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How refreshing to see. These ladies who used to meet at the senior center for dinner now visiting with each other on the square at least 6 feet apart chatting over a noon time meal. Left to right Barbara Hanak, Marsha Luczak, Linda Graves, Beverly Driscoll, Mary K. Barbour, Evelyn Helmick and Marsha Cobb. Photo by Vickie

Roland: Budget process 'very different' this year

Brittney Lofthouse – Contributing Writer

Since the Coronavirus pandemic first made its way to North Carolina, state and local governments have been working around the clock to implement preventative measures to sustain the infrastructure of the healthcare system and flatten the curve – local governments are now looking toward the future and how to help residents recover moving forward.

With retail businesses closed for weeks as part of Gov. Roy Cooper's executive order implemented in an attempt to prevent the spread of COVID-19, sales tax revenues are presumably down, meaning county governments will receive reduced funding from the state. With so many unknown factors, Macon County Manager Derek Roland told the board that the budgeting process for this year will be very different.

"There is going to be uncertainty," said Roland. "When you're in a recession and you're planning to come out of

See BUDGET page 5

Balmer notes changes in NYC's COVID-19 crisis

Brittney Lofthouse - Contributing Writer

Editor's note: Aubrey Balmer, a Family Nurse Practitioner has spent the last two weeks in New York serving on the frontlines of the Covid-19 crisis. The following chronicles her second week on the job.

Headlines around the country last week read "Queens leads NYC with more than 33,000 infections and 2,100 deaths of the Coronavirus." To put that into perspective, Queens is reporting about the same number of positive COVID-19 patients as Macon County has residents. Queens is the area of New York City that Franklin resident Aubrey Balmer was assigned when she arrived in the city as a health care worker.

Despite last week's headlines, Balmer said she is seeing improvements in the city.

"They're downsizing our facility to a 100-bed from 450 and are farming providers out into the hospitals," said Balmer. That's a good thing - case numbers are improving.

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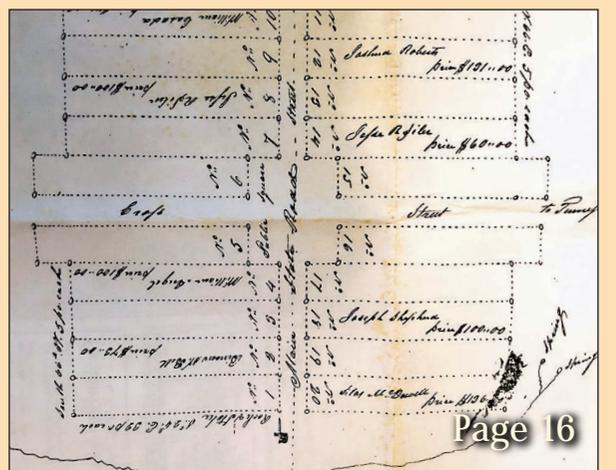
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Crawford Center still looking after its seniors



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Communités offering garden plots for rent



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Town of Franklin marks 200 years since its birth

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Why completing the 2020 Census is important to North Carolina

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The 2020 Census counts every person living in the United States and five U.S. territories.

The count is mandated by the Constitution and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. The 2020 Census counts the population in the United States and five U.S. territories (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands). Each home would have received an invitation to respond to a short questionnaire—online, by phone, or by mail—between March 12-20. The census provides critical data that lawmakers, business owners, teachers, and many others use to provide daily services, products, and support for the community. Every year, billions of dollars in federal funding go to hospitals, fire departments, schools, roads, and other resources based on census data.

Why the government needs your information

The results of the census determines the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives, and the data is used to draw congressional and state legislative districts.

It's also in the Constitution: Article 1, Section 2, mandates that the country conduct a count of its population once every 10 years. The 2020 Census will mark the 24th time that the country has counted its population since 1790.

Census results influence highway planning and construction, as well as grants for buses, subways, and other public transit systems.

Census results help determine how money is allocated for the Head Start program and for grants that support teachers and special education.

Census data helps communities respond to natural disasters and secure funding for hospitals and fire departments.

The list goes on, including programs to support rural areas, to restore wildlife, to prevent child abuse, to prepare for wild-

fires, and to provide housing assistance for older adults.

Over the next decade, lawmakers, business owners, and many others will use 2020 Census data to make critical decisions. The results will show where communities need new schools, new clinics, new roads, and more services for families, older adults, and children.

The results will also establish how hundreds of billions of dollars in federal funding are allocated to more than 100 programs, including Medicaid, Head Start, block grants for community mental health

There is still time to turn in your census. In light of the COVID-19 outbreak, the U.S. Census Bureau is adjusting 2020 Census operations in order to:

- Protect the health and safety of the American public and Census Bureau employees.
- Implement guidance from federal, state and local authorities.
- Ensure a complete and accurate count of all communities.

The Census Bureau temporarily suspended 2020 Census field data collection activities in March. Steps are already being

not be used against you by any government agency or court. Violating Title 13 is a federal crime, punishable by prison time and/or a fine of up to \$250,000.

The answers you provide are used only to produce statistics. Respondents are kept anonymous: The Census Bureau is not permitted to publicly release responses in any way that could identify respondents or anyone else in the home. No question regarding citizenship appears on the census.

Make a video, earn money

Census accelerate, an initiative within the innovation arm of the U.S. Census Bureau has launched its first-ever video prize competition to reward the most engaging, impactful, and informative videos about the 2020 Census – with a total of \$50,000 in cash prizes. The objective of the challenge is to use creative videos to reach hard-to-count communities.

This initiative calls for the most impactful, accurate, inspiring, funny, creative, factual and culturally relevant videos to educate the masses about the 2020 Census and mobilize communities to respond, reminding them that it's not too late to self-respond online, by phone or by mail. The challenge will focus on

short-format video content-30 seconds to 3 minutes in length-for social, platforms like YouTube.

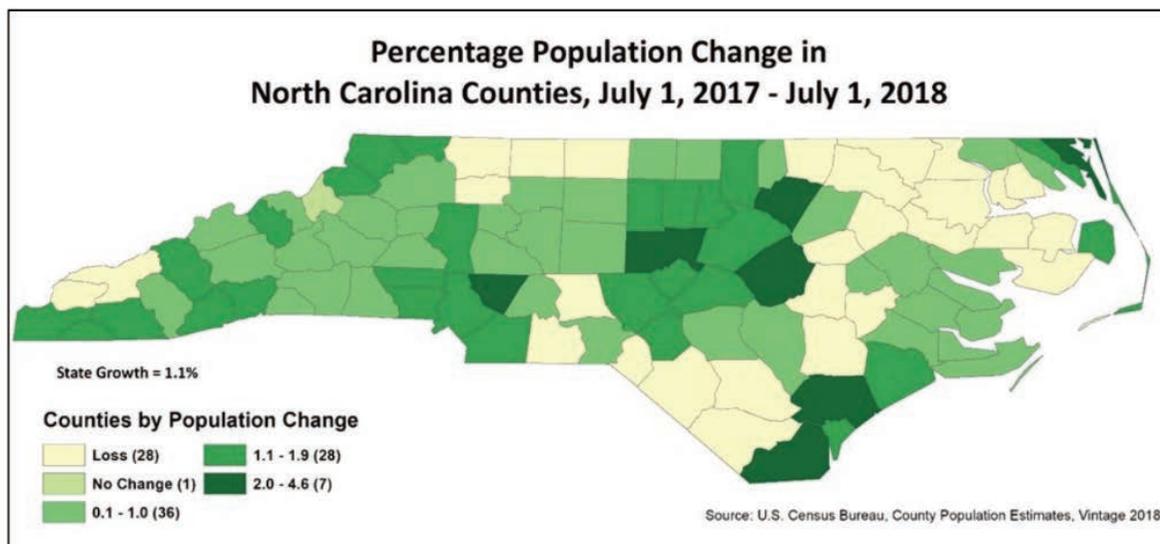
The U.S. Census Bureau will be awarding a total of \$50,000 for video submissions that can encourage hard to count communities to fill out the 2020 Census – \$30,000 - Grand Prize; \$10,000 – Runner Up Prize; and a \$10,000 – Student Prize.

Submissions close on May 7 at 11:59 pm EDT. Winners will be announced in early June.

Go to, [GetOutTheCountVideoChallenge](https://www.getoutthecountvideochallenge.com), for specific details on how to enter.

Student applicants can still be considered for the grand prize or runner up prize.

Students under the age of 18 are permitted to apply for the Prize Challenge with a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. Email census.accelerate@census.gov to request this form.



services, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, also known as SNAP.

North Carolina lags behind in reporting

The State of North Carolina does not have dedicated funds to support the 2020 Census operation. Currently, North Carolina is lagging in Census participation. As of this week, N.C. ranks 38th nationally for self-response participation with 46.6 percent of households responding. More than ever, North Carolina depends on an accurate count to receive its share of \$1.5 trillion in federal funding that will be critical for programs, services and infrastructure as the state recovers from COVID-19. In response to COVID-19 the Census operation has been extended to Oct. 31, 2020, which means that the state gets one more shot to make an investment in North Carolina's economic future for the next 10 years.

taken to reactivate field offices beginning June 1, in preparation for the resumption of field data collection operations as quickly as possible following June 1. This means that residents still have time to get their census data in by mail or online before the deadline of Oct. 31, to submit their data. Field operations will resume in June and operations employees will be going door to door to help anyone who needs assistance filling out the census.

Confidentiality is key

The Census Bureau is bound by Title 13 of the U.S. Code to keep collected information confidential. Under Title 13, the Census Bureau cannot release any identifiable information about you, your home, or your business, even to law enforcement agencies. The law ensures that your private data is protected and that your answers can-

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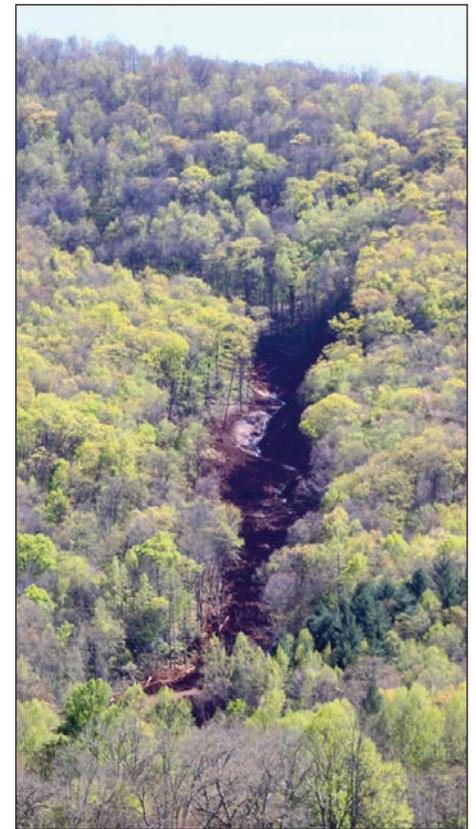
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Structure untouched by massive mudslide



The storm that swept through Western North Carolina Sunday, April 12, resulted in a total of 13 debris flows or significant slope failures. The old Franklin Lumber and Dry Kiln off Maxwell House Road narrowly escaped damage as the mudslide estimated to be 4,000 feet in length stopped just short of the door of the building. Officials have inferred that the debris flow may have been greater than the mudslide that caused the Peek's Creek disaster that claimed five lives in September 2004.

Photos by Betsy Gooder



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BALMER

Continued from page 1

person you will be from here on forward. A strong, wholesome character doesn't just appear in a person, it is developed. Your future is intentional."

Choosing to let her experiences shape her for the better – Balmer thinks about her son back at home, with whom she video chats, and how he would view the kindness of those surrounding her.

"What I can tell you is my son would be so impacted by the people around me," said Balmer. "People in the neighborhoods near a few of our hotels have taken rotations bringing hot food or random toiletries to the hotels for healthcare workers. The city breaks out in cheer for healthcare workers every night at 7 p.m. High rises all over the city are full of children watching a city support healing in their communities."

In terms of personal impact, Balmer said she is processing everything and everyone, all of which impacts her.

