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The Gallo Family!



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PHOTOGRAPHY



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

September Re-Start



Dear Ballantyne neighbors,

As the back-to-school season begins, we're reminded that a fresh start can bring both excitement and a bit of uncertainty. The unknown can be scary—but it also holds great possibility. Let's embrace change, stay present and set the tone for what we hope will be the best and most memorable year yet.

This is a perfect time to be intentional—about how we spend our

time, the memories we make and the traditions we create with our families. Whether it's a simple dinner together, a weekend adventure or a new ritual to mark the start of school, let's make space for meaningful moments.

We're also thrilled to share some exciting news: *Stroll Firethorne* has officially launched! What does this mean for our Ballantyne Country Club community? More neighbors, more local businesses and more ways

to connect. We're expanding into another incredible neighborhood, and with that comes new opportunities to network, grow and strengthen the *Stroll* community we all love.

We're already planning our next event—so please check your email for details. If you're not on our list yet, email ashley.grimm@strollmag.com to get connected.

Thank you for being a part of something truly special!

Warmly,

Ashley Grimm

Publisher

ashley.grimm@n2co.com



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

IT TAKES A VILLAGE!

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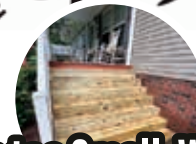
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THE GALLO FAMILY

Peggy and John Gallo were introduced in classic rom-com fashion—a blind date in August 1994, arranged by friends Jim and Jennifer Langan. “John knew about the setup,” Peggy laughs. “They didn’t tell me—but he accidentally slipped a couple of months later!” The rest, as they say, is history.

Originally from New Jersey, the couple raised their blended family in Charlotte, where Carson Lee and Cade were born. Their eldest daughter, Jackie Thompson, lives in Raleigh with her husband John and works at First Citizens Bank as Director of Enterprise Risk Management. Carson Lee, a former gymnast and volleyball player, is now a Clinical Research Associate with MedPace and is preparing for a big move to Austin, TX this July. Their son Cade, a senior at Indiana University, formerly played football and rugby. He is double majoring in Sports Marketing and Management and minoring in Finance at the Kelley Business School. “We’re excited to see where Cade lands next,” says Peggy. “It’s going to be a big year!”

Professionally, Peggy is a Realtor with Helen Adams Realty and a well-known face around BCC, where she serves on the Women’s Golf Association Board and runs the BCC neighborhood Facebook page. John—who retired from a career in compliance, treasury and high yield capital markets with Ally and Bank of America—has also served on the BCC’s Greens

Committee. Together, they’re regulars at community social events and can often be found relaxing poolside, cooking family dinners or catching a Seinfeld rerun. John, Peggy and Cade are all big golfers and pickleball players.

The family’s favorite holiday is Thanksgiving when they all get together and cook the family feast. Everyone cooks and Cade and Jackie make their signature chess pie for dessert. John is known for his cooking skills, and besides making the family meals, their friends never miss one of his invites to dinner! When dining out, they favor Osteria Luca in Park Road Shopping Center.

The family shares a love of sports (rooting for a mix of New York teams as well as college teams, especially UNC and Indiana University), traveling and spending quality time together. A summer tradition since 1996 has been their annual trip to Hilton Head, which continues strong to this day. And just this past spring, they took a memorable trip (that included Carson Lee’s boyfriend, Bryson Balash) to Italy, visiting Lake Como, Florence, Positano and Rome.

With Bryson’s shih tzu Jack by their side and a vibrant social circle right in the neighborhood, the Gallos love calling Ballantyne Country Club home. “Our friends are here, our kids’ friends are here—it just feels like home,” says Peggy. “We’re grateful for this community and everything it offers.”

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

1 / Photo by KLYX Photography
2 / Tuscany Vespa tour
3 / (L to R): John, Cade, Peggy, Bryson, Carson Lee, Jackie and John
4 / Lake Como
5 / Ponte Vecchio, Florence



2



3



4



5



IF YOU’VE BEEN AROUND BCC FOR A WHILE, CHANCES ARE YOU ALREADY KNOW—OR KNOW OF—PEGGY LEO-GALLO AND HER FAMILY. LONGTIME MEMBERS SINCE 1996 AND RESIDENTS FOR THE PAST 11 YEARS, THE GALLOS ARE DEEPLY ROOTED IN THE COMMUNITY AND WELL-KNOWN FOR THEIR INVOLVEMENT, WARMTH AND FUN-LOVING SPIRIT.

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JACK & BAILEY

BY RESIDENT REPORTER YUMO YUAN

If you've lost some golf balls (maybe a lot of them), call up the miniature Bernedoodles Jack and Bailey, who may just have them. They have a hobby of playing with these white, spherical objects in their yard along with the swimming that they do. They enjoy their time off by hanging out with their furry best friend, Grayson.

Officially, Jack (3.5 years old) and Bailey (2 years old) live with Frank and Jen Conley, who adopted both of their dogs from breeders. The family shares that Bailey came to the family because she did not have the traditional Bernedoodle pattern, and Frank notes that Jack was named after a family member who adores dogs. Despite being a year and a half apart, Jack and Bailey remain inseparable.



The duo certainly know how to entertain their parents and their guests. They love to sit and give their paws. Of course, they don't work for free. The Conleys describe them as very spoiled; Jen mentions that "they have homemade dog food, have many toys and receive a lot of attention."

After a day's worth of hard work, Jack and Bailey (an avid "mole hunter") wind down for the evening by going for their last walk or snuggling on the couch or even claiming their share of their owners' bed. Their "unconditional love and companionship" help make their presence known and make up for their small size.

Jack and Bailey have so much spunk and have taken so many wacky adventures. Maybe one day I'll even see them caddying on the course?

