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## FHS crowns Homecoming Queen

Senior Gracie Cochran was crowned the 2021 Franklin High School Homecoming Queen at half-time of last Friday's football game against Tuscola. Gracie is a member of the National Honors Society, Student Council, Interact and is in the top 10 of her class. Gracie has served on the yearbook staff for two years and was also involved with high school athletics for three years. Gracie attends the Murphy Church of God where she plays piano and leads praise and worship. Junior Tori Ensley is a member of the Varsity basketball and softball teams, the National Honors Society, and is a leader in FCA. Tori is a member of Cowee Baptist Church. For more homecoming photos, see page 6. Photo by Vickie Carpenter



### IN THIS ISSUE



Page 4

Women's History Trail meets \$400,000 goal

## Board votes 4-1 to continue mask mandate

Diane Peltz – Contributing Writer

The Macon County Board of Education met Monday evening for its regular monthly meeting. On a motion made by Hilary Wilkes and seconded by Carol Arnold, the Board approved by a 4-1 vote to continue mandatory face coverings inside all Macon County School facilities. Board Member Tommy Cabe opposed the motion. Cabe was not alone in his opposition with nearly 20 Macon County residents attending the meeting also opposed to the mask mandate.

During a heated public comment session person after person spoke about how masks did not protect kids from breathing in small particles of bacteria. Many cited statistics from various sources that show the ineffectiveness of wearing a face covering. Issues such as ill fitting masks, children not being able to see facial expressions, trouble breathing, psychiatric effects and infringement on civil rights were among the many issues brought to the school board's attention. One parent whose child attended High-



More than a dozen parents attended Monday's school board meeting to implore the board to "unmask our kids."

lands School spoke about a substitute teacher who reprimanded their child for not wearing a mask properly. The parent said that this substitute told her child that if you can't wear a mask properly you don't care about others. "You are

See MANDATE page 2



Page 12

67th Annual Macon County Fair wraps up

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OCTOBER 9

# MANDATE

Continued from page 1

a murderer" she told the child. When this parent spoke with the principal about the incident she stated, "he told me he had to talk to my child 25 times about wearing his mask." With that, she took her child from school to be homeschooled. She declared, "none of you have cared about the students."

Speaker after speaker kept referring to the sign above the school board's head which reads, "in the best interest of the children." One parent commented that three teachers at Macon Middle School do not wear masks when they speak to the students. This parent also noted that there was no A/C at South Macon during the hot days at the beginning of the school year. The temperature at that time was high, she explained, and her child came home with his face all broken out from having to wear a mask in that heat.

Still another resident claimed that children have rights. She said they were given a social security number when they were born. She went on "it's about the land we live on here in Macon County. You have ravaged, desecrated, and violated it. You have cold hearts." Another speaker, who stated she was not a parent, spoke about the Australian Draconian lockdown and how the country is on a "slippery slope."

Just before the vote, Danny Antoine asked the board to consider some of the studies brought up by the residents who spoke at the meeting. He asked the board to not make recommendations based on Kathy McGaha's (Macon County Health Director) data alone.

John Henning, School Board lawyer explained about the protocols which the school board must follow. Recommendations from the CDC and Health and Human Services (HHS) were listed in the HHS school toolkit. He went on to explain that outside statistics, such as the ones the parents were bringing to the table, were not able to be used in determining a decision on COVID interventions. According to the CDC the board is required to implement COVID control measures based on the guidance in the toolkit.

McGaha spoke to the board regarding the positivity rate in Macon County. She stated that as of this meeting, the rate, county wide, was at 26.3% which put Macon County in the Red.

She stated that the quarantine numbers would be higher if no masks were worn, noting that three schools in North Carolina that had a mask optional recommendation had many more quarantines and had to ultimately go to a mask mandate. She also said that students were coming to school sick and that causes more COVID cases. She urged parents to keep sick children home. There were some outbursts among the parents after hearing McGaha's recommendations. Jim Breedlove, board chairman, had to ask folks to please refrain from shouting out.

Melissa Evans, school board member, stated that although parents should have a choice, we need to keep our schools open. Evans explained that she lost her dad to COVID recently, al-

though he had received the vaccine, he died from pneumonia related to COVID. She requested that students be allowed to have "mask breaks." "If we don't do this," she said, "we will have to send our kids home. Once we get down to 10% positivity we can lift the mandate and make masks optional."

Carol Arnold, school board member, also spoke about how deadly this disease is, losing three friends to COVID. She felt that children were ultimately happy at school. She asked to look at the numbers and explained if we get too big we will have to shut down. She urged folks to "hang on with us."

The School Board will meet monthly to determine if the mask mandate can be lifted.

## Modern quilt guild donates quilt to Habitat



Franklin's Modern Quilt Guild designs and creates a quilt each year and donates it to a local charity. This group, facilitated by Linda Harrison, meets at the quilt thop, A Stitch in Time. Habitat for Humanity was chosen to receive this year's challenge quilt. The presentation was made on Friday, Sept. 17. Accepting the donated quilt is Habitat director Rick Westerman. The quilt will be on display at the Franklin ReStore for one month and then displayed at the Sylva ReStore. Pictured are Esther Pegg, Lynn Kline, Westerman and Harrison.