"On a personal level I'm next to people who left everything to risk whatever may come," said Balmer. "One NP decided to go into medicine after she lost a mother to AIDS after it was accidentally contracted from a blood transfusion. She has taken on caring for our patients that are HIV positive. We have hands holding the hands of people who were put on



Balmer video chats with her son, Breck.



Family Nurse Practitioner Aubrey Balmer (far right) and her coworkers don home-sewn masks to work in New York City.

dying and facilitating Skype calls to family members even though it was recommended that no one go in the room unless absolutely necessary, but they chose to do their best to make a death one of dignity and peace. Each one of us has a trajectory we are feeding into."

After two weeks of long 12-hour days, with no days off in between shifts, Balmer hopes to explore those following her journey to ignite change...for the better.

"In a time when rationale says to hold back and conserve, I'm encouraging you to wow the people in your life. Be generous, whether that's financially to people in need, or offering comfort and hope in a time of anxiety, or with skills: cooking for elderly or sewing masks. COVID is significant, but not compared to how you allow it to shape you," she said. "I'm overwhelmed and humbled by the love and support of the Macon County community - letters, messages, calls, prayers. I feel so blessed, in tears at times. My hope is that you'd take that energy and your resources and put that into those around you. This crisis and your response in it feed into what will one day just be a legacy."

BUDGET

Continued from page 1

that recession, there are some trends you can look to and some economic activity that you can look at and be able to project revenues off of. This is totally different. We don't know how quickly the economy is going to start back, we don't know what will be allowed to start back, and we don't know when it will start back. All of these things tie in to a budget process and revenue forecasting that is extremely uncertain."

Roland is working with department heads to address the typical needs and services provided by the county as well as developing a plan to fund anticipated needs that arise as a result of the pandemic.

"We will see a very conservative approach and we will have something that, whether it's one month, three months, six months, or a year, when it's over, we won't be in a situation where we've overestimated our revenues," said Roland. "I promise. So, when forecasting these revenues, we're going to be as conservative as we can and budget for a worst-case scenario for this budget process."

The Town of Franklin is in the same boat as the county

and according to Town Manager Summer Woodard, the town is crafting a budget to allow the town to prepare for what is to come.

"Our revenue's down about 30 percent and we anticipate that to continue to drop," said Woodard. "However, we've had some additional revenue come in as far as water taps and utility fees, which could offset some of that. The future is still unsure so as we go into this budget, the staff has been very mindful of how we're going to end this year and really looking at expenditures and how we're going to address that in the new budget."

With agencies such as the League of Municipalities providing information and planning predictions, Woodard said the town is moving forward with the budget planning process.

"We told our department heads this first quarter going into this new budget, it's going to be challenging for everyone across the state and the U.S. Again, these numbers are from a conservative budget standpoint, but please keep in mind that, given the current crisis, they could change. They're (The League of Municipalities) also saying to be even more conservative with the sales tax. Statewide, they're considering at least a 25 percent decrease."

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Crawford Center still taking care of its seniors despite restrictions

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The Crawford Senior Center building may be closed to visitors and participants due to the pandemic, but many activities are still going on, albeit, through various mediums. The majority of the staff is still working but many of the volunteers are not presently volunteering, due to safety concerns.

“We are packaging and distributing meals through our home delivered meal program and congregate drive-through meals,” explains Senior Center director Jennifer Hollifield. “The community resource center is still assisting the community with phoned in needs. The Adult Day Program is in daily phone contact with all their participants. SHIIP (senior health insurance program) staff is still answering phone call questions.

Some exercise classes, such as yoga and Tai Chi, are being recorded and put on our Facebook page.”

The Crawford Senior Center Facebook page is experiencing an increased amount of followers posting a variety of things such as activities, videos and photos for their participants.

The center is serving hot meals on weekdays including drive-through and home delivery. They are serving around 150 hot and nutritionally balanced lunches each day, to seniors. Staff is also calling participants daily to check up on them.

“We all miss getting to spend time with our participants,” said Hollifield.

If a senior is in need of a hot meal, all they have to do is call the center at (828)349-2058 to register for free daily meals. The drive



Senior Center employee Amy Ainsworth places food into a waiting vehicle, while Macon county employee Coleman Buchanan holds the door for her.



Senior center workers wait to load vehicles with meals for pickup or to be delivered to seniors in the community. Photo by Diane Peltz

through congregate meals are being distributed at the Senior Center at 108 Wayah St. daily from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Troy Palmer is a senior citizen and center participant who is on the advisory committee. Palmer moved to Franklin about four years ago. He recalls how many seniors partake in the lunches at the center on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays when they also play bingo. Small prizes are given out to winners, such as mugs or other homemade gifts which are donated by participants.

“The meals are by far very good,” says Palmer.

Most of all the participants enjoy the socialization they get from being at the center. “I’m lucky enough to be able to drive and

I have my dog to keep me company. Many seniors don’t drive and they have no family close by, so they are missing the social aspect that the center usually offers.”

He says he has spoken to about half-dozen of the participants and they are basically doing okay.

Under the circumstances the Senior Center is doing everything they can to stay in touch with the members and to help them remain active through Facebook videos such as tai chi and yoga. One challenge for seniors is the use of technology. Not all seniors are able to log onto Facebook and some don’t have smart phones, but the daily phone calls are still very much appreciated by the folks who can’t participate digitally.

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NC schools using 3D printers to make protective face shields

Kelly Hinchliffe
Carolina Public Press

While schools across North Carolina sit empty due to the new coronavirus outbreak, some staff members are using classroom technology to produce face shields for health care workers who are battling COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus.

Buncombe County Schools and Western Carolina University are using their 3D printers to make the much needed protective equipment.

“We did a trial run and ran that by the (emergency management officials) to make sure we had their approval before going into larger production,” said Barry Pace, Buncombe County Schools director of technology.

Buncombe school leaders gathered all of their 3D printers — 50 in total — and brought them to Nesbitt Discovery Academy in Asheville, where staff members have been printing frames for the protective face shields.

The process takes a few hours per shield. Staffers attach sheets of clear plastic material, glue the 3D-printed frames in place, add foam barriers on top of the frames and seal the seams with electrical tape.

Taylor Baldwin, Buncombe’s career and technical education director, made the prototypes. Buncombe officials also said the Asheville City Schools also helped print some of the headband pieces using Baldwin’s design on their 3D printers.



Laurel Bates, the assistant to the assistant superintendent for auxiliary services with Buncombe County Schools, works with protective equipment the schools have created using 3D printers.

Photo courtesy of Buncombe County Schools

“(I) needed to try six different times before the product was ready,” Baldwin said in a story posted on the school system’s website. “It doesn’t get much more ‘real-life’ than that. And I’m not even an engineer. I’m using Autodesk Inventor, the same soft-

ware our students use. I hope the kids can see the power of technology combined with autonomy and innovative thinking.”

At Western Carolina University, faculty, staff and students in the College of Engineering and Technology have been using 3D printers in the college’s Rapid Center to de-

velop visors for face shields.

Their work is part of a nationwide initiative by Stratasys, manufacturer of several 3D printers used by WCU’s Rapid Center, according to the university. The company has issued a nationwide call to businesses, industries and universities to use their 3D printers to make face shields for the medical community.

“Our maximum capacity is about 120 per week when we run 24/7,” Patrick Gardner, director of WCU’s Rapid Center, said in a statement. “That’s not a huge number compared to Ford, Toyota and some of the other national manufacturers involved in this effort, but each one is a precious commodity.”

WCU is shipping its face shields to Stratasys in quantities of 100 for collection and distribution to hospitals, emergency responders and others on the front lines, according to the school.

In a separate project, emergency services personnel from another county have asked WCU to produce more personal protective equipment for them as well.

“It looks like we may be able to use 3D printers to build custom connectors for their emergency gear, which are in very short supply,” Gardner said. “They are shipping samples to us, and we will evaluate to see how we can help. If we can assist them, we may be able to extend that service to other counties.”

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Optometric Society cautions against avoidable ER visits for eye care during ongoing pandemic

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to rapidly evolve and place unprecedented strain on the U.S. healthcare system, the North Carolina Optometric Society (NCOS), along with the American Optometric Association (AOA), encourages patients with urgent or emergency eye care needs to contact their local doctor of optometry before seeking treatment in emergency rooms. These actions will help reduce burdens on emergency departments and combat further community spread and a wider outbreak.

"Most eye-related conditions reported in local emergency departments may be treatable in an outpatient optometry office or clinic," says NCOS President Scott Athans, O.D. "When it comes to eye-related emergencies, patients should first contact their local doctor of optometry for guidance and possible treatment before heading to an already-overwhelmed hospital emergency room."

Urgent or emergent care needs may include those related to systemic and ocular disease or injury where there is significant risk of permanent vision loss because of any postponement of care. It also may include visits where patients are experiencing discomfort, blurry vision, changes in vision, or other symptoms that significantly impact or interfere with day-to-day activities.

As the coronavirus pandemic continues, many emergency rooms throughout the U.S. are triaging only the most urgent,

life-threatening cases. Unnecessary and non-emergency visits to the ER can not only put an individual at risk of transmission, but also take away supplies and resources from more critically ill patients who have no other treatment options.

While optometry offices have restricted their in-person visits and procedures to urgent and emergency patients only for the next several weeks, following guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), doctors of optometry will assess the level of care the patient needs—whether it's telehealth or urgent care that requires a visit to the doctor's office or ER—to ensure they get the appropriate treatment while allowing hospitals to make the best use of their available resources.

"Research shows treating eye emergencies at eye doctors' offices can potentially divert 1.4 million patients away from ERs each year," says AOA President Barbara L. Horn, O.D. "Easing the burden on local emergency departments and conserving much-needed resources is especially critical at this time, and as frontline providers, doctors of optometry are rising to the challenge by assuring continued access to essential health care nationwide."

Patients can find a local NCOS doctor of optometry at NCEyes.org. For coronavirus-related updates, visit aoa.org/coronavirus.

NCDHHS implements new mental health supports for North Carolinians, including health care workers and their families

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services has two new mental health resources to support North Carolinians throughout the COVID-19 crisis.

The Hope4NC Helpline (1-855-587-3463) connects North Carolinians to additional mental health and resilience supports that help them cope and build resilience during times of crisis. As part of the state's recent hurricane recovery efforts it served over 4,400 people in the most impacted counties, and now it is being made available to everyone in North Carolina's 100 counties during the COVID-19 crisis. This initiative is in partnership with all seven of the state's LME/MCOs and REAL Crisis Intervention Inc. in Greenville. Hope4NC is now available 24 hours per day, seven days a week to speak to a live person.

The Hope4Healers Helpline (919-226-2002) is a new initiative in partnership with the North Carolina Psychological Foundation. It provides mental health and resilience supports for health care professionals, emergency medical specialists, first responders, other staff who work in health care settings and their families throughout the state who are experiencing stress from being on the front lines of the state's COVID-19 response. Hope4Healers is also available 24 hours per day, seven days a week for people to reach out for support; they will be contacted quickly by a licensed mental health professional for follow-up.

"These are challenging and uncertain times for everyone.

We want to connect people to the mental health and resilience supports that they may need during this crisis to alleviate some of the anxiety and stressors that they are feeling," said NCDHHS Deputy Secretary for Behavioral Health and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Kody Kinsley.

Hope4Healers is also recruiting and onboarding additional licensed behavioral health professional volunteers to support this helpline. Volunteers must register through the NC Training, Exercise, and Response Management System (NC TERMS). That system can be accessed through: www.terms.ncem.org/TRS.

Volunteers must follow these steps:

- Create a personal profile in NC TERMS
- In NC TERMS, click "Join a Team;" select "ESF8 – Public Health and Medical Services;" then select "COVID 19 Medical Response Volunteers."
- From there select "Mental/Behavioral Health Personnel" and click "Request Membership."
- Volunteers will be contacted for follow-up once their licenses have been validated.

Additional resources and information on staying physically and mentally healthy can be found on the "Managing your Overall Health" page on the NCHHS COVID-19 website at ncdhhs.gov/coronavirus; and at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at cdc.gov/coronavirus.

Got a tooth ache during Covid-19? Here's when to call your dentist

One of the many consequences of the coronavirus pandemic involves the limitations imposed on dental work.

The American Dental Association (ADA), realizing that close proximity during office visits between dentists, their team, and patients could risk transmission of the virus, recommended that all dentistry practices close for everything except emergencies through April 30.

