



Jim Dodd (L) and Rick Norton set up shop in front of Bi-Lo last week to sell raffle tickets on a Ruger 10/22 rifle to raise money for the Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter #994. Other items for sale included bracelets and t-shirts. The drawing for the rifle will be held later this week.
 Photo by Betsy Gooder

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Hunter's Ride benefits Adult & Teen Challenge



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Fringed gentians called the 'nuns of wildflowers'

Previously closed schools open on Plan B; Nantahala shuttered through September 18

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The school year, so far, has not gone as planned. Although the plans were never certain for any one group, there was, in fact, a plan that was implemented to the best of what was deemed reasonable for all involved. This plan included allowing students to attend in-person classes two days per week, with three days being virtual, or to attend virtual classes at home five days per week. Parents and students chose which plan suited their needs better.

On day one of Macon schools re-opening, 60 staff members and 80 students were placed into quarantine due to COVID exposure. That caused a shortage of teachers and the school board was forced to suspend in-person instruc-

tion after only one week, at four schools. That, along with the week during Labor Day, having previously been scheduled to be a remote learning week, in order to re-evaluate the face-to-face learning, forced a three week long closure at Macon Middle School (MMS), Mountain View Intermediate (MVI), Union Academy (UA) and Franklin High School (FHS).

At a called school board meeting held on Thursday, Sept. 10, it was determined that all four schools would be able to reopen for face-to-face instruction starting on Monday, Sept. 14. It was noted that Macon Middle School would still need three substitute teachers for Monday. MMS, MVI, and UA

See **SCHOOLS OPEN** page 2

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NC Student Connect partnership to provide high-speed internet to students, communities

Governor Roy Cooper has announced nearly \$40 million in funding for NC Student Connect, a new partnership created to address internet connectivity gaps that are a barrier to remote learning for many North Carolina students. When school resumed in August, superintendents estimated that at least 100,000 students still lacked a reliable internet connection at home.

Many North Carolina students are currently attending school remotely and need reliable internet access to be able to connect with their teachers and access their lessons. Students who are attending school onsite may also need internet access at home to be able to complete assignments.

"Long before COVID-19, expanding access to high-speed internet has been a top priority for my administration, and this pandemic has made the need even more urgent," said Governor Cooper. "NC Student Connect will make critical investments in high speed internet access and remote learning that will help students, health care and businesses in our state."

The NC Student Connect investment includes:

- \$30 million to distribute 100,000 wireless high speed hot spots for students to connect with their remote learning classes.

- \$8 million to create accessible sites in convenient locations across the state such as school parking lots, municipal areas, and state parks, museums and historic sites. These NC Student Connect sites will provide free high-speed internet for students to connect to the Internet to download lessons and complete assignments offline.

- \$2 million for educator professional development, parent training and student involvement in a spectrum of activities that go into effective remote learning. More than 1,300 educators from rural North Carolina already participated in a virtual conference focused on remote learning to help them be better prepared to teach throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

NC Student Connect is a partnership across state government including the Department of Information Technology (DIT), the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources

(DNCR), Governor Cooper's Hometown Strong initiative and the NC Business Committee for Education (NCBCE), an educational nonprofit in the Governor's Office. These and other agencies have already worked to build partnerships to help leverage public investments to increase internet access in underserved communities. Purchasing began before Labor Day and thousands of hot spots will be shipped to school systems this week and will continue throughout the month.

"This announcement illustrates the state's unwavering commitment in connecting all our students and all of NC," said DIT Acting Secretary Thomas Parrish. "There's no greater action than investing in our children, our future world changers. We are grateful to our private partners, and all those who are assisting in this effort; our tomorrow says thank you."

"As a parent with a child that is remote learning at home, I can testify to the urgent need for devices with high speed connectivity," said DNCR Secretary Susi Hamilton. "As a leader in State government, I can answer the call to help school children by lending them devices through our State Library and add to their learning experience through outdoor and cultural programming that this department offers."

"Today's actions significantly advance Governor Cooper's commitment to quality, accessible high-speed internet for every North Carolina school district. Our Remote Learning Working Group continues to produce meaningful solutions for our most marginalized students. The time is now for bold, innovative, and collaborative solutions that deliver high-speed internet to every North Carolina home," said Jeremy Collins, director of Innovative Connectivity with Hometown Strong.

"Google is proud to work with our state, local, and corporate partners to provide innovative connectivity solutions—such as our Rolling Hotspots program in North Carolina—to help students access Wi-Fi. NCBCE's Remote Learning Working Group is thrilled that the state will invest in the NC Student Connect Program and provide professional development for educators as part of a collective effort to make it possible for more students to engage in school work remotely," said Lily Hester, Head of External Affairs - Southeast, Google, who serves as vice chairwoman of NCBCE and Chairwoman of the NCBCE Remote Learning Working Group.

Initial private sector investments in remote learning and NC Student Connect include, AT&T, Duke Energy Foundation, Fidelity Investments, Google, Smithfield Foundation, Verizon Foundation, and Wells Fargo Foundation.

SCHOOLS OPEN

Continued from page 1

will return to plan B with alternate A, B, schedule, while FHS would still need two more weeks where students went face-to-face only one day per week, in order to determine whether the school will be able to adhere to social distancing guidelines for some 200 students per grade. The board approved the two additional weeks noting that by Sept. 28 or earlier, students would be required to attend FHS two days per week.

Dr. Chris Baldwin, Macon County School Board Superintendent, stated, "Seventy percent of students in North Carolina chose plan 'C'. Plan 'B' is a tremendous challenge but we choose it because it is in the best interest of our students. There is a tremendous amount of pressure implementing plan 'B' but our teachers still choose face-to-face instruction."

Kathy McGaha, director of Macon County Public Health (MCPH), explained how contact tracing can affect a school's ability to remain open.

"As we contact trace positive cases, we contact anyone we feel is at risk of exposure, we interview that individual and based on symptoms and who they were in contact with, did they go to school that day, if there was a positive person in the classroom, they would have to quarantine for 14 days whether their test is negative or positive. They would have up to 14 days to display symptoms. So a negative test could still result in a positive within the 14 days. The goal of contact tracing is to try to diminish the spread of the disease. We hope parents understand that is what our job is," said McGaha.

The need for the quarantine of exposed individuals is the reason for the shortage of staff at the four schools that were closed.

Just after the school board voted to reopen four schools in Franklin, they were notified that a positive case of COVID-19 had been confirmed at Nantahala School. This individual is currently under quarantine. Contact tracing is underway through MCPH. Any student or staff member identified through the contact tracing will be notified. At this time, Nantahala School will be suspending face-to-face instruction through Friday Sept. 18. On Wednesday, a positive case of COVID-19 had been confirmed at Franklin High School. This individual is currently under quarantine. Contact tracing is underway through the Macon County Health Department. Any student or staff member identified through the contact tracing will be notified. Macon County Schools will continue to work closely with the Macon County Public Health Department to monitor these developments.

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Cowee Mountain construction moving along; traffic pattern remains

Cars will continue to cruise on Cowee Mountain.

Traffic will remain its current pattern over the next year while construction crews perform a major operation to stop the top of the mountain from moving.

N.C. Department of Transportation officials have awarded a contract to WNC Paving to complete major repairs to U.S. 441 on Cowee Mountain in Jackson County.

Crews from WNC Paving will shift into the second major phase of repairs that will stabilize the hillside and return the highway to its four-lane formation for many years into the future. This \$6 million project will prevent additional settling on the highway between Pumpkin Town Road and Victory Church Road.

“A section of U.S. 441 has been settling since it was constructed and minor repairs have been made several times over the years,” Division 14 Construction Engineer Ted Adams said. “We determined it best to rip off the Band-Aids and make the necessary long-term repairs.”

Geotechnical engineers analyzed the

area last summer and helped develop a two-phase plan ending with a permanent solution. The first phase included significant drainage repairs, and excavating from under the two northbound lanes before crews built a new wall to stabilize the southbound lanes.

WNC Paving crews have started moving equipment to the work and may begin work as early as next week. As part of the second phase they will rebuild the failed road slope by placing shot-rock as a foundation and build up to a new surface with fresh paint and shiny guardrail. The contract completion date is Aug. 1, 2021.

“Our statewide financial crunch has pushed this work back a few months, so we are excited to get it started,” Adams said. “This is a long, slow, tedious sort of project, and the repairs one that will last for decades.”

Transportation officials remind drivers to slow down in the work zone, obey all posted signs, and merge into one lane as soon as possible.

For real-time travel information, visit DriveNC.gov or follow NCDOT on social media.



State officials are confident that the \$6 million in repairs to the road on Cowee Mountain will last well into the future. The project is slated to be completed Aug. 1, 2021. Photo by Vickie Carpenter

Town approves special use permit for construction of a new Ingles

The Franklin Town Council approved the special use permit for a new Ingles to be constructed in the Holly Springs Plaza, the former site of Walmart.

Representatives with Ingles presented to the town council last week and detailed plans for four big box store spaces, two small retail spaces, and a car wash. The Ingles will also feature a gas station similar to the existing store located on the Georgia Road. According to representatives, tenants are already lined up for the available spaces. The current shopping center is 135,133 square feet and Ingles is proposing building back 179,153 square feet.

The current Unified Development Ordinance calls for 1,026 parking spaces for the square footage but at Ingles' request and after a traffic impact study was complete, the planning board recommended that this requirement be relaxed to allow 584 parking spaces.

The Ingles that is currently open in the Holly Springs Plaza will remain open during construction, however it will be replaced once the new building is completed.

To address traffic flow, Ingles Markets hopes to get approval from the North Carolina Department of Transportation to extend the exit ramp from the Highlands Road to become a turning lane or entrance point for the shopping plaza.

Town Council member Mike Lewis asked Ingles representatives about any potential impact the store and traffic could have on ambulance response times, as the Macon County Emergency Services Base is located next to the store, and Ingles informed the board that no one from the county had attended the neighborhood compatibility meeting or were present during the town hall meeting to voice concern.

Ingles purchased the Holly Springs Plaza property in 2015 for \$3.7 million and beyond confirming the purchase nearly five years ago, the chain has been tight lipped on plans for the future. Ingles opened a Super Ingles on the Georgia Road in the Fall of 2017. In addition to the 72,128 square foot shopping center, the property included 14,800 in additional space for retail shops. Since opening in 2017, those shops have remained vacant.



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Students invited to participate in farm apprenticeship program

The Center for Environmental Farming Systems (CEFS), EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems Food and Farm Apprenticeship Program, is seeking highly-motivated individuals from a variety of different backgrounds to participate in a hands-on work and study apprenticeship program. The apprenticeship program trains participants in many aspects of sustainable agriculture, value-added production, and local food and beverage small business expansion, marketing and business support. Apprenticeship appointments are for 8 – 12 weeks and are located in Jackson, Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Swain, Macon, and Haywood Counties, including the Qualla Boundary of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. All positions require an on-site presence. Those farms offering apprenticeships are:

- Wehrloom Honey (Graham Co.)
- Taylor's Greenhouse (Graham Co.)
- Shaka Alpaca Farm (Cherokee Co.)
- Candy Mountain Farm (Cherokee Co.)
- High Mountain Meadows Farm and Creamery (Clay Co.)
- Three Oaks Farm (Haywood Co.)
- KT Orchards and Apiary (Haywood Co.)

Eligibility

Eligible students include:

- Students enrolled in Southwestern Community College, Tri County Community

College, Haywood Community college curriculum or continuing education programs.

- Students enrolled in Western Carolina University (including rising Freshman).
- Students enrolled in any secondary institution and living in the program region during the apprenticeship period. -

Payment

Apprentices are paid through the NCSU payroll system at a rate of \$12 per hour. Program Overview

During the 8-12 weeks, apprentice will have the opportunity to:

- Immerse oneself in agricultural and value-added production, spending up to twenty hours a week as an integral part of a team.
- Assist business and nonprofits with expanding their marketing and outreach.
- Interact with other apprentices at the various mentor sites.
- Develop production and marketing skills.

For additional information about the EmPOWERing Mountain Food Systems Food & Farm Apprenticeship Program visit:

<https://cefs.ncsu.edu/food-system-initiatives/emfs-empowering-mountain-food-systems/emfs-food-farm-apprenticeship-program/>

To apply now visit: <https://jobs.ncsu.edu/postings/135580>



New system helps I-26 alternate routes

New directional signs from Hendersonville to Asheville sprouted this year as part of an innovative signal system designed to guide drivers around major incidents on Interstate 26.

N.C. Department of Transportation crews installed signs and upgraded signal systems along I-26 alternate routes such as Asheville Highway and Hendersonville Road as part of a new Incident Corridor Management System.

The system was activated for the first time this week.

"We're fortunate to have so many engineers and technicians put so much time and energy into developing a system that will help thousands of people driving the I-26 corridor," said Chad Franklin, Regional Information Traffic System Engineer. "We're happy to use the system for the first time in a non-emergency situation. It's like a dress rehearsal."

