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FREE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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The new Franklin Food Lion opened with a ribbon cutting on Wednesday in the former Bi-Lo building. The new grocery store will employ approximately 75 associates and will serve customers daily from 7 a.m. until 11 p.m. Food Lion is a North Carolina business based in Salisbury since 1957. Pictured (L-R) are Kristy McGuire store manager; Ralph Franklin, produce manager; Scott Warner, perishables manager; Lessa Price, assistant store manager; Tony Dills-Young, bakery manager; and Dolly Roy, customer service manager. "Having been born and raised in Franklin, I am so excited to welcome my neighbors into their new Franklin Food Lion," said McGuire. "I look forward to serving my community as the store manager."

Photo by Betsey Gooder

School board recognizes special educators

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

Teacher recognitions

The Macon County School Board met on Monday night and recognized three special educators for the 2020 school year. Emilee Higdon, Secondary English Teacher at Union Academy, was presented with the Prudential NC Beginning Teacher of the Year Award. Rachael Alford, Math Teacher, also at Union Academy, was chosen as Teacher of the Year. Principal of the Year went to Allison Guynn, South Macon Elementary School.

Three other teachers were also recognized by Lee Berger, president of the Retired Teachers Association. Kathy Brown, FHS English Teacher, Jennifer Nation, MVI Language Arts Teacher, and Zachery Tallent, MMS, Exploring Animal and Plant Science teacher, were each awarded a stipend. Kathy Brown and Zachary Tallent were awarded the Mattie Fouts Stipend and Jennifer Nation was awarded a stipend from local funds. Mattie Fouts was a teacher in Macon County in the 1930s. Her family established a fund for teachers in need in her name. Teachers can apply for the award based on need and two recipients are chosen yearly. This year the group felt

that a third teacher was also eligible for the stipend, so local funds were used. These funds will assist the teachers with classroom supplies such as replacement of missing and lost books. Tallent will be using his award for instruments needed in his class for measuring tree diameter and other technical supplies.

Teacher assistant shortage

Franklin High School Social Studies teacher John deVille addressed the board with concerns regarding the number of teacher assistants available to elementary school teachers. Senate Bill 359 was introduced in the General Assembly to provide more teacher assistants but has stalled. A month ago, two companion bills were also introduced to address this need. SB 359, also known as The K-3 Literacy and Improvement Act, was introduced in the Senate by three Democratic senators, introduced in the House by four Democratic representatives as House Bill 420, and calls for a teacher assistant in every K-2 classroom and one teacher assistant for every three third-grade classrooms. According to deVille,

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N.C. Superintendent visits Nantahala School



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Special Liberty Project holds women's retreat

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SCHOOL BOARD

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since the 2008-09 school year, the number of teacher assistants in North Carolina public schools has dropped by 9,470, referring to data from the Department of Public Instruction. That's a devastating trend, several teachers said, particularly with passage of this session of a new law aimed at improving Read to Achieve.

"It is so key having another person there to help you facilitate the small groups. It's so important because we can't address all of the kids' needs without it," said first grade teacher Samantha Ray.

Sen. Valerie Foushee, D-Orange states, "We know that it's good practice. We've seen the data that says that students learn better when they have that kind of support in the classroom. And we know that teachers are more effective when they have the tools that they need. And I think one of those tools in the early grades is a teaching assistant."

Music teacher Maggie Jennings also spoke to the board regarding the arts in Macon County Schools.

"The current situation is A. Middle school – no art in 10 years, no choir in 4 years; B. Union Academy is not being served at all by a art or music specialist; C. Elementary schools – 30

minutes a week, with two schools only getting art/music for a half year, with a one year gap. [It] has since been improved - all K-4 students receive 30 minutes of music/art weekly throughout the school year."

Jennings continued.

"There are tremendous mental health benefits offered by the arts. It plays out in the opioid and substance abuse epidemic. Relieves peer pressure by providing an inclusive home for the student. Creating is intoxicating and addicting. It is especially beneficial for our at-risk population for drug issues as it provides a safe place free from these temptations and engages them in something constructive. Last Thursday at the budget workshop, Mr. [Ronnie] Beale [county commissioner] felt that this county could and would make a valiant attempt at helping to meet the needs of the school system to educate students who are at-risk of jail-time, substance abuse and mental health issues. Yesterday, while talking with Commissioner [Karl] Gillespie, we discussed how Macon County could have the top school system in WNC and the top 5% of rural school districts. Coming from the city, I believe Macon County Schools can be every bit in the top of school systems in the state, and having found my own confidence and outlet through music in the public schools and watching it daily in my own students, I know strong music and art programs

Hidgon named Beginning Teacher of the Year

Emilee Higdon, a high school English teacher at Union Academy in Macon County Schools, was named the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) 2021 Prudential NC Beginning Teacher of the Year in a special ceremony at the Liston B. Ramsey Regional Activity Center on the campus of Western Carolina University Thursday, April 15.

The award was presented for the second time with finalists from across the state in attendance.

Hidgon was described as a beacon of positivity. Her principal noted: "Her unrelenting courage to embrace opportunities to help her



Emilee Higdon

students grow makes her an ideal example of a leader. A student said her style of communication makes the learning process feel more collaborative. The classroom works together as a group and she hears what each of student has to say."

"I am proud of all our finalists and happy for Ms. Hidgon and her school district," NCCAT Executive Director M. Brock Womble said. "NCCAT is a long-time

supporter of teaching excellence, and a natural expression of that support is to recognize the best of the beginning teachers in our state."

can and will help to curb mental health and substance abuse in our county. We, as citizens of Macon County, and stakeholders in Macon County Schools, ask you that our tax dollars be used to fund arts education in the aforementioned capacities. We promise to be with you to show up to commissioners' meetings and advocate for full funding for our school system throughout this three-year process and beyond."

The 2021-2022 \$8.2 million draft budget includes funds for art and music teachers for Macon Middle School and Union Academy.

Geothermal at Iotla still causing problems

Todd Gibbs, Auxiliary and Human Resource Director, updated the board regarding continuing concerns with the geothermal system at Iotla Valley Elementary (IVE).

"Iotla Valley is on a closed loop Geothermal HVAC system, just like Mountain View Intermediate (MVI). The IVE system has had about a dozen leaks of the system in the nine years the school has been open. MVI's system has had zero leaks in the 11 years it has been open," he said.

"Some of the IVE leaks have caused more damage from the water escaping the system. Some leaks have been inside the building soaking carpet, dry wall, suspended ceiling tiles, etc. Some of the leaks have been outside, coming from the pipes that run underground to the well field.

"The premise of the Geothermal system is that the earth is the heat exchange medium, instead of the air, like a residential heat pump system. A liquid flows through the pipes of the system, down wells drilled into the earth and then back to the school to distribute heating or cooling, whatever is required within the building to keep occupants comfortable. The welds that join the liquid-carrying HDPE pipes together within the system are failing due to poor workmanship during initial installation.

"We are looking for mechanical contractors who will evaluate the system, what it will take to replace the piping of the system, and of course the cost to replace the piping."

Board motions

Several motions were made during the meet-

ing. The Board discussed Franklin High School facilities. On a motion made by Tommy Cabe and seconded by Carol Arnold, the Board approved by a 5-0 vote to submit a request in the form of a resolution to the County Manager and Macon County Board of County Commissioners asking for consideration of a new high school facility located at the current site.

In regards to Hazard Pay, on a motion made by Carol Arnold and seconded by Tommy Cabe, the Board approved by a 5-0 vote for hazard pay to be given to all employees. Full-time employees will receive \$750 and part-time employees will receive \$375. (To be given full-time hazard pay, employees must have worked 20-plus days during the 2020-2021 school year-prior to May 15, 2021. To be given part-time hazard pay, employees must have worked 10-20 days during the 2020-2021 school year-prior to May 15, 2021.) The hazard pay bonus will be included in the May payroll.

The 2021-2022 Draft Budget in the amount of \$8.2 million was presented. After much discussion and on a motion made by Tommy Cabe and seconded by Hilary Wilkes, the Board approved to amend the 2021-2022 Draft Budget to include the pre-COVID positions. The approved 2021-2022 Draft Budget will now include an additional \$1.9 million to cover various positions including the following:

- STEM Teacher, EC TA (2-positions) @ IVE
- PE, STEM & one extra month for clerical @ SME
- 2 extra months custodians @ MVI
- Guidance Counselor, Art Teacher, Music Teacher @ MMS
- Foreign Language Teacher @ Highlands
- English Teacher @ FHS
- Art/Music/CTE Teacher, Day Treatment Assistant @ UA
- 50,000 Maintenance Contract for MCS
- 10 additional mental health professionals to cover K-12
- 5 additional full time school nurses to cover K-12
- 4 full-time art positions to cover K-12
- 4 full time music positions to cover K-12

Interviews are ongoing for a principal at Macon Middle School as well as Franklin High School. FHS principal Barry Woody, and MMS principal Scot Maslin are both retiring.

