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& Shopping Guide

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54th Annual
**MACON COUNTY
GEMBOREE**

Friday • Saturday • Sunday
at the Robert C Carpenter Community Building

See Pg. 2 for details



June 22, 2021 • 24 Pages

Volume 39 Number 10

FREE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Hometown Heritage Day held last Saturday in downtown Franklin featured live music along with a variety of vendors, a petting zoo and a plethora of antique and muscle cars. Hosted by the Streets of Franklin Heritage Association, the event was designed to celebrate traditional mountain life. For more photos, see page 12.

Photo by Betsey Gooder

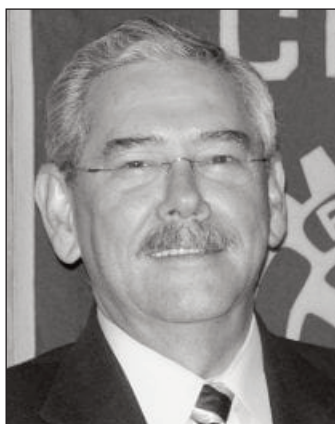
Filing closes; Horton lone candidate for mayor

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Residents in both the Franklin and Highlands municipalities will be determining new leadership this November as several candidates filed for the upcoming municipal election just before Friday's deadline.

During odd-numbered years (so as to alternate with statewide general elections) most municipal elections are held to elect the governing officials (mayor, city council, town council, etc.) of cities, villages and towns across North Carolina. 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. Therefore, only residents inside the Franklin and Highlands city limits are eligible to vote for the respective offices.

In Franklin, the seats up for election include the mayor seat — currently held by Mayor Bob Scott; and town council seats held by David Culpepper, Dinah Mashburn, and the seat left vacant after the untimely death of Barbara McRae.



Jack Horton

Neither Scott nor Mashburn are seeking re-election.

Incumbent David Culpepper filed for a second term and will face challengers JimBo Ledford, Rita Salain, Frances Seay, and Stacy Guffey. With three seats on the Franklin town council up for re-election, the top three vote getters will claim a seat this November.

Current town council vice-mayor and former Macon County Manager Jack Horton filed for mayor and without any challengers, has all but secured his seat as the next mayor of Franklin. Because Horton will be leaving his town council seat prior to the end of his term to take over as mayor, it will be up to the Town Council to appoint someone to fill his seat.

Voter turnout in Franklin was less than ideal during the last municipal election which occurred in 2017. There were 3,993 residents in the town of Franklin, 2,655 of which were registered to vote. In early voting, only 183 cast ballots. In Election Day voting another 194 people voted, meaning only 377 of the town's 2,655 voters showed up at the polls.

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All Saints Episcopal dedicates The Grove arbor

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ELECTION

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commissioner seats held by Amy Patterson and Donnie Calloway. Calloway is not seeking re-election.

Taylor will see a challenger in Marc Hehn who officially filed for the mayoral seat just before deadline. Hehn currently serves on the town board and if elected as mayor, his seat would then be filled by appointment. Taylor has served three, four-year terms in his official capacity in Highlands since first being elected in 2013. If re-elected this year, Taylor will begin his 4th term as mayor.

Incumbent Commissioner Amy Patterson filed for re-election and will face challengers. Patterson and Calloway both ran unopposed in the 2017 election.

Challengers this election include Eric Pierson, who has previously served on the town board, Thomas Craig, Pat Allen, Nicolaus McCall, and Mary Alice Bynum. With two open seats on the Highlands board up for election, the top two vote getters will be elected.

With the mayor and the town board seats unopposed during the last election, voter turnout was miniscule. Only 79 votes were cast in the mayor's race — 75 for Taylor and four write-ins; and 78 for commissioner which included all votes for the incumbents

with the exception of six write-ins. In 2013 when both the mayor's seat and the town board saw multiple candidates, the election was decided by less than 500 people. Taylor was elected with 60% of the vote in 2013 — which only amounted to 264 votes.

Election information

Election Day is scheduled for Nov. 2 and only voters who live within the respective city limits will be allowed to vote. Voters will be able to vote at Franklin Town Hall and the Highlands Civic Center from 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Election Day. Voters who wish to cast their ballots early will be able to do so Oct. 14 through Oct. 30 at the Macon County Community Building and the Highlands Civic Center.

- Voter registration deadline - Oct. 8 at 5 p.m.
- Early voting Oct. 14-30
- Last day to request absentee ballot by mail - Oct. 26.
- Last day for UOCAVA [Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act] voters to request an absentee ballot - Nov. 1
- Election Day - Nov. 2
- County Canvass - Nov. 12, 11 a.m.
- Filing for 2022 primary opens Dec. 6, noon. On the ballot will be three county commissioners, two soil and water officials, two school board members, Clerk of Court, Register of Deeds and Sheriff.

Gem Capitol

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Wyoming off trail riding excursion not for the faint of heart

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Despite being lifelong equestrians, a group from Franklin was challenged by an early July horseback excursion into the Teton wilderness of Wyoming. Due to a local connection with a family member who is a pack-trip guide at the almost 100-year-old Triangle X Ranch just outside Jackson Hole, Wy., I was asked to join what promised to be a “trip of a lifetime.”

The group of seven, six of my family members and one friend, had to sign detailed waivers specifying “hold harmless” details regarding every imaginable accident scenario involving wild animals, weather, unforeseen dilemmas, etc., but we also had to state our level of horseback riding experience. All in the group had been in the saddle since childhood, so we were confident we could handle the planned five-day horseback riding excursion that left from a trailhead just outside Grand Teton National Park and ventured 20 miles to base-camp location in the Teton Wilderness.

At about 14.5 hands [equine height measurement – about 58 inches], my leopard Appaloosa horse was the shortest of the bunch. A few of the horses were draft or Friesian mixes, meaning they were tall and wide, and one horse was a trained mustang. The others were quarter horse mixes and paints. And then the guide packed and pulled along another five large mules with our bags and miscellaneous items. Two other guides, including the cook, had ventured into the wilderness alone earlier that morning – at about 5 a.m. – to take supplies of food and other sundries that we would need during our time in the middle of nowhere.

While the ride started out sedate enough, meandering from a corral and through a lengthy campground, we quickly climbed a hill and before anyone had a chance to begin to navigate the narrow, rugged trail, we crested an apex overlooking the Buffalo River at least 1,000 feet below. The path turned sharply to the right so that it appeared, from just below the apex, that the trail disappeared over the cliff. We proceeded to ride along a ridge that descended straight down on one side of the path, which was just wide enough for the horses and mules to step. It was at this high point that we collectively realized this was going to be no ordinary horseback ride. Among the group, we had spent years showing, raising, training, and even racing horses. But what we encountered during that recent summer trip tested our mettle.

Other worldly

We ventured within tight passageways of tiny canyons, dense, through fragrant fir forests, and over arid, almost desert-like terrain. Resplendent and unexpected were wildflowers of every shape and hue. And when we found ourselves in the eerie and charred



Much of the 20 mile horseback ride into the Teton Wilderness was along the Buffalo River.

remains of a 20-years-ago burned landscape, the juxtaposition of the vibrant floral colors and the coal black toothpick trees was otherworldly.

After almost eight hours of riding, we en-

tered the base camp: an expansive and lush Edenesque meadow with a hillside that swept up and up on one side and on the other the Buffalo River and the solid rock Pentagraph Mountain, likened to another impressive rock



Base camp for the group of seven riders from Franklin was located in the shadows of Pentagraph Mountain. The group was treated to a rainbow on July 4th instead of fireworks. At right, Riders enjoyed forests and meadows thick with various wildflowers - even among the burnt remains from forest fires.



tempted to stand on our aching legs, we learned that the base camp was at 9,800 feet elevation. Tents were already spread out in private spots among willowy bushes and along a natural spring stream. And a large canvas tarp covered the “kitchen” and eating area.

We freshened by the stream, refilled our filter water bottles, housed belongings in our tent, and were treated to the first of many semi-gourmet meals that were a far cry from the pork and beans we expected so far from civilization. And, despite the knowledge that we were inhabiting temporarily the habitat of grizzly bears, timber wolves, moose, elk, and other large creatures (although the guides assured us they “usually” keep to even higher elevations during summer months) most of us slept exhaustedly that first night.

