



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



*** Intro (00:00:03)** - The Roundtable Talk podcast, getting to the facts across the state, around the world, and at home in Raeford, North Carolina.

Hal Nunn (00:00:13) - Good afternoon, folks, and welcome to the Round Table Talk podcast. How Nunn, Reuben Castelo and Chris Holland Inside the Studios of Christian 1057.com and Grandeur Vision Media. Thank you for Dan and his folks for helping us out. And happy New year. Happy new year, . Happy new year. It was, uh. I'm over it. Uh, you're already over the year.

Ruben Castellon (00:00:35) - No, I'm over all the food.

Hal Nunn (00:00:37) - Yeah, over the food process, man. I'll tell you what. It's, uh, definitely a different world as the kids, you know, get. Obviously they're older than just graduating, but now that the spread out a little more, it takes a little more effort to get to point A to point B, and sometimes you end up sitting in the room with, uh, the remote control and yourself. Yeah, yeah. We, uh, you didn't.

Chris Holland (00:01:01) - Know we actually drove back from Texas Friday. Uh, what was New Year's? That was Sunday night. It was, uh, so we came back on New Year's Eve. Yeah, yeah, we came back Saturday. Took us 22 hours, 20, 23 hours. I left it 6:30 a.m. central time, got home, unloaded the truck I laid down in the bed at 6 a.m.. Eastern time the next morning.

Hal Nunn (00:01:25) - Ruben, did you go anywhere or do anything? Oh, I gotta do the sponsors. Yep. Uh. Good call. Keep them happy.

Hal Nunn (00:01:37) - Episode 77. You can find us at Roundtable Talk podcast.com. But we've got to thank our our sponsors because I'm telling you what, when you get when you have loyalty, when you have people that that work closely and you have some of the same ideas and, and abilities and history, you tend to want to really help them over the top. And this is one of those times we need to help them.

Hal Nunn (00:02:03) - I saw a post from Raeford Guns the other day that they just got a sign at the store, nine years after it was promised. Oh yeah. Oh, I don't know nothing about who's build it or who owns it. Or is that the other? But if I was a retail business on a main thoroughfare somewhere and my landlord told me that there's going to be a sign put up and and it took that long. Oh my goodness. But anyway, Rayford guns sign or no sign, it's easy to find on 401 when you're heading from Fayetteville towards Raeford. It's on the right hand side just before the big aquatic center.

Hal Nunn (00:02:41) - Scull Road and Johnson Mill. Raeford. Guns. Yep. Inside the gas station at Scull Road and Johnson Mill Monday through Friday, 10 to 7. And they're normally at shows on the weekends. They they'll communicate well on their Facebook page. Raeford guns. Or you can give them a call 910709 3950. That's Raeford guns on Facebook.

Ruben Castellon (00:03:02) - And let me let me interrupt you. Here's the whole thing. If you listen in, uh, this is something you need to understand. Realize this. This is a local business. Okay. Wow. Then I might be one of the bigger, uh, uh, stores around the area that carry a lot of firearms. They can still get you what you want if they don't have it, you know, so you don't need to go to Jim's pawn shop or any other location. You don't have to use, uh, uh, Jerry's pawn shop on Spring Lake to get a, uh, a gun order or anything. This can be done here locally. Yep.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:03:39) - You wouldn't even have to leave the county. And sometimes even coming up in, uh, this this year, some of the construction, some of the pre stuff is going to happen for 211. So we already know about coming to Fayetteville, but going towards Southern Pines and Aberdeen is getting ready to get a little tougher.

Chris Holland (00:03:55) - Yeah that's going to happen right after the the Open in June.

Chris Holland (00:03:58) - So it opens in June. And then as soon as that's completed they're going to start breaking ground and really messing things up.

Hal Nunn (00:04:06) - You remember that comment a year or so back when the lady said they're doing all this just for the US open?

Chris Holland (00:04:12) - Yeah, yeah. No, they're going to hold off because they don't want those those people to be held up.

Hal Nunn (00:04:18) - All right. The other our other partner and soon to be uh, big news coming for us and uh, the podcast and, uh, the newspaper and the radio station, possibly we'd like to welcome the addition to the North State Journal as our family of sponsors. The Hoke North State Journal is a weekly statewide newspaper in North Carolina covering local, state, national, and world news, as well as college and pro sports. Subscribe today by calling 33628363053362836305. Hoke dot North State journal.com. And I had messed up and didn't do my post of the week of Christmas, so I did a double banger post this week and had December 27th and January 3rd.

Hal Nunn (00:05:02) - Um, Murphy to Manteo, I think, uh, there's a cool spot in there that maybe we'll talk about, uh, coming up. But anyway, um, did you, uh, make did you make any resolutions? Did you do did you say, I'm going to do this this year or do that?

Chris Holland (00:05:17) - I don't I don't do resolutions.

Hal Nunn (00:05:19) - Yeah, I think we already had that during our holiday. Uh, put.

Chris Holland (00:05:22) - Too much pressure on yourself. Right? Right.

Hal Nunn (00:05:24) - We don't need no more pressure than we got already, right?

Chris Holland (00:05:27) - That's right. Uh, well.

Hal Nunn (00:05:28) - But, uh, I said I saw this one video, uh, yesterday, and it's the guy down in south in Georgia, uh, Doctor James Merritt. He does a sermon. You can find him online touching lives Ministry. But, uh, uh, he said, look to the Bible daily. And then he said. It's useless if you don't read it. So. And then he had some kind of stat where, you know how many.

