

How NC Wikipedia editors keep the site humming

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Apricots. The War of 1812.
Grant Hill. The second season
of “Grey’s Anatomy.” Tables.

There are 6.5 million Wikipedia entries in the English language alone, and over the past two decades, this ever-evolving, user-generated platform has achieved a level of credibility to go along with its popularity. In an average month, the site registers more than 18 billion page views worldwide. It’s not 100% accurate, but it has far from crumbled under the weight of online misinformation.

Wikipedia is largely maintained by a group of invested volunteer editors called Wikipedians, some of whom organize into smaller networks based on interests or geography. One of the few states to have its own Wikipedian group is North Carolina.

Since forming in 2015, the North Carolina Wikipedians have spent hours writing pages, pinning citations to facts, identifying untouched subjects to research, and recruiting new contributors to a project they believe is more a movement than an encyclopedia.

“(Wikipedia) feels like something that couldn’t actually be possible, but it seems to be working pretty well,” said Gaurav Vaidya, a Semantic Web technologist in Chapel Hill who made his first edit in 2002, in only Wikipedia’s second year. Back then, the nascent platform had basic information gaps: Vaidya, for example, believes he

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