



Children line up on the tailgate of the old truck on the square in downtown Franklin during Winter Wonderland last Saturday for the perfect photo opportunity. With all the decorations, open stores and placing of the Nativity in courthouse plaza, there was plenty of Christmas spirit to go around. For more photos, see page 12. Photo by Betsey Gooder

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New school board members sworn in Monday



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Service dog Atlas back in the limelight

Town considers amendments to parade ordinance

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

At Monday night’s meeting of the Franklin Town Council, members considered amendments to a current ordinance that would clearly define the town’s procedure for permitting parades and demonstrations during Monday night’s meeting.

John Henning Jr., attorney for the Town of Franklin, presented the board with a draft ordinance Monday night that details the specifics of who and how permits for parades and demonstrations are handled by town employees.

“The demonstrations and political events of this year led to us reviewing the current ordinance,” said Henning. “There were a couple of provisions that needed to be revised to keep up with some more recent federal cases - things such as the need to allow spontaneous demonstrations without a permit; not requiring one for groups that stay in the sidewalks without blocking them and that obey traffic laws. Police Chief

Bill Harrell was already aware of these legal requirements and none of the matters that arose this summer and fall were affected by these issues, so we’re really just trying to make sure we have a cleaned-up ordinance.”

While the First Amendment of the United States Constitution protects free speech activities, the United States Supreme Court has consistently ruled that municipalities like Franklin may regulate First Amendment-protected activities through reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions.

Amendments to the town of Franklin’s Parades and Demonstrations ordinance include:

Changing the definition of group demonstration from: “Any assembly together or concert of action between or among two or more persons” to “A public display of sentiment for or against a person or cause including protesting

See VOTER ID page 5

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Virtual Academy changing at FHS

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

Franklin High School (FHS) is planning on changing the way virtual academy is delivered to students. Starting in January a new online platform will be offered to students who still wish to remain in the virtual classes. The objective is to put FHS in a position to transition to more days of face-to-face instruction if that option becomes available to them by the Governor. Under this plan, virtual learning may not be a good fit for every student. Students and parents should weigh the information regarding this new platform, against their reasons for choosing virtual instruction.

Among the changes is that elective offerings will be limited to business courses. The program will be self-paced and each course will be constructed in a complete form so that it can be assessed as a whole with no ending date. It will continue from start to finish. Students enrolled in the program will need to be highly motivated and eager to complete assignments. There will not be a report card, but rather a progress report that will show parents more than a report card would. It will include the percentage of the course that is finished and the numerical grade. Standard and honors level classes will be available to all students. Seniors will have the opportunity to enroll in Advanced Placement courses through Southwestern Community College or the North Carolina Virtual Public School Program (NCVPS). Foreign language credit for virtual students will also be earned through NCVPS and will be reserved for seniors in need of meeting college admission requirements. Grades will be recorded on the

high school transcript and will contribute to the GPA (grade point average) calculation.

The purpose of this change is to offer a more consistent approach to learning and to improve each semester for the students. The new platform is a licensed, and highly qualified curriculum product. Instructional videos, practice activities and assessments are included along with a highly qualified facilitator available for support. Google Meets will no longer be necessary. Should students be allowed to return to a five day a week agenda, it would be nearly impossible for teachers to teach in person and virtual. FHS has secured a plan to alternate cohorts for on campus attendance on Fridays, beginning in January.

"We are excited to increase face to face instruction and make the most of opportunities for engagement," said FHS Assistant Principal Pam Roper. "We have committed to this structure for our virtual program for next semester only. We are confident that no student will be in jeopardy of not meeting graduation requirements due to lack of course offerings."

The decision to choose 100% virtual instruction may be made at any time during or before the spring semester. However, the decision to return to blended or face-to-face instruction will not be possible during that semester. If virtual instruction is chosen, changes will be made to the student schedules as needed. Virtual students may participate in club and athletic opportunities, but outside of school hours only. Students will be responsible for their own internet connectivity, using available hotspots when necessary. Jet packs will be available to FHS students as supplies dictate.

PARADE ORDINANCE

Continued from page 1

among two or more persons."

The proposed changes also add social events and festivals to the types of events regulated under the Parade and Demonstration ordinance. The change will add outdoor concerts, fairs, community event, or similar event that is primarily commercial and/or recreational in nature to the existing ordinance.

Amendments also clarify that permits will be required for activities that obstruct or block any street, sidewalk, alley, or other public place within the town, as well as for a parade, picket line, or group demonstration.

The proposed amendments clarifies consequences of violating the ordinance as well by proposing that, "Participation in illegal parade, picket line, or group demonstration is unlawful."

As Henning noted that the proposed changes specifically state that if the event is spontaneous due to unforeseeable and immediate events, a permit is not required.

The proposed amendment also changes the notice the town would need for such events from 24 hours to 48 hours notice.

Permits left to the discretion of the Chief of Police of the town

can be denied for/if:

- A permit has already been issued for the same time and place.
- Abuse of the permitting process, such as providing false information in an application.
- If the applicants proposed activities would be unlawful, endanger the health and safety of surrounding persons, significantly inhibit pedestrians and vehicular traffic, or deprive the municipality of critical services that could not be supplied through other means.

Members of the Town Council did not vote on the proposed amendment Monday night, but took the amendments under advisement and will discuss the issue further during the January board meeting.



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AG settles with DISH for \$210M over illegal telemarketing calls

Attorney General Josh Stein reached a \$210 million settlement with Dish Network for engaging in illegal nationwide telemarketing in violation of do-not-call laws. North Carolina will receive \$13,986,000, the largest penalty ever obtained in the state over do-not-call violations. Most of the funds will go to North Carolina's public schools.

"Companies cannot use aggressive tactics to take people's hard-earned money," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "That's why do-not-call and telemarketing protections exist."

"This pandemic has underscored the importance of addressing the gaps in broadband access. Children across our state are doing their virtual learning classes from library parking lots and other unacceptable situations. I urge the legislature to consider ways to use these funds to address broadband access. Education is the best way to invest in our children's futures and to level the playing field - access to reliable internet is imperative to students' success."

The settlement comes after a federal appeals court upheld a trial court judgment holding Dish accountable for making millions of unwanted calls to people on the Do Not Call Registry and tens of millions of illegal robocalls, both directly and through its authorized direct marketing businesses. The settlement also requires Dish to reform its telemarketing practices.

Stein was joined in the settlement by the Attorneys General of California, Illinois, and Ohio, as well as the Federal Trade Commission.

Report robocalls or illegal telemarketing calls online at www.ncdoj.gov/norobo or at 1-844-8-NO-ROBO.

County's economy kicks up Tier designation

Brittney Lofthouse - Contributing Writer

Since 2007, North Carolina has used a three-level system for designating county development tiers. The designations, which are mandated by state law, determine a variety of state funding opportunities to assist in economic development. The North Carolina Department of Commerce annually ranks the state's 100 counties based on economic well-being and assigns each a Tier designation.

Macon County's Tier Designation improved from Tier 2 to Tier 3 - meaning Macon County's economy is among the best in the state. The county's economic distress rank is #84 (it was #72 in 2020). Compared to last year, the county's population growth rank, median household income rank, and unemployment rate rank all improved.

There are only 20 Tier 3 counties in the state. Macon County is the only county in the westernmost portions of the state to be recognized as a Tier 3 county. Further east, the next Tier 3 counties are Transylvania, Henderson, and Polk with the remaining counties in the eastern portion of the state.

The 40 most distressed counties are designated as Tier 1, the next 40 as Tier 2 and the 20 least distressed as Tier 3. County Tiers are calculated using four factors:

- Average unemployment rate
- Median household income
- Percentage growth in population
- Adjusted property tax base per capita

Beginning with the 2019 rankings, only these four factors determine final Tier rank. In previous years, additional adjustment factors were also considered in the calculations. In 2018, the North Carolina General Assembly eliminated these

adjustment factors from the Tier ranking methodology.

A total of 22 counties in North Carolina will see a change in tier designation in 2021. Along with Macon County, Beaufort, Camden, Carteret, Chowan, Jones, Onslow, Perquimans, Pitt, Polk and Transylvania improved their tier designation. Alexander, Brunswick, Buncombe, Burke, Cherokee, Davie, Haywood, Hoke, New Hanover, Randolph, and Rowan counties saw their tier designation change to a more distressed tier.

Macon County Economic Development Director Tommy Jenkins explained to commissioners at Tuesday night's meeting that the change in ranking is positive, as it indicates that the county's economy is improving over the previous years, however it can present challenges as some funding opportunities will no longer be available. Certain state programs and funding opportunities are only available to Tier 1 and 2 counties, meaning Macon County's shift to Tier 3 could affect its participation in some current or future programs.

