

Juniors, Seniors and guests gathered last Saturday at the Tessentee Wedding and Event Center dressed in their finest for a parent-sponsored prom. Games, food, music and more created an evening to remember after a year of uncertainty with many school activities either curtailed, restricted or cancelled altogether. For more details and photos, see page 12. Photos by Vickie Carpenter

School board names two new principals

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The Macon County School Board met on Tuesday night and chose two new candidates for the vacant principal positions at Franklin High School (FHS) and Macon Middle School (MMS.) Michael Noe, of Clay County, was chosen as principal of FHS and Dr. Kevin Bailey, of Jackson County, was selected as principal of MMS. Noe has been a principal with the Hayesville school system since 2003. Bailey has been the executive director of Human Resources in Jackson County since 2017. He has also held positions as assistant principal and interim principal.

Field trips resume

As COVID cases are still on the decline in Macon County, school field trips have been reinstated. The FHS Girls Basketball Team will be traveling to Knoxville, Tenn., in June to participate in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes Team Camp. The FHS Track and Field Team will be headed to Greensboro, N.C., for a state competition. Four FHS Cheerleaders will attend a leadership retreat in Pigeon Forge, Tenn. Thirteen FHS Cheerleaders will be going to Concord, N.C., to participate in a Cheer Camp. And Buddy Huckabee, FHS band director will be accompanying 80 students to various performances throughout the year. Other trips will include students from the Summer Edventure camp who will be trav-

eling to Hayesville and Tallulah Gorge, Tallulah Falls, Ga.

Summer Edventure Camp/Learning

The Macon County Schools-sponsored Summer Edventure Camp to be held at Cartoogechaye Elementary School this year. Edventure Camp will be take place from June 14 through July 31, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The camp is open to students ages 5- 12. Five year old students must have completed kindergarten to be eligible. Students ages 13 and under who have completed any grade are eligible to attend. Counselor-in-Training volunteer program is available for selected students ages 15 up to age 18.

Weekly-themed activities are planned around the interests and needs of the children and include physical activity; arts and crafts; independent and group activities; quiet time for reading, journaling, drawing, coloring, painting; and enrichment opportunities shared by community agencies, businesses, and individuals. Summer Edventure Camp strives to maintain a balance between self-directed and adult-guided activities, periods of play alternated with periods of rest, and opportunities for outdoor play.

On-site activities may include sports, science projects, and guest presenters and performers. Enrichment field trips to local attractions, museums, parks, and recreational facilities

See **SCHOOL BOARD** page 16

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Franklin Chamber holds annual awards banquet



Six-month-old miracle baby continues to improve



Road course master takes inaugural COTA race

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Suminski named Citizen of the Year at annual Chamber banquet

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

The Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce hosted its “Annual Awards & Installation Banquet,” Friday, May 21, at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts at which time it honored Claire Suminski as Citizen of the Year. Nominated by Jim Breedlove, branch manager at United Community Bank in Franklin and a Chamber board member, Suminski is a local business owner, author, and tireless community volunteer.

Explained Diane Baldwin, administrative assistant at The Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce, “We have been recognizing outstanding citizens in the community for at least 30 years.”

Suminski, who moved to Franklin from Lincoln, Neb., 30 years ago, works in her family business, Dometrics, Inc., which specializes in the supply of machine replacement parts for European made machinery. She is also a prolific author of children’s books, including the “Cowee Sam” and “Animal Stories” series, which fall under the Suminski Family Book publishing entity.

“I was very humbled and honored to receive the chamber award,” said Suminski, who asked one of her daughters, Jamy Beth,



Claire Suminski was given the Citizen of the Year award at Friday night’s annual Chamber Awards banquet. Chamber board member Jim Breedlove both nominated and presented the award to Suminski. At right, Suminski’s daughter Jamy Beth Ferraro accepted the award for her at the banquet.



to receive the award on her behalf, because she and her husband, Joe, were out of town. “Trusting in God and committing to work

with a team for each project that I’m involved in in the community ... with like-minded individuals who are willing to roll their sleeves up and get to work ... I feel that is at the core of any success that I have experienced. I look at the people that chose me to receive this year’s award as my peers. We work shoulder to shoulder to keep building strength in this community for the future.

“The well-run, non-profits and dedicated volunteers in this community are a multiplier factor. They take the funds given to them and put them to good use to help our community shine,” she added.

Suminski has been involved in countless community endeavors, including Women’s

History Trail, which is part of The Folk Heritage Association of Macon County, the Community Connections mentoring program for Macon County schools, and much more. She has also organized the annual Balsam Bee fund raiser, which takes place at Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center during the Christmas holidays, as well as Cowee Christmas, an arts and crafts event.

She pointed out that her family, which includes four now-grown children, has often served with her. Her family has hosted the bible-based Franklin Family Fellowship for 30 years.

See CHAMBER page 4

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Dale West (L) presented the Duke Energy Citizenship & Service Award to Michele Alderson with Hospice House Foundation of WNC.



The Youth Citizen Award was given to Franklin High School student Dakota Collins. Chamber president Bryan Robinson is pictured.



Bryan Robinson (center) presented the Above & Beyond Award to Macon County Health Department, accepted by health director Kathy McGaha and Macon County EMS accepted by Derek Roland for their work during the pandemic. Photos by Betsy Gooder and Eric Haggert

CHAMBER

Continued from page 2

“And a special thank you to Jim, who has believed in all of the ‘ways of helping’ ideas that I have brought to him,” she said.

Suminski shared that living in Macon County and serving in whatever capacity is needed has been a privilege.

“I am amazed every day to live here, in the midst of God’s nature and beauty, and yet, it is the people that live and work and give and serve here that really make this such an incredibly special place.”

Additional Award Winners

Michele Alderson was given the *Duke Energy Citizenship*

Service Award. Alderson is one of the founders of Hospice House Foundation of WNC, a Franklin not-for-profit. Alderson has served as president of the foundation since its inception in 2005, leading HHFWNC in pursuit of its mission... to raise funds for the construction of a Hospice House that will serve the rural mountain region. This mission is approaching fulfillment due to more than 1,500 supporters and Alderson’s leadership. Alderson is the driving force that led HHFWNC to the achievement of its mission.

Dakota Collins was awarded the *Youth Citizenship Award*. Dakota is a member of the Cowee Volunteer Fire Department serving as a junior firefighter. Collins is also an officer in the Future Farmers of America student organization at FHS and has earned the 1st and 2nd level awards in FFA. He has participated in the “Rise for Hunger” program, where



Chamber member Matthew Corbin (R) presented the Club/Organization of the Year award to Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies addiction recovery center. Accepting for Teen Challenge is director Mike Barres.

he helped package nearly 20,000 meals. Collins also serves on the community service committee for the FFA. Collins volunteers at Grandview Manor in the “adopt a grandparent” program. Collins has overcome many challenges and struggles this year and continues to do so while inspiring others.

Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies was named the *Club/Organization of the Year*. Accepting the award was director Mike Barres. Teen Challenge is a faith-based 12-month residential addiction recovery program opening in the old Cullasaja Campground location just off the Highlands Road in 2016.

The Above & Beyond Award went to the Macon County Health Department for its efforts in Covid-19 testing and vaccination and to Macon County EMS. Kathy McGaha – both presented by Chamber president Bryan Robinson presented the award to Health Director Kathy McGaha with County Manager Derek Roland accepting for the EMS department.

Brittney Lofthouse contributed to this article.



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Six-month-old miracle baby Dula continues to improve

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Raylen Dula, born Nov. 24, 2020, at 33 weeks, has overcome and is still overcoming significant physical hurdles, according to her parents, Randy and Tanya Dula. Raylen, and others like her, are affectionately known as “snowflake babies” because she was adopted as a frozen embryo and, as Tanya noted, “each one is unique, just like snowflakes.”

Because Tanya’s pregnancy was difficult and Raylen was not expected to live, the couple and other people, including doctors, have dubbed Raylen a miracle. At one point just after her birth, Raylen was on 12 different IV pumps, a ventilator, and a special light for jaundice. Her father, Randy, told Macon County News (Feb. 25) “One doctor said I’ve not seen a baby as sick as yours in a very long time. I can give no medical explanation for how she’s survived. He pointed to the ceiling and said God is the only reason.”

The local couple believes that it is through the ongoing prayers of many people that their daughter’s health has continued to improve.

A major milestone was to wean the 6-month-old off of oxygen – a process that began taking place in early May “trailing being off oxygen day and night,” explained Tanya. Since that process proved successful, Raylen’s pulmonologist told the parents that “she is doing well off her oxygen.” Their hope, added Tanya, is that “she will be off all her pulmonary medications by August and she will still be doing okay without oxygen.”

Another health-related milestone will be removal of a feeding tube by year’s end.



Considered a “miracle,” Raylen has undergone a series of physical struggles since her birth in November, when she was on a ventilator and several IV pumps, and she has so far overcome numerous health hurdles.



