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FREE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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East Franklin Elementary School personnel hit the neighborhoods in their school district on Thursday letting their students know how much they are missed. Teachers decorated their cars with signs and balloons and drove through Franklin honking horns and waving to their young students.
Photo by Vickie Carpenter

Community gets creative trying to stay connected 'from a safe distance'

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

They say necessity is the mother of invention and in Macon County creative inventors are coming out of the woodwork. The social distancing and stay at home orders that are in effect have spawned a creativity that seems to have no limits. Some local businesses have stepped up offering ways to stay connected and help out where necessary.

It's the little things that often count!

Amanda Shaw, owner of Macon Rental is always on the lookout for ways to help the folks in town. "I am a great organizer," she's been known to say, and organize she did. Shaw explains her idea.

"I decided to pursue the paper lunch bag idea because Diane Cotton, principal of Union Academy, told me of the need. As school lunches have been given out to thousands of Macon County School children, they became short on brown paper bags. This may be a small thing in the eyes of some but it is the little things that keep the big things moving. But this project so far is a success because of our community. I am truly a cog in the wheel and keeping this moving is helping me stay grounded when I am also anxious.

"Even in times of uncertainty and stress we, as a

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Commissioners go a step further with restrictions

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Monday afternoon, Public Information Officer for Macon County Health Department Kathy McGaha reported that the health department had tested 64 people at the health department and had received 43 COVID19 test results back, all of which were negative. The health department has another 21 tests pending with residents awaiting results. Wednesday saw the first positive case returned in Franklin.

Jennifer Garrett with the health department told Macon County Commissioners on Thursday that the health department sends the majority of COVID19 tests to LabCorps, a private lab conducting testing across the country. Although the North Carolina state lab has a two to three day turn around for testing results, Macon County has elected to use LabCorps over the state lab, with test results averaging seven to 10 days. McGaha said that the state prioritizes testing and test patients found to be "high risk" first, which is

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First Macon County resident tests positive for COVID-19

Macon County Public Health received notice on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, that the first Macon County resident has tested positive for COVID – 19. An elderly individual was tested on Thursday, March 26, and was admitted to and is in isolation at an area hospital.

Macon County Public Health is working to identify close contacts. The CDC defines close contact as being within approximately 6 feet of a person with an infection with a COVID-19 case for a prolonged period of time of 10 minutes or longer. Based on information provided by the individual's family, 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 entire 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, any-

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Highlands foundation awards \$2.5M to nonprofits

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UPDATE

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why the county sends “low risk” patient tests to LabCorps, despite the labs having a nearly two week back log for results.

To be tested by the health department, patients are asked to sign a quarantine waiver agreeing to not leave their residence for any reason other than a medical need pending test results. In the event that someone meets other screening benchmarks, such as fever, being in contact with someone who tested positive, or traveling to an area with a high concentration of COVID-19 cases, they are tested at the health department and then sent home to wait for test results. Because the back log at LabCorps, residents are finding themselves home, unable to work, or do other items for up to 12 days waiting for results – when the state lab could theoretically return the test results in a matter of a couple of days.

To stop the spread of the virus in North Carolina, which as of Tuesday has seen eight deaths and 1,500 confirmed cases since the beginning of the month, Gov. Roy Cooper issued a “Stay at Home” order that went into effect on Monday.

Cooper ordered people in the state of North Carolina to stay at home for 30 days, until April 29, 2020, in an attempt to slow the spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus. Cooper’s Executive Order No. 121 took effect on Monday, March 30. The order provides for essential businesses to continue to operate while prioritizing social distancing measures.

This Order permits the following essential businesses to remain open (partial list)

- Restaurants that provide take-out, drive-thru, or delivery
- Grocery stores
- ABC stores and beer and wine stores
- Doctors and other healthcare providers
- Pharmacies
- Hardware stores
- Post offices
- Office supply stores
- Gas stations and convenience stores
- Veterinarians and pet supply stores
- Hotels, airlines, buses, taxis, and rideshare services (Macon County has implemented additional restrictions for hotels)
- Places of worship
- Child care providers (following required NCDHHS procedures)
- Food, Beverage Production and Agriculture

The order directs people to stay at home except to visit essential businesses, to exercise outdoors or to help a family mem-

ber. The order also bans gatherings of more than 10 people and directs everyone to physically stay at least six feet apart from others. While many people had already been voluntarily participating in such practices, the order was intended to mandate the practices rather than just suggest them.

The order also says that in the event a local order is more strict than the state order, the more strict rules will also apply—which is the case in Macon County.

On Thursday afternoon, Macon County Commissioners voted 4 to 1 to follow recommendations by Macon County Emergency Management Director Warren Cabe to provide additional screening at the airport for visitors, close lodging facilities for people attempting to enter Macon County for vacation, and require a 14-day quarantine for second home owners coming to the county. Cabe worked with Sheriff Robert Holland and interim Macon County Public Health Director Carmine Rocco to develop the recommendations.

Cabe says that the situation is unlike anything he’s experienced, and this is the time for action.

“We have no choice but to err on the side of caution for the health of our citizens,” said Cabe. “That’s a difficult decision that we have to make, it hurts a lot of people in various ways, and it’s not one that we take lightly. My concerns are: we are essentially at war with something that we can’t see, we can’t hear, and we don’t know when it’s coming, and when it gets here when we discover it, it’s almost too late. We are basically handicapped with that at the moment as far as the ability to respond to it.”

Despite Cabe, Sheriff Holland, and Rocco urging all commissioners to support the recommendations, Commissioner Paul



The Sunset Restaurant is one of the many in Franklin who are offering curbside service. Photo by Vickie Carpenter

POSITIVE

Continued from page 1

one of any age can become infected with this illness. Therefore, we ask 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 our Facebook page with accurate and current information regarding COVID-19; we encourage the public to check our 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, please call the Health Department at 828-349-2517. The call center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Higdon voted against the measure, citing the need to consider the health risks, which he compared to the flu, against the economic risks. Higdon said that he believes closing lodging facilities and other businesses will hurt the economy and be of greater consequence than “the few who may get sick.”

Cabe explained that the health risk isn’t necessarily COVID 19, but the strain it puts on the healthcare system as a whole.

“At the moment, my fight is not necessarily with COVID. The disaster that we’re attempting to avert at the moment is the failure of our healthcare system,” said Cabe. “We have to maintain the structure of our healthcare system, not just for the folks that may be affected by the COVID-19 virus. For instance, if my neighbor had a cardiac issue, and needed a facility or a bed [at a healthcare facility] and wasn’t able to get that because the system is degraded to the point where it can’t handle any more patients. There are other issues that we have to look at as opposed to just the COVID-19 situation.”

With access to seven ventilators in Macon County, Cabe informed commissioners he put in a request for 10 ventilators, all of which were denied. Cabe said he also ordered 30,370 masks,

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face or eye protection for local healthcare workers, but only received 353 from state providers. Of the 1,400 gowns Cabe ordered, he received only 370.

With a large number of second homeowners in Macon County, many residents have asked county officials to prevent them from returning to their second homes altogether, something that Cabe said isn't legally possible.

"Prohibiting second homeowners from coming to their homes could be a constitutional issue but would require a significant legal review prior to any kind of implementation," said Cabe. "Macon County is not considering that at this time. We are encouraging second home owners to consider not coming now for a brief period of time to mitigate our chances of someone unintentionally bringing an illness into our area that might contribute to a significant strain on our healthcare system. If people do come, they are requested to self-quarantine themselves as appropriate for 14 days for the same reason."

The town of Highlands has established checkpoints throughout the town at various entrances to educate residents about the virus and the current stay at home order. The checking stations are also an opportunity to inform second home

owners returning to Highlands of the various regulations put into place. Other towns and counties such as the Town of Andrews and Graham County have implemented similar restrictions and checking stations. Road blocks to completely cut off main highways into Macon County are not as feasible due to the number of entrance points and the amount of traffic. While other towns and counties have different regulations in place to address visitors traveling to their respective areas, none of the regulations currently being implemented prevents second home owners from accessing their properties in the mountains.

"Macon County is a large county with many entrances and attempting to control ingress and egress would require a significant amount of resources that are just not available in Macon County as law enforcement and other appropriate agencies are still trying to maintain their normal services," said Cabe. "The benefit analysis of what could be achieved by this versus the manpower requirement to effectively accomplish this does not indicate that this is a feasible option for us. We can hopefully accomplish the same result through other means."

Safe Kids helps provide child safety seats for EMS

Safe Kids Macon County is partnering with Macon County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to ensure that new, safe, child passenger seats are available for use in county ambulances.

When EMS transports pediatric patients, the Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) makes sure that pediatric patients who weigh less than 40 pounds are restrained with an approved restraint device either secured to the stretcher or the "captain's chair." EMTs carry a car seat on all of their ambulances for this purpose for when the patient's family does not have one or when theirs has been involved in an accident.

Due to space issues on ambulances, the car seats are carried in an outside compartment. These compartments are "sealed." However, over time, dust and grime leave the seats in a condition where they are no longer able to kept clean and they must be periodically replaced.

Safe Kids Macon County works with various local and state agencies to secure grants for child passenger safety seats.

Together, this partnership helps keep EMS costs down and continue to provide for the safe transport of pediatric patients in the community.

The mission of Safe Kids Macon County, along with Safe Kids Worldwide, is to reduce preventable injuries in children.



Josh Randall with Macon County Emergency Medical Services carries a brand new child safety seat in his ambulance.

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Health care workers excluded from federal emergency paid sick leave

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

In a time where healthcare workers and first responders are needed more than ever, very few measures are in place to provide them with the support needed to remain on the frontlines. Cherokee County has reported seven cases of COVID19 as of Tuesday morning and due to the county's location along the Tennessee border, many of those patients are being cared for by Erlanger Health Systems based out of Chattanooga, Tenn. Erlanger operates the medical facilities in Cherokee County. Several Franklin residents are employed by Erlanger Western Carolina Hospital in Murphy and via email on Monday received notice that despite working on the frontlines of the pandemic, many benefits for those employees are being temporarily suspended to cut operational costs at the hospital.

Erlanger is facing a temporary expense reduction plan, which includes furloughing some administrative employees, staffing changes, reducing overtime, suspending job recruitment for administrative positions, suspending vacation accruals, suspending 403b retirement contributions by the company, and reducing leadership pay.

In the email, employees were notified that paid time off or PTO, which is accrued based on time worked, is being suspended beginning with the current pay period. PTO balances will remain intact and accessible to employees, but any PTO that would be accrued as a result of additional hours worked during the pandemic, will not be generated. Erlanger will also no longer contribute to employee retirement plans during the indefinite suspension.

Erlanger's suspension of PTO comes at the same time that the federal government's relief package specifically excludes both healthcare workers and first responders from being eligible for emergency paid sick leave.

The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA) requires certain employers to provide employees with paid sick leave or expanded family and medical leave for specified reasons related to COVID-19. The Department of Labor's Wage and Hour Division (WHD) administers and enforces the new law's paid leave requirements. While FFCRA will provide aid to people out of work as a result of COVID19, the law specifically excludes healthcare workers

and first responders, who are most at risk of contracting the virus, from being able to utilize the benefits.

The paid sick leave and expanded family and medical leave provisions of the FFCRA apply to certain public employers, and private employers with fewer than 500 employees. Small businesses with fewer than 50 employees may qualify for exemption from the requirement to provide leave due to school closings or child care unavailability if the leave requirements would jeopardize the viability of the business as an ongoing concern.

Under the FFCRA, an employee qualifies for paid sick time if the employee is unable to work (or unable to telework) due to a need for leave because the employee:

- 1) is subject to a Federal, State, or local quarantine or isolation order related to COVID-19;
- 2) has been advised by a health care provider to self-quarantine related to COVID-19;
- 3) is experiencing COVID-19 symptoms and is seeking a medical diagnosis;
- 4) is caring for an individual subject or self-quarantine
- 5) is caring for a child whose school or place of care is closed (or child care provider is unavailable) for reasons related to COVID-19; or
- 6) is experiencing any other substantially-similar condition specified by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, in consultation with the Secretaries of Labor and Treasury.

While FFCRA will provide aid to many impacted by COVID19- a member of law enforcement or a healthcare worker would not be eligible and while their employer may allow them the time off if needed, there are no provisions or safety nets to pay those individuals who are out of work aside from those employees using PTO they have accrued or vacation time they have earned.

In response to FFCRA, Macon County officials sent out a memo to employees late Tuesday afternoon announcing that because the federal law leaves it up to local governments to determine whether or not healthcare workers and first responders are excluded from the Paid Sick Leave provision, Macon County leaders made the decision to ensure that any county healthcare workers or first responders will not be excluded and will be eligible for the federal benefits.