"Funding opportunities like the building reuse grants which we have seen make a big difference in Macon will no longer be available," said Jenkins. "So while it is good to be considered amongst the top economically well-off counties, it presents some challenges as well."

The Macon County public school system will also likely be affected by the change in the county's tier ranking. Macon County Commissioner Gary Shields noted that the county will likely lose access to many grants and other state programs that are limited to school systems in Tiers 1 and 2.

In addition to economic development and school system impacts Commissioner Ronnie Beale said Social Services and other areas could also be affected by the change.



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School board member Arnold not new to workings of school system

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The School board held a special called meeting on Monday morning to swear in new board members, re-elected board members and appointed board members. New member Hilary Wilkes will represent Highlands, Carol Arnold replaces Fred Goldsmith and Jim Breedlove was re-elected and will continue to serve as board chair.

Arnold, who replaced Fred Goldsmith, when he suddenly resigned last month, has had a long tenure in the education system.

Arnold, a Macon County native, graduated from Franklin High School (FHS) in 1973. She attended college at Western Carolina University, and after graduating with a degree in Elementary Education in 1977, she began teaching school in Swain County. At that time there were no available positions in Macon County, so she taught in Swain County for seven years. She also received her Masters Degree in Elementary Education and has become certified in several areas of middle school curriculum. She has obtained her Curriculum Specialist licensure along with a superintendent's license and principal's license.

When a position became available at Macon Middle School (MMS) in 1984, she began teaching there, and was chosen as Teacher of the Year. Arnold worked at MMS until 1988 when she took a job as Director of Exceptional Education with the Macon County School System. She left her position with Macon Schools in 1998 to work as a Field Consultant for the State Department of Public Instruction. There, she was in charge of 18 school systems in the Western NC Re-

gion. In 1998, Arnold also ran for a position with the Macon County Board of Education. She was appointed to a four-year term which she held until 2002. She did not seek re-election because her mother was diagnosed with cancer and she left to become her caretaker. Arnold's mother passed away in 2003.

In the summer of 2003 she took a job as the Associate Superintendent of Clay County Schools and retired in 2009. She and her husband did some traveling during their retirement. In 2014, Arnold had had enough of retirement so she took a position as a Consultant of Federal Programs with the Macon County School System. When Josh Lynch took her place in July of 2020, Arnold retired, once again. On Dec. 7, Arnold was sworn in as an official School Board Member, replacing Fred Goldsmith.

Arnold will have been married to Jerry Arnold for 46 years, on Dec. 22. He is a retired Macon County Schools Administrator. In 2006, he retired as principal of Cartoogechaye Elementary School. Arnold says her husband is an avid hunter and fisherman. They have one son who also attended Macon County Schools.

Arnold wants to carry on with Fred Goldsmith's visions.

"I want to support the schools, the staff, the parents, the students, and our community as we strive for excellence," she said. She has a great deal of respect for Goldsmith and said that she thinks that he was very invested in the schools and cared deeply for the students and staff.



Newly appointed school board member Carol Arnold is sworn in by Clerk of Court Vic Perry with her husband Jerry and son Jason looking on.

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Nominations sought for Chamber awards

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce announces nominations are being accepted for four prestigious awards, Citizen of the Year, The Duke Power Citizenship and Service Award, Youth Citizenship Award and Club/Organization of the Year.

The Citizen of the Year Award recognizes an individual who significantly contributes to the community and is an inspirational role model. This is the most coveted award given by the Chamber of Commerce.

The Duke Power Citizenship and Service Award recognizes and rewards leadership and/or involvement in volunteerism and community services to an individual, team or group. Recipients of the award help foster a culture of citizenship and service that acts as a catalyst for others to become involved in civic and social activities.

The Youth Citizenship Award recognizes

a youth who has shown a strong interest in serving in their communities and volunteering to help others.

The Club/Organization of the Year Award is presented to the most outstanding club or Organization. The award is aimed at recognizing the club for its dedication and contribution in our community.

Nomination letters can be delivered to the Franklin Chamber of Commerce at 98 Hyatt Road or emailed to LindaH@Franklin-Chamber.com. Nomination deadline is Tuesday, December 29 at 5:00 pm. If you prefer, a Nomination Form is available for your convenience at the Franklin Chamber. Feel free to drop by or give us a call to

have one emailed to you.

Details of the award presentations will be announced in the coming weeks based on COVID-19 restrictions.



Rescue Dog adoption story in the running for national recognition

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Petco Foundation, which invests in life-saving animal welfare projects, annually selects winning adoption stories to feature nationally. This year a Macon County Animal Services' adopter's story – about how a pet has changed their life – was selected by the Petco Foundation as one of 50 national winners in the Holiday Wishes campaign. If selected through a People's Choice voter competition at petcofoundation.org/vote, which lasts until noon CST on Dec. 16, Macon County Animal Services could earn up to \$25,000 for ongoing needs and improvements.

Shawanna Pollak "met" Franklin, a pit bull-mix, when he ran out in front of her car. Pollak contacted Macon County Animal Services, which took in the stray dog to attempt to locate its owner. When no owner was found, and Franklin became available for adoption, Pollak decided to pursue adoption. However, not only had Pollak never owned a dog – she was "terrified" of them.

"I never let them near me," she said in a YouTube video featuring Franklin. "But after I found Franklin, I realized he needed someone to care for him ... he obviously had had a hard life. When COVID hit, I was isolated ... he cuddled me every day, watched movies with me, knew when I was upset. The bond between a person and their dog is special. I'm realizing this as an adult. Shelter dogs need our love. I couldn't be happier that I adopted Franklin."

Pollak, who has suffered from depression, admitted that the shelter-in-place mandate may have caused her symptoms of depression to worsen had it not been for Franklin to provide companionship.

"We encourage our community of animal lovers to vote for our story," said Jimmy Villiard, administrator at Macon County Animal Services. "If 2020 has shown us anything, it's that pets change our lives for the better. Your



Shawanna Pollak's pet adoption story was chosen as a finalist in a competition that could result in a \$25,000 award to the local animal shelter.

vote can help us earn lifesaving funds so we can bring more pets in need together with loving families."

The Petco Foundation's Top 5 People's Choice vote will name: One first place winner of \$25,000; two second place winners of \$10,000 each; and, two third place winners of \$5,000 each. Winners will be announced late December.

Since 2013, more than 20,000 adopters from across the country have shared how their pets have changed their lives; so far more than \$5.8 million in Holiday Wishes have been realized for animal welfare organizations that make adoption matches possible. For more information about the Petco Foundation Holiday Wishes campaign, visit petcofoundation.org/holidaywishes. Petco Foundation affirmed it has helped more than 6.5 million pets find homes.

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Governor declares modified Stay at Home Order to slow COVID-19 spread

On Tuesday, Governor Roy Cooper and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mandy Cohen announced that North Carolina will begin a Modified Stay at Home Order after a rapid increase in North Carolina's key COVID-19 trends. The Order requires people to stay at home between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. and takes effect Friday, Dec. 11, and will be in place until at least Jan. 8, 2021.

"We already have strong safety protocols and capacity limitations in place – including a statewide mask requirement. With this additional action beginning Friday, we hope to get these numbers down," Governor Cooper said. "Our new modified Stay At Home order aims to limit gatherings and get people home where they are safer, especially during the holidays. It's also a reminder that we must be vigilant the rest of the day – wearing a face mask when we are with people we don't live with, keeping a safe distance from others and washing our hands a lot."

The Order requires restaurants, bars, entertainment venues, personal care businesses and more to close at 10 p.m. Travel to and from work; to obtain food, medical care, fuel or social services; or to take care of a family member is exempted.

In the past week, North Carolina's case count has broken single-day records on three separate days, including crossing more than 6,000 cases per day on two of those days. Just a month ago, cases were under 3,000 per day. In recent days, the percent of tests returning positive has increased to more than 10%.

Governor Cooper was clear that further action would be taken to slow the spread of the virus if trends do not improve. This could require further limiting of restaurant

dining, indoor entertainment or shopping and retail capacity restrictions, among other safety protocols.

Dr. Cohen also provided an update on North Carolina's COVID-19 County Alert System map. The COVID-19 County Alert System gives individuals, businesses and community organizations, and public officials a tool to understand how their county is faring and to make decisions about actions to take slow the spread of the virus. The COVID-19 County Alert System uses metrics informed by the White House Coronavirus Task Force and North Carolina's key metrics to categorize counties into three tiers:

1. Yellow: Significant Community Spread
 2. Orange: Substantial Community Spread
 3. Red: Critical Community Spread.
- The system uses a combination of three metrics: case rate, the percent of tests that are positive, and hospital impact within the county.

