

The Macon County

# NEWS

& Shopping Guide

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## Full time nurse to be added to county jail medical staff

**Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer**

Macon County Detention Center is one of the few facilities in Western North Carolina to have access to a full-time dedicated doctor. Commissioners originally approved the contract for Dr. Jason Creel for \$60,000 per year. Sheriff Holland's budget last year included \$425,000 for medical services, which covers the cost of medical supplies and medical bills for inmates. For the fiscal year that ran July 1, 2018, to June 30, 2019, the sheriff's department spent \$330,413 of the annual medical budget.

"We are required to provide adequate and appropriate medical services for inmates," said Sheriff Robert Holland. "Detention officers or any other member of the MCSO are not qualified to make medical decisions and this updated contract will allow us to have the appropriate qualified medical personnel making medical related decisions."

Last week commissioners approved an amendment to the contract which will allow the detention center to also now have a full-time nurse available for inmates.

By contracting with a local doctor and by adding a dedicated nurse, the medical services at the jail will be more effective and efficient, Holland explained to commissioners last week.

"Dr. Jason Creel has been an asset to the community and our staff," said Macon County Detention Center Lt. Derek Jones. "To extend his contract and add a nurse to the staff is a tremendous step in a positive direction by adding additional services at no additional costs. This saves a lot of time and money in the fact that many services are now available in-house rather than traveling outside for such services."

## Board approves contract for IVC transports

**Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer**

Macon County Commissioners last week approved a third-party contract that will hopefully alleviate some of the staffing concerns within the sheriff's office.

When a magistrate issues an involuntary committal order, an officer from that county is required by law to transport the patient to a hospital for evaluation, but the shortage of available beds for mental health patients is making the process problematic for local law enforcement.

At the request of Sheriff Robert Holland, commissioners voted unanimously to contract with ABT Secure Solutions, LLC, to allow the company to transport involuntary commitments (IVC) as needed. Currently, whenever someone is involuntarily committed, the Sheriff's Office is responsible for securing those individuals within their custody and transferring them anywhere in the state where a bed becomes available.

"Last year we transported 194 individuals who had been involuntarily committed," said Sheriff Holland. "As of today, we have transported 199 this year, which includes two being transported to the coast tonight."

Whenever an IVC case is being transported, a deputy drives them however far it takes for them to be placed in an appropriate facility and often times has to pick up the individual whenever they are released. The transports remove detention center staff as well as deputies from other responsibilities within the department, which adds to the staffing shortage both on patrol and within the detention center. The transports also increase the amount of overtime pay needed to pay employees to make the trips across the state, which often results

in overnight travel.

According to County Manager Derek Roland, the transportation agreement can be accomplished within the sheriff's office's existing budget and new monies will not be used to execute the contract. According to Roland, the funds that have previously been used to pay sheriff's office staff to transport the IVC patients, will now be used to fund the contract. The Macon County Sheriff's office has previously spent nearly 10,000 man hours in a single year transporting patients, which amounts to around \$300,000.

The rate sheet for the contract is proposed to be \$27 an hour for time a driver is actually working and a mileage reimbursement rate of \$.65 a miles.

While commissioners approved the agreement, the contract still has to be sent to local municipalities for approval. Both the town of Highlands and the town of Franklin leaders must review and accept the contract before it is finalized by the county.

North Carolina state statute mandates that the governing body of a city or county may adopt a plan for transportation in involuntary commitment proceedings. Law enforcement personnel, volunteers, or other public or private agency personnel may be designated to provide all or part of the transportation required by involuntary commitment proceedings. Persons so designated shall be trained and the plan shall assure adequate safety and protection for both the public and the respondent. Law enforcement, other affected agencies, and the area authority must participate in the planning. If any person other than a law enforcement officer is designated to provide transportation, the person designated shall follow the procedures set up for a law enforcement officer to transport.

# Merry Christmas!

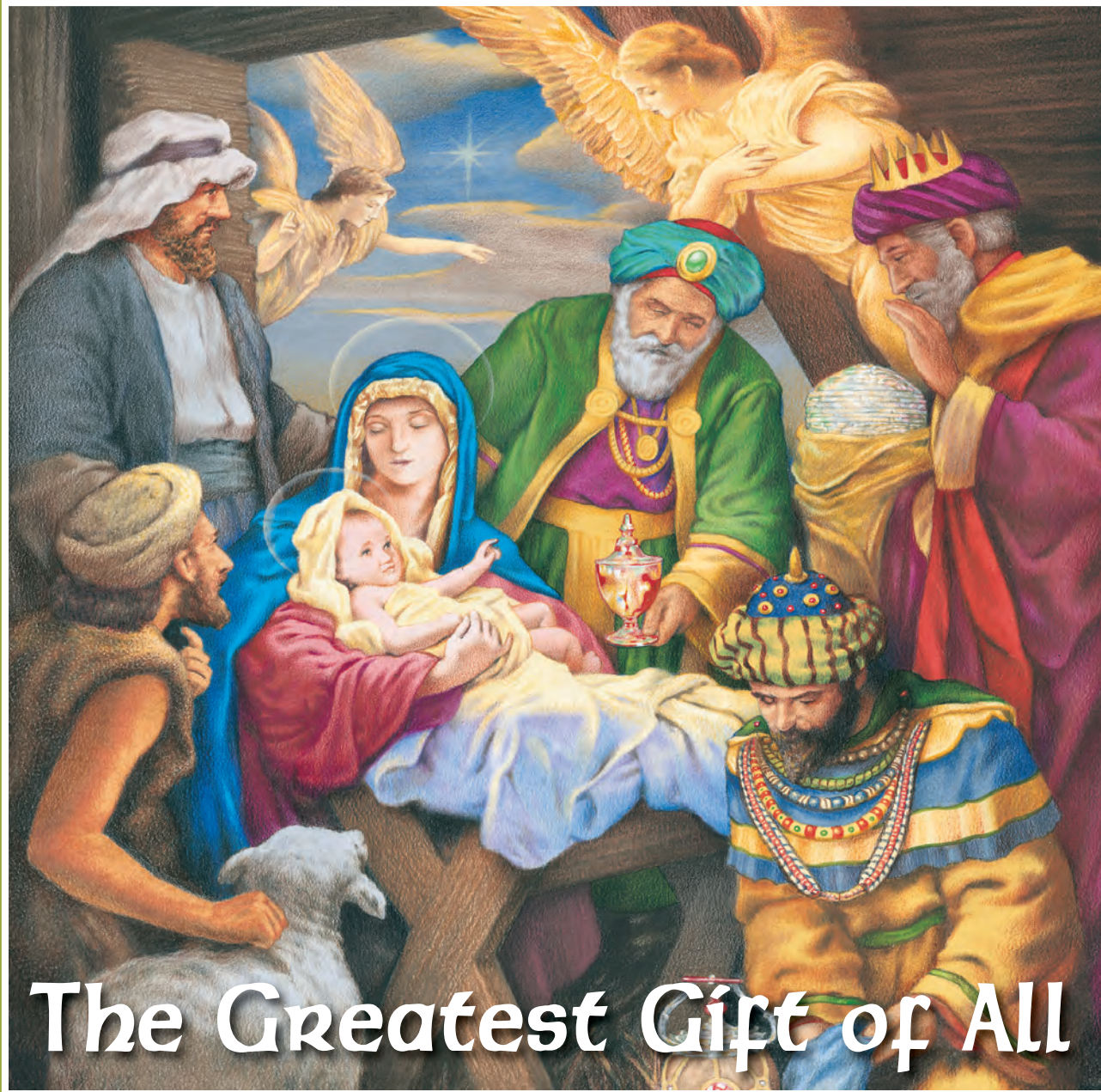
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# Nantahala Health Foundation filling in gaps of nonprofit funding

**Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer**

As part of the sale agreement when HCA purchased Mission Health System, the Nantahala Health Foundation (NHF) was established and portions of the sale were used to set up a nonprofit to help organizations in Western North Carolina. NHF just announced the first round of awarded grants which totaled nearly \$1.5 million and will benefit five counties and the Qualla Boundary.

According to NHF Director Lori Bailey, the foundation received a total of 62 applications and was able to award 27 grants. The grants mainly focused on access to healthcare and education throughout the region.

For some Macon County based nonprofits, the grants came at the perfect time. Since nearly the inception of the Town of Franklin's nonprofit funding pool, Franklin-based KIDS Place has requested and received \$5,000 a year to assist staff with child forensic interviews and therapies. KIDS Place has long since filled a significant gap in services in Macon County and provides a safe place with qualified staff to help children who have fallen victim to abuse. Without KIDS Place, both the town and county would have to spend a substantial amount to provide the same services independently.

KIDS Place has outgrown its current space and is planning to build a new facility near the Franklin Fire Department and the Police Department to better serve the unfortunate demand for their services. This year, Franklin Town Council voted to no longer provide nonprofit funding, which created a gap in the organization's funding. Luckily, KIDS Place was able to apply for funding through the newly created NHF and was one of the 27 organizations approved.

"KIDS Place is very grateful to be a recipient of funding from The Nantahala Health Foundation," said Alisa Ashe, director. "This grant will be used to increase local access to child medical evaluations for child/youth/teen victims of abuse. This grant funding is particularly crucial during a year when some other local funding sources are no longer available."

KIDS Place was not the only local nonprofit caught off guard by the elimination of town funding for nonprofits. The Community Care Clinic of Franklin, which has routinely received funding from the town for medication assistance programs and other medical needs for the community, also lost funding when the town eliminated the nonprofit funding pool.

Like KIDS Place, fortunately the Community Care Clinic was able to apply for the NHF grant and were approved.

REACH of Macon County had also historically received \$5,000 from the town of Franklin annually prior to this year. They, too, were approved for funding through the NHF this year and were awarded a grant to be able to purchase a disability equipped passenger van to address transportation issues.

Other Macon County organizations set to receive a portion of NHF \$1.5 million in grants include First Baptist Church of Franklin/Macon to provide vouchers and support for its Macon Medication Assistance Program as well as Macon County Emergency Management Services to provide improvements in the technology infrastructure for Macon County EMS.

Other organizations' funding ranged from Blue Ridge Mountains Health Project/Free Dental Clinic to increase access to emergency, restorative and preventative dental services to low-income residents of Western North Carolina, to Clay County Schools to increase access to school-based counseling and behavioral health services.

Nantahala Health Foundation plans to announce the timeline for its next round of grants in early 2020. The organization has received \$5 million from the sale of Mission Health to date and will receive \$10 million more over the next two years as part of the sale agreement.

The following is a partial list of recipients of NHF funds:

- Blue Ridge Mountains Health Project/Free Dental Clinic – To increase access to emergency, restorative and preventative dental services to low-income residents of WNC.
- Clay County Emergency Medical Services – To establish a community paramedicine program.
- Clay County Public Health Department – To support expansion of dental services through a mobile dental program.
- Clay County Schools – To increase access to school-based counseling and behavioral health services.
- Community Care Clinic of Franklin – To increase access to health care and medication assistance services.
- KIDS Place – To support the Child Medical Evaluation Program for child and youth victims of abuse and neglect.
- First Baptist Church of Franklin/Macon Medication Assistance Program – To provide vouchers and support for the Macon Medication Assistance Program.
- Macon County Emergency Management Services – To provide improvements in the technology infrastructure for

Macon County EMS.

- Mountain Area Health Education Center – To provide short-term student housing for the Rural Fellowship Program to support students interested in practicing in the region.

- Swain County Emergency Management Services – To establish a community paramedicine program.

- Swain County Health Department – To support expansion of dental services to low-income and uninsured patients.

- Vecinos Farmworker Health Program – For the purchase of medications, preventative supplies, health monitoring devices and vaccines to address patient health concerns.

- REACH of Macon County – To purchase a disability equipped passenger van to address transportation barriers.

- Cherokee Indian Hospital – To purchase a simulation mannequin to allow healthcare professionals and students to learn about, prepare for and respond to life threatening emergencies.

- Graham County Schools – To construct a Greenhouse for the Academy which will provide a venue for instruction in gardening, sustainable horticulture and business management providing fresh produce for the local community.

- HIGHTS – To support the Tiny Home Build Proposal, part of the Youth Continuum of Care Project.

- Southwestern Child Development – To support expanded eligibility for early childhood education services for children ages 0-3 years old.

- Southwestern Community College – To purchase equipment for the new optician program.

- Swain County Recreation Department – To provide upgrades and renovations to improve accessibility for the recreation department swimming pool, increasing the programming capacity for the County's Day Camp program.

- Clay County Senior Food Project – To provide food and supplies to address food insecurity among seniors.

- HERE in Jackson County – To provide case management services to assist homeless households in securing emergency shelter and aid in obtaining permanent, affordable housing.

