end of a long day is a luxury in itself. For two decades, Switchin' Kitchens has delivered on that promise. Since 2006, the neighborhood kitchen has filled Charlotte-area freezers with chef-prepared Take & Bakes and Meal Kits, and in 2024, owners Kelsey Jolley and Theron Quill stepped in to carry the tradition forward.

A Legacy Worth Protecting

Jolley and Quill did not set out to reinvent a beloved local institution. They fell in love with one.

"As parents ourselves, we know how quickly life gets busy and how hard it can be to get a real dinner on the table every night," the couple explains. Seeing the potential in an already-cherished business, they took ownership with a clear mission: grow the concept to serve even more families while preserving everything that made it special.

They are quick to describe themselves as stewards rather than founders. "We may be the current owners, but we see ourselves as stewards of something the community already loved," they say. "Our goal is to protect what made Switchin' Kitchens special while continuing to grow and find new ways to serve Charlotte-area families."





More Time For What Matters

The company's guiding philosophy is captured in its motto, "More Time For What Matters." It shapes every decision, from the menu to the way customers are greeted at the door.

The concept is simple, and once it clicks, it tends to stay with people. Guests visit the shop and choose from a freezer stocked with chef-prepared Take & Bakes and Meal Kits. At home, a dinner of homemade quality is ready whenever life allows. There is no planning, shopping, chopping, or cleanup.

It is a distinctly different model from the usual options. Switchin' Kitchens is neither a meal-delivery subscription nor traditional takeout. Every dish is prepared by the team in the shop's own kitchen, designed to be finished at home and enjoyed when the family is ready. New meals debut each month, while longtime favorites remain on the menu for the customers who have loved them for years.

A Day in the Kitchen

For Jolley and Quill, the day begins as it does for so many local parents: getting the kids up, dressed, and off to school. Once at the shop, their attention turns first to feeding preschoolers at five local preschools through the school lunch program. From there, the kitchen hums with prepping, cooking, and assembling meals for customers.

"We're lucky to have an amazing staff, so even on the busiest days, we have a lot of fun in the store," they say. "No two days are exactly the same, and that's part of what we love about it."

The Neighborhood Kitchen

What do customers value most? Jolley and Quill point to convenience that never compromises the experience of feeding a family a real meal. Just as important is the personal touch. The owners listen to feedback, remember favorites, and strive to make each visit feel like stepping into a neighborhood kitchen rather than shopping with a large corporation.

Questions are welcome, and the most common one is a favorite. "How does this work?" opens the door to conversations about serving sizes, dietary needs, and the meals the owners' own families return to again and again.

Seasons of Life, Full Circle

Ask about a memorable moment and the owners find it hard to choose just one. Many of their most meaningful stories involve customers who leaned on Switchin' Kitchens during difficult seasons: recovering from surgery or illness, welcoming a new baby, or caring for a family member.

Twenty years in business has also brought a rare gift. "Kids who grew up eating our Chicken Pot Pie at their family table are now putting that same Pot Pie on the table for their own kids," the owners share. "We may be making dinner, but sometimes what we're really giving someone is one less thing to worry about and a little more time for what matters."

Giving Back

Community involvement is central to the Switchin' Kitchens story. The team partners with local schools through its lunch program, participates in farmers markets, makes neighborhood deliveries, caters local events, and collaborates with charities and organizations that support area families. "We are always looking for ways Switchin' Kitchens can show up, give back and be part of the community outside the four walls of our store," they say.

Beyond the Kitchen

Away from the shop, the owners' lives are every bit as lively. Life at home revolves around their two children, soccer and baseball





schedules, and a household that includes five dogs: four Chow Chows and a Great Pyrenees. "Our house is almost as busy as the kitchen," they laugh. "There is never a dull moment."

When time allows, the family enjoys trying new restaurants and escaping town. A favorite local haunt is Dunwellz Custom Kitchen & Pour House in their hometown of Mint Hill, a place founded by longtime restaurant friends who wanted to build something of their own, where staff and guests feel like family. "Being restaurant people ourselves, that really resonates with us," they say.

Their ideal way to unwind? "A good meal, a drink and absolutely no dishes to wash afterward," followed by a movie night at home with the kids.

AT A GLANCE

Business: Switchin' Kitchens
Owners: Kelsey Jolley & Theron Quill
Serving Charlotte since: 2006
Under current ownership since: 2024
Signature offerings: Chef-prepared Take & Bakes and Meal Kits, school lunch program, catering, farmers market and neighborhood delivery
Motto: More Time For What Matters





CRISIS ASSISTANCE MINISTRY

Neighbors helping neighbors

BY CONTRIBUTING WRITER NICOLE AYERS, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

Most in this community have never had to wonder whether a single surprise expense or one missed paycheck could cost us our home. For thousands of families across Charlotte-Mecklenburg, that worry is a daily companion.

