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envision



year of collaboration

VANCE





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Based in Henderson, Triangle North Healthcare Foundation provides grants to nonprofit organizations, governmental agencies, and schools in Vance, Warren, Granville, and Franklin counties. The Foundation's grant funding mission has been made possible by the endowment that was established after Maria Parham Health merged with the for-profit Duke-Lifepoint in 2011.



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A Look Inside

ENVISION VANCE

CONTENTS

P. 4-7	FROM THE CHAMBER	P. 41-42	ENTREPRENEURSHIP & VGCC
P. 8-9	Q&A WITH CHAMBER PRESIDENT	P. 43-44	CITIZEN OF THE YEAR
P. 10-12	COLLABORATION	P. 45	GREAT OUTDOORS
P. 14-33	MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY	P. 48-49	HISTORY COMES ALIVE
P. 34-35	PETCO MAKES MARK		
P. 36-40	MEMBERSHIP (ALPHABETIC)		



ON THE COVER

This year's Envision Vance cover photo features the Leadership-Vance Class of 2022 completing its chosen class project. The graduates elected to help spread several loads of mulch on the playground at the Boys and Girls Club in Henderson. Each year, the Leadership-Vance participants choose a project that will beautify, enhance and/or make a difference to the community.

2022 LEADERSHIP-VANCE CLASS GRADUATES

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ENVISION VANCE
2023 EDITION
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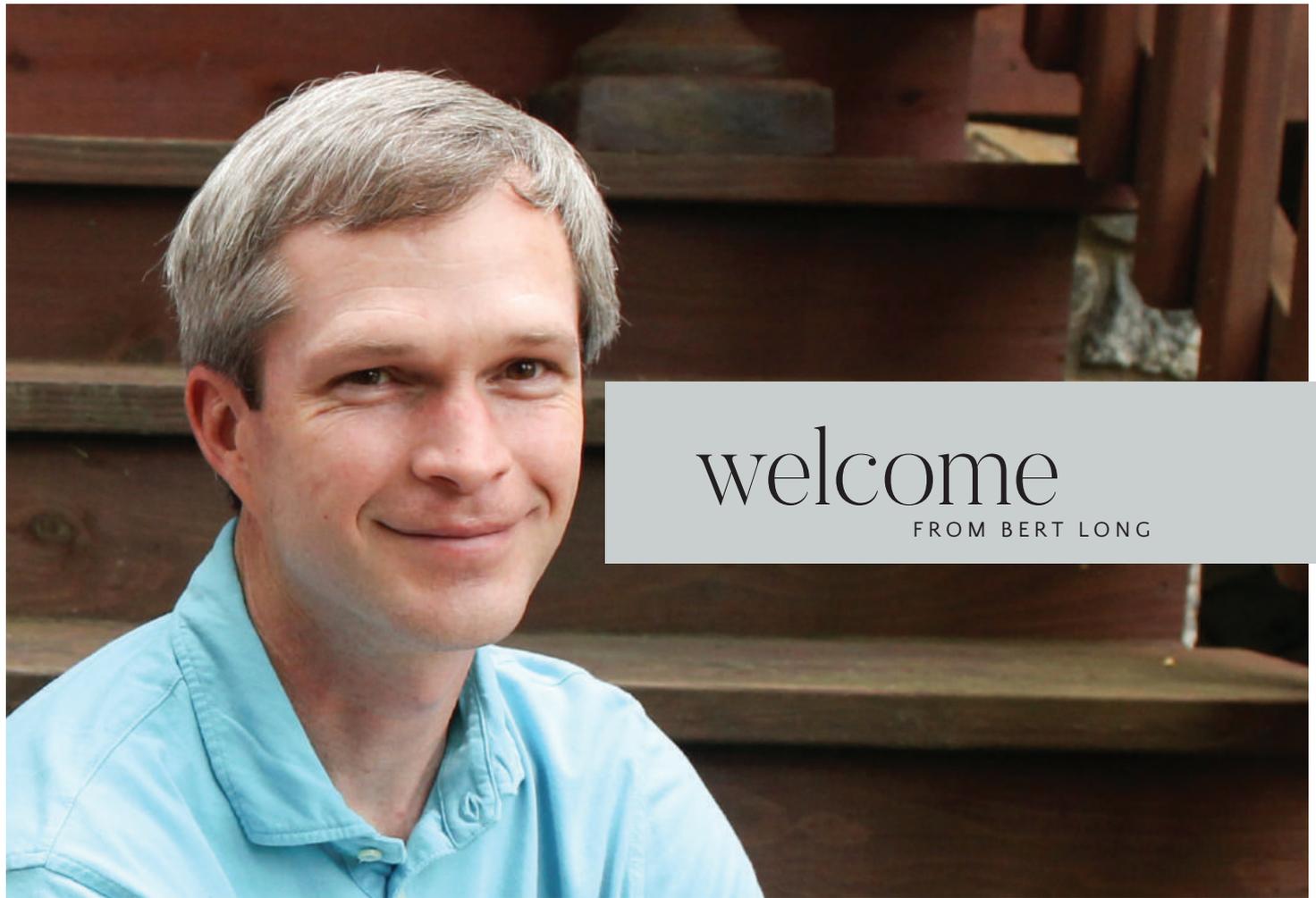
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welcome

FROM BERT LONG

Welcome to the 2023 edition of Envision Vance. This is an annual publication produced by a partnership between the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce and the Henderson Daily Dispatch newspaper.

It is made possible by local business, industry, governmental and nonprofit members of the Chamber who purchased the advertisements contained throughout this issue. Please make a point to support these businesses as they strive to make our community a great place to live.

I am honored to serve as the 2023 Chairman of the Board of Directors for the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce. This summer will represent the 85th year that this organization has been the pathway to business for this community. The Henderson-Vance County Chamber continues to be a leading organization which advocates for business, economic development, small business development and growth and leadership training. Our theme for 2023 is “Year of Collaboration.”

We want to collaborate with our businesses, organizations and community to create partnerships which will enhance our community. We want these entities to share their ideas and suggestions with the chamber as we work together to provide the best support to them.

The Henderson-Vance County Chamber offers valuable access to resources and serves as a marketing tool for our businesses. Our Chamber is proud to be able to offer quality programs and events that bring our membership together for their benefit as well as for the community. If you are a business owner and you are not a member of the Chamber, we invite you to consider becoming a member. The Chamber provides exposure for your businesses through ribbon cuttings, business after hours, member listings on the Chamber’s directory as well as inclusion in Chamber publications, social media highlight posts, sponsorship opportunities, educational programs and leadership training. A membership can assist you in increasing your customer base and provide opportunities for networking with other businesses.

We hope that you will enjoy reviewing just a small represen-

Working together for a common goal is a stalwart of strong communities. As a convener for business interests, our hope is that we can be a part of propelling our community forward by fostering communication, building bonds, and being a source of information.

tation of some of our Henderson- Vance County Chamber members whose stories are told in these pages. If you happen to be looking through this publication for the first time and are not familiar with our Chamber, we hope that you will reach out or stop by and see our extraordinary staff to see how we might partner together. We are looking forward to our year of collaboration.

Working together for a common goal is a stalwart of strong communities. As a convener for business interests, our hope is that we can be a part of propelling our community forward by fostering communication, building bonds, and being a source of information.

As such, we encourage you to invest in our community and in our Chamber through membership in our organization. We also encourage you to get

involved to help us grow our community spirit and promote a stronger community pride in our city and county, throughout our downtown, our neighborhoods, and in our outlying rural communities. We believe that a community that is engaged and working together can be a powerful force.

Come grow with us and make a significant impact in our community.