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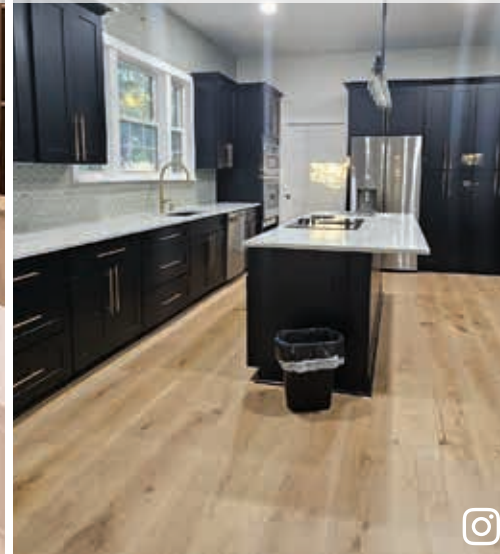
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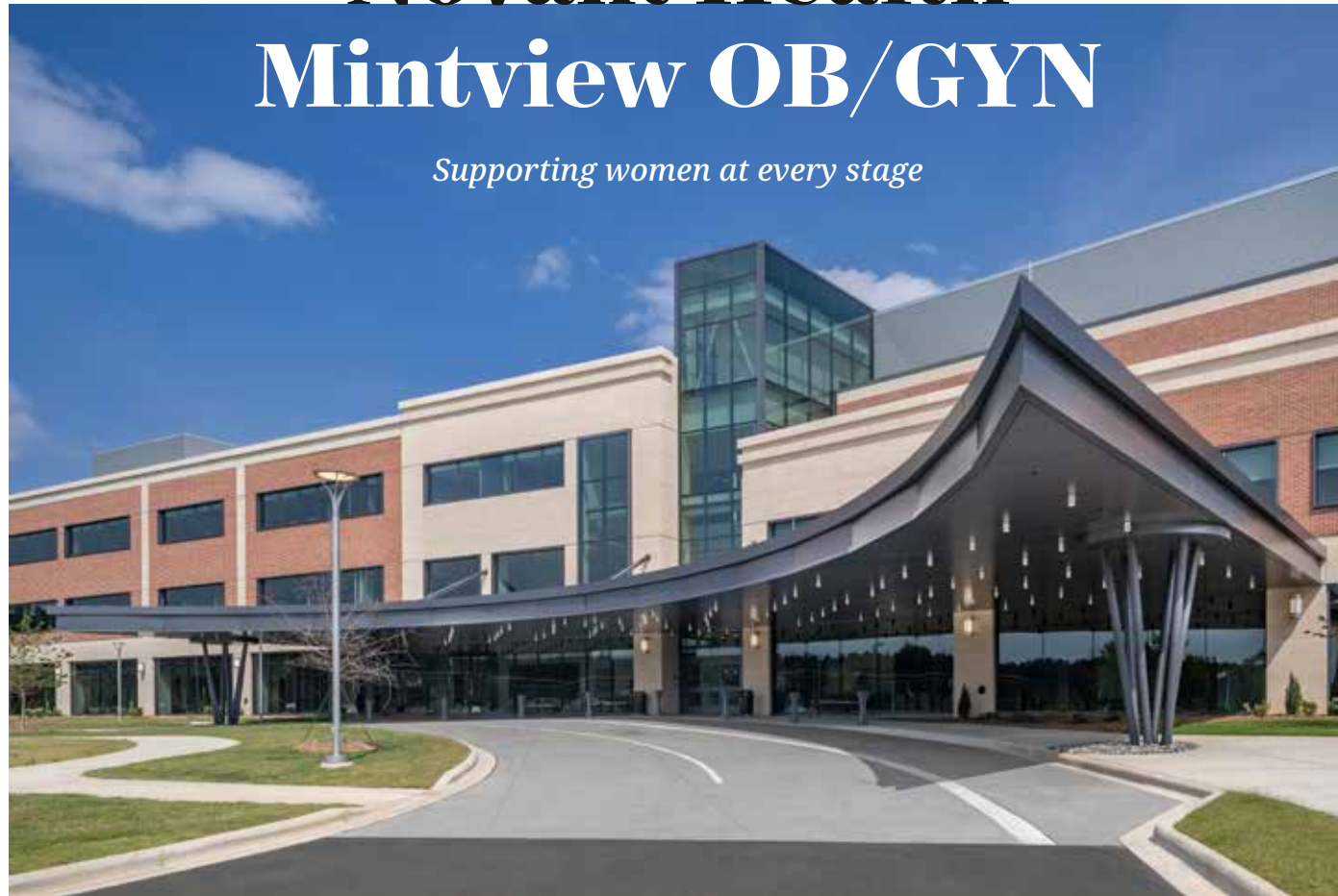
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Novant Health Mintview OB/GYN

Supporting women at every stage



Mintview OB/GYN is located within Novant Health Ballantyne Medical Center.

At Novant Health Mintview OB/GYN, women's health is more than a specialty – it's a commitment to providing compassionate, expert care through every phase of life. With locations in Ballantyne, Steele Creek and a third office opening in Fort Mill in late 2025, Mintview OB/GYN is meeting the needs of women across south Charlotte and beyond. "Our team provides individualized obstetrical and gynecological care for women of all ages," states Dr. Nathan Givens, OB/GYN with the clinic. "We take pride in being your partner during all of life's stages so you can live your best quality of life."

From well-woman exams to managing complex gynecologic concerns, Mintview OB/GYN offers a full spectrum of care. Routine annual exams include screening for cervical cancer, infections, breast concerns and some routine

immunizations. Also available are in-office ultrasounds and minimally invasive surgical procedures – all within the convenience of the Novant Health Ballantyne Medical Center. Frequent gynecological concerns treated at Mintview OB/GYN include vaginitis, acute and chronic pelvic pain, urinary tract infections and menstrual cycle concerns.

The clinic also treats other issues like abnormal uterine bleeding, treatment of abnormal pap smears, uterine fibroids, ovarian cysts, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS) and menopausal/perimenopausal symptoms.

Pregnancy care at Mintview OB/GYN is both comprehensive and supportive. Clinicians routinely see patients for preconception counseling to review medications, family history and discuss any potential concerns before pregnancy. Once pregnancy is

confirmed, routine prenatal visits are scheduled to monitor the health of the expectant mother and the growth and health of the baby, with periodic ultrasounds to evaluate fetal anatomy and growth. During routine office visits, many topics are covered, including glucose testing, monitoring of weight gain, measurement of fetal growth, maternity education, breastfeeding education and preparation for labor and delivery. "Plus, we're thrilled to offer midwifery care as part of our collaborative clinic team," Dr. Givens says. "Our certified nurse midwives bring a compassionate, patient-centered approach and are here to support women – from annual checkups and gynecologic care to prenatal visits, labor and delivery at Ballantyne Medical Center, and even menopause support. It's a meaningful step forward in how we care for our community."

