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Franklin High School student body selected this year's Mr. & Ms. FHS crowning the winners at a Friday afternoon ceremony in the Panther Pit. Earning this year's titles are Peyton Wood and Dylan Garcia. Following the ceremony, the FHS Interact Club sponsored a girls-only Powderpuff Football game. Girls who wished to play paid a \$10 fee and boys who wanted to coach also paid \$10. Proceeds from spectator donations were earmarked to go to Compassion International. For photos of the Mr. & Ms. FHS court, see pages 12 & 13.

Photo by Vickie Carpenter

School board makes pitch for new high school

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

The Macon County Board of Commissioners took a big step Tuesday night in moving forward with plans to replace the Franklin High School building located in the heart of downtown Franklin. The school, which was built in the early 1950s, has had substantial issues over the last decade or so, with the school board and county commissioner pouring in funding every year to keep the school operational. From new windows to security upgrades like fencing and cameras, every year maintenance projects at Franklin High School take up a significant portion of the school district's capital outlay funds.

After a decade of back and forth and talking about the needs at Franklin High School, the Macon County Board of Education sent a formal request to county commissioners last month asking for a new high school facility to be built on the current site of Franklin High School.

Macon County Schools Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin stated that Macon County Schools has explored options to relocate the high school, but he recommended building a new facility at the current location.

"We've gone so far in the past decade, as to look out into the community, to identify parcels of land that would be conducive for a new site for Franklin High School," said Baldwin. "Unfortunately, none of those sites were found to be perfectly favorable, and we've moved on from those. But it may be time to consider a new Franklin High School facility at the current site."

The school board has been working with an architectural firm who volunteered to create preliminary design plans for a proposed scope of work and a project estimate to replace Franklin High School on the same site of its current location. The proposal, which is estimated to cost between \$70 million to \$80 million would create minimal disruption in the school year and be scheduled around the Franklin Panther football season to avoid disruption in school athletic seasons.

The scope of work includes building one, three-story academic building to house all classes and a two-story field house that would open directly onto the Franklin High

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Cyber attack shuts down vital East Coast pipeline

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

Over the weekend the Colonial Pipeline was shut down after a ransomware cyberattack. As news about the cyberattack spread, concerns about the shut-down causing a disruption in the supply chain for gas grew leading to drivers scrambling to fuel their vehicles. The panic-buying spree left many stations either without gasoline and forcing others to limit or regulate gas sales.

Monday night the panic-buying made its way to WNC with many stations across Macon and Jackson counties reporting shortages beginning on Monday.

The Colonial Pipeline is a privately owned fuel pipeline stretching 5,500 miles from Texas to New Jersey serving states along the East Coast. In response to the interruption in supply and demand for gas, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper issued a State of Emergency on Monday, which kickstarted North Carolina's price gouging law that is now in effect.

"The hackers who breached Colonial Pipeline's systems have made it harder for hardworking North Carolinians to go about their lives, but I will not allow businesses to take advantage of this incident to charge excessive prices," said Attorney General Josh Stein. "North Carolina's price gouging law is in effect – please let my office know if businesses or people might be trying to profit off this situation so we can hold them accountable."

North Carolina's law against price gouging, or charging too much in times of a crisis, goes into effect when the governor declares a state of emergency. In some cases, businesses and industries that are heavily impacted by the incident causing the state of emergency have a reasonable



The Fastop gas station on Georgia Road ran out of gas earlier this week, along with other stations across the county and the southeast.

need to increase prices in order to resupply, but they should disclose these increases and allow people to make informed purchasing decisions. Businesses cannot, however, unreasonably raise the price of goods or services to profit from a state of emergency.

Stations in outlying areas of Macon County saw gas prices rise as much as 30 cents per gallon and many have already sold their limited inventory with no real promise of when they will be able to resupply.

Colonial Pipeline, the company that operates the pipeline, has said that it hopes to restore most operations by the end of the week. The attack, which the Federal Bureau of Investigation said was carried out by an organized crime group called DarkSide, has highlighted the vulnerability of the American energy system. The pipeline provides the Eastern United States with nearly half its transportation fuel.

North Carolinians are urged to report potential price gouging by calling 1-877-5-NO-SCAM or by filing a complaint at <https://ncdoj.gov/file-a-complaint/price-gouging/>.

SCHOOL BOARD

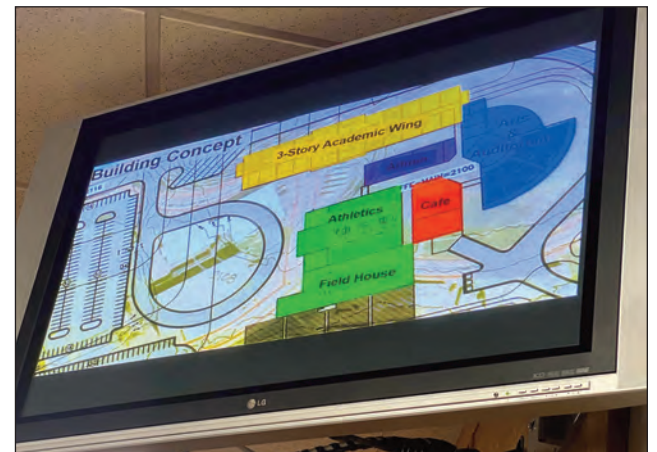
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School football field. The project would also address the drainage and flooding issues of the football field by working with the football practice field to bring in dirt already on the campus and potentially installing underground water tanks to store water that accumulates during rains that have caused sinkholes and damage to both the parking lot, football field and track.

After the academic building would be completed, the proposal outlines for the existing high school campus to be demolished with baseball fields or other school amenities to be constructed in its place.

Macon County Commissioner's Ronnie Beale, Josh Young, Jim Tate, and Gary Shields were all in favor of the project. Commissioner Paul Higdon noted that although he understands a new facility is needed, he thinks the conversation to raise taxes and build a new facility is rushed. Higdon noted that he would rather see the county slow down and develop a long-term plan to address all school needs as well as the county's capital improvement plan before committing such substantial funds to one project at the high school.

Baldwin said that if the board decides to continue to wait on a new facility and delay construction of a new school again, that the school board would ask the county to look at



The plans for the new high school include a three-story academic building, field house, cafe, arts auditorium and an admin building located at the current site of FHS.

funding significant renovations to address immediate needs at the football field and the fine arts building, which cannot be ignored any longer.

Commissioners are set to begin their budget planning process on May 25 and agreed that if a new high school was going to be built, discussing it — and the possible need for a 5-7 cent property tax increase to fund the construction — would be appropriate during the county's budget process.



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AMC nurses reflect on a tough year during National Nurses Week

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

After an unprecedented year in healthcare, National Nurses Week means a little more this year, as nurses were thrust into the frontlines of the COVID19 pandemic. While others stayed home to stay safe, nurses layered on PPE [personal protective equipment] and cared for hundreds of thousands of people impacted by the Coronavirus all while balancing their regular duties.

“Over the past year, COVID-19 has challenged healthcare professionals across the country, sending shockwaves across the rural care community,” said JR Eller, Nurse Manager, MSN, RN, NE-BC at Angel Medical Center. “Healthcare providers confronted an unknown opponent, unlike anything before. The nursing staff here at Angel Medical Center met this crisis head-on. Not only did they survive, but they thrived. Every day, nurses and staff members donned the personal protective equipment, providing the essential care needed to our patients and community.”

National Nurses Week begins each year on May 6 and ends on May 12, Florence Nightingale's birthday. These permanent dates enhance planning and position National Nurses Week as an established recognition event. As of 1998, May 8 was designated as National Student Nurses Day, to be celebrated annually. And as of 2003, National School Nurse Day is celebrated on the Wednesday within National Nurses Week (May 6-12) each year.

“Watching the majority of patients overcome and recover from COVID-19 has been nothing short of amazing,” said Eller. “Listening to patient stories and engaging families solidified the care AMC provided, ensuring we were available when needed. For those families who lost a loved one, our thoughts and prayers are with you and yours. COVID-19 will not defeat us, as its time too shall pass.”

Nurse Tate Jacobs works in the ICU and on the Medical Surgical floor at Angel Medical Center.

“When COVID started, I was an oncology nurse at Mission so I was terrified that I would bring it into the hospital. In September, I transferred from Mission to Angel and dove right into caring for COVID patients. The scariest time for me was when the ICU was full of COVID patients that all required oxygen, bipap, vapotherm, and ventilators,” said Jacobs. “Now a year later, how do you feel? After a year, I feel more confident when taking care of COVID patients because I have learned so much in such a short amount of time but I also take COVID very seriously after seeing the number of sick patients and deaths throughout the year.”

Tate said that while caring for patients



Tate Jacobs is a nurse who works in the Intensive Care Unit and the Medical Surgical floor at Angel Medical Center.

throughout the year, it was also important to ensure she took care of herself and her family.

“Being a COVID nurse has been mentally and physically exhausting,” said Jacobs. “After caring for these highly contagious patients, I worried every day if I would bring it home to my family. I love to hug my loved ones but I have been hesitant this year. I am so blessed to have such a supportive husband (Kevin), and parents (Tommy and Sally) who have been by my side. I have kept my faith and prayed harder than ever.”

Reflecting on the past year, Jacobs said that each day was a whirlwind from beginning to end.

“A typical day as a nurse in a COVID unit looks like a tornado touched down. There are yellow protective gowns hanging on all the doors and masks, and gloves, everywhere,” said Jacobs. “Monitors alarming all the time, phones constantly ringing from scared family members and new updates every day.”

Jacobs said that with more and more people getting the vaccine, she and her coworkers are waiting for the day that they can work without having to wear a mask for 13 hours straight, but says she doesn't that will happen anytime soon.

“I also want to thank everyone at Angel for coming together as a team and family,” said Jacobs. “From EVS deep cleaning every nook and cranny to nutrition who makes specific trays for those who can't taste and don't want to eat, Tom for keeping our supply room stocked, and JR for managing the floor at all times. It takes a village. I can honestly say, I love where I work and who I work with. COVID is real and has killed so many people. Love one another because tomorrow is never promised. Nursing is not easy, but it is the best decision I have made in my life.”

Audrey Rogers has worked as a nurse for

the last three years and currently serves as a Team Lead MedSurg/ICU nurse. Rogers said that like Jacobs, she is waiting for the day for normalcy to return to her life.

"I am beyond ready for some normalcy," said Rogers. "I want everyone to remain safe and smart, but I think not having to

wear masks would be the first step back to normalcy. It is awesome to see the Covid numbers go down in the hospital. It gives us all hope."

