

Town hears disc golf course proposal for Whitmire property

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

A tale as old as time — may actually be getting a new chapter in March as the Franklin Town Council is considering a plan to approve a non-invasive recreation plan for the Whitmire Property in town.

The Franklin Disc Golf Club, working with Town Council member Mike Lewis and Town Manager Summer Woodard, presented the board with a proposal Monday night to construct a disc golf course on Whitmire Property this spring for public use. The town council, who all reacted favorably, decided to review plans over the coming weeks and take a vote to approve the measure during their March meeting.

For the last five years or so, town leaders have touched on the fate of the Whitmire Property a little each year. Typically around budget time, a member of the board brings up the property and what should happen next. It was not until 2017 that the town made the move to assess the property for actual potential future use when they approved \$13,800 to be spent for a survey of the property done by WR-Martin Management Consulting out of Asheville to develop a plan for the property.

The Whitmire Property sits just under 13 acres and was purchased for \$1,575,000 in November 2004 by the town of Franklin. At the time, town leaders wanted to construct a new town hall on the property, but that idea was later scrapped and town hall remained on Main Street instead leaving the property to go unused for more than a decade. The property was last appraised at \$2.15 million in August 2008.

Community groups have presented plans for the property for the last several years — typically always for some form of recreational use, however beyond listening to presentations, the town has been reluctant to take action.

The 2017 assessment from WR-Martin Management Consulting found that a passive recreational and/or cultural use would be the best use of the property based on a list of factors



The Town of Franklin purchased the Whitmire property in East Franklin for \$1.5 million in November 2004. No plans to use the property have ever come to fruition.

Photo by Vickie Carpenter

the board asked the consultants to consider.

The Franklin Disc Golf club presented a plan to construct a non-invasive 9-hole course around the property — which would need little work aside from purchasing the baskets used for holes and established tees.

Disc golf is a flying disc sport in which players throw a disc at a target using rules similar to golf. It is usually played on a course with 9 or 18 holes. Players complete a hole by throwing a disc from a tee pad or area toward a target, throwing again from where the previous throw landed, until the target is reached. Usually, the number of throws a player uses to reach each target is tallied (often in relation to par), and players seek to complete each hole in the lowest number of total throws.

Woodard informed the board that the cost of the proposal would be around \$8,000, which she said can be funded through the town's Pickin' on the Square budget which went unused due to the pandemic.

"I think this is just the beginning of a multi-use recreational opportunity for this property," said Mayor Bob Scott.

Council member David Cullpepper agreed with the mayor and said he sees the disc golf course as being the first step in developing the property for public use with things such as picnic tables and maybe a future amphitheater.

Council member Dinah Mashburn said that she supported the idea, but asked for a month to review the plans and to see if any other groups come forward with any additional ideas for the property that would work in conjunction with the proposed disc golf course.

Members of the disc golf club said that once equipment is ordered, it would take around a month to receive the needed items, with installation taking about two weeks. If the board approves the project in March as expected, the disc golf course will be ready for public use by mid-April.

Town re-approves water, sewer for new hospital

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

The Franklin Town council re-approved a water and sewer allocation for the new site of Angel Medical Center (AMC) during its February meeting on Monday night. The request was made by AMC and HCA healthcare staff for the second time, with the first request lapsing due to delays caused by COVID-19. A ground breaking ceremony is set for April.

Despite delays, the new Angel Medical Center facility is expected to be completed on schedule, with a projected opening date in 2022.

The new facility will be located at the intersection of 441 and Hunnicut Lane in Franklin, about a mile from the current hospital. Plans for the new AMC facility have remained the same, however, the price tag as increased substantially, now projected to be close to \$70 million.

The new facility will not exceed the 30-bed capacity of the current Angel Medical Center; rooms will be larger and equipment will be upgraded and expanded services and structural and safety requirements will be met when the new building is ready in the third quarter of 2022.

Although the new facility does not mean the return of labor and delivery for Macon County residents, HCA has partnered

with Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) for a women's health care center in Franklin. MAHEC opened its new office in the 56 Building in the medical park behind AMC on Jan. 6. Suzanne Dixon, MD, OB-GYN will be providing prenatal, postnatal, and gynecological care.

Another addition to the new location will be an all-weather helicopter pad to serve a new helicopter from Mission. Mission Health's new helicopter — Mountain Area Medical Airlift (MAMA) — is an upgrade from an Airbus EC135 to an Airbus EC145. The EC145 has more interior space giving nurses and paramedics better access to patients. It also carries more fuel increasing MAMA's range, more powerful engines for a higher payload capacity, and more sophisticated instruments.

The new helicopter is larger than the previous helicopter used as MAMA and that means it has more room for the patient and the crew, according to John Grindstaff, supervisor for Mission's air medical services.

It is able to safely land in the same size area as the current MAMA aircraft and has a 31% larger patient care area. MAMA has bases at Mission Hospital in Asheville and Angel Medical Center in Franklin. While it takes about an hour and 20 minutes to drive the 68 miles between the two without traffic, it is but a 25-minute flight.

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COVID-19 vaccination woes continue for MCPH

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State diverts vaccine supplies to metro areas; change is on the way

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

If the Coronavirus has taught us anything it is to be patient, but lately it seems that patience is wearing thin. Folks have patiently waited in their homes under quarantine, waited during the safer-at-home mandate, waited for stores and restaurants to open up and waited in line to get a COVID test and then waited for the results. More recently people are waiting to receive the COVID-19 vaccine, and there is much confusion throughout the community regarding the supply, vaccination sites and the timeframe in which to get it.

Vaccine rollout program well underway in Franklin and Highlands

The Macon County Health Department (MCPH) administered its first COVID-19 vaccine to Dr. Donald Dewhurst who received the Moderna vaccine on Thursday, Dec. 31. The vaccine was first made available for healthcare personnel directly responding to COVID-19 and long-term care facilities. Residents over 75 were also added to this list and recently the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) opened the availability to folks 65 and older. Here is where patience is once again required. In order to get the vaccine one has to register with the Health Department, fill out a short questionnaire, and then wait for an appointment. As with all new programs there are always glitches. Macon County Health Department Director Kathy McGaha explained to the county commissioners at a meeting a few weeks ago, that the high volume of calls coming into the Call Center by folks wanting to register for the vaccine, overloaded the phone system and caused the system to go down. The system was down, off and on for three days. Macon County IT and leadership immediately began looking at alternative options and making plans to move the Call Center to an offsite location on a separate phone system. This, coupled with the fact that they were only administering the vaccine two days per week, added to the lengthy wait.

Drake Software offers services of Call Center

Local businessman Phil Drake heard about the situation at the Health Department and on Jan. 15, he met with the COVID Leadership Team to see how he could assist with the phone overload issue. The leadership team consists of Sheriff Robert Holland, Emergency Management Director Warren Cabe, County Manager Derek Roland, and McGaha.

The following day, Drake opened a COVID call center in the Drake Education Building, to help with the abundance of calls that the Health Department had been trying to handle. He staffed the call center with 10 agents from Drake Software's call center to

help get folks registered with the county in order to get their vaccine. The team took 357 calls that day to get folks registered. The intent was to run the call center for a week while the Health Department got a new phone system set up. The health department ultimately asked Drake to extend the use of their call center, which they did.

The following Monday the call center was staffed with personnel from the county along with some volunteers. They had 10 people manning the phones Monday through Friday. The call center went from using the website, to filling out forms and completing the questionnaire, which cut a few days out of the process. On Monday, Jan. 18, the call center took 315 calls, 234 the following day, 236 on Wednesday, 227 on Thursday and 175 on Friday. Outbound calls to folks who had previously left voicemails were also made.

"All our calls are answered within two seconds and each call lasts approximately 4 minutes and 11 seconds," said Terry Breedlove, vice president of I.T. at Drake.

The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They have now expanded the call center to 25 workstations. The center is now staffed with Health De-



The sign at the entrance of health department on Monday relayed the news that vaccine supplies were depleted.

partment personnel along with volunteers. When callers schedule an appointment for the first vaccine they are also given an appointment for the second vaccine dose, which is given four weeks later. Anyone in Group 1 or Group 2 can get an appointment for the vaccine. (Group 1 consists of health-care personnel directly responding to



Phil Drake, owner of Drake Software, offered his call center to the health department when their phone systems became overloaded with hundreds of calls from people seeking vaccine appointments. The call center is staffed with both paid agents and volunteers. Below left, Kim Green and Mandy Bewick are on the job at the call center and Maria Greene, right, takes a call.



COVID-19 and long-term care facilities and Group 2 is for those 65 and older). The phone number for the call center is (828)524-1500 for vaccinations and (828)349-2517 for COVID testing appointments. When supplies allow, vaccines are being given five days per week at the Health Department on Lakeside Drive.

Pharmacies looking to jump on the bandwagon

There is more good news on the horizon about alternate sites offering the vaccine. Several local pharmacies have now jumped on the bandwagon to offer to assist with giving the vaccine, much like they do the yearly flu shot. Although Ingles Pharmacy has a waiting list and is not accepting any more appointments, slots will be opened up when the vaccine becomes more readily available – the first shipment of which has not arrived.

Smart Pharmacy is also in the process of applying to the state to give the vaccine. Jacob Reiche, owner of Smart Pharmacy, says he is in the process of completing the massive amount of paperwork that would allow him to give the vaccine at his pharmacy. He is hopeful that when he finally gets the approval, Johnson and Johnson will have had their vaccine approved for emergency

use also. He would like to use Johnson and Johnson because it requires only one dose and can be stored at refrigerator temperatures instead of the ultra cold needed for the Pfizer vaccine. He is also hoping to be in his new location near the Senior Center in late February or Early March. Reiche also said that he will not have a waiting list. As the vaccine allotment arrives in his facility he will schedule the appointments according to how many doses he receives. Walmart is not currently offering the COVID-19 vaccine.

As to whether or not Walgreens in Franklin will offer the vaccine, O'Conner Campbell, Walgreens Account Supervisor, said, "Walgreens is providing COVID-19 vaccinations to vulnerable populations as determined by states and jurisdictions, and vaccinations are currently being administered at select Walgreens stores in limited quantities according to state and jurisdiction distribution plans," and that the vaccines will be available in all of Walgreens more than 9,000 store locations, once they become available for mass administration. Campbell anticipates a mass effort to begin in the spring.

Vaccine doses trickle into Macon County

So why are folks still having long waiting times to get the vaccine?

State Sen. Kevin Corbin said that members of the General Assembly are getting calls from county health directors, hospital leaders, and constituents about problems with the COVID-19 vaccine distribution.

In a statement on Jan. 23, he said it is his understanding that N.C. gets a weekly shipment of 120,000 first dose vaccines from the federal government. N.C. has proven to be one of the slowest states in the country to document vaccine distribution due to "data lag" or a delay in entering the data.

Corbin believes that an effort to move N.C. up in the vaccine distribution rankings resulted in the scheduling of two mass vaccination events at the Charlotte Motor Speedway and another the following week at Bank of America Stadium in Charlotte.