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BOC names funding pool recipients

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Nonprofits in Macon County will receive a financial boost from the county during a year where fundraising has been especially difficult due to the COVID19 pandemic. The Macon County Board of Commissioners (BOC) approved recommendations for grants from the Community Funding Pool during its April board meeting. The grants will provide \$75,000 to nonprofits serving the residents in Macon County.

“The nonprofits in our community need these funds more than ever,” said Macon County Commission Vice-Chair Ronnie Beale. “As needs for their services have increased, for many nonprofits, funding sources have decreased, so I am proud to support these grants.”

BOC allocates \$75,000 a year for the community funding pool, which provides grants to local nonprofits. Due to COVID19, the Macon County Board of Commissioners had reduced the community funding pool by 50 percent, with intention of providing \$37,500 for nonprofits this year. However, during the mid-year review meeting, Macon County Manager Derek Roland recommended the full \$75,000 be allocated due to county revenues being higher than expected.

The community funding pool receives on average 15 applications from area nonprofits, however this year, a total of 13 organizations applied. While opening the grant application process to allow time for more organizations to apply, the Community Funding Task Force, which is comprised of 10 community members, submitted nominations to com-

missioners to approve.

According to Karen Wallace, who serves on the Community Funding Task Force, 12 of the 13 organizations that applied were recommended for approvals by the board. Wallace said the applicant not receiving funding, the Arise and Shine Women’s Recovery Center, was in early stages and there was additional paperwork and documentation needed to be eligible for the grants.

Macon County Community Funding Pool recipients:

- Bascom Corporation — \$325 — STEAM Programs
- Highlands Cashiers Land Trust — \$3,200 — Kids in Nature Education Program
- Highlands Community Child Development Center — \$1,075 — Naptime cots for preschool children
- Hospice House — \$7,800 — Patient care equipment
- KIDS Place — \$10,600 — Client services
- Literacy Council of Highlands — \$5,300 — English as a second language Program
- Macon County Humane Society — \$5,300 — Remodel crates and kennels
- Macon Program for Progress — \$10,600 — Parents as Teachers Operational Support
- Mountain Mediation — \$4,300 — Operational Support
- REACH of Macon County — \$10,600 — Domestic violence service delivery
- Read2ME — \$5,300 — Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Teen Challenge of the Smokies — \$10,600 — Remodeling and maintenance

New policy will expand internet access in rural North Carolina

More North Carolinians, especially in rural areas, will be able to access affordable, high-speed internet service, thanks to the new state Dig Once Policy spearheaded by Governor Roy Cooper.

“The pandemic has highlighted the critical need for high-speed internet in our daily lives,” said Governor Cooper. “Making it easier to install broadband will help people from all corners of our state get connected to online health care, education and business services they need.”

The Dig Once Policy, which took effect March 1, will help expand broadband access in the state by making it less expensive and easier to install broadband conduit along state-maintained roads. Cooper issued a 2019 executive order directing the state departments of Information Technology and Transportation to develop the policy.

North Carolina’s Dig Once Policy requires internet service providers who are installing or relocating facilities within a state road project to advertise their project so other internet service providers can install their fiber optic cable when the trench is dug for the conduit.

One of the most expensive parts of installing broadband comes about when companies dig an open trench to install the fiber. The policy will enable multiple internet service providers to collaborate, disturb the ground just once to install conduit and share the costs for fiber installation.

For more information, read the state Dig Once Policy or the NCDIT’s web page on these policies.



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N.C. eases some Covid restrictions

Governor Roy Cooper and North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy K. Cohen, M.D. gave an update on the state's current data, trends and vaccination progress Wednesday. As the state's metrics and key indicators remain stable, Governor Cooper also signed an Executive Order outlining safety measures for the month of May. Executive Order No. 209 will take effect April 30 and is set to expire June 1. As more North Carolinians get vaccinated and adhere to safety protocols over the course of the next month, the state anticipates lifting more restrictions on June 1.

"While our numbers are mostly stable, we have more work to do to beat back this pandemic," said Governor Cooper. "Let's work hard in May and get as many people vaccinated as we can before summer gets here."

Under the new Executive Order, masks will still be required indoors but are no longer mandated outdoors. Masks are still strongly recommended outdoors by NC DHHS in crowded areas and higher risk settings where social distancing is difficult.

Executive Order No. 209 will also increase mass gathering capacity limits. The number of people who may gather indoors

will increase from 50 to 100 and the number of people who may gather outdoors will increase from 100 to 200. Occupancy limits currently in place will remain the same.

"Fortunately, we now have enough vaccine for everyone. They are free and widely available across the state. In many places you don't need appointment," said Secretary Cohen. "For those who have questions, I encourage you to go to YourSpotYourShot.nc.gov to learn about the benefits of the vaccines, potential temporary reactions you might experience, and answers to common questions."

North Carolina continues to focus on distributing vaccines quickly and equitably. To date, the state has administered over 7 million doses. 48.7% percent of those 18 and up are at least partially vaccinated, and 39.2% percent of those 18 and up have been fully vaccinated.

State health officials are continuing to monitor COVID-19 and its more contagious variants in North Carolina, which is why it is important to continue to follow the state's mask mandate and continue to practice safety precautions, including the Three Ws—wear a mask, wait 6 feet apart, and wash hands often.

Zonta Club gives to REACH

The Zonta Club of the Franklin Area presented reading materials for women to REACH in Franklin. Fifty booklets on financial management and two self-help books were given at a presentation at the REACH for Bargains store. Zonta supports REACH in Jackson County and Macon County.

REACH of Macon County and Jackson County helps women and families by fighting violence in the home and sexual assault anywhere. It runs 24/7 crisis hotlines, coun-

seling and education services and a shelter in Macon County.

The Franklin Zonta Club is the only one of this international organization in North Carolina. Zonta focuses on helping women and their families reach their full potential by addressing education and health needs, by working to end violence against women and by supporting women in the workplace.

For more information visit the Club's website at zontafranklinnc.org.



Pictured (L-R) are Innda Tyler and Peggy Milton (Zonta Board); Jennifer Lynn-Turner (REACH); Roxanne Chambless and Deanna Wagner (Zonta Board).

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

I was playing cleanup on Monday [4/19], that is patrolling the corridors and picking up the orange trash bags from the Highlands Plateau Pickup. Over 50 volunteers hit the corridor roads this past Saturday [4/17]. I want to thank the Highlands Chamber of Commerce, especially Beverly Wichman for her coordination of another successful event.

Every year I see the same trash in the orange bags that the volunteers collect. There are the plastic and aluminum cola and beer bottles, the empty potatoes chip bags, the cans filled with snuff spit, and all sorts of paper products. There is also a substantial amount of construction debris such as insulation, plastic wrap and scraps of wood and metal.

Monday afternoon I was at the city limits sign on NC 28 retrieving the big orange litter sign that I had deployed to warn motorists on Saturday. About 50 yards beyond the town limits I saw a small wooden structure, pictured in the photo, in the middle of the road. There was a layer of exposed nails that would have wreaked havoc on an unsuspecting motorist. I warned two approaching vehicles and quickly ran out to retrieve the hazard.

I know where it came from and its destination. A contractor crew had loaded a truck with a demolished deck. The truck was headed to the Rich Gap transfer station. The load was not secured and the wooden gate in the photo fell onto the road. I wonder if the driver of the truck noticed the object from his load on his return trip from the transfer station and just kept driving. That may have happened since I was retrieving it after the transfer station had closed.

The question is how can we improve the problem of trash and litter on the roadways? I use the term we, instead of the town. The immediate response by some is that the town should do something like have crews pick up the corridors coming into the town. My response is that the town may need to reconsider pickups on the roadways inside the town, but that would be a limited solution. Our employees cannot go beyond the town limits. That road obstruction was just outside the town limits. While I know our employees would have done the same thing I did in retrieving the danger, technically it would be beyond their responsibility. The town limits stop at the Sequoyah Dam, so the vast majority of the litter on that

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Arguments against photo IDs are disingenuous

Let's set into place the clear and unequivocal evidence that the Socialist/Communist Democratic Party and their propaganda operations arm in the Lame Scream media have perpetrated a carefully orchestrated full bore effort to subvert one important aspect of our election process.

Virtually everyone in this country has to have a valid government issued photo ID to:

- Open a bank account
- Cash a check
- Check out a library book
- Apply for SNAP/Food Stamps
- Purchase alcoholic beverages
- Purchase tobacco products
- Apply for Medicaid
- Fly on an airplane
- Travel on a cruise ship
- Apply for a job
- Apply for Social Security
- Rent or buy a house
- Purchase a gun
- Get married
- Adopt a pet in a commercial pet store
- Rent a hotel room
- Apply for a hunting or fishing license
- Buy a cell phone
- Pick up a prescription at a pharmacy
- Pick up a package at the Post Office
- Donate or receive blood
- Purchase certain cold medicines
- Purchase nail polish at CVS
- Register to go to many schools
- Access education and other records
- Rent or buy a car
- Get a Covid-19 vaccine shot

Most if not all states offer free photo ID cards through the state DMV, even if you don't need or want to drive a car.

Someone please come up with some reasonable list of people who don't do any of the above activities on a frequent basis and have the requisite photo ID cards.