After more than a year of working with COVID19 patients, Rogers said there are things she won't ever forget.

"The main thing that has affected me has been having to watch the patients be sick alone due to visitor restrictions," said Rogers. "It is very sad and heartbreaking. Although I understand that it is necessary to cut down on the spread of Covid, it doesn't make it any easier to watch."

Just as everyone else celebrates nurses after such a difficult year, Rogers said she will also be celebrating her coworkers, who have gotten her through the pandemic.

"My coworkers are the best," said Rogers. "They are the only way I have gotten through this thing. They are more than willing to help, they are supportive, they have worked extra shifts, they have come in early and stayed late, we have taken extra classes for more education, prayed for each other, prayed with each other, and we have yet to give up or give into anything thrown at us through it all. Angel Medical Center has some of the best staff around."



Audrey Rogers serves as a Team lead MedSurg/ICU nurse at Angel Medical Center.

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Paddling down the Tennessee reveals local history, Cherokee culture

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

At one time all along both sides of the Tennessee River in Franklin and beyond were thriving Cherokee villages, trade roads, council houses atop ancient mounds, and agricultural fields. Brent and Angela-Faye Martin led an April 25th educational kayaking trip from the Lake Emory Dam to McCoy Bridge in Cowee so that participating paddlers could understand what life may have been like for Cherokee in the 18th and early 19th century, before the Indian Removal.

The almost 10-mile stretch passed two ancient Native mounds, Watauga and Cowee. At the Cowee Mound, the group pushed their kayaks into a tributary and took a break to eat lunch and read the informational kiosk that is part of the Cherokee Cultural Corridor.

Brent Martin, who also serves as director of the Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy, informed the paddlers that what is now mostly farm land along the Tennessee River (some farmed by the same families for at least a century) was at one time, red with Cherokee-cultivated wild strawberries.

“When William Bartram passed through here in 1775, he described horses’ hooves stained red from strawberries,” he told kayakers. “Bartram’s descriptions of life along the Tennessee at that time are the only detailed ones we have.”

While paddling, Martin mentioned various passages from “Travels of William Bartram” Bartram was a famed naturalist who traveled extensively in the area to observe life, flora, and fauna. Bartram wrote about the strawberries. “The swelling bases of the surrounding hills fronting the meadows

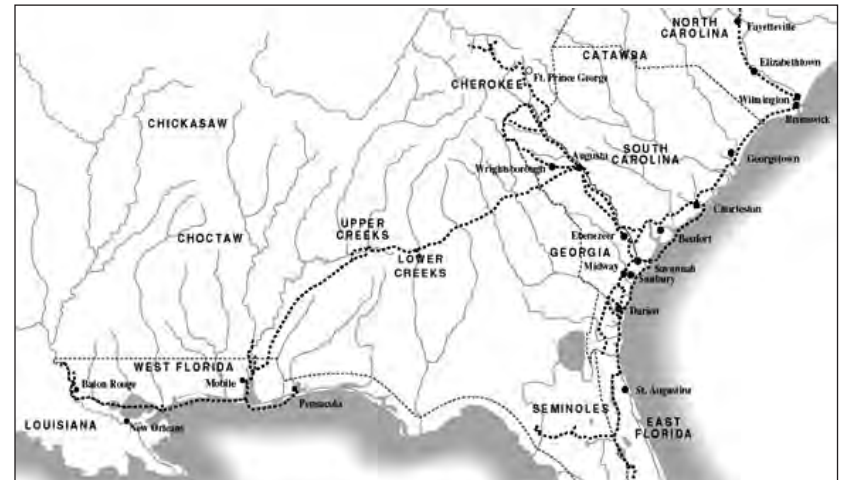


Birding, local history, and Cherokee culture were the topics presented to kayakers on a recent paddling trip down the Little Tennessee River.

presented for my acceptance the fragrant red strawberry, in painted beds of many acres, indeed I may safely say, many hundreds.”

The kayaking group, when passing the Watauga mound, across from Mainspring Conservation Trust’s Gibson Bottoms project along the river, were informed about the Cherokee Chief of Watauga that Bartram met and wrote about. Martin shared that it is one of his favorite passages in the book: “During my countenance here, about half an hour, I experienced the most perfect and agreeable hospitality conferred on me by these happy people; I mean happy in their dispositions, in their apprehension of rectitude with regard to our social or moral conduct: O divine simplicity and truth, friendship without fallacy or guile, hospitality disinterested, native, undefiled, unmodified by artificial refinements.”

Martin pointed out fishing weirs along the river, indicating dozens still exist in the stretch that the paddlers traveled. These mostly V-shaped areas in the river were constructed of stone by Cherokee, and baskets or nets were



Brent Martin referenced a historic map that shows the Cherokee villages and their names that once existed along the Tennessee River from the Franklin area through Cowee.

placed at the end of weirs to contain the fish. He also noted that Cherokee traveled down the Little Tennessee in dugout canoes, made from large hardwood trees, that could often accommodate several people.

Both Brent and Angela Martin provided the group with information about the many birds sighted along the Little Tennessee, including kingfishers, barn and cliff swallows, a bald eagle, ospreys, and wood ducks.

Through hiking, paddling, and camping, the Martins’ intention is to provide opportunities for individuals and groups to learn about nature and local history.

Upcoming activities include “Wildcraft Kitchen Comes to Cowee,” Saturday, May 15, and “In Bloom: Silky Camellia,” May 29.



On a recent historical paddling trip along the Tennessee River, the group included (from left): Robert Smith, Eric & Pat Towers, Alarka Expedition guides Angela-Faye Martin and Brent Martin, and Mary Ann Litrell. They stopped at the Cowee Mound kiosk to rest and eat lunch and learn more about the ancient Cherokee site.

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FHS bands present 2021 Spring Concert



On Monday, the Franklin High School Band department put on its first concert since December 2019 last Monday. The theme was "Year in Review" with the Jazz Band and the Marching Panther Regiment performing musical numbers that they would have performed throughout the year if they had been allowed to. Selections included songs from their football half-time show, Christmas songs, songs that were set to be performed at the Cherokee Heritage Festival and more. The band is preparing for a normal marching band camp in July and working on a possible competition trip.

"One of the worst hit groups during Covid has been live entertainment," said Buddy Huckabee, band director. "... Our lives will not be back to 'normal' until we can get our arts back. This is the way that many people deal with emotions and without an outlet, many will and have suffered. I do know that since our students have returned to school and are able to be back in my class playing with their band family again, their emotional well being and overall attitudes have improved drastically. Music will be the way out of an emotional pandemic rollercoaster as we hopefully see light at the end of this tunnel."

Photos by Vickie Carpenter



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Overland rentals open for business in Franklin

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce recently celebrated with Appalachian Overland Rentals a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Appalachian Overland Rentals is a new locally owned and operated business renting recreational vehicles. Owners Lucas and Cynthia Freimuth, both locals, are currently taking reservations for the 2021 season in Franklin.

"Throughout our travels around the country and overseas, we have always found our way back home to Franklin, N.C. Our love for traveling, camping, and exploring our backroads in WNC sparked the desire to help others have a convenient and affordable way to do the same."

"We have created a unique fleet of rental vehicles fully equipped to give our guests a jump start on their next adventure. The rentals available include an expedition pull-behind trailer; a pull-behind teardrop camper with sleeping quarters; a Jeep Grand Cherokee and Toyota Tacoma with



Lucas and Cynthia Freimuth have started a recreational vehicle rental business in Franklin. Celebrating with them are Franklin chamber representatives, staff and family.

overland builds; and a fully self-contained camper van. Rentals range from \$85 to \$250 per night and all rentals come equipped with camping essentials," said Lucas Freimuth.

For more information visit AppalachianOverlandRentals.com or call 828-332-0116. Follow them on social media for upcoming specials, events and more.

Abby's Angels CBD opens store in Franklin

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting ceremony welcoming Abby's Angels to the Franklin business community. Abby's Angels storefront is located at 520 East Main Street, Unit A.

Abby's Angels CBD is a locally and family owned farm to shelf CBD company. It was started after Abby Brogden, who has a rare form of epilepsy, had life changing results using a full spectrum CBD oil as an alternative medication for treatment of her seizures.

The product line includes full and broad spectrum tinctures, topicals, gummies and pet tinctures and treats. To learn more about their story and how they got started, visit the website at www.abbyangelsnc.com.



Abby Brogden, for whom Abby's Angels is named, prepares to cut the ribbon on their storefront located at 520 East Main Street, Unit A.



Chamber representatives Gary Shields and Cindy Cavender hold the ribbon for TNT CEO Ray Truesdell in a recent ribbon cutting ceremony.

TNT Recycle Inc. offers pick-up service for clients

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon cutting celebration for TNT Recycle, Inc. TNT Recycle, Inc. is a home and business recycle pick-up service who caters to your needs. TNT Recycle can pick-up all recycled items or just what clients want to recycle. For example, pick up is available for just glass bottles or a combination of whichever items clients want to recycle. Pick-ups can be scheduled weekly or bi-weekly for those who don't have much for a weekly pick-up. Two, 17-gallon bins are included in the cost or your current system can be used.

"We also offer clean-up services hauling away anything clients don't want and recycling what we can. This includes removal of landscape debris, appliances and whole house clean-outs" said Ray Truesdell, CEO.

TNT Recycle has been in business since November 2019 serving Franklin, Highlands, Scaly Mountain, Glenville, Cashiers, Sapphire and Sylva areas. The company is looking to expand in new areas soon but its home base is in Macon County.

Check out the website at www.TNTRecycle.com for more information, call (828) 347-6569 or email to Ray@TNTRecycle.com to start services or ask questions. Check them out on Facebook at TNT Recycle and like their page. TNT shares re-using ideas, recycling news and awesome do-it-yourself projects along with a free (and printable) PDF e-Book called the "TNT Recycle's Idea Book." The book offers ideas on how to re-use, refurbish or be creative with recycling. Email if you are interested and they will send you the book.

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Angel Medical's Cancer Center opens
Ribbon cutting marks completion of state-of-the-art facility

Photo: Matt Walker

Left: Frank Truesdell, CEO of TNT Recycle, Inc., and Ray Truesdell, CEO of TNT Recycle, Inc., cutting the ribbon at the new TNT Recycle, Inc. facility. Right: Ray Truesdell, CEO of TNT Recycle, Inc., and Ray Truesdell, CEO of TNT Recycle, Inc., cutting the ribbon at the new TNT Recycle, Inc. facility.