That means postponing routine checkups/exams, elective procedures and non-urgent dental visits. But it also raises questions about what constitutes a dental emergency during the pandemic, and how dentists are viewing this narrower but important focus of their practice.

"We all have so much concern for everyone's health during this difficult time," says Dr. Rick Mars (www.dentalcaregroup.net), a general dentist and the author of *The Big Smile: The Principles of Modern Dentistry – for Dentists and Patients*.

"You never want your patients to put off checkups or procedures that enhance their oral care, but in the interest of public health, the best things we can do are follow the proper guidelines, encourage our patients to practice good oral hygiene during the pandemic, and be grateful we can treat the numerous kinds of emergencies that can't wait.

"Allowing dentists to focus on patients with emergencies significantly reduces the chances of patients ending in hospital emergency rooms, which would result in further overburdening of those facilities. We're mindful of many healthcare facilities struggling to treat the number of COVID-19 cases, and the essential need to preserve personal protective equipment for the doctors and nurses at the front lines."

The ADA defines a dental emergency as those situations that "are potentially life threatening and require immediate treatment to stop ongoing tissue bleeding or to alleviate severe pain or infection." The list includes:

- Uncontrolled bleeding
 - Facial cellulitis
 - Swelling or trauma to facial bones that might compromise breathing
 - Abscess or localized bacterial infection resulting in pain and swelling
 - Severe cavities causing pain
 - Pain in a tooth or in the jaw bone
 - Painful dentures that need adjusting
 - Replacement of temporary fillings
 - Conditions like dry socket that need dressing changes
 - Adjustments for orthodontic appliances that are creating open wounds
 - A gum infection that includes swelling or pain
 - Broken or knocked-out teeth
- Non-emergency dental procedures as defined by the ADA include:
- Initial or periodic oral examinations and recall visits, including routine radiographs
 - Routine dental cleaning and other preventive therapies
 - Orthodontic procedures other than those to address acute issues (e.g., pain, infection, trauma)
 - Extraction of asymptomatic teeth
 - Restorative dentistry including treatment of asymptomatic lesions
 - Aesthetic dental procedures.

"This is an unprecedented time for all of us, but it's very important to control the things we can right now," Dr. Mars says. "Oral hygiene is always important, and with so many staying home it's the right time to practice and continue good oral habits – and to avoid emergency dental work.

"Brushing and flossing consistently make a big difference, especially when you can't see your dentist for regular checkups and cleanings. And look at it this way, you won't have to lie the next time you do see your dentist and hygienist and they ask if you floss."

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Special enrollment periods opening up for ACA health insurance marketplace

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the loss of jobs, income and health insurance coverage for millions. Some life changes, such as losing health insurance through your job, may qualify consumers for Special Enrollment Periods through the Affordable Care Act (ACA) health insurance marketplace at www.healthcare.gov. But the time to report that life change and sign up is limited – only 60 days. Pisgah Legal Services is offering free assistance to help people in Western North Carolina (WNC) review their options and get signed up for health insurance during these uncertain times.

Shannon Cornelius, Pisgah Legal's Health Justice Program Director, says, "Outside the yearly ACA Open Enrollment Period, there are times when you can sign up for health insurance. You may qualify for a Special Enrollment Period if you've had certain life events, including: losing health coverage through your job; loss of Medicaid or Medicare; moving; getting married; having a baby; aging out of your parents' health insurance plan; securing permanent legal status or citizenship; or being released from incarceration."

She continues, "Pisgah Legal Services, and our nonprofit partners, offer free, unbiased guidance with trained assisters so that folks in Western North Carolina can get the support they need to understand their options for health insurance and maintain it throughout the year, and especially now during the COVID-19 outbreak when so many people have been impacted."

Appointments can be made online at www.pisgahlegal.org or by calling (828) 210-3404. For the safety of consumers, staff and volunteers, all appointments are currently being conducted by phone.

Cornelius says, "Many people qualify for financial assistance to make their plans affordable on the ACA Marketplace but they just need a little help calculating their household income. We can help them sort out the details to get coverage before the 60-day window period closes."

Financial assistance is still available to those who qualify. Last year, more than 90 percent of North Carolinians who enrolled for coverage through the Health Insurance Marketplace received financial assistance to make their plans more afford-

able. Subsidies are based on household taxable income and may be difficult for consumers to calculate themselves. Pisgah Legal can help with this process and can factor in unemployment benefits if needed. Pisgah Legal can also answer questions about other coverage, such as COBRA, and help people apply for Medicaid and CHIP.

Pisgah Legal Services (PLS) and other Enrollment Partners of WNC participating organizations give local residents free, unbiased health insurance information and enrollment assistance in the NC Health Insurance Marketplace. These organizations include: Council on Aging of Buncombe County, Legal Aid of North Carolina, Mountain Projects, Inc., Western Carolina Medical Society, and Pisgah Legal Services.

The ACA - also known as Obamacare - is the law that ensures access to quality, affordable health insurance on the Health Insurance Marketplace. With these plans, consumers are protected and:

- Can't be denied coverage for a pre-existing health condition and can't be dropped for getting sick;
- Insurers can't charge higher premiums to women; and
- Insurers can't sell substandard plans that don't pay for essential health care benefits.

Since 1978, nonprofit Pisgah Legal Services has provided free civil legal aid to help people with low incomes seek justice and meet their basic needs including preventing homelessness, stopping domestic violence and securing health care. Pisgah Legal Services provides a broad array of free, civil legal services in 11 WNC counties, and offers health and immigration law services in 18 counties. Last year PLS served more than 18,000 people across the mountain region.

PLS has offices in Asheville, Burnsville, Brevard, Hendersonville, Marshall, and Rutherfordton and has added staff in 2020 to serve the people of the Plateau and those living throughout Macon and Jackson counties. Pisgah Legal has 32 attorneys on staff and relies heavily on the pro bono legal services of more than 300 volunteer attorneys.

Pisgah Legal Services continues to serve clients during the COVID-19 outbreak. For more information, visit www.pisgahlegal.org.

EBT program expands to feed families in crisis

North Carolina has been approved for the new Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program, to help families purchase food for children impacted by school closings due to COVID-19. NCDHHS is working to operationalize the program and families will receive this benefit in coming weeks.

"So many families are in need, especially with so many out of work right now. This approval helps people get assistance faster to feed their families," said Gov. Roy Cooper.

The program provides a benefit on an EBT card to North Carolina families whose children are eligible for free and reduced lunch at school. Families will receive \$250 in P-EBT benefits per child, provided in two installments, with the possibility of an additional benefit if North Carolina schools are closed beyond May 15. Families will be able to use the P-EBT benefit to purchase food items at EBT authorized retailers, including most major grocery stores.

Families will not need to apply for the P-EBT program. P-EBT eligible families already receiving Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) benefits will receive an additional benefit on their existing EBT card. P-EBT eligible families not already enrolled in FNS will be mailed a new EBT card in the next few weeks. Families who receive a new EBT card will receive a letter from DHHS in the mail explaining how to activate and use their card.

"The P-EBT program will provide extra help buying groceries for the families of the more than 800,000 children who normally receive free and reduced lunch at school," said NC Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Mandy Cohen, M.D.

North Carolina is one of the first four states to receive federal approval from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) to provide P-EBT benefits, which are entirely federally funded.

The new P-EBT program is in addition to other services families may be participating in. As of March 30, 2020, all families that receive Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) will receive the maximum amount allowed for March and April 2020 for their household size. Families are encouraged to continue utilizing community feeding programs.

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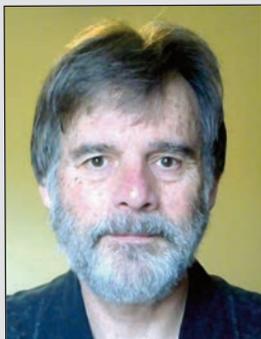
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Missing: Common sense

George Hasara – Columnist



George Hasara

By now, we all know about the routine of washing our hands, not touching our face, anti-social distancing of the magical six feet, and, of course, the new golden rule of hunkering down in our abode waiting for permission to leave. Above it all is the incessant drone of “Stay home. Stay safe. Save lives,” or some other variation of creepy Orwellian groupthink. Yep, that’s the plan. Wash, rinse, repeat, until told otherwise.

Curiously, the common-sense advice of getting sunshine has been absent from the Coronageddon health directives. This is strange because it’s important to get outside into the sunlight and fresh air, to exercise and soak in the rays that convert into immune-boosting vitamin D. While this advice might be labeled by some as tin-foiled inspired pseudo-science, one need go no further for collaboration than our own Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In an article titled “Are There Benefits to Spending Time Outdoors?” the CDC writes, “Spending time outdoors can improve overall health and wellness. The outdoors offers many opportunities to be physically active. Time outdoors may also promote mental health and stress reduction ... Ultraviolet (UV) rays from the sun can stimulate the production of vitamin D in the skin. Having little or no sun exposure may put a person at risk for low levels of vitamin D.”

I’ve combed through health literature but I can’t find recommendations that specifically list sunlight as a safeguard against the pandemic. After all, shouldn’t sunshine be promoted if our health was really the concern? Unfortunately, the diktats are designed to drive us inside with local, state and national parks being placed off-limits. People have been arrested for paddleboarding in the ocean, sunbathing on a deserted beach, and playing catch with their child in an empty park. Insanity.

Okay, so why isn’t the “sunshine option” championed by our minders in regards to COVID-19? Unlike the free market, bureaucracy tends to act in lockstep, calibrating its decisions and actions with what other bureaucracies are doing. This is hardly a prime environment for innovation. Our local health department for instance, is not going to say anything that is outside the accepted governmental norm. Even the simple and safe recommendation of getting more sunlight for COVID-19 would cause

See HASARA page 11

Letters to the Editor

The U.S. is collapsing

A letter by David Snell in the April 16, 2020, issue of *The Macon County News* noted some destructive changes that have occurred in our society over the past several decades. The collapse of complex societies has been studied. I particularly like J. A. Tainter's "The Collapse of Complex Societies." He identifies several characteristics of collapsing societies. All of his characteristics are present today in the U.S.

Among the characteristics are: (1) The number and severity of management crises at the Federal level has increased which indicates very poor management. (2) Since 1970 and as a result of JFK's and LBJ's "great society," class conflict is increasing as measured by the ratio of the income of the top 90th percentile versus the income of the bottom 10th percentile. Because the "rich" are fewer in number and number is very important in determining the national government, the Federal government adopts a tax-the-successful-people policy that is destructive. (3) The Federal investment in coercion (IRS, FBI, DEA, homeland security, etc.) is increasing. (4) Successful people and their money are leaving the tax structure of the U.S. (5) The accompanying jobs are flowing overseas. (6) Secession movements in several states are gaining strength. (7) Both mandated costs and direct taxes are increasing without a corresponding return [called "declining marginal returns" by Tainter]. (8) Undeclared, overseas wars are being fought without a way to repay the costs [called "unproductive war."]. (9) The requirements for security during war are forcing restrictions in openness and freedom that reduces tolerance and that benefits those in power. (10) The Federal government's ability to solve problems is rapidly declining; and (11) Great social pressure exists to reason from accepted postulates such as "a big government is better" and such as interference in another's affairs is acceptable.

The availability of food partially depends on the climate. Forecasting climate is a very complex task. If the climate changes to long-term drought, the climate cools, or the global warming folks are successful, the food availability may no longer sustain the population. Such a strain frequently does cause collapse.

The good news for us is that a political society may adjust rather than collapse. Therefore, Donald Trump was elected by those who were tired of the declining nature of the U.S. Parents could no longer hope their children would have a better life than they had. Trump is restoring hope to these parents. Trump has been correcting Tainter's noted trends.

But it seems the populous is electing Democrats that are supporting a socialist agenda that is the trend of the

last 50 years. Now we are approaching a crossroad. The Republic of the Constitution is being elected by a majority of voters who do not have experience dealing with the trials and tribulations of the world or nature. The political response of previous civilizations (notably Rome) has been to elect an Emperor. If the Democrats continue to press the reasons for collapse, an Emperor may be in our future.

John Hodge – Franklin, N.C.