- Jackson County Department of Aging – To purchase thermal hot pads to improve the quality of food delivery to those served by Meals on Wheels.

- The Sparrows Nest Food Pantry – To provide food and supplies to address food insecurity among seniors.

For more information on NHF and its funding priorities, visit [nantahalahealthfoundation.org](http://nantahalahealthfoundation.org).



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# Macon County community clubs recognized at WNC Honors Awards

The WNC Honors Awards is built on a 70-year tradition of recognizing rural community development clubs for their innovative ideas and grassroots solutions. These centers and clubs are the backbone running through our beloved mountains. The culmination of this year's program occurred at a luncheon held on Saturday, Nov. 2 with 250 community leaders from 13 Western North Carolina counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

The 65 communities participating in this year's program made a \$6 million investment of time, talent, money and effort in our Western North Carolina Communities. Their fundraising efforts brought in \$950,000 with more than 5,500 volunteers investing an impressive 195,500 hours of their time in outreach programs dedicated to conservation, education, beautification, health, wellness, and economic development.

Communities of Promise receive a cash award of \$1,000 and are chosen because of the initiatives implemented by the community that show promise and can be replicated around the region. Locally, the Holly Springs Community Development Club received this honor. They are continuing to make updates to their building, including a keyless lock which will help with rentals, and the placement of a Holly Springs fire coverage map to allow residents to locate their applicable fire district. Holly Springs has worked to list every road and home in their community so that they can visit homes and meet commu-

nity members face-to-face. They have already visited 60 community members giving them a brochure about Holly Springs CDC and inviting them to the next club meeting. The main focus of the club this year has been to bring broadband service to Macon County. Club members have attended several broadband meetings, completed speed tests and questionnaires. They are currently working with a local cable company who has provided service to parts of Holly Springs to extend that service further. This is a huge effort, but will make a lasting impact on the community for years to come.

Engaged Communities receive a cash award of \$500 and are involved in numerous programs impacting their residents. The Otto and Carson Community Development Organizations received this recognition.

Participating Communities receive a cash award of \$250 each for their successful projects implemented during the past year; the Clarks Chapel, Cowee, Nantahala, and Upper Cartoogechaye communities received this designation for the year.

Generous sponsorships from Harrah's Cherokee Casino Resort, Harrah's Valley River Casino & Hotel, Biltmore Farms, Inc., Duke Energy, First Citizens Bank, The McClure Fund, Buncombe County Farm Bureau, Carolina Farm Credit and Wells Fargo brought in \$37,500 to award to the 65 community centers and clubs participating in the 2019 WNC Honors Awards.



Pictured are (L-R) Wayne Sutton and Janie Sutton of Holly Springs Community Development Club accepting the award as a Community of Promise with Leeann Bridges of Harrah's Cherokee Casinos' presenting. The award comes with 1,000 in cash for the club.

Photo courtesy of WNC Communities



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# FBLA club students offering technology assistance to seniors

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

Franklin High School's Future Business Leaders of America Club members have been showing up at Crawford Senior Center recently to offering technology tutoring to seniors. For the past several weeks volunteers from the FBLA club, along with their co-advisor Summer Passmore, have been visiting the seniors at the center to teach them how to operate their electronic devices.

## Why there's a need

The Blog site "No Isolation" explains why seniors have so much trouble with technology. According to Eurostat, in the EU, 87 percent of people aged 75 years and over have never been online (Eurostat, 2018). Most technology designed for communication relies on the ability to see, hear and read, meaning due to health conditions, a significant chunk of society are missing out on communication opportunities.

Seniors often struggle with reduced reactivity, making it harder to keep up with fast-paced technology, such as platforms that use notifications. Nine percent of seniors at the age of 75 or over have severe visual impairments, and 18 percent have severe hearing limitations in the EU (Eurostat, 2017). Ad-

ditionally, U.S statistics show that "23% of older adults indicate that they have a physical or health condition that makes reading difficult or challenging" (Pew Research Centre, 2014). There are reasons to believe that those included in these statistics cannot participate fully in mainstream technology.

Health issues aside, knowledge about technology is also very important to capability, and lack of this is a factor that prevents many seniors from participating in communication technology. As many as 77 percent of seniors report that they would require assistance were they to try and learn how to use a smartphone or tablet. Additionally, of those who are already on the internet but do not use social networking sites, 56 percent say they would need help to connect with friends and family (Pew Research Centre, 2014).

The results of these surveys are clear; whatever the reason is, seniors are missing out on communication technology. Subsequently, missing out on these opportunities for communication can leave seniors feeling disconnected and lonely. Having regular contact with a close circle of friends or family can alleviate the feeling of loneliness, a feeling that has been reported to be bad for health.



FBLA Club member Alyssa Smith helps Bruce Stoudt with his new iPad.

## Help is on the way

Ten seniors participated in the session with the FBLA students, toting their technological devices along. Many had new cell phones but several had tablets and laptops. These lessons

were not group lessons, rather, each participant received an individual tutoring session to help conquer the trials and tribulations of their specific devices.

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FBLA Community Service Project this year and the group plans to continue doing it through the end of the school year. FBLA is also going to be offering Tech Support to everyone in the public on the first and last Thursday of the month beginning in January. Anyone with questions about their mobile devices are invited to sign up with Michelle Brooks by emailing her at michelle.brooks@macon.k12.nc.us or calling the school at 524-6467.

Kim Crawford, Senior Center Coordinator, explained how this all began.

“We polled participants of the senior center regarding the type of activities or help they desired and the most requested response was, can someone help me with technology,” said Crawford. “So, we looked to find someone who knows about many different aspects of technology and who knows better than teenagers, so we contacted Michelle Brooks at FHS to see if her FBLA students would be interested in helping out. Ms. Brooks had previously volunteered to help at the center with Care Connection, a program for patients suffering from memory loss and dementia. She agreed to help again, and now every Wednesday at 3:30 the FBLA students show up to offer their assistance. What is so great about this activity,” she said, “is that it is an inter-generational event.”

One of the participants, Bruce Stoudt, had the privilege of working with Alyssa Smith one of the FBLA volunteers. He came to the tutorial with his android cell phone and his new iPad. Stoudt explained that he purchased the iPad so that he could bring it with him when he traveled. He needed some help navigating the icons in order to get into Facebook, email and messenger. Smith knew just how to help him and before long he was off and running on his own.

“I never had an Apple product before so I really needed some assistance,” Stoudt said.

Smith spoke about what she gets out of helping these seniors.

“I like helping with problems and I like talking and helping. This is my second week doing this,” said Smith.

Linda Swafford was another senior in attendance with her husband, though they both needed different types of assistance. Swafford had just purchased a new Chromebook because she wanted a larger screen. She was interested in copying old photos onto her laptop and really just needed to learn the ins and outs of the new device.

“I have no children or nieces or nephews to get help from, so I took advantage of getting help from the kids here,” said Swafford. Dawson Post was her tutor that day.

“I like being able to help the community. I grew up with technology so I am able to offer help in that area,” said Post.

The event lasted for an hour as each FBLA student made their way to all the seniors in need. From flip phones to android phones, iPads to Laptops, each participant received the one-on-one tutorial they needed to be able to navigate all the buttons and log-ins that their devices require.

Students will be at the Crawford Senior Center every Wednesday from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Seniors in need of assistance with electronic devices, there is help available. The Crawford Senior Center is located at 108 Wayah Street. Call (828)349-2058 for more information.

#### About FBLA

Future Business Leaders of America is a nonprofit educational association for middle school, high school, and college students who are interested in learning about the free enterprise system. FBLA is a nationally recognized club in the U.S.

The purpose of FBLA is to prepare members for careers in business and to assist them by becoming better employees and citizens. FBLA helps students develop leadership abilities, prepares them for entry into a business-related occupations, and offers a setting where members compete at regional, state and national levels in business and technology curriculum. Franklin High School’s FBLA club has 37 members.



Dawson Post helps Linda Swafford with her Chromebook

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:  
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shall be called Wonderful Counsellor, The mighty God,  
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## Hospice House project utilizing workers from Macon County

Construction of SECU Hospice House in Franklin, an initiative of Hospice House Foundation of WNC (HHFWNC), is 35% complete, reflecting roughly \$1 million in expenditures, primarily in Macon County. According to a spokesperson with Western Builders of Sylva, nearly half of their construction crew for the Hospice House project, and weekly payroll for such, is from Macon County. John Barbee, treasurer of Hospice House Foundation of WNC, reported that an analysis of the major sub-contractors employed by Western Builders for the Hospice House project were mostly based in Macon County.

Barbee said that 10 new FTE jobs will be created by SECU Hospice House in Franklin, representing approximately a \$700,000 annual budget flowing into the county. It is anticipated that construction of SECU Hospice House will be complete during in the summer of 2020 with operations commencing shortly thereafter.

HHFWNC has raised \$4 million, 89% of its \$4.5 million campaign goal for SECU Hospice House. Several recent grants contributed to this fundraising progress:

- \$25,000 – Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation
- \$ 5,000 – The Church of the Good Shepherd (Cashiers)

Above is an aerial view of SECU Hospice House on Maple Street 30% from completion. The project is slated to be completed and operating in summer 2020.

- \$ 5,000 - Percy B. Ferebee Endowment
- \$ 3,000 – North Carolina Community Foundation (Jackson and Graham counties)
- \$ 2,500 – Mountain Findings (Highlands)

Additionally, HHFWNC received a grant from the Philip L. Van Every Foundation. The reception area in SECU Hospice House will be named The Philip L. Van Every Foundation Foyer in recognition of this Foundation's major investment in SECU Hospice House.

About Hospice House Foundation of WNC  
HHFWNC is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to raise funds for a hospice inpatient facility for the far western region of North Carolina (Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon, and Swain counties) and northeast Georgia. Hospice Houses provide relief from physical, emotional, and spiritual suffering of people who are facing life's final journey and respite care so that caregivers can get the rest they need to stay well.

To learn more, contact HHFWNC's President, Michele Alderson, at (828)524-6375.



Drawing of SECU Hospice House - Front Elevation

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# Ornament exchange offers gathering opportunity for women

**Deena C. Bouknight**  
Contributing Writer

The fourth annual Ornament Exchange at Discover Church was held last Friday. Close to 250 women packed what is normally the sanctuary space for the non-denominational church. During the three-hour event, attendees enjoyed a meal and homemade dessert, games, music, a speaker, a silent auction, and an ornament exchange. Each six- to eight-top table was hosted by an individual volunteer or a volunteer team who focused on creative themes such as nutcrackers, woodland animals, gnomes, snowflakes, snowmen, and more.

"I have been doing ornament exchanges for 15 years ... the first a small gathering in my house ... as a reason for ladies to get together and celebrate Christmas, with food and laughter," said organizer Julie Adams. "I've been blown away by how this Ornament Exchange at Discover Church has grown in four years. Seventy the first year, 130 the second, then 230, and 249 this year."

"It's just a really good time for women to be women and have a night off during the holidays," said Michelle Graham. "This is my third time being involved and I just like to serve women who are busy."

"There is such a need for women to meet and



Close to 250 women packed Discover Church Dec. 6 to hear live Christmas music and much more at the Ornament Exchange.



Creative table scapes and luscious desserts were represented at the 4th annual Ornament Exchange at Discover Church.



connect with other women," added Adams. "We get so stuck in routines that it's worth it to do something different." She pointed out that some women come to the church for the Ornament Exchange and realize "how much they miss worship and feeling connected to others."

Graham, whose table focused on an upscale animal print theme, said the annual Ornament Exchange event is not only for women who attend Discover Church, but anyone in the community – or visitors. "Some of the women who sit at the table I host are invited and I know them well, but others I do not know well or not at all. I always pray for the women that are going to be sitting at the table – that they would be filled during the evening in so many ways."

Added Devonne Jimison, who has hosted a table for the past two years, "This event is a wonderful way to reach out to women in the whole community. So many women who come say they just don't have anything like this ... it's about getting to know one another, and enjoying a wonderful evening." Jimison's table theme was jewel-tones and peacock.

Sue Joiner, who sat at Jimison's table, said it was her first time at the Ornament Exchange. "I had no idea there was going to be so much creativity and glitz," she said.

"They really take ownership of their tables," said Adams of the hosts. "It's a creative way to carve out a ladies night. It ends up being a big mix of Franklin ... not just a church event."

The 2020 Ornament Exchange at Discover Church will take place the first Friday of December.