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Harbor Freight holds job fair Thursday

Harbor Freight Tools is opening a new store in Franklin. The new store will be located at 395 Westgate Plaza and is expected to open this summer.

Construction has already begun at the location, using local workers and companies from the surrounding Franklin area.

In addition, the store is expected to bring between 25 and 30 new jobs to the community, including sales and logistic supervisors, senior associates, sales associates, and seasonal opportunities as well. Harbor Freight Tools offers a competitive starting rate along with a best-in-class retail benefits package that includes health coverage. Harbor Freight provides stability and the opportunity to advance in a company that continues to grow, with more than 23,000 associates and more than 1,100 locations nationwide. *Forbes Magazine* recently recognized Harbor Freight as the country's number one employer for veterans as well as one of the top 20 large employers in all of retail. In addition, DiversityJobs.com has named Harbor Freight one of their 2021 Top Employers, citing the company's commitment to recruiting and hiring from all diversity groups.

"We've been looking to open a location in Franklin for a number of years so that we can

provide the tools and equipment at tremendous values to the community," said Trey Feiler, Senior Vice President, Real Estate and Construction for Harbor Freight Tools. "In addition to finding a great location, we were attracted by the availability of great associates in the Franklin area, and we look forward to having them join the Harbor Freight team."

A job fair is being held Thursday, May 13, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Franklin Chamber of Commerce, 98 Hyatt Road. Interested applicants can apply online at www.harborfreightjobs.com/retail and search "Franklin, NC".

About Harbor Freight Tools

For more than 40 years, Harbor Freight Tools has been America's go-to source for affordable tools. The family-owned company started in Southern California in 1977, when 17-year-old Eric Smidt began transforming his father's small phone sales business into a successful mail order company, bypassing the resellers, dealing directly with factories, and passing the savings on to the customer.

The company opened its first store in 1980. Today, Harbor Freight Tools has 1,100 stores across the country, 23,000 associates and more than 40 million customers.

FHS graduate Reece Kimsey named as Principal of S.C. investment firm

Middleburg Communities announces that Reece Kimsey has been promoted to Principal, a reflection of his increased ownership in the firm's business and larger role in all of the company's projects, including new development opportunities.

"Reece is highly entrepreneurial and has excelled at building a culture of excellence within Middleburg's team. In only three short years, Reece has grown our land acquisitions team into a highly effective group and developed a significant amount of capital to fuel our growth," said Middleburg Communities Managing Partner and CEO, Chris Finlay. "We are looking forward to his continued leadership as he applies his grass roots style and drive to advance our mission to be a top investor, developer and operator in the Southeast U.S."

Prior to joining Middleburg Communities, Kimsey founded Wayah Wake Real Estate Advisors in Charleston, S.C. Additionally, Kim-



Reece Kimsey

sey helped oversee land acquisitions for a Top 5 National Homebuilder located in Charleston, S.C. Before moving to acquisitions, Kimsey practiced commercial real estate and transactional law in Charlotte, N.C., with the southeastern regional law firm of Parker Poe Adams & Bernstein, LLP.

Reece is a 2007 graduate of Franklin High School. He received his dual Juris Doctorate (JD) focused in transactional law and Master of Business (MBA) in corporate finance and real estate from Wake Forest

University in 2015. Reece is the son of Marty Kimsey and Jane Cansler Kimsey, and currently resides in Charleston, S.C.

About Middleburg Communities

Since 2004, Middleburg has acquired and developed more than 21,000 apartment units, executing more than \$3 billion in transactions. For more information, visit www.MiddleburgCommunities.com.

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

The wording on the masks signs downtown has been changed to read "Masks suggested in crowded areas."

I know some may think that weak mayor caved in and changed the mask requirement. Others might say it was about time for that overreaching mayor to come to his senses about mask wearing. I didn't make the decision, the entire Highlands Board of Commissioners did.

All of the town's emergency orders have been made by the entire board, not by the mayor taking unilateral action. I think board action is the best path to follow when making such critical policy. I have fully supported its decisions.

At last Thursday's budget workshop, I asked the Town Manager to place the discussion of the mask requirements on the agenda. Normally, these kinds of items are not on budget workshop agendas, but during the pandemic situations change very quickly.

At the April Town Board meeting, commissioners reviewed the mask policy and left it in place, with the proviso that we would track the mask wearing issue and revisit it periodically. Little did we know that the CDC would loosen up their outdoor mask recommendations, and that Governor Cooper would change his outdoor mask wearing order soon thereafter.

The governor issued a new order (#209) that went into effect on April 30. It basically eliminated the outdoor mask order (#180) that we enforced through North Carolina Statutes concerning states of emergency. As a result, the town only had a town emergency order in place requiring masks on commercial sidewalks. To be frank, the enforcement of such a local order could have become confrontational and not well received in state courts.

After a long discussion, and yes debate, the board unanimously voted to change the signs to the current language of suggesting and encouraging the wearing of masks in crowded street areas. The state requirement to wear masks inside businesses remains in effect, and there is a clear procedure for enforcement of that order.

Given where the country is in regard to wearing masks, I believe the board made the best decision for the current circumstance. We now have a huge number of visitors from towns and states where the outdoor mask requirements have already been rescinded. The board came to the conclusion that the risk of outdoor exposure to

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Don't let fear keep you from enjoying life

Are you the type of person who sees a glass half full or half empty? Are you type of person who looks for the best in people or the worst in people? Do you look for the best scenario or the worst scenario?

I know someone in Florida that is afraid to drive over long high bridges alone. His worst scenario is that the bridge will collapse and he will die. I knew a widow whose late husband was a pastor and yet she had all her windows nailed shut because her worst scenario was that an intruder might break into her house and kill her. I remember after the movie "Jaws" came out, there were people scared to swim in the ocean because their worst scenario was that a shark might attack them and kill them.

All these worst case scenario ends in death. Now what happens to a child of God when he dies? Keep in mind that we are all God's creation but we are not all God's children. For a child of God, death takes us to a place we call heaven. A place where there are streets of gold, no more tears, perfect peace and unending joy. The Bible tells us "absent from the body is present with the Lord."

If our fears take us to a beautiful place we call heaven then maybe we should not be afraid. Maybe we should focus our eyes more on heaven and not so much on earthly things. Maybe we should get more involved in our church, get more involved in our community, get involved in senior games, get involved in your neighborhood, and spend more time with your friends. But don't get more involved with the screen on your tv, the screen on your computer, the screen on your phone or tablet.

Enjoy this precious life God has given you.

Mike Townsend – Franklin, N.C.

The giving of oneself can be a good thing

When someone gives of themselves in helping out another, it's a very honorable thing to do, and anyone who sees or hears of it would agree. It would be like giving ourselves to someone in a time of need. The unselfish giving is more realized and highlighted when it is directed towards someone that the giver may have never known. It seems a normal thing to give oneself to someone who you know, as in a relative or close friend. But it's completely different to give unselfishly towards another in saving someone that you've never known. This unselfishness changes the life of both the giver and receiver. So the giving of oneself can be a good thing. The goodness of what it means to be human is the willingness to give to others in a way that honors them and not seeking praise and honor towards ourselves. The building of goodness towards each other even to the point of sacrifice, is the ultimate giving.

There's another giving of oneself on the other hand that can be very harmful. The giving of oneself in the destruction of others, whether in life, property or character, this giving over to oneself in evil and hatred that does nothing but destroy both the giver of hate and the one receiving hate. No one wins, not even those whose thinking, what was once evil, is now to their good, for evil delights in destruction and thrives within selfishness and pride. We all have that sense of what is good and evil. The dullness of not knowing what is good or evil, is the more evil we revolve around, the power and enjoyment of evil, becomes our good. Then life becomes clouded and truth or good means little, for it has no foundation to rest upon. So both truth and good can seem evil because it is redefined as we go, and its directions are chosen by those in power.

Those giving themselves into this selfishness and pride often fall into despair, forcing upon others what they think will set their lives free. Even those striving to do good can find themselves falling into "despair." This is a battle from within, a deterioration which can destroy the individual in a multitude of ways. The giving up of life in defeat, never being good enough, the peer pressure to conform, addictions of all sorts, porn, drugs, money, lies, all can disappoint and the internal battles seem endless and exhausting. Life in general seems disappointing and goodness seems hard to find. The battles we face are within every facet of life, young, old, Christian and non-christian, it's a sickness within all mankind. The struggle of good and evil seems never ending. Yet we want good, but more often than not, evil is always present. Doing good seems always noble, but yet seems so difficult. We say we must conquer evil, but often turn a blind eye when it's knocking at our door. The history of mankind is defined in our choosing good, versus choosing evil, it's so evident to see. It manifests itself physically, but it's seeded in the spiritual, and grows deep within the soul of mankind.

A history book of old which I hold dear, describes not the old but the newness in life that is found in no other. The Bible tells of all humanity's restlessness of good and evil. Brokenness, pride, bitterness, hate, has been removed by Christ, given to those who ask. Just as when we ask forgiveness from a loved one we have offended, we ask this of our creator who loves us, even when we feel the most unlovely. This newness in life is found in no other, it's worth the "giving of oneself."

Your thoughts are welcomed.

Deni Shepard – nds13@frontier.com

What's on your mind?

Email letters to the editor to
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Honor your mother; sit beside her in church

Driving home today I read a church billboard message for Mother's Day: "Honor your mother / sit beside her in church."

I'm always reading church billboard signs, looking for misspellings, bad punctuation, and stuff like that; it's the English professor in me, I guess. And too, I value the written word, believe grammar serves a fundamental purpose of capturing a thought and conveying it clearly, but that's another topic. You see, this little challenge touched something deep in me.

This has been a year of revisiting my past. My family. Memories. My oldest brother turned 70 a few weeks ago. My middle brother hit 68, and 67 awaits me in a few weeks; who knows what lies ahead. Well, for sure, the unavoidable, inescapable reality of death, but that's not what this is about. And neither has the year been depressing, just a season of reflection, more than usual.

Back when I was stationed in Germany, coming home on leave from the military was a rarity. When it happened, I jumped on the first plane and rushed back to the States both to see my family and of course, my girlfriend. In 1977, I happened to be home for Mother's Day. My parents were not church-goers. Dad preferred being outside, fishing, to a cold and empty pew surrounded by shouting and such. He recalled being "Dragged down the aisle and baptized with tongues and shouts of joy that scared him to death!" as he put it, when he was 12. From that point on, he worshipped with a fishing pole.

Mom, though, occasionally liked to go to church, but would never go alone—and dad wouldn't go—so, this particular Mother's Day Sunday I offered to take mom to church. You know, to honor her, just like the billboard I drove by on my way home today.