Hal Nunn (00:05:54) - There are so many Bibles in homes today, more than there ever has been. Maybe Dan can give me the big numbers or something, but there's more Bibles in the homes in America and the world today than there ever has been before. But what percentage of them are actually opened on a daily basis?



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Ruben Castellon (00:06:17) - Yeah, well, I can tell you right now there's three Bibles in my house and I know one gets open every day. Amen, brother. And that's, uh. That's mine. Amen. The other two are randomly look by, uh, others in the, uh, in the house, you know, so.

Hal Nunn (00:06:35) - Actually, uh, uh, actually one of the comments that he made during that sermon, this was New Year's Eve. Was it 31st? So you can go look for it yourself. Touching lives ministry. But one of the other things he said about, uh, the Bible is you may want to look to it daily or you should be looking to it daily. Uh, unless you just don't look at it at all.

Hal Nunn (00:06:54) - But he says, if you don't look at it at all, even if you look at it, do you actually believe what's in it? And in other words, there are so many Christians today that are in the churches that that believe, you know, uh, Jesus died on the cross for us and came back from the grave to, uh, abolish all of our sins, you know, but they can't say they even look in the Bible so they know the tagline. But do they know what it means? And I think that, uh, I'm going to dig a little deeper myself this year. That's one of the it's not a resolution, just something I want to do.

Chris Holland (00:07:27) - Yeah. Self-improvement. Yep.

Hal Nunn (00:07:29) - Just want to dig in anyway. Uh, local, local local.

Chris Holland (00:07:33) - Um, so I got something. You know, we're moving into the 2024 election season. Oh, well, we know what happened in 2020 with all the the mandates, the masking, the Covid shots, the lockdowns and everything else that, well, getting ready to get, I think, fired up.

Chris Holland (00:07:48) - You know, around the nation, we're hearing rumblings of the same thing that's happening now. It struck home. So the Cape Fear Valley medical system has just updated their visitor and masking policies. So Cape Fear Valley Health is updating its masking policy due to the increased volume of respiratory infections, including flu. Now, I don't know, maybe I'm just like lost 50 years of my life or lost 50 years of memory. But flu has been here ever since I was a kid.

Ruben Castellon (00:08:17) - Well, it disappeared during COVID though, right?

Hal Nunn (00:08:20) - But I got the flu.

Chris Holland (00:08:21) - But my point being, I don't ever remember going to a hospital and putting on a mask because of flu, any flu season. I mean, it just comes and goes and it. But anyway, RSV and Covid 19 in the community. So as of December 28th, all patients and visitors in the emergency department waiting room, unless the patients are 65 or older or is in cognitive cognitively impaired, will be alone. So, you know, if you're an adult, you go in there by yourself.

Chris Holland (00:08:50) - You have no visitors. Nobody accompany you unless you're cognitively impaired or you're over the age of 65. Uh, once you get admitted, if you get admitted into a room, you can then have one one visitor at a time type thing. As for kids, they can have one parent or guardian in the emergency room with them, and then once they're admitted, they can have up to two adults. Their parents can come in and visit them. But they ask, you know, if you're suffering any kind of symptoms or whatever nasal.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:09:20) - Things been hanging around.

Chris Holland (00:09:21) - Just remember, just stay home. Don't even come if you don't have to. But I just I find it ironic, you know, here we are. It's the flu, it's RSV, it's COVID-19 now. I mean, we're two years into it. The population has resistance.

Ruben Castellon (00:09:38) - Three years.

Chris Holland (00:09:39) - Three years into it, we have resistance, you know. And so all growing up, I never was asked to put on a mask when you got the sniffles or you got the cold and went to the hospital, you didn't see nurses.

Ruben Castellon (00:09:51) - This is what this is. Okay. One word indoctrination. Okay. There is now that the real research is allowed back in on Google or whatever else is out there, now we have it's it's always been there. There is no data. There is no research available because they tried the math, especially the surgical masks that, uh, the doctors use. You know, the little blue, blue ones. Okay. Oh, cloth, cloth mask. They don't protect you, period. They don't they they just don't protect you. If anything, that makes it worse on you, it makes it worse on you that there's a lot of information out there today that these masks don't protect you. Uh, this is all. I do believe that this is all a face to try to do the same thing that. Happen in um during the 2020 elections. And if, uh, if Americans don't wake up, they become sheep. You know, right now is the time, you know, this whole metaphor about, you know, sheep and wolves, you know, you're supposed to be a sheep.

Ruben Castellon (00:11:08) - No, I'm, I'm I, I don't care what anybody says. Uh, I'm always. I've always been a predator. I'm a wolf. You're not gonna. You're not gonna step on me. You're just not gonna step on me. You know, to this day, I refuse to go to, um, to, uh, the, uh, First Health Moore, uh, the clinic on Teal Drive.

Hal Nunn (00:11:29) - Teal Drive.

Ruben Castellon (00:11:30) - You know, uh, you know, I had an appointment and they didn't want to see me. I said, you're denying me medical services. I, I refused to wear a mask. And so what they would do, they would go inside and talk to my doctor. Yeah. Let them in. You know, you you got to. You got to stand. You got to stand up. You got to stand up. And you know what? There's other hospitals, you know. And I tell you what, when you have enough people to stand up and say, hey, we're not going to do this, they will quickly change the tune because it all boils to this.

Ruben Castellon (00:12:03) - Patience equals only one thing profit. Profit.

Hal Nunn (00:12:06) - That's it. That sounds like Harvard. That's it, that's it. I haven't even gotten there yet.

