

Sheriff Holland will not seek re-election

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

After serving five terms as Sheriff and three decades in law enforcement, Macon County Sheriff Robert Holland has announced that he will not be seeking re-election in 2022. “Throughout my 30-year career with the Macon County Sheriff’s Office, I have been dedicated to this community while serving in a wide variety of positions,” Sheriff Holland said in his announcement on Friday morning. “For the past 19 years, I have had the distinct privilege of serving as your sheriff. While carrying out my duties, I have always tried to give my very best. I knew that, along with being elected sheriff, came the awesome responsibility of ensuring the safety and security of our community. I am proud to have always been associated with such a dedicated and professional group of officers and employees who continue to

“I am proud to have been associated with such a dedicated and professional group of officers ... who continue to serve honorably .. I believe that, together, we have made a positive difference for the citizens of our county.”
 – Sheriff Robert Holland

serve honorably at your Sheriff’s Office. I believe that, together, we have made a positive difference for the citizens of our county.”

Sheriff Holland was elected as sheriff of Macon County in 2002 following the retirement of Sheriff Homer Holbrooks. Holland first began his career with the Macon County Sheriff’s Office in 1991, working his way through the ranks of the department, serving as Detention Officer, Deputy Sheriff, Juvenile Investigator, K-9 Handler, and Detective Sergeant.

Holland was re-elected each term while facing both primary and general election opponents and after the 2018 election, decided that it was time for him to retire and take time for his family.

“My wife and I knew that after my victory in the 2018



Sheriff Robert Holland announced his retirement Friday morning. Holland has served as Macon County sheriff since 2002.

election, my opportunity to retire had been secured and mine to take when and if I decided to do so,” said Holland. “Following much prayer and discussion with my family, we set a date to publicly announce and today is that day. Today, I am formally announcing that I will not be seeking a sixth term. Protecting and serving this community since 1991 and holding the office of sheriff has truly been an honor. However, my service has come with great sacrifice by my family. Their love and support have allowed me to faithfully carry out my duties and responsibilities as sheriff. I am blessed to have had that love and support through the very best of times and through the many difficult days and nights that come along with a career in law enforcement. Although a difficult decision, I am incredibly thankful to have reached this milestone in my career and I am excited to have earned the opportunity to retire and start another chapter in life. I feel that this is the

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Suspect apprehended in early morning shooting

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Early Wednesday morning, just after midnight, officers with the Franklin Police Department were dispatched to a disturbance at Walmart with reports of gunshots fired. The shooter was firing rounds from a 30/30 hunting rifle toward a Walmart truck that was being unloaded by Walmart employees.

No casualties or injuries were sustained during the incident.



Phillip Buchanan

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Scottish/Cherokee celebration held downtown

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SHERIFF

Continued from page 1

right time for me to pass the torch. It is my hope and belief that, in the very near future, the voters will choose my replacement to be someone who has a proven track record of dedicated service and commitment to Macon County and who will keep your Sheriff's Office moving in the right direction."

Filing for the Macon County Sheriff's race doesn't officially open until December, however, several candidates have already come forward expressing their interest... suggesting the field for Macon County's next sheriff will be a crowded one.

"I will be forever grateful for the trust afforded to me by the citizens of Macon County and for the blessings bestowed on me by God. In 2001, I well remember being a young 34-year-old detective announcing my intentions to seek my first term to the office of sheriff," said Sheriff Holland. A statement I often repeated during my initial campaign and one I have made during each election is, "If elected as your sheriff, you will continue to get the very best of me and my staff from the first day until my last day in office." Although I plan to retire at the end of my current term, I want the citizens of Macon County to know that while my retirement may be on the horizon, our work is not complete. My staff and I will con-

tinue to work diligently and we will remain committed to providing our very best until my last day as sheriff of Macon County. I would like to offer my sincere gratitude to the citizens of this community for believing in me, for trusting me, and for every act of kindness that you extended to me and my family throughout the years. Serving as your sheriff has truly been an honor and a privilege. Thank you, Macon County."

District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch to seek a third term in office

Welch, 42, a Republican, has been top prosecutor since 2016 for the state's seven westernmost counties. Prior to that, she served as an assistant district attorney for the 30th Prosecutorial District, now designated the 43rd Prosecutorial District.

Welch was born and raised in Hendersonville. She attended East Henderson High School and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

In 2003, District Attorney Welch received her law degree from William and Mary School of Law. That same year, she began her career as a prosecutor, working as an assistant district attorney in the 29th Prosecutorial District.

"It's an honor and a privilege to serve the people of the 43rd Prosecutorial District," she said. "We have a great team of dedicated, hardworking people in place, and I'm very proud of the work they do."

Filing for 2021 municipal elections opens July 2, runs through July 16

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

The Town of Franklin could soon have new leaders as the state prepares to hold municipal elections this fall.

During odd-numbered years (so as to alternate with statewide general elections) most municipal elections are held to elect governing officials such as mayor, City Council, Town Council, etc., of cities, villages and towns across North Carolina. Not all municipalities will have an election in a given odd-numbered year. A few municipalities elect their officials in even-numbered years. Although municipal elections are conducted by county boards of election, only residents of the municipality are qualified to vote in the election. These voters must have resided in the municipality for at least 30 days prior to the date of the election.

While there is legislation pending that could impact some cities and towns this year due to delays in the census, towns in Western North Carolina are not impacted.

"Counties not affected by the census data will hold their Municipal Elections as planned," said Macon County Board of

Elections Director Melanie Thibault.

According to Thibault, filing for the 2021 Municipal Election will begin at noon on July 2 through noon on July 16.

"Counties not affected by the census data will hold their Municipal Elections as planned," said Thibault.

Seats up for re-election in Macon County include the Franklin Mayor and three council member seats currently held by David Culpepper and Dinah Mashburn, and the vacant seat of the late Barbara McRae. Seats up for election in Highlands are the mayor's seat and two commissioner seats currently held by Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway.

Early voting for the 2021 municipal election is scheduled to begin on Oct. 14 and will run through Oct. 30. Early voting locations will be at the Macon County Recreation Building on the Georgia Road and the Highlands Civic Center. The 2021 Election Day is scheduled for Nov. 2 and will take place at Town Hall in Franklin and the Civic Center in Highlands.

More information can be found on the Macon County website or by contacting the Macon County Board of Elections office.

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CORRECTIONS

In the graduation issue of The Macon County News, one Franklin High School student was left out – Nathan Stamey – and a Highlands student Stevi Graham – was misidentified. MCN regrets the errors.

FRANKLIN HIGH SCHOOL



Nathan Stamey

HIGHLANDS



Stevi Graham

CORRECTION: In an article in last week's *Macon County News*, it was stated that The Art Room commissioned artist Matt Taylor to do a mural on the side of their building in the alley on Main Street. The Art Room gave permission to paint it there but The Streets of Franklin Heritage Association made it happen. Taylor donated his time and talent and the association bought the paint. MCN apologizes for the error.

To my Love, J.T.

Your man wishes you a **wonderful birthday**.
It's been another great year, being with you.
You make my life a living dream.
Thank you for almost
sixty-nine wonderful years together.

Always remember my long-legged beauty,
"the longer the grape strays on the vine,
the sweeter the wine." That's you, my baby.
Again, **Happy Birthday** and thank you
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Franklin High School hands out annual athletic awards for 2020-21

On Monday, June 21, the FHS Booster Club presented the 2020-2021 Athletic Awards for Franklin High School athletes.

– Booster Club Above and Beyond Award: Josh and Jay Brooks
– FCA Awards: Anna Gilliam and Emily Zoelner (Taylor Ensley and Seth Crupi also presented FCA Plaques)

Scholarships

– Tom Raby Memorial Scholarship: Gavin Awtrey and Taylor Ensley
– Walter Scruggs Memorial Scholarship: Chad Wilson and Brandy Dills
– Stan Sloan Memorial Scholarship: Rylee Corbin, Seth Crupi, Evan Klatt
– Brandon Stiwinter Memorial Scholarship: Bryce Rogers
– Parker Mathis Memorial Scholarship: Gavin Awtrey & Seth Crupi
– Walter Wright Memorial Scholarship: Chad Wilson & Gavin Awtrey
– Eric Witherington Athletic Scholarship: Dylan Garcia, Sydney Chapman, Hannah Angel, Taylor Ensley, Brandy Dills
– Booster Club Athletic Scholarship: Taylor Ensley, Kandice Parker, Mckenzie Redouty, Eli Gilbert, Chad Wilson
– Scholar Athletes of the Year: Evan Klatt & Jasmine Cruz-Rios

Fall Sports Awards

– Football MVP: Gavin Awtrey & Evan Klatt
– Football Panther: Camden Cochran
– Volleyball Offensive MVP: Canaan Drake
– Volleyball Defensive MVP: Anya Valentine
– Volleyball Panther Award: Taylor Ensley and Rylee Corbin
– Women's Tennis MVP: Alyssa Smith and Mariah Sloan

– Women's Tennis Panther Award: Jasmine Cruz-Rios
– Men's Soccer MVP: Solomon Espinal & Isaac Jennings
– Men's Soccer Panther Award: Caleb Pevia
– Women's Golf MVP: Olivia Stahl
– Women's Golf Panther Award: Olivia Stahl
– Men's Cross Country MVP: Ethan & Nathan Stamey
– Men's Cross Country Panther Award: Ethan Farrell
– Women's Cross Country MVP: Dylan Garcia
– Women's Cross Country Panther Award: Hannah Angel