NCDHHS has also designated about a dozen sites that have done a good job of quickly administering larger allotments and



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Cooper instructs schools to reopen

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Just a little more than a month shy of the one year mark that North Carolina Public Schools began implementing virtual learning due to the COVID19 pandemic, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper announced on Tuesday afternoon that he strongly encourages all districts across the state to provide options for in-person learning for students who choose to do so.

[The governor joined North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) Secretary Mandy Cohen, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt and State Board of Education Chair Eric Davis to thank educators for their extraordinary work during an unprecedented time, to highlight ongoing research that shows that with proper mitigation measures, in-person learning is safe, and to emphasize the critical importance of ensuring all students have an opportunity to learn in a classroom.]

["Protecting the health and safety of the people of this state, especially our children and our teachers, has been our goal," said Governor Cooper. "We know school is important for reasons beyond academic instruction. School is where students learn social skills, get reliable meals, and find their voices. Research done right here in North Carolina tells us that in-person learning is working and that students can be in classrooms safely with the right safety protocols in place."]

Based on the updated NC School Tool Kit, Governor Cooper and state leaders are recommending that 6th – 12th Grade Students should return to in-person instruction five days per week to the fullest extent possible while following all protocols in the StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit, including the Six Feet Social Distancing Requirements. The requirements for six feet distancing provide an additional layer of protection in middle and high school settings, recognizing that studies indicate that younger children appear to be less likely to spread COVID-19 to others than older teens and adults.

School systems are to ensure that 6 feet distance can be maintained when both students and faculty will be stationary both indoors and outdoors (e.g., when seated in classrooms, waiting in lines, in restrooms and locker rooms, in cafeterias, other indoor school settings where people congregate. For some schools, this may mean limiting the total number of students, teachers, staff, and visitors within a school building at any one time to ensure that six feet distance can be maintained.

The governor's recommendation comes as the Senate Education Committee was holding a hearing on Senate Bill 37 which would require that school districts provide in-person instruction.

Senate Bill 37, "In-Person Learning Choice for Families," requires schools to provide access to in-person learning under ccPlan A (minimal social distancing) for students with

exceptional needs. It also requires schools to provide in-person learning options for all K-12 students under either Plan A or Plan B (moderate social distancing).

The proposed bill ensures that families would still have the choice of remote learning for the remainder of the 2020-21 school year.

As news of SB 37 moved through the state, the North Carolina Association of Educators said it wants to see how districts are coping with COVID-19. The advocacy group announced plans for a statewide tour to all 100 counties from now through June.

SB 37 was filed by Senators Ballard, R-Watauga; Lee, R-New Hanover; and Hise, R-Mitchell. The bill does the following:

- Requires local boards to provide an in-person Plan A option for all students that have an individualized education program (IEP) or a 504 Plan.

- Requires local boards to provide an in-person Plan A or Plan B option for all students who are in grades K-12. Local boards may opt for all Plan A, all Plan B, or a combination thereof.

- Local boards may shift individual schools or classrooms to remote learning due to COVID-19 exposures that result in insufficient staff or required student quarantines. Any move to remote learning must be reported to DPI within 72 hours.

- Requires local boards to continue a remote option for families that wish to have this option.

- Requires that the bill be implemented by the first workday, 15 days after becoming law.

Cooper said that he agrees with state lawmakers that students need to return to the classroom, but wants to ensure that local districts retain control over what is best for their respective district.

Cooper said that the recommendation to return to in-person instruction comes after additional evidence surrounding COVID19 becomes available. [Increasing evidence suggests that, with prevention measures in place, there are low rates of COVID-19 transmission in primary and secondary school settings even with high rates of community transmission. In addition, ongoing medical studies and peer-reviewed data affirm that children infected with COVID-19 generally have mild or no symptoms, and are less likely to spread the disease.]

["Learning loss resulting from COVID has the potential to be a generational hurdle, but the data we have seen shows us that schools can reopen safely if they adhere to COVID prevention policies," said Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt. "For many schools, the logistics of returning to in-person instruction five days per week will be a challenge, but this is absolutely a challenge we must face head on so that all students have a chance to fulfill their potential. With strong prevention measures in place, and the scientific research to back them, now is the time to act. North Carolina's students cannot lose any more time."]

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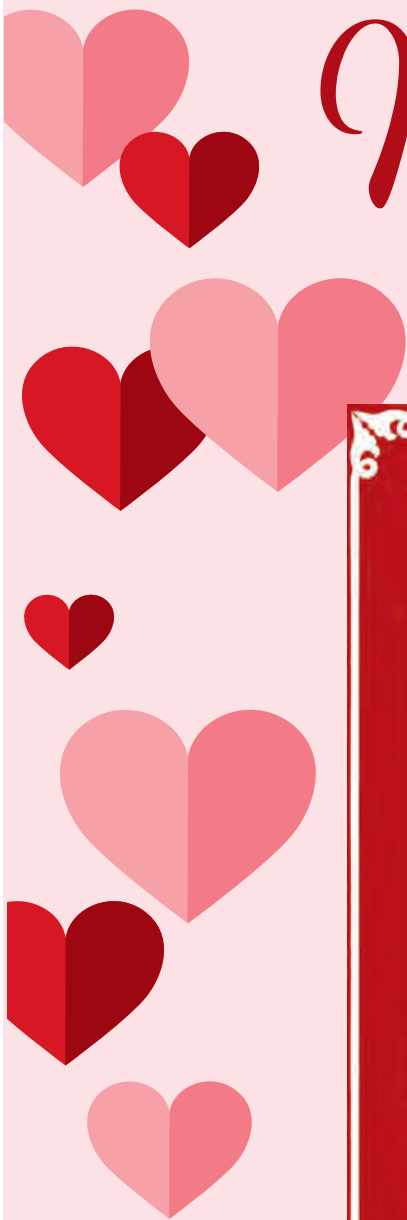
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VACCINE Continued from page 2

entering data into the DHHS system. Of N.C.'s 120,000 first dose shipment, 40,000 doses were diverted to the Charlotte Motor Speedway vaccination event. Because of that diversion, every vaccine site received fewer doses and many locations received zero doses. Macon County was scheduled to get 2,250 doses of vaccine and scheduled appointments for 2,250 people and then were told they are only getting 200 doses. The other 2,050 doses were diverted to Mecklenburg County.

"That is unacceptable. We are talking about first dose vaccines here, not second doses. The second dose shipments are supposed to mirror the first dose shipments from 3-4 weeks prior (depending on if they are Pfizer or Moderna vaccines). In other words, if your county received 100 Moderna vaccines four weeks ago, it should receive 100 second dose Moderna vaccines this week," said Corbin.

NCDHHS plans to move the dial back towards "an equitable geographic distribution" following the two mass vaccination events in Charlotte.

Some lawmakers, including Corbin, sent letters to the governor and the secretary of Health and Human Services expressing their concern about vaccine distribution.

"The decisions about the vaccine have been made entirely by the Department of Health and Human Services without input from the legislature. This week we will express our desire for more equitable distribution to our rural areas," said Corbin.

Highlands holds its own clinic

The Town of Highlands sponsored a COVID-10 vaccine clinic a few weeks ago. Emily Ritter with MCPH said that it was put together by an outside organization and set of partners that had nothing to do with MCPH, though MCPH was able to provide them with guidance regarding vaccines and vaccine storage. At the direction of NCDHHS, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA- owner of Mission Health) transferred 500 Moderna doses to MCPH for use at Highlands' first clinic.

"These doses were supposed to be given to hospital staff and first responders and did not come from the MCPH's 200 doses," said Nancy Lindell, Mission Hospital Director of Media Relations.

According to Dr. David Ellis, Chief Medical Officer, Pardee Hospital in Transylvania County, at the request of NCDHHS, Pardee transferred 500 doses of the Pfizer vaccine to Macon County Public Health on Jan. 23. At that time, Henderson County and Pardee UNC Health Care were vaccinating Groups 1 and 2 - individuals over the age of 65 and health care workers.

Robin Austin, one of the volunteers at the Highlands clinic

said that, "the clinic was staffed by 150 volunteers from a consortium in the community, and organizations such as the Rotary Club. The vaccine was given to those who had appointments. We managed to vaccinate 480 residents during the first clinic and 476 in the second clinic. Those folks who were vaccinated on Jan. 20 with the Pfizer vaccine will be able to receive their second dose on Feb. 14 and those who received the Moderna vaccine on Jan. 24 have appointments for their second dose on Feb. 17."

Tom Neal, CEO of Highlands-Cashiers Hospital, was among the volunteers at the clinic, although Highlands-Cashiers Hospital was not directly involved with the vaccine clinic. Neal said to remember that between the time of getting the first shot and getting the second shot people can still contract the virus, so continuing to wear a mask and practicing the three W's is still necessary. Highlands has a separate call center, also staffed with about 60 volunteers. Their number is (828)526-1310 and they are open six days



per week from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Right now there is a wait list of about 900 people.

More vaccine doses on the horizon

North Carolina will soon be receiving 140,000 doses weekly (after the federal government committed to increasing shipments to each state by 16%) to be distributed throughout the 100 counties in the state. MCPH has received 200 first doses per week since Dec. 31, and has vaccinated 2,515 people as of Feb. 1. They will be receiving 300 first doses of the vaccine each week for the next three weeks, while Clay County will receive 100 per week and Jackson County will receive 400. The number of doses received is based on population size. Hospitals are given separate doses of the vaccine for their staff and they do not come out of the MCPH doses. As of Monday, Feb. 1, MCPH had no vaccines in its inventory, but received 400 doses on Tuesday.

"Right now there is just not enough vaccine supply to have

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an additional vaccine site. This is certainly something we are looking at when our supply increases," said Ritter. "Angel Medical Center's first priority needs to be caring for their patients. A number of Macon County employees are now helping with efforts like phone center staffing and operating vaccine and testing clinics, departments like EMS, Emergency Services, and the Sheriff's Office are assisting in efforts. This is all in addition to National Guard members who are assisting with everything from paperwork to giving vaccinations."

Ritter also stated that with every first dose they receive, they receive the corresponding second dose. Residents began receiving their second dose on Thursday, Jan. 28.

About the vaccines

The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine contains the following ingredients: messenger ribonucleic acid (mRNA), lipids (SM-102, polyethylene glycol [PEG] 2000 dimyristoyl glycerol [DMG], cholesterol, and 1,2-distearoyl-sn-glycero-3-phosphocholine [DSPC]), tromethamine, tromethamine hydrochloride, acetic acid, sodium acetate, and sucrose.

The Pfizer Vaccine contains mRNA : messenger ribonucleic acid, mRNA is the only active ingredient in the vaccine. It also includes (4-hydroxybutyl) azanediy bis(hexane-6,1-diyl) bis.

(2-hexyldecanoate), 2 [(polyethylene glycol)-2000]-N,N-ditetradecylacetamide. 1,2-Distearoyl-snglycero-3-phosphocholine. and cholesterol.

The mRNA molecules contain the genetic material that provide instructions for our body on how to make a viral protein that triggers an immune response within our bodies. The immune response is what causes our bodies to make the antibodies needed to protect us from getting infected if exposed to the coronavirus.

The Moderna and the Pfizer COVID19 Vaccines have not been approved or licensed by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA), but has been authorized for emergency use by FDA, under an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA), to prevent Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID19) for use in individuals 18 years of age and older. There is no FDA-approved vaccine to prevent COVID19. Do not take the vaccine if you are allergic to any ingredients in the vaccine.