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### Getting to know the new town manager

Martha Holbrook and Brenda Wooten with Mossy Rock met with the new Franklin Town Manager Amanda Owens this past week. The town is making plans to bring fall to downtown Franklin with their traditional pumpkin displays and autumn decorations. The Main Street Merchants and the Streets of Franklin Heritage Association will be hosting Hometown Fall on Main on Saturdays through the end of October with vendors, crafters and music. Photo by Betsy Gooder

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## Women's History Trail meets fundraising goal

The Folk Heritage Association of Macon County announces that its Women's History Trail Project has raised funds to complete the production of the sculpture "Sowing the Seeds of the Future." The sculpture, originally conceived by Barbara McRae, shows three women – Rebecca Morris (Cherokee), Salley (African American), and Timoxena Siler (White) – whose lives and cultures intersected in the early days of Macon County. The Folk Heritage Association contracted with nationally renowned figurative sculptor Wesley Wofford to produce the sculpture.

The Leadership Team for the Women's History Trail project of the Folk Heritage Association of Macon County are shown above while visiting at Wesley Wofford's studio in Cashiers. The photo demonstrates the clay version of the sculpture 'Sowing the Seeds of the Future'. Molds will be made to produce the final bronze statue. From left to right are Anne Hyder, Chair of the Folk Heritage Association of Macon County, Theresa Ramsey, Treasurer of the Folk Heritage Association of Macon County, Mary Polanski and Marty Greeble, Board members of the Folk Heritage Association of Macon County and Co-Leaders of the Project.



"Journey to Freedom" another Wesley Wofford sculpture is on a nationwide tour and is currently situated in Sylva.

Marty Greeble, co-leader of the project, said, "Now that we have secured \$400,000 of the funding associated with the sculpture to complete and install the seven-foot bronze sculpture, we will focus on raising funds for landscaping, lighting, and interpretive signage. Our preliminary goal for that portion of the project is an additional \$50,000 beyond the funds we have on hand; however, we'll be working with other parties to produce a full plan for landscaping and lighting and will release a final goal at a later date."

An exact location has not yet been selected for the sculpture's location but the River Gateway district has been proposed as a possible home. Discussions are ongoing with parties who would be involved in that site.

"We worked closely with Wesley Wofford and a number of knowledgeable individuals to incorporate appropriate details, including Cherokee symbols, into this work of art," said Mary Polanski, project co-leader. She continued, "We are grateful for all the donors who collectively enabled us to bring Barbara's vision to reality, and we look forward to installing this significant sculpture in the Town of Franklin."

Wesley Wofford, who lives near Cashiers, most recently completed a 9-foot-tall sculpture of Harriet Tubman (at left). A duplicate of that sculpture is on a nation-wide tour and is currently set up at Bridge Park in Sylva, where it is currently on display until mid-December 2021.

For additional information, visit folkheritageassociation.org to learn more about the project including how to make a donation.

## Zonta presents Red Sand Project

The Zonta Club of Franklin will once again present the Red Sand Project Saturday, Oct. 2, at 9 a.m. at the gazebo in downtown Franklin. The Red Sand Project was created by Molly Gochman to bring awareness of the many aspects of human trafficking and exploitation. According to the 2020 Trafficking in Persons Report, in 2019, 62% of victims in the U.S. were sex trafficking victims; 22% were victims of labor trafficking; 30% of them were children; and 49% were women and girls. Nearly one in five homeless youth has been a victim of human trafficking. The Covid pandemic has increased the number of individuals at risk with fewer resources to fight



against it. The Red Sand Project seeks to draw attention to those who metaphorically “fall through the cracks” and become victims of human trafficking. Zonta will highlight how it affects the community and the country and introduce some of the organizations in the area that are fighting it. Participants will be given red sand that they will use to fill in the cracks in the sidewalk to draw attention to those who cannot advocate for themselves. The Red Sand Project will be held in front of the Macon County

Courthouse in downtown Franklin on Saturday, Oct. 2, at 9 a.m.

For more information, contact the Project Coordinator Roxanne Chambless at 828-371-2875.

## Law enforcement apprehends suspect after hours-long search

Local authorities captured Tristan Justice Davis, 25, of Franklin Wednesday morning after Davis wrecked a stolen car in the Cowee Community on Tuesday.

Tuesday afternoon, a Macon County Sheriff's Deputy attempted to stop a vehicle after it was discovered that the vehicle was earlier reported stolen. The deputy activated his blue lights but the driver refused to stop and continued to drive away at a high rate of speed. At some point during the chase, two people exited the vehicle and were quickly apprehended. As the chase continued, deputies were able to conduct a field interview with the two individuals being detained and were able to identify the driver involved in the chase.

During the chase, the suspect made several attempts to hit deputies' patrol vehicles in what appeared to be attempts to wreck them. At one point, the suspect made an attempt to hit a responding K9 officer head on. Deputies attempted twice to utilize spike strips during the chase in an effort to disable the stolen vehicle, but those efforts were unsuccessful.

The stolen vehicle left the roadway in the Echo High area of Macon County and crashed while attempting to drive down the mountain through the woods. Deputies exited their vehicles and made their way on foot

to the wrecked vehicle but the suspect had already fled and was last seen running through the thick brush into the heavily wooded area leading down the mountain towards the road.