Perhaps after the first grueling day of horseback riding, we all thought privately that we would not want to get back on a horse until it was time to pack back out. However, the guides had us up early and, after a hearty breakfast, we were back in the saddle and heading toward Buffalo River, which we forded, and around Pentagraph Mountain. As we had the day before, we traveled through every imaginable geological landscape – from high-grass, natural fields, where we saw a mule deer bedded, to a barren hillside of large lava boulders to vertical forests of downed trees that we had to navigate over and around. We were “off trail,” but what the guide eventually directed us to – as cliché as it may sound – literally took our breath away. Another 1,000-2,000 feet higher than our base camp and tucked behind thick Fraser fir trees was a brilliant aqua glacier lake. Immediately, we realized that it was so pristine that we could see clearly large schools of rainbow and cutthroat trout.

Just after we tied our horses to trees, a bald eagle soared down the middle of the lake and perched uninhibited to watch us. Another eagle glided above the lake after the first one lost interest. With compact poles, some of the riders began fishing and quickly caught large trout – which were taken back in saddle



bags for the evening meal. After several hours of enjoying the almost ethereal setting, we braved the steep downhill descent and experienced some precarious events – such as my horse bolting down the mountain because the horse behind me jumped a log overzealously and landed on my horse’s haunches. For a few split seconds I was hanging on the side of my saddle, but I managed to strain myself upright and pull the horse to a halt behind the rest of the party.

By the time we entered our base camp, we had ridden another 20 miles. For the next few

mountain, Devils Tower in Wyoming, which was the very first official United States National Monument. Pentagraph appeared to be chiseled on all its sides and then lopped off to create a flat top. Instead of July 4th fireworks, we witnessed reverently a rainbow form over the stone precipice. After we peeled ourselves out of the saddle and at-



Triangle X Ranch is located within the grand Teton National Park with a view of the Grand Teton mountain range. Families can stay at the ranch and enjoy mild horseback riding and other horse related activities. At right, Twenty-four horses and mules roamed free in the evenings around the base camp and then returned each morning.



days, some in the group rode to where centuries-old glaciers and the previous winter's snow refused to melt in the summer sun. Another glacier lake enabled two riders to catch and release more than 70 fish. The guide explained that since few humans had likely ventured to such remote spots, the fish were captivated by the shiny lures and bit them practically every time they hit the water.

Every evening around the enormous camp fire, with the horses grazing freely (large cowbells affixed around their necks) we talked about the days' riding highlights, perils, and challenges.

On the last day, the guides awoke at 4 a.m. to begin packing up all the tents, sleeping bags, tarps, clothing, and food onto 14 mules and horses, and we rode out at 9 a.m. We were more

aware of what to expect during the 20-mile ride back to civilization, and we tried to absorb the imposing landscape – realizing we may never have an opportunity to return.

After farewells to our mounts, who had carried us sure-footed and safe over miles and miles of rough terrain, we traveled back to Triangle X Ranch and arrived just in time to witness the daily ritual of releasing at least 100 horses from corrals so they could trot and gallop across many acres and a highway to spread out on a great plain for an evening of grazing with the Grand Tetons as looming sentries.

Definitely a horseback riding trip that was not for the faint of heart, but we all agreed that any future rides will likely pale in comparison.



One of 10 pack mules stands beside the array of saddles standing ready to help the group of seven Franklin riders on the adventure of a lifetime.

Florence Robbins

celebrates her Birthday on the 23rd of July. All of her children would like to wish a

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Federal funding drying up for KIDS Place; commissioners step in

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

KIDS Place is a private nonprofit, nationally accredited child advocacy center serving children in Macon County. Before KIDS Place was established, child abuse victims in Macon County were often shuffled from one place to another. Although caring professionals worked in those agencies, families were forced to go from agency to agency in order to meet the informational needs of those agencies. The places that professionals were meeting to talk with children were not always the best places for children to feel secure enough to tell the truth. They were certainly not child-friendly settings.

KIDS Place exists to make the investigative and judicial process easier for children and to insure that all child abuse victims in Macon County have access to evidence-based therapy, at no cost to the family.

Although KIDS Place receives funding from the county as part of the county’s annual community funding pool grant process, director Alisa Ashe told the Macon County Board of Commissioners last week in the facility’s 30-year history, they have never had to ask commissioners for emergency funds before, but due to factors beyond their control, they are now left with no other choice.

“We were notified last fall that we would be getting a cut of about 30-35% percent from our base funding,” said Ashe. “Our base funding comes from the Victims of Crime Act — that is not taxpayer funding, that is funding that comes through white collar federal crimes and is put into a pot of funding nationally and must be spent to serve victims of crimes. That money has been dwindling over the last four to five years.”

Victim services agencies, including those offered at KIDS Place, are funded primarily by money from the Victims of Crime Act Fund passed in 1984. VOCA is funded by fines from federal convictions and provides significant, core financial resources for victim services agencies to assist and support victims of human trafficking, sexual violence, fraud, DUI crashes, domestic violence and homicide.

During the past four years, fines previously directed to VOCA have decreased significantly due to the Department of Justice’s increasing reliance on deferred prosecution and nonprosecution agreements. Unlike the monetary penalties associated with criminal convictions, the penalties associated with deferred prosecution and nonprosecution agreements are deposited into the General

Fund of the Treasury, not the Crime Victims Fund. As a result, the VOCA fund is at an all-time low.

In 2018, North Carolina victim support agencies received more than \$100 million from the VOCA fund. As of 2020, the VOCA fund balance stood at more than \$6 billion. But in 2021, the state’s VOCA funding dropped nearly 80% to \$22 million, and more cuts are anticipated for 2022.

While Ashe has been bracing for a 30-35% cut in funding at KIDS Place, when the facility received the grant a few weeks ago, they found out the funding cut was actually 67%.

For KIDS Place, that meant their base funding of just over \$315,000 was cut to be around \$100,000. At the same time KIDS Place experienced a drastic cut in their base funding, they also lost a competitive grant of more than \$100,000 which allowed the center to provide mental health services to children.

Incidents of domestic violence and abuse have climbed over the past year with many stuck at home during the COVID-19 pandemic due to closed schools and quarantine orders.

An article in the American Journal of Emergency Medicine reported that police

departments across the nation saw significant increases in domestic violence calls and arrests since the onset of the pandemic.

In the past year and a half, KIDS Place has seen the agency’s service numbers double — all while available funds have decreased. Ashe said that legislators are working to address the funding cut and impact to VOCA nationally but that will take two to three years to be corrected for individual agencies like KIDS Place, which is why the emergency help is needed from the county in the interim.

After cutting the center’s budget down to what she referred to as a “bare bones” budget, Ashe said KIDS Place was \$110,000 short to cover operating costs, even at significantly reduced levels.

“I think KIDS Place can safely raise \$35,000 through some local foundations and just through our local donors,” said Ashe. “So I am asking the county to consider giving us \$75,000 to help us meet this bare bones budget.”

KIDS Place, although it operates as a private nonprofit, partners with both the town of Franklin and the county to provide services not otherwise available. The sheriff’s

See KIDS PLACE page 8

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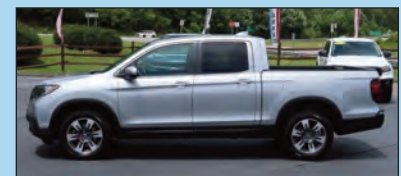
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KIDS PLACE

Continued from page 6

office and the police departments in Macon County work with KIDS Place to provide services to children when needed and if KIDS Place did not exist, it would be the responsibility of those agencies to provide the services. From January through June, KIDS Place has conducted 43 interviews at the request of child protective services and law enforcement. Cost estimates are around \$1,200 to conduct an interview and fund a position with the training required. KIDS Place has also completed 21 medical exams — which would have otherwise cost around \$2,000 each to complete.

Although KIDS Place partners with the county to provide required services, Commissioner Josh Young expressed concern over providing taxpayer funds to the non-profit. Young, who noted he was unaware of all KIDS Place did until Ashe made the request last week, said he would like to see the community help fund raise and get the money the organization needs.

Commissioner Paul Higdon also noted that while the services are worthy, “as a manager of county taxpayer dollars, how do I put a vote on this.”

Commissioner Ronnie Beale made the

motion to provide KIDS Place with a one-time allocation of \$75,000 due to the emergency need. Commissioner Gary Shields seconded the motion.