Arguments to the contrary are merely disingenuous and specious or are people deliberately turning a blind eye to the denigration of our great nation's history bought by the men and women who fought Communism in foreign lands to keep it from coming here.

So with that said, why does the Socialist/Communist Democratic Party and their propaganda operations arm in the Lame Scream media arm raise such holy hell when States require photo ID to participate in the most fundamental right we have, the right to vote?

It is undoubtedly because that safeguard against non-citizens and illegal criminal aliens voting and diluting the vote of American citizens goes against their agenda to overthrow

our Republican form of government. It also makes it a lot harder for people to cast multiple ballots which are illegal in all instances.

It is long past time for every freedom loving patriotic American, Republican, Democrat, Independent, or unregistered, to write, e-mail, call and demand ALL members of city, county, state voting commissions and legislatures, stop their efforts to prevent the mandatory requirement that everyone and anyone voting in person or by mail to present a valid photo ID in order to participate in this keystone of our Republic.

I suggest anyone who doesn't think that is the right thing to do and are unhappy with living here should pack their bags and move to a Communist country.

How can anyone in their right mind want to empower people who are undoubtedly criminals who have violated Federal law when they breached our borders and sovereignty and jumped in front of those who are coming here through legal channels to have any say in how we run our country?

It is beyond folly to foolishly presume to aid and abet in bringing a Marxist/Socialist/Communist regime which is an anathema to our existence into being in America by continuing to support the Marxist/Socialist/Communist Democratic Party and think they won't be coming for you too.

My personal opinion is that those doing so are bereft of any moral and/or intellectual integrity in the face of the obvious. If you know of anyone like that, please see if you can say a prayer for God to heal their obviously tortured souls.

Peter K. Stern
USAF Retired – Franklin, N.C.

Email letters to the editor to
maconcountynews@gmail.com

The Macon County News letters page is a public forum open to a wide variety of opinions as a right guaranteed in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Letters are neither accepted nor rejected based on content. Letters must be signed and contact information provided. Views expressed are not necessarily reflective of the opinions of publisher, editor or staff. Writers are asked to refrain from personal attacks against individuals or businesses. Email letters to: maconcountynews@gmail.com

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NC Superintendent tours schools in WNC

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

North Carolina's Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt was in Western North Carolina recently visiting several mountain schools. Senator Kevin Corbin and Macon County Schools officials joined Truitt on her stop in Macon County where she toured Nantahala School.

"We are excited that Superintendent Truitt and her team visited Nantahala School and Macon County," said Dr. Chris Baldwin. "Mrs. Truitt seemed to truly enjoy learning about our school system and our students."

Nantahala Principal Andrew Pyle said it was a unique experience for a small school.

"It was a great honor to be visited by Superintendent Truitt and Senator Corbin," said Nantahala Principal Andrew Pyle. "We love having the opportunity to show the awesome and engaging teaching and learning that is taking place at Nantahala School and in Macon County Schools."

Superintendent Truitt, a Republican, was elected last November to serve as the new NC State Superintendent. She began her career in education as a high school English teacher and spent two years in the classroom teaching both high school and middle school. She has been nominated twice for the Teacher of the Year Award. She spent her last three years as a teacher teaching at West Johnston High School where she taught English to juniors and seniors. Under Governor Pat McCrory, Truitt was appointed to serve on his Senior Advisory Committee on Education in 2015. McCrory even awarded Truitt with the Order of the Long Leaf Pine, the state's highest honor, in recognition of her efforts to improve public education across the state.

"It was my pleasure to welcome Superintendent Catherine



Pictured are Superintendent of Public Instruction Catherine Truitt and Nantahala Principal Andrew Pyle with staff members, Sen. Kevin Corbin, School board member Carol Woodlee, School Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin, School board member Tommy Cabe and school board member Melissa Evans.

Truitt to Macon County," said Corbin. "Since first being elected to Raleigh, I have made it my priority to ensure that folks in Raleigh are reminded that the state doesn't end in Asheville. As one of the newest elected state leaders, Superintendent Truitt is already making the western part of the state a priority and I am looking forward to working alongside her to continue ensuring the residents in the West are not forgotten."

Corbin said that Truitt's visit to Macon County was hopefully the first of many and that she was committed to continuing to support small schools like Nantahala and Highlands on the state level.

Superintendent Truitt also visited Macon, Jackson, and Swain County schools.

"To my knowledge, this is the only time that a Superintendent of Public Instruction has been in Macon or Swain county," said Corbin. "Students from Swain County prepared and served our lunch. It was a great visit and she promised there would be more visits to come."

TAYLOR

From previous page

scenic byway is beyond the town.

So what are some solutions? First, maybe the county solid waste department should have a covering of construction material policy for those using their facilities. Expecting law enforcement to enforce such a policy would be a hit or miss proposition, but all those vehicles eventually arrive at the landfill facilities.

Another idea is to have a program led by a civic organization, maybe the Chamber of Commerce, to pay a company to do litter sweeps of the corridors on a regular schedule, not just a volunteer effort in the spring. Under such a program concerned citizens could donate to support the program.

Finally, maybe local businesses could support such an anti-litter initiative. Our local ABC Store sells a huge amount of small, plastic, one shot bottles of liquor. Many of these bottles land up in those orange trash bags, as well as the many Bud Light cans and bottles sold at the local convenience stores and gas stations. Maybe these businesses could be participants in such an effort and even be a part of a campaign to make folks aware of littering.

These ideas would need a community commitment, not just a simple position of "just let the town take care of it." I hope in the coming weeks some of the ideas I have suggested can become a reality.



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Franklin High School Lady Panthers softball honor its seniors

Franklin High School Lady Panthers Softball team held its senior night last Thursday prior to the game against East Henderson, which the Lady Panthers won handily, 10-7. The Lady Panther played Pisgah on Tuesday and will play Smoky Mountain on Friday. The Lady Panthers beat Pisgah at their last meeting 16-0, but lost to Smoky in a close match, 3-2. As of April 27, Franklin was ranked 5th in the state NC Class 2A Softball Rankings.



#2 McKenzie Redoutey is accompanied by her mother and father Deb and Scott. McKenzie plans to attend Louisiana State University.



#15 Kiara Dewey, catcher, is accompanied by her mother, father and brother. Kiara plans to attend Caldwell Community College.



#7 Deaven Lombard is escorted by her father Steve and her mother Sharalyn. Deaven plans to attend Western Carolina University.



#22 Taylor Ensley is accompanied by mother Kim, father Todd and sister Tori. Taylor plans to attend NC State University.



Photos by Patri Cabe



#8 Rylee Corbin accompanied by her mother and father Autumn and Alan. Rylee plans to attend the University of Tennessee.



#21 Nevaeh Tran accompanied by her mother, father and sisters. Nevaeh plans to attend Western Carolina University.



#5 Kandice Parker accompanied by her father Lance, her mother Crystal, her sister Cassidy, her sister Savannah and her brother Lance. Kandice plans to attend Western Carolina University.

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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 April 16 - 26. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

April 20

William Mark Pritikin, was charged with obtaining property by false pretense. Matthew Long made the arrest.

Nathan Peter Etzel, was charged with felony speeding to elude arrest. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

April 21

Brannon James Parrish, was charged with probation violation. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Sarah Lynn Webb, was charged with failure to appear for possession of methamphetamine, probation violation. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Trance Lewis Stoudemire, was charged with probation violation, assault by strangulation, assault on a female, assault inflicting serious injury with a minor present, injury to personal property. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Dustin Cole Estevez, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Emileigh E. Sands made the arrest.

Jeremy Cole Sanders, was charged with possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

April 22

Randy Topez Stewart, was charged with false imprisonment, resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer. Matthew T. Breedlove made the arrest.

April 23

Tiegha Shaye Franklin, was charged with larceny, possession of stolen goods/property. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

April 24

Michael Anthony Passafume, was charged with maintaining a place for controlled substances, speeding, driving left of center, reckless driving. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

April 16

Michael Anthony Passafume, 51, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, felony flee to elude, assault with a deadly weapon on law enforcement officer, resist/obstruct/delay, damage to property, speeding 100 MPH in 35 MPH zone, unsafe lane change, white light rear of vehicle. A secured bond of \$40,000 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

April 17

Richard Lee Davis, 35, was charged with second degree trespassing. An unsecured bond of \$800 was set. Sergeant Norman

made the arrest.

April 18

Angela Watson Torres, 52, was charged with misdemeanor larceny. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

William Grady Baughn 29, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$1,200 was set.

April 20

James Taylor, 55, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set. Officer Kirkland made the arrest.

April 18

Daniel Gregory Still, 65, was charged with second degree trespass. An unsecured bond of \$200 was set. Sargent Beegle made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

April 19

Jessica Roxanne Small, 36, of University Heights, Cullowhee, was charged with simple assault. No bond was set.

Michael Eric Stone, 50, of Live Oak, Fla., was charged with communicating threats, contributing to the delinquency of a juvenile, misdemeanor child abuse, assault on a child under 12, failure to appear for driving while license revoked impaired violation, misdemeanor probation violation, driving while intoxicated level 5. A secured bond of \$8,500 was set.

