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Room to Breathe

After the holiday weekend clears, July is an invitation to slow down, look up, and live a little more intentionally.

WE START THE MONTH WITH a bang. The flags go up, the grill comes out, and for one long, unhurried weekend, the whole country seems to exhale together. Ahhhh... summer. What follows the Fourth is equally worth savoring. July has a way of creating breathing room that the rest of the year rarely allows. With school on a break, the carpool line dormant, and the calendar mercifully clear of practices and recitals, there is finally space to be present in your own life. To notice the yard. To finish a project that's been waiting. To spend an evening doing exactly what you feel like doing.

That breathing room is worth protecting. The best version of summer isn't necessarily the busiest one. It's the one where you completed a project, visited with neighbors, or simply enjoyed an outing without rushing to the next thing. July invites us to look up from the routine and pay attention to the texture of everyday life, and this issue of *Stroll Quail Hollow* is designed to help define and refine what it means to be

intentional. It offers a chance to design that kind of summer. To choose to slow down and to invest in spaces and habits that give back as much as you put in, developing an adjusted routine and a personality-packed home that feels as good as it looks.

We hope these pages inspire you to make one small, intentional change this season, even if it's simply the way you spend some summer downtime. The good life doesn't require a grand gesture; just a little intention.

As always, thank you for spending your summer with us.

Andrea Kroger

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Stroll Quail Hollow is your neighborhood publication. Break out your cameras and share your pictures with us for our August 2026 issues. Please send pictures to us at strollquailhollow@gmail.com for our upcoming issues. Pictures must be 1 MB or larger to be of good print quality.

NEW TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

Are you and your family new to Quail Hollow? If so, welcome! Please send your contact info to Andrea at andrea.kroger@n2co.com to be added to our monthly sneak peek email and event invitation list. To submit an idea, photo or article, please email us at andrea.kroger@n2co.com

HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS FOR PHOTO SUBMISSIONS:

Holiday - We want to see all your photos of decor, events and family.

Milestone Celebrations - Do you or a loved one have a milestone birthday or anniversary coming up? Send us some photos!

Weddings - We'd love to share photos from weddings in our community. Share the love by sending your special wedding day pictures to us!

Family and Neighborhood Gatherings - *Stroll Quail Hollow* is all about family and community. Our favorite

photos are those of kids playing, birthday parties and neighborly gatherings.

Graduation - we will be celebrating our graduates all summer long.

Travels - we would love to see all the exciting places you visited over spring break

Pets - We would love to see your fur babies or feather babies

Cool kids - Do you have a "cool kid" in your house?

Athletes - Are you running a marathon? Do you have an athlete in your family? Are you a dancer?

Neighborhood Events - Any parties or events happening in the neighborhood

Local Nonprofits - Local nonprofits are changing the lives of Charlotte residents. Do you volunteer for a great organization? Are you a board member of an awesome organization making a difference?

Resident Business Guide - Do you own a business? We have guide. Email us to have your business listed.



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A TOAST TO COMMUNITY
HIGHLIGHTS
FROM OUR 2026
SIP & STROLL

Neighbors gathered on May 28 for an evening of conversation, connection, and community spirit. Take a look back at some favorite moments and help us thank the partners and residents who made this year's Sip & Stroll such a success.



Thank you to everyone who joined us for this year's Sip & Stroll on May 28. It was a fantastic evening filled with great conversations, new connections, and plenty of neighborhood spirit. Residents enjoyed visiting with friends and neighbors while stopping by partner tables to learn more about

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the local businesses and organizations that help make our community thrive. We are especially grateful to our event partners for their time, generosity, and support, and to every resident who came out to participate. Your enthusiasm and engagement made the evening a tremendous success. We hope you enjoy this collection of photos highlighting some of the memorable moments from a truly special night.



