



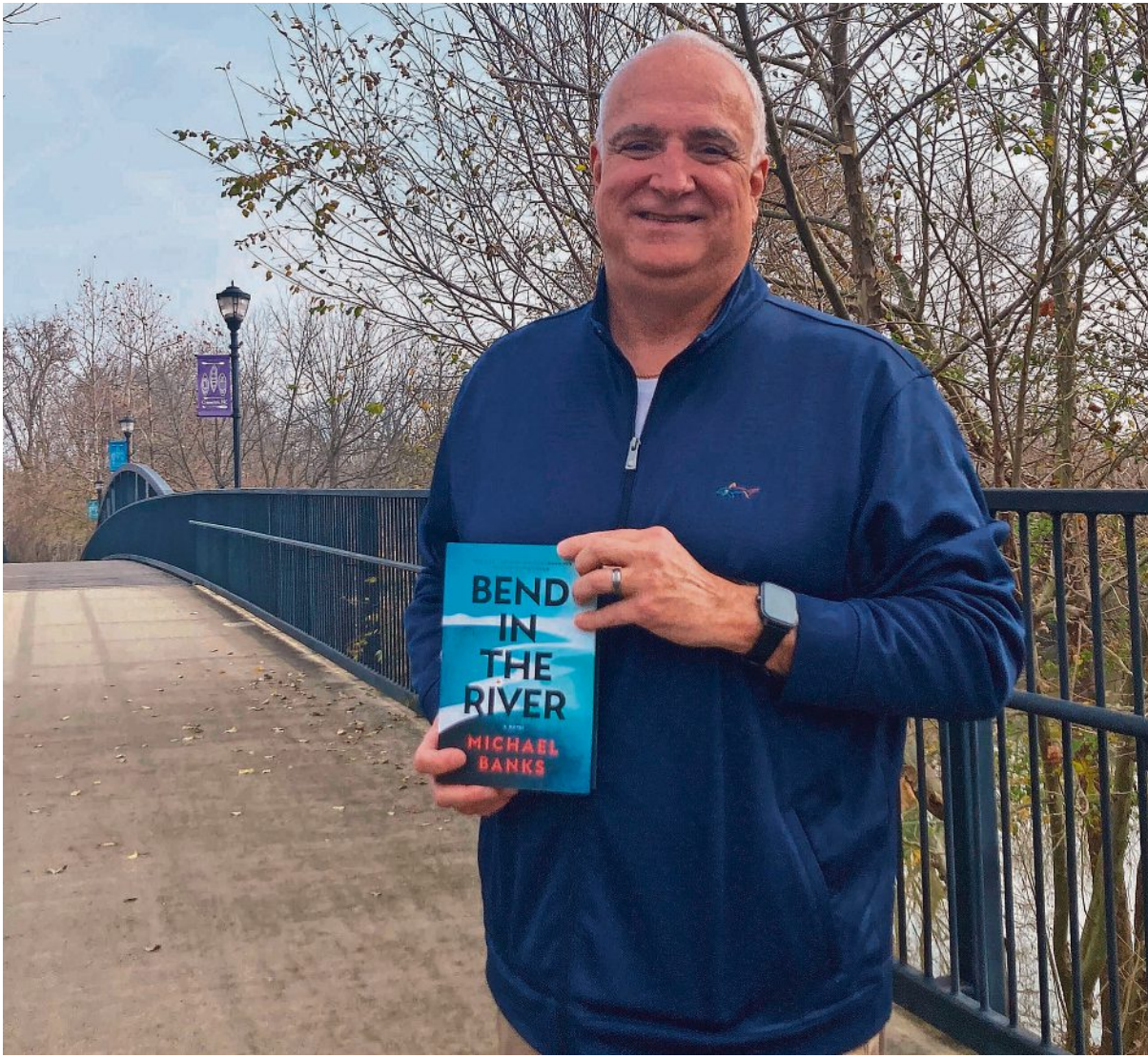
Why Crest football is relishing second NCHSAA playoff crack at Hickory

SPORTS, 1B

The Gaston Gazette

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Mike Banks KARA FOHNER/GASTON GAZETTE

Local newspaper man publishes first book

Kara Fohner Gaston Gazette | USA TODAY NETWORK

Belmont writer Mike Banks understands small towns, and in his first novel, “Bend in the River,” he writes about what he knows. • “It’s about the small towns and the secrets of small towns, and how people closely guard a lot of these secrets,” Banks said in an interview. See BOOK, Page 2A

Banks, who has since moved back to Belmont, said that his book was partially inspired by a true story. In 1964, two hunters went missing and were presumed to have drowned in the Ohio River.

Gaston restaurants ranked from 95 to 94.5

Diane Turbyfill
Gaston Gazette
USA TODAY NETWORK

Here are the North Carolina Department of Health’s restaurant and food stand inspection scores for Gaston County conducted Nov. 9-17. All restaurants listed this week re-

ceived an A rating. The North Carolina Department of Public Health, Environmental Health Section, conducts regular restaurant inspections to help keep residents and visitors safe. Disclaimer: On any given day, an establishment may have fewer or more violations than noted in their most recent

inspection. An inspection conducted on any given day may not be representative of the overall, long-term conditions at the establishment. A few more recent, follow-up inspections may not be included here. All restaurants scored an A. See RESTAURANTS, Page 2A

Gastonia woman accused of abusing man

Victim’s remains found next to road

Kara Fohner
Gaston Gazette
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Gastonia woman has been accused of assaulting and humiliating a man whose remains were found at the side of U.S. 321 in February 2024. Shirley Michelle Dukes, 56, of Carriage House Lane in Gastonia, was arrested Monday, Dec. 1, and charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. Dukes came under investigation after the body of 58-year-old Glen Anthony Miller was found at the side of the highway on Feb. 6, 2024, wrapped in blankets and trash bags, Assistant District Attorney Sean Baetjer said in court Tuesday. Miller’s death is being investigated

See REMAINS, Page 2A

Teacher charged with touching student

Kara Fohner
Gaston Gazette
USA TODAY NETWORK

A 31-year-old Gaston County teacher is accused of having an inappropriate relationship with a student, according to prosecutors. Victoria Lynn Powell, 31, of Grover was arrested Monday, Dec. 1, and charged with two counts of indecent liberties with a child in the Nov. 1 incident. Powell is a physical education teacher at Hunter Huss High School who was hired by Gaston County Schools in 2021, according to the school district. On Tuesday, Dec. 2, she was suspended with pay, the district said. According to Assistant District

See TEACHER, Page 2A

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