First COVID-19 unemployment benefits will be paid this week

Governor Roy Cooper has announced that the first payments for the unemployment claims related to coronavirus will begin going out this week. The Division of Employment Security has received an unprecedented number of unemployment insurance claims since Governor Roy Cooper signed Executive Order No. 118 on March 17.

In the past two weeks, approximately 270,000 claims have been filed, with most of them related to COVID-19. For comparison, the state received about 7,500 claims in the first two weeks of March, before the order was issued.

"Thousands of workers have lost jobs, but their bills don't stop. We're working overtime to get unemployment checks out now. We'll keep pushing every day for more state and federal help to save our workers and their families," he said.

On Saturday, the governor directed the Division of Employment Security to begin implementing the unemployment insurance provisions of the federal CARES Act. The Division of Employment of Security expects to receive guidance from the federal government later this week about how to implement the changes, including the change that allows for an additional \$600 in unemployment benefits. The state expects those payments to begin approximately two weeks after that guidance is provided.

Workers applying for benefits must complete their weekly certifications in order to receive unemployment insurance payments. The weekly certification is a series of 'yes or no' questions that helps determine a person's eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits each week. If a person does not complete a weekly certification, they will not receive a payment for that week.

The weekly certification must be completed through the individual's online account at des.nc.gov.

About the process

For general questions about unemployment benefits in North Carolina during the COVID-19 crisis, contact the Division of Employment Security.

- Employees with questions about the application and benefits can read more about requirements and steps to get an unemployment benefit payment at <https://des.nc.gov/need-help/covid-19-information/covid-19-information-individuals>

- Employers who have questions about their role in the process can read more about what is required of them to help their workers qualify for benefits at <https://des.nc.gov/need-help/covid-19-information/covid-19-information-employers>.

- To report technical difficulties using the online tools provided by the Division of Employment Security, contact the office via the form at <https://des.nc.gov/customer-contact-form>.

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COMMUNITY

Continued from page 1

community are always willing to step up and help. As a small business owner, I just give a huge thank you to other small businesses that are still donating and volunteering even though we are all still worried about paying our employees and bills."

Shaw has collected close to 25,000 bags and is still going strong. The lunches require about 5,000 bags a day so donations are still needed. Monetary donations can be mailed to Macon Rental Company, 537 West Main Street, Franklin 28734 in c/o Amanda Shaw. She also accepts donations through Paypal at amandajshaw@hotmail.com and at venmo@james79. Even a \$5 donation helps. If you have paper bags you can drop them off at Macon Rental, also.

East Franklin Teacher Parade

Folks that live within the city limits of Franklin may have heard a cacophony of horns honking and people shouting, last Thursday afternoon. The horns and shouts came from the East Franklin Elementary School's parade of teachers, and the students who waited on the side of the road to shout back to them.

Sandra McMahan, principal of East Franklin Elementary (EFE) School explains how the parade idea got started.

"Kim Clark and Courtney Anderson, two teachers at the school, both saw similar things on Facebook and got the ball rolling. From there I asked our SRO [School Resource Officer], Tom Pruett to plan a route to reach as many homes as we could. I did a connect call to parents to let them know which streets we would travel on and the order in which we would go. I did remind them with two calls about the importance of following social distancing. All staff was invited and about half participated. Those that couldn't participate were mostly serving our kids and families in other capacities such as driving buses to deliver food or preparing that food. Macon County Public Schools does a fantastic job serving families. Staff was advised to adhere to responsible social distancing as well. We had about 16 vehicles. Some decorated their cars and made signs. We all waved and shouted hello and I love you to our kids. There were about as many older people that came into their yards and onto porches excited to see us go by. I know there were some tears shed and lots of smiling faces. This is a difficult time, hard for our kids to understand, no doubt. We miss the kids so much and cannot wait to have them back at school."

Kim Clark explains how she got the idea of a parade.

"I saw a post on Facebook where a group of teachers did a drive through in their community. When I saw the excitement and happiness of the kids and faculty I just knew this was something I wanted to do! I called Mrs. McMahan and described the Facebook event and told her I really wanted to do this either as a school wide event, team level event, or just myself. I felt that it would help bring closure, so to speak, of being a classroom family (teacher and kids) on a Thursday afternoon, to being isolated from each other, the following Monday. It's been tough on our kids, tough on our parents, and tough on teachers being in empty class-



East Franklin teachers decorated their cars and drove through the neighborhoods of their students, honking horns and waving in an effort to show the students that they are missed.

Photos by Vickie Carpenter



rooms these last couple of weeks. Thankfully, Mrs. McMahan was on board with the idea bringing Officer Pruett in on the planning of the route, and a couple of days later we had an awesome EFS parade through Franklin. It was exciting to see our kids with their families along with business people walking out of buildings to wave at us and drivers honking their horns along with us. It was like a breath of fresh air after being smothered in smoke (so to speak). I think one of the best parts of this event was seeing the excitement and enthusiasm in the eyes of my coworkers after a couple of stressful weeks. I want to thank our principal, Mrs. McMahan, and, SRO Tom Pruett, for jumping on board and making this a memorable event for all involved in the parade and the spectators. EFS is blessed to have these two special people along with Mrs. Parker, our assistant principal."

On-line activities for everyone

Rose James, yoga instructor at Cherokee Choices for the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, decided to do a yoga video.

"After a few days of isolation I was beginning to get anxiety," said James. "I thought about how I would have normally taught a bunch of yoga classes that day and because they were cancelled I had excess energy. Then I thought about how many other people felt the same way and 15 minutes later I was teaching a Facebook live yoga class. James

has also produced a kids workout video via Facebook, which she first aired on Tuesday at 11 a.m. To view any of Rose's classes, like her Facebook page, for Rose James to do it live, or access any old classes at the Cherokee Choices website.

Another online activity has been taking place for the past few days thanks to an idea from Brittney Lofthouse, chairman of Safe Kids Macon County.

"I serve as the Chairman of Safe Kids Macon County and my husband, Corporal Nick Lofthouse, with the Macon County Sheriff's Office (MCSO) is the coordinator. As parents ourselves, we know how hard staying home is. Safe Kids Macon County had several events planned this spring that we are having to postpone so we wanted to create something that would allow our community to stay connected with our local heroes, so we launched the #firstresponderreadingchallenge. It started with Nick and his K9 partner reading a story and then issuing the challenge to another first responder, and it has grown from there. The stories have been viewed almost 10,000 times in just a few days with people of all ages letting us know how much they enjoy it. We even had Sgt. Mark Tappan who won the A&E TV Show, 'America's Top Dog,' with his K9 partner Mattis, read a story from Alpharetta, Ga., for the challenge. We hope to keep it going as long as we can and see it grow to different first responders from anywhere."

Another way the internet is being used to connect students and their teachers is through video conferencing being conducted by Jillian View, Mountain View Intermediate School science and math teacher. View has made several videos on ClassDojo, an app that allows teachers, students and parents to interact. Last week View sent a message to the students in her class asking them to join a live video chat with her and their classmates. The students finally got to see each other and were allowed to chat with one another at the end of the session. She will be trying to do this on a weekly basis while school is still out.

Friends of the Library bookstore steps up

The Friends of the Library bookstore came up with the idea of placing books on the sidewalk in front of their store



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Friends of the Library bookstore packed the sidewalk with books on Sunday and Monday offering a chance for readers to pick up some reading material at a bargain. Patrons were able to make their choices, then place the money for the books in an "honor" jar. Photo by Vickie Carpenter

on Highlands Road on an honor system. Many of the books were priced at four for a dollar with some even priced at 10 cents. With folks stuck at home and the library closed, avid readers were able to stock up on reading material at a fraction of the cost. Many people who took advantage of this generous offer paid more than the asking price, adding extra dollars to the collection jar.

Treats to make Girl Scouts smile

Kimberly Pressley, Troop Leader of Girl Scout Pack 12692, sent a little surprise to the girls in her troop.

"I was missing the girls so much and then I realized how all this is probably so confusing to them as well as the adults," said Pressley. "I wanted to send them all something to let them know I was here and thinking about them during this confusing time for all of us." Each girl in the troop received a package with some sweet treats, a special pop-up balloon and an encouraging message to help ease anxiety.

Free internet throughout the county

Many folks have been asking where they can get internet service if they do not have it in their home. Balsamwest has established several drive-in WiFi hotspots. One such hotspot is in the Franklin Plaza parking lot, where Big Lots and Burkes are located. The SSID is Balsamwest and the log-on is Balsamwest. The library and Franklin High School's internet also extend to the parking lot.

Feeding the community

Motor Company Grill continues to offer

kids a free lunch. The crew has been cooking 15-20 meals daily. They are offering curbside pick-up and all you need to do is call ahead to order and the lunches will be ready when you arrive. Motor Company Grill would like to continue to offer this service for as long as is necessary but they could use some donations to help keep it going. Just drive up, honk the horn and someone from the staff will be happy to accept any donations.

Ace Hardware has joined with Carenet to offer free food to families. Although since the "stay at home" order has been issued, Ace is no longer distributing the food on their premises. Folks can now go to Carenet on Bidwell Avenue on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and pick up a bag of food. Folks just have to show up, there is no calling in. Since the food giveaway began two weeks ago, more than 20,000 pounds of food has been given away along with 1500 backpacks. Donations can still be brought to Ace Hardware on Palmer street or taken to Carenet on Bidwell Street.

School buses are still delivering meals to Macon County School kids. Buses are delivering at local bus stops and have also set up food distribution sites at Franklin High School, South Macon Elementary, Cartoogechaye Elementary, Mountain View Intermediate, Highlands School and Nantahala School, for parents to pick up both breakfast and lunch. Although parents do not have to go to their child's school for their meal, all schools are allowing any parent to pick up meals for their children at any of the these locations.



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Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation awards \$2.5M to nonprofits

Living up to its stated intention, Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation has awarded more than \$2.5 million to area charities since its founding on February 1, 2019. The Foundation was reconstituted from the assets of the Highlands Cashiers Hospital Foundation when Mission Health, a non-profit organization was sold to Hospital Corporation of America (HCA), a for profit organization last year.

“When Mission Health sold the hospital to HCA last year, we had no alternative but to reorganize our Foundation since we could no longer use our funds to support a for profit hospital. The board decided to continue the long legacy of donor support of investment in health and vibrant communities,” said Dr. Walter Clark, chairman of the Foundation Board.

The Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation (HCHF), in its inaugural year, funded 23 organizations \$1,024,124 to increase access to healthcare. The funded programs and initiatives included increasing access to mental health, dental and primary care providers, outfitting emergency transport vehicles with state-of-the-art equipment, and provide sustainability measures to successful and longstanding health programs.

One example of an awarded grant was for

as rescuers are able to move more personnel and gear into places where other vehicles cannot access. It also allows them to expedite the removal of injured patients from remote locations where often personnel are required to physically carry them out long distances in patient litters to reach vehicles capable of transport to medical facilities. We are sincerely grateful to the Foundation.”

Other emergency transport projects the Foundation were proud to support included air pack replacements for our local firefighters, and state-of-the-art ambulance equipment – including automated CPR devices and power lift stretchers to EMS Squads.

Alongside improving emergency transport vehicles, the HCHF funded initiatives that are successfully creating new and innovative ways to reach populations that would otherwise not have access to medical care and behavioral health services.

Marianne Martinez with Vecinos states “Migrant farmworkers typically live in crowded rooms with limited privacy or security. Having a private, third space to seek health care is critical to farmworkers' well-being. Our current mobile clinic is one room, open to the elements, and not completely private, which limits the physical exams and mental health interventions we can complete. A new mobile clinic will allow us to serve farmworkers in their homes, after the work day, breaking down barriers to accessing health care as well as cultural barriers to seeking mental health care. It will incorporate 3 separate rooms for confidential physical and mental health screenings for migrant farmworkers in WNC.”

Other initiatives funded by the Foundation involved increasing access to primary care, as well as access to diagnostic imaging and lab services for low income and uninsured patients, and a program that will

house medical residents in Jackson County who will serve patients throughout our six-county region through clinical rotations. A critically important aspect of health that is unfortunately overlooked is oral health. Melanie Jones with Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic says “The funds received from the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation are being used to strengthen dental health serv-



Volunteers with Vecinos stand in front of the Mobile Clinic purchased in 2005. The New Mobile Clinic will be much larger and will be outfitted to serve as a primary care clinic, a laboratory, and a behavioral health clinic. The New Mobile Clinic is slated to be completed by the Summer of 2020.

ices for low-income and uninsured patients in our region. And we wasted no time in expanding outreach. In October, we did more in one month than in any previous month in our 14 years as an organization: 246 dentist hours, 237 patient visits and 629 procedures including 143 restorations and 35 cleanings.”