Consider Nikki. She was thrilled to start a new job, but a short gap between paychecks left a hole in her budget, and landlords rarely make exceptions. Nervous and a little scared, she walked into Crisis Assistance Ministry not knowing what to expect. A caseworker listened with compassion, arranged an emergency rent payment to stop her eviction and connected her to additional resources. Nikki left with her home stabilized and with her confidence restored.

Stories like hers are repeated every day, and the numbers explain why. Since 2010, average rent in Charlotte has climbed 61%, while wages have barely moved. A minimum-wage worker would need to log 125 hours a week to afford a one-bedroom apartment at $1,180. Last fiscal year, Crisis Assistance Ministry helped 44,000 people with $5.6 million in emergency housing assistance, keeping families in their homes and their lights on.

Founded in 1975 by local faith leaders, Crisis Assistance Ministry has been the community's basic-needs safety net for half a century. Its focus is families who are not yet homeless but are one setback away. Beyond rent and utility help, it offers financial empowerment coaching and a Free Store stocked with donated clothing, shoes, coats, school uniforms and household essentials, all at no charge.

For neighbors who want to help, the path is simple. Give a financial gift, which goes directly toward keeping families stably housed. Provide a winter coat. Donate new or gently used items to the Free Store. Volunteer your time. Or share what you've learned with a friend.

A stable home changes everything for a family and for a community. Join us in making sure Nikki's story is the rule rather than the exception.



Carol Hardison joined the Ballantyne Country Club Book Club to discuss Brian Goldstone's "There Is No Place for Us: Working and Homeless in America."







Carol Hardison and Katie Weeks of Armstrong Maguire

SEARCH FOR A NEW LEADER

Carol Hardison, CEO of Crisis Assistance Ministry, will be retiring soon after leading the agency for 26 years. Armstrong Maguire's Katie Weeks, whose family is featured in this issue, is leading the search for a new CEO.

Crisis Assistance Ministry is entering this transition from a position of organizational strength. The agency has an exceptional leadership team, dedicated staff, committed volunteers, strong governance and a clear vision for the future.



Coffee with a Cop

Building relatonships one cup at a time



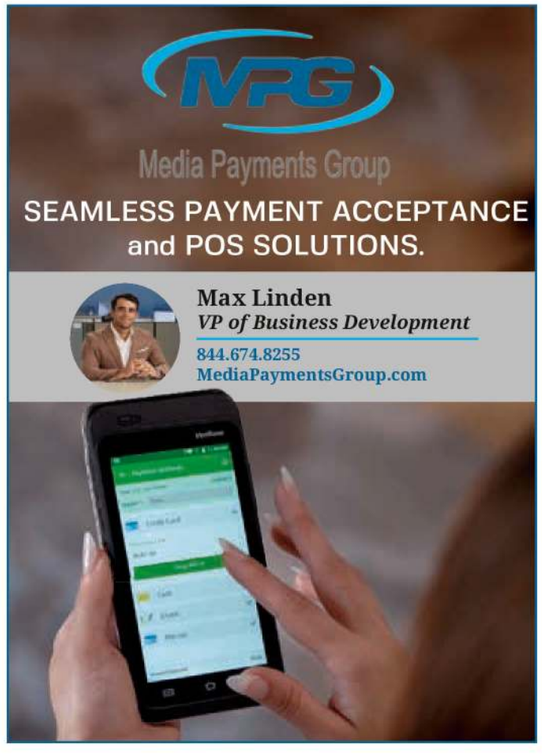
Each month, Stroll joins **Coffee with a Cop**, and we would love more of our residents and community partners to come along. We're proud to partner with the Mecklenburg Police Department for Coffee with a Cop! On the second Friday of every month from 9–11 AM, local officers will be at Ballantyne Summit Coffee to connect, mingle, and build meaningful relationships with our community. These gatherings offer a simple yet meaningful way to connect- sharing a cup of coffee while building trust and understanding between Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department (CMPD) officers and the neighbors they serve.

Coffee with a Cop creates space for open dialogue in a relaxed setting, where residents can ask questions, voice concerns and get to know the officers who help keep our community safe.

Come show your support and get to know our local heros.

Where: Ballantyne Summit Coffee, 13743 Conlan Cir, Suite 101
When: Friday November 13th, 9–11 AM

STROLL.







Intentional Gratitude

Put action into your Thanksgiving attitude.

BY NICOLE LETTS

Thanksgiving is synonymous with gratitude. Instead of simply going around the table saying what you're thankful for once a year, there are other ways to implement the feeling into your daily life. Research on gratitude suggests small, regular moments of noticing what's good tend to do more for mood and outlook than one deep reflection a year. In fact, a daily gratitude practice can improve mental health by reducing stress and boosting serotonin. This year, let's take gratitude out of the greeting-card zone.