Rolling roadblocks with delays up to 30 minutes on I-26 in Henderson County between U.S. 64 and U.S. 25 Business are scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday in the west-bound lanes, and 7 p.m. Wednesday for east-bound lanes. The rolling roadblocks will allow contract crews to safely place girders for a new bridge on Clear Creek Road over I-26.

Asheville Highway will serve as an alternate route on both nights. The new ICM system will provide longer green lights on Asheville Highway, giving drivers the choice to wait on I-26 during the rolling roadblock or to take the alternate route with more green light time.

NCDOT engineers developed the ICM system to direct local, commercial and emergency traffic to alternate routes between



NCDOT is initiating a new system for I-26 alternate routes.

Hendersonville and Asheville in case of an emergency such as an extended closure of I-26 between I-40 and U.S. 64.

Transportation officials in Raleigh or at the Mountain Regional Traffic Management Center can remotely initiate the system in a matter of minutes, activate the digital signs and change signal timing to allow more vehicles through signals along the detour routes.

For example, signals on Hendersonville Road (U.S. 25), Long Shoals Road, Airport Road, Brevard Road, or Haywood Road (N.C. 191) would remain green for an extended time period while side streets remain red longer to allow the detoured traffic to flow better along the alternate route.

"Our traffic and signal teams have put in a lot of time and technical work to design and implement this important system," Franklin said. "We're very fortunate to have this specialized system in Western North Carolina."

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Hunter's Mountain Ride benefits Teen Challenge

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

While the Western North Carolina mountains draw thousands of people every year who drive or cycle highways, byways, and backroads, Hunter's Mountain Ride is intended as more than just a joy ride. The Oct. 3 Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center event that begins at 9 a.m. is an annual memorial, a fundraiser, and an educational opportunity.

In 2016, Tony and Monica Curtis lost their son, Hunter. The native Franklin couple wanted to do something to help stop young adults from losing their lives far too soon. Each year, Hunter's Mountain Ride raises funds for the local Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center scholarship program and the various equipment and campus needs of the facility. Specific current needs include the completion of a cabin and the auditorium's bathrooms.

David Linn, organizer for the fifth annual event, said, "We will be starting Hunter's Mountain Ride at the traditional start location [Macon County Fairgrounds] and cruising the beautiful back roads of Macon County and finishing at the campus of Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center, 336 Living Hope Way [off Highlands Road]. Participants can experience the campus, learn information about the program, and hear various testimonies [from men enrolled in the program]."

Anyone can participate with their cars or their motorcycles. In past events, around 50 vehicles have participated.

"Everyone is encouraged to join us because we all know someone who has been challenged by drugs, lost hope because of drugs, or lost their life because of drugs. We would love to have the support of the citizens of Macon County and Western North Carolina, so polish up that vehicle(s) and join us as we cruise the back roads of Macon County on a nice fall day," said Linn.

Along with the motorcade event, a silent auction will also be held. Linn explained that items will be posted on the Hunter's Mountain Ride Facebook event page and bid-



Hunter Curtis

Hunter's Mountain Ride is held as a fundraiser, memorial and as an educational opportunity in memory of Hunter Curtis who died in 2016 in a drug-related incident.

ding is the day of the event from 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon. At the auction, according to Linn, "will be a TV, grill, shop vac, Craftsman tools, spa items, gift certificates to local businesses, and furniture made by residents at Adult and Teen Challenge Men's Center. Items are still coming in and will be updated regularly on the Facebook event page."

Linn shared that several local businesses donate each year to the fundraising efforts of Hunter's Mountain Ride.

"We are a blessed community that loves to give where love is needed and hope lives. Curtis TV, Holland Construction, Rockin' Rollie Pollies, Holland Car Wash, ACE Hardware, Jennings Building Supplies, Hedden Brothers Well Drilling, Luxury Therapeutics, and Ultimate Trucks are just a few of the many local businesses that give their support. There are many private donors and church donors who help make this annual fundraiser a successful event."

Anyone not participating in the Ride, but who wants to donate to Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center, can give online at www.mtcots.com. Adult & Teen Challenge of the Smokies Men's Center is a faith-based, 12-month residential addiction recovery program.

NEWS BRIEFS

Additional expiration date extension for select DMV credentials; Five credentials impacted

On Sept. 4, Governor Roy Cooper signed Coronavirus Relief Act 3.0. Among its provisions is a new extension of the expiration dates of five DMV credentials. If they have already expired or are about to, their new expiration dates are now 30 days after the governor lifts his state of emergency order related to the COVID Pandemic.

The five credentials impacted are:

- CDL licenses
- CDL permits
- Handicap placards
- State IDs
- Inspection mechanic licenses

That decision granted a one-time, five-month extension of expiration dates between March 1 through July 31.

Election campaign signs can now legally be placed

Next week, drivers will start seeing election signs along state-maintained roads. A state law allows campaign signs to be placed in the right of way of state roads as early as 30 days before the start of early voting.

Restrictions regarding the signs, include:

- Whoever places the signs is required to get permission from any residential, business or religious institution property owner fronting the right of way where a sign would be placed;
- No signs are permitted in the rights of way of a highways with limited access such as an interstate;
- No sign can be closer than three feet from the edge of the pavement;
- No sign can obscure motorist visibility at an intersection.

The North Carolina Department of Transportation has the authority to remove any signs that violate the rules.



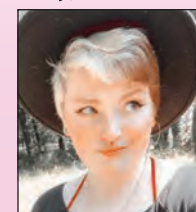
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Retention cited for modest enrollment increase at WCU

For the ninth time out of the past 10 years – and this fall by a small margin – Western Carolina University has experienced an increase in total enrollment, with a new record of 12,243 students enrolled for the 2020 fall semester and an all-time high retention rate.

The modest increase comes despite earlier concerns that WCU might actually see a decrease in enrollment if students decided to postpone their educational plans because of uncertainties related to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on university operations.

The slight uptick in total headcount is the result of increases in the number of continuing undergraduate students, new graduate students and distance education students. Enrollment growth in those areas helped offset COVID-related decreases in the number of new first-time, first-year students and undergraduate transfer students.

“We also are seeing a larger than usual number of applications for the coming spring semester, which I believe indicates that some students have opted to stay on the sidelines this fall to see how things shake out with the pandemic,” said WCU Chancellor Kelli R. Brown.

According to preliminary census data, total enrollment at WCU grew by 0.62 percent this fall semester, up 76 students from last fall’s total of 12,167, which marked the first time in the institution’s history that the number of students enrolled topped 12,000.

WCU also has hit an all-time high in the percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students who have returned for their sophomore year, as 81.57 percent of last year’s freshman class is back in school this fall semester. The previous record retention rate was 80.06 percent.

The number of first-time, first-year students enrolled this fall is 1,780, a drop of 14.5 percent from last year’s tally. Transfer student enrollment dipped by 7 percent this fall to 929.

Among the factors leading to a 1.65 percent increase in graduate student enrollment this fall is a new master’s degree program in experiential and outdoor education, which added 21 students to the rolls, said Brian Kloeppe, dean of Graduate School and Research. “We are also making a jump on next year’s enrollment. For the 2021 spring semester, we already have 521 of our graduate students enrolled, which is up 80 graduate students compared to this point in time for spring 2020,” Kloeppe said.

The enrollment numbers are from official census statistics compiled by WCU’s Office of Institutional Planning and Effectiveness and released late Friday, Aug. 28. Although classes began Monday, Aug. 17, enrollment is not official until after the 10th day of classes, referred to as “census day.”

Book touts character, leadership of ‘Old Abe’

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Author John Cribb told a small audience – due to COVID-19 – Sept. 4 at Hudson Library in Highlands that his Sept. 15-release historical novel, “Old Abe,” was “born in a library.” Formerly with the Department of Justice, the Department of Education, and the National Endowment for the Humanities, Cribb is a history buff who has written nonfiction books. “Old Abe” is his first novel, but it sprang from his meticulous and detailed research of the famous president.

While countless books have been written about President Abraham Lincoln, who came from a humble beginning, steered the country through a devastating Civil War, and then lost his life at age 56 to an assassin’s bullet, Cribb wanted to focus on Lincoln’s unexpected entrance into the highest position in the nation, as well as his character.

“I want people not only to know about him, but know him – now more than ever,” said Cribb. “We are in the throes of an election season at a critical time, but there was another election season 160 years ago that was significant.”

Through “Old Abe,” which begins on May 9, 1860, when a resolution was passed that Lincoln become the Republican Party of Illinois’ choice for the president of the United States, Cribb’s desire is that people understand that the political process more than a century and a half ago involved people talking, debating, and swapping news. Lincoln was not only self-taught regarding basic education, but he rose from a poor, simple upbringing in a log cabin to self-study law, pass the bar, practice law in his own firm, and enter state politics at the age of 23.

Lincoln’s Whig Party collapsed, in part due to the controversy surrounding the Kansas-Nebraska Act, which opened up new territories in the U.S. and the possibility of pro- and anti-slavery laws in those new territories. As a result, Lincoln became a Republican because he believed people should be free, pointed out Cribb. The Democratic party of the 19th century upheld the institution of enslaving individuals.

“Many people don’t realize that the Republican party was founded to combat the evils of slavery,” Cribb explained.

And though Americans today often equate crassness and beligerence with modern politics, the party opposing Lincoln hurled insults via campaign posters and in newspapers.

“They called him ‘Old Ape,’ insinuated he was a mulatto and

thus was not fit to be the leader of the United States, and referred to him as a country bumpkin,” said Cribb.

However, as is the case today with the attention and focus given to presidents, many other people considered Lincoln a “star,” said Cribb, “due to his oration skills, his height, his character, and his presence.” In fact, as he got onto the train in Springfield, Ill., to leave for Washington, D.C., at least 1,000 people showed up to “see him off,” said Cribb.

Another difference in the political process then and now, shared Cribb, is that people campaigned for candidates because it was thought to be “vain” and in poor taste if candidates campaigned for themselves. Candidates also did not vote for themselves.

“Lincoln did not get a single vote in the lower South,” said Cribb, “because they took his name off the ballot. And, the death threats started right away ... letters with drawings of knives and guns or a noose around his neck.”

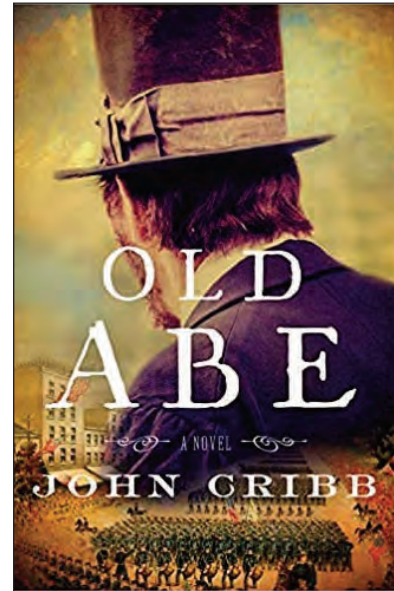
Lincoln was elected as the first Republican president on Nov. 6, 1860, and “immediately faces the greatest crisis of the United States,” said Cribb. “He campaigned on the promise, ‘The Union Must and Shall be Preserved,’ so right away the Southern Democrats, many who were slave holders, were alarmed.”

A little over a month after Lincoln was elected, on Dec. 20, 1860, South Carolina became the first slave state in the South to declare that it had seceded from the United States.

“Lincoln was not just a stiff person in a history book,” said Cribb, who portrays him as playing handball with friends, draping his long legs over the end of a sofa, and sprawling on the grass in a patch of woods. “My hope with ‘Old Abe’ is to bring him alive ... to understand the extreme service he provided to this country, which primarily was to safeguard the founding principles and to free enslaved people.”

Cribb added, “Lincoln’s touchstone was the Declaration of Independence, that everyone has a right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness ... that these principles protect, no matter what’s happening. That’s why he’s so timeless and relevant even for today, because he embodied many traditional American ideals of freedom and equality.”

“Old Abe,” published by Republic Book Publishers, is expected to be available by month’s end at various local bookstores, such as Books Unlimited on Main Street in Franklin and at Shakespeare and Company in Highlands.





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SCC gets renewed grant money for TRiO

The U.S. Department of Education recently awarded Southwestern Community College a \$1.6 million grant in continued funding for the TRiO Student Support Services (SSS) program.

Since first receiving the grant in 1990, SCC's program has served more than 2,000 students - significantly boosting SCC's graduation and transfer rates.

This grant will fund the program for an additional five years.

"We're extremely grateful that the U.S. Department of Education will continue funding this program, which has touched and continues to touch the lives of so many students," said SCC President Dr. Don Tomas. "The amount of academic, financial and personal development resources provided by SSS is invaluable to such a significant population of our students. During these times, our students need all the support we can provide, and this is a key part of that support."