The number of red counties (critical community spread) has more than doubled since Nov. 23, up to 48 red counties from 20 red counties. There are now 34 orange counties (substantial community spread), as compared to 42 orange counties from the previous report. With Tuesday's report, more than 80% of the state's counties fall into the red or orange tier.

"Your actions can keep people from getting sick, save lives, and make sure our hospitals can care for people whether it's for a heart attack or a car accident or COVID-19. Protect yourself, your loved ones, and your community now," said NCDHHS Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D.

Macon County Public Health

Daily COVID-19 Update

Today's Date and Time: December 9, 2020 at 4:00pm

Total COVID-19 Tests Reported to Macon County Public Health **11,748**

This number reflects all the COVID-19 tests performed in Macon County that have been reported to Macon County Public Health by private physicians, hospitals, and other area health facilities performing COVID-19 testing.

Number Tested at Macon County Public Health Department **7,352**

Pending Results **145**

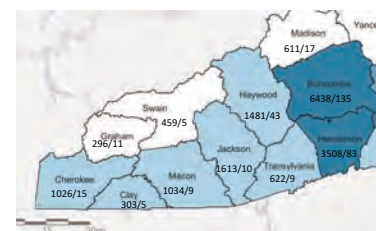
Reported Cases and Deaths

	Cases	Deaths
United States (CDC)	15,174,018	286,338
North Carolina (NCDHHS)	410,527	5,661
Macon County (MCPH)	1034	9

Macon County COVID-19

Total Cases	1034
Active Positive	92
Recovered	933
Deaths	9

WNC Confirmed COVID-19 Cases (Cases/Deaths) (12/9/2020)



Hepatitis cases rising

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is urging people to get vaccinated against hepatitis A. The department is reporting a sharp increase in the virus associated with an ongoing outbreak that began in April 2018.

Of the 423 cases related to the outbreak, 270 have been reported since January 2020. The department has confirmed four deaths so far in 2020 associated with the outbreak, increasing the total to five.

NCDHHS recommends getting vaccinated against hepatitis A, especially for people who are at high risk of contracting the virus. People at highest risk during this outbreak include those who are experiencing homelessness, men who have sex with men and those who use drugs.

"Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself against hepatitis A," said Dr. Erica Wilson, medical director for vaccine preventable diseases in the NCDHHS Division of Public Health. "We also urge everyone to continue to practice good hand hygiene and safer sex practices. Drug use also increases risk of infection, and individuals who continue to use drugs should practice harm reduction strategies and get vaccinated."

Hepatitis A vaccine is available for free at all local health departments for people at high risk. Individuals seeking the vaccine are encouraged to contact their health department, health care provider or the NCDHHS viral hepatitis program to be linked to care assistance.

Hepatitis A is a contagious, vaccine-preventable liver infection that can range from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to severe illness lasting several months. Because hepatitis A causes inflammation of the liver, anyone with underlying liver disease is at risk of more serious illness if infected.

The virus is usually transmitted through food or water that has been contaminated with undetectable amounts of feces from a contagious person. Hepatitis A virus can be spread through sexual contact or non-sexual contact, and transmission through shared injection supplies is possible, though believed to be uncommon.

Anyone experiencing symptoms of hepatitis A should contact their health care provider and refrain from preparing food for others. Symptoms include fever, fatigue, nausea, loss of appetite and stomach pain. Jaundice (yellowing of the skin and/or eyes), dark-colored urine and clay-colored bowel movements may also occur. Symptoms can appear 15-50 days following infection with the virus.

Little Pantries supplement family food budgets

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Food insecurity was already a reality for many people living in Macon County, and with the pandemic stretching on into a year and businesses and jobs affected, that reality has widened its reach. Little pantries, similar to the little libraries concept, provide emergency food supplies and other necessities for anyone in need.

After Dick Richards constructed and erected a little pantry adjacent to a church in Murphy, which he had pastored, the need was immediately evident. Plus, he said, "It gave the congregation something to do besides just attend church and then go home."

A resident of Macon County with his wife, Vicki, for 15 years, Richards decided to put another little pantry at Louisa Chapel United Methodist Church and it, too, began to fill a need. Next, Bethel United Methodist Church requested one adjacent to its building.

Richards, 80, constructs the little pantries in his workshop, paints them red and white, and adorns them with the scripture verse Matthew 25:31-46, which teaches, "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink ..."

Materials cost about \$200, explained Richards, pointing out that he built bird houses before he "graduated" to little pantries. It takes him about 25 hours and his son, Keith Richards, 50, helps him put the roofs on.

"If any church or group wants one, I will build it, deliver it, and supervise the installation," said Dick Richards. "Jesus told us to feed the hungry. Little pantries are a community activity for anyone ... everyone. People 'take what they need and leave what they can.'"



The Little Free Food Pantries are scattered all over the county for folks in need of a just a little help. This one is located just off the Old Murphy Road. Photo by Vickie Carpenter

Vicki Richards regularly visits the little pantries to make sure they are stocked. She carries items in her car and adds what is needed.

"The most popular item seems to be Vienna sausages," said Dick Richards. "They are always taken after people put them in the little pantries. But really any protein, like Spam and peanut butter, is popular. Anything non-perishable. Vegetables are the last things to get taken, but they do. Baby food is needed as well, but people often don't think about putting it in a little pantry ... or things like toilet paper, soap, sanitizer, shampoos, deodorant. I want to encourage people to consider adding items to pantries regularly ... maybe every time they go to the grocery store, they can pick up a few extra things."

Richards said he believes that stocking little pantries is the "best way to serve God because you are serving others. Little pantries are a labor of love and something we love doing, and we just want to make sure people know about them."

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

I have yet another photo that illustrates trash disposal problems that a small number of residents continue to generate. Yes, I and the board might be viewed as garbage nazis by some with the passage of the ordinance requiring bear resistant toters. But, we are not going to sit back and see Highlands literally get trashed by a few individuals who do not want to take responsibility for properly disposing the garbage that they generate.

The photo was taken last week in front of a residence on a main corridor in our town. Probably someone came for the week or weekend and simply put out their garbage in



these unsecured containers as they left. There is a black toter in the photo, but it is obviously not bear resistant. I suspect these folks live back home in a development that would never tolerate what the photo depicts. Why is it ok to do this in Highlands? This irresponsible behavior is also no longer acceptable in Highlands.

So someone left town and triggered a mess for others to deal with. I know they had been warned about the bear resistant toter ordinance. Notice the red warning tag in the upper right hand portion of the photo.

The ordinance was passed 16 months ago and was to go into effect on Aug. 1 of this year. The board had delayed ordinance enforcement for a year so folks would have time to purchase the toters.

In August, implementation of the ordinance was delayed because of back orders of toters at local stores. All the back orders have now been filled and toters are in stock. This fall residents that still didn't have bear resistant toters had red tag warnings placed on their nonconforming trash

See TAYLOR page 11

Letters to the Editor

Tough problems require tough solutions

Experience has shown that allowing the current legislative and judicial state of affairs to continue to thrash around ineffectively and allow the massive election fraud on Nov. 3 to go unsolved will not be good for our Constitutional Republic.

Tough problems require tough solutions.

The readers should take steps to protect our country by sending these two paragraphs to President Donald Trump. (info@mail.whitehouse.gov)

"Mr. President – The 80 million of us who voted for you want you to immediately use the Plenary Power and Authority of your Office to protect us from the ongoing despotic attacks against our liberty and Constitutionally protected rights, privileges, and protections including but not limited to the Right to a peaceful, honest, and untainted elections, and being secure in our lives, property, being waged by a combination of the corrupt Democratic Party and its operatives in the various states acting in collusion with and as agents for foreign enemy interests, by invoking the Insurrection Act, Title 10 USC Sections 251, 252, 253, 331 through 335.

"We ask you to please immediately issue a Proclamation declaring the States of Georgia, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Arizona, Nevada, California, Washington, Oregon, and others are engaged in disorderly, unlawful and corrupt conduct against the Peace, Dignity, Laws and Order of the United States of America, causing loss of life, assaults and damage to property of law abiding citizens of this country, depriving the good citizens of this country of the rights, privileges and protections guaranteed them under the Constitution and Bill of Rights, and are in insurrection, obstructing the execution of the laws of the United States and impeding justice, and use the Proclamation to suspend the Jan. GA Senate run off, and the Dec. meeting of the Electoral College so military tribunals can first be established to properly investigate and resolve the ongoing cyber warfare attacks from enemies foreign and domestic on our 11-3-2020 election."