Write a two-minute journal.
Keep a notebook in the places you rest the most; think one by your bed or by your favorite chair. At the beginning or end of each day, jot down one or two things you're thankful for. You don't have to use complete sentences or even full phrases."Slept well," or "got inundated with puppy kisses," work perfectly. The point isn't eloquence; it's consistency. No elaboration required.

Think of "three good things" at bedtime.
This one is similar to a gratitude journal but a little less formal. Before you turn off the light, name three specific things that went well that day, however small. The specificity matters more than the size: not "work was fine" but "Sam covered for me during that call." You can speak this aloud or keep it to yourself; the intention is the same regardless of who hears you.

Take a phone-free walk.
As kids these days would say, go touch grass. Leave the phone behind for a brief walk. Use the time, just 10 or 15 minutes, to notice the environment around you. Cold air, a neighbor's porch lights, the smell of someone's fireplace. Each of these forces your attention outward instead of down at a screen.

None of these need to last forever, and none of them need to be done perfectly. Think of it as a brief, repeatable habit that outlasts the holiday weekend. Pick one. Try it for a week. See if it sticks. In fact, see if you can make it last. It's a pre-New Year's resolution.





The Fine Print Is Where the Education Begins

BY AMINA KHAN | HAPPY MORTGAGES

What if we spent less time advertising what mortgages can do and more time explaining what it actually takes to do them?

Apparently, we can all close fast, offer competitive rates, provide exceptional service, and find the perfect mortgage for just about anyone. Wonderful. Now, can we talk about YOUR actual mortgage? Because somewhere between the impressive headline and the fine print is an entire conversation that deserves to happen. That conversation is where I believe mortgage education should begin.

THE PROBLEM WITH PROMISING PERFECTION

Mortgage advertising is designed to attract attention. Understandably. We're all running businesses, and businesses need customers. But mortgages aren't interchangeable products sitting on a shelf. A mortgage shouldn't be sold as a quick dopamine hit. It's a long-term financial commitment, and it deserves considerably more thought than a catchy headline or a flashy blazer.

Two people can purchase similarly priced homes, have comparable incomes, and possess excellent credit scores while qualifying for entirely different financing options.



Why? Because how you earn your income is important. How you document it matters. What you own, what you owe, where your money comes from, and what you're purchasing all matter.

Even the property itself has a story to tell. Yet much of the advertising consumers encounter leads with an outcome before anyone has examined the circumstances. Can we close quickly? Absolutely. Can we close your mortgage quickly? That's a different question.

EXPERIENCE CHANGES THE QUESTIONS YOU ASK.

I entered the mortgage industry in 2015 and spent approximately seven years working in retail lending and operations before moving into the broker world.

Over that time, I've had a front-row seat to more than 6,000 closings coming to fruition, including builder transactions that require coordination across multiple parties, construction timelines, financing requirements, and contractual obligations.

One thing experience teaches you is that what looks straightforward at the beginning doesn't necessarily remain straightforward. And what initially looks impossible isn't necessarily impossible, either.

Sometimes the solution is a different loan program. Sometimes it's restructuring debt, documenting income differently, addressing a property concern, or simply allowing more time.

Other times, the responsible answer is that the proposed financing doesn't currently make sense. The important takeaway? You cannot responsibly recommend a solution to a problem you haven't properly identified. Don't let the marketing distract you from the mortgage itself. You deserve to understand the reasoning, calculations, and trade-offs behind your loan structure.

At Happy Mortgages, I approach lending with a fairly simple philosophy.

INFORMATION IS NOT THE SAME AS EDUCATION.

We have an extraordinary amount of mortgage information available today. Rates. Calculators. Affordability estimates. Prequalification tools. Endless advertisements telling consumers what they might be eligible to receive. But information without context can create a false sense of understanding.

A mortgage calculator doesn't know whether your self-employment income is calculated differently from your taxable income. A rate advertisement doesn't necessarily explain the costs, assumptions, or qualifications associated with the advertised rate. And a quick prequalification doesn't automatically mean every component of your transaction has been evaluated.

None of these tools is inherently bad, they just can't be used as substitutes for understanding. Education means explaining not only WHAT we're requesting, recommending, or calculating, but WHY. Why do we need that document? Why does this particular loan structure make sense? Why might one financing option cost less initially but more over time?

Investigate first. Educate throughout. Recommend responsibly.

And perhaps most importantly, what happens if something changes? Those are the conversations worth having before making a 30-year financial commitment. As a society, we've been programmed to spend months planning a wedding that lasts a day, yet sometimes devote less time to understanding a mortgage that could last 30 years. Make that make sense.