Tansi Elaine Young, 40, of Old Soco Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to complete community service. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Alexis Cyntoria Smith, 22, of Welders Lane, Dillsboro, was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses. An unsecured bond of \$5,000 was set.

April 20

David Charles Roberts, 40, of Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Thomas Michael Joseph Wade, 18, of Touch Stone Lane, was charged with failure to appear for injury to personal property, assault on a female. A secured bond of \$6,000 was set.

Stephen Jeremiah Penninger, 34, of Luker Branch Rd., Tuckaseegee, was charged with failure to appear for possession of meth and drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Andrew Douglas Anderson, 34, of Dills Branch, was charged with failure to appear for second degree trespass, resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Cody Allen Mintz, 29, of Crakin Chestnut Lane, was charged with failure to appear for probation violation. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Brannon James Parrish, 21, of Wyner Mason Rd., Franklin, was charged with failure to appear for possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver methamphetamine, possession of a stolen motor vehicle, obtaining property by false pretense, breaking and entering, felony probation violation. A secured bond of \$500,000 was set.

April 21

Delbert Carlsyle Ward, 30, of Hurl Rd., Whittier, was charged

with failure to appear for attempted larceny. A secured bond of \$50,000 was set.

Rhiannon Tancy Ward, 26, of Hull Rd., Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for attempted larceny. A secured bond of \$50,000 was set.

Ryan James Schaefer, 35, of Deyoung Rd., Lymon, S.C., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, felony possession of cocaine. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set.

Mark Anthony Wood, 32, of Clay Haven Heights, was charged with felony flee/elude arrest, felony probation violation. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Shawn Aaron Bradley, 38, of Dills Branch Rd., was charged with resist/obstruct/delay. No bond was set.

April 22

Jessica Lynn Holiday, 32, of Mockingbird Lane, was charged with misdemeanor child abuse, possession of drug paraphernalia, assault on another person in the presence of a minor, simple assault, possession of marijuana, possession of controlled substance in prison /jail premises. No bond was set.

William Kenneth Drasdo, 41, of Mockingbird Lane, was charged with misdemeanor child abuse, assault on another person in the presence of a minor, assault on a female, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

Hannah Mikayla Hilton, 22, of Rosemont Rd., was charged with probation violation. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Jake Michael Radford, 22, of Catolster Johnson Rd., Cherokee, was charged with possession of marijuana paraphernalia, carrying a concealed gun, maintaining a vehicle/dwelling/place for a controlled substance, felony possession of a schedule VI controlled substance, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver a schedule VI controlled substance. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

April 23

Wayne Lee Kitchens, 46, of Sleepy Lane, Warner Robins, Ga., was charged with extradition/fugitive from other state. No bond was set.

Simon James Willmon, 48, of Whitney Dr., Asheville, was charged with failure to appear for assault on a female. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Jessica Lynn Holliday, 32, of Mocking bird Lane, was charged with failure to appear for defrauding a drug/alcohol screen test. A secured bond of \$8,000 was set.

Maggie Ann Martinez, 23, of Westridge Rd., was charged with failure to appear for cruelty to animals. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Brandon Marsell Barker, 18, of Cheek Circle Rd., was charged with possession of an open container of an alcoholic beverage in the passenger area of a motor vehicle, consume alcoholic beverage by less than 19 year old, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, felony possession of marijuana. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

April 24

Daniel Wayne Warren, 38, of Sylva, was charged with assault inflicting a serious injury, resist a public officer. A secured bond of \$6,000 was set.

Matthew Douglas Owen, 37, of Eagle Ridge Rd., Sapphire, was charged with communicating threats, resist/delay/obstruct. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

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Special Liberty Project holds its first women's retreat

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

“So, so incredible,” is how founder and CEO Jessica Merritt described the first Special Liberty Project retreat in Macon County. Six women, all based in North Carolina, attended a three-day retreat hosted in the Holly Springs community by Special Liberty Project. Each attendee shared personal stories of the loss of a military spouse due to combat, accident, or suicide.

The nonprofit was started four years ago in San Diego, Calif., by Jessica and her husband, Cory, a recently retired U.S. Navy Senior Chief involved in search and rescue. The couple saw a need to provide respites for struggling and grieving individuals and fam-



Six women who lost military spouses participated in Special Liberty Project's first Macon County retreat.

ilies. And, since Cory grew up enjoying outdoor pursuits like hunting, and Jessica has always had a love of nature and a passion for understanding food origins and sustainable living, they decided to offer such pursuits to at least a half dozen individuals each month at their new Franklin location.

For the past few months, local volunteers have been readying the property in preparation for the April 8-11 retreat.

“More than 100 people have volunteered in the past few months,” said Jessica. “Meta and Tim Sadlon (Sadlon and Associates) were a huge help. Tim brought his team over to do a lot of the construction work for the tent platforms and Meta provided so many

gifts for the ladies and helped so much with the final touches on the 16-by-14 foot tents. The Knights of Columbus participated in volunteer cleanup days. And local friends, the Holden Family, Dustin, Stacy, and Maddie, helped with building and whatever was needed. Morgan and Melonie Stewart, Stewart Communications, were hard at work behind the scenes making sure everything went smoothly. And countless other local volunteers worked hard to make this retreat the best it could be.”

On the agenda for the six women, who arrived on Thursday, April 8, was a pottery workshop, dulcimer music around a campfire, journaling, hiking, yoga, equine therapy,

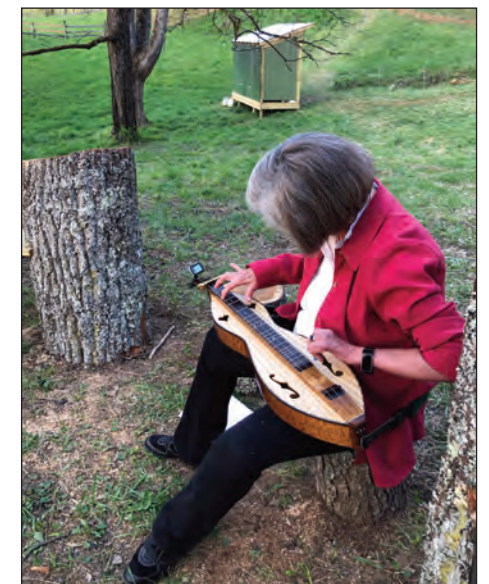
understanding bee keeping, and more.

“Bees were donated to the organization and we were even taught a lovely workshop on how to create a sleep-better balm using beeswax, and bee balm was given to the retreat participants,” said Jessica. “Art Room did a wonderful journaling workshop and donated art materials, Sally DeLawter provided the gift of music with her dulcimer, and Sulky of America, our corporate sponsor, gave a generous donation for a sewing workshop so there could be a take-home activity for the women to practice mindfulness.”

Because Special Liberty Project is a family affair, the couple and their twins, ages 10 years old, helped with set up and clean up, serving the women, and much more.



Permanent tents, deck platforms, and spacious tent interiors for people staying at the Special Liberty Project property in the Holly Springs are the result of numerous local volunteers.



Sally DeLawter, of Nikwasi Dulcimer Players, volunteered to provide music all three nights during the retreat.



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Special Liberty Project Founder and CEO led the six women retreat attendees through an outdoor yoga session.

“We are very thankful to live in these beautiful mountains, surrounded by supportive patriots who want to work with us to give back to families who have made the ultimate sacrifice,” expressed Cory. “We are humbled and honored by the community’s contribution to the mission.”

“The women felt comfortable and some of them told me they rested for the first time in a long time,” added Jessica. “That’s our intention with these retreats.”

“One of the rewarding aspects was that the women relaxed and felt they could share. When I first arrived at this property, I could tell it was a majestic healing space and I wanted us to share it ... to offer rest, peace, and breathe. Watching that vision become reality was wonderful. And seeing the women enjoy peer support ... knowing they weren’t alone, means everything. What happened at this first retreat is ex-

actly why Special Liberty Project exists.”

The Special Liberty Project retreats are scheduled monthly through the fall and are offered at no cost to the participants.

“We can offer these retreats because of fundraisers and our local and national sponsors as well as regular donors,” said Jessica. “We are so appreciative.”

The next retreat is May 6-9 and the Merritts said volunteers are always needed, as well as anyone with a skill who is willing to offer a workshop during a retreat. For more information, visit speciallibertyproject.org or

call (828) 222-3105.



Crafts, journaling, and art were all part of the Special Liberty Project retreat experience for six women who lost their military spouses due to combat, suicide, or accident.

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Deaths & Funerals

Ellen Higdon Goodwin

Ellen Higdon Goodwin of Franklin, N.C., passed away peacefully on April 21 at the age of 87.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Charles Foster Higdon and Sallie Crawford Higdon, her husband of 59 years, Silas "Nat" Goodwin and her beloved daughter, Lynda Faye Goodwin.

