

The State of Things
Monday – Friday, 12 – 1pm
Lines For Quarter 2 of 2020

June 30, 2020

Category: Politics

Accusations Of Predatory Behavior Lead To Resignation Of Raleigh City Council Member:

Former Raleigh City Council member Saige Martin is facing multiple accusations of sexual misconduct. The Wake County District Attorney asked the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation Monday to review the allegations of four men who accused him of making unwanted sexual advances while he worked at North Carolina State University. The News and Observer led an investigation into these allegations and spoke to all four men, who are current or former NC State students. Two of them said Martin sexually assaulted them. Martin resigned Friday after the allegations became public. Host Frank Stasio gets the latest details from WRAL reporter Keely Arthur.

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

The State Of Surveillance: Protesters, Police And Big Tech:

Are protesters surveilling the police or vice versa? Law enforcement agencies use cell phone location-based data to identify and incriminate demonstrators. Yet handheld videos, shared online, of police violence prompted and sustained the ongoing wave of demonstrations. The recent surge of public support for the Black Lives Matter movement is in part a result of that widespread visual evidence of police violence, according to T. Greg Doucette, a criminal defense and first amendment attorney based in North Carolina and the host of the F*ck 'Em All podcast. Yet Doucette warns that privacy laws do little to protect the people holding the camera and caught on tape from being charged. Law enforcement can access much of the third party data originally developed for targeted advertising. Tracking personal data is just one of the many ways that corporations support police surveillance. Even as technology companies like Amazon and Google express solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement and promise change, many continue making their products and services available to law enforcement, writes Edward Ongweso Jr. for Motherboard by Vice Media. Host Frank Stasio talks with Doucette and Ongweso about how policing relies on private-public partnerships to make surveillance more invisible and cost-effective. Stasio also hears from Alvin Jacobs Jr. about how photographers balance privacy concerns with the need to expose state-sanctioned violence. Jacobs is a Charlotte-based image activist who has covered mass demonstrations across the country, including in Minneapolis, Standing Rock, Charlottesville and Ferguson.

June 29, 2020

Category: Education

Armondo Collins Will Tell His Own Story, Thank You Very Much

For Armondo Collins, growing up in a predominantly-black neighborhood in St. Paul, Minnesota meant several things. It meant that he had to pass through majority white, wealthy communities whenever he wanted candy from the corner store. And it meant that he got stopped by the police a lot. Collins did not realize that the over-policing of Black communities was something he should be offended by until he moved to North Carolina for college. He pursued English and

African American studies to learn more about the experiences of other Black people and how they differed from his childhood. He read voraciously about Black history and systems of oppression, which he now incorporates into his own classes as a professor of African American and African Diaspora Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Collins also heads the Digital Media Commons at UNC Greensboro, where he designs programming to teach students about videography, podcasting, web design and other digital literacy skills. The protests in Minneapolis prompted Collins to take a trip to the Twin Cities, his first since the pandemic, to document and dig into the stories of communities on-the-ground. Host Frank Stasio talks with Collins about his childhood in Minnesota, his education in North Carolina and his work to shape new narratives about Black communities and experiences.

June 26, 2020

Category: Politics

The Political Junkie On Which Of Today's Issues Will Persist Into November:

American voters have a notoriously short political memory. The United States is struggling to come to terms with the inequities highlighted by the coronavirus pandemic and the recent police killings of numerous Black people — and some pundits are wondering which of the issues front of mind today will influence the upcoming elections in November. Host Frank Stasio talks to Political Junkie Ken Rudin about what we can glean from this week's election results. Rudin also shares the latest on who is in the running to be former Vice President Joe Biden's running mate after Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar announced she was withdrawing her name from consideration. And Rudin shares his analysis of the latest presidential polls, which show presumptive Democratic nominee Biden with a widening lead over President Donald Trump.

Category: Health

Safer-At-Home In NC For Three More Weeks As COVID-19 Cases Show Little Improvement

North Carolina will remain in Phase 2 of reopening until at least July 17. Governor Roy Cooper also announced a mask requirement that goes into effect today at 5 p.m. These measures come as the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests hovers at around 9%, up from around 6% in early May. Host Frank Stasio talks with North Carolina Health News founder and editor Rose Hoban on the state's response to coronavirus cases and how an old law meant to limit Ku Klux Klan activity limits Cooper's ability to require North Carolinians wear masks in public.

Category: Race/Minorities

Corporations Are Making Statements About Black Lives Matter, Should Consumers Believe Them?

As the country reckons with the systemic racism upon which it is built, major companies are making statements of their own. Some address inequities and enumerate actionable steps to combat racism. Others lay out plans to donate funds to organizations supporting Black individuals and communities. Other companies chose not to say anything. How are consumers supposed to navigate this sea of corporate messaging? Host Frank Stasio talks with Charlotte Business Journal reporter Caroline Hudson about how some of North Carolina's largest corporations are responding to the Black Lives Matter movement. Yvette Lynne Bonaparte shares analysis on how consumers can discern genuine statements from hollow press releases. She is an assistant professor of marketing at North Carolina Central University.

June 25, 2020

Category: Environment

Supreme Court Removes One Hurdle For Atlantic Coast Pipeline, But Others Remain

A U.S. Supreme Court decision last week allows the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to travel under a section of the Appalachian Trail in Virginia. A lower court denied the U.S. Forest Service the

right to grant a permit to Dominion Energy, the lead developer of the proposed 600-mile long pipeline, to carry out the construction two years ago. Dominion Energy appealed the case, and the Supreme Court now upholds the Forest Service's authority. The ruling sets a precedent that other pipeline projects — such as the Mountain Valley Pipeline that covers a different route through West Virginia and Virginia and recently received approval for an extension into central North Carolina — can cross the trail in the future. But construction on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline remains halted as the developers work to obtain eight other environmental permits. The pipeline also travels through several rural, low-income and predominantly Black and Indigenous communities, some of which are continuing to organize in opposition to the construction. As state legislatures in North Carolina and Virginia announce plans to move towards renewables, is there still a need for these large pipelines? Host Anita Rao speaks with Lyndsey Gilpin, founder and editor-in-chief of Southerly, about the Supreme Court ruling and the future of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in the southeast.

Category: Health

Transgender Health Outcomes Improve When Providers Take These Steps:

Stigma, confusion and outright discrimination shape the healthcare experiences of many transgender and gender non-conforming people. In a national survey of transgender people in the U.S., 29% said health care providers had refused to see them because of their actual or perceived gender identity. On this edition of Embodied, host Anita Rao learns about the ways gender-affirming doctor's visits, home life and classrooms can improve health outcomes for transgender and gender-nonconforming people. The UNC Transgender Health Program is providing comprehensive transgender healthcare, from surgery to therapy. Program manager Katherine Croft shares the ways health providers across North Carolina can learn more about the needs and identities of patients. Croft also exposes inconsistencies in Medicaid and the State Health Plan's definitions of cosmetic and reconstructive surgery that excludes the health needs of transgender patients. There are many kinds of physical transitions that humans go through in life, and the ways transgender people can healthily navigate those changes remain under-researched and marginalized in medicine. Rao talks with Max Brown, a rising ninth grader in Western North Carolina who is doing lots of research about what it means to transition. He socially transitioned earlier in middle school and is now taking steps to ensure he feels comfortable in his own body. While support structures have been lacking in school, Max relies heavily on his pediatrician and Youth OUTright WNC in Asheville to manage his mental and physical wellbeing. His mother, Frances Brown, joins the program to discuss her own learning process while ensuring her son's health. Schools can do more to support transgender students. Stigma and bullying from classmates and school staff can increase risk factors for suicide and depression — which transgender and gender-nonconforming teens experience at alarming rates. Health risks and academic setbacks for young people can have lasting effects, including joblessness and homelessness well into adulthood, explains Rebbly Kern, director of education policy at Equality NC. There are easy steps that schools, families and health providers can take to address gender discrimination and secure more equitable health outcomes.

June 24, 2020

Category: Politics

NC 11th Congressional: Republicans Pick 24-Year-Old Real Estate Broker To Face Democrat Retired Colonel:

A 24-year-old political newcomer handily defeated a candidate endorsed by President Donald Trump in yesterday's Republican runoff election in North Carolina's 11th Congressional District. Madison Cawthorn defeated Lynda Bennet by 30 percentage points to vie for the seat vacated by Mark Meadows, who is now Trump's fourth chief of staff. Host Frank Stasio talks with Smoky

Mountain News' Cory Vaillancourt about the results. Plus, North Carolina is one of only five states this year with races for the presidency, U.S. Senate and governorship. Despite the ongoing global recession, donors outside North Carolina continue to pour money into the upcoming general elections. Republican political consultant Paul Shumaker estimates that \$98 million has already been committed to political advertising for the June to November period. Host Frank Stasio talks with WUNC Political Reporter Rusty Jacobs about the ways the Black Lives Matter movement and COVID-19 are shaping the elections

Category: Education

Amid COVID-19, N.C. Childcare Centers Make Difficult Choices

Even before COVID-19 began to impact childcare center operations across the state, half of North Carolina was a childcare desert — a geographic area where three or more working-parent families vie for every available childcare slot. Though childcare needs have changed during the pandemic, as more parents have been working from home and caring for their children at home, there's still more need than there are open childcare center slots to fulfill it. As the state reopens and more parents gradually return to work, some childcare centers are still unable to open at full capacity, due to ongoing COVID-19 restrictions. Those that are open at 50 percent capacity are operating at a financial deficit. Host Frank Stasio talks to WUNC education reporter Liz Schlemmer; Catherine Lieberman, director of Bell's School for people under six; Cassandra Brooks, owner of The Little Believer's Academy; and Michele Rivest, policy director of the North Carolina Early Education Coalition.

June 23, 2020

Category: Breaking News

Fayetteville Resolution Supports Citizen Board To Oversee Police Misconduct

Who polices the police? Protesters rising up against George Floyd's death and police violence have raised this question, including in Fayetteville. The Fayetteville City Council voted in support of establishing a citizens advisory board for issues of police misconduct at a special meeting Monday night. The city has supported a citizen advisory board in previous years, but a lack of state legislation that would give the board power to review police personnel files prevented its creation. The council members also discussed the adoption of the "8 Can't Wait" reforms for the Fayetteville Police Department. These reforms, launched by the group Campaign Zero, aim to reduce police violence. Host Frank Stasio talks with WUNC reporter Will Michaels about the council's decision and what citizen boards look like in other communities in North Carolina.

Category: Politics

Immigration Reform Could Play A Big Role In November. What Else Are Latino Voters Watching?

Last Monday opened the beginning of a tense week for many U.S. immigrants. Then, relief: The U.S. Supreme Court ruled Thursday to uphold the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, which protects over 600,000 people in the country from deportation. In 2017 President Donald Trump announced his administration would rescind the DACA program, but the court ruled that his process in doing so violated a federal statute. The future of the program remains uncertain, and its fate may depend on who holds presidential office. Host Frank Stasio talks with Laura Garduño Garcia, a DACA recipient and a community organizer with the immigrant rights group Siembra NC, about her reactions to the Supreme Court decision and the uncertain future of the program. Stasio also speaks to Geraldo Cadava, an associate professor of history at Northwestern University, about the reactions of more conservative Latino voters and the implications for the November election. Some Latino voters have stayed with Republican candidates over the years despite anti-immigrant policies, but a growing young Latino electorate could sway November's election toward the Democratic candidate.

Category: Politics

A Queer, Undocumented North Carolinian Looks Forward Following Major SCOTUS Decisions

The LGBTQ community and DACA recipients are celebrating last week's Supreme Court decisions. In a surprise 5-4 majority, the Supreme Court ruled the Trump Administration could not immediately end the Obama-era Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. It allows undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States when they were under the age of 16 to apply for temporary work permits and drivers' licenses, and the program provides protection against deportation. But Chief Justice John Roberts left a loophole in the court's decision and said the president could try again to revoke DACA. Emilio Vicente, who grew up in Siler City, describes this moment as bittersweet. He is queer and undocumented, so the excitement of last week's news is clouded by the loophole. While not a DACA recipient, Vicente worries about the potential for DACA to become a political bargaining chip in the fight over immigration policy. Host Frank Stasio checks in with Vicente, the advocacy and communications manager for [Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement](#), about how this moment affects the LGBTQ and Latinx community.

June 22, 2020

Category: Race/Minorities

Historian Arwin Smallwood Dedicated His Life To Studying His Triracial Roots In NC:

Arwin Smallwood grew up in the rural town of Indian Woods, in the northeastern part of North Carolina. The ten-square-mile community is the home to descendants of the Native American, African and European people who lived there over hundreds of years. Smallwood came of age there in the 60s and 70s. At that time, many residents had military careers, and Smallwood imagined a similar trajectory for himself. But a military recruiter encouraged him to apply to college and become an officer after he scored well on an aptitude test. His Air Force dreams were dashed because of his poor vision and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Smallwood pursued history instead after a chance encounter with that department head. When it came time to write a master's thesis, he decided to go back to his roots in Indian Woods. He started writing about his father's community activism there and discovered a much deeper history to highlight in a doctoral dissertation. He has spent his entire career working to better understand the unique, triracial heritage of his home. Today Smallwood is a professor and chair of the department of history and political science at North Carolina A&T State University. Host Frank Stasio talks to the historian about his upbringing in Bertie County, the ways studying Indian Woods made him fall in love with history and how he encourages that passion in his students today.

June 19, 2020

Category: Arts and Culture

Juneteenth Is A Day For Celebrating The Ongoing Fight For Black Liberation:

Jaki Shelton Green joins us on her birthday to discuss "the wind of freedom" which billows through the North Carolina poet laureate's new album of verse and song, "The River Speaks of Thirst" (Soul City Sounds/2020). Collaborator, jazz singer and six-time Grammy nominee Nnenna Freelon also joins the conversation to discuss the paradox of celebrating a holiday about freedom when liberation remains a continuous process. Documenting that process is essential to maintaining momentum and exposing those who stand in the way of freedom struggles. INDY Week staff photographer Jade Wilson captured the Raleigh demonstrations following the police killing of George Floyd. Their photos focus on the emotions of protest — showing the ways unity and confrontation manifest in the gaze and stance between police and

demonstrators. Wilson talks about the importance of collective memory with host Frank Stasio and Tara Green, professor of women's and gender studies as well as African American and African diaspora studies at the University of North Carolina Greensboro. Green discusses the ways the history of slavery is warped by modern white supremacy and guilt — and how black authorship can address those injustices. She is the author of "Reimagining the Middle Passage: Black Resistance in Literature, Television, and Song" (Ohio State University Press/2018).

June 18, 2020

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

Why Are Use-Of-Force Reports Confidential?:

Where is the data on police violence? Every time a law enforcement officer uses a weapon, they submit a report justifying use of force. Police department procedures make those reports inaccessible to the public. When use-of-force reports are categorized as personnel records — which includes performance reviews and employee complaints — they are protected by state law under a privacy clause. Efforts to increase transparency include a voluntary FBI database started at the beginning of 2019 in which about 40% of the nation's law enforcement officers currently participate. On June 9, Gov. Roy Cooper issued an executive order which includes the creation of a Center for the Reduction of Law Enforcement Use of Deadly Force and the North Carolina Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice. It remains unclear whether the data released by the task force will include specific incidents or simply aggregated data about agencies. Host Frank Stasio parses apart how law enforcement departments obscure use-of-force information with WUNC's data reporter Jason deBruyn. DeBruyn's work is part of the NC Watchdog Reporting Network.

Category: Law

Federal Law Now Protects LGBTQ Employees From Discrimination. But What's Next?