WE DON'T NEED TO PROMISE EVERYTHING. WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND WHAT'S POSSIBLE.

At Happy Mortgages, I approach lending with a fairly simple philosophy. Investigate first. Educate throughout. Recommend responsibly. I'm particularly interested in the files that require deeper examination: self-employed borrowers, real estate investors, complicated financial histories, and transactions that don't fit neatly into a conventional lending conversation. But complexity isn't a prerequisite for good advice.

A first-time homebuyer deserves the same thoughtful investigation as an experienced investor purchasing a fifth property. The objective isn't to place every borrower into a loan. It's to understand the borrower, evaluate the available options, explain the trade-offs, and determine an appropriate path forward. Sometimes that path is immediate. Sometimes it requires preparation. And sometimes it means reconsidering the transaction altogether. I'd rather have that conversation honestly than advertise an outcome I haven't earned the right to promise.

TRUST SHOULDN'T BE HIDDEN IN THE FINE PRINT.

I believe businesses can be profitable without manufacturing unrealistic expectations. I also believe consumers are perfectly capable of understanding complicated financial decisions when someone takes the time to explain them. That's why I'm building the Happy Mortgages Library alongside my lending practice: to make the language, processes, and decision-making behind mortgages more accessible. Not everyone who reads it will become a client. That's perfectly fine.

EDUCATION SHOULDN'T REQUIRE A LOAN APPLICATION.

Ultimately, a mortgage professional's value isn't demonstrated by how confidently they promise an outcome. It's demonstrated by the questions they ask, the problems they recognize, the options they investigate, and the explanations they provide. So, before asking how quickly someone can close your mortgage, perhaps start with a different question. How much do they actually understand about the mortgage they're promising you?

Stay golden.

LOOKING FOR A LITTLE MORE PERSONALITY IN ALL THINGS LENDING?

Follow @happy.mortgages.with.amina for updates, insights, and a little life & lending POV.
Our website, free downloadable resources, and home buying preparation guides are coming this October!
www.happymortgages.io

Amina Khan is the founder of Happy Mortgages and the creator of the Happy Mortgages Library, an educational platform dedicated to making lending more understandable.



Building Community, One Hand at a Time

Bridge and Mahjong courses coming in January 2027







There is something truly special about the way games bring people together. Whether tiles are clicked or bridge cards are dealt across a table, these classic pastimes have served as the heartbeat of community connection. They invite us to slow down, share a laugh, exercise our minds, and, most importantly, build lasting bonds with the people around us.

When I left Bank of America and moved to Providence Country Club (PCC), I experienced this magic firsthand. I joined a bridge group with 12 other wonderful women, and we have been playing together on Tuesday afternoons since the fall of 2013. We rotate houses, and it has been such a joy meeting one another's friends and family as they have stepped in to sub over the years. It is endlessly fun to stay deeply connected to people I raised my children with and sat alongside on playing field bleachers cheering on our kids. If you peek into the PCC Ladies Card Room, you will regularly see lively groups of friends gathered over bridge and mahjong, sharing that exact same spirit of camaraderie. I watched my parents plug into their new snowbird community and later, their senior living community by joining bridge groups. A few years ago, I formed a mahjong group of my own. Initially, it was something to do when I couldn't play golf or tennis, but it has grown into one of my favorite afternoons.

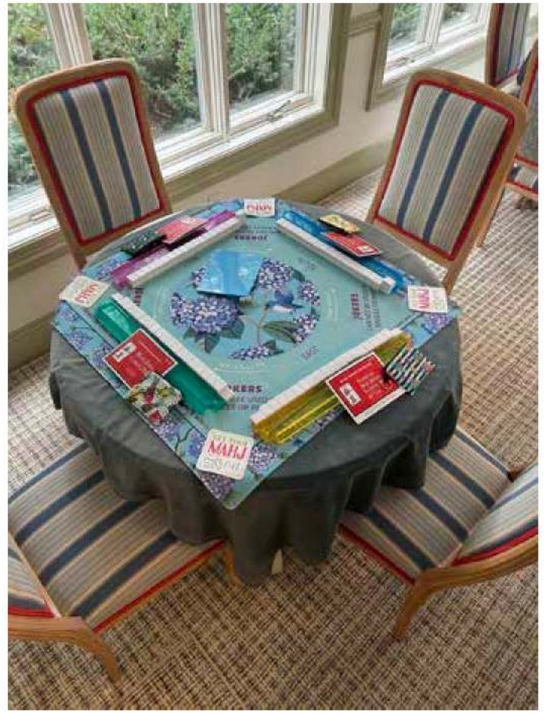
Having spent my career in Learning and Development, I am thrilled to channel my lifelong passion for teaching into something for our neighborhood. I am excited to announce that I will be offering two brand-new courses at my home in PCC: **Introduction to Bridge** and **Introduction to Mahjong**.