Higdon and Young supported providing the funding through the county’s community funding pool and forgo providing funding to any other non-profits this fiscal year.

However, Beale’s motion was to provide the funding out of the county’s fund balance. The Macon County Board of Commissioners voted in favor 3-2 with Higdon and Young voting against it.

Because of the way VOCA is funded, the stability of the fund has long been a source of concern. But in March, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the bipartisan VOCA Fix to Sustain the Crime Victims Fund Act of 2021, also known as the VOCA Fix Act.

After passing in the House, the bill stalled in the Senate despite receiving bipartisan support. Sen. Pat Toomey, R-Pa., has blocked the VOCA Fix twice in the Senate, most recently in June after Sens. Dick Durbin, D-Ill., and Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, requested unanimous consent to pass the bill. Both North Carolina senators — Republicans Richard Burr and Thom Tillis — have expressed support for the VOCA Fix.

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Harris Regional offers rapid COVID testing for travelers

Your bags are packed, and the tickets are booked, but have you gotten your COVID-19 test? As more people ready for summer travel, there are a few more boxes to check before stepping on the plane or hopping in the car towards wherever paradise awaits. list.

The CDC urges both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals to approach traveling with caution as COVID-19 variants continue to spread. To ensure everyone's safety, get a COVID-19 test at least three days before you go. For international travel, some countries, including the United States, require proof of a negative COVID-19 test before permitting travel.

If you need a coronavirus test for travel, you might be asking, where you will get one, what type of test you will need, how long it will take to get an appointment (and wait for the results), and what it will cost.

The tests that often do not help you with travel are antibody tests. These are blood tests that can identify if a previous COVID-19 infection caused your immune system to produce COVID-19 antibodies. Rapid antigen tests check for proteins on the virus's surface and are popular for their quick turn-around times but are rarely accepted. Meanwhile, molecular tests, such as NAAT tests, amplify bits of viral RNA to detect specialized tests. These samples are gathered by swabbing someone's nose or mouth. The whole process is over in a few minutes.

What you generally need for travel is a PCR test (polymerase chain reaction). These tests are the most reliable for detecting active COVID-19 infections. Though PCR tests generally take around 72 hours for results, some urgent care facilities have introduced "rapid PCR tests," where you can receive your results in as few as 30 minutes.

Harris Regional Hospital offers same day "rapid" PCR testing, and molecular (NAAT) COVID-19 testing. If you do not know which test you need, ask your provider.

Sign-up to receive a COVID-19 test at any front desk/registration area at Harris Regional Hospital and any other out-patient facilities such as Harris Urgent Care or Harris Medical Park of Franklin once you have received a doctor's order.

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News from the Legislature

From the office of
N.C. Rep. Karl Gillespie



Karl Gillespie

The House held a no-vote session on Monday, June 28, 2021. Tuesday began with various committee meetings to review the Senate budget. I attended the House Appropriations, Education Committee where we reviewed the education portion of the Senate budget. Session convened Tuesday afternoon and we considered the following bills:

– SB41, Remove Certain Satellite Annexation Caps for the cities of Kings Mountain, Lowell and Shelby, and the town of Franklinville, Liberty, Ramseur, Stanley and Vass. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 108-3.

– SB188, Board of Architects/Interior Designers, would allow for registration of interior designers and to modify the North Carolina Board of Architecture. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 105-7.

– SJR726, Confirm David Richard/Director Health Benefits, is a joint resolution providing for the confirmation of Dave Richards as director of the Division of Health Benefits, Department of Health and Human Services. The bill passed unanimously.

I attended an additional House Appropriations, Education Committee on Wednesday morning where we continued discussions on education funding in the Senate budget. I attended two caucus meetings with my colleagues prior to the start of the afternoon voting session. During session, we voted on various bills, including:

– HB619, Alcohol Bev. Manufacture Sales Tax Exemption, would exempt from sales and use tax sales of machinery, parts, accessories, supplies, and ingredients to certain ABC permittees for use in the manufacturing of beer, wine, and spiritous liquor for which the purchaser would otherwise be ineligible because the purchaser is primarily engaged in the restaurant business. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 102-6.

– SB198, GSC Good Funds Settlement/Comm. Receivership, recommended by the General Statutes Commission, consists of three parts. Part I amends the Good Funds Settlement Act to provide that a settlement agent may disburse settlement proceeds in reliance on a check drawn on the account of or issued by a licensed mortgage lender. Part II makes amendments relating to the N.C. Commercial Receivership Act, enacted last year by S.L. 2020-75. Part III makes technical changes to various laws regulating financial practices. The bill passed unanimously, 109-0.

The House held no-vote sessions on Thursday and Friday prior to the start of the July 4th holiday weekend. A one-week

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Many came together to make a successful event

Franklin families, neighbors, businesses and visitors,

Please let me take a minute to thank all of our vendors, nonprofits and merchants for setting up booths. Thank you to our Musicians, the singing was awesome, we are truly blessed here in Franklin. Thank you to Prentiss Church for allowing us to use their Red Back Hymnals and First Christian Church of Franklin for the use of their Sound System, Thank you Donald Holland for letting us use your trailer and David for bringing it and setting it up. We could not provide a stage for the music without you guys. Thank you to Sterling Passmore for playing under the Gazebo all day. We would like to thank the Macon County TDA and TDC for their funding support, the Town of Franklin for all of their support, the Franklin Police Department Chief Harrell for sending out Devin Holland and his Squad before sunrise blocking the roads and Tony Ashe and his Squad unblocking them. A big thank you to the Franklin Fire Department for the Old Fire Truck on display and the water tower for the kids and adults that cooled off under the mist. The guys for the Antique Cars and Muscle Cars are always welcome to come to any of our events and show off their beautiful cars, thank you.

Thank you to The Streets of Franklin Heritage Association merchants for all their help in planning this event for months. A special thank you to our Board Members, Brooke Reale, Martha Holbrook, Brenda Wooten and including our planning committee, Roland Mock, Rob Reale, Matt Taylor, Betsy Gooder and Allen Pruitt. A special thanks to Allen for all his hard work for getting the musicians together and Betsy Gooder who got our Car Clubs to come out. Thank you to all our media folks who went above and beyond for advertising this event.

If I have forgotten anyone, please forgive me. We thank you.

We are looking forward to our next event Hometown Fall on Main Sept. 4 ... more to come

Again thank you all for your support and supporting me.

Gwen Taylor, President
The Streets of Franklin Heritage Association

Library 'pride' display educational and inclusive

I have been a member of the Macon County community for over 20 years. I have lived, volunteered, grown up, and worked in Macon County since I was four years old. This community has supported, nurtured, cared for me. While my family are transplants, I have always felt that this community has been an extension of my own family. But today, I was dismayed by the public comment period during the Macon County Commissioners meeting.

As a teen in Macon County, I grew up with several friends

in the LGBTQ community. I watched them struggle for acceptance, love, or even just kindness. Rural, Appalachia is not the best place to grow up if you are queer. I watched my friends struggle with thoughts (and often attempt) of suicide, depression, abuse. I watched as their church communities rejected them, and left them without a support system. I also watched friends lose their families. All because they had the courage to tell the world who they really were, who God made them to be. Growing up, I was blessed to feel loved by this community, but my LGBTQ peers were not afforded the same luxury. Some of those individuals are no longer here because of the kind of homophobia that was on display tonight.

Some members of the Macon County community issued complaints to the commissioners regarding an LGBTQ display during the month of June (Pride Month) in the children's section of the Macon County Library. The display included 20 children's books that discuss LGBTQ issues. These members of the public asked of the commissioners to not only to limit the library's ability to display books on LGBTQ+ issues but their ability to purchase these books in general. These citizens implored to the commissioners to reject "the transgender agenda" and "uncritical" looks at LGBTQ issues.

These individuals are asking the commissioners to reject the obligation to provide a safe environment for free and critical thought on all topics, difficult and light. They are asking to take away a temporary display that celebrates diversity and inclusion, They are asking to take away the ability for critical and free thought. What they are asking is wrong. What they are asking is homophobic. What they are asking is not acceptable.

I am a proud and outspoken supporter of the LGBTQ community. I am also a proud Macon County citizen. I ask the commissioners to think of the request that has been made to limit children's access to age appropriate books on what some members have deemed inappropriate, but rather is educational, informative, and inclusive. While it cannot make a difference in the lives of those who are no longer with us, it can show those that are that they are not alone, and there is in fact a place where they will be accepted in Macon County, even if they can't find it outside of those walls.