There was a small, storefront United Pentecostal church just down the road from where they lived out in Pontiac, S.C., just beyond the Columbia, S.C., city limits. Mom liked the pastor there, she told me, and so we got dressed and I drove us to the little church.

By then, mom was in her late 50s. She'd suffered a series of strokes two years in a row and though she survived them, she lost a lot of weight and was very small. She wasn't really ever that big anyway, but at 4'11" when her weight fell off she was tiny. And because of that, she'd begun shopping in the girls' Junior Clothing Dept in order to find clothes that fit her petite frame.

She put on a shimmering black dress that hung just above her knees, and with her red lipstick, when she lit her cigarette and tossed back her graying, auburn streaked and perfectly coiffed hair, she was completely beautiful. Her eyes twinkled. She was excited about going to church on Mother's Day with her son. I looked at her and wondered why dad didn't jump at the chance to take her himself. But that, too, is another story. Probably too many stories. So off we went.

The church was packed! Evidently, a lot of sons honoring their moms and sitting beside them that morning. Mom and I sat high up on the 3rd row. We didn't know anybody. The music started and the hymnals came out as the song leader held up his book and gave a call to worship complete with title and page number.

I fumbled our song book open and held it for mom, who, by then, had put on her glasses so she could see. I don't know why, though, she didn't read music and didn't know the songs either, but she read along and chimed in here and there and it was a beautiful moment that we shared.

At one point there was an offering, somebody sang a solo, and the plate passed around to us, and mom reached in her purse and pulled out a few dollars and made sure to put in her share and pass the plate along to the person next to us.

After the offering the song leader introduced the Preacher, and when he walked out on the stage, everybody stood, waving their hands, shouts of "Amen!" "Hallelujah!" "Bless Jesus!" filled the air and I glanced over at mom. Her eyes were lit up like flickering candles and she was full of quiet joy, a sort of deep, satisfying smile; one might call it hunger. I certainly would. She was definitely a spiritually hungry person. But all she knew of God was the Catholic church she'd rejected in her youth because, as she said, she didn't like the priests being over-friendly with the "young girls," as she described it. I always wondered if she'd experienced one of those moments, or just watched, but Mom left and never returned.

And when we did go to church as kids, rarely, or a family, more rarely, it was not to a Catholic church. She had me and my older brother baptized as Episcopalians in what I later learned after researching online was a storefront missionary church in NYC. Of course, it's no longer there. To this day, if I'm anything "Christian" or embrace any form of Christianity, it's found in the Episcopal church. For me, less judgment. Far more compassion, and inclusion too. But that too, offers a long list of other stories. This is about mom.

About that time, a handsome preacher, somewhere near mom's age, with a head full of curly, black hair danced out on the stage. His long, Pentecostal T.D. Jakes suit hanging on his body, stove pipe pants, and a flat, beige material (no doubt \$\$\$) jostling as he slid and shuffled across the wooden floor until he stood beside the pulpit. Perfect choreography. Then he began to jump straight up with his legs together and when he came back down, he landed tippy-toe and the tassles on top of his shiny, brown dress shoes bobbed up and down.

I kept hearing a jingling sound as he bounced and after a few times realized he'd filled his pockets with change and as the coins clanked together the sound echoed beneath the chorus of praise and shouts. Mom turned to me and said, "He's full of the Holy Ghost, you can tell..." I just saw a pocketful of change, but it was Mother's Day.

The pastor finally began to preach, expounding on this and that, and after sometime he brought his message to a close. I thought he was finished and we could go home now.

But then, he brought up Mother's Day.

Mom, who, like me, was ready to leave, lit up and began to listen again. The preacher talked about his mother, and turned around to a table covered with long-stemmed red roses that suddenly appeared, and lifted one up and held it above his head.

"With this rose, we honor our mothers today!" Something like that. You could feel the congregation in agreement. And then, he looked out into the audience and called out the mothers, invited them to come forward for their rose.

One after one, all the mothers stood and slowly walked to the front. Mom included. She wanted that rose. She reached the floor and an usher took her by the hand and led her up to the preacher. He reached out, gently, and full of compassion and lay a beautiful, deep red rose across the palm of her tiny, outstretched hand.. And then he told all the mothers to wait up there with him for a special Mother's Day blessing! Mom waited.

As the preacher prayed one hand after another lifted up in the air before God and that preacher. Mom held the rose to her chest and slowly raised her right hand halfway and turned her head softly to the side as he prayed, and she received a Mother's Day blessing!

We never talked about that morning. I remember nothing about the rest of that day either. Surely, she got home and put the rose away and the moment was gone.

"Honor your mother / sit beside her in church."

Eric R. Hendrix – Franklin, N.C.

TAYLOR

From previous page

COVID versus the potential for confrontation and total noncompliance was not compatible.

Several commissioners noted that many of our residents and visitors have been fully vaccinated, and their risk to being exposed to COVID, especially outdoors, is very minimal. The question was posed as to why should these folks be expected to wear a mask outdoors? Also, for enforcement purposes, how would a distinction be made between unvaccinated and vaccinated people?

I know that some may think the board's decision was not the right one. My feeling is that if someone is concerned about contracting COVID on our sidewalks, by all means, whether vaccinated or not, wear a mask. If one is not vaccinated, I believe that person should do the right thing and wear a mask.

Finally, if everyone were to get a vaccination as soon as possible, we would not be discussing this issue as we move into the summer and fall seasons. I am vaccinated, but I will continue to model responsible behavior by wearing a mask on commercial sidewalks and in businesses.

Around June 1, Governor Cooper will make another decision about masks. The town will follow his lead.

Wild-eyed man disrupting pleasant small town

Reading *The Macon County News* is like taking a stroll through a pleasant small town to learn more about it. Passing storefronts, a bulletin board with local events listed, normal small-town sights. And then the reader gets to the Letters section. This is like finding oneself in an area near the center of town, at one end of a very dark, fetid alley. A wild-eyed, clearly-deranged man is standing on an overturned apple crate ranting and raving, spittle flying from his mouth, warning anyone within hearing distance about the latest, and untrue, evil government conspiracy that he read about on an obscure website that morning, complete with petty name-calling. Normal townspeople are embarrassed by this ugly display and they pay no attention to him, merely shaking their heads that anyone can possibly believe that drivel. The reader of the newspaper turns the page, and gratefully the town tour returns to normal, leaving the insane blathering behind them as they continue their walk through the otherwise pleasant town.

Gillian LaRoux – Franklin, N.C.

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

Franklin High School selects candidates for Mr. & Ms. FHS



Front row, L-R) Avery Moffitt, McCall Sanders, Cynthia Rios, Hannah Smith, Tory Ensley, Corey Burrell, Anya Valentine, Savannah Mira-Knipfel, Claire Holland, Taylor Ensley, Dylan Garcia, Hannah Angel, Sky Golebiewski-Kral, McKenzie Redoutey; Back row, L-R, Abram Apel, Reed Raby, Luke VanHook, Brayden Watts, Israel Jackson, Devyn Blackburn, Pablo Montelongo, William Shannon, Nicholas Sanders, Seth Crupi, Bryce Rogers, Eli Gilbert, Peyton Wood and Gavin Awtry.



Savannah Mira-Knipfel & William Shannon



Peyton Wood & Sky Golebiewski-Kral



Claire Holland & Nicholas Sanders



Taylor Ensley & Seth Crupi



Bryce Rogers & Dylan Garcia



Eli Gilbert & Hannah Angel



Abram Apel & Avery Moffitt



Reed Raby & McCall Sanders



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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 30 - May 9. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

April 30

Christopher Warren Hooper, was charged with violating domestic violence protective order violation. Jonathan A. Taylor made the arrest.

May 4

James Farley Fouts, was issued warrant service. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

Dustin Ty Daves, was charged with trespass. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Justin David Carver, was charged with injury to personal property, safecracking, possession of stolen goods, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Tyler Lee Gilbreath, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia.

May 5

Luis Angel Robles Molina, was charged with failure to appear. Jonathan Phillips made the arrest.

May 6

William Clinton Holt, was charged with probation violation. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Micah Dillon Breeden, was charged with driving while license revoked, possession/displayed altered/fictitious/revoked drivers license. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

May 7

Samuel Stephen Nix, was charged with breaking and entering, possession of stolen goods, larceny, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

May 8

Benjamin Gary Speed, was charged with disorderly conduct, resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

May 9

Nelson Jermiah Sparks, was issued a true bill of indictment. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

April 30

Gregory Philip Hanlon, 39, was charged with disorderly conduct, resisting a public officer. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set.

May 5

Tammy Melton, 45, was charged with trespass, shoplifting, possessing stolen goods, resisting officers, assault on a government official. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

May 3

Brandi Nichole Houchins, of Combs Lane, Morristown, Tenn., was charged with failure to appear for operating a vehicle with no insurance, driving while license revoked, not impaired revocation. No bond was set.

May 4

Barry Lee Mounce, 58, of Racine Rd., Climax, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set.

Lindsey Nicole Adams, 25, of Elm St., was issued warrant service for other jurisdiction. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Daniel James West, 41, of Cherokee, was charged with possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of marijuana, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Janet Rena Medford, 50, of Bethlaham Rd., Old Fort, was charged with failure to appear for expired registration card, expired/no inspection, driving while license revoked. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Steven Mason Coggins, 22, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of cocaine. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

May 5

Ruth Ann Judd, 56, of Whittier, was charged with failure to

appear for communicating threats. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Joseph Brandon Hall, 27, of Ferguson Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a schedule II controlled substance. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Anthony Lamar Rice, 34, of Heady Mountain Rd., Cashiers, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, obtaining property by false pretenses, issued a child support purge, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$4,900 was set.

May 6

Paul Anthony Namotka, 29, of Sparks Lane, was charged with failure to appear for felony probation violation. No bond was set.

Jamison Lawrence Lassiter, 38, of Sylva, was charged with injury to real property, breaking or entering. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

May 7

Jason Lee Tramper, 40, of Campground Cemetery Rd., Whittier, was charged with violation of a domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set.

Kevin David Ritchie, 32, of Hayfield Dr., was charged with misdemeanor probation violation. A secured bond of \$15,000 was set.