Led by Dominique Barwatt, SCC's Student Support Services program serves eligible students who are either first-generation college students, meet income eligibility criteria or have a documented disability.

Students in the program have access to academic advising and free tutoring, supplemental grant aid and scholarships, assistance transferring to four-year institutions including campus visits, career counseling, personal enrichment programs including outdoor adventure activities and community service opportunities, and other support necessary for educational access, retention and completion.

"We are so lucky to work with our students beginning at



The Student Support Services (SSS) program at SCC will continue providing academic, financial and professional services to students through the recently renewed U.S. Department of Education grant. Pictured are the SSS staff, from left: Cheryl Contino-Conner, Dean of Students; Jennie Ashlock, Health Sciences Academic Advisor; Dominique Barwatt, Director of Student Support Services; Mary Lockey, Intake Coordinator/College Transfer Advisor for Student Support Services.

orientation and through their time at SCC, making sure they walk across the stage at graduation," said Barwatt. "Through these well-designed resources that are backed by the most dedicated employees, we get to build strong relationships with our students to support them academically and professionally. Facing the challenges of COVID-19, these relationships are more important than ever."

For more information about SCC's Student Support Services program, visit southwesterncc.edu/ssc or call 828-339-4420.

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Small Business Center offers free counseling to small businesses impacted by COVID-19

Southwestern Community College is open and ready to support local businesses as they persevere and adapt in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

In direct response to the current economic crisis, North Carolina's General Assembly passed House Bill 1043, providing additional funding to the Small Business Center Network to use toward expanded counseling and access to subject matter experts for businesses negatively impacted by the pandemic.

Through the Reboot, Recover, Rebuild (R3) Program, SCC's Small Business Center will offer expanded counseling opportunities in more than 40 different categories that are uniquely suited for small businesses in Jackson, Macon, Swain Counties and the Qualla Boundary.

Many local businesses are currently experiencing challenges managing employees, understanding their Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), diversifying revenue streams and marketing their services in a constantly changing consumer landscape.

The R3 program is paying industry professionals to help businesses owners with topics such as: developing marketing plans, strategies for scaling business operations, loan package preparation, review of financial obligations and communication with creditors, website development, digital marketing and more.

"Small businesses owners are feeling burnt out and overwhelmed right now. They don't need someone to tell them what to do; they need someone to actually help them do it. That's what this program is about. We are paying professionals to help you build your website, to clean up your QuickBooks or to create your social media campaigns," said



Tiffany Henry, Director of the Small Business Center at SCC, connects area small businesses with free COVID-19 support resources through the recently launched R3 Program.

Tiffany Henry, Director of SCC's Small Business Center. "Whatever you may need help with, we've got you covered and we're doing it for free. We are here to help our local businesses pivot into a 'new norm,' sustain their business and retain their workforce."

Interested businesses are encouraged to apply for the program by visiting southwesterncc.edu/sbc. For more info. For more info, email Henry at t_henry@southwesterncc.edu. Participants will work confidentially with an expert one-on-one.

What to know about canceling credit cards

Closing a rarely used credit card may sound like a good idea, but it's not as simple as some people may think.

"Many don't realize that closing a credit card can negatively impact their credit scores in the short term," said Michael Sullivan, a personal financial consultant with Take Charge America, a national nonprofit credit counseling and debt management agency. "That said, sometimes it may be worth taking the hit to your credit score — especially if it means saving yourself from overspending and falling deeper into debt."

Sullivan offers several tips to help consumers determine whether closing a credit card is the right move:

When to close a credit card

- **Tempted to spend:** If you have a hard time controlling your spending, closing the account may be your best option to avoid the temptation.
- **Card fees:** If a card has high annual fees, consider paying off the balance and canceling it. You can also transfer the remaining balance to a credit card with better interest and fees. Remember, though, there may be a balance transfer fee.
- **Fraud alert:** If your credit card is compromised and freezing the account won't protect you from fraud, consider canceling the card.
- **Splitting up:** If a joint account needs to be separated, as in a divorce, canceling makes sense.
- **Balance transfer:** If you transferred a balance to a lower-interest card, consider closing the higher-interest account,

unless it's been open for more than three years. However, if you have a longer history with the card, or if there's a cancellation penalty, just put it away or cut it up.

When not to close a credit card

- **Rarely used:** Canceling a rarely used card can hurt your debt-to-credit ratio and drop your credit score. To remove the temptation to spend, consider cutting or storing the card without closing the account.
- **Making payments:** Whether an account is open or closed, finance charges accrue when there's a balance on the card. Paying down the balance improves your debt-to-credit ratio but only if the account is open.
- **Shopping for a loan:** Looking to purchase a house or a car in the next year? Canceling a card can impact your credit score and prevent you from qualifying for good terms and interest rate on a loan.

Consumers who are overwhelmed by debt or struggling to pay bills may find guidance with a free online credit counseling session.

About Take Charge America, Inc.

Founded in 1987, Take Charge America, Inc. is a nonprofit agency offering financial education and counseling services including credit counseling, debt management, student loan counseling, housing counseling and bankruptcy counseling. It has helped nearly 2 million consumers nationwide manage their personal finances and debts. To learn more, visit www.takechargeamerica.org or call (888) 822-9193.

Jackson County a good place to start a business

Jackson County and the unincorporated community of Cullowhee surrounding Western Carolina University have been ranked as the nation's second most economically dynamic "micropolitan area" of 50 profiled in a report by the Heartland Forward, an institute for economic development.

A micropolitan area is designated by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget as one or more adjacent counties that have at least one urban core area between 10,000 and 50,000 in population, with adjacent territory having a high degree of social and economic integration with the core. The Cullowhee micropolitan statistical area reaches beyond the immediate location of the WCU campus to include all of Jackson County.

The second place ranking is noteworthy, said Arthur Salido, WCU's executive director of economic development and regional partnerships, especially when considering the other, better known micropolitan areas on the list, such as Bozeman, Mont.; Breckenridge, Color.; and Jackson Hole, Wyo.

"WCU plays an important part in regional economic development primarily through the work of faculty and students who partner with organizations and individuals in a variety of ways, such as through internships, applied research, capstone projects, economic impact studies and market analyses, external funding opportunities and consulting," Salido said. "Our faculty and students provide the talent and innovation needed in Western North Carolina and across the state. Our impacts are being recognized nationally in this latest Heartland Forward report."

The rankings, made by Jonas Crews, Ross DeVol, Richard Florida and Dave Shideler for the institute, were derived from metrics that reflect factors such as job growth, wage and income gains, and the proportion of total jobs at "young firms" – the ratio of employment at firms five years or younger.

In an executive summary, the authors stated "the key to long-term economic success lies in developing environments that are conducive for entrepreneurs to start and scale up their firms. Communities must take a holistic approach to build their entrepreneurial ecosystems, and they must be inclusive. It is the ability to connect and engage the elements of an ecosystem as efficiently as possible to maximize job creation. Young firms and the entrepreneurial ecosystems that spawned and nurtured them determine the economic destiny of communities."

Nick Breedlove, executive director of the Jackson County TDA, agreed with that assessment.

"The same traits that make Jackson County an attractive place to live, play and work make it the ideal location to start or expand a business," Breedlove said. "With access to a world-class fiber-optic network and the necessary infrastructure in place, it's clear why Heartland Forward named Jackson County to its 'Top 50' list. Employers rely on the quality of life in our community to grow and attract workers, and that quality of life is unparalleled. Jackson County is within minutes of the Blue Ridge Parkway and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. With a low cost of living and the ability to be a day's drive from half of the U.S. population, it makes sense to locate a business in Jackson County."

Cullowhee and Jackson County were ranked as the nation's 13th most economically dynamic "micropolitan area" in a similar report released last year by the Walton Family Foundation.

WCU's community and economic engagement and innovation efforts create partnerships that link university, non-profit, government and industry resources to address regional and economic development needs primarily in the 16 westernmost counties served by WCU through its Cullowhee campus, Cherokee Center and Asheville area instructional site at Biltmore Park.

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor - Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

The September meeting of the Highlands Town Board is tonight [Thursday] at 7 p.m. It is a hybrid meeting so to speak in that it will be both a ZOOM and in person meeting. The ZOOM log on information is posted on the town website.

Along with several commissioners, I will meet in person at the Highlands Conference Center where we will also ZOOM. The public can join us at the Highlands Conference Center so long as masks are worn and social distancing practiced.

We have a full agenda for the meeting. The first item will be a public hearing for rezoning the recently purchased property on US 64 for the new fire department. The rezone will be to change the current B-3 designation to GI which is governmental/institutional. We will also review of the fire department construction bids. Our construction representative has bids from subcontractors for all phases of construction. The board will review these bids and the guaranteed maximum price for the new facility.

The board will also review the final subdivision plat for the Bearmor Subdivision on Big Bear Pen Road. Town engineer will make a report on the status of the project and his recommendation.

A major agenda item will be the Highlands Cashiers Hospital request for water and sewer for workforce housing. Tom Neal made an initial presentation at the August board meeting. Further details will be presented followed by what I anticipate will be a lengthy discussion. A board decision could come at the end of this review.

Our recreation director, Lester Norris, will be reviewing several items including opening the ice skating rink. Lester will also present a proposal to convert two tennis courts to six pickle ball courts. Two newly resurfaced tennis courts would remain.

Kaye McHan of the Highlands Chamber of Commerce will update the board on impending community events sponsored by the chamber. The status of the Halloween event, the town lighting and the Christmas parade will be reviewed.

I have been gratified to see several community events move forward by modifying operational procedures. The recent art show is a prime example. We have the Dahlia Festival this weekend, where flowers will be displayed throughout the community.

The Highlands Motoring Festival had to cancel their show in June, but developed a limited but very successful car event this past weekend. Car enthusiasts participated in tours around the plateau. I had the honor of welcoming participants on Friday morning. To support the nonprofits that the car show normally benefits, please go the Highlands Motoring Festival website and make a contribution as I did before welcoming participants.

Letters to the Editor

Locals are the ones trashing their own backyards

I wish to thank Mr. James Wright for his letter of solutions offered for roadside debris in this paper of Sept. 10, 2020. I wish to offer the following which will somewhat disagree with his opinion of offenders of road side trash. I live on a road in this county which is highly traveled but traveled by locals only. Visitors to this road do not travel here much. I know when there is a home on our road being worked on as the trash increases greatly in volume, which I am out picking up daily. You see, it is the locals throwing the trash out of their vehicles and it is not our visitors. Until the people living in this beautiful county decide to stop trashing their own backyards there is no solution. And until this happens it takes people like me and others who pick up their trash which they can not seem to wait to throw away until they arrive home or a local trash can. And to make a further point, there are many local trash cans.

Cindy Wilson – Franklin, N.C.

Not a witness to the good work of DOT

In response to G.G. Puckett's editorial:

Concerning DOT, I have had a blocked culvert for over a year. The water overflows and makes my driveway a river. I have called, begged, and showed up in person. They are located three miles from the problem. There was a bump on Hwy. 28 end of bridge, they worked on it and instead of being concave it became a speed bump. So still a bump up instead of down. Also, as you stated the garbage is deplorable.

My other concern is the no connection between the greenway. So one must cross four lanes of traffic, as a temporary solution could someone not put up a crosswalk as in front of brewery and on Main Street, stating traffic to stop even a gallon of white paint would do the job.

In response to James O. Wright's editorial, does he know there is a four-year contract for adapting a highway and stretch of two miles?

I wrote headquarters of DOT many times, and they did respond but the job they did left me wondering. How about the ramps on new bridge that had to be jackhammered up while they waited in their trucks for hours for the concrete? I know there are different divisions and some good probably comes of it. I just have not witnessed it yet.

Mr. Puckett and I are not the only ones that have written about garbage. It is quite a regular subject.

J. Williams – Franklin, N.C.

Belongings returned; case closed

Thank you for returning my belongings and as a person of my word, nothing else will be said or done.

Pam Battles – Franklin, N.C.

The Macon County News letters page is a public forum open to a wide variety of opinions. Letters are neither accepted nor rejected on the basis of the opinions expressed. Writers are asked to refrain from personal attacks against individuals or businesses. Letters are not necessarily reflective of the opinions of the publisher, editor or staff of The Macon County News.

Voter information for November 3 General Election

Absentee ballots requests Sept. 4 - Oct. 27

An N.C. state absentee request must be completed and returned to the Macon Board of Elections in order to receive an absentee by mail ballot. Request forms at www.maconnc.org or www.ncsbe.gov or by calling (828)349-2034 or email Macon.boe@ncsbe.gov.

Voter Registration Deadline Friday, October 9 at 5 p.m.

Name, address and party changes MUST be returned to County Board of Elections by Oct. 9 at 5 p.m. Same day registration is possible only during one-stop voting.