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### Miss Patti celebrates 26-year heart transplant

On Wednesday, Dec. 11, friends gathered at First United Methodist Church Fellowship Hall to help Patti McClure celebrate the 26th anniversary of her heart transplant. Pictured with Miss Patti in no particular order are Linda Hughes, Barbara Raby, Sissy Pattillo, Cindy Eubanks, Diana Balleis, Linda Morrow, Wilma Corbin and Nancy Scott. Photo by Betsey Gooder

This is a festive Christmas advertisement for 'Going Places Travel'. The background is red with green pine branches and white stars. On the right, a large yellow teardrop-shaped frame contains a photo of Santa Claus sitting on a chair with a young child on his lap. The child is wearing a red and black plaid shirt and has a white bow in her hair. To the left of the frame, the text reads: 'ARE YOU LIKE SANTA &amp; PEYTON, THROWING UP YOUR HANDS AT WHAT TO BUY FOR CHRISTMAS? GIVE THE GIFT OF TRAVEL... Merry Christmas!'. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'Going Places Travel' which includes a globe and an airplane, followed by the address '244 Porter St. • Franklin, NC' and the phone number '828.369.5999'.

This is a promotional flyer for two businesses. The top left features the logo for 'MOSSY ROCK HOME &amp; BEAUTY' with the address '37 E Main Street Franklin, NC' and phone number '828.369.1612'. Next to it is the logo for 'Blackberry MARKET FASHION BOUTIQUE'. The main text in the center reads 'Annual Christmas SALE' in large blue letters, followed by '25% OFF STOREWIDE\*' in pink and white. Below that, it says '\*Some Exclusions' and 'MONDAY, DEC. 16 through TUESDAY, DEC. 24'. On the right side of the flyer, there is a photo of a woman wearing a white jacket and a patterned scarf, standing in a store. The entire flyer is framed with a decorative border of white pine branches.

This is a Christmas message from the Macon County Board of Commissioners and County Employees. The background is yellow with a decorative border of red and white poinsettias and green holly leaves. The main text is written in a cursive font: 'Wishing you a Merry Christmas with all sincerity'. Below this, the words 'PEACE and JOY', 'LOVE and PROSPERITY,', 'HOPE, CONTENTMENT and GOOD HEALTH,', and 'HARMONY, GOODWILL and WEALTH' are listed. At the bottom, it says 'Macon County Board of Commissioners &amp; County Employees'.

## OPINION

## What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor  
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

The last Highlands Town Board was a unique session with the swearing of Marc Hehn, a new commissioner, and the swearing of Commissioners Buz Dotson and Brian Stiehler for new four year terms.

Kevin O'Donnell, our Nova Energy consultant, gave an update on the status of the town's Duke Energy wholesale electric contract. The contract is complicated and fluid. Kevin monitors the continuous execution of the contract to insure our interests are represented. He challenged a charge in this year's contract that netted the town a \$64,000 refund. Refunds are applied toward operating costs to help keep rates down. For at least four years we have had no significant rate increases. That has not been the case with Duke retail customers. Kevin informed us that Duke retail customers may be facing a built-in 50% rate increase over the next decade to cover the rebuilding Duke's electric grid. As a wholesale customer, the Town of Highlands will not be a part of these rate increases.

With that said, Kevin does expect Duke to increase our wholesale rate next year. There is a rate formula in our contract with Duke that determines these increases. For several years we have not passed these increases on to customers, but the coming year may be different.

Coal ash fees were again brought up by Kevin. The NC Utilities Commission granted 100% of the costs Duke requested for coal ash recovery. That ruling meant higher fees for Duke customers. The NC Attorney General and the NC Utilities Public Staff filed a suit that will be heard by the NC Supreme Court. The plaintiffs contend that the NC Utilities Commission awarded Duke excessive recovery costs when compared to similar cases in nearby states. If the court rules for the plaintiffs, there's a good chance the current coal ash fees could be reduced.

In 2028 the town will have to renegotiate a contract with Duke, or find another supplier. Kevin advised us to start this process around 2025. It will be important to explore opinions concerning how and with whom to purchase electricity.

The new fire station is moving forward. The board approved a request to seek qualifications for a contractor manager position. This position would oversee the entire building construction. The contractor/manager would call for bids from subcontractors for all building phases. The manager would consult with the town and architect in determining which subcontractors made the best bids. This type of construction management has proven to be an effective way of containing building costs.

I also appointed members of the board to working committees for next year. These committees work with staff in studying specific issues and making proposals and recommendations to the entire board. For example, we have a public safety committee, a land use committee, a finance committee and a recreation committee to name just a few. I will be appreciative of all the time and work the committees will do this year.

## Letters to the Editor

## The Christmas Story not fully understood

I cannot tell you the many times I have heard the story of Christmas, and as a very small child, the story of St. Nick who filled our stockings and placed gifts under lighted trees to the wonderment of all. The imagination and fairy tale wonder of Christmas for little children is brief, but the anticipation of Christmas morning never quite seems to leave us no matter what age we find ourselves, for it brings families both young and old closer than any other time of year. It seems our entire world stops ever so briefly on this one holiday for a time of pause and reflection of where we are in life and why our heart's desire is for understanding and a peace within. The mystery of Christmas that affects many seems to be placed, not by man, but by the hand of Divine influence. Man gives us the commercial side of things and we get a distorted view of the reality and truest meaning of just what Christmas is. Christmas is but one true gift given to one person, and that gift is for you. A young maiden was honored the privilege of bringing this gift of Christ to humanity by which we all can share in, if we accept the gift offered. This great story of Christmas blends in well to the narrative of who and what we are. We all have a sense there's an imbalance within us and this world we live in. This uneasiness is widely felt and seeking answers through man, government leaders, and religious systems is to no avail. We want a love in truth, honesty and justice to relieve the uneasiness we all feel, but it is no where to be found. This is where and why the Christmas story enters our lives. It's a story within a story. God's beginning of creation, time, and us in it, and man's searching for his own meaning and purpose, and continues so to this day. God enters into this story again in a most profound way, by bringing Christ as a innocent child who remained innocent unto death for giving freely a purpose and meaning to those who are looking for what man cannot achieve. He came to satisfy the purest honesty of love and justice we all want and desire; our lives, families, country, and our world seeks this. God, though his son "Christ," is the essence and display of everything we seek, for he has placed this search in the heart of mankind, and the heart finds itself when it finds God. There is no greater gift than one who gives his own life for those undeserving of it. This gift is given and only finds its value to those who freely accept it, otherwise this gift is of no value and is not seen for what it truly is. The true gift has been given to mankind by God Himself ... Christ, the gift to humanity, born from the womb of humanity, to relate to the failure and hurt of humanity against itself and against God. We all share and are taking part of a continued story of seeking just why is it, and where is it, we fit. This mystery of the, "Christmas Story is not fully understood" or realized, until we accept the gift. A gift which keeps giving ... "Christ." Merry Christmas!

Deni Shepard - Franklin, N.C.

## Witch hunt grasping at power straws

President Trump was spot on once again by saying the current shenanigans going on in Congress is a "witch hunt."

If you know history you can see the comparisons to the witch hunts carried on by our early settlers in the New England states. Hundreds were accused of being witches and some 20 were actually hung. One group of girls complained that a 5-year-old girl was a witch and she was jailed as a result.

Many young girls said they had witnessed witches doing their thing and some even said they experienced visions of the witches attacking people. More broke down in a court trial and screamed and wailed and went into a stupor. Of course there were no real witches and it turns out parents were encouraging their daughters to lie so the parents could grab the property owned by the accused witches.

The bottom line is that if you repeat a lie enough times people will begin to believe it. This is precisely what we see going on in the Democrat controlled Congress right now.

Adam Schiff and Jerry Nadler keep lying about what President Trump is or has been doing. Fact is, it is surprising to see how many people are suckered into believing the lies.

Combined with some of the Communist/Socialists people who would love to bring America to its knees we could lose our country so many worked so hard to build.

You better believe China will be pouring money into the 2020 elections to stop President Trump from winning. They don't want a balanced trade deal. China is not going to approve a trade deal in the hopes Trump will be taken down. They will back Biden since his family owes them so much money.

Europeans and other countries don't want to pay their fair share of defense and would rather have us foot the bill for their defense. Just in Okinawa, we pour billions into their economy and they would go broke without our bases there.

The Europeans are happy to have our bases in their country because our service people spend their money in their cities.

So far, I have been unable to find any honest testimony from anyone during the recent impeachment hearings and found it filled with hearsay and some outright lies.

In the meantime, we deal with the absurd and we must all work to grasp what's really going in the DC swamp.

The Socialists have been diligently working for over 80 years to arrive at this point in time and we must decide who we want to follow, President Trump or the liars?

Let's be honest, every president from Washington to Lincoln to Roosevelt to JFK to LBJ to Obama could have been impeached under the standards set by the Socialists currently ruling Congress. But note they turn a blind eye to their own corruption.

Bob Wilson - Franklin, N.C.

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## Dems need to keep doing what they're doing

I finally have to respond to the constant lies and half-truths being printed in both Macon County newspapers, by people who definitely have to be Democrats. A Mr. Snell and Mr. Waldrop must be on both papers' payrolls, as both seem to have their letters published by both papers. My guess is they are simply following orders of the Dem Collective to keep posting their "propaganda" as many times as they can – as then maybe, just maybe people will actually believe the drivel they spout. And yes, it is drivel to the maximum.

I'm sure most Macon County folks who float moderate to right don't have time to write so many letters as they have jobs and on the floor laughing their butts off at the nonsense that gets printed on a regular basis by both papers. These two gentlemen as not alone, they have plenty of actors with them that also get their diatribes posted very often, like a Mr. Chew of Otto and others. Gentlemen, you have an opinion and that is fine, yet when it is a bald face lie and you know it – then shame on you for propagating it. Just because your "masters" demand you to do so, does not make it right. Most of the same people also like to spout off they are veterans, which means to me – nothing other than maybe you got some shell shock or traumatic brain injury at some point and you need to seek immediate help from the VA, if you can get it. I say that as a 20-year military retiree – not just a veteran who probably served simply because of the draft. I volunteered and stayed through four presidents – from Carter to Clinton - two Democrats and two GOP. The Democrats were horrible presidents, as well as the prior POTUS #44 who just left office. Clinton was not as bad as the two mentioned, but because he was so Politically Correct, he made the military not worth staying any longer for.

I am Independent by choice and float moderate to the right. I've been both a DEM and GOP, so I know both sides of the story. You gentlemen have not and seem to be lifelong DEMs, so of course you follow the party line; even as bad as it's getting. Should there ever be a Dem worth voting for, I'd seriously consider that person – yet as treasonous as they are becoming, that won't probably happen in my lifetime. Does Trump lie – of course he does and so do you! He's a businessman in a political game and the politicians (all of them – both sides) are doing their best to knock him done and out without hurting themselves – i.e. Lindsey Graham, Mitch McConnell. Democrats don't care, they are all in – and that is a very bad place to be in. You may win big (doubtful), but can easily lose big (probable). As for what Trump did prior to being POTUS – who cares how many times he filed bankruptcy during the real estate downturns, whom he may or may not have slept with, and the list goes on. We the people did not elect / vote for him as he was a saint. We voted for him simply to keep the devil incarnate out and turn this country into a craphole that was forming under #44. Trump puts his pants on like you and me – one leg at a time; so he is not better or worse. He's a billionaire – so what. Dems have two of them running and both are horrible choices and will be lucky to get 5-10% of the vote. There are no real leaders out of the whole bunch of Dem POTUS potentials. I mean from a sleazy woman (Harris) who used her gender to climb the ladder to being a Senator; a woman (Warren) who doesn't even know what she is, but pretends to be anything and everything; and a guy (Bernie) who has never held a real job and wants to make everything free. Really? "Who" pays for all that free stuff?

Matthew 7:3-5 explains your situation very well: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye."

I get the impression you and I did not watch the same Impeachment Hearings, if you even watched at all. I did as

much as I could stomach. The oxymoron called the House Intelligence Committee part was a complete and utter fiasco. Dems asked very soft and opinionated questions and got like-wise answers. The GOP asked harder questions and got the "real" answers from all those that came. None had any direct knowledge of the telephone call in question for the whole charade. None – not one. Even the strongest one – Sondland – eventually stated there was no Quid Pro Quo and President Trump even stated to him such. That statement directly conflicted with his written and opening statement. None of the others, even the so-called highly decorated Army Major – Vindman – had no direct knowledge. Vindman is a Russian by birth and the man wore his dress uniform that day for simply one reason – to get people to think such a man would never lie – but he did. Why wear your dress uniform when your day to day uniform is a business suit? I do know where you folks got your account of the Intel Committee fiasco – from the Alphabet Nightly News stations – as I, too, watched what Mr. Stephanopoulos and David Muir of ABC Nightly News said on TV (WLOS - Asheville). Those people only gave part of the real story that aligned with their political leanings. What did FOX News say? No clue, as I don't watch it along with CNN, MSNBC, and the other false media outlets. I got my facts straight from watching the circus and even listening to the full telephone conversation between Trump and the Ukraine president. Even the Office of Management and Budget have come out stating that "holding" funds from countries is pretty standard under "all" presidents. I even saw a video of ex-VP Joe Biden explaining how he held up \$1 billion in aid to the Ukraine unless they stopped investigating his son Hunter. Hhhhhmmmm, think we see where the real Quid Pro Quo really was and that would be the Democrats under Barry Soetero aka BHO. I think President Trump has every right as president to ask another country's president to look into some of the shady deals of the past. BTW [by the way] – Joe Biden is simply one of 20-plus people who are running for election, not the actual Democrat nominee at this point. Americans, all Americans have the right to know what kind of shady deals were going on during the Obama Regime.

