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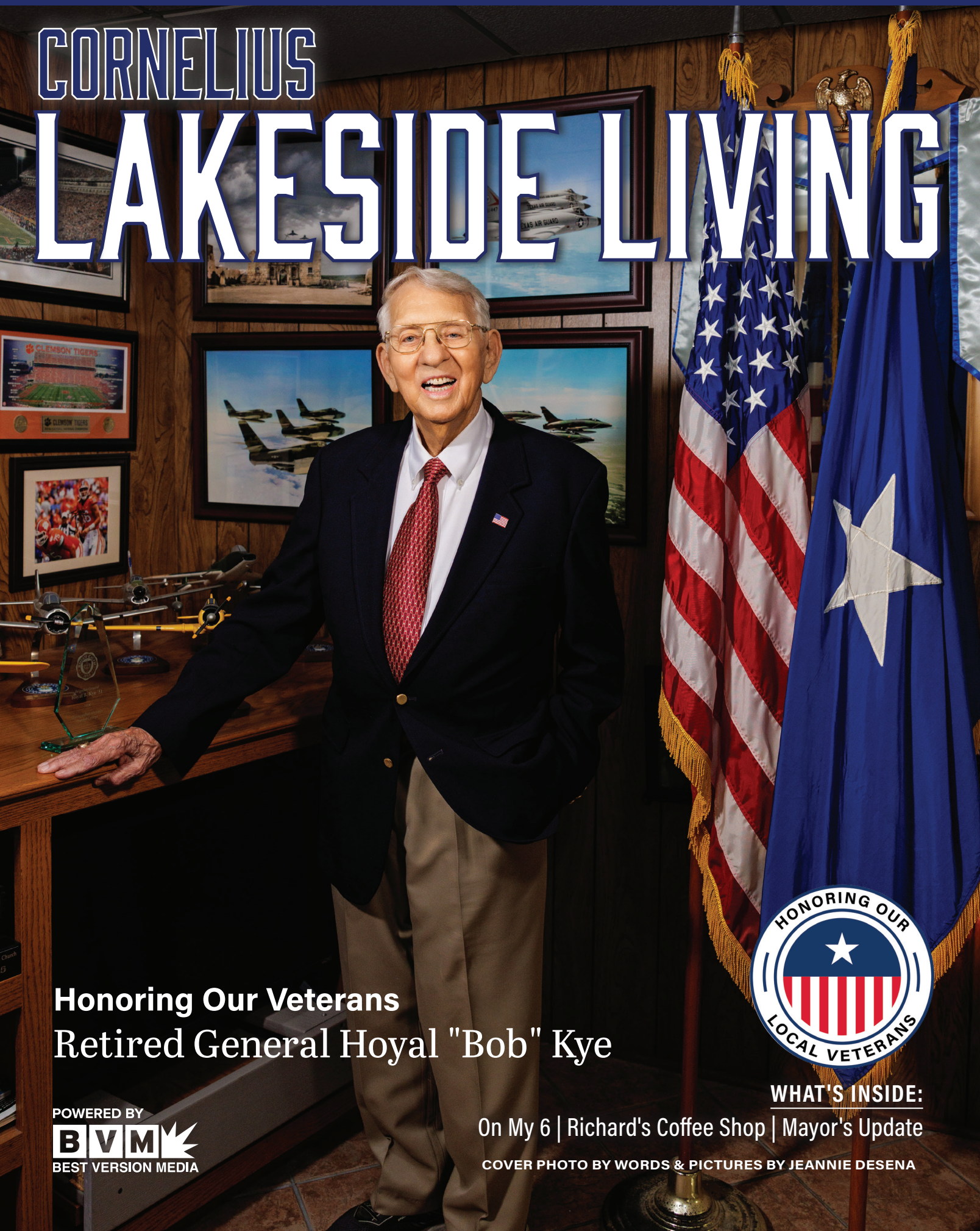

HONORING OUR LOCAL VETERANS

Honoring Our Veterans

Retired General Hoyal "Bob" Kye

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December 25	February
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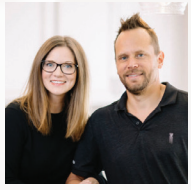

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Honoring Retired General Hoyal "Bob" Kye

BY CAROLINE CAMPBELL
PHOTOS BY WORDS & PICTURES BY JEANNIE DESENA

Retired Air Force General Hoyal "Bob" Kye has spent his life setting goals and then doing everything he could to achieve them. From high school through his military career and well beyond, this same philosophy has served him well.

Born in 1930 and raised on a tobacco farm in Forsyth County, General Kye grew up during the Great Depression in Tobaccoville, NC, a village about 12 miles north of Winston-Salem. Life on the farm left little time for sports, music or other childhood pursuits. He had to rush home from school each day and go straight to work. Still, by the time he was 10, young Kye had already decided what he wanted to become. "I wanted to be an engineer and a fighter pilot," he recalled. "[My] primary goal was engineer; secondary was fighter pilot." He began working toward those goals with determination.

A 1949 graduate of Richmond High School, General Kye earned a scholarship to Brevard College, where he studied pre-engineering from 1949 to 1951, and later received his engineering degree from Clemson University. He arrived at Brevard with holes in his tennis shoes but with enough savings and a scholarship to make the opportunity possible. While there, his interest in aviation became more than a childhood dream. In November 1951, he partnered with a man he met at a jewelry store to purchase a Piper J-3 Cub, a light aircraft. A local farmer allowed them to use his cow pasture as a runway and tie the plane down in his field. General Kye logged hours flying from the field, gaining experience that would help him prepare for the next chapter of his life.

After graduating from Brevard, Kye was accepted into the US Air Force Aviation Cadet program. He passed the required mental, psychological and physical exams, and drove alone from North Carolina to Marana, Arizona, to begin his training. "I was so excited to go to that school that nothing could've stopped me," he said. His preparation was already well underway. Kye had studied aviation so extensively that, according to a friend who recalled his early flying lessons, his instructor essentially turned him loose. "He gave me one takeoff, said my landing was good and let me go," Kye remembered.

"I had studied enough to know the aerodynamics, the ailerons, elevators, brakes and the technique for landing in a crosswind." That approach—study, prepare, set a goal and pursue it—would define General Kye's life.