Whether you are completely new to these games or looking to brush up your skills, there is an option that fits your style:

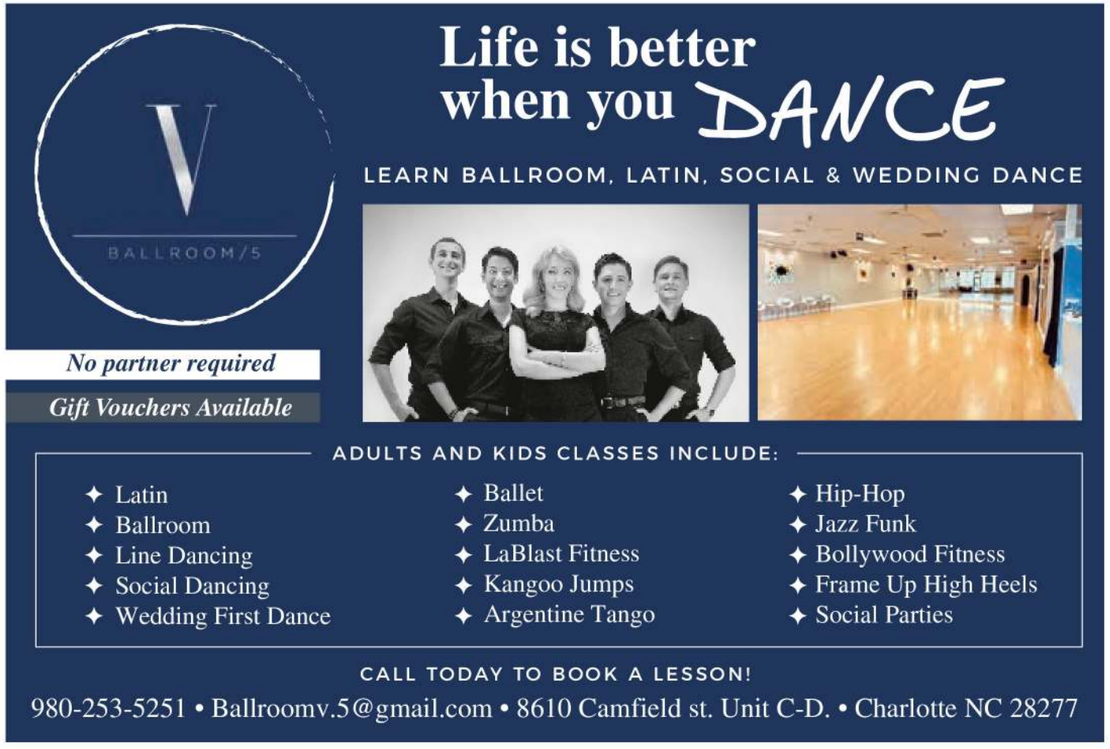
- Group sessions for up to 16 people
- Small group sessions for groups of 4
- Personalized private lessons

If you have ever wanted to learn the ropes, enjoy some friendly quality time, and meet more neighbors, I would love to have you join a class. Please reach out via the number below. Psst... need a gift for someone? There will be holiday specials on gift cards. Let's keep our community connected, one hand at a time.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT
Nancy at (704) 516 -1802.







Meet Toby: A Rescue Dog With a Story to Tell

From a chance call at a North Carolina rescue to becoming a beloved member of the family, Toby has found exactly where he belongs.

Sometimes, the dog you're meant to find isn't the dog you originally went looking for. That's exactly what happened with Toby, a Belgian Malinois mix estimated to be five or six years old.

Toby's story began at Godbey Creek Canine Rescue in Mocksville, North Carolina. His owner had actually applied to adopt a different dog when the rescue reached out with a special request. They asked if she would consider meeting a very special boy who wasn't even listed on their website and who had a complex history.

Something about Toby's story—and the opportunity to meet him—was enough to say yes.

After spending time together, the decision became clear. Toby was going home with her. As she drove back toward Charlotte with her new companion, she looked up and saw one of those



The first day they met

moments that feels almost like confirmation: a beautiful rainbow stretched across pink clouds over the city.

Toby was going to be her dog.

About a year and a half later, it's easy to see that Toby has settled comfortably into his new life. He has discovered some of his favorite things, including Chuckit! balls and freeze-dried beef, which are apparently excellent motivators for this very smart boy. And while he has plenty of refined talents, Toby still enjoys some of the classic canine pursuits—namely, chasing squirrels, bunnies and raccoons whenever the opportunity presents itself.