With increased dental care being a necessity in our region, the Foundation also granted funds to begin a mobile dental clinic program – reaching the most remote areas of our six-county region, and a program that will bring the smiles back to 21 veterans.

Through the eye-opening experience of its first year, the Foundation learned about the growing substance abuse crisis and behavioral health provider shortage our area is facing. Tracy Stribling and Melanie Norman with the Counseling and Psychotherapy Center of Highlands know just how desperately needed these services are “In a rural community, many people are unaware of the need of mental health counseling. Your neighbor may have lost a beloved pet and is suffering in silence, a family member may be struggling with substance abuse but is afraid of receiving help due to stigma.” Says Tracy Stribling. Melanie

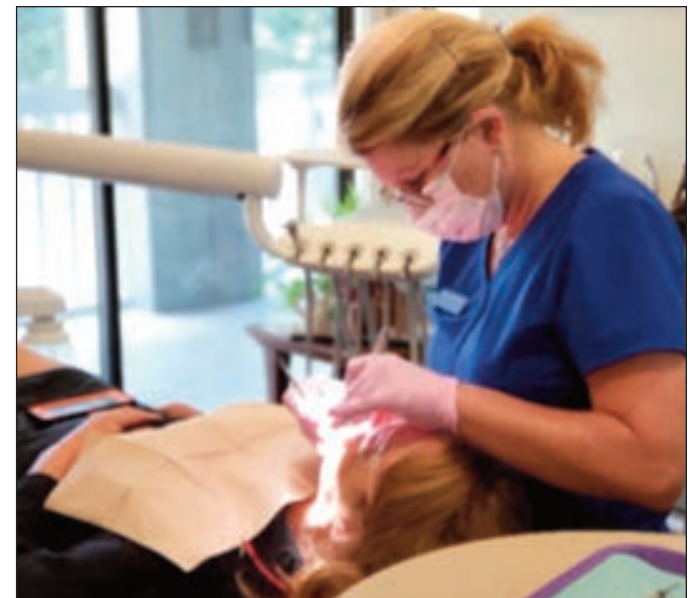
Norman states “This is where the grant from Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation will make so much difference. Through their funding, we have been able to increase our capacity and expand our reach to include a population that otherwise would not be able to afford counseling services.”

To further address the mental health service shortage and increase access to substance abuse prevention programs, HCHF funded organizations, programs and projects that provide a full spectrum of services; therapy programs to help veterans struggling with PTSD, and women and



Glenville Cashiers Rescue Squad EMS Volunteers bring an injured hiker at out at Whitewater Falls. The 6x6 ATV that was purchased with funds from the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation will alleviate the need for EMS Volunteers to physically hike in and out of remote, dangerous locations to rescue injured patients.

an emergency all-terrain vehicle critically needed during dangerous emergency patient retrieval operations. “The grant from Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation is allowing us the ability to purchase is a new 6x6 ATV,” says Chip Sherrill, Captain of the Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad. “This vehicle plays a vital role in almost every rescue performed in wilderness or remote areas



A patient receives a preventative cleaning at Blue Ridge Free Dental Clinic. With funds from the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation the Clinic was able to increase the number of patients who receive preventative and restorative care.

children who have been victims of domestic violence, and programs that administer naloxone. All funded projects had a similar goal: to increase the accessibility to safe spaces that provide services that address mental health and substance abuse.

In 2019, the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation is proud to award over \$2.5 Million dollars to 53 organizations spanning the six-county region of WNC. Through the journey of conducting Listening Sessions, Community Outreach Meetings, and committing over 2000 hours to grant reviews, the Programs and Grants Committee and the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Board of Directors has gleaned extensive information about unique strengths, challenges and opportunities to improve the health and wellbeing of our Highlands, Cashiers and surrounding communities.

"This year has been a landmark year for the Foundation; an outstanding year for progress and positive growth for our community. I am honored to serve alongside fellow Board Members and dedicated Community Advisors. We all look forward to continuing this momentum and building upon our purpose create lasting impact for generations to come." Dr. Walter Clark,

Chair of the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation.

"The Foundation looks forward to another tremendously impactful year in 2020, as it will unveil strategic priorities that will truly move the needle forward for Highlands, Cashiers, and the surrounding communities." says Robin Tindall, Executive Director and CEO of the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation.

Health and Healthcare: \$1,024,124

Access to Healthcare: \$817,064

- AWAKE, Inc.
- Blue Ridge Free Dental
- Cashiers Glenville Fire Department
- Clay County Governing Board
- Clay County Public Health Department
- Community Care Clinic of Franklin
- Community Care Clinic of Highlands
- Glenville-Cashiers Rescue Squad, Inc.
- Hospice House Foundation of WNC
- KIDS Place
- Macon County EMS
- Mountain Area Health Education Center
- Mountain Area Pro Bono Health Services
- Smoky Mountains Outreach Foundation

- Southwestern Community College
- Vecino's Farmworker Health Program
- Youth Initiatives: \$847,022 Educational Improvement: \$603,000
- Advance Highlands Education Committee
- Blue Ridge School Education Foundation
- Cashiers Valley Preschool
- Clay County Board of Education
- Hampton Preschool and Early Learning Center
- Highlands Community Child Development Center
- Southwestern Child Development Commission
- Summit Charter School
- The Literacy Council
- Western Region Education Service Alliance
- Community Vitality:** \$513,000
- Poverty Reduction:** \$260,000
- Circles Cashiers
- HERE in Jackson County, Inc.
- Life Challenge of WNC
- Mountain Projects, Inc.
- Pisgah Legal Services
- Restoration House WNC
- International Friendship Center
- Macon County Care Network

- MANNA Food Bank
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse:** \$207,060
- Clay County Department of Social Services
- Counseling and Psychotherapy Center of Highlands
- Meridian Behavioral Health Services
- REACH of Macon County
- Swain County Health Department
- Warrior Survival School
- Youth Development:** \$244,022
- Boys and Girls Club of the Plateau
- Cashiers Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Eliada Homes, Inc.
- Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust
- HIGHTS, Inc.
- The Bascom
- The Still Place
- Combating Food Insecurity:** \$198,000
- Clay County Food Pantry
- Fishes and Loaves
- The Community Table
- Community Enrichment:** \$55,000
- Peggy Crosby Center • Vision Cashiers

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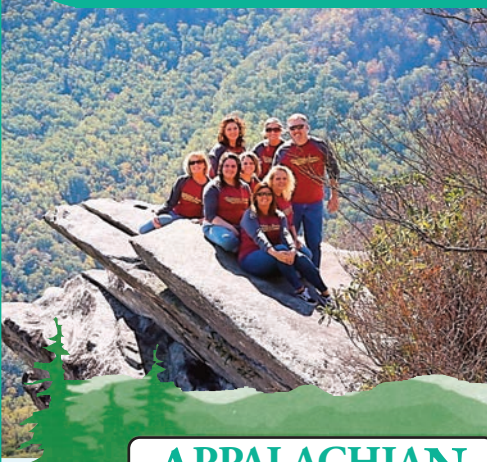
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Writer takes on new role

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Throughout my nearly 10 years writing for the newspaper, I have had the pleasure of interacting with folks from all walks of life – from meeting President Barack Obama to talk about the unique needs of Western North Carolina, to writing stories of triumph and victories in our local communities, I have been afforded a unique perspective of our region over the last decade. I take great pride in being a voice for Western North Carolina and being an advocate for change – whether that be by researching injustices in state funding shortfalls to our education system or the disparities for our local businesses struggling to stay competitive without adequate infrastructure like broadband, as a journalist I have had the opportunity not only to shed light on issues facing our community, but be part of the solution to solve those problems.

While I intend to continue my work as a journalist as long as time allows, I am excited to announce that I have transitioned into a new role to help the most vulnerable members of our communities. I am thrilled to be serving as the Community Engagement Officer for the non-profit organization, Pisgah Legal Services (PLS). For more than 40 years, Pisgah Legal has provided free civil legal aid to help low-income people meet their basic needs, such as protection from domestic violence, avoiding homelessness, and accessing health care and increasing income. Because of the foresight of residents in the Cashiers and Highlands communities, PLS is expanding their service area to include Macon and Jackson counties – and I am grateful for the opportunity to help them become rooted in our community.

PLS has 25 attorneys on staff and relies heavily on the pro bono legal services of 300-plus volunteer attorneys to meet the needs of low-income residents in our community. I am honored to be joining their team and being part of an organization that recognizes that sometimes circumstances are beyond our control and everyone deserves a fair and fighting chance.

All too often my work as a journalist has led me down the path of telling stories of folks in WNC struggling in comparison to our counterparts across the state – often forgotten about by leaders in Raleigh. Resources and opportunity are devastatingly sparse for our friends and neighbors, or at least they have been in the past. I am happy to be part of an initiative to change that and make a difference right here at home.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with state and local leaders, as well as community and civic powerhouses to help Pisgah Legal Services become an embedded part of our community and a resource we can all rely on to ensure justice for all – not just those who can afford it.

If you want to learn more, feel free to contact me anytime at brittney@pisgahlegal.org.

Letters to the Editor

Writer objects to editorial's assessment of Nantahala

RE: Bill McGouns' OP/ED 2/8/20 [in the Asheville Citizen-Times - ACT] Nantahala Gives New Meaning to "Isolated"

Dear Ms. Wadington [editor of ACT],
I'd like to invite Bill McGoun to revisit, properly research, then rewrite "the rest of the story."

Why your editorial staff permitted this sloppy, incomplete, inaccurate piece of shoddy researched article get inked is beyond reason.

Extreme isolation may be a negative to Mr. McGoun, but once the territorial boundary is penetrated by driving Wayah Road, a beautifully warm community lies within.

Were he to have done more than a cursory ride-through, he could have written an inspiring, uplifting article, rather than his absolutely insulting piece of rubbish.

It was a disgraceful representation of the residents, the Macon County School System, and the economic status of our Nantahala Community.

Would it not have been professionally correct for him to contact the County Manager, Derek Roland, for statistical information?

To touch the heart and soul of the Nantahala Community, Mr. McGoun can contact the following:

Daniel Lopp, a 2007 WCU graduate who chose to return to his community to raise his family and participate in teaching those "80" some students; Kristine Flaig, owner of the local real estate agency; Shawn and Kathy Bryant, owners/entrepreneurs of a multifaceted operation; John and Bonnie Gordon, owners of Lakes End Marina and Restaurant who moved their family from Florida's entertainment center - Orlando - to enjoy "full-time" life in this comfortably warm community; Tom and Colleen Enmon, who brought Gulf-Coast ingenuity to establish Cherokee Cabins, their investment in this community; Kathy and Richard Smith, resident entrepreneurs who work daily in this community; John B. Mitchell, a proud veteran who returned home to establish a thriving business, raise his family, and join his parents who work here daily; Jennifer Solesbee and Kevin and Gay Moore, realtors who thrive in this so-called isolation; Jon Flaig, a developer who is following the tradition his father, Jack, brought to this lake community; Jeff and Martha Cohen, mainstays in boat repairs for the area residents; Jody and Stefan Hafey, hosts for a thriving destination wedding venue.

Mr. McGoun could talk to full time residents like Dutch and Amy Holland - Dutch commutes to Atlanta Regional where he is a Captain for Delta International Flights; Scotty and Barbara Cope - Scotty works for the USFS daily; Shirlon Haney, a most knowledgeable resident and retired Post Mistress for the Tipton Classified Station. Or, he could

speak with innumerable second home residents like John and Janice Shackleton or Dr. Joe and Wellyn Moore, who like others, chose the secluded beauty of this community to relax throughout the year.

There are far too many residents, both native Maconians and seasonal second homers, to enumerate, but I would hope you, now, get the picture.

His article denigrated a perfectly beautiful community nestled in the mountains of Macon; a community of lively, well informed Folk who love crossing the territorial bounds of so-called isolation to thrive in the beauty of Nantahala.

Shame on his ill-researched opinion editorial. His article could have been uplifting rather than semi-insulting.

I perceive his negativism may have resulted from the lack of cell service as he straight-lined his trip across Wayah Road.

Incidentally, he could assist this rural community by editorializing on the government "First Net Program." It is funded to assist cell coverage in rural areas. AT&T holds the national contract. They need prodding!

Thank you, Mrs. Wadington if you elect to send him back to "lick his calf over"; we will gladly enlighten him.

Help us, Mr. McGoun; don't perpetuate the myth of "yesteryear" as our prevailing status.