Chris Holland (00:12:11) - Here we go.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Ruben Castellon (00:12:12) - That's it. You know, and I can't believe to this day they're still pushing the COVID shot. Oh, there's plenty of data out there now they that if you have taken a shot, if you're taking a booster or if you're taking more than boosters, you have compromised your immune system forever. Yep.

Hal Nunn (00:12:30) - You don't have to have it.

Ruben Castellon (00:12:31) - And now you're going to get sick. Things that didn't affect you before can have a dramatic effect on you. Yeah, especially as you get older, too.

Hal Nunn (00:12:39) - Yeah, absolutely. So, um, there was another story, though, that that's Cape Fear Valley. But in the state of North Carolina, there was was it all hospitals made a.

Chris Holland (00:12:52) - As I just found the Cape Fear Valley?

Ruben Castellon (00:12:54) - No, it was just Cape Fear System.

Hal Nunn (00:12:57) - I thought that I, I saw something I'll have to look for a break or something, but where, where, um, the the state says something about the hospital.

Ruben Castellon (00:13:04) - No, no.

Hal Nunn (00:13:05) - Okay. My bad. All right. So maybe there's. But Reuben, you were actually correct. I think, uh, probably October or November. One of those shows. You can go look at the show notes. You were saying, hey, watch it. The mask are coming back. Yeah.

Ruben Castellon (00:13:19) - Yeah. And this is why I said, you gotta stand up. Listen, I see a mess like the Second Amendment. Just because we have a pandemic, we don't lose our God given rights. The government, the government is to protect our rights, not to force themselves on us, infringe our on our rights. Their job is to protect our rights, not to take away our rights. But ultimately it has to be with the American people if you want. If you give them inch, you will never get it. Get it back. Once you once you give up a right, you don't get that right back and.

Hal Nunn (00:14:00) - You're giving them the inch. And then they say, well, well we'll go over here and also do this.

Hal Nunn (00:14:05) - We'll go over here and do.

Ruben Castellon (00:14:06) - Remember Joe Biden, if you just give me a hundred days and anybody that knows that lying, uh, person would know that he was lying.

Chris Holland (00:14:19) - Yeah, I read some articles and they keep blaming, you know, the deaths from the pandemic on Trump. Actually, more people died after Biden came into office. Yeah. And prior to than prior to. But, you know, that's it's like beating your head on a wall.

Ruben Castellon (00:14:34) - I want to go back around to a very important thing you said about the Bible. Did you know that if you read the Bible, did she know that you're mentally more healthy?

Hal Nunn (00:14:46) - Well, it's also physically.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Ruben Castellon (00:14:47) - Yeah. And did you also know the chances? Chances of committing suicide decreased dramatically? Wow. Uh, because you read the Bible, you know, I, you know, I say very loud and clear, I, I'm proud of what I, what I was and what I've transformed to. You know, I'm not gonna say I was proud, but I am proud of what I am today.

Ruben Castellon (00:15:11) - Uh, I was an atheist. I didn't, you know, I did not believe in God. Didn't definitely did not believe in Jesus Christ. And and 2001 during Kosovo operations. Uh, in Macedonia area. Mhm. Um, I came to a moment in my life there that I realized I can't do it all by myself. I needed something bigger than me and I that's when I read the Bible the first time and you know, it transformed me, you know, and I, I tell you what, it is very healthy. It is very healthy to pray. It is very it's healthy for the soul. It's it's healthy for the mind. It's healthy for the spirit. It's very healthy to. I read, uh, the Bible I read. I'm in revelations right now. I've read the revelation. I've read the same Bible I've had at least five times, and I still read revelations, and I still don't understand.

Hal Nunn (00:16:03) - It'll it'll throw you some curve.

Ruben Castellon (00:16:05) - Because God has not opened my mind in my eyes yet to understand what revelations.

Ruben Castellon (00:16:10) - I'm hoping that one day when I get done reading revelation, it's gonna click and say, ah, okay, okay, I see that.

Hal Nunn (00:16:18) - I know what I think, I know when it's going to click there. It's going anyway. My my, my Sunday school teacher, probably one of the best in the world, says it's like client, uh, claim trying to understand Einstein's theory of relativity. Yeah, a clam, a little clam trying to understand God. Yeah. We can't, we can't. I don't know if we I mean, the revelation.

Ruben Castellon (00:16:43) - I mean, the Bible specifically says I'm paraphrasing because many locations say your job is not to understand God. It's a matter of fact, if you want to tell God your plans, he's going to laugh at you.

Hal Nunn (00:16:56) - Yeah, absolutely.

Ruben Castellon (00:16:57) - You know, and so my job is not to understand God. My job is to ensure that I try my best to follow his mandate.

Chris Holland (00:17:07) - His word.

Ruben Castellon (00:17:07) - Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Hal Nunn (00:17:10) - So basically we went from masks, right? To Jesus Christ.

Ruben Castellon (00:17:16) - Well, I can. Okay. Nowhere in the Bible, nowhere in the Bible does it say that we are to wear masks. Now, if you understand, you need to understand something about the Bible. The Bible is spiritual. It's good for the soul. It's good for everything. It's also a documented, proven, proven, documented history.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:17:37) - Um, so history.

Ruben Castellon (00:17:38) - Book of the suffering of God's people. Um, it's it's it's it's it's all in the Bible. You have good and you have bad. You know. And this is what this is what people don't don't understand. It's not just, you know, you read the Bible and I'm saying, no, it's more it's more deep than that.

Hal Nunn (00:17:58) - Yeah. There was three sermons, and, uh, I won't get into them all, but what's next? And and wait, I have to tell that story another time.