But what really sets Toby apart is his love of training.

"He loves training...and goodness is he smart," his owner says.

Toby's intelligence is more than just impressive—it's occasionally very convenient. He has figured out how to open the door to the house and let himself out into the yard, proving that when Toby wants something, he is more than capable of finding a way to make it happen.

Training has also played an important role in helping Toby build relationships with other dogs. Through his training, he had the opportunity to meet plenty of canine friends, and several have become especially memorable.

Among Toby's favorites are the pit bulls who have come through his life, particularly Rue and Hammer. Their friendships are a sweet reminder of just how much a rescue dog's world can expand when given patience, training, love and the chance to connect.

From an unexpected phone call at a rescue to a rainbow-filled drive home, Toby's journey is one of those wonderful rescue stories that seems to have been written before anyone even knew how it would end.

He may have started out as the dog no one was expecting to meet, but today, Toby is exactly where he was meant to be—home, loved and surrounded by plenty of balls, treats and four-legged friends.







Toby and his girlfriend Rue













Bullseye Arthritis and Pain Relief: A Second Act Built on Service

After a career with the NYPD, Chris Ort brought a breakthrough pain-relief technology, and a genuine desire to help, to the Charlotte community.

For Chris Ort, retirement was never meant to mean slowing down. When he moved his family south from New York City more than two years ago, he was leaving behind a career with the New York City Police Department, but not the instinct that defined it. “I knew I needed to do more,” he says. “I needed to help people again.”

Today, he does exactly that through Bullseye Arthritis and Pain Relief, a Charlotte-area practice now a year and a half old, built on a simple conviction: no one should have to live in pain every day.

From Patient to Practitioner

The origin of Bullseye is deeply personal. Shortly before retiring, Ort was involved in a serious car accident that left him with multiple injuries. Physical therapy and chiropractic care, the conventional paths, offered little relief.

The turning point came during a visit to his brother in Florida. A chiropractor, his brother uses a machine called Softwave TRT, a technology that addresses pain and inflammation holistically. After his first treatment, Ort felt real relief for the first time since the accident.

“I knew I had to get this technology out to others,” he says. Bullseye was born from that moment.

A Different Kind of Access

Ort is aware that other Charlotte-area practices use the same technology, and he built Bullseye to stand apart in the ways that matter most to clients. His service is available in-office, but also on a mobile basis: he comes to you. He also works around his clients’ schedules, understanding that many have demanding careers and cannot make traditional office hours.

Treatment carries no recovery period. Clients can resume their day immediately, a point Ort says is among the most common questions he receives.

The Personal Touch

What do clients value most? The attention that continues long after the appointment ends. Ort follows each visit with calls or texts to check in on how clients are feeling, and he takes the time to know the people he treats. “I talk to my clients, get to know them,” he says.

A Moment That Stays

Asked to name a memorable moment, Ort recalls a client who had lived with pain and limited mobility in her neck for 15 years following surgery. After her first treatment, she noticed a significant reduction in pain and improved range of motion. “I will never forget the look of relief on her face,” he says.





Living Well, Without Limits

Ort’s mission extends to the broader neighborhood. He hopes more neighbors will come to understand that relief does not have to come from medication or surgery. “There is a better way to live pain free,” he says.

He also gives his time to the community’s youngest residents, volunteering at lacrosse clinics where he teaches local youth the fundamentals of the sport.

Beyond the Practice

Lacrosse is a lifelong thread for Ort, who played Division 1 lacrosse and now passes the game on to his sons, Liam and Hunter. His days follow a familiar rhythm: school drop-off, the gym, a few client treatments, then dinner at home and a quiet evening in front of the TV with his family.

When the family dines out, The Porter’s House is a favorite. And his advice for fellow business owners reflects the discipline of a lifetime: “Success doesn’t come easy. Keep on working hard no matter what, to achieve the success you deserve.”

AT A GLANCE

Business: Bullseye Arthritis and Pain Relief
Owner: Chris Ort
In business: 1½ years
Technology: Softwave TRT, a holistic approach to pain and inflammation
Service options: In-office and mobile appointments, with flexible scheduling
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Web: www.bullseyeapr.com

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Chris Ort Owner/Operator





Fallen Leaf Place Cards

"Leaf" it to the kids to make this year's Thanksgiving table shine. BY NICOLE LETTS

LEAD KIDS and kids at heart on an outside foraging adventure to find a piece of fall's best foliage for Thanksgiving dinner guests. Then, help them practice their handwriting and etiquette by making leaf name cards for each place setting. The leaves serve as table decor, complementing the full spread of everyone's favorite family recipes.