Adopted as a frozen embryo, Raylen Dula faced health challenges in utero and after her birth, but the 6-month-old is steadily improving.

“Raylen still has a long way to go with her feedings but we are working on trying to improve on them,” said Tanya. “She is still being bottle fed and what she does not take by bottle she is fed through her feeding tube.”

Despite physical challenges due to her precarious beginnings, Raylen proved to be a

fighter even while developing in Tanya’s womb. When doctors suggested the pregnancy be terminated due to foreseeable complications, the couple declined and Tanya commented in February, “As long as her heart was beating, she was fighting and we were going to fight for her.”

Her mother said Raylen not only has a fighting spirit but a happy nature as well. Despite also needing physical therapy for her feet, which requires braces to help straighten them, “Raylen loves the characters Nemo and Dori [from the Disney movie “Finding Nemo”] so she has them on her new foot braces.”

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Governor's order seeks to connect the unemployed with jobs

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Businesses across the country more than likely have a “now hiring” sign in the window — many also have signs offering a signing bonus or increased hourly wages. All efforts being taken by businesses owners as a way to get people back to work after COVID19.

Governor Roy Cooper's executive order No. 216 was issued the same day the state seasonally adjusted April unemployment rates were released showing that for April the unemployment rate was 5.0 percent, down 0.2 of a percentage point from March's revised rate. The national rate increased 0.1 of a percentage point to 6.1 percent.

Friday's action expands upon the governor's Executive Order 200, which reinstated work search requirements for new claimants after March 14, 2021. As North Carolina makes progress on its key COVID-19 metrics, the work search requirements will now apply to everyone currently filing for unemployment benefits.

With unemployment qualifications and requirements across the country relaxed during the COVID19 pandemic, businesses who have reopened have struggled to find workers. Businesses around Western North Carolina have announced reduced operating hours or operational capacities, with many fast food restaurants closing their doors entirely due to the lack of staff.

“Unfortunately, even Santa isn't immune from the country wide employment shortage,” The popular Santa's Land theme park located in Cherokee posted to social media on Friday. “We are still opening this Saturday and will be open Sunday; however, we will

not be open during the week. We are still in the process of interviewing and hiring...hopefully, we will have a full staff by next weekend and will be open 7 days a week as usual. We will update

ment activity offered by a NCWorks Career Center or a partnering agency.

To continue receiving benefits, all unemployment claimants will be required to register with a jobseeker account on NCWorks.gov, North Carolina's online portal for employment and training services. Jobseekers can use NCWorks.gov to search and apply for jobs, access labor market information and find opportunities for workforce training. Over the next several weeks, existing claimants will receive notifications about registering with NCWorks.

Since the start of the pandemic, North Carolina has distributed more than \$11.7 billion in unemployment benefits across multiple state and federal programs. Approximately 245,000 North Carolinians are currently receiving benefit payments each week.

Paula Alter, director for the Macon, Jackson, and Swain County branches of NC Division of Workforce Solutions has been working with local businesses to host job fairs to quickly connect employees with employers.

“We had a job fair in Macon County last week and we had a really great turn out,” said Alter. “The job fairs give employees the opportunity to meet face to face with positional employers and see if they will be the right fit before ever having to fill out an application.”

Alter said that with the need for workers continuing to be high, she plans to schedule bi-monthly job fairs across the region to help get people back to work.

The next job fair is scheduled on June 16 in Jackson County at the Bridge Park downtown. The event features employees from across the region.



Some businesses in Franklin are getting creative with their incentives with KFC offering sign on bonuses and Captain D's offering up to \$50 in gift cards for referrals of qualified applicants.

Photos by Vickie Carpenter

as the situation changes.”

Under Cooper's order, claimants must make contact with at least three different employers each week and keep a record of their work search, as is required by state law. One of the three weekly job contacts can be satisfied by attending an approved reemploy-

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Setser named interim Town Manager

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer



Justin Setser

During the Tuesday night continuation meeting of the Franklin Town Council last week, the board voted to appoint Justin Setser as interim Town Manager.

“I feel honored that the town council trusts me with the position of interim Town Manager,” said Setser. “I will continue to work very hard and do my best for the residents, citizens, mayor, town council and the valuable employees of the town of Franklin.”

Setser, who currently serves as the Town Planner, will fill the vacancy left by Summer Woodard, who will leave her post as Town Manager in June. Woodard announced her resignation this spring and will be relocating to Reidsville, N.C., where she will take over as the next City Manager.

Woodard agreed to continue working with the town of Franklin through the current budget process, with her last day to be June 7.

Setser is a native of Macon County. Upon graduation from Franklin High School, Setser attended Haywood Community College, receiving an Associates Degree in GIS/GPS Technology in 2006. He was the former GIS Analyst for Macon County. Setser is a Franklin Fire Department Captain and served on the Town Planning Board and Board of Adjustment prior to his appointment as Town Planner. Setser is a North Carolina Certified Zoning Official (CZO), is a 2018 graduate of the Rural Economic Development Institute (REDI) and has completed the County and Municipal Administration course at the UNC School of Government.

Franklin Mayor Bob Scott noted that Setser

was appointed while the town continues to search for a permanent replacement for Woodard.

“State law says that a municipality with a council-manager form of government shall have an interim manager. It doesn't say may, or should. It says shall,” said Scott. “No member of the council may serve in that capacity. The council seemed to feel it best to have someone within the ranks of employees serve in the interim

as the pool of experienced, retired managers to serve as interim managers is nearly non-existent. However, a county governing board in the same situation can allow a member of the county commission to serve as an interim county manager. Strange how that works in one way for the county and not for a town.”

The Town Council voted to go with a search firm, Developmental Associates, LLC, of Chapel Hill, to find a new manager. The position will be advertised, a brochure developed about Franklin and applicants will be screened from across the nation. Initial candidates will be selected, screened and tested on emotional intelligence factors by the firm.

“I do not have a vote in this as I have no vote except to break a tie,” said Mayor Scott. “From what I have found out, we are talking 60 to 90 days before we select a new manager. Justin Setser is well versed in the working of the town and he is knowledgeable about the day to day operation. All our department heads and employees are pulling together and I have no doubt we will be fine till a new manager is on board. Our town employees are tops in their respective areas of service to the town.”



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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

This weekend will be a joyous holiday weekend where Highlands returns to a normal operation as we move out of the COVID pandemic. I hope everyone will have a wonderful Memorial Day weekend with their family and friends.

But, Memorial Day is a somber time where we should also remember the fallen from American wars, and their families. These patriots gave their "full measure of devotion" to this country.

I will never forget being at a party at a past holiday. I was in the kitchen of the hostess and noticed a faded telegram framed on the wall next to the window. It was near the kitchen sink, a place where that woman was everyday. It read, "We regret to inform you. . ." I asked her about the telegram. It had been sent to her mother with the news that her husband had been killed on a Pacific beach during World War II. The tragedy was that this gracious, adult woman never knew her father. Her Marine lieutenant father had deployed to the Pacific before she was born. But, she kept that old telegram near her as she grieved for a father that she never knew. Like all Gold Star families, the lasting impact of losing a beloved son, daughter, parent or spouse never goes away. It is a burden that is carried for lifetimes.

I hope everyone will take a moment to reflect and pray this Memorial Day for the fallen and their surviving families. As a country we can never repay them, but we can be mindful and thankful for the ultimate sacrifices they all made.

American Legion Post 370 will be holding a ceremony on Monday, Memorial Day, at 10 a.m. at the Veterans Memorial in front of the police station. It will be an appropriate way for everyone to show our gratitude.

Tonight [Thursday] is the in-person May meeting of the Highlands Town Board of Commissioners. The meeting starts at 7 a.m. at the Highlands Conference Center which is next to the ball field.

The meeting agenda is rather long. There will be two public hearings concerning changes to the Unified Development Ordinance. The changes to the UDO are being mandated by the NC Legislature under the new 160 D statues. The board will also review the NCDOT Macon County Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The plan identifies county transportation needs through

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Clarity on voting ID and registration is a good thing

Let us view this issue from a standpoint of the statistical and verifiable evidence.