Multiple deputies and troopers with the NC Highway Patrol and officers with the Franklin Police attempted to locate the suspect utilizing K9s but all attempts in locating him were unsuccessful. During the search several homes and properties were searched but that also was unsuccessful.

Detectives involved in the chase were able to identify the suspect based on prior encounters. Following a thorough search of the area, the search was called off and the scene was later cleared and the vehicle was towed.

Detectives later were able to obtain arrest warrants for Davis for one felony count of flee to elude arrest; one felony count of possession of stolen vehicle; three felony counts of assault with deadly weapon on government official; and one misdemeanor resisting public officer.

Deputies continued to monitor the area throughout Tuesday night. After receiving several tips from the public regarding Davis' whereabouts, Macon County law enforcement officers were able to take him into custody on Wednesday morning.



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## Blood donors sought to alleviate severe shortage

The American Red Cross is experiencing an emergency blood and platelet shortage and must collect 10,000 additional blood products each week over the next month for the blood supply to recover and meet hospital and patient needs. Donors of all blood types – especially type O – and platelet donors are urged to make an appointment to give now and in the weeks ahead to overcome this current shortage.

Blood donor turnout has reached the lowest levels of the year as many delayed giving amid a return to the workplace and in-person learning, as well as a recent surge in COVID-19 cases across the country due to the delta variant. As cases spiked in August, blood donor participation decreased about 10%, but blood product distributions to hospitals have remained strong, significantly outpacing blood donations in recent weeks.

### Historically low inventory levels

The national Red Cross blood inventory is the lowest it's been at this time of year since 2015, with less than a day's supply of certain blood types in recent weeks. The supply of types O positive and O negative blood, the most needed blood types by hospitals, dropped to less than a half-day supply at times over the last month – well below the ideal five-day supply.

“Fall is typically a time when the blood supply rebounds as donors are more available to give than during the busy summer months, but this year has presented a unique and serious challenge,” said Dr. Pampee Young, chief medical officer for the Red Cross. “While it's clear the pandemic

continues to weigh heavily on our minds, the Red Cross asks the public to remember donating blood and platelets is essential to the many patients that rely on lifesaving transfusions every day.”

Don't wait. People across the country depend on the generosity of blood donors. Make an appointment to give blood or platelets as soon as possible by using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

- As a thank-you, all those who come to donate through Sept. 30 and help tackle the emergency blood shortage will receive a limited-edition football-inspired T-shirt while supplies last.

- All those who come to donate in October will receive a link by email to claim a free Zaxby's® Signature Sandwich reward or get a \$5 e-gift card to a merchant of their choice.

### Blood drive safety

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows the highest standards of safety and infection control, and additional precautions – including face masks for donors and staff, regardless of vaccination status – have been implemented to help protect the health of all those in attendance. Donors are asked to schedule an appointment prior to arriving at the drive.

Upcoming blood drive in Franklin is scheduled for Oct. 7, from 12:30 p.m. to 5 p.m., First Baptist Church Franklin, 69 Iotla Street.

## Macon Public Health Center offering seasonal flu clinics

With flu season approaching, Macon County Public Health Center is announcing the upcoming drive-thru seasonal influenza clinics. Protect yourself and those around you during flu season by getting your flu vaccine.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that everyone over 6 months of age receive the yearly flu vaccine. The influenza vaccine is reviewed annually and is designed to protect against the four strains that research indicates will be the most common this year.

Drive-thru flu clinics will be held at the public health center located at 1830 Lakeside Drive:

– Mondays 1 to 4 p.m. and Thursdays 1 to 4 p.m.

These flu vaccine clinics will be first come, first serve and an appointment will not be necessary. Individuals 65 years and older are eligible to receive high-dose influenza vaccine. High-dose vaccine will be available as long as supplies last.

The cost for the regular dose is \$36 and the high dose (recommended for those 65+) cost is \$73. Insurances will be filed, so bring your insurance card with you to the flu clinics, along with only cash or check for any co-payments.

“By achieving greater flu vaccine coverage throughout Macon County, it will take some of the burden away from physicians and clinics in having to deal with both COVID-19 and flu outbreaks. Our hope is that our community will step up and be a hometown hero to protect their community,” said Macon County Health Director, Kathy McGaha of the flu clinics.

For additional information on influenza and COVID-19, call (828)349-2081.

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# Stressed EMS staff to see some temporary relief

As of Tuesday, Sept. 28, Macon County Emergency Services had nine vacancies for a staff of 41 employees, according to Warren Cabe, director of Macon Emergency Services. Speaking to the Highlands-Cashiers Hospital CEO Tom Neal earlier this month, Cabe agreed with Neal that the COVID situation in the area is as intense, or even more so than at the beginning of the year. Health experts are seeing a surge with the spread of the Delta variant.

“EMS currently has nine full-time vacancies out of our 41 full-time positions,” said Cabe. “We have a large roster of part-time/as needed employees and through the use of those staff members and liberal use of overtime funds, we, for the most part, have been able to maintain our existing levels of service through the month of August. Our staff is in contact almost daily with COVID patients and inevitably we will have staff that need to be isolated and miss work due to illness.”