States with democratic governors short on supplies

Trump is on a real campaign, and all for free on TV every nite, telling how great he is, and what a great job he's doing. He's done more than any other country has done. He gets so excited he can hardly talk, telling how happy he is. All the time a virus is sweeping across our country an killing people. A deadly virus that took him a few months to realize it wasn't a hoax. He's far more concerned about his economy, than trying to save lives. Can you put a price on your kids or family? He got by using the holdup on U.S. military aid to Ukraine, to try an get all the dirt on Joe Bidens son, now he's promising supplies to democratic governors, by telling nice things about him. Some states that have a democratic governor have had trouble getting supplies from the strategic National stockpile, the emergency supply of mask and drugs. Some reason Mass. got 17 percent of its order, an Maine only got 5 percent. Then theres Fla. where Trump lives and a Republican governer, There request in early March was 430,000 surgical mask, 180,000 N95 respirators, was delivered in full with in 3 days. A second identical shipment arrived just over a wk. later. He has really devided our country. German officials accused Trump of trying to poach Cure Vac scientists and their intellectual property for the exclusive use of the U.S. Americans used to stand up an be a proud American, an would not let anyone keep slapping them in the face, tell him what a great person he is. He will break you down to nothing. Mickey Mouse could do a better job, taking care of the country. Keep safe.

Kathy Whitley – Franklin, N.C.

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Constitutional rights being shredded before our eyes

Remember that time Daniel was told not to pray: His friends told him it would be dangerous to keep praying and he was supposed to respect the king. So, instead he compromised and went into his inner closet to pray?

Remember that time Esther had the opportunity to save her entire people but Mordechai reminded her that it would be disrespectful to the king and would be dangerous to even try, so instead she went and locked herself in her room and just asked God to go speak to the king?

Remember that time Shadraq, Meshaq, and Abednego were told they had to bow to the king and when they realized how disrespectful and dangerous it would be not to, they decided to just bow and pray together later in private?

Remember when Daniel was told he had to eat the King's meat in violation of his faith and his friends told him to quit being a troublemaker and to save his life to fight later so he did?

Remember how the disciples were whipped and told by the authorities to quit talking about Jesus in public so they went back to fishing and tax collecting, trusting that God was sovereign and must be working in another way?

Remember when Abraham was going up the mountain with his son to sacrifice him when he realized how stupid and unwise it all was and was home by dinner?

Remember when they arrested Paul and were beating him and he thought, "I don't want to cause any trouble for these guys, I better not tell them I am a Roman. I'll take my beating and call it a day. No need to talk to the governor."

Yeah, me neither.

Faith without works is a dead faith, Church. If you aren't acting out of faith right now with the virus problem, you need to repent. If the church is only about the informational model the government just reduced it to with its unconstitutional mandates, then what is the point in going? After all, information is everywhere. We need community. We need Christ at the center of our lives esp. in times of crisis. Do not trust the government or lying media. America has forsaken God's command to respect our governing authorities. When I say governing authorities, I am not talking about corrupt leaders. I am talking about Articles 1-7 of the Constitution and its 27 Amendments. We sit idly by while totalitarians, controlled by globalists, shred it before our eyes. And, we do it in the sanctimonious name of pursuing peace and security.

Jim Gaston – Franklin, N.C.

Timeline researched on COVID-19 response

As I read the April 16 edition, I was pleasantly surprised to see my name in a letter to the editor. To the letter writer, thank you for reading and responding to my letter published April 9. It is important to expose ourselves to views that don't align with our own views, even if we vehemently disagree with the those views. Our own worldview can evolve only if we expose ourselves to the world views of our neighbors and colleagues.

I have researched some of the assertions made in the April 16 letter, here are my findings:

On the whitehouse.gov website I found the January 31 proclamation "... on Suspension of Entry as Immigrants and Nonimmigrants of Persons who Pose a Risk of Transmitting 2019 Novel Coronavirus." That proclamation called for limiting alien entry to the U.S. originating from China. Since that proclamation and until April 1, over 40,000 people have travelled from China to the U.S. Over 400,000 people have arrived in the United States on direct flights from China since Jan. 1.

Eight hundred Americans flown on five charter flights from Wuhan, China to the U.S. were force quarantined by the U.S. military for two weeks. All other people traveling

from elsewhere in China to the U.S. were told to self-quarantine at home for two weeks.

By early April, virologists had read the virus genome history and have determined the infections in New York City (NYC) came primarily from travelers from China transiting at airports in the EU [European Union], which helps explain why NYC, with two major international airports, took the brunt of infections.

The WHO [World Health Organization] declared a state of emergency on Jan. 30. According to whitehouse.gov, a U.S. state of emergency proclamation was made on March 13. From the Jan. 31 travel ban to the proclaimed national emergency on March 13, the White House made no other proclamations of any other public health emergencies or public health actions. The CDC was unilaterally pursuing test kit development in this time period, Covid-19 task force members were named, and the vice-president hosted a kick-off conference call with U.S. governors.

After Jan. 31, there were no calls made by the White House to prepare the country for the onslaught of the virus. No task force assessed hospital and emergency services readiness. No survey was made of the available PPE, ventilators, hospital beds, or medical staff.

As far as the Obama administration's response to the N1H1 virus, the Obama administration began addressing the H1N1 virus as the disease emerged early in April 2009. A public health emergency was declared on April 26, 2009, when there were approximately 20 deaths confirmed. The administration renewed this declaration twice in the ensuing months before declaring a national emergency in October 2009. Eventually, 20,000 people were infected and one thousand people died, before three billion vaccine doses were delivered in November 2009.

As I write this, in just 10 weeks, Covid-19 has infected 765,914 Americans, killed 41,124.

John Barry – Franklin, N.C.

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HASARA

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controversy because it represents stepping outside of the conformity box. After all, if people are encouraged to enjoy the outdoors, being the social creatures that we are, who knows what that might lead to?

Nevertheless, more and more people are getting outside, walking, running and exercising without waiting for permission slips from the authorities. Even those who view the virus far more seriously than I do, are getting out and about, making this particular health-related decision on their own, and on their own terms. It's a positive sign to see people being pro-active with possibly just a hint of defiance as well. "Get out of the house. Meet some people. Have a little fun. Get back to work!"

Notes in the Margin

- Seeing how buying booze is deemed "essential" and going to church is not, maybe it's time (if it isn't already happening) to revive the speakeasy but with a twist. Congregations, instead of bar patrons, could be on the lookout for a "raid" from the "G-men." Christianity certainly has a storied history of worshiping in secret while facing extreme consequences.

- There is a growing list of sheriffs around the country who openly pledge not to carry out any governmental orders that violate the Constitution, which of course includes the right to bear arms. Locally, it would be a powerful declaration for our sheriff to do the same.

Contact George at georgehasara@yahoo.com.

Maple Street closed due to round-a-bout construction

This is to advise that beginning Thursday, April 16, Maple Street will be closed to all through traffic from the intersection of Maple Street and US 441 Bus., to the intersection of Maple Street is necessary in order to construct the new round-a-bout at the intersection of Maple Street and US 441 Bus. The reopening of Maple Street to through traffic is anticipated to be no later than July 3.

The detour routes for local traffic north bound will be to continue US 441 Bus. to the intersection of US 441 Bus. and West Palmer Street. Turn left on West Palmer Street then continue to the intersection of West Palmer Street and Maple Street.

Road closure barricades will be placed on Maple Street at the intersection of Maple Street and US441 Bus. and at the intersection of Maple Street and East Dogwood Drive.

The N.C. Department of Transportation encourages motorists to drive with caution and obey the posted speed limits. For any questions regarding this issue, contact Ronald Woods or Andy Russell at (828)321-5061.

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Community garden plots now available for spring planting

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

During World War I, Victory Gardens were planted by families on the homefront to help augment the food supply. Planting Victory Gardens helped make sure that there was enough food for soldiers fighting around the world and for the families left at home. As the U.S. continues to battle the COVID-19 pandemic, many families are finding themselves short on food and long on time.

Due to social distancing restrictions and the forced closure of many businesses, many folks lack the resources normally available for them to feed their families. Food banks have stepped up to offer help and many social service agencies are offering free food also, but another way to feed families is to grow it yourself. For those without a place of their own to plant, some communities, churches and organizations offer plots to rent.

Community gardens

Community gardens are popping up all over Macon County, where folks can grow fresh vegetables and fruits. One such garden is located in Otto. This community garden was established in the 2017 growing season, and is free to any resident of the Otto Community. The garden is a service provided by the Otto Community Development Organization with ongoing support from the Otto Volunteer Fire Department, the Otto Garden Club, Old School Knife Works, Adams-Newcastle and Dryman's Chapel. The garden is located in the old Otto Elementary School track on Firehouse Road, behind the Knife Works. This garden can help families obtain fresh produce with a little hard work, and could help feed families that are struggling.

The rules for this garden follow the rules for the Macon County Community Garden and each gardener is required to sign off on the rules. Right now there are six beds with two still being available. An abundance of cinder blocks are available for anyone wish-

ing to build another bed, perhaps to accommodate larger fruits such as melons but would require quite a bit of effort and more dirt. Gardeners are asked that any extra food that they don't need be shared with neighbors or the local food pantry. Last year the garden produced more than 120 lbs. of food that was donated to neighbors in need. Anyone interested in a garden bed can contact Suzanne Mandler at (828)369-6302 for information.

In addition to Otto's community garden, another is located behind the old Cowee School off Bryson City Rd, at 51 Cowee School Drive, in Franklin.

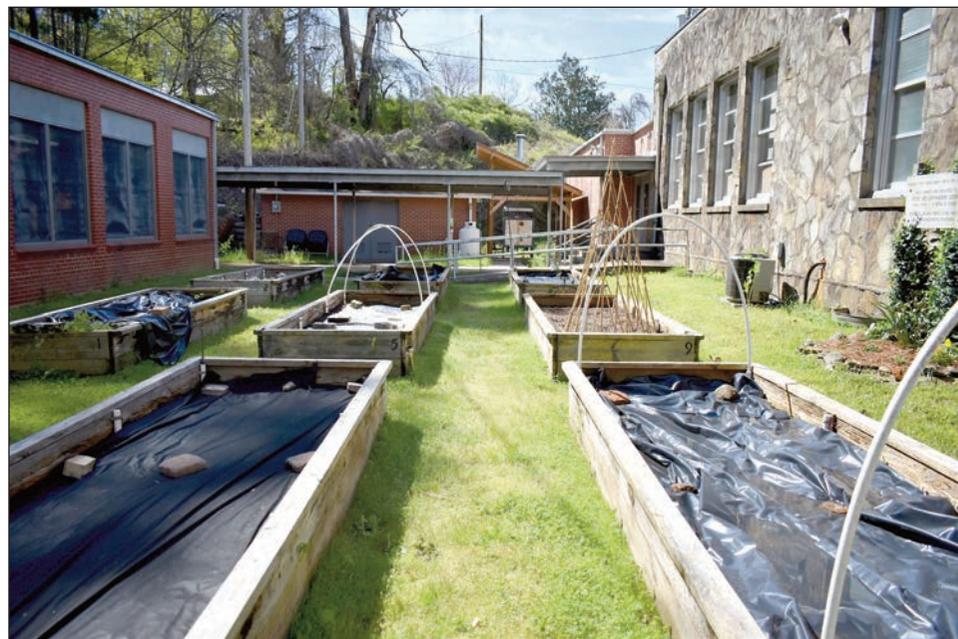
The Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center built the garden about six years ago with money donated by the Annie Dee Leatherman Smith family. Smith was a pioneer in conservation in Macon County, especially in the Cowee area. The funds were used for the construction of the garden boxes and soil. Ed Haight, a local engineer, volunteered his services in designing and, along with volunteers, constructing the boxes. Agriculture students from Franklin High volunteered as well.

Ten raised boxes were built on the property. The boxes are rented yearly for \$25 per bed. The cost of refilling them with soil can be deducted from the fee. Users can grow fruits and vegetables for the entire year, both warm and cold season crops. Users are free to grow what they choose. The use of chemicals is confined to the user's box and for sprays, used only on non-windy days. Gardeners are not required to donate any of their harvest.

Several beds are still available at this time. For information on renting a bed at the Cowee School you can contact Susan Ervin, one of their board members, at (828)524-8369 or email susanervin0213@gmail.com.