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that gay, lesbian and transgender employees are protected from discrimination on the basis of sex on Monday. The 6-3 decision extended the definition of "discrimination on the basis of sex" in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include sexual orientation and gender discrimination. Justice Neil Gorsuch, President Donald Trump's first appointee to the court, wrote the majority opinion, which argued that any reason for firing a gay or transgender employee was rooted in discrimination based on their biological sex. Dissenting justices argued that the ruling was based on a modern, cultural interpretation of the statute rather than the law itself. The decision comes on the heels of a June 12 decision by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that removed nondiscrimination protections for LGBTQ patients in health care and health insurance. Law experts are still discussing how the Title VII ruling may affect this decision and other statutes, such as those that cover housing or education. Host Frank Stasio speaks with Duke University Law School professor Trina Jones about the ruling, its significance and the implications for other statutes that deal with discrimination. Stasio also talks to Ames Simmons, the policy director for Equality NC, about how the law affects LGBTQ communities in North Carolina.

Category: Race/Demographics

Malinda Maynor Lowery Reincarnates Her Revolutionary Lumbee Ancestor

As we work to gain perspective during this crisis, we may find ourselves searching our personal and collective memories for precedents, stories or myths that might restore the ground under our feet. What is the relationship between collective memory and identity? Fairy tales like the American Dream and the Lost Cause emerge from selective memory, excluding Native and Black communities from history-making authority. Malinda Maynor Lowery wishes to recover the shunned layers of our history and reincorporate heroes of the past into

our present moment. Host Frank Stasio joins Lowery on a [hypothetical reincarnation of her rebel ancestor](#) for the present moment. Using science fiction and oral history, they explore the importance of community vision to transform a crisis into revolution. Henry Berry Lowrie is a mythical figure among the Lumbee people. In the wake of the Civil War, he and his associates waged an eight year guerilla war against white supremacists in government and the business community. He stands as the prototype of rebellion — robbing the wealthy farmers to feed the poor. But, if alive today, would Lowrie abide by tribal elders' stay-at-home orders?

About the interviewee: [Malinda Maynor Lowery](#) is the director of the Center for the Study of the American South and a professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, she is the award-winning author of "[The Lumbee Indians: An American Struggle](#)" and "[Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South: Race, Identity, and the Making of a Nation.](#)"

Note: This program originally aired April 22, 2020.

June 17, 2020

Category: Military

What Happens To National Guard Members Who Refused To Deploy To Protests?

As protests surged in response to the death of George Floyd at the hands of a former Minneapolis police officer, governors and mayors in more than 20 states deployed the National Guard to control the crowds. President Donald Trump ordered the National Guard to Washington, D.C. Some guardsmen, however, refused the deployment order and may face consequences. Host Frank Stasio talks to Carson Frame about her reporting on this story. She is a military and veterans' issues reporter for Texas Public Radio and a correspondent for the American Homefront Project.

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

NC Communities Examine The 'Resource' School Resource Officers Offer

School resource officers have long been a mainstay in North Carolina's public schools. For some parents, students and administrators, the presence of school resource officers offers reassurance of heightened safety in the wake of school shootings and violence. For others, the constant presence of law enforcement inside hallways and classrooms creates a culture of fear and trauma, stemming from disproportionate arrest and conviction rates of black and brown students. Host Frank Stasio talks to Aissa Dearing, student organizer and co-founder of the Durham Youth Climate Justice Initiative; Fernando Martinez, director of organizing for the Education Justice Alliance; William Lassiter, deputy secretary for juvenile justice for the North Carolina Department of Public Safety and chair of the North Carolina Task Force for Safer Schools; and Rep. Craig Horn, Union County Republican in the North Carolina General Assembly.

June 16, 2020

Category: Race/Minorities

Asheville Considers The Future Of Its Confederate Monuments:

On Tuesday evening the Buncombe County Board of Commissioners will vote on the future of two Confederate monuments in downtown Asheville: a Robert E. Lee memorial in Pack Square and a monument honoring fallen Confederate soldiers outside the Buncombe County Courthouse. Last week Asheville's city council unanimously voted to remove the two monuments. The United Daughters of the Confederacy own these two memorials, and if the resolution passes, the group will have 90 days to remove them. The commissioners will also vote on the Asheville City Council's request for a task force to decide the future of the controversial Vance Monument in Pack Square. Host Frank Stasio gets the latest from Matt Bush, news director for Blue Ridge Public Radio.

Category: Military

The Marine Corps Bans The Confederate Flag:

Earlier this month the U.S. Marine Corps ordered the removal of the Confederate flag from Marine installations. The timing suggests this announcement is tied to recent protests against racism and police brutality across the country — but this order is a follow-up to a February order from the highest-ranking officer in the Marines. American Homefront Project reporter Steve Walsh discusses the details of this order with host Frank Stasio and puts it into context. Walsh is based at KPBS in San Diego.

Category: Health

NC's COVID-19 Numbers Are Going Up, Here's How To Make Sense Of The Data

As businesses reopen and summer weather lures people into public spaces, health officials in North Carolina worry about the pandemic's increasing toll on the population. Confirmed COVID-19 cases in the state topped 45,000 this week. Hospitalizations are trending upward, and more than 1,100 people have died. Gov. Roy Cooper and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen are reconsidering the move into Phase Three at the end of June. Host Frank Stasio talks with Liora Engel-Smith, a reporter for North Carolina Health News about making sense of the most recent numbers. Lisa Gralinski, assistant professor of epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, also joins Stasio to discuss the state of testing and vaccines.

Category: Race & Demographics

Ronnie Pepper Wants You To Eat Your Broccoli And Confront Ingrained Racism

When Ronnie Pepper was a kid, his mother told him he could not be the president or an astronaut. Though she did not say it aloud, Pepper understood that it was because of the color of his skin. Patterns of internalized oppression and ingrained racism are some of the targets of recent protests and calls for social change across the country. Pepper sees the moment as ripe to start conversations closer to home with family and friends who may say or do things that harm Black communities. The process may be like getting a kid to eat their broccoli, Pepper says. People may not want to hear criticism or new ideas right away, but if you get them to try just a little bit, they'll be more open to trying it again later. Host Frank Stasio talks with Pepper, a professional storyteller and librarian at the Henderson County Public Library, about starting these difficult conversations and his tactics for talking about race.

June 15, 2020

Category: Environment

From 'Death And Dirt' Law To Conservation For Black-Owned Forests: Meet Mavis Gragg

Mavis Gragg never thought her work would "take her to the trees," but that is where she has found herself. She grew up during the 80s in Black Mountain, North Carolina as the middle child to a long-haul truck driver and a bank teller. Gragg had her sights set on law school from an early age after her father promised her an orange corvette as a law school graduation gift. After studying unions and labor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill as an undergraduate, she went on to graduate from Pepperdine University Rick J. Caruso School of Law in 2002. She did not get the corvette, but Gragg knew she had made her parents proud and she started working for a large firm in Washington, D.C. Then in 2012, Gragg's parents died unexpectedly. The sudden loss propelled her into an emotional and career reckoning. Was she really practicing law because she wanted to, or because her parents wanted her to? About a year of career guidance and therapy later, Gragg realized she was just practicing the wrong kind of law. In 2014 she moved to Durham and opened her own law firm that specialized in what she

calls “death and dirt” law. The idea to focus on estate planning and heirs property law came after her parents’ death, when Gragg suddenly became the custodian to a number of family estates, and her family lost considerable property. She wanted to help other families get organized and prepared for what happens when a family member passes, particularly for people of a low socioeconomic class whose wealth is even more precious. That practice ran until 2019, when Gragg accepted the position of director of the Sustainable Forestry & African American Land Retention Program with the American Forest Foundation. Black land ownership in America has steadily declined since its peak 100 years ago, so Gragg helps black families maintain and keep their privately-owned forest land. It is a departure from the legal world, but Gragg enjoys the conservationist aspect to her work in protecting African American property. Host Anita Rao talks to Mavis Gragg about finding purpose in her work and how families can protect intergenerational wealth.

June 12, 2020

Category: Poverty

Landlords Can Begin Evicting On June 21: These Are Your Rights

Chief Justice Cheri Beasley’s moratorium against evictions ends on June 21. Those living in federally-subsidized housing — also called Section 8 — have until July 25. On those deadlines, landlords may begin serving eviction notices, and then tenants have 30 days to respond either through the court or by paying owed rent. For non-English speakers in North Carolina, fighting against eviction can be confusing. Host Frank Stasio discusses possible steps to stay in one’s home with Sarah D’Amato, a staff attorney for Legal Aid of North Carolina. To learn more about the health risks posed by housing insecurity, especially among North Carolina Latinos, Stasio talks with Rosa Gonzalez-Guarda, an associate professor at Duke University School of Nursing and the co-director of the community engagement core for Duke’s Clinical Translational Science Institute.

Category: Politics

Meet NC’s Mayors — Bobbie Jones Of Princeville

When Hurricane Matthew flooded his hometown in 2016, Mayor Bobbie Jones understood the magnitude of the decisions ahead. As the National Guard drained the floodwaters back into the Tar River, some of the 2,200 residents considered relocation. Mayor Jones flat-out refused. For him and for many of his neighbors, neither Hurricane Matthew nor Floyd in 1999 could compare to their ancestors’ struggle to found the town. Settled in 1865 as Freedom Hill, the freedfolk arrived from all over Eastern North Carolina with few-to-no resources and had access to none of the federal or state infrastructure dollars available to their descendants today. It is the oldest town in the nation established by Black people, and it remains 97% African American. Yet, with many residents only a generation away from sharecropping cotton — Jones included — the danger of economic subjugation remains a constant fear. Mayor Bobbie Jones tells host Frank Stasio about why an autonomous and thriving Princeville remains an important symbol for Black America.

Category: Arts and Culture

Zoocrü And The Soundtrack For Black Power Worldwide

Zoocrü is a Durham progressive jazz combo embedded in African diasporic music. They describe themselves more simply — Zoocrü is Black American music. Drummer and founding member Jonathan Curry wants listeners to understand the different lineages in Black American music. Between songs, the audience learns about the band’s influences and intentions — how and why they draw on North Carolina legends like John Coltrane and Max Roach while incorporating rhythms and licks from Ethiopia and West Africa. Their first album, “Lucid,” is a celebration of local stars positioned within the global diaspora, featuring spoken word by Dasan Ahanu along with contributions by trumpeter Al Strong and others. Host Frank Stasio talks with

Curry about the group's new album, which is ready for release but on hold due to COVID-19, and the lively conversation between Black percussionists worldwide. Alongside Curry, Zoocrü includes saxophonist and keyboardist Alan Thompson, Christian Sharp on bass, and guitarist Russell Favret.

June 11, 2020

Category: Law

What Criminal Justice Reforms Are State Lawmakers Discussing?

Cities around the country are facing pressure to reform their policing and take a hard look at systemic racism. Minneapolis announced the intent to defund portions of their police department. Other cities have ended relationships between school systems and the police. In North Carolina some cities are moving forward with reform. But what about statewide policies and legislation? Host Anita Rao talks with Jeff Tiberii, WUNC's capitol bureau chief, about state lawmakers' response to protests over police violence. He also gives updates on the move to reopen the state in the face of rising COVID-19 hospitalizations and deaths.

Category: Race/Minorities

Embodied: Everyone Is Talking About Race Right Now. But How And For How Long?

Nationwide protests against the police killing of George Floyd are still underway, and they have reignited discourse around race and racism. These conversations can be particularly challenging for friends, partners, and colleagues of different races. Interracial couples may be approaching conversations about racism from difficult angles than usual in this moment -- or engaging the topic directly for the very first time. White friends are struggling with how to approach their black friends during this time, and black friends are finding it challenging to field an influx of "check-ins" from friends and colleagues who've rarely talked to them about race or racism before. On this week's "Embodied," host Anita Rao will talk to Sarah E. Gaither, assistant professor of psychology and neuroscience at Duke University, Rain Bennett, filmmaker and host of The Storytelling Lab podcast, Priska Neely, reporter/producer for the podcast and website Reveal, and Candace Manriquez Wrenn, director and producer for NPR's Marketplace about navigating cross-racial conversations in a time of civil unrest.

June 10, 2020

Category: Arts and Culture

Movies On The Radio Screens "Return Of The Drive-In"

Social distancing guidelines are pushing many social interactions outdoors — so why not the movies? Drive-in theaters had their heyday in the 1950s and '60s, with showings of family classics, kitschy horror films, sci-fi wonders and — ahem — "adults-only" flicks. The coronavirus pandemic has sparked a resurgence of interest in the iconic activity.

For this month's Movies on the Radio, host Frank Stasio and film experts Marsha Gordon and Laura Boyes discuss films that made it big at the drive-in, reflect on listener's memories of the drive-in experience and share their own favorite drive-in stories. They'll talk about how films like "Yours, Mine and Ours" drew in cars full of kids in pajamas in the backseat, and how parents hoped the kids would fall asleep while they watched "Psycho." They'll also review films that were enhanced by the outdoor experience, like "Close Encounters of the Third Kind" and "Men in Black 3."

Gordon and Boyes share the history of drive-ins and the way the pandemic has affected the movie theater industry. Gordon is a film professor at North Carolina State University and a

public scholar at the National Endowment for the Humanities. Boyes is the film curator for the North Carolina Museum of Art and the curator of the Moviediva series.

Tuesday, June 9, 2020

Category: Breaking News

NC Prisons Failed To Protect Inmates From COVID-19, Judge Orders Mass Testing

North Carolina has failed to protect inmates from COVID-19, according to a ruling from a Wake County Superior Court judge. The litigation against Gov. Roy Cooper and members of the North Carolina Department of Public Safety highlights evidence and affidavits that contradict DPS' claimed safety measures. Judge Winston Rozier Jr.'s order remains unreleased, but could include guidance for mass testing and a long-term reduction in the state's inmate population. Host Frank Stasio talks with reporter Jordan Wilkie about the lasting implications for North Carolina prisons. Wilkie is a Report for America Corps member working for Carolina Public Press. His coverage is part of the NC Watchdog Reporting Network in which WUNC participates.

Category: Politics

In Charlotte, COVID-19 Continues To Complicate RNC Planning

As President Donald Trump plans to move his presidential nomination acceptance speech to a different venue, the city of Charlotte continues its plan to host the Republican National Convention this August. North Carolina's reopening timeline, now in Phase 2, still only allows indoor gatherings of 10 or fewer, making it difficult for RNC organizers to estimate the number of attendees, as well as the public health measures necessary to accommodate a gathering of any size. Host Frank Stasio talks to WFAE political reporter Steve Harrison about what may be in store at a socially-distant RNC.

Category: Race/Minorities

'Impossible Documents' — How An Enslaved Muslim Scholar Illuminates Southern Identity

In the 1700s, approximately 5% of the pre-colonial United States was Muslim. Most of them were enslaved, and one of the foundational figures of early American Islam lived in North Carolina. Omar ibn Said has confounded scholars and translators for more than a century. An educated scholar from an aristocratic family, Said was enslaved and brought to the port of Charleston in 1807 from his homelands in the Futa Toro region of modern-day Senegal. His autobiography is written in Arabic with a Southern accent and includes references to West African locations and Sufi literature. In it, Said attacked his enslavers and the conditions of the American South while also illuminating his struggle to overcome the psychological imprisonment of slavery. He wrote because he needed to.