Chris Holland (00:18:05) - I want to say, on a side note, I didn't know you were in Kosovo in oh one.

Chris Holland (00:18:08) - Oh, Lord, I was two doing this. How long I know. Right. We're gonna have to swap some stories now, he said.

Hal Nunn (00:18:13) - You said it.

Ruben Castellon (00:18:14) - Was in the men's shed. Anywhere in the men's shed in.

Chris Holland (00:18:18) - Kosovo, in Bonn.

Ruben Castellon (00:18:19) - Still Bonn, still.

Hal Nunn (00:18:21) - I was in Fort Eustis, a member of the £6,000 forklift they had found weapons in. When I took the wheel off. Anyway, you were going to go to another story, and it's our last one. Unless we mentioned some fruit, you know, stuff. Okay, let me go ahead and mention, uh, what's going on? Uh, two things. Congratulations to the Boys Bucks basketball team. They won the Lee County, uh, Christmas Classic basketball tournament, beating Triton High School. Big school. Uh, so that was really cool. The women's wrestling team has won, like 2 or 3 matches in a row, and they won the W.R. or WRAL Women's Invitational. And the boys wrestling team is is one of the top in the state now in my opinion.

Hal Nunn (00:19:05) - And I saw.

Chris Holland (00:19:07) - That in the paper. Yeah. Um.

Hal Nunn (00:19:08) - I just, you know, we we've got to make sure that sometimes these sports get pushed to the backburner and things like that, like swimming. You know, we've got the aquatic center now, and we found out that the other teams were coming to swim here even though Hoke wasn't participating because of exams. But I understand all that. But these sports, sometimes they get, uh, not as much highlights. But let me tell you something. The wrestling program under the, uh, under Brandon Locklear is, in my opinion, nothing. But on the way up. Now, of course, they'll have some problems. They'll probably have some, you know, some something happened, I hope I didn't jinx them or nothing like that, because we're in the middle of the season. You don't do it. But just wanted to give a shout out. The women's basketball team beat a tough team early on in that tournament, but they lost in the second or third round.

Hal Nunn (00:20:01) - And uh, last thing for me. And then you can knock it out. Grieve. Share. Uh, our church, uh uh, Tommy and Judy Williams are hosting a grief share. And if you know anything about, uh,



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



during the holidays or losing a loved one, sometimes things can be a little bit tough, especially of a loss of a family member. And there's a huge program that they do is basically countrywide. Everybody does it. But you have locals that set up and do that. Our church is doing a grief share program and it starts on Thursdays, uh, Thursday this coming Thursday, January 11th at four. And it goes for about two hours. And it's a 13 week, I think, program, uh, dealing with the loss of very close loved ones or and it's tough. So there's an opportunity for you if you need more info, uh, you can send us a message or First Baptist Church. I think the, uh, look them up.

Chris Holland (00:20:58) - (910) 875-3508 yeah, I just yeah, I just want to send out a reminder.

Chris Holland (00:21:03) - This Saturday is the kind of conservative men's huddle. It's over at the Raeford Civic Center from 9 to 11 a.m.. Uh, the cost is \$5. That's kind of a nominal fee. And I'll tell you why it happened. And it happens to us sometimes. These liberal groups follow our announcements, and when we put stuff on Eventbrite, they come in with all these fake names and they take the free tickets, right? So, you know, if somebody's really wanting to go, they hit on RSVP and.

Hal Nunn (00:21:31) - It's it's not a very big place. Yeah.

Chris Holland (00:21:32) - Well yeah. And it's just like, well we can't there's no tickets available so people don't show up. And it's a tactic these people use. And we've been struck several times. Some of our events had to go there and clean them out. You know it's like Susie Q from Long Beach, California is coming to North Carolina to go to a barbecue, right?

Hal Nunn (00:21:50) - Right to a barbecue at the farm.

Chris Holland (00:21:52) - Yeah. So, so but anyway, it's a nominal fee of \$5, and that is to actually get the attendees, uh, reserve the tickets for it.

Chris Holland (00:22:00) - On it is the Frederick Douglass Association out of Fayetteville, and but the, uh, Mr. Ruben Castellon here and Gerald Laura Nunez, two members of the Hope County Republican Executive Committee, are going to be panelist members. We've got Mr. Tony Cunningham. He ran previously for, uh, Polk County School Board. He'll be a panelist member. And it's going to be moderated by a dual Ali, the former.

Hal Nunn (00:22:27) - Oh, yeah.

Chris Holland (00:22:28) - Caruthers County or Travis County, uh, GOP chairman.

Hal Nunn (00:22:32) - Carrabbas County.

Hal Nunn (00:22:33) - Carrabbas - not the restaurant.

Chris Holland (00:22:37) - But no, that's all I got. Oh, okay.

Hal Nunn (00:22:39) - Do you have any free for all?

Ruben Castellon (00:22:40) - Just real quick. You know, uh, talking about the Bible, um, you know, if you're around children, if you have children. Whether you're a parent, guardian, uh, uncle, whatever. Uh,



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



you gotta realize this. You need to. And you also need to understand you. We need to protect our children, uh, especially minors, and protect their innocence until the last minute.

