



A mudslide that occurred in the early morning hours of April 13, caused a mobile home to shift and break apart, endangering its three occupants. The mudslide that happened just off Pressley Road, was one of eight across the county as a result of a storm that dumped a substantial amount of rainfall overnight. Submitted photo

Family loses home in harrowing mudslide

Three survive horrific storm

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Sonya Watson said she had a “bad feeling” about Easter’s late evening storm that dumped several inches of rain in Macon County, produced high winds, and spawned tornadoes in North Carolina and surrounding states. She and her 14-year-old autistic daughter, as well as her mother-in-law, Mary Sue Bettis, 68, resided in a mobile home just off Pressley Road in Franklin.

“I was worried about the storm,” said Watson. “I just had this bad feeling. And I have friends in Mississippi and Tennessee and I had been watching the news about the storm and I was worried about them.”

Watson could not sleep as the storm raged on through the early morning hours of April 13.

“I was watching television and looking out and seeing it raining sideways. My dogs were acting weird. Sue got up and I told her I didn’t like how it looked. A tornado watch came up on the phone so we discussed different plans of what we needed to do if a tornado came through.”

As the storm dissipated, Watson said she got her mother-in-law, who suffers from various health issues, back to bed, and she stayed awake until 3 a.m.

“The storm died down, so I decided to lie down on the

See MUDSLIDE page 4

Gov. Roy Cooper tightens restrictions on retailers

Governor Roy Cooper took action to address the spread of COVID-19 by issuing stronger social distancing requirements and speeding up the process to get benefits to people out of work through Executive Order No. 131.

Three key areas are addressed in the order. The first requires retail stores that are still operating to implement new social distancing policies to make shopping safer for customers and employees. The second makes earlier COVID-19 guidelines mandatory for nursing facilities, and recommends other long-term care facilities to do the same. The third area is unemployment benefits, issuing changes that will speed up certain benefit payments to those who are out of work.

“North Carolina continues to take strong action to slow the spread of COVID-19, and today’s order will help make stores safer, protect those living and working in nursing homes, and get more unemployment benefits out quicker. Our state is resilient, and we will get through this crisis

See ORDER NO. 131 page 2

Balmer takes her place at COVID-19 ground zero

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Editor’s note: In last week’s Macon County News, Brittney Lofthouse interviewed Aubrey Balmer, a Family Nurse Practitioner, who was headed to New York to serve on the front-lines of the Covid-19 crisis. The following chronicles her first week on the job.

Last Wednesday at 4 p.m., Aubrey Balmer boarded a plane to New York City. Despite a relatively long career in the medical field, she was on her way to something she had no idea how to prepare for – all she knew was she was called to be there.

Balmer, a Family Nurse Practitioner from Franklin, felt compelled to use her medical knowledge to help those most in need during the COVID-19 pandemic. She boarded a flight and headed to New York City, the epicenter of the outbreak in the United States.

Shortly after arriving to contract for 30 days straight,

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Franklin finds creative ways to mark Easter holiday

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ORDER NO. 131 Continued from page 1

together if we all do our part," said Cooper.

Policies for social distancing in retail stores

The Order offers clear requirements that essential businesses must implement in order to safeguard the health of customers and employees. Some of the directives include:

- Setting limits of how many people can be in a store at one time, 5 people per 1,000 square feet of retail space or 20% of fire marshal posted occupancy limits
 - Marking 6 feet of distance for areas where people gather like checkout lines
 - Requiring specific cleaning measures for retail stores
- The Order encourages:
- Implementing hygiene recommendations for employees and customers, like hand sanitizer at the doors and face coverings for workers
 - Establishing designated shopping times designated for high-risk groups
 - Creating barriers between customers and employees at checkout to lower the risk of required interactions

Lowering risk in long-term care facilities

The Order sets public health and safety requirements for nursing homes during the public health emergency. The Order encourages other long-term care facilities to follow the same guidance. Some of the directives include:

- Canceling communal activities, including group meals
- Taking the temperature of employees and essential personnel when they enter the facility
- Requiring personal protective equipment in facility
- Requiring close monitoring of residents for COVID-19 health indicators like body temperature

Streamlining unemployment insurance claims

The Order makes it easier for employers to file a batch of claims, called an attached claim, on behalf of their employees. By temporarily eliminating some of the hurdles for employers, benefits can get in the hands of those who need them faster.

The Order will extend 60 days beyond the date the state of emergency is lifted to allow employers to recover.

DES working to implement Federal Unemployment Assistance Programs; Additional \$600 payments expected soon

The Division of Employment Security is moving quickly to bring additional unemployment insurance benefits to North Carolinians impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. DES has received official guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor on how to implement the three federal unemployment programs included in the CARES Act.

DES intends to implement the federal programs in this order:

1. Federal Pandemic Unemployment Compensation (FPUC). This program provides an additional \$600 in weekly unemployment insurance benefits to eligible claimants. DES is currently testing the payment system and anticipates making the first payments by April 17, 2020.

2. Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA). This program provides unemployment compensation for individuals not eligible for regular unemployment insurance, such as independent contractors and self-employed workers, and those who have exhausted any extensions to unemployment insurance.

DES estimates online filing system will be ready to accept claims for this assistance program around April 25, 2020.

3. Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation (PEUC). This program provides up to 13 additional weeks of benefits for those who have exhausted their state benefits.

Updates about eligibility and how to apply for these benefits will be provided on des.nc.gov.

Since March 16, 2020, the Division of Employment Security has received nearly 500,000 claims for unemployment benefits, with most of them related to COVID-19. Prior to March 16, 2020, DES received approximately 3,000 claims a week.

GROUND ZERO Continued from page 1

working 12 hour shifts, Balmer was assigned to staff a makeshift Emergency Room set up at the Billie Jean Stadium.

"What I do each shift varies daily... sometimes more than that," said Balmer. "Originally we were going to be only Covid, then it switched to non-Covid overflow, then we started receiving patients that are only Covid overflow."

Balmer said that the day-to-day changes with the need. "We were told we would not be going into hospitals, but in the plan set forth by emergency management there was a clause that if the need was critical we would be utilized in a hospital," said Balmer. "We are working to 'debulk' New York Health and Hospitals by taking overflow who are in beds in the cafeterias, or med surg units that were made into pseudo ICUs. Hospital rotations should be starting [soon]."

Sunday night a round of storms blew through the city, which took a toll on another tent hospital erected in the city, which meant Balmer and her team were preparing to fill the gap.

"Over the past few days we have had a lot of training and developed teams," she said. "We work in teams of two MDs, four advanced practice providers, five nurses and two paramedics for a 12-hour shift. We start with 20 moderately ill COVID patients per team. The number of patients admitted vary; today [Monday] we got only 13. But with the winds last night we were set to get 60 patients from a tent hospital in another sector. Those not on rotations are being cycled into the



Health care workers receive an introduction and assignments when Balmer first arrived in NYC.

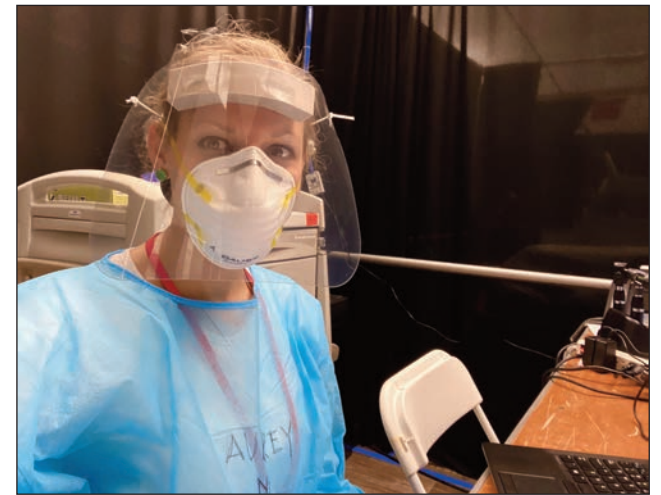
hospitals."

Prior to the assignment, Balmer said she tried to shelter herself from the news surrounding the pandemic, so being in the middle of it, is her first and best account of how the crisis is impacting the city.

"I've really tried to shelter myself from the news," she said. "But, what I can speak to is that when you look at the city it appears like things are calm. Life has slowed down. But, in the hospital there is an overwhelming number of admissions and an increase in loss of life is happening. The toll on healthcare workers' psyche and health is significant. We have traumatologists on site in every field hospital."

Despite the challenge and the obvious toll it is taking on healthcare workers and the entire nation, Balmer remained optimistic and reiterated the positives.

"One key point to remember is the majority of cases will improve," said Balmer. "Not every Covid case will end up in futile resuscitation efforts. The majority of my patients have improved. My personal and professional advice is, if you are worried about getting sick or dying, focus on what you do have control over. How you improve your overall health and build up your immune system is one of the best things you can do. That includes a diet low in processed foods and sugars, good rest, good hygiene, supplements like Vitamin C and probiotics. Don't live in fear, but be wise to follow suggestions that were put in place to protect you and prevent the spread of the virus."



Aubrey Balmer takes a selfie in her PPE gear during training.

With the first week behind her, Balmer said she continues to prepare for the evolving situation and being ready to help where she is able.

"Hurry up and wait is normal when these things start. You don't anticipate the training or that maybe they only had enough help to open one side of the rooms and any available hand will be needed to sort hundreds of boxes of medicine and take inventory, set up beds, or offer training to each other," said Balmer. "We opened for patients five days early. The thing with crisis and Covid is no one has it figured out yet. We have some insights from what has transpired to this point, but treatment is still a work in progress."

Each day has a new set of challenges and can be completely different than the day before. Balmer said she doesn't have any expectations for the next three weeks because it is all changes so rapidly.

"I can't speak to my expectations yet," she said. "The OEM director who New York City contracted, also largely oversaw 9/11 and relief in Hurricane Katrina said to me last night that there have been spikes in Queens, Bronx, and Harlem-working class folks that have to go to work. Trains were decreased resulting in crowding. We may get 15 transfers a day, we may be getting 60 in the next two hours. What good will expectations do? It's best to just roll with the punches and enjoy the people you're with."

Balmer is asking the Macon County community to help spread kindness for patients she encounters by sending cards for them. "If your kids are bored and want to do an 'art' class please have them make get well cards or signs for our patients," asked Aubrey. "They haven't seen their families in days, weeks and we can brighten their days with colorful well wishes."

Cards can be mailed to: Courtyard by Marriott, JFK Room 712, Aubrey Balmer, 145-11 N Conduit Ave, Queens, NY 11436



A view inside the makeshift Emergency Room that was set up outside of Bille Jean Stadium that Balmer was assigned to. Balmer helped set up the ER when she arrived. The photo was taken before the site started accepting patients.



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MUDSLIDE

Continued from page 1

couch. I don't usually sleep on the couch, but I'm glad I did that night."

Watson was asleep for about an hour when she heard loud, "weird noises ... popping and cracking." And then the mobile home, where Watson had lived for two years, began to shift.

"Stuff started breaking and hitting me everywhere. The trailer was tilting and slamming me all over the room. Cabinets hit me in the head and just about knocked me out. All I was thinking was that I needed to get to my daughter's bedroom."

Watson said she did not fully comprehend the situation until later that evening, but she said when she managed to make it to her daughter's bedroom, there was a light shining on her bed – from where she did not know because it was pitch black outside – and the bedroom was untouched and her daughter was asleep.

Watson told her daughter to stay in her bedroom so she could check on her mother-in-law. The mobile home continued to slide gradually; Watson went to where her mother-in-law's



A slide in an area known as Indian Trail near Parker Meadows Recreation Park took trees and debris, cutting a swath down the mountain.

add-on dining room, porch, and bedroom had been. The dining room and porch were gone and she could hear Bettis screaming farther up the hill. Watson said she still did not fully consider there had been a mudslide. She thought the porch and dining room had been ripped off the mobile home by a tornado.

"I started screaming."

Neighbors and family members came outside with flashlights.

Watson went back to her daughter's room, wrapped her daughter in a blanket, and carried her to where there was an opening in the wall. "Mama's got you," I told her. "I needed to get her out." The mobile home slid more and turned down the road before becoming wedged on a pole.

Watson could hear her mother-in-law, whose bedroom was detached and stuck at the top of the hill, screaming. Neighbors and family members braved the mudslide to clear glass and debris, pull off doors, etc. to get to Bettis and help her out.

"When I got my daughter to an opening, it was just an expanse of mud," said Watson. "That's when I saw the fire department coming and I saw Tim's face [a fireman; last name unknown]; I'm a manager at Wendy's and I know him from there and from seeing him around town. I saw his familiar face and grabbed his hand. I stepped off in the mud with my daughter ... I just had on a tank top, pajama pants, and I was barefoot. The mud was knee-to-waist deep."

Watson had to tell the firemen that her daughter could not understand what they were saying or what was happening. "But she was so brave. I'm so proud of her. I'm just so glad that she's okay ... that we're all okay."

The mudslide also took off add-on sections of another house a little farther down the hill; Watson's four vehicles were destroyed as well as a cousin's older car that was farther up the hill. Watson's five dogs and a cat were not injured, but she imagines her birds and fish in the home have died. She has not been able to get back in the home because it is unstable, and also the road is blocked by the thick mud. Everyone on the road and in the area of the mudslide was evacuated during the early morning of April 13.

Watson lived in an area where other family members have homes above and below where her mobile home was situated. Banks and hillsides were covered with trees, bushes, and plants. Even though there had been a mudslide in that area 25 years ago, she said, "Nothing made us think it would happen again. Our private road had just been graded and everything seemed fine. I was more worried about a tornado."