Host Frank Stasio talks with 21st century translators of Said, Professors Mbaye Bashir Lo and Carl Ernst. The two scholars dispute earlier commentary that cast Said's writing as unintelligible. Contextualizing Said within the linguistic and cultural landscape in which he was raised, they find evidence of Sufism and Islamic syncretism. Their translation and commentary assert the ways Said underscores Islam and the African diaspora's foundational role in the making of Southern culture and society. Lo is an associate professor of the practice of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Duke University and Ernst is a professor and the co-director of the Center for Middle East and Islamic Studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. The partners taught a course on the subject and their critical edition of Said's writings will be published digitally by the University of Maryland.

June 8, 2020

Category: Arts & Culture

This Author Will Help You Teach Your Kids About Race: Meet Carole Boston Weatherford

Carole Boston Weatherford wrote her first poem in first grade. She dictated it to her mother on the way home from elementary school in Baltimore. Her father, a high school printing teacher, printed the poem on an index card. She continued writing poems, and her father used them for typewriting exercises in his classes. Weatherford was in elementary school during the height of the civil rights movement, but she encountered very few black characters or people of color in the children's books she read growing up. Now the author of more than 50 books for children and young adults, Weatherford writes stories that fill in some of the many gaps she saw in the books from her childhood. Her books often depict the stories of African American leaders, explorers and artists, many of whose stories are seldom told. They also navigate ugly pieces of American history like slavery, the 1963 Birmingham bombing and police brutality against black communities. She puts an intentional spotlight on the arts, and incorporates her love of jazz and her passion for artists like Billie Holiday into her work. Weatherford keeps her finger on the pulse of young peoples' interests as a professor of English at Fayetteville State University. Host Frank Stasio talks with Weatherford about her childhood in Maryland, her growth as a writer and the themes of history, race and music that thread their way through her literature.

June 5, 2020

Category: Environment

GenX Contamination Research Continues Three Years After Breaking Story

Three years ago this weekend, the public learned about the presence of a toxic chemical compound known as GenX in the Wilmington-area drinking water. The Wilmington Star News broke the story, highlighting the research that a North Carolina State University lab — led by Detlef Knappe — conducted on the drinking water and its links to the discharge from Chemours' Fayetteville Works plant into the Cape Fear River. Local government officials are still fighting for greater regulation of toxins like GenX. Researchers are also still conducting studies on humans and wildlife to determine the long-term effects of the compound in living systems. Host Frank Stasio speaks with WHQR reporter Vince Winkel about the most recent updates and research on GenX.

Category: Politics

How 'Violent' Is Property Damage?

Do looting and property damage subvert the movement against police violence? Or does the police response to material destruction expose law enforcement's prioritization of private property over human life? While four in five people in the U.S. believe peaceful protests are an appropriate response to a police killing of an unarmed black man, the same number believes that property damage undermines the movement. Yet the damage goes both ways. Less-lethal weapons are not innocuous — police have blinded people with rubber bullets, and tear gas and sonic cannons can sometimes cause lasting damage. Is it worth hurting people in order to protect property? Evidenced by their enforcement tactics, the City of Raleigh appears to say yes; Durham says no. Demonstrations were met with starkly different policing in the neighboring cities. Host Frank Stasio hears about those responses from Durham Mayor Pro Tempore Jillian Johnson, along with a protest organizer and local business owners. Stasio also speaks with Blue Ridge Public Radio News Director Matt Bush about the Asheville Police Department destroying a protester medical station and deploying tear gas four nights in a row.

Category: Arts & Culture

Do The Work, Then Write A Poem About It: An NC Poet's Take On Poetry And Activism

Writing poetry in this moment of civil unrest is not much different than writing poetry at any other time in American history, according to Hausson Byrd. He says poets have been writing about

police brutality, racism and violence since the beginning. Still, he views the latest wave of protest and demonstrations as an opportunity to reinvigorate conversations about race. Byrd is a slam poet and senior at North Carolina A&T University and member of the Bull City Slam Team. His first brush with poetry was only an extra credit opportunity for one of his freshman classes. But after getting on stage to spit poems about life, he was hooked. Host Frank Stasio talks with Byrd about his coupling of poetry and advocacy. You can view live poetry readings at Byrd's NC A&T poetry club Instagram account @aggielivepoets.

June 4, 2020

Category: Politics

COVID-19 Spurs Bipartisan Support For Absentee Ballot Bill

With rare consensus from Democrats and Republicans in the North Carolina House of Representatives, House Bill 1169 — which outlines provisions for an anticipated increase in absentee-by-mail voting this fall — passed 116-3 last week. Fear over public safety at polling sites has led to the quick, decisive action. The State Board of Elections projects that requests for mail-in ballots in North Carolina could jump from around 4% to 40% this year, based on data seen from recent elections in other states like Wisconsin. House Bill 1169 makes its way through Senate committees this week. Host Frank Stasio talks to WUNC political reporter Rusty Jacobs about what the bill's potential success could mean for the general election in November.

Race/Minorities

Examining Gaps In The 1968 Report That First Named White Racism As The Cause For Black Riots

Anti-racist activists are protesting across the country in response to police brutality against people of color, particularly black men. This latest wave began after George Floyd's death in police custody, captured on cell phone footage. Many recognize that white racism and violence against black and brown people lead to this civil unrest, but what causes white violence? Keisha Bentley-Edwards points to a report from over 50 years ago to help us understand. She is the director of the Health Equity Working Group for the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity at Duke University and co-author of the paper "How Does It Feel to Be a Problem? The Missing Kerner Commission Report." The 1968 Kerner Report, commissioned by President Lyndon Johnson following 1967's "long, hot summer" of black riots, investigated the reason for unrest and named white racism as the cause. Bentley-Edwards points to a history of race riots in which white people assaulted black people and property left out of the report. Up until the mid-20th century, she says, the term "race riot" usually meant white violence. Host Frank Stasio talks with Bentley-Edwards about blind spots in the Kerner Report and how the country can move forward by reckoning with white violence.

Category: Arts and Culture

Jooselord: 'It's Gonna Get Rough In Here'

Inciting riots is his God-given gift, the Durham rapper admits. Jooselord Magnus does it regularly on stage and his upcoming release — "MoshPit Messiah" — is a testament to that skill. So it was a surprise to some of Jooselord's fans when he maintained peace at protests over the past week in Raleigh and Durham. He expresses equal regard for peaceful and violent protesting, as long as they remain different strategies to the same end. Host Frank Stasio and Jooselord discuss the long fight against police brutality and listen to tracks off of "MoshPit Messiah," slated for release on October 30. Raised in North Carolina, Jooselord recounts confrontations with Durham police and explains his view of gang culture as a beautiful aspect of

the city worth celebrating. Meanwhile his music calls out Durham's transformation: "Put a Starbucks in the hood and watch 'em lock up brothers."

June 3, 2020

Category: Race/Minorities

NC Latinos Four Times More Likely To Contract COVID-19:

Thirty-nine percent of the people with confirmed cases of coronavirus in North Carolina are Hispanic. But Latinos only make up 9.6% of the total population. Health experts say the disproportionate rate is due to working and living conditions as well as access to culturally-appropriate health care and information. Many Latinos work in essential services that do not offer paid sick leave or health benefits. To better understand this intersection of labor, health and race, host Frank Stasio talks with Paola Jaramillo, co-founder and executive editor of Enlace Latino NC, and Dr. José Cabañas, medical director of Wake County EMS.

Category: Race/Minorities

NC Community Members Reflect On Their History With Policing And Protests

As protests against police brutality, harassment and discrimination continue across the state, community leaders and citizens are taking time to reflect on their own experiences with law enforcement and the country's long history of racial disparity in policing. They are also looking ahead and contemplating the future of policing and public safety. Chris Suggs, founder of Kinston Teens, discusses the protest youth organizers planned in Kinston on June 1, their demands for police accountability and the community pushback the protest received. Host Frank Stasio talks to Adriane Lentz-Smith, associate professor of history and African and African American studies at Duke University; Toska Cooper, member of the Carolina Black Caucus; and Nia Wilson, executive director of SpiritHouse.

Category: Race/Minorities

Schools, Universities Can Confront Racism By Talking About It

In 2016, a 43-year-old black man named Keith Lamont Scott was shot by police about a mile away from the main campus of the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The shooting sparked demonstrations in the student body, but the administration was slow to respond. In the aftermath of the shooting and protests, Tracey Benson, assistant professor of educational leadership at UNC-Charlotte, conducted a study analyzing the university's response and recommending ways that the institution could have guided professors in starting conversations about race and meeting the needs of students after the traumatic event. Benson talks with host Frank Stasio about the role of higher education in establishing racial literacy among its students. They also discuss the relationship between the police force and K-12 education system in North Carolina.

June 2, 2020

Category: Breaking News

Protests Across NC Deepen Tensions Between Communities And The Police:

For the last three nights, people in communities around North Carolina raised their voices and demonstrated against police brutality against black people. The death of George Floyd sparked these protests in the Tar Heel state and around the country. A police officer killed Floyd in Minneapolis on Memorial Day by kneeling on his neck for nearly nine minutes after detaining him for allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill. On Saturday and Sunday in North Carolina, peaceful protests turned to violence in several different cities and towns. Local officials have declared states of emergency in Raleigh, Charlotte, Fayetteville and Wilmington. In all of those towns, law enforcement officers used tear gas and other less-lethal weapons against people

demonstrating. Some protesters in Fayetteville, Charlotte, Wilmington, Raleigh and other communities broke windows, started fires and vandalized property. Many cities across the state imposed a curfew by Monday night, and demonstrations on Monday night around the state remained peaceful. Host Frank Stasio talks to Jason DeBruyn about protests in the state's capital and how they evolved over several nights. DeBruyn is WUNC's data reporter.

Category: Arts/Culture

#BackChannel: Processing Protests And Police Violence On Top Of A Pandemic:

As of June 2, The Washington Post reports on-duty police officers have shot and killed 422 people in 2020 — on par with the average number of fatal police shootings in the U.S. despite the way the coronavirus pandemic has changed or slowed down everyday life. The death of George Floyd in Minneapolis is a flashpoint and sparked protests across the nation over the weekend. In many communities, police officers donned riot gear and used tear gas, rubber bullets and other means to subdue those demonstrating — and peaceful protests turned violent, leading to fires, broken windows and vandalism. On this edition of #BackChannel, host Frank Stasio talks to pop culture experts Natalie Bullock Brown and Mark Anthony Neal about the protests, the police response and how communities are reacting to the most recent victims of police brutality: Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery. They also discuss the pain of this recent violence in addition to the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on African Americans. Natalie Bullock Brown is a filmmaker and teaching assistant professor at North Carolina State University. Mark Anthony Neal is the James B. Duke Professor and chair of the department of African and African American studies at Duke University.

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

How Do We Hold Police Officers Accountable In NC?:

On Memorial Day, former Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin put his knee on George Floyd's neck for over eight minutes, leaving it there after Floyd lost consciousness and became unresponsive. Chauvin was detaining Floyd after he allegedly used a counterfeit \$20 bill in a deli. The police officer had been with the Minneapolis Police Department for over 18 years, and 18 complaints were filed against him during that time. Only two of those complaints were "closed with discipline," and neither hurt his career. Many are asking why a police officer with so many complaints was still on the streets — and who knew about these numerous complaints. In North Carolina, a citizen can only review the disciplinary record of a police officer after they have been fired. Advocates say this is one of the things that needs to change to increase police accountability in the state. Host Frank Stasio talks to Dawn Blagrove about the laws that protect police officers from citizen scrutiny and why she is working to change them. She is the executive director of Emancipate NC, a nonprofit organization dedicated to dismantling structural racism in North Carolina.

June 1, 2020

Category: Economy

From Designing Toys To Promoting Business Sustainability: Meet Jessica Yinka Thomas

Jessica Yinka Thomas grew up in both the United States and West Africa. Her father, a Nigerian economics professor, and her mother, an American computer scientist, raised their four kids between Miami, Nigeria, Senegal and eventually Maryland to get them ready for college in the states. After studying engineering at Stanford University, Thomas took a job designing satellite systems. It bored her, so she thought back to a toy design project from her senior year for a career-change inspiration. She walked the aisles of a Toys-R-Us and

was drawn to the educational games that the then-new company LeapFrog offered. She cold-called them and asked for a job, and in the mid-90s she became a toy designer. As much as she loved her work, Thomas could not shake her concerns that the companies did not think about their social impact. That desire to better understand business decisions brought her to Duke University's Fuqua School of Business. Now, she is the Director of the North Carolina State Poole College of Management Business Sustainability Collaborative and runs the NC State B-Corp Clinic, which pairs businesses with students to enhance a company's environmental and social impact. She is also the author of two social justice novels, "How Not To Save the World" (Lulu/2012) and "How Not To Make Friends" (Lulu/2019). Host Frank Stasio talks with Thomas about how she balances her STEM background with her creative side and what she hopes to teach her students about a better business future. Note: This segment originally aired February 10, 2020.

May 29, 2020

Category: Politics

The Political Junkie: Is 2020 Even Happening?

Perhaps you are grateful for the lack of election news. While coverage of presidential primary contenders started back in 2018, former Vice President Joe Biden has all but disappeared from the news. Except for ongoing coverage of the sexual assault allegations and last week's "you ain't black" comment, Biden's campaign is struggling to regain the spotlight. Meanwhile, President Donald Trump is taking on the very platform he broadcasts over. Will the escalating feud with Twitter lead to concrete policies surrounding social media sites' authority to censor? According to polls of North Carolina registered and likely voters, Republican Senator Thom Tillis closed in on Democratic challenger Cal Cunningham during the month of May. In fact, Tillis crossed party lines last month in support of Governor Roy Cooper's phased reopening. The Political Junkie Ken Rudin joins host Anita Rao to discuss the ways voting access and social media will affect the 2020 elections.

Category: Arts & Culture

All The Songs We Sing: A Celebration Of North Carolina's Black Writers

Twenty-five years ago, renowned poet Lenard D. Moore invited a group of his peers into his basement for a session of writing critique. That monthly gathering evolved into the Carolina African American Writers' Collective, which has supported over 60 writers across a variety of styles through their careers. Members have published books, chapbooks, essays and their writing appears in a variety of literary magazines. The collective celebrates 25 years of honing their craft with the anthology "All the Songs We Sing" (Blair/2020), out June 2. Host Anita Rao reflects on the CAAWC's history with founder and editor of "All the Songs We Sing" Lendar D. Moore. Journalist and author Bridgette Lacy joins the conversation and shares her memories of the collective. And writer Angela Belcher Epps talks about how working with the collective helped sharpen her writing. Lacy, Belcher Epps and poet Crystal Simone Smith will host a virtual "All the Songs We Sing" workshop May 30-31 on Zoom.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — Zeb Smathers Of Canton

Coming of age in a decaying mill town is a common American recipe for brain drain. While growing up in Canton, Zeb Smathers anxiously watched his community struggle with the fallout from globalization. The mountain town's blue collar spirit was under threat. His grandfather's grocery store went out of business and the town's paper mill changed hands and downsized. Smathers left. He came from a well-to-do family and was able to attend Duke University then head to Chapel Hill for law school. Studying in the Triangle during the early 2000s, Smathers wondered if his hometown

could follow Durham and Fuquay-Varina and recover from total factory-dependence to develop a diversified economy. So he returned to the mountains and, soon after, followed in his father's footsteps as mayor. In leadership, Smathers celebrates the grit of the mill town — the paper factory stubbornly remains open — while developing a burgeoning bedroom community to Asheville, only 25 minutes away. Now with mass unemployment threatening that progress, along with the added responsibilities of a newborn at home, Smathers acknowledges that the job is not getting any easier. Host Anita Rao follows Canton Mayor Zeb Smathers down memory lane to think about the prospects for post-pandemic sustainable development.