Contraceptive counseling is another important focus. Clinicians walk patients through a variety of birth control options – oral pills, injections, IUDs, implants and even surgical sterilization – ensuring every woman can choose what's right for her life and goals. "We believe patients who are well-informed can make the best decisions about their healthcare," notes Ginny Gaulden, lead midwife for the clinic.

As women approach menopause, Mintview OB/GYN remains a trusted resource. Whether navigating hot flashes,

irregular vaginal bleeding, vaginal dryness, night sweats and/or mood changes, the team offers both education and personalized treatment plans, both hormonal and nonhormonal. "We want you to feel heard and not alone – you don't need to suffer," they emphasize.

The strength of Mintview OB/GYN lies in its people: board-certified physicians, certified nurse midwives, a women's health nurse practitioner, sonographers and support staff who all work together to provide top-tier care. "Our clinicians are experts in everything from adolescent care to surgical treatment options," Dr. Givens states. "We listen to our patients and collaborate with them to develop the best possible care plan."

Whether you're planning a pregnancy, managing menopause or simply due for a routine exam, Novant Health Mintview OB/GYN offers the trusted expertise and personalized care every woman deserves.

Appointments can be scheduled online at NHMintviewObGyn.org or by calling 704-377-5675. With office hours Monday through Friday, and some early morning availability with nurse midwives and a nurse practitioner, the team makes it easy to find a convenient time.

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PATIENT TESTIMONIALS:

"Dr. Christopher Danner is always caring and concerned and attentive when I see him. He is a *model* for Novant Health."

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"Dr. Nathan Givens is beyond incredible! His bedside manner is off the charts! He truly cares about his patients, and it shows!"

"Cannot recommend Dr. Katherine Menezes enough! She just 'gets it'! As a female herself, she is tuned in and up to date on the latest, greatest treatments. This was my favorite doctor appointment of the year!"



(L to R): Nathan Givens, MD, Virginia Gaulden, CNM and Joann Long, DO



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COHEN

BETTENCOURT

For Cohen Bettencourt, baseball isn't just a sport—it's a way of life. The Charlotte Christian graduate has spent more than a decade behind the plate, earning accolades, championships and a reputation for leadership that extends far beyond the diamond.

Cohen has been the starting catcher for Charlotte Christian's varsity baseball team since his freshman year, helping lead the team to a state championship in 2022 and multiple conference titles in 2022, 2024 and 2025. As a senior, he capped off his high school career with a walk-off hit against a future MLB draft pick—one of his proudest moments—and served as team captain, helping shape the culture of the program for future players.

His list of honors is as impressive as his work ethic: two-time First Team All-Conference selection, 2025 National High School Strength Coaches Association All-American and 2025 Charlotte Hot Stove "Catcher of the



Year," to name a few. He also played for the South Charlotte Panthers, a nationally ranked travel team, for three years (six seasons), gaining national exposure and experience that helped prepare him for the next level. "Baseball is a game of failure and teaches players how to be resilient," Cohen says. That mindset has helped him thrive



in high-pressure moments and stay focused on constant improvement.

His leadership has not gone unnoticed by his coaches. "I have had the opportunity to coach Cohen for the last four years, and as impressive as he's been on the baseball field, he has been even more impressive passing down the standards and culture we take pride in as a program and leading as a team captain," said Reid Fronk, head coach of Charlotte Christian varsity baseball. "He will be extremely missed, but we are excited for him to take the next step in his personal and baseball journey."

Off the field, Cohen enjoys fishing, golf, grilling and traveling with his family (dad Griffin, mom Jaime and younger brother Hudson). He's also a strong student—recipient of High Point University's Presidential Scholarship and the Entrepreneurship Fellowship. This fall, he'll head to High Point to study entrepreneurship and continue his baseball career at the collegiate level.

His advice for younger athletes? "Whether it's in the classroom or on the athletic field, there is always someone out there working harder than you. If you want an exceptional result, you have to show up and put in exceptional work."

Well said—and well earned. Congratulations, Cohen!

To recommend an athlete or other young achiever, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.



The Bettencourts
(photo by Weslie Woodley)



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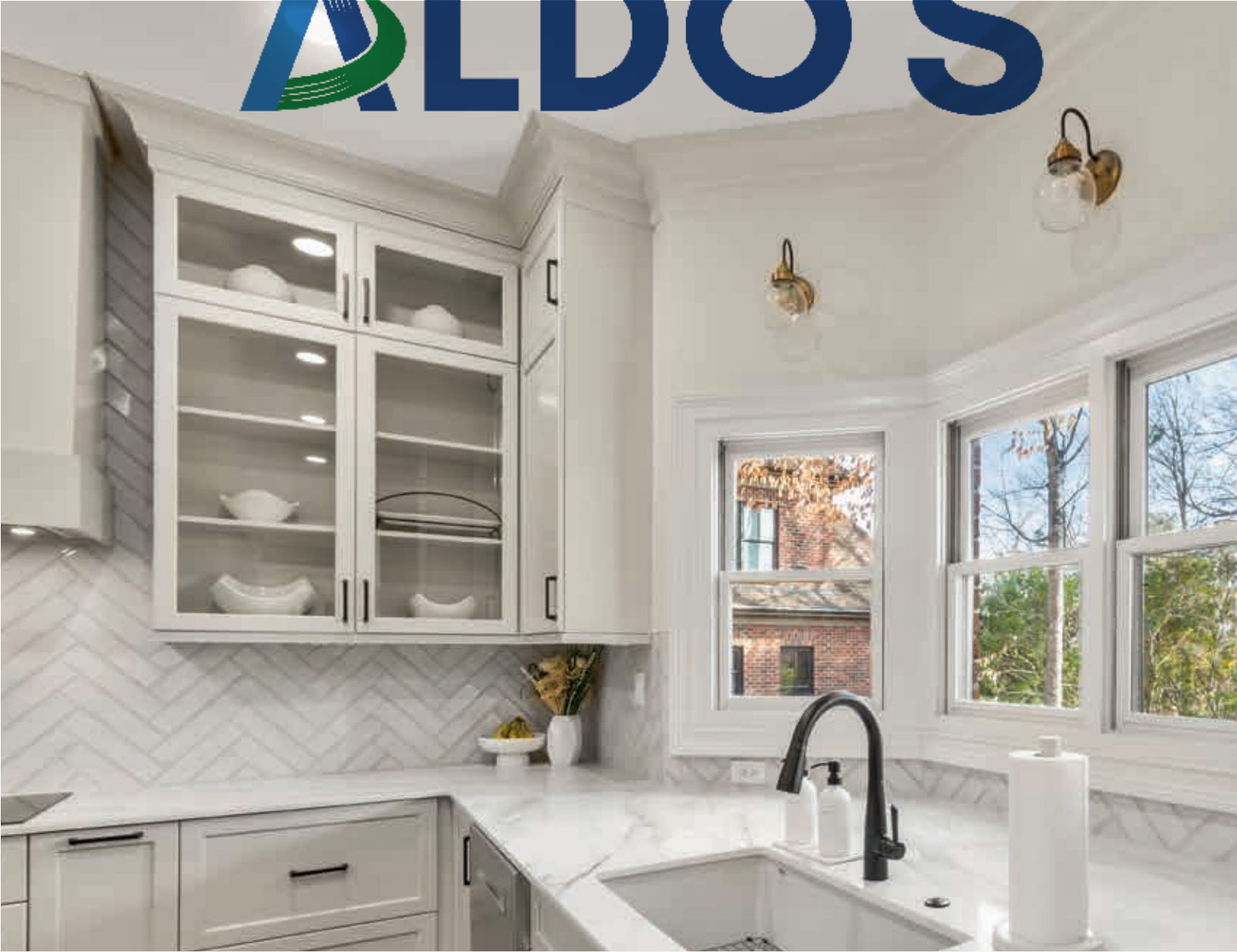
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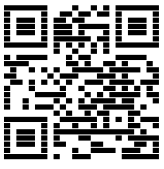