Then off to Little Man J-bo Nadler's Circus in the House Judiciary. Hhhhhmmmm – let's see ... four constitutional professors are invited and guess what, three are Democrat invitees (Feldman, Gerhardt, and Karlan) and one (Turley) is for the GOP. Much like the Intel Committee – the Dems asked very soft and opinionated questions for their three people and can you imagine it – they all responded in kind. Turley sat over at the end of the table for nearly the whole session and was never asked a single question by the Dems. He even stated that he was not a Trump supporter, but gave his view on the "Constitutionality" of the whole impeachment deal and said nothing President Trump did was impeachable. He also specified that should the Democrats keep on and set a very bad precedent like the Nuclear Option from Harry Reid & Co days, it could / would come back to bite them later on. Even Karlan had to drag President Trump's son – Barron – into the fray, yet according to the Dems – children (even grown ones like Hunter) are off limits – yet not Democrat one said a word to the contrary. She also stated that she had to cross the street so as not to walk directly in front of a Trump Hotel. OMG – is that not loony tunes!

Explain to all of us, why the impeachment charges have gone from Quid Pro Quo to what they are now? Every time a charge was made, that charge has been nullified by facts – so let's keep that county fair duck shooting game going with that bent BB gun and ducks streaming across that are next to impossible to knock down - maybe one shot will actually work! Everyone knows Trump will not be impeached (nothing to impeach for) and Dems are simply making sure he is re-elected in 2020. But hey, keep up the good work.

Thanks,

Terry Swift – Franklin, N.C.

## The child I was would not understand

I remember in grade school learning about the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. Even today, the opening phrases in those documents sometimes play over and over in my mind, like a song you can't get out of your head,

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

"We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility ..."

I remember the King in England ruled the American colonists with personal fiats and a total disregard for established laws. I can easily picture the people who founded our great nation, because they are no different from the people I know now. They are the same people as my neighbors, friends, work colleagues, all with a common understanding of the importance of personal liberty and freedom from tyranny.

The nation's founders tried to insure that a tyrant would never again rule the people without consent. They would define the three most basic government functions, each free from domination by the other two branches. First they gave us a body of representative lawmakers elected directly by the people; this Congress most closely represented the people and was intended to be the primary of the three branches. The second branch would be the executor, responsible for ensuring that the laws enacted by the Congress were carried out. The third branch would be judges who could interpret the laws and resolve conflicts between the Congress and the executor.

I try to imagine what our colonial ancestors would think of our current state of affairs: a body of lawmakers whose divisiveness and rancor have paralyzed their ability to enact laws, a body of judges who have used partisanship and political agendas to poison their judgements, and an executor who has made himself unanswerable to either the lawmakers or judges. I think these time travelers from the birth of our nation would be horrified that our country has allowed the return of an imperial executive, who has put himself above the law.

That innocent child I was would not understand how we could have returned to a government ruled by an executive with absolute power, who is above the law. That child I was would recoil from the return of tyranny.

We now have a president who has said he will not respect any of the constitutionally protected subpoenas that the Congress has issued.

Why does president refuse to respond to these requests for documents and testimonies?

He says it isn't fair, he says he has done nothing wrong.

The president has decided that he does not answer to the Congress. His actions tear down the most fundamental building blocks of our nation; the ability of the Congress to keep the executor from devolving in a despot, a ruler with no boundaries, an autocrat, a dictator.

That child I was would fear for the future of our democratic republic.

John Barry – 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.*

## WCU trustees authorize beer, wine sales at campus athletics events

The Western Carolina University Board of Trustees unanimously approved a resolution authorizing the sale of beer and wine at campus athletics venues, endorsing the recommendations of a 17-member special study committee assembled in August to examine pros and cons of having those alcoholic beverages available at university sporting events.

The action came as part of the board's quarterly meeting Friday, Dec. 6. The special study committee was tasked with examining issues surrounding a state law approved by the legislature in June that empowers the boards of trustees at University of North Carolina System institutions with the authority to permit the sale of beer and wine at athletics venues.

But before fans of Catamount athletics will be able to raise their glasses to toast the board's action, the trustees also instructed the university administration to develop an implementation plan that will guide the sale of beer and wine and to bring that plan back to the board for review at its meeting in March.

Among the matters to be considered by university administration are logistical, business and legal matters related to the sale of beer and wine at campus athletics facilities and at which athletics venues and events those beverages should be sold.

Board of Trustees member Tim Haskett served as chair of the special study committee, which was composed of a wide cross-section of campus and external community representatives. Fellow board member Kenny Messer served as vice chair.

During the past three months, the committee conducted interviews with the trustees, administration and athletics staff at peer institutions, members of WCU's Catamount Club, university alumni, residents of the surrounding community, law enforcement personnel, and faculty, staff and students at WCU and at other institutions.

"With such a diverse group on our committee, we leveraged their broad perspectives in making our recommendation to the Board of Trustees," Haskett said.

Among the findings of the committee was strong support in favor of beer and wine sales from the local community, alumni, faculty, staff and students, Haskett said. Most of the interviewees said they considered the sale of beer and wine foremost as an enhancement to the fan experience.

## Rabun Gap students give to children's home

Over the past few weeks, students in Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School's Lower and Middle Schools have been ordering and gathering donations for Calvary Home for Children in Anderson, S.C. On Thursday, Dec. 12, Laura Lindsley, a representative from Calvary Home, came to campus to speak to the students during chapel and to take the donations back to the home. She asked the students to take time during this season and throughout the next year to reflect on God's goodness to them.

The stairwell in the Lower School is lined with a gingerbread road decorated with gingerbread houses that students colored in after placing an Amazon or Target order for Calvary Home. Students took QR codes home to their parents that linked directly to Calvary Home's wish lists and the donated items were shipped directly to the home.

"Our students have created a fictional Christmas village in the stairwell of the Lower School to represent the community of homes at Calvary Home for Children," said Head of the Lower School Ms. Renee Rogers. "Helping our students visualize the village of people and supplies it takes to help care for children allowed them to see the part that they can play in positively impacting other children's lives. Our students and families were eager to help furnish homes for children in our area. It also helped our students to see that each person can make a difference in the lives of others."

In the Middle School, students piled supplies and toys next to the Christmas tree in the queue. After hearing from Lindsley in chapel, the sixth-grade worked together to pack up Lindsley's truck with all they had collected and then enjoyed having lunch with her afterward.

Calvary Home strives for every child to be nurtured in a



Sixth-graders at Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School helped to load a truck with donations gathered for Calvary Home for Children in Anderson, S.C., on Thursday, Dec. 12. Pictured left to right: Kenna Bilbrey of Otto, Abby Hartridge of Clayton, Annie Davis of Lakemont, Ga., Cassidy Klimasewski of Rabun Gap, Zoey Weems of Tallulah Falls, Ga., Santi Robles of Franklin, Coby Bloedow of Highlands, Hannah Demmler of Rabun Gap, and Abigail Brenner of Franklin.

welcoming, reliable, and Christ-centered home and be united with their family as a more physically, emotionally, and academically stable individual. Lindsley said that the gifts students provided make a big impact on the children in the home and are a way that God shows his faithfulness and love to them.

"The contributions poured into Calvary this year from our parents and students in both the Lower and Middle School Divisions were amazing, including strollers and two full-size soccer goals," said Middle School science teacher and Experiential Education Coordinator Johnathan BySura. "What we saw here at the school was only half of the total contributions, as much was sent directly to Calvary for their new baby house. This is such a meaningful and important community service project for the students at our school. We hope to visit Calvary Home within the next few months to continue our relationship and service to these children. Thank you to all who support this mission."

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# Marr family ‘comes together’ for the holidays

**Brittney Lofthouse**  
Contributing Writer

Active duty U.S. military members numbering around 170,000 are deployed to more than 150 countries around the world. Nearly 40,000 members are assigned to classified missions in undisclosed locations. Franklin native John Marr is one of those individuals. Marr graduated from Franklin High School in 2012 and currently serves in the United States Air Force where he works in structural maintenance. He was deployed in October for the second time since joining the military.

This deployment however, is a little different than his last one. When Marr left to serve in October, he didn't just leave behind his wife Kaylee, who graduated from Franklin High School in 2015. But he also left behind his 10-month-old son, Trevor.

“Our son is 10 months old so this is his first Christmas,” said Kaylee. “It’s really hard to not have John here for Trevor’s first Thanksgiving and Christmas but we are both so proud of him. He will also be missing his first birthday which is also really hard on him.”

Kaylee and John were married on June 10, 2017, after dating for a year. While John was part of the Franklin High School football and wrestling teams, he joined the military after spending two years studying at Western Carolina University. He has served in the military for the last six years.

With John missing his first Christmas as a new dad, Kaylee wanted to do something to bring her family together for the holidays. She posted a picture of John holding a sign reading “Merry” and a picture of her and Trevor holding a sign reading “Christmas” side by side on Facebook. Despite being across the world from each other, the photos made them feel a little closer together. Photographer Ruby Peoples photoshopped the picture a little more to blend the two



The Marr Family found a way to “come together” for Christmas, with John taking a photo at his place of deployment and Kaylee and their son taking one in Franklin. Kaylee just wanted to “lighten up” the holidays and show that “no matter how far away he is, John is still with us and we are still one happy family.”

photos together to make it appear as if they family was a little closer for the holidays.

“Deployments can be so hard and exhausting,” said Kaylee. “The idea behind the picture came from other military spouses I’m friends with. I just thought it would lighten up the holidays and show no matter how far away he is, John is still with us and we are still one happy family.”

Kaylee said living in Franklin and being around friends and family makes the entire process a little easier.

“I am very fortunate to be able to move home and have the help of family to keep us busy,” said Kaylee. “We also ordered a life size cardboard cut out of him so he can be ‘here’ as well and to keep things funny. We are making the best of the situation. The love and support all of us have felt by our family and friends is amazing and we appreciate it.”

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# Shop with a Cop

The annual Shop with a Cop was held last Friday. Children from all over Macon County were given a chance to ride along with law enforcement, shop at Walmart with officers from all branches of law enforcement, emergency personnel and NC Wildlife Officers, have dinner, see Santa and wrap presents they bought for family members. Shop With a Cop raises funds all year to provide Christmas for Macon County children and their families.  
Photos by Vickie Carpenter



NC Hwy Patrol Officer William Vespasian with Ryan



Franklin Police Officer Steve Apel and Susan Ball with Ava



MCSO Officer Nick Lofthouse and Brittney Lofthouse with Bentley and Isabella



NC Wildlife Officer Kenneth Ashe and Faith Ashe with Bryan and Brianna



Franklin Fire Dept Alex Andreu, Chuck Norton, Tori Norton, Brayden, Justin, Maddy Brown, Brooke Breedlove and Bo Garrison



MCSO Officer Chris Murray with Austyn



Sasha with Santa



McKayla Holland helps out with wrapping presents.



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# Family nurse practitioners ready for duty

Harris Regional Hospital and Swain Community Hospital joins Western Carolina University in announcing that Caroline Rooney, Hannah Caplinger, and Norma Burdette have completed the family nurse practitioner program (FNP) and will begin caring for patients at hospital locations this month. Rooney and Caplinger will join Harris Family Care – Franklin and Burdette will join Swain Family Care.

Rooney and Caplinger received educational funding for the family nurse practitioner program through The Ascent Partnership, the formal relationship between WCU and the hospitals. The partnership launched in 2015. In the partnership, the hospitals provide full tuition coverage for selected nurse practitioner students who commit to a minimum of

Swain Community Hospital.

“This is a wonderful opportunity to help our students and make a positive difference in improving the health of our communities,” said Doug Keskula, dean of the College of Health and Human Sciences at Western Carolina University.