Currently, Watson, her daughter, and Bettis are living temporarily in the Comfort Inn in Franklin. She was able to arrange for her pets to be housed temporarily with friends and family members.

"They won't let us go into the trailer because of the instability," she said, "but I'm hoping that I will be able to at least get my photo albums and some framed pictures out at some point, and to find my phone, which has all my contacts on it."

Watson said she has been inundated with support from churches and concerned citizens who are trying to find them a place to live. "People have been so nice. The Red Cross has been fantastic. We've gotten clothes, meals ... most of what we need initially. But I feel like I need to get my daughter somewhere soon so she will feel stable."

Watson said she has had trouble sleeping but realizes she was able to maintain some fortitude dur-



The Pressley Road mudslide continued down the mountain but no other structures were affected.

Photos by Vickie Carpenter and Betsey Gooder

ing the hellish night. "I've never fought so hard in all my life to get to my loved ones and get out of there."

She credits God for her demeanor and for saving them.

"We felt His hand for sure," said Watson, tearfully. "No place was touched where my loved ones were sleeping. My bedroom was upside down and twisted and part of walls were gone. For that reason, He had me sleep on the couch that night. I told Him [God], 'You watched over us in the storm.'"



The torrential rainfall of Sunday night into Monday apparently caught the owners and tenants of the warehouses off Old Murphy Road by surprise as flood waters rose above the cabs of the Frito-Lay delivery trucks.

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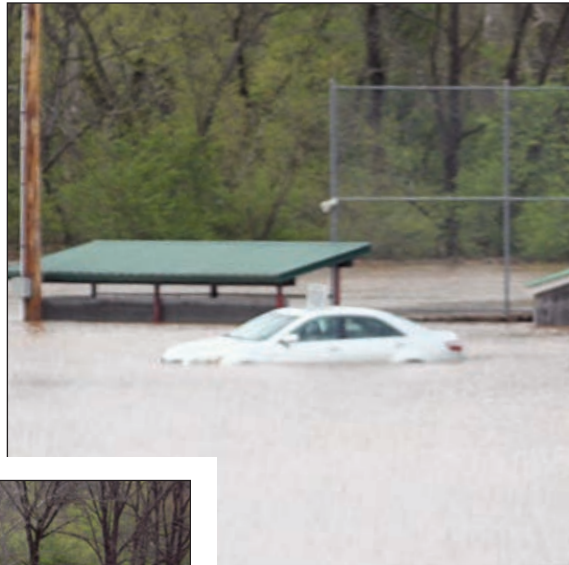
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Business seeks answers to potential gas fumes

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

Just before Valentine's Day, Ashley Sanders, owner of Rust and Relics on Main Street requested the assistance of a hazmat team to investigate noxious smells that would periodically waft through the building. The hazmat team, who responded a couple days after Sanders called with concerns did not detect any hazardous fumes — however, according to Sanders, the fumes were not occurring at the time. The building has continued to have issues with the gas-like smells.

Last week, Sanders enlisted the services of a Roto Rooter plumbing company out of Valdosta, Ga., to look into the building's infrastructure to find the source of the odor and according to the report sent to Sanders, it appears the problem has been identified.

"Due to fumes commencing once again, Roto Rooter returned Wednesday," said Sanders. "Prior to opening any sewer lines ... a gas analysis was completed. Sewer gas was detected throughout lower level with the heaviest being in the back near the bathrooms. Previously I had many plumbing issues addressed and corrected at my expense — a brand new (handicap) toilet installed, leaking water line pipes replaced, 'P' traps on sinks, and numerous open pipes capped throughout the building. I ensure water is often run down the floor drains and unused sinks. However, it makes it less effective ... when pipes are not visible, old and broken. The drain pipe under the sink is disintegrated, hidden behind the wall. This is one source of fumes stemming from behind the wall. There was no way to know of the plumbing system behind walls and underneath each floor level hidden. Many sewer pipes lead to toilets or sinks that have been removed and filled in with concrete; but the piping underneath is still existing."

Roto Rooter's report also revealed that in addition to this drain behind the wall, a smoke test was done and smoke made an appearance on all three levels.

"After smoke testing lines, several locations found throughout the building were allowing sewer gas fumes to enter inside



Rust & Relics on Main Street in Franklin has been experiencing intermittent noxious fumes. Appeals to various officials and hazmat crews have yielded few results over the past few months.

Photos by Betsey Gooder

the building. This can cause an unhealthy environment to work in. Two areas on cast iron piping are allowing an extreme amount of sewer gas fumes into the building on upper floor."

Previously, Sanders, and others experienced headaches, rashes, hives, burning eyes, and other similar reactions. After closing early and exiting the building, symptoms would cease. Sewer gas is highly corrosive and toxic, she said.

Sanders owns the business Rust and Relics, but does not own the building in which the business is located. Town of Franklin officials have previously reviewed Sanders' complaints and determined that the issues Sanders is facing is a tenant/landlord issue, not something in which the town or county can get involved. Sanders has enlisted the help of local attorney Ward Collins to mitigate the situation with her landlord, but has been so far been unsuccessful.

Per Sanders' lease agreement, the landlord, which is listed as Baird Cove Properties, LLC, is responsible for the upkeep of the building itself and capital improvements. However, attempts to remedy the situation prior to the Roto Rooter inspection proved fruitless. Now, Sanders has sent the inspection and work estimates for repairs to the landlord — but even a week later has not received a response.

Sanders doesn't want to have to pursue the matter in court, however, she says she has an obligation to her customers and employees to ensure their health and safety.



Roto Rooter Plumbers of Valdosta, Ga., did a smoke test on drain pipes and sewer lines of the building that houses Rust & Relics revealing leaks on all three levels.



Project seeks to 'reconnect' nursing home residents

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Janie Key sees every day, firsthand, Macon County's healthcare needs. She has been a nurse for 24 years. In the past few weeks, she has been increasingly burdened by the needs of the elderly – especially those sheltering in place at local nursing home facilities.

"Weekly they looked forward to visiting church groups, family members, friends," said Key. "And now they can't even walk about the home ... go to the common area and look out the window."

She added, "I really started thinking about a way to help them when this man, in his 90s, from my church [Franklin Church of God] talked to me about how he was so down and out because he felt secluded in his room and couldn't go to church and couldn't even listen to the sermons."

Key decided to join with her friend, Christine Basey, owner of Christine's Home Décor, in gathering as many smart tablets as possible to distribute to able-bodied residents quarantined in Macon County's nursing home facilities.

"I get these ideas ... Christine's used to them," said Key, "my wild ideas. She's always helped me. A few years ago we worked together on a special needs baseball team. Saturday, we started spreading the word on Facebook in a message we titled 'Hope of the Lonely.'"

The message reads, "We love our community and never back down from a challenge when it comes to helping those in need. Right now our nursing home residents desperately need our help! These individuals like so many others live for each day they can see their families, friends, and church family. Unfortunately, due to COVID and for their safety, they're confined to their rooms. Having any close contact with each other or with anyone from outside their facility puts their life at risk. That risk is just too high. For some of us, these same folks raised us up. We are their future. We owe them. They are depressed, lonely, and scared. We ask that you join our group and us in purchasing iPads or tablets and donating them to our local facilities so that these individuals can see and talk with family members by video chat. We have talked with our local Walmart. We do NOT want you to go out shopping! You can go online and order and have them shipped to our local Walmart in Franklin. There are several tablets under \$50."

Key and Basey purchased a dozen or so tablets available at Walmart for under \$50. Anyone interested in becoming involved in the Hope for the Lonely initiative can order tablets through Walmart.com and have them shipped to the Franklin Walmart care of (c/o) either Key or Basey. They will be held in a secure place until Key or Basey can pick them up. Already, the two women learned there are at least another dozen or more tablets that have been ordered.

Donated monies to purchase a tablet, or tablets or iPads ordered from other sources, like Amazon, can be shipped to Basey's address; she has asked that people Facebook message her first and explain how they would like to help and she will provide instructions.

From speaking to administration at Macon Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Grandview Manor Care Center, and Franklin House, Key estimates that approximately 100 residents could operate and would benefit from a smart tablet.

"People don't need to buy an expensive tablet," said Basey. "Just something to allow elderly in these homes to communicate ... even if it's just now and then. We don't want to just get a few and have them pass them around because the point is that they don't all need to be touching the same one."

On Monday evening, April 13, the tablets the two women were able to purchase from Wal-Mart in Franklin were loaded by Scott Basey, Christine's husband, with basic com-



Christine Basey and Janie Key have been good friends for many years, working on a variety of community initiatives, such as the current one: to collect tablets for local nursing home residents so they can communicate with family members and friends - and more.

munication apps, such as Skype and Facetime, as well as apps that will allow users to share photos, music, and messages, and stream church sermons and Bible studies, for example.

"Monday was our test run," said Key. "To see if we could connect them with Wi-Fi and make them easy to use."

"It worked, we will begin giving them out Friday, the 14th, and after that as they come in," said Basey.

"The staffs at these facilities are too stretched as it is," said Key. "They can't share their phones or tablets with the residents. Plus, it's too risky. By gathering these devices, we can give one to each of the residents to keep so that can stay in touch and not feel so isolated. I'm worried about them not having hope ... that they might stop eating or become dehydrated. They have very little to keep them going, so these might help."

"They at least need to hear a loved one's voice," said Basey, "... have light at the end of the tunnel. We have to do something; these people are lonely. We are not doing this for ourselves at all, it's for these people who are completely isolated. I get so upset thinking about them."

Key shared about an elderly friend who died without having any family members by his side – due to COVID-19 precautions. "He passed away alone. No one should have to be completely alone ... for all hope to be taken away."

Basey, from conversations she has had with various people in the community, believes that people want to help during this crisis. Often, they do not know how.

"This is one way," she said. "We have to get creative during this crisis."

Key explained that when she told her fellow church member, who resides at Macon Valley Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, that he would be getting a tablet, "He cried. He is looking forward to being part of our of Bible studies and talking and seeing family and friends. He prayed for us and our efforts."

Other common ways to connect with residents in local nursing home facilities are to send letters, cards, and pictures. Children of all ages can send or drop off drawings or paintings.

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WCU students make cards for nursing home

Sophomore Brianna Hedges was brainstorming with her dad one day on what activities members of Western Carolina University's Recreational Therapy Association group could participate in as a way to reach out while they are physically unable to go out and volunteer in places because of the COVID-19 crisis.

They came up with the idea of making inspirational cards for residents of nursing homes. Hedges, a recreational therapy major from Raleigh who also is the marketing coordinator for RTA, pitched the idea to the group. They decided to make cards for The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge in Asheville.

The group mailed about a dozen cards to the nursing home facility. The cards began arriving this week, said Miranda Evans, a 2006 graduate of WCU's recreational therapy program who now works as the recreation services director at The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge.

"I delivered the cards to two of my residents (Tuesday, April 7)," Evans said. "They were so excited to start a new correspondence with someone in the community. One of the residents is a retired teacher and was active in a civilian's club in another city in North Carolina. She is looking forward to sending a response. The resident said, 'This is so thoughtful and I really think it is going to be interesting for both of us. There is something special about written correspondence, and it makes you feel lucky that someone is thinking about you. It's nice to take time away from electronics, unplug and do something good for someone else.'"

The RTA members, along with Jennifer Hinton, associate professor and recreational therapy program director, created the cards while on Zoom, a videoconferencing service.

"It was enjoyable to have RTA members gather over Zoom for this project and seeing the group have the desire to help reach out during this time where those at The Laurels of GreenTree Ridge and other nursing homes can't have visitors," Hedges said. "Our goal was to be able to provide these cards as something that might bring a smile to individuals during these hard times."

Hinton, whose background is in behavioral health care, said one way to lift depression and anxiety is to reach out and help someone else.

"When you can get outside of yourself, it can help you to feel better about what's happening in your world," Hinton said. "I think that this was just one of those opportunities to not only connect them with each other, but also they're giving back to other people who are even more isolated than they are."

Orangellys Santiago, a recreational therapy student from Whitsett, was one of those who felt rewarded. Santiago created a card that read, "Stay strong. We're thinking of you."

"Even though it was something small, it represents the importance of helping older adults in our community, especially during a time like this," Santiago said. "RTA wanted to reach out to these individuals to let them know we are here for them and to motivate them to remain hopeful as this pandemic passes. Social distancing may keep us apart, but they are never forgotten in our hearts."

RTA is a registered student organization for recreational therapy majors and pre-majors. Its main goal is to promote public awareness of the benefits of utilizing recreation and other activities as forms of active treatment and their roles in establishing and maintaining a balanced lifestyle.

Evans, who said Cullowhee will always be home to her, was not surprised that the RTA members reached out to send messages of encouragement.

"We are all connected in a special way. Regardless of when someone attended WCU, there is a connection that is special," Evans said. "WCU always looks after its own by connecting and finding ways to build each other up. The recreational therapy department has always been a close-knit group. The fact that they are still checking in with us and finding ways to build up, not only our lives, but the lives of these sweet residents, is truly heart-warming."

"Our residents here are facing something we are all coming to understand even better. They are unable to see or visit with their families, be around their friends, or go out into the community, so it's important to let them know, 'someone is thinking of you and we care.' My goal every day is to make sure these sweet people know we are here for them and we love them. I feel incredibly blessed to have attended WCU, but to still have connections there that are focused on improving the lives of others makes me proud to be a Catamount."

Second Macon County resident tests positive for Coronavirus

Macon County Public Health received notice on late Wednesday evening, April 8, 2020, that a second Macon

County resident has tested positive for Coronavirus or COVID-19. The individual is between the ages of 25-49 with underlying health conditions and is in isolation in a healthcare facility. No further information will be released about this individual.