One-Stop Voting - Franklin October 15 - October 31

Robert C. Carpenter Community Building
Hours Mon-Fri, 8-7:30;
Saturdays, Oct. 17, 24, 8-6; Oct. 31, 8-3

One-Stop Voting - Highlands October 15- October 31

Highlands Civic Center, 600 N 4th St.
Hours Mon-Fri, 8-7:30;
Saturdays, Oct. 17, 24, 8-6; Oct. 31, 8-3

General Election Day Tuesday, November 6

Voters will cast ballots at registered polling location.
Polls open 6:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Contact the Macon County Board of Elections at (828)349-2034 or visit www.maconnc.org/elections.

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Since 9/11, government's answer to every problem is more government

John W. Whitehead
Columnist

“A government big enough to give you everything you want is a government big enough to take away everything that you have.”—Anonymous

Have you noticed that the government's answer to every problem is more government—at taxpayer expense—and less individual liberty?

The Great Depression. The World Wars. The 9/11 terror attacks. The COVID-19 pandemic.

Every crisis—manufactured or otherwise—since the nation's early beginnings has become a make-work opportunity for the government to expand its reach and its power at taxpayer expense while limiting our freedoms at every turn.

Indeed, the history of the United States is a testament to the old adage that liberty decreases as government (and government bureaucracy) grows.

To the police state, this COVID-19 pandemic has been a huge boon, like winning the biggest jackpot in the lottery. Certainly, it will prove to be a windfall for those who profit from government expenditures and expansions.

Given the rate at which the government has been devising new ways to spend our money and establish itself as the “solution” to all of our worldly problems, this current crisis will most likely end up ushering in the largest expansion of government power since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

This is how the emergency state operates, after all.

From 9/11 to COVID-19, “we the people” have acted the part of the helpless, gullible victims desperately in need of the government to save us from whatever danger threatens. In turn, the government has been all too accommodating and eager while also expanding its power and authority in the so-called name of national security.

When it comes to the power players that call the shots, there is no end to their voracious appetite for more: more money, more power, more control.

This expansion of government power is also increasing our federal debt in unprecedented leaps and bounds. Yet the government isn't just borrowing outrageous amounts of money to



John Whitehead

keep the country afloat. It's also borrowing indecent sums to pay for programs it can't afford.

The government's primary response to this COVID-19 pandemic—flooding the market with borrowed money in the amount of trillions of dollars for stimulus payments, unemployment insurance expansions, and loans to prop up small businesses and to keep big companies afloat—has pushed the country even deeper in debt.

By “the country,” I really mean the taxpayers. And by “the taxpayers,” it's really future generations who will be shackled to debt loads they may never be able to pay back.

This is how you impoverish the future.

Democrats and Republicans alike have done this.

Without fail, every president within the last 50 years has expanded the nation's debt. Despite President Trump's pledge to drain the swamp and eliminate the debt, the federal debt is now approaching \$27 trillion and is on track to surpass \$78 trillion by 2028. Just the interest that must be paid on the national debt every year is \$338 billion and growing.

At some point, something's got to give.

Unfortunately, despite the tax burden “we the people” are made to bear, we have no real say in how the government runs, or how our taxpayer funds are used, but we're being forced to pay through the nose, anyhow.

We have no real say, but that doesn't prevent the government from fleecing us at every turn and forcing us to pay for endless wars that do more to fund the military industrial complex than protect us, pork barrel projects that produce little to nothing, and a police state that serves only to imprison us within its walls.

All the while the government continues to do whatever it wants—levy taxes, rack up debt, spend outrageously and irresponsibly—with little thought for the plight of its citizens.

This brings me to a curious point: what the future will look like 10 years from now, when the federal debt is expected to surpass \$78 trillion, an unsustainable level of debt that will result in unprecedented economic hardship for anyone that does not belong to the wealthy elite.

Interestingly enough, that timeline coincides with the government's vision of the future as depicted in a Pentagon training video created by the Army for U.S. Special Operations Command.

According to the video, the government is anticipating trouble (read: civil unrest), which is code for anything that chal-

lenges the government's authority, wealth and power, and is grooming its armed forces (including its heavily armed federal agents) accordingly to solve future domestic political and social problems.

The training video, titled “Megacities: Urban Future, the Emerging Complexity,” is only five minutes long, but it provides a chilling glimpse of what the government expects the world to look like in 2030, a world bedeviled by “criminal networks,” “substandard infrastructure,” “religious and ethnic tensions,” “impoverishment, slums,” “open landfills, over-burdened sewers,” a “growing mass of unemployed,” and an urban landscape in which the prosperous economic elite must be protected from the impoverishment of the have nots.

Funny how closely fact tracks fiction these days.

Just recently, in fact, I re-watched “Escape from L.A.,” John Carpenter's 1996 post-apocalyptic action film that imagines a future (2013, in fact) in which the United States has elected a president for life who runs the country according to his own theocratic moral law. Anyone who runs afoul of the president's moral laws is stripped of their citizenship and either electrocuted or deported to the island of Los Angeles, a penal colony where lawlessness reigns supreme.

Carpenter is a brilliant filmmaker whose dystopian visions of the future are eerily prescient, but this film is particularly unnerving: environmental disasters; engineered viruses used like weapons to control the masses; riots and looting that leave the populace longing for law and order; religion used like a weapon; martial law; surveillance that keeps every citizen under the government's watchful eye; and a growing awareness that the only path to freedom left for humanity is to shut down the government and start over again.

We're almost there now.

Unless we make some effort to reject the sorry excuse for representative government that we have been saddled with, the future that awaits us—whether it's the future envisioned by the Pentagon in its training video or the future imagined by Carpenter—will be a living nightmare from which there is no escape.

John Whitehead is an attorney and author who has written, debated and practiced widely in the area of constitutional law, human rights and popular culture. He established The Rutherford Institute, a nonprofit civil liberties and human rights organization located in Charlottesville, Va. More information can be found at rutherford.org.

Applications open for \$32 million in special GREAT grant funding to expand internet access to rural areas

Internet service providers and electric membership cooperatives can now apply for \$32 million in grant funding to help bring high-speed internet access to rural North Carolina.

Governor Roy Cooper signed House Bill 1105 into law, allocating more than \$32 million for rural broadband expansion from the Coronavirus Relief Fund created by the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act of 2020. The North Carolina Department of Information Technology's (NCDIT) Broadband Infrastructure Office (BIO) will review applications and assign the funding through the Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant program.

“Internet is no longer optional. The pandemic has highlighted the digital divide in our state, underscoring how critical it is for all North Carolinians to have reliable high-speed internet to work, learn and connect,” Acting NCDIT Secretary and State Chief Information Officer Thomas Parrish said. “These supplemental grants will help expand access to thousands of residents and businesses in rural areas that need it most.”

Applications for this 2020 Special Supplementary Growing Rural Economies with Access to Technology (GREAT) Grant

round will be accepted through Oct. 14.

Projects in Tier 1 and Tier 2 counties as well as rural census tracts located in Tier 3 areas currently being served by less than 25 megabytes per second download and 3 megabytes per second upload speeds are eligible for this 2020 Special Supplementary GREAT Grant round.

“We want to ensure that North Carolinians are not put in this position again,” BIO Director Jeff Sural said. “These projects will provide much-needed, long-term investments to expand broadband infrastructure and extend access high-speed service to residents in rural areas.”

Since the GREAT grant program launched in 2018, the state has invested nearly \$26 million in 26 Tier 1 counties, connecting more than 21,000 households, businesses and agricultural operations to high-speed internet. The state funding has been matched by more than \$20 million in private investment. The program will expand to include 98 counties for this upcoming grant cycle.

Information on how to apply can be found at <https://www.ncbroadband.gov/grants/great-grant>.

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City Lights hosts virtual discussion with authors

City Lights is hosting a virtual discussion with George Singleton to celebrate the release of his new book, "You Want More: Selected Stories of George Singleton" Wednesday, Sept. 23, at 6 p.m. He will be joined by Jeremy Jones, author of "Bearwallow." With his signature darkly acerbic and sharp-witted humor, George Singleton has built a reputation as one of the most astute and wise observers of the South. Now Tom Franklin introduces this master of the form with a compilation of acclaimed and prize-winning short fiction spanning 20 years and eight collections, including stories originally published in outlets like the *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Playboy*, *The Georgia Review*, *The Southern Review*, and many more.

To reserve a spot on the Zoom event, contact City Lights Bookstore at (828)586-9499 or by email more@citylightsnc.com

Virtual event on Native American health issues

Western Carolina University's Culturally-Based Native Health Program will hold a free webinar on Native American and indigenous peoples' health issues Thursday, Sept. 24, as a lead-up event for the rescheduled Rooted in the Mountains symposium.

The event will be streamed live from noon to 1:30 p.m. with the theme "Ama: The Sacredness of Water." A panel will feature Lisa J. Lefler, program director; Tom Belt, former Cherokee language instructor at WCU; and Jerry R. Miller, professor in the Department of Geosciences and Natural Resources.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual symposium has been moved to April 8, 2021.

Lefler, associate professor at WCU and an applied medical anthropologist, has worked with numerous tribal communities, including the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Kiowa and Apache. She organizes workshops to bring tribal elders into a worldview, to create positive shifts in the approach to health, wellness and environmental concerns.

Belt, retired coordinator of WCU's program in Cherokee language, is a citizen of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma and has lectured at the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, Purdue, Yale, University of Pennsylvania and Stanford. Belt serves a consultant for the Center of Native Health and the Smithsonian Institution's Native Culture and Health Workgroup.

The Whitmire Distinguished Professor of Environmental Science at WCU, Miller has more than 25 years of experience in the fields of geomorphology and environmental geology. He has published the results of his research in more than 65 referred articles and has co-authored six books including "Process Geomorphology and Contaminated Rivers: A Geomorphological and Geochemical Approach to Site Assessment." He and his colleagues have received more \$3.5 million in external funding for their research.

Registration links for the webinar and rescheduled Rooted in the Mountains symposium at <https://www.wcu.edu/experience/conference-services/rooted-in-the-mountains.aspx>.

Group keeping music alive in Franklin



A new organization called Macon Music is going to be doing all sorts of things around Franklin related to music. The group is currently under production of a new album with local songwriters produced by Dave Stewart, along with other Macon Music members, Warren Drake, and Frank Smith. The group gets together with other musicians Sunday afternoons at 3 p.m. at the Big Bear shelter on the Greenway. Macon Music is also involved in a new music store in town (bottom photos) with Ronda and Warren Drake called "Sonny's Music Lounge" (named for the late Sonny Curtis who was Ronda's step-father). Curtis played with George Jones and Tammy Wynette and more than 60 other famous musicians over his 60-year music career.



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Sock Hops to give outdoor concert Friday

The Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts welcomes The Sock Hops, an oldies group known for singing beautiful four-part harmonies of memorable songs from the '50s, '60s, and '70s, on Friday, Sept. 18. Showtime is set for 7:30 p.m. This special drive-in concert will accommodate a limited number of vehicles and will take place in the theater's parking lot. A designated social-distancing area where patrons can sit in their personal lawn chairs will also be accessible near the elevated stage. Tickets can be pre-purchased for \$18 per person.

Having had the privilege of opening concert appearances for The Temptations, Frankie Avalon, The Rascals, and many other great artists, The Sock Hops are no strangers to the stage, nor are they strangers to the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. This will be their eighth time performing at the theater. Previous showgoers enjoyed performances of hits including, "Why Do Fools Fall in Love," "At The Hop," "Sherry," and "The Lion Sleeps Tonight."

The Sock Hops recently celebrated their 30th anniversary as Georgia's premiere oldies entertainment group. The group provides fun and memorable experiences everywhere they go. Members of the group include Courtney Oliver, Scott Cruce, Ward Hiss, and Jim Mitchell. Oliver formed The Sock Hops in 1989. His heartfelt interpretation of Louis Armstrong's, "What A Wonderful World," often brings a crowd to its feet. Cruce has an incredible tenor range which makes him the perfect fit as lead vocal on hits made famous by The Eagles and The Four Seasons. Hiss adds a signature



The Sock Hops celebrated their 30th anniversary this year. Formed in 1989, the quartet has earned wide acclaim by performing memorable songs from the '50s, '60s and '70s. Members of the group include Courtney Oliver, Scott Cruce, Ward Hiss and Jim Mitchell. Tickets to hear the Sock Hops may be purchased at greatmountainmusic.com or by calling (866)273-4615.

baritone sound that holds the group's complex harmonies together and makes him the perfect lead vocal on songs like, "Margaritaville." And with a powerful bass sound in songs such as, "Blue Moon," and "Sweet Caroline," Mitchell's voice offers the perfect touch to many fan favorites.