BERT LONG, 2023 HENDERSON-VANCE
COUNTY CHAMBER
OF COMMERCE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
CHAIRMAN

Bert Long



Q&A *w.* Sandra Wilkerson

PRESIDENT, HENDERSON-VANCE COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BY KELLEN HOLTZMAN

Sandra Wilkerson was named the new president of the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce in November 2022.

No stranger to the organization, Wilkerson had served as director of programs for the Chamber for more than four years before becoming president and in addition to spending 32 years in various positions with the City of Henderson.

Wilkerson's long record of service has not gone unnoticed. She received the Order of the Long Leaf Pine in 2011. The prestigious award is bestowed by the governor of North Carolina to persons for exemplary service to the state and its communities that is above and beyond the call of duty, making a significant impact on and strengthening North Carolina.



“There is truly opportunity in Henderson...there is opportunity for growth, and an opportunity to join a community of engaged citizens.”

- SANDRA WILKERSON
President, Henderson-Vance Chamber

Eager to learn more about Wilkerson and her vision for Henderson and Vance County? Here's The Dispatch's question-and-answer session with the new Chamber president:

Q: HOW DOES COLLABORATION BENEFIT LOCAL BUSINESSES?

A: The Vision of the Chamber for 2023 is “The Year of Collaboration” and I hope this vision continues for years to come. Whether it’s collaboration with business leaders, board members, staff, ambassadors, nonprofits etc., it can only work toward improvement. Most of us want the same thing for Henderson and Vance County, so making positive impacts in community development, revitalization, workforce, and education is a joint effort.

Q: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE IMPORTANCE OF CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE, PARTICULARLY IN SMALL CITIES?

A: The Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce is the pathway to business. The Board of Directors and staff are constantly advocating for Henderson to be a better place to live, work and play. Small businesses make up the majority of our 345 members. We support our small businesses and promote them by offering networking opportunities, educational support and resources; however, it is much more than this. By being a Chamber member, small businesses show their partnership and investment to our local community.

Q: WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT WORKING IN DOWNTOWN HENDERSON?

A: I think Downtown Henderson is beautiful. I am a lifelong resident and remember shopping with my parents and grandparents downtown as a child. I long to do that again and now that we are seeing progress, I want to be a part of it.

Q: WHY ARE YOU PASSIONATE ABOUT SERVING THIS AREA?

A: My passion for serving Henderson and Vance County started a long time ago. By working with the City of Henderson for 32 years, I gained a respect for public service and the longtime employees who have a heart for improvement. I like being a part of that “heart” that beats with passion. When it comes down to it, it is all about people. When I was given the opportunity to serve as Chamber president, the passion for people and local business was reignited. I think one of my strengths is listening and that is what I want to continue to do. I don’t have all the answers, but by working together and collaboration, we will all have the answers we are looking for.

Q: WHEN YOU’RE NOT WORKING, WHAT ARE YOU MOST LIKELY TO BE FOUND DOING?

A: When I’m not working, I enjoy reading, spending time with family, especially my 2-year-old grandson, sitting on a beach, and decorating.

Q: WHAT IS HENDERSON’S BEST-KEPT SECRET?

A: There is truly opportunity in Henderson. What does opportunity mean to me? There is opportunity for growth, the opportunity for big business to open and have availability for all the water they need, an opportunity for retirees to relocate near beautiful Kerr Lake, an opportunity for recreational businesses to open and be supported by our young adults, an opportunity to gain additional certifications and degrees from our local college system, an opportunity to find employment, and an opportunity to join a community of engaged citizens. I hope this is no longer a secret.



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RESOURCES MAKE
US WHO WE WANT
TO BE, AND THAT
IS A POWERFUL
RESOURCE TO OUR
BUSINESS LEADERS
AND CITIZENS.”

- SANDRA WILKERSON
President, Henderson-Vance Chamber

COLLABORATION IS KEY

Teamwork essential to local success

BY KELLEN HOLTZMAN

Sandra Wilkerson, Tracy Madigan, McKinley Perkinson, Pam Hester, and Kyle Burwell gathered on the front steps of the Henry A. Dennis County Office Building to promote collaboration between the various disciplines they represent; the chamber of commerce, downtown development, countywide economic development, tourism, and higher education, respectively.



PHOTO COURTESY OF ABBY WILKERSON
 (FROM LEFT) SANDRA WILKERSON, TRACY MADIGAN, MCKINLEY PERKINSON, PAM HESTER, AND KYLE BURWELL
 OFFERED THEIR PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION IN HENDERSON AND VANCE COUNTY.

The meeting took place on a morning in March, which coincidentally and appropriately happened to be national Women’s History Month.

Coordination between Wilkerson, Madigan, Perkinson, Hester, and Burwell represents local collaboration, an idea Wilkerson is emphasizing and encouraging in 2023 through her role as Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce president. Madigan serves as the city’s Downtown Development Commission coordinator, Perkinson Vance County’s Economic Development Commission director, Hester the Vance County Tourism executive director, and Burwell Vance-Granville Community College’s dean of business and industry solutions. That they’re all women? Well, that’s the icing on the cake.

H - V CHAMBER

To be a successful business advocate, Wilkerson said, collaboration is key.

“Not only do we need collaboration with our members, but with other divisions that are working toward the same goals,” the new Chamber president continued. “Economic development, downtown development, tourism, and the Small Business Center at Vance-Granville Community College are all components of a strong effort to progress and enhance the community. Engagement and sharing resources make us who we want to be, and that is a powerful resource to our business leaders and citizens.”

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

COMMISSION

Wilkerson started her new role as Chamber president at the turn of the new year while communication, coordination and transparency — each an important element of

collaboration, Perkinson believes — have been tenets of the EDC director’s first year and a half on the job.

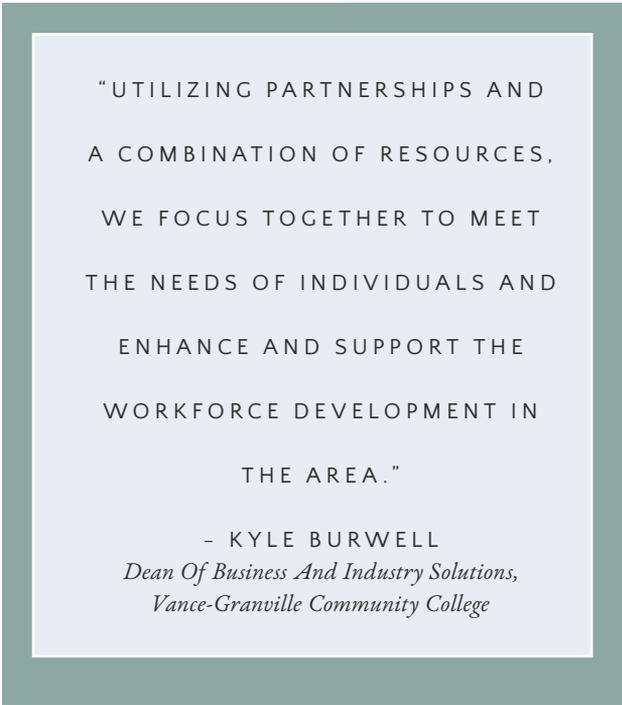
“The team approach to economic development continues to strengthen for Vance County,” Perkinson said. “I am very excited about the collaboration and relationships that continue to grow among the community leaders and business professionals in Henderson and Vance County. No one person can manage a truly successful economic development program, and I would not be able to advance

our local economy forward if not for my relationships and collaborative approach towards improving our economic vitality. I am truly thankful to every single partnership I have.”

Part of Perkinson’s responsibility is helping attract businesses to the area, the outcome of which is determined by a multitude of factors including workforce development and an overall healthy and desirable surrounding community.

VANCE - GRANVILLE

Partnering with the Chamber, Economic Development, Downtown Development, and Tourism allows VGCC a wide variety of resources, Burwell noted.