Ruben Castellon (00:23:09) - We should not be volunteering or force, um, materials that that would just contaminate a child's mind, uh, or body or body. This is. This is why it's a there's been a big push. Uh, but the, uh, parents bill of rights, um, uh, to make sure that the public school system is, um, you know, educating, uh, our children properly. Because what people don't understand is that children, they're the future leaders of America. And if you indoctrinate children, say, a five, six year old child into this woke stuff, uh, gender trend, whatever confusion, confusion, you that's the type of, uh, of adult you're going to have. You're going to have a confused, suicidal individual. So protect your children, protect people's, uh, children. Uh, it's it's our duty. The Bible is specifically in the case. I'm gonna paraphrase, you know, uh, Jesus Christ once said that it's it's better to, uh, uh, get a, uh, a rope with the stone and, uh, get thrown into the sea, uh, before you even, um, injure one of my children.

Hal Nunn (00:24:27) - Man. And that is a big story. We'll probably have it on the next show or next time around. Well, we have a guest coming up in the next segment, and, uh, we're going to be doing that for a month or so. We're going to pick some folks to come in. And, uh, Melissa Swarbrick is running for North Carolina House district 48. So check, uh, stay tuned and listen to that. We'll be right back. All right, folks, welcome back to the Round Table Talk podcast. Here with us today is uh and we're going to do this. We're going to, you know, start the process. 2024 is an election year. So why not jump in hard and heavy with our local North Carolina House district 48 seat? And, uh, there's, uh, of course, held by Garland Pierce. And he's been in there a long time.

Chris Holland (00:25:16) - 20 years, I think.

Hal Nunn (00:25:18) - And, uh, you know, not just saying he's been in office for a long time.

Hal Nunn (00:25:23) - He's he's he's not even that old. I don't think so. Anyway, um, we have Melissa Swarbrick. And Melissa, to me personally has been a friend for quite a few years now. But, um, a lot of, you know, when I mentioned her name to some folks at church, I'm saying they don't even know. They really didn't even know they knew Garland Pierce, but they didn't know what office he held. No, no, actually what office? They said he worked in the house or something. So, Ruben, sometimes like education, we've got to educate people. So that's what we're going to try to do. We're going to try to have some of these candidates on. And everybody is more than welcome to come on. Right. If they want to, if they want to come in and do an interview and talk about their things going on, it'd be great. And uh, so, Melissa, first of all, welcome and happy New Year.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:26:09) - Thank you very much. Thanks for having me.

Hal Nunn (00:26:12) - It's pretty cool. And, uh, did your holidays go like, planned?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:26:16) - They did. Did. Glad it's over, though.

Hal Nunn (00:26:18) - All right, I'm sure. Uh, well, we, you know, we pontificated earlier about our holiday stuff, so is that is that the right word, Chris? Yeah.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Ruben Castellon (00:26:26) - I'm just glad it's over, because I'm tired of all this food. It's like I wake up eating. I went to sleep. Eating?

Hal Nunn (00:26:33) - Yeah, but anyway, Melissa is running for North Carolina House district 48. I get the number. Right. You did? Um, and Garland Pierce is there now. And this is not your first time running? No, it's.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:26:44) - No. Second.

Hal Nunn (00:26:45) - Time, actually, the second time running. But first of all, for those that don't know who you are, tell us a little bit about yourself. Where are you from? How'd you. You know, I don't think you grew up in Raeford. So did you.

Hal Nunn (00:26:57) - Yeah, yeah. So you're like me. And actually, all of us have sort of been in plants. Plants. But tell us where you're a little bit about yourself, where you're from, and basically why you've decided to run.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:27:07) - Well, thank you, Hal. Um, first off, I'm from Asheville. My husband and I moved over to Moore County in 1999. I grew up, um, two Christian parents taught me all about community service, and so I've been a really active member of the community in both counties. Now I live in Hope, moved here in 2015, and I was a small business owner for 18 years in Moore County before selling the business, selling the house in Pinehurst to move in to Hoke County, to start doing something different and really giving back to the community. I got to that age of almost 60 years old, so it's time to get in there, get in there, do something a little different. Yeah. Big six.

Hal Nunn (00:27:48) - Mine's coming up.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:27:49) - One thing I noticed first when I moved here, I started getting involved in charitable work, community service is that there are a lot of opportunities that go by the wayside here, because we have a lot of people that don't step up.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:28:02) - We have a lot of people working hard for the community. So I jumped in trying to do a lot of different things, but I noticed that we're held back because we don't really have a lot of honest government here. We don't have representatives that represent all the people. Right. And I'm talking from our county commissioners up to our state representative, Garland Pierce. So I decided to run and I ran last time, and we were very successful. We didn't win, but we came within 1500 votes of beating Garland Pierce, which is closer than anybody's ever gotten before. And we actually won Scotland County, which was which was really something. And so I'm practically, um, going to take that momentum and go forward into 2024. All right.

Hal Nunn (00:28:44) - Well, what what was the main reason for deciding to run again? Well, I mean, the first time you ran, I believe there was a lot going on in public education, but what what was maybe one of the number 1 or 1 of the big issues, uh, that that really got you into saying I think I need to run.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:29:02) - Well, mainly economic development and the quality of life that we have here in Hoke County and Scotland counties. We, um, when I was preparing to run for this position, I



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



decided to go back to school. So I applied to get my master's degree at Chapel Hill. And I know, I know Big State fan and I learned so much. I took all the economic development and leadership classes I could so that I would be prepared to actually have some good ideas going forward, and coupled that with other talk and other business leaders. I think that economic development is the piece that we're missing here in Hogan, Scotland.