Showgoers will tune into an FM frequency that will transmit the concert into individual vehicles so everyone will enjoy a full drive-in concert experience. Carhop refreshments will be available for cash purchases only. Restroom facilities will also be available. Any changes due to inclement weather will be posted on the theater's website. To purchase tickets to see The Sock Hops, who are always a crowd pleaser, or to find out more information about this or any other show at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts, visit GreatMountainMusic.com or call (866) 273-4615.

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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 August 31 - September 13. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

September 4

Marty William Rogers, was charged with possession of weapon of mass destruction. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Nathan Shane Humphries, was charged with breaking and entering, larceny, injury to personal property. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Richard Mark Ellis, was charged with simple assault and battery. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

April Lee Ensley, was charged with simple assault and battery. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

September 5

Tyler Kaiea James Bateman, was charged with failure to appear. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Alexandria Rae Anglin, was charged with breaking and entering, domestic criminal trespass, communicating threats, injury to personal property, assault with a deadly weapon, assault with a deadly weapon with a minor present. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

Derald Fredrick Queen, was charged with all other offenses. Michael R. Hollifield made the arrest.

Robert Ryan Oteri, was issued warrant service for offenses committed in jurisdiction. Michael R. Hollifield made the arrest.

Amando Thomas Virata, was charged with drug/narcotic violations.

Joshua Lawrence Burr, was charged with possession of heroin.

September 6

John Paul McCall, was charged with felony larceny, possession of stolen goods/property. Brent C. Ledford made the arrest.

September 8

James Brooks Ramsey, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

September 9

Jeffery Paul Hooper, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Richard Austin Dyer-Cook, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

September 10

Britni Moore Pinkham, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. Nick Loft-house made the arrest.

Chandler Reed Stanley, was charged with possession of heroin, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a firearm by a felon, possession of altered gun serial number. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

September 11

Michael Joseph Monteith, was charged with failure to appear for aid and abet, driving while license revoked impaired revocation. Jay Wright made the arrest.

Kenneth Judson Gibson, was charged with larceny, possession of stolen goods/property.

Marcus Cody Waldroup, was charged with maintaining a

place for a controlled substances, breaking and entering, fictitious information to an officer, resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Jesse Mal Cowart, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of stolen firearm, possession of drug paraphernalia, larceny of a firearm, possession of firearm by a felon. Jonathan C. Bean made the arrest.

September 12

Donovan Bruce Britton, was charged with driving under the influence. Troy L. Burt made the arrest.

Santiago Garcia Morales, was charged with driving while impaired. Joel Lynch made the arrest.

September 13

Jarol Bonilla, was charged with driving under the influence. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

September 3

Samuel Ray, 38, of Franklin, was issued an order for arrest for driving while impaired, probation violation, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a schedule II controlled substance. Officer Dula made the arrest.

Melissa Lynn Pruett, 35, of Old Murphy Rd., was charged with possession of a schedule IV controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine, aid and abet driving while license revoked, possession of drug paraphernalia. An unsecured bond of \$800 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

September 5

Joshua Henry Dale Driver, 27, of Franklin, was charged with all other larceny. A secure bond of \$1,000 was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

September 6

Garrett Charles Sanders, 21, of Snow Hill Rd., was charged with injury to personal property, resisting a public officer, second degree trespass, drunk and disorderly, assault on a government official. A secured bond of \$3,200 was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

September 7

Justin Gregory Dorsey, 31, of Murphy Rd., was issued a extradition warrant for smuggling contraband, speeding 71 in 55 mph zone, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of marijuana. A secured bond of \$5,500 was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

September 10

Marshal Payne Balding, 19, of Stewart St., was charged with breaking and entering. An unsecured bond of \$2,000 was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

Stacy Lynn Burton, 37, of Franklin, was charged with all other offenses. An unsecured bond of \$2,000 was set. Sgt. Norman and Sgt. Beegle made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

August 31

Christian Charles Thomas, 28, of Larkspur Lane College Park, Fulton, Ga., was charged with assault on a female, simple assault, possession of schedule I controlled substance. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Joshua Eugene Bailey, 37, of Dillsboro Rd., was charged with out of state fugitive. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Daryl Lynn Bryson, 54, of Millcreek Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, attempted larceny of property or goods, larceny of property or goods value less than \$1,000, misdemeanor larceny. An unsecured bond of \$3,000 was set.

September 1

Taylor Norman Taylor, 20, of Rec Park Rd., Cherokee, was

charged with interfering with emergency communications, assault on a female. No bond was set.

Diamond Spring Wolfe, 25, of Phillip Owle SR Rd., Whittier, was charged with felony probation violation. No bond was set.

James Tanner Barron, 23, of Grogan Rd., Woodruff, S.C., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a schedule II controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond was set.

Quenten Carrie Riggs, 24, of Pyramid Place, was charged with possession of a firearm by a felon, possession of stolen firearm, larceny of a firearm. A secured bond of \$15,000 was set.

September 2

Joshua Clifford Marks, 41, of Nutmug Lane, was charged with assault on a female, communicating threats. No bond was set.

Jess Harvey Cagle, 47, of Winesap Dr., was charged with injury to trees/crops/lands, drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$3,500 was set.

Amber Nicole Simon, 26, of Cullowhee, was charged with resist/obstruct/delay, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine, injury to real property, defacing public building, conspiracy, burning a bridge, fire station, rescue squad building etc. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

September 3

Brandon Alan Hanson, 28, of Houghton Williams Rd., Franklin, was charged with resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Orlando Mendoz Muniz, 19, of Crane Rd., Tuckaseegee, was charged with injury to real property, defacing a public building, felony conspiracy, burning a bridge, fire station, rescue squad building etc.. A secured bond of \$25,000 was set.

Kala Marie Bueno, 28, of Walnut Cove Rd., Tuckaseegee, was charged with injury to real property, defacing public building, felony conspiracy, burning a bridge, fire station, rescue squad building etc. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

Kenobio Mendoza Mendoza, 32, of Wesleyan Church Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with injury to real property, felony conspiracy, burning a bridge, fire station, rescue squad building etc. A secured bond of \$25,000 was set.

Edge Dakota Fortner, 30, of Birchfield Rd., Bryson City, was charged with failure to appear for possession of stolen motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Rashonda Lashae Bradley, 32, of Bryson City, was charged with failure to appear for possession of a stolen vehicle. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Hilaria Ano Moreno, 45, of Spark Rd., was charged with simple assault. An unsecured bond was set.

Carla Suzanne Moore, 41, of Mill Creek, Robbinsville, was charged with simple possession of a schedule III controlled substance. No bond was set.

September 4

Amari Marquise Rashadeen, 21, of Amberly Lane, Charlotte, was charged with failure to appear for violation of court order. A secured bond of \$200 was set.

Steven Joseph Howell Smith, 24, of Raintree Dr., Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Scott Edward Everhart, 25, of Charles Pheasant Rd., Cherokee, was issued an order for arrest for possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

September 5

Jaylan Ishmal Dewight Davis, 25, of Johnson Catolister Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked. A secured bond of \$250 was set.

Jose Salvador Garcia, 54, of Old River Rd., Cherokee, was charged with misdemeanor probation violation for Jackson County. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set.

Kristin Lee Devecki, 37, of Alan St., was charged with failure to return rented vehicle. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

A.A. meetings in the greater Franklin area including Otto have been suspended until further notice. To speak with a member of A.A. call (828)349-4357 or (828)837-4440 or visit www.aawnc80.com.

Nantahala Hiking Club will hike Mountains to Sea Trail at Waterrock Knob to Woodfin Valley Overlook on Saturday, Sept. 19, 9 a.m., meet at Bi-Lo. Hike to Waterrock Knob 6,400' from the parking lot. Return and get on the M to S Trail and descend 1400' to the Parkway. Views along the ridge. Total Hike Distance 5.5 miles. For more information, call Gail Lehman at (828)524-5298.

Jackson County Branch of the NC NAACP regular meeting will be held online Saturday, Sept. 19, at 10 a.m. A nominating committee will be elected to select officer candidates for the November branch elections. A discussion on GOTV efforts is planned. Email jcnaacp54ab@gmail.com to receive instructions to join online. The public is welcome to join this meeting.

Nantahala Hiking Club will hike Tessentee Farms on Sunday, Sept. 20, 2 p.m., meet at Westgate Plaza. Explore this 1800s farm with open fields and forests. This property is managed by Mainspring Conservancy. Visit an old homestead. Wildlife and birds are sure to be seen. Total hike distance is 3 miles. For more information, call Leader Jean Hunicutt Phone (828)524-5234.

The North Shore Cemetery Association will be hosting a downscaled version of the Reunion on Sunday, Sept. 20, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. This will be a "drop-in event" for those who want to see some of the others they have been missing. No organized services or agenda. Participants are asked to bring lawn chairs and other items necessary for an outdoor picnic while maintaining social distancing. Bring your own food and drinks. The reunion will be held at the Deep Creek Picnic Shelter north of Bryson City. Follow directional signs from US 19/74 to the Deep Creek Entrance. The Picnic Shelter is straight ahead ¼-mile on the left.

Holly Springs Community Development Club will meet Monday, Sept. 21, at 6 p.m., at the community building at 2720 Cat Creek Road. No food will be served but canned drinks and water will be available. Attendees wishing to bring their own brown bag meal, are encouraged to do so. CDC and NC COVID-19 restrictions will be observed.

"Faith, Family and Freedom Rally" will be held on Saturday, Sept. 26, from 12 to 2 p.m., in the parking lot of The Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts in Franklin. This event is being held in conjunction with "The Return" national prayer event in Washington DC. Local pastors will be leading prayer. Madison Cawthorn, candidate for the 11th Congressional district, and North Carolina Supreme Court Justice Paul Newby will be speaking, and "Mountain Faith" will be leading worship. This is a Christian event of worship, prayer, and devotions from the Word of God to highlight the role of Christian faith in community and government.

Red Sand Project will be held at the Gazebo in Downtown Franklin on Saturday, Oct. 10, 10 a.m. The Project calls attention to those who metaphorically "fall through the cracks" of human trafficking, including

children, girls, and refugees, and spreads awareness in the community. The Zonta Club of Franklin will have a short presentation about the project and hand out bags of red sand that will, as a group, be poured into the cracks of the bricks surrounding the gazebo. Wear face coverings and practice social distancing for this event.

Ray Reunion usually scheduled in October has been cancelled for this year.

Smoky Mountain Pregnancy Care Centers in Cullowhee and Franklin have an educational parenting program to earn "points" to use to obtain free items for your family. The centers carry formula, diapers, wipes, baby items and clothing up to size 6, as well as strollers, car seats, high chairs, pack n' plays, etc. Donations are always welcome. Services are free and confidential. For more information or an appointment, call (828)349-3200, (828)293-3600 or smppcc.org

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

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

Uptown Gallery on Main Street new hours are Monday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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

Franklin Covenant Church has a grocery delivery service for anyone at higher risk for COVID-19. If you are unable to leave home to get the supplies you need due to sickness, disability or age, please contact us for more details. The only cost to you would be the items you order, there is no delivery charge. FCCdelivery@yahoo.com.

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

Macon County CareNet is in need of volunteers. If interested stop by for an application at 130 Bidwell St., or call (828)369-2642.

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

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

Editor's Note: Due to a judge's ruling that declared the closing of churches unconstitutional, some churches are now opening with safety protocols in place and altered schedules. Email maconcountynews@gmail.com with schedule or venue changes.

First Alliance Church Sunday services in person and on Facebook are held at 10:30 a.m. Senior Pastor Scott Eichelberger will deliver the message. The Strings Ensemble will provide special music. The church is located at 31 Promise Lane (off Womack next door to Tri-mont Christian Academy). For more information, call the church office at (828)369-7977.

Franklin First United Methodist Church Sunday Online Worship is held at 9 a.m., on Facebook Live at Franklin First United Methodist Church while we are social distancing due to COVID19. The church is located at 66 Harrison Avenue in downtown Franklin; senior pastor is Rev. David Beam. For more information, call (828)524-3010 or www.firstumcfranklin.org

Lifespring Community Church is holding Sunday services beginning at 10 a.m. with social distancing observed. Brian Lamb in the pastor. The church is located at the intersection of Cheek Road and Addington Bridge Road.

Tellico Baptist Church is now having in-person Sunday School at 10 a.m. and worship service at 11 a.m. inside the church building with the Reverend L. E. Angel. Everyone is welcome.

West Franklin Church services are held on Sunday, 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. The church is located on Sloan Rd. next to the Forest Service Office.

Prentiss Church of God is discontinuing its 9 a.m. service and will only have one Sunday worship service in its sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m. Social distancing is observed and safety measures are in place. Pastor Kevin Chapman invites the community to attend. Services are also streamed online on the Prentiss Church of God Facebook page. The church is located at 59 Church Hill Lane, off Addington Bridge Road. Phone: (828)369-3885.