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Today, it has grown into a full-scale service company with a large fleet of vehicles, a skilled team of technicians, and a loyal customer base built on trust, integrity, and family values. "We've always been a family-run company," says Angie Dickerson Cliffe, who now helps manage daily operations alongside her sister Debbie. "Our dad still plays an active role in the business—he's out there every day performing irrigation backflow testing and offering estimates. It's personal to us. This company has our name on it, and that means something."

The company's current 11,000-square-foot facility, which includes a 7,000-square-foot warehouse, allows the team to keep a wide range of parts and equipment on hand—ensuring fast, efficient service, even on weekends. From toilet repairs to light



Angie Dickerson Cliffe and her family

fixture installations and complete HVAC replacements, the Jim Dickerson Company is equipped to handle every residential need.

Their Preventative Maintenance Memberships have become especially popular, offering priority scheduling, seasonal system checkups and peace of mind for homeowners. "We believe in being proactive," says Angie. "A little maintenance goes a long way toward preventing major issues."

Even as the business has grown and evolved, the heart of the company remains the same. "We're a close-knit family," says Angie. "No matter how busy life gets, we always make time for each other—and that family-first approach carries over to how we treat our customers."

To learn more or schedule a service, visit jim-dickerson.com or follow @jimdickersoncompany on Instagram and Facebook.

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Jim and Judy Dickerson



Jim with his daughters



Jim and Judy with their grandchildren

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- **Warning Signs:** Dripping faucets, flickering lights or inconsistent airflow can signal bigger problems. Pay attention to unusual smells—these may be signs of mold or electrical hazards.
- **Energy Efficiency:** Upgrade to smart thermostats and energy-efficient appliances to reduce energy bills. Improve insulation and seal ductwork to help your HVAC system run less and last longer.
- **Shut-Offs:** Every homeowner should know how to shut off the water, gas and electricity in an emergency. During service visits, the team can help label and test these shut-offs.
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HM PROPERTIES

The Grimm Family's Fertility Journey



2017: The Hopeful Beginning

With excitement and dreams of growing their family, the Grimm family began trying to conceive in early 2017. Like many couples, they expected it to happen naturally. But after more than a year of waiting, hoping and countless pregnancy tests, there were still no signs of a baby.

2018: Seeking Help

After 18 months with no pregnancy, the emotional toll began to set in. Frustration, sadness and uncertainty started to replace optimism. The Grimms made the difficult but empowering decision to seek fertility help. They turned to REACH Fertility, a trusted center known for



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2018–2019: Treatment and Trials

The initial treatment plan included Letrozole, a medication to stimulate ovulation. Though it offered hope, it wasn't enough. After careful monitoring and adjustments, they moved to timed ovulation cycles. Still no success. The next step was intrauterine insemination (IUI). It took three emotionally and physically challenging rounds—but finally, they received the long-awaited positive test. Their first child, London, was on the way.

2021: Trying Again

Hopeful to expand their family, they began trying for baby number two in 2021. After eight months with no luck, the familiar emotions returned. They revisited REACH, once again leaning on Dr. Katz and the team for guidance. Letrozole was tried again, but didn't yield results.



Seth Katz, MD

"Every fertility journey is deeply personal, and my role is to walk beside each patient not just with medical advice, but with guidance and support. I understand this road can be difficult, and sometimes it takes multiple tries to find what works best for each individual—but together, we keep moving forward." — Dr. Seth Katz, medical director at REACH Fertility (who sees patients in both the Ballantyne and Charlotte locations)

2022: A Low Chance and a Miracle

They moved forward with IUI once again. The first and second rounds didn't work. During the third round, test results showed hormone levels were low, and Dr. Katz gently explained that the chances of success were very slim. Still, together they decided to continue. That round—against all odds—worked. That pregnancy became their daughter Holland, whom they lovingly call their strong little miracle baby.

The Support That Made All the Difference

Throughout both journeys, Dr. Katz and the REACH team were more than providers—they were partners. Their unwavering support, honest conversations and constant encouragement helped the Grimms push forward, even in the most uncertain moments.

Today

With two healthy children and full hearts, the Grimm family reflects on their journey not as one of defeat, but of strength. Choosing to seek help wasn't giving up—it was fighting for the family they dreamed of. Their path to parenthood wasn't easy, but it was deeply worth it.



Holland

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Karla Williams’ Backyard Retreat

Tucked away behind an unassuming Ballantyne home lies a hidden treasure that delights all who enter. Karla Williams’ backyard is not simply a yard—it’s a living, breathing work of art cultivated over a decade with care, creativity and a deep appreciation for nature’s rhythm.