He entered the Air Force in August 1952, and earned his wings and commission as a second lieutenant in November 1953, just months after the Korean War ended. Three of his brothers had served during the war, but Kye remained in training and did not see combat. His military career took him through thousands of hours in the air and a succession of increasingly demanding assignments. He flew approximately 7,000 hours in fighter aircraft, served as a jet instructor, conducted flight testing on the F-102, flew supersonic aircraft and eventually became a fighter squadron commander with the rank of lieutenant colonel. Of all his Air Force assignments, that command was his favorite. He later earned the rank of full colonel and ultimately brigadier general, retiring in August 1991 after 35 years of Air Force service.

Kye's aviation achievements extended beyond the military. He was recognized as Brevard College's Distinguished Alumni Graduate in 2024-2025. Additionally, he earned virtually every aviation certificate available to him, including his airline transport pilot rating. He also remembers one particularly memorable international flight: delivering an F-100 fighter to the Danish Air Force. The journey from Georgia to Madrid included six aerial refuelings behind a KC-135 tanker over the Atlantic before the pilots continued to Denmark. During this adventure, Kye spent two days in Madrid and fell in love with Spain, where he attended a bullfight and dined at a restaurant visited by Earnest Hemingway.

For Kye, challenges were opportunities to prove his preparation. During one flight in a T-33, the aircraft suffered a serious mechanical failure at approximately 40,000 feet. Kye ultimately made a

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belly landing near Houston rather than ejecting. "I knew I could make the field," he said.

After retiring from the Air Force, Kye returned to Cornelius, the hometown of his wife, Betty Jean Pender Kye. The couple had married at First Baptist Church in Cornelius on February 20, 1962. They purchased their property on Lake Norman in 1980, sight unseen, and finally moved there in 1991 with their two children, who are also currently Lake Norman residents. Dr. Keith A. Kye, a dentist in Birkdale, and Karen A. Kye, a retired teacher who taught at Cornelius Elementary, remain an important part of his life.

Following his military career, Kye worked multiple jobs over the years to help pay for his children's education. His philosophy was simple: When his children received their diplomas, he wanted them to have the same opportunity he had—to leave school without owing anyone a penny. Kye worked for local Ford dealerships for 25 years, first at Huntersville Ford and later at Mooresville Ford. He also farmed, attended antique car shows and ran 5Ks with his son. In his later years, he took up skydiving, continuing to jump until 2024 at age 94.

But maybe his biggest role was as Betty's caregiver for 15 years while she battled two bouts of cancer. "I wasn't going to give up on her. She was so good to me, raising two babies in the Air Force," recalls Kye. "It was the toughest period of my life that I ever had." And on February 15, 2018, Betty took her final breath. "The Lord took her easy and allowed me to keep her [at home]. He was real good to me."

General Key's life offers a lesson that extends far beyond military service or aviation. Kye began working toward his goals at age 10 and never stopped striving to reach the next one. "Everything I did was exactly by my goals and objectives," he said. "The only thing I'd do better was to do it better." For Hoyal "Bob" Kye, that philosophy has carried him from a tobacco farm in North Carolina to the cockpit of fighter jets, the rank of brigadier general and, ultimately, back home to the community he loves. Through it all, he remains grateful. "The good Lord was great to me," Kye said. "He gave me brains." And he made sure to put them to work.







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Honoring OUR VETERANS

COMPILED BY CAROLINE CAMPBELL

There are many veterans in our *Cornelius Lakeside Living* community, and we are honored to share a few of their stories with you. Please join us this Veterans Day by thanking those in our community who selflessly served our country.





Eugene "Gene" McKinney

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran (deceased)

1961-1966

- Served in Okinawa, Japan, Vieques, Puerto Rico and Camp LeJeune, NC.
- He was a graduate of UNCW, retired from AT&T and was an active member of First Baptist Church of Cornelius.
- Gene was born in Bronx, NY, and made his home in Cornelius for 33 years with his wife, Dayna McKinney.
- He served as past commander of the American Legion Post 86, where he was instrumental in the fundraising and completion of the Cornelius Veterans Monument.



Robert “Bob” Weitzel

U.S. Army Veteran

Army Security Agency (ASA)

1966-1970

- Specialist 5th Class, High Speed Teletype Intercept Operator.
- Spent 1 year on training assignment and 3 years in Turkey and Japan.
- Received National Defense Medal, Good Conduct Medal and Top Secret Crypto Clearance.
- Retired from a 30-year career in information technology.
- Currently lives in Jetton Cove.

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Tim LaCroix

U.S. Air Force Veteran

1982-1988 (Active/Reserve)

- Served as Lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force.
- Assignments included 14th Flying Training Wing.
- Awards and certifications include Marksman, Training, Pilot Training & MAC Support Ribbons.
- Currently serves with the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary on Lake Norman and works at Alira Health.
- Resides in Bahia Bay neighborhood with wife, Karol.

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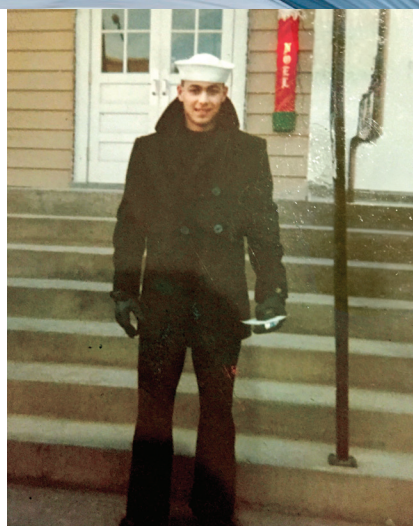


Tom Manley

U.S. Navy Veteran

1966-1972

- Graduated from Air Traffic Control School in 1967 and was assigned to the control tower at the Naval Air facility in El Centro, California—an intense aviation training airport, which was also winter training home to the Blue Angels and daily host to training flights by some Top Gun pilots from Miramar, California.
- Flew in several fighter aircraft and was later assigned to the control tower and GCA (ground-controlled approach) radar unit in Rota, Spain.
- Currently owns his own business, Mission Enterprises II, LLC, which provides renovation and new construction services.
- Lives in The Peninsula with his wife, Jennifer.