Winter Sports Awards

– Women's Basketball MVP: Canaan Drake & Tori Ensley
– Women's Basketball Panther Award: Kandice Parker
– Men's Basketball MVP: Miles McClure and Griffin Green
– Men's Basketball Panther Award: Chad Wilson
– Women's Swimming MVP: Natalie Claire Ballard
– Women's Swimming Panther Award: Olivia Stahl, Calie Roper, Claire Holland
– Men's Swimming MVP: Michael Frazier
– Men's Swimming Panther Award: Luke Borgman, Clayton Guynn, Caden Tyler
– Cheer MVP: Alivia Gibbs
– Cheer Panther Award: Lauren Shannon
– Wrestling MVP: Branden Berger
– Wrestling Panther Award: Braden Cody
Coach Kyle Barrington was recognized as Mountain Six Conference Wrestling Coach of the Year

Spring Sports Awards

– Baseball MVP: Austin Coker
– Baseball Panther Award: Dawson Johnson
– Softball MVP: Mckenzie Redoutey, Nevaeh Tran, Taylor Ensley
– Softball Panther Award: Deaven Lombard & Kandice Parker
– Men's Golf MVP: Skyler Hill

– Men's Golf Panther Award: Mason Williamson
– Women's Soccer MVP: Brandy Dills
– Women's Soccer Panther Award: Maddie Brannon, Cynthia Rios, & Megan Davis
– Men's Track MVP: Ethan Stamey
– Men's Field MVP: Luis Torres
– Men's Track and Field Panther Award: Logan Russo and Ethan Farrell
– Women's Track MVP: Dylan Garcia
– Women's Field MVP: Hannah Angel
– Women's Track and Field Panther Award: Rylee Cassada and Hope Smith
Head Coach Melissa Ward was Recognized as the Mountain Six Conference Track and Field Coach of the Year
– Most Improved Athlete Over a Career: Chad Wilson & Rylee Corbin
– Most Outstanding Athlete of a Team Sport: Gavin Awtrey, Canaan Drake & Taylor Ensley
– Most Outstanding Athlete of an Individual Sport: Ethan Stamey, Hannah Angel & Dylan Garcia
– Panther Pride Award: Coach Josh Brooks

College Commitments and Athletes

enlisted in the United States Military
Canaan Drake- Bryan College (Volleyball)
McKenzie Redoutey- LSU (Softball)
Taylor Ensley- NC State (Softball)
Hannah Angel- UNC Charlotte (Track)
Dylan Garcia- Montreat (Cross Country)
Anna Tastinger- Montreat (Track)
Kiara Dewey- Caldwell (Softball)
Nathan Stamey- Montreat (Cross Country)
Ethan Stamey- Montreat (Cross Country)
Amy Tippett- UNC Asheville (Volleyball)
Braden Berger- Military
Blanca Melendez- Military
Aiden Carpenter- Military



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SHOOTING

Continued from page 1

Once on scene, it was discovered that the suspect, later identified as Phillip Lawrence Buchanan, 58, of Franklin, had fled the scene after firing shots at the delivery truck in the back parking lot.

Officers intercepted Buchanan as he fled the scene, leading law enforcement officers on a short chase through Franklin. A Macon County Sheriff's Deputy was able to deploy stop sticks, which the suspect's vehicle engaged, causing it to be disabled and come to a stop in the parking lot of Mountain View Intermediate School.

Buchanan was apprehended and taken into custody without further incident. Several long guns, consisting of hunting rifles and assault rifles with ammunition were recovered from the suspect's vehicle. All indications thus far point to the suspect acting alone. He was booked into the Macon County detention center just after 4 a.m. and charged with three felony counts of discharging a firearm inside the city limits and fleeing to elude law enforcement. Buchanan was initially given a \$5,000 secured bond, however, Police Chief Bill Harrell met with the district attorney's office adding a charge of firing a weapon into an occupied vehicle. The bond was increased to \$200,000.



School board seeks input on priority areas

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Around \$15 million has been allocated to the Macon County School System in funding referred to as ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund) funding. In 2020 and 2021, Congress passed three stimulus bills that provided nearly \$190.5 billion to the ESSER Fund.

States receive funds based on the same proportion that each state receives under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Title-IA. States must distribute at least 90% of funds to local education agencies (LEAs) based on their proportional share of ESEA Title I-A funds. States have the option to reserve 10% of the allocation for emergency needs as determined by the state to address issues responding to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act, passed on March 27, 2020, provided \$13.5 billion to the ESSER Fund.

The Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act, 2021 (CRRSA), passed on Dec. 27, 2020, provided \$54.3 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER II fund.

The American Rescue Plan Act, passed on March 11, 2021, provided \$122.7 billion in supplemental ESSER funding, known as the ESSER III fund.

The funding does have requirements and regulations attached to it. The school system is required to reserve at least 20 percent of the funding they receive to address learning loss.

Two-thirds of ESSER funds were immediately available to states while remaining funds will be made available after states submit ESSER implementation plans. The U.S. Department of

Education is tracking state plans, 28 states have submitted their plans for review and approval.

Macon County Schools established a task force, to determine the best way for the funds to be spent and have asked the public for input on ways they would like to see the funding improve public education in Macon County.

The Community Collaborative group is made up of school board members, commissioners, teachers, parents, business leaders, and central office staff. This list of possible initiatives in which ESSER funding could be used to invest in students, teachers, and school system infrastructure, came out of data collected from students, parents, and teachers in the community.

The Macon County School Board is now asking the general public to review the list of possible initiatives and to rank each area with One (1) being a low priority and Five (5) being a high priority. There is also a section after each option where the public can provide written comments related to each funding area.

Macon County Schools will be utilizing ESSER funding in several priority areas.

Based on survey data, the five initiatives upon which all stakeholders agree are:

- Hands on / experiential / outdoors
- More art /music / extracurriculars
- More / enhanced science / STEM
- Less testing
- More fun

After the survey is completed, the Community Collaborative Group will analyze the response to formulate a plan for how to utilize the funding to be approved by the school board.

To participate in the survey, visit Macon County Schools website and click on the News and Announcement section.

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Town of Franklin planning all-day Independence Day Celebration

The Town of Franklin's annual celebration of Independence Day will see several changes in 2021.

"Franklin's celebration this year will be held on Saturday, July 3. It is a true, small town American experience. The Town Council and employees have planned an event that is open to everyone – children, residents, visitors, veterans, young, old, and pets – to have the opportunity to take part in the parade and all activities as we celebrate our Nation's 245th birthday. It is a celebration where everyone becomes a participant, not just a spectator," said Mayor Bob Scott.

The activities will begin at 12 noon with inflatables for kids including a water slide. The free attractions will be open until 4 p.m. on the square in Downtown Franklin near the Macon County Courthouse. Be sure young ones are dressed appropriately to enjoy the water slide and other inflatables.

At 4:30, the Little Miss & Mister Firecracker Contest will take place. This contest is open to all girls and boys ages 3 to 6. It is patriotic in nature with entrants judged on their patriotic attire and one question. No registration or entry fee is required for this family-friendly contest that will be held at the Gazebo on the Square.

Even pets can get in on the fun with the Patriotic Pet Contest following at approximately 4:45 p.m. Deck your pets out in red, white and blue for this fun event.

"Franklin hosts one of the few parades in the country that visitors can actually partic-



A Little Miss and Mister Fireworks contest is open to youngsters ages 3-6.

ipate in," said Justin Setser, Interim Town Manager. "We encourage locals and visitors alike to be part of the parade. All you have to do is be in the lower parking lot of Town

Hall at 5:30 p.m. for lineup. Entrants can walk, drive or ride and are encouraged to incorporate patriotic colors."

The Patriotic Parade will begin at 6 p.m. and travel down Main Street, turn right on Iotla Street and disband back at Town Hall.

Following the Patriotic Parade, a short break is planned to relax, have dinner, and get ready for Fireworks Over Franklin. The park and watch fireworks show will be displayed in East Franklin at 15 First Street across from the Shops at Riverwalk (formerly East Franklin Shopping Center).

"We are again working with Hale Artificier, Inc. of Lexington, N.C., to produce the show," said Scott. "These folks have been in business nearly 40 years and produce spectacular fireworks displays all across the Southeast."

Fireworks Over Franklin is an all-aerial show that will feature hundreds of fireworks with more than 250 shells in the grand finale alone.

A perimeter around the site will be secured and spectators will not be allowed to park or walk close to the launching site. Any unauthorized vehicles in the safety zone will be towed.

"Plans are to have a test fireworks shell fired at 9 p.m. and 9:15 p.m. These test shells will help those who want to view the display determine if they might need to move to a different location for better viewing," Scott said. "You will be able to view the display from many different locales in East Franklin and even from Town Hill."



Fireworks will be visible from all over town including a stellar view from atop Town Hill.

Prior to the fireworks display, the Town of Franklin will host a live radio broadcast on WFSC Radio beginning at 8:30 p.m. At 9:30 p.m. WFSC will air a patriotic soundtrack for the fireworks display that you will be able to listen to, no matter where you are. Tune radios to 104.9 FM for both the live broadcast and fireworks soundtrack.

"Franklin's Fourth of July event is for everyone. The Town of Franklin is certainly very pleased to host these events for our residents and visitors as we return to normal during the pandemic," Scott said.

For additional information call (828) 524-2516 or online at TownofFranklinNC.com or follow on Facebook @FranklinNCEvents.

Property Description:

- Eagle Point Subdivision, Lot # 3, in Franklin, NC
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Eagle Point S/D Lot # 3
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County Value = \$47,600
Annual Property Tax = \$213
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Inflatables and a water slide for kids will open at noon on the square in downtown Franklin on Saturday, July 3.

Weather station installed at Macon Library provides real-time data

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

The Macon County Public Library and Jackson County-based business Local Yokel Weather teamed up to install a weather station on the library campus recently. The station will provide real-time data for the public.