When Karla and her partner Donald Menchhofer moved into their Legette Court home 10 years ago, they were greeted by a blank canvas: a sloped backyard with six mature hardwoods, a few struggling azaleas and mostly patchy grass. But for Karla, a generational gardener inspired by her mother’s celebrated green thumb, this was not a challenge—it was an opportunity. “I didn’t have a grand plan,” Karla admits. “I just started one small garden at a time, based on how the light fell or where the soil seemed right. It’s not about agriculture for me—it’s about aesthetics. It’s my creative outlet.”

The result is a winding, English-informal landscape of meandering stone paths, textured plantings, birdbaths, benches and artfully placed accents. From sunlit perennials



to shade-loving ferns, each area offers a new perspective depending on the time of day or season. “My favorite time of year is June and July,” she says, “when the perennials bloom and the grass is still a vibrant green. But really, the garden changes every day. It’s a living masterpiece.”

Visitors are often surprised when they step into the backyard oasis, hidden from view by the house. “People always say it should be a public garden,” Karla laughs. “Or they ask, ‘Did you



do all this yourself?” The answer is yes—with help from nature and a little professional guidance, including a custom front walkway by Designia Landscaping this spring to “mirror” the existing stone-edged informality of front, back and side gardens.

Now enjoying retirement after a distinguished career in the nonprofit sector—where she authored books, taught at universities and consulted nationwide—Karla finds fulfillment in this peaceful, ever-evolving sanctuary. Her husband Donald, a retired engineer from a family-run manufacturing firm in Indiana, shares her appreciation for craftsmanship and quiet beauty. Together, they’ve created a garden not only for themselves, but for every guest lucky enough to wander its thoughtful paths.

To share your home remodel/renovation or yard/outdoor space (or to recommend a neighbor), please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.





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Olympic Gold at the BCC Pool

BY BCC NEIGHBOR NICOLE DAW
PHOTOS BY KLYX PHOTOGRAPHY AND JEN MCINTYRE

On June 20, Ballantyne Country Club's Swim Team members had an incredible opportunity to attend a swim clinic run by four-time Olympic medalist and world record holder, Cullen Jones, as part of his Summer Racing Series.

Jones holds two Olympic gold medals and two Olympic silver medals. In total, he accounts for 13 US medals (seven gold) at major international competitions. Cullen Jones swam with Michael Phelps on the 4x100 freestyle relay team in the 2008 Beijing Olympics where they won the gold medal and broke the world record, one that still stands today.



Harry Schoeneck, Logan McIntyre and Everett McIntyre with Cullen Jones



Luke Witte and Lillie Witte with Cullen Jones



Jones ran the clinic at the BCC pool with a focus on power, speed, efficiency, accountability and the focused mentality of a champion swimmer. He also coached BCC's swimmers to kick more productively, create a strong streamline and prevent shoulder injuries.

BCC swim team members Claire Gratrix and Everett McIntyre thought practicing with Cullen Jones was an invaluable experience. "He taught me how to improve my freestyle by reducing the number of strokes I take to get across the pool," McIntyre states. Gratrix says, "Learning from an Olympian was amazing. It was really fun, and I learned a lot. It's definitely going to help me swim faster and I hope we can do it again."

Jones graciously provided swim caps and photo cards, signed autographs and posed for photos. Proceeds of the event went to the Swim for All non-profit.

"Having Cullen Jones at Ballantyne Country Club was an incredible experience for our swimmers and coaches alike," says Jason Siri, BCC's Family Activity Center assistant director. "His enthusiasm was contagious, his technical knowledge was world-class and the way he translated complex skills into simple, actionable steps was inspiring. Our swimmers walked away faster, and our coaches walked away better. It was a masterclass in coaching and connecting."

To share an article idea, email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.



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Your stories and recommendations bring our community magazine to life, and we're looking for fresh, exciting content to share! Here's how you can get involved:

- **Have a go-to recipe?** Share your favorite dish with us! If your kids love to cook, we'd love to feature their creations too.
- **Know a home that turns heads?** Whether it's a stunning interior, a beautifully landscaped yard or a standout feature like a pool, pool house or "she shed," nominate

it for our "Home of the Month/ Yard of the Month" series!

- **Shine a spotlight on young achievers!** If your child excels in sports, the arts, academics or community service, let us know! We're featuring local standouts in our "Athlete of the Month/ Young Achiever" section.
- **Have a photogenic or lovable pet?** We're looking for adorable furry (or feathered or scaly!) friends to feature as "Precious Pets."

- **Celebrate your neighbors!** We love introducing the wonderful families of our community in our "Meet Your Neighbors" feature. If you know a family with a great story to share (or want to highlight your own), reach out!

Send your submissions and nominations to Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com. We can't wait to hear from you!

To share an idea, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.

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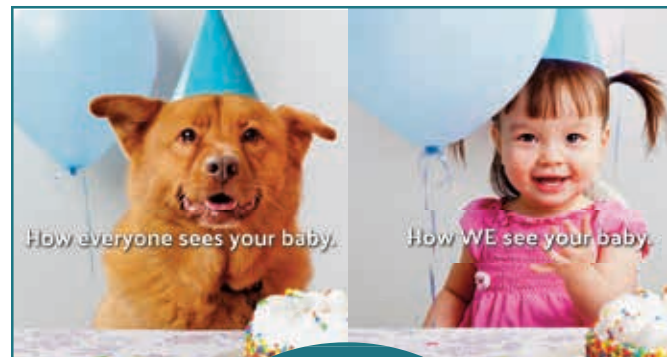
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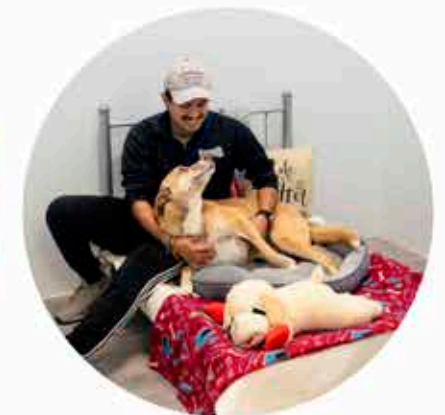
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Kadai Paneer

Kadai Paneer is a flavorful Indian dish made with paneer cubes in a spicy tomato-based gravy, perfect for serving with Indian breads like naan. Paneer is a soft white cheese popular in South Asian cuisine.