First United Methodist Church (FUMC) shares a rich history regarding their community garden.

The Share and Serve Garden was a direct result of the FUMC vision in February



Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center started a community garden about six years ago with 10 beds available for rent to friends and neighbors who want to grow their own food.

2013. Through the visioning process, hunger was determined to be a need upon which FUMC could have an impact. One of five new initiatives from the 2013 visioning was a community garden. The original concept was a teaching garden, somewhere that CareNet clients or others in need could come and learn to grow their own food. What was then the Blaine House (now playground), was provided for this project. Over the spring and summer of 2013, the area was prepped and divided into six plots. A Boy Scout troop was key in the first year, members of which went and picked up rocks every week and turned over the compost bins to provide nutrients for the soil.

In the year the garden was established, members of the garden group planted all six plots with a variety of vegetables in hopes of turning one over to a person of need. All vegetables went to CareNet if they did not have anyone to turn the plot over to. They had no participants the first year. Nearly 800 lbs. of produce was donated to CareNet.

By the next year in 2014, it was determined that a learning garden was not going to produce a large amount of produce so to provide a service while the learning garden gained momentum, they added a second garden site (below the Hospice House) to only grow four items: corn, tomatoes, beans, and sweet potatoes. In order to create more interest in the garden they created marketing brochures, and created a Facebook page. They did not subdivide the Share and Serve Garden the second year and donated 2,892 lbs. of produce to CareNet.

In 2015, no real changes were made to the plan. Several members from outside the church created a Garden Committee, with 2,525 lbs. donated to CareNet.

In 2016, FUMC was awarded the Duke Endowment Grant, raised beds were built, and workshops began, along with an intern program through Franklin High School. In 2017, the garden committee began leasing raised beds. The fee was \$25 per bed, which



The community garden in Otto is located behind the Old School Knife Works. Gardeners may build their own plots on the property with the cinder blocks that have been made available.



helped cover the cost of materials and maintenance. These beds are still being leased and several are still available for planting. The garden follows the same rules as other community gardens and asks bed owners to donate part of their crop, 10 percent, to those who want one. To lease one of the FUMC garden beds, contact Laura Gamble at laura_jean85@yahoo.com

The Macon County community garden, which is run by the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Office, is closed for the time being, due to government restrictions stemming from the pandemic. The garden is located behind the Southwestern Community College Annex, across from the public library. The community garden has grown from 16 to 24 garden spaces since its beginning. Spaces are 500 square feet each and are tilled. Gardeners must supply their own fertilizer, seeds and plants and agree to abide by garden regulations, which all community gardens have adopted. A charge of \$25 per garden spot is assessed. It is requested that a portion of each gardener's produce be donated to Macon County CareNet. In the past several years, the community garden has



First United Methodist Church in downtown Franklin has been making garden plots available for many years. Since 2013, the church has donated thousands of pounds of produce to CareNet. Photos by Diane Peltz

provided a substantial amount of fresh vegetables to Care Net for distribution to those in need. For more information regarding an opening date and bed availability, call North Carolina Cooperative Extension, Macon Center, at (828)349-2046. Once government restrictions are eased, the garden will be available to those who might be interested in obtaining a bed.

Food for thought, so to speak

Since Macon County has several community gardens in the area, folks can choose a spot that is closest to their home or work. Tasks involved for growing your own food includes sowing plants or seeds, watering, weeding, fertilizing, pruning and finally reaping the rewards. When thinking about designing your garden consider what food your family will want or need the most. Some folks plant just one crop and others choose a variety of fruits and vegetables. A single tomato plant can produce 200 tomatoes in a season. The North Carolina Cooperative Extension website offers a variety of resources to help in your garden journey.



Photos by Vickie Carpenter

Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests April 13 - 18. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

April 13

Vicki Lynn Shirley, was charged with violating a domestic violence protective order. Stephanie Robbins made the arrest.

April 16

Jonathan Wade Hurst, was charged with failure to appear for domestic violence protective order violation, resisting a public officer, misdemeanor larceny, possession of stolen goods/property, breaking and/or entering, larceny after breaking and entering, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. David Blanton made the arrest.

Jeffery Lee Hurst, was charged with breaking and entering,

larceny. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

April 17

Jacqueline Leeann Sedman, 44, of Pierce Hill Rd., Dayton Tenn., was issued an order for arrest for larceny. No bond was set. Officer Bingham made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

April 13

Alexander Tommy West., 58, of Alfred West Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked not impaired revocation. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Kimberley Natasha Owle, 27, of Spirit Mountain, was charged with possession of stolen goods, misdemeanor larceny, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of stolen motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle, obtain property false pretense, possession of stolen goods. A secured bond of \$11,000 was set.

Hunter Lee Lewis, 23, of Maynor Dr., Balsam, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, misdemeanor larceny, possession of stolen motor vehicle, larceny of a motor vehicle. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

Matthew Devon Perkins, 27, of Cheyenne Dr., Highlands, was charged with possession of stolen goods, misdemeanor larceny, obtaining property by false pretenses. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

April 14

Christopher Todd Jones, 33, of Cloudy Valley Dr., was charged with possession of an open container, possession of stolen property, driving while license revoked. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

April 15

David Jason Johnson, 38, of Beavor Rd., Lake Toxaway, was charged with felony probation violation. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

Justice Lee Littlejohn, 25, of Jessie Littlejohn Rd., Cherokee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of heroin. An unsecured bond of \$2,500 was set.

April 16

Charles Robert Bumbarner, 31, of Too How Rd., Whittier, was charged with damage to personal property, assault on a female. No bond was set.

Zachary McDonald, 30, of Ela Heights Rd., Whittier, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set.

April 17

Darin Ray Talley, 32, of Bizmark Loop, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor larceny, resisting a public officer. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set.

April 18

Brittany Lane Shelton, 27, of Clayton St., was charged with failure to appear for possession of stolen goods/property, misdemeanor larceny. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

DA says justice for sexual-assault victims 'top priority'

Recognizing April as National Sexual Assault Awareness Month (SAAM), District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch this week urged community members to support survivors, demand an end to victim blaming and emphasize the moral and legal obligation for consent.

The goal of SAAM is to educate individuals about the magnitude of sexual violence, its impact and how to prevent it.

As the district attorney for the state's seven westernmost counties, the 43rd Prosecutorial District, Welch and her staff members make sure survivors' voices are heard and they receive legal representation.

"As district attorney, I have made advocacy and justice for victims of sexual assault a top priority," Welch said. "Though designating a month to raise awareness won't, by itself, change society, April serves as a good starting point for prevention efforts all 12 months of the year."

As many as one in three women and one in six men have experienced sexual violence in their lives.

Sexual Assault Awareness Month began in 2001, when the National Sexual Violence Resource Center coordinated the first formally recognized Sexual Assault Awareness Month campaign.

Welch said she wants victims to know they aren't alone: In addition to other support staff, her office includes three designated victim witness legal assistants, funded through grants provided by N.C. Governor's Crime Commission.

The victim witness legal assistants are strategically based, one each in Haywood, Jackson and Cherokee counties. They serve across the district in the four other counties, too, in Macon, Swain, Clay and Graham. Welch said victim witness legal assistants ensure survivors and witnesses are treated with the compassion, respect and fairness they deserve.

"Through the bad actions of others, these individuals find themselves suddenly thrown into a complicated judicial system filled with lawyers, judges, obtuse language and various legal procedures," the district attorney said. "My office places an emphasis on helping survivors navigate these unknowns, with whatever level of support is required."

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

- In an emergency, dial 911.
- For services, advice or just to talk (including anonymously), call these county hotlines: Haywood, (828)456-7898; Jackson, (828)586-8969; Macon, (828)369-5544; Swain, (828)488-6809; Cherokee, (828)837-8064; Clay,

(828)389-0797; Graham, (828)837-8064 or (828)488-6809; Qualla Boundary, (828)488-6809.

• If you are a victim of sexual assault with questions about an open case or about legal protection, call the District Attorney's office at 349-7210 and leave a message. Your call will be returned as promptly as possible.

Professor gives 13 behaviors to maintain during pandemic

As society digs into its battle against COVID-19, a health researcher at Ball State University recommends behaviors that to adapt as soon as possible to avoid illness.

"Our society is more diverse than ever, and we have developed a tolerance for a variety of behaviors due to greater amalgamation of cultures, traditions, etiquettes, and norms," said Jagdish Khubchandani, a health science professor. "In general, we tend to ignore unhealthy and unsanitary behaviors in the guise of other peoples' choice, personality type, family habits, or culture."

"During and after the current pandemic crisis, we need greater awareness, collective action, and common civic behaviors driven by scientific evidence on transmission of emerging infectious disease agents such as coronaviruses. We must also not hesitate from educating or questioning family members, colleagues, and the general public on behaviors that pose danger to self and the society."

Given the current evidence on mechanisms of transmission and action of COVID-19, Khubchandani offers up 13 behaviors and habits to be embraced:

1. Take regular showers. While people are sheltering in place, some may neglect daily routines, but showering is a must because COVID-19 can live on surfaces for days.
2. Keep your clothes clean. Don't wear the same clothes for many days. Do laundry frequently.
3. Stop nail biting, thumb sucking, and rubbing eyes.
4. Stop scratching your head, face, or body.
5. Wash fruits and vegetables, and avoid eating them immediately in aisles, stores, or car.
6. Don't litter the inside and around your house. This could

increase risk for household members, while littering around the community can burden the sanitation workers. Recent instances of people throwing used masks and gloves in public places will increase risk for waste management workers and trash pickers.

7. Clean your car. Dispose of leftovers and edibles, trash, masks, and gloves.

8. Maintain hygiene while growing your hair, beard, or nails or using hair and face accessories.

9. Cover your face when you sneeze or cough.

10. Wash your hands after using restrooms, coming back from public places, after grocery shopping, pumping gas, using elevators, or using high traffic door knobs or electric switches.

11. Clean your desk space, cell phone, and computer devices.

12. Don't rely on carryout or delivery as your sole source of food for every meal every day, and be sure to eat enough and consume healthy foods.

13. Don't reuse wipes, masks, gloves, and personal care devices without cleaning them.

About Ball State

Founded in 1918 and located in Muncie, Ind., Ball State University is one of Indiana's premier universities and an economic driver for the state. Ball State's 22,500 students come from all over Indiana, the nation, and the world. The 790-acre campus is large enough to accommodate first-rate facilities and 19 NCAA Division I sports, but its welcoming and inclusive campus is small enough to ensure the friendliness, personal attention, and access that are the hallmarks of the University.

Town of Franklin will mark 200 years this spring since its birth

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

This spring season marks the 200th anniversary of the Town of Franklin's official birth. In 1820, Native Americans still occupied areas along the Little Tennessee River, where there is now a greenway, a park, a brewery, and more. In 1820, states were beginning to battle it out through legislation, such as the Missouri Compromise, to establish where everyone stood on the tense issue of slavery. And, the population in America had grown by 33 percent in 10 years; close to 10 million people resided in the United States in 1920.

And, in 1920, more Europeans (especially of Irish and Scottish descent), as well as families who formerly resided in Charleston, S.C., and the Northeast, were moving into this soil-rich and visually beautiful area. It is because of the increase in population that prompted in 1920 local commissioners Jesse Franklin and James Meabin to undergo the task of "organizing" the new territory into a true town. These two men appointed Robert Love, (1760-July 1845), a Patriot in the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War, as chief of the survey party that mapped the land in late spring 1820. The first land sale took place on Sept. 20, 1820, and after that, the settlement proceeded rapidly for what became known as Franklin, named for Jesse Franklin, who served as a N.C. senator (1799-1805; 1807-1813) and as the state's 20th governor (1820-1821).

The original survey included the courthouse and public square forming the center of the Town of Franklin, with 20 narrow, one-acre lots lined up along Main Street. Land was set aside throughout another 400 surrounding acres for churches, schools, and commercial and residential use.

Other than the town's oldest existing buildings dating back to the late 1800s, instead of the 1820s, not much about the original plan for the Town of Franklin has changed. The town square and courthouse continue to be central to entertainment and government activities. Most business spaces on Main Street are occupied.