She was a housewife by choice. She was raised in Franklin until moving to Massachusetts after finishing 6th grade with her parents. Her life there involved swimming across lakes and playing



Ellen Higdon Goodwin

girl's half-court basketball in high school. She was an avid dancer and knew all the '50's dances. She met her future Air Force husband at Cape Cod where he was stationed. She was 17 and he was 19. They traveled to AF bases in the U.S., Germany, and Philippines. She raised her two daughters during those years and then moved to Franklin upon her husband's retirement. They became members of First Baptist Church. She was active in her Sunday school class and church choir. She volunteered in the gift shop at Angel Hospital. Her first love was her family. She was extremely loyal and supportive especially to her two grandchildren, Stefanie and Ryan. Her grandson lovingly called her The Nana. Upon her husband's passing she traveled with her daughter and son-in-law to several National Rural Letter Carrier Association State and National Conventions and watched many WCU basketball games at Western. Her life was full and interesting. She blessed everyone she met with her beautiful smile.

She is survived by her daughter, Sallie Goodwin Conley (Dennis) of Franklin and her grandchildren, Stefanie Conley of Sylva and Ryan Conley of Franklin.

A graveside service was held Sunday, April 25, at Higdonville Baptist Church Cemetery for family and friends.

Rev. Steve Reeves officiated.

Pallbearers were Mike Lamontagne, Mitch Nidiffer, Calvin Conley, Russell McConnell, Craig Holland, and Tyler Holland.

To represent her love of children, the family requests that donations be made to Love That Surpasses, 3085 Arthur Court, Santa Clara CA 95051. lovethatsurpasses.org. (A non-profit organization which Lindsay Shuler Smith volunteers with that provides ministry outreach and Bags of Hope to families who receive a prenatal diagnosis of Down Syndrome.)

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

Macon Funeral home will be handling the arrangements.

James Joseph Granato

James Joseph Granato, 76, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Thursday, April 22, 2021. He was born Sept. 16, 1944, in Trieste, Italy, to the late Francesco Granato and Lidia Fratte. He was retired after 30 years from Illinois Bell Phone Company. He loved the mountains, and loved to cook; he was a member of Knights of Columbus and a Catholic by faith.

He is survived by his daughters, Lora Morrison (Sean) and Lisa Vines (Michael); three sisters, Aussunta Granato (Vittorio Pignatelli), Marisa Granato (Enzo Parisi) and Stella Granato (Giovanni Caliendo); six grandchildren, Lauren Klier, Faith Klier, Alexander Vines, Nathan Vines, Madison Morrison and Natalie Morrison.

No services are planned at this time.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Granato family. Online condolences may be made at www.bryant-grantfuneralhome.com.

Joyce Bak-Feldhaus

Joyce Bak-Feldhaus, 74, passed from this life on April 18, 2021. She was born to Felix S. and Stella M. Polaski Bak on Oct. 13, 1947, in Toledo, Ohio. She and her husband, Terrence (Terry) Patrick Feldhaus, were high school sweethearts who married later in life.

She retired to Franklin, N.C., and was an English teacher and librarian for 25 years. Her love of learning led her to earn Masters degrees in English, Psychology, and Library Science. She enjoyed reading, especially books about spirituality. QVC was her favorite channel both for watching and participating. She delighted in growing flowers and plants along with redecorating her house regularly.

She was of the Catholic faith, loved life and was a cancer survivor. She was a fighter who never lost her determined approach and attitude towards winning that battle. She was loved by many, including Sam (dog) and Chole (cat), her pet babies.

She was predeceased by her husband, her parents, and her sister, Phyllis Bak-Dietrich.

She is survived by her brother-in-law, John G. Dietrich of Fernandina Beach, Fla., and by her dear friend, Beth Howison of Franklin.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the Bak-Feldhaus family.

Online condolences at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.

Ray 'Buddy' Allen Cunningham

Ray "Buddy" Allen Cunningham, 73, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, April 19, 2021. He was born in Macon County, North Carolina, Aug. 26, 1947, to the late Ralph W. Cunningham and Maggie Elliot Cunningham. He was a graduate from Franklin High School and was a U.S. Army veteran. He worked and retired from General Motors in Pontiac, Mich. He was a gentle soul that loved helping people and being a blessing to others, he loved to travel to Florida to visit friends and enjoyed traveling all over the world; he loved his plants and flowers.

He is survived by his sister-in-law, Judy Cunningham of Franklin; a sister, Louise Dills of Franklin; his friend of 50 years, Danny McKinney of Fort Lauderdale, Fla.; and many nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by two brothers, Wayne Cunningham and Woodrow Cunningham; a sister, Ruth Blanton; and his beloved pet, Sophie.

A graveside memorial service was held Friday, April 23, at Iotla United Methodist Church Cemetery with Rev. David Williams officiating.

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

Shirley Ann Ledford Davis

Shirley Ann Ledford Davis, 84, of Brevard, N.C., passed away Friday, April 23, 2021.

She was born in Macon County to the late Sherman and Anna Smith Ledford. In addition to her parents, she was preceded by husband, Carl Davis.

She was a loving homemaker who enjoyed sewing.

She is survived by children, Rick Grasty (Brenda) of Hudson N.C., and Debra A. Carr (Gary) of Knoxville, Tenn.; siblings, Linda L. McCollum (James) of St. Augustine, Fla., and Jerry Ledford of Franklin; seven grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Private graveside services will be held.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Four Seasons Hospice - Four Seasons Development Office 571 South Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 28731.

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

Eduardo (Eddie) A. Garcia, Jr.

Eduardo (Eddie) A. Garcia, Jr., 63, passed away on April 24, 2021. He born on Nov. 12, 1957, to Eduardo Garcia-Rodriguez and Belen Garcia-Arbona, was a retired postal worker and a veteran of the United States Army.

The U.S. Postal Service was important to him not only because of his job, he also met the love of his life, Diana, at the post office. Married for 38 years and the parents of three daughters, he will always be remembered as a very giving family man. He made sure their house was filled with laughter and remained a big kid at heart.

It could be said he was his own man as he was not dependent on the approval of others. He enjoyed coaching his girls and was willing to help other players whether or not they were on his team. Second to his family was his passion for fresh water fishing. He also loved animals and provided a home for iguanas, turtles, and dogs throughout the years, his favorite being a service dog basset hound named Izzy.

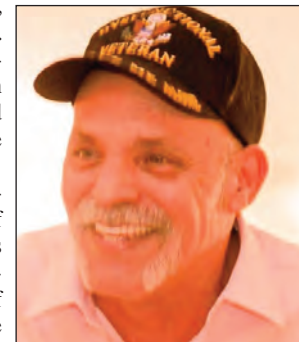
He attended St. John's Episcopal Church and loved being a part of that very special church family. His own family will remember him sitting on the porch of his mountain home, smoking his stogie.

Left with many wonderful memories are his wife, Diana Lee Lamb Garcia, of Franklin; and his daughters, Cheryl Salerno (Andrew), Danielle Velazco (Rodrigo), and Erika Cann (Evan) all of Concord, N.C.; four grandchildren, Cruz Eduardo, Everly Skye, Jackson Eduardo, and Leon Alejandro; four siblings, several nieces and nephews, along with many dear friends also survive. He was predeceased by his parents.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in his name may be given to Alzheimer's Association, 225 N. Michigan Avenue, Floor 17, Chicago, IL, 60601.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.



Eduardo A. Garcia, Jr.

Rebecca 'Becca' Jane Bartula

Rebecca "Becca" Jane Bartula, age 46, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on April 14, 2021.

She was born to Jimmy Arthur Redus and the late Francis Eilene Rethorst Redus. She was a member of Hickory Knoll United Methodist Church. She loved people and found joy in helping others.

She is survived by her children, Maggie Cochran and Shawn Redus; siblings, Loyd Redus (Tricia) and Joe Goodman (Anita); and father, Jimmy Redus.

A memorial service was held Sunday, April 25, at Hickory Knoll United Methodist Church.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Hickory Knoll United Methodist Church.

Online condolence at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Rebecca Jane Bartula

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Deaths & Funerals

John Huscusson

John Huscusson, 89, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Jan. 5, 2021. He was born Feb. 28, 1931, in Macon County, North Carolina, to the late John Calvin Huscusson and Bertha Roper. He was a Navy veteran and worked as a repair tech for Sears. He had many hobbies including woodworking, making knives, fishing, gardening and raising tomatoes. He loved cats. He served as a deacon at Ridgecrest Baptist Church and was of the Baptist faith.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth "Lib" Huscusson; two daughters, Marie Holland (Perry) and Wanda Bishop; two grandchildren, Tammy Holland and Chris Holland; two great-grandchildren, Evan Sanders and Kayla Sanders, a sister, Ann Nichols; three brothers, David Huscusson, Jim Huscusson and Rick Huscusson; and many nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his siblings, Rosemary Barbot, Frances Hernandez, Bobby Huscusson and Don Huscusson.

A Celebration of Life will be held Saturday, May 1, at 1 p.m., at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home Chapel Franklin, with Rev. Tommy Fouts officiating.

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

Christine Ester Franks Angel

Christine Ester Franks Angel, 74, of Franklin, N.C., passed away April 18, 2021.

She was born in Jackson County to the late Jimmy and Margaret Hester Pressley Franks. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Joe Angel; sister, Mildred Norman of Sylva; and brothers, Herman, Lewis Albert, and Carl Tilman Franks.