Respectfully submitted,

Peter K. Stern – Franklin, N.C.

Downtown Christmas display giving residents some joy

A big shoutout to the town of Franklin for the lovely Christmas display at the square! During this time of unsettled health issues and election woes, God bless the town for going above and beyond to give Franklin residents some joy. We surely do appreciate it!

Sonja Thompson – Franklin, N.C.

Not asking too much to wear a mask

Used to be a day when Americans came together and helped one another, The time has come for every American to start taking some responsibility to fight this terrible pandemic. Yes, you have your rights and your freedom to not wear a mask, but its time for accountability and do what you can do to at least try to stop so many people getting sick and dying. Doctors and nurses are giving all they got to help people and taking care of the sick, sure don't seem like its asking to much to wear a mask, is just asking a small thing, to what they are going threw. Same thing when it came to wearing seat belts in the car. and found out it saved a lot of lives. No doubt if the truth were to be known, Trump don't wear a mask, he can't stand the smell of his breath with it on. He says this virus will just go away, with thousands of people dying. Thats probly where a lot of his votes are that are missing, are out there in a cemetery some place. Its time for Americans to come together, even it it means wearing a mask keeps one person, even yourself from dying would help. Surely you can give up your rights and freedom to save a life, could be a member of your family or even yourself. Lets all take some responsibility, be a true American and "Welcome back America."

Kathy Whitley– Franklin, N.C.

What's on your mind?

Email letters to the editor to
maconcountynews@gmail.com



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Service dog Atlas once again in the limelight

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Last November, service dog Atlas Atticus received his first experience in the limelight when he and his owner, Macon Early College student Kristina Masta, were featured on CBS' "Dream Team's Lucky Dog" with animal trainer Brandon McMillan. The CBS segment was filmed last year when Kristina and her mother, Michelle Masta, co-owner of Black Bear Paving & Construction, were in California during a service dog training session with McMillan.

Atlas, an Anatolian shepherd, was destined to live out his days on a farm guarding livestock against predators like wolves and coyotes. However, Atlas could not prove his mettle as a sentry and, instead, ended up at an animal shelter in Oregon because of his shy nature. How Atlas was "discovered" as an ideal companion dog for Kristina is the plot of a new children's book titled "How I Became The Mighty Atlas," co-written by Kristina and local writer Faithe Giaquinto. The book is illustrated by Amberly Downs, owner



Macon Early College student Kristina Masta was on Main Street in Franklin Dec. 5 with her service dog, Atlas, during the debut of a book she co-wrote with Faithe Giaquinto called "How I Became The Mighty Atlas."

of Atomic Annies Tattoo, Gallery and Education Center in Franklin. The book's theme drives home the message: "Every animal has a purpose."

Sixteen-year-old Kristina was born prematurely, weighing 1 pound, 1 ounce, and eventually developed retinopathy of prematurity, which causes abnormal blood vessels to grow in the retina. Her story is detailed at the end of "How I Became The Mighty Atlas," which is told in narrative form through the voice of Atlas, the Anatolian shepherd. In the Nov. 21, 2019, edition of Macon County News, Kristina described her sight as "looking through wax paper with some small holes in it. You miss lots of stuff." Since Kristina is not completely blind, she needed a service dog trained for specific needs – not just as a general guide dog for the blind.

Atlas has fit the bill, according to Kristina's mother, who explained that proceeds from the sale of the book will be used to build a security fence for Atlas so that he can run and play when he is not working for Kristina.

"How I Became The Mighty Atlas" is available for sale at Books Unlimited in Franklin as well as at Amazon.com.

TAYLOR

From previous page

fall residents that still didn't have bear resistant totes had red tag warnings placed on their nonconforming trash cans. At a recent meeting, the town board authorized the town manager and staff to begin enforcement of the ordinance when all the back order issues were resolved. Therefore, beginning January 1st, the ordinance will go into full effect. Trash crews will not pick up garbage in nonconforming containers. If a resident places garbage in nonconforming containers, a fine will be issued.

Some folks seem to be confused about storing of totes in storage containers that are next to the street. Residents can roll the toter to the street curb on their collection day, or like me, place it in a storage container near the collection point. One purpose for the totes requirement was to eliminate trash crews having to do repetitive lifting of trash cans. Workers were lifting 500 to 700 cans a day. If a resident elects to construct a container for their toter, it needs to have a gate or open front where crews can roll the toter to the truck. An enclosed four-sided container that makes crews have to lift the toter up and out of the structure defeats the goal of eliminating the continuous lifting of trash containers.

Again, I thank residents who have purchased totes. Your participation and support has helped address what was a growing bear problem. It will also help the town maintain current residential collection rates. Folks that do not comply with the ordinance can discuss their issues with our code enforcement police officer.

Courts offer online services

District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch is urging residents to avoid long lines at courthouses by taking advantage of online options for resolving certain traffic tickets and paying various court costs, fines and fees.

"Using onlineservices.nccourts.org allows people to bypass the pandemic-caused delays in our judicial system, plus it can reduce risks of coronavirus exposure," Welch said. "We want people to stay home and stay safe to the extent possible."

Earlier this year, Gov. Roy Cooper directed the courts to maintain social distancing requirements and to facilitate "online or remote access by customers if possible."

The state's Electronic Compliance and Dismissal System (ECAD), rolled out in 2016, is integrated with the state Division of Motor Vehicles. This allows North Carolina residents cited with certain violations to show compliance.

The service is not available at this time to out-of-state residents.

Violations that can be resolved include expired registrations or inadequate inspection records, driving without a license, failing to have a license in the car or using an expired license.

Additionally, state residents can request district attorneys and their staffs to either reduce or dismiss traffic tickets. After reviewing the cases, officials approve or deny the requests. Residents receive electronic notification of the decision.

Also through NCCourts.gov, the public can sign up for text reminders for rescheduled court dates and access other court services online, including citation services, ticket and court payments, court date notifications and reminders.

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Winter Wonderland in downtown Franklin



Winter Wonderland continued last Saturday evening as shoppers shopped, Santa strolled, pictures were snapped and coffee was poured. Visitors and residents alike were busy making some Christmas memories in downtown Franklin. Photos by Betsy Gooder



Drive-thru Santa & Mrs. Claus at the library

The Children's Department at the Macon County Public Library presented a Drive-Thru Santa and Mrs. Claus Thursday, Dec. 3. The famous couple handed out goodie bags that included a craft, cocoa, a gift-wrapped book and more. Santa also provided a letter for each child to write their Christmas wishes on to be mailed back to Santa.

Photos by Vickie Carpenter



'The Bethlehem Experience' this weekend at Smoky Center

Members of Cartoogechaye Baptist Church and many others have been hard at work for weeks constructing the set of "The Bethlehem Experience," a drive thru nativity set for this weekend Dec. 11-13. The town is made up of an inn, chicken coops, Herod's palace, a marketplace, the stable and more. Costumed characters will provide a real life element in this depiction of the greatest story ever told. The drive-thru nativity is being held at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts from 6 to 9 p.m. nightly.

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Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests November 22 - December 5. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

November 27

Griffin Chandler Sanders, was charged with driving while license revoked.

November 29

Louis Edward Testa, was charged with second degree trespass, injury to personal property. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

December 1

Joshua Curtis Kruger, was charged with domestic physical.

December 2

Larry Tuner Turlington Jr., was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Samuel Ray, was issued a governors warrant for a fugitive. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Calee Suzanne Bowman, was issued a warrant for offense committed in jurisdiction. Emileigh E. Sands made the arrest.

December 3

Matthew Levan, was charged with breaking and entering, larceny after break/enter, possession of stolen goods/property, injury to real property, obtaining property by false pretenses. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Brandon Michael Martin, was charged with grand theft of a motor vehicle, grand theft of a firearm. James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

Warren Tyler Harling, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to appear for driving while license revoked. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

December 4

Lorri Walker Kilby, was charged with unauthorized use of a motor vehicle. Joel Lynch made the arrest.

December 5

Ronald Lee Wickham, was charged with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, possession of a controlled substance on prison/jail premises, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz. Joseph A. Raby made the arrest.

Joseph Daniel Toneges, was issued warrant service. Joseph A. Raby made the arrest.