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N.C. 2018 Ramon Esteban Paez-Jerez - Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2018 Jose Jaime Ramiro-Torres - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2018 Dieudonne Soifils - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2018 Guadalupe Espinosa-Pena - Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2018 Maria Rufina Castillo-Boswell - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2018 Dora Maybe Damata-Rodriguez - Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2017 Dewey Gidcumb - Duplicate Voting
N.C. 2017 Edward Charles Green - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2017 Dalton Shane Smith - Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2017 Robert Lee Youngblood - Duplicate Voting
N.C. 2016 Patrick Cannon - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2016 Robert Dean Hudson Official Finding Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2016 Lumberton, NC Official Finding Election Overturned
N.C. 2016 Pembroke, NC Official Finding Election Overturned

N.C. 2016 Roger Adam Herres - Duplicate Voting, False Registrations
N.C. 2015 Pasco Parker Criminal Conviction Duplicate Voting

N.C. 2015 Samuel Walter Sylvester IV - Ineligible Voting
N.C. 2014 Verna Roehm - Fraudulent Use Of Absentee Ballots

N.C. 2014 Pembroke, NC Official Finding Election Overturned
N.C. 2012 Horatio Johnson - Ineligible Voting

N.C. 2004 Anita Moore, Valerie Moore, Carlos Hood - Buying Votes
As reported by the Associated Press Reporter Gary Robinson on March 19, 2021,

Continued on page 11

"RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A federal North Carolina prosecutor's office that has been investigating allegations of voter-related fraud said on Friday that 24 more people have been charged over the past 18 months.

"Two of the defendants were charged earlier this year with unlawful voting in the 2016 general election, a news release from the U.S. Attorney's Office for eastern North Carolina said.

"More than 15 other defendants, including four whose indictments were unsealed Friday, were charged with falsely claiming U.S. citizenship to register to vote, according to a list the government released of those charged and their nationalities. The two charged with unlawful voting also are accused of false claims of citizenship.

"Several people also have been charged with naturalization fraud and the misuse of immigration visas and other documents.

Those charged are listed as being from Mexico and several central American countries, as well as from France, Yemen, Iraq and Nigeria and other countries. Each defendant was charged individually, and there are no conspiracy charges, according to the news release."

While I could list a lot more examples of voter fraud, and since space is limited, this should be sufficient to bring clarity that voter fraud is not "incredibly rare." These are only the ones caught by authorities.

If we casually accept the premise that the N.C. State Board of Elections states "more than 600,000 people" do not have government issued ID cards and that "More than 500,000 of these people regularly vote," how many of those people are actually ineligible due to voter registration fraud and how many double voted or voted out of their precinct? Without accurate and verifiable Voter ID with signatures to be crossed checked against applications, how are authorities going to accurately cross check to catch these criminals?

Look at the list.

In three of the cases listed, the problem was wide spread enough to overturn the election in counties where authorities did their due diligence. One or two ineligible voters did not create that circumstance. It was a whole lot of documented fraudulent registrations and/or votes. That is proof positive that happens a lot more than "incredibly rare."

While voter ID is geared to stop false impersonation, it also strikes to all types of ineligible registration as well as voting, both in person and more importantly by mail in absentee ballots.

Absent requiring valid Voter ID, how are officials going to effectively protect all of us from having our vote nullified by those who game the system?

With respect to the Washington, DC and local NAACP's suit against the Constitutional Amendment voted in 2018 into Law by a majority of NC voters, the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously reversed District Court Judge Bigg's finding, but the District Court Judge will not remove the injunction so yes, the legal fight to protect our Rights and

Continued on page 11

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From previous page

franchise continues, as well it should.

All the laws on the books will not stop criminals like Yakov or the ones listed above as well as those out of the 600,000 (just talking about N.C. What about the rest of this country?) who have not been identified due to lack of enforceable Voter ID requirements?

This begs the question as to why there are people who continually argue against more transparency and accuracy in the entire voting process. What is their agenda and what or who are they trying to aid in advocating for making it easier to commit voter fraud and get away with it?

It is like being slightly pregnant or slightly dead.

One legal and law abiding American citizen's vote nullified by these types of illegal acts is one too many.

Pete Stern – Franklin, N.C.

Administration implemented 'eight rules'

Prior to this past election, I was of the opinion that if Biden was elected president it would actually be a third term for Obama and that has been proven to be the case based upon Biden's top Cabinet picks, all of whom were members of the Obama Administration.

Of particular interest is Susan Rice, Obama's Ambassador to the United Nations, who is now director of the White House Domestic Policy Council. A member of the White House press corps has confirmed that all domestic policy issues pass before her desk for approval before being passed on to Biden. The question is, to whom does she consult before issuing her approval? The consensus of opinion is that it is Obama. It is also common knowledge that she was instrumental in preparing the numerous executive orders signed by President Biden on his first day in office. Those Executive Orders were apparently issued with no forethought of consequences but were spitefully issued to undo President Trump's accomplishments; specifically energy independence and border protection.

You may remember that Susan Rice was sent forth by the Obama Administration to lie to the American people that the reason for the attack on the Bengasi Embassy was an anti-muslim video.

Obama admitted in a former interview with Jimmy Kimmel that he would like to someday have a surrogate in a high position whom he could control. That now appears to have become a reality.

It is obvious that the Biden Administration is moving forward with the Obama Administration's agenda of fundamentally changing America. During Obama's first term the following appeared in print: Eight Rules for Creating a Socialist State: 1) control health care, 2) increase poverty since "poor people are easier to control," 3) increase the debt to "produce more poverty," 4) gun control, so that "you are able to create a police state" 5) expand welfare to "take control of every aspect of their lives," 6) control education to determine "what people read and listen to," 7) "remove the belief in the God from the government and schools" and 8) initiate class warfare to "cause more discontent" so "it will be easier to tax the wealthy with the support of the poor."

This was falsely attributed to the radical community organizer Saul Alinsky who gained prominence during the '60s and '70s. He was the subject of Hilary's college thesis and Obama mentioned him in his books. Although the origin of these rules is unknown, they were followed precisely by the Obama Administration as evidenced as follows: 1) Obama care. 2) See #5 3) Obama doubled the national debt from \$10 trillion to \$20 trillion 4) A continuing war against our 2nd Amendment right to bear arms. 5) People on welfare reached its highest point in history under Obama. 6) The teachers' union and media are arms of the Democrat party. Our schools, colleges and universities are more into indoctrination than education and the main stream media regur-

gitates the liberal Democrat agenda and talking points. The Democrats are even trying to get the FCC to take conservative news stations off the air. 7) During the '60s a liberal Supreme Court banned God from our schools and more recently ruled that there must be a Separation of Church and State even though our Constitution states that Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof. 8) Obama succeeded in turning rich against poor, blacks and whites against each other, Arabs against Jews and worst of all, he vilified the police. Never before had the police been despised to the point that someone would walk up to a parked police cruiser and assassinate the occupants. And now the Democrats are in cahoots with ANTIFA and BLM in their efforts to defund the police departments nationwide.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer is quoted as saying, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act." What we see from the Democrat leadership is evil. Late term abortions, a war against Christianiy and Christian values, attempting to make America into a Socialist nation, the first step toward Communism and a Dictatorship led by the liberal elite of the Democrat party. WAKE UP AMERICA!!

Marshall "Buck" Miller – Franklin, N.C.

All 'under the influence' must be held accountable

Is anyone else (at the very least) surprised that modern-day 21st Century America is having difficulty separating fact from fiction, truth from untruth, or finding it complicated establishing whether or not a resolution to that conundrum even matters?

I have never subscribed to the supposition that Donald Trump, or the party that presently promotes him, are the cause of possibly the final, total collapse of America's grand experiment with democracy. I see them more the conduit through which America's apathy, indifference and disregard for the truth travels at warp speed, conspicuous and bared for all the world to judge.

It is beyond belief and human understanding that what the English poet, John Dryden (1631-1700) maintained was "the foundation of all knowledge and the cement of all societies" – truth – could so easily be twisted and bastardized by nearly half a nation while the other half looks on in spell-binding paralysis.

Despite all we know to be true and have seen and heard with our own eyes and ears (ad nauseum), there are still countless Americans who will try and convince us the former president "did nothing wrong" and always "put America first." That's absurd.

It is also glaringly and simply not the truth. The 45th President betrayed the nation entrusted to him and and that he took an oath to protect and he had a lot of help doing it. Donald Trump was twice constitutionally impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives and the Republican Party (in the face of overwhelming evidence) twice revealed its cowardice and complicity by acquitting him, thereby giving him permission to continue his reprehensible behavior.

Truth matters ... We have always defined the United States as a nation of laws and the incontrovertible premise that no one is above those laws. Donald Trump and the GOP seem to have thus far proven that accepted doctrine – an illusion.

Donald Trump obstructed Congress, he violated his oath of office, he betrayed the public trust, he undermined the Constitution, disregarded the rules of law, further corrupted our government, and abused the power of his office on occasions almost too numerous to count (including asking the president of a foreign power to investigate a political opponent). And to insure history records and reviles the presidency of this consummate liar and masterful conman, days before leaving office he incited a deadly attack on our Capi-

TAYLOR

From previous page

2045. We will also be reviewing the last component of the BearWise initiative. I anticipate Highlands becoming the first certified BearWise community in North Carolina this summer.

Our town manager will be presenting the proposed budget for FYI 21-22. As prescribed by law the proposed budget is balanced. There are a number of major road and infrastructure projects in this budget. The town board will call for a budget public hearing for the June meeting. Upon approval, the budget goes into effect July 1.