No adverse reactions have been reported from people getting the first dose (aside from injection site tenderness), but some of the people who have gotten the second dose have reported mild flu like symptoms (body aches, fever, headache) that last anywhere from 24 to 48 hours. The flu-like symptoms are a signal that the body is building up antibodies to the virus.

Waiting list for vaccine growing

Because of the unreliability of the vaccine shipments, appointments that have previously been made have been cancelled and moved to the waitlist.

"We cancelled all current appointments in an effort to be fair to all that had already been scheduled," said Ritter. "Those individuals are being contacted over the next week to have their appointment rescheduled, those who had their appointment canceled will be given the opportunity to schedule appointments before others on the waitlist."

Rescheduling began on Monday. Those people who have second dose appointments will still be able to get their vaccine on their originally scheduled date.

As of 2020, the population of Franklin is 3,980 with 18% of residents being over 65. Highlands population is 1,164 with 35% of residents being over 65. In all, more than 35,000 full time residents live in Macon County, with many waiting patiently to be able to get the vaccine. As the vaccine doses trickle into the county more and more residents in Group 1 and 2 will be getting vaccinated. Once Group 3 opens up to colleges, university and high school students 16 or older, the Johnson and Johnson vaccine may be available; therefore, increasing the amount of vaccine able to reach the community. Group 4 makes the vaccine available to anyone who wants it.

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

I give folks my cell number, (828) 506-3138, and tell them to call me if they have questions or concerns. I have been receiving several calls in the past week about the relocation of the upcoming Bear Shadow Concert. The questions center around why did the town allow this event to move and be held in Horse Cove?

My response is that the town didn't approve the change. Actually, Highlands has no oversight over the Horse Cove community since it is outside the town limits. If the concert had been held in Founder's Park, the town would have had an approval role. But, organizers of the event decided to move it from Highlands to Horse Cove.

The county may have some limited role in approving the event, but there are no zoning limitations outside the town limits. The county does have building code and land disturbance ordinances but not designated zones. Highlands, on the other hand, has zoning ordinances designating certain areas in the town as either residential or business zones.

About a decade ago, the town adopted an extra territorial jurisdiction that included Horse Cove. As a part of ETJ, zoning districts were developed, including residential zones. As some will recall, ETJ was not well received by many people, especially residents in the ETJ. I was not the mayor at the time of the creation of the ETJ, but was a member of the planning board that recommended its adoption. Folks in Horse Cove and other areas let everyone know they did not want to be in the ETJ, and that there were no worries about zoning and development, especially in isolated areas of the county like Horse Cove. The town board rescinded ETJ.

Flash forward a decade and there are really no isolated, unknown areas in Western Carolina. Some people have expressed a concern that such an event being held in Horse Cove may be a prelude of further expansion in this small community, with even the location of commercial enterprises. Is a "Woodstock for Boomers" next for this beautiful valley? Or, maybe a residential development with shops and amenities?

I really don't have an answer for those concerns, but the recently proposed 57-acre Cashiers Hillside development may really be a marker for future developments throughout the area. I hope regional county and municipal leaders are reviewing and even implementing

See TAYLOR page 11

Letters to the Editor

Festival on protected land must be stopped

I am writing to request your help. Although Horse Cove is geographically separated by mountains from the rest of Macon County, please know that we are a caring neighborhood community and not part of Highlands. I am a 20-plus years fulltime Horse Cove resident. My husband is buried here. There are many fulltime county residents here.

The Highlands Chamber of Commerce and other Highlands sponsors have planned a three-day music festival with 1000-plus attendees in April advertised as a Highlands event, Bear Shadow Festival Highlands. The event was turned down by the town of Highlands and, so, someone decided to put it in Horse Cove. We haven't been able to discover who in the county gave approval. This is not a free "public" event but requires an expensive ticket. The preponderance of financial benefits goes to the Highlands Chamber and Highlands companies.

The festival is to be on a Cove property with a Conservation Easement with Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust (HCLT). The property contains multiple protected plant species and trout creek water part of the Chattooga River head waters. This is not just your regular ole private pasture. This property is supposed to be protected for all, in Trust.

The 1000-plus number of attendees exceeds the current state COVID restrictions. It is highly unlikely the restrictions will be eliminated at the time of the festival. Food and alcohol will be served at the festival. They plan something called a COVE (Contained Open-air Viewing Environment) for 6 to 8 attendees viewing. Masks are said required outside a COVE. However, most would agree that it's unlikely alcohol drinking revelers can stay contained in one open-air area and wear masks at a music festival! This leads to the probably of a COVID super spreader event in Macon County.

Attendees are not prohibited to travel to Horse Cove in their own vehicles. 180 parking spots on the "protected" property are outlined. The alcohol-using attendees will be left to nighttime navigation of Horse Cove Road, notorious for its curves and cutbacks and the only direct route back to Highlands. Significant congestion is also likely on the single road down in the Cove.

The three-day amplified band sounds reverberating off the surrounding mountains will have an impact on animals and humans. The county has a Nuisance Ordinance concerning noise that presumably applies here.

Given the above concerns, I am asking for your help to prevent this event in Horse Cove. No possible help from Highlands, the landowner or HCLT and no response coming from the county. Sponsors also unresponsive to outreach. We feel abandoned and need you.

If this cannot be stopped in our neighborhood, it could happen in anybody's neighborhood.

Please contact our county commissioners and county manager and tell them to ban this festival in Horse Cove. Any help you can provide will be so very much appreciated and valued. Gratefully,

Michele Mangum – Horse Cove, Macon County

Macon County Fair will survive until next year

The Macon County Fair Association is humbled on how the residents of Macon County respond to an issue. Mr. Wayne Proffitt always told us anytime we have an issue all we had to do was ask the citizens and they would respond. We may have reached our ultimate goal and have received enough donations to remain sustainable until the 2021 Macon County Fair. In addition, to what the citizens have donated, we would like to thank the Macon County Commissioners for their sizable donation for our cause. Currently, we have \$18,000 from the community and \$8,200 from the commissioners. We believe we will survive until next year.

To all those that donated, thank you, thank you, thank you. To those who have yet to donate, we will continue to take any donation you can give.

Please accept our sincere thank you; and may God bless.

The Macon County Fair Board Of Directors

Health department took wonderful care of us

I know, you hope somebody steals my pen, but I had a super experience yesterday.

My wife and I went to the local health department parking lot for our shots. The kind board lady gave us as 11 a.m. Wednesday appointment.

We pulled into the parking lot, greeted by several people who directed us into a line of cars, moved ahead, a man came gave us papers to sign, moved ahead. He took the papers, moved us around the building, behind three cars. Shortly moved into a covered area, greeted by five lovely ladies, who gave us our shots, shortly directed us to turn left up the hill, greeted by a nice lady and gentleman. Told to wait 15 minutes to make sure no problems. Would you believe, 15 minutes to 12 we were on our way home. Done in 45 minutes. In all that cold weather those wonderful working people took wonderful care of two old people. To all of you, God bless you and thank you for everything. They all deserve a nice raise. With respect,

Wm & Joan Trapani – Franklin, N.C.

The Macon County News letters page is a public forum open to a wide variety of opinions. Writers are asked to refrain from personal attacks against individuals or businesses. Email to maconcountynews@gmail.com

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We must 'come together'

What a wonderful day it would be for democracy, for the U.S. Constitution, for America, if Mitch McConnell, Chuck Schumer and Nancy Pelosi (the three most prominent politicians today) poured their hearts out in a letter to every voter in America. They could say that the 2020 election was secure. It was historic in turnout. Like every election it had a few mistakes that were accounted for/corrected. That many Americans have been misled by a president who valued political power over unity. That our election system must be protected/stabilized to assure that democracy survives and thrives.

Imagine receiving this bipartisan letter in your mailbox. Imagine these three political leaders vowing to listen to Americans. Listen to each other rather than committing only to party lines. Could it restore respect among Americans?

Jonathan Swift wrote: "Men must not turn into bees who kill themselves in stinging others." In the Bible we are told the Lord hates: "... he that soweth discord among brethren." Proverbs 6:19 KJV

It is time for our leaders to step up to the task of leading instead of destroying. We must build on what our forefathers (and mothers) handed us-government of the people, by the people and for the people. We must come together.

Dave Waldrop – Webster, N.C.

Trump committed treason on January 6

Nearly a year ago a family member (with whom I do not share comparable political views) emailed me I "should get off my dead ass and do the research." Those were the last words we've shared. Research is never ending, it goes on around-the-clock, we are enlightened by the minute.

The following is from a source I have long trusted but (as I've often stated) don't rely on the word of a rather jaded borderline burnout with questionable social skills, do your own research, draw your own conclusions - please.

On election night, 2016, Donald Trump's victory came as a shock, even to him. His advisor, Steve Bannon, reportedly said, Trump was "speechless and horrified." Don Jr. said his father looked like he'd "seen a ghost." Trump's personal attorney, Michael Cohen, later said his longtime boss had told him the presidential run would serve as "the greatest infomercial in political history" - a way of promoting his real-estate and reality-TV brand.

Fast forward four years. Those of us who have been paying even nominal attention can safely state Trump never really did grow into the job he eagerly sought and accidentally gained.

From dozens of sources we now know Trump tweeted, he watched Fox, and he golfed. He used his platform and power to spread chaos, spew endless lies and disinformation, poison our politics, disregard norms and defy laws. He pandered to dictators, alienated our allies, encouraged and emboldened white supremacists, and incited an insurrection to overturn an election. On top of all that, throughout his last year in office, he downplayed and actually worsened a global pandemic that has already claimed over 400,000 American lives. All of this (so eloquently stated by William Falk in The Week Magazine January 29) to "futilely try to fill his bottomless pit of narcissistic need."

The only president to be impeached twice, it remains to be seen whether the United States Senate (given a second chance) has the courage, dignity and integrity to do the right thing.

A Japanese Proverb declares, "If you sit by the river long enough the bodies of your enemies will come floating by." No bodies as yet, but the research is boundless.

Trump sparked a deadly insurrection against the United States Congress to prevent a duly-elected president from taking office.

Speaking of the event of January 6, Senator Mitt Romney (R-Utah) stated, "What happened here today was an insurrection, incited by the President of the United States." Representative Liz Cheney (R-Wyoming) and Number 3 House GOP leader, told Fox News, "The president formed the mob. The president incited the mob. The president addressed the mob, He lit the flames."

In our research we're apt to come across a definition worth noting in assessing Trump's articles of impeachment: "The offense of acting to overthrow one's government, a violation of allegiance to one's sovereign or to one's state, the betrayal of a trust or confidence; breach of faith; treachery."

That, my friends, is the definition of TREASON, an act unmistakably committed in our nation's capital on January 6 as the whole world watched.

David L. Snell – Franklin, N.C.

Democrats have fostered a life of lies

I've been doing some research on Democrats assertion that President Trump was a habitual liar.

Much of what I found in Trump's comments involved exaggerations or something the Dems could twist around to sound like a lie.

The Dems have become experts at twisting the truth and in fact appear to believe their own lies.

Seems even some Republicans picked up on the idea and never really looked at just what President Trump said, taking the Democrats word for it.