Emily Ritter – Franklin, N.C.

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'Irony' is the eyes of the beholder

John Barry brings up an interesting point on irony in a recent letter. Surely, we are living in some confusing times, but I find it "ironic" that the same people who claim there was no election fraud in 2020 were totally sure there was Russian collusion in the 2016 election even though facts state otherwise. They wanted election integrity then, but now? In Arizona alone (not counting the many obvious discrepancies in other swing states), an independent nonpartisan audit group found: 1.) 70k more ballots received than requested; 2.) 10k voters were added to the rolls AFTER election day that cast a ballot in 2020; 3.) remote access was indeed available to the election server that was supposed to be so secure; 4.) all access logs were wiped in March 2021; 5.) the number of votes certified does not match the number of ballots sent to the audit; 6.) 25k duplicate ballots were found by the audit, and no serial numbers on them (how many times they were scanned we will never know?); 7.) 74k absentee mail-in ballots are missing! Meanwhile election workers across the country by the hundreds have filed affidavits under penalty of perjury that they witnessed cheating.

Let's remember that Trump supposedly lost Arizona by only 11k total votes, so it is "ironic" that folks will completely ignore facts to justify their point of view even though deep down they have to know their opinion is wrong. Again, most sources will simply omit the truth or spin the truth however their agenda may dictate in order to get their party or their guy in office. Without an understanding of what is government's proper role in a free society, the America Empire will be doomed to repeating history.

Finally, Socialist Democrats in the recent New York mayoral primary election counted over 130k extra ballots that were not valid. 130k!! In one city!?! This has led to Democrats suing other Democrats over election integrity and fair process while Democrats continue vehemently denying we need election integrity elsewhere. No consistency whatsoever. That is what we call truly "ironic."

This letter is certainly not a plug for Donald Trump or the corrupted GOP. Today's problems will never be fixed by politicians of any stripe; only citizens taking responsibility to educate themselves and demanding true freedom with a return to limited, constitutional government can do that by God's grace.

Jim Gaston – Franklin, N.C.

Love and unity at the heart of universal language

We all rely on the basic essentials which sustains life. We all rely on water, food and air to breathe. We cannot survive but a few minutes, to a few days without one or more of these life-giving elements. Yet there is something else all humanity shares in, it may not be life sustaining, but yet maybe is in its own way. It's universal that all mankind has been part of and shares in. It unites many in common thought and it views our world in most every way possible. It crisscrosses cultures, nations and either drives us closer or drives us apart.

Music has been known as our universal language and is known by every part of humanity. Music, as in all the arts, shares all aspects of life – heartaches, war, pain, you name it and there's a song or melody that tells and reflects what we experience in the lives we live. But mostly it's the search for meaning and purpose within a deeper love we all seem to want and seek. Through music we connect with each other the desires within the depths of our hearts and being, it seems to go beyond the barriers of language and cultures.

Love and unity has always been at the heart of this universal language and it's a common thread throughout all time. It seems as though this is instilled within the heart of mankind, or written within the human spirit. The need for

connection with someone beyond ourselves seems in desperation, finding this harder in never finding a final destiny to be shared in a unified love throughout our life time. This feeling has been felt many times before, as in the '60s song "For what it's Worth" by Buffalo Springfield, singing "There's battle lines being drawn; nobody's right if everybody's wrong; young people speaking their minds getting so much resistance from behind." It's a warning to take a step back and question where confusion and lack of unity leads us. Or as in the famous song, "Sara" by Stevie Nicks asking, "Wait a minute baby, stay with me awhile, said you'd give me light but you never told me about the fire, Drowning in the sea of love, where everyone would love to drown."

This need for love touches each of us, if it can be found?

We all feel the uneasiness when our lives do not blend well with each other, not that we cannot disagree, but when we are divided with such bitterness and getting even, we ourselves become less likable because of our own disappointments. Many are in hopes of being unified in family, community and beyond, people with a common goal of caring, loving, and helping each other, but this cannot be by force or legislation. This must come from the heart of each of us. It's the beautiful poetry within every soul which desires love and acceptance from anyone who would accept it, even the unlovable and discarded. And this poetry and desire within us is satisfied with a completed happiness when it finds its resting place of acceptance.

Kim Phue better known as the "Napalm Girl," suffered from the horrors of Napalm bombing in the Vietnam War. She had gone through such pain and suffering physically with 17 surgeries to repair all the burns she suffered, and along with this the internal anguish of hate and bitterness towards those who had done this, feeling suicide was the only way out. Kim's deep bitterness and feeling less than human found restoration and forgiveness towards those who did this to her, even towards the pilot who dropped the bombs. It was in the love of Christ that she found the restoration and acceptance that we all look for. This is, in part, the music and poetry within all our hearts, to find this love of acceptance and forgiveness among all of us seeking out unity with not only us, but more so with a personal relationship of permanence with the Creator Himself. He came for this. Finding this brings us all in closer love and unity. "May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity. (Romans 15:5)(LAB)

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GILLESPIE

Continued from page 10

recess began Monday, July 5, 2021. The House returned, Monday, July 12, 2021 and held a no-vote session.

On Tuesday, July 13, the House Energy and Public Utilities Committee met to discuss HB951, Study Emerging Energy Generation. The House Rules Committee also met prior to session.

Tuesday afternoon's session included votes on these bills:

– HB375, Franklinville/ Liberty/Ramseur/Roxboro Boundary, would exempt the Towns of Franklinville, Liberty, and Ramseur from the 10% area cap on voluntary satellite annexations and remove a 2.6817-acre tract of land from the corporate limits of the City of Roxboro. The House concurred with the Senate Committee Substitute via a voice vote.

– SB122, Towns of Spruce Pine and Weaverville Dean-annexation, would remove one tract of land from the corporate limits of the Town of Spruce Pine and remove one tract of land from the corporate limits of the Town of Weaverville. The House voted in favor, 105-0.

– HB334, Job Opportunity and Business Saving Grants and Tax Relief, would provide grants to N.C. businesses affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, reduce taxes for businesses and individuals, update the reference to the Internal Revenue Code, make various other changes to the Revenue Laws, and appropriate funds from the General Fund to the Savings Reserve. The House voted to not concur with the Senate Committee Substitute and a conference committee was appointed to reach a compromise agreement with the Senate.

– HB67, General Statutes Commission Technical Corrections 2021, consist of updating or removing obsolete references, fixing incorrect references, fixing the format of citations, replacing legalese with plain English, removing unnecessary language, making stylistic changes for greater clarity or consistency, and more. I voted in favor and the House concurred with the Senate Committee Substitute by a vote of 104-1.

On Wednesday, I met with various liaisons and lobbyists. Later in the day, I had the pleasure of meeting with representatives from the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. Following an afternoon caucus, session convened at 4 p.m., and we considered numerous bills, including:

– HB71, Living Donor Protection Act, would provide insurance protections and a tax credit for individuals who are living organ donors, including bone marrow, and it would provide paid leave for State employees and State-supported personnel who are living organ or bone marrow donors. The bill passed unanimously, 105-0.

– SB146, Teledentistry/RDH Admin. Local Anesthetic, would establish standards for teledentistry; allow dental hygienists to administer local anesthetics while under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist; allow certain dental hygienists to practice without a licensed dentist physically present; allow licensure by credentials for certain dental instructors, and add the ECU School of Dental Medicine to the NC Caring Dental Professionals Board. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 101-7.

– HB951, Modernize Energy Generation, would diversify the state's energy portfolio to include natural gas, nuclear and solar. In turn, this will reduce carbon dioxide emissions by nearly 63% compared to the state's 2005 carbon dioxide emissions peak. The rate changes in the bill is a proactive measure to head off inevitable price increases from future federally mandated energy legislation. I voted in favor, and the bill passed, 58-50. Immediate third reading of HB951 was objected to, therefore the bill would need to be heard on another business day. As session was running past 8 p.m., the decision was made to hold a 12:01 a.m. session on Thursday, July 15, for the third reading, rather than require members to return the following morning at a designated time. HB951 passed third reading, 57-49, and the bill now heads to the Senate.

No-vote sessions were held on Thursday and Friday.

