

## Fire At the Grand Bohemian

[Blue Ridge Observer \[Newspaper\] — 1/29/2025 2:12 PM](#)

The Grand Bohemian Hotel in Biltmore Village, a Marriott Bonvoy hotel, has burned down under suspicious circumstances. Guests noticed smoke around midnight Wednesday and notified hotel staff, who subsequently evacuated the building. The hotel has been a landmark for years and is one of the most successful small hotels in Asheville. The company released a statement shortly after the incident stating that they would open the hotel as soon as they are able, but they do not have a timetable for reopening.

## DOT Official Takes Swipe at Chief of Police

[Land of the Sky News Network \[Tabloid News\] — 1/29/2025 6:34 PM](#)

Sandeep Gupta, Chief of Operations for the local Department of Transportation office, is the most prominent member of government to call for an official investigation into Police Chief Miller's alleged skimming of pension funds. "Those funds go to the officers who patrol our highways. Without them, the highways can't be safe. I think that both police-supporting citizens and members of the 'defund the police' community can agree that we want that money to go where it belongs."

## Leaders Say Vandalism is "Hate Crime"

[Land of the Sky News Network \[Tabloid News\] — 1/30/2025 7:54 AM](#)

The Lord's Church of Asheville was vandalized with occult symbols and phrases. The local religious community is up in arms, and conflict is brewing between the interfaith community and the ecumenical community. "We believe that our community is big enough for people of all faiths, and the actions of a few individuals cannot be generalized to the pagan and new age communities in our city," said a spokesperson for the Asheville Interfaith Cooperative. "This is a hate crime," said Director of the Asheville Christian League. Police reported that the church was broken into and that a security camera was destroyed, and police have not referred the case to the FBI to be investigated as a hate crime.

## Arson on Mountain Holly Drive

[Blue Ridge Observer \[Newspaper\] — 1/30/2025 12:14 PM](#)

A house fire on Mountain Holly Drive is suspected to be caused by arson. The Buncombe County Fire Marshal's office released a statement saying that the investigation is being handed over to the police as the search for victims continues. Two residents are still missing.

## [Land of the Sky News Network \[Tabloid News\] — 1/30/2025 6:03 PM](#)

Hannah Flanagan's in downtown Hendersonville was the site of unprecedented violence this week, when a dispute between patrons erupted into a shootout, with multiple participants on each side. Pub owner Janice McGregor, when reached for comment, shared in the community's disbelief, "Nothing like this has ever happened in Hendersonville before, as far as I know. We're a town of retirees, not gangsters!"

The gun fight broke out around midnight on January 22, with emergency services quickly called to the scene, leading to the dispersal of the remaining perpetrators. Hendersonville Police Department are still pursuing several leads on those who got away, though they assured the public that those still at large "Didn't seem to be from around here, and probably left town immediately".

At the moment, one individual is confirmed dead on the scene, though the name of the deceased is being held until family can be contacted. Eye witnesses on the street could only offer vague descriptions of the event, noting that they were outside at the time, but that the sounds of gunfire were accompanied by what they described as "howling". "I really hope they didn't bring no dogs into a situation like that..." worried local resident Annie Geiger, "If you're going out to do a crime, you should leave your poor dog at home!"

Hannah Flanagan's was subjected to significant damage and has no current schedule for reopening.

## Airport Accident Causes Questioned

### [Blue Ridge Observer \[Newspaper\] — 1/31/2025 at 8:44 AM](#)

Competing theories are emerging about the cause of an airplane crash on December 7, 2024. In a live blog posted to his Instagram account, local investigative journalist Hajun Sinmun compared and contrasted the FAA's statement with the airline's statement. "One is saying that it was a bird strike, which you have to assume happened mid-air. The other is saying that it was a gasoline tank explosion, which does not account for the plane's explosion itself." Although the majority of facts are consistent between the two reports, "there's still an outstanding question of competence. If the government is saying one thing, and private business is saying another, and both are extremely unlikely, either there is a third variable neither have made public, or at least one of them is incorrect."

## Grove House Burned; Cause Unclear

### [Blue Ridge Observer \[Newspaper\] — 1/31/2025 at 11:48 AM](#)

The Historic Grove House, former home of the YWCA from the age of desegregation and recent home of nightclub Scandals, has been gutted by a fire last night. Authorities do not yet know the cause, but they have not ruled out arson. The location stood on the corner of Grove and Patton

for generations, and its place in Asheville history was cemented by visits from dignitaries, community milestones, and gatherings of all sorts. Police have not commented on whether or not they are seeing an uptick in arson across the area, but locals are beginning to ask questions about what appears to be a trend.

## Veteran Journalist Casey Lawson Presumed Dead After Tragic Accident Friday

[Blue Ridge Observer \[Newspaper\] — 1/31/2025 at 5:01 PM](#)

Asheville, NC – Renowned journalist Casey Lawson, Uncle of Asheville Mayor Cecilia Lawson, is presumed dead following a tragic car accident on January 2nd. The accident occurred on 1-74 north of Chimney Rock while Mr. Lawson was returning to Asheville from an out-of-town trip. His vehicle reportedly veered off the roadway and down a steep embankment.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Lawson's body has not been recovered," stated Timothy McNeil, a Henderson County Deputy Sheriff. "The incident happened in the early hours of the night, and by the morning light when the damage to the roadside barrier was reported, emergency responders were dispatched to the scene. Evidence suggests Mr. Lawson was severely injured and subsequently attacked by wildlife."

Search crews have been deployed into the Hickory Nut Gorge wilderness areas to recover Mr. Lawson's remains. However, the Medical Examiner has deemed the chances of survival "thin to none" based on the severity of the initial impact and the subsequent animal attack.

Casey Lawson was a highly respected figure in the Asheville community. He enjoyed a long and distinguished career as an investigative journalist, earning numerous awards for his work.

"Casey was not only a brilliant journalist but also a kind and compassionate man and a loving uncle," said Mayor Cecilia Lawson in a statement. "He was a mentor to many and a true champion for social justice. His loss will be deeply felt by our entire community."