Respectfully,

J. Emory Crawford – Mocksville, N.C.

This storm is a chance to rethink priorities

If you were caught in a storm the first thing you would do is seek shelter and then wait out the storm. Afterwards, you would assess the damage and rebuild.

We are still in the storm.

When the storm is finally passed, when we find we are still here, we will find our economy will still be here, too. But as we sift through the storm damage, we find severe flaws in our economy and society.

We find that over the last 50 years, everyday working Americans have become an expendable resource, ripped off for a profit. Pumped full of opioids for a profit. Communities have been destroyed by sending jobs off-shore for a profit. Ripped off with predatory lending, payday loans and onerous student loans for a profit. Fed cheap junk food for a profit. Forced to live in sub-standard housing for a profit. Now with the latest from our Federal government we've finally reached the ultimate expression of this profiteering – let us simply die if it will maximize profits.

We need to rethink our priorities, so we can live our lives without fear of coming storms. We need to do this if only to regain our humanity. Maybe then we can create a humane, caring community of storm survivors. Maybe then we loosen a bit on the "everyone for himself" attitude that many claim is the American way.

John Barry – Franklin, N.C.

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Bless one another 'from a distance'

A cure may be in the works! It is readily available, recently FDA approved for off label use, cheap, and 100 percent effective, despite any fake news to the contrary which you may have heard. Israel has donated free of charge six million doses of the anti-malaria drug, hydroxychloroquine (HCQ). Dr. Vladimir Zelenko, a board certified family practitioner in New York is using a mixture of drugs, including HCQ, azithromycin (an antibiotic), and a zinc supplement to treat patients with COVID-19. His results, according to his most recent update: 699 patients treated, 0 deaths, 0 ventilator requirements, and four hospitalizations (all recovering nicely). Dr Z only treats high risk patients (over 60, or immuno-compromised). He begins treatment when they show symptoms. Within hours, the patients feel better. In two days, they are much less contagious. And in five days, they are symptom free, and no longer spreading the virus. According to the *Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2020, a placebo controlled study is being conducted in Kansas City by Drs. Jeff Colyer, Joe Brewer, and Dan Hinthorn. Results so far are promising.

I spoke with a local pastor of a church in Franklin. He said they have resorted to locking the door of the church building, because they are getting more requests for assistance than they have resources to help. Many people are hurting. If you saw this crisis coming, and prepared for it in advance, you are among the blessed. Please reach out to those in need. Random acts of kindness are needed now, more than ever.

There are many church buildings with locked doors, and no one inside. Where is the Church? The Church is not a building: it is an organism. It is made up of all true believers in Jesus, who have accepted the cure for the sin problem we all have. Our greatest need as humans is the love and forgiveness and healing offered by Jesus. If you are a Christian, you are blessed beyond comprehension. Please reach out and help people who are hurting.

Samaritan's Purse is headed by Franklin Graham, son of the late Billy Graham. They are setting up a 68 bed 14 tent hospital in New York City to help treat COVID-19 patients.

You may not be able to do anything big like that. But we can all call people on the phone. Some can offer assistance. Others can think of appropriate random acts of kindness.

Times like this teach us what our real needs are. We may need to remain six feet apart for safety, but we can still smile, and love, and pray. And we can be creative, and come up with ways to bless one another "from a distance."

Ed Hill – Franklin, N.C.

An open letter to Sheriff Holland

Dear Sheriff,

With the current hysteria over COVID-19, I want to kindly remind you of your sworn oath to uphold and protect the entire U.S. Constitution. What we have seen in previous weeks concerning this virus issue is nothing short of un-American. The government and media have influenced the citizenry to give up judgment, conscience, and common sense on a level never before seen. The government who is announcing bans on public gatherings, demanding the closure of businesses, or limits to the number of people together are doing so under the superficial guise of emergency powers but in direct violation of civil liberties. If civic leaders willingly violate the law, for whatever reason, then they cease to be governments and the rule of law means nothing. Without the law, there can be no freedom, and without justice, there can be no law. Our constitutional rights are not just valid in good times, but even more so in times of crisis. The Constitution forbids forcing American citizens to remain prisoners in their homes without public debate

and consent. But the Constitution does state, several times, that no person shall be deprived of life, liberty, or property without due process. House arrest, blanket business closures destroying livelihoods, communist curfews, bans on public gatherings, etc., deny Americans that due process as protected by the 1st, 5th and 14th Amendments. So now it is OK to go to Walmart where germs are always present, but illegal to go to church? Absolute BS. That being said, by all means, if someone feels they must self-isolate, that is their choice. There is a very high survival rate of this virus and no reason to panic. But if someone is afraid, they can take individual responsibility to stay home. No one, esp. government bureaucrats, has the right to force us to abandon constitutional principles. We will not permit any level of government to infringe on our civil rights without being challenged vigorously at every step. If governments infringe on our rights so easily now, they will do so again and again until the freedoms we and our ancestors fought to secure become a long-lost memory. Governments always use emotional times to grab more power and when the crisis is over, we don't get our freedoms back. History has proven this many times. This current "crisis" is being exploited by criminals in government and you have a job to oppose it. The Constitution as rule of law in our self governing republic is our Romans 13 authority, not so-called "leaders."

For anyone who falsely believes these drastic unconstitutional measures are necessary, it was Benjamin Franklin who wisely said, "Those who would sacrifice essential liberty to gain a little temporary security deserve neither liberty nor security." We the People can easily see through this charade by government and media. It is obvious these measures are not lawful and there will be serious blowback once the smoke clears from this goat rodeo.

You, Sheriff Holland, are called upon to defend the citizens of Macon County from the over reach of state and federal governments in this chaotic time. If you are willing to oppose government tyranny to protect the 2nd amendment in Macon County as so many other courageous sheriffs around the country have done, then we are counting on you to oppose the blatant destruction of the 1st, 5th, and 14th amendments, so help you God. We expect you to ignore any draconian measures passed down from state or federal government. These measures did not work in Italy and NYC, and they won't work in our rural areas. Common sense and trust in God's sovereignty is the only cure. County commissioners, you should also be encouraged to stand up for the rights guaranteed us as Americans no matter what the cost. Thank you for affirming that commitment with your (ironically timed) recent resolution protecting the Constitution. Now, please put some teeth to it. We the People have your back as we all oppose this government tyranny together.

Jim Gaston – Franklin, NC
www.lewrockwell.com

Current crisis could change the way we do things

Are we relying too heavily on the government to pull our economy thru the coronavirus crisis?

While I applaud the federal government for the passage of their Coronavirus Stimulus Packages to ease the economic impact of the current crisis, I cannot help but wonder if we could not be helping each other a bit more. As workers in many industries are forced out of work and will be relying on government support to feed and house their families I ask is there any sort of "pay it forward (or perhaps in this case backward)" that might help.

What if manufacturers large and small saw this an opportunity to do the morally correct and patriotic thing by manufacturing the medical supplies and equipment needed at minimal profit margins instead of hiking prices.

What if banks were willing to freeze mortgages for those

out of work instead of relying on the government to drastically increase unemployment benefits so their profits continue unabated.

What if landlords would forgive rents for businesses forced to close their doors – and banks would freeze mortgages on these commercial properties in the same manner as for unemployed workers so small businesses would not need to rely on government and/or government backed loans (to be turned into grants) to have a physical place of business to reopen when the need for virus mitigation closures has passed.

What if everyone currently in possession of more than one month's supply of toilet paper would return it to the store so those who need it could purchase it. Or better yet, share it with their neighbors.

What if everyone with a yard put in a victory garden – sharing seeds with their neighbors as a pack of seeds for most vegetables is enough to supply several families.

What if everyone who is not thrown out of work by this crisis would donate a portion of their earnings to local food banks, shelters and or their local hospital's "coronavirus supplies fund."

I am sure each of you reading this can think of other small and large ideas of ways we can all help each other and share the burdens of this epidemic. Resolve to put into play those within your power to do so.

I know some of my suggestions would require much communication between individuals, businesses and government. One hundred years ago this might have been impossible, but with today's technology I believe it would be relatively easy.

We need to recognize that this epidemic is going to cause hardships and temporarily, if not permanently, change the way we do some things in America. It is time for the American people to learn to share not only thoughts and prayers but also resources and hardships but most importantly, to share a resolve to get through hard times by working together and to share Hope.

Mary Ann Ingram – Franklin, N.C.

Common sense is needed

Viruses have been around since the beginning of life itself. They are not new to humanity and have not wiped us out. In a world of about eight billion people you cannot tell me that we do not have the resources on this planet to stop this pandemic. Shutdowns will slow down its transmission but finding a cure should be the priority goal and we should by-pass the FDA who claim that it will take a year or so to find a vaccine (there are currently eight similar COVID-19 viruses traveling around the world each with a slight mutation). To normally test a vaccine, a group of volunteers are selected with half getting the vaccine and half getting a placebo, then each will be exposed to the virus; neither group knows who is getting what. Just skip this part of the test and give all of them the test vaccine to see how they respond. If it is statistically favorable after eight weeks (not all will survive and all those volunteers should be memorialized as heroes), then provide the vaccine to the public at cost by having everyone sign a waiver not to sue if their results are not as positive. It's time we put a 100 percent humanitarian effort behind solving this crisis and stop the political grand standing, immature gestures, fake news and work together with our global brothers and sisters. In 1952, Dr. Jonas Salk created a vaccine that cured the polio virus on a global basis. He gave his discovery to humanity, not out of greed but out of a moral obligation to help humanity. Will this generation be so smart?

Larry Stenger – Franklin, N.C.

LETTERS

Continued from page 11

What to do until the Coronavirus passes?

This too will pass. While not originating from the Bible, this saying tells us that good times and bad times will always be with us. What is important is how we react to changing times. In short, we need to live one day at a time and enjoy the moment. As the Chinese say: a crisis is also an opportunity in the making.

My cat isn't having any particular problem with the CV as long as she gets feed and gets a pet or two. Maybe we should take notice from the world around us: all the animals and plants. The world goes on essentially unchanged, while we try to navigate our present crisis.

Finding the good in the bad isn't exactly easy: it takes effort. But our choices may have lasting effects. For example, the extra time we spend with our families may strengthen our bonds together. For those that have lost jobs or are staying home to take care of loved ones, this is an opportunity to reevaluate what is important to us and what changes we may want to make in our lives. Are we spending our time and money on things that really matter to us?

If nothing else, the Coronavirus may help us focus on our health, both physical and mental, so that we can increase our resiliency. When 80 percent of diseases may be a direct result of our lifestyle choices, we might consider what changes we might want to make when hospitals are already overwhelmed and we may not want to visit a doctor's office or emergency room. Our health begins with the food we eat, the water and air we breathe, whether we exercise or not, and much more. During these times, our mental health may be critical to weathering this storm.

While we may think that a healthy immune system is important, worry, stress and anxiety can cause our immune system to over-react and increase inflammation. When people die from the Coronavirus it is because their immune system over-reacts and attacks healthy cells. High levels of inflammation are associated with poor health and chronic conditions such as arthritis. Positive moods have been found to lower levels of inflammation. So what things can support both our physical and mental health?

This may be the time to consider planting a garden. The exercise of gardening and getting outdoors can have a positive effect on our well-being, energy level and health. Fresh vegetables from a garden can support a healthy immune system and we can avoid going into grocery stores where the virus may be present.

For those with a porch or deck or stoop, many plants have been adapted for container gardening. Our county extension provides garden spaces in the community garden or you can help out on local farms in return for some fresh produce. If you can't or are unable to garden, you can visit your local farmer's market or produce stand to get the best of local fresh produce while staying out in the fresh air and sun. Your local farmers are working hard to bring you fresh, healthy produce. Buying local supports your local economy and could be important in case there are disruptions in transportation.

While gyms are closed, we have the whole world outside to explore and enjoy. Western North Carolina has many trails, nature centers, parks and greenways that provide ample opportunity to be active outside. The Stay At Home Order allows for outside exercising as long as you stay six feet from someone else.

If this isn't possible, and we have to stay home, yoga or aerobics can provide the necessary physical exercise we may need to stay fit, healthy and relaxed.

Learning to slow down for some of us may be our biggest challenge, as we are used to being constantly engaged by everything around us. My cat again can be my best teacher, as she has no problem just laying around. We can practice meditation or pick up a book to read to relax.

We can engage in creative outlets that divert our attention from the latest alert that constantly keeps us in a state of panic. Knit a sweater, paint a picture, sing a song, work on a project, garden, or take a walk.

Not worrying may boost our immune system so if we do catch a virus we may just shrug it off.

Helping others can also reduce our anxiety and stress. When we act to meet the needs of others, we often forget about our own problems which benefits ourselves.

All of these things will help build our confidence, health, well-being, and resilience, so when the next virus or crisis comes knocking on our door, we'll be better prepared.