Hometown Heritage in Downtown Franklin brings a crowd



Residents and visitors alike headed to Main Street Franklin on Saturday to take part in the return of downtown festivals. The weather cooperated for the most part with the fire department providing a misty shower to cool summer temperatures. Music, vendors, pony rides and more made for a very successful event. The next event is Hometown Fall on Main set for Sept. 4.
 Photos by Betsy Gooder & Brittney Lofthouse



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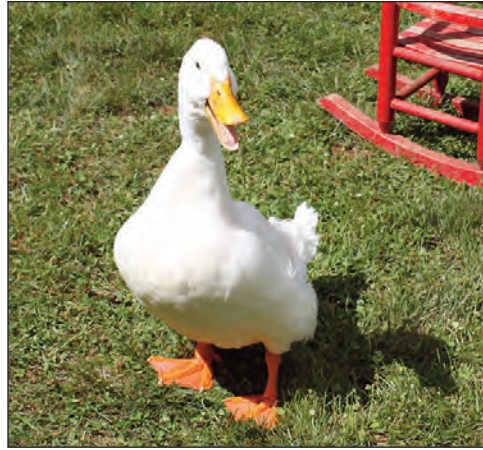
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Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests July 8 - 17. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

July 10

Jessica Myraah McCoy, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

July 11

Jose Luis Patino Alvarez, was charged with domestic criminal trespass. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

Arthur Jackson Jr., was charged with assault on a government officer/employee, communicating threats. James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

July 12

Arthur Jackson Jr., was charged with felony probation violation. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

Travis Jerome Staffelbach, was charged with identity theft, obtain property by false pretense.

Michael Adam Crisp, was charged with simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance. William D. Stamey made the arrest.

Garry Lee Franks, was charged with assault on a person with a disability, resist, obstruct and delay law enforcement officer.

July 13

Peter Eugene Woodall, was charged with failure to appear. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

July 14

Robert Stanley Reed, was charged with discharging a weapon on occupied property. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

July 15

Brittany Mae Roeder, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz., possession of marijuana paraphernalia. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Richard Dewight Collins, was charged with child support contempt, misdemeanor probation violation. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Paul Maynard, was charged with felony probation violation, violate domestic violence protective order. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Nikelus Orion Lee Hughes, was charged with disorderly conduct, resist, obstruct and delay law enforcement officer. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Sandra Abigail Hall, was charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle, possession of stolen goods/property, possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Gerald Lewis Hanson, was charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle, possession of stolen goods/property, possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

July 16

April Renee Burd, was charged with obtaining property by false pretenses, identity theft. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Jessica Jeannie Pinette, was charged with simple assault. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

July 17

Blake Justin Roskam, was charged with assault on a female, communicating threats, resisting a public officer. Jay Wright made the arrest.

Anthony Shamal Bryson, was charged with failure to appear. Troy L. Burt made the arrest.

Christopher Bryan Lococo, was charged with failure to appear. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Trey Bryant, was charged with larceny, larceny of a firearm, possession of stolen goods/property. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

July 10

Francisco Javier Garcia-Riuz, 24, was charged with driving while intoxicated, open container after consuming alcohol, driving without being licensed as a driver by the DMV of North Carolina, stop sign violation. A \$800 bond was set.

July 13

Amy Michelle McCall, 37, was issued an order for arrest for failure to appear. A \$12,000 was set.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

July 8

Kelly Jean Robinson, 45, of Touchstone Way, was charged with maintaining a dwelling for a controlled substance, possession with intent to sell/manufacture/deliver methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, sell methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, sell and deliver methamphetamine and maintaining a dwelling place for a controlled substance. A secured bond of \$100,000 was set.

July 9

Joshua Moore Duls, 38, of Aspen Dr., was charged with communicating threats. No bond was set.

Charles Michael Nash, 32, of Union Hill Rd., Whittier, was charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Sarah Elizabeth Riddell, 31, of Pinhook Rd., Tuckasegee, was charged with larceny. No bond was set.

Loretta Lynn Rosario, 51, of Canada Rd., Tuckasegee, was charged with felony possession of marijuana, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of marijuana paraphernalia and possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.



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Town rolls over TDA surplus to 2021

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

With events being cancelled due to the COVID19 pandemic and government safety protocols, the Franklin Tourism Development Authority (TDA) had additional funding left over in the 2020-2021 fiscal year that otherwise would have been disbursed in the form of grants to local events and organizations promoting tourism to the area. As more and more events and activities are beginning to be scheduled as the world opens back up, Connie Grubermann, chair of the the Franklin TDA asked the town of Franklin to allocate the balance remaining from last year to be spent in the new fiscal year that started on July 1.

“The funds are TDA funds and because they were not spent last year, they will be added to the TDA’s fund balance,” said Grubermann. “We are asking for the board’s approval to add it to this year’s general budget rather than the fund balance.”

The Franklin TDA is charged with disbursing room occupancy tax collections to businesses and organizations geared toward the promotion of travel and tourism in the Franklin area.

Last year, the TDA reported an anticipated budget for 2019-20 of \$140,000 but the total revenue collected was \$115,935.34. The TDA’s total expenses were at \$118,665, which means \$2,729 had to be used from the TDA’s \$152,631 fund balance to balance the budget by June 30, 2020, when the fiscal year ended.

The TDA’s new budget kicked off on July 1, 2020 and with more of an idea of the impact of COVID19, the board adjusted the budget to reflect the anticipated continued decrease in revenues. However, even though room tax numbers were down the first few months of 2020, by summer, Franklin experienced an influx of visitors as people from around the country fled large cities for the more sparsely

populated mountains. The unexpected influx of visitors to Franklin — despite fewer events and organizations requesting funding from the TDA resulted in additional funds at the end of the fiscal year.

According to TDA reports, April 2020 was the worst month on record for room occupancy tax collections in Franklin with just \$707.20 collected, a significant hit compared to the \$10,302 for the year prior for the same month. However, while April 2020 was the hardest hit month during the pandemic, April 2021 set a record for the TDA with a tax collection of \$14,346.44 — the highest collection amount for any April on record. A similar trend was seen for the month of May. The Franklin TDA collected \$4,265.21 in May 2020 — a more than \$10,000 reduction from the prior year — however in May 2021, the TDA reported a collection of \$16,649.89, the highest collection for May on record for the TDA.

By June 2020, the Franklin TDA collections has returned to near normal collection rates — while slightly less than previous years, but far different from the impact experienced in April and May.

During the July meeting of the Franklin Town Council, the TDA reported that with one month remaining before the fiscal year collection records were finalized — which sees more than \$10,000 on average historically — the Franklin TDA has already collected \$117,705.56 for the 2020-21 fiscal year — a \$2,000 increase over the prior 12 months. The Franklin TDA will close out the 2020-21 fiscal year with a collection rate of close to pre-pandemic levels.

The Franklin Town Council voted to approve allocating the unspent TDA budget from 2020-21 for the 2021-22 fiscal year budget to allow the TDA to provide additional grants and funding opportunities to encourage tourism and development this year.



Ballew presents history of American Folk Music

The Macon County Public Library will host the Annual History of American Folk Music with Marshall Ballew Thursday, July 22, at 6 p.m. Ballew’s concert will be a musical and historical journey through the many years and forms of American Folk Music, with its roots in both the Scotch-Irish ballads and tunes of the British Isles which gave rise to old-time, folk and bluegrass; and the Mother Church of African-American Gospel which birthed jazz, swing, ragtime, and the blues. He will trace the roots and hybrids of all these forms like rockabilly, hokum, rock and roll, and rhythm and blues on a variety of stringed instruments. The library is located at 149 Siler Farm Road. For more information, call (828)534-3600.

Page 16 Note: Last week’s announcement contained the wrong date.