Earlier this month, Cabe cautioned that based on staffing, equipment, and the county’s current positivity rate, healthcare officials in Macon County are more concerned than ever.

“I wanted to present all of these items to present my concerns that the pre-hospital healthcare system all the way from the call takers to the transport crews are as close to a single point of failure as I have ever seen in my career,” said Cabe.

The situation in Macon County is not unique. North Carolina submitted a request to FEMA on Sept. 10 for 40 Advanced Life Support and 10 Basic Life Support ambulances and crews. As a result, nine counties across North Carolina will receive help in the



form of 25 Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances each with a two-person crew of EMS providers.

“These ambulances and crews will provide necessary relief to our extremely busy EMS systems,” said North Carolina Emergency Management Director Will Ray. “While it’s not the full complement we requested, we know medical resources are extremely limited across the nation right now, and we are grateful for this assistance from our federal partners.”

The ambulances arrived in North Carolina late Sunday night and crews were provided with personal protective equipment and communications gear on Monday. Most began work for their assigned counties on Tuesday.

The number of ambulance crews assigned to each county follows:

- Brunswick County 2
- Franklin County 2
- Graham County 2
- Guilford County 3
- Macon County 2
- Mecklenburg County 5
- New Hanover County 4
- Pender County 2
- Robeson County 3

The ambulance crews will remain assigned to these counties for 10 days. After that period, needs will be reevaluated to see if changes are needed.

*Brittney Lofthouse contributed to this article.*

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## What's new on the plateau

**Patrick Taylor**  
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

A number of community events have recently taken place in Highlands. Our community is enriched by so many nonprofit initiatives.

This past weekend was the 10th Annual Three River Fly Fishing Festival. At a reception for the fishermen participants I spoke with former Mayor David Wilkes who was the founder of the event. We reflected on how the festival has grown and developed over the years. This fishing event generated over \$26,000 this year for the Town of Highlands Scholarship Fund. This fund makes sure Highlands School graduates receive a scholarship to attend a college or technical school. I have been a fisherman in this event several times. Another value added component is that it celebrates the natural resources and beauty of this wonderful mountain region. What a tremendous way to support an important cause and also experience our natural wonders.

On Sunday the Empty Bowls event was held by several churches at Coleman Hall. Proceeds from this event also went to the Highlands Food Pantry. As a potter I have also participated in this event since its inception more than a decade ago through the initial organizing efforts of the Bascom Visual Arts Center. Let me also give a shout out to all the potters who donate their work to the event. It takes a lot of work to produce and fire the bowls. I also appreciate the work of volunteers who prepare the soup and food that fill the bowls.

The BearWise program is now complete. To obtain information about the program and how to address bear issues, visit the town website. Click on information and BearWise will appear on the ensuing menu. The BearWise page will also have a map where folks can identify bear sightings, where there are quite a few postings lately since this is a active time of the year for bears. You can also make a request for support and more information. A Bear Task Force volunteer will contact you and provide addition support and advice.

I appreciate businesses and residents who have consistently used the bear resistant roll carts as a part of the effort to limit bear interactions in town. The BearWise measures have helped address the issues of bears roaming our community. It is a good program for us and the bears. Everyone is invited to a ceremony on Oct. 5, at 9 a.m. by the Lake Sequoyah Dam area. NC Wildlife representatives will present the town our official BearWise signs.

Motorists will notice that the truck sign on Main Street by 200 Main has been changed to read no trailers over 30 feet permitted on the Franklin Road. These new signs are at the entrances in both Highlands and Franklin. We can hope they will reduce the number of 55 foot tractor trailer trucks attempting to travail this dangerous highway stretch.

## Letters to the Editor

### Homelessness a result of failed agencies

This letter to the editor is in response to the article entitled FDP, NCDOT at odds over homeless camps which appeared in the Sept. 23, 2021 edition of *The Macon County News*.

After reading the quite lengthy article several times over I have concluded that the Franklin Police Department is quite upset that the North Carolina Department of Transportation will not aid and abet their office in criminalizing homeless drug addicts because they litter. It seems that the staff writer was thorough in presenting the article. However, the voice of the homeless is not even heard. So, I will take it upon myself to try to speak. The article FDP an NCDOT at odds over homeless camps has left me with a bad taste in my mouth. Why? because the voice of the Police Department seems to be the prevailing voice in the entire article. It seems from the article, that FDP wants to have the DOT to put up no trespassing notices so that the police can go in and arrest and prosecute. Such action would only exacerbate the problem.

The petty interagency squabbles need to stop. Every agency created in a state, county, or township should be operated in a manner that improves the human condition for ALL. Criminalization is a primary contributing factor in causing homelessness. Drug addiction is a result of the failed "war on drugs." In my opinion, homeless people and drug addicts can both be called "collateral damage" of failed agencies.

There is an agency called the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) <https://www.usich.gov>

This website is filled with information. I highly recommend everyone, especially the Franklin PD Chief to take the time to go to their website. They have listed what it takes to end homelessness. There are eight action items on that list: housing, integrated healthcare, build career pathways, foster education connections, strengthen crisis response systems, reduce criminal justice involvement, build partnerships and prevent homelessness.