Macon County Public Health is working to identify close contacts of the individual. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time of 10 minutes or longer. Based on information provided by the individual, county health officials will assess risks of exposure, determine which if any additional measures are needed such as temperature and symptom checks, quarantine and/or testing.

The state of North Carolina is under a "Stay at Home" executive order. Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions might be at higher risk for severe illness from COVID-19; however, anyone of any age can become infected with this illness. Therefore, Public Health asks that community members strictly follow this order and continue to practice social distancing, as well as safe hygiene measures such as hand washing and frequently cleaning touched objects and surfaces.

It is important to make sure the information you are getting about COVID-19 is coming directly from reliable sources like Macon County Public Health, CDC, and NCDHHS. For more information, visit the CDC's website at www.cdc.gov/coronavirus and NCDHHS' website at www.ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus, which will also include future positive COVID-19 test results in North Carolina.

Macon County Public Health regularly updates its Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19. The public is encouraged to check the Facebook page, www.facebook.com/MaconPublicHealth for up-to-date information.

Symptoms for COVID-19 are fever, cough, and other lower respiratory illness (shortness of breath). If you believe that you may have COVID-19, call the Health Department at (828)349-2517. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., until further notice.

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Kathy McGaha named Macon health director

The Macon County Board of Health has selected Kathy McGaha as the new Health Director for Macon County. McGaha holds a Master of Health Science in degree from Western Carolina University and has been an employee of Macon County Public Health for 23 years. In that time, she has served in several roles, including most recently serving as the Health Department's Population Health Section Administrator, where McGaha oversaw the Health Education, Dental, Accreditation, and School Nursing programs.

The selection of McGaha as Health Director ends after a year-long search for a department leader. Carmine Rocco has served as the Interim Health Director for Macon County Public Health for approximately 18 months, including overseeing the implementation of the School Based Health Center at South Macon Elementary School, the Health Department's response to a Meningitis outbreak in 2019, and the department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Kathy has developed into a leader because she listens and because she is an advocate that truly cares. The department and citizens of Macon County are fortunate to have her as the director," Rocco said of McGaha.

Board of Health Chairwoman and pharmacist Melissa Bell said of naming McGaha to Health Director, "The Board of Health would like to extend our sincere gratitude to Carmine Rocco for his tenure as Interim Health Director. Mr. Rocco has enabled our Health Department to continue services without interruption and has provided exceptional leadership. The Board of Health is also pleased to announce Mrs. McGaha as permanent Health Director. She brings both passion and dedication to the position."

McGaha will be entering the role of Health Director during the COVID-19 pandemic and the Health Department's response. McGaha understands the challenge ahead, but knows that she has a hard working team behind her.

"I am thrilled to be named Health Director with an incredible staff that I have been fortunate to work with for over 20 years. Even though this comes at the time of a global pandemic, our team is ready to handle the challenges ahead of us," said McGaha.

McGaha will be the official Macon County Health Director as of April 29, 2020.

WCU primary care nursing residency pivots standard training to assist during pandemic

As COVID-19 protocols began taking effect in the Asheville area, registered nurses in a primary care residency and fellows program at Western Carolina University made a quick shift to assist an at-risk population while still continuing their training.

Kae Livsey, director of community relations and scholarship for WCU's School of Nursing, serves as director for the RNs in Primary Care program.

"As restrictions regarding face-to-face practices were put in place, our team began to brainstorm for ways that we could continue to support 'front line' health care," said Livsey. "It didn't take long for some ideas for unique and vital alternative experiences to emerge."

Working with community partners who serve low-income seniors, the nurses in the program are now conducting wellness checks and health education by phone.

"Most of the people I have contacted thus far have been very appreciative," said Tina Cook, an RNPC student from Canton. "It's been a great community service, I believe, and they are very appreciative that somebody is reaching out just to talk to them. Residents of senior living centers are not able to go out and meet with their friends or talk in the hallways like they once did."

WCU's School of Nursing has a longstanding partnership with the Council on Aging and several low-income senior housing providers, which normally utilize WCU undergraduate nursing students to support prevention and wellness outreach.

"Many of our undergraduate nursing students conduct home visits and preventative education as part of their community and mental health course," Livsey said. "The grant team is working in collaboration with service coordinators at these senior housing communities in the Asheville area to identify resident needs, provide social support and help connect the residents to services to support their ability to be safe and well during this period in which these populations are being asked to stay home."

Because social isolation is a major concern for these

populations, the RNPC students provide an essential connection to the seniors living in these communities, Livsey said. The social distancing prescribed for the coronavirus is more than an obstacle for the program's objectives; it adds to the clients' concerns.

"I can hear the difference in the patients' voices after I share with them the CDC guidelines and our clinic recommendations," said Cecilia Brennan, an RNPC student from Hendersonville. "Primary care is among the first places to see positive COVID-19 cases. We can be that vital bridge to prevent patients from getting to the point where they need to visit the hospital."

The residency and fellows program is funded through a \$2.6 million, multi-year grant from the Health Resources Services Administration. The program is designed to prepare baccalaureate-trained RNs to practice at a fully licensed scope of practice in primary care settings.

"This is a great opportunity for WCU to show its commitment to the community during a time of need, to support community members needing direction from health care providers, like RNs, who possess clinical reasoning and care management, skills and can provide patient education and identify resources," Livsey said. "What the public fails to realize is that most primary care practices in this region are not staffed with RNs, and in many cases are struggling to address this new need for skills that RNs possess."

The six-month RNPC program includes robust didactic modules and practicum placement with regional health care agencies in primary care settings with a dedicated preceptor as well as innovative experiences such as virtual reality and inter-professional simulations, Livsey said.

WCU's School of Nursing is nationally ranked and accredited, with undergraduate and graduate programs at the main campus in Cullowhee, Biltmore Park instructional site in Asheville and online. For more information, go to the webpage nursing.wcu.edu.

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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

Tonight is the April meeting of the Highlands Town Board of Commissioners. It will not be held at the Highlands Community Center. Since we are under a state of emergency the meeting will be a remote, electronic meeting by way of the ZOOM meeting technology. The North Carolina attorney general and the governor have determined that an electronic meeting is allowable under the current emergency. Other elected bodies are already holding such meetings.

The public can access the meeting by calling into +1 929 436 2866. The meeting ID is 667 357 965. The password is 007442. The meeting can be accessed on a computer or tablet by going to <https://zoom.us/j/667357965?pwd=ZkJ5Q0xNbHNyL1ZGVzVwM0ZwRU3dz09>. The meeting ID and password is the same whether calling in or using the internet.

A ZOOM App can be downloaded for free. Using the app the above meeting ID number and password/code can be entered for fast access.

The first item on the agenda will be public comment. A person wishing to make a comment has to simply raise their hand. The session manager will open the microphone for the person to speak and the board to hear the comment. Please keep comments to three minutes.

On the agenda of the cancelled March meeting was a public hearing concerning ordinance changes. It had been advertised in the newspaper. This hearing has been postponed until the May meeting, regardless of whether there is public attendance or if we again hold an electronic meeting. The hearings will again be advertised in the newspaper. The town manager and I decided that it would be better to delay and make sure all hearing procedures were followed in order to eliminate any confusion and to allow maximum opportunity for public response.

The agenda for tonight's meeting is small. There will be a review of a preliminary plat for a new subdivision near Mirror Lake. A preliminary plat is a design and layout for a proposed subdivision. If the preliminary plat meets all ordinance requirements, the board approves the plat. The developer then has to build the infrastructure according to the approved preliminary plat before final board approval is given.

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Conditions will not always be ideal

To the nurse who is blaming the present administration for the shortages of medical equipment. The blame lies with different previous administrations who didn't replenish supplies after they were used. There are many patients who also require medical supplies on a daily basis. I don't see them complaining about shortages. They know they have to live with it and go about their treatments as best they can. A nurse should know there will not always be ideal conditions and know how to adapt without causing a disturbance. My advise to her is "suck it up" and quit acting like a prima donna.

Linda Behr – Franklin, N.C.

An Easter to remember

This is the first Easter I can remember not being in church to celebrate the most important event in all of history: the day death was defeated when Jesus Christ, the great Creator of the universe, rose from the dead. The church we attended elected to have a "drive in" service on Saturday evening, because the weather forecast was much better.

With a guitar and a violin and five singers, we had a wonderful service. Thanks to a powerful sound system with four speakers spread out, we could hear every word of the songs, and the powerful sermon by Pastor Brandon. His message was from Luke 23:13-25. He helped us to see what a monumental sacrifice Jesus made to pay the penalty for our sins. The Jews had a custom that every Passover, they would release a prisoner. Pilate thought it quite reasonable to release Jesus to them, since he could find no reason whatsoever to put Him to death, because He had done nothing wrong. But the crowd was insistent. They were determined to have Barabbas, a man guilty of insurrection and murder, released instead of Jesus. Why? All Jesus had done was to heal their sick, raise their dead to life again, and feed their hungry!

And still today, we all tend toward releasing the guilty, and punishing the innocent. We choose Barabbas over Jesus every time.

Brandon told a story of a great man from the early 1900s. He had lost everything in the Great Depression, but he managed to get a wonderful job operating the controls for a railroad drawbridge across the Mississippi River. He had a young son who he loved very much. He told his son about his exciting job, so naturally the boy desperately wanted to go to work with his dad. One day, he took him along. Between trains, they went down to the river to fish. They lost track of time, until suddenly they heard the train whistle in the distance. There wasn't much time, so the father told his son to stay there while he went up to the control house. But somehow the son didn't get the message. In his excitement

to see his father in action, he scrambled up the bank from the river. He slipped and fell down into the gears. His father didn't see any of this until the train, carrying 400 passengers, was nearing the bridge. All of a sudden, he looked down and saw his son with his leg caught in the gears. Unable to escape, the son signaled to his father to pull the lever. The father was in extreme anguish, knowing that he must pull the lever to save the 400 unwitting passengers from certain death. In horrible grief, he pulled the lever, sacrificing his beloved son.

God the heavenly Father did just this when He sacrificed His one and only Son, Jesus. He allowed Him to be ridiculed, abused, and scorned so that He could pay the penalty for all the people, whether they be self righteous sinners, or outright criminals like Barabbas. God the Father loved us all so much, that even though we prefer Barabbas to Jesus, He provided the only remedy for our sin, by allowing Jesus to be put to death. But as we all know, God raised Jesus gloriously from the dead on the third day. The empty tomb is the most well attested event from that period of history. Because He raised Jesus, He can and will raise you and me, if we will accept the payment He made, on our behalf. Because He himself never sinned, He was able to pay the penalty for your sin and mine. Crucifixion was a torturous way to die. But Jesus was willing to do it, because of His love for us Barabbas lovers. Don't wait until it's too late. Receive Him now!

Ed Hill – Franklin, N.C.

Trump delayed taking action on the virus

Donald Trump has no idea his responsibility is as president. For him to stand there on TV, in the beginning of virus outbreak, the virus is a hoax the democrats are trying to pull for elect. Then he says it's no worse than the flu. He said 37,000 Americans die from the flu each year. Nothing shut down, life and economy go on. He doesn't know the flu typically kills 0.1 percent of people it effects every year. World Heath Organization estimate the Covid-19 virus has a mortality rate 3.4 percent. Trump dismissed WHO's numbers as false, meantime his stupidity is costing lives.

He delayed in making the virus a priority as long as possible, by not going to briefings, dlwo playing thte problem. Mean while China cancelled right away all gatherings, closed everything, even a lot of air flights, and they have had no new cases in a while as they nipp it in the bud as soon as possible. If there ever was a hoax, its Donald Trump.

Kathy Whitley – Franklin, N.C.

Email letters to the editor to
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Action taken in less than 30 days from outbreak

Reply to John Barry:

So, you think it took a long time (7 weeks?) for President Trump to react to the COVID-19 virus?

The American Journal of Clinical Pathology reports that this coronavirus (COVID-19) was first seen in late December: On Dec. 30, 2019, scientists in China "a cluster of patients with pneumonia of unknown etiology was observed in Wuhan, China, and reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) China bureau in Beijing. A week later, Jan. 7, 2020, a new coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) was isolated from these patients. "As we suspect, the Chinese government tried to keep the virus outbreak secret – for what reason we don't know. What we do know, however, is that by Jan. 31, 2020, President Trump had declared a public health emergency and began restricting U.S. access to non-citizens from China. Flights filled with U.S. citizens who were in Wuhan were brought to America and those people were quarantined on U.S. military bases for two weeks. Though he lamented being called a "racist" for doing so, Trump says if he hadn't hardened the U.S. borders at that point, the virus would have had gained a bigger foothold in the country.

Now, let's go to the back in time to 2009. While American health officials declared a public health emergency on April 26, 2009, then-Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano downplayed the announcement, calling it "standard operating procedure," adding that she would rather refer to it as a "declaration of emergency preparedness." It wasn't until four months later in October, that then-President Obama himself declared an H1N1 national emergency. CNN reported in October 2009: Since the H1N1 flu pandemic began in April, millions of people in the United States have been infected, at least 20,000 have been hospitalized and more than 1,000 have died, said Dr. Thomas Frieden, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. President Barack Obama declared the H1N1 (swine) flu outbreak a national emergency, the *Wall Street Journal* reports. "The declaration, which Mr. Obama signed Friday, authorizes the administration to waive or modify certain federal requirements involving Medicare, Medicaid and health-privacy rules to speed treatment," the newspaper writes (McKay/Simpson/Whalen, 10/26).