To me, lying about something, except how beautiful your wife is, is a mental perversion and utterly disgusting. I don't even want to be around a liar lest some of their stink rubs off on me.

However, it does look, and this is my legal opinion, that the Democrats have fostered a life of lies. Listen to Pelosi, Schumer, AOC, CNN or Democrat politicians. Their days seem steeped in lies.

Joining the Democrat liars are the idiot class we have teaching our kids to believe anything the political bosses tell you to believe.

The Communists and Socialists have spent over 80 years trying to teach our kids to become slaves of a political system that will not work in America and in fact that never worked anywhere.

China has raised half their people out of poverty with our help but the other 700 million remain in poverty. But, the Chinese continue to indoctrinate our young people in how great their society is. Yeah, it's OK if you don't mind government telling you what to believe while you become virtual slaves.

I recall some idiot wrote a letter claiming that Trump caused thousands to die from the Corona virus because he would not stop the flow of Chinese immigrants. Of course this was a lie because President Trump moved very quickly yet the Democrats said he was a racist for stopping the immigrants. Fact is, President Trump is far from being a racist. All one has to do is listen to statements made by Democrats to understand they have made racism a major issue in the 2020 elections. But, Trump did more for black Americans than any president.

We know for a fact that a lot of voter fraud has taken place in the election, however, Democrats continue to claim it's all a lie.

Well, by golly, just one illicit vote makes the entire voting system stink. But, with some 7 million more votes for Joe Biden it is unlikely that many votes were stolen from Trump so we'll just have to accept Joe Biden as our new president.

From now on, we may find ourselves controlled by the billionaire masters who own the social media world. Who knows they may have gotten Joe Biden the 7 million votes he needed to beat Trump.

Precisely every time President Trump voiced an opinion

TAYLOR

From previous page

policies to address these trends. The Highlands Community Plan is coming at a critical moment for Highlands' future.

Years ago, a strategy was to entice businesses to locate in Western North Carolina. Having few regulatory impediments, such as zoning, was intended to promote economic development and growth. Under current circumstances those incentives for development and growth may not be needed. I anticipate towns and counties of Western North Carolina are going to be growing at astounding rates. The question is how will this exploding growth be shaped and developed?

Yes, growth brings economic development and more money. It may also have unintentional consequences, like losing a natural paradise.


on something, the Socialist media would say he was lying. All because they didn't agree with him or he didn't put things in a context of Socialism instead of Democracy.

Did he disagree with global warming? Yes, but not completely and certainly not to the point of shutting down American industry to give China.

The Left has become famous for its lies and many Dems seem quite happy to accept the lies.

What should scare the hell out of all is how politicians believe we are stupid enough to believe their lies.

Bob Wilson – Franklin, N.C.



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Drake named Mountain Six Offensive Player of the Year; team finishes season as Co-Champions

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

The Franklin High School Lady Panthers Varsity Volleyball team finished the season as Conference Co-Champions and dominated the 2020-21 all-conference team lineup.

“I am so proud of our team and our season,” said FHS volleyball senior Canaan Drake. “Being named co-champions is amazing! I think it shows our perseverance and hard work despite our circumstances.”

Drake has been an FHS standout since first joining the team. This year, she was named Volleyball Offensive Player of the year for the Mountain Six Athletic Conference.

“I was honestly quite surprised when my coach told me I was named Offensive Player of the Year,” said Drake. “There are so many phenomenal athletes in the conference and especially on our team. Aside from the shock I was thrilled! I am forever grateful the coaches chose me, and I won’t forget the moment when I found out.”

Drake finished the season ranked #1 overall in hitting percentage in the entire conference, which competes about teams from Hendersonville, Pisgah, Smoky Mountain, Brevard, and East Henderson. She was #2 for blocks, 4th for kills, 8th for aces and 15th overall for assists. She was named to the Mountain Six All Conference selection as well as All Tournament selection.

Despite a successful season, Drake said her most memorable moment from the past season was when she realized the team would be able to compete at all amid COVID19.

“The most exciting moment of the season was truthfully when I realized it would actually happen — that I would be able to be with my teammates in the locker room before games, play our rivals, and play in the conference tournament again,” said Drake. “I am so grateful for everyone who al-

lowed this year to happen.”

The pandemic presented some unique challenges for players on and off the court that Drake said took some adjustments. “COVID-19 definitely made this year challenging,” said Drake. “Even after adapting to the masks, we had other pro-



Franklin High School senior Canaan Drake has signed to play volleyball at Bryan College this fall.

ocols to follow. Our season was essentially cut in half and we jumped right into conference games. In addition, the 25 fan limit did not provide the usual dread of the Panther Den from 44% other teams. There were plenty of obstacles we, as a team, had to overcome.”

After graduating later this year, Drake will head to Bryan College, in Dayton Tenn., where she has committed to play volleyball.

“I wasn’t sure until I toured Bryan’s campus and got to practice with the team that BC was where I wanted to go,” said

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Drake. "I absolutely loved the atmosphere, the players, and the coaching staff. And throughout this season my love for volleyball has grown greatly. When I officially made the decision I felt so much peace and excitement, I knew it was the right choice."

Bryan College is extra special for Drake, as it is her parents' – Sarah Dills and Josh Drake – Alma Mater.

"I couldn't be more proud of Canaan," said Dills. "I always tell her that I want to be like her when I grow up! I started noticing this year that she would be the first off the bench cheering for a fellow teammate and even as a senior she was quick to grab water bottles for whoever was in the game, cleaning up the bench after a game, those are the things that touched me. I loved her servant's heart. Her awards are amazing and I can't show them off enough but we both know that in the long run those things will fade and I'm so proud of who she is on the court and off. I have so many emotions about her going away to school but it's a school that I love. I feel like it's a safe place for her to grow – her athletics and spiritually. I had the best times of my life there and my roommates are still Canaan's unofficial aunts. I pray she makes those connections, feels the bond of a new team, and just continues to grow into the amazing young woman she is already becoming."

Drake plans to major in education while attending college.

"I have already begun studying elementary education through dual-enrollment," said Drake. "Since I was little, I have wanted to teach, so I am thrilled to get started on that journey."

Drake's father, Josh Drake, is equally as proud of her, and is looking forward to watching the Bryan College Lions play next season.

"I'm very proud of Canaan. She has worked so hard over the past six years and I'm very happy for her getting Player of the Year," said Josh Drake. "I'm also looking forward to getting to continue to watch her play at Bryan."

Drake won't be the only FHS alum on the Lions' roster — FHS graduate Alison Knop was a freshman on the 2020 roster at Bryan College and will soon once again be Drake's team-

mate.

Drake said the road to victory was a team effort, which is evident by the individual accomplishments of her teammates.

Drake's teammate Taylor Ensley was named #1 overall in the conference in Kills and #2 in hitting percentage. She ranked 16th for blocks and finished the season out as a four year varsity starter and a member of the Mountain Six All Conference Selection.



Canaan was also named All Conference with teammates Sydney Williams, Taylor Ensley, Amy Tippett and Rylee Corbin.

Senior Rylee Corbin was not only ranked #1 in the conference in assists, but she also ranked #7 in the entire state. She ranked #2 in digs, #3 in aces and 16th overall in hitting percentages, finishing the season with an All Conference Selection.

Junior Sydney Williams was also named to the All Conference Selection and All Tournament Selection for the Mountain Six conference and ranked #7 in kills, #8 in hitting percentage and #18 overall in blocks.

Williams and Drake also play on the varsity basketball team which as of Wednesday had a record of 5-0.

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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 January 11 - 31. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

January 22

Richard DeWight Collins, was charged with violating domestic violence protective order. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Efrain Gallardo Guzman, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Cassie J. Shuler made the arrest.

January 23

Tiegha Shaye Franklin, was issued misdemeanor larceny. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

Esteban Vasallo Corteguera, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, resisting a public officer. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

January 24

Hannah Eve Morrow, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, resisting a public officer. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

January 26

Frank Wesley Maxwell, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Troy L. Burt made the arrest.

January 27

Robert Ryan Oteri, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Emileigh E. Sands made the arrest.

Martin Allen Brink, was charged with resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer, disorderly conduct. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Colt Lee Brink, was charged with disorderly conduct. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

January 28

Dean Leonard Myers, was charged with trafficking opium or heroin, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver a schedule II controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Max Colton Edwards, was charged with driving while license revoked. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Charles Russell Edwards, was charged with failure to appear for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Anthony Elliston Walker, was charged with possession of a weapon of mass destruction, carrying a concealed gun. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

Esteban Vasallo Corteguera, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

January 29

John Paul McCall, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Troy L. Burt made the arrest.

Jacob Keith Bateman, was charged with statutory rape, probation violation. Joel Lynch made the arrest.

Kayla Nicole Woods, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

Jeff Fox, was charged with warrant service. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

January 30

William Lamar Wellham, was issued warrant service for failure to report new address/sex offender. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Pamela Nicole Wykle, was issued a true bill of indictment for sell/deliver a schedule II controlled substance. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Jennifer Marie Gerba, was charged with simple assault. Joseph A. Raby made the arrest.

Patricia Anne Geiger, was charged with simple assault. Joseph A. Raby made the arrest.

January 31

Biaggio Withers, was charged with simple assault, assault and battery, assault on a female, domestic violence protective order violation, communicating threats, possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

January 21

Ronald Edward Swafford, 46, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

Steven Edward Bowman, 34, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$500 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

January 22

Kelly William Brasier, 26, was issued a warrant for arrest for breaking and entering a motor vehicle, misdemeanor larceny, attempt break/enter a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set. Officer Hovis made the arrest.

January 23

Johnathon Lee Smith, 26, was issued an order for arrest for obtaining property by false pretense, larceny, possession of stolen goods. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set. Officer Riles made the arrest.

John Beck Hobbs, 51, was issued an order for arrest for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, simple possession of a schedule IV controlled substance, aid and abet larceny, probation violation. A secured bond of \$34,000 was set. Officer Riles made the arrest.

January 25

Robert Brandon Keller, 27, was issued an order for arrest for breaking and entering, felony flee to elude, careless and reckless driving, speeding. A secured bond of \$8,000 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

January 26

Stephanie Larson, 27, was issued an order for arrest for probation violation. A secured bond of \$6,000 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

January 28

Michael Anthony Duncan, 62, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set. Officer Hovis made the arrest.

James Bryson, 23, was charged with concealment of merchandise in mercantile establishments, issued an order for arrest for a firearm by a felon. No bond was set. Officer Riles made the arrest.

Jennifer Lynn Nations, 48, was charged with breaking or entering, injury to real property. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

Michael Adam Crisp, 27, was issued a true bill of indictment for possession of a controlled substance on prison/jail premises.

A secured bond of \$3,500 was set. Officer Hovis made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

January 11

Jody Murrell Stanfield, 53, of Nickajack Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

January 12

Loretta Ball Bradley, 52, of Huntington Ridge Rd., was charged with simple assault, communicating threats. No bond was set.

January 13

Timothy Arthur Wallis, 29, of Sylva, was charged with harrissing phone calls, cyberstalking. No bond was set.

January 14

Yolanda Gale George, 50, of Sim Jessan Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear. A secured bond of \$11,000 was set.