“Utilizing partnerships and a combination of resources,” Burwell said, “we focus together to meet the needs of individuals and enhance and support the workforce development in the area, from large industries to small businesses. One way this is accomplished is by offering the services of the Small Business Center, directed by Carolyn Perry.”

Housed under the area of Business and Industry Solutions at VGCC are the Small Business Center, the Customized Training Program, Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Center, student Entrepreneurship Club and oversight over short- term training/occupational extension courses.

continued on next page

The Small Business Center at VGCC is one of 58 centers that make up the Small Business Center Network of North Carolina with the primary role being to ensure that North Carolina residents in all 100 counties are located within 30 miles of small business resources.

“The Small Business Center at Vance-Granville Community College services Vance, Granville, Franklin, and Warren counties with information in the form of advice, direction and training,” Burwell said. “The Small Business Center of Vance-Granville utilizes local partnerships with agencies such as our [aforementioned] partners to provide program services in accordance with this mission.”

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

Small businesses have always been the heart of downtown Henderson and the Central Business District that Madigan pilots. The Downtown Development Commission fosters and promotes projects that will improve the quality of downtown, and collects and interprets information concerning business and investment in the sector. That includes identifying projects involving public spaces such as pedestrian ways, parking lots, parks and open spaces, streets and traffic patterns, as well as facade improvements.

Across the U.S., healthy downtowns are often one of the key factors in building robust communities, a reality not lost on Henderson’s local leaders.

TOURISM

As an example of collaboration, Perkinson cited the work local stakeholders have put in to push for Henderson to gain recognition from the state as a Certified Retirement Community. Visit NC managed the program with assistance from the State Department of Commerce, highlighting areas that provide the amenities, services and opportunities retirees need to enjoy active and productive lives.

Kerr Lake is one of Henderson’s greatest means of marketing the area, and that’s Hester’s domain. But there’s more than the lake; namely McGregor Hall, Fox Pond Park, Raleigh Road Outdoor Theater, and the Henderson Country Club and Kerr Lake Country Club golf courses.

Funded through occupancy tax rather than local taxpayer dollars, Vance County tourism pumps money (exceeding \$2 million in 2021) into the local economy, another example of how the whole is greater than the sum of its parts when it comes to the overall health and success of Henderson and Vance County.

“We have all heard that ‘It takes a village to raise a child,’” Hester said. “It also takes a collaborative effort, of diversified partnerships, to make a thriving community. Vance County and Henderson need large businesses, small businesses, economic stimulants, and economic drivers to transform from a cocoon that happened when major business shut down years ago to the wonderful butterfly of a community we all know and love.”

Small businesses have always been the heart of downtown Henderson

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PETCO

enters Vance County's animal ecosystem

BY TYLER DAVIS

The clownfish provides sea anemones nutrients — the latter provides protection and shelter. That's called mutualism, a form of symbiotic relationship wherein both parties give something and get something.

You can see a form of symbiosis in Vance County's own animal kingdom, a network of animal-centered businesses and services.

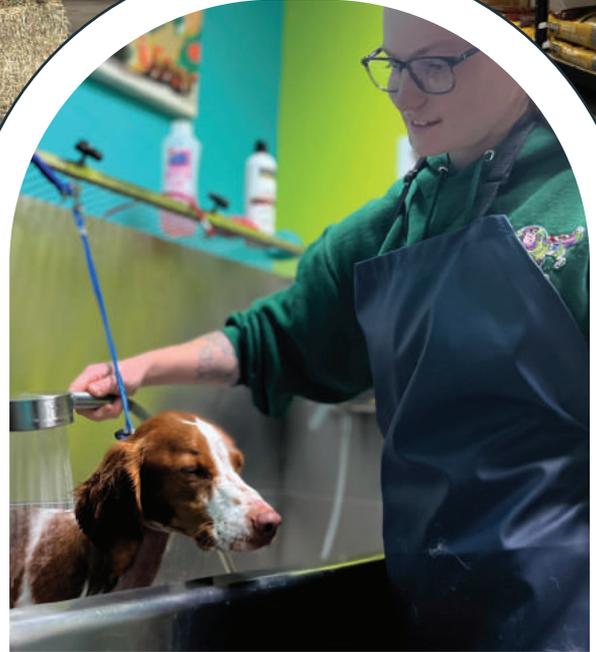
The newest species in the ecosystem, Petco, is located at 160 U.S. Bypass 158 and opened in early March of this year to much fanfare.

Henderson PetCo General Manager Shelly Baker's latest update: "Things are going great," she said. "We are enjoying the community and all the pets."

Petco hosted a Family Fest and adoption event on its opening weekend, leading to at least one adoption of a cat. There was another adoption event on March 25. The store offers vaccination clinics and dog training, alongside its usual offerings of pet and farm supplies.

Upon its arrival, Petco set out to become an integral community partner.

"We are working with [Vance County Animal Services] and [the Ruin Creek Animal Protection Society] with adoptions of cats and dogs at the shelter and rescue," said Baker.



MADDY MARSHALL GIVES MALLEY THE BIRD DOG A BATH AT HENDERSON'S NEXT LEVEL KENNELS. MALLEY BELONGS TO HEAD TRAINER SAM CHOFFEL.

"Petco allows us to house two cats at their facility at all times," Vance County Animal Services said. "This gives our shelter cats more visibility to the public. Petco also provides grants to our shelter that helps to cover the cost of our spay/neuter program."

The county-run animal shelter provides rabies shots for dogs and cats, investigates animal cruelty complaints, picks up dogs and cats that are stray or unwanted and sets live traps to pick up dogs and cats.

NEXT LEVEL KENNELS

Revisiting the ecosystem analogy, the shelter partners with other organizations and businesses around the county, like Next Level Kennels, which offers a vast amount of kennel space to regional rescue facilities or clinics in need of temporary aid, in addition to operating a K-9 Training and Special Operations Group.

"We're here to help the community," Next Level Kennels owner Scott Tarpley told The Dispatch in December.

PETCO REPRESENTATIVES PRESENTED CAM, THE DOG OF LATE HENDERSON FIRE CHIEF STEVE CORDELL, AND THE FIRE DEPARTMENT A GIFT WHEN THE NEW STORE OPENED IN HENDERSON.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY | KELLEN HOLTZMAN

“It’s a business, but we’re helping the community as well and we’re getting pretty deeply involved.”

RUIN CREEK ANIMAL PROTECTION SOCIETY

The Ruin Creek Animal Protection Society, a nonprofit founded in 2011, consists of a “small group of volunteers... dedicated to helping the homeless animals at the Vance County Animal Shelter connect to rescue groups that can help them find the loving homes they deserve,” per the organization. As an aside, Ruin Creek Animal Protection Society gave former Henderson Fire Chief Danny Wilkerson Rebel’s Firehouse. An anonymous party, who bought the firehouse at a fundraising event for over \$1,000, requested that it be presented to Danny. Rebel’s Firehouse was built as a memorial to Rebel the Fire Dog, a loving Dalmatian that served as the mascot for the Henderson Fire Department for many years. Danny recalled the many times Rebel would accompany the firefighters on calls throughout Henderson. Rebel sadly passed away on April 21, 1984. He is buried outside the Station 2 fire Department on Garnett Street. Back to the present, the animal protection society pulls animals from the

shelter, which “ensures safety to animals that may not be adopted out due to behavioral issues [or] physical disabilities or other problems,” according to the shelter.

DABNEY DRIVE, MARS AND H-V DOG PARKS

Dabney Drive Animal Hospital is a veterinary clinic. Named after Henderson’s main thoroughfare, it is located at 1 South Cooper Drive, just off Dabney.

Another invaluable partner is the Mars PetCare plant, which made a splash last year by going deep in the N.C. Chamber’s annual “Coolest Thing Made in N.C.” online competition, for its production of NUTRO Dog Food. The South Henderson plant plays an active role in the community, including providing dog and cat food for the animal shelter.