Chris Holland (00:29:38) - So Melissa, this is Chris Holland. So with economic development that kind of leads right into my interest. You know, I kind of I ran for county commissioner and kind of the same thing, you know, seeing that there's just a missed opportunity in the county is actually what you had mentioned previously. But. As what would be a priority in the district regarding economic development.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:29:57) - Well, Chris, that's a great question, and I think that every great community is a destination for something.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:30:05) - And you look at Randolph County, they have the Asheboro Zoo, and they received more funding from the state than Hoag and Scotland County put together just for their zoo. And I've got the information right here. They got \$71 million just for the zoo.

Chris Holland (00:30:22) - Just for the zoo, right.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:30:24) - What I want to do, I want to see our vocational and career and technical education training. I want to see a regional career center built here. I've toured Hoke County, CTE programs and Scotland, and they're fabulous. I spent three hours with Doctor Chavis at Hoke County High School and their drone program and some of their carpentry, but we need to network and collaborate with other counties, and I really think that we can bring a regional training center here, which would bring students and it would bring employers.

Hal Nunn (00:30:57) - Wow.

Chris Holland (00:30:58) - Good idea. Yeah. And and you're right, you know, we do have outstanding CTE programs here in both counties. And being able to bring that together to provide that education and that training for those future leaders and residents would, would really be great.

Hal Nunn (00:31:16) - The whole region. Yeah, basically.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:31:18) - Let me tell you a quick story. One of the greatest career training centers, was built by the Oklahoma General Assembly about 30 years ago. And the the they put the program in place and they got grant money from big, um, grantees around the country, but also from the state and from education, and built this center three weeks ago. I'm walking around at the Raeford Craft Fair, and this woman flags me down. And she had heard me talking about the CTE program. Her grandson dropped out of Hoke County High School and was going to work at McDonald's. He decided he loved horses, wanted to become a farrier. He went to a trade school to become a farrier. He's now making over \$100,000 a year and is setting up shop. Last year he was at the Kentucky Derby and he bought his grandmother's house.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:32:06) - Whoa, that. I've known two people in the county that did that. Yeah, um, of course they did it for their own.

Hal Nunn (00:32:13) - Right. Right. But moving forward on a growth scale, that's a huge industry.

Chris Holland (00:32:18) - And something like that is a niche job. But it's a it's still a requirement out there and nobody does it anymore.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:32:24) - He had to travel halfway across the country.

Chris Holland (00:32:26) - To get the training. Yeah, yeah.

Hal Nunn (00:32:28) - Ruben.

Ruben Castellon (00:32:28) - So, uh, Melissa, this is, uh, Reuben Castellon. Um, of course we know each other. We actually knocked doors a lot of doors together.

Speaker 9 (00:32:38) - Yes we.

Ruben Castellon (00:32:39) - Did. I know a little bit about Melissa knocking in. Happened to, uh, like, her husband a lot, John. So he's cool. Uh, so, of course, because, uh, I deal with, uh, a school, the public school system. I'm, uh, I'm doing my disclaimer. Yeah, I'm Reuben Castle, my whole county board of education. I don't relinquish my voice to anybody. I don't speak for no board member, let alone the board. But having said that, uh, as a, uh, as our, uh, potential future, uh, state representative, can you, uh, how can you and how do you think the state can improve the student outcomes? You know, that during COVID, a lot of stuff came out and, and and now that I'm in inside the system, I get chills just thinking about the failure.

Ruben Castellon (00:33:31) - Um, right. The failure of the public school system. And I think there are a lot of stakeholders that, uh, should be responsible, take blame for the failure that includes the state. Right. So what what do you think?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:33:45) - Well, I'll start. I've got a lot, but I'll start with the education.

Hal Nunn (00:33:49) - Is the, uh. Did you see the map in the North State the other day? I don't know if it was last week or this week where it said the largest employers in each county and, uh, Hoke County was the public education.

Ruben Castellon (00:34:00) - And I said that we talked about me and, uh, Melissa talked about this whole county school, uh, the whole county public school system is the largest employer in whole county. So, uh, Melissa, all right.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:34:13) - Let's start with the pre-K. Um, we really need the General Assembly money to focus. The NC pre-K requirements should be narrowed to focus greater resources on the underprivileged and low income children. They'll benefit the most.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:34:29) - And they'll they're the ones that need the better start. Because we know we cannot be the parents for these kids. So we need to put some of the money into the pre-K. Next, we



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



need to start exposing these kids to this trade school idea in middle school. Let's not wait till high school. Starting in middle school, we need to give public school students opportunities to pursue vocational. Or advanced training in preparation for a career after graduation. And then we need to follow through with the NC promise that the community colleges. Yeah. Now kids can go, they can start in high school and they can get a two year degree. And it gives them time. I know I didn't know what I wanted to do when I was in 11th or 12th grade. Right. But it gives them an opportunity to try out some college classes without going into debt. So those are three things I think we need to do right away. And then finally, we need to collaborate with businesses. We need mentorship and work training programs in the schools.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:35:27) - Now I mentor and I tutor, but I can only do one person at a time.

Hal Nunn (00:35:31) - Yeah, it's kind of tough when you got large numbers like in the public schools or even even in some of these smaller, you know, charter or private schools, you have groups of people who are going to want to sort of be together, I guess, is what we're thinking of.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:35:44) - Yeah, we need to get these business owners to network with our community colleges, because look at how dynamic these career paths are changing. Look how quickly they are changing. So I think there's got to be some way for these entrepreneurs to receive tax credits if they're having these workforce or apprenticeship programs. And I know it's kind of rough, you know, trying to figure that out, but I think we can do it well and that's it.