January 15

Daniel Keith Reece, 29, of Spirit Mountain Rd., was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Kenneth Christopher Potts, 46, of Huntinton Ridge Rd., Whittier, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Taylor Norman Taylor, 20, of Rec Park Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for interfering with emergency communication, assault on a female. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

Jeffery Scott Dyer, 28, of Sylva, was charged with obtaining property by false pretense, financial card fraud, identity theft. No bond was set.

January 16

Ubaldo Estrada Camacho, 36, of Jurassic Dr., Cashiers, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Dianna Pauline Queen, 48, of Boo Hollow Rd., Whittier, was charged with misdemeanor larceny. No bond was set.

January 17

Eutimio Reynosa Perez, 42, of Snowdrift Lane, was charged with driving while impaired. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set.

January 19

Scott Richard Ashley, 47, of Brushy Fork Rd., was charged with violation of domestic violence protective order. No bond was set.

Raven Andrew Tramper, 32, of Franklin Grove Church Rd., Bryson City, was charged with assault on a female, second degree kidnapping. No bond was set.

Joe Edward Maney, 49, of Acquoni Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for Jackson County for failure to work after being paid. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Hunter Lee Sanders, 45, of Stony Brook Rd., was charged with simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver a schedule II controlled substance, maintaining a vehicle/dwelling/place of a controlled substance, trafficking opium or heroin. A secured bond of \$50,000 was set.

Jessica Myraah McCoy, 26, of Furman Smith Rd., Cherokee, was charged with trafficking, opium or heroin, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$70,000 was set.

Daliyah Wolfe, 23, of Big Cove Rd., Cherokee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, felony possession of cocaine, possession of heroin, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

Miranda Leigh Marr, 29, of Brindle Rd., Bryson City, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. No bond was set.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Franklin First Baptist Church Drive by for February Sunshine Treats every Saturday in February between 2 to 3:30 p.m.

American Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Thursday, Feb. 11, from 12:30 to 5 p.m., at the First Baptist Church, 69 Iotla St., in Franklin.

Macon County Democratic Women February Online Meeting will be held on Tuesday, Feb. 16, 7 p.m.

Macon County Public Health is currently vaccinating those eligible under Group 2. This group includes those who are 65 years of age or older, regardless of health status.

Celebrate Recovery at Discover Church every Monday night, 6 to 8 p.m. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind.

Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Centers in Cullowhee and Franklin have an educational parenting program to earn "points" to use to obtain free items for your family.

Crawford Senior Center is hosting Zoom classes. Zoom classes will include exercise, tai chi, and others.

Macon Chips, the Franklin Wood Carving Club will meet on Thursday, 6:30 p.m. in Franklin High School Wood Shop.

Uptown Gallery on Main Street new hours are Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter Telephone Support Group for Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease or dementia is designed to provide caregivers opportunities

for sharing, education, and support through a telephone conference. Support group participants and a support group facilitator connect each month for one-hour confidential sessions.

Franklin Covenant Church has a grocery delivery service for anyone at higher risk for COVID-19. If you are unable to leave home to get the supplies you need due to sickness, disability or age, please contact us for more details.

Volunteer drivers needed at Macon County Senior Services. Mileage will be reimbursed. For more information, call (828) 349-0211.

Macon County CareNet is in need of volunteers. Positions open are food pantry, soup kitchen and file room.

Volunteer at Angel Medical Center Enjoy the reward of making someone else's day brighter by sharing your talents and time. Become a volunteer at Angel Medical Center.

CareNet on Bidwell Street will be open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. A box of food may be picked up once a week.

Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter Telephone Support Group for Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease or dementia is designed to provide caregivers opportunities for sharing, education, and support through a telephone conference.

Appalachian Animal Rescue Center is looking for volunteers to help at the thrift store. Call for information about the store (828)369-3046 or the shelter (828)524-4588 if you are interested in volunteering.

Mens Teen Challenge Needs Good Quality Lumber for its woodworking Shop. Pick up in Franklin area. To donate, call (828)369-1177.

Email calendar items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Grace Baptist Church 22nd Anniversary will be held on Sunday, Feb. 14, 10:30 a.m. One Step Closer will be singing. Preacher Gary Moore will deliver the message.

First Alliance Church Sunday Services are held in-person and on Facebook at 10:30 a.m., Sunday School for all ages is at 9:30 a.m. The church is located in Franklin at 31 Promise Lane (off Womack next door to Trimont Christian Academy).

All Saints Episcopal Church is conducting worship online through its YouTube page. Go to www.youtube.com and search for "All Saints Franklin." The in-person worship schedule is subject to change.

Olive Hill Church Services are held on Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Pastor is Keith McWhite. The church is located at 2389 Olive Hill Road.

Franklin First United Methodist Church Join them on Facebook at Franklin First United Methodist Church either live at 8:30 a.m. on Sundays or later on recorded video while they are social distancing due to COVID19.

Lifespring Community Church is holding Sunday services beginning at 10 a.m. with social distancing observed. Brian Lamb in the pastor. The church is located at the intersection of Cheek Road and Addington Bridge Road.

Tellico Baptist Church is now having in-person Sunday School at 10 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m. inside the church building with the Reverend L. E. Angel. Everyone is welcome.

West Franklin Church services are held on Sunday, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. The church is located on Sloan Rd. next to the Forest Service Office.

Prentiss Church of God is holding Sunday worship service in its sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m. Social distancing is observed and safety measures are in place. The public is invited to attend. Services are also streamed online on the Prentiss Church of God Facebook page.

Memorial United Methodist Church Anonymous Call-in Prayer Line. If you need prayer, call (828)369-0707. Leave a message with your prayer request, and the church will be happy to pray for you or whoever you request prayers for.

SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22 grid with numbers in a 10x10 grid.

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22 grid with letters in a crossword format.

Repeats Upscale Consignment advertisement with logo, contact info, and address: 107 Highlands Rd., Franklin, NC.

Focus of positivity and good news themes of writer's endeavors

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Devonne Jimison's new uplifting ventures stemmed from a 2014 dream.

"It was a crazy year with work and life and I was trying to figure out things about my future," she recalled. "And even though I did not often remember my dreams at that time, this one stuck with me because I was bustling around in my dream and went to an armoire in a corner and heard a baby crying inside. When I opened the armoire the baby was lying inside the door and I thought, in my dream, 'Oh, I forgot about you.'"

After talking to a friend, interpretation of the dream became clear to Jimison.

"I had always loved writing, and with all the craziness of life I had forgotten how much I loved it. Even when I was young, I loved writing. God had put that desire in me, but I had not written in a while. The dream was about me discovering something that I loved."

Jimison, an instructor at Southeastern Community College, signed up for a writing course there and committed herself to writing daily. By 2016, she had started a

Facebook group titled "This is the Day," on which she posted short writings. "I was refueled as a writer and began sharing inspiration, encouragement, scripture ... anything that countered the negativity that I sometimes saw on Facebook. I decided 'This is the Day' would include only positive posts."

Fast forward to 2020.

"I decided the year wasn't going to do me in," asserted Jimison. "Everyone was talking about what a negative year it was, so I decided to do something else positive."

Gathering some of the "This is the Day" writings, and adding fresh perspectives and essays as well as thought-provoking questions, Jimison published her first book: "Turn the Page." She explained, "It's my journey. It's our journey. It's everyday life as an adventure. It's our walk with Jesus."

But even though "Turn the Page" is touted as a devotional, Jimison wrote in the introduction that the book is intended to, "encourage you on the specific journey that you are on, no matter your age or season in life."

All stories and insight shared in "Turn the Page" are intended to uplift, and some entries convey Jimison's warm sense of humor. "On an Adventure" tells of a white-water rafting trip that took Jimison out of her comfort zone, while "Don't Quit" inspires perseverance.

"We can find beauty in our days, no matter how dark the world may seem," said Jimison.

Just released during the 2020 holidays, the book has been purchased, according to Jimison, by "world weary high schoolers, for someone whose daughter is in jail, and for someone's friend battling cancer. People are telling me, 'That's exactly what I – or they – want to hear right now.'"

Bombarded by bad news, fear, anxiety, divisiveness, and more, Jimison has embarked on other upbeat endeavors, including a podcast, called "Porch Talk," with friend, Helen Gentry. "We meet for coffee on different porches and talk about inspiring, encouraging topics." The podcast led to "Not an Option" on YouTube, which Jimison films weekly.

"The intention is to talk about what is 'not an option' in our lives. Instead of being fearful, complacent, or apathetic, people can tell themselves, 'It's not an option to avoid moving forward doing XYZ ... it's not an option to not be joyful ... Instead of thinking of our insufficiencies, we need to instead focus on what God can pull out of us that is positive.'"

Some of the topics Jimison discusses spring from what she has expressed and contemplated in her daily writing discipline. Themes from the podcast and the



Devonne Jimison's "Turn the Page," is a compilation of upbeat essays and encouragements.



Devonne Jimison's YouTube segments, "Not an Option," were developed to convey positivity and encouragement.

YouTube channel may find their way into a second book.

"I feel so invigorated," she said. "My goal is to walk in God's favor, to be bolder, and to accept fully how much He loves us, and I want to share those concepts with others so they can experience joy and find beauty in these days."

"Turn the Page" is available for sale on Amazon.com, but Jimison said she plans to be available for local book signings in the coming months. If someone purchases a copy of the book from Amazon and would like it to be signed by the author, Jimison advised messaging her and she will plan to meet somewhere in Franklin.

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Volunteers needed for Special Liberty Project clean-up days

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

In anticipation of the spring-through-fall retreat season, Special Liberty Project needs community volunteers. Late last summer, Special Liberty Project moved its headquarters from California to the Holly Springs area of Macon County. Founders of the organization, Cory and Jessica Merritt, first established the nonprofit four years ago in San Diego.

Cory, a recently retired U.S. Navy Senior Chief involved in search and rescue, co-founded Special Liberty Project with Jessica to provide nature-oriented programs for individuals and groups of people who have experienced military-related trauma and loss. Besides a variety of activities and events, a main focus of Special Liberty Project is to host outdoor retreats not only for veterans healing physically and emotionally, but for military families members as well.

The new Special Liberty Project headquarters and retreat center includes wide-open spaces for hiking, nature walks, glamping/camping, hunting, workshops, and more. Weekend retreats address three aspects each day: physical, such as yoga, equine activities, and more; emotional, such as mindfulness, journaling, etc.; and skill learning, through hands-on workshops, such as pottery making, knitting, and quilting, and including money management, fishing, and gardening.

Volunteers are needed to commit to teach in a wide variety of areas at the monthly retreats' short, hands-on workshops. With early April slated as the launch of the first

retreat in Special Liberty Project's new home, "all help will be appreciated," pointed out Jessica, to clear trees, split wood, rake, assist with general landscaping, build tent platforms, and more. Volunteer days are Saturday, Feb. 20, and Saturday, March 6, from

SPECIAL LIBERTY PROJECT

VOLUNTEERS WE NEED YOUR HELP

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The Special Liberty Project fosters and maintains a supportive community focused on nurturing families of America's fallen military heroes (Gold Star Families), Healing Veterans and Suicide Spouses through nature-centric programs and meaningful peer support.