“We just got our weather station installed, so we’re excited but we’re still in a learning phase,” said Fontana Regional Library Director Karen Wallace. “Preston Jacobsen from Local Yokel has been so supportive - he even installed the pole to mount the station on. We used funds from a grant called Rural Gateways, the purpose of which is to introduce and involve more adults in STEM [Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics] related activities. We’ve been doing some Citizen Science programs over the past couple of years and this helps us build on those efforts.”

Jacobsen, who owns and operates Local Yokel Weather which provides local forecasts, observations, and storm coverage, said he was happy to assist the library in the project.

“The library reached out to us to see if we were interested in installing a weather station at their location and also for some guidance as to which station to purchase,” said Jacobsen. “We asked if we could use the data on our website and they had no problem letting us do so, but to keep the relationship symbiotic I offered to put on weather programming whenever they would like. We have done weather programs in the past for Rotary Clubs and locally here at the Jackson County Library in Sylva and we cherish the connections made with individuals at these events. We always strive to make



With a grant from Rural Gateways and support from Local Yokel Weather, a weather station was installed at the Macon County Public Library. The library will be able to provide current conditions to the public and Southwestern Community College students, use the data for science experiments and possible tie-ins to future weather research.

the topic of weather as fascinating as possible and it’s truly a delight when those who live here realize how rare, unique and at times, extreme our weather can be in South-west North Carolina.”

Jacobsen noted that public access to weather data in and around Franklin is widely available, but it isn’t always easy to find.

“It typically takes hours of searching to find an online station with reliable data and this tends to be a roadblock for the general

public,” said Jacobsen. “This is in some ways why we started Local Yokel Weather back in 2007, to bring data to the public’s fingertips but we are no ways a pioneer in this space and often promote new stations or avenues to obtain archived or current data.”

Locally, the library will be able to provide current conditions to the public and Southwestern Community College students, use the data for science experiments on site, possible tie-ins to future weather research as a partner to larger studies put on by UNCA,

NASA, etc.

“Since the weather impacts us all and everything we do in life, there really is no limit to the applications this station data provides,” said Jacobsen. “It was a pleasure working with their team and the excitement they have by gaining access to local weather conditions is contagious, really fun to work with them. I look forward to putting on a snow event in the winter months using our snowmaking equipment and can only imagine how excited they’ll be once that comes to fruition.”

The weather station is already on the Local Yokel weather map and the Weatherlink map and the library plans to add the station to their website soon.

The first program hosted by the library incorporated the weather station was scheduled for June 16. The Revisioning Recovering Films and Discussion Panel event featured a collection of five short films that tell environmental disaster recovery stories and examine historical inequities that worsen when disasters hit.

The event was presented by Macon County Public Library, The Smoky Mountains STEM Collaborative, North Carolina Humanities, and Working Films.

This event included a live viewing of the films and an interactive panel discussion featuring leaders working toward climate and environmental justice. Featured panelists included Rob Young (Director of the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines at Western Carolina University), Erin McCully (Western NC Citizens’ Climate Lobby), and Jason Meador (Aquatic Programs Manager at Mainspring Conservation Trust). Attendees were able to join online, watch the panel discussion and ask questions through Zoom.

HUGE

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Grow Stevia – nature's sweetener

Melinda Myers – Columnist

Sweeten your meals by growing your own sugar substitute in gardens or containers. Stevia is nature's own sweetener that can be snacked upon fresh or added to soups, sauces, or beverages.

Wait for warm nights and the danger of frost to pass before planting stevia outdoors. It is a perennial in USDA zones 8 and warmer, but those gardening in colder areas must grow stevia like an annual. Start plants from seed, cuttings, or transplants. Seeds are difficult to find and even more difficult to sprout. Use this method if you like a gardening challenge.

Reduce your effort and increase success by starting with transplants. Check garden centers and mail order catalogs for plants. Place Stevia plants 12 inches apart in full sun or light shade with moist well-drained soils. You will get the best growth and most leaves during the long warm days of summer.

Incorporate a low nitrogen slow-release fertilizer in the soil or potting mix at planting. These provide small amounts of nutrients over a long period of time. Make a second application mid season if needed.

Water new plantings often enough to keep the roots and surrounding soil slightly moist. Gradually extend the time between watering. Thoroughly water whenever the top few inches of soil are crumbly and slightly moist. Spread a layer of evergreen needles, shredded leaves, or other organic matter over the soil surface. Mulching helps conserve moisture, suppress weeds, and improve the soil, reducing your time weeding and watering.

Harvest leaves as needed for sweetening your dishes. Munching on a single leaf can help suppress a sweet craving. You may be able to pass on a candy bar and go for a healthier option.

Wait for cool short days at the end of the growing season when the sweetness is most intense to make large harvests for drying. You can dry in a microwave, dehydrator, or a warm dark location in your home. Cut, bundle, and hang



Stevia, nature's own sweetener, can be grown indoors or out as long as the plants receive proper care. Photo courtesy of MelindaMyers.com

stems upside down to air dry. Knock leaves off the stem and save the dried leaves in an airtight jar. Grind the leaves by hand or use a coffee grinder to crush the leaves and release the sweetness. Dried leaves stored in an airtight jar will last for several years.

You can grow stevia indoors in a bright sunny window or under artificial lights. Purchase plants or start your own from cuttings. Check plants often and water thoroughly when the top few inches of soil is starting to dry. Fertilize with a dilute solution of any fertilizer labeled for use on indoor edible plants. Harvest the leaves as needed to sweeten favorite dishes.

Growing stevia indoors or out can add flavor to your beverages and meals and fun to your gardening experience.

Visit www.MelindaMyers.com.

Gillette Law Firm

When Sharon and I moved to Franklin 7 years ago and opened Gillette Law, we found a warm welcome in Macon County. Thank you to each and every client we have had the privilege of serving.

As of July 15, 2021, we will be retiring and closing our office. Clients wishing to pick up copies of their files may contact Sharon at (828) 634-7941 before July 6, 2021.

All the staff at Gillette Law thanks you for your business and support. We have enjoyed serving our clients and our community, and hope to continue serving the community in different ways in coming years.

Hospice House Foundation of WNC receives \$10,000 NIMble grant

Hospice House Foundation of WNC (HHFWNC) is among 27 western North Carolina not-for-profits and public service agencies selected by Nantahala Health Foundation (NHF) for a 2021 Needs Immediately Met (NIMble) grant. NHF's 2021 NIMble grants totaled \$204,000, of which HHFWNC received a \$10,000 award in support of the purchase of appliances needed for this region's new Hospice House now under construction in Franklin.

The 2021 NIMble grant is the fourth grant HHFWNC has received from NHF, bringing NHF's total cumulative support of HHFWNC's initiative to \$82,500, including a \$50,000 CHIP grant (Collaborative Health Innovation Project grant) in support of furniture and equipment for SECU Hospice House of WNC.

SECU Hospice House of WNC in Franklin will become the only free-standing inpatient hospice facility in North Carolina west of Asheville, serving the six far western counties of North Carolina and the Qualla Boundary, as well as northeast Georgia. Currently, the closest Hospice Houses to this rural mountain region are more than an hour's



The new Hospice House currently under construction is located on Maple Street in downtown Franklin.

drive for most people.

SECU Hospice House is a collaborative initiative between two not-for-profits, HH-

FWNC and Four Seasons The Care You Trust, that addresses three health and wellness concerns in the six far western coun-

ties of North Carolina: 1) Lack of quality end-of-life inpatient care, 2) Inadequate access to mental health support, and 3) Health risks of caregiving. HHFWNC is raising the funds for construction of SECU Hospice House and once completed, Four Seasons will operate this new hospice inpatient facility. Construction is currently 80% complete and slated to become operational this fall.

About Hospice House Foundation of WNC

HHFWNC is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to raise funds for a hospice inpatient facility for the far western region of North Carolina and northeast Georgia. The demographics in this geographic area speak volumes to the need for a hospice inpatient facility...roughly 25% of this area's population is 65 or older (more than 50,000 individuals); the age group most served by hospice; yet there are no Hospice Houses in this region.

For more information, visit www.hhfwnc.org; phone (828)524-6375 or email michelalderalderson@gmail.com

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

The town budget was passed at last Thursday's Highlands Town Board meeting. There are several capital items that folks will notice in the coming months.

Sometime this fall new street paving projects will get underway. Spring Street and Sherwood Forest Road will be paved. Upper Lake and Lower Lake Roads are currently unpaved. They will be paved also. There will be no right of way issues since the paving will only cover the existing roadbed. No widening will be done.

The budget includes two sidewalk projects. A new sidewalk will be installed between the Wells Hotel and the new subdivision development across from the ball field. The developer was required to install a sidewalk in front of the subdivision as a part of the town sidewalk plan. This new sidewalk connects the existing sidewalk to the newly built subdivision sidewalk. There will also be improvements made to the sidewalk in front of the Highlands Presbyterian Church. The understructure of that section of sidewalk has been degrading for a number of years.

A major budget item will be the improvement of a waterline on Moorewood Road. A deadend section of a two inch galvanized line will be replaced with a 6 inch ductile iron line that will be connected to an existing major line in order to form a continuous flow in that area. The new waterline will cost \$670,000 and will improve fire protection. The project will probably get underway in the fall. It will cause disruption of vegetation on the roadside since substantial excavation will be required.

A generator will be installed at the Little Bear Pen pump station for \$75,000. This new generator will insure continuous operation of the station should a major power failure hit the town.

At the water treatment plant a new high service replacement pump with variable flow devices will be installed. This pump will insure continuous service to the town should there be a major waterline break. The town is spending a total of \$885,000 for improvements to the water treatment plant this coming year. We will be making ongoing upgrades and improvements at the water plant for years to come.

At the wastewater treatment plant a number of maintenance and upgrades will be made. A UV light system

See TAYLOR page 11

Letters to the Editor

An interesting state of affairs for voters to consider

In 2018 the voters in North Carolina passed a Constitutional Amendment requiring voter ID in all elections.