BY BCC NEIGHBOR PAYAL KOTHARI

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 2 medium onions, finely chopped
 - 2-3 green chilies, slit
 - 4-5 cloves of garlic, minced
- 4 medium tomatoes, chopped
- 1 teaspoon turmeric powder
- 1 teaspoon chili powder (adjust to taste)
 - 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 tablespoon dried fenugreek leaves (kasuri methi)
 - Salt to taste
 - 1 cup paneer, cubed
 - 1 cup bell peppers, cubed (optional)
- 3 tablespoons cream (optional, for richness)
 - Fresh coriander for garnish

Method

Prepare the Kadai Gravy:

- Heat oil in a kadhai (wok) and add cumin seeds. Allow them to crackle.
- Add the chopped onions and sauté until they become translucent.
- Stir in the garlic and green chilies, sautéing for another minute until aromatic.
- Add the chopped tomatoes and cook until they soften and oil separates from the mixture (around 10-12 minutes). Mash slightly using a potato masher for a smoother texture.
- Introduce the turmeric powder, chili powder, salt and kasuri methi. Mix well and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes.

Add Paneer and Bell Peppers:

- Add the paneer cubes and peppers (if using) to the gravy. Stir gently to coat the paneer without breaking it.
- Cook on low heat for about 5 minutes to allow the flavors to meld. Option: stir in fresh cream for a richer taste.

Final Touches:

- Garnish with fresh coriander before serving.

Serving Suggestion

Serve hot with naan, roti or a bowl of plain rice. Kadai Paneer pairs excellently with a side of raita or salad to balance the spicy flavors.

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

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Voices of Freedom

Stories of growth and joy from freedom school scholars

BY ANNALISE WILSON, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER,
FREEDOM SCHOOL PARTNERS

At Freedom School, our scholars are the passion behind what builds our community up. Their voices are a reminder of the impact and purpose behind our work. We're excited to share a few of their stories with you.

Triple the Joy, Triple the Impact

Mariah, Mariella and Marcella Bernal, Level 2 Scholars
Meet Mariah, Mariella and Marcella! They are triplet Freedom School scholars who have been with us for the last four years. This summer, they're attending our Pinewood site, and this spirited trio is excited to share their Freedom School story.

Freedom School offers scholars many opportunities during the summer, and Mariah, Mariella and Marcella are especially excited about making new friends and celebrating Jubilee. Harambee! is another favorite part of their day—especially getting hyped during the Red Hot chant!



1/ The Bernal Triplets
2/ Scholars at Field Day
3/ Victoria Roary



As the summer program gets into full swing, the triplets are looking forward to exploring the city during field trips and experiencing the learning that comes from enrichment activities. They exemplify how the magic of Freedom School creates a space where friendships and academic skills can grow.

Mariella shares that Freedom School has helped her “not skip over words” and taught her how to use context clues. She also proudly explains that she's gotten better at identifying the main idea of a text.

It becomes clear to our scholars that Freedom School is about more than just reading—it's about learning to love reading and using that knowledge wherever life takes them. Whether they grow up to be teachers or police officers—like Mariah aspires to be—the foundation starts here.

Their advice to fellow scholars? Don't give up and keep reading! As Marcella puts it, “The more you read, the more you succeed.”

A Chance to Grow

Victoria Roary, Level 3 Scholar

Meet Victoria! She is a Level 3 scholar at The Grove Freedom School site. At the start of each morning, Victoria looks forward to starting her day in “Harambee!” and singing her favorite cheers and chants.

Since being at Freedom School, Victoria has learned to step out of her comfort zone and to demonstrate kindness. She recommends “treating people how you want to be treated. It doesn't feel nice when people talk down on me, so I wouldn't talk down on anyone else.”

Victoria understands that even at a young age, she has a role in the community—to help others grow and to make a meaningful impact on her younger peers. She encourages younger scholars to keep showing up every day, even when things get hard. “It's important to get your education because it'll lead you to higher places later in life.” And we're sure Victoria will reach higher places in her future! After graduating college, she hopes to become a real estate agent or a social worker.

To find out more about Freedom School Partners and how you can get involved please visit freedomschoolpartners.org.

To share your pics or a story idea, please email Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com.

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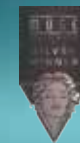


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The Soul of Home: Fall Back in Love with Where You Live

Welcome to Style & Homes! Ballantyne is getting stylish, and each month we will bring you an article to enhance your wardrobe or home.

WITH RESIDENT COLUMNIST PAYAL KOTHARI



Home isn't just where you sleep – it's where life happens. Where your kids leave socks on the floor, where you sip your morning coffee half-awake and where you come back after a hard day. But somewhere between the laundry piles and grocery runs, it's easy to stop seeing your home for the beautiful place it can be.



Start with the entryway, even if it's just a small hallway or a front mat. Light a candle. Put up a hook for keys. That first moment when you walk in should feel like the day can finally exhale.

Take a look at your living room. Is it arranged for life or just furniture? Try turning chairs to face each other. Add a soft blanket, a lamp, something that says, "sit and stay awhile." You don't need fancy – just cozy and you.

In the kitchen, even one clear counter can make you breathe easier. It's not about having the perfect Pinterest kitchen – it's about creating space for memories: pancakes on Sundays, late-night chats, cutting fruit while your kid tells you about their day.

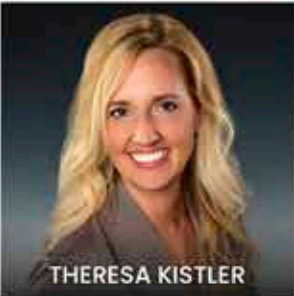
Your bedroom? Make it a no-drama zone. Clean off your nightstand. Fluff the pillows. Maybe put up that photo you've been meaning to frame. You deserve a peaceful place to land.

The bathroom can be more than just a pit stop. Hang a fresh towel. Light something that smells good. Even brushing your teeth feels different in a space that's cared for.

Kids' rooms don't need to be perfect either. Let them help make their space theirs. A string of fairy lights or a poster they love can go a long way toward making them feel safe and seen.

And don't forget the outdoors. Even a tiny balcony or porch can become your favorite spot with a chair and a plant.

Sometimes, a little more intention can help you change the vibe of your home. A few simple changes, a little care – and suddenly, it feels like a home again.