The Henderson-Vance Recreation and Parks Department plays a role too, showcasing its animal friendliness through spaces like Pawesome Park near Fox Pond and Scentral Bark, a dog park adjacent to the E.M. Rollins Elementary campus.

From Petco to Pawesome, Vance County’s pet-centric organizations are dedicated to the furriest among us.



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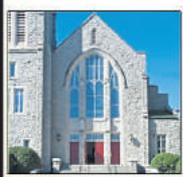
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CROSS-REFERENCE INDEX

MEMBERS

1949 Nut Company	32	Bowers & Burrows.....	28	Community Workforce	
3HC Home Health & Hospice Care	25	Boys & Girls Clubs of North		Solutions, Inc.....	18
A Fresh Potti by Foster LLC.....	30	Central NC - Vance Unit.....	18	Consolidated Electrical	
A L F Properties, Inc.....	30	Branche and Associates, LLC.....	30	Distributors, Inc.	23
A&S Pest Control, Inc.	29	Brassfield Commercial Real Estate	30	Consolidated Marketing, Inc.	26
A.B. Hair Carpets, Inc.....	17	Breedlove Electric, Inc.....	23	Cook Shack Catering Company.....	17
A.R. Perry Glass/		Brewer Cycles, Inc.....	30	Cordell's Lawn Care, Inc.....	27
Henderson Oxygen	15	Buchanan's Store	32	Country Snacks Manufacturing	27
AAA Gas & Appliance.....	30	Builder Tony Hirst, LLC.....	15	Creative Textiles	27
Abria's Chase Foundation	18	Builder's Discount Center		Crossroads Christian School.....	23
ACTS	18	of Henderson	17	Curriu Dental Lab, Inc.	21
Advance Academy	21	Bullock's Engraving	24	D'Campbell Floral D'zign Studio.....	24
Advance Auto Parts	32	Burgess Farms.....	15	Dabney Drive Animal Hospital.....	33
Adventure Island.....	30	C&P Body Shop	16	Dabney Elementary School	21
Ahner Security, Inc.....	15	Care, Jonathan S, Attorney, PA	15	Daily Dispatch, The	28
Alight & Feggins & Feggins Friendly Home of		Carolina Carpet.....	16	Danny W. Wright	26
Memorials.....	24	Carolina Notary &		Darensburg Broadcast	28
American Legion Post 60.....	18	Signing Services, LLC	28	Dataforge	20
AmeriStaff, Inc.....	23	Carolina Payroll Partners, LLC	29	Daurity Family Dentistry.....	21
Ardagh Group Packaging		Carolina Secure Storage	32	Dave Elman Hypnosis Institute.....	26
- North America.....	27	Carolina Sunrock LLC	20	Davis-Royster Funeral Service, Inc.....	24
AutoBrite Car Washes, Inc.....	17	Carolina United for Change	18	DeBrand Designs	15
AutoBrite Express.....	16	Carter Bank & Trust	16	Document Systems, Inc.	28
Aycock Elementary School	21	Carver Elementary School.....	21	Dominion Energy.....	33
Badcock Home Furniture & More	24	Central Baptist Church	17	Drake Dentistry.....	21
Ballet Arts, Inc.	21	Centre for Homeownership		Duke Energy	33
Barnett Properties, Inc.	17	& Economic Development.....	18	E.M. Rollins Elementary School	22
Beckford Medical Center	29	Century 21 - Country Knolls Realty	30	E.O. Young, Jr. Elementary School.....	22
Before The 1st Frame.....	30	Champion Heart and		EarlyFalsom Properties, Inc.....	31
Believer In You, LLC	25	Vascular Center.....	29	Eastern Minerals, Inc.....	27
Belk, Inc.....	21	Charles Boyd Chevrolet Cadillac		Eckerd Connects (Girls Residential Academy at Kerr	
Benchmark Community Bank.....	16	Buick GMC	16	Lake).....	18
Bojangles/Tri-Arc		Cheatham Transport	32	Edmonds Tennis and	
Food Systems, Inc	31	Chick-fil-A.....	31	Education Foundation.....	18
		Chosen Generation Day Care.....	17	Edward Jones -	
		City Auto & Truck Center	16	Christopher Manning.....	26
		City of Henderson.....	16	Edward Jones - Jeff Perry	26
		Clarke Elementary School	21	Edward Jones -	
		Classic Toyota of Henderson	16	Tony Adams and Alexandra Adams	26
		Clearview Church	17	Embroidery Shortcakes	23
		Cloninger Law Offices, PLLC	15	Executive Personnel Group	23
		Coastal Credit Union.....	16	Express Employment Professionals.....	23
		Coca-Cola Company.....	33	Families Living Violence Free.....	18
		Coffeys Bail Bonds	16	Family Eye Center, OD PA.....	29
		Community Partners of Hope	18		

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First Baptist Church.....	17	Henderson Collegiate School.....	22	Kingdom Work Ministries International Community Church Campus #2.....	17
First Citizens Bank & Trust Co.....	16	Henderson Country Club.....	20	Kittrell Job Corps Center.....	22
First National Bank.....	16	Henderson Family YMCA.....	18	Kiwanis Club of Henderson.....	18
First United Methodist Church.....	17	Henderson Fruit & Produce Company.....	33	Kontree Bowee LLC.....	15
Flex Desk 360, Inc.....	17	Henderson Institute Museum and H.I. Graduates & Former Students Association, Inc.....	18	L H Dickens & Sons Inc.....	30
FlyHNZ, LLC.....	32	Henderson Junior Woman's Club.....	18	L.B. Yancey Elementary School.....	22
Fogg's Exxon Service Station.....	16	Henderson Vance Crime Stoppers.....	18	Lakes Media Network - Radio.....	15
For Your Occasion Event Rentals.....	30	Henderson Wellness Center, PA.....	29	Lane and Associates Family Dentistry.....	21
Four Seasons		Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce.....	17	Legacy Human Services, Inc.....	25
Seamless Gutters, Inc.....	32	Henderson-Vance County Downtown Development Commission.....	18	Lendmark Financial.....	24
Franklin -Granville -Vance		Hight Warehouse NC, Inc.....	33	Life Line Outreach, Inc.....	26
Smart Start, Inc.....	17	Hillside Farms NC, LLC.....	33	Long Lens Photography, LLC.....	29
Franklin Brothers Nursery & Greenhouses, Inc.....	24	Holden Moss Knott Clark & Copley, P.A.....	15	Lowe's Home Improvement.....	25
Franklin Co Arts Council - Quilt Trails of the Tar/ Roanoke River.....	18	Holland Industrial.....	33	LRJ Coaching & Business Solutions LLC.....	27
Franklin-Vance-Warren		Hollander Sleep Products.....	27	M.R. Williams, Inc.....	33
Opportunity, Inc.....	25	Hometown Sheds LLC.....	32	Magnolia Management, LLC.....	31
Frazco, Inc.....	30	Hoyle CPA, PLLC.....	15	Mako Medical Laboratories.....	28
Fred's Towing & Transport, Inc.....	32	Hoyle's Tire and Axle, LLC.....	28	MakoRx.....	29
Garden Gate Villas.....	32	HUBZone Technology Initiative (HTI).....	18	Maria Parham Health.....	26
Garden Walk Villas.....	15	Huff Consulting, LLC.....	23	Markson Scientific, LLC dba	
Gateway CDC.....	18	Humana Health Insurance.....	26	Markson LabSales.....	27
Gentiva.....	26	Imports City of Henderson.....	16		
George's.....	31	J.M. White Funeral Service.....	24		
Geter Barber College, LLC.....	16	Jack H. Hughes., Attorney.....	15		
GFL Environmental.....	33	Jerry's Artarama NC, Inc.....	15		
Girl Scouts - North Carolina		Jersey Mike's.....	31		
Coastal Pines.....	18	Joel T. Cheatham Insurance Agency.....	26		
Golden Skillet.....	31	K & B Small Engine Repair & Service, LLC.....	16		
Granville-Vance Public Health.....	25	KARTS.....	33		
Green Rural Redevelopment Organization (GRRO).....	18	Kennametal, Inc.....	27		
Greens Campground		Kerr Area Rural Medical Alliance, PLLC.....	25		
Hideaway, LLC.....	33	Kerr Lake Country Club.....	20		
Greystone Concrete Products, Inc.....	20	Kerr Lake Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.....	28		
Guardian ad Litem.....	25	Kerr-Tar Regional Council of Governments.....	25		
Gupton Services, Inc.....	25	Kerr-Vance Academy.....	23		
H & D Industrial Maintenance LLC.....	20	Kevin Wade - NC Farm Bureau.....	26		
H & R Block.....	32	Kids World, Inc.....	17		
H.G. Reynolds Company, Inc.....	20				
Hampton Inn - Henderson.....	26				