A native of Orlando, Fla., Rooney has lived in Sylva for the past 11 years and completed her undergraduate studies at WCU. Caplinger has lived in Sylva for 22 years and completed her associate degree in Nursing at Southwestern Community College and her bachelor’s degree in Nursing at Western Carolina University. Burdette is a native and life-long resident of Swain County. She completed her undergraduate degree at Western Carolina University. Rooney,



Hannah Caplinger



Norma Burdette



Caroline Rooney

three years of employment by the hospitals after graduation. Burdette received educational funding through the Nurse Corps program, part of the federal Health Resources & Services Administration Health Workforce.

“Western Carolina University is an asset to our region in training the next generation of healthcare workers. We are excited to collaborate with WCU through The Ascent Partnership, and with other state and federal partners in expanding access to primary care in western North Carolina,” said Steve Heatherly, CEO of Harris Regional Hospital and

Caplinger, and Burdette cared for patients as registered nurses (RNs) for Harris and Swain before pursuing advanced practice degrees at Western Carolina University.

Appointments may be made with Rooney or Caplinger by calling Harris Family Care – Franklin at (828)349-3550. Appointments may be made with Burdette by calling Swain Family Care at (828)488-4205.

For more information on tuition support through The Ascent Partnership visit [www.myharrisregional.com](http://www.myharrisregional.com).

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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 November 22 - December 16. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*



## **Macon County Sheriff's Department**

### **December 9**

Nathan James Smith, 30, of Franklin, was charged with domestic violence protective order. No bond was set. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

### **December 10**

Jason Lee Rogers, 42, of Otto, was charged with assault, communicating threats, sexual battery. No bond was set. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

Mario Sanchez Garcia, 37, of Franklin, was charged with communicating threats. No bond was set. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

### **December 13**

Brevon Alexander Kimsey, 19, of Franklin, was charged with failure to appear for assault on a government official. A secured bond of \$4,000 was set. Parrish W. Young made the arrest.

### **December 15**

Garry Lee Franks, 57, of Franklin, was charged with communicating threats. A secured bond of \$250 was set. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

### **December 16**

Travis Aron Zepeda, 23, of Cherokee, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia. A secured bond of \$3,500 was set. Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

Krystal Downing, 20, of Franklin, was issued warrant service for probation violation, attempted larceny, break and entering a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$15,000 was set. Stephanie Robbins made the arrest.

## **Franklin Police Department**

### **December 3**

Eric Romer Madsen, 59, of Trimont Trail, was charged with assault on a female, sexual battery. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

### **December 4**

Howard Leo Fregeau, 22, of Treasure Lane, was charged with driving under the influence. An unsecured bond of \$2,000 was set.

### **December 6**

Rebecca Jean Dills, 34, of Belleview Rd., was charged with possession of a firearm by a felon, larceny of a firearm, false pretenses. A secured bond of \$20,000 was set.

### **December 8**

Brian Keith McConnell, 43, of Windy Gap Rd., was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana, no operators license. A secured bond of \$3,500 was set.

## **Jackson County Sheriff's Department**

### **November 22**

Jordyn Sloan Morris, 21, of Old Cullowhee Rd., Cullowhee. No bond was set.

Xan Deweese Sergio, 22, of Citidel Dr., Cullowhee, was charged with assault on a child under 12, misdemeanor child abuse, interfere with emergency communication, assault on a female. No bond was set.

Darin Ray Talley, 31, of Bizmark Loop, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor larceny. A secured bond of \$250 bond was set.

Austin Moody Terril Rattler, 24, of Cabe Rd., was issued a true bill of indictment for failure to appear on a felony. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

William Brian Henry, 38, of Wills Cove Rd., Clyde, was issued a true bill of indictment for no operator's license. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

### **November 23**

Jimmy Wayne Edwards, 26, of Begonia Lane, was charged with failure to appear for failure to complete community service. No bond was set.

Ian Richard Simpson, 51, of Secret Meadow Lane, Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for resist a public officer. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Timothy Scott Lawrence, 32, of Old Cullowhee Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with resist/obstruct/delay, larceny after breaking and entering, breaking and entering a motor vehicle. No bond was set.

### **November 24**

Matthew Sampson Armachain, 26, of Hayes Lossiah Rd., Cherokee, was charged with possession of counterfeit money, possession of a stolen motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Darren Ray Carter, 29, of Molasses Mountain Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set.

### **November 25**

Leona Boston Spears, 67, of Levi Mathis Rd., Whittier, was charged with simple assault. No bond was set.

David Donnie Luker, 42, of Luker Branch Rd., Tuckasegee, was charged with possession of a firearm by a felon. No bond was set.

Christopher Todd Jones, 33, of Cloudy Valley Dr., was charged with failure to appear for assault on a female. A secured bond of \$6,000 was set.

### **November 27**

Stacy Burton, 36, of Franklin, was charged with failure to appear for school attendance law violation. A secured bond of \$750 was set.

### **November 28**

Anthony Travis Arrwood, 33, of Devin Dr., Cullowhee, was charged with possession of stolen goods/property, failure to appear for felony larceny, break or enter a motor vehicle, violation of court order, misdemeanor larceny, larceny of motor vehicle, possession of a stolen motor vehicle, breaking and entering into a motor vehicle, driving while license revoked, mirror equipment violation, cover vehicle registration sticker or plate, resist/obstruct/delay public officer discharge duties, conspire break/enter building, felonious larceny, breaking and entering forcible, larceny, damage to a coin operated machine, break into a coin operated machine. A secured bond of \$51,500 was set.

Cassandra Chey Fox, 41, of Silver Fox Dr., Cullowhee, was charged with aid and abet larceny. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Timothy Scott Lawrence, 32, of Old Cullowhee Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with larceny after breaking and enter-

ing, breaking and entering a motor vehicle. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

### **November 29**

Elijah Wayne King, 41, of Lee Rd., Clyde, was charged with communicating threats, order for arrest for larceny by changing price tag, possession of marijuana paraphernalia, simple possession of a schedule III controlled substance. A \$250 bond was set.

Jessica Caitland Strickland, 29, of Hendersonville, was charged with assault on a government official, resist/delay/obstruct. A secured bond of \$500.

### **November 30**

Charles Alden Brooks, 17, of Long Branch Church Rd., was charged with failure to appear for damage to property, consume alcohol by persons less than 19, damage to property, break and enter a motor vehicle, felony conspiracy, obtain property by false pretense. A secured bond of \$1,500 was set.

Carrol Dean Moore, 57, of U.S. Hwy 441, was issued a true bill for obstructing justice. An unsecured bond of \$5,000 was set.

John Preston Rickman, 32, of Likawanta Dr., Cherokee, was charged with possession of stolen goods/property, misdemeanor larceny. No bond was set.

### **December 1**

Jackie Kevin Shelton, 46, of Ben Dr., Waynesville, was charged with breaking and entering forcible, assault by strangulation, assault on a female, assault on a child under 12, child abuse, communicating threats, injury to real property. No bond was set.

Christian Ryan Sammons, 26, of Toby Bryson Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with driving while license revoked, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

### **December 2**

Jesse Lonnie Harkins, 29, of Norton Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set.

Michael James Stiwinter, 27, of Windy Gap Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Wayne Morris Harbour, 48, of Hayfield Dr., was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

Laura Marie Jensen, 52, of Cheerful Cove Rd., was charged with failure to appear for possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$1,200 was set.

Kaitlyn Ann Reyor, 24, of Blanton Branch Rd., was charged with failure to appear for possession of methamphetamine, felony out of county probation violation. A secured bond of \$12,000 was set.

Darrell Martin Litzau, 34, of Parton Rd., Bryson City, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia not marijuana, possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

### **December 3**

Tracy Filkins Mathis, 49, of Triangle Rd., Tuckasegee, was charged with simple assault. No bond was set.

Kraig Allen Lackey, 35, of Hayfield Dr., was issued a child support purge, probation violation. A \$4,730 bond was set.

Danny Ray Johnson, 38, of Walter Ashe, was charged with failure to appear for assault on a female, domestic violence protective order violation. A secured bond of \$6,500 was set.

Dustin Ryan Dyer, 28, of Bee Branch, Bryson City, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver methamphetamine. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.





# Singing Christmas Card Thursday

Join family and friends as the community comes together to enjoy stories and songs of the Christmas Season Thursday, Dec. 19, at 7 p.m., at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. A heart-warming event full of joy, laughter and a few surprises. For tickets, visit [greatmountainmusic.com](http://greatmountainmusic.com) or call (866)273-4615.

Photos by Betsey Gooder



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# Selecting and caring for your family Christmas tree

Melinda Myers – Guest columnist

The Christmas tree is the center of many family celebrations. Ornaments collected over the years decorate the boughs while brightly wrapped gifts are carefully placed underneath. But the hunt for the perfect tree can be an important part of the tradition. Many try to find the right size and shape for the space allotted, a fragrance the whole family prefers and good needle retention for long lasting beauty. Load the family into the car or walk to the corner Christmas tree lot and let the hunt begin.

**Size and shape are important.** Your tree needs to fit but finding a fresh tree to last through the holidays is equally important. Here are a few tips to help you find the right tree and keep it looking its best throughout the holidays.

**Buy local.** You'll support local Christmas tree growers and reduce the risk of spreading unwanted pests into your landscape when purchasing locally grown trees. Your local University Extension Service and Department of Natural Resources will provide updates on any threats.

**Select the right variety.** Family tradition may dictate your tree choice. Many prefer the fragrance of balsam fir and the needle retention of other firs like Fraser, white, Grand and Noble.

Though not a true fir, Douglas fir needles have a wonderful aroma when crushed. White pines lack the fragrance that many prefer. Its pliable branches only support light-weight ornaments, but the soft needles have less bite than the popular Scots or Scotch pine. This evergreen has stiff branches that support heavier ornaments and its needles hold even when dry.



Proper selection and care of your Christmas tree will ensure that it lasts throughout the holiday season.

Photo courtesy of Melinda Myers, LLC

**Check for freshness.** A fresh tree will last throughout the holidays. Run your hand along the stem. The needles should be pliable, yet firmly attached to the branch. Avoid trees with lots of moss, vines, broken branches and other signs of poor care.

**The right fit.** Look closely at the overall shape and size of the tree. Stand the tree upright to make sure it will fit in the allotted space. Check the trunk. It should be straight and the base small enough to fit in your tree stand.

**Make a fresh cut.** Remove at least an inch from the base of the trunk before setting it in the stand. Straight or diagonal cuts work equally well. A diagonal or V-shaped cut may make it difficult to properly support the tree in the stand.

**Proper watering is key.** Fill the stand with water and check it often. Fresh trees can absorb as much as 2 quarts of water in the first 24 hours. Keeping your tree stand filled with water is the best way to keep your tree looking its best throughout the season.

Once your tree is in place you can add lights and decorations. Then be sure to take time throughout the busy holiday season to sit down, relax with your favorite winter beverage and enjoy the beauty of your Christmas tree.

For more on Melinda Myers visit [www.MelindaMyers.com](http://www.MelindaMyers.com).



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# Accomplished artist pursues lifelong love of painting

**Deena C. Bouknight**  
Contributing Writer

Cynthia Cochran Kinard was stricken with cancer when she was a child. To help her pass the time while she recovered from surgery, members of the Macon County community – where she grew up – gave her activity gifts to open each day. One of those was a pigment painting.

“It was of Prince Charming and Cinderella,” said Kinard, “and when I dipped my brush in water and ran it across the board and the image appeared, I decided I wanted to be an artist.”

Then, at around age 13, Kinard’s father purchased a book for her on the Dutch master artist Rembrandt. “I thought he was the most skilled artist I would ever see. I decided to pursue the masters after that.”

For the past seven years, Kinard has managed a gallery and studio in one of the former classrooms at Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center. The Franklin High School and Western Carolina University graduate eventually studied in Italy the teachings of mainly 16th and 17th century master artists. For more than eight years, she studied the painstaking process involved in oil painting techniques. Kinard also paints in watercolor and enjoys pen and ink and charcoal mediums as well. Besides a degree in art, she holds a degree in modern foreign languages. And Kinard has also studied in Asheville under Western North Carolina fresco artist Ben Long.



Cynthia Kinard, at her studio and gallery at Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center, is currently at work on an original oil painting showing Jesus outside the tomb.

Her artistic education has included mastering various techniques, such as cast drawing, charcoal drawings of models, cast painting, and more. Although she enjoys achieving copies of famous Christian religious paintings as well as original works – such as her current oil of Jesus outside the tomb – she said portraiture is her specialty.

Anyone who expresses interest in having Kinard paint their portrait is encouraged to first visit her gallery/studio. “I can tell them or show them what I do on my website,” she said, “but it’s not the same as seeing in person the work.” She admitted she is fascinated with faces. If she sees someone she would like to paint, she will approach them about modeling for her.