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Meet Junk Removal Solutions

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apart and go back together. “He can get things into or out of places you’d never expect,” Tami adds. But it’s not just about technical know-how—the Taylors take pride in the transformations they help create. “Justin gets satisfaction out of every job we do—seeing old things look new, cluttered spaces become clear or dirty spaces become clean.”

What truly sets Junk Removal Solutions apart is their professional approach in an industry where anyone with a truck can claim to be in the business. “We’re fully licensed and

When Justin and Tami Taylor moved from Florida to Fort Mill in 2017, they brought more than just their family—they brought a wealth of experience and a passion for hands-on work that would evolve into their newest venture: Junk Removal Solutions. Launched in January, the business focuses on junk removal and demolition, offering everything from simple clutter clearing to full-scale teardowns with a personal touch. “Justin’s favorite part of every job is the initial teardown,” says Tami. “He’s good at so many things—he grew up helping his dad manage rental properties and flip houses, and he’s rebuilt just about every part of our own older home.”

With a background that includes construction, towing, mechanics and industrial maintenance, Justin brings a deep understanding of how things come



“We believe a clear space helps create a clear mind! There is something freeing about letting go of things that no longer serve a purpose in your life. At Junk Removal Solutions we help you reclaim your space so you can enjoy the peace that comes with a fresh, open environment.” – Tami and Justin

insured, family-owned and operated and we don’t cut corners,” says Tami. “We use professional equipment, treat your home with care and always show up when we say we will.”

Beyond junk removal, the Taylors also offer “clutter coaching” to help clients organize, downsize and move forward—whether it’s unpacking long-forgotten boxes or sorting through sentimental items. “We’re a judgment-free zone,” says Tami. “And we truly get satisfaction from helping people reclaim their space.”

The Taylors are also dedicated to sustainability, donating and repurposing items whenever possible. They’ve earned all five-star reviews on Google and a loyal following on social media for their fair pricing and thoughtful service.

Their advice? “A clear space helps create a clear mind,” Tami says. “Sometimes the hardest part is just starting. Whether it’s the garage, the storage unit or that guest room-turned-catchall, we can help get the ball rolling.”

Outside of work, the Taylors are active foster parents with Triangle Beagle Rescue, and their own beagle, Toretto, adds to the family fun. With three grown children, a daughter about to start high school and one grandchild (with another one on the way), the Taylors understand the importance of a home that functions well and feels peaceful. In his free time, Justin likes to attend classic car shows and go trail riding, and Tami works as a sign language interpreter.

To see their work in action or get in touch, visit junkremovalsolutions.com or follow them on Instagram @junkremoval.solutions.

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Savoring Southern Charm in Lexington, NC

From barbecue and banter to vineyards and vintage arcades

BY CONTENT COORDINATOR DELIA MCMULLEN

Spend a weekend in Lexington, NC, and you'll quickly learn that this town is far more than just the Barbecue Capital of the World—though the barbecue alone is worth the trip. Nestled in the heart of Davidson County, Lexington blends small-town charm with rich artistic roots, a revitalized downtown and a flourishing food and wine scene.

We arrived on a sunny Friday afternoon and kicked off our visit at the **Bob Timberlake Gallery**, where tourism director Morgan Brinkle welcomed us with a warm smile and information about our weekend adventures. Bob Timberlake—a Lexington native and one of North Carolina's most celebrated living artists—has turned this gallery into a love letter to Americana. Between the nostalgic artwork and handcrafted furniture, it's easy to lose track of time.

After checking into a cozy Airbnb just steps from uptown, dinner beckoned at **Barbecue Center**, a family-run institution since 1955. Brothers Cecil and Michael Conrad continue their father's tradition of smoking pork shoulders "low and slow" over hardwood coals. The result? Tender, smoky perfection, best enjoyed with Lexington's signature vinegar-and-tomato-based "dip" and a side of hushpuppies. Unfortunately, we didn't have room for their famous banana split—a four-pound behemoth of ice cream indulgence that's as photogenic as it is delicious.

From there, we ventured to **Short Circuit Arcade Bar**, one of Lexington's newest gems in the Depot District. This retro-inspired arcade and bar features everything from pinball to Pac-Man, along with craft cocktails and fire pits overlooking the Breeden Amphitheater.



Owner Ryan Short's love for nostalgic fun is contagious. This was my husband's favorite part of our agenda!

Saturday began with strong coffee and a light breakfast at **Perfect Blend Coffee Co.**, a locally loved café connected to Missions Pottery. It was the perfect start to a morning exploring uptown Lexington's walkable Main Street. From the creaky wooden floors of **The Candy Factory** to literary treasures at **Pig City Books**, every shop offered a delightful glimpse into Lexington's character.

A standout stop was **Conrad & Hinkle Food Market**, where Lee Hinkle, the third-generation owner, welcomed us with a smile and a tasting of their famous homemade pimento cheese. Replicating his grandmother's recipe, the shop sells more than a thousand pounds in an average week—and for good reason.

Next, it was off to **Childress Vineyards**, where lunch at The Bistro was followed by a leisurely tasting of wines grown in the Yadkin Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA). NASCAR legend Richard Childress founded the vineyard in 2004, and today the property boasts over 70 acres of grapes as well as a broad selection of varietals to suit any palate.

We wrapped up the afternoon with a tasting at **Curran Alexander Vineyards**, a picturesque property with a 150-year-old family farm history and a knack for bold red blends. Surrounded by vines and good music, it was a

peaceful, palate-pleasing pause. Curran Alexander also features a lovely, historic home that is available for rental.

Dinner took us back to the Depot District at **Goose and the Monkey Brewhouse**, where **Pour Folk Provisions** serves up wood-fired pizzas and Southern comfort fare. Housed in a reclaimed furniture factory, the venue blends industrial grit with community spirit. The beer's good, the food's even better—and the energy? Absolutely contagious.

Before heading home on Sunday, we enjoyed a thoughtfully curated brunch at **Sophie's Cork & Ale**, where Chef John Wilson's locally sourced dishes are as vibrant as the downtown mural-lined streets. His journey from dishwasher to owner-chef is a testament to Lexington's community-driven heart. The shrimp and grits were the best this NC-born girl has ever had!

Whether you're coming for the 'cue, the culture or a little bit of both, Lexington invites you to slow down, dig in and savor the flavors—both on the plate and in the people.