She worked as machine operator at Belden for many years and would go on to work with Walmart where she retired after 10 years. She was a member of East Franklin Baptist Church and a proud lifelong resident of Western North Carolina.

She is survived by sister, Sarah Holbrooks of Franklin; and several nieces, nephews, and great nieces and great nephews.

No services are planned at this time.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to American Heart Association. American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association 10 Glenlake Pkwy NE South Tower Suite 400Atlanta, GA 30328.

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



Christine Ester Angel

Blanche Smith Morgan

Blanche Smith Morgan, 78, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, April 27, 2021.

She was born on Nov. 5, 1942, in Franklin, to John Doyle and Dove (McCoy) Smith. She married Lyman Dale Morgan on Oct. 20, 1962. She was an honest, loving, and hard-working wife and mother. A talented seamstress and cook, she created a happy home for her loved ones. She enjoyed music, crossword puzzles, reading, and keeping her home spotless. Her grandchildren will always remember the many happy holidays they spent at her house. Her sense of humor and personality will be greatly missed by her family and friends.

She is preceded in death by her father, John Doyle Smith, mother, Dove McCoy Smith, brother, J. D. Smith, and husband, Lyman Dale Morgan.

She is survived by her daughter, Jill Morgan Bell (Ralph); sister, Betty Gregory (Bill); grandson, Chris Bell and granddaughter, Lauryn Bell.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made to St. Jude's Children's Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or Hospice House Foundation of WNC, 272 Maple Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

A private service will be held and burial will follow at the Oak Grove Baptist Church Cemetery.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the Morgan family.



Blanche Smith Morgan

Diana Marie Schardt Bernard

Diana Marie Schardt Bernard, 62, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, April 27, 2021. She was born Jan. 8, 1959, in San Francisco, Calif., to Barbara Janicki Schardt and the late Dick Schardt. She was an accountant, attended First Pentecostal Church, and she liked to make jewelry boxes.

In addition to her mother, she is survived by her husband, Albert Joseph Bernard Jr.; daughters, Caitlin McKenzie and Christina Schardt; brothers, Jeff Schardt and Stephen Schardt; sister, Cathy Schardt and five grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her father and a brother, Chris Schardt.

No services are planned at this time.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the Bernard family. Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



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CDC, FDA lift pause of J&J COVID-19 vaccine

Following a thorough safety review, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration have confidence that the Johnson & Johnson vaccine is safe and effective in preventing COVID-19 and recommend its continued use to prevent serious illness, hospitalization and death from COVID-19. The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is recommending that providers in the state resume administration of the vaccine now that the CDC and FDA have reaffirmed its safety.

The pause was made out of an abundance of caution after reports of six cases of a rare type of blood clot in individuals after receiving the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine. This potential reaction is very rare as millions of people have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine. During the pause, medical and scientific teams at the FDA and CDC examined available data to assess the risk of this type of reaction. In a joint statement, the CDC and FDA shared the following:

- The FDA and CDC have confidence that this vaccine is safe and effective in preventing COVID-19.
- The FDA has determined that the available data show that the vaccine's known and potential benefits outweigh its known and potential risks in individuals 18 years of age and older.
- At this time, the available data suggest that the chance of this type of rare blood clot occurring is very low, but the FDA and CDC will remain vigilant in continuing to investigate this risk.

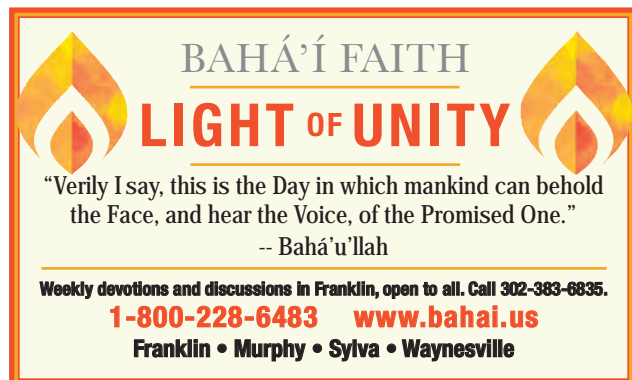
• The Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 fact sheet for recipients has been updated to include information about the risk of this syndrome.

During the pause, 9 additional cases were identified, resulting in 15 total cases among more than 8 million doses given. All of these cases occurred in women between the ages of 18 and 59. More than 250,000 people have received the Johnson & Johnson vaccine in North Carolina as of April 13, 2021.

Like all other COVID-19 vaccines, the Johnson & Johnson vaccine may produce temporary reactions like a sore arm and feeling tired or achy for a day or two. Mild headaches and flu-like symptoms in the first few days after vaccination can be expected. While it is extremely rare that you would have a serious adverse reaction, if you develop severe headache, backache, severe abdominal pain, new neurologic symptoms (like changes in vision, changed mental status or numbness), leg pain or swelling, shortness of breath, tiny red spots on your skin (called petechiae), or new or easy bruising within three weeks after vaccination, contact your health care provider or seek medical care.

Currently, there are approximately 132,000 doses of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine available in North Carolina. The state expects to be able to order new shipments of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine next week.

To read the full statement from the FDA and CDC, go to www.fda.gov.



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Keselowski snags dramatic overtime victory at Talladega

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

Despite sustaining damage in an early wreck, and despite leading only one lap in Sunday's GEICO 500 at Talladega Superspeedway, Brad Keselowski nailed down an opportunistic overtime victory in the 10th event of the NASCAR Cup Series season.

Surging to the front on the final lap, after fellow Ford driver Matt DiBenedetto abandoned the bottom lane and gave Keselowski a clear run to the front, Keselowski claimed his first victory of the season, the 35th of his career and his sixth at Talladega, tying Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr. for second-most all-time at the 2.66-mile track.

As the ninth different winner this season, Keselowski joined Team Penske teammates Joey Logano and Ryan Blaney on the 2021 victory list.

Keselowski said he thought "Merry Christmas!" to himself when the bottom lane opened up on the final lap.

"The whole race, I had a couple of opportunities to take the lead, but I just kept thinking, 'Man, just keep your car in one piece till the end.' We've been so close here, and it just didn't seem to want to come together here the last few years, and I've been on kind of a four-year drought here, but it's nice to get number six.

"I would have never dreamed I'd tie Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr. here. That's something. Those guys are really legends. I'm just really proud of my team. We had an accident there early, and they recovered and got it fixed up to where I could keep running. My crew chief, Jeremy Bullins, had a lot of confidence.

"I told him (before pitting on Lap 173 of a scheduled 188), 'I want to come in and put four tires on this thing,' and he said, 'Yep, go ahead.' And that really helped a bunch at the end."

William Byron ran second, extending his streak of top-10 finishes to eight races. Daytona 500 winner Michael McDowell was third, followed by Kevin Harvick and DiBenedetto. Kaz Grala, Tyler Reddick, Austin Dillon, Ryan Blaney and Cole Custer completed the top 10.

DiBenedetto held the lead at the white flag in overtime, which took the race three laps beyond its posted distance. But the driver of the No. 21 Wood Brothers Ford moved up the track – uncovering Keselowski behind him – to block a run by Blaney. Keselowski used a strong push from McDowell to charge to the lead.

"Our day will come," DiBenedetto said ruefully of the lost opportunity. "We'll get there... It's just so circumstantial — our day will come."

Joey Logano had a much shorter day on track than his winning Team Penske teammate. As the lead pack of cars approached the green/checkered flag to end the first 60-lap stage of the race, an aggressive push from Ricky Stenhouse Jr. forced Denny Hamlin out of line. In the process, Hamlin hooked the left rear of Logano's car, which got airborne off the bumper of Stenhouse's Chevrolet, turned upside-down, landing on its roof



Brad Keselowski, driver of the #2 MoneyLion Ford, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series GEICO 500 at Talladega Superspeedway on April 25, 2021 in Talladega, Ala. Photo by Sean Gardner/Getty Images



once again, Hamlin was at the center of the maelstrom. As the top lane accorded behind Keselowski, who was running second at the time, Martin Truex Jr. tapped Hamlin from behind, turning the No. 11 Toyota into the wall.

Truex then spun sideways, sustaining damage. Behind him, Byron steered down the track to the avoid the wreck and collected Hendrick Motorsports teammates Alex Bowman and Chase Elliott in a chain-reaction collision. Bowman couldn't get his car repaired in the requisite six minutes and fell out of the race in 38th place.

and barrel-rolled before righting itself. Keselowski's car also sustained minor damage in the incident.

When Logano's car bounced on its roof, his head hit the roll bar.

"It's nobody's fault," Logano said after a mandatory visit to the infield care center. "Denny is trying to go and the 47 (Stenhouse) is trying to go. It's a product of this racing. We have to fix it, though... At the same time, I'm appreciative of driving a car that is this safe and what Team Penske has done for the safety of these cars so that I can live to talk about it and go again.

"I got lucky that I didn't get hit while I was in the air."

The end of the second stage also produced fireworks, and

Series points leader Hamlin, who led a race-high 43 laps, finished 32nd, three laps down.