The NAACP in several places around the country sued to overturn that Amendment.

A District Court Judge in Raleigh ruled in favor of the Plaintiffs and the State appealed.

The 4th Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously reversed the District Court and found the new Amendment to be in full force and effect in North Carolina.

At the May 11, 2021, Macon County Board of Commissioners' meeting a proposed resolution which would put the board on the record that the new amendment will be declared active in Macon County.

Subsequently it came to light that the board was advised by their attorney that they did not have jurisdiction or authority on that matter and the board would not entertain the resolution.

At the June 8, 2021 board meeting, the board was advised that they do, in fact, have jurisdiction and authority in accordance with relevant portions of NCGS Section 153, a copy of which was entered on the record of that meeting as a supporting exhibit.

While stating this might not endear me to the members of the board, this raises several questions which a Macon County residents and citizens should ponder.

The elected members of the board have taken a Constitutional Oath of Office pursuant to NCGS 153A-26 and upon entering office assume a material fiduciary/trustee responsibility and duty to do all that is right for the citizens of Macon County.

They do not rule the population of Macon County.

They are paid by money collected from the citizens of Macon County and they work for the people.

Why doesn't the board want to go on record supporting the Voter ID Amendment of the North Carolina Constitution as active in Macon County in order to insure voting integrity in Macon County?

Why did the board attorney give the board incorrect legal advice and will there be any consequences for him doing so?

What is the hidden agenda of those who don't want to see every possible protection of our voting rights in place?

If the board does not want to adopt the resolution, will each and all of them go on record and guarantee that there will not be voter fraud due to unregistered voters voting, illegal aliens voting, people from outside the county voting, or people illegally voting more than once?

Why doesn't every citizen of Macon County concerned with ensuring maximum voting integrity in upcoming elections show up at the July 13, 2021 board meeting and demand the board answer these questions?

Even one illegal vote is too many, don't you think? This

is especially important if you realize a single illegal vote nullifies your legal vote.

Freedom is not free. Everyone must be ever vigilant and work hard to preserve our freedom and rights.

God bless this great nation!

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

Life no longer makes any sense

You know, something is very wrong under the Biden administration.

Take a look at the tons of illegal drugs coming across our border with Mexico right now. Tens of thousands will die from drug use and many more will either lose a loved one or a family will be ruined.

During the Trump administration drugs were coming across our border but Trump was rapidly building a wall to stop the flow, but Biden is willfully allowing the drugs to come in our country.

Just how many lives is Biden willing to sacrifice?

Of course we know his intention is to flood America with millions of illegal aliens and Biden plans to make them legal citizens so they will vote for the Democrats who let them in. Never mind they broke our laws to get in and brought tons of illegal drugs into the U.S.

This reminds me of the Nazis who were willing to murder millions to grow more powerful.

Can't help but remember it was the Republicans who fought and died to stop slavery as the Democrats tried to hold on the right to keep people as slaves. To listen to Joe Biden one would think the opposite. Fact is Joe Biden voted against integrating our schools.

If you ever wondered why we have so many homeless folks living on our streets, keep in mind it was the liberal Democrats who ended our system of mental institutions way back in the '70s. Now, if you can't make it on your own, you live on the streets. These are the people who need help but the libs seem to enjoy seeing them suffer.

I dunno, some of us long for the good old days when Donald Trump was in charge and we had jobs for everyone who wanted to work and in fact the lowest unemployment rate of all times. Other countries respected us and we led the world.

It seems that under our present regime all the neurotics have presented themselves and life no longer makes any sense.

Half the population is hollering and wailing about stuff that often doesn't even exist or exists in the minds of very neurotic minds.

Bob Wilson - Franklin, N.C.

Email letters to the editor to
maconcountynews@gmail.com

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Celebrating confusion is totally unacceptable

Are you aware of the perverse promotion at the Fontana Regional Library in Franklin and perhaps displays of this same perverseness at other regional libraries? I am speaking of the open celebration of homosexual behavior in the CHILDREN'S section of the Franklin branch library. It is the parents' responsibility, not the library, when they deem their children are ready to be exposed to controversial topics. A large percentage of us in this mostly conservative area of Western North Carolina would strongly object to the taxpayer-funded library promoting sodomy and gender confusion to innocent children. The amount of gross misinformation being supplied to our society these days is appalling, but celebrating confusion, in what amounts to child abuse to minors, is totally unacceptable.

When I complained to Karen Wallace, the regional director for all of the Fontana Regional libraries, she admitted that this is the first year the library has placed a gay pride table in the children's room, although similar displays have been placed in the adult section of the library prior to 2021. The library's current display promotes a sexualization of children at an innocent age and basically assumes all children are on the same maturity level to be exposed to this topic. The library should be a place that protects children's innocence, not destroys it. Our American society is morally bankrupt in so many areas, so will the library want to promote pedophilia or openly celebrate soft pornography next year if mainstream America makes it an agenda item like many other issues such as racial division and murdering babies? The library would argue they are merely providing information, but it is the celebrating of this lifestyle to CHILDREN that is the problem. A gay pride display does not belong anywhere in a taxpayer funded entity; especially in a children's section.

Another reason these types of books should remain hidden on shelves is because of the damage this warped mentality is doing to future generations. Those who would openly promote this kind of wayward behavior will have blood on their heads from the inordinate number of suicides in the homosexual communities. What happens is people's conscience tells them this type of unnatural behavior is wrong which adds to the confusion of what is promoted in the so-called name of "love." Love is the farthest thing from this type of mentality with countless homosexual lifestyles ending in suicide, deep depression, guilt, disease, and broken relationships. The statistics do not lie. Facts are in the details for anyone seeking real truth.

If you as a Macon County taxpayer do not want the open promotion of homosexual lifestyles/gender confusion to children, please immediately voice your concerns to the library director and the County Board of Commissioners so that our children are not exposed to this sexual deviancy in a celebratory way.

"Woe to them who call evil good and good evil...." Isaiah 5:20.

Jim Gaston – Franklin, N.C.

Exercise in political skill will bring about new schools

An article in the 10 June 2021 number of *The Macon County News and Shopping Guide*, reported that Macon County's Commissioners are discussing how to acquire an extra \$60 million for building a new high school.

We can have a new high school without plundering taxpayers for even one extra dollar.

To have it, a high degree of political skill will have to be exercised by our county commissioners in order to persuade North Carolina's Legislature to bring it about.

North Carolina will cease to provide school buildings.

It will cease to provide teachers.

It will cease to provide school books.

It will cease to exercise influence over what is taught.

It will cease to provide a vast education bureaucracy.

If there ever was a time when it was necessary for the state's government to provide all of this, that time has passed.

All that North Carolina will provide, is an allowance to each student's mother and father.

North Carolina has an abundance of fine teachers and principals who will make the effort to earn that allowance from the parents. Their effort will provide a new high school—likely several new high schools where now there is one. Students' mothers and fathers will be able to choose among alternative schools for their children, a freedom they do not now have.

Competition by the new schools for students, will improve the quality of education in North Carolina. Competition improves quality.

George Crockett – Franklin, N.C.

Breach of Capitol was no 'armed insurrection'

With all that's going on in the world – the G-7 summit, an armed Iranian war ship in the Atlantic, the unprecedented immigration crisis at the border – the Left wants to keep reminding us of the “violent and brutal incursion/coup/insurrection” at the Capitol.

An insurrection is a violent uprising against an authority or government; a coup is a sudden, violent and illegal seizure of power from a government; and an incursion is an invasion or attack, especially a sudden or brief one. Jan. 6 has been described as an “armed insurrection” “storming the capitol” “gleeful desecration” and other largely inaccurate and inflammatory statements.

The federal indictments filed against 200 individuals, revealed only 14 people faced weapons violations. Found on these individuals were items such as a helmet, a riot shield and pepper spray and were described as “dangerous or deadly weapons.” Only two protestors were found to be in possession of a firearm and neither were inside the capitol and were charged with violating Washington D.C.'s strict gun laws.

Of the more than 400 protestors who faced other charges, 44 defendants are accused of possessing or using a dangerous weapon. Among the “dangerous weapons” were batons, sticks, baseball bats, one person with a knife, one with a hockey stick, one with an ice ax. Of course, these weapons could cause serious harm, but no government has ever been overthrown with such a sad arsenal of weapons. Of the five people that died that day, only unarmed Ashli Babbitt's death was a result of a firearm which was used by capitol police. The other four deaths have been found to have occurred from natural causes including police officer Brian Sicknick despite ongoing efforts to portray his death as a murder.

Richard Barnett, the man who made himself at home in Nancy Pelosi's office, faces two counts of possession of a “dangerous or deadly weapon” which was found to be a walking stick that can be used as a stun gun. His lawyer argued that it didn't even have batteries and wasn't operational. He was finally released after spending nearly four months in jail. Others were charged with misdemeanor trespassing, the only charge that would stick.

Now, my favorite part of the story. Videos have surfaced - including more than 10 hours of capitol surveillance camera footage - that shows capitol police removing barriers and opening doors for protestors to enter the building. More than 300 entered the Capitol through the upper West Terrace doorway while five U.S. Capitol Police officers stood nearby. Usually armed insurrections don't start with police officers peacefully inviting the “insurrectionists” inside. Additional footage shows the protestors speaking with the capitol police inside the building. One officer can be

TAYLOR

From previous page

is a critical component of treating wastewater without the use of chemicals. The repair of the unit and replacement of lights will cost \$12,000. The tank cleaning costs for this year is \$61,000.

In the electric department a new bucket truck will cost \$251,000. Also, we will be upgrading street lights with new LED lights that can be adjusted for intensity levels. The new LED ball field light system will cost the town \$137,500. The county is partnering with us by also contributing \$137,500 which is half of the total cost. I appreciate the county supporting this project that will improve lighting for the field and at the same time reduce light spillover into the surrounding neighborhoods.