Paul Chew - Otto, N.C.

Reasons for confusion are few in number

It is nothing short of bewildering that so many Americans continue to champion Trump's irrational statements regarding the coronavirus despite over-whelming evidence of the president's unconscionable behavior viewed around the clock, around the world and coast to coast in our own country. This president is a pathological liar and no amount of spin, denial, or subterfuge can ever alter that fact one iota.

In any crisis Americans have always turned to our president for guidance as have many western world leaders, at least up until the present time. We cannot do that now because we are burdened with a bumbling incompetent leader whose behavior and routine lifestyle is best described as a combination soap opera and comic strip.

I remember a time most Americans gave a considerable measure of thought and reason before electing or appointing someone to a high position. Granted, for a solid half century now people have been appointed to key positions based almost solely on color or gender so it's not surprising that over time words like "expertise" and "proficiency" and fundamental "know-how" have lost their original and intended meaning.

Assigning positions on any basis other than knowledge, competence and "the right stuff," basically undermines a society by compromising its institutions and endangering its national security as we have watched happen for the last five decades. To do so in the face of a deadly pandemic directly and indirectly costs lives.

President Trump dropped the ball early on by shamelessly claiming we were over-reacting to the coronavirus, inferring it was a "hoax" concocted by the Democrats and broadcast by the media to make him look bad. That hog-wash is still widely circulated daily by Trump loyalists and apologists.

What we really need to do is listen to and follow the directions of people who really know the facts, the experts and scientists who have devoted the larger portion of their lives to this discipline. Once such person is Dr. Tom Frieden, the former director of the Center for Disease Control (CDC), 2009-2017, and who now advises other nations on how to organize against epidemics.

"The CDC," Frieden said, "has 700 professionals specifically focused on infectious lung diseases and respiratory viral infections." He finds it disconcerting that for the first

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time in 75 years the CDC is not in charge of the coronavirus pandemic that has engulfed the world. "We've heard that FEMA's in charge," Frieden said, "we've heard the vice president's in charge, we've heard Dr. Deborah Birx (U.S. Ambassador-at-Large) is in charge, and we've heard the Health and Human Service Secretary (Alex Azar) is in charge. Who's on first here, it definitely isn't the CDC."

The reasons for the confusion are few in number and just as obvious. President Trump is far more concerned about his poll numbers and being re-elected than he is about the health and well-being of Americans. Trump's ineptness and lack of understanding of his responsibilities is as conspicuous as it is colossal, no more need be said.

What worries Dr. Frieden (and what should be of grave concern to all Americans) is that the CDC is relegated to the sidelines during this crisis and not centrally involved in making decisions at the table. "It's not that the CDC is the only group that makes decisions," Dr. Frieden says, "but it's got unique expertise in communicating those decisions, and frankly I feel less safe because of that."

We are less safe, sir, thank you for pointing that out. Americans need to hear the truth from someone who knows the truth rather than the Trumps, the Limbaughs and other fools who think they're smarter and know more than the experts.

David Snell – Franklin, N.C.

Email letters to the editor to maconcountynews@gmail.com

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.



Seasons changing

In spite of what's going on around the country, spring is still here with a promise of better days ahead. Trees are budding out and flowers are blooming. Recent rains make spectacular waterfalls in the Cullasaja Gorge on Highlands Road.

Photos by Betsey Gooder



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No Wrong Door taking active role in addressing addiction and recovery

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Two years after dozens of stakeholders from across Western North Carolina met at Entegra Bank to develop a proactive solution to the drug epidemic in the region, No Wrong Door continues to take an active role in recovery for residents of Macon County.

Sheila Jenkins, executive director with No Wrong Door, visited a recent town council meeting to give an update on the services provided by the nonprofit organization. As funding has continued to be cut for mental health services from the state, local services and support are becoming more and more important.

The Town of Franklin and Macon County have partnered with No Wrong Door for Support and Recovery, Inc., a program launched last year, after a year of planning and research, to help combat the drug epidemic in Macon County. Both the town and county have pledged \$20,000 each to support the program which helps those suffering from addiction as well as their families.

No Wrong Door supports people who are transitioning from detention or treatment facilities and enlists the aid of peer support, pastoral ministries, and community organizations who assist those who suffer from substance abuse and/or mental health. Community-based peer support and education is provided as well as support for family members who have been affected by a loved one's struggles.

No Wrong Door is an initiative that started with the N.C. Department of Commerce in 2016. The Macon County mental health task force adopted the concept to hopefully better connect potential clients with the mental health and substance abuse treatment services that they need,

no matter where they turn for help initially.

No Wrong Door also provides peer-led groups for the male and female population at the detention center offering WRAP Skills, Parenting with Love & Logic and Peer Support. Last April, the organization started working in the local jail to support those in recovery by providing peer support.

Additional services provided by No Wrong Door include: One on One Support, Recovery Education Groups, Collaboration with County Health Department Telepsych Services, Resource Navigation, Kinship Support Group (Second Timers) in Collaboration with Senior Service and Sharing Our Stories Support Group.

All No Wrong Door services are provided at no charge.

The No Wrong Door initiative was born out of a community brainstorming session held in March 2018. Local law enforcement, agency representatives from department of Social Services, county leaders, and town officials shared ideas, experiences, and for the first time, worked collaboratively to share resources during the session. From there, the nonprofit organization was established. By October 2018, No Wrong Door had named Jenkins to the director position. Jenkins retired from the Macon County Senior Services Center after 30 years of service. Jenkins worked to secure the No Wrong Door's nonprofit status as well as establish a board of directors to lead the charge of the grassroots effort to address recovery efforts in Macon County.

For more information about No Wrong Door and their free services for those in need, visit their office at 102 Thomas Heights Road, Franklin; by email at sheila@nowrongdoor-wnc.org or by phone at (828)349-3366.

Long-time local Juvenile Justice leader closes the door on his 35-year career

As winter wanes, Charles (Chuck) William Mallonee, Western Area Administrator for the Department of Public Safety's Juvenile Justice Section, is winding down his 35-year career in service to the children, families and communities of western North Carolina.

Mallonee, who earned undergraduate and graduate degrees at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill, began his career with Juvenile Justice in August 1984, as a juvenile court counselor in District 30 (Cherokee, Graham, Clay, Swain, Macon, Jackson and Haywood counties).

Mallonee remained in District 30 throughout much of his career; during his time as District 30's chief court counselor, he helped to establish the Juvenile Justice Treatment Continuum that now operates in seven judicial districts and the Qualla Boundary. Though he eventually moved up the ranks to become the Western Area Administrator for Juvenile Court Services in 2011 – providing leadership to North Carolina 28 western counties – Mallonee served as a strong advocate and contributor to statewide policy, striving to provide effective leadership

and strong support to Court Services field professionals. He played an instrumental role over the past two years in transitioning Juvenile Justice into the Raise the Age era, which began in December.

"I look at the state of Juvenile Justice in North Carolina and feel the exact same optimism now that I felt as a newly-sworn juvenile court counselor in 1984," said Mallonee. "I've enjoyed watching a new generation of dedicated professionals, armed with the appropriate training and tools, continue to make this state a national model for the way that we (Juvenile Justice) do business, and the caring manner in which we save kids and their families."

"Chuck Mallonee is in every sense of the word a true public servant, who put his colleagues, the kids and families we serve, and the safety of the public first," said William Lassiter, deputy secretary for Juvenile Justice. "North Carolina's juvenile justice system is more effective, responsive and compassionate because of Chuck's leadership. I thank him for his service to our Great State."

Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests March 23 - 29. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

March 29

Rebecca Denise Frady, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of a controlled substance on prison/jail premises, possession of drug paraphernalia, breaking and entering, trespass, injury to real property.

Brandon James Parrish, possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana up to 1/2 oz, possession of drug paraphernalia, breaking and entering, trespass, injury to real property.

Franklin Police Department

March 23

Jorge Perez-Camaas, 35, of Burlington, was issued an order for arrest for assault on a female. No bond was set. Officer Dula made the arrest.

Jose Jordan Garcia Herrera, 39, of Todd Trail, was charged with driving under the influence. An unsecured bond of \$1,500 was set. Officer Pellicer made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

March 23

Bobby Joe Cucumber, 41, of Lucy Long Rd., Cherokee, was charged with felony probation for violation for out of county.

Katrina Lynn Cook, 32, of Riverview Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$200 was set.

Clarence Eugene Hanson, 55, of Mashburn Branch Rd., Franklin, was charged with indecent liberties with a child. A secured bond of \$75,000 was set.

Anthony Nicholson, 31, of US 74 E., was charged with assault on a female. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set.

March 24

David Ray Calhoun, 30, of Snowbird Rd., Robbinsville, was charged with failure to appear for larceny. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Richard Steven Willis, 36, of Sugar Fork Rd., Franklin, was charged with misdemeanor probation violation. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

Christopher Eric White, 43, of Hilltop Rd., Franklin, was charged with failure to appear for first degree trespassing, assault inflicting serious injury, assault with a deadly weapon. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Dustin Michael Aykroyd, 28, of Gerald Lane, Murphy, was charged with injury to personal property,

misdemeanor larceny, break and enter on a motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Linda Anne Johnson, 55, of East Sylve Circle, was charged with failure to appear for disorderly conduct. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Caitlin Juanita Lambert, 21, of Swimmer Branch, Cherokee, was charged with misdemeanor probation violation. No bond was set.

March 25

Mike Alexander Green, 40, of Peppermill Lane, was charged with resist a public officer, breaking and entering. An unsecured bond of \$1,000 was set.

March 26

Chadwick Errol George, 46, of Poplar Tree Lane, Whittier, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor larceny, possession of stolen goods, larceny of ginseng and plant conservation act violation. A secured bond of \$750 was set.

Amber Rae Czerok, 27, of Truck Wheel Holler, was charged with failure to appear for larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$7,500 was set.

March 28

Felicia McCall Hinshaw, 49, of Hickory Creek Rd., Knoxville, Tenn., was charged with resisting a public officer.

Terry Adam Young, 22, of Antler Dr., was charged with indecent exposure, assault on EMS worker, assault on a government official, resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$250 was set.

Tony Dustin Gregory, 29, of Nightingale Place, Waynesville, was issued a warrant for arrest for indictment for possession of drug paraphernalia, resist a public officer, assault with a deadly weapon causing serious injury, carrying a concealed weapon, interfere with emergency communication, misdemeanor probation violation, assault on a female. A secured bond of \$25,000 was set.

March 29

Adam Paul Hopkins, 33, of Wheatstone Dr., Glenville, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

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 Mondays 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 are suspending their operations until further notice. Taxpayers with appointments will be contacted to cancel their appointments. AARP Foundation 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.

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. Anyone in need is encouraged to come and get assistance. The thrift store will be closed until further notice.

Gastric Bypass Support Group will not meet in April.

Macon County Clerk of Court's Office is suspending passport applications until April 15. Check travel.state.gov for facilities that are currently accepting applications.

Franklin Golf Association meets on Thursdays, 8:30 a.m., at the Franklin Golf Course. For more information, call Franklin Golf Course at (828)524-2288.

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

Vagabonds RV Camping Club is seeking additional members for the 2020 season. The new schedule is available now for those who are interested. They camp one weekend per month, April thru November. Usually within 100 miles from Franklin. All ages are welcome. Any type camper is welcome. No dues, no structured activities. Just an

enjoyment of the outdoors, fellowship, good conversation, pot luck dinners and a roaring campfire. For more information, call Lillian at (828)369-6669 or lillan@aol.com

Macon Medication Assistance Program located at the back of the First Baptist Church is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more information call (828)524-5258.

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

Celebrate Recovery at Discover Church is conducting Online Open Share Groups every Monday night 6:30 p.m. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind. Celebrate Recovery is a safe place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our life. To sign up for a group or for more information, email Stu or Cristy at: cr@discover.church

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.

Macon County Senior Services needs volunteers Interested persons should stop in The Crawford Senior Center and fill out a volunteer application at the Community Resource Center. For more information, call (828)349-2060.

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.

Macon County Public Health offers nutrition counseling and diabetes education. Services are covered by many private insurances including Medicare/Medicaid. All insurance accepted and income based sliding scale fee available to Macon County residents. For more information, call April Innis at (828)349-2455.

Harris Hospice serving patients and families in Franklin and the seven surrounding counties, conducts ongoing orientation sessions for adults (18 & older) interested in becoming volunteers with the program. No medical experience is required. Training is provided. For more information, call Rachel Thomson, volunteer coordinator at (828)631-1702.