Memorial United Methodist Church Anonymous Call-in Prayer Line. If you need prayer, call (828)369-0707. Leave a message with your prayer request, and the church will be happy to pray for you or whoever you request prayers for. You may also leave a request for a call back if you need one.

Spiritual Light Center is now open for in-person services every Sunday at 11 a.m. Covid-19 protocols are in place. The public is invited. The center is located at 80 Heritage Hollow Dr., Franklin.

Email church calendar items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

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SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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

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| YET | AKA | SUE | NECS | AMID | FEET | SALTS | LEYS | BOB | FLM | FAM | YAG | SKIS | ORC | ORC | ORC | PAS |

Sought-after fringed gentians called the ‘nuns of wildflowers’

Dr. Bob Gilbert – Columnist

Walking to the mailbox one day in October I was shocked to find what appeared to be a gentian. From school days I remembered a poem by William Cullen Bryant, (do not ask me why this is the only poem I remember):

“Thou waited late, and com’st alone;
When woods are bare and birds have flown
And frost and shortening days portend
The aged year is near his end.
Then doth thy sweet and quiet eye
Look through its fringes to the sky,
Blue-blue-as if that sky let fall
A flower from its cerulean wall.”

This gentian I found has no fringes on the uppermost edges of the lobes of flowers. Also, the flowers were closed, with a couple just barely open as if someone had carefully pried them apart to take a look inside. I hurried home images fresh in my mind for the field guides. I returned 30 minutes later to get the mail, armed with a 10x hand lens.

It took some time to confirm the identification as *Gentiana quinquerfolia*, agueweed or stiff gentian. I had to look up the meaning of ague, a fever that produces chills and shaking. Further reading uncovered some interesting facts. Some gentians with closed blooms have a faint white rim at the tip. This serves as a pollination guide for insects, a target. Once a bumblebee enters the bloom, the white margin darkens, indicating to others that the pollen is already gone. It is usually the bumblebee that is strong enough to open the blooms.

Closed gentians are one of the richest of all flowers in nectar quantity. It is speculated that the closed blooms prevent rain from diluting the nectar. There are not many plants whose flowers appear to be buds. Gentians tend to colonize. They are not often found

but when present they may be numerous. Many prefer moist sites in light shade – along stream banks are good places to look. They all bloom late in the season, some as late as November. So, it is a good blooming plant to look for in the fall along with the ladies’ tresses orchid.

Author Jack Sanders has written a wonderful book called “Secrets of Wildflowers.” He poetically puts gentians in the Royal Family because of their deep blue color. As he describes them, “Most are brilliant in color, ex-



Dr. Bob Gilbert

traordinary in dress, finicky in situation, and few in number. Even the name has a regal origin.”

Gentians were named after King Gentius who lived in Shakespeare’s time in a country now known as Albania. He discovered a species of *Gentiana* that was curative. There have been numerous uses of gentian extracts to cure and alleviate stomach problems as well as fevers. There was even a patent medicine made from gentian roots, Moxie Nerve Food, reportedly effective against paralysis, softening of the brain, nervousness and insomnia. Eventually, carbonated water was added and, by 1884, Moxie was sold in bottle form and as soda fountain syrup. It



Fringes Gentians

Photos by Karen Lawrence

had a brief popularity when President Calvin Coolidge claimed to like it and baseball player Ted Williams endorsed it. It is still sold in the Northeastern United States. There is even a Moxie museum in Union, Maine, and a summer festival, “All Things Moxie.” Because of the advertising of the soft drink, a new word evolved, moxie, meaning courage, nerve or vigor.

The most popular and well-known species is the fringed gentian, *Gentiana crinita* (hairy). Its flowers are open with numerous fringe-like appendages on the lips of the flower lobes. It can be found in Western North Carolina but it is

uncommon. In a 1940s continent-wide poll, it ranked eighth of the most beautiful wildflowers. However, the fringed gentian is difficult to grow, is a biennial and is often picked, making it even scarcer. Its seeds are very fussy, and the plant itself is next to impossible to transplant. I have yet to find one blooming here and when I learned of several locations, the blooms were already gone.

Finding the stiff gentian prompted Franklin photographer Karen Lawrence and me to try to locate other species. We did find *Gentiana Saponaria*, soapwort gentian or harvestbells. It took some time with the hand lens and reference books for us to identify this wildflower correctly.

The Weakley key again saved the day. We did not feel so stupid when Weakley admitted that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between a flower lobe, a flower appendage and a flower filament. When we were just about ready to give up I found in my library a small forgotten text on Gentians, written in 1975 by Marty Bartlett. She included a line drawing clearly identifying flower parts. We are confident that we had found Soapwort Gentian. Karen and I agreed that Jack Sanders accurately called gentians the nuns of wildflowers as they are tightly wrapped to con-

ceal their inner parts.

Finally on Sept. 28, 2012, after a two-year wait, Karen and I along with a number of Southern Appalachian Plan Society members under the direction of Jim Drake found a field full of the Fringed Gentians. It was a sight that will be remembered by all of us for a very long time.

Drake has recently published a book entitled “Gentians of the Eastern United States, Breath of Spring,” Suwanee, Georgia, 2011. contact@breathofspring.com.

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

Karen Lawrence is a professional photographer of horticultural and wildlife subjects living in Franklin.



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Deaths & Funerals

William 'Bill' Furman Collins

William "Bill" Furman Collins, 74, passed away Saturday, Sept. 12, 2020, surrounded by family and loved ones. He was born in Macon County on Aug. 10, 1946, to the late G.H. Gibson and Helen Shepherd Gibson. He was a member of Liberty Baptist Church. He worked as a supervisor at the Macon County Landfill until his retirement. He also worked at several dairy farms, logging, and in his own farming ventures. He was never one to sit idle, even after retirement, he was constantly in a hay field or working hard at another project. As his health began failing he may not have been as physically involved, but he was excellent at making sure his boys did everything to his satisfaction. He would even sit and watch hay being cut, and call advice to the tractor operators. He was not content to sit and watch life pass him by, and always stayed in the thick of things. For all his gruffness and grumpy attitude, he had a heart of gold. He wanted to rescue every animal, and bottled many calves, pigs, and goats by his wood stove. He took great pride in being a grandfather, father, and uncle. His family was filled with blood relatives, and those he claimed as his own. He was greatly loved by each and every one he welcomed into his house.



William Furman Collins

Survivors include his wife, Bobbie Collins; three sons, Tony Collins (Linda), Billy Collins (Jenny), and Bobby Collins (Rhonda) all of Franklin, N.C.; special sons, J.D. Henry (Allison) and Robert Armstrong both of Franklin; two sisters, Jane Stamey of Franklin and Cindy Gibson Jenkins (J.J.) of Greer, S.C.; eight grandchildren, Jada Collins, Katie Collins, Dakota Collins, Karissa Collins, Samantha Collins, Branson Collins, John Henry, and Justin Henry; special caregiver, Patsy Brown; and a number nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a daughter, Tammy Marie Collins; a son, Joshua Collins; special son, Bernie Gibson; and two sisters, Johnnie Tallent and Donna Collins.

A funeral service was held Tuesday, Sept. 15, in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home with the Rev. Phillip Cochran and Rev. Davis Hooper officiating. Burial followed in the Shepherd Cemetery. He was transported to the cemetery by Chucky Stanley for one last ride in a log truck.

Pallbearers were Jerry Shepherd Jr., Eddie Beaver, Tim Cochran, Andrew Armstrong, Jeff Tallent, and Randy Beasley.

In lieu of flowers memorials can be made to the Shepherd Cemetery in care of Mrs. Josephine Jennings P.O. Box 781 Franklin, NC 28744.

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

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

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Deaths & Funerals

Clifford Talley

Clifford Talley, 78, went to be with his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ on Sept. 9, 2020. His time on Earth was well spent, and he enjoyed the life he was given.

He was born on April 15, 1942, and was predeceased by his parents, Marcus Leonard Talley and Charlotte Lydia Keener Talley, and by five siblings: Sarah Davis, Gordon Talley, Lewis Talley, Berta Lee Durci, and Martha Reese.

He loved horses, trail riding, and just being outdoors. A native Highlander, he liked working in his yard which always showed the care he gave it.

He served in the United States Navy and received an honorable discharge. His career with Verizon lasted for 35 years. A member of Shortoff Baptist Church, he was one of the most personable, laid back people you'd ever want to meet. He was able to make friends wherever he went. He was a special person who was dearly loved by his family, his friends, and his coworkers. He was especially proud of his grandsons that knew him as Buddy and even with Parkinson's, they were the two he always recognized.

His commitment to his family was evident. He was devoted to his wife of 43 years, Jearlene Davis Talley; his daughter, Niki Talley Bloedow (Steven) of Highlands; and his grandchildren, Coby Bloedow and Colson Bloedow, all of whom survive. He is also survived by his siblings, Eva Talley Marshall of Mt. Kisco, N.Y.; Charles Talley of State Road, N.C.; and Beatrice Talley Ruhl (John) of Newport, N.C.; and a number of nieces and nephews.

The family thanks the staff of The Franklin House for the excellent care they provided during his last days. His family now rests assured in his complete healing and are grateful for the time they had with him.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date. Burial will be at Oconee Memorial Park in Seneca, S.C.

In lieu of flowers memorial contributions may be made to Highlands United Methodist Church Youth Fund, PO Box 1959, Highlands, NC, 28741.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve Cliff's family. Online condolences at www.moffittfamilyfuneralcare.com.

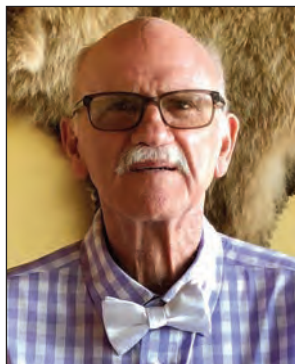
Karen Orpen Verran

Karen Orpen Verran, 62, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2020, at her home. She was born Oct. 13, 1957, in Jamestown, Pa., to the late Paul Orpen Sr. and Olive Stange Orpen. She was a loving wife, mother and grandmother, loved animals, gardening and arts and crafts.

She is survived by her husband, Robert Verran; a son, Justin Torr (Melissa) of Tampa, Fla.; a daughter, Rebecca Heddleston (Jonathan) of Clearwater, Fla.; three grandchildren, Trey Torr, Alexis Torr and Ashley Jablonski; a brother, Greg Orpen of Sharon, Pa.; and several nieces and nephews. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her daughter, Heather Torr.

A private service was held by the family.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Verran family. Condolences at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.



Clifford Talley



Karen Orpen Verran

Kathryne Ann Holland Moffitt

Kathryne Ann Holland Moffitt, born on Feb. 28, 1949, loved by her family, her friends, and her church, went on to Glory on Sept. 8, 2020. There was great rejoicing as her mom and dad, Mavis and Kerma Holland, met her at Heaven's Gates.

Kathy had a "way about her," as we say in the mountains, that made everyone she came in contact with feel special and loved. Her sense of humor and the ever present twinkle in her eyes kept conversations with Kathy the best ever. Even though she loved to laugh and cut up, she was also a good listener, and folks knew she cared about whatever she was being told. Her trips on Sundays from the front pews to the back of the church took forever because so many people wanted to speak to Kathy.

Kathy was fun to be with. She loved Porsche automobiles and never met a curvy road she didn't like. She was the ultimate card sender, recognizing occasions both great and small. She was the mother hen who gathered all her chicks under her wings every chance she had. Those who were fortunate enough to spend time at Don's and Kathy's count themselves as blessed, indeed. Somehow, though, to her grands those family gatherings took place at the venue known only as "Mamaw's house."

Kathy had a long career in banking, mostly at Macon Bank/Enterprise. She had an even longer career in the ministry, serving with her husband for over 50 years. Her role was more than being a pastor's wife: she was a true partner. One of her many qualities was her absolute resolve in doing what was right which only added to her reputation as a prayer warrior and a Jesus lover.

Kathy and her husband, Rev. Don L. Moffitt, had two sons, David Moffitt and Pepper Moffitt, then the Lord showered them with the blessings of a grandson and five granddaughters. And, just when she thought there was nothing better than grandbabies, along came great-grandchildren.

When they were small, Kathy especially loved having all five grandgirls spend the night at her house at the same time. Left with all those wonderful memories of their mamaw are Kayla B. Davidson (Brad), Evan S. Drake (Christian), Erin M. Partington (Greg), Carlee B. Moffitt, Alexis T. Moffitt, and Adam R. Cook (Leslie), along with great-grandchildren, Cora Lee Drake, Harper Partington, Grant Cook and Libby Cook.

Kathy's family meant so much to her. She is also survived by her sisters, Janet C. Holland, Loretta Y. Holland, and Shelby J. Holland; her brothers, Ronnie C. Holland (Sue) and Phillip T. Holland; and her aunt, Bonnie Holland. Along with her parents, three brothers preceded her in death, Leroy Holland, Gilbert Holland, and Michael Holland.