I would like to ask the FPD police chief, "Can you please explain to the public why you have chosen to pursue these homeless drug addicts so relentlessly that they can't even take shelter under a bridge?" Furthermore, "I really want to know why you are part of the problem and not looking for a real solution?"

I would hope that every public servant or person working in any government agency would take the time to see and understand that people who are the most vulnerable really are a result of failed systems. By now everyone reading this is probably thinking, "who is this person and what gives them the right to speak?" I am the mother of a homeless drug addict. The hurt I have endured in part because of the failed police system and failed court system and failed

healthcare system is very real and has gone on for decades. For my family it all started with prosecution of a minor and included distinct constitutional violations of my parental rights. That's a different subject, but I often wonder how many others it has happened to. As for me, I have finally just begun to speak out against the tyranny of unchecked police power.

Ann Ramos – Highlands, N.C.

### Prove your patriotism; roll up your sleeve

What a shameful thing that has happen to what was at one time a great country. The sacrifices from 9/11 were almost endless. Hundreds of firefighters, police and paramedics ran into the twin towers to evacuate the burning building, and died when it came crashing down. Thousands more emergency personnel, construction workers and volunteers headed to ground zero to search for survivors and bodies in the rubble, which many developed health problems from toxic dust. The year after, almost 200,000 Americans enlisted in the military, driven by desire to prevent another attack on our country. When our country needed people, they showed up. Where has all our patriotism gone, now that we have more than 1,500 people dying from the virus in one day. Just as in a war, the fight against covid requires citizens to depend on one another and the country. Compared to what was ask of so many people 20 years ago, the sacrifices required in this struggle are minimal. We don't have to dig through smoking ruins with our bare hands, all we simply need to do is roll up the sleeve and get vaccinated. But yet there are so many who are eligible people who won't do so, insisting it's there right to risk catching and spreading this killer disease. Sure a wonderful thing on 9/11 people didn't have all this hatred pumped in them. Was a blessing we didn't have Donald Trump around. 9/11 was an attack by foreign extremists the bodies that are now piling up in morgues are the victims of domestic madness. How can we stay proud of a country, where people have gotten so mean, to reach out and help one another. What's happen to our patriotism. Would rather see their own children die, than wear a mask. Has four years of Trump and his proud boys his meanness and lies broke down the American way. You can't let this be a political thing, its deadly. Its just never been the American way. You have to work together to make a great country. Take 9/11 as a good example. Trump is a mad man and should be put in a padded cell. Lets all work together and get out the mask and get vaccinated and look after one another and we can make America safe.

Kathy Whitley – Franklin, N.C.

Email letters to the editor to  
[maconcountynews@gmail.com](mailto:maconcountynews@gmail.com)

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## Do your own research; knowledge is power

"Get wisdom. With all your getting, get understanding." Prov. 4:7. This was my high school class's senior motto many years ago. The Bible says "My people perish for lack of wisdom" Hosea 4:6. Do we take time to ask God for wisdom as we live our daily lives?

I am thankful that we live in a time when although our nation faces many crises, there is opportunity for turning crises around as people stand up for our God-given rights and for our freedoms to be protected and restored. There is opportunity for us to form new relationships, new friendships, as we unite in search of truth, and move toward unity instead of division. A current prophet, Timothy Dixon, has been given a word from the Lord that says, "A spirit of truth has been released." Dixon says "... the greatest move, the greatest revival, the greatest shaking that has ever shook the Earth is here upon us." (Timothy Dixon: "Donald Trump, Joe Biden, Judas Iscariot Betrays" on YouTube). Others have said that this is an Esther moment, that we "are here for such a time as this." A Christian song in recent years has words "These are the days of Elijah...." As Elijah stood up to the hundreds of prophets of Baal, many today are standing up to tyranny and the overreach of government at all levels, town, county, state, nation in this country and across the world. There are protests against illegal government mandates regarding masks, COVID-19 inoculations, and lockdowns in countless places. For one, see civil rights attorney Leigh Dundas, whose family history goes back to Nazi Germany, addresses a crowd, where she shares about victories against government over reach in Orange County, Calif.

<https://www.facebook.com/david.cheyne/videos/10157554679791805/>

"Truth will set you free." Cognitive dissonance is defined as "the state of having inconsistent thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes, especially as relating to behavioral decisions and attitude change." An example, when what we are being told is so different from what we believe to be real that we can't wrap our minds around it. I have found that recognizing many lies which I have previously believed for the lies they are has been empowering. I know that light overcomes darkness and "for nothing is hid that shall not be made manifest, nor anything secret that shall not be known." Luke 8:17

We are created to be social beings, connected to fellow humans. We are meant to love and forgive each other. It has been uplifting to see smiles on more and more maskless people in recent months. As I research, I have found more evidence that masks don't help to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The box of the blue and white masks which I checked had words saying that those masks don't protect against coronavirus.

Also, in Dr. Anthony Fauci's emails released to the public, an email from him on 2/4/2020 to Sylvia Burrell, former Secretary of HHS, states "Sylvia: Masks are really for infected people to prevent them from spreading infection to people who are not infected rather than protecting uninfected people from acquiring infection. The typical mask you buy in the drug store is not really effective in keeping out virus, which is small enough to pass through the materials.... I do not recommend that you wear a mask, particularly since you are going to a low risk area."