Kinard’s copy of French artist William Bouguereau’s “Pietà,” oil on canvas, 1876, includes a Mary so lifelike, it appears there are blisters under her eyes from excessive grief and crying. Kinard explained that it took her eight months to paint the multiple layers necessary to create the \$24,000 painting.

“Oils take a lot of time,” she said. “And as I go along, I take close-up photos of different aspects so I can study the work before I move on.” Watercolors often take her up to two weeks to complete.

“Oils take a lot of time,” she said. “And as I go along, I take close-up photos of different aspects so I can study the work before I move on.” Watercolors often take her up to two weeks to complete.

Kinard is most proud of an oil of a Rembrandt self portrait



This oil, depicting French artist William Bouguereau’s “Pietà,” 1876, took Kinard eight months to complete.

as well as a watercolor of her father. “Not all my work is for sale,” she said. “Much is, but there are some I like ... that mean something to me, so I will keep those.”

Regarding her religious paintings, Kinard will often loan them to churches. Her depiction of “L’Innocence,” 1893, also by Bouguereau, was purchased by and hangs in the Church of the Incarnation in Highlands. After the church displayed the loaned Kinard painting for a while, they decided to raise the money to buy it.

Kinard is also an author; she has written five books, three

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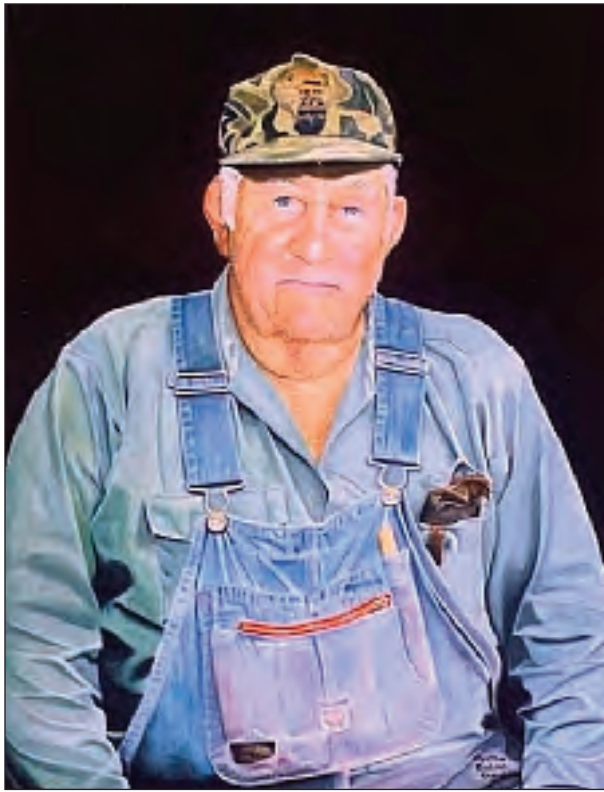
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Cynthia Kinard captures perfectly the character of a Cowee farmer, the late Lloyd Allen.

of which have been published, including one that focuses on her healing journey.

“Art is a gift from God,” she pointed out. “I have to paint. I didn’t do it for three or four days during the Thanksgiving holiday and I couldn’t wait to get back to it.” She said her three sisters are also artistic in some way.

Kinard admitted that although she might tackle difficult projects that take her weeks and months, it is often her signature that stumps. “Sometimes it’s the hardest part. I don’t want to mess up the painting with my signature. I have to work up my courage to add it to the paintings.”



This original painting by Cynthia Kinard was inspired by a dream in which she saw the painting fully realized.

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## 'Chance' seedlings produce variations on a theme

Dr. Bob Gilbert – Columnist

Years ago, a wonderful lady I will never forget came to my office for treatment. Alice was a substitute teacher who just barely reached five feet on her tiptoes. During an office visit she told me a story with a big smile on her face and a twinkle in her eye. She was in a new classroom and a young kid came up and pulled on her sleeve and said "say, what do they call you, is you a midget or is you a dwarf? She was prepared having been asked this before and happily explained the difference between the two.

Several years ago, while visiting a new garden and I noticed a holly growing very low to the ground. It looked like something had fallen on it and it could never get up again, a fallen plant. Sometimes you find trees and shrubs flattened by an adjacent tree fall. If they have enough roots still intact, they eventually will send up vertical shoots reaching for the sun. There was nothing vertical about this plant. Its label read *Ilex opaca* "Maryland Dwarf." It is commercially available. If I had discovered it, I would have named it *Ilex opaca* "Alice." This is often how plants get their names, not always based on scientific observations but sometimes for sentimental reasons.

*Ilex* is the Latin name for the genus *Holly* and is pronounced EYE-leks. *Opaca* means dull, opaque or not shiny, pronounced oh-PAK-uh. Thus, this scientific name aptly describes a holly with dull leaf surfaces. *Ilex opaca* is native here in WNC. It is dioecious (dio-two) meaning its male and female flowers are on separate plants requiring two different plants to reproduce. The female produces the characteristic holly red berries or fruits. Monoecious means one has both male and female blooms on the same plant. It is very easy to tell a male holly bloom from a female. In the privacy of your own home take a look. Only the female holly



Dr. Bob Gilbert

other horizontal spreading American Holly "Clarendon" gets 6-8 feet in height and grows as wide. It is a chance seedling that was first found in Pinehurst, N.C.

The *Ilex opaca* holly found here in the woods is commonly called American Holly. It is evergreen, slow growing but can reach 30 feet. It is dioecious. The foliage is dense enough for small birds to roost in over night. It would be difficult for a predator such as a hawk or an owl to fly into a holly tree looking for a meal.

Occasional variations can be found in plant seedlings. In fact, this is often how new plant introductions are found. For example, there is an American Holly with bright yellow berries called "Canary" that was discovered here in WNC. It some-



Maryland Dwarf Holly

times can be found for sale at specialty nurseries. These are called "chance" seedlings; purely by chance a variation occurred. Maryland Dwarf is a chance seedling. A Pennsylvania nurseryman Earle Dilatush found it in a group of *opaca* seedlings growing in Maryland.

Another source for plant variations is on the plant itself. Every once in a while, a branch will show variation in leaf size, color, growth patterns or berry color. This branch can be rooted and introduced as a new plant variety, a cultivar, but it has to grow true to form and not revert back to its origin form.

If you harvest the berries from Maryland Dwarf and grow them you will not get the same plant as the parent. These seedlings will have variations and most will grow into a normal sized upright tree. The only way to create an exact duplicate of the parent is to root cuttings from an interesting branch.

This particular plant's horizontal branches are genetically programmed to stay that way. You could tug, stake, twist and coax *Ilex opaca* Maryland Dwarf all you want she is not going to grow tall. One lesson to learn here is when taking cuttings, take specimens from vertical branches if you want a vertical plant, horizontal if you want a more horizontal lower growing plant. I found a white mulberry tree in the woods in Kennesaw that had fallen and one branch survived and grew vertically resulting into a very sculptural plant. It has become a major feature at Smith Gilbert Gardens.

A few years ago, I purchased some hollies from a specialty nursery. One of the plants I acquired never grew tall even after staking its leader upright. It was listed as an upright tree meaning it was a rooted cutting from an upright tree. I later learned that most likely the cutting came from a very horizontal branch.

*Dr. Bob Gilbert is co-founder of Smith Gilbert Gardens in Kennesaw, Ga. Karen Lawrence is a professional wildlife and horticultural photographer in Franklin, N.C.*



White Mulberry

bloom has it in its center a small pale swelling the ovary that will ripen into a berry.

Maryland Dwarf grows 3-4 feet tall but spreads out and becomes quite wide. It makes a great ground cover and could work well for erosion control except it is not a fast grower. One



## Deaths & Funerals

### Doris Lobeck

Doris Lobeck, 83, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019.

Born in Coatesville, Pa., she was the daughter of the late Walter Cox and Mildred Burnight Cox. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, William "Bill" George Lobeck; son, Scott Lobeck; and a grandson, Justin. She was a member of St. Francis Catholic Church. She enjoyed golf and had a great sense of humor.

She is survived by her daughter, Stacy Lobeck of Franklin; granddaughter, Madison Lobeck; grandson, Brian Schick and great grandson, Erik Schick.

A graveside service will be held Friday, Dec. 20, at 11 a.m., at Woodlawn Cemetery. Father Tien Duong will officiate.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at [www.maconfuneral-home.com](http://www.maconfuneral-home.com).



Doris Lobeck

### Kathryn Henry

Kathryn Henry, 81, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, Dec. 9, 2019.

Born in Cincinnati, Ohio, she was the daughter of the late Fred Wilson Williams and Etta Melinda Stiwinter Williams. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her brother, Owen Stiwinter. She was a member of Walnut Creek Baptist Church. She was an artist and enjoyed painting in oils, drawing, fishing, gardening, cooking/baking and rockhounding.

She is survived by her husband of 63 years, Don Henry Jr; three children, Teresa Saigeon (Dean) of Michigan, Mike Henry (Lori) of Stone Mountain, Ga., and Wendy Adam (Klaus) of Clinton, Mich.; sister, Carolyn Safrit of Franklin; three grandchildren, Danielle Saigeon, Listel Adam and Natasha Adam and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral service was held Friday, Dec. 13, in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Frank Rodriguez officiated. Burial was in the Wright Cemetery.

Condolences can be made to the family at [www.maconfuneral-home.com](http://www.maconfuneral-home.com).



Kathryn Henry



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# Deaths & Funerals

## Leon 'Dick' Brackett

Leon "Dick" Brackett, 83, of Hendersonville, N.C., passed away on Monday, Dec. 9, 2019.

Born in Henderson County, he was the son of the late Willie Garfield and Lillie Darnell Brackett. He is preceded in death by grandson, Joshua Bradley; brother, Jim Brackett; sisters, Pauline Poley and Juanita Fowler. He was well known for heavy equipment operating skills. He was of Baptist faith and loved spending time wood working.

He is survived by his wife of 64 years, Jane Brackett; daughters, Brenda Rychanek of Hendersonville, Donna Crum of Marshall; sons, Tim Brackett (Janice) of Franklin, Steve Brackett (Julie) of Fletcher; brother, Bill Brackett of Fletcher and sisters, Sue Jackson and Thelma Martin of Flat Rock; 12 grandchildren and several great grandchildren.

Funeral service was held Friday, Dec. 13, at Hoopers Creek Baptist Church in Fletcher. Pastor Phillip Youngblood, Rev. Donald Hare and Rev. Bill Brackett officiated. Burial was in the Hoopers Creek Baptist Church Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Daniel Bradley, Justin Rychanek, Tyler Brackett, Kyle Brackett, Jesse Crum, Cody Brackett, Brandon Brown, John Taylor, Mark Fowler and Joe Bradley.

Memorials can be made to Four Seasons Hospice, Four Seasons Development Office, 571 South Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 28731.

Macon Funeral Home was in charge of the arrangements. Condolences to the family can be made to the family at [www.maconfuneralhome.com](http://www.maconfuneralhome.com).



Leon 'Dick' Brackett

## Mallory Erle Phillips

Mallory Erle Phillips, III, 65, of Highlands, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019, at his beloved cabin, 'Twill Do. He was born Feb., 16, 1954, in Atlanta to Erle and Serena Phillips. He attended The Lovett School, University of Virginia where he was a Phi Delta Theta, and Emory Law School. He was a successful attorney in Atlanta before moving to Highlands 20 years ago. He opened a popular home accents shop called Twigs. He then became a realtor, opening Twigs Realty Group, and served as the president of the Highlands Cashiers Board of Realtors. He was a proud father, grandfather, antique collector, and even physical trainer.

He is survived by two daughters, Alissa Wagstaff (Will) and Annie Davis (Steve) both of Atlanta; one sister, Serena Vick; three grandchildren, Van and Barron (Wagstaff) and Stephen (Davis); and his dogs, Sugar and Buster.

Services were held Wednesday, Dec. 18, at the Church of the Incarnation of Highlands with Rev. Bentley Manning officiating. Burial followed at Highlands Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers the family is requesting donations be made to the Highlands Humane Society.

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

Online condolences can be made at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).



Mallory Erle Phillips

## Betty Guffey

Betty Guffey, 80, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Friday, Dec. 13, 2019.

Born in Rabun County, Georgia, she was the daughter of the late Prince Crawford and Rosa Lee Hawkum Crawford. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a sister, Virginia Walls. She was a member of Tellico Baptist Church and enjoyed gardening.

She is survived by her husband, T.J. Guffey; daughter, Janet Teague (Mike) of Franklin; son, Jon Guffey of Franklin; three grandsons; seven great grandchildren.