The new budget year begins July 1.

heard to say “We're not against ... here's what you need to show ... show us not attacking, no assault – remain calm.”

William Watson, a 23-year-old from Alabama, takes a microphone and tells protestors, “Listen up. The police here are willing to work with us and cooperate peacefully like our First Amendment allows. Gather more Americans under the condition that they will come and gather peacefully to discuss what needs to be done to save our country ... We're going to be heard. Everybody, this must be peaceful.”

Then, Jacob Chansley, better known as the man wearing the Viking horns — or the “QAnon Shaman” as he has since come to be identified as — shouts to the others, “This has to be peaceful. We have the right to peacefully assemble.”

Chansley faces several counts for trespassing and disorderly conduct. He reportedly has no criminal record, yet he remains in jail.

What happened on Jan. 6 was not an incursion or a coup. It was a peaceful protest that got out of hand and according to one source, “a bunch of overly zealous idiots who wanted to make a scene,” some more zealous than others. It was hardly another 9/11 as some have said, or “the worst attack on our democracy since the Civil War.”

Conversely, no federal investigation or committee has been formed to investigate the more than \$1 billion in damage caused by Black Lives Matter across the nation in the first two weeks of 2020; which is not including the other riots that have occurred periodically since. And, no extensive special investigations have sought justice for all the damage caused by the George Floyd riots. But that's a topic for another day.

Mattison Marr – Bryson City, N.C.

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Cherokee/Scottish Heritage Celebration



Photos by Betsey Gooder





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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 June 7 - 21. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

June 14

Danny Michael Cook, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Tim Holland made the arrest.

Luis Roberto Rubio, was issued warrant service for offenses committed in jurisdiction.

Thomas Andrew Behringer, was charged with domestic violation protective order violation. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

June 15

Wesley Preston Crone, was charged with assault and battery. Jay Wright made the arrest.

Nicholia Lamb, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon, assault inflicting serious injury with minor present, assault on a female, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver heroin, communicating threats. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Michael Anthony Rowland Jr., was issued warrant service for show cause, assault on a female. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Steven Aaron Davis Burton, was charged with failure to appear. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

June 16

Casey Michael Holland, was issued child support enforcement contempt. Jonathan Phillips made the arrest.

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

June 17

John Williamson, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver a schedule II controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance on prison/jail premises. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Monique Laverne Smith, was charged with possession of a schedule I controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Hank Riley Galloway, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Lauren Emily Alford, was charged with indictment. Jonathan A. Taylor made the arrest.

Brittin Nycole Walsh, was issued a governors warrant for fugitive. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Ricky Elli Wright, was charged with child support contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Robert Brandon Keller, was charged with failure to appear. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

June 18

Michael Adam Crisp, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Emileigh E. Sands made the arrest.

Noah Daniel Cloud was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

June 21

Biaggio Withers, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Luis Leonardo-Damian Mejia, was charged with failure to appear. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

June 11

Jesse Ray Machuca, 23, was charged with assault on a government official, attempted motor vehicle theft, breaking and entering to motor vehicle, resisting a public officer, disorderly conduct, injury to personal property. A \$200,000 bond was set.

Victor H. Tapia-Leon, 21, was charged with driving while impaired. No bond was set.

Davin Lane Eldridge, 34, was charged with resisting a public officer. A \$250 bond was set.

June 12

Gamadiel Cruz-Gutierrez, 37, was charged with driving while impaired. A \$500 bond was set.

June 14

Jesse Maurice Lamont Woodruff, 44, was charged with trafficking heroin by transportation, trafficking heroin by possession, possession of a controlled substance in jail premises, possession of drug paraphernalia, resist/obstruct/delay. A \$150,000 bond was set.

June 15

Keith Alan Bates, 46, was issued a warrant for arrest for obtain property by false pretense. A \$2,500 bond was set.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

June 7

Thomas Derek Todd, 59, of Walnut Cove, Tuckaseegee, was charged with assault on a female. A \$1,000 bond was set.

Shane Christopher Holder, 30, of Amber Trail, Duluth, Ga., was charged with trespassing, resisting a public officer, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$3,500 was set.

Jerrod Kristopher Deutschmann, 27, of Paul Cooper Rd., Whittier, was charged with assault on a female, simple assault. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Jessica Renee Yates, 39, of Webster Rd., was charged with trespassing, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

June 8

Crystal Louella Chastain, 31, of Foggy Mountain Lane, Leicester, was charged with no liability insurance. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Bobby Shuman Bright, 62, of Apache Trail, was charged with breaking or entering a motor vehicle. No bond was set.

June 9

Timothy David Kibel, 36, of Sutton Branch, was issued a child support purge arrest order. A \$1,426.91 bond was set.

Matthew David Boud, 37, of Tall Oaks Dr., was issued a child support purge arrest order. A \$2,367 bond was set.

Brittany Jade Moose, 33, of Ferguson Rd., was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses, identity theft. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set.

David Earnest Frizzell, 42, of Spalding Dr., was charged with statutory sex offense with a child by adult. A secured bond of \$600,000 was set.

June 10

Trinity David Frady, 42, of Richard Maney Dr., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for violation of court order, possession of drug paraphernalia, solicit to possess methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Walter Lewis Underwood, 42, of Zeb Alley Rd., Cashiers, was charged with habitual breaking and entering. A secured bond of \$75,000 was set.

Stephen Ray Bengivenga, 20, of Manor Trace, was charged with failure to appear for resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Harvey Douglas Bumgarner, 36, of Floral Dr., was charged with failure to appear for mirror violation, possession of stolen goods, fictitious/alterd title/registration/card/tag, driving while licenses revoked not impaired revocation. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Brandi Nicole Moore, 27, of Floral Dr., was charged with possession of stolen goods, larceny. No bond was set.

Michael Wayne Walkingstick, 38, of Kanott Dr., Cherokee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of heroin. No bond was set.

June 11

Robert Allen Hooper, 44, of Keyhole Lane, Cullowhee, was charged with resisting a public officer, identify theft, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$1,250 was set.

June 12

Christian-Nahum Zamara Marauz, 28, of Cullowhee, was charged with disseminate materal/perform that is harmful to a minor. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Anna Marie Stephens, 36, of Vanastar Lane, Cullowhee, was charged with possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine, misdemeanor child abuse, false report to police station. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

June 13

Matthew David Boud, 37, of Tall Oaks Dr., was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked not impaired revocation. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Kamie Calhoun Seay, 39, of Junaluska Rd., Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of heroin. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Travis Ray Morgan, 25, of Rock Hill Church Rd., Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for possession of a stolen motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

June 14

Brittany Hope Woodring, 31, of Marion Forest, was charged with simple assault. No bond was set.

Christopher Shaun Gaskins, 36, was issued a true bill of indictment for flee to elude arrest, speeding, reckless driving with wanton disregard, no operators license, resisting a public officer, injury to personal property, possession of stolen goods/property, identity theft, obtain property by false pretense, felony probation violation. No bond was set.

Jeffery Spencer Green, 48, of Slabtown Rd., Cashiers, was charged with child support purge.

Carl Logan Luker, 40, of Allman Rd., was charged with civil contempt.

Historic hops found growing on Little Tennessee River Greenway

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Hops are voluntarily growing and being nurtured along the Little Tennessee Greenway. And where they came from was mostly worked out by local historian Barbara McRae before her death in March.

Stan Polanski, a local writer, educator, and lecturer on the topic of native plants, who was asked to assist with what has become a historic plant demonstration, shared how the project came about.

“The inspiration came through Barbara McRae. That stand of hops [along the Little Tennessee Greenway] was first discovered by a botanist 15 years ago. It was considered very unusual and out of the natural range. In fact, it’s mysterious for a stand of hops to show up along a river in Western North Carolina, so the specimens were collected, but nothing was done to preserve or cultivate them. Then, a few years ago, Barbara came across a hand-written yeast recipe written by Timoxena Siler Sloan that dated around 1870.”

Sloan, an early settler with her family along the Little Tennessee River, is depicted in the Women’s History Trail sculpture, “Sowing the Seeds of the Future,” currently in production by famed sculptor Wesley Wofford, based in Cashiers, that will one day grace the entrance to Franklin.

Added Polanski, “Hop yeast was used to make bread, and sometimes beer. The Sloans lived on that exact tract of land where the stand of hops was found, from the 1850s on. So Barbara determined the historical link. And it was also learned that the Cherokee used hops analgesically. So I spoke with a Cherokee tribal horticulturist and although there is not certain information, we know that the Cherokee also lived along the Little Tennessee in that exact spot. So it could have been that the Cherokee started growing hops and then the settlers continued growing them.”

The fact that the stand of hops annually emerges voluntarily from the ground and then grows, via a vine, up to 30 feet into trees, is “significant,” said Polanski. “We



Hops dating back to the 1800s have been found growing along the Little Tennessee River Greenway and have become the site of an educational demonstration of living history.

have to work to keep invasive plants from taking over so the hop plants can be seen, but they are there, and in August and September they will bloom – as they have been all these years.”

Donated split railing fencing and future educational signage will distinguish the stand of historic hops, so that visitors along the Little Tennessee Greenway – in the section just up from the Shops at Riverwalk entrance, past the butterfly garden – can view and understand how hops grow. Visitors can actually witness living history, pointed out Polanski.

“No one is sure whether these hops are entirely native, or if they were introduced from up north,” said Polanski. “The species growing is called Northeastern hops or *cumulus americanus*. The year 1629 is

the first record of European hops being introduced into the United States. And there is some evidence that European hops were cross-bred with American hops.”