Zachary Heath Nicholson, 27, of Laurel Knob Rd., Cashiers, was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of marijuana. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Brent Anthony Metcalf, 36, of Donna Lane, Fairview, was charged with failure to appear for fictitious/alterd title/registration/card/tag, operate a vehicle with no insurance, possession/displayed/alterd/fictitious/revoked drivers license, driving while license revoked not impaired revocation. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Jamison Lawrence Lassiter, 38, of Sylva, was charged with larceny. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

May 9

Gabriel Issac Baumgarner, 39, of Barlow Court, Tuckasee, was charged with assault on another person in the presence of a minor, possession of drug paraphernalia, communicating threats, assault on a female, assault by pointing a gun, possession of firearm by a felon, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

Shawn Aaron Bradley, 38, of Dills Branch Rd., was charged with communicating threats, indecent exposure. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Newly-elected Chief Justice Paul Newby sets out to visit all 100 counties

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Chief Justice Paul Newby launched a courthouse tour over the weekend during which he will visit courthouses in all of North Carolina's 100 counties. Newby is the first chief justice to visit all of North Carolina's courthouses.

The first phase of the tour began in the far-western counties of Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Macon, and Swain. The phase also includes Jackson, Haywood, Transylvania, Henderson, Polk, and Rutherford counties as well as the Cherokee tribal court. The tour began in Murphy and will end in Manteo. At each courthouse, Chief Justice Newby will greet judges and courthouse personnel to express his appreciation for their commitment and dedication during the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As your State Senator I had the pleasure of hosting NC Chief Supreme Court Justice Paul Newby in a two-day visit to far Western North Carolina" said Senator Kevin Corbin. "Along with myself, Chief Justice Newby was hosted by the three outstanding State Representatives in my district: Rep Karl Gillespie (R-Macon) Rep Mark Pless (R-Haywood) and Rep Mike Clampitt (R-Swain.) We are always working hard



Pictured are Rep. Karl Gillespie (R-Macon), Sen. Kevin Corbin, Chief Justice Paul Newby, Rep. Mark Pless (R-Haywood) and Rep Mike Clampitt (R-Swain).

to get our leaders out to the west (of Asheville.)"

The Chief Justice's Commission on Professionalism is presenting professional programs during some of the phases of the tour.

"Our judges and courthouse personnel are the battle-tested

heroes of the past year. They came to work, day-in and day-out, facing real and often undefined dangers to fulfill the 'open courts' mandate of the North Carolina Constitution," Chief Justice Newby said. "Our courthouse stakeholders are doing their best to ensure that justice is administered without favor, denial or delay. Our state needs these dedicated public servants now more than ever to help address the large backlog of cases left in the wake of this pandemic."

District Attorney Ashley Welch and several judges from across Western North Carolina attended Newby's program on professionalism held in Murphy on Monday. The training for attorneys included a panel discussion that featured local judicial officials: Superior Court Judge Bill Coward, District Attorney Ashley Welch, District Court Judge Roy Wijewickrama and attorney Jerry Collins, a member of the N.C. State Bard Council.

After completing the far western phase of the tour, Chief Justice Newby plans visits to other courthouses spanning the mountains, foothills, piedmont, sandhills, and eastern North Carolina. The tour is planned to be completed within the next two years. The timeline and details of each visit will be announced as they become available.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Jackson County Sheriff's Office Blood Drive will be held on Friday, May 14, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the Jackson County Justice Center. Those who donate will receive a free Police Week T-Shirt. Additionally, the Blood Connection will also donate \$20 per person back to the Sheriff's Office for the Shop with a Cop program. Sign up at https://donate.thebloodconnection.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/171316. If no appointments are available for the time that fits your schedule, check back, as more appointments may be added.

VFW Post 7339 will host the District 17 Quarterly Meeting on Saturday, May 15. The Post will open at 10 a.m., for Meet and Greet. At 10:30, the group will move to the meeting room for discussion and other items of importance. Dinner will be served at 11 a.m. At noon, groups will discuss what they have done and projects planned for the year. Come out and support your VFW.

Jackson County Branch #54AB of NC NAACP Online Membership Meeting will be held on Saturday, May 15, at 10 a.m. The topic for discussion will be "Should Sylva's Confederate Monument Be Removed? A community discussion." Email jcnaacp54ab@gmail.com to receive instructions to join online.

"Faces" an exhibit of drawings by Ron Hunnicutt who died in February, will be held at the Macon County Public Library through the end of June. The public is invited to a reception at the opening on Saturday, May 15, 2 to 4 p.m. The library is located at 149 Siler Farm Road.

Holly Springs Community Development Club will meet on Monday, May 17, at 6 p.m., at the community building located at 2720 Cat Creek Road. Desserts and drinks will be served.

Adult and Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center next graduation is Saturday May 22, at 10 a.m. in the Center auditorium, 336 Living Hope Way (formerly 336 AG Camp Rd) Franklin. Please wear masks until you are seated and when you leave. Chairs will be spread apart. For more information, call (828)524-2157. Go to www.livinghopeway.com for more information about our 12-month residential addiction recovery program for men.

Macon Early College (MEC) has limited openings for rising 10th and 11th grade students for the 2021-2022 school year. MEC is a high school in Macon County offering a smaller academic environment that fosters growth and success. MEC serves grades 9-13 and is fully integrated into the Southwestern Community College system. Students have the opportunity to graduate in four or five years with a high school diploma and a two-year Associate's degree with transferable credits to a four-year university. Applications are available at mec.macon.k12.nc.us under the Parent Information tab. The deadline is June 4th. For more information, call (828)524-2002.

Franklin Seventh Day Adventist Community Services are open on Monday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., to help Macon County residents

in need with rent, power bill and a fully stocked food pantry. The church is located at 93 Church St., Suite 212. For more information, call (828)369-9000.

Truth Seekers meet the second and fourth Friday of every month from 6 to 8 p.m. in the Franklin library meeting room or the picnic pavilion to have a short video or other presentation by a member followed by lively discussion and a prayer for God to help us see clearly, with less dogma and more honesty and love. Contact jjurban55@gmail.com for more information.

New Girl Scout Troop forming in Franklin. Now recruiting for Daisies, ages 5 and 6; Brownies, ages 7 and 8; and Juniors, ages 9 and 10. For more information, call (828)371-2823 or email dianepeltz1953@gmail.com

Habitat for Humanity of Macon/Jackson County needs volunteers to share skills or gain some experience learning new ones. From carpentry to cleaning, marketing to moral support, computer skills, planning and organizing or just plain common sense, the greatest gift you could ever give is time. Any amount is good. Some great times, lasting friendships and rewarding experiences await. Call (828)369-3716 or (828)371-5442.

Friends of the Greenway FROG Quarters is now open Wednesday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 573 E. Main. Stop by for coffee, a soft drink and a snack, and free internet. Reservations taken for the shelters.

Franklin Alcoholics Anonymous "Open Meetings" are for anyone who thinks they may have a drinking problem or for anyone interested in the A.A. recovery program. In-person meetings with Covid 19 preventive measures are held Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 5:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church Outreach Center, 66 Harrison Ave., Franklin. Online meeting information is available by visiting www.aawnc80.org. or to speak with a member of A.A. call (828)349-4357.

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. Celebrate Recovery is a safe place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our life. Free childcare up to five years old for attending parents. Discover Church is located at 47 Macon Center Dr. (behind Bojangles). For more information, email cr@discover.church for questions.

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. The centers carry formula, diapers, wipes, baby items and clothing up to size 6, as well as strollers, car seats, high chairs, pack n' plays, etc. Donations are always welcome. Services are free and confidential. For more information or an appointment, call (828)349-3200, (828)293-3600 or smpcc.org.

Email calendar items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

First Alliance Church Service for Sunday, May 16, 10:30 am. Sunday School (all ages) is at 9:30 am. Senior Pastor, Scott Eichelberger, will deliver the message, as part of the series on Genesis. Special music shared by Daughters of Grace. The church is located in Franklin at 31 Promise Lane (off Womack next door to Trimont Christian Academy). For more information, call the church office at (828)369-7977.

Spiritual Light Center on Sunday, May 16, 11 a.m., Tom Wright will share on "The Importance of Awareness." The church is located at 80 Heritage Hollow Dr., behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow.

Grace Baptist Church services are held on Sunday, 11 a.m. Frank Rodriguez is the pastor. All are welcome to attend. The church is located at 130 Setser Branch Rd.

Prentiss Church of God is holding Sunday worship service in its sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m. as well as Children's Church. Social distancing is observed and safety measures are in place. Services are also streamed online on the Prentiss Church of God Facebook page. The church is located at 59 Church Hill Lane, off Addington Bridge Road. Phone: (828)369-3885.

Cowee Baptist Church is hosting "Parenting the Love and Logic Way" a seven-week study presented by Heart for Families on Wednesdays, through May 26, 6:30 to 8 p.m. Using the powerful tools of Love and Logic®, we can help our children make good choices while maintaining their love and respect. Love and Logic® is balance of love, mutual respect, limits, and accountability. All designed to help kids become happy, self-controlled adults. Registration is required. For more information, contact Bruce Ferguson by email B2F@msn.com

Son Rise Ministries is a non-denominational, full-gospel, Christian fellowship that meets Friday evenings at 7 p.m., Intercessory Prayer is Monday night at 6:30 p.m., Womens Bible study is Wednesdays, 1 to 3 p.m. The church is located at 462 Depot St. For more information, call (828)369-2465 or (828)421-4153.

Seventh Day Adventist Church meets on Saturday, with Sabbath School at 9:30 a.m., Worship Service at 11 a.m. Masks are required. The church is located at 71 Brendle Rd.

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. To learn more about attending in-person worship, contact us directly at admin@allsaintsfranklin.org or by calling (828)524-4910.

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.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

1	9	8	7	9	6	3	2	4
3	7	4	2	1	5	8	6	9
6	6	2	4	8	3	1	7	5
7	2	6	1	5	4	6	8	3
5	8	1	3	6	9	7	4	2
4	3	6	8	7	2	9	5	1
2	1	7	5	3	8	4	9	6
9	4	3	6	2	7	5	1	8
8	6	5	9	4	1	2	3	7

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

B	A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B
T	O	N	E	R	A	G	I	L
S	A	P	E	R	I	S	A	P
F	R	O	M	I	S	A	P	E
N	O	T	E	S	E	T	O	R
L	I	N	E	W	A	L	E	R
E	M	P	L	E	R	I	N	E
L	A	P	E	N	E	R	I	N
R	A	P	E	R	I	S	A	P
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A	C	A	O	L	O	N	E	R
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S	L	A	T	E	R	I	N	E
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Visitors can sample European culture without leaving the county

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Most foreign countries are still only “partially open” to travelers, and a handful, like Belgium and Norway, continue to be “completely closed” to out-of-country travelers. Yet, local opportunities are available to glimpse, taste, and learn about aspects of European culture. And, in this pandemic period, when foreign travel is either prohibitive or imprudent – depending on destination – grasping unique cultural opportunities can provide some fulfillment for individuals missing overseas travel opportunities.