Dawn Sakai

U.S. Army Veteran

1991-1994

U.S. Air Force National Guard

1994-1997

- Served as Cardiac Specialist in the U.S. Army.
- Served in Aeromedical Evacuation in the U.S. Air Force National Guard.

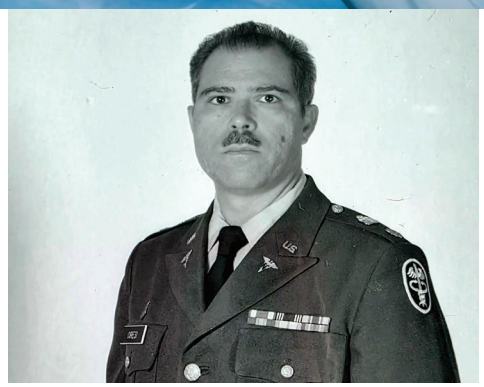


Steve (Silas) Robinette

U.S. Army Veteran

1968-1970

- 7th Infantry – 81mm Mortors and Red Eye Ground to Air Missile.



Salvatore Ciresi

U.S. Army Veteran

1972-1999

- Achieved the rank of Colonel and served as an Army nurse anesthetist, providing clinical care across multiple duty stations while exemplifying leadership and medical excellence under pressure.
- Awarded Meritorious Service Medal and the prestigious Legion of Merit, recognizing his exceptional service and high-level leadership.
- Post retirement, continued vital work as a nurse anesthetist closer to home at Womack Army Medical Center, Betsy Johnson Hospital and Novant Health Huntersville Medical Center before fully retiring from the medical field in 2002.
- Also served on medical missions to Honduras and Romania to provide care to underserved populations.
- Continues to serve by investing time heavily into mentoring and ministering to men. His faith-driven outreach spans his local church, the Charlotte Rescue Mission and the Red Truck Men ministry, where he helps guide the next generation toward purposeful lives.
- Currently resides in McKenzie Place with his wife of 53 years, Carol.



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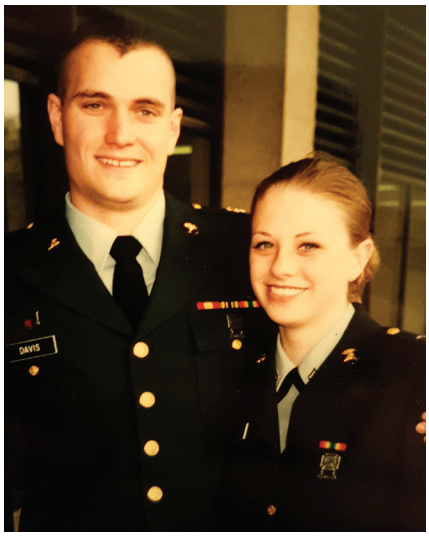
Rich Davis

U.S. Army, Army National Guard & Army Reserves

1993-present

- Private E-1 and achieved the rank of Sergeant First Class (E7), promotable before pursuing a commission. Currently a Chief Warrant Officer 5 (CW5).
- Assignments include 19th Special Forces Group (SFG), HQ, 2nd BN 19th SFG, 20th SFG, NATO Special Operations Headquarters, Mons Belgium, NATO Intelligence Fusion Centre RAF Molesworth UK (Special Operations Intelligence Branch), Special Operations Detachment – Europe, and Special Operations Command Europe (SOCEUR), Stuttgart Germany (Black Sea Desk Officer).
- Served as faculty at the John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (JFKSWCS) at Fort Bragg NC for the Special Forces Medical Sergeant Qualification Course, adjunct faculty for National Intelligence University, faculty at the NATO Special Operations University, Chèvres, Belgium, and Ridge Runner Irregular Warfare Program as the Sensitive Activities Director.
- Awards include Bronze Star w/ 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal w/ 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (3rd Award), National Defense Service Medal w/ bronze service star, Afghanistan Campaign Ribbon, Iraq campaign Medal Ribbon, Armed forces Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Reserve Medal, Army NCO professional Development Ribbon w/3 device, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon w/2 device, NATO Medal, Combat Infantry Badge, Airborne, Special Forces Tab.
- Currently lives in Crown Harbor with wife, Lisa.



Lisa and Rich Davis

Lisa Davis

U.S. Army Reserve Veteran

Served 8 years

- E5, Assistant Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the Cardiac Care Unit during Reserve drills.
- Assigned to 2290th US Army Hospital, Walter Reed Army Medical Center.
- Recognitions and certifications include Army Service Ribbon, MOS 91C (Licensed Practical Nurse), and attended ICU course, graduating as Distinguished Honor Graduate.
- Currently lives in Crown Harbor with husband, Rich.



Charles "Randy" Wally

U.S. Navy Veteran

1965-1969

- Served 7 tours to Vietnam aboard the USS Zelima, AF-49.
- Awarded National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with 3 Stars and Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device 1960.
- Currently lives on Knox Road in Cornelius.



Rob Cannon

U.S. Navy Veteran

1986-2011

- Proudly served in the U.S. Navy for 20 years.
- Served aboard the destroyer USS JOHN RODGERS (DD-983).
- Rob's training and tours included service in the Mediterranean, the western Pacific, multiple deployments to the Caribbean and a circumnavigation of South America.
- He also served at The Pentagon, in Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit 211 and during operations for Hurricane Katrina response.
- "I feel honored to have had this opportunity to serve."
- Currently lives in the Bethel Church Road community.

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Manny Garabato

U.S Army Veteran

1972-2002

- Began military career as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Marine Corps before inter-transferring to the U.S. Army, where he retired as a Colonel after a distinguished career of leadership and service to the nation.
- Assignments included South Korea, Japan, Bosnia, Iraq and two tours at the Pentagon.
- Commanded at both the battalion and brigade levels, served as Provost Marshal for U.S. Army Pacific and 8th Army and directed worldwide counter-drug programs for the U.S. Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard.
- Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, served as Chief of Law Enforcement, Antiterrorism and Force Protection at the Pentagon, helping implement security measures that influenced force protection and screening procedures used at military installations, transportation facilities and major NCAA and professional sporting events nationwide.
- His leadership in securing the Pentagon led to his appointment as the first Transportation Security Administration (TSA) Federal Security Director at Charlotte Douglas International Airport, where he helped establish TSA operations in North Carolina. Today, Colonel Garabato continues supporting U.S. and NATO military training efforts.
- Currently resides in Bailey's Glen with wife, Debbie, and enjoys coaching varsity volleyball and staying active in the community.