The meeting will also be on YouTube for those who can't attend in person. The broadcast will be a view only format.

tol (the human cost of which is yet to be determined) in a last ditch effort to overturn a free and fair election he lost.

If our republic and our democracy are to survive, Donald Trump and every man and woman who came within his sphere of influence to aid and sustain his avalanche of lies and wrongful actions must be held accountable under the laws of the land. If he, and they, are not held responsible, we have degraded the democracy we inherited, dishonored our ancestors and are willingly and knowingly punishing our own children.

It cannot be said too often or too loudly – truth matters... and, as Ralph Waldo Emerson (U. S. essayist and poet 1803-1882) believed, "The grandest homage we can pay to the truth is to use it."

David Snell – Franklin, N.C.

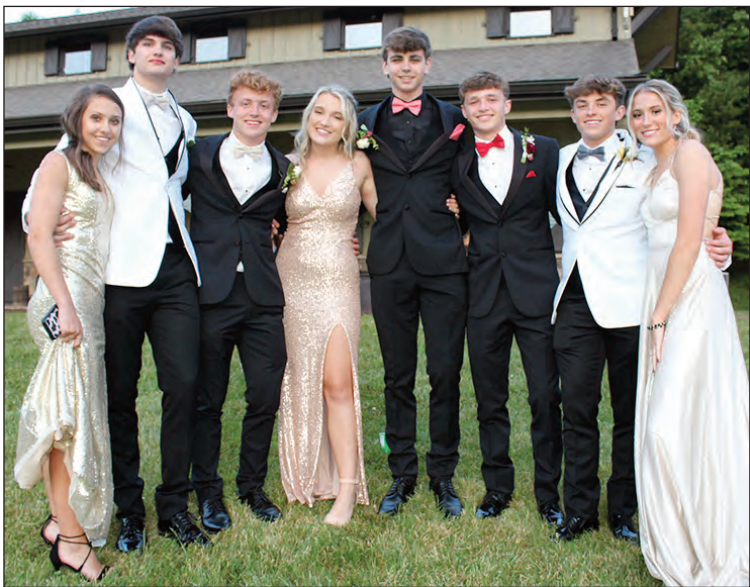
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'Carnival' Prom featured cotton candy, cornhole and a caricaturist

Franklin High School's parent-sponsored Junior Senior Prom for 2021 featured activities never before seen at a prom in Macon County looking more like a carnival than a formal. Held at Tennesse Farms Wedding and Event Center, prom-goers played corn-hole, giant Jenga, Connect 4 and other lawn games. A shaved ice truck offered flavored snowcones, and an abundance of cotton candy was available. A photo booth was set up to mark the occasion as well as a caricaturist to record smiling faces. All those present were given a Prom King or Prom Queen sash to honor each attendee.

Photos by Vickie Carpenter





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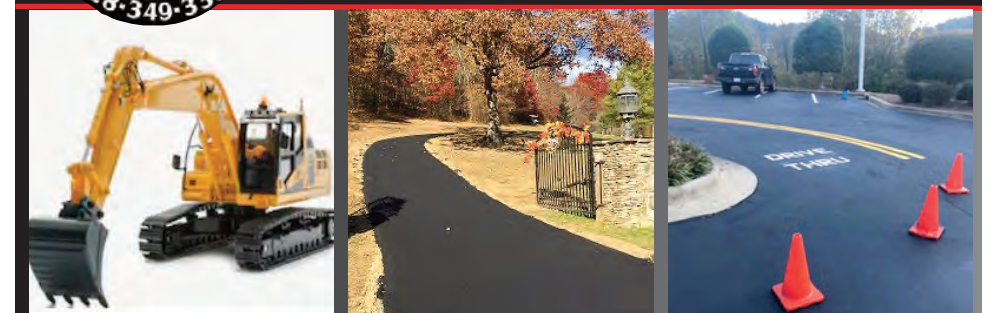
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Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests May 13 - 23. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

May 18

Ashley Bentson, was issued warrant service. Amber L. Wright made the arrest.

May 19

Brett Charles Aldrich, was charged with larceny of a motor vehicle parts. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

Anthony Shamal Bryson, was issued warrant service for child support enforcement contempt. Jonathan Phillips made the arrest.

Samatha Taylor Harkins, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

May 20

Carol Moore, was charged with obstructing justice, obtaining property by false pretenses. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Harold Andrew Williamson, was charged with injury to personal property. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

May 21

Richard Frank Sanford Jr. was charged with possession of stolen goods/property, possession of burglary tools, breaking and entering, larceny, possession of stolen goods/property, breaking and entering a motor vehicle, larceny, possession of stolen goods/property. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Mark Alexander Anderson, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, failure to appear for use of red or blue light, possession of stolen goods, receive stolen goods. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy, was charged with sex offender on child premises. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

May 22

Marcus Cody Waldroup, is being held for other jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

May 23

Haley Morgan McCall, was charged with failure to appear. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Dakota Charles Mathis, was charged with larceny of a motor vehicle. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Doyle Dooger Ramirez, was issued warrant service. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

Lynsey Houston, was issued warrant service. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

ham made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

May 13

Kayla Nicole Woods, 24, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

May 14

Erica Natasha Tastinger, 31, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set. Sergeant Norman made the arrest.

May 15

Alex Livorio Rivera, 28, was charged with breaking and entering. A secured bond of \$12,000 was set. Sergeant Beegle made the arrest.

May 17

Kristian Alexander Dremel, 41, was charged with all other offenses. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set. Officer Cabe made the arrest.

May 18

Dustin Ty Daves, 27, was charged with felony larceny, felony attempted larceny, felony possession of stolen goods, misdemeanor possession of stolen goods, misdemeanor larceny, injury to personal property. A secured bond of \$11,000 was set.

May 19

Rickey Anthony Caldwell, 36, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set. Sergeant Beegle made the arrest.

May 20

April Renee Burd, 28, was charged with larceny, possession of stolen goods. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set. Sergeant Norman made the arrest.

Kraig Allen Lackey, 36, was charged with shoplifting. A secured bond of \$10,500 was set. Detective Foster made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

May 17

Marcus Edmund Mundo, 40, of Olivine Place, was charged with stalking, cyberstalking, communicating threats, threaten executive legal court officer, violation of court order, domestic criminal trespass, assault on a government official/employee, resisting a public officer, assault on a female. A secured bond of \$20,000 was set.

Robert Joseph Beasley, of Front St., Dillsboro, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, simple possession of a schedule IV controlled substance, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set.

May 18

Lisa Morris Brown, 56, of Addington Place, Franklin, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon. No bond was set.

Michael Kevin Monteith, 59, of Fisher Creek, was issued a parole warrant. No bond was set.

Jose Manuel Salvador Garcia, 55, of Whittier, was issued a

child support purge. A \$200 bond was set.

Ericka Leah Arkansas, 43, of Hallmark Lane, Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for second degree trespass. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Jonny Francisco Rivera Moreno, 36, of Patriot Dr., was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses, uttering a forged instrument, forgery of instrument. A secured bond of \$150,000 was set.

Olivia Charice Kinsey, 21, of Stephen Court, Havelock, was charged with failure to appear for shoplifting, simple assault. A secured bond of \$1,250 was set.

May 19

Susanna Elise Cox, of San Francisco, Calif., was charged with kidnapping/abduction. A secured bond of \$150,000 was set.

Shawn Michael McQuaig, 25, of Anthony St., Waynesville, was charged with civil contempt for child support purge. A \$804.00 was set.

Isaiah Nittakmittiki Lewis, 25, of Savannah Dr., was charged with failure to appear for speeding, reckless driver to endanger, driving while intoxicated. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

May 20

Robert Veron Henry, 75, of Henry Rd., was charged with resisting a public officer, break/enter to terrorize/injure occupant. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Logan Mekenna Otter, 26, of Junes Loop, Cherokee, was issued a true bill of indictment for possession of methamphetamine/possession of drug paraphernalia, attempted break or enter a building. An unsecured bond of \$2,750 was set.

May 21

John Andrew Hansen, 38, of Crooked Creek Lane, Webster, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon, communicating threats. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

May 22

Tommy Lee Henderson, 37, of Whittier, was charged with attempted second degree trespass, obtain property by false pretense. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

May 23

Jason Adam Watty, 43, of Cherokee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, no liability insurance, drive/allow a motor vehicle with no registration. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Grant Aristotle Works, 38, of Whiskey Ridge, Whittier, was charged with carrying a concealed weapon, resisting a public officer, failure to appear for second degree trespass/resisting a public officer, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, larceny from the person, conspire to commit felony larceny, robbery with dangerous weapon. A secured bond of \$25,000 was set.