Community Care Clinic of Franklin needs volunteers to work at the front desk or as an intake volunteer. The front desk volunteer welcomes the patients and instructs them on completing the necessary paperwork. The intake volunteer takes vital signs and records medication and health information. Work as often or as little as you like. For more information, call (828)349-2085 or email mishields@peoplepc.com

CHURCH HAPPENINGS

West Franklin Church is holding services 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.

Ridge Crest Baptist Church services are held on Sunday School begins at 10 a.m., Sunday morning worship service at 11 a.m., Sunday evening worship service 6 p.m. Listen live on WNCC 104.1 FM Radio. Wednesday evening Bible study 6:30 p.m. The church is located on 441N., at 206 Ridgecrest Baptist Church Rd. Rev. Guy Duvall, pastor (828)369-6252.

Community Bible Church of Sky Valley service times are 9 a.m. Sunday morning and small Revisit group meetings Tuesday evenings at 5:30 p.m. The church is located at 696 Sky Valley Way #11, Sky Valley, Ga. Phone (706)746-3144. Gary Hewins, pastor.

Newman Chapel Weekly Services are Sunday School 10 a.m., Sunday service 11 a.m., Sunday night 6 p.m. and Wednesday night 7 p.m. The pastor is Rev. Dennis Ledford. The church is located on Mulberry Rd. in Otto.

Emmanuel Baptist Church Service times are Sunday School 10 a.m., Sunday morning service 11 a.m., Sunday night service 6 p.m., Wednesday night prayer meeting 7 p.m. The church is located at 129 Emmanuel Rd. For more information, contact (828)524-3214.

House of Hope Church of God service times are Sunday School 10 a.m., Sunday Morning Service 10:30 a.m., Sunday evening services first and second Sundays are 6 p.m., third Sunday youth service 6:30 p.m. no fourth Sunday services. Bible school classes Wednesday 7 p.m. The church is located at 1111 Tessentee Rd. in Franklin. For more information, contact Pastor Greg Bartram (828)524-5361.

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.all-saintsfranklin.org or call the church office at (828)524-4910.

Email church calendar items to maconcountynews@gmail.com

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SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22

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Explore the many ways to extend your vegetable garden season

Melinda Myers – Columnist

No matter where you garden there never seems to be enough time to grow all the fresh vegetables desired. Planting earlier or just providing plants with some added warmth on chilly days and nights can reduce the time from planting to harvest. Southern gardeners will enjoy the additional time for harvesting heat-sensitive plants before the stifling heat moves in and plants begin to decline.

Prepare the soil as soon as it can be worked. Cover the prepared soil with clear plastic, row covers or high tunnels for several weeks when planting earlier than normal. This warms the soil for planting and helps germinate many of the weed seeds. Lightly cultivate to remove the young weed seedlings without bringing more weed seeds to the surface. You'll be pulling fewer weeds throughout the growing season.

Once the garden is planted, enlist some of these season-extending helpers (gardeners.com). Homemade and commercial cloches, cold frames and row covers can help you plant earlier and harvest later in the season.

Row covers made of spun fabrics let air, light, and water through while keeping the plants warm. Anchor the fabric with landscape pins, stones, boards, or other heavy items. Leave enough slack in the fabrics for the plants to grow. Lighter weight garden fabrics also protect plants from insect pests like cabbage worms and bean beetles.



Melinda Myers

Garden covers take this method one step further. These structures fit over plantings in the garden, raised beds or elevated planters. Look for those with durable greenhouse fabric covers that let water in and keep excess heat out. These types of structures protect plants from cold and wind, speeding up your harvest by as much as 25%.

Raise the roof on these structures with high tunnels and plant protection tents. These are perfect for growing tall plants like tomatoes. As temperatures rise, the tops can be ventilated or in some cases replaced with

a mesh that keeps out insects and critters, while providing plants enough room to reach full size.

Or maybe you just can't wait for that first red ripe tomato and only want to jump start a row of greens. Garden cloches have long been used for this purpose. They capture the sun's warmth to protect plants from frosty weather. Local hardware and gardening centers most likely stock row cloche sets which allows you to expand your protection to the desired size. These clear PVC plant protectors have water wells to capture rainwater and gently disperse it to the plants below and vents for managing the temperature.

Further boost your tomato harvest with red plastic mulch, red tomato teepees and tomato boosters. University researchers found using red plastic mulch increased the individual fruit size and weight and overall tomato harvest by as much as 20 percent. They found the red plastic mulch reflected certain growth-enhancing wavelengths of light back onto the plants.

With a bit of extra effort and investment you'll be harvesting fresh vegetables long before your friends and neighbors. Then be sure to keep these season-extending devices handy to use again in fall. Protecting plants from those first few fall frosts can keep you eating garden-fresh tomatoes, peppers and greens well into winter.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD series* and



Cloches can help you plant earlier and harvest later, extending the growing season.

Photo courtesy of Gardener's Supply Company

the Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio segments. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and was commissioned by *Gardeners Supply* for her expertise to write this article. Her website is www.MelindaMyers.com.

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Locally authored books are worth checking out

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Besides the area’s celebrated authors, such as Ron Rash and Charles Frazier, an abundance of noteworthy writing talent exists in Western North Carolina. Reading actual books is up significantly across the country, despite continued access to technology. And books written by local authors present distinct vernacular language, history, and sense-of-place nature descriptions that bind readers to stories.

“For our area, we have a large number of local authors who write very well,” said Books Unlimited owner Suzanne Harouff. “And, supporting local authors supports local economy.”

Local authors include Merrilee Bordeaux, Jeannie Chambers, Monica Collier, Tyler Cook, Ronald Evans, Pam McDonald, Lotus Plott, Claire Suminski, Michael Willis, Ann Miller Woodford, Jim Shope, Matthew Baker, Robert Shook, Lee Lyons, Diane McPhail, Ken Sharpe, Brent Martin, Samantha Narelle Kirkland – among others.

Bordeaux, a native of Franklin and a retired middle school teacher, was inspired by the beauty of the mountains to write, “A Song of Life and other Poems.” Chamber’s book, “Tunnel of Time,” published in 2017, is a “fantastic journey across time.”

Collier, a native of Franklin and graduate of Western Carolina University, is the author of four novels, as well as the new owner of Franklin Office Supply. Her adventure romance novels are “Unwritten,” “Unbecoming,” “Kissing Hollywood,” and “Pink.”

Cook, another native of Franklin, co-wrote “A Guide to Historic Dillsboro,” and then followed that up with novels: “The One,” in 2015, “Aluria” in 2016, “Vigilante” in 2017, and “Disciple” in 2018.

“Frankie - A Life Cut Short: Her Life and Unsolved Mystery,” written by Evans, delves into the unsolved murder mystery of Frances S. Bullock, a 40-year-old widow who was brutally stabbed to death July 26, 1963, at her home in Franklin.

McDonald’s “Windy Garden” is shared expression of her imagination over the years and stories that had been captured in her diaries growing up. And another first-person account is that of Plott’s: “When Living on a Farm: An Appalachian Memoir.”

Claire Suminski, along with her family, publishes the Cowee Sam children’s book series, which have as their central character a loveable Great Pyrenees dog.

Willis, who graduated from Franklin High School and WCU, shared a poignant account of local 1960s rural culture in “The Life of Mikey, a memoir.”

Woodford authored “When All God’s Children Get Together: A Celebration of the Lives and Music of African American People in Far Western North Carolina,” which is a well-researched account of a distinct aspect of the area’s history.

Shope’s “Tales from Skeenah Creek,” published in March 2019, is set in the Civil War time period and spotlights a soldier’s adventures and struggles.

Baker captured oral history in his non-fiction books: “My

Mountain Heroes: Stories of Inspiration & Courage From Macon County’s Greatest Generation,” and “My Mountain Granny: The Story of Evelyn Howell Beck in the Mountain Town of Whittier, N.C.”

Shook, who is curator at Macon County Historical Museum, captured his family’s local legacy in a book he accomplished with Carol Schere titled “A Journey in Courage: Based on the True Story of one American Family.”

Lyons, of Highlands, unveiled her novel last year, titled “Southern Shamrock,” about a journey to Ireland to learn family history discovered in letters. McPhail, also in Highlands,

garnered much attention with her novel, “The Abolitionist Daughter,” based on true events about stereotypes of the Civil War South. Lyons and Highlands-based Sharpe, as well as many others in Macon and even Jackson County, attend a weekly writers group at The Bascom: A Center for Visual Art. Sharpe’s two books, “The Seers” and “Next Earth” explore futuristic questions regarding creation, science and humanity.

Last July, author and poet Brent Martin, who owns Alarka Expeditions with his wife, Angela, unveiled his book “The Changing Blue Ridge Mountains: Essays on Journeys Past & Present.” The Martins host a monthly N.C. Writer’s Network meeting of local published and unpublished writers at Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center. (Meetings will resume in the future.)

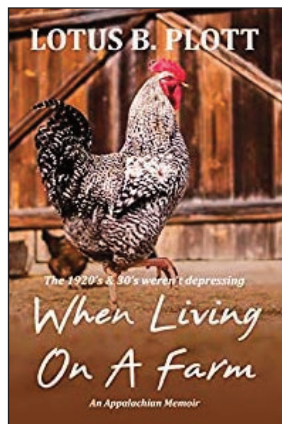
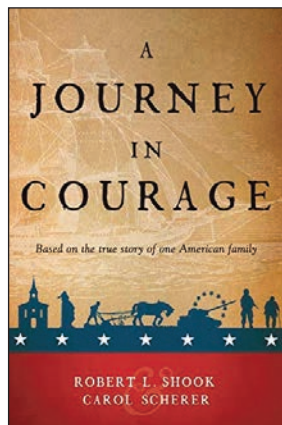
Kirkland has written several books. “Europe in Low” is about two college graduates bicycling across Europe post World War I.

“Ride the Sea” explores the tragedy of the sinking of the Titanic taking it in a whole new direction.

And of course, although he has long been deceased, William Bartram is perhaps Macon County’s most well-known and well-read author. An American naturalist who traversed the Western North Carolina mountain in the 1700s, Bartram wrote in detail of his findings and observations regarding Cherokee, plants, animals, trees, etc. His poetic prose takes readers to an Edenesque landscape: “At the return of the morning, by the powerful influence of light, the pulse of nature becomes more active, and the universal vibrations of life insensibly and irresistibly moves the wondrous machines. How cheerful and gay all nature appears! Hark!” And, it is because of Bartram that Macon County offers miles of hiking trails that bear his name.

Most locally authored books are available for purchase at Books Unlimited, as well as online. “Local authors provide plenty of topics for all interests,” said Harouff, which shared that hours for the store, located on Main Street in Franklin, have changed – because of COVID-19 – to Wednesday through Saturday, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Employees at Books Unlimited offer curbside service, for customer who do not want to enter the store.

Macon County News’ own contributing writer, Deena C. Bouknight, writes southern literary fiction. Her two novels, “Broken Shell” and “Playing Guy,” are available at Books Unlimited and online; expected publication of “Light Fracture,” a novel of the great Charleston earthquake of 1886, is later this year.



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Restoration company repairing century-old museum building

Midwest Maintenance Inc., a building restoration company out of Augusta, Ga., is conducting some repair work on the Macon County Historical Museum building is having some work done on the more-than-a-century old bricks. Workers are implementing a process known as “tuck pointing” which involves scraping out the old mortar and replacing it with new. Some of the bricks are deteriorating and will also be replaced. Below, an opening was exposed where a chimney was once located and the worker indicated that the bricks were just “laid in there.”

Photos Vickie Carpenter



Deaths & Funerals

Teddy Marshall ‘Wolf’ Higdon

Teddy Marshall “Wolf” Higdon, 74, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, March 25, 2020.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Theodore Warner Higdon and Geneva Pearl Coggins Higdon. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Steve Higdon. He enjoyed gardening and loved to play basketball, fish and hunt. He was a member of Higdonville Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife, Shay Higdon; three sons, Tim Higdon, Bo Higdon (Tina) and Denver Higdon (Alicia) all of Franklin; sister, Lawana Patterson of Franklin; and eight grandchildren, Vanessa Rhoden (Will), Garrett Higdon (Emilee), Dillon Higdon, Amber Higdon, Alexa Higdon, Alyssa Higdon, Heidi Shope and Sydney Shope.

A private funeral service was held Saturday, March 28, at Higdonville Baptist Church. Rev. Scott Matthews and Rev. Roy Lowe officiated. Burial was in the church cemetery.

Pallbearers were Garrett Higdon, Dillon Higdon, Donald Holland, Reggie Holland, David Holland and Heath Higdon.