Debbie Garabato

U.S Marine Corps Veteran

1973-1978

- Served as a captain in the U.S. Marine Corps, exemplifying a lifetime of service and leadership, including as Base Assistant Adjutant, the Inspector General's Office and a leader in the USMC Vietnamese Refugee Camp program.
- Assignments took her to Camp Pendleton, Okinawa and Hawaii, where she developed and demonstrated exceptional leadership both at home and abroad.
- After active duty and continued service in the Marine Corps Reserve, Debbie devoted herself to caring for others as a Registered Nurse and later as a public school teacher.
- Remains active in her community through her work on the Bailey's Glen - Hough High School Partnership Board and volunteers for the Neighborhood Watch Program.
- A devoted wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Debbie's lifelong commitment to service, education and community continue to inspire those around her, making her a truly deserving veteran honoree.



Thomas B. Knox

U.S. Army Veteran

1964-1967

- Artillery Surveyor.
- Forward Observer.



Michael Kingsley

U.S. Air Force Veteran

1984-2016

- Retired as Major General in the United States Air Force after serving for 32 years.
- In his career, Michael was a helicopter pilot, and he was proud to serve in Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM in Iraq, multiple deployments to Bosnia and Herzegovina, multiple tours in Afghanistan and several deployments to Iraq again in 2004-2006.
- Currently owns his own business, Kingsley Consulting, LLC, which provides consulting for small businesses.
- Locally active in his church and supports Habitat for Humanity.
- Currently lives in The Peninsula.



Norm Jungmann

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

1963-1968

- Served as a Captain in the Marines.
- Served in Vieftnam from 1965-1966.
- Currently retired and living in Cornelius.

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Joe Cantello

U.S. Army Veteran

Armor/Cavalry Officer

1994-2001

- Served as a tank platoon leader, scout platoon leader, squadron operations officer, brigade logistics officer, brigade reconnaissance troop commander and tank company commander. His last job was serving as a tank company commander which consisted of 14 M1A1 main battle Abrams tanks and leading 70 soldiers.
- Currently resides in Lake Norman Island neighborhood.



Barry Lambert

U.S. Navy Veteran

1983-1987

U.S. Army Veteran

1987-1992

- Served as an Air Traffic Controller at Pensacola Naval Air Station.
- Served as a CH-47D pilot at Hunter Army Airfield in Savannah, Georgia.
- Barry was on duty in both South Korea and Honduras, and in combat during Desert Shield and Desert Storm.
- Currently lives in Captain's Point.



Dale Overcash

U.S. Army Veteran

1972-1975

- U.S. Army Special Security Group – Pentagon.





Richard H. Little

U.S. Army
(Vietnam Vet)

1968-1970

- Communications





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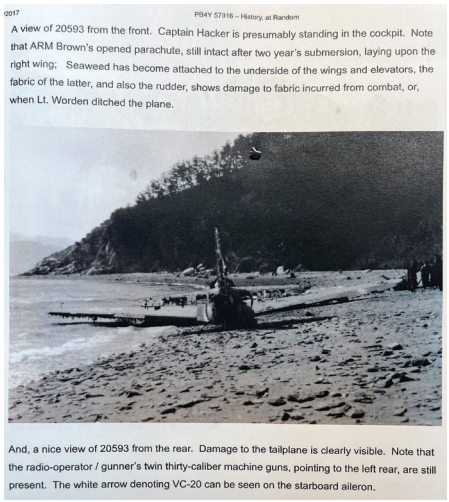

2017 PB4Y 57916 – History, at Random

A view of 20593 from the front. Captain Hacker is presumably standing in the cockpit. Note that ARM Brown's opened parachute, still intact after two year's submersion, laying upon the right wing; Seaweed has become attached to the underside of the wings and elevators, the fabric of the latter, and also the rudder, shows damage to fabric incurred from combat, or, when Lt. Worden ditched the plane.

And, a nice view of 20593 from the rear. Damage to the tailplane is clearly visible. Note that the radio-operator / gunner's twin thirty-caliber machine guns, pointing to the left rear, are still present. The white arrow denoting VC-20 can be seen on the starboard aileron.

Clifford A. Brown

U.S. Navy Air Force Veteran

1943-1945

- Airman First Class and gunner on the back of the hell driver who sat backwards behind the pilot, delivering bombs, torpedoes, dogfights and strafing enemy on the ground with his twin 30-caliber machine guns as he did in the battle of Iwo Jima.
- Shot down on a mission near Tokyo and taken prisoner at the POW interrogation center—known as Ofuna—an unmarked, unknown, unregistered camp run by the Japanese Navy to extract information from anyone who crash-landed in the sea.
- Brown survived the camp, receiving many medals, including the Purple Heart, Air Medal, and Distinguished Flying Cross, though none of which would make up for the atrocities he and his fellow comrades suffered while serving proudly for the United States of America.



Tom Brown

U.S. Army Veteran

1975-1978

- Served with the Army Security Agency.
- Tours included Korea in 1976 on the DMZ during Operation "Paul Bunyan," which is now a declassified operation.



Robert Westmoreland

U.S. Air Force Veteran

1966-1970

- Aircraft Instrument Repairman.



Mike Fox

U.S. Navy/Navy Reserve Veteran

1965-1971

- Communications Technician 2nd Class at National Security Agency.



Joseph P. Strumolo

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

2010-2020

- Retired Major in the U.S. Marine Corps after serving 10 years.
- Served in a multitude of roles from battalion logistics officer to deputy director of logistics for an infantry division.
- Joe held Company Command three times, to include twice within the special operations community.
- Two deployments include Afghanistan, as an advisor to the Afghan National Army, and Southeast Asia with the Marine Special Operations Command.
- Currently resides in The Peninsula with his wife and two young boys.

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Robert Lennon, Sr.

U.S. Army Veteran

1964-1970

- Served for six years in the Army, First Infantry.
- Fought as a combat infantry soldier during the Vietnam war in 1966, on the ground with his M16 machine gun.
- Currently lives in Robbins Park neighborhood.