Nathan Shane Humphries, was charged with breaking and entering, larceny after breaking and entering, possession of stolen goods/property, injury to real property, resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

December 3

Ronnie Lee Queen, 38, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$3,500 was set. Officer Hovis made the arrest.

Joshua David Shelton, 26, was charged with assault on a female. A secured bond of \$1,200 was set.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

November 22

Jason Carroll Lowery, 37, of Robin Lane, Bryson City, was charged with larceny after breaking and entering, breaking and entering forcible. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set. Megan L. Rhinehart made the arrest.

Charles Ray Tolley, 46, of Riverbend Rd., was charged with communicating threats. No bond was set. William K. Davis made the arrest.

November 23

Jamison Lawrence Lassiter, 37, of Sylva, was charged with injury to real property, breaking and entering. No bond was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

November 23

Eric Bascom Wilkes, 47, of US 74 East, was charged with failure to appear for school attendance law violation. William A. Foxx made the arrest.

Amanda Dawn Clawson, 39, of Hallie Manor Court, was issued warrant service for other jurisdiction. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set. Dray E. Holland made the arrest.

Kyle Lee Lackey, 38, of Roads Cove, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set. Jesse L. Henkel made the arrest.

Charles Michael Nash, 32, of Union Hill Rd., Whittier, was charged with misdemeanor larceny, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of less than half an ounce of marijuana. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set. Jesse L. Henkel made the arrest.

November 24

Roger Clay Bryson, 68, of Whisper Wind Rd., Cashiers, was charged with assault on a female. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set. William A. Foxx made the arrest.

George Vernon Norton, 30, of Shook Cove Rd., Tuckasegee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set. William A. Foxx made the arrest.

Shane Christopher Holder, 29, of Washington Creek Rd., Cherokee, was charged with possession of marijuana, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$2,000 was set. James A. Brown made the arrest.

November 25

Regina Stawn Clyburn, 41, of Cullowhee Mountain Rd., was charged with misdemeanor larceny, violation of a court order. An unsecured bond of \$2,000 was set. William K. Davis made the arrest.

November 26

Tommy Lee Henderson, 36, of Carringer St., Bryson City, was charged with failure to appear for uttering a forged instrument, possession of stolen goods/property, obtain property by false pretense. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

November 27

Kenneth Howard Trantham, 56, of Camp Branch Rd., Whittier, was charged with domestic criminal trespass. No bond was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

Preston Richard Ramsey, 25, of Whittier, was charged with driving while impaired. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set. Josh A. Yopp made the arrest.

November 28

Jose Antonio Contreas-Rios, 28, of Sylva, was charged with failure to appear for driving while impaired/driving while license revoked, domestic violence protective order violation.

No bond was set. William A. Foxx made the arrest.

November 29

Jamison Lawrence Lassiter, 37, of Sylva, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor probation violation. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set. Hunter M. Karup made the arrest.

Lora Dawn Wuttke, 50, of Big Burn Circle, was charged with assault on a child under 12. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set. Conner L. Wilson made the arrest.

Katrina Lynn Cook, 33, of Goose Creek Rd., Cherokee, was charged with second degree trespass. A secured bond of \$500 was set. Michael T. Smathers made the arrest.

Meli Faith Lambert, 18, of Liner Creek, Clyde, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine, injury to personal property, aid and abet larceny, larceny. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set. Josh A. Yopp made the arrest.

November 30

Carolyn Elizabeth Keck Loftis, of Snapdragon Lane, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Michael David Touger, 36, of Sunrise Park, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of burglary tools, forcible breaking and entering. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

James Tyler Whitmire, 32, of Berry Mountain Rd., was charged with possession of burglary tools, forcible breaking and enter. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

December 1

Dernando Agustin Sanchez, of Puma Trail, Tuckasegee, was charged with all other offenses. No bond was set.

Edge Dakota Fortner, 31, of Birchfield Rd., Bryson City, was charged with misdemeanor probation for violation out of county. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

David Charles Roberts, 40, of Whittier, was charged with financial card theft, identity theft, possession of stolen goods. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

David Jason Johnson, 38, of Beavor Rd., Lake Toxaway, was issued an out of state fugitive warrant for driving while license revoked, identity theft, possession of stolen goods. A secured bond of \$4,500 was set.

Amanda Lee Meszyk, 31, of Sylva, was charged with financial card theft. No bond was set.

December 2

Rodney Odell Buchanan, 71, of Toohow Rd., Whittier, was charged with assault on a female/simple assault. A \$500 bond was set.

December 3

Rebecca Lynn Pellot, 31, of Castle Rock Circle, was issued a warrant for arrest for first degree trespass enter/remain. An unsecured bond of \$200 was set.

December 4

James Tyler Whitmire, 32, of Berry Mountain Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz., possession of heroin. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Timothy Brandon Luker, 41, of Luker Branch, Tuckasegee, was charged with communicating threats. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Charles Michael Nash, 32, of Union Hill Rd., Whittier, was charged with larceny, motor vehicle theft. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Michael David Touger, 36, of Sunrise Park, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz., possession of heroin. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.



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Overlook presents dinner show

The Overlook Theatre Company presented "A Christmas With Family and Friends" a classic Christmas celebration with songs, stories and traditions in this one-of-a-kind dinner show served live on stage. The menu includes a traditional holiday feast of turkey, stuffing and all the trimmings. The production continues Dec. 14 & 15 at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. For ticket information, visit greatmountainmusic.com or call (866)273-4615.

Photos by Betsey Gooder



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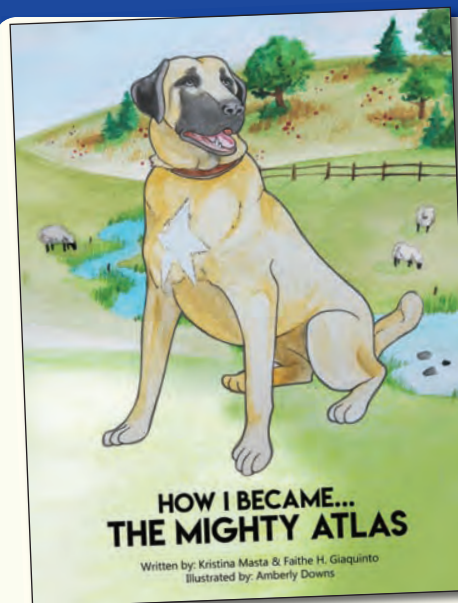
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Cute and fuzzy caterpillar poisonous to touch

Dr. Bob Gilbert – Columnist

Late last summer in some shrubbery, we found an unusual caterpillar that was unknown to us. A quick google and Peterson Field Guide search identified it as the White Hickory Tussock Moth Caterpillar, *Lophocampa caryae*. Fortunately, it was on a branch so there was no need to pick it up with our hands. I had to look up tussock to learn that it is a term that describes a clump of grass. The white hairs on this caterpillar do look that way. Its hairs are barbed and break off leaving the ends in skin. They are attached to poison glands that create a serious red rash that itches. For people who are allergic to insects and other things there can be a serious reaction.

Caterpillars can be poisonous and unpalatable as the result of the plants they eat. This produces a chemical protection that predators learn to avoid. Monarch Butterfly caterpillars are a good example. Another butterfly, the Viceroy, has evolved that looks like the monarch thus confusing predators.

Eight venomous caterpillars reside in Eastern North America. These are harmful to touch, which is another kind of protective mechanism. The venom is on the skin or hairs. The only other one of these that I have seen is the Saddleback



Dr. Bob Gilbert

Caterpillar. The venomous caterpillars listed for North Carolina are: Black Moth, Flannel Moth, Hag, IO Moth, Puss, Saddleback, White Hickory Tussock and Spiny Oak-slug. None of these sound like much fun.

The venomous White Hickory Tussock Moth Caterpillar feeds on most woody trees and shrubs. When available it is especially fond of Hickory Trees and other nut producers. The moth flies in May and June then it lays its eggs. There is only one generation per year. The larva or caterpillars hatch in the summer. In the fall, they over winter as a pupa in a cocoon. Moths and butterflies both have three different forms during their life cycle, adult, larva or caterpillar and pupae. As a group moths can be separated from butterflies as they have fuzzy antennae.

If you happen to get a rash from Hickory Tussock, ice helps reduce the pain. Washing the site with either a solution of household ammonia or bicarbonate of soda relieves the itching. For sure keep your hands away from your eyes.

Cute and fuzzy are terms best used to describe a pet that will only chew your furniture not defoliate your trees and create a rash. That said, I am allergic to cats. I do not think cats can be called venomous although it feels like it when I am around one. Most cats sense that I am not interested and keep their distance saving me the embarrassment of resorting to aggressive action.