TREE CLEARING | WOOD SPLITTING | LANDSCAPING

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 10-2:00

Special Liberty Project Farm & Retreat Center
635 Berry Cove Rd. Franklin NC 28734

CONTACT JESSICA MERRITT FOR MORE INFORMATION
JESSICA@SPECIALLIBERTYPROJECT.ORG | (619) 726-9240

10 a.m.-2 p.m. For more information about volunteering opportunities at Special Liberty Project, and to discuss sharing skills and knowledge for a retreat workshop, contact Jessica Merritt at (619) 726-9240, or email her at Jessica@SpecialLibertyProject.org.



Jessica and Cory Merritt, co-founders of Special Liberty Project, and their daughter, meet with Meta Sadlon to discuss upcoming community volunteer opportunities. Upcoming volunteer days at Special Liberty Project are planned for Feb. 20 and March 6, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The nonprofit, military family and veteran, retreat center is in need of help to tackle a variety of projects.

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Deaths & Funerals

Ernest Alford Klatt Sr.

Ernest Alford Klatt, Sr. (Big Al), 80, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Jan. 26, 2021. He was born in Dania, Fla., to the late Ernest Klatt and Violet Stewart.

He was a long-time resident of Macon County, and the former owner and manager of the family business, Ruby City Gems. He was a master gem cutter, stone setter, and an accomplished real estate investor. He loved hunting, fishing, and traveling the world. He was a member of the Rotary Club and the American Gem Trade Association.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Lila Emery; five children, Al Klatt Jr., Kevin Klatt, Cindy Klatt, Laura House, and Michael Klatt; two sisters, Elsie Winchester and Kay Martin; nine grandchildren, eight great grandchildren; and one great-great grandchild.

A celebration of life was held at Macon Funeral Home Saturday, Jan. 30.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue, PO Box 81, Franklin, NC 28744 or Children International, P.O. Box 219055, Kansas City, MO 64121.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Ann M. Clark

Ann M. Clark, 89, a long time resident of Franklin, departed this life on Jan. 29, 2021. She was born at the family home in Grand Island, Fla., in 1931. She was a fifth generation Floridian.

She attended schools in Eustis, Fla., and graduated from Orlando High School in 1949. She married Ted Clark in 1949. He was in the U.S. Army and served in two major conflicts: Korea and Vietnam. As a military wife, she had the opportunity to reside in foreign countries. During her husband's service station in Florida, she built a home on family property near her birth place. Upon her father's death, she was involved in the citrus industry. She loved to travel and was fortunate to visit and fall in love with the mountains of North Carolina; bought a home in Franklin and made many friends. She did volunteer work at societies that protected animals.

She is survived by her son, T.C. Clark, Jr. (Jackie); grandson: T.C. Clark III, (Eleanor) of Toronto, Canada; brother, W.A. Milton III of Altoona, Fla.; three nieces, two great nieces and two great nephews, all residents of Florida.

The family would like to express its deep appreciation for the love, friendship and assistance rendered by our cousin James Wilson (now deceased); dear friend Jan Delong; the good folks at The Franklin House and especially the devotion and concern from the staff at Macon Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center.

Online condolences may be sent to www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

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



Ernest Alford Klatt Sr.



Ann M. Clark

James M. Barfield

James M. Barfield, 95, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Jan. 27, 2021. He was born April 5, 1925, in St. Louis, Mo., to the late Edward Barfield and Florence Ware Barfield. He was married to the late Joyce Elizabeth Barfield. He was a Navy veteran and served in WWII and the Korean Conflict. He enjoyed working in his yard and loved walking his dog "Teddy." He attended 1st Alliance Church in Franklin.

He is survived by a daughter, Carol McCann (Craig) of Franklin; four grandchildren, Jessica Wood, Katie Wood, Kenneth Wood and Kevin Wood. In addition to his parents and wife, he was preceded in death by a sister, Anna Christianson; and two brothers, William Barfield and Edward Barfield.

A funeral service will be held Thursday Feb. 4, at 1 p.m., in the chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home with the Rev. Scott Eichelberger officiating. The family will greet friends from 12 to 1 p.m. prior to the service. Burial will be private in the Addington Cemetery.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Barfield family. Online condolences can be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



James M. Barfield

John Henry Simmons III

John Henry Simmons III, 95, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Jan., 26, 2021

He was born in Jersey City, N.J., to the late John and Emma Klink Simmons.

He was a Navy veteran serving in WWII. He enjoyed working with wood and using his carpentry skills to build bird houses.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Rosemarie Simmons.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue, PO Box 81, Franklin, NC 28744.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



John Henry Simmons III

Richard Lewis Owen

Richard Lewis Owen, 64, passed away Friday, Jan. 19, 2021, at his home. He was born March 27, 1956, in Jackson County to the late John Lewis Owen and Lula Fisher Owen-Swann, where he was a life long resident.

He worked for WNC Paving Company for many years before retiring. He loved the outdoors, hunting, fishing, and horseback riding.

Survivors include his daughter, Jessica Owen Cochran and husband, Tim of Franklin, N.C.; a son, Josh Owen and his wife, Cindy of Tuckasee; a brother, Clarence Owen of Tuckasee; two sisters, Deborah Farmer and Kelly Rich both of Sylva; and two step-grandchildren, Mark Mintz and Cody Mintz.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held in the spring. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Canada Volunteer Fire Department, Charley's Creek Rd., Tuckasee, NC 28783.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

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



Richard Lewis Owen

Pearl Maxine Cunningham Tallent Hodgin

Pearl "Maxine" Cunningham Tallent Hodgin, 87, passed away on Tuesday, Dec. 29, 2020.

A native of Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Samuel Cunningham and Sadie Woods Cunningham. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her first husband, J.D. Tallent in 1985; her second husband, Bryson "Budge" Hodgin in 2012; a son, Ray Tallent; a son-in-law, Danny Rogers; and a stepson, Woodrow Cunningham, all of Franklin; sisters, Lucille Tallent and Paulette McCoy McCall, both of Franklin; brothers, Hershall Cunningham, Lonnie Cunningham, and J.C. McCoy.

She loved her family very much. She also loved fishing and flowers. She was of the Baptist faith and attended Windy Gap Baptist Church.

She is survived by son, Philip (Lois) Tallent; daughters, Linda (Mark) Bishop, Wanda Rogers, Sharon (Bobby) Peek, Christine (Tim) Woodall; daughter-in-law, Joann Tallent; stepdaughter, Glenda Shepherd, all of Franklin; a sister, Christine Cunningham, also of Franklin; 11 grandchildren; 18 great grandchildren; two great-great grandchildren; two step grandchildren; two step great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery. Rev. Mark Bishop will officiate. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery fund or Windy Gap Baptist Church.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Olene Dolly Hooper Sanders

Olene Dolly Hooper Sanders, 81, went on to Glory on Jan. 27, 2021. She was born on March 28, 1939, to Hester Gibson Hooper and Fred Hooper Sr. A member of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, she loved the Lord and enjoyed studying the Bible.

She was married to the love of her life, David M. Sanders, for more than 50 years. She absolutely adored him and doted on him until his passing. Their heavenly reunion was something she looked forward to with joyful anticipation.

She thrived on helping others. She had a heart full of love for her friends and family, and especially for Joyce C. Sanders who was like a daughter to her. Her yard was a source of enjoyment for her, and her rhododendrons were some of the prettiest.

Among her friends, Dorothy Knight and Bernice Woody were counted as her best friends. They shared many adventures and had wonderful times making memories through the years. And, her chihuahua, Pepper, proved to be a loyal and faithful companion, always providing good company for her.

She was predeceased by her husband, her parents, three sisters, Margie Gibson, Roma Nell Mashburn, and Irene Carter; and three brothers, Lloyd Hooper, Fred Hooper, and Laughty Hooper.

She is survived by two sisters, Ruth Hooper of Franklin, and Willa Fay Pendergrass of Nantahala along with several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service was held at Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. Eddie Stillwell officiating.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, Tennessee, 38105.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the Sanders family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.



Pearl Hodgin



Olene Dolly Sanders



Deaths & Funerals

Raymond 'Ray' Floyd Thompson

Raymond "Ray" Floyd Thompson, 57, of Otto, N.C., passed away Sunday, Jan. 24, 2021, in Asheville, N.C. He was born March 2, 1963, in Dade County, Florida.



Raymond Thompson

He moved from Florida to Franklin in 1978 and lived with his grandmother. His parents followed in 1980. He attended Franklin High School and made many friendships that have lasted through the years. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, and partying and loved all animals, his family and friends. He was an all around nice and likeable guy. He will be sorely missed.

He is preceded in death by his father, Robert William Thompson, and brother, Timothy Thompson

Surviving is his mother and stepfather, Madge and John Sala; stepson, Nick Manos; brother, Michael Thompson; sister, Kelley (Ricky) Bates; ex-wife, Kelly Thompson; uncle and aunt, Bruce and Janice Sontag; aunt, Joanne Ulsh; special nieces, Jana Thompson and April (Nick) Lamb and son Ryan Lamb; special nephew, Coben Eli Thompson; granddaughters, Payton and Aulora; nieces, Violet and children Luis, Enrique and Alma, and Kelsie and children, Lynleigh, Christopher and Derrick; nephew, Scott.

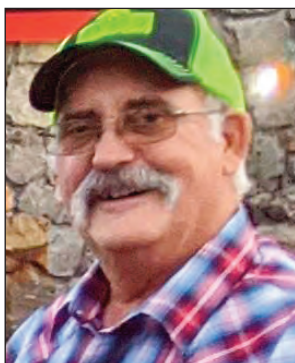
Visitation will be held Saturday, Feb. 6, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Macon Funeral Home.

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements

Online condolences may be made to the family at madgesala@yahoo.com and www.maconfuneralhome.com.

James Michael 'Mike' Southard

James Michael "Mike" Southard, 62, of Franklin, N.C., died on Monday, Jan. 25, 2021, after a brief time of declining health.



James Michael Southard

He was born in Macon County, the son of the late William "Ernie" Porter and Margie Blanche Ledbetter Southard. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his ex-wife, Vickie Keener Southard and a sister, Teresa Southard.

He was known for always working hard. He really enjoyed working on the farm, tending to his cattle or bailing hay. On Sundays, he would often be found visiting either Franklin Church of God or Cartoogechaye Church of God.

He is survived by his wife, Aurora Salis; a son, James Henry "Hank" Southard of Franklin; one sister, Sherri Ross; and three brothers, Charles Southard (Cindy), Tommy Southard, and Steve Southard (Denise) all of Franklin; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins and many friends.

A gathering of family and friends was held at Macon Funeral Home on Saturday, Jan. 30. The family plans to have a celebration of life at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Macon County Fairgrounds or Future Farmers of America.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Matthew Jon Rippetoe

Matthew Jon Rippetoe, 40, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Jan. 27, 2021.

He was born in Gainesville, Fla., to Leonard and Judy Rippetoe. He spent the last 15 years making his home in Western North Carolina. He was a sentimental man. He loved music, movies, spending time building WWII-era model tanks and planes, and tinkering with his model trains. He took pride in his beer brewing and enjoyed cooking, using his smoker, and making homemade ice cream. He was also a gifted gardener.