Ron Sutek

U.S. Army Veteran

- Attended United States Military Academy at West Point in New York, and a year of flight school at th U.S. Army Aviation Center at Fort Rucker, Alabama where he was trained to fly UH-60 helicopters, also known as Black Hawks.
- Ron was stationed at both Fort Hood, Texas and Fort Bragg, North Carolina and was sent on tours to both Kuwait and Bosnia to fly on missions for up to six months at a time.
- Served in the U.S. Army for seven years.
- Currently resides in Pointe Regatta.

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Ken Osterhus

U.S. Army Veteran

- Served for three years, achieving the rank of Specialist 4th Class.
- Part of the Airborne and Military Police units, with assignments in Germany, Vietnam and New York City.
- Currently resides in Salisbury, NC, where he is a licensed general contractor.
- Owns and operates Osterhus Outdoors Fiberglass Pools with wife, Cyndi.



Robert Zarybnicky

U.S. Marine Corps Veteran

- Served for 4 years, retiring as a Corporal.
- Served in Desert Storm.
- Certifications and training include Security Force training and pistol and rifle marksman and expert.
- Has resided in Mooresville for last 23 years.
- Owner and operator of All Star Plumbing Inc in the LKN area for over 22 years.

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Lake Norman Region Veterans Events

November 7: Huntersville Veterans Day Parade & Ceremony

November 11: Town of Cornelius Veterans Day Program

November 11: Town of Davidson Veterans Day Ceremony

November 11: Town of Mooresville Veterans Day Parade & Celebration

November 19: Jamie Lissow in support of Brad Keselowski's Checkered Flag Foundation (A Hero's Homecoming at Cain Center for the Arts)

For event details and schedules, visit *cornelius.org* or *townofdavidson.org.*

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Standing Together for Those Who've Had Our Backs

BY CHRISTIE SHEIN, FOUNDER, ON MY 6



In military language, "on my six" means "I've got your back." Six o'clock is the spot directly behind you, the one you can't see. At On My 6, that's exactly what we want our community to be for the active-duty service members, veterans, first responders and their families who live among us.

How We Started

On My 6 was founded by Cornelius resident Christie Shein in honor of her late brother, Master Sgt. Scott Joy, who served with the U.S. Army's 82nd Airborne Division and Special Forces. Scott often said he just didn't know how to meet his community. Too many who serve feel the same way. They come home, take off the uniform or finish a shift, and find it hard to connect with the civilian neighbors around them. Christie started On My 6 to change that.

In partnership with the Town of Cornelius Parks and Recreation Department, we held our first gathering in January 2026, and we've met every month since.

Who We Serve and What We Do

On My 6 is a nonprofit dedicated to connection, understanding and allyship. We serve active military, veterans, first responders and their families, along with the neighbors who want to know them.





Our monthly gatherings are simple: pull up a chair, enjoy a complimentary hot breakfast and get to know the people who have served and still serve our town. Each meeting includes updates from local town leaders on community initiatives and ways to get involved, plus a guest speaker who shares their story. Most of all, it's a chance to listen: to hear what our veterans and first responders have lived through and to let them know their community is behind them.

Join Us in November

At our November meeting on Saturday, November 14, members of the American Legion Post 86 will demonstrate the traditional folding of the American flag and walk us through the meaning behind each of the 13 folds. It's a moving tradition, especially in the month we celebrate Veterans Day, and a wonderful morning to bring the whole family.

Get Involved

Our meetings are open to everyone:

Second Saturday of each month, 10–11am at Bailey Middle School Café, Bailey Road Recreation Center 11900 Bailey Road, Cornelius

You don't need to be a veteran or first responder to belong. You just need to show up. We're always looking for assistance:

- Volunteers to greet guests and help set up on meeting mornings
- Veterans, service members and first responders willing to share their stories as guest speakers
- Neighbors to spread the word and bring a friend

Learn More

Visit *www.OnMy6.com* or email OnMy6Mission@gmail.com. We'd love to save you a seat at the table.



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The Next MISSION: Building Wealth Through Real Estate After Military Service

BY NIKKI CALDEN, ALLEN TATE – BROKER/REALTOR©

Military service develops qualities that translate exceptionally well into real estate investing: discipline, patience, adaptability and the determination to achieve a long-term goal. Following military service, these same strengths can help veterans and their families build stability, generate income and create lasting wealth.

The journey does not have to begin with purchasing a traditional investment property. For many, it starts with buying a primary residence, maintaining it and systematically building equity over time. According to a US Census Bureau report released in January 2026, approximately 39.4% of owner-occupied homes nationwide were owned free and clear of a mortgage during the 2020–2024 reporting period.

In the Lake Norman area, entry costs vary significantly depending on the community. During the three months ending in August 2026, median sale prices reached approximately $735,000 in Davidson, $647,000 in Cornelius, $576,000 in Huntersville and $419,000 in Mooresville.

These variations emphasize why a successful real estate strategy begins with a clear objective. The best opportunity isn't necessarily in the area with the highest price tag or fastest appreciation rate—it is the property offering the optimal mix of purchase price, location, condition, rental potential and sustained demand.

Some homeowners take the next step by purchasing properties with income potential, such as homes with separate living quarters, duplexes or residences that can eventually transition into long-term rentals. Others keep their current home as an investment when relocating rather than selling immediately. Each path carries unique opportunities, responsibilities and risk factors.

Real estate offers multiple avenues for income generation:

- **Traditional Long-Term Rentals**: Provide steady monthly cash flow.
- **Short-Term or Mid-Term Rentals:** Offer added flexibility in high-demand locations.
- **Renovations, Land, & New Construction:** Present higher-yield growth potential for those with the capital, experience and professional support required to manage them.

Veterans are already driving significant impact as business owners. Data released by the Census Bureau in November 2025 indicated that veterans owned approximately 1.6 million US businesses in 2023, generating roughly $1 trillion in receipts. This entrepreneurial background, combined with military-honed leadership and problem-solving skills, provides a solid framework for managing real estate assets.

Before purchasing any property, looking beyond the initial purchase price is essential. Property taxes, insurance, maintenance, repairs, management fees, vacancy buffer and future capital improvements all impact total return. A property that looks profitable on paper can yield very different real-world results once all recurring costs are factored in.