Dr. Bob Gilbert, now living in Franklin, is cofounder of Smith Gilbert Gardens in Kennesaw, Ga.

Karen Lawrence is a professional horticultural and wildlife photographer from Franklin.



Hickory Tussock Caterpillar Moth

Photo by Karen Lawrence

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Deaths & Funerals

Mary Lee Buchanan Duvall

Mary Lee Buchanan Duvall, 96, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Friday, Dec. 4, 2020.

Born in Spruce Pine, N.C., she was the daughter of the late Audie and Mae Duncan Buchanan. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her daughter, Sharon Duvall Burrell; two brothers, Audie Buchanan Jr. and Paul Buchanan. She was a member of Cowee Baptist Church, the Cowee Quilters and loved sewing and working in her yard.

She is survived by a daughter, Shelia Young (Gene) of Franklin; son-in-law, Walter "Sonny" Burrell of Franklin; sister, Evelyn Hall of Charlotte; and a half brother, James Buchanan of Spruce Pine; four grandchildren, Adam Burrell (Angela), Eric Burrell (Kristin), Tara Sund (Richie), and Mark Young (Jennifer); seven great granddaughters, Jordan Burrell, Payton Burrell, Avery Sund, Kayla Burrell, Corey Burrell, Eden Burrell and Reece Sund; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Private graveside services will be held at Woodlawn Cemetery. Rev. Steve Reeves will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Cowee Baptist Church, attn: Music Department, 6301 Bryson City Road, Franklin, NC 28734.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



Mary Lee Duvall

Margie Kimsey Mason

Margie Kimsey Mason, 84, passed away Saturday, Dec. 5, 2020. She was born Aug. 8, 1936, in Macon County to the late Claude and Bertha Kimsey. She was a dedicated member of Prentiss Baptist Church. She was active in the Franklin VFW, Franklin High School class of 1954 reunion committee; and Care Net of Macon County.

She is survived by her two sons, Keith A Mason (Pam) and Ronald L. Mason (Pat); three grandchildren, Alex Mason, John Mason (Tiffany), and Amy Weegar (Jeff); four great-grandchildren, Grant Weegar, David Mason, Maddie Weegar, and Liam Mason; two sisters, Selma K. Crane and Faye K. Wilson (Bobby); and numerous nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, William (Bill) C. Mason Jr.; and a sister, Margaret K. Hernandez.

A graveside service was held Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the Prentiss Baptist Church Cemetery with the Rev. Allen Waters officiating.

A memorial service will be held at a later date to celebrate the life of Mrs. Margie Mason.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Prentiss Baptist Church, 1438 Belle Dowdle Rd. Franklin, NC 28734.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory is serving the Mason family.



Margie Kimsey Mason

Darlene (Dean) Breedlove Corbin

Darlene (Dean) Breedlove Corbin, 79, of Franklin, N.C., slipped her earthly bonds to enter the heavenly gates on Saturday, Nov. 28, 2020.

She was a precious, loving soul. She loved the Lord and had been a reflection of his love for everyone to see. She could make you feel so treasured. Her smile was contagious and her hugs were like going home. Her voice would make you forget your troubles. She wanted to make a positive difference in the lives of everyone she met. She was an active member of Holly Springs Baptist church for many years and attended First United Methodist Church during her final years.

She was first married to Bob Johnson and had two daughters: Rachel Lynn Sanders (Vance Sanders), and Lisa Johnson Parker (Dale Parker); grandchildren, Logan Sanders, Jacob Sanders, Molly Sanders, Christopher Wilmoth, Andrew Wilmoth, Hailey Wilmoth and Laura Parker.

Following Bob's death in 1984, she married Harold Corbin in 1987. They ran Corbin Catering for many years and then she served as a compassionate CNA at Angel Community Hospital for 18 years. She continued to work as a home health aid until March of this year. Harold passed away in 2014. Her step-children with Harold are Kevin Corbin (Beth Corbin), Kelly Corbin (Dayna Corbin); and grandchildren, Matt Corbin (Charissa Corbin), Maggie Heron (Jason Heron), Kristi Raby (Andrew Raby), Brook Corbin and Joey Corbin; and five great grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Dec. 19, at 2 p.m., at the Joe Place in Holly Springs Community. A short service will be held outside. Bring a chair if necessary. Social distancing and masks are encouraged. The Joe Place is located at the end of Corbin Road.

Contributions in Dean's memory may be made to Hospice House Foundation of WNC in Franklin, N.C. The family also thanks Hospice at Angel Community Hospital for their provision of care to Dean.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is assisting the family during this time.

Online condolences at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.

Claude William Hurst

Claude William Hurst, 88, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with his Lord on Sunday, Dec. 6, 2020.

He was born in Macon County, the son of the late Joseph Daniel and Ella Allen Hurst. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brothers, RL Allen, Jay Hurst, and Carrol Hurst; and his sisters, Margie Elmore, Alene Holbrooks, and Eula Mason. He worked many years as a meat cutter, first working for Franklin Frozen Foods and later working for Nantahala Meats. He was a member at Sugarfork Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Mattie Jo Hurst; three sons, William E. Hurst (Becky P), Richard E. Hurst (Becky R.) and John J. Hurst, all of Franklin; three granddaughters, Crystal Parker, Kristina Morales and Stephanie Hurst; seven great grandchildren, Savannah, Kandice, Cassidy and Lance Parker, Marco, David and Brian Morales; along with several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held on Wednesday, Dec. 9, at the Sugarfork Baptist Church cemetery. Rev. Gene Hawkins and Rev. Steve Reeves officiated.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Gideons International, PO Box 372, Franklin, NC 28744.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



Darlene Corbin

Homer Wayne Bryson

Homer Wayne Bryson, 92, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, Dec. 3, 2020.

A native of Macon County, he was the son of the late Lawrence and Lazelle Talley Bryson. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife of 63 years, Evelyn "Eloise" Barnes Bryson in 2019; two brothers, Wymer Bryson and Wendell Bryson; and a sister, Lois Hawkins.

He was a lifelong resident of Macon County and attended Community Baptist Church. He loved gardening, farming and could often be seen riding his John Deere.

He is survived by a son, Denver Bryson (Penny) of Franklin; four sisters, Opal McCall of Highlands, Doris Hicks of Highlands, Gail Henry of Liberty, S.C., and Mae Ivester (Dennis) of Clayton, Ga.; four grandchildren, Daniel Bryson (Naomi), David Bryson (Robyn), Kristen Brown (Noland) and Taylor Lottes (Mickey); and nine great grandchildren, Eli, Andy, Colin, Ava, Samuel, Olivia, McLain, Lillie, and Jensen; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. A private graveside service will be held at the Addington Community Cemetery.

Memorials can be made to the Hospice House Foundation of WNC, PO Box 815, Franklin, NC 28744.

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



Homer Wayne Bryson

Bruce Arthur Bennett

Bruce Arthur Bennett, 61, of Franklin, N.C., went to his heavenly home on Monday, Nov. 23, 2020. He was born in Lakeland, Fla., on July 24, 1959 to Robert and Elizabeth (Ann) Bennett of Franklin.

He worked as a custodian for the Macon County School System for more than 19 years. He enjoyed camping, fishing and playing the bass guitar, as well as gardening, working around the house, traveling and connecting with people on the computer and enjoyed reading his Bible.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his wife of 19 years, Julie A. Bennett; brothers, David and Bonnie Bennett of Franklin, and Robert and Shirley Bennett of Westminster S.C.; nieces, Megan Bennett and Monica Turner; nephews, Eddie (Crystal) Bennett, Charlie (Blesi) Bennett, Patrick (Stephani) Bennett, and Chris (Sherri) Turner.

He worked as a custodian for the Macon County School System for more than 19 years. He enjoyed camping, fishing and playing the bass guitar, as well as gardening, working around the house, traveling and connecting with people on the computer and enjoyed reading his Bible.

Funeral services were held Friday Nov. 27, in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Davis Hooper and Rev. Ronnie Branson officiating. Burial was at Cowee Baptist Church Cemetery. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests contributions be made to Cowee Baptist Church Cemetery Fund or to the Billy Graham Training Center, Asheville N.C.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Bruce Arthur Bennett

View obituaries online at themaconcountynews.com

Shirley Jean Vogler

Shirley Jean Vogler, 84, formerly of New Smyrna Beach, Fla., went to her heavenly home on Tuesday, Dec. 2, 2020.