May 28, 2020

Category: Health

Coronavirus Cases Are Breaking Out In Meat Processing Plants — But How Many Remains Unclear

Meat processing facilities in North Carolina have seen coronavirus outbreaks among their workers, disrupting supply chains and causing concerns about meat shortages. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services told a North Carolina news collaborative on Tuesday that there are 2,146 cases in 28 outbreaks at meat processing facilities. But the exact number of cases and the identity of plants that experienced the outbreaks remains unclear. NCDHHS does not require meatpacking facilities to disclose cases of COVID-19, relying instead on voluntary reporting that the department has been reluctant to share with the public. In a [press briefing](#) earlier this month, NCDHHS secretary Mandy Cohen told reporters to “stay tuned” for more information about these outbreaks. WUNC's data reporter Jason DeBruyn is part of the statewide news collaborative that has been reaching out to the state and local health departments to get a clearer picture of the number of cases. Host Anita Rao talks with DeBruyn about the why the data has not been released to the public and the implications this has for worker safety and the supply chain.

Category: Health

Embodied: How COVID-19 Is Changing Childbirth

Pregnancy and postpartum experiences can already be rife with anxiety. But since the beginning of the coronavirus crisis, expectant and new mothers' anxieties have heightened exponentially. From prenatal visit restrictions to cancelled baby showers and welcome-home visits, mothers are feeling more isolated and overwhelmed as they adapt to changes they could not have anticipated or imagined. On this installment of Embodied, host Anita Rao talks about the challenges of carrying, delivering and bringing home babies during COVID-19, with Melanie Patrick, co-owner of Emerald Doulas in Durham; first-time expectant mom and doula Maya Hart; and Megan Roberts, program coordinator at Moms Supporting Moms in Raleigh.

May 27, 2020

Category: Health

Our Pandemic Summer: A Statewide Special:

Summer for many families in North Carolina is filled with beach weekends, getaways to the mountains, bountiful produce and other fun in the sun. But how much of that will be possible this season with the ongoing coronavirus pandemic? Public radio stations from across North Carolina joined forces to look into summer 2020 for “Our Pandemic Summer: A Statewide Special.” WUNC's “The State of Things” host Frank Stasio interviews scientist Lisa Gralinski about how COVID-19 responds to heat, water and other facets of summer life. Gralinski is an assistant professor in the department of epidemiology in the Gillings School of Global Public Health at UNC-Chapel Hill. WFAE's “Charlotte Talks” host Mike Collins talks to WFAE political reporter Steve Harrison about how the pandemic may impact the Republican National Convention, scheduled to take place in Charlotte in August. And WUNC “The State of Things”

host Anita Rao investigates how the coronavirus has changed things for our state's migrant and seasonal farm workers with Aaron Sánchez-Guerra, a reporter for The News & Observer. Plus, reporters from public radio stations WFDD in Winston-Salem, BPR in Asheville and WHQR in Wilmington share their reporting on the status of minor league baseball and summer camps in western North Carolina; summer festivals in the Triad and the restaurant industry in Wilmington.

May 26, 2020

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

Cherokee County DSS Indictments Shed Light On Unlawful Family Separations

In North Carolina it is unlawful to separate a child from a biological parent without the oversight of a judge. But in Cherokee County, a grand jury has indicted at least three current and former Department of Social Services officials for allegedly doing just that. Cindy Palmer, former Cherokee County DSS director; David Hughes, former child protective unit supervisor; and Scott Lindsay, former DSS attorney were charged last week with more than three dozen felonies and misdemeanors, including obstruction of justice and contributing to the delinquency of a minor. Host Frank Stasio talks to Kate Martin, investigative reporter for Carolina Public Press about what is at stake in the case.

Category: Health

Asymptomatic Testing At Nursing Homes Will Be Key In Preventing Coronavirus Spread

Nursing homes are hotspots for spreading the coronavirus. Long-term residents can more easily stay isolated from family and friends, but workers and short-term patients travel in and out of nursing home communities. Many may be asymptomatic, unknowingly providing an opportunity for the virus to enter and exit vulnerable communities. As of Tuesday, May 26, North Carolina nursing homes have seen at least 2,948 coronavirus cases and 401 deaths, and there have been at least 612 cases and 57 deaths at residential care facilities, according to the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Host Frank Stasio talks with Don Taylor, a professor of public policy at Duke University, who researches aging and health systems. Taylor speaks about the need for federally funded widespread asymptomatic testing in order to curb the transmission of the virus. Taylor says the state is responsible for figuring out how to carry out testing, while private institutions must determine the best testing tools.

Category: Race/Minorities

In Memoriam: Andrea Harris Opened Doors For Minority-Owned Businesses In North Carolina

Andrea Harris was a force to be reckoned with. An advocate for the economic advancement of minority communities in the state, she tore down barriers that prevented those communities from owning homes or running businesses. In 1986, she co-founded the North Carolina Institute of Minority Economic Development, known familiarly as The Institute, and served as its president for many years. The Institute has given over \$1 billion to minority businesses in financial and contract awards. Harris grew up in Henderson and attended Bennett College in Greensboro. She started her career in advocacy and economic justice at the age of 23, when she became the director of a community action agency in her hometown and fought poverty in three rural counties. Harris died Wednesday at the age of 72. Host Frank Stasio remembers her life and legacy with Lew Myers and Anita Brown-Graham. Myers met Harris when they were both in their 20s and co-founded The Institute. Brown-Graham was one of Harris' mentees. She is a professor of public law and government at the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Government and the director of the nclMPACT Initiative.

May 25, 2020

Category: Health

Meet ‘The Coronavirus Hunter’ Ralph Baric

The coronavirus that causes COVID-19 took most of the world by surprise — but not Ralph Baric. He is an epidemiologist at UNC-Chapel Hill who has been dubbed “the coronavirus hunter.” Baric has been tracking coronaviruses for decades and working on medications to treat coronavirus-caused infections, including remdesivir, a drug that the FDA approved for COVID-19 treatment with an emergency use authorization earlier this month. Baric spoke recently with Terry and Joe Graedon, hosts of The People’s Pharmacy, and The State of Things features a special edition of that program today. Baric is the William R. Kenan Jr. distinguished professor of microbiology and immunology at the UNC Gillings School of Public Health.

May 22, 2020

Category: Education

UNC System Plans Campus Reopening For Fall 2020

As colleges across the nation deliberate over whether to continue holding classes remotely in the fall, UNC system schools — including North Carolina A&T State University, NC State University, UNC-Greensboro, and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill — have already announced their tentative plans for campus reopening. The plan includes an amended calendar, with varying semester start dates. UNC-Chapel Hill will begin on August 10 and end at Thanksgiving break. Other campuses are contemplating starting later in August or as late as after Labor Day. At UNC-Chapel Hill, dining halls and residence halls will also be reopened to students in the fall, with some stipulations. A more comprehensive contingency plan is in the works. Host Frank Stasio talks about the details with WUNC education reporter Liz Schlemmer.

Category: Economy

Labor Organizing In A Pandemic: Asheville Nurses Await A Consequential Union Decision

Strikes and labor organizing are on the rise as essential workers grapple with safety concerns while on the job. Meatpacking plants, city sanitation and healthcare are some of the industries where workers are striking or organizing. Host Frank Stasio speaks with senior labor reporter and founder of Payday Report Mike Elk about national labor organizing trends since the start of the pandemic. Here in North Carolina, nurses employed by one of the state’s largest health systems, Mission Health, are pushing to unionize. Freelance reporter Jonathan Michels joins the conversation to share the conflict between nurses and HCA Healthcare in Asheville, which owns Mission Health. And Trisha Stevenson, an emergency department nurse at Mission Hospital in Asheville, shares what is happening on the ground as she and her colleagues look for more power and representation.

Category: Arts & Culture

How Author Victoria Lee’s Fantasy Novel Eerily Predicted Our Present Moment

When Victoria Lee first wrote “The Fever King” (2019/Skyscape), they did not intend to predict the future. Rather, they hoped to explore our habit of repeating history. Then the coronavirus hit, and the parallels between the fictional Durham, Carolina in 2074 and the real Durham, North Carolina in 2020 deepened further. The fantasy YA novel focuses on Noam Álvaro, a child of undocumented immigrants from Atlantia living in a post-apocalyptic Carolina. A pandemic of a magical virus plagues the nation, and the vast majority of people

who contract the virus die. Some, however, survive and retain magical powers catered to their personalities. After Noam's parents die, and he survives the virus with a new power to control technology, he is recruited by the government that oppresses immigrant families like his own. In their book, Lee explores themes like immigration, xenophobia, child sexual abuse and public health. Their novel, the first in a series, was adapted for the webcomic app Webtoon. The comic has more than 373,000 subscribers, who read an updated strip of the story weekly. Host Frank Stasio talks with author Victoria Lee about writing a fantasy novel based in the South and the joys of watching an illustrator translate words into art. You can follow Lee on Instagram at @sosaidvictoria, where they host occasional live events.

May 21, 2020

Category: Breaking News

Memorial Day Weekend Sees Phase Two Of NC's Reopening Plan

As a holiday weekend typically celebrated with travel and social gatherings approaches, Governor Roy Cooper announced the state's plans for proceeding with Phase Two of reopening. The news comes as a relief to businesses like salons and barbershops, which can finally resume appointments at 50% capacity, but restaurants are torn on whether reopening dine-in service at half-capacity is a good thing for their overall bottom line. Localities can use their discretion about how to implement Phase Two. Durham, for instance, will not reopen its restaurants, salons and pools until June 1. Host Anita Rao talks to WUNC reporter Will Michaels about which restrictions will be eased and which will remain in place during Phase Two.

Category: Health

Embodied: Finding Care For Substance Use Disorders During A Pandemic

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, people with substance use disorders and those in recovery find themselves at risk for relapses and overdoses. Feelings of isolation, fear and anxiety act as triggers for substance use and mental health issues. Though recovery providers have scrambled to continue providing care, the pandemic has made some resources physically or financially unable to continue. In a survey of 70 addiction treatment organizations, Addiction Professionals of North Carolina found that 57% of organizations had to close at least one program. But treatment centers are finding new ways to connect people in need with the resources and assistance. Patient care has moved online, as well as recovery group meetings. On this installment of Embodied, host Anita Rao talks with four guests about challenges and stories of resilience in recovery communities during the pandemic: Crystal Moore is a member of a recovery community in Raleigh; Dr. Steve North is a family physician and adolescent medicine specialist who serves as the state medical director for Eleanor Health, a substance use disorder treatment provider; Jarmichael Harris is the collegiate recovery community coordinator at East Carolina University; and Lona (LC) Currie is the creator of the Hope in Recovery Network and the Recovery SoulFood Podcast and YouTube channel.

May 20, 2020

Category: Education

During COVID-19, Some Student Loan Borrowers Find Temporary Relief

Over one million North Carolinians have student loan debt, and the average borrower owes about \$25,000. Even under normal circumstances, education debt can be prohibitive. It affects the borrower's ability and readiness to buy a home or start a family. It can even make things like taking a small annual vacation impossible. It is good, then, that during COVID-19, the federal government has made some temporary provisions for federal loan borrowers. Forbearance is

available under the CARES Act until Sept. 30, 2020. But with the long-term financial impact of the crisis still accruing, it is uncertain whether borrowers will be in any better shape to repay when the provision ends this fall. Host Frank Stasio talks about the landscape of student loan debt during COVID-19 and beyond with WUNC education reporter Liz Schlemmer; Rochelle Sparko, director for NC Policy at the Center for Responsible Lending; and Trey Roberts, a first-generation college graduate and co-founder of Raleigh Pride.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — Charles Townsend Of Fairmont

Summers were spent at his father's gas station. Charles Townsend met all sorts of folks while manning the ice house. In the muggy lowlands of Robeson County, ice was a sought after commodity — no matter if you were raising tobacco or bidding on it in the warehouses. But as the cash crop went into decline, and Townsend considered his career prospects, he chose to leave the town of 2,000 people to work in retail. Since returning, Townsend has rediscovered the town's character. Through working a variety of jobs, from substitute teacher to insurance agent, he began measuring the needs of his community. That experience informs his outlook as mayor. At the beginning of his tenure he used his leadership to prioritize skills-training and instilling confidence in the town's young people, as he would have wanted for himself. But after witnessing main street shutter, he could no longer deny the discouraging realities of rural economics. Holding out hope for sustainable development in the wake of timber, textile and tobacco, he continues balancing the need for strong education with economic initiatives. But COVID-19 has presented yet another challenge: two of the area's largest employers, meat processors and the state prison system, are hot spots for infection. Host Frank Stasio talks with Fairmont Mayor Townsend about his changing understanding of success in the small community.

May 19, 2020

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

COVID-19 Deaths Of Female Prisoners Speak Volumes About The Prison System

Andrea Circle Bear was eight months pregnant and serving a two-year sentence for a drug charge when she became the first female federal prisoner to die from the coronavirus. Her death sparked questions and conversation about what placed her in prison and why she was held there under the circumstances. Though incarcerated women make up a small number of the coronavirus deaths in U.S. prisons, their stories illuminate the unique problems women face in prison and how the system punishes women and their families differently from their male counterparts. Host Frank Stasio talks with two reporters from The Marshall Project about their reporting on four women who died from the coronavirus in prison. In their investigation, the reporters noted patterns among the women's narratives, including children left behind, drug addiction and convictions as accomplices to crimes committed by men. Durham-based Joseph Neff and Dallas-based Cary Aspinwall share their reporting on the women's stories and the trends they reveal about female incarceration.

Category: Arts

Can NC's Foodie Culture Survive The Coronavirus? It's Up To You:

North Carolina is known for its barbecue and its bustling food scene. But the state's restaurants and bars have grown quiet and empty over the last few months. Some eateries have been able to offer takeout, delivery or curbside pickup — but not all dishes work well in a box. Host Frank Stasio checks in on the state's restaurants and bars with Matt Lardie and Jenn Rice. Lardie and Rice are both freelance journalists who write for Eater Carolinas. They share their reporting on how different establishments are adapting to take-away food and how chefs are trying to connect directly with patrons. Lardie explains how bars have been particularly hard-hit by the

coronavirus, and Rice talks about how restaurants in smaller towns are making more money because their neighbors are no longer commuting to big cities for work. Chefs from around the state share what they are doing now and how they are thinking about reopening. We hear from Ricky Moore, chef and founder of Saltbox Seafood Joint in Durham; William Dissen, chef and owner of the Market Place restaurant in Asheville, Haymaker restaurant in Charlotte and Billy D's Fried Chicken at the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro; Dean Neff, chef of the upcoming restaurant Seabird in Wilmington; and Katie Button, executive chef of Cúrate and Button & Co. Bagels in Asheville.

Category: Arts

Chef Cheetie Kumar On Slowing Down And The NC Chefs' Group Text:

North Carolina's chefs have all had to pivot and change their business models in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic. Cheetie Kumar closed her Raleigh restaurant Garland in mid-March, right after she closed her music venue Kings. Since then, her life has looked a lot different. Instead of managing a hectic kitchen and working nonstop, she and her husband have spent a lot of time in nature and actually relaxed on the weekends. Kumar says this strange time is teaching her to exercise patience as she looks for signs of what the future might hold. Earlier this month, the James Beard Foundation announced that Kumar is a finalist for Best Chef in the Southeast. Host Frank Stasio talks to the chef about the nomination, how she is planning to reopen and about the regular conversations and check-ins that chefs around North Carolina are having about how to navigate this time.