Franklin, population around 4,000, is home to both a French- and a German-inspired restaurant. Caffé Rel, on E. Main Street, is touted as a “classic French neighborhood café,” and takes food preparation seriously. In fact, its mission is: “It’s about the food.”

Chef Richard E. Long has operated the restaurant beside the Hot Spot gas station since its inception in 2004. While the menu includes some American and Italian-inspired items as well, some of the classic French fare featured are such dishes as French pot roast and a signature cordon bleu with an herb mornay sauce.

Rizzo’s Bakery and Bistro has been owned and operated by Pete and Barbara Rizzo for many years. Both master bakers, the Rizzos are now retired and the new owner is Brandi

Smith. The former owners taught her the German method of achieving the baked goods before they handed over the reins. The menu includes American dishes, but is German leaning, with authentic cakes and pies in its dessert cases, including German apple and cherry strudel. Also very traditionally German is Jaeger Schnitzel, a breaded and fried pork cutlet, that is served with German

provides an authentically European, stay-at-home experience on sofas, comfortable chairs, and at small café-style tables.

The Scottish Tartans Museum and Heritage Center on Main Street is the only one of

find his or her heritage tartan and learn more about family origins. The annual Taste of Scotland festival, usually scheduled for Father’s Day weekend is once again being postponed and will not be held this year. However, the Taste of Scotland Society is planning a Ceilidh for Saturday, June 19, at the Rathskeller on Stewart Street with Scottish music, singing, traditional dancing and storytelling. The Scottish Museum is also holding a Cherokee/Scottish Heritage Celebration on June 19.

Lucios in Franklin provides a traditional Italian foodie experience, but beyond Franklin, yet still in Macon County, are other opportunities for European cultural experiences. Ristorante Paoletti has been in Highlands since 1984. The Italian restaurant, with all menu items in Italian and then described in English, takes patrons on a culinary tour, beginning with antipasti (traditional first course of meats and cheeses and marinated vegetables) and insalate (salads) to pasta and main dishes and eventually ending with dolci (dessert), including creme brulee w/fresh berries and Gelati Della Casa, in-house-made gelato, which is a frozen ice-cream-custard-like Italian specialty.

Get a feel for a real British tavern by popping into The Ruffed Grouse at Highlander Mountain House, just before entering the Main Street shops in Highland. Located in a renovated English country estate inn, The



Rizzo’s on Georgia Road is under new ownership but still serves German-leaning dishes and desserts including German apple and strudel. The new owner is Brandi Smith (right). Photos by Vickie Carpenter



Spaetzle, which is a dumpling-like egg noodle made in-house.

Bent Willow is a bakery that offers items prepared with traditional European flair: handcrafted batches of slow fermented, wild yeast cultured breads, such as baguettes or artisan loaves like its British-inspired Earl Grey and apricots sourdough, as well as unique baked goods such as blackberry and crystallized ginger scones. Housed in a historic, renovated home on Palmer Street, just behind Main Street in Franklin, the bakery

its kind in the United States. People unable to travel to the British Isles will appreciate an education on Scottish Highland dress traditions, such as tartans and kilts; plus, there are plenty of foods to purchase, including short-

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Ruffed Grouse has overstuffed couches, marble-topped pub tables, and a large wood-burning fireplace. Visitors are encouraged to settle in for remote working and a hearty or simple breakfast, stay for brunch or lunch, try dishes like Wild Boar Ragout or the Harvest Vegetable Platter for dinner, or just hang out in the tavern and sample libations and share a starter, like the Ploughman's Board of cured meats, cheeses, house pickles, chutney, and grilled sourdough.

Forbes reported April 15 that three European countries recently announced dates for re-opening – Greece by mid-May, Malta on June 1, and Denmark plans to reopen to vaccinated visitors on June 26. The United Kingdom may open next month, or at least by July, according to Forbes' report. However, until locals can get back on track with



The Jacobites by Name will be performing at a Ceilidh Saturday, June 19, at the Rathskeller. The event is sponsored by The Taste of Scotland Society.

foreign travel plans, they can at least enjoy some bits of European culture in this mountain community.



The Ruffed Grouse in Highlands enables patrons to step into an old world British tavern experience.

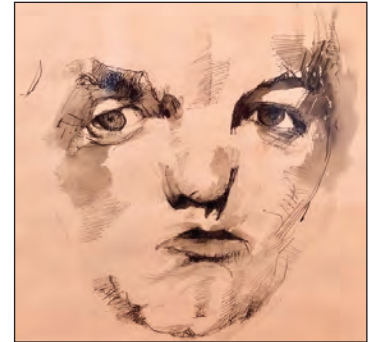
'Faces' exhibit at library through June

"Faces" an exhibit of drawings by Ron Hunnicutt who died in February, will be held at the Macon County Public Library through the end of June. The public is invited to a reception at the opening on Saturday, May 15, 2 to 4 p.m. The library is located at 149 Siler Farm Road.

Ron loved faces. He saw them everywhere – in clouds and forests, in tree trunks and rocks, in leaves and flowers. He collected photos of interesting faces in magazines and books – and photographed faces himself.

But his drawings are not portraits. They are simply faces from his head. He did occasionally do portraits; three are included in the exhibit.

Ron had an interesting face himself – and could create many looks. During his career as a photographer in Atlanta and did modeling when a face with "character" was needed. Some of those photographs are also included in the exhibit.




The Vagabonds are back at the library

The Vagabonds are back Monday, May 17, 2: p.m. in the Macon County Public Library Meeting Room playing lively music on the first and third Mondays at the library. The group plays old country, oldies, old pop and some gospel. Band members are: Penny Brewster plays guitar and vocals; Wild Bill Jackson on harmonica and vocals; Jim Hite plays guitar, six-string banjo and vocals; June Kirkland plays guitar and vocals; Roy Wood plays the guitar and vocals; and Martha Wood plays the fiddle and vocals. Patrons of the library are required to wear a mask or other face covering. For more information, call the library at (828)524-3600.

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Clematis a flowering vine not to be feared

Dr. Bob Gilbert
Columnist

I started off on the wrong foot with flowering vines. Early on I attended a horticultural lecture on native plants and was introduced to a native Begonia named Cross Vine. I could hardly wait until I found one for sale. About the same time, we constructed a trellis and overhead structures that needed a green growing covering. We were talked into planting Wisteria. The Wisteria required untold hours of pruning attempting to control its growth. As it matured it wrapped itself around the vertical supports so vigorously that the supports began to twist in spite of the fact they were cemented in place. Meanwhile the Begonia reached the top of a very tall mature pine tree while producing attractive yellow orange tubular flowers in the spring that were equally as pretty on the ground as well as on the vine. I then discovered it traveled horizontally on top of the ground and by underground branches. I learned first-hand the term stoloniferous. We found it many yards away from the original planting. It took years to get rid of both vines. I used to tell visitors not to stand still too long by either one. I bet there are still remnants of the Begonia present at Smith Gilbert Gardens 50 years later. It might even be in the next county by now. No more vines for me which in retrospect was a shame as I missed the pleasures of the Queen of vines, Clematis. Now I enjoy them in other's yards only because I live in the woods with very little direct sunlight.

On a rare recent drive to town not long ago we had to pull off the road to admire a Clematis in full bloom growing well on a pole. Karen Lawrence's photo of it does it justice. I am not familiar with all the many varieties so I cannot accurately tell you it's varietal name. Take the photo to a good nursery and I will bet they will know it. It looks familiar.

Clematis (Klem'-a-tis) is a genus of 300 species within the buttercup family. Most available selections are cultivars and new ones come on the market regularly. Also we have a couple of native species. They generally are referred to as woody vines. Most of the cultivars were produced by selective hand pollination techniques with the seedlings used for vegetative cuttings. I have several friends that do that at home rather successfully.



Dr. Bob Gilbert



Purple Clematis

Clematis is Greek for climbing plant. Garden varieties started to become popular in 1862 with a selection Clematis x jackmanii. It is still on the market and remains popular. Almost all selections were originally from China or Japan. The British have named a species of theirs "Traveler's Joy."

The genus is composed mostly of woody climbing vines with a few that are shrubs. Species found in the tropical climates are often evergreen compared to the temperate zone deciduous species. All are easily grown. There is an old adage "Clematis like hot heads and cool feet." So full sun and ample mulch is important.

Different species bloom at different times of the years and from different parts of the plant. This creates some confusion about pruning as you do not want to eliminate the blooms. I will try to simplify a pruning guide. Spring bloomers flower on side shoots from the previous year's stems, summer and fall blooming varieties bloom on the end of new stems and repeat, or twice bloomers bloom from both. Most Clematis plant labels at a nursery will indicate which group the specimen is in.

The objectives of pruning are to eliminate dead portions, maximize flower production, and manage plant size. Often this information is organized into three groups based on bloom times:

Group 1 - Early blooming April and May on last year's stems, prune after blooming only if needed

Group 2 - Flowers from old as well as new wood, selective light pruning after flowering

Group 3 - Flowers in late summer on new wood in the fall, prune heavily in the spring if necessary

If you do not know the name of your plant by observing the bloom times and bloom location you can after a year know which group our plant is in.

We have two native Clematis worth knowing about. Clematis virginiana or Virgin's-bower is often found at woods edge. It produces large numbers of one-inch wide white flowers. It is easily grown from seed and is often used on fences. In the fall, plumes of feather like seed pods are especially noticeable.

The less common native is Clematis pitcheri often called Purple Leatherflower, Purple Clematis, Bellflower and Pitcher's Clematis. It is a semi-woody vine that can grow to 10 feet. It is not a heavy bloomer but the purple nodding blooms are unique. It would be a great vine to let grow on an evergreen small leaf shrub like ilex crenata.

Do not be afraid of Clematis escaping, they stay put.

Dr. Bob Gilbert, co-founder of Smith Gilbert Gardens in Kennesaw Ga.

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



Deaths & Funerals

Lionel A. Brooks

Lionel A. Brooks, 79, of Franklin, died on Saturday, May 8, 2021, after a period of declining health.

Born in Jackson County, North Carolina, he was the son of the late Isaac "Red" and Macie Best Brooks. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a son, Cameron Brooks. He served in the United States Army and was a member of the Jarrett Memorial Baptist Church in Dillsboro.