She was a retired high school cafeteria manager. She was a member of Glencoe Baptist church in New Smyrna Beach as well as Cartoogechaye Baptist Church, Franklin, N.C.

She was the loving wife of Jerrell Vogler who preceded her in death along with mother, Phyllis Mosley, father, Theodore Norman, daughter, April O'Connell.

She is survived by daughter, Katrina Gray as well as nieces and nephews and grandchildren.

Graveside service will be held Friday, Dec. 11, at 11 a.m., at Woodlawn Cemetery with Pastor Carson Gibson officiating.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the local Hospice.

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2021 DAYTONA 500 to have limited fan capacity; tradition continues Sunday, Feb. 14

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – The 63rd Annual DAYTONA 500 will play host to a limited number of fans, but The Great American Race will – as it has since 1959 – continue the tradition of the biggest event in all of motorsports, delivering the pageantry, excitement and drama like nowhere else in the world.

The reduced venue capacity for the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series opener, set for Sunday, Feb. 14, as well as all events part of DAYTONA Speedweeks Presented by AdventHealth (Feb. 9-14), is due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and is in accordance with enhanced safety protocols and procedures to provide a safe environment for guests, NASCAR competitors, employees and the local community.

“The DAYTONA 500 is one of the greatest spectacles in all of sports, and fans from all over the world converge in Daytona Beach to be a part of motorsport’s biggest day,” said Daytona International Speedway President Chip Wile. “While we won’t be able to have a capacity crowd here in February, we are excited that we can host the DAYTONA 500 with those in attendance, as well as for the millions who will tune in live on FOX.

“The Great American Race will once again have the aura and atmosphere that fans have come to know and love. From the pageantry of our pre-race festivities to the rumble of 40 engines roaring around the high banks, it’s the biggest stage in motorsports.”

As a result of the seating capacity limitations, the Speedway will work to accommodate guests who have already purchased tickets to the 2021 DAYTONA 500. To ensure social distancing between groups who will be in attendance, many fans will be reseated in new locations. The reseating process is expected to be complete by early January.

All guests will be screened before entering the facility and will be required to wear face coverings while maintaining six feet social distancing throughout their visit. Information about your visit to Daytona International Speedway, including all ticket options and safety protocols, can be found by visiting www.DAYTONA500.com/updates or calling 1-800-PITSHOP.

Tickets for the remaining Speedweeks events, and a limited number of premium and extended-stay camping packages, are still available. Fans wishing to attend are encouraged to make their plans early and secure their seats or camping experience now. Excluding the DAYTONA 500 children 12 and under are FREE in the 100 level seating and \$10 in all other reserved seating. In addition to the DAYTONA 500, the rest of the fresh-look on-track Speedweeks action includes:

– Tuesday, Feb. 9: 43rd Annual Busch Clash At DAYTONA (DAYTONA Road Course under the lights)

– Wednesday, Feb. 10: DAYTONA 500 Qualifying Presented By Kroger



Fewer fans will be at the Daytona 500 starting line than in past years. The reduced venue capacity is due to the ongoing pandemic.

– Thursday, Feb. 11: Duel At DAYTONA qualifying races
– Friday, Feb. 12: NextEra Energy 250 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race

– Saturday, Feb. 13: NASCAR Racing Experience 300 (NASCAR Xfinity Series) and Lucas Oil 200 Driven By General Tire (ARCA Menards) doubleheader

Fans can stay connected with Daytona International Speedway on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for the latest Speedway news throughout the season.

The NASCAR Foundation to Host Virtual High Speed Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. (Dec. 3, 2020) – In 2021, The NASCAR Foundation’s Betty Jane France Memorial High Speed Hold ‘Em Poker Tournament traditionally held in Daytona Beach during Daytona Speedweeks Presented by AdventHealth will transition to a virtual partnership with World Poker Tour®. The high stakes evening, hosted online on January 13, will feature NASCAR Cup Series champions Brad Keselowski, Kyle Busch and Martin Truex, Jr., professional poker stars Maria Ho and Phil Hellmuth, and actor Michael Rooker, among other celebrities and participants.

The final table will be streamed at a later date to be determined, with Maria Ho serving as host and commentator. A silent auction and donation drive will round out the event’s programming.

“This year has certainly presented its challenges,” stated The NASCAR Foundation Chairman Mike Helton. “But it

has also created new opportunities and we are very excited to host our first virtual poker tournament allowing greater participation as we raise funds to help the children in our racing communities.”

Utilizing the World Poker Tour’s online sweepstakes-based poker platform, ClubWPT™, the tournament will allow for two playing styles to happen simultaneously – Sit and Go tables and Multi-Tables. The final table will feature six players including two NASCAR Cup Series drivers, one professional poker player, one celebrity and two participants. Participating NASCAR Cup Series drivers will have a chance to earn funds for their charities with the first place finishing driver receiving a \$25,000 donation, the second place finishing driver a \$15,000 donation and the third place finishing driver a \$10,000 donation.

“The World Poker Tour looks forward to extending its online poker partnerships on ClubWPT with The NASCAR Foundation for this event,” said Adam Pliska, CEO of the World Poker Tour. “Philanthropy is top of mind at the WPT®, and the WPT Foundation along with its \$27 million raised since 2012, is partnering with The NASCAR Foundation to raise awareness for a great cause and provide a safe environment to play.”

Proceeds from the tournament benefit The NASCAR Foundation’s Speediatrics Children’s Fund, a program that aims to provide health care resources and wellness programs for children.

For more details on sponsorship opportunities and participation, visit NASCARfoundation.org/poker.

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Car crash victims honored with permanent 'Tree of Life' on the State Capitol Grounds

A permanent 'Tree of Life' has been planted on the State Capitol Grounds in downtown Raleigh, memorializing forever all victims of roadway crashes across the state.

The historic move made was possible by the joint efforts of the N.C. Governor's Highway Safety Program, Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, Department of Insurance, MADDNC and hundreds of law enforcement, first responders and volunteers. The tree immortalizes the annual tradition, now in its 23rd year; and the commitment to the multi-agency work being done to eliminate roadway deaths.

During an online ceremony (downloadable version here) on Friday, Dec. 4, Governor Roy Cooper honored crash victims while reaffirming his commitment to making a better and safer North Carolina.

"Our first duties as leaders, is to keep North Carolinians safe; whether it be from a pandemic, a hurricane, or dangers on the highway," said Governor Cooper.

"Roadway crashes take an emotional and physical toll on families, friends, colleagues, communities and first responders, and it hurts our economy," Governor Cooper shared.

The commitment from state leadership came with a challenge to the public to help leaders take up the cause of roadway safety.

NCDOT Secretary Eric Boyette said during the service, "As we remember those who we've lost, we plead with drivers around our state to make safe decisions behind the wheel. No distractions. No cell phones. No pills, smoking, alcohol or other impairing substances while driving."

The ceremony included both the planting of a permanent tree and a virtual candle-lighting spearheaded by MADDNC.

MADD National President Helen Witty, whose own daughter's life was taken due to the actions of another behind the wheel, was among the speakers.

Speaking of her family's loss, Whitty said, "Helen Marie

was coming home and saw the car spinning toward her and there as was nothing she could do but die. We were shattered and we had to learn to live again and thank heavens MADD was there to show me that I would not die of my grief and that I could survive and that I could have a life of joy. And so, this night is one where we are together, this is your safe space."

Jennifer Litchneger, director of MADD NC said, "Sadly, 1,470 people died on our roadways in 2019; 348 of those were lost because of the 100% preventable crime of driving while impaired. Each year DWI fatalities account for approximately one-third of all motor vehicle deaths on our roadways."

"Tonight we recognize the profound sense of loss with the lighting of these candles before us," said MADDNC Program Specialist Lori Brown; as the group lit four candles representing the grief, courage, memory and love reserved for the fallen.

"Some of the fallen are law enforcement and first responders who tend North Carolina roadways daily," said Guilford County Sheriff Danny H. Rogers.

"As we honor those lost, we also recommit to removing from our roadways those that would seek to compromise the right to peaceful and safe passage of law-abiding citizens," Sheriff Rogers said.

N.C. Governor's Highway Safety Program Director Mark Ezzell, whose agency championed planting the permanent tree said, "We close out this year's 'Tree of Life' ceremony with the unveiling of what we believe will be a beacon of hope, and a haven for many in the years to come."

The tree, with a permanent plaque displayed, is being lit with a white beam representing all traffic crash victims, a red beam recognizing victims of impaired driving, and a blue beam in honor of law enforcement killed in traffic crashes.