Learn more at VisitLexingtonNC.com or follow @VisitLexNC on Instagram and Facebook. #VisitLexNC

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



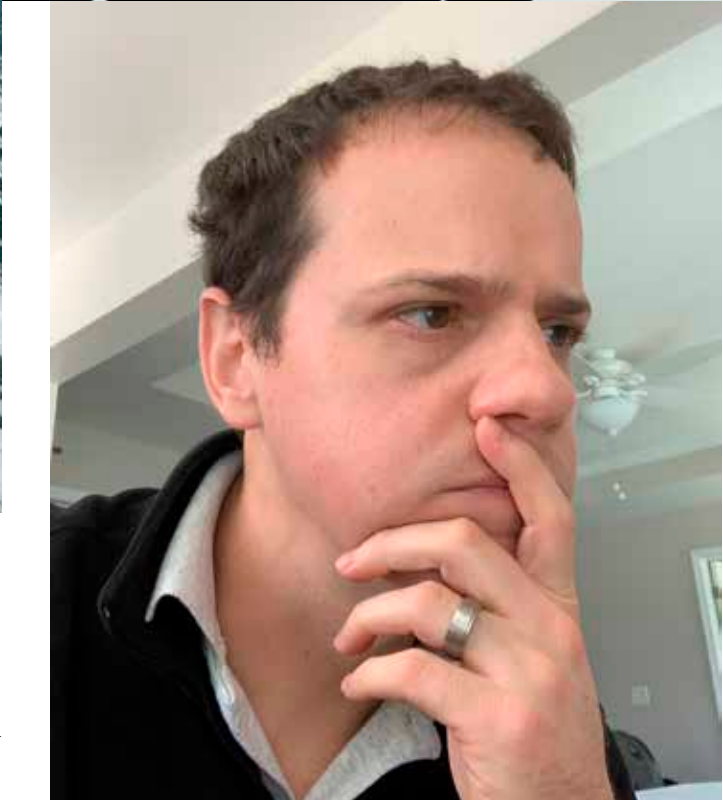
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PATON DIGITAL

Helping businesses grow through targeted online campaigns

BY CONTENT ASSISTANT ANDREA POWELL



Online advertising is a powerful way to increase your brand recognition, generate sales and grow your business. But the digital world is growing faster than we can keep up; it can be confusing and overwhelming. You might be tempted to try an ad campaign, but without a targeted approach, the only result will be a waste of money. Alan Moore at Paton Digital can help you cut through the clutter, find your audience and maximize your media approach.

Alan was born and raised in northern Virginia. He earned his BA from Christopher Newport University in 2005 and his MA from George Mason University in 2012. His career managing digital marketing campaigns took off; he managed more than \$150 million in paid media across platforms like Linear TV, CTV, OTT, Paid Social, Programmatic, Paid Search and more. “Through that experience, I saw how many businesses were investing heavily in media without a clear strategy to drive measurable, profitable results,” he describes. “I started Paton Digital to change that.”

Paton Digital (a name combining two syllables of his children’s names) was formed in 2014. “I wanted to help businesses cut through the noise, simplify their marketing and finally get the kind of growth their budgets deserve,” Alan explains. “Whether it’s scaling campaigns, refining media strategy or optimizing every dollar for maximum return, Paton Digital exists to deliver real performance – not just reports.”

Alan has worked with companies as large as Fortune 500 and as small as local businesses, across a multitude of

industries. His strength lies in his ability to quickly understand a business’s goals, identify potential opportunities and then build a custom approach that delivers results. “I consider marketing both a solution and an investment – something that should be accountable, strategic and built around long-term growth,” he says. “Whether you’re a Ballantyne business looking to attract more local customers or a growing brand ready to scale, you get a partner who brings both big-picture thinking and hands-on execution to the table.”

To minimize expenses for the customer, Alan works with one other team member and a host of contractors to analyze the business’s market, competition and audience. Through information gleaned from one-on-one meetings as well as independent research, Paton Digital designs digital campaigns that are optimized for performance across all desired platforms. They monitor, track and adjust the campaigns based on engagement with potential customers and users, ultimately ensuring that every dollar spent yields the best return.

Time and again, Alan has seen businesses make quick decisions around online marketing, throwing money at problems and ultimately missing their audience. His advice to clients? “Slow down. Know who your ideal customer is, understand what makes them act and then align your messaging and media around that. You don’t need to be everywhere, you just need to show up in the right places with the right message.”

Alan is results-driven and passionate about helping his clients. “I take my work personally and am invested in the outcomes, not just because I love seeing a strategy come to life, but because I know my clients are building something important for their families and futures. I get it. I know what’s at stake.” He understands because his family is the reason he started Paton Digital in the first place. “They continue to be my biggest motivation,” he reveals. “This business is how I provide for them, so failure simply isn’t an option.”

With such a fierce and savvy resource in your corner, you don’t need to be intimidated about the fast pace of technology and how your business will compete within the changing landscape. Paton Digital can handle the online marketing so you can focus on everything else.



Alan and his wife were married in 2011 and have an 8-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son. They live in Lancaster with their “very lazy” Newfoundland mix, Zeus.

For more information or to schedule a discovery call with Alan, visit patondigitalmarketing.com.

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resident business guide

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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 September 2025 issue. Please send pictures to Delia at ballantyne@strollmag.com for our next issue (August 5 deadline for the September issue, September 5 deadline for the October issue). Pictures need to be 1 MB or larger to be of good print quality.

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:

Summer Camps and Vacations – Was your summer getaway incredible? Did you attend a great summer camp or mission trip? Share photos of your favorite summer memories.

Late Summer/Fall Sports – Swim team, tennis, golf and travel sports are wrapping up their seasons, while late summer conditioning for fall sports is getting underway. Whatever sport you enjoy this time of year, we invite you to share your best action shots with us.

Back to School – Shopping sprees, open houses at our community schools and cars packed for dorm room setup are sure signs it's time to return to school. Whether you are heading to graduate school or preschool, we'd like to see how you are preparing for the new school year.

Labor Day – A great weekend to get out of town one last time before the routine of another school year sets in. Show us how you made the most of this work-free weekend.

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 weddings in our community. Share the love by sending your special wedding day pictures to us!

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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A Publication for the Residents of
Ballantyne Country Club

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