He said he has learned much about hops from Alan Weakley, a botanist at the University of North Carolina, the book “Flora of the Southeastern United States,” and the UNC Chapel Hill Herbarium.

“The 2020 edition of the book includes information about native hops,” he said. “Last year, I took a specimen of these hop plants to Kathrine Mathews [biology professor and director of the herbarium] at Western Carolina University to have it identified. And then in early June, we found more of the hops’ plants just upstream from where the plants are growing that we are tending to.”

Signage at the stand of hops is expected to be erected in July and will provide visitors with information about the species, the interesting history of hops and the site and more.

In the future, there is a possibility that someone might want to cultivate somewhere else and to a larger extent seeds from the Little Tennessee Greenway stand of hops, noted Polanski. But for now, the plants are growing to remind visitors not only of the tenacity of native plants, but that people at one time lived and thrived along the Little Tennessee River.

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Donnie Clay, Coordinator for Pickin' on the Square



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Deaths & Funerals

Peggy Ann Clark

Peggy Ann Clark, 82, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Saturday, June 19, 2021.

Born on Nov. 11, 1938, she was the daughter of the late Douglas and Dorothy Whalen of Derwood, Md. She was a graduate of Richard Montgomery High School, class of 1956. She moved to Florida and worked for the Florida State Government. After retirement she moved to N.C. and settled in Macon County.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by one brother, John Michael Whalen.

Surviving are her husband, Gary Clark Sr.; stepchildren and their spouses, Gary and Wendy Clark Jr., Richard and Kim Clark and Tracy and Keith Hagan; sisters and brothers-in-law, Helen and Narbie Kaelin, Dorothy and John Snyder and Joyce and Jack McElfish; brother and sister-in-law, Douglas and Barbara Whalen Jr.; numerous step grandchildren, step great grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

A private service will be held at the request of her family.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Macon County CareNet, 130 Bidwell St. Franklin, NC 28734.

An online guest register is available and may be viewed at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



Peggy Ann Clark

Virginia Earles Houston

Virginia Earles Houston, 92, of Americus, Ga., formerly of Franklin, N.C., died on Sunday, June 20, 2021.

Born in Martinsville, Va., she was the daughter of the late Willie Jessie Earles and Mattie Cox Setliff. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Hayes "Gene" Houston; brother, Tommy L. Earles; and four sisters, Billie Jean Rogers, Barbara Garrett, Judy Wright and Christine Patterson.

She was a member of the Abundant Life Church in Newport News, Va. She loved spending time with her family. She will be remembered for always having an encouraging word for her loving family and everyone else she encountered.

She is survived by two sons, Richard Houston (Jean) of Hampton, Va., and Gary Houston (Faith) of Cobb, Ga.; sister, Gloria Setliff Holmes of Yorktown, Va.; and grandson, Kevin Houston of Hampton, Va., granddaughter, Julie Beck (Henry) of Wellford, S.C., granddaughter, Laura Kendrick (Brad) of Grayson, Ga., also one great-granddaughter Carly Beck of Wellford, S.C.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

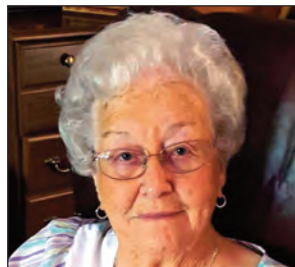
Funeral service will be held Thursday, June 24, at 2 p.m., in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Davis Hooper will officiate. Burial will be in the Woodlawn cemetery.

The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 p.m., one hour prior to the service at the funeral home.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Ministry of the League of the Good Samaritan, C/O Magnolia Manor, 2001 South Lee St., Americus, GA 31709.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Virginia Earles Houston

Edwin Benkis

Edwin Benkis, born Sept. 22, 1930, in Brooklyn, N.Y., was the son of Russian immigrants. His mother, Many Benkis-Schmidt (Michael) was an accomplished concert pianist. Father, Arvid Benkis, was a former soldier, vocalist, and pressman. Grandfather, Jacob Bermant (Celia), was a Brooklyn family doctor. Aunt Sophie Bermant-Heynick (Dave). He is survived by twin cousins, Richard Heynick and Susan Heynick-Washington (David).

He graduated from Peekskill High School, class of 1949. He received a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from the State University of New York. In 1951, he obtained his Amateur Radio license, W2HTI, and was a charter member of NJDXA, established in 1957. He was preceded in death by his wife, Jean Cameron on Dec. 20, 1974, and their son, Andrew, on July 13, 2015.

He passed from this life on June 4, 2021. W2HTI was "The Last Man Standing," the record for most countries worked.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Eileen Morris-Leadbeater-Benkis, who is also an accomplished licensed Ham, KO4DI. Together they owned and operated Uniform Plus, Inc. in Franklin, N.C. since 1988.

Also surviving six children "one of each," Donald Benkis (Elaine), Lynne Benkis and Jennifer Benkis, David Leadbeater (Gloria), Brian Leadbeater (Colleen), and Linda Leadbeater-Hoffart (Jerome); 11 grandchildren, Christopher Benkis, Michelle Benkis-Clark (Ian), Declan, Hunter, and Nathaniel Morrow, Stephanie and Michael Leadbeater, Becky and Andrew (Cassy) Leadbeater, Allison and Nicholas Hoffart; Four great-grandchildren, Lily and James Clark, Colton and Chloe Leadbeater.

A memorial service was held Saturday, July 17, at All Saints Episcopal Church, St. Agnes Chapel, 66 Church Street, Franklin. Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family. Online condolences at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.



Edwin Benkis

Robert 'Bob' Edgar Norton Sr.

Robert "Bob" Edgar Norton Sr., 79, of Greenville, S.C., passed away Sunday, June 13, 2021. He was born March 17, 1942, in Highlands, N.C., to the late Ray Elias Norton and Agnes Ella Baty Norton. He worked for Serrine Engineering as a structural engineer for power plants and paper mills.

He had a deep love for Highlands. He enjoyed playing golf and watching all types of sports. He also loved Mustang cars, working outdoors, and having family get together. He was a loving brother, father, grandfather, father-in-law, uncle, and friend.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Betty Jean Burriss Norton, four brothers and two sisters.

He is survived by three sons, Robert E. Norton, Jr. (Regina) of Waldorf, Md., Randy Norton of Greenville, S.C., and Ryan Norton (Evelina) of Charleston, S.C.; daughter, Laurie Norton Deluca of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; sisters, Edna Crisp of Highlands, and Nancy McClain of Gainesville, Ga.; seven grandchildren, Austin Norton, Addison Norton, Hunter Norton, Louie Deluca, Landon Deluca, Lawson Deluca, and Lathan Deluca.

A funeral service was held Tuesday, June 22, at Shortoff Baptist Church in Highlands, with Rev. Roy Lowe officiating.

A private burial was in Highlands Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Heart Association or to the American Diabetes Association.

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

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



Robert Edgar Norton Sr.

Stephen W. Anglin Sr.

Stephen W. Anglin Sr., 77, passed away peacefully at home on Wednesday, June 16, 2021, with his wife, Lisa, and his children by his side.

He is survived by his wife, Lisa Rabiun Anglin; his children, JR Anglin (Paula), Kyle Schulte (Kristy), Casey Schulte (Kayla), Teresa Anglin, Kelly Anglin, Lezli Anglin, and Kelli Green (Bryan); sister, Cindi Daddabbo (Tony); 17 grandchildren and 10 great grandchildren.

He was preceded in death by his father, Walter Anglin; mother, Freida Hunter; first wife, Mary Anglin; daughter, Stephanie; sister, Laura Hunter; and great grandson, Carson.

Steve and his wife, Lisa, were together 28 years. Their life together was one great adventure. They shared so many wonderful memories. His kindness and sense of humor will be sorely missed. He always had a story to tell. Greater forces brought Steve and Lisa together.

He was a successful businessman and entrepreneur. He had a love of all things car and motorcycle related. His business ventures included car sales; manufacturing, where he developed "Catchall" molded car mats and aftermarket molded car and truck carpeting. He was in the furniture business and even built and owned a motel. He bought and sold real estate and was in the antique business. He had an amazing work ethic.

He was a member of the Hugh L. Bates Masonic Lodge #686 in Hamilton, Ohio. He was a Master Mason 3rd degree for over 56 years. He was a man that never knew a stranger; was respected and loved by many and in return he loved many. A more kind, loving, generous man, you would never meet.

He bought and traded for more than 100 cars by the time he was out of high school. He once traded a car for a leather jacket; just to stay warm. He loved classic cars and was the first to develop "Flame Throwers" for his cars. He raced in quarter-mile races and participated in demolition derbies. "Buy, Sell and Trade" was his way of life. He treated strangers with kindness and respect and was even generous to a fault. He was an incredible role model to his eight children and all his grandchildren. His family, classic cars, motorcycles and antiques were his life.

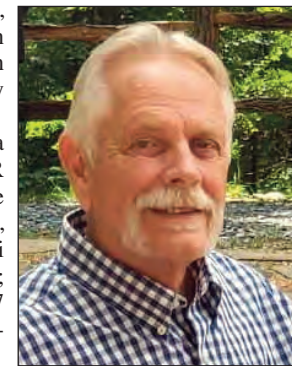
He gave his children and grandchildren "Lessons for the Day," which was a running joke; often resulting in some eye rolling looks. He was a memorable man with a colorful life, who will be missed.

"Bossman," we love you more than words can express. We are grateful for you and the life you gave us. We hope you dance in heaven and we will see you on the flipside "7"!