Remember, foraging brings the outside in, so even if it's not quite a golden fall where you are, leaves of any color or large flower petals (like dogwoods) work well. Of course, if the weather won't cooperate outside, as Ina would say, "Store-bought is fine!" There's nothing like a craft store for making decor dreams become reality.



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Bookish Travel

Let your latest read inspire your next itinerary. BY NICOLE LETTS

Skyscanner reports that 55% of travelers have booked, or would consider booking, a trip inspired by literature. It makes sense. Books have always sparked wanderlust, planting the seed for a destination long before a trip is ever planned. That imaginative pull is now shaping real itineraries, not just reading lists.

It's a trend with range, too. A literary trip can be as loose as wandering a favorite author's hometown or as devoted as retracing a character's exact path through a story. Either way, the destination comes with a built-in tale; what's more inspiring than that?

NANTUCKET, MASSACHUSETTS
The island has become something of a pilgrimage site for Elin Hilderbrand's readers, who have spent summers living vicariously through her characters. Books such as Five Star Weekend, The Perfect Couple, and The Hotel Nantucket have helped the island gain even more popularity than it already had as an East Coast summer destination. There are cobblestone streets, shingle-clad homes, harbor views, and more hydrangeas than can be counted.

BEAUFORT, SOUTH CAROLINA
This Lowcountry town shaped much of Pat Conroy's fiction, and it still carries the atmosphere he wrote about: moss-draped oaks, tidal marshes, and a sense of history sitting just beneath the surface. Visitors will find walking tours built around his novels, and the town itself remains quietly beautiful and chock full of excellent seafood whether or not you've read a page.

PORTLAND, OREGON
For readers whose idea of a vacation involves a suitcase with more room for books than clothes, Portland is close to essential. Powell's City of Books is one of the largest independent bookstores in the country, occupying an entire city block, and the surrounding neighborhoods have one of the highest concentrations of small, independent bookshops anywhere in the U.S. Choose your own adventurous novel here and let it guide your next vacation.

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Thanksgiving Parade Differences

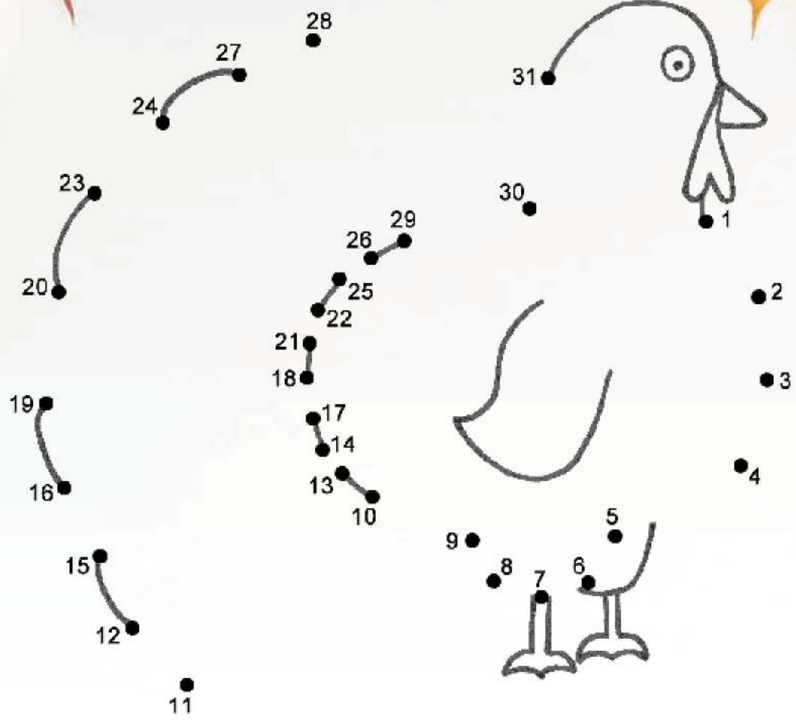
The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. Can you spot the difference between these two parade route cartoons? There are 15 to find. Can you see them all? BY NICOLE LETTS

Think you cracked it? Scan to check your answers!



Dot to Dot

Starting at dot 1, draw a straight line to dot 2, then 2 to 3, and so on in order all the way through the last number. Once you reach the end, connect it back to dot 1 to close the shape. Don't worry about staying perfectly straight; the picture will still reveal itself. Once your outline is complete, grab your crayons or markers and color in your new fall creation.