Correction

In last week's issue of The Macon County News dated Thursday, May 20, the Arrest Report incorrectly stated the William F. Talbott had been arrested for disorderly conduct by the Franklin Police Department. No arrest was made. The Macon County News regrets the error.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Memorial Day Service will be held on Monday, May 31, 11 a.m. at the Macon County Memorial Park (beside the Carpenter Community Building). The American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and the Vietnam Veterans are uniting in this ceremony to remember and honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in defense of our country. Shaded seating and cold bottled water will be available. Light refreshments will be served at the American Legion Home, 614 W. Main Street, following the ceremony. The public is invited to attend and participate in this event.

Macon County Art Association Veteran's Portrait Project will be held this year. Spots are open for four to seven veterans as applications remained from 2019. Macon County veterans or family members can apply to have the veteran's portrait painted by a local artist at the gallery between Memorial Day and July 4. There is no cost to apply or for the portraits. The only requirement is that the veteran or their family member be present to receive the portrait on Veterans Day. Community members who wish to help support the costs for this program are also welcome. For more information, email at karen@program-services.org.

Friends of the Rickman Store are looking for volunteers to be greeters and assist in Saturday activities. No amount of time is too small. The store is open Saturdays 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. For more information, call Connie Reynolds (828)524-0359.

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 Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. at No Wrong Door, 102 Thomas Heights Rd., 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.

Historic T M Rickman Store is now open on Saturdays from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Located at 259 Cowee Creek Road in the historic West - Mill District. Music Jams begin at noon.

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.

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.

Macon County Public Health is currently vaccinating those eligible in all groups. Individuals that want to receive a COVID-19 vaccine, must call Macon County's Vaccine Call Center at (828)524-1500 to register and schedule an appointment. The Call Center is open Monday - Friday, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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 smccc.org

Crawford Senior Center Zoom Classes will include exercise, tai chi, and others. For more information, or to register, call the Senior Center at (828)349-2058.

Macon Chips, the Franklin Wood Carving Club will meet on Thursday, 6:30 p.m. in Franklin High School Wood Shop. They will continue to meet on Thursdays. Participants are asked to comply with social distancing and other endemic protocols. All members and prospective members are cordially invited to attend. For more information, call Contact D Lansont (828)369-2144.

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

Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter Telephone Support Group for Caregivers of Persons with Alzheimer's Disease or dementia is designed to provide caregivers opportunities for sharing, education, and support through a telephone conference. Support group participants and a support group facilitator connect each month for one-hour confidential sessions. For more information, call (800)272-3900.

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

Macon County CareNet is in need of volunteers. Positions open are food pantry, soup kitchen and file room. If interested stop by for an application at 130 Bidwell St., or call (828)369-2642.

Volunteer at Angel Medical Center Enjoy the reward of making someone else's day brighter by sharing your talents and time. Become a volunteer at Angel Medical Center. Volunteers serve in a variety of roles such as mail and flower delivery, guest service, information desk assistance, student volunteer programs, pet therapy, chaplain, administrative support and more. For more information, call (828)349-6639 or email Bonnie.Peggs@msj.org.

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

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

Macon Medication Assistance Program located at the back of the First Baptist Church is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information call (828)524-5258.

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Son Rise Ministries and Dynamic Women Ladies Brunch will be held on Saturday, June 12, 10 a.m. The guest speaker will be Ida Thornton, a minister of the Gospel prophetically called to declare the seasons and times of the Lord and to establish, equip, and strengthen believers in their faith. The Fellowship is located at 462 Depot St. For more information or reservations, call (828)369-2465 or (828)524-7631.

Spiritual Light Center on Sunday, May 30, 11 a.m., Forrest Rivers will be sharing on "Our Lost Sage: Earth and Her Power to Heal." The center is located at 80 Heritage Hollow Dr., behind the Gazebo Restaurant in Heritage Hollow.

First Alliance Church is holding Sunday services at 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages is at 9:30 am. Senior Pastor Scott Eichelberger will deliver the message. 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.

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. 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.

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, Franklin Services are held Rite I, 8 a.m. without music and Rite II, 10:15 a.m. with music, every Sunday. First and third Sundays at St. Agnes Chapel, 66 Church St. and second and fourth Sundays at St. Cyprian's Chapel, 216 Roller Mill Rd. Sunday 10:15 a.m. services can be viewed live on the website: www.allsaintsfranklin.org and past Sundays can be viewed on YouTube by searching "All Saints Franklin" to find our YouTube page.

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

Franklin First United Methodist Church meets at 9:30 a.m., on Sundays for in-person worship or on Facebook at Franklin First United Methodist Church, either live or later on recorded video. Note that COVID-19 health protocols are followed for in-person worship. Plan to arrive early for check in; masks are required. The church is located at 66 Harrison Avenue in downtown Franklin. Senior pastor is Rev. David Beam. For more information, call (828)524-3010 or visit www.firstumcfranklin.org.

SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

6	9	7	1	2	4	8	5	3
4	5	2	8	7	3	1	9	6
8	1	3	9	5	6	7	2	4
9	2	1	3	8	7	6	4	5
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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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SCHOOL BOARD

Continued from page 1

are also planned.

Breakfast, lunch and afternoon snacks are provided daily at no extra charge and are prepared by the Macon County Schools Child Nutrition Department and served on-site. Boxed lunches and snacks are provided while on field trips.

Parents/Guardians are required to attend a parent information evening on Friday, June 11, drop-in between 5 and 7 p.m., prior to the first day of Summer Edventure Camp. A calendar of activities and field trips will be available at that time as well as on the Summer Edventure Camp website.

Macon County Schools Summer Edventure Camp is licensed by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Child Development, and is governed by the Child Care Policies as set forth in the Child Care Handbook. Tuition costs are incurred and subsidies are available.

Students enrolled in Edventure Camp will also have an opportunity to take part in enrichment activities provided by contracts with Nantahala Learning Center, Danny Antione's Karate Academy, Maggie's Music Academy, and New Visions Gymnastics.

In addition to the Summer Edventure Camp, a Summer Learning Program will also be offered for students who need a little extra help catching up due to learning challenges surrounding the lockdowns and online school. Students are selected for this program based on academic need. This program will provide students with credit recovery and remediation. Subjects offered for recovery include reading, math and science. Instruction will be provided at no charge to the student.

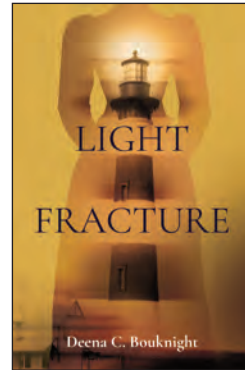
"We have never served this number of students in a summer program before. Six hundred-plus students will be attending the Summer Learning Program this year," said Josh Lynch, Macon County Curriculum Director.

The Summer Learning Program will be combined with Summer Edventure Camp activities, to offer students the opportunity to socialize, which had been a missing ingredient for virtual learners during the pandemic. Students will have free transportation to and from school and free breakfast and lunch. Participating schools include South Macon Elementary, Mountain View Intermediate (MVI) and FHS. More information will be forthcoming at a later date.

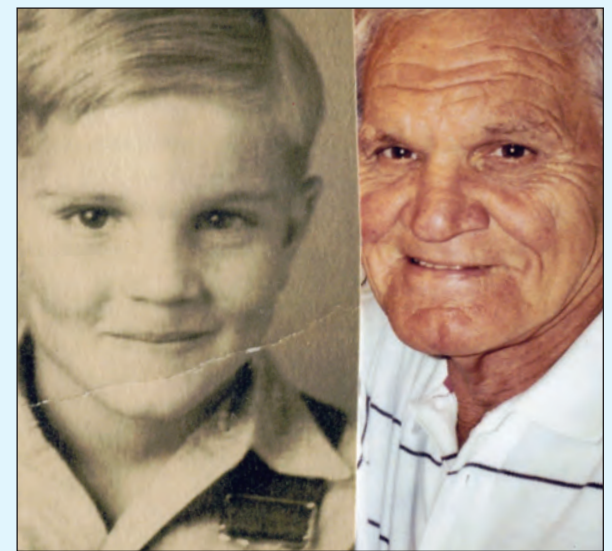
Local author to sign books Saturday, May 29

Since author Deena C. Bouknight resides in Franklin, Books Unlimited on Main Street is the first book signing site for her new novel, "Light Fracture." The author will be available to sign books and answer questions about the novel at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 29, during the Memorial Day weekend's "Hometown Spring Market Days on Main."

Bouknight's historic literary novel, "Light Fracture," is a well-researched, sense-of-place, post-Reconstruction tale that builds in and around a lighthouse culture to climax with a natural disaster involving strange phenomena before, during, and after an estimated magnitude-7 earthquake. Few people realize that the 1886 earthquake that devastated Charleston, S.C., is the worst on record to ever affect the East Coast. Though steeped in accurate history, the fictional tale focuses on Agnes Larsson's plummet inside the Morris Island lighthouse during the earthquake's aftershocks and explores whether her death was driven by mental illness or involved something sinister on the part of her lighthouse keeper husband or their children's teacher.