So even though you seem to think it took President Trump seven weeks to take the virus seriously, he actually began his travel restrictions in less than 30 days which any prudent person would believe the president was taking the matter seriously. Yes, some of the things President Trump may say seem off-base and even a little ridiculous, his actions by far substantiate his motives in the situations he faces. Even if by any wild sense of imagination it took him seven weeks to act, that's still a lot sooner than it took the former president to act on the last pandemic to strike this nation.

Bill Lawson – Franklin, N.C.

Health care workers treat without discrimination

This past week Saint John the Divine Cathedral in New York City informed the Christian relief organization, Samaritan's Purse, that they would be withdrawing their offer of using the church as a makeshift hospital to serve the sick and dying victims of the coronavirus. Yes, you read that right. Why on earth would anyone refuse help in these dire times, much less a church? Well, it seems that Saint John's is a progressive Episcopal church and welcomes the LGBTQ community part and parcel. Samaritan's Purse is a conservative Christian organization and does not embrace the LGBTQ agenda. As a matter of fact, its employees and volunteers sign a statement of faith that acknowledges their beliefs are in line with those of Samaritan's Purse. Mind you, no is ever refused treatment for any reason. That in-

cludes, race, gender, sexual orientation, faith, or lack of.

I have been a Registered Nurse for 24 years. I am also a conservative Christian. Most of that time was spent at the bedside in an urban, public hospital providing care for drug dealers, wife beaters, pedophiles, transgender, gays, straight, lesbians, alcoholics in withdrawal, politicians, socialites, sports figures, and any and all combinations of the above. And I can look you in the eye and say that every one of them was treated and cared for with the same respect I would want my family cared for. Furthermore, it's been my experience, that most health care workers try very hard to do the same.

So, when a church tells a relief agency the caliber of Samaritan's Purse to take a hike, we'd rather let a few more die than risk the ire of the LGBTQ community by using your conservative Christian caregivers ... I'm beside myself. I'm appalled. I'm personally insulted. I'm angry.

What happened to tolerance? What about inclusivity? What about a person's right to believe what they want without fear? Not if you are a Christian. Then you are labeled a hater, a "phobic." You're not even worthy of setting up a hospital in your own country to care for the sick and dying citizens. Shame on you Saint John's Divine ... shame.

Dan Morgan – Franklin, N.C.

P.S. Since penning this editorial, articles of this side of the story have been dropping from the internet. One remains. NY Times April 9 by Liam Stack

'Test' run of martial law looks to be successful

If I were a conspiracy theorist, and I'm not, of course, I may think that this coronavirus fiasco could be a test, especially for Americans, to see how they respond to martial law. How would we enjoy losing more of our freedoms for a little bit (?) of safety, and will some of our neighbors ensure that we are "policed?" And how many autocrat wannabees will come out of the cracks? If this be the case, success! So far.

God bless everyone, hope you had a happy Easter and Passover.

Stephen Crosby – Franklin, N.C.

Donald Trump not worthy of the title

One of my favorite books is the King James Bible (1611). Excellent advice. In the '50s my mother took us to the nearest Baptist church regularly-Sunday School and Bible study. She had great respect for Billy Graham. Too bad he didn't have a son who would continue his Christian ministry. He has clearly chosen politics. In the '60s while in the U.S. Navy I began to wonder: Is the creation story true? Still, I turned to the Bible for guidance and philosophy.

Church attendance has plummeted, though, during my lifetime. Religion seems to be less relevant to many Americans. Is that true for Christianity as a belief? In the '70s legendary singer Johnny Cash sang, "What is truth?" In the '90s Counting Crows sang of "...the crumbling difference between wrong and right." Are these songs reflective of the drop in church attendance? Are they signs of a broader societal concern for morality in general?

Now, in 2020, Donald Trump, president of the United States, is widely regarded as the world's biggest liar. Lying is a violation of the ninth commandment (Exodus 20:16). Mark Twain's fictional character Huckleberry Finn is a distant second. Sadly, Trump is real rather than merely a fictional character. Trump may also be world champion in another vice. Proverbs 3:27 states, "Withhold not good from them to whom it is due, when it is in the power of thine hand to do it." Marvelous human relations wisdom. Has Trump never read Proverbs? Does he merely refuse to follow sage advice?

Trump was one of the "fortunate sons" that Credence Clearwater Revival sang about in the '70s. He avoided mili-

TAYLOR

From previous page

The board will also review the status of the utility fees for the Performing Arts Center. The board waived these fees as a part of the transfer of the property from the town to the PAC. This agreement was to be in effect while construction of the new facility was under way. They were to expire in March.

Also, the board will review and approve the Comprehensive Water Master Plan and Assessment Management Plan. The town received a grant to hire consultants to do a comprehensive study of our water system. In order to receive grant reimbursement for the study, the board will have to review and approve this report. This study and report will serve as a guide for future improvements to the system over the next several decades.

Hope everyone can "tune in" to tonight's meeting.

tary service during the Vietnam War. Billionaire father. "Bone spurs" in his feet. Still, he belittled American war hero John McCain who spent nearly six years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam.

Between now and Nov. 3, veterans as well as active service members need to ask themselves this question: Since Donald Trump chooses to lie to us and belittle us, is he worthy of the title Commander-in-Chief? In my book he is not.

Dave Waldrop – Webster, N.C.

See more letters on page 12

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.

Correction

In the April 9 edition of *The Macon County News* in an article by Deena C. Bouknight entitled, "Small farmers finding alternative ways to get goods to consumers" Yonder's ordering site was incorrect. Instead of eatrealfood.com, go to either www.eatrealfoodinc.com or www.yonderfarmersmarket.com.



LETTERS

Continued
from page 13

Regressive changes detrimental to our future

The editorial board of *USA-Today* recently made the provocative statement that the president of the United States is "waging war on accountability." Many of you will not believe that, much less accept it as axiomatic. I, however, find that claim every bit as true as I do unsurprising.

Three fundamental changes these past several decades have resulted in the almost total collapse of our society and the inevitable spawning of one Donald J. Trump.

One is the failure of three generations of parents to stay in touch with their common sense, to expect children to obey and to say "No" more than "Yes." Some of you will call that "old-fashioned" but it's simply tried and true.

Simultaneously, the second involves public education which, in my view, has drifted far afield from educating to adopting a philosophy more closely akin to entertaining, emphasizing a "feel good" environment.

At one time the primary goal of education was to promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, church and community, to cultivate closer relationships between parents and teachers in order to intelligently train a child. Also, a conscious effort was made to develop between educators and the general public a trust that would secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education. Would it surprise you to learn these were the stated objectives of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers (the PTA) following WWII?

Third (and a most devastating factor), the almost total breakdown of our communities (the "Village"). Parents once understood that in rearing a child, they had an obligation to both the child and the community so when parents stopped parenting and villages stopped assisting parents in the raising of children, our society began its down hill slide. Over the last 50 years or so, the "experts" and social change agents have managed to replace child-rearing realities with "parenting" rhetoric.

Subsequently, over time, words have lost all meaning to many Americans. Our children are growing up in a high tech world where truth, honesty, morality and ethics are merely words in a book rarely opened.

The sum and substance of our collective decades-long failures has finally crowned a man president who doesn't appear to know right from wrong, who lies incessantly, obscures, confuses and muddles the truth with wild abandon and who eagerly (with self-centered flair) fires those he deems disloyal, which is just about anyone with integrity or who is honest, decent, professional and puts the nation first, before himself.

Some Americans may view the changes that have occurred these past five decades as "progressive," they're anything but that. They're regressive, detrimental to national security, democracy, our sovereignty and our future. It comes as no surprise what-so-ever that Donald Trump's promise to "drain the swamp" has metamorphosed into (as *USA-Today's* editorial board so eloquently stated) "the president is taking a sledgehammer to government institutions designed by law to ruthlessly ferret out fraud and waste."

As hundreds of Americans (and allied citizens) lie dying of war and pestilence and thousands more grieve their dead, Trump remains devoted to his hold on power and personal grudges by purging our nation of honest and decent men and women.

The latest to go, Michael Atkinson, the inspector general of the intelligence community. Before him; Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman and his twin, Lt. Col. Yevgeny Vindman, ambassadors Gordon Sundland and William Taylor, all people who enraged Trump by simply telling the truth and failing to cover up Trump's disregard of our laws.

This is but one page in Trump's thick book of lifelong misdeeds and misadventures. But for those who willingly kneel at his feet and beg to fulfill his every whim, who advocate,

support and approve of Trump's words and actions unconditionally, this speaks volumes.

David Snell – Franklin, N.C.

Isn't it time to pull together instead of apart?

How sad it is to read the criticisms against our president during this Covid-19 nightmare we are going through with the rest of the world. Instead of appreciating the efforts made by him and his team, it seems those who hate Trump use this as a means to try to destroy him, as they have been doing since the first day he was in office.

I get my news from *billoreilly.com* and his "no spin" news. As Sargent Joe Friday used to say, "Just the facts Ma'am, just the facts!" Here are some facts: President Trump stopped flights from China in January, before any other country did, and was ridiculed for it by Joe Biden. There were also three democratic debates between Jan. 1 and Feb. 27, and Covid-19 was not so much as mentioned by the Democratic contenders or moderators! So much for the Democratic early response. As far as him not fully alerting the American people early on, any president with common sense would try his best not to cause panic and havoc. And how was he to know the full extent of the threat to us until it actually unveiled itself? He depended on the information on hand. He closed our borders from other affected nations soon on to stay the numbers. He assembled a highly trained task force, all this while dealing with the distraction of "impeachment" proceedings. So easing the American people into the reality, as it presented itself, was reasonable. The truth is that we are faring far better than the others. While our death rate from the virus stands at 3%, Spain and Italy and others are, sadly, way up in their numbers. That shows us that our Democratic system works on behalf of the people far better than the Socialist systems of government.

For which of Trump's accomplishments is he hated most? Is it that he was able to boost the economy and reduce unemployment in record time? Was it because he was able to wipe out the threat of Isis? Maybe it was the better trade agreements he secured, or lowering taxes to bring American businesses back home? Maybe it was that he has insisted on protecting Americans and their lives, jobs, and our economy from being compromised by irresponsible immigration policies. Should we prefer, rather, the chaos that permitting unlimited, unverified, illegal immigration produces? Consider the drug infiltration, increased crime, violence, homelessness and disease outbreaks resulting from the loose far left policies of California and Chicago. So I ask myself, who would they replace him with? Whom do they think could do a better job? Maybe Sanders, with his Communist, and Socialist ideology, which would surely bankrupt us and destroy our economy? Maybe Biden who would be the far left Democratic puppet? I shudder to think ...

The fact that President Trump has survived the constant onslaught from the left has to confirm his strength and courage as a person. No he isn't perfect, but then, who out there in the political world is perfect anyway? "Let him who is without sin cast the first stone." He has proven his leadership abilities, despite the propaganda the liberal press would have us believe if we are taken in by their brand of hate agenda driven "journalism?"

We live in a very complicated world and at a very threatening time. Isn't it time to pull together instead of apart? Isn't it time, as others have rightly suggested, to be the best we can be to help and encourage each other, to seek truth and facts instead of spreading lies, division and alarm? Instead of using the pandemic for political advantage? Aren't we better than that? Instead, let's look at the brave nurses, doctors, paramedics, and scientists who are tirelessly devoting themselves to the sick and the answers we need to end this nightmare.

Which side do you choose?

Loretta Hastings – Franklin, N.C.

Long-term care ombudsman offers advice for dealing with health care challenges

These are challenging days for everyone. This is particularly true for the long-term healthcare community. Whether you are a resident, the family members, friends, or other acquaintances of a resident; or, someone who is in an administrative position or works as direct-care staff in a long-term healthcare facility, you are probably stressed out and anxious (justifiably) about Covid-19.

As the Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman (RLTCO), with the Southwestern Commission- Area Agency on Aging, serving the seven western-most counties in North Carolina – Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Jackson, Macon, Swain – I offer some suggestions of ways to deal with this challenging time in regards to the long-term healthcare community.

- Be grateful for the facilities and those who are working to provide care for the residents who live in the facilities. These staff members are seeking, while at personal risks to their own health and that of those closest to them, to provide for the needs of the residents in ways that are adequate and appropriate.

- As you have opportunity, express your gratitude to those that are staffing the facilities. Kind words and simple tokens of appreciation can go a long way in encouraging these folks to keep on doing their work on behalf of the residents.

- Strive to be realistic and reasonable. Realistically, no one knows the many ways Covid-19 will impact the facilities and the entire long-term healthcare communities. The numerous limitations and restrictions that have been put into place will be frustrating for those desiring to have intimate contact with residents. The unavailability of needed equipment and supplies to address Covid-19 will be difficult to accept. The expected increase in the number of those who will test positive to the disease will be frightening and the results (deaths) devastating. These things, and so many more are likely to happen before an improvement in containing and controlling the spread of the virus occurs. The best way to approach these issues is to be reasonable. Inasmuch as is possible, practice patience, kindness, understanding, and advocacy for best practice in caring for the residents. Reasonableness requires that responses exhibit control of anger outbursts, avoidance of excessive demands, and a willingness to listen to the explanation of those most closely engaged in the situation.

Please be assured that it is acceptable to raise any concerns and complaints that you may have during these days. If you suspect that a resident has been abused, intentionally neglected, or is being (or has been) financially exploited, contact the Department of Social Services-Adult Protective Services (DSS-APS) in the county where it occurred. If you suspect that the rights of a resident are not being honored, or there are questions concerning the quality of life experienced by the resident, contact the RLTCO (828-586-1962, ext. 223). You will be asked to leave a voice message and will receive a return call. If you prefer, call your complaint to North Carolina Division of Health Services Regulations (NC-DHSR) at 1-800-624-3004 (within NC) or 1-919-855-4500. Again, be realistic and understand that your complaints will be handled in a timely manner, given the current situation. And, be reasonable and understand whatever resolution may be possible will be dependent on the restrictions and limitations in place due to Covid-19.