Honorary pallbearers were Phil Higdon, Bruce Holland, Lyman Holland, Gary Taylor, Mark McDowell and Sherman Paris.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Four Season’s Hospice, (for the Hospice House) Four Seasons Development Office 571 South Allen Road, Flat Rock, NC 2873.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Teddy Marshall Higdon

Melvin Lee Miller

Melvin Lee Miller, 84, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Tuesday, March 24, 2020. He was born Aug. 16, 1935, in Union County, Ill., to the late Lester Miller and Margaret Gayette Miller. He retired from the Navy after 24 years of service as a Master Chief E-9. He served in the Korean Conflict and the Vietnam War. He was a member of the Fleet Reserve Association, Carolina Mountain Woodturning, Old Bones Softball Senior League and the Brasstown Wood Turner Guild. He was of the Baptist faith.

He is survived by his wife, Christina Coumts Miller; two daughters, Lynn Michelle Unnerstall (Keane) of Orlando, Fla., and Teresa Diane Miller (Barbara Tuttle) of Charleston, S.C.; a son, Michael Lee Miller (Elisabeth Diffenderfer) of Charleston, S.C.; four grandchildren, Christopher Storey, Paige Miller, Meghan Miller and K.C. Diffenderfer; a sister, Patsy Ruth Lewis (Ron) of Mustang, Okla.

In addition to his parents, he is preceded in death by his brother, David Lester Miller.

A private funeral was held Friday, March 27, at the Salisbury National Cemetery.

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



Melvin Lee Miller

Janice Maude Houston Lee

Janice Maude Houston Lee, 77, of Otto, N.C., passed away Tuesday, March 24, 2020. She was born in Albany, Ga., to the late Otha Lawrence and Decima Mock Houston. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a brother, Larry Houston.

She is survived by her husband, Woodrow Lee; one daughter, Shari Dee Hines (Steve) of Albany, Ga.; one son, Jeff Barrett (Angela) of Canton, Ga.; one sister, Lenora Jowers of Albany, Ga.; and several grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She moved to Otto in 1996 and was a member of the Holly Springs Baptist Church. She was a former member of Rotary International and the American Cancer Society. She was instrumental in the forming of Relay for Life. She was a Registered Nurse and graduated from Albany Junior College, South Western in Americus, Ga., as well as Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Ga.

A private graveside service will be held at the Holly Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. A Memorial Service will be held at a later date.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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

Martha ‘Ann’ Redoutey

Martha “Ann” Redoutey, 66, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, March 26, 2020.

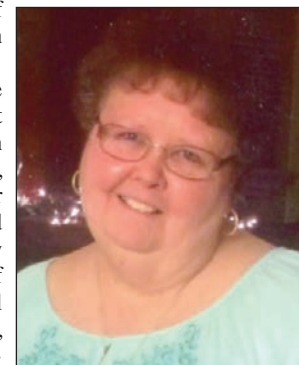
Born in Jackson County, she was the daughter of the late Elbert Griffen and Frances Robinson Griffen. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her son, Michael Ray Redoutey and two brothers, Dickey and Johnny Griffen. She was a member of First Pentecost Church. She will be greatly missed by her family, whom she loved more than anything.

She is survived by her husband of 49 years, George Redoutey; one son, Scott Redoutey (Deborah) of Franklin; five brothers and sisters, Kathy Worley of Asheville, N.C., Donna Gullidge of Sanford, N.C., Fred, Bobby Joe and David Griffen all of Sylva; four grandchildren, Alex, Landon, Chandler, McKenzie; and one great granddaughter, Khloe.

In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, a memorial service will be held at a later date.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Martha ‘Ann’ Redoutey

Riscardo Reyes Rodriguez

Riscardo Reyes Rodriguez, 39, passed away Thursday, March 19, 2020. He was born March 31, 1980, in Puerto Rico to Wilfredo and Isabel Rodriguez Escalera. He loved riding motorcycles and fishing. He would help anyone who was in need. He loved life and people. He was of the Catholic faith.

In addition to his parents, survivors include his brother, Edgar Reyes Rodriguez; grandmother, Maria Colon; several aunts, uncles, and cousins.

A funeral service was held Saturday, March 28, in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home. Burial followed in the Addington Cemetery. Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home & Crematory is serving the Escalera and Reyes Rodriguez family.



Riscardo Reyes Rodriguez



Deaths & Funerals

George Burgin Moses

On March 28th the love of my life passed away, George Burgin Moses, always known as "Bud." He was 66 years old.

He fought a courageous fight against cancer for over four years. He was a jack of all trades; he could do almost anything. He retired from the trucking company after 25 years. He loved the outdoors, fishing, camping, hunting and spending time with his family. He was a great husband, Dad and Paw.

He was preceded in death by his mom and dad, Thomas and Mary Lee Moses and a sister, Louise Ensley. He came from a large and loving family; Virginia McCall (John), Ann Lequire, Pat Cochran (Tommy), Ricky Moses, Rhonda Simmons (Randy) of Pennsylvania, Donnie Moses (Beth) of Georgia, Vickie Green (John) of Asheville, David (Tim) of Freemont, N.C. The others lived here in Franklin.

He married his high school sweetheart, Elsie McClure Moses. They were married for 48 years. Together they had two children, Misty Moses Crisp and Chad Thomas Moses, both of Franklin; three grandchildren, Mason Schulte, Conner Crisp and Shannon Shuler (Austin) and one great grandson, Stetson Shuler.

He made his peace with the Lord and everyone before he left this world.

So, our story ends here...until we meet again.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Ralph Williams Hoffman

Ralph Williams Hoffman, 72, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, March 24, 2020.

Born in Pontotoc, Miss., he was the son of the late Ralph H. and Anne Belle Williams Hoffman. He is survived by a sister, Anne Barkley of Blue Mountain, Miss.; and numerous cousins.

A graveside service was held Friday, March 27, at Dowdle Cemetery.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made to the family at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Thomas George Hughes

Thomas George Hughes, 52, of Otto, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, at Mission Hospital in Asheville.

He was born on Aug. 17, 1967, in Macon County, North Carolina, to the late Jerry Dean Hughes and Martha Sue Webb Hughes.

He worked in construction as a carpenter. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brothers, Terry Dean Hughes and Jerry Ray Hughes; and his sister, Teresa Ann Hughes Wallace.

Those left behind to cherish his memory are his sons, Jeremy Scott Hughes and Thomas Stephen Hughes, both of Hampton, Ga., and Tanner Jackson Hughes, of Franklin, N.C.; former wife, Carolyn West Hughes of Hampton, Ga.; and Randy Dean Hughes and his wife Irene, of Otto, N.C.

The family will announce a memorial service at a later date.

Asheville Mortuary Services is honored to be assisting the Hughes family with arrangements.

David S. Hill, O.D., P.A.

Following in the footsteps of his father, David Simmons Hill, O.D., P.A. became a leading optometrist in Macon County, providing excellent eye care to his community for many years.

Dr. Hill was civic minded, serving as Angel Community Hospital board chairman and enjoying working with members of the Noonday Rotary Club where he was recognized as a Paul Harris Fellow.

Dr. Hill was born July 20, 1955, to Rachel Hill and Joseph Hill, O.D. He graduated from Franklin High School in 1973, from the University of Tennessee in 1977, and from the Southern College of Optometry in 1984. He passed on March 27, 2020.

His friends knew him as a gourmet cook who loved to entertain. An evening of good music, friends, and an excellent meal was his trademark.

An only child of only children, he had no close relatives but distant ones in the Bat Cave area of Rutherford County, North Carolina.

No service is planned at this time.

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

In keeping with his interest in the community and in Rotary, memorials made to the Roy Rickman Scholarship Fund c/o The Rotary Club of Franklin, PO Box 375, Franklin, NC 28744 are appropriate.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the blessed memory of Dr. Hill.



David S. Hill

Town council will next meet Monday, April 13

Notice is hereby given that the Town Council meetings scheduled for April 6 and April 14, have been cancelled. The meetings will be combined and rescheduled as a Special Called Meeting to discuss regular business and to include a budget work session for April 13, at 5:30 p.m. at the Town Hall board room located at 95 East Main Street, Franklin.

Onsite access to the meeting will not be permitted to the public, but there will be a link to the live stream of the meeting found on the front page of www.franklinnc.com.

Anyone wishing to make a public comment shall have an opportunity to submit questions or comments via email to contactus@franklinnc.com that will be read during the meeting. Comments and/or questions may also be mailed to P.O. Box 1479, Franklin, NC 28744. The deadline for these will be Monday April 13, at 12 p.m.

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View obituaries at

themaconcountynews.com

The Family of

Robert G (Bobby) Parrish

would like to thank each one who has blessed us with love and kindness during the loss of our loved one. We appreciate the Hospice workers, especially Cindy Smith who helped us through some hard times. Their kindness and compassion will always be remembered.

Thanks to Dr. Lawson Hunley and Joey Gibson for their kindness. Thanks to Rev. Charles Stevens, Rev. Jim Dusek, Rev. Lloyd Fish, Rev. Tom Nahlen for a beautiful service.

Thank you to Bobby's family and friends who were pallbearers. For each person who visited, called, sent a card, brought food or flowers, we are truly grateful and overwhelmed by love & generosity of our friends & neighbors. Special thanks to the staff at Macon Funeral Home (Brain Hylton) for their services.

Wanda, Chad, and Everett Parrish

Timmy Hill wins eNASCAR iRacing race at virtual Texas Motor Speedway

Holly Cain – NASCAR Wire Service

Timmy Hill gave the afternoon's dominant car, driven by William Byron, the virtual "bump-and-run" with three laps remaining to take the race lead and then ultimately held off fellow NASCAR Cup Series drivers Ryan Preece and Garrett Smithley for the victory in Sunday's O'Reilly Auto Parts 125, the second event in the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series.

Byron, who drives the famed No. 24 Chevrolet for Hendrick Motorsports, led a dominating 80 laps but Hill's move with three laps of regulation was good enough to flush Byron back into the pack. A caution came out and Hill then had to hold off fellow iRacing regulars Preece and Smithley on a green-white-checked restart. Byron ended up seventh.

It was the 27-year old Maryland native's 674th iRacing victory, but Hill acknowledged it was among the most important of his career.

"I couldn't be more excited," Hill said "Very exciting times for us because we just don't get the recognition on a normal basis. To be on an even playing field is excellent. To be on this platform, the Cup platform, is exciting. The amount of folks that reached out to me has just been tremendous.

"The last lap was just one I will definitely remember for a while."

Hill said he had already participated in his usual victory celebration – his wife gave him a hug and big glass of milk to drink.

"Downed that right away and hugged her," he said.

"I had quite a bit of friends that were in my channel throughout the race that were spotting me, crew chiefing me throughout the race. I kind of got to chat with them. I am not surrounded by all my loved ones right now because everybody is trying to be safe. But I got a lot of phone calls, messages. I feel like the hero today."

Although Hill, who has 1,677 iRacing starts, essentially paces the field in iRacing virtual experience, in the real world, he competes for a smaller, low-budget team. He qualified for his first NASCAR Cup Series Daytona 500 only this February driving the No. 66 for Motorsports Business Management and finished 27th – his best showing in the four races NASCAR held before putting the regular season on hold as the world deals with the COVID-19 pandemic.

The opportunity to continue to compete – albeit virtually – against many of the same NASCAR Cup Series drivers – plus a



William Byron, driver of the #24 Axalta Chevrolet, pits during the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series Race - O'Reilly Auto Parts 125 at virtual Texas Motor Speedway on March 29, 2020 in Fort Worth, Texas. (Editors note: This image was computer generated in-game)



Timmy Hill does a burnout at virtual Texas Motor Speedway after taking home the victory.



Michael McDowell (No. 34) and Christopher Bell (No. 95) are involved in a wreck at Texas.



Ryan Blaney (No. 12) and Kyle Busch (No. 18) are involved in a wreck at virtual Texas Motor Speedway.

group of drivers from other NASCAR series that qualified for Sunday's race – has been a significant achievement for Hill – a sort of virtual victory for the real life underdog.

For example, Hill is competing in the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series with a 12-year old steering wheel attached to a desk with only a single viewing monitor to conduct his race – a stark difference from last week's inaugural eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational winner, Denny Hamlin who estimates he spent nearly \$40,000 on his elaborate simulator set-up which is high-end all the way – from its high tech race seat to the three monitors and pedal system.

Hill, on the other hand, estimates his wheel cost him \$300, it's mounted to a \$75 desk he got at a local office store. He sits in a

\$100 chair coordinating his race on a gaming computer that cost him about \$1,400 by his estimate. But, he noted, it's his primary laptop computer and he doesn't just use it for iRacing but for everything – from running his NASCAR Gander RV & Outdoors Series team to filling out a personal tax

return.