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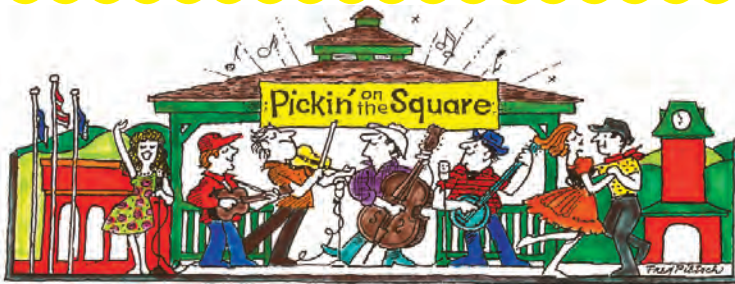
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Donnie Clay, Coordinator for Pickin' on the Square



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The Grove dedicated by All Saints, open to all

Deena C. Bouknight, – Contributing Writer

Just after their 10 a.m. service this past Sunday, All Saints Episcopal Church congregants and guests gathered on a hillside next to the church office to dedicate The Grove, which includes a timber-frame arbor, walkways, trees, and benches for the use of not just the church but also the Franklin community. Situated on what was once occupied by a neglected historic house that was a few years ago available for free for anyone who wanted to move it off the property, The Grove was dedicated in memory of parishioner John Russell's late wife, Sharon, who died at age 63, and son John Jr., who died at age 19. Russell donated the funds to All Saints for the construction of the open-air pavilion as well as the landscaping, and more.

All Saints' Rector, Rev. Jonathan Stepp, told the crowd gathered for the dedication on the corner of Church and Iotla streets, "It's a beautification of our property ... a gift we can give our congregation and our community, and an improvement near the town square. It's a space where people can reflect and find rest, enjoy a peaceful lunch, spend time in prayer ..."

The design of the front of the structure mirrors the front portion of the Gothic Revival-style church. Crosses make up the east and west sides, and there are plaques, which were handmade by local potter Brad Dobson of Mud Dabbers Potter, that include such expressions as "Truth" and "Love." The vaulted shiplap ceiling includes a hanging light, and the structure has been equipped with a sound system so that music will play regularly. Plus, there are benches on all four sides.

"John Russell had a vision," said Rev. Stepp, and "it's a blessing for this town." He led participants through a litany of blessing and thanksgiving, including the prayer: "In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, we give thanks for this grove and arbor, blessing them to be a place of deep connection with the Divine, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Russell, who spoke with visiting family members, friends, and church members present, shared that his wife and son "gave love" and provided "memories," and he thought of The Grove as their gift. Inside the structure's construction, he explained, are his wife and son's names included on wooden pegs.



Parishioner John Russell donated the funds for The Grove to honor the memory of his late wife and son.



All four sides of The Grove pavilion include handmade plaques by a local potter, and the east and west sides are crosses. The arbor is complemented by a landscaped area with benches.

Russell thanked many individuals who worked to make The Grove a reality, including Paul Shuler of Cowee Grading; Charlie Mayol of Charles & Son Concrete, Kent Ledford, New Creations Landscaping; Walker Enterprise; and more.

Built in 1888, All Saints' St. Agnes Chapel on Church Street is constructed of handmade bricks formed by clay from the nearby Little Tennessee River. Church pews were hand made, and in 1888 the membership consisted of 12.

Deaths & Funerals

Patrick William McConnell

Patrick William McConnell, 63, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, July 18, 2021.

Born in Columbia, S.C., he was the son of the late Millard B. and Louise York McConnell. He retired from the United States Airforce in 2001 as a C.M.S.G.T., and later retired from the Social Security Administration. He attended Prentiss Baptist Church. He was a very active member of VFW Post 7339 where he had previously served as commander; and the American Legion Post 108. He also belonged to the Masonic Lodge in Fayetteville, N.C.



Patrick McConnell

He is survived by his wife of eight years, Carol Goran McConnell; grandmother, Kay Ledford of Franklin; stepdaughter, Richelle Helms Metz of Michigan; two brothers, Joseph McConnell (Geneva) of Albuquerque, N.M. and Mark McConnell (Margaret) of Franklin; and one sister, Debbie Brogden (Andy) of Hendersonville, N.C.; one grandson and numerous nieces and nephews.

Memorial service will be Friday, July 23, at 11 a.m., in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Randy Drinnon will officiate. Burial will be in the Prentiss Baptist Church cemetery with military honors being provided by VFW post 7339 and American Legion Post 108.

The family will receive friends from 10 to 11 a.m., one hour prior to the service at Macon Funeral Home.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Prentiss Baptist Church cemetery fund or VFW Post 7339.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Ruben Cano

Ruben Cano, (MSGT, Ret. USAF.) 77, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, July 13, at Mission Hospital in Asheville.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Alice Rosario; two daughters, Yvonne D Cano of Franklin and Michelle M Cano of Manchester, Tenn.; two sisters, Lourdes Lasselle of Tullahoma Tenn., and Elvia Cano of Sacramento, Calif.; and multiple nieces and nephews.

He was a Vietnam veteran, and a retired USPS Letter Carrier. Originally from El Paso, Texas, he retired to Franklin with his wife Alice. He was an avid basketball player, animal lover, and friend to all. He was especially a loving husband and father and will forever be remembered for his great humor.

Funeral services were held Friday, July 16, at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church with burial at Woodlawn Cemetery with full military honors.



Ruben Cano

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Deaths & Funerals

Estelle Brandsma

Estelle Brandsma, 82, of Franklin, N.C., passed away June 17, 2021. She was born to the late Theodore and Florence Rogovin July 18, 1938, in Youngtown, Ohio.

She is survived by her husband of 35 years, Bruce Brandsma of the home; a daughter, Jill Sue Weinstein (David) of Port St. John, Fla.; a sister, Judy Rosenburg of Pembroke, Fla.; a grandson, Matthew Newman of N. Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; and a former son-in-law, Cliff Newman.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her former husband, Paul Schwartz and a sister, Charlene Cohen.

Estelle and Bruce had an antique business and traveled throughout the country buying and selling antiques. Estelle led a full life traveling overseas with her husband Bruce.

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

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to the Alzheimer's Association Western Carolina Chapter, 4600 Park Rd. STE 250, Charlotte, NC 28209.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

Bryant-Grant Funeral home & Crematory is serving the Brandsma family.

Johnathan 'Trent' Stinson

Johnathan "Trent" Stinson, 48, resident of Lawrenceville Ga., formerly of Franklin, N.C., fought his two-year battle with lung cancer before passing peacefully in his home on July 17, 2021, surrounded by his loving family.

He is survived by parents, Michelle Coburn and James Stinson; wife, Robin Stinson; children, Keirston and William Grace; granddaughter, Clover Stinson; siblings, Christy (Doug) Cabe, Sarah (Benjamin) Heath; nieces, Kimberly Cates, Kayla and Lydia Cabe; and great nephew, Gavin Cates.

He was a loving husband and father, son and brother. Gentle, funny and kind hearted, he will be truly missed by everyone he has touched. He was loved by all.

Services will be held by Wages & Sons Funeral Home, 1031 Lawrenceville Highway, Lawrenceville, Ga. on Sunday, July 25, at 2 p.m.

Janet Marie Caple Appalsamy

Janet Marie Caple Appalsamy, 72, passed away Wednesday, July 14, 2021, at home with the family by her side.

She was born Nov. 25, 1948, to the late Harris Caple and Rose Marie Hale Caple. She worked and retired as a hair stylist. She loved the sauna, pool, and being in the sun. She also enjoyed watching the Food Network Channel, NCIS, and Grey's Anatomy. She loved the Lord and was of the Christian faith.

Survivors include her husband, Desmon Appalsamy of the home; three children, Shawn Maddox (D'Anne) of Franklin, N.C., David Maddox (Stacey) of West Palm Beach, Fla., and Michela Caple (Steve Castilla) of Ft. Pierce, Fla.; and three grandchildren, Cash Castilla, Madison Maddox, and Genevieve Maddox.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

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

Dorothy Rogers Gregory

Dorothy Rogers Gregory, 89, went to her Heavenly home on July 10, 2021.

She was born in Macon County to the late John and Addie Miller Rogers. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Patrick "Pat" Gregory; six brothers, Lee, Harley, Carl, Henry, Harrison, and Willis Rogers; three sisters, Valerie Ledford, Blanche Cabe, and Ellen Miller; and a grandson, Robert Dingus.

She worked in the home and loved cooking, sewing, quilting, and crocheting. She always had an instant smile and she loved everyone.