Larry Reeves, Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman

Easter Celebrations

The Franklin community didn't let a virus keep them from marking the Easter holiday. Safe Kids Macon County teamed up with The Factory Franklin, the Franklin Fire Department, and the Macon County Sheriff's Office to escort the Easter Bunny around Macon County last Thursday. The Easter Bunny visited neighborhoods around Franklin and each of the elementary schools to wave to children ahead of the Easter holiday. Cowee Baptist Church held a drive-in church and Hickory Knoll Methodist filled their pews with make believe parishioners dressed in their finest.



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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 April 2 - 13. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

April 13

Vicki Lynn Shirley, was charged with violate domestic violence protect order.

Franklin Police Department

April 2

Jordan Marie Hanslovan, 25, of Clyde Downs Rd., was charged with resist/obstruct/delay, assault law enforcement officer, domestic criminal trespass, felony possession of stolen goods, larceny after breaking and entering, breaking and entering, domestic criminal trespass, felony possession of stolen goods. No bond was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

April 4

Rebecca Elise Brown, 28, of Franklin, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor trespassing. Sergeant Ashe made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

April 6

Amanda Rae Santiago, 37, of Soggy Hill Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for Swain County shoplifting concealment of goods. A secured bond of \$100 was set.

April 7

William Douglas Allen, 30, of Mitchell Rd, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

April 8

Lynsey Marie Cogdill, 35, of Bettys Dr., Waynesville, was issued a true bill of indictment. No bond was set.

April 10

Casey Jameshill Dixon, 20, of Dixon Farm Rd., Huntersville, was charged with, assault on a female. No bond was set.

April 12

Errika Leah Bradley, 32, of Lizzie Cucumber Rd., Cherokee, was charged with resisting a public officer, second degree trespass. A \$1,000 bond was set.

Samantha Nicole Namotka, 21, of Sparks Dr., was charged with misdemeanor larceny, felony conspiracy, second degree kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

Paul Anthony Namotka, 55, of Sparks Rd., was charged with felony conspiracy, second degree kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

Drug trafficker will serve 18-23 years in prison

District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch's office secured the conviction this week of an Otto man who played a key role in a large-scale methamphetamine operation to ferry drugs from Atlanta, Ga., into Macon County.

Kenneth Wayne Underwood, 51, pleaded guilty to trafficking in methamphetamine. He was sentenced as part of a negotiated plea agreement.

Underwood will serve at least 225 months and up to 282 months in prison. He received credit for time served, 369 days of pretrial confinement.

Macon County Superior Court Judge Bill Coward also ordered Underwood to pay court costs and a \$250,000 fine.

"The defendant attempted to build a methamphetamine pipeline into Western North Carolina," Welch said. "Thanks to great work by the Macon County Sheriff's Office and members of my office, we were able to ensure Mr. Underwood, rather than profiting from dealing drugs, instead spends a lengthy amount of time in prison."

Assistant District Attorney John Hindsman Jr. served as case prosecutor.

Two other Macon County residents, Nikki Wykle and Melissa Burch, were arrested by Macon County Sheriff's Office on April 10, 2019, as part of a drug sting at Wykle's house on Cat Creek Road.

Deputies stopped a vehicle seen leaving the residence and arrested Underwood and Burch after seizing more than two



Pictured (L-R) are Kenneth Wayne Underwood; defense attorney Andy Kite; and Assistant District Attorney John Hindsman Jr.

pounds of methamphetamine. The drugs had an estimated street value of at least \$90,000.

Wykle is charged with trafficking methamphetamine by possession, two counts of conspiracy to traffic methamphetamine, habitual felon indictment and maintaining a dwelling for controlled substances. She is being held under a \$2.5 million secured bond.

Burch pleaded guilty to sell/deliver methamphetamine and attempted trafficking. A judge sentenced her to probation; subsequent probation violations are scheduled to be heard in court June 1.

DA's office sees uptick in domestic violence calls

Victims of domestic violence can tap a full array of protective services, including potentially lifesaving legal protections, even with the coronavirus lockdown, District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch said this week.

"For some, staying home is not actually safe," she said. "These are very dangerous times for people in abusive relationships. I want victims to know there are avenues of escape."

Welch and local anti-domestic violence advocates fear a looming spike in the number and severity of cases – not just involving spouses or partners, but children and senior citizens, too.

Like Macon, other communities within the 43rd Prosecutorial District that Welch oversees – the state's seven westernmost counties – are also starting to experience an uptick in the number of domestic-violence calls received.

REACH of Macon County's executive director shares Welch's concerns. Andrea Anderson oversees the Franklin-based nonprofit that provides critical services to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

"We have seen an increase in the need for services — particularly at the shelter, and with calls," Anderson said.

The 10-bedroom safe haven is full, she said, though the nonprofit continues to find ways to house victims, turning no one away. For now, because of social-distancing constraints, clients cannot "double up" when using the shelter.

"Also, people at our shelter are having to stay a little longer because things are not the same," Anderson said, explaining that some of REACH's clients have seen their plans for financial independence derailed or delayed as economic fallout rides sidesaddle to the coronavirus threat.

The seemingly small needs of victims can prove formidable.

In a neighboring county, one client did not have a way to cook her food. A nonprofit was able to step in and provide a

microwave oven.

Meanwhile, Welch said the courts continue to hold emergency hearings and issue restraining orders; law enforcement officers continue to answer calls and arrest abusers; prosecutors continue to shepherd domestic-violence cases through the justice system on victims' behalf.

Macon County commissioners issued a stay-at-home order March 26. One day later, Gov. Roy Cooper did the same. Residents are allowed to leave home for essential services, conduct essential business or tap government services.

Welch said Macon County leaders, as well as state and national leaders, are taking the steps necessary to curb the deadly coronavirus. But, there is a flip side of the coin.

"Stress on households will increase the longer people remain homebound," Welch said. "There are some individuals who respond to frustrations by drinking. There are those who become aggressive, with emotional abuse escalating into physical abuse."

Welch said victims could find it difficult to carve out the privacy needed to safely seek help. She urged abuse victims to take precautions when:

- accessing websites about domestic violence.
- sending emails or texts.
- making or receiving phone calls.

To make a financial donation to REACH, call 369-5544 or email reach@reachofmaconcounty.org,

Do you need help? Here's how to get it:

- In an emergency, dial 911.
- For services, advice or just to talk (including anonymously), call the hotline at (828)369-5544.
- If you are a victim of domestic violence with questions about an open case or about legal protection, call the District Attorney's office at (828)349-7210 and leave a message. Your call will be returned as promptly as possible.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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

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

Adult Day Care at the Senior Center is closed until further notice. This action is consistent with other adult day cares in the region and across the state as they are either in the process of have already ceased providing this service.

All AARP Tax-Aide sites in Western North Carolina, as well as across the state and nation, are suspending their operations until further notice. Taxpayers with appointments will be contacted to cancel their appointments. As coronavirus (COVID-19) developments change hour by hour, AARP Foundation is doing its part to flatten the curve of transmission. A top priority for the volunteer organization is ensuring we are protecting those most at risk, including our volunteers and taxpayers. They will continue to assess whether they can open again in some or all sites for the remainder of the tax season and if the tax season is extended.

Nantahala Hiking Club Hikes have been canceled until further notice.

Gastric Bypass Support Group will not meet in April.

Adult Day Care at the Senior Center is closed until further notice. This action is consistent with other adult day cares in the region and across the state as they are either in the process of have already ceased providing this service.

Macon County Care Network is here to serve any in need, we have made a few changes to our operations. They will be switching from the client choice food pantry to a pre packed box of food. Clients will come to the outside window sign in and get their food. The soup café will be feeding the homeless every day. Backpack program will continue as usual. This is to protect their clients, volunteers and staff. Any one in need is encouraged to come and get assistance. The thrift store will be closed until further notice.

Taste of Scotland and Celtic Festival scheduled for June 19 and 20 has been cancelled. The next Taste of Scotland is scheduled for June 18 through 20, 2021.

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

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

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

Email calendar items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

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

Editor's note: Most churches in the Franklin area are not holding services, although some are live streaming online. The Macon County News will continue to list churches to reference when the governor's meeting restrictions are lifted.

All Saints Episcopal Church holds Rite I Service every Sunday, 8 a.m., at St. Agnes Chapel, 66 Church St.; Rite II Service at 10:15 a.m. with music at St. Agnes Chapel every first and third Sunday; and at St. Cyprian's Chapel, 216 Roller Mill Rd., every second and fourth Sunday. For service times on fifth Sundays, visit www.allsaintsfranklin.org or call the church office at (828)524-4910.

Franklin First United Methodist Church meets Sundays for worship at 8:30 a.m. (contemporary) and 10:55 a.m. (traditional). Fellowship time is at 9:30 a.m.; Sunday School classes meet at 9:45 a.m. Bible studies, group offerings, and gatherings occur throughout the week. The church is located at 66 Harrison Ave. The senior pastor is Rev. David Beam. For more information, call (828)524-3010 or visit www.firstumcfranklin.org

Patton United Methodist Church Services are Sunday worship 9.45 a.m., Sunday school 11 a.m., prayer time Wednesday 6 p.m., youth group Wednesday 6 p.m., Bible study Wednesday 6.30 p.m. 119 Patton Church Road, Franklin Pattonmethodistchurch.org

Memorial United Methodist Church regular Sunday services are held at 10:55 a.m. each Sunday, and Sunday School at 9:45 am. Everyone is welcome to attend. The church is located at 4668 Old Murphy Rd., just off 64 West. For more information, call (828)369-5834 or visit our website at: www.memorialmethodistchurch.org.

Son Rise Ministries is a non-denominational, full-gospel, Christian fellowship that meets Friday evenings at 7 p.m., Men's Bible Study is Monday night at 6:30 p.m., Ladies prayer and Bible study is Wednesdays, 1 to 3 p.m. The church is located at 462 Depot St. For more information, call (828)369-2465 or (828)421-4153.

St. Nicholas Orthodox Christian Church Divine Liturgy is held on Sundays, 10 a.m., followed by coffee hour. The church is located at 23 Hickory St., in Murphy. For more information, call Fr. James Blomeley (828)361-1464 snocmurphy@gmail.com

Memorial United Methodist Church Anonymous Call-in Prayer Line. If you need prayer, call (828)369-0707. Leave a message with your

prayer request, and the church will be happy to pray for you or whoever you request prayers for. You may also leave a request for a call back if you need one.

First United Methodist Church Sunday Worship Schedule: Contemporary Worship at 8:30 a.m. immediately followed by a Fellowship Breakfast, Sunday School at 9:45 a.m. and Traditional Worship at 10:55 a.m. (childcare provided) at First United Methodist Church, 66 Harrison Ave, Franklin. Call (828) 524-3010 / firstumcfranklin.org

Prentiss Church of God Sunday services include Sunday School at 9:30 a.m.; Worship at 10:30 a.m. On Wednesday, pre-service prayer begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by praise and worship at 7 p.m. Pastor Kevin Chapman invites the community to attend. The church is located at 59 Church Hill Lane, off Addington Bridge Road. Phone: (828)369-3885.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church Divine Worship with Holy communion is held on Sunday 10:30 a.m. Rev. Fred Balke is the pastor. The church is located one block north of SR 64 next to BP Station. Visitors are welcome. For more information, call (828)369-1006 or web site gslc-franklin.com

Grace Presbyterian Church (EPC) Services with Pastor Toby Popeare are Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Worship 11 a.m., Wednesday Bible Study 6 p.m. The church is located at 360 First St. (828)369-6800. Visit www.graceepc-franklin.com or find us on facebook @ gracepresbyterianchurch-EPC

Franklin Church of the Nazarene Service times are Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. Praise and worship 10:45 a.m. Sunday night prayer service 6 p.m. The church is located at 266 Belle Dowdle Rd. in Franklin.

Morrison Presbyterian Church Sunday Worship Service is held at 9:30 a.m. The church is located off 441S.; take the first right after the visitors center onto Morrison Church Rd.; go 1/4 mile to the church.

Franklin Seventh Day Adventist Church Services are, Saturday Sabbath school 9:30 a.m., Saturday services 11:30 a.m., Wednesday prayer meetings 6:30 p.m. The church is located at 71 Brindle Rd., Franklin. Pastor is Glenn Marshall. For more information, call (828)524-5493.

Iotla Baptist Church services are Sunday School at 10 a.m., followed by worship service at 11 a.m. Sunday and Wednesday evening supper 5:30 p.m., services at 6:15 p.m. The church is located at 1537 Iotla Church Road. Pastor is Brandon Breedlove. For more information, call the church office at (828)524-7167.

Grace Baptist Church Sunday School is at 10 a.m.; Sunday morning worship service at 11 a.m.; Sunday evening at 6 p.m., and Wednesday evening prayer meeting at 7 p.m. Pastor is Frank Rodriguez. The church is located at 143 Setser Branch Rd.

Email church items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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

W	A	S	P	E	T	A	E	T	A	E	S	E	
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SCC holding virtual town hall for businesses impacted by pandemic

The Small Business Center at Southwestern Community College is offering a free, live COVID-19 Virtual Town Hall featuring a panel of key business experts from 2-4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22. Attendees will be able to ask the panel questions directly and receive business support and the latest information related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Topics include loan and disaster financing options, unemployment information, operational guidance, government updates, additional upcoming webinars and more.

Featured speakers include Sharon Harvey, who currently serves as the U.S. Small Business Administration's Senior Area Manager for Western North Carolina, and Jeff Goss, an attorney from Ridenour & Goss, PA in Sylva who regularly advises small business owners on employment issues, corporate governance and contract related matters.