Matthew Jon Rippetoe

Surviving is his wife, Mary Chauvin; parents, Judy Rippetoe (Miles Hyman) of Franklin and Leonard "Rip" Rippetoe of Gainesville, Fla.; sister, Renae (Gregg) Gardner of Meridian, Miss.; and nephew, Griffen Gardner.

A celebration of life was held at Macon Funeral Home on Sunday, Jan. 31.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Balsam Center, 91 Timberlane Road, Waynesville, NC 28786.

Macon Funeral Home will be handling the arrangements.

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

Bessie Louise Cooper

Bessie Louise Cooper, 72 of Franklin, N.C., passed away Jan. 30, 2021.

She was born in Macon County to Ethel Passmore Carver and the late James Carver. In addition to her father, she is preceded in death by husband Roy Cooper.

In addition to her mother, she is survived by her son, Scott Cooper (Kendra) of Franklin; brothers, Howard Carver of Franklin, Doyle Carver of Franklin, Dale Carver of Franklin, David Carver of Highlands, and Terry Carver of Cornelia, Ga.; sisters, Lillie Parris of Cherokee and Barbara Franks of Sylva; grandchildren, Jennings Cooper and Erish Cooper; and several nieces and nephews.

A service will be held at Macon Funeral Home, Thursday Feb. 4, at 10:30 a.m. Rev. Jack Gregory and Chris Cooper will officiate.

Pallbearers will be Chris Cooper, Justin Cooper, Jennings Cooper, Erish Cooper, Travis Williamson and Jamie Donaldson.

Honorary pallbearers will be Howard Carver, Doyle Carver, Dale Carver, David Carver and Terry Carver.

The family respectfully asks that social distancing guidelines be followed and masks be worn.

Macon Funeral Home will be handling the arrangements.

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



Bessie Louise Cooper

Robert 'Bob' Greenlee McFalls

Robert "Bob" Greenlee McFalls, 84, of Waynesville, N.C., died Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021.

A native of Haywood County, he was the son of the late James Alfred and Maude Rogers McFalls. He worked for Champion Paper for 45 years as a truck driver. He was of the Baptist faith. In past years he enjoyed riding his motorcycle and even traveled across the United States on it with his wife. He also enjoyed fishing and particularly looked forward to his annual fishing trip with his son-in-law and their friends. But most of all, he enjoyed being a family man.



Robert Greenlee McFalls

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Marlyn Farley McFalls; four daughters, Cheryl Summey and Debora Sampson of Canton, N.C., Connie Gregory (Darrell) of Franklin, N.C., and Vickie Wilson (Danny) of Concord; five grandchildren, Daniel Wilson (Michelle), Shaleigh Russell (Brandon), Ceara Gregory, Nathan Summey and Ben Sampson; four great grandchildren, Wesley Wilson, Bevin Wilson, William Russell and Rubie Russell; and two brothers.

Graveside service was held Saturday, Jan. 30, at Windy Gap Baptist Church Cemetery with Rev. Jeff King and Rev. Mark Bishop officiating.

Pallbearers were Clay Eller, Rick Rigdon, Mark Shepard, Eddie Younce, Dean Cook, Gary Scott, Tommy Guy, and Danny Wood.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Windy Gap Baptist Church cemetery fund.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Mary Bale-Skwarek

Mary Bale-Skwarek, 92, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, Jan. 26, 2021.

Born in Hazel Crest, Ill., she was the daughter of the late Claude Ferris and Lauris Schrickel Bodry. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by three husbands, Herbert Lee Bale, Charles Barton, and Stanley Andrew Skwarek; and two siblings, Judy Chicke and Bill Bodry; grandson, Herbert Russell Cook.

She enjoyed traveling and playing bridge. She was past president of the St Pete's Women's Club and was of the Methodist faith.

She is survived by her three children, Michael Bale (Kathy) of Franklin, Patrick W. Bale (Deborah) of Franklin, and Janet Cook (Richard) of Moweaqua, Ill.; a sister, Nancy Nurenburger of Clairmont, Fla.; seven grandchildren, Mary Jo Bale, Jennifer Bale, Patrick Bale, Mike Bale, Michelle Cook, Tim Cook and Christy Lynch; six great grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

No local services are planned at this time. Interment in the Camp Butler National cemetery in Springfield, Ill., will be at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the St. Pete Women's Club or Franklin House, 186 One Center Court, Franklin, NC 28734

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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Deaths & Funerals

Barbara McGaha Posey

Barbara McGaha Posey, 75, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus on Friday, Jan. 29, 2021.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late William Felton and Ruth Slagle McGaha. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in by her husband, Douglas MacArthur Posey, and her son, Tony Douglas Posey.

She retired from Angel Hospital, where she worked many years in the dietary department and was a faithful member of Tellico Baptist Church.

She is survived by her daughter, Sheila Ann Posey; a sister, Betty Jane Breedlove; and a brother, William "Harold" McGaha all of Franklin; four grandchildren, Douglas Posey, Austin Posey, Melissa Hall and Portica Waldroup; eight great grandchildren, Logan, Namen, Esperanza, Rolando, Anastasia, Emellina, Amilia, and Coy; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral service was held Wednesday, Feb. 3, in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Gary McCoy, Rev. Morris Tippett and Jerry Guffey officiated. Burial was in the Tellico Baptist Church Cemetery.

Condolences can be shared at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Barbara McGaha Posey

George Emerson Crawford

George Emerson Crawford, 92 of Franklin, N.C., died Thursday, Jan. 28, 2021.

A native of Macon County, he lived most of his life in Franklin. He was the son of the late Cecil and Flora Robinson Crawford. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Brent Crawford; and two brothers, Kenneth and Lowell Crawford.

He worked as a heavy equipment operator and was a lifetime member of Mt. Hope Baptist Church. He was very dedicated to his church, serving as a Sunday School teacher and singing in the choir. He was an Army veteran, serving during the Korean Conflict.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Kate Penland Crawford; daughter Martha Orr (Gary) of Williamsburg, Va.; son, Emerson Crawford (Valerie) of Kernersville, N.C.; daughter-in-law, Eugenia; and five siblings, Ruth Slagle, Preulo Crawford, Bruce Crawford, Geneva Burnette, and Burt Crawford; seven grandchildren, Cheryl, Natalie, Landon, Cameron, Caitlin, Patrick, and Penlyn; seven great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

No services are planned at the present time. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

The family would like to thank all the caregivers; especially Jackie and Jerry Guffey and Charlene Hall for the outstanding care given to their family.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Mt. Hope Baptist Church or the WNC Hospice House Foundation.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



George E. Crawford

'Gerrie' Marie Curtis Rue

"Gerrie" Marie Curtis Rue, 84, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Friday, Jan. 29, 2021.

Born in Port Huron, Mich., she was the daughter of the late Wesley Roosevelt and Olith Hilda Adolph Curtis. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Richard Kenneth Rue Sr., in 1997; a daughter, Mary Jean Daniels in 1995; and three sisters, Ruth Arjani, Lorraine Grat-tan, and Elaine Curtis.

She studied Biblical counseling at Trinity College of Bible and Theological Seminary. She was the secretary at Carlson Memorial United Methodist Church in Labelle, Fla., for 29 years. After moving here in 2006, she first became a member at Holly Springs Baptist Church and later attended Cowee Baptist Church and various other churches. The most important thing in her life was her Christian faith. Her favorite song was "Do Not Stand at my Grave and Weep." She loved to crochet, read, quilt, paint, sing and write. One of her proudest accomplishments was that she had one of her books published, "Of Song and Sorrow."

She is survived by one daughter, Linda Rue Quinn (Bryan) of Franklin; two sons, Paul Wesley Rue of Franklin, and Richard Kenneth Rue Jr. (Kathleen) of Spring Creek, Nev.; and one brother, Marvin Curtis of Tuscon, Ariz.; six grandchildren, nine great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

In honoring her wishes, no services are planned.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Western Carolinas Alzheimers Association, 31 College Place Suite Doppler103, Asheville, NC 28801.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



'Gerrie' Marie Rue

Wardie Lovalle Young

Wardie Lovalle Young, 82, born Feb. 27, 1938, left his earthly life for his permanent home in Heaven on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2021. Greeting him in heaven were two of his brothers, Ray and Clifton (Chip), his parents, Louin and Lillie Young.

He leaves behind his wife of 60 years, Judy Price Young; his daughter, Dede Marr (Bill) of San Angelo, Texas, whom he adored; grandchildren, Derrick Marr (Jamie) and Chelsea Lyndaker (Patrick) who called him PopPop; great grandchildren, Kara and Kaden Marr, and Odette Lyndaker; siblings, Laverne Tippett and Dale Young of Franklin, Doyle Young of Five Points, Ala., and Bonnie Angel of Gastonia, N.C.

He has always been a shining light to our family in so many ways. He would address most people by name, even though he had not seen them in years. He loved to laugh and often pulled jokes on his Mom. He was happy to help anyone in need, he loved his family, and was such a godly man. He was a member of Mountain Grove Baptist Church and enjoyed his friends there.

No services are planned at this time. A time of remembrance will be held at a later date.

The family is so appreciative for Lisa, Donnie, Patty, and Dr. Amy Hinton of Four Seasons Hospice Care.

We can only imagine his huge smile when he heard these words: Well done thou good and faithful servant.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the family. Online condolences can be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



Wardie Lovalle Young

Edith Louise Dalton Ray

Edith Louise Dalton Ray passed away peacefully on Jan. 24, 2021, at Franklin House in Franklin, N.C. She was born in Sylva, N.C., to Beecher and Lola Bell Dalton on Sept. 23, 1930.

Her life was spent in devotion to her husband, Robert Paul Ray. Together they found personal joy in the children, grandchildren and great grandchildren that they shared.

Her personal passions were raising her four sons, traveling with her family, camping and demonstrating her skills as a true southern cook. In her later years, she enjoyed attending Sunday school at Franklin House, painting, singing, listening to music, watching movies, playing Bingo with her friends and laughing, while displaying a wonderful, gentle and positive spirit at every turn of her life.

She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Paul Ray, and granddaughter, Marianna Ray.

She is survived by her brother, Arthur Dalton (Jean) of Scottsboro, Ala.; four children, Danny Ray of Cumming, Ga., Greg Ray of Franklin, Bruce Ray (Teresa) of Clarksville, Tenn., and Ron Ray (Mary) of Snellville, Ga.; four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Our mother's life cannot pass without the family giving sincere affirmation and gratitude to those of you that have graced her life by providing personal healthcare throughout her final years. To the staff of Franklin House, and most recently, Four Seasons Hospice, thank you for giving her love and kindness while comforting her needs and allowing her to have as much dignity and laughter as possible.

We cannot mourn her passing without celebrating the colorful, spirited, happy, and splendid life that she lived. She was indeed, one of a kind. As her children, we offer her our abiding love with great reverence and deepest gratitude for the life we shared with her.

Out of respect for our mother, a private service of remembrance will be held for the immediate family.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory are serving the Ray family. Online condolences can be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



Edith Louise Dalton Ray

James Carlous Saunders

James Carlous Saunders, 91, passed away January 26, 2021.

No services are planned.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.