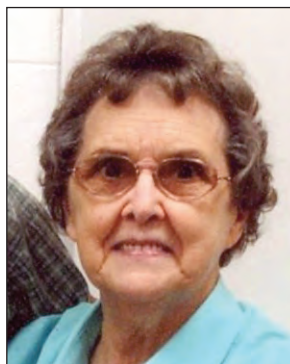
She is survived by her five children, daughter, Phyllis Mason of Franklin, N.C.; sons, Patrick Gregory (Rosa) of Fuquay-Varina, N.C., Darrell Gregory (Connie) of Franklin, Marvin Gregory of Cornelia, Ga., and Shane Gregory (Stacey) of Cleveland, Ga.; sister, Roberta Holt of Dillard, Ga.; five grandchildren, Shelly Marion, Theresa Wolfe, Jessica Meeks, Ashley Sorenson, and Cieara Gregory; and four great grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews also survive.

Graveside services were held Wednesday, July 14, at the Wright Cemetery. Rev. Mark Bishop officiated.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made to Wright Cemetery.

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements for the Gregory family.



Dorothy Rogers Gregory

John Alfred Forest

John Alfred Forest, 92, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on July 12, 2021.

He was born in Rochester, N.Y., to the late Henry and Alice Forest.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, John Alfred Forest Jr. and wife Dorothy Forest.

He was a veteran of the U.S. Army and was a Purple Heart recipient. He was a skilled woodworker and enjoyed football and golf.

He is survived by his children, Kathleen Tucker of Franklin Trudi Freimuth of Franklin, Linda Buso of Houston, Texas, John Forest of Margat, Fla.; and Corey Bytof of San Rafael, Calif.; 12 grandchildren; 22 great grandchildren; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the wounded warrior project at <https://support.woundedwarriorproject.org/>

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral home will be handling the arrangements.



John Alfred Forest

Randall Clifford Downs

Randall (Randy) Clifford Downs, 70, went to heaven July 16, 2021.

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

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve Randy's family.

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



Randall Clifford Downs

Martha Sam Gibson Jamison

Martha Sam Gibson Jamison, 72, went home to be with the Lord Friday, July 16, 2021. She was born in Macon County, North Carolina, on Nov. 8, 1948, to the late Sam Gibson and Mary Jo Fulbright Gibson. She was a graduate of the Franklin High School Class of 1967 and earned a BSED degree in 1971 from Western Carolina University after she completed her student teaching requirements in Honduras. From 1971 until 2003, she taught in the Macon County school system in Highlands, Otto, East Franklin, and Cartoogechaye Elementary.



Martha Jamison

She loved traveling. Her travels included exploring the west and visiting the National Parks in their RV as well as touring, Spain, The Greek Islands, and Greece. Some of her greatest joys came from going saltwater fishing with her husband, playing bridge with her Franklin bridge club, and participating in the neighborhood Birthday Club at their lake home in Townville, S.C.

She was a lifelong member of the Iotla Baptist Church in Franklin, N.C.

Survivors include her husband of 50 years, Bill Jamison; sister-in-law, Robin Jamison Shope (Phil) of Arden, N.C.; brother-in-law, Farrell Jamison of Franklin; best friend, Carol Arnold; and her favorite cousin, Martha Jamison Constance.

A Celebration of Life service will be Saturday, July 24, at 2 p.m., at the First United Methodist Church, Franklin. The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 p.m. prior to the service. A private burial will be held in the Woodlawn Cemetery at a later time.

The family would like to express a special thank you to Dr. Kit Helm; all the doctors and nurses at Angel Medical Center and the Messino Cancer Center of Asheville for all the great care they gave to her during her illness.

Online condolences can be left at bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

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

John Deering Roberts

John Deering Roberts, 78 of Highlands, N.C., passed away Jan. 21, 2021.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday July 24, at 11 a.m., at The Episcopal Church of The Incarnation In Highlands.

More obituaries on page 20

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Deaths & Funerals

Phylliss Rena Garrison

Phylliss Rena Garrison, 37, of Franklin, N.C., passed away July 15, 2021.

She was born in Milledgeville, Ga., to Margie Wilson Garrison and the late Bobby Smith. In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by her stepfather, Bud Garrison; and sister, Jody Lynn Smith.

She was a long-time resident of Macon County. She loved her family and animals.

She is survived by her husband, John Hershel Garrison; children, Johnnie Rena Garrison of the home, and John Hershel Garrison Jr.; mother, Margie Wilson Garrison; and numerous nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue at 851 Lake Emory Rd, Franklin, NC 28734
Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Phylliss Rena Garrison

Laura Arlene Stucky

Laura Arlene Stucky, 63, of Huntsville, Ala., passed away on July 7, 2021, after a brief battle with cancer.

Born on Aug. 22, 1957, in California, she was the third of six siblings. She lived in a variety of places, including Franklin for several years. She loved classic rock, eating raw egg noodles, her pets, her children, and was passionate about art. She was extremely talented in painting with watercolor and acrylic. She enjoyed doing southwestern art and landscape and later dabbled in abstract art.

She also enjoyed hand-making cards for people. She also enjoyed photography, riding her bike, traveling, and spending time with her cat, Caesar.

She is preceded in death by her father, Robert "Bob" Stucky, her mother, Shirley Stucky, her aunt Arlene Bucher Diamond, and her grandson, Maverick Orion.

She is survived by her daughters, Jessica and Shianne; son, Joseph; her sisters, Vickie, Lisa, Kelly and Caryn; and brother, Robert Jr.; two grandchildren, 1 great grandchild, and numerous nieces and nephews.

No services will be held at this time.



Laura Arlene Stucky

Brian 'Boney' Keith McConnell

Brian "Boney" Keith McConnell, 44, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Friday, July 16, 2021, after a period of declining health.

He was born in Sylva, N.C., the first son of Michael Keith and Diane Crisp McConnell. He was a member of Black Mountain Baptist Church. "Boney" as he was affectionately known, was a friend to many. He enjoyed working on his Jeep, riding around with friends, and pulling pranks on anyone he could.

In addition to his parents, Mike and Diane, he is survived by a brother, Chad Douglas McConnell of Franklin; nephew, Preston; and niece, Morgan; and numerous aunts, uncles, and friends.

A Celebration of Life was held Monday, July 19, at Windy Gap Baptist Church. Rev. Mark Bishop officiated.

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

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Brian Keith McConnell

Kenneth 'Ken' Cloyce Giblin

Kenneth "Ken" Cloyce Giblin, 81, of Franklin, N.C., passed away July 18, 2021.

He was born in Detroit, Mich., to the late Cloyce and Gladys Lumley Giblin.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife Nancy; sisters, Shirley Lowry, Mary Wise, both of Florida, Betty Smith of Michigan; and brother, Mike Giblin of Florida.

He was a U.S. veteran and served in Vietnam from 1961-1963. He loved to work on computers as well as wood crafts. His other hobbies included golfing and fishing.

He is survived by numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held at Woodlawn Cemetery in St. Petersburg, Fla., at a later date.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Loren Maurice Long

Loren Maurice Long, 51, passed away on July 9, 2021. Born in Lynchburg, Va., in 1969, he was predeceased by his father, Harold Daniel Long, his mother, Margaret June Brinegar, his stepfather, Patrick Floyd Stanley and his brother, Daniel Conway Long (Wanda).

He is survived by his sisters, Cynthia (Marvin), Lorita (Barry) and Sue (Thomas) as well as his brothers, Rodney (Valerie) and Bryan.

He met his wife, Jane Regan, at Shiloh Bible Institute in Montana. They married at St. John's Episcopal Church in Franklin and had two sons, Matthew Regan and Graham Thomas. After obtaining an Associate's degree in Network Administration from Southwestern Community College, he was employed for 20 years as Chief Technology Officer at Macon Bank and Entegra Bank.

Loren's walk of faith was important in his life, and he studied the Word of God with commitment while encouraging and mentoring others. He enjoyed kayaking, running, karate and tennis, but, above all, he enjoyed his family.

In lieu of flowers, please donate to the Christian Training Center International, 234 Watchman Lane, Franklin, NC 28734.



Loren Maurice Long

Earl Lynn Phillips

Loving and faithful husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, son, friend, and most importantly, child of God, Earl Lynn Phillips departed this world on July 11, 2021, to enter the kingdom of heaven and the presence of the Lord.

To all who knew him, he was a joyful person who caught people off guard with his dry wit and sense of humor. He was a man who loved everyone, who had a gift for recognizing and promoting the potential he saw in others, even when they could not see it themselves. Generous and kind, patient and forgiving, he did not expect of others what he did not expect from himself.