"With information changing what feels like daily, this is a great place to get answers from the experts. They'll go over the most frequently asked questions we've been seeing, and then you'll have a chance to ask questions to the panel," said Tiffany Henry, Director of the Small Business Center. "Instead of spending hours reading through documents online or trying to find the answer to something specific, you can get the information you need quickly and upfront."

Prospective attendees must register in advance to receive necessary login information by visiting http://bit.ly/SCC_Webinars.

For more information on any seminars or services provided by SCC's Small Business Center, please contact Henry at t_henry@southwesterncc.edu



Tiffany Henry

Professors go high-tech to share their music

Two Western North Carolina music professors joined forces to help area churches fill the void of missing choirs this Easter Sunday, silenced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Brad Ulrich, who teaches trumpet at Western Carolina University, and Vance Reese, an organist and music professor at Brevard College, went high-tech to record three pieces of classical music meant to be donated to area churches.

"With the lockdown, churches cannot get their choirs and other musicians together to record for the services," Ulrich said. "We thought this would be a very useful service to some of the churches who prefer to use classical music."

The pieces—two by Vivaldi and one by Bach—feature Reese on organ and Ulrich on trumpet. But the two played their respective parts alone in their own university's concert halls because of social-distancing requirements.

"I played the accompaniment part on the organ at Brevard College, which is a mechanical action pipe organ, a fabulous instrument," Reese said. "Our engineer, Kurt Davis, worked on it in a matter of a few hours and then I piped it over to Brad. He went to Coulter recital hall at Western and was able to listen to my part on headphones and record his part, which he then sent to me."

From there, Reese used a digital audio workstation app, GarageBand— an app he confessed to still learning — to edit his and Ulrich's parts together so the recording sounds as if the musicians are playing together in the same concert hall. The challenge, Vance said, was when he first recorded his organ part alone without hearing Ulrich. "I had to guess at the registration and keep a steady beat, but I had a metronome to keep me on track," Reese said. "Once I was able to hear the two parts together, I was then synching at the computer using GarageBand."

For Vance, performing these classical pieces was doable only because of his long-established relationship with Ulrich. The two musicians are old friends and collaborators who have toured often together, most recently in January. "We breathe



Vance Reese



Brad Ulrich

with each other, we respond to each other in the moment," Vance said. And each are members of the Asheville Symphony Orchestra.

While each is employed in higher education, ensuring steady paychecks, they have plenty of musician friends who are out of work because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

"We're doing this because people need music, especially at this time," Ulrich said. "We hope these recordings will fuel the appetite of churches to hire musicians in the future."

While the COVID-19 pandemic has wreaked havoc on the lives of many musicians who are out of work, Ulrich and Vance say the crisis has given them the opportunity to fight back with something they love. "There's the chance to reach out and say, 'we need the arts at times like this and this is one little contribution that two friends can make,'" Ulrich said.

Submitted by Melanie Threlkeld McConnell



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FRANKLIN BYPASS WALMART

Malocasoma, the Caterpillar Tent Maker

Dr. Bob Gilbert – Columnist

Spring is here and a few tent caterpillars have been spotted. These tents are almost always located in the inconspicuous native Wild Cherry trees. Oaks and Black-gums are also occasional hosts. At first glance it appears the tents have appeared even before the trees have leafed out. Closer inspection reveals the early leaves have already been eaten. In a heavy infestation year the entire tree looks like it has been defoliated.



Dr. Bob Gilbert

There are two species of Tent Caterpillars – the Eastern Tent (*Malocasoma americana*) and the Forest Tent (*Malocasoma disstria*). *Malocasoma* is a family of moths. *Maloca* is a South American term for a communal structure. *Soma* means body.

The moth's larvae form is a caterpillar that exists as a communal inhabitant in a woven tent. Fortunately, the Forest Tent species is uncommon here; it is found mostly in hardwood cypress forests. It has white spots like footprints



Above, closeup of egg mass with silk trails. At right, a one-inch long tent caterpillar.

on the top of the body. It does not form tents but sheets or pads of silk on the very tips of branches. They do not colonize living a somewhat nomadic existence.

The Eastern Tent species has a white line down its back. The tents are formed in forks of branches. These caterpillars are communal. Both species have long hairs covering their bodies. Blue jays and the Yellow-billed and Black-billed Cuckoos appear to be the only birds that can digest these insects. When there is a bumper crop of tent caterpillars the Cuckoo population increases. The population of these caterpillars fluctuates in cycles. Last year there are fewer tents. Silk gathered from the tents line many bird nests.

What is interesting about the tents is that they are constructed to capture heat from the early morning sun. Studies have shown that the caterpillar has to have a body temperature of at least 55 degrees in order to digest leaves. The caterpillars move to different rooms in the tent as the sun

changes positions. They start to forage early in the morning leaving a hormone (pheromone) trail and/or a silk trail that enables them to get back to home base where they rest and digest. Buried in the layers of the silk tent are droppings called frass. They are only able to partially digest an ingested leaf so there is always lots of frass.

Tent caterpillars are one of the earliest insects to hatch in the spring, likely because young leaves are easier to digest? These caterpillars have a short life span. They hatch in March and after 5 to 6 larval molts called instars, they spin a cocoon and pupate. Two months later the adult moths hatch, breed and then the female lays eggs in a mass and dies. The adult female moth may only live a day or two. Like other insects with this type of life cycle the adults do not feed. The egg mass is laid around a small branch and is covered with a shiny material called spumaline. It is able to absorb some moisture necessary for the larvae but stays hard enough to prevent other insects like wasps from laying their eggs directly on larvae. In a heavy year the Forest Tent species produces so much



frass that people have to stay inside. It rains frass.

Moths of the tent caterpillar are short lived. Most of their life cycle is spent in a larva or caterpillar form. This is very similar to our cicada. It spends most of its life underground only briefly emerging above ground to reproduce and then dies.

Almost all healthy deciduous trees can tolerate being defoliated two to even three times a year. The second and third growth produces smaller leaves. It does use up a lot of energy for a tree to defoliate but this does not kill the trees. But if this happens year after year the tree will become weaker.

A third insect, the gypsy moth, also produces webs and defoliated trees. These insects were mistakenly introduced in an attempt to develop silk. Fortunately, gypsy moths have not reached us yet.

Sprays can control both tent caterpillars, Sevin being the most popular insecticide. But you can in early spring look for eggs masses on branches that could be cut off and destroyed. But do remember that these caterpillars are the food source of our native, elusive and very unique cuckoos.

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

Karen Lawrence is a professional wildlife and horticultural photographer from Franklin.

Note: This article now abridged first appeared in The Franklin Press in April 2011.



Tent caterpillars and frass



Deaths & Funerals

Lucille Green

Lucille Green, 98, passed away peacefully on April 11, 2020, of natural causes. She lived in Franklin, N.C., for 44 years.

She was born in Lemon City (Dade County), Fla., in 1922. She worked for the veteran's administration for many years helping veterans get access to the care they needed. She was instrumental in donating her blood in the early 1940s, for medical research on the Rh factor in women's blood. Even in death, she wished to donate her body to science, but was denied because of the pandemic.



Lucille Green

She spent her early days in Florida camping, fishing and traveling. While in North Carolina, she spent more than 20 years at the Senior Center, which has been a huge focus in her life. The hot meals were greatly appreciated along with the camaraderie that the other seniors and staff offered her. The Senior Center helped her achieve a sense of purpose in her life as she helped the center with daily attendance check-ins. Thank you to the Senior Center for "check-up" phone calls when Lucy was ill.

She was also an ardent gardener, canning her veggies from her extensive garden and attending to her orchids and flowers throughout the summer months. She loved dogs and often donated to the animal shelter.

She is survived by her son, Joseph Terry Green of Laramie, Wyo., and her grandson, Rick Green, of Franklin.

No services are scheduled at this time.

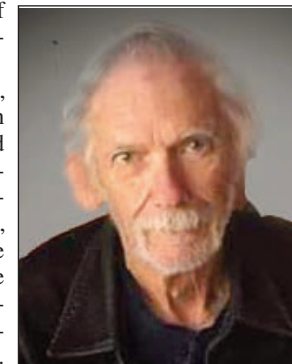
Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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

Lofton Dingler Leland

Lofton Dingler Leland, 87, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Monday, April 13, 2020.

He was born in Newark, N.J., on May 31, 1932. He was the son of the late Richard Ernest and Helen Elise Dingler Leland. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Richard Ernest Leland II. He proudly served his country in the Army, serving in the Korean Conflict. He was also a member of Junaluske Masonic Lodge 0145. He was the shop teacher at Franklin High School where he influenced many lives before his retirement.



Lofton Dingler Leland

He is survived by his children, Dorcas, Jonathan and Kim Leland; a brother, Charleton Leland; six grandchildren, Hallee and Trae Leland, Trent Jones, Mark and Thomas Stivers and Patrick Dolge and one great grandchild. Also surviving is his wife, Peggy Leland.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Memorial donations may be made to the Macon Citizens for the Handicap (MCH Workshop), P.O. Box 698, Franklin, NC 28744.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Deaths & Funerals

Frederick James Sherer

Frederick James Sherer, 77, of Lehigh, Fla., and Franklin, N.C., passed away Wednesday, April 8, 2020. Born April 17, 1942, in Lycoming County, Penn., he was the son of the late Kenneth Sherer Sr. and Doris Sweet Sherer. He retired from Lee County, Fla., Department of Transportation as a paint operator. He enjoyed fishing, playing cards, gem mining, woodworking and making wooden toys. He was of the Assembly of God faith and attended Riverside Fellowship Church.

He is survived by his wife of 43 years, Eva Sherer; two sisters, Margaret Williams and Bonnie Sherer, both of Georgia. He is preceded in death by his parents.

A private service will be held.

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

James Nathan Norman

James Nathan Norman, 39, of Bryson City, N.C., passed away Thursday, April 2, 2020.

Born in Jackson County, he was the son of Henford Lee Norman and the late Mildred Marie Franks Norman. In addition to his mother, he was preceded in death by a brother, Michael Henford Norman and a nephew, Jayden Lane Norman. He was a member of Galbreath Creek Missionary Baptist Church of Bryson City.

In addition to his father, he is survived by his brother, Mark Anthony Norman (Kimberly LaNae) of Sylva; two nephews, Michael Anthony Norman and Colton Isaiah Norman; and a niece, Remi Grace Norman.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to Meridian BHS, in memory of James Norman, 44 Bonnie Lane, Sylva, NC 28779, R.E.C. Program.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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

Cathy Jean McCall Leopard

Cathy Jean McCall Leopard, 64, formerly of Franklin, N.C., and Brevard, N.C., died Tuesday, March 17, 2020, in Florida.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of James and Sue Ledford McCall. She was preceded in death by her sister, Judy Sleight. She loved to travel and was of Baptist faith.

In addition to her parents, she is survived by daughter, Amanda Jones of Lake Toxaway; son, Charles Brown Jr. of Asheville; brother, Jimmy McCall of Franklin; and several grandchildren, aunts, uncles, and cousins.

No services are planned at this time.

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

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



James Nathan Norman



Cathy Leopard

Betty Robinson Frazier

Betty Robinson Frazier, 94, passed away on Monday, April 6, 2020.

She was born in Haywood County, North Carolina, and grew up there and in Asheville. She was preceded in death by her parents, G.G. and Elsie Byers Robinson, and her sisters, Geraldine Peyton and Margaret Reno. She was the wife of the late Charles O. Frazier, principal of Franklin High School 1967-1981.

In addition to raising three children, she was a substitute teacher and librarian in the Andrews, N.C., school system. She spent 30 years working in the Macon County school system, retiring as purchasing agent. She loved reading, libraries, cats, picnics, and family trips to Florida, the Rockies, and Myrtle Beach. She was a devoted supporter and dedicated viewer of First Baptist Church of Spartanburg.

She is survived by sons, Charles Frazier and spouse Katherine, David Frazier and spouse Melissa; daughter, Elizabeth Cook and spouse Leonard; granddaughters, Cristine Frazier Pilgrim and spouse Carey of Rome, Ga., Annie Frazier Crandell and spouse Kyle of Asheville, and Heather Fitzgerald and spouse Shauna of Fuquay-Varina, N.C.; great-grandsons Carey Oldridge Pilgrim and Anderson Owen Pilgrim were among the greatest delights of her later years.

A memorial service will be held at a later date.

Memorial donations may be made to First Baptist Spartanburg, 250 E. Main St., Spartanburg, SC 29306 or at fbs.org.

Macon Funeral Home is handling arrangements.

Condolences may be made at maconfuneralhome.com.

Clyde Percyville Beasley

Clyde Percyville Beasley, 77, of Otto, N.C., passed away Thursday, April 9, 2020. He was born in Macon County, North Carolina, on June 23, 1942, to the late Joseph Asbury Beasley and Britty Webb Beasley. He formerly worked for the Rabun County Maintenance Dept. and enjoyed being outdoors. He was of the Baptist faith.

He is survived by three sisters, Arizona McCracken of Clayton, Ga., Betty Jane White and husband Joe of Clarksville, Ga., and Jessie Faye Vickery and husband Ken of Thomason, Ga.; and a brother, Steve Beasley and wife Connie of Clayton, Ga. In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his wife, Rosie Jane Beasley; two sisters, Charity Beasley and Evelyn Carroll; and two brothers, Ben Beasley and Andrew Beasley.

A private service will held at a later date.