He was a true athlete and lived his whole life loving sports. As a young man he played for Sylva High School before going on to play basketball, football, and baseball at Gardner Webb. After graduating Gardner Webb, he went on to receive his master's degree from Western Carolina. He started coaching as an assistant football coach for Sylva Webster in the fall of 1971 and continued until 1989. In 1990, he became the head coach and continued until 1996. During these times, he also helped to coach baseball and golf. Lionel officiated basketball for 30 years and returned to coaching in 2001, before retiring from Pisgah in 2005. He could remember plays, players, scores and even what yard and down certain games were determined by. He loved the game and mentored so many young people over the years.

He is survived by his wife of 53 years, Linda Merritt Brooks; and three sons, Joe Brooks, Josh Brooks (Bekah) and Jay Brooks (Amber) all of Franklin. Also surviving are his five grandchildren, Bristol, Oakley, Baylor, Rigley, and Welker.

A Celebration of Life was held at Prentiss Church on Wednesday, May 12. Rev. Kevin Chapman officiated.

The family request outside plants that can be planted in Lionel's memory.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Lionel A. Brooks

James Alton 'Al' Mitchell

James Alton "Al" Mitchell, 92, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on May 9, 2021.

He was born in Troy, Me., to the late James and Ruth Barker Mitchell. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by brother, Arland Mitchell; sister, Athene Towne; and great granddaughter, Autumn Mitchell.

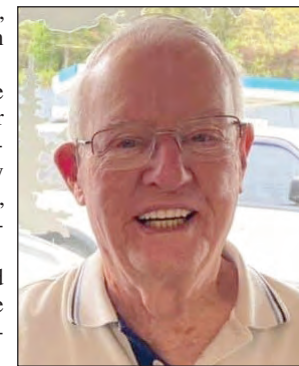
He was a farmer by trade and loved working in the garden. He was very handy and could fix anything. In his free time, he enjoyed working on puzzles and reading.

He is survived by his wife of 69 years, Affie Mitchell; daughters, Deborah Duncan (Dana); Becky Sanders (Greg) both of Franklin; sons, David Mitchell (Penny) of Danville, Va., Robert Mitchell (Gloria) of Milton, Vt., Wayne Mitchell (Lisa) of Franklin, Steven Mitchell (Loretta) of Lakeland, Fla.; 13 grandchildren, 14 great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

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

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to Care Net, 130 Bidwell Street, Franklin, NC 28734.



James Alton 'Al' Mitchell

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Deaths & Funerals

John W. 'Jack' Lewis, Jr.

John W. (Jack) Lewis Jr., was born in Nashua, N.H., Oct. 4, 1935, the son of John W. Lewis and Ruby Merle Stevens Lewis. In addition to his parents, he was predeceased by his wife, Judith Hassey Lewis, and an infant daughter.

His career was in the insurance industry having retired from Fred C. Church Insurance in Lowell, Mass., as a Senior Vice-President and an Honorary Director. He was also a trustee and a member of the Board of Investment of the Lowell Five Cent Savings Bank, and was made an Honorary Trustee.

He was a former administrator of the Lowell General Hospital and was actively involved in several charitable organizations in the Merrimack Valley. He enjoyed golf, traveling and entertaining.

He was a church organist having served churches in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Florida, and most recently at St. Agnes Episcopal Church in Franklin, N.C.

He is survived by his spouse, George M. (Marty) McLaughlin; a daughter, Deborah L. Garbiso, of Mims, Fla.; a son, Mark Taylor Lewis, of Glenville, N.C.; five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

At his request, no services are planned.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Juanita Hylton Cutshaw

Juanita Hylton Cutshaw, 66, of Andrews, N.C., went home to be with Jesus on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, after a period of declining health.

She was born in Rabun County, Georgia, the daughter of the late Henry Hual and Hazel Estella Crisp Hylton. She lived most of her life in WNC and was a member of the Pisgah Baptist Church in Andrews. Her favorite things to do was spending time with her family, especially her granddaughter, Delaney; her church family; and her many friends.

She was always known for her infectious smile and her big heart; she loved everyone, and everyone loved her.

She is survived by her husband of 16 years, Joel Cutshaw; son, Joe Wilson (Jessica); and granddaughter, Delaney Wilson all of Andrews; brother, Troy Hylton (Virginia) of Otto, N.C.; and sisters, Jeanie Postell (Donnie) and Ramona Hicks (Melvin) of Andrews; a special aunt, Gladys Gibson of Franklin, N.C.; a special cousin, Barbara Ammons of Franklin, who is more like a sister; and several nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews.

A Celebration of Life was held Saturday, May 8, at Red Marble Baptist Church. Rev. Jerry Tatham and Rev. Jim Postell officiated, and Melvin Hicks was a special speaker.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to Shriners Hospitals for Children, Office of Development 2900 Rocky Point Drive, Tampa, FL 33607.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



John W. 'Jack' Lewis, Jr.



Juanita Hylton Cutshaw

Tammy Kimsey Walker

Tammy Kimsey Walker, 60, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, May 5, 2021.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of Becky Reece Kimsey and the late Floyd "Flick" Kimsey. In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by a brother, Brad Kimsey.

She was a longtime and very active member of Franklin First Assembly of God. She had been a Sunday School teacher and had served on the church's board of directors. She was a member of the North American Association of Christians in Social Work. Tammy touched so many lives in so many ways.

In addition to her mother, Becky Reese Kimsey of Franklin; she is survived by her husband of 40 years, Keith Walker; two sons, Ben Walker (Janet) and Josh Walker (Andrea) both of Franklin; three grandchildren, Zoi, Malik, and Lana; with whom she cherished every minute she spent; two sisters, April Nolen (Bill) of Franklin and Meg Mason (Mike) of San Marcos, Calif.; two brothers, Greg Kimsey, and Vic Kimsey (Christie) both of Franklin; and numerous beloved and loving nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Monday, May 10, at Franklin First Assembly of God with Rev. Mike George officiating. Burial was in the Mount Zion Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Center, 226 E Palmer St, Franklin, NC 28734.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Tammy Kimsey Walker

James William 'Billy/Caddy' Peek

James William "Billy/ Caddy" Peek, 68, of Houston, Del., formerly of Franklin, died on Tuesday, May 4, 2021.

Born in Transylvania County, North Carolina, he was the son of the late Furman Lee and Jeanette Hulda Holland Peek. He was a member of Buck Creek Baptist Church and was known for always being available to help others. He was affectionately known as "Billy" to some, and "Caddy" to others, but the names he most cherished was "dad, papaw and honey."

He has always had a love for fast cars; he loved the NHRA Drag Racing and playing cards. He could always read people's expressions and figure out what kind of "hand" they were holding. He loved spending time with his family and going to visit all his friends.

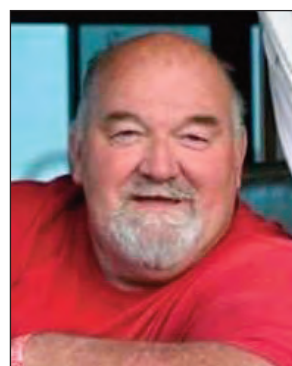
He is survived by his wife of 40 years, Toya Trammel Peek; son, Josh Peek of Houston, Del.; daughter, Cassi Peek of Milford, Del.; and granddaughter, Dynasty Wright (and her Dad, Chris); one brother, Bobby Peek (Sharon) of Franklin; five sisters, Sharon Huscusson (Bill), Martha McConnell (Elbert), Pam Bell (Mark) all of Franklin, Linda Henderson of Brevard, and Vesta Hogsed (Roland) of Lake Toxaway; two brothers-in-laws, Skip Trammel (Theresa) and Mike Trammel (Dawn) both of Franklin; and a sister-in-law, Barbara Hodgins of Franklin; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life was held at Windy Gap Baptist Church on Tuesday, May 11. Rev. Mark Bishop, Rev. Jason Smith, and Rev. Carson Gibson officiated.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Macon New Beginnings, 131 Franklin Plaza Dr., Box 228, Franklin, NC 28734.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



James William Peek

Charles 'Scoon' Verlin Nichols

Charles "Scoon" Verlin Nichols, 71, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Saturday, May 1, 2021. He was born Nov. 25, 1949, in Macon County to the late Charles Martin Nichols and Betty Jo McCoy Nichols. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara Jean Moses Nichols. He was a member of Victory Baptist Church. He was a probation officer and had worked in real estate and as a trucking dispatcher. He was also a notary, a firefighter and instructor for fire service education.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, May 15, at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home. The family will greet friends following the service.

In lieu of flowers the family ask that donations be made to American Cancer Society, 1901 Brunswick Avenue Suite 100, Charlotte, NC 28207

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Nichols family.

Online condolences may be made at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

Patricia Ann Waters Capaforte

Patricia Ann Waters Capaforte, 80 of Franklin, N.C., passed away May 5, 2021.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date.

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



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would like to send our sincere gratitude to everyone who called, sent flowers, food, cards, donations and all the prayers that were bestowed on our family. Our hearts go out to the tributes that were given in honor of our mother. A special thank you to Rev. Charles Stevens, Ronnie Branson and Dustin Pendergrass for the most beautiful graveside service.

Most of all, thanks to the Cowee Volunteer Fire & Rescue members for not only being a special part of her life, but also by being such a special part of her service. A very special 'Thank You' to Macon Funeral Home staff, especially to Brian Hylton. May God bless each and everyone of you.

Phil, Hugh, Mary Carolyn, Jessica, Travis & Family

Martin Truex Jr. holds on to win nail-biter at Darlington

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

DARLINGTON, S.C. – In the final stage of Sunday's Goodyear 400, Kyle Larson turned a Martin Truex Jr. cakewalk into a study in suspense, but Larson couldn't keep Truex out of Victory Lane in the 12th NASCAR Cup Series race of the season.

Truex swept the first two stages and led 248 laps to win his third event of the season and remain the only multiple winner in the series this year.

But after the final sequence of pit stops, Larson — who gained time by pitting one lap earlier than Truex — closed the leader's advantage to .170 seconds on Lap 266 of 293 as the drivers worked stubborn lapped traffic.

Larson stayed within a second of Truex until the final few laps, when Truex finally pulled away to win by 2.571 seconds. No previous stage winner had ever gone on to claim victory at Darlington.

"We just had a good balance," said Truex, who committed to run the top of the track throughout the race. "The car would do what I wanted it to do. I just had to manage those long runs. It was really loose that last run. I was nervous when the 5 (Larson) was catching us. We got mired in some traffic there, and that's always tough ...

"What an awesome team we have. Hopefully, we can keep this rolling."