Kathy had a very special and wonderful relationship with her beloved mother-in-law, Clara Moffitt, who predeceased her. She also adored and had a special place in her heart for her "3rd" son, Steve Maney. Included in Kathy's survivors are also a multitude of nieces and nephews along with in-laws and those lovingly referred to as out-laws.

A gathering of friends and guests was held Saturday, Sept. 12, at Prentiss Church of God with a celebration of life service following. Members of Kathy's family along with Pastor Kevin Chapman shared thoughts and memories.

Pallbearers were Christian Drake, Brad Davidson, Greg Partington, Darren Holland, Joe Moffitt, Justin Moffitt and Mike Southard.

In lieu of flowers, Kathy requested memorials be made to her two favorite charities which she has supported for many, many years, giving her family direct orders to continue to donate to these worthy causes:

– St. Jude's Children Research Hospital, 262 Danny Thomas Place, Memphis, TN. 38105;

– Shriners Hospitals for Children—Greenville, 950 W. Faris Road, Greenville, SC. 29605

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



Kathy Moffitt

Lawrence 'Larry' Owens

Lawrence "Larry" Owens, 63, of Franklin, N.C., was called home to be with our Lord and Savior on Thursday, Sept. 10, 2020. He was born in Miami, Fla., and moved to Franklin 25 years ago. Some may remember him as the tall skinny dude who would walk into town each day, coffee in one hand and a cigarette in the other waving to everyone who drove or walked by him. He served in the United States Army for three years and received an honorable discharge in 1983. He was a member of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Franklin.

He was the son of the late Roy R. Barton, Dianne A. Owens Barton and W. Mason Owens. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his son, Richard Lee Owens; two sisters, Terry Owens Fortier and Laura Owens and a brother, Leo M. Owens.

He is survived by his sister, Debi Varner; two sons, Christopher Owens and Jeremy Lyn Owens; several cousins, nieces and nephews; a great niece and a great-great niece.

A private celebration of life is planned for a later date. A private family viewing was held on Friday, Sept. 11.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that memorial donations be made in his name to the Appalachian Animal Rescue P.O. Box 81 Franklin, NC 28744.

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



Lawrence Owens

Edith Emily (DeKraker) Vanderwerp

Edith Emily (DeKraker) Vanderwerp, 96, died on Aug. 6, 2020, at Macon Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Franklin, N.C.

She was born on Aug. 24, 1923, to Peter DeKraker and Gertrude (Douma) DeKraker in Holland, Mich. In high school she participated in Dutch dances during the annual Tulip Festival. She graduated from Holland High School in June 1941. She then went to business school in Holland to learn secretarial skills.

After graduating, she was the first woman from Holland to enlist in the U.S. Coast Guard Women's Reserve (SPARS) and served from 1943-1946. While in the Coast Guard SPARS she served in Philadelphia for the captains of the ships. After discharge she moved to Chicago and worked as a secretary in various offices.

She married George Frank Vanderwerp in Holland, Mich., on June 12, 1954, at Trinity Reformed Church. The couple moved to Marion, Ind., where their two children were born. They moved several times with many years in Glen Ellen, Ill., Bloomington, Ind., Lebanon, Ind. and Lafayette, Ind. Her favorite place to live, however, was Franklin, N.C. She spent many happy years there being very active in her church, Grace Presbyterian Church, the Nantahala Hiking Club and working and crafting for Maco Crafts. She loved to quilt, sew and knit and was always ready for a hike or a new adventure.

She is survived by her daughter, Mary Vanderwerp (Richard Ball); her son, John Vanderwerp (Melissa Brown); a grandchild and a great grandchild; and her sisters, Joan Dresselhouse and Charlotte DeKraker.

A small private burial will be held in Franklin.

Donations may be made to Grace Presbyterian Church in her memory.

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



Edith Vanderwerp



Deaths & Funerals

Mary Patricia Cathey

Mary Patricia Cathey, 70, passed away on Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020. She was a native of Pennsylvania and a resident of Franklin, N.C. She was preceded in death by her parents, William Albert and Patricia Drace Cathey, her closest friend, Susan Ehle, and her beloved dog, Shuggah.

She was the loving sister of Daniel Cathey (Kimberly) and William Cathey (Sandra); aunt of Bronwen Cathey, Alexandra Murray (Gregory), and Benjamin Cathey; and great aunt of Rowen, Izaak, and Seumas Murray. She is also survived by many friends, who loved her like family.

After a successful teaching career in Iowa, she was a dorm mother at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee Boarding School in Rabun County, Ga. In the early 1980s, she began her golfing career and became a member of the LPGA Teaching and Club Professional Division. Along the way, she opened a driving range, developed and managed the Parker Meadows nine-hole executive golf course, became a talented club-fitter in North Carolina and Florida, and worked as a golf instructor at numerous courses in North Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana.

A celebration of life will be held Monday, Sept. 21, at 11 a.m., at Macon Funeral Home. Interment will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery. A formal eulogy will be presented online.

Memorial contributions may be made in Mary's honor to the American Cancer Society, American Cancer Society, P.O. Box 22478, Oklahoma City, OK 73123 (cancer.org).

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be offered online at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Yvonne Payne Cheatham

Yvonne Payne Cheatham, 94, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, Sept. 13, 2020.

Born in Philadelphia, Miss., she was the daughter of the late Clois and Eunice Tolbert Payne. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Willard Cheatham; a brother, Jack Payne and a sister, Peggy Coleman. She worked as secretary to the school superintendent for many years in Charlotte County, Florida, and was a member of Pine Grove Baptist Church in Franklin.



Yvonne Payne Cheatham

She is survived by her son, Alton Cheatham and wife Darla of Franklin; her daughter, Carole Hill of Franklin; eight brothers and sisters, Mary Ethel Turner of Philadelphia, Miss., Laquita Edmonds of Mooresville, N.C., Hoyt Payne, Uhl Payne, Jo Walters, Weegie Thomas, Glenda Gregory and Rhonda Thomas, all of Philadelphia, Miss.; five grandchildren; 12 great grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be held Thursday, Sept. 17 at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Greg Rogers, Rev. Mike Chastain will officiate. Burial will be in Cedarlawn Cemetery in Philadelphia.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Pine Grove Baptist Church Building Fund, 7454 Highlands Road, Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Debra Carpenter

Debra Carpenter, 59, passed from this life on Sept. 11, 2020. The daughter of Lonnie D. Berryhill and Caroline Hester Coutant Barnes, she was born on July 28, 1961, into a family that provided her with a great treasure—five siblings to love and cherish.

She is survived by three children, Melissa, Christina, and Zachery; three sisters, Carolee Marr and Johnny Henson of Franklin, Tammi Abrahams and Christopher Sutton of Great Meadows, N.J., Edith Dayton and husband Michael of Stedman, N.C.; her brother, Bud Berryhill and wife Barbara of Monroe City, Mo.; and a number of grandchildren, nieces, and nephews. She was predeceased by her parents and a sister, Melody Berryhill.

She was a hugger who loved to make people smile. She was generous and had a personality that helped her to make friends easily. She genuinely cared about others and no matter what her circumstances were, she tried to make the day brighter for someone else.

She loved being outdoors. A perfect day for her would include being able to see God's handiwork in both the beauty of the sunrise and the sunset. As most children who lived through the '70s, she was a fan of classic rock and country music. Her zest for living, despite her physical limitations, was shown in many ways as she always strived to be as independent as possible. She was quick witted, funny, and a joy to be with as evidenced by her many friends.

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

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

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



Debra Carpenter

Fay Ellen Miller Parker

Fay Ellen Miller Parker, 89, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, Sept. 8, 2020.

She was born in Bowling Green, Fla., and was the daughter of the late Seaborn Howell Miller and Ola Hawthorne Miller. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Robert Parker and sister, Joy Johnson.

She was raised in Miami, Fla., and attended Miami Edison High School, graduating with the class of 1949. While in high school, she was captain of the Miami Edison Cadette Corp. During the time of raising three children, she attended Miami Dade Community College and earned her BS degree in social work from Florida International University. Always an active participant in community life, she managed to raise her family, be an advocate for community mental health services and be a pioneer in after school activities for her children. She was a member of First Presbyterian Church of Franklin and the PILOT Club in Florida. She loved to write and read and was often found journaling and sending cards from the church.

She is survived by her children, Barbara McInnes and husband Jim of Franklin, Elder David Summerford and wife Carolyn of Greenville, Ga., and Eve Marie Miller and husband James of Sackett Harbor, N.Y.; sister, Wanda Aguerra of Hawaii; five grandchildren; nine great grandchildren and numerous nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life was held Friday, Sept. 11, in the chapel of First Presbyterian Church with Rev. Tempe Fussell officiating. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to First Presbyterian Church, 26 Church Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Fay Ellen Parker

Genie Christine 'Tinia' Delpho

Genie Christine "Tinia" Delpho, 73, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Sunday, Sept. 6, 2020.

Born in Corpus Christi, Texas, she was the daughter of the late Bob Bryant and Hazel Christine Welder. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her son, Robert Spencer Delpho Jr.; daughter, Theresa Christine Delpho and sister, Gwendolyn Hughes.

She loved art and music and was a trained musician. She also loved bowling in both the womens and mixed bowling leagues.

She is survived by her husband of 56 years, Robert Delpho; son, Jonathan "Jon" Delpho and wife Julie of San Antonio, Texas; sister, Patricia Gale Moore of Florida; and one grandson, Robert Spencer Delpho III, of San Antonio, Texas.

No services are planned at this time.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donation may be made to the American Cancer Society, at www.cancer.org

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Online condolences may be made to the family at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



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Brad Keselowski dominates the Richmond Playoff race

Holly Cain – NASCAR Wire Service

Brad Keselowski made good on a confident Babe Ruth-like prediction earlier this week when he said he expected to dominate and win Saturday night's Federated Auto Parts 400 Playoff race at Richmond (Va.) Raceway.

Dominant, he did. After leading a race best 192 of the 400 laps at the three-quarter mile track, Keselowski scored an impressive 2.568-second victory over Martin Truex Jr. to guarantee his position in the next round of the NASCAR Cup Series Playoffs. It's Keselowski's fourth win of the season in the No. 2 Team Penske Ford and 34th career victory.

Keselowski's Team Penske teammate Joey Logano was third, followed by Austin Dillon and Chase Elliott. Kyle Busch finished sixth, followed by championship points leader Kevin Harvick. Aric Almirola, Alex Bowman and Clint Bowyer rounded out a top 10 sweep of current Playoff-eligible drivers. Although not a victory for the reigning series champion Busch, his top-10 finish was an achievement considering he started last in the field after failing pre-race inspection twice.

Denny Hamlin, who finished 12th, still earned enough points to secure a spot in the next round of the Playoffs. He led 45 laps and won Stage 1, but he was called for speeding on pit road and had to play catch up the rest of the night after serving the penalty.

The only caution flags Saturday were for scheduled slowdowns – a competition caution and two stage breaks. And there were 20 lead changes among nine drivers.

"It was a great race for us and the two-team," the 2012 series champion Keselowski said, noting he drove the same car Saturday as he used to win at New Hampshire earlier this summer. "I wanted to do a really cool burnout with it, but I want this car for [the championship race] Phoenix."

"I'm really pumped. I don't want to look too far ahead. The next round is going to be really difficult, but still, I'm really pumped about this performance and the way we've run on short tracks."

"If we can get to Phoenix, we're going to be really good," Keselowski promised, not wanting to look too far ahead despite his impressive performance Saturday.

While Keselowski, 34, was clearly the class of the field, leading nearly four times as many laps as any other driver, Logano, Truex and Dillon did their best to keep him honest.

Dillon's 55 laps led was the most he has ever led in a single race in his seven-year fulltime NASCAR Cup Series career. He missed pit road while coming to the pits for service late in the race – the only hiccup on his night. But



Brad Keselowski, driver of the #2 Western Star/Alliance Parts Ford, Joey Logano, driver of the #22 Shell Pennzoil Ford, and Martin Truex Jr., driver of the #19 Bass Pro Shops Toyota, lead the field during the NASCAR Cup Series Federated Auto Parts 400 at Richmond Raceway on September 12, 2020 in Richmond, Virginia.

Brad Keselowski, driver of the #2 Western Star/Alliance Parts Ford, celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Federated Auto Parts 400 at Richmond Raceway on September 12, 2020 in Richmond, Virginia.

than many may have anticipated heading to the Bristol cutoff race next week.

On the other side, Truex kept up his consistent pace. His third-place run was his ninth top-five finish in the last 10 races.

Only the top 12 drivers among the 16 Playoff eligible will continue to contend for the season title following that Bristol race.