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Mast Drug Company	29	PNC Bank	16	Southern Charm Event Center.....	33
Matthews Creek Productions	21	Prim Development and Rentals	31	Southern Classic Car of Henderson, LLC.....	16
Mazatlan Mexican Restaurant	31	Private Wealth Management		Southern Laundry and Dry Cleaning.....	27
McDonald's/Endrusick Enterprises.....	31	of NC, LLC.....	26	Spectrum Medical Solutions	28
McGregor Hall		Quality Equipment, LLC	24	Stainback, Satterwhite & Zollicoffer, PLLC.....	16
Performing Arts Center	15	Quick Print of Henderson, Inc.....	30	State Employees Credit Union.....	16
Medical Arts Pharmacy	29	Rebuild Communities - Cultural Center		State Farm Insurance -	
Medical Careers Readiness	22	Rebuilding Hope Inc.	18	Margier White	26
MGM Products, Inc.....	27	Red Carpet Entertainment, LLC - DBA RCE		STEM Early High School	22
Michael's Florist, LLC	24	Theaters - Henderson	28	Sterling Park Apartments	15
Middleburg Steak & Seafood	31	Renn Farms, LLC.....	15	Strickland Farms Catering	17
Mike Brummitt Heating and Cooling, LLC.....	25	Ribeyes Steak House	31	Sugar N Spice Preschool	17
Narrow Way Christian Fellowship, Inc.		Rick Edwards Electric.....	23	Sunflower Direct Primary Care	29
NC Works Career Center.....	17	RJ's Grill.....	24	Supply Line Country Market	25
NCOL.NET.....	20	ROBCO Manufacturing	27	Susan Abbott	25
Nella Roo's	32	Roberson Family Dentistry	21	T & R Tractor and	
New Hope Elementary School	22	Robert D. Herford, CPA	15	Trailer Repair Inc	16
New Life Baptist Church	17	Rogers Group, Inc.....	31	T-Mobile	17
Next Level Kennels	21	Rose Oil Company.....	29	T. C. Water Adventures, LLC.....	32
North Carolina Pediatric Associates.....	30	Rosemyr Corporation.....	17	Tabletop Media Group.....	28
Northeast Piedmont Chorale.....	18	Rotary Club of Henderson.....	19	Tegarris Associates Realty	30
NuVisions, LLC	28	Ruin Creek Animal Protection Society of Henderson, NC.....	15	The Bridges of Parkview.....	28
Occoneechee Council Boy		Rural Health Group at Henderson	25	The Church of the Holy Innocents	17
Scouts of America	16	Rustic Barn Boutique		The Corbitt Preservation	
Optimist Club of Henderson.....	18	and Decor LLC.....	32	Association	19
Outside the Box		S.a.M. Child Advocacy Center	19	The Hair Loft	25
Promotions & Apparel	32	Sadie's Coffee Corner	20	The Help Center NC.....	19
Oxford Preparatory School	22	Salare Inc.....	27	The Mary Emma Evans Foundation	19
Paddle Consulting Group, LLC.....	26	Salvation Army, The	19	Thermo King of Henderson	32
Parker Peace Pool	30	Sams Furniture & Mattress Center	24	Three Dimensional	
Pegram Agency, Inc.....	26	Satterwhite Point Marina, Inc.....	27	Technologies, LLC	26
Pendergrass Transportation, Inc.....	33	Schewels Home.....	24	Tom Church	26
Penn Pallet, Inc.....	27	Schmitt Orthodontics.....	29	Triangle North Healthcare	
People Ready	23	Scottish Inns, Jalaram Inc	26	Foundation.....	19
Pernell's Custom Framing.....	24	Select Products Holdings, LLC	27	Tribal Chimney Sweep	19
Perry & Waters, LLP.....	16	Self-Made Selfie Museum	29	Truist Bank	16
Petco	32	Servpro of Franklin, Vance &		Turning Point Community Development Corporation.....	19
Pete Smith Automotive Group.....	16	Granville Counties.....	19	United Sports Automotive, LLC.....	16
Phillips, Dorsey, Thomas, Waters		Site Script Company	15	United Way of Vance County.....	19
& Brafford, PA	15	Skipper Forsyth's Bar-B-Q	31	Uniting Our Community.....	19
Picturesque Homes, LLC.....	20	Sleep Inn Henderson	26	US Cellular	17
Pinkston Street Elementary School	22	Smooth Sailing Boat Rentals	30	Vance Charter School	22
Pinnell Insurance Agency - A Division of Watkins Insurance, Inc.	26				

Vance Commons,		Membership Corporation.....	33
Senior Apartments.....	15	Walmart DC 6091	21
Vance Construction Company.....	20	Walmart Store 2256.....	32
Vance County.....	25	WDT Development, LLC.....	17
Vance County Arts Council.....	19	Wester Insurance Agency.....	26
Vance County		Wester, M. W., III, DDS.....	21
Community Foundation	19	Whitco Termite & Pest Control	29
Vance County		William L. Stark and Company.....	15
Early College High School.....	22	William S. Wooten DDS PA.....	21
Vance County Farm Bureau, Inc.....	15	Wilson S. Hoyle, Jr., DDS.....	21
Vance County High School.....	23	Wise Snacks.....	33
Vance County		WIZS Radio.....	28
Historical Society, Inc.....	19	Woodlief's Lawn Care, LLC.....	27
Vance County Middle School	23	WW Properties & Rentals	31
Vance County		Zeb Vance Elementary School	23
Public School Foundation.....	19	Zoo On The Moove.....	15
Vance County Schools	23		
Vance Furniture Company.....	24		
Vance Granville Home Builders Association ...	19		
Vance Virtual Village Academy	23		
Vance-Granville Community College	23		
Vanco Outdoor Equipment.....	24		
Variety Wholesalers, Inc.	32		
Vaya Health.....	28		
Versatrim, Inc.	27		
Vescom America, Inc.....	27		
Visions Educational Learning and Tutoring Services, Inc.....	19		
Vocational Rehabilitation Services.....	25		
Vulcan Materials	20		
Wake Electric			



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Aiming for *innovation*

VGCC wants to know, 'Is there a better way to do this?'

BY KELLEN HOLTZMAN

Vance-Granville Community College's role as a regional leader in entrepreneurship fits right into the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce's theme for 2023: collaboration.

To be an entrepreneur means to be an innovator, according to VGCC President Rachel Desmarais and Jerry Edmonds, the college's vice president of workforce and community engagement.

Innovation represents a way for the communities VGCC serves to achieve growth and to sustain success, which has been a challenge for rural areas everywhere that were once buoyed by small business.