A celebration of life will be held in the near future. If you have a classic car and can attend, please drive it in his memory.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



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Deaths & Funerals

Kenneth Michael Cook

Kenneth Michael Cook, 55, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus on Thursday, June 17, 2021.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of John and Susie Cook. He attended Prentiss Church of God and was known for his love of giving to charitable causes. He was the owner of Custom Sound and Security for 17 years and was known for his hard work ethic. He loved to travel and had a special love for his "grandloves," Kinsley and Briley who called him "Niney," and his dogs, Shelby, Luna and Zola, who called him "Papa."



Kenneth Michael Cook

In addition to his parents, he is survived by his wife of 32 years, Melissa Stanley Cook; son, Tyler Michael Cook; two daughters, Miranda Suzanne Cook and Mckenzie Hope Cook, all of Franklin; and a brother, Keith Cook (Crystal) and their three daughters, Kara, Alexia (Samuel), and Brooklyn of Lincolnton, N.C.; in-laws, Chester and Susie Stanley; Chuckie and Teresa Stanley; nephew, Chet Stanley (Heather); niece, Katie Wiggins (Brad); and great nephews and nieces, Pender, Casey, Maelee and Brenley, all of Franklin.

A celebration of life is being planned for June 25, at Prentiss Church of God. Family will receive friends from 5 to 7 p.m., with celebration of life at 7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Appalachian Animal Rescue, PO Box 81, Franklin, NC 28744 or American Heart Association: American Heart Association/ American Stroke Association 10 Glenlake Pkwy NE South Tower Suite 400 Atlanta, GA 30328.

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.
Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Rev. Gary Wayne Buhl

Rev. Gary Wayne Buhl, 88, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Saturday, June 19, 2021. Born in Corbin, Ky., he was the son of the late James Everett and Irene Arnold Bull. He was predeceased by his wife, Patricia Moore Buhl; brother, Ray Bull; sisters, Mary Bull of Dayton, Ohio, and Betty Foxx of Corbin, Ky.; and aunt, Louise Steele of Corbin. Cousins are Phil Hutson, Ronnie Hutson and Vicki Baker-Bryant, of Corbin; Charlotte Young, of Naples, Fla.; and Linda Duncan, of Lexington, Ky.

He graduated from Asbury College in Wilmore, Ky., and received his Masters of Divinity from the Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Ga. He was a member of Memorial United Methodist Church and began serving in the Florida Annual Conference in 1958. In retirement, he started a Sunday school class, a Mighty Men men's group, began an email devotional ministry, and performed services at Memorial United Methodist Church as well as Patton United Methodist Church. Within the past few years, he started a shut-in ministry.

He is survived by sons, Mark Stephan Buhl, Brent Patrick Buhl, Brandon O'Neal Buhl; and a daughter, Laura Beth B. Hawkinson; eight grandchildren, Ainsley Jordan, Alexander Garrett, Katelyn Alexandra, Juliana Ashley, Avery Rooke, Addison Christine Marie, Aedan Patrick and Aengus Morris; two great-grandchildren; brother-in-law, Stephan Moore of Cleveland, Tenn.; and his sons, Jared B. Moore and Aaron C. Moore.

A Celebration of Life Service will be held at 11 a.m. on Saturday, July 10, at Memorial United Methodist Church. Rev. Evan Hill will officiate. Interment will be in the Oak Hill Cemetery, Corbin, Ky., in July.

Memorials may be made to Memorial United Methodist Church. Online condolences can be made at maconfuneralhome.com.

Richard Forrest 'Dickie' Baty

Richard "Dickie" Baty of Ohattee passed away on Monday, June 14, 2021 at home.

He is survived by his wife, Teresa Baty; daughters, Audrey Haven Gooch (Cody), Allison Brett McMellon (Logan); sons, Caleb Forrest Baty (Ana), Kyle Fitzgerald Bejma (Cassie); sister, Donna Baty Cleveland (James); brother, David Baty (Missy); grandchildren, Norah Bejma, Virginia Baty, Reed Gooch and Mallory Bejma; fur babies, Gracie and Allie Jane; several uncles and aunts and nieces and nephews.



Richard Baty

He is preceded in death by his parents, Earl Forrest and Audrey Raye Baty. He loved music, especially playing his guitar. He enjoyed golf, and sailing with his family. He was known as "Papa" to his grandbabies who he adored. Dickie was a huge Alabama football fan.

Funeral service was held Saturday, June 19, at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home in Franklin, N.C. Online condolences may be made to www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

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

Stephen Richard Beck

Stephen Richard Beck, 61, was welcomed into heaven June 18, 2021.

Born on March 27, 1960, he put his whole self in everything he did. He was a man's man with a soft heart and tender feelings who loved and wanted to care for his family above anything else.

Some of his friends' and family's best memories from years ago involve how Steve loved boating on Lake Lanier, sharing his "special lemonade," and playing classic rock on the most powerful sound system on the lake. If there was fun to be had, he wanted in on it.

He owned Atlanta Flooring Company until his retirement, loved NASCAR and was a huge Dale Earnhardt fan. He drove a 1997 black Camaro SS proudly displaying an Earnhardt tag. Imagine his excitement when he was able to drive it around the Atlanta Motor Speedway. And being a fan of a good time even though he was not a fan of dressing up, he had fun showing his outdoors persona by wearing a camouflage tuxedo to his son's formal wedding.

He enjoyed being outdoors. He and his Husky, Bandit, were quite a pair as they explored and roamed in the North Carolina mountains. He also used this time to be with God. A Christian for many years, the mountains just seemed to offer him the peace and solace he had always dreamed of.

No one was more important in his life than his son, Chris, until his granddaughter, Georgia, was born. He would have done absolutely anything for either of them, but the minute he saw Georgia, she became his top priority. He also had a wonderful relationship with his parents, Joey and Zeb, and always looked forward to speaking with them daily.

He is survived by his son, Chris Beck (Katie) of Auburn, Ga.; his granddaughter, Georgia; his parents, Joan Sloan Beck and Zebulon V. Beck Jr.; his sister, Elizabeth Ann Brookshire (Bruce) of Biloxi, Miss.; his brother, John V. Beck (Pat) of Lake Oconee, Ga.; and several nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, June 26, at 3 p.m., at Somerby Independent Living, 25 Glenlake Parkway, NE, Sandy Springs, GA, 30328.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family. Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.



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Kyle Larson continues to dominate with Nashville win

Holly Cain – NASCAR Wire Service

Kyle Larson continued his streak of superiority Sunday afternoon winning the Ally 400 at Nashville Superspeedway – his third consecutive win, following three consecutive runner-up finishes. He hasn't finished worse than second place in a NASCAR Cup Series race since May 2.

It's a high performance mark the series hasn't seen in more than a decade when former Hendrick Motorsports driver Jimmie Johnson won four straight points-paying races in 2007. Larson's win Sunday was his third straight points-paying victory but he also won the All-Star Race \$1 million-twin exhibition last week at Texas Motor Speedway.

Larson's No. 5 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet led Ross Chastain and Chip Ganassi Racing's No. 42 Chevrolet across the Nashville finish line by 4.335-seconds. He paced the field by as much as 5 seconds in the closing 10 laps of this inaugural event. And that fourth winner's trophy is a series best on the season.

There were 14 lead changes among seven drivers, but only two other drivers led double digit laps – Chase Elliott (13) and Kyle Busch (10).

"It was a great day," Larson said, smiling at the understatement. "We never really had to run behind people, so I don't know if one of my teammates got out front again, it probably would have been hard to pass them."

"This Valvoline Chevrolet was really good. It cut the middle of the corner really well and our pit crew did an awesome job again. I just hope we can keep it going."

Larson led 264 of the 300 laps at the 1.333-mile Nashville track in the first NASCAR Cup Series race in the city since 1984. The effort marked the fourth time this season Larson's led at least 200 laps in a race and the fifth time he's led more than half the total laps in a race.

Only 17 races into the 36-race season, Larson has already eclipsed his previous season-best laps led. He's been out front 1,426 laps. His previous season-best total was 1,352 laps led in 2017.

Larson, who now has 10 career NASCAR Cup Series wins, has led 82 percent of all laps run during this current three-race winning streak. His Hendrick teammate Elliott – who was disqualified for having four loose lug nuts – won Stage 1 and Larson answered with the Stage 2 victory – his 12th of the season, which is double that of any other driver.

Larson's Hendrick Motorsports teammate William Byron looked to give the team its fifth straight 1-2 finish, rallying from the rear of the grid. He was running second until the final 10 laps when Chastain got around him. Byron finished third, followed by polesitter Aric Almirola and his Stewart-Haas Racing teammate Kevin Harvick.

The fourth-place finish was Almirola's best of the season. Harvick's fifth place run was his best in the last six races.

"We had a good car, just, my goodness, we don't have anything for those Chevrolets right now," said Almirola, who drives the No. 10 SHR Ford. "They're making grip and they're getting up off the corner. It's so hard to race with them."

"But," Almirola added, "We have made huge strides to close the gap. Our race team is doing a great job scrounging and scrapping to build better race cars and it's nice to come here and run up front, run in the Top-5 and at least be in the mix."

Ricky Stenhouse Jr., Daniel Suarez, Kurt Busch, Christopher Bell and Joey Logano rounded out the Top-10. It marked Stenhouse's second Top-10 of the season and the



Kyle Larson, driver of the #5 Valvoline Chevrolet, celebrates in Victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Ally 400 at Nashville Superspeedway on June 20, 2021, in Lebanon, Tenn. At left, Larson leads Kyle Busch, driver of the #18 Pedigree Toyota, and Chase Elliott, driver of the #9 NAPA Auto Parts Chevrolet.

Photo by Logan Riely/Getty Images

makes Busch a perfect 3-for-3 in Xfinity Series starts this season and it's the second time he has won from the pole.

Appropriately for a Father's Day weekend race, Busch was immediately greeted in Victory Circle by his six-year-old son, Brexton.