Category: Arts and Culture

May 18, 2020

Nick And Amelia Tell The Sylvan Esso Story:

They are a Grammy-nominated duo of musical magpies. The shared nest of Amelia Meath and Nick Sanborn is woven with treasures from ambient, Appalachian gospel, EDM, post-rock, folk-pop and trap music. Yet Sylvan Esso is anything but patchwork. While they have characterized their collaboration as an argument, Meath and Sanborn clearly have no trouble dissolving tension between genres. The concoction, while crowd-pleasing, challenges genre-zealots to reconsider. Bluegrass fans may appreciate Sanborn's jerky interpretations of the ballad form. Meanwhile, Meath invites dancehall crowds to follow her sometimes-lagging rhythms and try out some new choreography.

Because of all these outside influences, Sylvan Esso was always a marriage grounded in community. (And yes, the duo is also a sanctified couple). This year, however, Meath and Sanborn invited their respective collaborators to join together. The product is WITH, a symphonic re-imagining of Sylvan Esso. Playing live with eight friends, including some local favorites, Sanborn describes the collaboration as a rediscovery of their own music. Sanborn is on display behind-the-scenes of the concert film of WITH. He moves from conductor to collaborator without hesitation. He enthusiastically relinquishes catchy bass lines to a bass clarinet. Meanwhile, Meath gives feedback through movement — on stage she commands the band and audience in slicked-back hair and dressed in a semi-transparent pink marshmallow suit.

The duo join host Frank Stasio to explore their individual origin stories. Meath remembers her struggles with dyslexia and learning to move in order to think. Sanborn reflects on learning the piano from his father and the magnetism of live performance. Now building their own studio in Chapel Hill, they consider their shared visions and ways to offer each other room to grow.

May 15, 2020

Category: Politics

Christian Leaders Gather To Proclaim Constitutional Right To Gather For Worship

Hundreds of people protested Gov. Roy Cooper's stay-at-home restrictions for churches in Raleigh Thursday morning. Rev. Ron Baity, president of Return America, an organization of Christian leaders based in North Carolina, criticized the governor's executive orders for violating their constitutional right to practice their religion. This criticism is also the subject of a lawsuit the group filed against Cooper in federal court. Cooper responded to the gathering in a briefing Thursday afternoon. He stood by the executive order, saying that allowing gatherings at churches would put the congregants' health at risk. The state is currently in the first phase of Cooper's reopening plan, which restricts gatherings of more than 10 people. This prevents many churches from holding services indoors, but there is no limit to the number of people that can attend an outdoor service. Host Frank Stasio talks with WUNC daily news producer Will Michaels about the protest and the governor's response.

Category: Economy

How Black Small Business Owners Are Rallying to Avoid Permanent Closure

In Durham, small businesses have been the backbone of downtown revitalization. But since COVID-19 forced the closures of most non-essential businesses in mid-March, brick-and-mortar shop owners have struggled to stay afloat. The closures have been especially challenging for some black entrepreneurs with smaller operating budgets and staff, making it difficult to secure emergency financial support. Host Frank Stasio talks to Tammie Hall, division director of the North Carolina Department of Administration's Office for Historically Underutilized Businesses; Morgan Siegel, owner of Jeddah's Tea; and Monica Edwards, co-owner of Morehead Manor Bed and Breakfast about how minority-owned small businesses are faring during the pandemic.

May 14, 2020

Category: Health

Embodied: Porn And Erotica, Pleasure And Shame

Lights off, private browser, headphones in, locked door ... does that sound like your normal porn ritual? Cultural norms stigmatize the adult film industry, and many people feel shame about their porn habits. But one of the most popular pornographic websites in the world, Pornhub, says their website hosts an average of 115 million visitors a day. If so many of us watch porn, why are we embarrassed to talk about it? On this installment of Embodied, host Anita Rao aims to answer that question. Durham-based artist Monét Noelle Marshall talks about her forthcoming virtual exhibit "Shameless Pleasure." Over 200 people from across the world answered questions about the shame they carry related to their porn consumption. Feminist beliefs and fear of partners' hurt feelings were a primary source of shame for both men and women, Marshall notes. She hopes that her exhibit will encourage people to talk about their fantasies. Also joining the conversation is Lynn Comella. She is an associate professor of gender and sexuality studies at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas and the author of "Vibrator Nation: How Feminist Sex-Toy Stores Changed the Business of Pleasure" (Duke University Press/2017). And Gina Gutierrez of Dipsea and Shine Louise Houston of Pink and White Productions join the discussion to share their perspective on the adult industry. Gutierrez co-founded the audio erotica app Dipsea with a focus on feminine sexual pleasure. And Houston started Pink and White Productions, along with the Crash Pad Series and PinkLabel.TV, to highlight queer porn content and producers.

May 13, 2020

Category: Politics

Pro-State's Rights Protesters Exercise Open Carry And Defy Social Distance

A small group, mostly armed, walked the streets of downtown Raleigh Saturday in support of their Second Amendment rights. The group — known as members of a Facebook page called Blue Igloo — went viral when The News & Observer photographer Travis Long tweeted photos of a few of them placing orders at a local Subway restaurant, while toting military-grade firearms. These are not the only protests taking place during the coronavirus lockdown. A much larger, unarmed group called ReOpen NC has been gathering at the governor's mansion for several weeks to urge the state legislature to reopen businesses and restart the economy. Host Frank Stasio talks to WUNC reporter Jason DeBruyn about both recurring public actions.

Category: Health

What The Eastern Cherokee Can Teach The U.S. About Public Health:

The Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority has been mass testing asymptomatic residents and visitors to territories held by the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. In restricting EBCI borders and closing businesses, Principal Chief Richard Sneed preempted most counties and Gov. Roy Cooper. Keeping elders safe is the utmost priority for North Carolina's only federally-recognized tribe. With 16,000 members in the tribe and a dwindling population of fluent Cherokee language speakers, protecting older members from coronavirus is tantamount to preserving their cultural heritage. Yet the public health solutions of the sovereign nation also undercut funding their hospital system. The hospital opted out of the notoriously under-funded Indian Health Services thanks to a casino-supported tax base. But with casinos closed for all of April, a Catch 22 developed between good public health policy and funding the hospital. Host Frank Stasio discusses lessons learned by the Cherokee Indian Hospital with Lilly Knoepp, Blue Ridge Public Radio's reporter for western North Carolina.

Category: Environment

Migratory Birds You Might Only See (Or Hear) This Week:

Long-distance travelers are stopping through North Carolina this week. Despite weighing as much as a triple-A battery, the Blackpoll Warbler annually migrates from the Caribbean and South America to breeding grounds in Canada. But get your binoculars out now, because the warblers will take a different route in the fall — travelling 1,800 miles over open ocean to return to warmer areas. Host Frank Stasio marvels at warblers, thrushes, grosbeaks and the many other fleeting delights of May with Kim Brand, North Carolina Audubon's engagement director. For thousands of young people across North Carolina, sports going on hiatus was no big deal. But the cancellation of the Science Olympiad competition was devastating. Rou Yu Tan and Dishita Agarwal spent the school year learning how to identify birds by sight and sound. Their efforts were rewarded with gold medals at the regional competition. But the eighth-grade team from The Academy at Lincoln never got the chance to win a medal for their efforts at the state or national competitions, both of which were in Raleigh this year. Tan joins Brand and Stasio in a celebration of birds and to show off some of her prowess at avian identification.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — Steve Schewel of Durham

Work-arounds are his specialty. In the Bull City, ID cards are available to undocumented residents, and a chunk of property tax revenues recycle back into affordable housing initiatives. But Steve Schewel's use of establishment power to bend establishment norms took some practice. Before becoming Durham's mayor, he was an emboldened student leader at Duke

University, an activist arrested multiple times for direct-action protest and the founder of “Indy Week,” the Triangle’s alternative weekly newspaper. Now heading North Carolina’s fourth largest city, he must answer to critics reminiscent of his former selves. Host Frank Stasio asks Mayor Schewel how his relationship with authority and activism has changed now that protesters stand against public health measures.

May 12, 2020

Category: Weather

The Perfect Storm: Hurricane Season Approaches as Pandemic Continues

The Atlantic hurricane season begins in less than a month. Researchers predict an active season with as many as 22 named storms, a small portion of which may become major hurricanes. But it takes only one storm to cause major damage, and emergency managers are preparing for the worst. This year, the pandemic provides additional challenges. Managers must get informational messages into people’s homes without the usual aid of face-to-face communication. Should a hurricane hit, the standard method of gathering large numbers of evacuees in inland shelters is no longer a viable option. Communities are also experiencing emotional fatigue from the repeated disasters as they try to rebuild from previous storms, navigate the pandemic, and prepare for the upcoming hurricane season. Host Frank Stasio talks with Stephanie Chavis, director of Robeson County Emergency Management, and Laura Hogshead, chief operating officer at the N.C. Office of Recovery and Resiliency. Stasio also talks with Robert Young, director for the Program of the Study of Developed Shorelines at Western Carolina University, about science behind the predictions for the upcoming hurricane season.

Category: Arts & Culture

Coastal Communities Will Weather This Crisis And The Next: Reflections from Karen Willis Amspacher

Coping and recovering from a crisis is nothing new for North Carolina’s coastal residents. Hurricanes have altered life for generations of families along the Atlantic seaboard who regularly weather floods, evacuations and damage to homes and communities. These circumstances are familiar to Karen Willis Amspacher, executive director of the Core Sound Waterfowl Museum & Heritage Center. The museum closed in September 2018 after suffering immense damage from Hurricane Florence and was only set to reopen April 1, 2020. The museum staff spent 20 months digging out artifacts, raising money and waiting for construction to finish. Then the pandemic happened. Amspacher shares with host Frank Stasio how decades of hurricanes have shaped the resilient nature of coastal communities. She talks about the experience of dealing with two disasters at once and the lessons she hopes people will take from this time.

May 11, 2020

Category: Science/Technology

Meet Virologist Richard Watkins: A Scientist Willing To Say: I Don’t Know

Richard Watkins has always moved in multiple circles. As a child he was surrounded by college sports and college life. His father was the baseball coach for North Carolina A&T State University, and Watkins would travel with the team as a bat boy. He competed nationally as a speed skater before he started playing football in high school. Fayetteville State University recruited him to play on their varsity team, but he also earned a full-ride scholarship for his good grades. In college, he almost had two separate identities: he spent countless hours on the

football field, but he was also heavily involved in several academic groups on campus. He went on to get his doctorate in microbiology and immunology, and now he is building a career as a connector of the different worlds in which he operates. Watkins is the CEO and founder of the Science Policy Action Network, a nonprofit organization dedicated to bridging the gap between the scientific community and the general public. He is also the program coordinator for the Chancellor's Science Scholars program at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. There he works to open up science for people of color and connect students to mentors. Watkins joins host Frank Stasio to talk about his career path, his run for U.S. Congress in 2018 and the lessons we can learn from the coronavirus pandemic.

May 8 2020

Category: Health

Still No Hugs, But Other Restrictions Lifted In Stay-At-Home Order Amendments

North Carolina transitions into the first phase of easing coronavirus restrictions today at 5 p.m. Gov. Roy Cooper and Dr. Mandy Cohen, secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, announced the new guidelines on Tuesday: retail businesses are allowed to open at 50% capacity with cleaning and social distancing standards, while bars, salons, gyms and entertainment venues will remain closed. People can visit non-family members in small gatherings. Cooper and Cohen recommended cloth face coverings and social distancing for all interactions outside the home. The modified stay-at-home order aims to ease pressure on the economy while keeping communities safe and healthy, Cooper said. Host Frank Stasio talks with Rose Hoban, the founder and editor of North Carolina Health News, about the governor's decision to ease the order and the details of phase one. Hoban shares her reporting on the state's testing capacity and hospitalizations, as well as pushback to the state's phased reopening.

Category: Crime/Law Enforcement

Murdered And Missing Indigenous Women: Advocates Say NC Law Enforcement Ignores The Problem

Gov. Roy Cooper declared Tuesday, May 5 a "Day of Awareness for Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women." The advocacy group Shatter the Silence reports that 31 native women have gone missing or been murdered in eastern North Carolina since 1998. The state tracked at least 90 cases of murdered or missing indigenous women in North Carolina since 1994. But advocates say the real numbers are likely much higher. Journalist and nonprofit leader Antionette Kerr reported on missing and murdered indigenous women (MMIW) in North Carolina in the piece "North Carolina officials are ignoring a crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women" for Scalawag Magazine, highlighting the 2017 deaths of three women in Robeson County: Rhonda Jones, Kristin "Christina" Bennet and Megan Oxendine. Their families say they were murdered, but their official cause of death is "undetermined." Host Frank Stasio talks with Kerr about the MMIW awareness movement. Crystal "Red Bear" Cavalier Keck and Jane Jacobs also join the conversation. Cavalier Keck is a doctoral student writing her dissertation on MMIW awareness and a member of the Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation. Jacobs' sister Korina Locklear was raped and stabbed in Pembroke in 2018. Both point to a history of mistrust between native communities and law enforcement contributing to the problem of high rates of violence against indigenous women.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — Mitch Colvin of Fayetteville

He leads in ribbon-cuttings and celebrations of life. Mitch Colvin took over his family's funeral home before running for office. His day-job provides insight into and practice with community building in difficult times. He rose to prominence after speaking out against the city's lack of investment in his neighborhood, the core of Fayetteville's African American community along

Murchison Road. Now mayor for over two years, the intricate balancing act between his dual roles is only heightened during the pandemic. Critics leapt on the mayor for putting in place a strict curfew, which ends May 8. Meanwhile, he must comfort a grieving family that lost their young father. Mayor Mitch Colvin joins host Frank Stasio to continue the NC Mayors series in discussing the role of race in public health and community leadership.

May 7, 2020

Category: Education

Hail The Conquering, If Confined, Graduate

When this year's seniors started their final year of high school, they could not have imagined that their spring would involve canceled proms, drive-thru cap and gown pickups and postponed graduation ceremonies. Since COVID-19 forced school closures in mid-March, the class of 2020 has had to cope with the loss of the many milestones that traditionally mark the end of a K-12 student's career. On this segment of Embodied, host Anita Rao talks to high school seniors about how they are handling the present and looking to the future. Connor Booher attends Christ School in Asheville. Sela Rosa is a graduating student at Durham Academy. Jarek Harris is a senior at Riverside High School in Durham. Kristy Newitt, counseling coordinator for Cumberland County Schools, also weighs in on how teachers and families are supporting students during this unusual time.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — James Reid Of Andrews

(Population 1,833 - Cherokee County) He personally put up the barricades to keep visitors out in order to protect his mountain hometown from the coronavirus. But James Reid remembers when the problem was folks no longer stopping through Andrews. He witnessed the downtown suffer after a four-lane bypass was built and, a decade later, felt NAFTA deliver an even worse blow. Reid was a forklift operator at the blue jeans factory when the jobs evaporated. Like lots of his neighbors in Andrews, he turned to entrepreneurship. Well, that and local politics. It should be noted that the mayor's \$600 a month salary falls plenty short of paying the bills. Reid's day job is managing rentals, and he runs a tree and lawn care business in town. Host Anita Rao talks with Mayor James Reid about catching headlines for his early decision to close the town to outside visitors as well as how he continues listening to and learning from his community.