Chris Holland (00:36:08) - You know, it's a hard solution. And I think that that's where the failure in the past has been. Nobody's taking the opportunity or taking the interest in doing the hard work. So I would welcome that as a representative, somebody that would take that on.

Chris Holland (00:36:22) - And that leads right back into that, that, uh, economic development, you create the workforce, the jobs are going to come. That's right. You know. So with that said, all this stuff costs money. So do you support the continued lowering of tax rates across the board, the way that the Republican legislature has done for the past ten years here in the state? Or do you think that we need to have a more targeted approach? And I ask that because a lot of people say, you know, big business should be paying more money, or rich people should be paying more money. What is your thoughts on that?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:36:54) - Well, the corporate tax rate has been reduced over the years. We know that. And but we know what it costs to run a business these days. So I think we need to focus targeted areas. One is eliminating savings from the tax base because people don't want to get taxed on their savings. And I think that is one way that we can help people keep more money in their pockets.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:37:17) - And capital gains is another one. Okay. So instead of just across the board, it's like throwing money at a program and not wondering what they're going to do with it. There are things that we can do, um, to cut taxes for some people. Also entrepreneurs, um, business owners that have less than 50 employees, things like that. I want to help them. I went out to the farmers market that they had in Hoke County a couple weeks ago, talking to those business owners, and one lady said to me, North Carolina hates small businesses. Oh Lord. And I ran a small business. I know what she means. I know.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:37:54) - The battles we have

Hal Nunn (00:37:55) - Maybe, maybe mine were on a small scale and, you know, yours or whatever else.

Ruben Castellon (00:38:01) - Let me interrupt you, uh, Melissa, for a second. But you know what? That what you just said is so powerful about North Carolina hates, uh, small business. And that was proven during COVID because they were quick.

Ruben Castellon (00:38:14) - North Carolina under Roy Cooper. He was quick to, uh, put a pen on paper and shut down the North Carolina, uh, economy. And that was basically the small business. Walmart...these, these big companies that were all saved. But he he is not pro small businesses. No.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:38:34) - Rueben, I was out of work for two and a half months. I know exactly what you're talking about. And it was tough. And some people never rebounded from that.

Chris Holland (00:38:43) - No, they can't.

Hal Nunn (00:38:44) - Uh, some of them had to close. I mean, I closed in 2020. The little company. None boys. But, um, uh, mostly it was not because of the economy, although that it came into my mind thinking about the year. I'm like, am I going to do this another year? Can my body hold up.

Chris Holland (00:39:00) - Hold up your reasons?

Hal Nunn (00:39:01) - But it also gave me a little nudge to say, you know what, go ahead and lock it down. Um, again, reminder we're talking to Melissa Swarbrick.

Hal Nunn (00:39:09) - She is running for North Carolina House district 48. That's the North Carolina State House of Representatives. And I'll get my final question in. And then y'all can rock and roll from there. We got probably another 5 or 7 minutes. Um, when I was involved with the when I was in leadership of the Republican Party, uh, I was invited to one of the, uh, uh, NAACP and community events on felon voting, and it was actually a zoom. So it was in 2020, right before, I think, Chris, before you came on board. Um, and I don't know if they did, they still holler, try to get you to go to those things or have you been to some. Yeah. They do. Okay. And and I wanted to learn more about it myself. But what I got in there and found out. Was, um, they they want the laws to change, and we can get into all the laws. My my question is, what is your thoughts on, uh, what they're doing with the felon voting and, you know, serving out your time or the time when you register you were a felon and then came in later.

Hal Nunn (00:40:10) - What's your thoughts about the felon voting issue? Because I think I saw a story week before last in the North State about that particular subject. Maybe I can find it.

Chris Holland (00:40:19) - Well, yeah. And they call it discrimination. You know that once you get out of jail, you should be out of jail free. Well, you know, the requirements right now and have been implemented since 2020 was right. You have to finish out your sentence, which includes fines, fees and anything else.

Ruben Castellon (00:40:35) - Well, just so you know, the the Constitution does not say anything. If you're a convicted felon, you cannot vote. That was that was federally mandated. And then obviously push uh,



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



to the to the states. And uh, I myself think that it's a very touchy, touchy, uh, situation. I have really been in law enforcement in the past. I have made personal contact with convicted felons, you know, and I have, uh, I have mixed feelings as to, well, this type of felon.

Ruben Castellon (00:41:10) - Yeah, he should be able to vote, but this type of felon should not. And so there lies my my mixed feelings. Yeah, I mean, I fell in a convicted felon is a convicted felon, regardless of the type of crime, right. You know, so what is your thought? Uh, Melissa?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:41:26) - Well, obviously, felons should never be able to vote while they're incarcerated, right? They gave up that constitutional right to shape our society when they made their choice to reject societal standards. Right. As it stands, like Chris just said, convicted felons cannot vote until they finished parole, probation or supervised release. Right?

Hal Nunn (00:41:45) - That was actually the part they were telling me on the zoom. Yes. Was that time frame of when they finish out that part? That's I know it can get a little deep and a little confusing for some. And basically the, the if you were a convicted felon, you can't vote not just from being incarcerated, but until you've paid back restitution and or your time.

Hal Nunn (00:42:05) - Right, uh, of community service or whatever else they've dictated.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:42:09) - But what I want to remind everybody is this ties directly into election integrity. Just this week, we found out that a candidate running for office in Rockingham County was ineligible to vote. Yet he had voted three times. Oh, and he made his way on to the ballot before his opponent challenged it. And the Board of Elections found it out. Right. So we need to be careful to make sure that voters are eligible before they're added back to the rolls or added to the rolls, period.