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

Yvonne Adeline Ledford Angel

Yvonne Adeline Ledford Angel, 87, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Friday, April 10, 2020.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Marion and Franchie Sanders Ledford. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Roy Angel and six brothers and sisters, Ellis, Calvin and Wilson Ledford, Marie Ramey, Thelma Waldroop and Barbara McConnell and a granddaughter, Christen Angel. She owned and operated a florist for many years.

She is survived by four children, Richard Angel (Cynthia) of Franklin, Deborah Angel (William Church) of Murphy, N.C., Michael Kinsland (Donna) of Franklin, and Kirk Angel (Donna) of Charlotte, N.C.; sister, Josephine "Tootsie" Dehart of Franklin; brother, Al Ledford of Franklin; eight grandchildren; several great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

No services have been planned at this time.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Betty Robinson Frazier

Paul Hines Trulock III

Paul Hines Trulock III, 76, of Climax, Ga., passed away Friday, April 10, 2020, at Archbold Memorial Hospital.

He was born on May 20, 1943, in Thomasville, Ga., to Margretta and Paul Trulock Jr. He grew up in Climax, Ga., graduating from Bainbridge High School in 1961. He graduated with honors from the University of Georgia in 1965 with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture. While there, he began a career of leadership by serving as EA of Sigma Alpha Epsilon Fraternity.

Following graduation, he moved to California to broaden his knowledge and experience by working in agriculture. He returned to Climax in 1968 and helped run the family farms with his father.

He purchased Farmer's Peanut Company in Whigham, Ga., and built it into a successful company until his retirement. His experience in agriculture gave him the skill set to serve as one of the founders and president of SOWEGA Cotton Gin, and as president of the Georgia Farm Bureau Young Farmers Committee.

Politics stirred in his heart and he took an active role to elect Jimmy Carter as president. He was a "liberal conservative" – liberal in his desire to help underprivileged people, and conservative in not wanting to waste resources to accomplish worthwhile goals.

Seeing the need for housing in his native area, and following in the footsteps of Carter, he worked on the committee to found the Decatur County Habitat for Humanity in 1989.

In 1980, he ran for the Georgia State Senate and was elected and sworn into office Jan. 12, 1981. He served the people of the 10th district for three terms until he retired in 1986. While serving in the legislature, his greatest accomplishment was meeting the love of his life, Diane Griffith Johnson. The two were married in 1985.

He loved bird hunting more than any other outdoor activity. It is believed that he holds the Decatur County record for "relocating" the most predators to protect the precious quail population. Bird hunting took him to exotic places like Iowa, Texas, Arizona, Oregon, Idaho, Mexico, Bolivia, Uruguay, Columbia and Canada. But it is Paul's turkey hunting adventures that are the stuff of which legends are made. Stories are recounted whenever hunters gather. Paul's humor was always colorful. He never missed an opportunity to laugh at himself or with you at jokes and great stories.

Paul and Diane expanded their horizons by traveling extensively throughout their 35 years of marriage. China, Russia, and most recently France, were among the places that the two enjoyed together. In 1997, they purchased a home in Highlands and began spending their summers there. He was a collector of people, their names, and soon, their friendship. He seldom forgot a name and he never forgot a friend.

During his summers in Highlands, he especially loved to spend time on the golf course. He never gave up his attempts at greatness on the links.

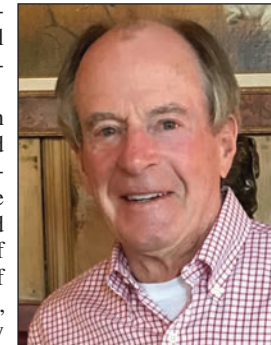
Paul and Diane were members of the First Presbyterian Church in Bainbridge, and also worshiped at First Presbyterian Church in Highlands. He served as a deacon and an elder at First Presbyterian in Bainbridge. He was a longtime member of Rotary and took a tenure as president. He quietly went around helping others with no desire for fanfare.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Margretta McGavock Trulock and Paul Hines Trulock, Jr. He is survived by his wife Diane; son, Paul Hines Trulock IV (Caroline); daughters, Ann Trulock Bouy (Mike), Susan Lynn Trulock Manning (Michael), Sage Johnson Dwyer (Ryan), Cameron Johnson Collins (Tim); and numerous grandchildren; a sister, Helen Trulock Pettyjohn (Thad); and brother, Robert McGavock Trulock (Anne).

A private graveside service will be held at Highlands Memorial Park in Highlands. A celebration of Paul's life will be scheduled on a later date. Online visitors may sign the guest register at www.iveyfuneral.com and www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to First Presbyterian Church, 200 E. Shotwell St, Bainbridge, GA 39819; Habitat for Humanity, 300 E. Broughton St., Bainbridge, GA 39817; or Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy, 13093 Henry Beadel Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32312.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Crematory are helping to serve the Trulock family.



Paul Hines Trulock III



Deaths & Funerals

Jo Mason Fincher

Jo Mason Fincher, 67, of Lakemont, Ga., passed away Sunday, April 5, 2020. She was born March 20, 1953, in Macon County, North Carolina, to the late Woodrow Mason and Edith Hastings Mason. She retired as an office assistant at the Rabun County Tax Office. She loved traveling, shopping, taking pictures of blooming trees and her iPad. She was a great cook and enjoyed being with her family and friends. She was a member of the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church.



Jo Mason Fincher

She is survived by her husband of 47 years, John H. Fincher Jr.; a daughter, Holly Fincher of Flowery Branch, Ga.; a son, John H. Fincher III of Clayton, Ga.; a grandchild, Taylor Fincher of Cleveland, Ga.; a sister, Dorothy Mason Knight of Franklin; and two brothers, Doug Mason and Junior Mason, both of Franklin. In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by her brother, Gerald Mason.

A private graveside service will be held Thursday in the Pleasant Hill Baptist Church Cemetery, Franklin.

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

Nancy Lee McLane

Nancy Lee McLane, 81, of Blairsville, Ga., passed away on Monday, April 6, 2020.

Born in Grand Rapids, Mich., she was the daughter of the late James and Connie McKay. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Samantha McLane and a grandson, Connor McLane.

She was a devout Christian and member of Living Waters Church in Blue Ridge, Ga. She was an extraordinary example of a devoted and loving wife and mother; she could take a house and make it a home. She enjoyed knitting, sewing, puzzles, baking, reading, gardening and mystery movies. She loved to entertain and be surrounded by family and friends.

She is survived by her husband of 60 years, Michael James McLane; seven children, Jim McLane (Denise) of Bad Axe, Mich., Jody McLane of Blairsville, Ga., Charles McLane (Cindy) of Otto, N.C., Abby Lewis (Rob) of Celina, Texas, Joanna Freij (Nabil) of Palmetto, Fla., Gretchen Saba (Walid) of West Bloomfield, Mich., and Nan Beach (Will) of Stanhope, Iowa; two brothers, Dick McKay (Jan) and Ken McKay (Joan) both of Grand Rapids, Mich.; 16 grandchildren; four great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at Rush Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Connor McLane Memorial Scholarship, C/O Entegra Bank, 50 W. Main Street or the Ninth District Opportunity Food Bank, 165 Wellborn Street, Blairsville, Georgia 30512.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Nancy Lee McLane

Mary Muse Butler Jellison

Mary Muse Butler Jellison, 83, of Highlands, N.C., passed away on April 9, 2020.

She was born during the early morning hours of Sept. 30, 1936, along with her twin sister, Mildred Lee Butler at Jackson Hospital in Miami, Fla. Her parents were Thomas French Butler of Daisy, Ga., and Mildred Lee Skinner of Fitzgerald, Ga. She also had a brother, Thomas F. Butler Jr.

She attended Miami Shores Elementary School, Horace Mann Junior High and Miami Edison High School, graduating in 1954. She attended the University of Florida having to leave after one year due to the death of her father.

She began her professional career as a secretary/stenographer for eight years at the Miami FBI Office and thereafter, was employed as an executive secretary by the Miami Dolphins, the Whirlpool Corporation, the Storer Broadcasting Company and at various times several law firms in Miami.

In 1956, she married Leland E. Stansell and had two children, James Leland Stansell (Kristin) and Susan M. Stansell. She now has two grandchildren, James Leland Stansell, Jr. and Kimberly A. Weismantle; one great grandchild, Lincoln A. Weismantle; and two nieces and nephews.

In 1975, she married David N. Jellison, an FBI Agent in Miami. Since then, they have lived in Miami Shores, Fla., Hobe Sound, Fla., and Highlands, N.C.

Over the years, she has enjoyed playing the piano and bridge, the DAR, sewing, photography, cooking, travel and doing non-profit volunteer work. In this regard, she administered and managed Fibber Magee's Closet, whose income is distributed to those in need, other nonprofits and scholarships.

She has been a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Highlands where she served as an elder.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Mary Jellison

Robert E. Wilson

Robert E. Wilson, 91, of Highlands, N.C., formerly of Franklin, passed away on Sunday, April 12, 2020.

He was preceded in death by his wife of 64 years, Dawn Wilson; and by his two brothers.

He served in the 511th Army Paratrooper Division as well as a draftsman in that division during WWII. He was awarded the WWII Victory Medal and the Army Occupational Medal Japan. He was a parachute rigger who was also rated for sailplanes and hot air balloons. He had an avid love for all things that fly. He knew all planes from the inside out. He had been a check pilot and an Antique Airplane judge for 25 years, receiving many aviation ratings throughout his life. He raced airplanes and did aerobatics at airshows always for fun. He built many airplanes and flew them each. In his spare time, he was also involved with RC planes. He ended his professional aviation career, retiring as an Airline Captain at one of the largest airlines at the time, with the highest seniority level of all other pilots. His flying career started with being a crop duster, ending as a Captain of the DC10. Flying was in his blood.

He also enjoyed motorcycle trips with friends and making beautiful artwork and carvings, one of which was displayed in the Cherokee Museum. He was kind and generous and will truly be missed.

He is survived by his daughter, Linda Barrett; two grandchildren, Jessica and Michael and two great grandchildren, Kadence and Bianka.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Robert E. Wilson

William 'Bill' Maston Letson

William "Bill" Maston Letson, 76, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with the Lord on Sunday April 5, 2020.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Henry and June Letson.

He was born in Daytona Beach and raised in West Palm Beach, Fla. But he developed a love for Franklin after his father and mother brought him here on vacation. In 1964, he married Charlotte Jones and they spent their honeymoon in Franklin; eventually, he and Charlotte made Franklin their home. It was here that he and Charlotte raised their four daughters, who Bill adored and spent his life caring and providing for them.

As a young man, he joined the U.S. Army where he became a member of 101st Airborne. He worked a number of jobs before becoming an estate manager for a property in Highlands, N.C., where he spent the last 38 years.

He was a dedicated member of Cartoogechaye Baptist Church where he took part in many of the church's special events. He often worked behind the scenes, building props and scenes. He had a love for the Lord and was unashamed to worship and praise him. He was a caring, compassionate and loving man who easily made new friends. He passed away as a man who was deeply loved by his family and friends and will forever be missed.

He is survived by the love of his life and best friend, his wife of 55 years, Charlotte; his four daughters, "The Letson Sisters", Cindy Letson of Murfreesboro, Tenn., Debbi Waldrup (Brian), Josie Letson and Summer Southard (Brian), all of Franklin; eight grandchildren, Ethan Letson, Nicole Ledford (Jacob), Danielle Talley (Jordan), Taylor Wilson (Levi), Jordan Rogers, Dylan Southard, Parker Southard, and Judd Southard; five great grandchildren, Emmett Ledford, Rowan Ledford, Wilder Ledford and twins Brodee and Hadlee Wilson; two sisters, Sally Cain of West Palm Beach, Fla., and Sue Black of Orlando, Fla., and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be planned at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue, PO Box 81, of Franklin, NC 28744.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



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Joey Logano finds a purpose during the break in racing

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

Like so many in the world right now, NASCAR champion Joey Logano is spending his downtime from racing figuring out ways to make a positive difference in his community.

While home waiting out the COVID-19 pandemic, Logano has kept busy playing with his two-year-old son Hudson and spending time with his expectant wife Brittany. A two-time race winner in the season's first four NASCAR Cup Series races on track, he also participated in the inaugural eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational virtual race two weeks ago.

All the while, Logano said he has been trying to figure out what he could do to help – to provide a positive impact during a time of uncertainty, fear and need. A big picture kind of boost.

So on Tuesday afternoon, Logano, 29, took his quest to help to a new level – announcing that the Joey Logano Foundation partnered with Elevation Outreach to establish a \$1 Million COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.

This partnership will contribute that seven-digit money toward educational equity and access, medical supplies, food distribution and financial shortages throughout the greater Charlotte area and communities across the United States.

The racer known for his big smile and positive personality will be providing plenty for people across the country.

"I've been blessed to have the ability to help others with our platform and for the past few weeks, the Joey Logano Foundation has been able to help in multiple ways on a local level, however Brittany and I knew we could do more and felt a huge calling to give on a larger capacity at a statewide and national level," Logano said.

This effort was a natural progression of thought. Since the sport's on-track activity ceased three weeks ago, Logano immediately tried to reach out and help – from offering free meals from Bobbee O's Barbeque to school children in the Charlotte area to posting homemade videos about proper handwashing technique featuring his young son, to even providing black-and-white photos of his No. 22 Team Penske Ford to be copied for kids to color and decorate.

And on a lighter note, Logano retweeted a tongue-in-cheek reminder about social distancing in which Charlotte Motor Speedway took video of a cardboard standup of the driver in an empty race track grandstand.

"I've been trying to do whatever I can to help our sport in any possible way, to stay connected whether on social media or doing interviews," Logano said. "And trying to make a charitable impact where we can. Honestly, I'm just as busy as I was, I've just really shifted my focus.