May 6, 2020

Category: Arts

Movies On The Radio Cures Your Wanderlust With Films That Travel The World

As the weeks of social distancing and stay-at-home orders drag on, some people are desperate for a break from where they have been for the past couple months. Films can offer an escape and transport the viewer to faraway lands or lush landscapes. For this month's Movies on the Radio, host Frank Stasio and film experts Marsha Gordon and Laura Boyes share films that have a strong sense of place, from the red clay of North Carolina in "Bull Durham" to the icy landscape of Antarctica in "The Thing." Some movies feature locations as characters, like the role of Venice in "Don't Look Now." Gordon and Boyes reflect on listeners' picks and share their own favorite place-based films. Gordon is a film professor at North Carolina State University and a fellow at the National Humanities Center. Boyes is the film curator for the North Carolina Museum of Art and the curator of the Moviediva series. Gordon's latest documentary, "All the Possibilities" is streaming as part of the virtual River Run Film Festival until Friday, May 8.

May 5, 2020

Category: Race/Minorities

Remembering Kenneth Edmonds, Publisher Of Durham's Black Newspaper:

The Carolina Times faces an uncertain future after its publisher Kenneth Edmonds died Saturday, May 2. His tenure at the historic black newspaper started when he was just 4 or 5 years old. Helping out his grandfather, founder Louis E. Austin, "Kenny" Edmonds sold papers on the corner and eventually graduated up to writing obituaries. He was also known for his basketball skills, which he honed at Hargraves Community Center in Chapel Hill and later the Laurinburg Institute and East Carolina University. But he eventually left behind sports to take up the family business. During his time as publisher, Edmonds covered stories for and about African American communities in Durham and across the state, many of which other newspapers ignored. Host Frank Stasio talks with Andre Vann, North Carolina Central University's archivist and a close friend of Edmonds, about his life and the future of the state's black press.

Category: Race/Minorities

How The Stimulus Package Leaves Out U.S. Citizens With Undocumented Spouses

Stimulus checks are rolling into bank accounts across the country, but many have experienced confusion about when, and if, their portion of the \$2 trillion economic relief package is coming. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act stipulates that tax filers are eligible if they fall within a certain income bracket, but some American citizens will not receive their check even if they meet those requirements. A provision in the tax law bars citizens who are married and filing jointly with undocumented immigrants from receiving the aid. The left-leaning outlet North Carolina Policy Watch estimates this provision excludes at least 300,000 adults and children across the state. The Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund has filed a class-action lawsuit on behalf of six plaintiffs who are married to immigrants without Social Security numbers. Host Frank Stasio talks with Victoria Bouloubasis, independent journalist and investigative reporter for Enlace Latino NC, about the exclusion and what it means for North Carolina communities.

Category: Economy

Coastal Counties Battle Health And Economic Concerns As Reopen Date Nears

North Carolina's coastal counties draw millions of visitors each year with their scenic shorelines and festive events. Tourism is the primary economic driver in beach communities like Corolla, in Currituck County, but the coronavirus will prevent hotels, restaurants, vacation rentals and events from operating at full capacity this summer. Currituck County commissioners have discussed reopening the beaches to visitors on May 22. Host Frank Stasio talks with Tameron Kugler, director of tourism and transportation for Currituck County, about the health and economic concerns faced by the county and its residents. Kugler details the challenges of following safety guidelines while reconnecting people to their livelihoods, as well as the need to soothe fears of both visitors and residents. Stasio also speaks with Samantha Crisp, director of the Outer Banks History Center. Crisp talks about the concerns of community members about opening up too soon, and she describes how the community can learn from other historic crises.

Category: Politics

Meet NC's Mayors — Bettie J. Parker Of Elizabeth City

She did not expect to be the only person of color in a classroom, and certainly not as the teacher. Before she was elected mayor of Elizabeth City, Bettie J. Parker taught math for 33 years at the local high school. In 2017, she was elected leader of the majority-African American

small city in the northeast corner of the state, making her the first woman to hold the position. Sitting on the Pasquotank River, “The Harbor of Hospitality” is home to a U.S. Coast Guard base and the historically black college Elizabeth City State University. Mayor Parker joins host Frank Stasio to discuss how her usual open-door policy and other aspects of her job have changed during the coronavirus pandemic.

May 4, 2020

Category: Environment

Sharing The Wonders Of Nature With The World: Meet Eleanor Spicer Rice:

Eleanor Spicer Rice spent her childhood fascinated by ants, flies, maggots, bones and other natural curiosities. Her family encouraged that inquisitiveness — her father would take her on walks in the swamps near their Goldsboro home, and her parents never told her the bugs that enchanted her were gross. Spicer Rice loved insects, but she did not realize they could be a career until she started college at North Carolina State University. She majored in zoology and came back to NCSU to get her doctorate in entomology. Today she is a senior science writer at Verdant Word, the company she founded with a childhood friend. She is also involved with the Recluse or Not project, and she is the author of “Dr. Eleanor’s Book of Common Ants” (University of Chicago Press/2017) and “Dr. Eleanor’s Book of Common Spiders” (University of Chicago Press/2018). Guest host Anita Rao talks to Spicer Rice about how her childhood wonder became her career and about her work’s mission today. Note: This program originally aired July 29, 2019.

May 1, 2020

Category: Politics

The Political Junkie: What Does #MeToo Mean For Democrats In 2020?

Former Vice President Joe Biden denies a sexual assault allegation by former Senate aide Tara Reade. The presumptive Democratic nominee spoke publicly about the allegation this morning for the first time. Prominent women in the Democratic party, including Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and potential Vice Presidential nominees Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, have defended Biden in recent weeks. The Political Junkie Ken Rudin joins host Frank Stasio to discuss how #MeToo will affect the 2020 elections. Plus, tension is growing between levels of government to reopen the U.S. economy, but a new poll from Meredith College indicates that 76.3% of respondents, with majorities from both parties, approve Gov. Roy Cooper’s decision to extend the shutdown until May 8.

Category: Economy

Is ‘The Food Supply Chain Breaking?’ Facing The Risks Of Industrial Meat Processing:

The nation’s meat supply was declared ‘critical infrastructure’ by the White House Tuesday. The order detailed that ‘the closure of a single large beef processing facility can result in the loss of over 10 million individual servings of beef in a single day.’ The executive order came two days after the chairman of Tyson Foods responded to closures of major meat processing hubs with a full-page New York Times ad warning that “The food supply chain is breaking.” With outbreaks of COVID-19 spreading rapidly to processing facilities, worker absenteeism threatens this important bottleneck between grocery stores and farmers. The hazards facing our nation’s food supplies are related to the history of corporate consolidation and reliance on centralized industrial facilities. With hundreds of employees on the refrigerated slaughter floor at once, meat processors are working closely with local and state health departments to screen and maintain the safety of personnel. But are the measures enough to protect the surrounding communities where workers live? As the supply chain teeters, processors in North Carolina continue churning

out chicken and pork, some of which is sent to parking lots and fairgrounds across the state for massive factory-price sales. Host Frank Stasio discusses the precariousness of meat production as well as the labor and public health questions around the processing facilities with Leah Douglas, a reporter for the Food Environment Reporting Network. Also joining the conversation are North Carolina Emergency Management Services Director Michael Sprayberry and Poultry Extension Agent Margaret Ross.

April 30, 2020

Category: Health

Sex Ed Is Already Sparse For NC Students — And COVID-19 Is Making It Worse

Is it possible to have “the talk” over Zoom? What about teaching comprehensive sexual education? In the midst of a pandemic, the answer is unclear. On this segment of Embodied, host Anita Rao talks with Elizabeth Finley about gaps in sex ed brought about by the coronavirus pandemic. Finley is the director of strategic communications for Shift NC, a statewide nonprofit dedicated to improving sexual health in teens and young adults. Educators have shared with her that sexual education is at the bottom of the totem pole in the transition to remote learning. Teachers are struggling to cover core subjects like reading and math, which take higher priority. North Carolina’s Healthy Youth Act of 2009 only mandates public schools offer sexuality education courses to students in seventh, eighth and ninth grade. If students were slated for those classes this spring, Finley says, it is likely they will never receive that course. Online resources like Amaze and Scarleteen can fill the gap. Still, questions of internet access and household attitude toward LGBTQ youth complicate whether or not kids out of school will receive comprehensive sex education.

Category: Economy

Big Stories. Small Budgets. Here’s What Journalists Are Dealing With During The Pandemic

As death tolls rise, new testing information surfaces and doctors race to find a vaccine for COVID-19, breaking news is not in short supply. The constant influx of new information and endless questions from communities trying to adapt to the circumstances have newsrooms across North Carolina working harder than ever before. But while more readers are relying on the service of local news, advertisers are withdrawing their funding and making budgets tighter. Host Anita Rao talks with Paola Jaramillo and Robyn Tomlin about how newsrooms are overcoming the challenges of providing essential information to their communities. Jaramillo is the co-founder and executive editor of Enlace Latino NC. She talks about the need for Spanish-language news and resources in the Latino community and the innovative ways her organization is sharing that information. And Tomlin is the president and editor at The News & Observer and the Durham Herald Sun. She speaks about The News & Observer’s all-hands-on-deck approach to coronavirus coverage and what the pandemic may mean for the future of local news sources.

Category: Education

The News Between Four Walls: Student Journalists Cover the Home Front

When in-person classes were cancelled for the semester at Wake Forest University, Professor Justin Catanoso knew he would have to break some of his own rules. Catanoso teaches an introductory journalism class, where he asked students throughout the semester to cover campus events as if they were writing for the student newspaper. They were not allowed to interview their friends, they had to use quotes and they had to step outside of their comfort zones to find the scoop. But with all his students now off-campus, Catanoso asked them to cover the pandemic as they saw it from their homes. Catanoso joins host Anita Rao to talk

about the unconventional assignment along with two students from the class. Junior Marlee Rich shares her experience in writing about the upturned lives of her family members — her sister’s 18th birthday, her laid-off father and her immunocompromised mother’s visit to the grocery store. Sophomore Anthony D’Angelo talks about the process in writing his piece about his sister bringing home the coronavirus from college and moving their grandmother out of the house to protect her.

April 29, 2020

Category: Politics

NC Lawmakers Meet For A Historic Pandemic Session:

North Carolina lawmakers gaveled in Tuesday for a legislative session unlike any other — their first since the coronavirus pandemic hit the state. The State Legislative Building was quiet, and much more empty than usual. The doors were locked, and only legislators, staffers and media were allowed inside. Many of those in chambers wore masks and abided by physical distancing requirements, while others ignored protocol and sat right next to each other. The main goal for the General Assembly in this short session is to dole out COVID-19 relief funds. Host Frank Stasio talks to WUNC Capitol Bureau Chief Jeff Tiberii about the debate over how the pandemic dollars should be spent and previews other big questions state lawmakers are facing: What will the November election look like? What if another major hurricane hits North Carolina? Is there enough of a surplus fund to help cover the expected budget shortfalls of local governments?

Category: Arts

Writing As Rescue, Reading As Escape: Three Writers On Creativity In Quarantine

“Writers write.” “Publish or perish.” Even without a global pandemic, writers face constant pressure to produce new material. But for the first-time novelist, publishing a book when bookstores are closed for browsing, signings and readers is particularly tough. The process presents unique challenges for veteran authors, too, from learning new technology to battling low productivity. Host Frank Stasio discusses the impact of COVID-19 on the creative process with Martha Waters, children’s librarian and debut author of the romance novel, “To Have and to Hoax” (Atria/2020); Lee Smith, author of the new novella, “Blue Marlin” (Blair/2020); and Randall Kenan, professor of English at UNC-Chapel Hill and author of the upcoming short story collection, “If I Had Two Wings” (W.W. Norton/2020).

April 28, 2020

Category: Health

A Broken Elder-Care System Crumbles Further Amid COVID-19

Nursing homes are the source of more than 40% of North Carolina’s reported COVID-19 deaths so far. These facilities house some of our most vulnerable community members, many of whom need personal care — things like help going to the bathroom or brushing teeth. As of Tuesday, the data from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services shows that 48 nursing homes and 20 residential care facilities (which include adult and family care homes) have outbreaks.

Host Frank Stasio talks to Lisa Leatherwood, an administrator at the facility Silver Bluff Village in Haywood County, about how she and her staff are working to protect their residents. So far, that facility has no confirmed cases of COVID-19. Stasio also talks to Thomas Goldsmith, a longtime journalist and reporter for North Carolina Health News who covers aging. Goldsmith shares his

investigation into staffing at facilities that have seen outbreaks and details the statewide landscape of elder care facilities in North Carolina. We also hear from Donna Denton, an 89-year-old assisted living resident in Raleigh; Eileen Hume, a Charlotte-based occupational therapist who specializes in elder care; and Darlene Chee, a family nurse practitioner working in palliative care in western North Carolina.

Category: Religion

Illumination In Isolation: How Omid Safi Forms Spiritual Community During COVID-19

Omid Safi, professor of Asian and Middle Eastern Studies at Duke, knew that the months of April and May would be difficult for the Muslim community this year. Like Easter and Passover, the holy month of Ramadan will be celebrated much differently due to COVID-19's ongoing social distancing restrictions. Responding to a need for an unconventional way to gather, reflect, and inspire, Safi developed a series of online lectures called Illuminated Courses, centered on the poetry of 13th-century mystic poet Rumi and other Muslim sages. The work has drawn students from several religious backgrounds. Host Frank Stasio talks to Omid Safi about spiritually weathering the pandemic and how Illuminated Courses can help Muslims form a sense of togetherness during Ramadan, despite social distancing.

April 27, 2020

Category: Race/Minorities

The Legacy Of The Latta Family: Meet Brandi Neuwirth

As a child, Brandi Neuwirth remembers family chatter about her great-great-grandfather owning a school in North Carolina. But she was young and North Carolina seemed a world away from the life she lived in New York City. Her great-great-grandfather the Rev. Morgan Latta had a vision of a school that would educate the children of freed slaves. That dream became a reality with the opening of Latta University in 1892. The school featured vocational education, an orphanage and night classes. It would take years for Neuwirth to delve into the rich history of her ancestors. In the meantime, she had her own journey that ranged from being a little girl performing in musicals at Lincoln Center to producing a Jackie Chan movie. Now a resident of the Triangle, Neuwirth is chair of the Latta House Foundation. She also serves as the community art coordinator for the United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County. Neuwirth joins host Frank Stasio to talk about visiting the plantation that owned her ancestors, her great-great-grandfather's dream to educate blacks and her work to keep his legacy alive. Note: This program originally aired November 25, 2019.

April 24, 2020

Category: Politics

From Top To Bottom, The Arguments For Reopening North Carolina's Economy:

Governors find themselves in the political crosshairs of the pandemic — navigating the threat of an economic depression with a second wave outbreak. This week, states began diverging from the federal government's recommended strict restrictions. Neighboring governors in Georgia, Tennessee and South Carolina are allowing some businesses to turn on the lights again. In North Carolina, frustration is building. While Gov. Roy Cooper extended the stay-at-home orders this week, protesters and some local officials in rural areas are requesting regional authority to lift restrictions. Chair of the Wilkes County Board of Commissioners Eddie Settle joins host Frank Stasio to explain why he feels ready to start rebuilding the local economy. Also joining the conversation are Steve Harrison, a political reporter at WFAE, and Lisa Lerer, a New York Times political reporter and CNN political analyst. They detail the grievances of the movements to reopen and the growing number of links between national protest organizers and top conservative donors.

Category: Health

It's Not What You Do, It's How You Do It: Balancing Work And Play In A Pandemic

Remember the days when school, work, home life and social engagements kept our schedules packed to the brim, and a little bit of leisure time was hard fought? The coronavirus has turned the work-life balance upside down for many folks. Some are working extra time, while others have been forced to leave their jobs. Whatever your schedule looks like, it can be hard to find enjoyment amidst the stress of the pandemic. This does not have to be the occasion for planting a three-tiered garden or starting your own jewelry-making business. The solution may lie in appreciating the small moments and lowering our expectations of what hobbies we can take on and what we can accomplish during this time. Host Frank Stasio talks about mindfulness and leisure time with Jennifer Loudon, a personal growth specialist and author of the newly published book "Why Bother? Discovering the Desire for What's Next" (Page Two Books/2020). Also joining the conversation is Jen Johnson, a mindfulness coach and counselor based in Wilmington. The experts discuss the barriers to participating in leisure activities during the pandemic, and they identify ways to find meaningful moments however possible.