A career writer and journalist who is a contributing writer to Macon County News, Bouknight has also written two other Southern fiction novels, "Broken Shell" and "Playing Guy," which are available at Books Unlimited and the Macon County Public Library.



Teem to celebrate 90th

James L. Teem will turn 90 years old on Wednesday, June 2. Born and raised in Franklin, he is the son of the late Jim and Roxie Crisp Teem. James and his wife Betty, reside in their home on the old Teem homeplace. On Saturday, June 5, a birthday celebration will be held in the Teems' backyard. Friends and family are welcome to stop by any time after 2 p.m. and wish him well.

MEC student to attend N.C. School of the Arts

Jacey Begnaud, a 10th grade student at Macon Early College, has been accepted into the University of North Carolina School of the Arts (UNCSA).

Following a comprehensive admissions process that included a detailed application, letters of recommendation, academic analysis, a vocal portfolio review, and a competitive vocal repertoire audition, Begnaud was invited to enroll in The School of Music - Voice Program.

In addition to competitive music school undergraduate and graduate programs, UNCSA offers one of the nation's only res-



idential high school programs and is home to the renowned A.J. Fletcher Opera Institute, a tuition-free graduate-level professional training ground for exceptional young vocalists.

The School of Music offers weekly master classes taught by distinguished guest artists, as well as a transformative conservatory experience that combines intensive individual study under artist mentors. With a rich variety of performance opportunities, students rehearse and perform in state-of-the-art facilities and "gig" as professional musicians in Winston-Salem.

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For more information call 828-524-2516 Donnie Clay - Coordinator

Yes, can you believe it? This weekend we will get to do Pickin' for the first time in about 18 months! It has been really strange times for all of us. I hope all of you have been safe and well.

We are having the J.W. band, a great country band that is a favorite of the Pickin' concerts. They will be doing some great classic country, as well as some new stuff. We are excited to let you know that we will have a new sound person, Mr. Tony Curtis and crew. We are looking forward to that.

So hope to see you this Saturday night. The concert will start at 7:00 p.m. and end around 9:00 p.m. Remember, these concerts are brought to you each weekend by the Town of Franklin, free of charge.

Donnie Clay, Coordinator for Pickin' on the Square



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To till or not to till

Dr. Bob Gilbert – Columnist

Have you ever wondered how trees in the forest can grow so huge without man-made products like fertilizer? Where do their nutrients come from? Why are we compelled to add various forms of fertilizers to our plants when in the forest that is not necessary? Are we just in a hurry as fertilizers promote uncommon rapid growth? There is a fairly simple answer, leaf mold, mulch, humus (the organic component of soil) provide the forest plants nutrition. However, the roots of most plants cannot digest soil nutrients without the help of fungus organisms. A specialized group of soil fungus organism called Mycorrhizae (My-cor-rhi-a) attach themselves to the roots of plants and digest organic materials feeding the roots. The roots by themselves cannot do this alone. The consequence of tilling soil is that the massive Mycorrhizae filaments are broken and become ineffective. Man-made fertilizers become necessary in order for a plant to grow successfully. We've all seen Mycorrhizae on the forest floor by turning over old exfoliated forest leaves and debris finding networks of white fibers or filaments.

It is curious to me that now some soil mixes and fertilizer compounds have soil Mycorrhizae added. However, there are literally hundreds of different kinds of Mycorrhizae. Many plants have a specific fungus organism that they depend on. So, you don't know which Mycorrhizae to add even if it were available. Some manufacturers are adding a blend of Mycorrhizae to their fertilizers and soil mixes, hoping that they happen to supplement the right one.

Cultivation, double digging or tilling the soil prior to planting disturbs the natural fungus organisms that feed roots of plants. In order to get adequate growth or even fast growth chemical fertilizers high in nitrogen and phosphorus and potash are often added. Some of these chemicals are harsh and if over applied can burn roots. Slow-release products are now available. A common one is Osmocote. It consists of BB-size round plastic pellets that are filled with fertilizer. The plastic lining is porous. The larger the pore size in the plastic, the faster the release. Obviously, the smaller the pores the slower the release. Osmocote comes in 3, 6, 9 and I believe 12-month release. Rarely do we find the 9 or 12-month Osmocote available here because our growing season is not that long.

There are generally, two types of Mycorrhizae, one surrounds roots, and the other actually penetrates into the root. It is not possible to know or find listed which species of Mycorrhizae is needed for a specific plant. So, in my opinion the best thing to do is to get a blend and also apply an organic mulch annually.



Dr. Bob Gilbert



Forest mycorrhizae

Right: Diagram of two types of mycorrhizae from "The Hosta Journal"

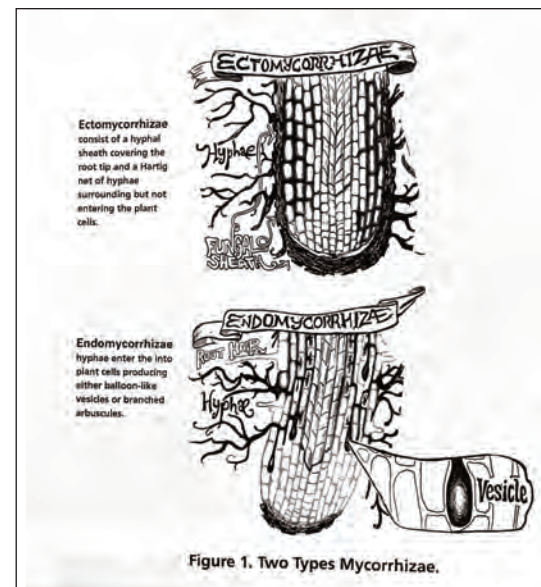


Figure 1. Two Types Mycorrhizae.

Keep in mind if you going to till cultivate, till or turn over the soil prior to planting, the soil needs to be supplemented with some sort of nutrients because the mycorrhizae has been disturbed, broken and pulverized.

An old adage about ivy states that the first year it's planted it sleeps, the second year it creeps, and the third year it leaps. From my experience this adage about ivy is accurate. I have often wondered whether this has anything to do with the development of Mycorrhizae on the roots? I found no evidence suggesting that it takes 2 to 3 years for Mycorrhizae to redevelop in disturbed soil but that certainly could be the case.

Now when I am planning something I will incorporate into the soil a blend of Mycorrhizae organisms. Curious there are now organic fertilizers that have "soil" or "alive" mycorrhizae already added. Also, blends are available.

I should have begun this dialogue with a disclaimer. I am not

a soil chemist nor have I made a study of this subject. I am simply a back yard gardener.

A large group of Master Gardeners from Cobb County Georgia began to volunteer at my garden in Kennesaw. One of the most dramatic things they did was to turned my nursery bed into a vegetable garden. Hundreds of pounds of vegetables were grown annually and donated to a local organization like Care Net. I learned a lot from them. They put down between rows cardboard and newspaper and then topped it with a heavy layer of leaves. This was reapplied every year. Over the years both layers broke down feeding now what I know as Mycorrhizae. Of course, there were no weeds so no soil disturbance. I don't recall them using any inorganic fertilizer.

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

Karen Lawrence is a professional wildlife and horticultural 12 photographer from



Fertilizer and Mycorrhizae blends and Soil Mix with Mycorrhizae. Photos by Karen Lawrence





Deaths & Funerals

Edna Phillips Bryson

Edna Phillips Bryson, 94, passed away Thursday, May 20, 2021. She was born Oct. 12, 1926, in Macon County to the late James Roy Phillips and Octia Henry Phillips. She was a lifelong resident in Highlands and was married to the late Walter Neville Bryson who preceded her in death July 2010. She worked at Bryson Gulf Service in Highlands for 35 years. She loved to sew, quilt and needlepoint. She loved her family and enjoyed time spent with them and her grandchildren. She earned a Bachelor Degree at Brevard College. She was a member at the Highlands United Methodist Church.



Edna Phillips Bryson

She is survived by two sons, Jim Bryson (Sheila) and Mike Bryson (Becki); five grandchildren, Ryan Bryson, Josh Bryson, Jennifer Bauer, Jaime Miller and Maegan Gallira; four great-grandchildren, Rylee Bryson, Laney Bryson, Kinsley Bryson and Wesley James Miller; a daughter-in-law, Margaret Vinson Bryson.

In addition to her husband and parents, she is preceded in death by her son, Ned Bryson, two sisters, Evelyn Crowe and Mary Wood; a brother, James Phillips.

A funeral service was held Sunday, May 23, at Highlands United Methodist Church in the Faith and Fellowship Center with the Rev. Randy Lucas and Rev. Paul Christy officiating. Burial followed at Highlands Memorial Park. Pallbearers were Ryan Bryson, Josh Bryson, Dennis Wilson, Jaime Miller, Jennifer Bauer and Brian Bauer.