"For me personally the iRacing platform, it's kind of an equalizer in effect that the cars that we're driving on there, I'm in the same cars as everybody," Hill explained. "Most weekends, I'm not in that situation. I'm in a situation where I'm racing on 15 lap tires, have a motor that's 200 horsepower down, got a car that's probably five years old. I'm really kind of behind the eight ball as soon as we show up at the racetrack at times.

"To come into the server where everybody has the same cars, in this case even the same setup, everybody is on the same exact playing field, basically the driver conquers all in this situation.

"I had more experience coming into it because I've been on the service quite a bit longer. I knew that would be to my advantage. At the end of the day, these guys are all competitors, they're all turning hundreds of laps. They're all doing the best they can.

"For me to actually beat these guys on a level playing field, it really feels good for my driving talents. I look forward to the competition as it gets better in the coming weeks.

Certainly this second week of competition featured an even more robust level of performance – from fewer multi-car incidents, to fantastic racing up front. Byron, who famously helped earn his NASCAR opportunities through his excellence in iRacing won the pole position and showed the way for much of the race, which featured 10 leaders and 16 lead changes.

"Led most laps, got moved out of the way. We'll get him back next time! Thanks," Byron said of his afternoon on Twitter following the race.

Hill acknowledged that Byron may not have been too thrilled with the "bump-and-run" pass for the win, but that it was his only opportunity for victory – something he hoped the 22-year old Byron would understand in the coming days.

"I think the etiquette is similar to real life; basically you race people how they race you," Hill said of the Byron incident at the end of the race.

"In this situation, we've never really raced each other. In real life we're on two completely different levels of competition. So this is a unique situation where we were kind of competing for the win in the closing laps. I think that kind of changes the element and style of racing. For me it was a situation where I don't get the chance to win much on this big of a platform. I told myself, If I have a chance to win any race, NASCAR, short track level, if it came down to it, that's what I would do. It doesn't change because it was iRacing. That's what I would do in real life.

"Going forward, I'm sure William isn't happy about it. I'm sure he'll do the same back to me. Reverting back to what I said before, you race others how they race you. I'll probably get a lot of abuse going forward. I'll have to accept that. But that's in the future. I'm kind of living in the present and happy to get the win."

The win – on a nationally-televised NASCAR event – could be a game-changer for Hill; possibly attracting more sponsorship to either the Gander Truck team he owns or perhaps his NASCAR Cup Series car. The implications go

PRO RACING THIS WEEK

Racing News, Stats & Trivia

Last Week's Race: Timmy Hill won iRacing race at Texas

NASCAR's new normal resumed Sunday with another virtual eNASCAR event, the second in an iRacing Pro Invitational Series thrown together after the coronavirus pandemic stopped nearly all sports. Timmy Hill won the virtual race at Texas Motor Speedway, where a highlight came when Daniel Suarez was parked by iRacing officials for intentionally trying, but failing, to crash Ty Dillon. Hill is considered among the top competitors in iRacing, a subscription-based gaming platform. His virtual victory was his 674th in the game. Fox Sports again used its team of Mike Joy and Hall of Famer Jeff Gordon to call the race, which was aired both on Fox in some markets and nationwide on its cable channel. The first iRacing event last Sunday drew 903,000 viewers to Fox Sports 1 and was the most watched esports event in U.S. history, bettering the 770,000 viewers Mortal Combat drew to The CW in 2016. Those who tuned in watched a live video game of 35



NASCAR racers competing at an exact replica of Texas Motor Speedway. Fox was able to obtain feeds of drivers racing on simulators everywhere from their bedrooms, basements, garages and, in the case of last week's winner, Denny Hamlin's living room. With racing on hold and drivers desperate to give exposure to their teams and sponsors, Hill's virtual victory gave the NASCAR journeyman a rare live opportunity to thank his sponsors, the staple speech of any successful racer.

Top News Stories

Jimmie Johnson considering IndyCar/NASCAR double at Indianapolis Motor Speedway
NASCAR star Jimmie Johnson is hoping to do a modified version of 'The Double' by partaking of his first NTT IndyCar Series race during the July 4 weekend where NASCAR's Brickyard 400 will take to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway oval and the IndyCar Series will make use of the IMS road course. With ties to Chevrolet through Hendrick Motorsports, where he's won seven Cup titles, and to the Chevy-powered Arrow McLaren SP IndyCar team, Johnson was due to test a car for the first time in April prior to the coronavirus shutdown. He is keen to do the Saturday Indy Grand Prix followed by Sunday's 400-mile NASCAR event. "I think that would be an awesome opportunity," the retiring Californian told NBC Sports. IndyCar veteran Graham Rahal alerted Johnson to the newly combined IndyCar and NASCAR date via social media. "Clearly there's a lot of things to sort out, and I haven't even asked permission yet to pull it off," Johnson said of broaching the idea with Hendrick. "But I love the idea and am so thankful Graham brought it up because I would have probably missed it and reacted too late." It's believed the AMSP IndyCar outfit would be more than accommodating if Johnson is able to jump start his open-wheel career sooner than anticipated.

NASCAR Race Schedule News

There has not yet been an officially updated schedule released by NASCAR on when and how it plans on making up the seven (so far) postponed Cup Series races. Speaking after the decision was made to halt racing, NASCAR President Steve Phelps only offered that there is the intention to run all the races, and officials will weigh all options on how to do that. Options include racing mid-week, and doubleheaders. NASCAR is already scheduled

for a doubleheader weekend at Pocono Raceway in late June, with a Cup Series race held on Saturday and Sunday. Aric Almirola believes racing mid-week would resonate well with NASCAR fans. "Fans who worked all day can come home, eat dinner and then relax on the couch while we put on a show," said Almirola. There are whispers that NASCAR is leaning toward holding qualifying and racing in one day without any practice time.

2020 Standings

Cup Series Top Ten			Xfinity Series Top Ten		
Drivers	Points	Top 10s	Drivers	Points	Top 10s
1) Kevin Harvick	164	4	1) Harrison Burton	176	4
2) Joey Logano	163	2	2) Chase Briscoe	173	3
3) Chase Elliott	144	2	3) Austin Cindric	155	3
4) Alex Bowman	138	1	4) Brandon Jones	148	3
5) Jimmie Johnson	131	2	5) Ross Chastain	146	3
6) Ryan Blaney	123	1	6) Noah Gragson	143	3
7) Kyle Larson	121	3	7) Ryan Sieg	143	3
8) Aric Almirola	121	2	8) Justin Haley	140	3
9) Matt DiBenedetto	118	1	9) Justin Allgaier	138	1
10) Brad Keselowski	118	2	10) Michael Annett	119	1

Racing Trivia

Who is the only driver to successfully complete all 1,100 miles of the Indianapolis 500 and Coca-Cola 600 in the same day?

- a) Tony Stewart
- b) Robby Gordon
- c) John Andretti
- d) Kurt Busch

Answer: a) Tony Stewart

beyond the virtual dashboard.

"For me personally, I've been in this sport for 10 years, don't get talked about much. I feel like I can get the job done given an opportunity. I'm trying to showcase that as many times as I can.

"I really feel that I can drive at a high-level in tough equipment given that opportunity," Hill continued. "I don't know if that will come from this, but you never know. I kind of hold hope for that. We'll kind of see."

One thing for sure, Hill will receive an iconic memento of his work.

As he was completing the winner's press conference via conference call after the event, Texas Motor Speedway President Eddie Gossage offered a real – not virtual – winner's cowboy hat – the traditional celebration in the Fort Worth Victory Lane.

"Excellent," Hill said, when informed of the news. It was indeed an excellent day for Hill.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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

Take care of the Earth **RECYCLE**



CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

STATEPOINT CROSSWORD

THEME:
MYSTERIES
AND THRILLERS

ACROSS

1. Wire danger
6. Part of a circumference
9. Nashville's Keith
13. In a cold manner
14. Prefix for something revived
15. Paralyzing disease
16. Mulled wine
17. Egg cells
18. A do-nothing
19. "Alphabet Series" detective novels author
21. *It's close to midnight, and something evil's lurking in "
23. Second mo.
24. Fabricca Italiana Automobili Torino
25. Not don'ts
28. Popular Japanese soup
30. *Agatha Christie's famous sleuth
35. Wood sorrels
37. "Through" in text
39. Give sheep a haircut
40. Raise the roof
41. Wall or pedestal support
43. Cogito, ___ sum
44. Drink like a cat, two words
46. Be inclined
47. Commotions
48. Bewitch or beguile
50. Jack and Jill's water jug
52. Put to work
53. *James Patterson's "___ the Girls"

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69							70				71			
72							73				74			

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55. "Jack and the Beanstalk" Giant's disapproval
57. *Hitchcock classic
61. *Poe's "Tales of ___ and Imagination"
65. In the know
66. *Subject of Roswell's mystery
68. Cocoon dwellers
69. King Julien XIII of "Madagascar," e.g.
70. Bubble source
71. Possible allergic reaction
72. Gaelic tongue
73. Store posting, for short
74. Oceanic trenches
5. International ___ of Units
6. In a little while, old-fashioned
7. Once around
8. Raccoon's South American cousin
9. *The Demon Barber
10. Spanish earthen pot
11. Coffin stand
12. *New ___, setting of "The Alienist"
15. Michelangelo's famous Vatican statue and others like it, e.g.
20. Death reports, for short
22. Deli offering
24. Baby extractor
25. *Sherlock Holmes creator
26. Continental divide
27. Planktonic tunicate
29. *"Who ___ J.R.?"
31. Actress Perlman
32. "Lost" in Paris
33. Mar-a-___, pl.
34. Having a toothed margin
36. Undesirable location
38. Forearm bone
42. Enlighten
45. Slower
49. Oil drilling apparatus
51. Spoke with a speech defect
54. Make a murmuring sound
56. Chopin's composition
57. Wide river valley
58. Water carrier
59. L.A. footballers
60. *HBO's "___ Detective"
61. *Pamela Voorhees and Norma Bates, e.g.
62. D'Artagnan's sword
63. Stairway alternative
64. Those not opposed
67. *Remus Lupin's occasional body cover

DOWN

1. Google alternative
2. Maple genus
3. Capital on the Baltic Sea
4. Blindman's ___

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 CLINT BLACK - OCTOBER 22
 HOTEL CALIFORNIA - OCTOBER 16
 JORDAN FELIZ - TBD
 RAY ON MY MIND - SEPTEMBER 9

BOOTH BROTHERS



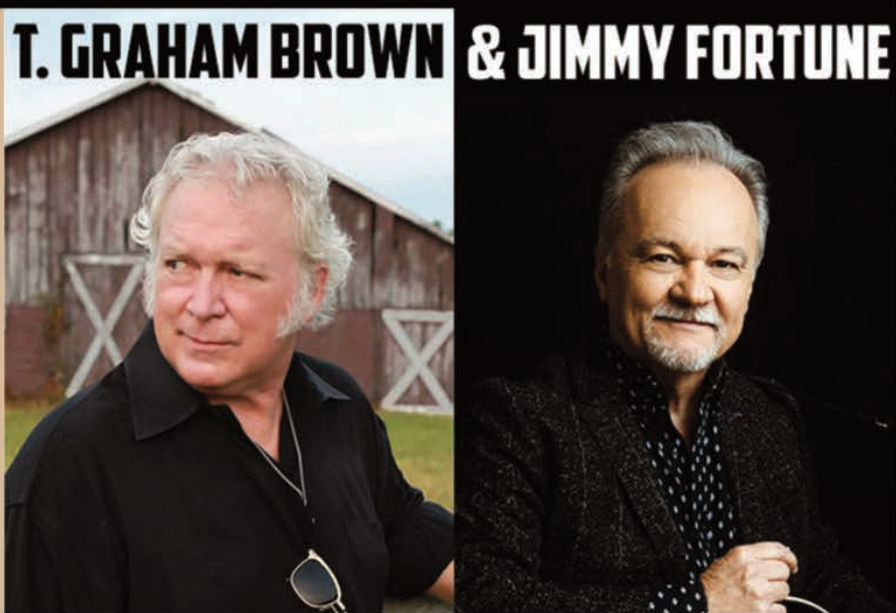
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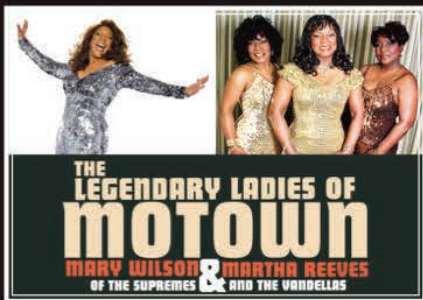


MAY 22



JUNE 13

UPCOMING SHOWS:



JUNE 19



JUNE 26



JUNE 27



JULY 3

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