April 23, 2020

Category: Health

Embodied: How Covid-19 Disrupts The Rituals Of Death And Dying

Death is a taboo topic. Acknowledging it feels like an admission of defeat — that there is no hope left. But in the face of a pandemic, death surrounds us. And the way we process death has changed as we try to prevent the spread of COVID-19 with social distancing and stay-at-home orders. Funerals are being canceled and postponed. People are dying alone in hospital rooms, their loved ones barred from visiting them. On this installment of Embodied, host Anita Rao examines how the coronavirus pandemic strains the death care industry and interrupts personal grief processes. Tanya Marsh, a funeral and cemetery law professor at Wake Forest University, joins the conversation to explain how the death care industry is overwhelmed by the pandemic. Marsha is also the host of the podcast Death et seq. Nina Jones Mason explains how funeral homes are adapting to serve the needs of grieving families, while maintaining social distancing. She is a fourth generation funeral director with Ellis D. Jones and Sons funeral services in Durham. And Dr. Raymond Barfield of Duke University Medical School shares his expertise on palliative care and grief processing. He is a pediatric oncologist and palliative care physician at Duke Health. He is also a professor of pediatrics and Christian theology in Duke's Medical School and Divinity School.

April 22, 2020

Category: Health

In Black Communities' Fight Against COVID-19, The Real 'Pre-Existing Condition' Is

Poverty: In North Carolina and across the nation, black communities are contracting and dying from COVID-19 at disproportionately high rates. But there has been little consensus about why that may be the case. Some health officials cite "pre-existing medical conditions" as a key factor. Black Americans are more likely to suffer from hypertension, heart disease, asthma and diabetes than white Americans — all conditions that could make them more susceptible to contracting COVID-19 and less likely to recover from it. Other public health experts believe that structural inequity is the larger contributor. Workers in black communities are less able to work from home and more likely to use public transportation, two factors which add an increased risk of exposure to coronavirus. To unpack other structural and systemic inequities that factor into racial health disparities, host Frank Stasio talks to public health scholar Lori Carter-Edwards, an associate professor at the UNC Gillings School of Global Public Health, and William "Sandy"

Darity, director of the Samuel DuBois Cook Center on Social Equity at Duke University and co-author of the new book, "From Here to Equality: Reparations for Black Americans in the Twenty-First Century" (UNC Press/2020)

Category: Arts and Culture

Malinda Maynor Lowery Reincarnates Her Revolutionary Lumbee Ancestor:

As we work to gain perspective during this crisis, we may find ourselves searching our personal and collective memories for precedents, stories or myths that might restore the ground under our feet. What is the relationship between collective memory and identity? Fairy tales like the American Dream and the Lost Cause emerge from selective memory, excluding Native and Black communities from history-making authority. Malinda Maynor Lowery wishes to recover the shunned layers of our history and reincorporate heroes of the past into our present moment. Host Frank Stasio joins Lowery on a hypothetical reincarnation of her rebel ancestor for the present moment. Henry Berry Lowrie is a mythical figure among the Lumbee people. In the wake of the Civil War, he and his associates waged an eight year guerilla war against white supremacists in government and the business community. He stands as the prototype of rebellion — robbing the wealthy farmers to feed the poor. But, if alive today, would Lowrie abide by tribal elders' stay-at-home orders? About the interviewee: Malinda Maynor Lowery is the director of the Center for the Study of the American South and a professor of history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A member of the Lumbee Tribe of North Carolina, she is the award-winning author of "The Lumbee Indians: An American Struggle" and "Lumbee Indians in the Jim Crow South: Race, Identity, and the Making of a Nation."

April 21, 2020

Category: Health

COVID-19 Is Creating Another Public Health Crisis: Domestic Violence:

The weeks of stay-at-home orders have created space for some families to spend more time together than ever before. This could mean more bonding, family meals and joyful activities. But for others it makes for a dangerous situation. Experts warn that movement restrictions can mean more frequent and severe incidents of domestic violence and child abuse. The isolation, disrupted routines and economic struggles are all conditions that child welfare advocates say can lead to more violence in the home, creating another public health crisis alongside the coronavirus pandemic. Host Frank Stasio talks about it with Anna Gassman-Pines, an associate professor of public policy, psychology and neuroscience at Duke University. Gassman-Pines shares her ongoing research on hourly service workers and the stress they are facing because of this pandemic — and what that could mean for the children in their homes. Domestic violence legal expert Emily McCool joins the conversation to illuminate how courts have adjusted to COVID-19 and how that is affecting domestic violence survivors. McCool is a managing partner for Scharff Law Firm who specializes in representing survivors of domestic violence. She is also the former legal and policy director of the North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence. Plus, licensed social worker Kathy Douglas talks about how she is navigating the move to telehealth and the struggles of connecting her clients to services. Douglas is the owner of Stepping Forward Counseling Services in Lincolnton.

If you or your family need support, you can call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE. The North Carolina Coalition Against Domestic Violence can also help [connect you to local resources](#).

Category: Arts and Culture

Lessons Of Gardening And Grieving With Jaki Shelton Green

Abundance emerges even in catastrophe. The earth is telling us so. Emphatic evidence now shows itself following the first warm rains. What plans did winter make in its stillness? Host Frank Stasio speaks with Jaki Shelton Green, North Carolina's Poet Laureate, about witnessing hope.

"I want the dust of you unscattered
I want the hush of you unhushed"
—Excerpted from "i want to undie you" (Jakar Press/2017)

About the interviewee: Jaki Shelton Green is originally from Orange County, North Carolina. In 2018, she was named North Carolina's ninth poet laureate. As the founder of SistaWRITE, she leads travel and writing workshops for women. "The River Speaks of Thirst," an album of music and poetry, will be released on June 19, 2020. Green recorded the album in collaboration with local artists including Nnenna Freelon, Jennifer Evans and CJ Suitt. Green is the award-winning author of "Dead on Arrival," "singing a tree into dance," "breath of the song" and "Feeding the Light," among other titles. She is the co-editor of two anthologies: "Poets for Peace" and "Immigration, Emigration, and Diversity." She is an instructor at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University. As a community arts advocate, she facilitates programs intended for audiences including the incarcerated, teachers, and nonprofits.

April 20, 2020

Category: Gender

Meet Mia Ives-Rublee: An Endorphin Junkie Who Made The Women's March Accessible

Mia Ives-Rublee grew up surrounded by adults who were worried about her well-being. She has Osteogenesis imperfecta, a genetic bone disorder more commonly known as brittle bone disease, and uses a wheelchair to get around. From a young age she pushed back against others' worries about her body and continuously challenged her own physical limitations. She played competitive sports and competed at an international level in wheelchair track, fencing and adaptive CrossFit. Today Ives-Rublee fights to make spaces more accessible for people with disabilities. She founded the Women's March Disability Caucus and works with a range of organizations as an independent consultant on accessibility issues. Ives-Rublee talks with host Frank Stasio about athletics, activism and exploring her identity as a transracial Korean American adoptee. Note: This program originally aired June 3, 2019

April 17, 2020

Category: Politics

The Right To Protest During A Crisis? Personal Freedoms Vs. Public Health

Across the nation, governors are facing grassroots pressure to lift their stay-at-home orders. More than 100 protesters gathered in Raleigh Tuesday to demand that the state reopen for business. Wearing masks and gloves, State Capitol and Raleigh Police watched over and eventually arrested one protester who was charged with a misdemeanor for violating the prohibition of the executive order banning gatherings of more than 10 people. Later that day, the Raleigh Police Department responded to a question about the arrest with a Tweet that said: "Protesting is a nonessential activity." While Raleigh Mayor Mary-Ann Baldwin refused to comment on the legal basis of the statement, Gov. Roy Cooper took a contrary stance at a press briefing, saying his orders "do not interfere with people's constitutional rights to express themselves" and rather with "unlawful mass gatherings." Host Frank Stasio talks with WRAL Statehouse Reporter Travis Fain about lawmakers' priorities as public health, individual freedoms and the heightening economic crisis converge in North Carolina.

Category: Race/Minorities

The Founding Of SNCC 60 Years On With Co-Founder David C. Forbes

David Forbes arrived at Shaw University in 1958. In the winter of his sophomore year, the Civil Rights movement swept through North Carolina when four students in Greensboro led a sit-in. Forbes and hundreds of other Shaw students followed suit at the Woolworth's in Cameron Village. More protests and arrests followed, with Forbes stepping into the role of front-line organizer, driving students in his father's car. That April, representatives from student movements across the country converged on the campus of Shaw to discuss young people's place in the Civil Rights Movement. Also present were older representatives of national movements — Martin Luther King Jr. of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); Thurgood Marshall; Roy Wilkins of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP); and James Farmer from the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE). King and other leaders sought to leverage the burgeoning student energy within their own organizations, but a North Carolina leader of the SCLC saw it differently. Ella Baker advocated for young people's idealism to remain independent and asserted that it belonged at the front of the nascent Civil Rights movement. With Baker's support, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee was born. Host Frank Stasio is joined by Rev. David C. Forbes, Sr. a former dean of the divinity school at Shaw University, and Valerie Johnson, the dean of the school of arts, sciences, and humanities at Shaw. The university will host an online watch party for the documentary "Shaw Rising" featuring Rev. Forbes on Friday, April 17 at 9 p.m.

Category: Arts and Culture

Experimental Duo Samples Whips, Whitney Houston, And A 1954 Educational Film:

Usually the dancing is quite erratic at Sand Pact shows. Induced by their chaotic collages, onlookers may find themselves alternately writhing on the floor, head-bopping or paralyzed save a slight eye twitch. Nonetheless, a Raleigh choreographer thought the duo a perfect candidate for a collaboration. After weeks of bouncing ideas back and forth, ShaLeigh Danceworks premiered "The In-Between," with an original score composed by Sand Pact. Featured in the score are reworked audio from a 1954 educational film, the sound of a whip crack and, naturally, some samples of Whitney Houston. Kaanchee Gudiya and Alex Fresa together are Sand Pact. They each also have solo projects — Gudiya and Debt Stalker. They join Host Frank Stasio to break down a section of their score and explain the creative process behind their soundscapes. Sand Pact performs on Tuesday, April 21 from 1:20-2:20 a.m. as part of Internet Friends' 12-hour live-streamed performance featuring dozens of musicians.

April 16, 2020

Category: Education

Students And Schools Learn COVID's Impacts Just Keep Coming

For students and educators around the state, this year's learning is in a state of flux. Public schools are holding out hope that they will reopen their doors before the school year ends. Meanwhile colleges and universities are looking ahead to the summer and even fall — and realizing the COVID-19 pandemic has reach well beyond the academic year. Host Anita Rao talks with WUNC education reporter Liz Schlemmer about Durham Public Schools' decision to end its daily meal delivery to students who normally rely on free and reduced school lunches. Schlemmer also takes listeners to a turkey farm just a few turns off Interstate 40, where internet service providers told a college sophomore it was too costly to lay wire for the broadband that would enable him to do his distance learning. And she gives us updates on other education-related stories she is covering around North Carolina.

Category: Health

Embracing Distance: Coping With The Lack Of Physical Touch During COVID-19

Has anyone checked on the huggers? As weeks of social distancing wear on, many are missing the comforts of a warm embrace — especially those who live alone. Touch has always been an essential emotional and physiological need. In its absence, more people are seeking out creative solutions. From self-massage and weighted blankets to pet fostering and adoption, those sheltering in place are finding new ways to connect with their bodies and their inner selves.

On this episode of Embodied, a series about sex, relationships and your health, host Anita Rao talks to Paula Scatoloni, a licensed clinical social worker and somatic experiencing practitioner in Chapel Hill, and Tiffany Field, research professor and director of the Touch Research Institute at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. These experts explain what is happening to our bodies, brains and touch needs during this pandemic, and they cover topics like the health benefits of skin movement and nerve stimulation and practical tips for inducing good touch feelings at home. Rao also looks at a new surge of interest in fostering and adopting pets during COVID-19 with Joanne Duda, foster coordinator at the Wake County Animal Center.

April 15, 2020

Category: Health

From Mountains To Beaches, A Statewide Update On COVID-19:

In a statewide special, public radio stations from across North Carolina join together to examine the impact of Coronavirus on our health, schools and economy. WFAE in Charlotte presents “Coronavirus in North Carolina: The Statewide Impact of COVID-19,” which includes a conversation between WFAE’s Mike Collins, host of “Charlotte Talks,” and Gov. Roy Cooper. Collins also interviews Mandy Cohen, the secretary of the state’s Department of Health and Human Services. Host Frank Stasio speaks with Rep. Craig Horn (R-Union) who co-chairs a House working group on education and COVID-19, about the challenges of distance learning and the opportunities for growth this pandemic could force school communities to accept. Stasio and Collins also check in with reporters from public radio stations from the mountains to the coast who paint a picture of how various communities are handling the outbreak, from frontline healthcare workers in Winston-Salem to tourism operators in Wilmington and Asheville.

April 14, 2020

Category: Politics

ICE Detentions Decrease, Yet Detainees Protest Conditions:

Seventy-two of the 33,863 people currently detained by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement have tested positive for COVID-19 as of Monday, April 13. That is a higher infection rate than the general U.S. population, and immigrant rights groups dispute those official numbers, saying new detainees are not tested upon arrival. Alongside detainee protests, advocate groups are finding fault with the centers’ preventative measures described in memos by ICE and CoreCivic, the private organization managing Stewart Detention Facility in Georgia where most immigrants detained in North Carolina are held for processing and deportation. ICE claims officers are now only targeting individuals who pose a serious public threat. According to their press releases, detention facilities are taking in fewer people and releasing more than usual. It remains uncertain how the decreased rate of intake is affecting immigrants held in county jails awaiting transfer. Host Frank Stasio is joined by Melissa Boughton, the courts and law reporter at the left-leaning publication NC Policy Watch, to discuss the hidden statistics of the immigration system.

Category: Arts

Yes, You Can Laugh During A Pandemic

The news is filled with constant updates about the coronavirus pandemic, from outbreaks in prisons and nursing homes to an ever-increasing number of deaths. Mental health experts have been vocal about the need to take breaks from the news, but what specifically can help us reset? Try humor. Host Frank Stasio talks with comedians, a reporter and a scholar about how humor can provide some levity and counterbalance to the uncertain and dark news. And they all agree: Yes, it is okay to laugh during a pandemic.

Michelle Robinson talks about the ethics of stand-up comedy and how comedians in recent history have used humor to navigate difficult times. Robinson is an associate professor in the department of American studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Dave Jorgensen also joins the conversation to talk about how digital platforms like the popular short video app TikTok are adding to the comedy landscape and helping people stay connected while social distancing at home. Jorgensen is a video producer for The Washington Post and runs the paper's TikTok account. Comedians around the state also share how they are thinking about humor in the pandemic era — and how COVID-19 will shape the future of comedy. Lauren Faber is a comic based in Durham. Comedian Jon Reep is based in Hickory and is the host of the podcast “Country-ish.” Brandy Brown is the manager of Goodnight's Comedy Club in Raleigh. And Erin Terry is the founder of Eyes Up Here Comedy, a North Carolina showcase dedicated to spotlighting local women-identifying, non-binary and gender non-conforming comics.