"I remember growing up as a kid and watching [NASCAR Hall of Famer] Mark Martin win every week in that 60 car, just the domination he had," said Busch, driver of the No. 54 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota. "And he's number two with 49 wins."

"Wanted to give a huge shoutout to Rowdy Nation out there, we appreciate you Rowdy Nation," Busch added, pointing to the grandstands. "I saw a lot of you standing up when Allgaier took the lead then a lot of you sat back down when I took the lead. So, an awesome day for Rowdy Nation."

Moments later, after receiving the famed guitar awarded to Nashville winners, Busch strummed the strings but he did not smash the guitar as he infamously did in 2009.

For his part, Allgaier left no doubt he was tired of being the race bridesmaid to Busch.

"Running second sucks, I'm not going to lie to you," said Allgaier, who had both his daughters names – Harper and newborn Willow – on the car and at the track in recognition of the Father's Day race weekend.

"When we took the lead from Kyle I thought we were good, we were able to drive away. But then all those restarts at the end, he just held me down really hard in the middle of [turns] three and four and we got loose and I think that was the difference-maker, after that we just didn't have the speed after that."

"Again, just proud of my guys – to bring two fast race cars two weeks in a row to have a shot at it and have it come down to late in the races is a big deal. We'll keep digging."

The race marked the first time the series had competed at

third for Suarez in the new No. 99 Trackhouse Racing team, which hosted co-owner, superstar performer Pitbull, at Nashville.

NASCAR Cup Series championship leader Denny Hamlin had to pit for fuel with two laps remaining dropping from a Top-10 result. He finished 22nd – the second time he's finished outside the Top-10 in the last six races and now holds a slim 6-point championship lead over Larson.

The NASCAR Cup Series moves to Pocono (Pa.) Raceway for a doubleheader weekend. Race one will be next Saturday (3 p.m. ET, NBCSN, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). The Explore the Pocono Mountains 350 (Sunday, 3:30 p.m. ET, NBCSN, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio) completes the weekend.

Kyle Busch wins his 100th NASCAR Xfinity Series race

Kyle Busch earned his historic 100th NASCAR Xfinity Series victory Saturday at Nashville Superspeedway in epic fashion – starting on the pole position, leading a race-high 123 of the 189 laps and bettering the field on three restarts in the closing 20 laps of the Tennessee Lottery 250.

For the second race in a row Busch had to hold off veteran Justin Allgaier on a series of late race restarts. The margin of victory on Saturday was a mere 1.11-second – the two dueling side-by-side in the final laps exchanging the lead seven different times in the final stage of racing. The victory

the 1.333-mile concrete Nashville track since 2011. By all accounts, this latest edition of close racing and dramatic finish was well-received by the fans.

Busch's JGR Toyota teammate Harrison Burton finished third followed by Allgaier's Chevy teammate Josh Berry who had a triumphant, if busy afternoon. He started 22nd but raced hard enough to earn points (eighth place) at the end of Stage 1. An unfortunately timed pit stop late in the race – a caution came out while he was on pit road – put him another lap down with just over 40 laps remaining. But the Tennessee native still rallied to a fourth place finish – his fourth top 5 in 13 races this year.

A.J. Allmendinger overcame an early race pit penalty to finish fourth in the No. 16 Kaulig Racing Chevrolet. Brandon Jones, Jeb Burton, Noah Gragson, NASCAR Camping World Truck Series regular Austin Hill and Riley Herbst rounded out the top 10.

The current Xfinity Series championship leader Austin Cindric finished 32nd after being collected in an accident toward the front of the field, late in the race. He led every lap in Stage 1 to earn his series best seventh stage victory. The finish is his worst of the season.

"Pretty hard hit right at the start/finish line," said Cindric, driver of the No. 22 Penske Racing Ford. "I hate it for all the Penske guys. We had made great strides after practice, obviously. Winning the first stage was great but kind of lost handling of the car. I learned a lot today. But kinda battling back through the field... it was not our day."

Despite the disappointing finish this week, Cindric remains the championship leader – 90 points over Allmendinger. With 11 races remaining until the Playoffs begin, Jeremy Clements holds a 48-point advantage over Brandon Brown for the 12th and final Playoff position.

The NASCAR Xfinity Series races next at Pocono Raceway in a double-header Sunday afternoon with the NASCAR Cup Series in the Pocono Green 225 (noon ET, NBCSN, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

Ryan Preece wins at Nashville in first career NASCAR Camping World Truck Series start

Ryan Preece took the lead from Grant Enfinger with seven laps remaining in the Rockley Roofing 200 at Nashville Superspeedway to earn his first NASCAR Camping World Truck Series victory Friday night in his first race in the series.

Preece, the 30-year old Connecticut native who competes full-time in the NASCAR Cup Series, is only the fifth driver



Kyle Busch, driver of the #54 M&M's Toyota, celebrates with the checkered flag after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Tennessee Lottery 250 at Nashville Superspeedway on June 19, 2021 in Lebanon, Tenn. Photo by Sarah Stier/Getty Images

in history to win in his truck series debut.

"That was a lot of fun," Preece said, adding, "Really I didn't know what to expect. I didn't know anything."

"I was just taking the guidance from [crew chief] Chad [Johnston] and my teammates and told them I'd be better in the race than I was in qualifying and practice. And fortunately, I lived up to that."

Preece's teammate Todd Gilliland – who started at the rear of the field following a pre-race inspection violation – rallied all the way to second place, passing Enfinger with four laps remaining.

"It stings not to get that last spot especially because I was under the 17 [Preece] and got too loose, but that's racing," said Gilliland, whose father David served as his crew chief after his normal crew chief was suspended as part of the inspection penalty.

The Preece-Gilliland work gave Ford its first one-two finish of the season. Enfinger finished third followed by Zane Smith and Stewart Friesen, whose top-5 finish was only his second top 10 in the past eight races of the season.

Veteran Matt Crafton, two-race winner Ben Rhodes, Ty Majeski, Austin Hill and championship leader John Hunter Nemechek rounded out the top 10.

Preece, who drives the No. 37 JTG-Daugherty Chevrolet in the NASCAR Cup Series, was one of three full-time Cup Series drivers entered Friday – all wanting to get some extra laps at the 1.333-mile Nashville track which is hosting its first Cup race Sunday. Chip Ganassi Racing's Ross Chastain finished 22nd and Hendrick Motorsports' William Byron finished last in the 36-truck field, his No. 27 Chevrolet truck experiencing a motor problem shortly after the Stage 1 break.

Nineteen-year old Derek Kraus, who won his first career Camping World Truck Series pole position Friday afternoon, followed it up by leading the first 48 laps of the race and earning the Stage 1 victory – his second career stage win.

A slow pit stop during that stage break forced him to play catch-up, but he rallied back inside the top 10. His race ended early after contact with the Josh Berry truck sent Kraus' No. 19 Toyota hard into the wall with only 40 laps remaining.

Nemechek's 10th-place finish retained the lead in the championship standings for the second-generation driver. A four-race winner so far in 2021, he leads Rhodes by 78 points with only three races remaining to set the 10-driver Playoff field.

Chandler Smith, who finished 13th Friday, sits in the final Playoff transfer position with a slim 15-point edge on former series champion Johnny Sauter, who finished 12th at Nashville.

The series races next in the CRC Brakleen 150 at Pocono Raceway (Saturday, June 26, 12 p.m. ET, FS1, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).



Ryan Preece, driver of the #17 Hunt Brothers Pizza Ford, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Rackley Roofing 200 at Nashville Superspeedway on June 18, 2021, in Lebanon, Tenn. Photo by Jared C. Tilton/Getty Images

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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

CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME: THE 4TH OF JULY

- ACROSS**
- Steps to the river, in India
 - Hot springs resort
 - Meal in a shell
 - Driver's misbehavior?
 - *Grilling technique
 - Medal of Honor descriptor
 - Cracked open
 - What Knave of Hearts stole from Queen of Hearts, sing.
 - Raise one's rank
 - *July 4th pyrotechnic display
 - Hubble Space Telescope operator, acr.
 - Chip dip
 - i topper
 - *Main Street tradition on the 4th
 - Superlative of fummy
 - Ribonucleic acid
 - Store as fodder
 - Moonfish
 - Rose oil
 - Number cruncher
 - Fairytale garden dweller
 - Indian Lilac tree
 - Extinct type of zebra
 - Steampunk decoration
 - Did 2 + 2 (2 words)
 - Crocheted blanket
 - Swedish shag rug
 - Ancient port city in Israel
 - Smiley face
 - *First President to hold July 4th celebration at the White House
 - Snoop Dogg's "Gin and ____"

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 - G, in solfa
 - "The Fountainhead" author
 - Medicinal succulent
 - Hit the bottle
 - Earthenware pots
 - View from a high-speed train?
 - Observer
 - "No ____ without representation"
 - Unfortunately, exclamation
 - *Drink to wash down burgers and hot dogs?
 - Table scrap
 - Steal, past participle
 - What haters spew?
 - Crane or heron
 - Expecting woman's date
 - Life force in Sanskrit
 - Chipped in
 - What Motion Picture Association of America did
 - *Most popular July 4th decoration
 - Notable period
 - Polynesian island country
 - Former tennis pro Steffi
 - One who's made the pilgrimage to Mecca
 - Petri dish filler
 - Mother of Calcutta
 - Roebuck's partner
 - a.k.a. anorak
 - A in B.A.
 - Feudal lord
 - Fish a.k.a. porgy
 - Beer acronym
 - *Lee Greenwood's "Proud to Be an ____"
 - Blooper
 - Sine ____ non
 - Old-timer
 - Force units
 - Wedding tossable
 - Jiggly dessert
 - Run ____ of the law
 - Type of sea bird
 - Agitate
 - Kickboxing moves
 - Miso bean
 - U.S. ____ in golf or tennis
 - Egghead
 - Leisurely run

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