Lynn was a Christ follower and a member of First Alliance Church in Franklin, N.C. He was happiest with hands-on ministry in the church and community, working closely with people to serve their needs as directly as he could. His mountain home was often a retreat for missionaries visiting Franklin from around the world, and it was his pleasure to provide them a place to rest and recharge.

A husband of 57 years to his wife, Pat, and father to his three sons, Lynn took seriously his role as provider and protector, often working quietly behind the scenes to fulfill the desires of his family. As a grandfather, "Pop" cherished each moment shared with his grandchildren – building things in the workshop, riding in his truck, exploring the mountain property, and especially just being together.

He loved woodworking, refinishing furniture, gardening, and spending time with friends and family. He passed his love of music to his children and grandchildren. He loved to plan elaborate trips and to travel. In his later years, he researched family history.

He was born May 19, 1941, in Mena, Ark., to Earl Tildon and Marjorie Galloway Phillips. He graduated from Fort Smith Senior High School in 1959 and served in the Arkansas Air National Guard from 1960 until his honorable discharge in 1966. Starting out with J.C. Penney in the shoe department at age 17, his career included nine moves across six different states until his retirement as store manager in 1998 when he chose to settle in Franklin, his final home of 23 years.

Left with many wonderful memories are his wife, Patricia Cotten Phillips; his sons and their wives, Michael and Suzanne Phillips of Greenville, S.C., Mitchell and Lori Phillips of Marietta, Ga., and Matthew and Libby Phillips of Syracuse, N.Y.; his grandchildren, Doug (Meg), Blake (Caitlyn), Nicholas, Ashley, Josh, Jackson, Samuel, Madie, Landon, Abby, and Austin; his great-granddaughter, Hailey Adelynn; and his siblings, Joyce Gray of Springfield, Mo., and Patsy (Gary) Tuer of Mountain Home, Texas. He was predeceased by his parents; his sister, Brenda Fitting; his in-laws, Bill and Joy Cotten and his sister-in-law, Deborah Harrison.

Burial took place at a private family service on July 14 at Ramsey Creek Preserve in Westminster, S.C.

A public memorial service will be held Thursday, July 22, at 4 p.m., at First Alliance Church-Franklin, NC.

As an expression of sympathy, memorial contributions can be made to the First Alliance Church Great Commission Fund or Samaritan's Purse.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

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

Heinz Ludwig Bressel

Heinz Ludwig Bressel, 93, passed away Saturday, July 17, 2021. He was born April 20, 1928, in Hamburg, Germany. He lived in Franklin for the past 29 years. He worked and retired in the manufacturing of jewelry. He was also an assistant curator at the Franklin Gem and Mineral Museum.

Survivors include his son, Raymond Bressel (Carol) of Rochester, Minn.; a sister, Helga Schmidt (Peter) of Hamburg, Germany; a granddaughter, Lindsey Porter (John) of Rochester, Minn.; and a new great grandchild in the next few weeks.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneral-home.com.

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



Earl Lynn Phillips



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Aric Almirola shakes up playoff standings with unexpected win at New Hampshire

Reid Spencer
NASCAR Wire Service

With a stunning victory in Sunday's Foxwoods Resort Casino 301 at New Hampshire Motor Speedway, Aric Almirola sent shock waves through the NASCAR Cup Series' Playoff standings.

With hard-charging Christopher Bell closing behind him, Almirola crossed the finish line at the 1.058-mile track .657 seconds ahead of the Joe Gibbs Racing driver to win the third race of his career and give Stewart-Haas Racing its first ostensible Playoff berth of the 2021 campaign.

After battling Team Penske teammates Brad Keselowski and Ryan Blaney—who waged their own internecine war shortly after the start of the third stage—Almirola had to hold off Bell to win for the first time this season and for the first time on a track that isn't a superspeedway.

Almirola entered Sunday's event 27th in the Cup standings. Leaving New Hampshire, he's eligible to compete for the series championship, barring the unlikely of circumstances.

"This is by far one of my favorite race tracks," an elated Almirola said after taking the checkered flag. "I love coming up to the New England area and racing. I love this race track. I had this race won a couple of years ago, and I gave it away—I lost it. And I am so glad to win a race here with this race team."

"It's so good, man. We've been through so much, and I just stood the test. Everybody has just been working so hard... There've been so many people who have continued to support us through the crappiest year ever. Man, this feels so good for them. My pit crew did a phenomenal job on pit road. There's no doubt we've struggled, but guess what? We're going Playoff racing."

It helped Almirola's cause that NASCAR cut the race eight laps short of the scheduled 301 circuits because of darkness, a move necessitated by a rain delay that commenced after eight laps had been completed and Kyle Busch's polesitting car had been wrecked beyond repair.

Bell thought an extra eight laps might have made the difference.

"I didn't know how many laps they cut it short, but definitely whenever I saw the board and saw that we were eight laps short, it stings, man, because I feel like I probably had a little bit better pace than him, and I was able to get to him," said Bell, who won Saturday's NASCAR Xfinity Series race at the track.

"I know lapped cars were giving him a bad time, but I was able to get to him, and it was going to be a heck of a race."

Penske teammates Keselowski, Joey Logano and Blaney ran third, fourth and fifth, respectively, with Logano recovering from a two-lap penalty incurred during the rain delay. Nicked for the two circuits when a crewman worked on his car during the red-flag period, Logano used two free passes under caution to his advantage.

Kevin Harvick finished sixth after winning the first stage and leading a race-high 66 laps, the first time since May 9 at



Aric Almirola, driver of the #10 Smithfield Ford, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Foxwoods Resort Casino 301 at New Hampshire Motor Speedway on July 18, 2021 in Loudon, New Hampshire.

Photo by James Gilbert/Getty Images

Darlington the driver of the No. 4 Stewart-Haas Racing Ford had been at the front of the field.

Ford drivers claimed five of the top six finishing positions, with Bell in a Toyota being the only exception. Kyle Larson, Ross Chastain, Alex Bowman and Denny Hamlin completed the top 10.

Almirola's victory set up a battle between Richard Childress Racing teammates Tyler Reddick and Austin Dillon for the 16th and final Playoff berth. Both were comfortably situated in points before the race, but Almirola's win reduced the number of available spots in the postseason from four to three.

Reddick currently leads Dillon by five points for the last Playoff-eligible position with four regular-season events remaining.

On Lap 6, as rain began falling with sudden intensity, frontrunner Kyle Busch spun into the Turn 1 wall, crushing the rear of his No. 18 Toyota. Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Martin Truex Jr. suffered a similar fate on the wet track, damaging the front end and splitter of his No. 19 Camry.

Hamlin spun behind Busch and Truex, making slight contact with the No. 48 Chevrolet of Bowman, but Hamlin had more time to react after witnessing the ill fortune of his JGR teammates and escaped major damage.

NASCAR officials were surprised at how quickly mist turned to hard rain rendered the track too treacherous to continue the race.

"As (race director) Tim Bermann is about to put out the yellow, we look down and (Busch) is already getting loose," said NASCAR executive director and chief racing development officer Steve O'Donnell.

"I've been here a number of years. That's the first time I've seen that in terms of how quickly it came upon us. Certainly mist, we've raced in mist conditions before. The track got slick, obviously, in a hurry, and it was unfortunate what took place."

The wreck eliminated Busch from the race in 37th (last) place. Truex recovered to finish 12th.

Logano suffered corollary damage when debris from the track stuck in the throttle linkage and prevented the throttle from opening fully. Because a crew member began working on the car before the red flag was lifted, Logano incurred the two-lap penalty.

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15. Egyptian falcon-headed deity
16. Top of a steeple
17. *"_____-I-Am"
18. Vernacular
19. *"Walking" spring toy
21. *Purple dinosaur
23. Foot the bill
24. Smidgen
25. *KIDZ _____
28. Like a mattress?
30. Stay clear of
35. *Dumbo's were huge
37. *Arnold Lobel's "Frog and _____"
39. Emotional punishment
40. At the summit of
41. Young hooter
43. Shakespeare's home-town river
44. Increase rpms (2 words)
46. *Pinocchio or Baron Munchausen, e.g.
47. Retired, shortened
48. Soft palate vibrations
50. Bob of the boxing world
52. Bovine hangout
53. Give the cold shoulder
55. Unagi on sushi menu
57. *Place called Sesame
60. *Place for Pong and Pac-Man
63. Semolina source
64. It would
66. Mourning fabric
68. Arterial blood vessel
69. Atlantic catch

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