April 13, 2020

Category: Agriculture/Economy

What Drag Racing Reveals About Humanity: Meet Mark Menscer

Mark Menscer likes living between worlds. The “shock nerd” might spend the day chumming it up at a race track before heading home for a solitary night spent photographing the remains of a supernova. The Fayetteville native points to his unique upbringing for sparking his curiosity and wide-ranging interests. Menscer was raised on a diet of NASCAR, blues guitar, horse showings and grunt work at the family trucking business. His father, a Vietnam veteran, drove him to strive for perfection in a variety of fields. As a teenager, Menscer professionally toured the Blues circuit, opening for acts like B.B. King and Patti LaBelle. But the ego stroke and constant distractions reached a peak, and Menscer dropped out of high school. He ended up working a string of jobs that led to running an exotic animal rescue business and eventually caring for a Siberian tiger and other big cats. That unconditional love of animals persists today. He rears a herd of Hereford cattle at Post Rock Farms and assists his father's pursuit of breeding and caring for racing horses in a more humane way. In the auto racing world, Menscer secured his fame with an innovative shock design he developed while dirt track racing. As the CEO of Menscer Motorsports, he gets flown all over the world to redesign the suspension in millionaires' hobby cars. Amusingly enough, he admits to not being a good driver, and prefers dealing with cars at a stand-still. Despite his renown in the race car industry, Menscer is highly critical of the sport's glut. But he sees no end to humans wanting to push the limits of speed, so Menscer invests in causes that slow society down, namely farmer-driven food systems. Mark Menscer shares his story and philosophy with Host Frank Stasio. Note: This program originally aired January 6, 2020

April 10, 2020

Category: Health

Fertile Ground: The Silent Struggle Of Infertility:

Infertility is a disease that affects millions of people in the United States but is rarely discussed openly. Twelve percent of married women between the ages of 15 and 44 experienced infertility, along with just over nine percent of men in that age group, according to a 2013 report from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Those numbers translate to about one in eight couples who have trouble getting or staying pregnant. There are a variety of treatments for infertility, but they can be costly and are not accessible to everyone. On this episode of Embodied, a series about sex, relationships and your health, guest host Anita Rao talked to doctors, experts and those with firsthand knowledge about the issues surrounding infertility in American culture. Dr. Steven L. Young joined Rao to talk about who is affected by infertility, what causes it and what treatments are available. He is a professor of obstetrics and gynecology at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine and a physician at UNC Fertility. CDC statistics show African American women are more likely to be infertile than white women, but they are almost half as likely to seek treatment as white women. Dr. Desiree McCarthy-Keith explored the reasons why black women are more likely to experience problems with fertility and why they are less likely to seek treatment. McCarthy-Keith is a reproductive endocrinologist and infertility specialist at Shady Grove Fertility Atlanta. Nichelle Sublett and Belle Boggs share their personal journeys with infertility. Sublett had five miscarriages over five years. She is a fertility advocate and Mrs. North Carolina 2018. She discusses the emotional and psychological impacts of pregnancy loss and what it is like to be a woman of color dealing with infertility. Boggs is an associate professor in the department of English and director of the Master of Fine Arts program in creative writing at North Carolina State University. She struggled with fertility for five years, and during that time wrote the memoir and cultural history “The Art of Waiting: On Fertility, Medicine and Motherhood” (Graywolf Press/2016). Medical sociologist and ethnographer Liberty Barnes digs into how cultural stereotypes play into who receives fertility treatment. She also discusses the financial barriers to fertility treatment, LGBTQ couples and her book, “Conceiving Masculinity: Male Infertility, Medicine, and Identity” (Temple University Press/2014). Note: This program originally aired July 18, 2019.

April 9, 2020

Category: Politics

The Political Junkie Looks At Politics In A Pandemic:

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders is out of the Democratic presidential race. Former Vice President Joe Biden is now the presumptive nominee who will face President Donald Trump in November. A new poll from CNN shows that more than half of Americans think the federal government is doing a “poor job” in preventing the spread of COVID-19 — and a majority disapprove of the president’s response to the crisis. Plus, Wisconsin held its primary election this week after a political battle between the Democratic governor and Republican-controlled state legislature and state supreme court. Does this election fight foreshadow what could happen on a national scale in November? Host Frank Stasio talks to Political Junkie Ken Rudin about all this and more, including how this moment measures up against other tough times in American history.

Category: Economy

Massive Rates Of Unemployment In NC Could Spell Trouble For The Future Of Work

North Carolina’s unemployment filings since March 16 hover just over 470,000, and about 87% of those claims are related to COVID-19. This amounts to years worth of claims that need to be processed in only a matter of weeks. The state Division of Employment Security hired 350 additional staff and opened a new call center to handle the influx of applications, but many North

Carolínians say they are still facing many problems while trying to file. WUNC Capitol Bureau Chief Jeff Tiberii shares his reporting on Gov. Cooper's changes to unemployment eligibility requirements and how the federal CARES Act influenced eligibility in North Carolina. And how will this economic crisis affect the future of work? Diane Lim is the director of outreach and senior advisor for the Penn Wharton Budget Model. She says young, low income and minority workers are on the frontlines of the current economic crisis, but she feels optimistic that workers will be able to bounce back once the stay-at-home orders are lifted. Steve McDonald is a professor of sociology at North Carolina State University focusing on labor markets and economic inequality. Noncitizen workers and gig workers were already some of the most vulnerable laborers, he says, and the economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic will force a reckoning with weaknesses in American work culture. Host Frank Stasio speaks with guests about the economic consequences of the pandemic and how work will change because of it.

April 8, 2020

Category: Politics

In NC Prisons, COVID-19 Outbreak Could Mean A Death Sentence

As of April 7, a surge of COVID-19 cases at the Federal Correctional Complex in Butner sent the total number of infections to 62 — the highest among the nation's federal prisons, according to The News and Observer. Overcrowding and understaffing has public health officials concerned that prisons, jails, and detention centers will become the next epicenters of the outbreak. Some district attorneys are joining with families and advocates to expedite inmate releases from potentially dangerous situations. At the same time, much of the court system is at a standstill until June 1, 2020, and law enforcement officers are shifting strategies to avoid detaining offenders. Will the justice system's emergency protocol result in more crime or a reevaluation of policing and punishment? We hear messages from former inmates, family of those imprisoned and law enforcement. Host Frank Stasio speaks with Joseph Neff, a staff writer with The Marshall Project, as well as Kristie Puckett-Williams, the Statewide Campaign for For Smart Justice manager for the ACLU of North Carolina, and Chuck Manning, director of the Welcome Home Program and lead peer support specialist for the reentry of early-release detainees for the City of Durham's COVID-19 Task Force. Then Stasio asks North Carolina Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley to explain her reasons for freezing the state's court system yet allowing local judges to decide which cases are too urgent to delay.

April 7, 2020

Category: Environment

Relaxed EPA Rules Will Not Affect NC Environmental Enforcement:

The Environmental Protection Agency relaxed environmental standards during the coronavirus pandemic. The agency says it is suspending civil penalties temporarily because of potential worker shortages, social distancing mandates and travel restrictions. But the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality says state rules still apply. According to reporting from WHQR's Vince Winkel, NCDEQ's deputy secretary Sharon Martin said: "During the current public health crisis, DEQ continues to protect air quality, water quality and human health under all state environmental rules and regulations. Under our authority DEQ will work with regulated entities to ensure they remain in compliance and in instances of noncompliance, pursue enforcement actions on a case by case basis." Host Frank Stasio talks to Winkel about his reporting on the story and what DEQ's decision means for our state's environment.

Category: Military

Coronavirus Pandemic Postpones Veterans' Final Military Ceremony:

COVID-19 is changing all aspects of life — including the rituals we associate with death. All funerals have been upended, but veterans have now lost one particularly important ceremony: burial with military honors. WUNC military and veterans affairs reporter Jay Price shares his reporting with host Frank Stasio about how this policy change is affecting North Carolina's five active military cemeteries and how families are coping.

Category: Religion

Honk (or Zoom) If You Love Jesus: How Churches Are Adapting Amid COVID-19

Whether passing the peace, the communion chalice or the collection plate, touch is central to many church congregations. But while church members are sheltering at home, pastors and faith leaders have had to find new ways to provide their parishioners with a sense of togetherness. From Zoom bible studies and Sunday services to worshipping in parked cars at the local drive-in, churches are committed to imparting messages of peace and hope as prolonged isolation and social distancing cause worry and despair for many. Host Frank Stasio talks to Janeé Avent Harris, professional counselor and assistant professor at East Carolina University. Will Breedlove, senior pastor of Harriett Baptist Church, also joins the conversation to discuss the unique challenges and lessons of pastoring during social distancing.

April 6, 2020

Category: Government

Ways & Means Presents: Sealing The Cracks In Our Democracy

Could American democracy be better? It is a big and existential question that is now even more pressing as many watch their friends, neighbors and loved ones fall through the cracks in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Researchers at Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy have spent years putting the entire foundation of the nation we know under a microscope to ask big questions about our democracy, including: What does it take to get people engaged in the democratic process? How can we address the racial wealth gap? And why does local news matter for democracy? In the final installment of our collaboration with the podcast Ways & Means, journalist Emily Hanford introduces us to scholars from Duke's Center for Politics (Polis) who are examining the hows, whys and political potential of these foundational questions.

April 3, 2020

Category: Health

Embodied: The Science And Art Of Your Gut:

Hippocrates, the Greek father of medicine, wrote "all diseases begin in the gut." He continued the line with the famous advice: "let medicine be thy food and food thy medicine." New research confirms Hippocrates' thinking, showing the human gut does much more than just process food. The gut's dense network of neural tissue serves as a conduit for communication between other microbial species and our own brains. Microbes in our gut help regulate serotonin, affecting anxiety levels and prompting that deep sense of satisfaction after eating your favorite meal. But the gut-brain connection is also a two-way road — stressful emotional events may increase the chances of Irritable bowel syndrome. Guest host Anita Rao talks with Ian Carroll, assistant

professor of nutrition at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Dr. Lin Chang of the School of Medicine and vice-chief of the Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Division of Digestive Diseases at the University of California, Los Angeles about how the gut and brain communicate with one another and methods for treating abnormal communication, including fecal transplants. Also joining the conversation is Lydia Greene, a postdoctoral fellow at the Duke Lemur Center, who shares lessons learned about nutrition and health from studying the gut microbiome of our primate cousins. Finally, Anna Dumitriu reaches for the sublime in her creative interpretations of gastrointestinal infections. Dumitriu is an artist in residence with the Modernising Medical Microbiology Project at the University of Oxford and at the National Collection of Type Cultures at Public Health England. She is a visiting research fellow at the Brighton and Sussex Medical School. This conversation is part of The State of Things' new series "Embodied: Sex, Relationships and Your Health." Note: This program originally aired August 22, 2019.

April 2, 2020

Category: Health

Shoppers' Anxieties And Workers' Realities: The Truth About Food During COVID-19

Grocery clerks and delivery drivers are on the frontlines alongside healthcare workers fighting the coronavirus. But, unlike nurses, coming in contact with highly contagious diseases was not included in their job description. Low wages, limited benefits, and now the pervasive threat of illness? On March 27, Triangle fast food employees went on a day-long digital strike asking for better sanitary supplies and protective equipment, paid sick leave and a \$15 minimum wage. The local strike follows a wave of national labor organizing throughout the food system, including the United Food and Commercial Workers, Amazon warehouse workers, Whole Foods staff and Instacart delivery drivers. Meanwhile, Amazon is looking to hire 100,000 more warehouse and delivery workers across the country amidst predictions of a 32% unemployment rate. WUNC Reporter Jason DeBruyn talks with host Frank Stasio about food workers' labor organizing amidst the uncertain job market and strained supply chains.

For many consumers, grocery stores are the epicenter of anxiety. Food shortages, crowded aisles and worries over contaminated packages have many avoiding stores altogether. Experts say neither food nor food packaging are likely sources of infection. But there are steps shoppers and eaters can take to ensure they reduce their chances of bringing the novel coronavirus into their homes and mouths. Stasio talks with Natalie Seymour, a food safety extension associate with North Carolina State University, about staying safe around food and the greater repercussions of the pandemic on our agricultural and food systems.

He also talks with Stacy Wood, the Langdon Distinguished University chair of marketing at North Carolina State's Poole College of Management, about the sometimes unexpected behavior consumers exhibit during times of stress and uncertainty. Wood says depending on how long buyers are forced to modify their habits, their new ways of interacting with food, businesses and each other could persist long after a return to so-called normal.

And, home cooking is taking a creative turn as folks take fewer trips to the grocery store. Listeners chimed in with their favorite quarantine recipes, including one from cookbook author Sandra Gutierrez reminding us of the infinite versatility of canned tomatoes. Stasio asks Chef Meherwan Irani to share his own favorite non-perishables and some substitutes for out-of-stock ingredients. Irani is the executive chef and chief chaiwalla at Chai Pani Restaurant Group, which has a location in Asheville.

Audio description: Host Frank Stasio speaks with a food safety expert, consumer behavior researcher, and head chef about how the food system is adapting to pandemic

April 1, 2020

Category: Religion

In ‘Broken Faith’ Reporters Uncover Decades Of Abuse Inside Cult-Like Spindale Church

When former schoolteacher Jane Whaley and her husband, Sam, founded Word of Faith Fellowship in Spindale, NC in 1979, no one could have imagined all that the institution would become: a religious movement with global impact; a community that provides housing and job opportunities to its congregation; and a cult dogged with allegations of physical, psychological and spiritual abuse.

John Cooper grew up in Spindale as part of the Word of Faith Fellowship community, and the abuse he suffered then haunted him well into his adult life. While attending medical lectures on how to recognize signs of domestic violence, he was reminded of multiple church members attempting to exorcise Word of Faith Fellowship congregants through “blasting” — or screaming and punching a person believed to be demon-possessed. Wanting to stop the suffering of other children and families, Cooper eventually reported his experiences to two investigative journalists at the Associated Press, Mitch Weiss and Holbrook Mohr.

Weiss and Mohr not only found other church members willing to corroborate Cooper’s claims, but they unearthed even more disturbing accounts of manipulation and abuse at Word of Faith Fellowship. Their investigation is the subject of a new book, “Broken Faith: Inside the Word of Faith Fellowship, One of America’s Most Dangerous Cults” (Hanover Square Press/2020).

Host Anita Rao talks with Mitch Weiss and Holbrook Mohr about their investigation and the more than 100 interviews with people connected to the church that comprise their book.

Category: Military & Environment

Bombs, Beavers And Butterfly Biologists: What Fort Bragg Teaches Us About Saving A Species: Of all federal agencies, the Department of Defense manages the highest density of threatened and endangered species, more than even the National Park Service. The special relationship between the Pentagon and environmentalist organizations originates at Fort Bragg. There, biologists and military officials work together to save the St. Francis Satyr — one of the world’s rarest butterflies — by starting fires and flooding the landscape. Disturbance is necessary to create habitat for the thumbnail-sized butterflies. In fact, the butterfly thrives on the artillery range. To learn more about how artillery specialists take part in conservation, guest host Anita Rao talks with Nick Haddad, a butterfly expert and longtime collaborator with the base, about his book “The Last Butterflies: A Scientist’s Quest to Save a Rare and Vanishing Creature” (Princeton University Press 2019) Haddad is joined by Brian Ball, Fort Bragg’s St. Francis Satyr program manager, and Fort Bragg Range Operations Training Lands Coordinator Jon Garrow. Note: This program originally aired July 31, 2019.