Building long-term wealth through real estate rarely depends on a single transaction or immediate returns. It requires informed decisions, capital preservation and compounding equity over time.

For veterans stepping into their next chapter, real estate can become far more than just a place to live. Guided by a clear strategy and trusted advisors, it can establish financial security, open doors for future generations and serve as the foundation for the next mission.



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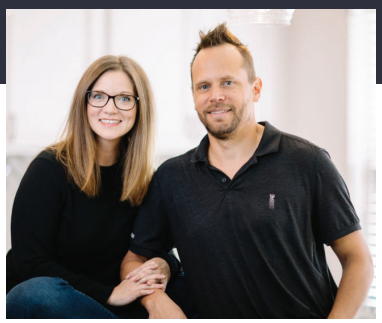

Accessible Bathroom Remodeling: Creating a Safe Space for Aging in Place

BY SARAH FIEL, OWNER, HOME THEORY

More homeowners are choosing to age in place, updating the home they love rather than moving. The goal isn't to make your home feel clinical or institutional. It's to create a space that's safe, easier to navigate and still beautifully you.

At Home Theory, we approach accessible remodeling the same way we approach every project—with thoughtful space planning, elevated finishes and details that support real life. The best accessibility features are often the ones you barely notice until you need them.

Zero-Threshold Showers

A shower curb can become a significant trip hazard as mobility changes. A zero-threshold shower, also commonly called a curbless shower, creates a seamless transition from the bathroom floor into the shower, making it easier to enter and exit whether you're walking or using a walker or wheelchair.

Achieving a true zero-threshold shower may require significant structural and subfloor modifications. In some homes, the floor system can be recessed to accommodate the required slope and drainage. On a concrete slab, achieving the necessary elevation may require concrete slab modification. While this can add considerable cost and complexity to a renovation, it's an important detail to plan for early in the design process.



Grab Bars That Look Like Design Details

Grab bars provide valuable stability in one of the home's most slip-prone spaces, but accessibility doesn't mean settling for institutional-looking hardware. Today's designer grab bars are available in finishes and styles that coordinate with bathroom fixtures. Some can even double as towel bars, allowing an important safety feature to become part of the overall design.

Proper installation is just as important as the grab bar itself. Plan for structural backing or blocking so grab bars can be securely fastened to the wall structure—skip the wall anchors.

A Vanity Designed for Independence

The bathroom vanity is an area where small design decisions can make a meaningful difference. Ergonomic cabinet hardware, such as larger pulls that are easy to grasp, can be more comfortable to use than small knobs or hardware that requires a tight grip or significant dexterity.

We consider the shape, size and placement of hardware so everyday tasks—opening a drawer, reaching for toiletries or accessing towels—require less effort.

Counter height can also be adjusted to how the bathroom will be used, including providing comfortable access from a seated position when appropriate.



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Mirrors Designed for More Than Standing

A mirror doesn't have to be designed solely around standing height. Tilt-adjustable mirrors provide visibility from multiple positions, making them particularly useful in an accessible bathroom.

Whether you're standing at the vanity, sitting on a stool or using a wheelchair, thoughtful mirror placement can make everyday routines easier while still creating a beautiful focal point in the room.





Lighting and Electrical Placement

Good lighting becomes increasingly important when navigating a bathroom safely. We layer ambient, task and accent lighting to minimize shadows and improve visibility throughout the space.

The placement of electrical controls deserves consideration, too. Appropriately positioned light switches, dimmers and outlets can make everyday tasks easier from a seated position and reduce unnecessary reaching.

Flooring That Balances Beauty and Safety

A beautiful bathroom shouldn't require choosing between style and safety. Polished surfaces and loose rugs can become slippery, particularly around water. We recommend textured or slip-resistant tile with appropriate traction while maintaining the sophisticated look and feel of a thoughtfully designed bathroom.

Accessibility That Looks Like Good Design

The most successful aging-in-place bathrooms don't announce their accessibility features. Instead, thoughtful details are integrated into the design from the beginning- creating a space that's comfortable and intuitive today while allowing it to adapt as needs change.

Whether you're planning a bathroom renovation now or preparing your home for the future, designing with accessibility in mind can be one of the most valuable investments you make in your home.





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The Question I Ask Homeowners *Before Choosing Custom Window Treatments*



BY DESPINA KOUMANTAROS, LEVEL UP TAILORED WINDOW COVERINGS

A window can frame a beautiful view in the morning and make a room uncomfortable by afternoon. Sunlight shifts, privacy changes after dark and a fabric that looks lovely on its own may feel quite different once it is in the room. Before choosing a custom window treatment, I ask homeowners one important question: "What do you need this room to do?"





I listen for what they want to change and for what they hope to keep. They may want privacy from the street without giving up daylight or relief from afternoon glare while keeping the view they love.

That conversation includes how the window treatment will look in the room. A textured Roman shade can add warmth, drapery can soften tall windows and plantation shutters can echo architectural trim. I recommend exploring fabric samples beside furnishings because a color or texture that appeals to you in a showroom can feel quite different in the light of your own home.

Privacy can change with the hour. A Roman shade made to open from both the top and the bottom can cover the lower part of a window while letting natural light in from above. In the evening, it can close completely. The choice of fabric and lining matters too. Some light-filtering materials show

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silhouettes when the lights are on inside, even if they seem private during the day.

When a homeowner asks for "blackout" shades, I ask how dark they need the room to be and when. Do they need to sleep past sunrise, keep a nursery dark for daytime naps or darken a media room for a midday movie? Room darkening fabric alone may leave light visible around the edges of a shade, but a complete light-blocking system can create a true blackout experience.

The way a window treatment operates deserves the same attention. A shade on a high window may rarely be adjusted if it is difficult to reach. Motorization can make it easy to use as the sunlight changes. For someone who travels, a compatible hub may allow app control while away or let the shades follow a schedule.

What a homeowner wants from a window is rarely just one thing. They may love the view and need relief from the sun or welcome daylight and want privacy after dark. The right custom window treatment makes room for both, while adding something beautiful to the home.