After Richmond, the four drivers below that top-12 line include William Byron (-3 points), Cole Custer (-8 points), Matt DiBenedetto (-25 points) and Keselowski's Penske teammate Ryan Blaney (-27 points).

The series moves to Bristol for the Bass Pro Shops Night Race next Saturday (7:30 p.m. ET on NBCSN, PRN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio).

Allgaier sweeps Xfinity weekend at Richmond, Cindric clinches regular season title

The difference in his race was like night and day but Justin Allgaier proved himself tops again – winning Saturday afternoon's Virginia is for Racing Lovers 250 at

his team recovered and it turned out to be of minimal consequence for an organization that has mightily impressed the first two weeks of the Playoffs.

Dillon finished runner-up to Harvick in last week's Playoff opener at Darlington and now has a second top five heading to Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway next week for the final race in this opening stage of the Playoffs.

"To come from the back [after the speeding penalty] and finish second in Stage 2 was just so awesome," said Dillon, driver of the No. 3 Richard Childress Racing Chevrolet.

"This race team is on fire right now and showing up when it matters."

Dillon, who won at Texas Motor Speedway this summer, has positioned himself to a much better Playoff run

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Richmond (Va.) Raceway answering a hard-fought victory Friday night and sweeping the Xfinity Series weekend doubleheader.

Allgaier's No. 7 JR Motorsports Chevrolet essentially dominated the afternoon leading a race best 135 of the 250 laps and holding off his teammate Jeb Burton by a healthy 2.185-seconds for his third win of the season. It is the 14th victory of the 34-year old Illinois native's career and Allgaier's 770 total laps led in 2020 is most of any driver this season.

"I knew how good our car was all day," Allgaier said. "I knew at the end there, I knew we had speed, I knew when we needed to go we could, I just didn't know how fast. My teammate Jeb Burton did a fantastic job on that last restart, just so proud of these guys."

The runner-up showing for Burton is a career best effort in the series. Ross Chastain finished third followed by Burton's 19-year old cousin Harrison Burton in fourth and Chastain's Kaulig Racing teammate Justin Haley in fifth.

Allgaier's JR Motorsports teammates Noah Gragson and Michael Annett were sixth and seventh, followed by Brandon Jones, Kaz Grala and Austin Cindric, who clinched the Xfinity Series regular season championship with his effort. He receives a 15-point bonus for his season-long work when the series Playoffs begin, Sept. 26 in Las Vegas.

"Wish we would have been able to do more with the Penske PPG Ford Mustang today," said Cindric, whose five race wins in 2020 is a single season career-best.

"We sat down as a team at the beginning of the year and wrote down our top three goals - I'm not a big proponent of setting goals but if we were going to put something on paper, my number one was winning the regular season championship.

"Maybe at the beginning of the year or on the outside looking in that was a lofty goal but we had a lot of speed and a lot of fight and really proud of that effort."

Chastain's third-place run gave him back-to-back top five efforts at Richmond, but still keeps the Kaulig Racing driver winless with only next weekend's regular season finale at Bristol (Tenn.) Motor Speedway remaining to notch a trophy before the seven-race Playoff run.

He certainly kept Allgaier honest in both races and was a front-runner all afternoon - his 58 laps out front second only to Allgaier's effort. And they each won a stage - Allgaier the first stage and Chastain, the second. But neither Chastain nor Jeb Burton were able to wrestle the lead from Allgaier during a long green flag run after the second stage nor on a restart with 13 laps remaining following an incident with Riley Herbst and Brandon Brown.

Brown was able to continue and scored an impressive 11th-place finish - good enough to keep him 49 points ahead of 17th-place finish Jeremy Clements in a duel for the 12th and final Xfinity Series Playoff position. Brown hopes to hold on to his 49-point advantage over Clements



Justin Allgaier, driver of the #7 FilterTime Chevrolet, celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Go Bowling 250 at Richmond Raceway on Sept. 11, in Richmond, Va.



Justin Allgaier, driver of the #7 BRANDT Chevrolet, celebrates in Victory Lane after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series Virginia is for Racing Lovers 250 at Richmond Raceway on September 12, 2020 in Richmond, Va.

"This is our fourth year partnering with hospitals across the country to bring some comfort and joy to their pediatric patients," stated Nicole Krieger, Executive Director of The NASCAR Foundation. "This program is so uplifting, but especially this year, we hope the bears will bring big smiles during what can be a very stressful and emotional time."

NASCAR Drivers also participated in the initiative by recording a special video message for kids who received the bears, including: NASCAR Cup Series drivers Austin Dillon, John Hunter Nemechek and Tyler Reddick; NASCAR Xfinity Series drivers Justin Allgaier, Ross Chastain, Austin Cindric, Noah Gragson and Ryan Vargas; NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Truck Series drivers Cassie Gannis, Jennifer Jo Cobb and Natalie Decker; and, Rev Racing driver Isabella Robusto.

Since the Speedy Bear Brigade began in 2017, the nationwide program has delivered nearly 4,000 teddy bears to sick children at more than 80 hospitals. For more information about The NASCAR Foundation, its programs or how to donate, please visit NASCARfoundation.org.

next Friday in the regular season finale at Bristol Motor Speedway, the Food City 300 at 7 p.m. ET on NBCSN, PRN and SiriusXM NASCAR Radio.

The NASCAR Foundation Celebrates National Teddy Bear Day with Speedy Bear Brigade

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. - On Sept. 9, The NASCAR Foundation and its track partners delivered more than 1,000 Speedy Bears on National Teddy Bear Day to nearly 40 hospitals across the U.S. in Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, Tennessee and Virginia.

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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THEME: BOTANY 101

ACROSS

- 1. One's arbitrary assertion
- 6. "Swan Lake" step
- 9. Not Sunni
- 13. Mountaineer's tool
- 14. Tolkien creature
- 15. Bebe Rexha's "___ to Be"
- 16. Artificial or mannered
- 17. Snow runner
- 18. Nylon or Kevlar, in chemistry terms
- 19. Scooby-Doo's best friend
- 21. *Between order and genus
- 23. *Marine botany is study of plants living here
- 24. 35mm, e.g.
- 25. Public health agency, acr.
- 28. Partner of void
- 30. Small lynx
- 35. Stewart and Blagojevich
- 37. Grazing lands
- 39. Jawaharlal ___
- 40. g or cm
- 41. Smelling ____, athlete's pick-me-upper
- 43. No neatnik
- 44. Lay to rest
- 46. They are hairy on a hobbit
- 47. Hefty volume
- 48. One in line, during COVID-19 pandemic
- 50. In the middle of
- 52. *Grain-bearing tip of a cereal plant
- 53. Cattle meat
- 55. Fleur-de-___
- 57. *Pollinator attractors
- 60. *Food for a pollinator
- 63. One there at the beginning
- 64. Famous T-Rex
- 66. Lowest deck
- 68. Forearm bones
- 69. Cassius Clay, ___ Muhammad Ali
- 70. Private instructor
- 71. ___-do-well
- 72. Thus far
- 73. Inflict a blow

- DOWN
- 1. Female sib
 - 2. "Hamlet" has five
 - 3. Sure or uh-huh
 - 4. "The Forsyte ____, " pl.
 - 5. *Product of photosynthesis
 - 6. One of a pocketful, ac-

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- 7. Genesis vessel
- 8. "The Matrix" genre
- 9. Highway hauler
- 10. Icy precipitation
- 11. Dr. Jones, fictional professor of archaeology, to friends
- 12. Filled up
- 15. Biblical personification of material wealth
- 20. Olden-day Celts
- 22. Priest's robe
- 24. Blank leaf in a book
- 25. *Seed holder
- 26. "Death, Be Not Proud" poet
- 27. Mine passages
- 29. *Food manufacturer
- 31. Superlative of better
- 32. Actress Sevigny
- 33. Something in the air

- 34. *Potato, e.g.
- 36. Proofreader's mark
- 38. *Plant support
- 42. "...he found a crooked sixpence upon a crooked ___"
- 45. Sales lure
- 49. Electric fish
- 51. *Not monocots
- 54. Piece of writing
- 56. Pull strings
- 57. Carpet attribute
- 58. Marine eagle
- 59. Russia's famous Peter
- 60. Sans mixers
- 61. Choir voice
- 62. *Plant anchor
- 63. Good times
- 65. Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's guitar
- 67. Prefix for prior

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The Classifieds

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MASTER GARDENER Fall Plant Sale, Native, Perennials and other plants. Gardening tools and equipment for a donation. Saturday, September 19, 9am-1pm, Environmental Resource Center, 1624 Lakeside Drive, next to the Landfill. Masks will be required. Appointments can be scheduled (9-10, 10-11, 11-12) Call (828)369-6240.

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| 2015 | Buick | Encore | 24,299 |
| 2015 | Buick | LaCrosse | 28,168 |
| 2018 | Cadillac | CT6 | 29,695 |
| 2020 | Cadillac | Escalade | 26,141 |
| 2020 | Cadillac | Escalade | 35,568 |
| 2007 | Cadillac | Escalade EXT | 157,114 |
| 2020 | Chevrolet | Blazer | 4,708 |
| 2013 | Chevrolet | Camaro | 10,190 |
| 2018 | Chevrolet | Colorado | 18,864 |
| 1972 | CHEVROLET | CORVETTE | 91,171 |
| 2018 | Chevrolet | Equinox | 74,937 |
| 2019 | Chevrolet | Equinox | 26,227 |
| 2014 | Chevrolet | Equinox | 20,707 |
| 2018 | Chevrolet | Equinox | 26,211 |
| 2009 | Chevrolet | HHR | 111,785 |
| 2018 | Chevrolet | Impala | 7,188 |
| 2020 | Chevrolet | Silverado 1500 | 11,584 |
| 2017 | Chevrolet | Silverado 1500 | 41,705 |
| 2017 | Chevrolet | Suburban | 28,879 |
| 2016 | Chevrolet | Suburban | 112,779 |
| 2011 | Chevrolet | Suburban 1500 | 125,781 |
| 2015 | Chevrolet | Tahoe | 84,475 |
| 2015 | Chevrolet | Traverse | 101,068 |
| 2014 | Chevrolet | Traverse | 86,535 |
| 2017 | Chevrolet | Traverse | 91,512 |
| 2010 | Chrysler | Town & Country | 140,383 |
| 2018 | Ford | EcoSport | 5,000 |
| 2018 | Ford | Explorer | 49,216 |
| 2020 | Ford | F-150 | 23,354 |
| 2013 | Ford | F-150 | 153,636 |
| 2016 | Ford | F-250 | 190,896 |
| 2018 | Ford | Flex | 70,276 |
| 1930 | FORD | MODELA | 78,269 |
| 2019 | Ford | Ranger | 2,746 |
| 2015 | GMC | Acadia | 92,733 |
| 2018 | GMC | Sierra 1500 | 49,139 |
| 2003 | GMC | Sierra 1500 | 214,228 |
| 2013 | GMC | Yukon | 51,248 |
| 2019 | GMC | Yukon XL | 37,969 |
| 2002 | HARLEY DAVIDSON | FATBOY | 2,318 |
| 2008 | Honda | CR-V | 167,881 |
| 2014 | Honda | Odyssey | 125,663 |
| 2019 | Honda | Ridgeline | 12,928 |
| 2019 | Hyundai | Elantra | 36,506 |
| 2019 | Hyundai | Tucson | 36,252 |
| 2017 | Jeep | Cherokee | 81,967 |
| 2003 | Jeep | Liberty | 218,554 |
| 2017 | Jeep | Renegade | 48,579 |
| 2006 | Jeep | Wrangler | 126,792 |
| 2019 | Mazda | CX-5 | 36,819 |
| 2017 | Mercedes-Benz | Metris | 57,091 |
| 2015 | Mercedes-Benz | ML 350 | 67,933 |
| 2018 | Nissan | Armada | 51,313 |
| 2019 | Nissan | Rogue | 40,105 |
| 2019 | Nissan | Rogue | 39,470 |
| 2019 | Nissan | Sentra | 38,658 |
| 2019 | Nissan | Versa | 35,717 |
| 2020 | RAM | 1500 | 25,556 |
| 2016 | RAM | 1500 | 92,141 |
| 2017 | Subaru | Forester | 44,665 |
| 2019 | Toyota | Camry | 34,683 |
| 2019 | Toyota | Corolla | 35,775 |
| 2019 | Toyota | Corolla | 27,529 |
| 2018 | Toyota | Tacoma | 35,770 |
| 2008 | Toyota | Tacoma | 138,530 |
| 2008 | Volkswagen | Eos | 115,733 |



¹ Excludes select base trims. Monthly payment is \$13.89 for every \$1,000 you finance. Example down payment: 3.5%. Must finance with GM Financial. Some customers may not qualify. Not available with lease and some other offers. Take new retail delivery by 6/30/20. ² Not available with special financing, lease and some other offers. Take new delivery by 6/30/20. ©2020 General Motors. All rights reserved.

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