The victory was the second at Darlington for the driver of the No. 19 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota and the 30th of his career. Truex was elated to win another race with the high-horsepower, low-downforce competition package used at Darlington this year.

"I think the most important part is we are winning with the low downforce package, which most of the Playoff races we run are," Truex said. "Phoenix was a really, really big confidence booster for us — to go there and win.

"I feel like we've carried it since there. We just have to keep this thing going. Guys are doing a really good job all around. It's so fun to drive race cars like that."

Kyle Busch finished third, 6.209 seconds back. Fourth-place William Byron was 17.067 seconds in arrears and fifth-place Denny Hamlin was 21.939 seconds behind his JGR teammate, as only nine cars remained on the lead lap at the finish.

Larson lopped two seconds off Truex's advantage during the final exchange of pit stops but couldn't pull off a winning pass.

"I was surprised that I was able to get to him," said Larson, who posted his sixth top-10 result in seven Darlington starts and improved his average finish at the track to a series-best 6.0.

"I caught him, I closed on pit road, was riding and actually had an opportunity to get by and thought I'd stay patient, and he was better on the long run."

As close as Larson made it near the end, the first two stages were an absolute runaway.

Truex's Camry was decked out in an Auto-Owners Insurance paint scheme. The only other time Truex had used that livery at Darlington was in 2016 — and that was the only time he had ever won a Cup race at the track.

But the nod to 2016 wasn't the only throwback involved. In harkening to 2016, Truex was recalling a season in which he achieved the sort of dominance he enjoyed on Sunday afternoon.



Martin Truex Jr., driver of the #19 Auto-Owners Insurance Toyota, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Goodyear 400 at Darlington Raceway on May 09, 2021 in Darlington, South Carolina.

Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images

At Charlotte Motor Speedway, the 40-year-old from Mayetta, New Jersey, put a permanent stamp on the Cup Series with an utterly dominant run in the Coca-Cola 600. Truex led 392 of 400 laps, translating to a NASCAR-record 588 of 600 miles.

By the time he took the green/checkered flag on Saturday to complete a sweep of the first two stages, Truex had a 14.516-second lead over Kyle Busch.

And for much of Sunday afternoon, the race threatened to present a similar outcome — until Larson intervened.

Kevin Harvick came home sixth, followed by reigning series champion Chase Elliott, Ryan Blaney and Chris Buescher, the last driver on the lead lap.

Byron's fourth-place finish was his 10th straight top-10 result this season.

Justin Allgaier pulls off dramatic overtime victory at Darlington

In a dramatic two-lap overtime shootout, Justin Allgaier squeezed past JR Motorsports teammate Josh Berry and held on to win Saturday's Steakhouse Elite 200 NASCAR Xfinity Series event at Darlington Raceway.

Allgaier chose the outside lane for the final restart and had

to fend off Berry, who edged ahead entering Turn 1. But Allgaier shot the gap to the outside off Turn 2 and pulled away to win by .422 seconds over his teammate.

Allgaier had wrestled the lead from Berry from the bottom lane on the previous restart on Lap 138 and appeared a likely winner before Ryan Vargas' spin on Lap 142 forced the final restart and sent the race to overtime.

"Our car wasn't as good as we wanted all day, but the guys down in the pits, they just kept fighting," said Allgaier, who added his first Darlington win to his maiden win this season at Atlanta. "To check off Atlanta and Darlington, I couldn't be

more appreciative of this race team ... We're going to celebrate this one for a while."

The victory was the 16th of Allgaier's career.

Berry will cede his part-time ride in the No. 8 JRM Chevrolet to Sam Mayer in the second half of the season.

"I'm mad," Berry said. "I want to win. I'm racing for my life out here, man. We need to find a sponsor or something so I can run this thing full-time. But it's hard to be mad, coming here, running second, no practice, first time with these guys — that's pretty incredible."

Brandon Jones ran third, one spot ahead of Noah Gragson, who would have pocketed his third straight \$100,000 Dash 4 Cash bonus for finishing highest among four eligible drivers, had his No. 9 Chevrolet not been disqualified in post-race inspection for an infraction involving the suspension mounts.

Instead, the bonus went to 12th-place finisher AJ Allmendinger of Kaulig Racing, who finished ahead of the other two eligible drivers, Jeb Burton and Austin Cindric.

Daniel Hemric, who led 38 laps, inherited fourth place after the Gragson disqualification. Jeremy Clements was fifth, followed by Michael Annett, Brett Moffitt, Ryan Sieg and Alex Labbe and Harrison Burton.



Justin Allgaier, driver of the #7 Good Humor Ice Cream Chevrolet, celebrates after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Steakhouse Elite 200 at Darlington Raceway on May 08, 2021 in Darlington, South Carolina. Photo by Sean Gardner/Getty Images

Cindric, the series leader, was out front for 34 laps and won the first stage but crashed on the frontstretch coming to the checkered flag. He finished 30th and saw his points advantage over second-place Hemric shrink from 59 to 39.

Harrison Burton won Stage 2, but the decision to pit for tires before the final two-lap shootout proved unproductive. Burton, who led 12 laps, finished 10th.

The race featured nine cautions for 43 laps

Sheldon Creed holds off Ben Rhodes for Darlington win

After a 17-truck wreck effectively ended Kyle Busch Motorsports' stranglehold on the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series, Sheldon Creed outdueled Ben Rhodes on the final two restarts to win Friday night's LiftKits4Less.com 200 at Darlington Raceway.

Driving a No. 2 GMS Racing Chevrolet whose paint scheme was an homage to the late Jason Leffler, Creed took the lead from runner-up Rhodes in a side-by-side battle after a restart on Lap 140.

After Danny Bohn's spin brought out the 11th caution of the race on Lap 141, Creed prevailed once again on a Lap 146 restart when Rhodes got loose, slipped and lost ground. Fittingly, the race ended under yellow for Hailie Deegan's final lap spin on the frontstretch.

That caution was the 12th of the race, for a total of 66 of the 147 laps.

Creed, the defending series champion, collected a \$50,000 bonus for winning the first Triple Truck Challenge

event of the season.

"It feels great," Creed said after a celebratory burnout on the frontstretch. "Didn't have the best truck there, for sure... firing off I was really tight. Then I was wrecking loose there, just doing everything I could."

"I was really aggressive on restarts — that's what it takes. We've been struggling, but we keep chipping away at it. We're getting better trucks the last couple weeks. All I ask for are trucks I can race with."

"Won an extra \$50K tonight — whoo!"

The victory was Creed's first of the season, first at Darlington and the sixth of his career. Not only did it stop a record-tying streak of five-straight victories for KBM, but it also broke Toyota's seven-race monopoly to start the season.

Before a game-changing restart on Lap 117, however,

KBM drivers seemingly had firm control of the race. Series leader and Stage 2 winner John Hunter Nemechek held the point with teammate Corey Heim — making his NASCAR Camping World Truck Series debut on one of NASCAR's most challenging tracks — beside him.

But wide disparities in tire strategy created an accordion effect on the restart, with trucks with newer tires pushing trucks that were having trouble putting power down. Nemechek and Heim both turned sideways due to contact from behind, and chaos reigned in their wake.

All told, 17 of the 33 trucks still running sustained damage in the wreck, including all three of the KBM entries.

That set the stage for Creed and Rhodes to battle for the victory. Rhodes had recovered from two flat tires and a penalty for pitting early to work his way back to the front.

"I saw going into the corner we were going to push low, so I tried to work our way back up to give us some line so we could be side-by-side coming off of (Turn) 2, but got really loose," Rhodes said of the final restart. "Luckily, we saved it, but it was an up-and-down night. I had a lot of fun."

"We set ourselves up for the end there with our Bombardier Tundra to go for a long run — with like low pressures, and then lo-and-behold, red flags and caution after caution after caution. So what do you do, right? He had seven-lap newer tires, some help on the restarts, and I guess conditions were perfect for him, but I'm not going to pout about it. I'm driving a race car. I'm happy."

Sunoco rookie Carson Hocevar ran third, followed by Matt Crafton, Grant Enfinger and Johnny Sauter, as ThorSport Racing placed four trucks in the top six. Timmy Hill was seventh, and Nemechek recovered to finish eighth. Austin Wayne Self and Jordan Anderson completed the top 10.



Sheldon Creed, driver of the #2 GMS Racing Chevrolet, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series LiftKits4Less.com 200 at Darlington Raceway on May 07, 2021 in Darlington, South Carolina. Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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THEME:
FICTIONAL FATHERS

ACROSS

- Like Annapolis Academy
- Pine juice
- One in a manger
- Like a good athlete
- Modern address
- Printer cartridge contents
- Cate Blanchett's movie "____ on a Scandal"
- 2nd largest living bird in world
- U in UV
- *Honoré de Balzac's "Le Père ____"
- *Nemo's dad, named after a sport fish
- "____ of the morning!"
- Seaside bird
- Tax accounting specialist, acr.
- Back of the neck
- Chew the fat
- Country dance formation
- Greek goddess of fertility
- Waterwheel
- *Drunk and, incidentally, Huck Finn's Pap
- Metallic sounding
- Quite a stretch
- Place to dry out
- Like the White Rabbit
- Dr. Robert Bruce Banner's green alter ego
- Sun-____
- Toothy wheel
- Bad-mouth
- Made a rug
- Low-____ image
- *Simba's father in "The Lion King"
- *Luke's and Leia's father
- Golfer's sun protection
- Romanian monetary unit

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- Introverted one
- Follow as a consequence
- Pooh's wise friend
- Territory in China known as Las Vegas of Asia
- Young woman
- *"That '70s Show" dad
- One-room school house "notebook"
- Weevil's target
- Not in favor of
- Capital of Switzerland
- Chapter in history
- As opposed to turn-off
- 1960s abstractionism
- Rainbow shape
- Like ones between 13 and 19 years old
- *Griswold family patriarch
- Mushroom caps
- Egyptian symbol of life, pl.
- *Jay is to Claire as ____ is to Haley
- Flood survivor
- Father of psychoanalysis Sigmund
- Garlicky mayonnaise
- *Both father in "Mary Poppins" and father in "Father of the Bride"
- Unfledged hawk
- Casino chip
- Pine
- ____ of dog!
- "I ____" at the altar
- Middle Earth and Kingdom of the North, e.g.
- Courage in the face of danger
- Smokeless tobacco brand
- Short skirt
- It was Brezhnev's domain
- Unplayable baseball
- Old in Scottish
- Cuzco valley empire
- Straight pour from the bottle
- Chill in front of TV, with 'out'
- Ovine mom
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