In lieu of flowers the family requests that memorials be made to Highlands United Methodist Church Building Fund, 315 Main Street, Highlands, NC 28741.

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

Connie Mae Horner

Connie Mae Horner, 69, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, May 17, 2021. She was born Nov. 5, 1951, in Alamance County, North Carolina, to the late Lindsey and Gladys Tingen Whitfield. She was a Baptist by faith, loved cooking, traveling and going on cruises. She also made clothing and built dollhouse furniture for the American Girl Company.



Connie Mae Horner

She is survived by her husband, Ned Horner; sons, Mickey Lee Horner, Brian Keith Horner (Regina), and Jeremy Lewis Horner (Kimberly Welvin); daughter, Ashley Suzanne Blekicki (Tim); sisters, Becky Troxler, Vivian Crawford and Bobbie Sweeney; 10 grandchildren, Taylor Lee Horner, Savannah Jade Horner, Kayleigh Braelyn Scholfield, McKenzie Horner, Madison Horne, Samuel Horner, Jonah Horner, Zane Lewis Horner, Lytham Nathaniel Horner and Cora Lynn Horner.

A Celebration of Life will be held at the home.

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

Jake Lee Breedlove

Jake Lee Breedlove, 86, of Franklin, N.C., died on Friday, May 21, 2021.

Born in Swain County, he was the son of the late Alfred Gaston and Cora Lee Dehart Breedlove. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two children, Baby Breedlove and son, Alfred Breedlove; brothers, Clyde Breedlove, Frank Breedlove, Alfred Breedlove, and Ralph Breedlove; and two sisters, Grace Davis and Thelma Ammons.

He lived most of his life in Western North Carolina, in his spare time he enjoyed gardening, rabbit hunting, fishing and just being outside. He attended Oak Grove Baptist Church.

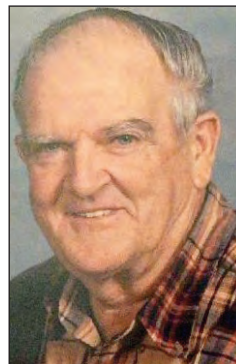
He is survived by his wife of 67 years, Etta Mae Posey Breedlove; daughter, Janice Gibson (Connie) of Franklin; two sons, Jackie Breedlove (Kim) of Franklin, and Ted Breedlove (Denise) of Burlington, N.C.; and three sisters, Bethel Bogan of Charlotte, N.C., Gladys Winston of Charlotte, and Betty Walker of Bryson City, N.C.; 15 grandchildren; numerous great grandchildren and great great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews surviving.

Graveside service will be Monday, May 24 at 3pm at the Graveyard Gap Cemetery in Swain County. Rev. Brandon Breedlove will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Macon Funeral Home, 261 Iotla St, Franklin, NC 28734.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Jake Lee Breedlove

Terry L. Gregory

Terry L. Gregory, 66, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, May 20, 2021.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Troy L. and Bessie Mae Taylor Gregory. He was a member of Black Mountain Baptist Church. He enjoyed bass fishing, spending time with his family and loved being with his grandchildren.

He is survived by his wife, Lynne H. Gregory; son, Josh Gregory; and two grandchildren, Dakota Troy Gregory and Skyler Marie Gregory all of Franklin.

In keeping with his wishes, no services are planned at this time.

Memorials can be made to the family to help with medical expenses.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Terry L. Gregory

Johnnie Sue Frady

On May 15, 2021, as the sun rose over the mountains, Johnnie Sue Frady closed her eyes for the last time, opened her arms, and let the angels carry her home. She was 63 years old and although she lost her long and painful battle with cancer, she never lost her indomitable spirit or her sense of humor.

She was a person who effortlessly drew people to her, forming close friendships easily. Anyone who met her never forgot her. A true character, her self-deprecating humor, and her ability to weave a good story kept everyone around her constantly entertained. Even in the worst days of her illness, when we knew she was in terrible pain, she made us laugh. Usually, with the side-splitting, laugh-until-you-cry kind of laughter that never failed to lift our spirits.

She was raised and lived her life in Cashiers. She repeatedly stated she never wanted to live anywhere else. She was an all-in kind of person, not known for ever holding anything back. She stood up for what she believed in and never backed down from a fight. Her father often said she would fight a circle saw. With Johnnie, what you saw was what you got.

She was outspoken and a champion of the underdogs. Known for opening her heart and her home to anyone who asked for her help, eager to share what she had even when she didn't have much.

Children adored her. And why not? She was notorious for spoiling children rotten. She possessed a vivid imagination and a true genius for finding fun things to keep kids entertained for hours. Thus, ensuring they thoroughly enjoyed their time with her and never wanted to go home. She also gave the best hugs. The all-enveloping, make you feel warm, and safe and loved kind of hug we all need from time to time. You knew if you went to visit her you were getting one of those hugs before you left.

She loved reading and gardening. She was a talented artist, creating beautiful sculptures from rock and driftwood. But what mattered most to her was her family. She loved her family fiercely and whole-heartedly. In her last days she talked about heaven and looked forward to going there but worried about leaving her family alone. That worry was probably the tether that held her here for so long when it would have been so much easier for her to let go.

She leaves behind two daughters, Laura Frady (Randy Bryson) and Lindsey Sowers (Nathan); three grandchildren, Adam Frady, Mason and Landon Sowers; two sisters, Betty Galloway (Ted) and Mary James (Jeff); and countless nieces and nephews. She was one of six children, preceded in death by her parents, John Lee and Madellon Rogers, her brother Tony, sisters Wanda Rogers and Sandie Talley and two nieces Conda Burrell and Kelly Munger.

When she passed, she left an impossible to fill hole in our lives. Even though, she took her light with her when she left this earth, she left behind a wealth of wonderful memories for us to cherish. Those of us who were lucky enough to know her will share those memories and treasure the time we had with her. We will use those memories to keep her in our hearts and in our minds until we see her again.

A private family service will be held at the Upper Zachary Cemetery in Cashiers on Sunday, May 30, at 2 p.m.



Johnnie Sue Frady

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Road-course master Chase Elliott wins inaugural race at COTA

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

You can't call a Chase Elliott victory on a road course "unexpected," but little else was predictable in the inaugural NASCAR Cup Series race at the Circuit of the Americas road course in Austin, Texas.

After all, Elliott came to COTA having won five of the previous 10 road races, and on Sunday the EchoPark Texas Grand Prix became No. 6 after NASCAR called the race 14 laps short of the scheduled finish because of excessive standing water on the track and potential danger to the drivers.

Elliott's first victory of the season and 12th of his career accounted for significant milestones. He delivered the 268th Cup win for Hendrick Motorsports, tying the organization with Petty Enterprises for most all-time.

It was also the 800th NASCAR Cup Series victory for Chevrolet.

"Yeah, man, I couldn't be more excited," said Elliott, the reigning Cup champion, who is tied for third with Rusty Wallace in all-time road course wins. "I've never won a rain race before, so it's kind of cool. Just super-proud of our team for continuing to fight.

"We kind of started the day, and we weren't very good. I just kept pushing myself and (we) made some good changes throughout the day and got to where I think we were on pace with those guys there at the end."

A week after Hendrick drivers finished 1-2-3-4 at Dover, the organization grabbed the top two spots at the 3.41-mile, 20-turn road course, with Kyle Larson running second when NASCAR red-flagged the event after 54 of a planned 68 and then called it when the rain failed to abate.

Joey Logano ran third, followed by Ross Chastain and AJ Allmendinger. Chase Briscoe, Michael McDowell, Alex Bowman, pole winner Tyler Reddick and Kyle Busch completed the top 10.

William Byron finished 11th, ending his streak of consecutive top-10 results at 11.

For all but the first few laps, drivers raced in the rain until it became too heavy to continue.

With challenging visibility on the long, high-speed backstretch, a crash on Lap 25 brought the race to a halt for the first time. Martin Truex Jr. slammed into the back of the Ford of Michael McDowell, who had slowed in traffic.

In a chain reaction, the Ford of Cole Custer plowed into the back of Truex's damaged Toyota, lifting the rear of the Camry off the pavement. Custer then hit the Armco barrier to the inside of the straight. Custer hastily exited the crippled Mustang, which had lit on fire.

NASCAR red-flagged the race and sent track dryers out to remove water from the racing surface.

"I'm all good," Custer said after a trip to the infield care center. "It didn't hurt as much as I thought it was going to, but it's just that you can't see anything. It means, you can't see a foot in front of your car. I was just rolling down the backstretch. You can't see anything. I'm just so frustrated about having our day end like this. It killed the car, and it's just really frustrating."

The cars of Custer and Truex were damaged too severely to continue. Before that wreck occurred, Kevin Harvick and Bubba Wallace already had been eliminated in a similar low-visibility crash on Lap 19.