"We think small business and entrepreneurship, in particular small business," Desmarais said, "looks different in rural and it looks different in these communities."

continued on next page



PHOTOGRAPHY BY | KELLEN HOLTZMAN

VANCE-GRANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE PRESIDENT RACHEL DESMARAIS (LEFT) AND JERRY EDMONDS, VGCC'S VICE PRESIDENT OF WORKFORCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, GUIDED THE COLLEGE TO NATIONAL ACCLAIM LAST YEAR FOR PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILL DEVELOPMENT ON CAMPUS.

“VANCE-GRANVILLE IS GOING TO BE A CATALYST FOR BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES WHERE EVERYONE CAN EXPERIENCE A FULFILLING QUALITY OF LIFE BECAUSE HERE IT'S NOT ABOUT THE DEGREE...IT'S NOT ABOUT THE JOB EVEN. IT'S ABOUT A CAREER. IT'S ABOUT A FAMILY-SUSTAINED WAGE. IT'S WHERE YOU CAN BECOME A BETTER CITIZEN AND ENJOY A BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE. THAT'S WHAT IT'S REALLY ALL ABOUT.”

So VGCC engaged in some innovation of its own when Desmarais signed in 2021 the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship Presidents for Entrepreneurship Pledge, committing the college to five action steps designed to create economic vitality through entrepreneurship.

Crediting the foresight of Desmarais (Ph.D.), Edmonds (Ed.D.) noted only a small percentage of North Carolina's community colleges signed the pledge then.

By fall last year, VGCC had been recognized at the NACCE's annual conference in Boston as the Heather Van Sickle Entrepreneurial College of the Year. VGCC's commitment to entrepreneurship included opening the VGCC Entrepreneurship & Innovation Center at the college's South Campus, establishing a Student Entrepreneurship Club, and offering an Agricultural Entrepreneurship Program.

Desmarais believes the new initiatives complement VGCC's mission as a workforce developer.

"Vance-Granville is going to be a catalyst for building strong communities where everyone can experience a fulfilling quality of life because here it's not about the degree," Desmarais said. "It's not about the job even. It's about a career. It's about a family-sustained wage. It's where you can become a better citizen and enjoy a better quality of life. That's what it's really all about.

"So how can we work with other partners in our



We think small business and entrepreneurship, in particular small business, looks different in these communities.

— RACHEL DESMARAIS
VANCE-GRANVILLE COMMUNITY
COLLEGE PRESIDENT



communities to encourage this to happen? We can't do it all. We don't pretend that we can do it all."

At VGCC, embedding entrepreneurship in clubs means providing a bridge, through skill development, to the college's Small Business Center, where students receive assistance in the creation of businesses.

The umbrella of entrepreneurship can include a wide range of credit and noncredit students across disciplines and of varying ages, beginning with Vance County Early College High School students. Much like other areas of study on campus, Edmonds envisions taking advantage of the entrepreneurship offerings not only as a way to gain knowledge but to network with local business mentors

that are invited to share their stories and advice.

Whether it's a high school senior or an established businessperson expanding their horizon, participants are challenged to ask themselves, "Is there a better way to do this?"

VGCC hopes more people reflecting on that question, and working in concert to find solutions, will lead to greater progress for the area as a whole, and especially in Henderson, where Desmarais is proud to reside.

"In terms of collaboration, entrepreneurship is the perfect vehicle that spans a lot of different areas," Edmonds said, "and everyone can be involved in innovation, even if you scratch out [the term] entrepreneurship and just focus on innovation."

CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

goes to 'humble volunteer'

BY TYLER DAVIS

Before presenting the 2022 award, Mark Hopper, 2021's Citizen of the Year, shared his perspective on the new winner during the Henderson-Vance County Chamber of Commerce Banquet in March at Vance-Granville Community College.

"If we had to label this year's Citizen of the Year, it would be 'humble volunteer,'" said Hopper.

Jack Richardson was that humble volunteer. Beyond humble, he has been "tireless" in his work in education, advocacy for students, fundraising and other work for charities like ACTS and Community Partners of Hope, the men's homeless shelter, recruiting others to provide meals for people who are homeless, serving as a shuttle driver for Maria Parham Health and much more.

"He does not allow anything to interfere with his willingness to serve," said Hopper. "A man of integrity and passion, as shown by the way he lives and serves."

Upon being called to the stage, Richardson gave a short speech.

"I am very humbled by this honor, that I'm sure that most of you in here would have been," said Richardson. "All those nice things that were said about me could be said about most of you, I'm sure. This is a very humbling experience. And everybody says this, I'm not sure I deserve this award, but I will gladly accept."

"I enjoy working here at the schools and at the homeless shelter and at ACTS. I've been doing these things for many years. I will hopefully be able to continue for many more. I thank you very much."

FROM 2022, A YEAR OF COMMUNITY...

"2022 was a busy year, but it was a quick year," said former Chamber Chairman Ronald Bennett.

A video produced by Clearview Church gave a recap of the Chamber's past year.

Since 2022, the Chamber has seen a 5% increase in membership. Forty-five new members bring the total to 330. There were 30 ribbon-cuttings for grand openings or milestones.

Seventeen citizens graduated from the Chamber Leadership Vance Program on July 19, 2022. The video ended with a short tribute to the late Hen-

derson Fire Chief Steve Cordell.

"All the memories we have of Steve and what he did for our community and we are forever grateful for all his contributions and all," said Bennett.

The last year has been about building ships — partnerships, relationships and life-long friendships — between the chamber and law enforcement, public officials, businesses and more, Bennett explained.

The "State of" series began last year, starting with the State of the City. The

idea is to give attendees an overview of progress, ongoing projects and future plans at various levels and in various areas of the community.

Bennett gave a mini State of the Chamber presentation.

"The state of your chamber is strong. Financially, we're strong," he said. "When I got involved, four or five years ago, we may not have been in the negative, but we were close to it. Now we can say that we're much stronger financially."

continued on next page





CHAIRMAN BERT LONG (LEFT) PRESENTS THE 2022 CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARD TO JACK RICHARDSON DURING THE ANNUAL CHAMBER BANQUET AT VANCE-GRANVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE.

TYLER DAVIS | HENDERSON-VANCE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

That can be attributed to the chamber staff, including former President Michele Burgess. She has since stepped down to care for her family. Her successor, Sandra Wilkerson, pulled in Vanessa Jones, an experienced chamber worker with knowledge of the community; and Tanya Wilson, who Wilkerson encouraged to come back to Henderson from Raleigh.

“As we move deeper into 2023... rest assured, with team Chairman Bert Long and team President Sandra Wilkerson, your [Chamber] is strong and in great hands,” Bennett concluded.

TO 2023, A YEAR OF COLLABORATION

Incoming Chairman Bert Long thanked Bennett, the Chamber staff, its Board of Directors and elected officials for their work before getting into the chamber’s future.

While 2022 was a year of community, 2023 is going to be the year of collaboration, Long explained.

“In the current environment that we find ourselves in, working together can go a long way,” Long said. “Bear with me, because this is going to seem like an odd shift. We need conflict. There’s plenty of that to go around right now, you say. Totally agree. Hear me out.

“We need healthy conflict.”

A lack of challenges breeds complacency, he said. But how can the community have healthy conflict?

He said he isn’t a hundred percent sure, but that he has a few suggestions.

“Starts by listening,” he said. “Sometimes, as business leaders, we are always looked to for answers that can dull our ability to really listen to those around us.

As opposed to just saying “Yes,” he posited saying “Yes, and.”

He called on attendees to continue supporting and partnering with the Chamber.

“NOW, BACK TO COLLABORATION,” SAID LONG. “NOTICE THE WORD IS NOT COL-SIMPLE-ATION, OR STRAIGHTFORWARD, OR EFFORTLESS. THE ROOT OF COLLABORATION IS LABOR.

“WE MUST PUT IN THE EFFORT.”