"I don't know how to sit still. That's the thing. I just find the next thing I need to work on to stay busy and still make an impact whether it's for our sport or our community. Or just being a dad is keeping me plenty busy.

"I have not slowed down a bit, I can honestly say."



Joey Logano hasn't "slowed down a bit" since the NASCAR series was delayed by the COVID-19 outbreak as he finds ways to reach out to his community.

And that's saying a lot for someone who has already won half of the season's races, owns the 2018 NASCAR Cup Series championship, the 2017 Daytona 500 trophy and has hoisted at least one trophy in each of the last nine consecutive seasons.

His outreach also includes a high-profile partnership with Feeding America through the Wheels Up organization. The idea is to donate at least 10 million meals and Logano joins an A-list of supporters from Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson and his wife Ciara to Tampa Bay Buccaneers quarterback Tom Brady. Even Alex Rodriguez and Jennifer Lopez, have donated money and raised the profile for the effort. (Donations accepted through feedingamerica.org/meal-sup.)

It is all indicative of what NASCAR competitors – drivers, crewmen, team members, team owners – have immediately and wholeheartedly undertaken during this time of national crisis.

"I watched a sermon at our church, Elevation Church, and our pastor was talking about how people say, 'We're all in the same boat; we're all in this together,' and our pastor said, 'No we're not, we are not all in the same boat,'" Logano explained, the emotion evident in his voice.

"And I thought about that. He's right. This virus is impacting everyone in a different way. Yes, we are all in this together but is it impacting all of us? Yes. But some of us can weather the storm better than others. Some of us are more

prepared than others or been in a fortunate position for a while that has put us in a good spot.

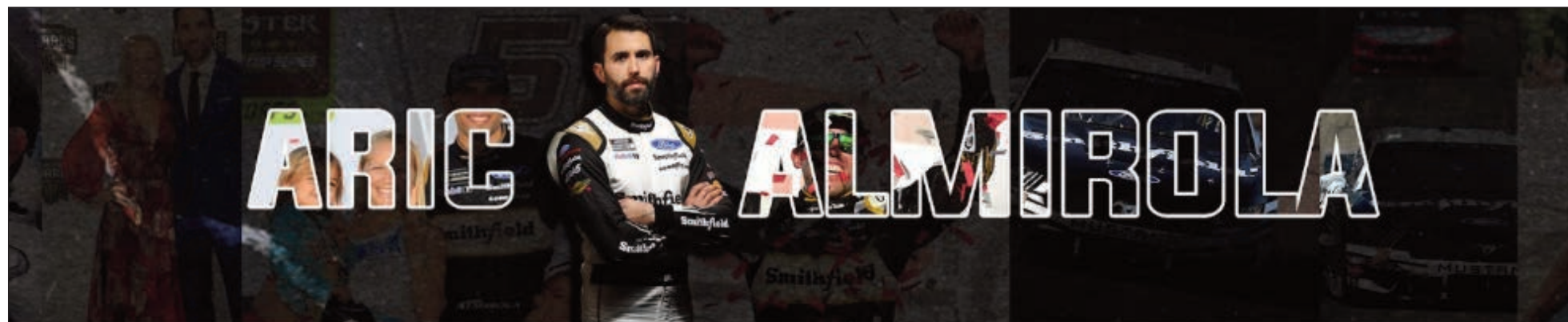
"Everyone's situation is a little different. And I think it's important for us to realize that and try to understand where we can help because what's going on in our community right now is so many businesses are getting shut down, so many people getting laid off, all these kids out of school that relied on meals. It's making a huge impact on families and not in the best of ways. It's important for us to realize that."

Certainly, the greater NASCAR community has responded during this uncertain and unprecedented time.

The iconic Wood Brothers race team is raising money to purchase tablets for seniors – an effort to help keep the seniors in touch with family that may not be allowed to visit in their nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Logano's own Team Penske teammate Brad Keselowski's Checkered Flag Foundation partnered with local groups to provide meals to healthcare workers. And his Keselowski Advanced Manufacturing company is helping produce face shields so desperately needed by healthcare workers.

Seven-time NASCAR Cup Series champion Jimmie Johnson is raising money for the Center for Disaster Philanthropy Inc., which will get the funds to groups helping in the fight against COVID-19. The effort is accepting \$25 donations from fans, with each donation entering that person for a chance to win Johnson's autographed race-worn shoes. This effort goes through April 6.



And of course, Denny Hamlin made big news with his eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational inaugural win at the virtual Homestead-Miami Speedway two weeks ago. He pledged to donate \$100 for every lap he led, plus \$5,000 for winning the race, to an effort headed by The NASCAR Foundation and Feed the Children working in the South Florida area. In all, Hamlin contributed \$6,400 to the effort and his sponsor Coca-Cola matched the money, as did the Kevin Harvick Foundation.

And these are just a handful of the doing-good efforts by NASCAR stars and teams. The concern and generosity is real.

"There's so much opportunity in front of us to help people and make a difference," Logano said.

Quarantine and Chill: Binge Watch Aric Almirola's YouTube Docuseries 'Beyond the 10'

It's been four weeks since NASCAR and other sports were forced to postpone their respective events amid the COVID-19 outbreak. It's made binge watching the new pastime of this brave new world.

While iRacing has done an impressive job of simulating NASCAR action with the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series, the ability to go beyond the racing and behind the scenes of the NASCAR Cup Series has seemingly been halted.

Or has it? Aric Almirola, driver of the No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang for Stewart-Haas Racing, has a solution.

His free YouTube docuseries, Beyond the 10, began nearly a year ago and has since grown to include 17 episodes, five of which were created before the 2020 season was forced into hiatus. Fans have already watched more than 5,400 hours of Beyond the 10 and have given it a 97.8 percent approval rating.

"We started this docuseries because we felt like there was much more for fans to see than just drivers in firesuits racing cars," Almirola said. "It's been fun to show fans that I'm really no different from them. I'm a dad and a husband with a great family. I have flaws and I make mistakes, but I enjoy life. I have to get up every day and work hard for what I have, just like everyone else. At the end of the day, I want to be recognized for the human I am outside of the racecar."

Early episodes showcase his 2019 season, beginning with the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte (N.C.) Motor Speedway. Episodes progress into previewing his workout regimen, his routine at the track while awaiting practice, visiting LEGOLAND Resort and the beach with his family, dancing like a dad with his son Alex and daughter Abby, performing burnouts on the Las Vegas strip to help kick off the NASCAR Playoffs, and even throwing a bowling ball out of his No. 10 Smithfield Ford Mustang at 140 mph with the No. 1 bowler in the world, Jason Belmonte, to secure the record for the World's Fastest Strike.

For the second season of Beyond the 10, fans get behind-the-scenes access of how Almirola prepares physically and mentally for the start of the year. Viewers can also tag along with Almirola to Miami where in the week leading up to the Super Bowl, he spent time on radio row doing countless interviews to promote the Daytona 500, all while mingling with NFL legends. Cameras followed Almirola throughout Day-

PRO RACING THIS WEEK
Racing News, Stats & Trivia

Top News Stories

Jimmie Johnson says "opportunity could be there" to return in 2021

NASCAR has maintained that it will do whatever it can to get all 36 races in this season, double-headers, mid-week races, whatever, despite only having four so far. But the future for everyone is uncertain, so hypothetically, if NASCAR can't get a full season in this year, would Johnson consider postponing his retirement season until 2021? "I don't know," the 44-year-old driver had told For The Win by phone from his North Carolina home. "I wouldn't know yet." The No. 48 Chevrolet driver said he hasn't thought about that hypothetical situation yet. Talking to the media last week, Jimmie Johnson was asked again if he was reconsidering retirement. "For me in my final year in a Cup car, I feel more for the fans that wanted to see me at their track and experience that and have it. I know where I am and I'm very content and fulfilled with



the career I've had. Sure, I want to be on track. Sure, I want to go to these places a final time," Johnson said. "This is way bigger than me and way bigger than what was going to be my final time at these tracks. So, that stuff hasn't really even crossed my mind, honestly, is why I bring it up. There have been so many other issues at-hand to think about and be concerned with, that I haven't thought much at all about it being my final year and what I might be missing for myself."

Top News Stories

NASCAR driver Kyle Larson uses racial slur during stream of virtual race
NASCAR driver Kyle Larson used a racial slur during the livestream broadcast of an exhibition virtual race on Sunday night. Larson, of Chip Ganassi Racing in NASCAR's Cup Series, was competing in an iRacing event when he seemed to lose communication on his headset with his spotter. During the microphone check, Larson could be heard saying the slur. "You can't hear me?" he said on the livestream. "Hey, (expletive)." "Kyle, you're talking to everyone, bud," one driver replied. Another person said, "No way did that just happen." Larson's radio communication was broadcast to followers on Twitch, a gaming app, as well as to eNASCAR viewers. The other 61 drivers in the race were also on the virtual race session, which was not part of a NASCAR official series. Larson, 27, is half Japanese and is the only driver of Japanese descent to win a major NASCAR race. He climbed from short track racing into NASCAR through its "Drive for Diversity" program. In his seventh season, Larson is considered one of the top sprint car racers in the country and in January finally won the prestigious Chili Bowl after 13 attempts. Larson is in the final year of his contract with Chip Ganassi Racing. His sponsors at Ganassi are McDonald's and Credit One Bank.

NASCAR Race Schedule News

NASCAR iRacing at Richmond Raceway

The physical Richmond Raceway is quiet for now, but the digital one will be front and center on Sunday, April 19. Landon Cassill and the other drivers on the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series will take on the challenge of bringing home the virtual checkered flag. The race will air on Fox Sports 1 at 1 pm. For Cassill, iRacing in a simulator is as close as it comes to really driving on the track. "From

a software perspective, the physics are very good," Cassill said. "What you don't have is that physical threat where, if something happens, you can get hurt," Cassill said. When the drivers physically return to Richmond after the COVID-19 outbreak, Cassill will be just as excited. "It's been a track that's been really good to me. A lot of tire falloff, a lot of tire management seems to play in my favor," Cassill said.

2020 Standings

Cup Series Top Ten

Drivers	Points	Top 10s
1) Kevin Harvick	164	4
2) Joey Logano	163	2
3) Chase Elliott	144	2
4) Alex Bowman	138	1
5) Jimmie Johnson	131	2
6) Ryan Blaney	123	1
7) Kyle Larson	121	3
8) Aric Almirola	121	2
9) Matt DiBenedetto	118	1
10) Brad Keselowski	118	2

Xfinity Series Top Ten

Drivers	Points	Top 10s
1) Harrison Burton	176	4
2) Chase Briscoe	173	3
3) Austin Cindric	155	3
4) Brandon Jones	148	3
5) Ross Chastain	146	3
6) Noah Gragson	143	3
7) Ryan Sieg	143	3
8) Justin Haley	140	3
9) Justin Allgaier	138	1
10) Michael Annett	119	1

Racing Trivia

At which track does Jimmie Johnson have the most wins? ?

- a) Dover
- b) Martinsville
- c) Charlotte
- d) Texas

Answer: a) Jimmie Johnson has 11 wins at Dover International Speedway.

tona Speedweeks, with Beyond the 10 featuring exclusive content in the moments leading up to the Great American Race. The latest and most popular episode is an MTV Crib-style tour of the No. 10 Smithfield haul. If you have one hour, 54 minutes and 24 seconds in your day, which you likely do with the government's mandate to stay at home, binge-watching Beyond the 10 can help fill the void of our silenced sports scene.

"This is the perfect way to kill some time, whether you're

working from home, studying from home, or are an essential employee who has had a long day and needs a way to unwind," Almirola said.

Future Beyond the 10 episodes will feature how Almirola balances his kid's school, competition obligations and staying fit, and also how he came to marry his former crew chief's daughter.

"It took a lot for me to put myself out there," Almirola added. "So, I hope everyone enjoys and subscribes."

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15



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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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THEME:
 NAME THE ANIMAL

- ACROSS
- Spoil
 - Delivery service
 - Gallup's inquiry
 - Madison Square Garden, e.g.
 - One of the Tudors
 - Pinkerton's gallery member
 - Beneath, to a poet
 - Bird-to-be
 - Not slouching
 - *Koko or Digit
 - *George or Marcel
 - Langley agency
 - Can of worms
 - Pine juice
 - Up to the task
 - Most recent
 - Furnace output
 - Gives a helping hand
 - Veranda in Honolulu
 - *European sea eagle
 - Waterwheel
 - Ladder crosspiece
 - *Valued for its down
 - Steelers's Chuck
 - Genealogical plant?
 - Treat for Dumbo
 - Hoofbeat sound
 - "To ___ is human"
 - Jim Carrey's 1994 disguise
 - Garden cultivator
 - *Roger or Peter
 - *Rocket or Rascal
 - "Random" audience member

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- Black and white treat
- *Papa or Mama
- Clown act
- Perennial garden flower
- Iris holder
- *Babe or Wilbur
- Fraternity letter
- Politician's barrelful
- Curved molding
- Famous Australopithecus
- "___ the wild rumpus begin!"
- Hertz offering
- Labanotation founder
- Doesn't mix well with water
- Wilma and Fred's hometown
- *Dolly
- Eagle's nest
- *Giant or Red
- *Simba or Elsa
- Queen of Hearts' pastry
- Accustom
- Not so crazy
- *Detroit mascot
- Not quite an adult
- Perfect houseplant spot
- Luau greeting
- S. E. Hinton's "___ Fish"
- Chi precursor
- Place for a square
- Furry scarf
- What's in your e-wallet?
- Actress Perlman
- Runs, as on TV
- Radar flash
- Indian music
- Yorkshire river
- Lode deposits
- Supreme Court number
- Make a seam
- *Tom or Sylvester

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