In the early 1900s, the Tallulah Falls Railroad established a 58-mile line that ran from Cornelia, Ga., through Rabun County – past Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School – to end on

what is now Depot Street in Franklin. The train line brought residents and visitors, but passenger service ended in 1946. Prior to the automobile becoming commonplace, people traveled to and from Franklin on horseback, by horse-drawn wagon or carriage, or on foot. After the automobile, wagon trails and footpaths from the coast, Northeast, and West became established roads to Franklin.

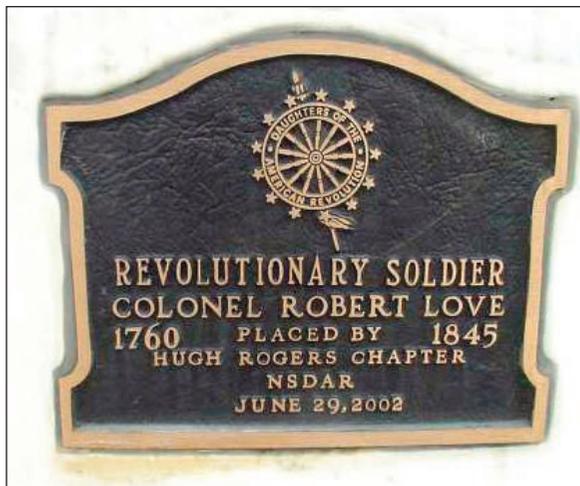
Thus, while there were only a few dozen families who established homes and livelihoods in the 1820s in Franklin, the population of the town grew to 335 by 1900, and by 1930 surpassed 1,000. The current population of the Town of Franklin is more than 4,000.

In 1920, areas just outside of

Franklin, in what would become Macon County eight years after the surveying of the town, were also formerly established. For example, Samuel Smith, a pioneer to the area, purchased a tract roughly 10 miles outside of Franklin, known as the Tesenta Town (Tessentee), which was an old Cherokee village site. It was there that he and his family established a significant farm and what was known as the Smithbridge Township. Other families followed suit; and, although they did not live inside the original surveyed lands of the Town of Franklin, they traveled to Franklin for goods, services, trading, and to keep up with state and world news.

Of course, before being named Franklin in 1820, the area for centuries was called Nikwasi by the Cherokee. Nikwasi means "center of activity," and the mound protruding upwards at the entrance of Franklin at the bridge that crosses the Tennessee River is where the hub of activity took place for many generations. According to NChome.com, the area of Franklin was officially part of the Cherokee Nation until 1819, when the Cherokees signed the Treaty of Washington and rights to lands as far west as the Nantahala Ridge were ceded.

During the surveying of the Town of Franklin, aspects of the treaty were not respected; yet, many of the names of roads and waterways and mountains and trails throughout Franklin and Macon County maintain Native names so that residents in modern times will remember that prior to 1820, the landscape and culture was entirely different.



Franklin's original surveyor was a Revolutionary War soldier and is buried in Waynesville.

Franklin's surveyor was patriot, soldier, friend to president Jackson

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Robert Love, who lived from 1760 to 1845 packed much into his 85 years. While he is known locally as the man who established the original survey of the Town of Franklin, he was much more – and some of his roles smack of irony when considered on the 21st century side of history.

At age 15, Love, a Patriot who was against England's continued rule as well as King George III's mandate of taxation without representation, joined the Continental Army, whose commander-in-chief was George Washington. Although young, Love proved himself an adept soldier and rose through the ranks, eventually becoming a lieutenant colonial.

Long after the war, when he asked to receive a pension, his service and rank was questioned because of his young age. It was Andrew Jackson, a friend of Love's, who ended up petitioning the pension board for due payments to Love.

Interestingly, the genealogy site geni.com reports that it was in 1790 that Love won a horse race against Jackson, who eventually became the country's seventh president, by getting Jackson's jockey drunk. Love and Jackson began a shouting match and Love challenged Jackson to a duel. However, Jackson declined to duel and the two evidently re-established a friendship, since Jackson went to bat for Love regarding his unpaid Revolutionary War pension.

After the Revolution, and with his parents dead, Love first moved from his home in Augusta County, Va., to what was then Washington County, N.C., now part of Tennessee. One of his titles, in fact, is as a "frontiersman."

Love, like many men of that era, was interested in exploring the wilderness of the Western Carolina Mountains.

In 1782, he married Mary Ann Dillard, the daughter of Col. Thomas Dillard of Virginia. Together they had 13 children. As a politician, Love first represented Washing-

ton County in the North Carolina Legislature in 1789, and then he moved to Buncombe County in 1792 and was elected to the State Senate of North Carolina.

Many aspects of Love's character positioned him as the ideal person to establish the survey for the Town of Franklin: his history of leadership and politics; his nomination for Presidential Elector in 1816 in the first political convention held in North Carolina's history; and, his wealth enabled him in 1809 to donate land in Haywood County for a courthouse, jail, and town square to form Mount Prospect, which was renamed Waynesville.

A year after Franklin's survey, Love helped to establish the final state boundary line between North Carolina and Tennessee.

Ironically, it was Love's friend, then foe, then friend who, 10 years after his survey for the Town of Franklin, signed the 1830 Indian Removal Act. In the summer of 1838, President Jackson eventually ordered that thousands of rounded-up Cherokee prisoners travel the Great State Road, which was built

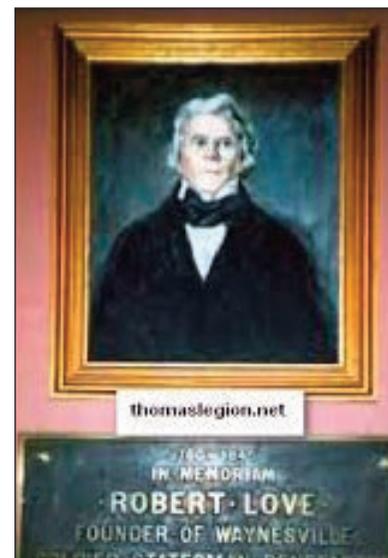
to connect Franklin to Fort Butler in Murphy, N.C., before being marched 1,200 miles to Oklahoma on what became known as the Trail of Tears.

What Love's view was of Jackson's decision is not documented; however, a Dec. 10,

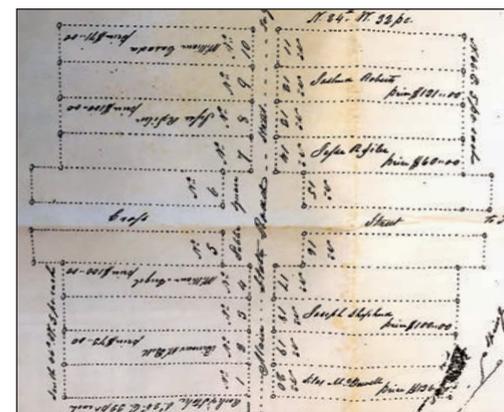
1831, letter from Jackson to Love is housed in the Library of Congress. The salutation conveys the two men's friendship. Jackson starts the letter with "My Dear Lv." In the letter, although Jackson's script is difficult to read, it appears that Jackson attempts to explain, and perhaps justify, his Indian

Removal Act.

On July 14, 1834, Love was kicked in the hip by a horse and was injured to the point of being crippled and needing crutches until his death in Waynesville, July 17, 1845. He was reportedly a man who was "loved by his friends and feared by his enemies."



Robert Love, who lived from 1760 to 1845, is known locally as the man who established the original survey of the Town of Franklin.



Original survey of the Town of Franklin

Select Bank & Trust completes acquisition of three WNC branches from Entegra

Select Bancorp, Inc., the holding company for Select Bank & Trust Company, announced today that Select Bank & Trust has finalized the purchase of three branches in western North Carolina from Entegra Bank, a Division of First Citizens Bank. Select Bank & Trust has assumed the deposits, and majority of the loans, property, equipment and other selected assets associated with the Entegra Bank branches located at 30 Hyatt Road, Franklin; 498 East Main Street, Sylva; and 473 Carolina Way, Highlands.

The three locations were closed on Friday April 17, and re-opened as branches of Select Bank & Trust on Monday April 20. Given the public health and safety concerns related to spread of the novel Coronavirus, the branch lobbies will remain closed; however, the branches will continue to operate for customers through the Drive-Thru (Monday through Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., by appointment and telephone, ATM and Digital Banking until further notice.

William L. Hedgepeth, president and CEO of Select Bancorp, said of the acquisition, "Our goal for some time has been to further expand the markets we serve and enter new markets. These branches will serve as an expansion of our footprint into western North Carolina. We are deploying our capital in a deliberate and efficient manner. This strategic acquisition fits nicely with our recent opening of a full-service branch in Cornelius, North Carolina (Char-



Select Bank & Trust has now assumed ownership of the Entegra Bank branch near the old Walmart shopping center at 30 Hyatt Road, Franklin. Photo by Vickie Carpenter

lotte area) and the opening of loan production offices in Winston-Salem and Durham, North Carolina." He went on to explain, "Finding established locations with experienced employees in communities like these fit into our strategic plan perfectly and we are looking forward to serving these new customers. It is a tough time in our nation and world right now and we hope to continue to be a source of assistance and education for our customers, footprint wide. We

are extremely proud of our employees and our newest employees for making this transition during this difficult time in our communities. We ask our new customers to be patient with us as we work through this transition with somewhat limited resources due to the novel Coronavirus pandemic. It is a testament to the hard work and dedication of our team that we are able to finalize the purchase of these three branches at this time."

About Select Bancorp, Inc.

Select Bancorp, Inc. is a bank holding company headquartered in Dunn, N.C. The Company primarily conducts operations through its wholly owned subsidiary, Select Bank & Trust Company, a North Carolina-chartered commercial bank that provides a full suite of banking services through its offices in North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. The Company's common stock is listed on the Nasdaq Global Market under the symbol "SLCT". Select Bank & Trust Company has 19 offices in Burlington, Charlotte, Clinton, Cornelius, Dunn, Elizabeth City, Fayetteville, Goldsboro, Greenville, Holly Springs, Leland, Lillington, Lumberton, Morehead City, Raleigh, and Wilmington, N.C., Blacksburg and Rock Hill, S.C., and Virginia Beach, Va., and loan production offices in Durham, Wilson and Winston-Salem, N.C. Select Bank & Trust Company serves these and nearby communities focusing on local businesses and consumers as a dedicated community bank. The mission of Select Bank & Trust Company is to be the bank of choice in the communities we serve, by providing exceptional customer service, superior products and experienced bankers using a "common sense" approach to banking. When customers choose to bank with Select Bank & Trust Company, they receive quality financial products at a fair and competitive price, along with friendly, courteous, and responsive service. More information can be obtained by visiting www.SelectBank.com.

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Deaths & Funerals

William 'Bill' Stanfield

William "Bill" Stanfield, 79, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Harley Stanfield and Esther Holland Stanfield. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his loving wife of 40 years, Annette "Big Turtle" Raby Stanfield; three sisters and seven brothers.

He enjoyed spending time outdoors. He was an avid trout fisherman and enjoyed apple farming as well as deer and grouse hunting. He was a founding member of Cullasaja Volunteer Fire Department and member of Cullasaja Assembly of God.

He is survived by daughter, Selena Lisenbee (Rodney) of Marshall, N.C.; son, Mark Stanfield (Gwen) of Franklin; special friends, Clyde McCall, Bruce Holland, Earl Holland, Bill McConnell, Bobby Cabe, Thurman Blaine and Dennis Holland; four grandchildren, Daniel and Mitchell Stanfield and Reece and Rylan Lisenbee; one great grandchild, Lia Stanfield; and several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at Salem Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Gideons International, www.gideons.org/donate or Salem Cemetery Fund, 40 Snooker Lane, Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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

William Judson Brasington

William Judson Brasington, 85, of Otto, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, April 15, 2020.

Born in Clare, Mich., he was the son of the late Rufus and Lucille Halstead Brasington. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a daughter-in-law, Carrie Brasington. He enjoyed wood working and gardening. He used to help the Baptist Men with Missions. He was a member of Coweeta Baptist Church where he served as a Deacon.