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Richard's Coffee Shop

BY JOANIE BAKER



THURSDAY MEETING

On Main Street in Mooresville, you will find a national military gem, Richard's Coffee Shop. Both a traditional and living museum, the one-of-kind Richard's Coffee Shop has been called the "most patriotic coffee shop in America" and is named in honor of Richard Warren, who was a combat helicopter pilot in Vietnam. Richard had opened a coffee shop in downtown Mooresville in the 90s called Pat's Gourmet Coffee Shop, named after his wife Pat. With a focus on "welcoming" and attracting local veterans, Pat's quickly become a gathering place for area veterans, and the shop began accumulating military artifacts from its patrons, like articles, photographs, military models, uniforms and weaponry. Richard Warren passed away in 2009 from complications from exposure to Agent Orange.

Before passing, Richard had started the formation of a nonprofit organization called Welcome Home Veterans (www.welcomehomeveteran.org) to welcome veterans home from service and to provide a "home away from home" where they could socialize, relax and heal. The organization's mission is "to ensure the memory of and support to those who serve" through its living military museum. Board members and patrons honored Richard by keeping his spirit, dream and coffee shop alive. With generous community donations and volunteer support, they renamed the coffee shop in his honor and were later able to move to a much larger space across the street at 165 North Main Street. Its grand opening was on July 4, 2012. According to the Welcome Home Veteran website, Richard's Coffee Shop "serves as both a place of respectful respite for veterans to gather and as a historical museum lovingly crafted to provide tribute to veterans of all conflicts and all branches of the military. Vets and their families encounter sincere camaraderie and fellowship, as well as assistance in finding resources that may offer aid and support."

100% of the funds generated by the coffee shop go back to the veteran community, and all coffee shop workers are volunteers. Outside, the large picture windows house military displays, and inside, you will find artifacts dating back to the Revolutionary War. Upon entering, you will be immersed in colorful displays of various military uniforms and large corps flags. The kitchen and coffee shop are in the back. All space is packed with artifacts, and along the perimeters, various cubby holes honor the different eras, wars and conflicts (the Revolutionary War, the World Wars, the Korean War, Vietnam, Desert Storm and 9-11, to name a few). There is also a POW Memorial, a Blue Star and Gold Star Family display, a library and a gift shop packed with gift items representing all the branches of military service. There is a pastor on site, as well. The "Book of Honor" is prominent when you walk in and serves as a record of the military regulars and patrons who have visited. Service men and women who visit are



RICHARD WARREN AND THE BOOK OF HONOR


GIFT SHOP



RICHARD'S COFFEE SHOP



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invited to sign the book and are given a key chain with colored beads that represents their branch of service. So far, over 17,000 service men and women have visited Richard's!

Every Thurs. from 8am-1pm, veterans from every branch as far back as WW2 from all over the Lake Norman and Charlotte area, and often even farther, gather for free coffee and camaraderie. Considered by most patrons as more therapeutic than counseling, they eat, drink coffee and socialize. The morning culminates in a meeting where they say the Pledge of Allegiance and share news and information. Many come dressed in their branch gear, and often, there are theme days. On Saturday mornings from 9am-12pm, veterans gather at the coffee shop for entertainment in an open mic set up.

Although Richard's Coffee Shop serves hundreds of area veterans each week as a social gathering place, the funds they raise also support dozens of area organizations that assist veterans. A few years ago, a generous anonymous donation paid off the mortgage, so now all funds generated go directly toward museum improvements (with media capabilities) and extending their services to directly assist our area veterans. Richard's Coffee Shop is open six days a week from 8am-1pm and does not charge admission. It is a fantastic place to take out of town guests, especially those with military ties, and a great place to stop for a cup of coffee and inspirational conversation. You will be awed by the array of artifacts, mesmerized by the stories told and humbled by the American heroes you will find inside.



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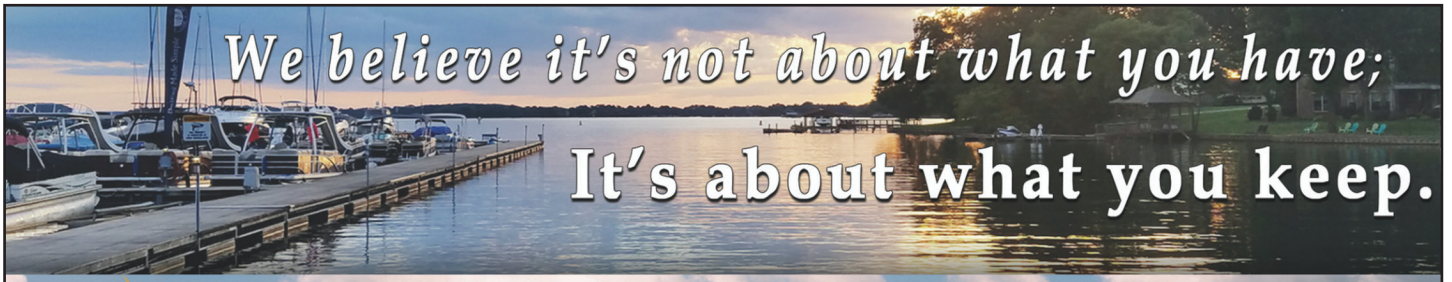

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AROUND TOWN
with Mayor Bilodeau

Hello Cornelius!

Social media, anyone?

Every now and again, I take a peek at Nextdoor and Facebook. When I do, I often swear I'll never look again! I'm always amused by the passion, candor and mis-information that sets off a lengthy debate on social media. So, here is my opportunity to offer my thoughts within the safety of a magazine's written word!

Did You Know?

The Bailey Road Extension project in Cornelius will provide a safer, quicker way to travel from the dangerous curve on Bailey Rd to US 21 adjacent to the new Atrium Hospital. The project will remove the curve and replace it with everyone's favorite ... a new roundabout. This $23 million road project is well underway and is expected to be completed by early 2028. The new road will also remove daily through traffic from the Oakhurst neighborhood. Bailey Rd will eventually be extended over I-77, providing another east-west option for travel across town. With plans for an Exit 27 now moving forward, folks who use Westmoreland Rd will have another east-west option via the new Bailey Rd fly over I-77.

Speaking of Westmoreland Rd...