SUCCESS BREEDS SUCCESS
— WHEN ONE BUSINESS SUCCEEDS, EVERYBODY ELSE DOES.

“WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER,” HE SAID.



PHOTO COURTESY OF KLCC
KERR LAKE COUNTRY CLUB OPENED IN
1965 AND SPANS 6,530 YARDS.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Golf is a vital piece of recreation options

BY BRYANT BAUCOM AND KELLEN HOLTZMAN

Whether it's golf at the Kerr Lake or Henderson country clubs, family fun at Fox Pond Park or taking advantage of one of the largest lakes in the Southeast, recreation options abound in Vance County.

HENDERSON COUNTRY CLUB

The game of golf has a powerful presence in the state of North Carolina. From the lore of Pinehurst to PGA Tour events at Quail Hollow and Sedgefield Country Club, the sport is popular in the Tar Heel State.

While these courses draw the ire of professional golfers and primetime television, they are far from the only quality courses in the area.

In fact, Henderson has not only new and improved courses, but historic venues for local residents to explore and improve their golf game.

Henderson Country Club's 18-hole course was originally designed in 1923 and is celebrating 100 years of golf in Vance County. Over the last century, the course has seen improvement and renovations, including new TifEagle Bermuda grass greens installed in the fall of 2022.

The course ranges from 4,651 yards at its shortest to 6,455 yards for golfers looking for a greater challenge.

Assistant Golf Pro Jeremy Radford, who runs the course, just celebrated nine years at Henderson Country Club and is in charge of its prominence in Vance County.

For those looking to improve their game, the club currently offers private instruction along with video analysis in golf lessons and junior clinics. Radford holds regular clinics for both members and the public, focusing on mechanics and the fundamentals of golf.

Each year, the club hosts three yearly member events along with the HCC Invitational and the Two-Man Invitational.

The club is the only private country club in Vance, Warren and Granville counties.

KERR LAKE COUNTRY CLUB

Nearby Kerr Lake Country Club also holds an 18-hole course with a par score of 72 strokes. The course opened in 1965 and spans 6,530 yards. Designed by architect Ricci Boni, the course has a 71.1 rating with a slope rating of 122.

Newly-implemented Bermuda greens make for improved conditions near the pin, while the club has made changes to their driving range. In addition, they have also brought back their practice greens for players to work on before their round or to correct their mistakes after.

“With a mission to create a family-oriented atmosphere of recreation, fun, and competition for members and guests, Kerr Lake Country Club has something for everyone,” said President Pam Hester. “For the occasional golfer, KLCC offers reasonable green fees and golf cart rentals. For the diehard golfer, the membership packages are great. Need a place to warm up, practice hard, or swing for the first time? The driving range and recently established putting green offers the perfect place to improve your game.”

Fees range from \$30-\$35 depending on the weekday or weekend rates and sit at \$35 on holidays.

From April to October, the club hosts monthly dinners open to the public, while their Two-Man Invitational takes place in May and the Red, White, and Blue Tournament on July 4.

Whether it is at Kerr Lake or in West Henderson, you don't have to look far for quality golf in Vance County. As summer approaches, check out the pristine courses in the area and enjoy 18 holes in Henderson.

RECREATION AND PARKS

The Henderson-Vance Recreation and Parks Department had a major victory to celebrate earlier this year. For the first time since Aycock Recreation Center received partial state funding in 1997 and 2000, Henderson was awarded a Parks and Recreation Trust Fund grant through the state that is going towards the planned Williams and Montgomery Park.

The Williams and Montgomery Park has been a long-time coming, with the groundwork laid in the city of Henderson's 2010 comprehensive plan before Recreation and Parks Director Kendrick Vann carried the torch forward when he was hired two years ago.

The City of Henderson has gone about implementing the plan in multiple phases. A National Fitness Campaign grant made the first phase possible, emphasizing outdoor fitness facilities that are free to the public to go along with picnic shelters. The next phases are bringing a skatepark, splash pad (spray pool), restrooms, open-air market, walking trail, and more.

“We have a rough design already that we submitted to the state, but once we start getting into the nuts and bolts of things, we have an engineer that will come in and tell us how it will flow with the water system and all of that,” Henderson-Vance Recreation and Parks Department Director Kendrick Vann told The Dispatch in January.

The brightly blue-colored splash park is already in place, just a short distance from the downtown sidewalks of South Garnett Street, the city clocktower and front side of the old Henderson High School serving as distant backdrops.

City Manager Terrell Blackmon said the construction or enhancement of park spaces is part of the city's larger redevelopment plan to improve quality of life in Henderson, and noted the city's pavilion that's in the works near McGregor Hall.

PHOTO COURTESY OF H-V REC AND PARKS



FOX POND FEATURES A FISHING PIER, TENNIS/PICKLEBALL COURTS, A SOFTBALL/BASEBALL BALLFIELD AND A TOT LOT FOR PRESCHOOL AND PRIMARY AGE CHILDREN WITHIN THE SAME PROXIMITY.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY | KELLEN HOLTZMAN



KERR LAKE
JUNE 2022
THE PIER AT
BULLOCKSVILLE
PARK IS A
FAVORITE OF
LOCALS AND
VISITORS FOR
FISHING.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY | RAY GRONBERG



HENDERSON CITY MANAGER TERRELL BLACKMON TAKES A SHOT AT HENDERSON COUNTRY CLUB.



ONE OF THE NEWEST EDITIONS DOWNTOWN IS THE HENDERSON-VANCE RECREATION AND PARKS DEPARTMENT SPLASH PARK.



FOX POND PARK HOSTED A NATIONAL TENNIS MONTH TENNIS FUNDAY IN MAY THROUGH A PARTNERSHIP INVOLVING HENDERSON-VANCE RECREATION AND PARKS, EDMONDS TENNIS AND EDUCATION FOUNDATION AND U.S. TENNIS ASSOCIATION N.C.

“This will be a multi-generational park, which I think is very important,” Blackmon said. “So you’ve got something for the youth. You’ve got something for the parents and you’ve even got something for the seniors when you’re talking about a skate park, splash pad, fitness, walking — you kind of combine all those things and you create what I think is a great gathering place for families and for people to continue a healthy lifestyle.”

“Our staff put a lot of great time and effort into researching what other [areas] have to try to enhance and make our parks and recreation system better,” Vann said, referencing again the new park plans. “You’re not going to have a multi-use park [anywhere else] at the quality we have right now in a three- to four-county area.”

KERR LAKE

Measuring in at 77 square miles, Kerr Lake is a destination for boating, camping, fishing, sailing, watersports, and more.

Kerr Lake State Recreation Areas feature 700 Campsites, 13 picnic areas, three community buildings, shelters, fishing piers, seven tot lots, 21 boat ramps, and swimming areas.

Staying true to the Chamber’s theme of collaboration, Vance County Tourism Pam Hester offers a reminder: “Individually we are one drop,” she said. “Together, we are Kerr Lake.”

Another 16 outdoor parks dot the local Recreation and Parks landscape including flagship Fox Pond Park, which dates back to 1926. Fox Pond features a fishing pier, tennis/pickleball courts, a softball/baseball ballfield and a tot lot for preschool and primary age children within the same proximity. There are two picnic shelters, an amphitheater, a family picnic area, and a play structure. The entire park is tied together by a trail system graded to accommodate wheelchairs.



THE DOCK AT FOX POND PARK IS THE PERFECT PLACE TO SOAK IN THE COLORS OF FALL.

HISTORY COMES ALIVE *in Henderson*

BY KELLEN HOLTZMAN



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF H-V CHAMBER



KELLEN
HOLTZMAN

If you gaze along Garnett Street for long enough — if you’re looking in the right places and talking to the right people — you stand the chance of becoming immersed in the history of Henderson.