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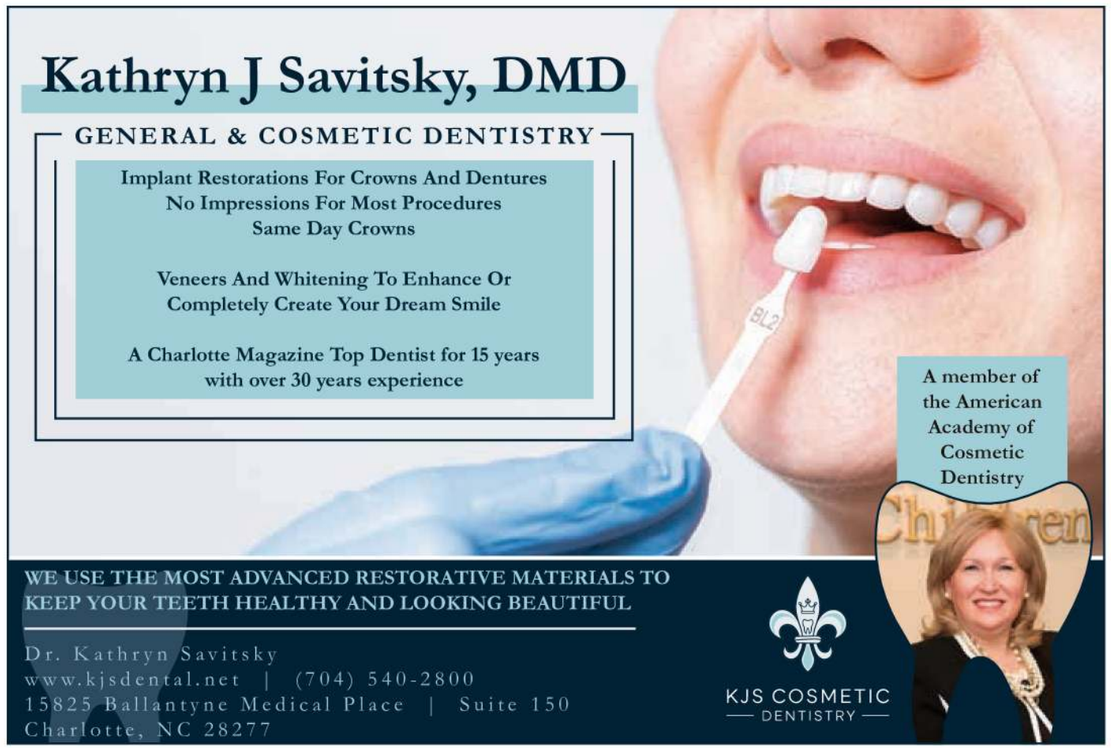
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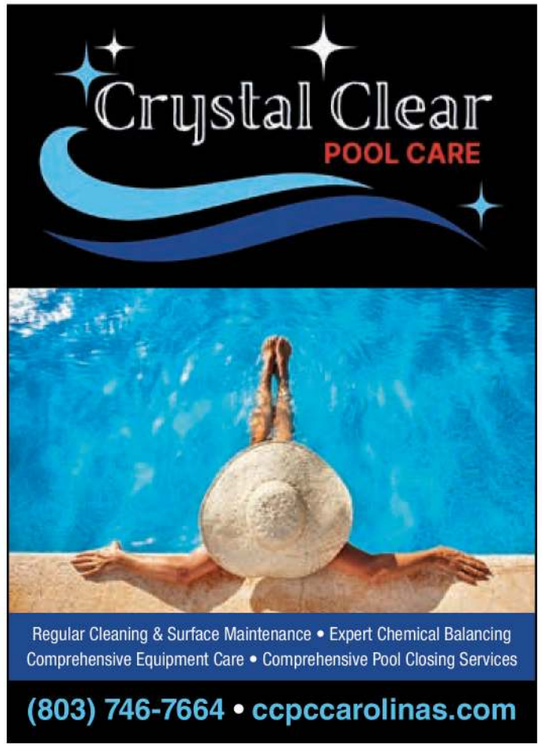
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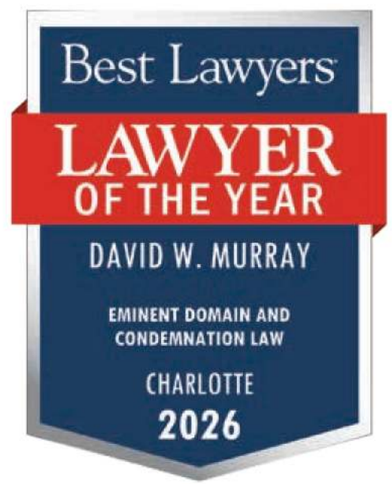
Murray Law Firm is pleased to announce David's selection by Best Lawyers® as Charlotte's 2026 Lawyer of the Year for Eminent Domain & Condemnation Law.

For over 17 years, David Murray has focused solely on protecting landowners' rights in the areas of eminent domain and zoning. David prides himself in his client-centered approach and has successfully represented homeowners, developers and businesses throughout North Carolina.

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