Even before the race went green, teams were faced with a choice. With rain seemingly imminent but the track dry to start the event, would a change to slick tires be in order, or would crew chiefs opt to stay on rain tires, which NASCAR had man-



Chase Elliott, driver of the #9 Llumiar Chevrolet, celebrates Chevrolet's 800th Cup Series win in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series EchoPark Texas Grand Prix at Circuit of The Americas on May 23, 2021 in Austin, Texas. Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images



Racing Toyota led a race-best 36-of-46 laps. No other driver led more than three laps at the 3.41-mile 20-turn circuit.

"It's really really cool to come here for the first race at a new track and to win," Busch said. "Real proud of the effort.

"I think the biggest thing is just all the resources and stuff we have and being able to get laps on the track today, feel the tire, everything like that and then being able to get back out there tomorrow and do everything all over again tomorrow with the Cup car," the Las Vegas native added.

"Thanks to Toyota and TRD, we've got some really cool tools we've been able to use and I feel like it was a plus for us today."

NASCAR Xfinity Series championship contender A.J. Allmendinger – one of NASCAR's best on road courses – finished second to Busch. Justin Allgaier placed third. Another NASCAR Cup Series champion, Kevin Harvick was fourth, also getting some laps in preparation for Sunday's race. NASCAR Xfinity Series championship leader Austin Cindric was fifth.

Harrison Burton, Cup regulars Cole Custer and Tyler Reddick and Allmendinger's Kaulig Racing teammates Justin Haley and Jeb Burton rounded out the Top 10.

Allmendinger and Haley won Stage 1 and Stage 2, respectively. Championship contenders, they opted to stay on track and earn the points rather than join in Busch's strategy of pitting just prior to the stage breaks. What he conceded in points, he made up for winning the inaugural trophy.

The only laps Busch, 36, didn't lead were when he pitted or when he made a brief rally after stage breaks. Following the first stage break, for example, he restarted fourth and was leading the field two laps later.

"It's shocking, Kyle Busch is actually pretty good," Allmendinger said smiling. "It's always fun to race Kyle. Did everything we could, got a stage win, got a lot of points and finished second. That was as good as we were going to do."

The victory marked the 17th season Busch has won an Xfinity Series race and the 27th different NASCAR track where he has hoisted a trophy.

dated for the initial roll off pit road.

Most of the field opted for slicks, and Austin Cindric streaked to an early lead. But the rain intensified, and those who had taken the green on dry tires soon came to pit road for rain tires.

Earlier in the day, in only the second Cup qualifying session of the 2021 season, Reddick won the pole in dry conditions with a lap at 92.363 mph. The pole was the first for a Richard Childress Racing driver on a road course since Dale Earnhardt was top qualifier for the last time in his career in August 1996 at Watkins Glen.

"Road racing has been a big challenge in my career, and I've worked really hard to get better at it," said Reddick, who qualified fifth in the rain and finished eighth in Saturday's Xfinity Series race. "Running yesterday's NXS race helped me with some valuable seat time, so it's great to see all that hard work come together with a pole."

Kyle Busch conquers COTA for 98th NASCAR Xfinity Series Victory

Kyle Busch essentially went to school Saturday afternoon in the NASCAR Xfinity Series to learn the Circuit of the Americas road course in preparation for Sunday's NASCAR Cup Series race there. The result, however, was that Busch absolutely schooled the field – earning an 11-second victory in the Pit Boss 250, NASCAR's Xfinity Series debut on the famed Austin circuit.

It marked the two-time NASCAR Cup Series champion's record 98th win in the Xfinity Series. His No. 54 Joe Gibbs



Kyle Busch, driver of the #54 Skittles Gummies Toyota, celebrates after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Pit Boss 250 at Circuit of The Americas on May 22, 2021 in Austin, Texas. (Photo by Jared C. Tilton/Getty Images)

While the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race, held hours earlier, had some light rain and was run on rain tires, the weather had cleared nicely by the drop of the Xfinity Series green flag. The vast majority of the field opted to pit for slicks (dry tires) during the parade laps and by the race's midpoint, it was a sunny afternoon.

The Xfinity Series next races, Saturday, May 29, at Charlotte Motor Speedway in the Alsco Uniforms 300 (1 p.m. ET, FS1, PRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

Gilliland overcomes early penalty to win inaugural NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race at COTA
 Todd Gilliland was so fast and so determined out front in Saturday's Toyota Tundra 225 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race his own team had to remind him to slow down and take care of his tires in the closing laps of the series debut at the Circuit of the Americas (COTA) race

Despite receiving the cautionary advice, Gilliland, 21, did not ease off and raced to a hefty 7.941-second margin of victory to earn his second career series win and first since 2019. His No. 38 Front Row Motorsports Ford set the fastest lap of the race with two laps remaining.

"I definitely did a lot of stuff wrong but that's what I love about road course racing, there's 20 turns here, 20 opportunities to pass but also make mistakes," Gilliland said, thanking his Front Row Motorsports team.

"Last year we didn't quite have the season we knew we could and just to come out here and win early, we've been building momentum and for my team to get this win is just amazing."

Gilliland and the rest of the field ran wet tires flag-to-flag, so his team kept reminding him to be careful and look for wet spots on the track since the rain stopped mid-race. He hit his marks on the 3.41-mile 20-turn circuit and he hit the puddled water just enough to carry on to the victory – leading the final six laps and earning an extra \$50,000 incentive in the second

race of the series' Triple Truck Challenge.

Kaz Grala finished runner-up, followed by pole-winner Tyler Ankrum, Grant Enfinger and Sheldon Creed, who led a race-best 14 of the 41 laps.

Seventeen year-old driver Sam Mayer, rookie Carson Hocevar, Zane Smith, Austin Hill and Ben Rhodes rounded out the Top-10. Championship points leader John Hunter Nemechek finished 12th.

Gilliland actually won Stage 1 – his first stage win of 2021 – and was first out during the ensuing pit stops during that caution period. But NASCAR ruled one of his pit crew members was over the wall too soon and Gilliland was penalized – sent to the rear of the field on the restart.

With Gilliland now forced to play catch-up, defending series champion Sheldon Creed led most of Stage 2, pitting just before it ended and allowing Ben Rhodes to instead take his first Stage win of the year.

Creed and Ankrum battled one another up front – at one point passing each other three different times on one lap – before Gilliland – who methodically worked his way forward was able to take the lead for good with five laps remaining. Grala passed Ankrum with two laps remaining to tie his best ever series finish.

The victory marks Gilliland's fifth Top-10 showing in the



Todd Gilliland, driver of the #38 Crosley Brands Ford, and crew celebrate in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Toyota Tundra 225 at Circuit of The Americas on May 22, 2021 in Austin, Texas. (Photo by Chris Graythen/Getty Images)

last six races and as he told his team on the victory lap, "I know we can do this [win races] a lot."

Gilliland becomes the fourth full-time NASCAR Camping World Truck Series driver to win this season – joining two-race winners John Hunter Nemechek and Rhodes, and last week's winner Creed.

The series races next Friday night in the North Carolina Education Lottery 200 at Charlotte Motor Speedway (8:30 p.m. ET, FS1, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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ACROSS

- Ivory, in the bathroom
- Letter of the _____
- Kiln for drying hops
- Marine eagle
- Muffin Man's Drury
- Zest
- Landlord's collection
- Chieftain in Arabia
- Frequently precedes "nonsense"
- *Tabletop fun (2 words)
- Passage in a coal mine
- Clear the whiteboard
- Sean's mom Yoko
- Alpine structure
- Slabbered
- Clothing border
- Incense burning container
- Gauche or Droite, in Paris
- In a frenzy
- Unagi
- Fancy necktie
- Eye protection, sing.
- Not dangerous to health
- Dwight the President
- Worked the dough
- *Screen-free message
- Hairpiece, slangily
- Libra symbol
- Buenos _____
- *Dirty hobby?

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 - *Ten-pin establishment
 - Challenge
 - Purse to match a gown
 - Lake of Scottish lore
 - *Between 'game' and 'match'
 - Deliver a tirade
 - Japanese cartoon
 - Used to be
 - *Explore the great _____
 - _____ spumante
 - Editor's mark
 - Craggy peak
 - Official emissary
 - Bird-deposited fertilizer
 - Same as schlock
 - Famous Bobby, on ice
 - *Sidewalk art medium
 - Macho man
 - *Tell jokes, e.g.
 - Sub station
 - Permissible
 - Extract a memory, e.g.
 - Try to prevent
 - It's not a want
 - _____ Bernie Sanders,
- abbr.
- *Guessing game
 - Administer an oil
 - "Don't make me ____!"
 - With pleasure
 - Full of bunnies?
 - Full of gentleness
 - Ranee's wrap
 - *Macrame or wood carving, e.g.
 - Expunge
 - Bodily disorders
 - Hermes and Apollo
 - 'I' in Greek alphabet
 - Person, place or thing
 - John Wayne's "True _____"
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