Elliott, the reigning series champion, was able to continue and finished 24th. Harrison Burton came home 20th in his NASCAR Cup Series debut.

Jeb Burton gets first NASCAR Xfinity win in rain-shortened Talladega race

A thunderstorm pelted Talladega Superspeedway at just the right time for Jeb Burton.

After a seven-car wreck on the backstretch, Burton held the lead under caution when the rain intensified. After NASCAR

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brought the Xfinity Series cars to pit road, the clouds opened and made a first-time winner of the driver of the No. 10 Kaulig Racing Chevrolet.

Burton's win in Saturday's Ag-Pro 300 was the third straight at Talladega for Kaulig Racing, which swept last year's two events with driver Justin Haley.

"Unbelievable, man," said Burton, son of 2002 Daytona 500 winner Ward Burton. "It's been a tough road to get to this point. Just an unbelievable race team. Today we had Mother Nature on our side, but we had a fast car anyway. We ran up front all day..."

"We've been building and building and building, and I feel like I've kind of been the weak link the last couple of races, and I need to clean some things up. Just the momentum—that's what I needed... I want to win races. I told them (Kaulig Racing) that I wanted to come there and hang banners."

The wreck on the backstretch on Lap 85 of a scheduled 113 destroyed the cars of Joe Gibbs Racing teammates Brandon Jones and Ty Dillon and ended the last green-flag run of the race. Michael Annett spun off the bumper of Joe Graf Jr.'s car, igniting a seven-car accident that brought out the fourth and final caution of the afternoon.

Dillon's Toyota was knocked up the track into the Supra of Jones, as both cars sustained severe damage.

The first two 25-lap stages ran without incident. Justin Haley surged into the lead on the final lap of Stage 1 and beat Jeb Burton to the stripe to score the Playoff point.

The second stage went to Noah Gragson, who moved past Austin Cindric on Lap 50 to get the win.

Series leader Austin Cindric finished second, followed by AJ Allmendinger, Riley Herbst and Ryan Sieg. Sixth-place Gragson pocketed the \$100,000 Xfinity Dash 4 Cash bonus for the second straight race as the highest finisher among four eligible drivers.

"A hundred thousand dollars is a big deal for us," Gragson said. "This is two times in a row. It's pretty cool to be able to do that, but, man, I wanted to race for the win... A hundred thousand's nice, but I race for wins. It is what it is. It's 'Dega, baby.'"

Jeb Burton, Austin Cindric, AJ Allmendinger and Noah Gragson all qualify for the next round of the Dash 4 Cash at Darlington Raceway on May 9.

Cindric, the reigning series champion, leaves Talladega with a 59-point lead in the standings over second-place Daniel Hemric, who ran 12th on Saturday.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America announced as Official Youth Community Partner of NASCAR

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – NASCAR and Boys & Girls Clubs of America has announced a multiyear partnership that will support the nonprofit's mission of enabling and enriching the lives of young people. As the Official Youth Community Partner of NASCAR, Boys & Girls Clubs of America will work with NASCAR and industry stakeholders to engage more than 4.6 million youth and teens across the country with NASCAR content and experiences.

The nationwide partnership will focus on three core areas – STEM education, career development and diversity, equity and inclusion (DE&I) initiatives – and extend across all NASCAR

platforms and racetracks. Programming will include both virtual and at-track experiences with an emphasis on local Boys & Girls Club locations within NASCAR race markets.

Partnership efforts will build on the continuing work of The NASCAR Foundation to advance children's well-being, including ongoing relationships with several Boys & Girls Clubs across the country.

"As a community leader, Boys & Girls Clubs of America continues to have immeasurable impact on the lives of our country's youth, and NASCAR looks forward to engaging those efforts in meaningful ways," said Steve Phelps, president of NASCAR. "Through this partnership and together with the NASCAR industry, we have boundless opportunities to advance the mission and objectives of Boys & Girls Clubs of America while at the same time introducing young future fans to our great sport."

"Kids and teens need safe places and caring mentors now more than ever, and local Boys & Girls Clubs around the country are doing whatever it takes to empower

youth and build new opportunities so they can achieve every success in life," said Jim Clark, president & CEO Boys & Girls Clubs of America. "We are very excited to partner with NASCAR to elevate this support in communities even further, enabling more high-quality programming and experiences that will have a positive impact on kids and teens."

As young people continue to emerge from the pandemic and navigate virtual learning, year one of the partnership will focus on developing high-quality education programming that will live on MyFuture, Boys & Girls Clubs of America's digital learning platform. Additionally, NASCAR's work with Boys & Girls Clubs of America will focus on career development and mentoring across a breadth of industry disciplines and will include engagement with industry executives and other employees.

Throughout the partnership, NASCAR will collaborate with drivers, teams and tracks to amplify the sport's commitment to Boys & Girls Clubs of America and deepen the engagement with Club youth and teens. NASCAR partners will also have the opportunity to integrate with the new partnership, and several partners will look to build on their own longstanding relationships with Boys & Girls Clubs of America.

Boys & Girls Clubs of America provides high-quality programming that helps level the playing field and provide opportunities to young people that will help them build the skills they need to become the leaders, innovators and problem-solvers who shape our world.

To learn more about Boys & Girls Clubs of America and support its mission with donations, visit BGCA.org.



Jeb Burton, driver of the #10 LS Tractors Chevrolet, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Ag-Pro 300 at Talladega Superspeedway on April 24, 2021 in Talladega, Alabama.

Photo by Sean Gardner/Getty Images



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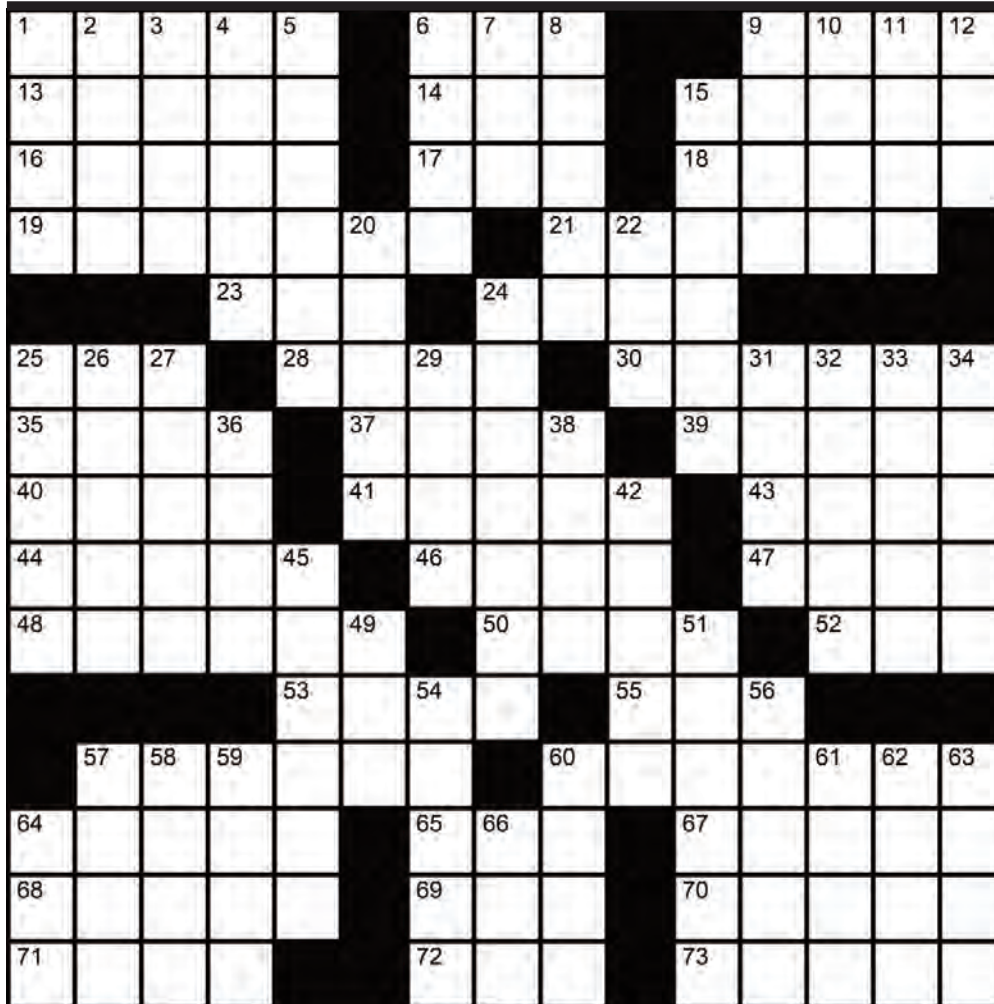
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1. Build a collection
6. Economic measure acronym
9. *Beverly Goldberg's schmoopie
13. Use an épée
14. Neither here ____ there
15. Tall ancient monument
16. Daisy-like bloom
17. Much of it about nothing?
18. Commotions
19. *She's 'Bow' to Dre in TV sitcom "Blackish"
21. *Mother to Jo, Meg, Amy and Beth March in novel and movie
23. Before tac
24. Ripped
25. Part of Super Bowl entertainment, pl.
28. Homesteader's measure
30. **"Game of Thrones" Lannister and mother to Joffrey, Myrcella and Tommen
35. Douses
37. Adjutant
39. Article of faith
40. Genuflecting joint
41. *TV mother to Alexis and David, "friend" to Jocelyn Schitt
43. "Will be," as sung by Doris Day
44. Perform in a play
46. Load sixteen tons, e.g.
47. Peacock's pride
48. *Mowgli's adoptive mother
50. Apartment
52. Skeleton in a lock
53. Part of a jousting outfit
55. Spelling competition
57. *Mother to Carlton in "The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air"