The tree will remain lit until the end of the annual holiday 'Booze it & Lose It' campaign, ending January 5, 2021.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: HAPPY HOLIDAYS

ACROSS

1. "Lord of the Flies" shell
6. *New Year's Eve choice: Brut or Demi-
9. Get-out-of-jail money
13. Convex molding
14. *"_____ I Want for Christmas..."
15. Sign of life
16. Redo, to a carpenter
17. Flying saucer acronym
18. Often-missed humor
19. *Hanukkah toy
21. *_____ Santa, gift-giving tradition
23. Ides mo.
24. Part of a hammer
25. Cook's leaf
28. "Hey!"
30. Brain's _____ system
35. Revered one
37. "_____ Your Enthusiasm"
39. Capital of Egypt
40. Went by horse
41. "I do" spot
43. *_____ Sandler's "Eight Crazy Nights"
44. Scary movie consequence
46. Dexterity
47. Boundary line
48. Modern self-portrait
50. Superman's last name
52. Actor's domain
53. Wild plum
55. Mama sheep
57. *"I'll be home for Christmas, if only in my _____"
60. *African-American celebration
64. Town news announcer
65. Charged particle
67. _____ Elephant poacher's ware
68. Give new guns
69. *The night before Christmas
70. Present
71. *Like a Christmas sweater, often
72. Uncooked
73. Adherents of

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DOWN

 1. Umbilical connection
 2. *"Grandma got run _____ by a reindeer..."
 3. *Santa's "cheeks were like roses, his _____ like a cherry"
 4. Request to Geico
 5. Carriage on top of elephant
 6. Pulitzer winner Bellow
 7. *Santa helper
 8. Bring to an end
 9. Jefferson's Vice President
 10. Medicinal succulent
 11. Negative contraction
 12. Bovine hangout

15. Alfresco meal
 20. Novelist Jong
 22. Sushi restaurant choice
 24. *Have a piece of Christmas Goose, e.g.
 25. *"Five golden rings, four calling _____"
 26. Dig intensely
 27. Cry of the Alps
 29. *Time for log
 31. Address with apostrophe
 32. Stays somewhere
 33. About to explode
 34. *Vixen follower
 36. Table extension
 38. Diamond's corner
 42. Sign up again

45. Divest one of a gun
 49. "Slippery" tree
 51. Mark and Shania
 54. Twig of a willow tree
 56. End of a poem
 57. Fortune-teller's residue
 58. Iranian coin
 59. Suggestive of the supernatural
 60. Was aware of
 61. Fall asleep, with 'out'
 62. Foot part
 63. Pirates' affirmatives
 64. French vineyard
 66. Female gametes

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OLD EDWARDS INN & Spa, Highlands NC. Housekeeping and Dishwashing starting at \$13 per hour. Now recruiting for Housekeepers, Houseman, 2nd Shift Laundry, Turndown Attendants, Dishwashers, Cook, Pastry and Bread Cook, Assistant Farm Manager, Servers, Bussers, Host/Hostess, Old Edwards Inn Rooms Manager, Front Desk, Bellman, Night Audit, Fitness Manager, Spa Attendants, Cosmetologist. Benefits offered after 90 days employment. Apply online: www.oldedwardsinn.com/careers

COMPANION HEALTH CARE is needing CNA's, special opportunities are available with this position. Call Donna for more information, it will be worth the call. (828)524-6444.

LEGAL SECRETARY/ PARALEGAL For Immediate Hire at Coward, Hicks & Siler- Sylva, est. 1951. www.cowardhicksandsiler.com. Duties include preparing documents for real estate closings, civil litigation, estate matters, and managing client files. Attention to detail, organized, excellent communication skills, ability to work independently and as a team, and exceptional customer service skills are a must. Candidate should be proficient at SoftPro, Microsoft products, and Word perfect. We Are Willing To Train the right candidate. Email resume to emontoya@chspa.com.

SOLID FOUNDATION INC. is Seeking Skilled Carpenter and Carpenters Helper. Must have own Transportation, Tools References Needed. Call (828)369-3894.

ALL PHASES of Remodeling, Trim, Paint, Decks, Furniture Finishing and Repair, 30 Years of Experience. Call (828)421-8639.

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PROFESSIONAL KNIFE and scissor sharpening Mon-Sat. Kitchen Sink Inc. 72 E. Main Street, Franklin (828)524-2956.

HANDYMAN HOME REPAIRS Carpentry, Pressure Washing, Gutter Cleaning, Decks, Drywall, Painting, Electrical/Plumbing, Repairs of any kind. 40 Years, Fast/Reasonable/Reliable. (828)332-7247.

MOUNTAIN AREA PROPERTY Services, Cleaning Packing Organizing & Other Household Services. Great References. (828)550-4585.

SQUID'S SMALL ENGINE REPAIR & Service, 867 Highlands Rd., by Franklin Flea Market. (828)342-5135.

C & C PUMPS Well Pump Sales, Service & Installations. Iron Removal Filter Systems. Call David Cheek (828)369-5176.

GRADING, FINISH GRADING Hydroseed, Driveways, Roads, Hauling, Land Clearing, Chipper. Install Septic Systems, Retaining Walls, Rock Work, Boulders, Patio, Perez. (828)524-8650, (828)347-6793 Excellent References.

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Franklin, NC - Five Day Forecast

THUR	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON
 5%	 10%	 60%	 40%	 30%
66°/29°	61°/40°	57°/36°	54°/27°	46°/24°



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Nursing & Rehabilitation Center

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PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2017	Buick	Encore	43,236
2018	Cadillac	CT6	29,695
2020	Cadillac	Escalade	26,141
2018	Chevrolet	Camaro	8,360
2014	Chevrolet	Camaro	104,018
1997	Chevrolet	Camaro	16,606
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado	4,769
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado	40,758
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado	13,389
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado	37,779
2015	Chevrolet	Colorado	52,137
2019	Chevrolet	Colorado	3,987
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado	884
1972	CHEVROLET	CORVETTE	91,171
2019	Chevrolet	Cruze	14,078
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	26,234
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	21,036
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	48,398
2018	Chevrolet	Impala	8,465
2018	Chevrolet	Malibu	41,816
2017	Chevrolet	Malibu	66,094
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	11,584
2017	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	41,705
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	51,696
2015	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	85,479
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	34,952
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	9,139
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	11,559
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	123,077
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	6,147
2015	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD	71,489
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD	4,832
2017	Chevrolet	Suburban	29,946
2016	Chevrolet	Suburban	112,779
2015	Chevrolet	Traverse	101,068
2017	Chevrolet	Traverse	91,551
2018	Chevrolet	Traverse	17,683
2017	Chevrolet	Traverse	37,686
2018	Chevrolet	Trax	10,745
2020	Chevrolet	Trax	1,156
2016	Dodge	Grand Caravan	102,307
2019	Ford	Edge	45,478
2018	Ford	Explorer	49,223
2000	Ford	Explorer	229,025
2020	Ford	F-150	23,354
2016	Ford	F-150	73,912
2018	Ford	F-150	27,491
2018	Ford	F-150	25,711
2014	Ford	F-150	130,566
2016	Ford	F-250	190,904
1999	Ford	F-250	233,137
1930	FORD	MODELA	78,269
2019	Ford	Ranger	2,749
2017	GMC	Sierra 1500	43,356
2014	GMC	Sierra 1500	54,681
2020	GMC	Sierra 1500	16,220
2014	GMC	Terrain	82,762
2019	GMC	Yukon XL	37,969
2004	HARLEY DAVIDSON	ROAD KING	9,778
2019	Hyundai	Elantra	36,506
2019	Hyundai	Tucson	36,252
2019	Jeep	Cherokee	9,020
2004	Jeep	Liberty	130,097
2017	Jeep	Renegade	48,579
2015	Jeep	Wrangler	69,479
2017	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited	88,737
2016	Kia	Sorento	73,214
2016	Land Rover	Range Rover Sport	55,302
2019	Mazda	CX-5	36,819
2017	Mercedes-Benz	Metris	57,091
2018	Mitsubishi	Outlander	49,313
2019	Nissan	Frontier	39,039
2019	Nissan	Pathfinder	36,059
2019	Nissan	Rogue	39,871
2019	Nissan	Sentra	38,658
2018	POLARIS	SLINGSHOT SL	1,502
2020	RAM	1500	25,556
2020	RAM	1500 Classic	18,621
2017	Subaru	Forester	44,665
2019	Toyota	Corolla	35,775
2019	Toyota	Corolla	27,529
2018	Toyota	Tacoma	35,770
2018	Toyota	Tacoma	13,859

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