Funeral service was held Monday, Dec. 16, at Tellico Baptist Church. Rev. Gary McCoy, Rev. Morris Tippett and Rev. L.E. Angel officiated. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Pallbearers were Jeff Hooper, Josh Teague, Benny Hampton, Nathan McConnell, James Waldroop and Shawn Bates.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. Condolences can be made to the family at [www.maconfuneralhome.com](http://www.maconfuneralhome.com).

## Kristopher Erik Prince

Kristopher Erik Prince, 27, of Franklin, N.C., died on Wednesday, Dec. 4, 2019.

Born in Sylva, N.C., he was the son of Robert Eric Pendergrass of Franklin, Stephanie Prince Armes and stepfather, Travis Armes of Cincinnati, Ohio. He was of the Baptist faith and worked with his dad at on call maintenance. He loved working on cars in his free time.



Kristopher Erik Prince

In addition to his parents, he is survived by two daughters, Harley Leehan of Colorado Springs, Colo., and Addison Powell of Franklin; grandparents, Steve Pendergrass of Franklin, and Daisy and Jack Akoul of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., and Kenneth Prince of Prospect, Ky.; sisters, Brooke Pendergrass of Raleigh, N.C., Olivia Armes of Cincinnati, Ohio and Kayleigh Henry of Franklin; step sister, Rylee Armes and aunts, Renae Gibson, Tara Pendergrass and Kelly Walker all of Franklin.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Dec. 28, at 2 p.m., at Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Steve Reeves will officiate. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service at Macon Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made the charity of one's choice. Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. Condolences can be made to the family at [www.maconfuneralhome.com](http://www.maconfuneralhome.com).

## Sandra Leola Tippett

Sandra Leola Tippett, 77, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Wednesday, Dec. 11, 2019. She was born Nov. 21, 1942, in Macon County to the late Euell Cordele Owens and Blanche Rosalee McCoy Owens. She worked for Macon County Citizens for the Handicapped, she loved collecting dolls, tea sets, depression glass and loved antiques.

She is survived by a daughter, Angela Houston of Wake Forest, N.C.; a son, Tim Houston (Misty) of Clayton, Ga.; grandchildren, Taylor Houston and Triston Houston of Clayton, and Landon Houston of Wake Forest; sister, Elaine Enloe (David) of Franklin; and brother, Ronnie Owens (Kathy) of Franklin. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by two sisters, Mary Patricia Akins and Beverly Owens.

The family will have a private service at a later date. Donations may be made to Carepartners of Franklin, 170 Church Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Tippett family. Online condolences are available at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).



Sandra Leola Tippett

## Alice Ramona Freeman

Alice Ramona Freeman, 47, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, Dec. 10, 2019. She was born Feb. 19, 1972, in Jackson County, North Carolina, to Julia Burgess Freeman and the late Fred Freeman. She was a homemaker and attended New Bethel Baptist Church. She was outgoing and had a sense of humor. She was always friendly and smiling, she never met a stranger and was always wanting to help someone.

In addition to her mother, she is survived by her sister, Vickie Lee Freeman of Franklin; three nephews, Jordan Howell, Zackary McDonald and And're McDonald.

A funeral service was held Sunday, Dec. 15, in the chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home, with Rev. Keyth Eddings officiating. Burial was in Woodlawn Cemetery. Pallbearers were Tracy Wright, Greg Hall, Charles Freeman, Kevin Burgess, Eddie Burgess, Matt Burgess and Willis Chavis.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the Freeman family. Online condolences are available at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).

## Major Charles Wright Knighton

Major Charles Wright Knighton USAF (ret.), 82, of Tuckasegee, N.C., passed away peacefully Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, in his own home, and in the arms of his loving wife and son.

He was born on June 12, 1937, in Montgomery, Ala., to the late James and Mary Knighton. As a young Eagle Scout, he was awarded the Young American Award for Bravery by Dwight D. Eisenhower at the White House. As an USAF enlisted man he attended Auburn University in order to enter Flight School, and advanced to Fighter Pilot, Test Pilot, and Instructor Pilot, who in addition to setting the long distance flight record in the RF-84, served as a decorated combat pilot during the Vietnam War.

As a businessman, he built the largest medical manufacturer's representative organization in the Southeastern U.S., Charles Knighton and Associates, managed the construction and management of the Marathon, Fla., airport during its conversion from a local to international airport, finally establishing Cloud 9 Home Inspections during his retirement.

An avid outdoorsman, he had a lifelong passion for hunting, fishing, and deeply loved the Western North Carolina mountains, where he built his final home.

He is survived by his wife, Margaret R. Knighton, and son, Charles J. Knighton.

A military graveside service was held Tuesday, Dec. 17, at the North Carolina Veterans Cemetery in Black Mountain, N.C., with Rev. Kevin Chapman officiating.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory is serving the Knighton family. Online condolences are available at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).



Major Charles Knighton

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## NASCAR announces Premier Partners for NASCAR Cup Series

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The structure is new, and the level of commitment is elevated, but the four companies announced Thursday as Premier Partners for the NASCAR Cup Series are hardly new to the sport.

Busch Beer, Coca-Cola, GEICO and Xfinity already enjoy significant roles in NASCAR, but the presence of those four companies will expand as part of a paradigm shift in sponsorship structure in 2020.

NASCAR's premier division will be named the NASCAR Cup Series, with the four cornerstone brands announced Wednesday as Premier Partners, who collectively will own a presence connected to the NASCAR Cup Series Championship Race and NASCAR All-Star Race.

"We're thrilled with these brands," said Daryl Wolfe, NASCAR executive vice president and chief sales and operations officer. "They've been in our sport for a long time. They're invested in the sport emotionally, too—they care about the sport. They promote aggressively around the sport."

"We believe they're the right four partners for us going forward."

All four partners will be featured prominently in multiple platforms across the sport, including integrations in broadcast, NASCAR digital and social channels, event entitlements, in-market promotions and at-track activations.

Busch Beer, for example, will maintain its exclusive sponsorship of the Busch Pole Award, as well as adding an entitlement for a 2020 Cup race to its portfolio. Coca-Cola, which sponsors the sport's longest race—the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte Motor Speedway—will take on the role as presenting sponsor of the NASCAR Cup Series regular-season championship trophy.

Earlier this year, GEICO became the "Official Insurance Provider of NASCAR." The company will enhance its involvement as a Premier Partner and as the presenting sponsor of a still-to-be-announced phase of the NASCAR Cup Series season.

Xfinity will retain its sponsorship of the NASCAR Xfinity Series and will add entitlement sponsorship of the 2020 Round of 8 Playoff cutoff race at Martinsville Speedway.

The prominence of the four Premier Partners, however, doesn't obscure the fact that the NASCAR Cup Series brand will stand by itself.

"The first mark is our mark—it's the NASCAR mark," Wolfe said. "In the world of transitioning sponsorships, if you think about from Nextel to Sprint to Monster Energy, the pinnacle of our sport is the NASCAR Cup Series. We want to lead with our brand. We think that's good for other partners."

"They've made an investment with our brand, the sport, NASCAR. We also think it's good for fan-development opportunities... We're leading with our brand, the NASCAR Cup Series, so we think that from a fan development opportunity and fan engagement opportunity, it's a big plus for us going forward."

Wolfe said he expects Monster Energy, which has sponsored the Cup series for the past three years, to maintain a substantial presence in the sport.

NASCAR will not sunset existing deals in the categories of the four Premier Partners. Nor will race teams be restricted from attracting new sponsors by exclusivity provisions, as has been the case in the past.

"We're looking at these deals holistically across the entire sport," Wolfe said. "We wanted to make sure it was easier for our teams to go out there, prospect and find brands. So, no restrictions on teams... That was an important component of this."

## PRO RACING THIS WEEK

Racing News, Stats & Trivia

### This Week's Racing News



#### NASCAR drivers want race in Nashville

As NASCAR's Champions Week took over Nashville, numerous NASCAR drivers and legends have voiced their support of having a race return to Nashville, with Dale Earnhardt Jr. saying he'd race at the Fairgrounds Speedway Nashville if they got a race. Earnhardt told the Tennessean in an interview, "I think we belong in Nashville racing cars. That's more important than even having the banquet there. It's a great place for us to be racing and we should be racing there." Although Earnhardt retired from racing in 2017, he still runs one race each year and told the Tennessean he would get back behind the wheel more often if NASCAR returns to the Fairgrounds track. "If they ever did run a NASCAR Xfinity race there and it's in the next four or five years I'd love to put that on my calendar as a race to go run," Earnhardt said.

### Racing History

**Dec. 21, 1971** - Clyde Minter, who finished in the top five in each of his first four Cup starts, died on this day at age 50. Minter was 27 in 1949 when he started the sixth and eighth races in NASCAR's first Strictly Stock season and finished fourth at both Martinsville and North Wilkesboro. He made eight starts in 1950, finishing third at Charlotte and fifth at Martinsville. Minter started his 42nd and final Cup race in 1955.

### Racing Trivia

What year did Jimmie Johnson have his most wins?

- a) 2007                      c) 2011  
b) 2009                      d) 2013

Answer: a) Jimmie Johnson won 10 races in 2007.

### All-Time Top Driver's Bio



#### Jimmie Johnson

Born: Sept. 17, 1975  
Cup wins: 83  
Cup top-tens: 364  
Cup championships: 7

Jimmie Johnson was born in El Cajon, California, and began racing motorcycles at the age of four. After graduating from Granite Hills High School he competed in off-road series. In 2000, he began racing in the NASCAR Nationwide Series. He moved to Hendrick Motorsports in the Sprint Cup Series in 2002. After finishing fifth in the points in his first full season, he was second in 2003 and 2004 and fifth in 2005. Johnson won his first Cup series championship in 2006. He went on to win the Cup series championship the next four years and became the only driver in NASCAR history to win five consecutive championships. During the 2011 season, Johnson finished sixth in points, while he finished third in 2012. In 2013, Johnson won his sixth championship. In 2016, Johnson won his seventh championship to tie Richard Petty and Dale Earnhardt for the most championships.

### Hailie Deegan moves to Ford development program

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. - Hailie Deegan, one of NASCAR's most-talked about young talents, was formally introduced Tuesday as a new Ford development driver. For the 2020 racing season, the 18-year old Californian will drive a Ford for the respected DGR-Crosley race team full-time in the ARCA Menards Series and she will also compete in selected events for Ford's Multimatic Motorsports team in the IMSA Michelin Pilot Challenge.

It's a major announcement for Ford and for Deegan, who in 2018 became the first woman to win a race in the former NASCAR K&N Pro Series West (now known as the ARCA Menards Series West). She added two more victories in the series in 2019, earning three pole positions, eight top-five and 11 top-10 finishes in 14 starts en route to a third place finish in the championship.

In six ARCA Menards Series starts last year, Deegan earned a best finish of fifth at Indianapolis' Lucas Oil Raceway.

"Hailie has shown in her brief time behind the wheel of a stock car that she's got what it takes to be successful," Mark Rushbrook, global director of Ford Performance Motorsports said at Tuesday's announcement in Concord, N.C.

"Our goal is to put her on a path to realize our shared goal of winning championships and part of that is gaining experience on tracks such as road courses and superspeedways. We feel this year will serve as a good foundation for what lies ahead."

That foundation will include an assortment of IMSA races in addition to the full 20-race ARCA schedule. Ford's Rushbrook reiterated to the gathered media Tuesday that the plan is to bring Deegan up to speed, slowly and steadily. In recent seasons Ford has fostered the burgeoning careers of young drivers such as Cole Custer, Austin Cindric and Chase Briscoe.

And Deegan said she was prepared for a measured approach – appreciated the plan.

"I think it's really important because at the end of the day as a driver you pretty much have one reputation chance," said Deegan, who will drive the No. 4 Monster Energy Ford in the ARCA ranks. "When you blow it, when you don't do good, that kind of sits with you. It's hard to get rid of that."

"I think it's definitely important for me and the people who support me and are coming with me along the journey that we want to have success where we go. When we move up to the next level, we want to make sure we do it at the right time and I'm ready for it and they're ready to take the step."

"I think we're definitely taking the right route and process. If we can stick to what we're doing, stick to the game plan, it should be good."

Deegan has contested her early stock car career in Toyota equipment and although grateful for the opportunities it presented, she said she felt this alliance with Ford would be beneficial long-term with increased opportunity. And, she noted often Tuesday, her family has a long relationship with the manufacturer. Her father, Brian Deegan, won a gold medal in the 2011 X Games driving a Ford Fiesta in the Global Rallycross Championship.

"I think it gives me the confidence to know that we made the right decision, confident in my future and my development just because we're all on the same page," Deegan said. "Especially with them starting this kind of lower level development where they had Chase Briscoe, Cindric, all the guys coming through the higher ranks, now they're kind of stepping into the ARCA Series. It gives me a lot more confidence to know we're doing the right thing."