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60. "Well, I'm a-standin' on a corner in ____, Arizona," from the Eagles "Take it Easy"
 64. Country's LeAnn ____
 65. Hoover's agency acronym
 67. Piano practice piece, e.g.
 68. Church song
 69. What Usain Bolt did
 70. Poisonous substance
 71. *Wife to Papa, mother to Baby
 72. Sum it up
 73. Go on a buying spree
- ### DOWN
1. Way, way off
 2. ____ Verde National Park
 3. Naysayer's favorite prefix?
 4. What bloodhound is after
 5. Croatia's neighbor
 6. Nibble away
 7. Affirmative action
 8. Movie trailer, e.g.
 9. Elementary particle
 10. *Claire Dunphy and Mitchell Pritchett's mother
 11. Soothing lotion ingredient
 12. Bell and Barker, e.g.
 15. Christopher Kimball's "Milk ____"
 20. ____'s razor
 22. Part of a circle
 24. Tiresome
 25. Questioner
 26. **"Mamma Mia!" mamma
 27. Do this or forever hold your peace
 29. '80s band "Quiet ____"
 31. Catch one's breath
 32. ____ a peak
 33. Bone-chilling
 34. Europe's "boot"
 36. Short for seconds
 38. *She played Ricky Schroder's stepmom on "Silver Spoons"
 42. Defendant's excuse
 45. Religious belief
 49. ____ Khan
 51. Plural of #39 Across
 54. Below, prefix
 56. Impede
 57. "Everywhere you want to be" credit card
 58. Muslim holy man
 59. Plural of velum
 60. *Ellen, Scarlett's mother in "Gone with the ____"
 61. Like the best accommodations
 62. War god in Norse mythology
 63. Make one's way
 64. Dashboard acronym
 66. *Kunis, Hahn and Bell as "____ Moms"

Classifieds

Misc. For Sale

FULL SIZE SLEEPER Sofa, medium slate blue color. Minimally used, in very good condition. Asking \$280. Teeter Hang-up Inversion Table model #EP-960. In very good condition. Asking \$180. Diane (828)421-5539 (Not available 2pm-9pm Thursdays).

MILITARY SURPLUS W/C Pants/Shirts, Jackets. Military Boots On Sale. Cold Weather Clothing, Field Gear, Sleep Bags, Packs, Bags. (828)349-3140.

Garage & Yard Sales

HONEY BEES FOR SALE A Few 5 Frame Nuc's. New Marked Queens. Call after 6 p.m. (828)524-6051

FARMERS MARKET Spring Season 9-12, every Saturday. Please Come Out and Support Your Local Farmers Market. Winter Vegetables, Honey, Fresh Chicken, Artisan Breads, Pastries, Preserves, Handcrafted Soaps, Eggs, Large Assortment of Cookies. Blueberry & Blackberry Bushes, Peonies. 200 Block East Palmer.

Auctions

PALLET JACK, w/rebuilt pump \$150.00. **AB CHAIR** Model "AB Lounge XL" \$125.00 Tom 828-524-4072

SMOKEY MOUNTAIN AUCTION CO. online bidding, Smokeymountainauctioncompany.hibid.com preview in person, 175 Jim Mann Rd. Open 10am-4pm Mon-Sat NCAL Firm 10389 (828)634-4271.

Classifieds

\$8.00 **20 words or less**

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The Classifieds

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NOW HIRING Experienced Line Cooks. Apply in Person at 145 Highlands Rd. Between the hours of 7am-2pm Ms. Lois Restaurant.

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AUTO BODY MAN/PAINTER Wanted Also Auto Detail/Cleanup Person. Apply after 3pm at 69 Mill St. Franklin.

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

Real Estate

FOR SALE BY OWNER 4 Lots in Gated Community. Long Range Views, Good Roads, Backed up to Indian Land. (828)421-4582.

Rentals

2BD/1.5BA One level, new carpeting, paint, carport, utility room. Cowee. Landlord on property. Owner does yard work. Perfect for retired couple. No pets. First/Last/Security, \$1,200/monthly. Reference. Must meet lease requirements. Available May 1 (828)371-7760.

Commercial Rentals

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY for lease on 441 south. 2 Full bays, 2 story office space, all for lease separately. \$1500 per bay, \$1500 for office space, monthly. Call (828)369-5333 for more information.

HOUSEKEEPERS WANTED for 2021 Season. Looking for quality housekeepers to work 2 or 3 days a week in the Highlands & Cashiers area. Work in pleasant homes, with nice customers. Dependable car needed & cell phone. Drug test & background check required. \$14.00 per hour, with \$20 gas allowance per day. If interested, please send resume to: TheCleaningTeam4U@gmail.com

WIOA CASE MANAGER: Jackson & Swain Counties Join a motivated team striving to assist participants who are seeking education and occupational skills to obtain/retain employment opportunities. The ideal candidate for this position is involved in these communities and is enthusiastic about assisting individuals in securing gainful employment. Requirements: Responsible for coordinating the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) services by increasing employment and job retention for participants. Responsible for assisting in the increase of occupational skills attainment by providing training services. Performs initial assessments and evaluations of each participant's employability, aptitudes and interests through interviews, testing and counseling. Places participants in training classes and assists with job searches. Promotes the program through visits within the community and colleges. Coordinates and oversees the On the Job Training (OJT) program. Ensures continuous improvement toward program goals to achieve required and desired outcomes. Performs other duties as assigned. Working knowledge of Microsoft Office Products. Excellent communication skills. Valid driver's license required. Education and Experience: Bachelor's degree, two years related experience and/or training or the equivalent combination of education and experience. MPP is an EEO/AA Employer. Ways to apply: NC Works office, 23 Macon Avenue, Franklin NC or www.ncworks.gov MPP website | mppnhc.org Email resume to admin@mppnhc.org Apply by 5:00 pm Friday, May 14, 2021.

Community Fundraisers

BAKE SALE Wednesday, May 5, 4-6pm, Hickory Knoll United Methodist Church.

HABITAT RE-STORE 56 W Palmer St., Franklin. Furniture, Lighting, Plumbing, Building Materials, Doors & Windows, Appliances & More! (828)524-5273. Sylva Re-Store, 1315 W. Main St. (828)586-1800. Hours for both Stores Mon./Wed./Fri./Sat. 10-4pm.

REACH FOR BARGAINS in Heritage Hollow, open Tues.-Sat. 10am-3pm. Benefits Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Macon County. Information call (828)369-2040.

Services

PAINTING & STAINING Residential, Interior/Exterior, Repaint, Pressure Washing, Deck Repair, Locally Owned & Operated, Franklin/Highlands Area, 30 Years, Excellent References, Free Estimates, Insured, Chandler Contracting. (828)369-5104, (828)226-3792.

DAVID CHEEK'S WELL PUMPS Sales Service & Installation of Pumps and Iron Removal Systems. For All Your Water Needs. (828)369-5176.

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

DIESCHER ELECTRIC Professional service. Reasonable rates. NC Licensed and fully insured. 20+ years experience. (845)807-1326.

MELTON'S ROOFING and Gutter Cleaning. Give Us a Call at cell# (828)421-6712 With All Your Roof and Gutter Needs.

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

HYDROSEEDING & SOD LAWNS Now Is The Time! Ron's Hydroseeding. (828)524-3976.

STALLSWORTH PAINTING Interior/Exterior, Pressure Washing, Handyman, 35 Years Experience. (239)860-0117.

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CRANE BROS. WELL Drilling, 6" Drilled Wells for Farms Homes and Industries, Free Estimates. 248 Crane Circle, Franklin. (828)524-4976.

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

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LAWNS MOWED in Macon County Area, 25 Years Mowing Experience. Starting at \$35. Call (828)524-0114.

HOME & PROPERTY CARETAKER Service. We Will Be There When You Can't to Offer Routine Home Inspections, Maintenance, Repairs and Peace of Mind. (828)421-6712.

Boats & Campers

AUTO PARTS/COLLISION Parts: Bumpers, Fenders, Headlights and Used Parts, Motors, Transmissions, Accessories. Installation Available. Franklin Body Shop. (828)524-7494.

RV 2003 JAYCO 28' Slide-out, Air/Heat, Refrigerator/Freezer, Microwave, Queen Bed, 4KW Generator \$4K (828)349-3473.

Animals

FOUND SHAR PEI MIX Brown White Mix, Male, Mashburn Branch Area. No collar or identification. Call (828)342-3949.

VOLUNTEERS & DOG WALKERS Needed at Macon County Animal Services. 18 years and older. Call Debbie (941)266-7084.



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