James Carlous Saunders

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Joe Gibbs Racing hangs on to Denny Hamlin and FedEx

NASCAR Wire Service

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. (February 1, 2021) – Joe Gibbs Racing (JGR) has announced that it has extended agreements with driver Denny Hamlin and long-time sponsor FedEx with a pair of multi-year agreements.

“The relationship between FedEx and our organization has been a tremendous success story in so many ways and we’re excited that FedEx will continue to support Denny and our No. 11 team,” said Joe Gibbs, owner of Joe Gibbs Racing. “Denny continues to perform at the top of our sport and our goal is to continue to position him and FedEx to win a championship.”

Hamlin is a three-time winner and defending champion of the Daytona 500. He has 44 career wins in the NASCAR Cup Series and the Chesterfield, VA native has been a model of consistency amassing 280 top-ten and 179 top-five finishes in 542 career starts. Nobody has visited victory lane more than Hamlin over the past two seasons, with his 13 wins in the Cup Series tied for the most over that time.

“I’m so fortunate to have the support of FedEx behind me throughout my career,” said Hamlin. “I take a tremendous amount of pride in having the opportunity to represent them not only on the racetrack, but also in the community through the countless programs they have supported for the better part of these past two decades.”

“FedEx has remained the primary sponsor of the #11 car and Denny Hamlin for over 15 years, and together we have celebrated many successes on and off the track including three Daytona 500 wins,” said Jenny Robertson, Senior Vice President, FedEx Integrated and Marketing Communications. “The FedEx Racing relationship with Joe Gibbs Racing has continued to provide meaningful opportunities for us to engage our customers, team members, and fans, as well as make a positive impact in the community. We are honored to extend this relationship with the Joe Gibbs Racing organization for multiple years and continue the drive for a NASCAR Cup Series championship.”

U.S Air Force extends partnership with Richard Petty Motorsports

WELCOME, N.C. – In an agreement announced last month at the 2021 U.S. Air Force Snocross National in Deadwood, S.D., the U.S. Air Force has extended its partnership with Richard Petty Motorsports (RPM). U.S. Air Force Recruiting Service renewed their commitment to Richard Petty Motorsports with a presence on the NASCAR Cup Series (NCS) No. 43 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1 1LE, driven by Erik Jones.

As part of the agreement, the U.S. Air Force will serve as the primary partner of Jones’ No. 43 Chevrolet Camaro ZL1

1LE in the NASCAR Cup Series at the Talladega (Ala.) Superspeedway (April 25) and at the Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway (Sept. 18). The U.S. Air Force is an associate partner for the entirety of the 2021 NASCAR Cup Series season with Richard Petty Motorsports.

“I think it is a great partnership with Richard Petty Motorsports, one that I feel really comfortable with and am really thankful for,” said Jones.

“We are excited to continue our partnership with Richard Petty Motorsports and welcome driver Erik Jones to the



Denny Hamlin will continue to drive the FedEx No. 11 for Joe Gibbs Racing for many years to come thanks to a multi-year agreement.



U.S. Air Force renewed its agreement with Richard Petty Motorsports for a presence on the No. 43 driven by Erik Jones.

team,” Maj. Jason Wyche, Air Force Recruiting Service chief of national events branch, said. “Our involvement in motorsports allows us to highlight the connections between racing and the Air Force, such as speed, teamwork, competition and technology. We’re grateful for the opportunity to host Erik Jones at the 2021 U.S. Air Force Snocross National. This cross-promotion initiative is a great way to fully immerse Jones in the Air Force Racing team.”

The U.S. Air Force utilizes the Richard Petty Motorsports partnership to attract the most talented Airmen and Guardians to preserve the security of America. They see the Richard Petty Motorsports partnership as an opportunity for a positive impact on generating public awareness about the career opportunities the U.S. Air Force provides, its people, and its mis-

sion.

World-Renowned Grammy-winning artist Pitbull to serve as Grand Marshal for 63rd Annual DAYTONA 500

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – GRAMMY®-winning international superstar, Pitbull, will serve as the Grand Marshal for the 63rd DAYTONA 500 on Sunday, Feb. 14, and will give the command for drivers to start their engines (2:30 p.m. ET on FOX) at the 2.5-mile Daytona International Speedway.



Pit Bull has been named the Grand Marshal of the 63rd Daytona 500.

“It’s an honor to be named Grand Marshal for the 63rd DAYTONA 500,” said Armando Christian Perez (Pitbull).

“It’s exciting to mix culture, music and sports into motor racing. I’m humbled how embracing the NASCAR community and fans around the world have been about me joining the Trackhouse family. Unity at its finest. So let’s get ready to start engines, DALE (Dah-lay)!”

“We’re honored to have someone as accomplished and respected as Pitbull be a part of the 63rd running of the Daytona 500,” said Daytona International Speedway President Chip Wile. “He is not just a world renowned artist, Pitbull has made his mark as a philanthropist and businessman, most recently announcing he has joined the NASCAR ranks as a co-owner with Justin Marks at Trackhouse Racing with driver Daniel Suárez. We’re proud to welcome Pitbull to our great sport and I can’t wait to hear him deliver the most famous words in motorsports ahead of the Great American Race.”

With countless awards, dozens of international number ones, hundreds of gold and platinum certifications, single sales of over 80 million, and cumulative views in excess of 15 billion, Pitbull owns one of the most impressive careers in music history, setting the stage for him to make true change. Not only did he successfully help establish Sports Leadership Arts and Management (SLAM!) tuition-free public charter schools

across the country, he was honored by the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of “Clean Water Here.” He is also a partner in eMerge Americas, the annual tech and innovation summit held in Miami, and he was honored alongside music legends as well as Nobel Peace Prize and Pulitzer Prize winners at the 2019 International Achievement Summit.

In January, Pitbull was announced as an ownership partner in the new NASCAR Cup Series team, Trackhouse Racing, set to make their NASCAR debut at the DAYTONA 500 with the No. 99 Chevrolet driven by Daniel Suárez.

For a schedule of on-track activities and protocols, logo onto www.DAYTONA500.com. Fans can stay connected with Daytona International Speedway on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram for the latest speedway news.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15



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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: VALENTINE'S DAY

ACROSS

- "You're the ____!"
- Horse color
- Interesting person, acr.
- *Feeling of the heart
- Nevada city
- City in Belgium
- Use a whisk
- Greek H's
- *Popular Valentine's Day delivery, pl.
- "Love means never having to say you're sorry" movie
- Ballpark calls
- Strong adhesive
- Greek letter N, pl.
- Lord's subordinate
- Given to drinking
- Ovine mom
- Old storage medium
- Fairy-tale beginning
- Politician Pelosi
- Tokyo, once
- Bone hollows
- Sky bear
- Fitted with a name tag, e.g.
- "Ever" to a poet
- With more seeds
- Attic
- Summer sandwich?
- Fraternity letter
- Medieval headdress
- *Only day more popular than Valentine's for card giving
- Like blue sky
- Walk the Pacific Crest Trail, e.g.
- Samoa money
- *Dionysus' pipe-playing

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60. Affirm

61. Give off

62. Plays for pay

63. *Color of Valentine's Day

64. *Lovers' reunion

DOWN

- Cry like a baby
- Canyon sound
- Convict's weapon
- Conical dwellings
- Get on juice diet, e.g.
- Opposite of binary
- Like a gossipmonger
- Exterminator's target
- Change for a five
- Part of T.G.I.F.
- Like an abridged classic
- Tiler's paste
- *"I Will Always Love You" singer
- Stupefied
- Us, in Mexico
- *Cupid's mother
- In the know
- Common thing?
- Smoke plus fog
- Lay to rest
- Rocks at mountain base
- *Symbol of Valentine's Day
- Infantry's last row
- Roulette bet
- *Chocolatier, pioneer of the heart-shaped box
- ___ apple
- Risk something
- Between eggy and eggiest
- Feeling worse than before
- Gave away
- Thin piece
- Annoyed
- Russia's alternative to caesar
- Aries or Taurus, e.g.
- Burn to a crisp
- MADD member, colloquially
- Climbed down, as from a cartilage
- Fill beyond full
- Pharaoh's cobra

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PRE-OWNED VEHICLES

CARS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
1997	Chevrolet	Camaro	16,606
1972	CHEVROLET	CORVETTE	91,171
2019	Chevrolet	Cruze	14,078
2018	Chevrolet	Impala	8,465
2018	Chevrolet	Malibu	41,816
1930	FORD	MODELA	78,269
2002	Honda	Accord	217,842
2019	Hyundai	Elantra	36,506
2019	Jaguar	XE	22,559
2015	Mercedes-Benz	GLA 45 AMG	36,589
2020	Nissan	Altima	38,911
2019	Toyota	Corolla	27,529

VANS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2016	Dodge	Grand Caravan	102,307

RECREATIONAL

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2004	HARLEY DAVIDSON	ROAD KING	9,778
2019	KAUFMAN	TRAILER	
2019	POLARIS	SLINGSHOT SL	

SUVS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2017	Buick	Encore	43,236
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	26,234
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	21,036
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	48,398
2016	Chevrolet	Equinox	107,191
2016	Chevrolet	Suburban	112,779
2016	Chevrolet	Suburban	51,478
2008	Chevrolet	TrailBlazer	189,795
2015	Chevrolet	Traverse	101,068
2017	Chevrolet	Traverse	91,551
2018	Chevrolet	Traverse	17,683
2017	Chevrolet	Traverse	37,692
2015	Chevrolet	Trax	135,060
2019	Ford	Edge	45,478
2018	Ford	Explorer	49,476
2014	GMC	Terrain	82,762
2019	GMC	Yukon XL	37,969
2020	GMC	Yukon XL	25,411
2019	Jeep	Cherokee	9,020
2019	Jeep	Cherokee	38,039
2004	Jeep	Liberty	130,097
2016	Jeep	Renegade	85,600
2019	Jeep	Wrangler	6,867
2018	Jeep	Wrangler JK	47,132
2017	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited	88,737
2018	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited	52,471
2016	Kia	Sorento	73,230
2019	Kia	Sorento	21,976
2016	Land Rover	Range Rover Sport	55,302
2016	Lexus	GX 460	81,717
2017	Lexus	GX 460	39,179
2019	Nissan	Rogue	39,871
2017	Nissan	Rogue	86,430
2018	Mitsubishi	Outlander	49,318
2018	Volkswagen	Tiguan	19,002

TRUCKS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado	4,769
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado	40,758
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado	13,389
2019	Chevrolet	Colorado	3,987
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado	884
2019	Chevrolet	Colorado	6,928
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	11,584
2017	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	41,705
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	51,696
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	37,411
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	9,141
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	6,147
2013	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	201,568
2014	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	114,700
2000	Dodge	Ram 1500	113,743
2002	Dodge	Ram 1500	128,891
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	130,556
2016	Ford	F-250	190,904
2019	Ford	Ranger	2,749
2020	GMC	Sierra 1500	16,221
2013	GMC	Sierra 1500	108,664
2019	Nissan	Frontier	39,039
2019	Nissan	Frontier	38,223
2020	RAM	1500	25,556
2020	RAM	1500 Classic	18,621
2018	Toyota	Tacoma	35,770

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