As for her pace, Rushbrook indicated there was specifically no rush to get Deegan into one of NASCAR's three national series until she was legitimately ready. It's an approach Deegan appreciates and that Rushbrook expects to pay off.

"No comment on the length of the contract or even the progression," Rushbrook said. "I think the great thing has been since the very first conversation that we want to see Hailie succeed and take the steps when the timing is right. I've got a lot of confidence that will go through in these coming years all the way to the Cup level."

Deegan's first formal time behind the Ford steering wheel will come at the Roar Before the 24 at Daytona International Speedway on Jan. 3, 2020 – the traditional three-day test for the Jan. 25-26 IMSA season-opening Rolex 24 sports car race weekend. Deegan will make her sports car debut on Friday, Jan. 25 with teammate Chase Briscoe in the Michelin Pilot Challenge.

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 21

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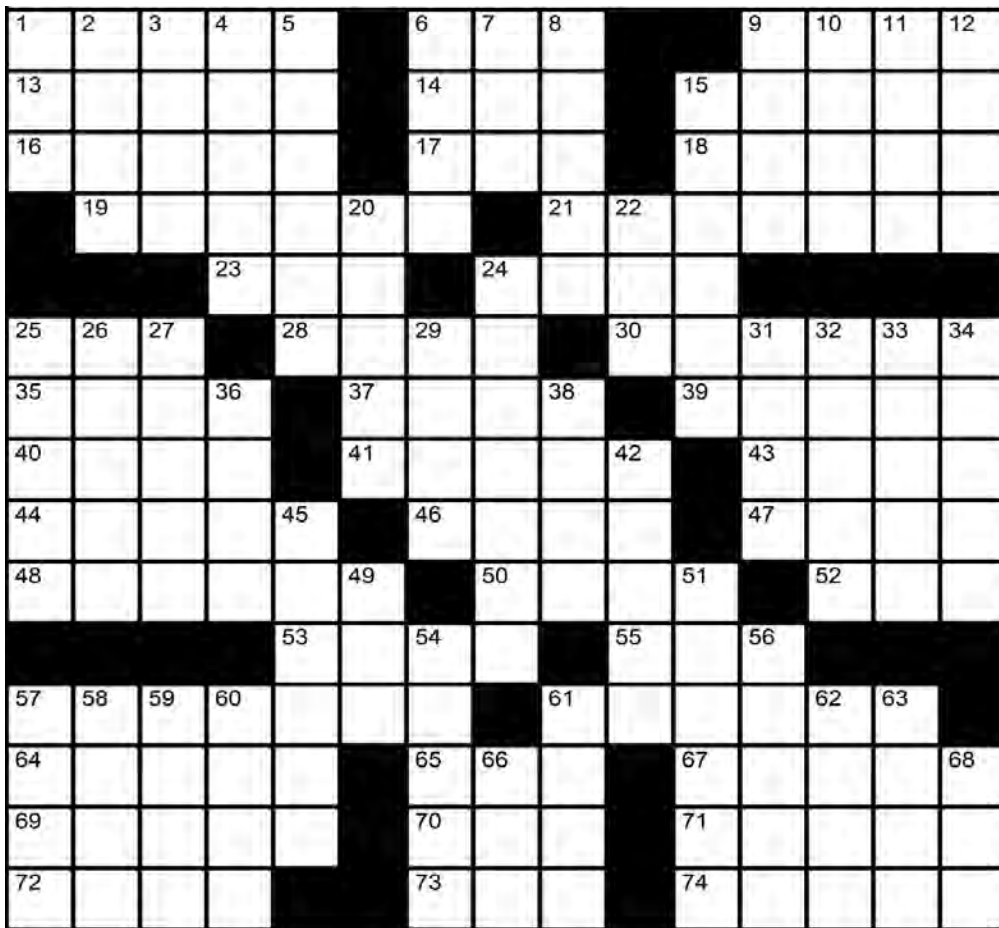
THEME: YEAR-IN-REVIEW

#### ACROSS

1. Pin location
6. BBQ sauce alternative
9. \*Volodymyr Zelensky's capital
13. 0103 food poison
14. Between sea and shining sea, abbr.
15. Native of American Great Plains
16. Famous fabulist
17. Band performance
18. Prefix with national and pol
19. \*The Mueller \_\_\_\_
21. \*European country declared to be no longer free
23. Ostrich-like bird
24. Fix a horse
25. Old Spice: "Smell Like a Man, \_\_\_\_"
28. Diva's delivery
30. Opposite of underdog
35. Seed covering
37. Share a boundary
39. Miller's product
40. Leave behind
41. \*Flute playing rapper
43. Pot contribution
44. Make corrections
46. Days in Havana
47. Nomad's round house
48. Caesar derivative
50. "Fifteen Miles on the \_\_\_\_ Canal"
52. Mad Hatter's drink
53. Hofbräuhaus offering
55. Bard's before
57. \*He got life plus 30
61. \*Euroceptics vs. pro-Europeanists point of debate
64. Sweeney Todd's weapon
65. Seek damages
67. \*Archie was one before he was born
69. \*Bran, Lord of the Six Kingdoms, e.g.
70. "\_\_\_\_ Now or Never"
71. \*What Jeffrey Epstein had in store
72. Seaside bird
73. Volleyball divider
74. Set in motion

#### DOWN

1. Grazing ground
2. Maple tree or laptop brand
3. Downward dog, e.g.
4. Skip the big wedding
5. Benign fatty tumor
6. Pipe problem
7. \*Europe voted to ban single-\_\_\_\_ plastics
8. Take a tubby
9. \*Best Actress in Supporting Role Oscar-winner
10. Tiny bit
11. Pitcher
12. Subject to change
15. To some extent, two words
20. Not urban
22. Final, abbr.
24. More gossamer
25. \*Actor in Leading Role Oscar-winner
26. Wafting pleasantness
27. One born to Japanese immigrants
29. Footnote acronym
31. Performance with acts
32. Holey confection
33. Grossly unconventional
34. \*Swedish environmentalist
36. Eye contact
38. Nicholas II was the last one
42. Willow twig
45. Go ashore
49. Tombstone acronym
51. Builds
54. Fluorescent red dye
56. Make an effort
57. Formerly, formerly
58. Better than never
59. #38 Down, alt. sp.
60. Some blow their own
61. \*"Green Book," winner of \_\_\_\_ Picture
62. Hip bones
63. Salty drop
66. Shoshonean
68. Summer sandwich?



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# Classifieds

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SMALL ESTABLISHED Company looking to hire 2 people for piece work that is done at your home. Transportation Needed. Non smoking. Call (828)524-6293

COMPANION HEALTH CARE Now Hiring: CNA's and Experienced Caregivers Needed for in Home Care. Call (828)524-6444.

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## Services

PAINTING & STAINING Residential, Interior/Exterior, Repaint, Pressure Washing, Deck Repair, Locally Owned & Operated, Franklin/Highlands Area, 30 Years, Excellent References, Free Estimates, Insured, Chandler Contracting. (828)369-5104, (828)226-3792.

CNA TRAINED Caregiver, In Home Aid, Run Errands, Dr. Appointments, Light Housekeeping, References. Over 10 Years Experience. (828)342-3750.

CRANE BROS. WELL Drilling, 6" Drilled Wells for Farms Homes and Industries, Free Estimates. 248 Crane Circle, Franklin. (828)524-4976.

SQUID'S SMALL ENGINE REPAIR & Service, Get your lawn equipment ready for Spring. 867 Highlands Rd., by Franklin Flea Market. (828)342-5135.

ALL AMERICAN TREE Service, Full Tree Removal, Stump Grinding, Pruning, Storm Cleanup, View Cutting, Excavating, Bush-Hogging, Gravel-hauling, Firewood. Fully Insured. Free Estimate. (828)506-8480.

STALLSWORTH PAINTING Interior/Exterior, Pressure Washing, Handyman, 35 Years Experience. (239)860-0117.

CAROLINA PAINTING & Remodeling, Pressure Washing, Painting, Home Repairs, 28 Years Experience in WNC. No Job Too Small. Home (828)349-9087, Cell (828)371-9754.

NEW CREATIONS Landscaping LLC. For all your landscaping design & installation needs! Fall/Winter cleanup, lot clearing, driveway repair, grounds maintenance, firewood, retaining walls and more! Insured Free estimates (828)524-6959.

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# The Classifieds

## Real Estate

**FOR SALE BY OWNER** 12.71 Acres, Stream, 4 acres grass then woods, Long Range Views, Good Road, Will Divide. (828)421-4582.

## Rentals

**UNIQUE RENTAL HOME** in Ridgecrest Heights - Main house: 3BD/2BA, stackable washer - dryer, and an attached 1br, 1 bath 2 story Apt. With washer/dryer. \$1400 per month, \$1,400 security deposit, Electric is metered to the 3/2. 3/2 Tenant could rent Apt. for at least \$600+ includes utilities. One year lease. (828)371-6844.

**QUITE 2BD/1BA** Completely Furnished, with W/D. Private Setting. Close to Town Outside Porch. Storage Building. \$695/monthly, 6 month lease required. Security Deposit. Available Jan 1. No pets, non-smoking. (828)342-4897.

**1BD/1BA SMALL CABIN** Big Yard, Perfect for single or couple. 3 miles from Town. Woodsy Setting. \$500/monthly, \$500/security. (828)371-6844.

**STUDIO APARTMENT** Close to town, \$550/monthly, \$350 Security Deposit, Water, Garbage Included. No Pets. Non-smoking (828)371-6844.

## Misc. For Sale

**6"x12" ENCLOSED TRAILER** New Tires, Tows Good \$1,800. (828)349-0141.

**FARMERS MARKET** Winter Season 10am-Noon, every Saturday. Produce, honey, trout, artisan breads, pastries, roasted coffee beans, preserves, hand-crafted soaps, eggs, peonies, lamb, microgreens. 200 Block East Palmer.

## Motor Vehicles

**2004 BMW 330L** Very Nice Condition \$3,250. 2007 Mercury Montego. Excellent Condition. 4 Door. V6 Automatic \$1,750. 2002 BMW Convertible. Excellent Condition. New Paint. New Tires \$4,000 Firm (828)421-7835, (828)369-7904.

**AUTO PARTS/COLLISION** Parts: Bumpers, Fenders, Headlights and Used Parts, Motors, Transmissions, Accessories. Installation Available. Franklin Body Shop. (828)524-7494.

## Animals

**POMERANIAN PUPPIES** Nice colors. 3 females, 1 male. 8 weeks old. Shots current. \$350. (828)332-2812

**TERRIER MIX PUPPY** Will stay small. Adorable girl. 4 months old, all shots current. \$150. (828)200-5101.

## Community Fundraisers

**REACH FOR BARGAINS** in Heritage Hollow is open Mon.-Sat. 10am to 4pm. Proceeds benefit Victims of Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Macon County. For More Information call 369-2040.

**CARENET THRIFT STORE** 268 E. Palmer St., Franklin, Hours, Monday through Friday 9am-5pm, Saturday 9am-1pm. 100% of proceeds benefit the Mission of CareNet to help bridge the gap during times of crisis for families in Macon County. (828)349-9064.

**FHS BAND RAFFLE** Tickets \$10 each or \$40 for 5 tickets. prizes include 14K Gold Bracelet, Gift Cards, Knife Set, Restaurant Gift Certificates and More! Drawing end of January. View Items on Wade Shope's fb Page. Tickets call (828)524-6467 or (828)482-2246.

**HABITAT RE-STORE** 56 W Palmer St., Franklin. Furniture, Lighting, Plumbing, Building Materials, Doors & Windows, Appliances & More! Hours 10am-4pm Mon.-Sat. (828)524-5273. Hours for the Sylva Re-Store, 1315 W. Main St. are Mon.-Sat., 10am-4pm, (828)586-1800.

**BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER** Saturday, Dec. 21, 8am-10am, Pancakes, Sausage, Bacon, Gravy, Grits, Eggs and Biscuits, Fruit. Hickory Knoll Church, 86E Hickory Knoll Rd. Proceeds Benefit New Fellowship Hall.

## Wanted

**WANTED TO BUY** U.S. and Foreign Coins. Call Dan (828)421-1616. Any Quantity, Coins Also For Sale.

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## "Home for the Holidays"

**Macon County Animal Services**  
is currently running our annual  
"Home for the Holidays" adoption special.  
Now until December 23<sup>rd</sup>,  
adoption prices have been lowered as follows:

**Dogs and puppies - \$30**  
Includes all age appropriate vaccines,  
spay/neuter, microchip and wellness exam

**Cats and kittens - \$20**  
Includes all age appropriate vaccines,  
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