In a 2020 study which reviewed 10 random controlled studies from 1946 to July 27, 2018, results showed no significant reduction in influenza transmission with the use of face masks. It was stated that medical or surgical masks were designed to protect against contamination of patient wounds and to protect the wearer against splashes or sprays of bodily fluids. See "Fauci Email Proves He Knew Face Masks Don't Work" 11 min.

<https://www.ise.media/video/yes-fauci-email-proves-he-knew-face-masks-don-t-work-110.html>

Science Has Proven Mask Mandates Are More Harmful to Children Than Covid (9 min.)

<https://www.ise.media/video/science-has-proven-m-sk>

[mandates-are-more-harmful-to-children-than-covid-120.html](https://www.ise.media/video/mandates-are-more-harmful-to-children-than-covid-120.html).

In my Sept. 2, 2021 letter to the paper, I cited a short Tucker Carlson segment related to masks. Whether you like him or not, the point of the story was that in the Spanish flu era of 2018-19, a photograph was printed showing some of those in power who were mandating masks for others attending a boxing match maskless. The hypocrisy helped to wake up the public and end the mask mandates.

When a letter writer accuses others of "misinformation," and makes generalizations such as "Because of overwhelming scientific evidence and outcome data we know masks work and are highly effective," without giving any sources of that information, it is difficult to take that writer seriously no matter what credentials he or she may have. What scientific evidence? What outcome data? Without having sources, one cannot verify whether these statements are accurate or not. What "well-designed random control trials are the evidence to which we should be paying attention"? According to Dr. Lee Merritt and other doctors, in previous animal studies with mRNA technology and SARS type viruses all of the ferrets, cats, and another animal died after being vaccinated and later exposed to the wild virus. See <https://www.lewrockwell.com/2021/04/no-author/dr-lee-merritt-in-animal-studies-after-being-injected-with-mrna-technology-all-animals-died-upon-reinfectio>

We should all have a choice of what medical treatment to take and particularly whether to take an experimental injection based on mRNA technology that has never been used before. The Nuremburg Code states that there should be informed consent before one participates in a medical experiment. Has anyone read the package insert which should state risks from any COVID-19 injection? It has been announced that "Several doctors from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) gave startling testimony on Friday during a hearing on the COVID-19 vaccines. One of the highlights of this testimony was the allegation that the vaccines are actually killing more people than they are saving. The doctors also said that the COVID "variants" are being driven by the vaccines, a conclusion those of us with working brains have already arrived at. The FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee ultimately voted 16-2 after 8 hours of testimony, shooting down Joe Biden's hopes and dreams of imposing boosters on all Americans." See <https://www.patriotinsider.org/bombshell-testimony-top-scientists-at-vaccine-hearing-reveals...>

Knowledge is power. There are numerous sources of ways to improve our immune systems to stay healthy. Staying positive and out of fear is most important. Get out in nature. Enjoy music, be with friends, vaccinated or not. There are sources of information for those who have been vaccinated to protect themselves from some of the adverse effects of the injections, such as possible blood clots. America's Frontline Doctors' website has protocols for protecting from illness and from adverse effects. Please do your own research and most importantly ask the Holy Spirit for wisdom and discernment.

Panthea Crawford – Franklin, N.C.

## America still the best option on earth

On a trip to Asheville recently we passed a place covered over with kudzu. I couldn't help but see in it a picture of what is taking place in our country. Kudzu comes from Japan and started out as a corrective to soil erosion and ended up a huge problem because it is an foreign invasive plant! Unfortunately many Americans voted for Biden because "He's NOT Trump." What seemed to them a solution to their hatred of Trump turned out to be a national disaster. I believe many Democrats now regret their decision.

But what to do about it? We are now stuck with a Puppet, not a President, and an Administration that is liberal and bent on forcing Socialism on us. In the process they have created the greatest border crisis in our history. As thousands of undocumented foreigners invade our southern border weekly, Biden and Harris do absolutely nothing, allowing

people with Covid, drug dealers, criminals, possible terrorists, infiltrating the throngs who feel invited to come by this administration. We have drugs, property destruction, and violence overwhelming our large cities as the rule of law is discarded. Inflation is continuing to rise as gas and grocery prices soar. We have a huge deficit of workers because people are being paid to stay home. The economy is headed for a downfall as we carelessly spend money we do not have. They are passing the most liberal abortion bill ever, allowing the procedure at any time for any reason and trying to force our doctors to perform procedures against their consciences. Our colleges have been hijacked by "woke" and liberal academia, turning our students against America as we know it. I could go on and on.

I cannot believe 40% of Americans think we are "headed in the right direction" as some polls indicate. They would either have to be ignorant of the facts, brainwashed, committed Socialists or Communists or maybe just wanting someone to take care of them without effort on their part, because that's what socialism promises to do. It also destroys initiative, and takes control of our lives while its leaders rise to power.