While both the Bailey Rd flyover I-77 and an Exit 27 are at least 5-10 years away, the Northcross Dr Extension to Westmoreland Rd Project is scheduled for a 2027 completion. This $22 million project will provide an alternate connector between Sam Furr Rd (Hwy 73) and Westmoreland Rd without having to drive on W Catawba Ave. These new travel options, including the eventual widening of W Catawba Ave, come with a hefty price tag and the unfortunate need to remove trees.

Roads vs Trees

Preparing for road widening requires new utility easements. While I personally prefer underground utilities, burying the overhead lines is cost-prohibitive. The decision to keep overhead lines, however, also prevents lengthy change-of-plan delays. Cornelius currently has a tree canopy of approximately 46%. Our 2024 Park Master Plan calls for additional land preservation beyond the town's recent 72-acre purchase. We have and will continue to search for additional available land



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to purchase. We also plan to plant trees and add landscaping along the disturbed areas. The call for road widening and improved traffic flow is decades old. We are now feeling the construction pain that comes with our new roadways.

2nd Mondays with the Mayor

As you may know, I have been walking and talking with citizens every Monday morning in Jetton Park. I would like to acknowledge Joseph Miller (100% attendance) and Carol Houle, as well as all attendees, for their dedication and support. For the upcoming winter months, I plan to move indoors. Beginning November 9, from 5-7pm, a drop-in meeting called "2nd Monday with the Mayor" will be held at Lost Worlds Brewery, 1900 One Norman Blvd in Cornelius. This will be your opportunity to bring issues and ideas for discussion. I will also provide updates on road and other development projects underway in Cornelius. While this will not be an official town meeting, a couple of commissioners as well as town staff will also be dropping by. I will miss my early morning walks but hope to see y'all each month at Lost Worlds Brewery for some lively conversation!

As always, your feedback and questions are also appreciated at dbilodeau@cornelius.org.

Have a safe and happy Thanksgiving!

Mayor D

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November

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FARMERS MARKETS

DAVIDSON FARMERS' MARKET

Every Sat. in November

@Downtown Davidson near Town Hall
Come out and support local with the Davidson Farmers' Market. No pets allowed.
Time: 9am-12pm
www.davidsonfarmersmarket.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Every Sat. and Sun. from now-November 22

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www.carolina.renfestinfo.com

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November 4-5: Oldtimers: The Musical
November 6: Abacab: The Music of Genesis, Phil Collins & Peter Gabriel
November 7: Tom Cotter
November 10: Spyro Gyra
November 12: Simply the Best
November 15: Jeki Yoo
November 19: Jamie Lissow (supporting Checkered Flag Foundation)
November 20: Johnny Folsom 4
November 21: Masters of Soul
For showtimes and tickets, visit *cainarts.org.*

Sat., November 7

23RD ANNUAL STATESVILLE PUMPKIN FESTIVAL

@Historic Downtown Statesville
Pumpkin-themed activities, local food and craft vendors, a kids zone, classic car cruise-in, live entertainment and more awaits at this annual fall event.
Time: 10am-6pm
www.statesvillepumpkinfest.com

Wed., November 11

VETERANS DAY PROGRAM

@Cornelius Town Hall
The Town of Cornelius and American Legion Post 86 hold an annual Veterans Day Program at the Cornelius Veterans Monument at Rotary Plaza and the Cornelius Town Hall lawn each year. This program honors military veterans and those currently serving in our Armed Forces.
Time: 11am
Cost: Free
cornelius.org

Sat., November 14

ON MY 6 COMMUNITY GATHERING

@Baily Road Recreation Center
In partnership with Cornelius Parks & Recreation, you're invited to be part of our community that stands together in support of our active military, veterans and first responders. Join us the second Saturday of each month to be part of something meaningful. We're open to everyone in the community
Time: 10-11am
Cost: Free
cornelius.org/park/classes___programs/recreation/on_my_six.php

Sat., November 14

ADA JENKINS CENTER'S FOOD FIGHT COMPETITION

@Ada Jenkins Center, Davidson
This brunch-themed event will feature a competition between local restaurants, caterers and home chefs vying for the "Best Of" in their chosen category. Come sample the cuisine or choose to throw your best "brunch punch" and enter the food fight. Tickets now available for purchase.
Time: 10am-1pm
Cost: $25 adults; $10 children 12 and under
www.adajenkins.org/events/food-fight

Sat., November 14-Sun., November 15

2025 SHEEPDOG TRIALS & DOG FESTIVAL

@Historic Rural Hill
Come out to see the herding action, dog demos, vendors, food and tail-wagging fun for the whole family. Pups welcome!
Time: 10am
Cost: $10 and up
ruralhill.net

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Sun., November 22
KRUGER BROTHERS
@St. Alban's Episcopal Church
The Kruger Brothers' remarkable discipline, creativity and their ability to infuse classical music into folk music has resulted in a unique, nuanced sound that has made them a fixture within the world of acoustic music.
Time: 3pm
Cost: $15-20, youth & students are free
www.musicatstalbansdavidson.org

Sat., November 28
LIGHT UP CORNELIUS
@Downtown Cornelius
Each year, thousands of people join the community for the annual tree lighting in Downtown Cornelius. Attendees can enjoy community group performances, children's activities, a sledding hill, trackless train rides, a model train display, food and drink, s'mores and a visit from Santa and Mrs. Claus!
Time: 4-7pm
Cost: Free
cornelius.org

SCHOOL CALENDAR

CMS: 11/2, 11/3, 11/11 & 11/25-11/27, No School
Cannon: 11/5, Early Release; 11/6 & 11/23-11/27, No School
Community School of Davidson: 11/2, 11/3, 11/11 & 11/25-11/27, No School
Davidson Day: 11/23-11/27, No School
Lake Norman Charter: 11/11 & 11/25-11/27, No School; 11/24, eLearning
Langtree Charter: 11/11 & 11/23-27, No School; 11/20, Early Release
Pine Lake Prep: 11/11 & 11/23-27, No School
Woodlawn: 11/20, Early Release; 11/23-11/27, No School

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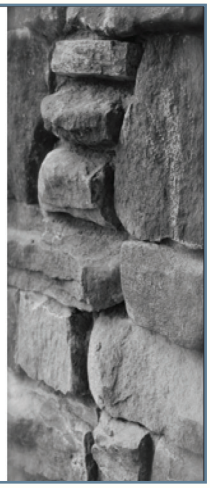

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