

Rocky Mount TELEGRAM

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ROCKY MOUNT, NORTH CAROLINA

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Conference play begins

SPORTS, B1



City's top cop reflects on first months on job

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer



HASSELL

Police Chief Robert Hassell was asked by City Councilman Andre Knight what he has been seeing in the community in his four months on the job.

Knight also wanted to know from Hassell whether he needed anything from the council.

Hassell said that from the city manager's office to the council, "I've seen nothing but support from the council" and that, at

the moment, he couldn't think of anything he could ask of the council.

Hassell said that he is working with the city manager's office on a few things as he completes his evaluation of the police department and that he is looking at some possible reorganizations and other items.

Knight questioned Hassell mo-

ments after Hassell as part of the Sept. 13 council work session gave his report about crime during August in Rocky Mount.

Hassell reported for work in early May after having been hired by City Manager Rochelle Small-Toney. Hassell had previously been the police chief in Reidsville in the Triad region.

During the Sept. 13 council work session, Hassell made clear the Rocky Mount Police Department is working on implementing new technologies he believes will

help the department make residents more aware of what's going on because many of the crimes occurring are ones that could possibly be avoided.

One of the new technologies that has been discussed is a real-time crime-fighting intelligence center to provide visibility via cameras not only managed by the municipality, but also via the cameras of residents and businesses who give the department access through partner agreements.

The other that has been dis-

cussed is a public safety app to enable residents to use their cell phones to keep track of the department's reports of incidents and to quickly communicate with the police.

During the Sept. 13 council work session, Knight told Hassell he has been receiving calls about shootings throughout city neighborhoods.

Knight said that gunfire not only can be heard late in the night but

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WILLIAM F. WEST/ROCKY MOUNT TELEGRAM

Discussions have been in progress about Howard Street becoming the scene of an arts district.

Downtown arts district envisioned

BY WILLIAM F. WEST
Staff Writer



WILDER

A statewide arts official on Saturday is going to participate via teleconferencing with a group in Rocky Mount residents interested in having a vibrant arts district in the heart of the city.

Leigh Ann Wilder, who is the creative economies director at the N.C. Arts Council, told the Telegram she is going to have a conversation with the people in the group, which plans to convene at noon.

Discussions have been ongoing locally since at least as far back as autumn 2019 about having an arts district along Howard

Street as part of a continuing effort to revitalize downtown. And there is a desire to include part of Church Street in the arts district.

Wilder told the Telegram over the phone on Thursday she will be asking more of the appropriate questions she believes people should ask themselves when they are ready to have an arts district.

She said questions include, "Is there a problem they are trying to solve? Is

this something where they want to connect the local arts resources? Why do you want to have a cultural arts district in the first place? What do you hope to accomplish? Is there interest in creating a plan?"

She said other questions include whether there are people behind the idea, who the key players are and whether this is a logical geographic area for the arts district to occur.

"So I'm going to be talking to them about their decisions around that or have they asked themselves those questions," she said. "We're just going to be exploring it, basically.

"It's really the very first step," she said.

The N.C. Arts Council is a state agency that is part of the state Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.

The arts council delivers resources to arts organizations and artists to support projects and programs of public value that revitalize downtowns and educate and empower North Carolina youths — and fuel a thriving nonprofit creative sector that generates more than \$2 billion a year.

Wilder runs a community development team that works with local arts

See ARTS, A2

Arrest made in Hollister teen's death

Student killed in 2012

BY AMELIA HARPER
Staff Writer



SALGUERO-OLIVARES



HEDGEPETH

An area woman learned Thursday that a man had been arrested in connection with the murder of her daughter, Faith Hedgepeth, who was killed just over nine years ago in Chapel Hill.

Connie Hedgepeth, who lives near Hollister, was notified Thursday morning of the arrest of Miguel Enrique Salguero-Olivares, 28, of Durham. Until Thursday, no arrest had been made in connection with the death of her daughter Faith, who was killed at the age of 19 while she was a student at UNC-Chapel Hill.

Salguero-Olivares was charged with first-degree murder and is being held without bond in the Durham County jail.

At a news conference Thursday afternoon at the Chapel Hill Town Hall, Connie Hedgepeth said she has been waiting a long time for this news.

"When I got the news this morning, I didn't do anything but cry and thank God and praise God because I put it in his hands and it was his timing," she said.

Faith Hedgepeth was

found dead on Sept. 7, 2012, in a friend's off-campus apartment in Chapel Hill. Hedgepeth, a member of the Haliwa-Saponi Tribe, was a sophomore biology major at UNC-Chapel Hill at the time of her death. She was reportedly planning to become a pediatrician and return to work near her home.

Connie Hedgepeth said she is grateful for the perseverance of law enforcement officers who worked diligently on her daughter's case over the years.

"I thank the Chapel Hill Police Department, the SBI and anyone who had a hand in investigating this case. I thank them for their hard work and their labor paid off," she said. "When I cried, it was tears of joy, tears of relief, knowing that someone had been arrested in

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Nash Democrats set to choose next county register of deeds

BY AMELIA HARPER
Staff Writer

Today is the last day for members of the Nash County Democratic Party who wish to be considered for nomination as the county's next register of deeds to make their wishes known to party leaders.

The Nash County Democratic Party plans to meet at 6 p.m. on Sept. 23 via Zoom to vote on a recommendation of an eligible

resident of Nash County to be appointed to fill Anne Melvin's unexpired term as register of deeds.

The move is necessary because of Melvin's death on Sept. 2. Melvin, a Democrat, had served as Nash County Register of Deeds for nearly 10 years, winning her last election to the office in 2020. The current term of office expires in 2024 and the person who is selected at next Thursday's meeting will serve in that role until then,

Nash County Elections Director John Kearney said Thursday.

Sandra Davis, the county's assistant register of deeds, is filling the position until a new register of deeds is appointed, Nash County Manager Zee Lamb said in an earlier interview.

Anyone who is qualified and interested in becoming the next Nash County register of deeds should provide a letter of interest by today to their Democratic pre-

dict chair or to Sandy Conover, chairwoman of the Nash County Democratic Party.

Once the Nash County Democratic Party selects a person to fill the role Thursday, the recommendation will be made to the Nash County Board of Commissioners. However, under state law, that vote is merely a formality.

According to N.C. General Statute 161-5, if the executive committee of the Nash County Demo-

cratic Party selects a nominee for the position within 30 days, that nominee shall be appointed by the Nash County Board of Commissioners to fill the role until the term expires.

Registers of deeds are elected to four-year terms by the citizens of the county and serve as custodian and manager of large numbers of public records including real estate records, birth and death records and marriage certificates.



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