I had that experience at last year’s annual car show, which centered around a Saturday morning on South Garnett Street with Corbitt trucks, antiques, vintage muscle cars, hot rods, and a host of other classic cars and trucks spanning downtown Henderson’s main drag from First United Methodist Church all the way south past the American Legion building to Burwell Avenue.

The event kicked off on Friday with an evening cruise-in hosted on Horner Street by Southern Classic Cars.

Come for the car show and stay for a history lesson. That’s what I did when I met Ken Stegall and Tom Burleson of the Corbitt

Preservation Association, right outside the Henderson Fire Station and Municipal Building, a must-visit in its own right for anyone seeking to soak in the history of Henderson.

The Henderson Fire Station, with its iconic and towering redbrick clocktower, was built in 1908 before adjoining with the Municipal Building of the 1920s.

What better location for me to get an education in Corbitt, which made its name producing buggies around the turn of the 20th century, at a site just across Garnett from the fire station. Paying homage to the company’s 50-plus years of manufacturing in Henderson, the Corbitt Preservation Museum at 180 Court St. is just a short walk away from here, a stroll Stegall was kind enough to lead me on.

One block over from the museum is another quintessential piece of Henderson architecture: the original Vance County Courthouse, which was first constructed in 1881 but completely remodeled in 1908, and expanded in 1960. “The main block of the courthouse,” according to the National



PHOTOGRAPHY COURTESY OF H-V CHAMBER

DR. WYKIA MACON LOOKS OUT OVER DOWNTOWN HENDERSON FROM THE CLOCKTOWER. MACON IS THE N.C. COOPERATIVE EXTENSION AGENT FOR 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT.

HERE’S A LOOK INSIDE HENDERSON’S FAMOUS CLOCKTOWER.

Register of Historic Places upon which it is listed, “is a three-bay Neoclassical gable front building of tan brick with a monumental portico with modillion cornice supported by Doric columns.”

What they said.

A number of structures join the clocktower and courthouse in making up the Henderson Central Business Historic District including the Neoclassical-style former Post Office and First National Bank buildings. The post office was originally built in 1885 and the bank in 1921.

Last year, Tem Blackburn gave me a brief, oral history of the bank building during a breakfast at the nearby Methodist church. Blackburn, a go-to source on all things Henderson, works with the Vance County Historical Society to preserve and share the area’s history.

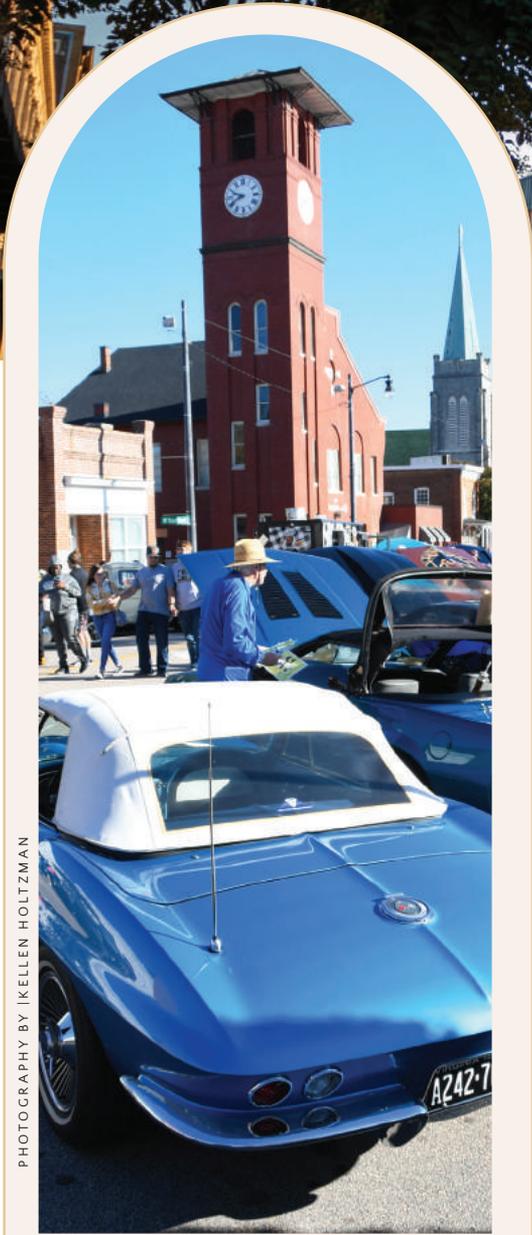
It was Blackburn who offered historical context last year when the city named its operations and service center after Dr. Andrea L. Harris, who passed away in 2020. He noted the significance of a public building in Henderson being named for an African American, calling it “one of the brightest moments in the history of Henderson.”

Among the voluminous list of achievements for Harris, who gained statewide acclaim as a devoted advocate of equality, was graduating from Henderson Institute in 1966.

Located on Rock Spring Street adjacent to the former Eaton-Johnson campus, the Henderson Institute Museum isn’t quite within walking distance of the Central Business District, but its significance to the story of Henderson is monumental.



MOST LOCALS KNOW IT NOW AS A COUNTY-OPERATED BUILDING. BUT THE STRUCTURE WAS FIRST CONSTRUCTED IN 1885 AS THE LOCAL POST OFFICE.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY | KELLEN HOLTZMAN

NO MORE ICONIC STRUCTURE EXISTS IN HENDERSON THAN THE CITY'S FAMOUS CLOCKTOWER. PICTURED HERE DURING THE 20TH ANNUAL SHOW, SHINE, SHAG AND DINE CAR SHOW.

The 1928 Library and Laboratory Building, in which the museum is located, is the only surviving reminder of the Henderson Institute that was established in 1887. Its National Register of Historic Places entry notes the building is a “significant reminder of late 19th and early- to mid-20th century African-American secondary education in Henderson, in North Carolina and throughout the South. The Institute took primary responsibility for the education and advancement of the African-American citizens of Vance County.”

If you're looking for a place to put the historical pieces together, it might just be in Perry Memorial Library's Vance County History Museum, a joint project

with the Vance County Historical Society. And just around the corner in the library's Local History Room, decades of Henderson Daily Dispatch print archives can be accessed.

The colossal facades bearing the name of the library's neighbor, McGregor Hall, facing Breckenridge and Winder streets, combine modern touches with Neoclassical nods to Henderson's relics, making for the ultimate blend of past and present.

In Henderson, history can come alive just around the corner.



PHOTOGRAPHY BY | KELLEN HOLTZMAN

THE 1928 LIBRARY AND LABORATORY BUILDING IS THE ONLY SURVIVING REMINDER OF THE HENDERSON INSTITUTE THAT WAS ESTABLISHED IN 1887.



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HENDERSON VANCE COUNTY

Economic Development Commission

adv**vance** /əd'vans/ 

Verb: To create business success in Vance County.

ADVANCE

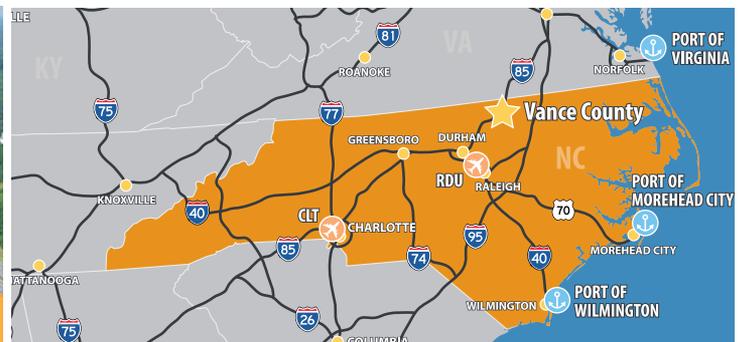
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HENDERSON
VANCE COUNTY
Economic Development Commission

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