He is survived by his wife, of 64 years, Joyce Brasington; six children, Jeffrey (Rae) of Inman, S.C., Timothy of Waynesboro, Miss., Philip (Cindy) of Albany, La., Douglas (Kathy) of Reserve, La., Joe (Lisa) of Columbus, Miss., and Vickie Ocmant (Jeff) of High Point, N.C.; two brothers, Millard Brasington, Loren Brasington and a sister, Mary Kirkpatrick all of Michigan; 17 grandchildren; 18 great grandchildren; seven great-great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Coweeta Baptist Church Building Fund, 780 Coweeta Church Rd., Otto, NC 28763 or your local food bank.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



William 'Bill' Stanfield



William Brasington

David Mitchell Holland

David Mitchell Holland, 64, of Detroit, Mich., passed away Feb. 12, 2020. He was born Feb. 13, 1955, in Detroit, Mich., to the late Mitchell Eugene Holland and Alma Joyce Tallent Holland. He retired from Chrysler as an electrician and was a member of U.S. Armed Forces having served in the Navy. Being an avid outdoorsman, he enjoyed fishing, hunting and camping, especially his excursions in Canada and Alaska. He loved his dogs.

He is survived by a sister, Karen Perino and her husband, Lenny Perino of Franklin; an aunt, Grace Green of Franklin and an uncle, Herschel Tallent of Raleigh. He is preceded in death by his parents.

A private service will be held at a later date.

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



David Mitchell Holland

John Gary Stanley

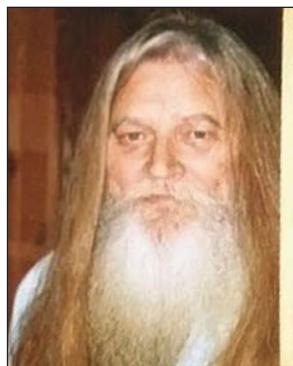
John Gary Stanley, 67, passed away at the John F. Kever Solace Center, Asheville, N.C., Monday, April 13, 2020.

He was born in Fazeley, England, in 1952. He attended Glenville High School. He served in the N.C. National Guard for six years and worked approximately 30 years at Cashiers Plastic in Cashiers, N.C.

He enjoyed watching movies, rock music, classic cars and spending time with his family but he most enjoyed giving people wet willies.

He is survived by his loving wife of 40 years, Mellie, of the Pine Creek Community, Cullowhee; his mother, Constance H. Stanley of Asheville; brothers, Bryant (Marcia) of Cashiers, George (widowed) of Asheville; sister, Althea Moody (James) of Glenville N.C.; sons, Dusty of Cullowhee, Jamie Stanley (Jennifer) of Franklin, Tommy Owen (Jodie) of Dalton Ga.; and loving granddaughters, Zoe White (Casey and great grandson Cayden), and Kiley, and other relatives.

The graveside funeral service will be held at Pine Creek Baptist Church at a future date.



John Gary Stanley

John Raymond Jacobs

John Raymond Jacobs, 81, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio, he was the son of the late Chester Jacobs and Geraldine McAdams Jacobs. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Waunita May Jacobs.

He was a U.S. Navy veteran. He owned and operated Kar Chem Supply and enjoyed golfing. He was a member of First Alliance Church.

He is survived by two daughters, Tiffany Niemeyer of Decatur, Ga., and Donna Jacobs of Milledgeville, Ga.; two stepchildren, Kimmy Dobson Netterville of Alpharetta, Ga., and Kenneth Dobson of Baton Rouge, La.; sister, Judy Comella of Cleveland, Ohio; four grandchildren; one great grandchild; and two nieces.

No services have been planned at this time.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



John Raymond Jacobs

Mary Lou Hedden Hooper

Mary Lou Hedden Hooper, 92, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Friday, April 17, 2020.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late John Quincey Hedden and Selma Howell Hedden. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Robert V. Hooper.

She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Franklin for over 60 years. She was also a charter member of the Angel Community Hospital Auxiliary, Founding Member of the Board of Trustees of Angel Community Hospital, Lifetime Member of the Macon County Home Extension Club and a member of the Advisory Board of Macon County Home Health and Hospice.

She is survived by her two daughters, Melanie Hooper Enloe (Jeff) of Franklin, Kentucky and Jane Hooper Sutton (Bob) of Mount Dora, Fla.; granddaughter, Mary Leah Sutton of West Hollywood, Calif.

A private graveside service will be held at Highlands Memorial Park Cemetery.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



Mary Lou Hooper

Gene Pickens

Gene Pickens, 85, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Saturday, April 18, 2020.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Joseph Wade Pickens and Evelyn Sanders Pickens. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by son, Jimmy Pickens; daughter, Pat Browning; brother, Charles Pickens; and infant brother, Joseph. He was a U.S. Army veteran and was an active member of Ridgecrest Baptist Church serving as deacon.

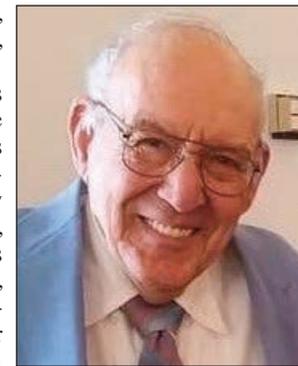
He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Ada Henry Pickens; daughter, Teresa Pickens of Greenville, S.C.; sisters, Judy Shuler and Ruth Holden both of Franklin; grandchildren, Kristy McGuire, Erica Browning, Robert Browning and Ricky Pickens; great grandchildren, Chelsea, Christopher and Annalee and several nieces and nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at Ridgecrest Baptist Church Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Hospice House Foundation of WNC, PO Box 815, Franklin, NC 28744.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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



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Deaths & Funerals

Bryant Loson Holland

After a hard fight with cancer, Bryant Loson Holland, 77, went to be with the Lord on April 14, 2020 at his home he built in Franklin, with his caring family by his side. He is survived by his faithful and loving wife of 48 years, Diane Walters Holland.

He was born on May 30, 1943, to the late Denver and Delton Jennings Holland in Franklin, N.C. He met and married the love of his life while working for General Motors in Pontiac, Mich. Diane was the woman of his dreams. Together, they had one son, Kevin Bryant Holland (Jennifer) and his latest "joy and partner in crime," his granddaughter, Summer Rose, all of Franklin. Bryant and Diane raised a daughter, Paula Christian (Kenny) of Dillard, Ga., and a son, Nick Robinette of Hernando Beach, Fla. He fathered a son, Mike Holland and a daughter Sandra Holland of Michigan. He was a great Dad and Papaw who loved his family.



Bryant Loson Holland

He was the only son and the youngest of five children. He is survived by his sister, Audrey Holland Cook of Franklin. He was preceded in death by three sisters, Phyllis Holland Caldwell, Bernice Holland Penley and Marsha Holland Mason. He is survived by his granddaughter, Alicia Aughtman (Buck) and great grandson, Jonathan, of Fort Bragg, N.C.; a grandson, Chance Dakota Holland of Franklin. He was preceded in death by an infant grandson Joseph Nicholson and a young, beautiful granddaughter, Kristen Nicholson, whom he never stopped loving.

He was a Macon County native who proudly served in the U.S. Army through the Vietnam War. He was a hard worker who took a lot of pride in his home and family. He was good at everything from mechanics to construction to cooking. He taught carpentry at Southwestern Community College, as he was an amazing carpenter.

An avid coon hunter, he was a long-time member of the Coon Hunters Association where he had many friends and was well known for his awesome dog training skills with Walker dogs.

He will always be remembered for all the lives he has touched by giving a helping hand, for caring, and providing for everyone he knew; and all the prayers and visits he made to all his friends and family when they were sick, grieving, or had fallen on hard times.

He was the first deputy to retire from the Macon County Sheriff's Department in 1998 after serving as "Chief Deputy" and protecting the county for 15-plus years.

If he wasn't coon hunting, he was talking about coon hunting. He enjoyed playing cards, a good game of pool, his coffee, eggs and gravy, his "baccar," and everything about the "Great Outdoors," from hunting, fishing, camping, gardening, and ginseng digging. His personality always had a joke or some way to make you laugh. His greatest joy in life was always his grandchildren and making sure everyone was "taken care of." He was a true man of his word, a man you could honor, and one everyone loved and respected. He was a Baptist and a member of Pine Grove Baptist Church.

He loved his dogs, friends and family as much as they all loved him. He was truly an admirable man with so many life memories. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. His patience and words of wisdom like, "Well that don't matter" and "Why, that's water under the bridge," will never be forgotten. But his favorite saying of all was... "Y'all go with us!"

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

A private graveside service is being held for the family with Greg Rogers and Mike Chastain officiating.

Pallbearers will be Kenny Christian, John "Buck" Aughtman, Jonathan Aughtman, Lyman Holland, Raymond Holland, Larry Ledford and Max Houston. Honorary pallbearers will be J.R. Dendy, Summer Holland and Alicia Aughtman.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements. Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Frances Lea Martinelli

Frances Lea Martinelli, 77, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Born in Galveston, Texas, she was the daughter of the late Amanuel Melvin and Kathleen Margaret Merriam Bennight. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a son, Brian Flattum; daughter, Margaret Crozierher; sister, Kathleen Armstrong and a brother, Richard Bennight.

She was a member of the Gem and Mineral Society. She loved jewelry making and bowling.

She is survived by her daughters, Laura Lee Canull of New Mexico and Michelle Loewy (Jon) of Franklin; six granddaughters, Jennifer, Jessica, Jo, Jamie, Julie and Jackie.

No services are planned at this time.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Frances Lea Martinelli

Sarah Corbin Penland

Sarah Corbin Penland, 83, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Henry and Maggie Seay Corbin. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her siblings, Linda Osborne, Margaret Pendergrass, H.D. Corbin Jr., William Clarence Corbin, Clyde Corbin and Harold Corbin. She was a member of Iotla Baptist Church. She was a beloved wife, mother and grandmother.

She is survived by her husband of 61 years, Melvin "Pete" Penland; two sons, Michael Penland of Wilmington, N.C., Steve Penland (Beverly) of Franklin; three grandchildren, Corbin (Leah) Penland, Whitney Penland, Elizabeth (Brandon) Brown; two great grandchildren, Beckett and Ronan; and several nieces and nephews.

A private service will be held at Iotla Baptist Church with Brandon Breedlove and Steve Reeves officiating. Burial will be in the Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



Sarah Corbin Penland

James Robert 'Bobby' Collier

James Robert "Bobby" Collier, 77, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, April 21, 2020.

Born in Macon County, North Carolina, he was the son of the late William and Mary Louise Crisp Collier. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his sister, Martha Collier and a nephew, Jerry Collier. He was a lifelong resident of Western North Carolina. He attended Emmanuel Baptist Church, loved animals and farming.

He is survived by his brother J.D. Collier; one niece, Brenda Collier; one nephew, Jimmy Collier and several great nieces, great nephews, great-great nieces and great-great nephews.

A private graveside service will be held at Ridgecrest Baptist Church. Rev. Dave Williams and Rev. Frank Rodriguez will officiate.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to Ridgecrest Baptist Church, Cemetery Fund, 206 Ridgecrest Baptist Church Rd., Franklin, NC 28734

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



James Collier

Margie Collins Hopkins

Margie Collins Hopkins, 87, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Saturday, April 18, 2020.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Byrd Collins and Anna Franks Collins. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Howard Hopkins Sr.; children, Jerry Ray Hopkins, Charles Hopkins, Richard Hopkins, Mary Alice Hopkins, Betty Sue Hopkins, Harold Hopkins and Patsy Holbrooks; grandsons, Jerry, Stanley, Bobby and Keith; and several brothers and sisters. Margie was a member of Windy Gap Baptist Church. She enjoyed gardening and spending time with her family.

She is survived by six children, Gary Hopkins, Randy Hopkins, Billy Hopkins, Edith Sullivan, Barbara Weaver and Elaine Hopkins; brother, Monroe Collins; 19 grandchildren; 40 great grandchildren; 16 great-great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

Private services will be held at Windy Gap Baptist Church Cemetery.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Condolences may be mad at www.maconfuneralhome.com.



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William Byron goes back-to-back in eNASCAR iRacing

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

William Byron became the first multi-time winner of the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series – holding off Timmy Hill by a mere .256-seconds at the virtual Richmond Raceway Sunday afternoon. It was Byron's second consecutive win in the series - answering a victory at iRacing's virtual Bristol Motor Speedway two weeks ago just before the Easter off-week.