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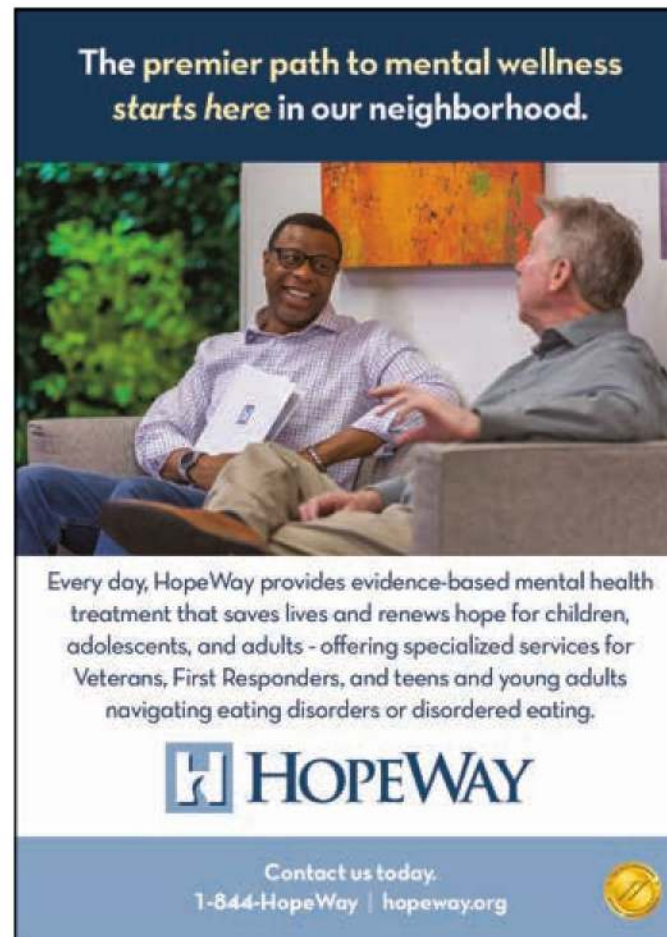
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Lighting the Way Forward: Charlotte Unites for Light The Night

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.

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

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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



GET INVOLVED

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
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Light The Night

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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Leading the practice is Charlotte-native Zachary Williams, DMD MS whose journey into dentistry began from an unexpected place—the patient chair. Growing up in Bessemer City, North Carolina, frequent dental visits sparked a fascination with the profession and the profound impact dental care can have on a person's confidence and quality of life. That curiosity evolved into a calling, leading to more than 1,000 hours of shadowing healthcare professionals before earning a Biology degree from Western Carolina University, a Master's in Medical Sciences from Mississippi College, and ultimately a Doctorate of Dental Medicine from East Carolina University.

After several years practicing as an associate dentist, the dream of opening a boutique dental practice became a reality. Phoenix Dental was established to offer something increasingly rare in today's healthcare landscape—a relationship-driven practice where patients receive highly personalized care in a comfortable, welcoming environment.

What truly sets Phoenix Dental apart is its commitment to serving patients who experience dental anxiety. Every aspect of the practice has been intentionally designed to help patients feel at ease, from the calming atmosphere to the clear, compassionate communication style. The team understands that many individuals have postponed treatment due to fear or past experiences, and their mission is to create a different kind of dental visit—one built on trust and understanding.

In addition to creating an exceptional patient experience, Phoenix Dental offers comprehensive treatment options under one roof by investing in advanced technology and ongoing education. This approach allows patients to receive high-quality, convenient care while maintaining continuity with a provider they know and trust.

Community involvement is also a cornerstone of the practice. Phoenix Dental proudly supports local initiatives, including an annual golf tournament benefiting the Special Olympics, where they ranked among the top contributors in North Carolina. The practice has also partnered with organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club and childcare centers serving underserved communities throughout Charlotte.

For Phoenix Dental, success is about more than healthy teeth. It's about helping patients overcome fear, restore confidence, improve overall health, and feel genuinely cared for throughout the process.

Their advice to the community is simple: don't delay dental care. Small issues are easier, more comfortable, and more affordable to treat when addressed early. Equally important is finding a provider who treats you as an individual and takes the time to understand your goals, concerns, and overall well-being.

At the end of the day, Phoenix Dental's mission is clear: deliver advanced dentistry with intention, integrity, and compassion while creating an experience that feels personal rather than procedural.



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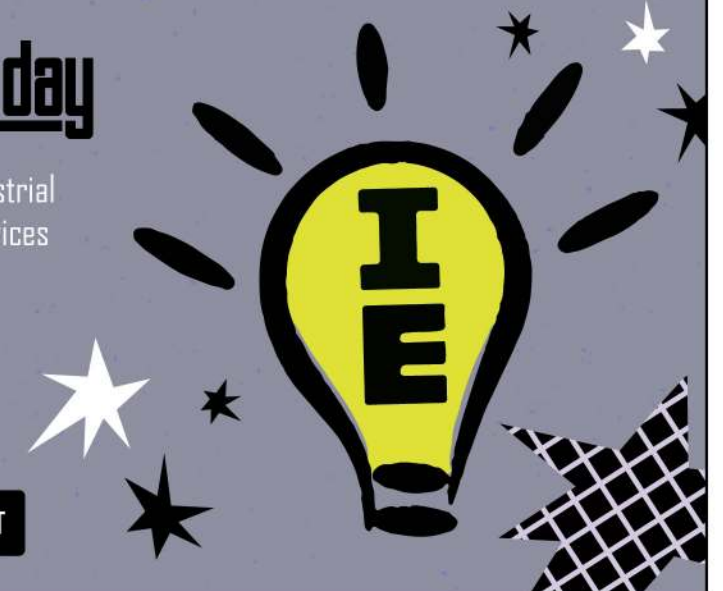
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MAKE & BAKE