Hal Nunn (00:42:38) - Wow. I'm gonna have to look that case up, because I have a little history there with the registering of voters and stuff like that. Ruben. Chris.

Chris Holland (00:42:45) - So I were really to wrap this up. So we talked about earlier about Cape Fear Valley has reinstated their masking policies. You know, I see 24 election season being just like 2020 election season. They're starting to try to bring back these mandates and all of these requirements that I believe contributed to, you know, invalid voting, I'll call it that.

Chris Holland (00:43:07) - But as a state legislature, what do you feel that the state legislature and you as a representative, how would you fight back against any kind of federal mandates? Well.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:43:19) - North Carolina is first in freedom because we demanded that the Bill of rights be included before we ratified the US Constitution. That same hunger for freedom goes on with the work we do today to ensure individual liberty for each and every North Carolinian. Amen. So as your legislature, I'm I'm going to fight back against these federal mandates by passing legislation to prohibit state agencies from implementing federal mandates if they're found to be in violation of our constitutional right. This should not be a controversial position, but it's going to take someone with a backbone to make it happen. And that's the type of fighter I'm going to be. We saw what Roy Cooper did and we cannot let that happen again. Amen.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Ruben Castellon (00:44:05) - All right. And one well, and I gotta tell you, um, um, I think I already know your answer. What about, uh, medical freedom? What's your thought on that? Should should, uh, just to add more to it, because that question is so broad, but, uh, should the federal government, should the state mandate what shots we should get?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:44:30) - That's, you know, Ruben, that is a great question.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:44:32) - And I feel very passionately about this. It's crucial that we approach individuals who champion medical freedom with caution when they fail to clarify their position. And we've heard it from other candidates that are preaching medical freedom. I firmly stand against government mandates for untested and. Potentially hazardous vaccines. While acknowledging the remarkable contributions of vaccines in the past, such as the eradication of measles, mumps, polio, rubella. I remain committed to the principles of limited government intervention. Furthermore, I vehemently opposed government imposed shutdowns for things like Covid. We witnessed that during Covid. I said I was out of work for two and a half months. Um, some kids have never recovered. They're detrimental to the economic and personal liberty. Wow. Uh, lastly, I maintain my unwavering stance against abortion being equated with medical freedom, which it is. And I firmly believe that the sanctity of life should always be protected.

Hal Nunn (00:45:36) - Alright. The most important and final question. North Carolina style barbecue or Western style barbecue.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:45:42) - North Carolina!

Announcer0 (00:45:43) - Yeah, baby. Always.

Hal Nunn (00:45:45) - All right, well, um, how can folks follow you? Or what can people do to learn more about what you're doing to. Because there is a primary coming up in March.

Chris Holland (00:45:53) - March 5th.

Hal Nunn (00:45:54) - And you have to register to vote by January 20th.

Chris Holland (00:46:01) - Yep. February 12th starts early voting. Wow. And then March 5th is elections January.

Hal Nunn (00:46:07) - Like, first or not, it's coming up soon. But anyway, that is pretty soon.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:46:12) - So we have our website, Melissa Inc.com. We're on all the major social media platforms Facebook, Instagram. Is it Twitter or X? I'm too old. I call it.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:46:27) - Um, you can find us there. Um, we've got a place where you can volunteer. You can send in your questions, you can sign up to, uh, work the polls. And there's also links to some of our favorite GOP groups.

Hal Nunn (00:46:39) - Yeah. And maybe, uh, we need to make sure that we get a link up on our page for, uh, places.



The Roundtable Talk Podcast Show



Hal Nunn (00:46:45) - First of all, registering to vote. Make sure we got that date correct. But also how many polls places there are in her county and where they're at.

Chris Holland (00:46:52) - So. So yeah, for early voting is typically the county building and the rockfish community building. And then there are 15 polls that will be open on March 5th for we'll get.

Hal Nunn (00:47:05) - We'll get a link to that. Melissa, thanks for stopping in and happy New Year.

Melissa Swarbrick (00:47:08) - Happy New Year.

Hal Nunn (00:47:09) - All that cool stuff there. Good luck.

Chris Holland (00:47:11) - In your run and look forward.

Ruben Castellon (00:47:14) - Melissa, do you have any final words?

Melissa Swarbrick (00:47:15) - Uh, no. I just I always worry about turnout. And I was looking back at some of the numbers. You know, we Hope County has some of the lowest voter turnout in the state. And I just urge everybody to look up these candidates, see what they stand for, and then go out and vote.

Hal Nunn (00:47:34) - There you go. Amen. Thank you. Get registered. All right. We're going to wrap this show up first one of 2024.

Hal Nunn (00:47:38) - I want to thank Raeford Guns for, uh, helping us and continuing into the New Deal. Was a new word on these Rayford guns. They're over at the gas station at Scull Road and Johnson Mill. Uh, also want to thank the Hoke County edition of the North State Journal. And, of course, Dan-o and his folks at, uh, Christian 1057 Grander Vision Media. And we still got big news coming. So, uh, we'll have to let you know on that. So for how nun.

Ruben Castellon (00:48:03) - Reuben Castelo.

Chris Holland (00:48:04) - And Chris Holland.

Hal Nunn (00:48:04) - We'll see you next time.

Outro (00:48:06) - Getting to the facts across the state, around the world and at home in Raeford, North Carolina. This has been the Round Table Talk podcast with your hosts Hal Nunn, Ruben Castellon and Chris Holland. Be sure to like, share and leave a review wherever you get podcasts. The Roundtable Talk podcast.