I urge all voters who only listen to the liberal mainstream media, to consider listening to some conservative news outlets to get a broader perspective because you are not getting the whole story, only what the liberal leaning media want you to hear. We are indeed at a crossroads, and if Biden doesn't completely unravel our country by the 2022 midterm elections, we have one last chance to take back some semblance of common sense governing. Please, please consider voting conservative. It is our only chance to save the freedom that we Americans have taken for granted all these years. I cannot understand why we who have freedom would want to trade it in for what others are desperately trying to escape. We simply cannot let that happen!

America, with all her faults, is still the best option on this earth. We are seeing the fallout from what liberalism would bring: "... by their fruits you will know them." So I pray every day for God to forgive us for turning our backs on Him and letting others so easily discard the vision of our forefathers, who though not perfect, fought for and some died for, the chance to be free and to share a noble cause to help others obtain freedom as well. Let us not betray those who generously gave all for what is on the line this very day, this very hour. The enemy is already in our camp. We must do our part to fight him with every means we have left.

So, be informed by facts not propaganda, Encourage our representatives in Congress by writing or calling (Tillis, Burr and Cawthorn have comment lines) and encouraging them to fight against the liberal agenda before them. Vote conservative. Please do your part and pray, pray, pray that Almighty God will graciously intervene and have mercy on us.

Loretta Hastings – Franklin, N.C.

*The Macon County News letters page is a public forum open to a wide variety of opinions as a right guaranteed in the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Letters are neither accepted nor rejected based on content. Letters must be signed and contact information provided. Views expressed are not necessarily reflective of the opinions of publisher, editor or staff. Writers are asked to refrain from personal attacks against individuals or businesses.*

# Macon County Fair 2021



Photos by Ellen Bishop and Vickie Carpenter



Naomi Knight, Grand Champion



Samuel Henry, Reserve Champion



Theresa Holland won Best Cake in the County.





Madeline Bishop & Joy Wilkinson



Hayden McDonald



Braylen & Mason Keener



Gabrielle Wilkinson



Easton McDonald



Kenleigh Deal & Haylee Ledford



# Arrest Report

*The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests September 17 - 26. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.*



## Macon County Sheriff's Department

### September 20

Monique Laverne Smith, was charged with failure to appear for possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a schedule I controlled substance and simple possession of a schedule II controlled substance. Joel Lynch made the arrest.

### September 21

Rickie Lynn Antes II, was charged with larceny of a motor vehicle, larceny of motor vehicle parts, possession of a stolen motor vehicle and attempt to obtain property by false pretense. Corporal James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

Sara Beth Rowe-Ritter, was charged with domestic verbal. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Joshua Curtis Kruger, was charged with sex offender/child on premises. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

Matthew Jerry Levan, was charged with trafficking opium or heroin, possession of methamphetamine and carrying a concealed gun. Matthew T. Breedlove made the arrest.

Seth Michael Curtis, was charged with indecent liberties with a child. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

### September 22

Kelly William Brasier, was charged with injury to real property, breaking and entering, larceny after breaking and entering, possession of stolen goods, possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver methamphetamine, possession of fentanyl and possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Jessica Jevonne Stiwinter, was charged with probation violation and possession of stolen goods/property. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Wyatt Lane Qualls, was charged with larceny of a firearm, possession of a stolen firearm and breaking and entering.

Toni Leann Brewer, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Samuel Ray Webb, was charged with habitual impaired driving. Costine Jigla made the arrest.

### September 24

Ryan Mannon Crawford, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. Sergeant Anthony Hopkins made the arrest.

### September 25

Jonathan William Talley, was issued warrant service. Gabe D. Bingham made the arrest.

Crystal Dawn Bates, was charged with possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver methamphetamine, maintaining place for a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. William D. Stamey made the arrest.

### September 26

Clarence James McCall, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

Shawn Christopher Casey, was charged with failure to

appear and probation violation. Troy L. Burt made the arrest.

Tyler Johnathan Thurman, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and no operators license.

Ronald Edward Swofford, was charged with habitual felon. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

## Franklin Police Department

### September 17

Tranquilino Alexis Mendoza-Mendoza, 24, was charged with driving while impaired. A \$1,500 bond was set.

### September 19

Carissa Rosetta McGaha, 25, was charged with driving while intoxicated. A \$1,500 bond was set.

### September 22

Andrew Joseph Baxley, 22, was charged with trafficking methamphetamine by transportation, trafficking methamphetamine by possession and possession of drug paraphernalia. A \$250,000 bond was set.

James Daniel York, 56, was charged with disorderly conduct. A \$500 bond was set.

## Jackson County Sheriff's Department

### September 20

Jonathan Richard Ellison, 35, of Scarlet Ridge, was charged with assault on a female.

Michael William Rauch, 60, of Black Wolf Ridge Rd., Whittier, was charged with simple assault.

Daniel Wayne Warren, 39, of Sylva, was charged with trespass of real property. No bond was set.

### September 21

Logan McKenna Otter, 26, of Junes Loop, Cherokee was charged with fugitive from another state.

Andrew Todd Muenzel, 57, of Cherokee, was charged with simple possession of a schedule IV controlled substance. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

### September 22

Alisha Kaye Toineeta, 29, of Kallups Cold Mtn. Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for possession of heroin, felony probation violation, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of methamphetamine.