BERRY & CREAM CROSTINI

A refreshing, no-fuss summer appetizer that pleases every crowd.

THIS RECIPE is one that requires few ingredients and little time, but receives bountiful compliments. Toasted baguette slices receive a swipe of cream cheese, a tumble of fresh blueberries and raspberries, a drizzle of honey, and a sprig of mint for extra pizzazz. They come together in minutes and disappear just as fast. Serve them at a Fourth of July gathering, a summer

brunch, or any occasion where you want something that looks beautiful on a board without spending hours in the kitchen.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 baguette, sliced on the diagonal into ½-inch rounds
- 8 oz cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup fresh blueberries*
- 1 cup fresh raspberries*
- 2–3 tablespoons honey
- Fresh mint leaves for garnish

*Sub with any blue/red fruit of your choice (blackberries, cherries, etc).

STEP ONE: TOAST THE BAGUETTE

Arrange the baguette slices in a single layer on a baking sheet. Toast in a 375°F oven for eight to ten minutes, flipping once halfway through, until the edges are golden and the centers are firm. Remove and allow to cool.

STEP TWO: SPREAD THE CREAM CHEESE

Using a butter knife or small spatula, spread a generous layer of softened cream cheese onto each toasted slice.

STEP THREE: ADD THE BERRIES

Top each crostini with a mix of fresh blueberries and raspberries. You can keep them separated by variety for a

graphic, intentional look, or mix them freely for something more relaxed and abundant. Either way, pile them on generously and have fun with it. This is a great step to involve the kids!

STEP FOUR: DRIZZLE WITH HONEY

Using a honey wand or a spoon, drizzle honey lightly over each finished crostini. A little goes a long way; add just enough to give a slight shimmer and touch of sweetness.

STEP FIVE: GARNISH AND SERVE

Tuck a small fresh mint leaf alongside each crostini for a pop of color and a hint of freshness. Arrange on a platter and serve. It's wonderful to enjoy while the bread is still slightly warm, but this one does just fine at room temperature, too. After all, there's a party to be had!

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WE WILL ROCK YOU

A comprehensive manual for the diverse world of garden stone.

BY NICOLE LETTS

The secret to a low-maintenance, high-impact landscape isn't more plants, bales of pine straw, or bags of mulch; it's better stone. Unlike the aforementioned solutions, which break down, fade, and need annual replacement, stone is a true buy-it-once investment. Garden stone has quietly become one of the most versatile tools in a homeowner's outdoor arsenal, serving as both a functional workhorse and a design statement. Here, we explore the wide world of stone: the ultimate set-it-and-forget-it landscaping accessory.

Before heading to the garden center and loading up on heavy materials, take time to evaluate your needs. Climate matters more than many homeowners realize. In drought-prone areas, stone mulch outperforms wood chips, retaining soil moisture while reflecting heat. In wetter climates, permeable options like pea gravel prevent pooling and erosion.

Next, consider the stone's purpose. If drainage is your priority, pea gravel and crushed granite are your top choices. Both allow water to move through them freely, reducing runoff and protecting your soil. For high traffic areas, such as paths, crushed granite is the best option as it compacts slightly over time. Pea gravel stays loose, which makes it ideal for flower beds and around trees where roots need room to breathe.

To maintain or add curb appeal, bigger is better. Oversized sandstone pavers bring warmth and texture to patios and garden borders, and their neutral tones complement nearly any exterior palette. Similarly, Western river rock is naturally tumbled, with a varied surface that adds organic character to everything from fire pit surrounds to poolsides. The most polished landscapes tend to mix scales. A large paver anchored by smaller gravel creates visual contrast and a more finished look.

The number one tip is to calculate coverage. One ton of most garden stone covers roughly 100-120 square feet at two inches deep. And the adage holds: measure twice, order once. The payoff is a yard that looks intentional year-round and holds its own through every season...and likely without a single weed.





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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.

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.

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Megan and her staff



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!

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