It certainly reaffirmed Byron's position as the heralded master of the iRacing tournament among NASCAR Cup Series regulars. He has dominated in total laps led (319) in the four iRacing events in his No. 24 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet and on Sunday was easily the class of the field, holding the point for 94 laps of the 154-lap race.

Parker Kligerman, Landon Cassill and reigning NASCAR Cup Series champion Kyle Busch rounded out the Richmond top five. Denny Hamlin, who won the inaugural Pro Invitational Series event at Homestead, finished sixth followed by his Joe Gibbs Racing teammate Erik Jones. Dale Earnhardt Jr., Bubba Wallace and Brad Keselowski rounded out the top 10 – the highest finish for both Keselowski and Wallace to date.

Despite several new entries this week, the Richmond race had the very real competitive feel NASCAR fans have come to expect at the 7/8-mile oval.

And Byron, who got his competitive start in iRacing years ago, again put on a master class – holding off a group of competitors with fresher tires on a final race re-start with three laps to go.

"I didn't really know how that was going to work out, but luckily we were able to have a little bit of buffer to the guys with four tires, and then the late restart, just executed that well," Byron said. "It was fun. Really enjoyed it. To go back-to-back is really cool. Having fun with it while we're kind of in a hiatus here, but looking forward to getting back



William Byron, driver of the #24 Axalta Chevrolet, races at Richmond Raceway on April 19, 2020 in Richmond, Virginia. (Editors note: Images were computer generated in-game)

to real racing soon, too."

Tight re-starts, dramatic collisions and important strategy calls are all something fans are accustomed to at the Richmond short track. And they were important elements of Sunday's race - even in this virtual competition.

Matt DiBenedetto was parked late in the race after iRacing officials disapproved of avoidable contact he made - crashing Ryan Preece in the waning laps. It was a tough ending to a promising day for Preece, who held a virtual "meet and greet" with his sponsors and fans prior to the green flag

and was the only other driver to lead multiple laps – his No. 37 JTG Daugherty Chevrolet pacing the field for 59 lap; second only to the race-winner.

One of the day's most impressive runs came from Team Penske's Brad Keselowski who kept his No. 2 Ford among the top 10 for much of the race before a pit road miscue forced him to play catch-up again in the final laps. It was only Keselowski's 34th iRacing start compared to Byron, for example, who has more than a thousand.

Top-10 finishers such as Kyle Busch, who finished fifth after starting 27th along with Jones (who started 24th) and Wallace (who started 28th) had to feel a strong sense of accomplishment on the afternoon.

Ultimately, strategy played a decisive hand in the dramatic final stretch to the checkered. A caution period with three laps remaining created an urgency for Byron. He had to hold off Hill – whose No. 66 Toyota was on fresher tires – in those frantic last laps.

And Byron and Hill have a virtual "history." Byron was leading at Texas Motor Speedway when Hill moved him on a late race restart to snatch the victory. On Sunday, it was just a clean fair sprint to the checkered.

"He raced me really clean; I was really thankful for that," Byron said. "We've had some good races, honestly. Texas, obviously I was frustrated with Texas, but if I would have been in his position, I probably would have done the same thing, looking back on it.

"I think he's done a really good job showing how consistent he is. I feel like he's got good race craft, and I enjoy racing with him. I know what to expect when I race with him, that he is going to use the bumper, so I just have to race him back that way, and I think we both understand that.

"Fortunately I had just enough speed to kind of keep my gap there and win that race.

Hill, the only driver with top-3 finishes in all four eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series races, tweeted following the race that he was pleased with the effort, and like so many, already eagerly looking forward to the Talladega Superspeedway virtual high banks, where the series races next Sunday.

"Just came up a little bit short there at the end," Hill said on Twitter. "Congratulations to @WilliamByron on the win!



Christopher Bell, driver of the #95 Procore Chevrolet, flips after contact with Ryan Blaney, driver of the #12 Advance Auto Parts Ford, during the eNASCAR iRacing Pro Invitational Series Toyota Owners 150at Richmond Raceway on April 19, 2020 in Richmond, Va.

Looking forward to a bunch of fun at Talladega next week.”

eNASCAR Heat Pro League Returns For Season Two After Successful 2019 Debut

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – NASCAR, Race Team Alliance and Motorsport Games announced the highly anticipated eNASCAR Heat Pro League™ season two kicked off Wednesday at virtual Homestead-Miami Speedway. The series will again be streamed on eNASCAR.com, as well as NASCAR Heat’s Twitch and Facebook.

“The eNASCAR Heat Pro League debut last year highlighted the significant opportunity for our esports platforms,” said Tim Clark, senior vice president and chief digital officer, NASCAR. “We’re excited about season two, and in the midst of this sport’s hiatus, we’re proud those platforms can help fill that void for our fans.”

The 2020 season features 14 races at tracks across the NASCAR circuit, including Eldora Speedway, Road America and Iowa Speedway, with gamers showcasing



their skills in all three of NASCAR’s national series. The 14-race season is broken up into three four-race segments, with one driver per platform (Xbox One™ and PlayStation®4) capturing a spot in the Championship race as well as a shot at the \$200,000 prize pool. In addition, a final wildcard event at the virtual Daytona International Speedway in July will allow for two more drivers to secure their Championship hopes.

“eNASCAR Heat Pro League competition helps create yet another opportunity for teams across NASCAR to engage with fans and grow their presence in the evolving esports space,” said Dmitry Kozko, CEO, Motorsport Games. “With an increased prize pool to \$200,000 and a new schedule format, competitors and teams have more on the line this season, and the racing is sure to show it.”

The eNASCAR Heat Pro League will once again offer gamers the opportunity to race for one of 14 NASCAR teams, with all of last year’s teams returning. Prior to the virtual draft on April 8, organizations were required to clear at least one roster spot from last year. Chip Ganassi Gaming, GoFas Gaming and Joe Gibbs Gaming elected to start with fully clean slates. Teams had a pool of 48 gamers to choose from, with the draft order determined by inverse point standings from last season. Draft results and team rosters can be found here.

The debut season of the eNASCAR Heat Pro League

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PRO RACING THIS WEEK
Racing News, Stats & Trivia

Last Week's Race: William Byron won iRacing race at Richmond

William Byron won his second consecutive NASCAR virtual race on Sunday by holding off Timmy Hill, the driver who moved him out of the way to win an earlier iRacing event, in a race low on dramatics. Matt DiBenedetto was parked after twice crashing at virtual Richmond Raceway with Ryan Preece, the second incident clearly intentional. It triggered a Twitter spat between the two, with DiBenedetto demanding Preece's address to go to his house to fight and Preece replying he'd give it to him if DiBenedetto showed up in the giraffe costume he wore while competing Sunday. Jimmie Johnson manually disconnected his simulator rather than wait out late-race repairs, and Kevin Harvick ate his lunch from the seat of his rig as he was in a 20-minute hold for repairs. Resets were eliminated to make it a cleaner race, and NASCAR and broadcast partner Fox initially trimmed the field in an effort to avoid the wreck-fest from virtual Bristol two



weeks ago. That created a wave of backlash as the drivers dropped were both full-time Cup participants or had sold sponsorship for the iRaces. As a concession, a heat race was held Sunday morning in which 11 drivers tried to finish inside the top two to advance into the main event. Harvick made his iRacing debut, likely pushed by his sponsors and race team to get involved in the only activity drivers can do right now to promote their partners.

NASCAR Race Schedule News

NASCAR postpones next race, eyes return without spectators

NASCAR has postponed the May 9 race at Martinsville Speedway in Virginia, which is under a stay-at-home order into June. NASCAR suspended its season four events into the year when sports shut down because of the coronavirus pandemic. It listed Martinsville as its first race to resume but acknowledged Friday it will not be able to hold

the event. NASCAR said it is still committed to running all 36 Cup Series races this year and will consider holding events without fans. To date, eight races have been postponed. NASCAR has privately given teams a revised schedule in which racing would return with the Coca-Cola 600 at Charlotte Motor Speedway on May 24. The revisions call for some weeknight races and doubleheaders through the summer.

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

Top News Stories

State lawmakers call on Gov. Cooper to reopen Charlotte Motor Speedway for race without fans

Several Republican lawmakers in North Carolina’s General Assembly are calling on Gov. Roy Cooper to reopen Charlotte Motor Speedway in time for the Coca-Cola 600 which is scheduled for May 24. The plan would call for racing with no fans. This would be the 60th anniversary of the Coca-Cola 600. The hope, according to lawmakers, would be to run the Memorial Day race without fans in attendance, but be broadcasted as originally scheduled. Speedway Motorsports President and CEO Marcus Smith said on Sunday night that he would prefer to run the iconic race with fans in the stands, but will abide by guidelines determined by the status of the pandemic. “Our desire is to run the Coca-Cola 600 with fans as originally scheduled on May 24, but we realize these are unprecedented circumstances and the parameters surrounding public gatherings remain a primary consideration,” said Smith. The lawmakers noted that Florida recently amended its stay at home order to allow for racing without fans. NASCAR hasn’t held a race since March 8 in Phoenix in light of the coronavirus pandemic. The Republicans say in order for the track to hold a race, Cooper would need to amend his executive orders.

Racing Trivia

Which driver has the most Coca-Cola 600 victories? ?

- a) Jimmie Johnson
- b) Dale Earnhardt
- c) Darrell Waltrip
- d) Bobby Allison

Answer: (c) Darrell Waltrip won the Coca-Cola 600 a record 5 times.

produced over one million live views of its race broadcasts and numerous live events throughout the year, including a live draft at Phoenix Raceway, an in-person race at Charlotte Motor Speedway and the Championship finale at NASCAR’s Arena 43 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The eNASCAR Heat Pro League features 28 gamers from 14 teams, each owned and operated by prominent NASCAR race teams. Each team fields two drivers, one racing on Xbox One™ and the other on PlayStation®4, all competing for a shared championship. The

eNASCAR Heat Pro League transitioned to NASCAR Heat 4, the latest game in the NASCAR Heat franchise, last September, prior to the 2019 playoffs.

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SUDOKU ANSWERS ON PG. 15



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CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PG. 15

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THEME:
FAIRY TALE CREATURES

- ACROSS
- *Like many mythical creatures
 - Second mo.
 - Spill the beans
 - Convex molding
 - "___ the President's Men"
 - Ankle support, e.g.
 - Make a logical connection
 - *E.T.'s craft?
 - Des Moines native
 - *Fire-breather
 - *Household spirit
 - Tucker of "Modern Family"
 - Antonym of is
 - *Grimm's Queen ___
 - Tailor-made
 - Showing on TV
 - "All's well that ___ well"
 - Golly!
 - Punctuation mark
 - Seaport in Yemen
 - Hitching post?
 - Additionally
 - Poison ivy or Poison oak
 - One more than The Beatles
 - Hold as a conviction
 - *Mrs. Potts or her son
 - Chip
 - Andrew Sean Greer's 2017 Pulitzer-winner novel
 - Toast choice
 - Jack and Jill's water jug

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- "___ Now or Never"
- *Horse's cousin
- *One of the seven dwarfs
- Ascetic holy Hindu
- HHS agency
- Relating to #25 Across
- Banana treat
- Go bad
- Australian canid
- Lou of "Walk on the Wild Side" fame
- Card in the hole?
- "The Forsyte ___," pl.
- *Half-man, half-goat
- *Santa's helper
- Splotches
- Arch on a face
- Croquet turf
- Popular smoothie berry
- Well, to Sofia Loren
- Relating to living organisms
- Opposite of alpha
- Genetic initials
- Parents hope to do this with values
- *Beauty's beau
- Empower
- Dropsy
- *Big Bad One
- Yellow brick one
- Feeling worse than before
- *Like Curious George
- *Garden dweller
- Finger move
- Moneyed one
- Pine product
- Choose not to do something, 2 words
- Toni Morrison's "___ Baby"
- 1862 plots, for short
- Prefix for below
- Old photo color
- Stalin's domain
- Back of the neck
- Not active
- Past tense of chide
- Fill beyond full
- Sound of passing bullet
- *Baba ___
- *Who Bugs Bunny talks to?
- Numbers, abbr.

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

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