Ted Christopher Jenkins, 48, of Lower Tuskegee Rd, Robbinsville, was charged with failure to appear for conspiracy to commit felony larceny and false report to a police station. A secured bond of \$3,000 was set.

Heather Lee Taylor, 32, of Young Squirrel Dr., Cherokee, was charged with felony larceny, possession of stolen goods/property and second degree trespass. A secured bond of \$5,000 was set.

David James Leary, 44, of Longbow Lane, Whittier, was charged with assault on a female. An unsecured bond of \$500 was set.

Thomas Frank Scott, 41, of Dills Branch Rd., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and possession of a schedule II controlled substances. No bond was set.

### September 23

Wayne Elliott Driver, 47, of Hensley Cemetary Rd., Whittier, was charged with simple assault. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set.

Andre Johannes Roestenberg, 80, of Whittier, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation and second degree trespass. A secured bond of \$2,500 was set.

Christopher Michael Johnson, 42, of Harris Circle, was charged with being a habitual felon. No bond was set.

### September 24

Sara Jane Ferrin, 35, of Franklin, was charged with failure

# Routine traffic stop results in drug arrest

Last Tuesday, Sept. 21, the Macon County Sheriff's Office conducted a routine traffic stop that led to the arrest of a Macon County man and the seizure of trafficking levels of narcotics known as fentanyl.

The traffic stop was initiated after deputies observed multiple motor vehicle equipment violations. Familiar with the occupant of the vehicle and as part of an ongoing narcotic investigation, officers with the Macon County Sheriff's Patrol Unit, Narcotics Unit, Canine Unit and Jackson County Sheriff's Office all assisted during the traffic stop. The driver of the vehicle was identified as Matthew Jerry Levan of Franklin who is known to local law enforcement.

During the traffic stop, a search of the vehicle and its occupants was conducted and a trafficking level of fentanyl was recovered along with methamphetamine and drug paraphernalia. A concealed firearm was also recovered during the search. After conferring with the District Attorney's office, Levan was arrested and charged with trafficking, opium or heroin by possession, trafficking opium or heroin by transportation, possession of methamphetamine and carrying a concealed weapon. After further investigation and communication with the District Attorney's office a search warrant was obtained and executed on Levan's residence. Participating in the execution of the search warrant were members of the Macon County Sheriff's Office Patrol, Investigations, Narcotic and K9 Units as well as a member of the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. During the search of the residence, detectives seized several items pertinent to the case including U.S. currency and additional drug paraphernalia.

As of press time, Levan remains in the Macon County Detention Center under an \$800,000 secured bond.

While an arrest has been made, this case remains an ongoing criminal investigation.

to appear for injury to personal property. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

Ricky Carl Brooks, 58, of Grindstone Knob Rd., Whittier, was charged with first degree trespass, felony larceny and obtaining property by false pretenses. An unsecured bond of \$10,000 was set.

### September 26

Kayleigh Morgan Hamrick, 22, of Citadel Dr., Cullowhee, was charged with resisting a public officer and assault and battery. No bond was set.

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**COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

**Nantahala Hiking Club** will take a two-mile out and back easy hike on the Cove Forest and Anselm's trails with several gentle ups and downs on Saturday, Oct. 2. Meet at the Piggly Wiggly parking lot in Dillard, Ga., at 10 a.m., and carpool to Patterson Gap on Betty Creek Rd. After the hike, a short drive up Betty Creek Rd. to Barker's Creek Mill will allow participants to see the mill operate and have lunch. Visitors and well behaved dogs are welcome. Bring food and fluids as needed. Reservations are not needed. For more information, call hike leader David Stearns at (828)349-7361.

**The Macon County Writers Club** will meet on Tuesday, Oct. 5, 1 p.m., at the library in the big room. Bring your stories. Everyone welcome. For more info contact jsteeley@dnet.net

**Franklin Women's Club** will meet on Friday, Oct. 8, at Fat Buddies restaurant in Westgate Plaza. The program will be a "purse auction." Patty Priester, member will be the auctioneer. To RSVP, call Brenda Jacobs at (828)421-0411. For more information about the club, call Joyce Wood at (828)349-4440.

**Death Cafe** will be held on Sunday, Oct. 10, 2 to 4 p.m. Join Jan Brewer, M.A., CMT, for a group-directed conversation where you can share your fears, tears, laughter, curiosity, creativity, and stories related to death and dying/life and living. For more information, call Jan at (510)684-5555 or visit [www.deathcafe.com](http://www.deathcafe.com).

**Share the Journey Support Group for Caregivers** whose loved ones are experiencing memory loss will meet on Wednesday, Oct. 13 and 27, 2 p.m., at First Presbyterian Church, 26 Church St. Enter the church from the parking lot, come through the double red doors in the courtyard and follow the signs. For more information, call (828)524-3119.

**Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Friends of the Library** the Macon County Public Library is displaying a pictorial and written history of the organization through the end of the year. The library is located at 148 Siler Farm Rd., in Franklin.

**Thursday Painters** meets at the Environmental Research Center every Thursday 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring your own project, a table covering, and a bag lunch. All skill levels and mediums welcome. Contact Pat Mennenger [pm14034@yahoo.com](mailto:pm14034@yahoo.com) For more information [Franklinuptowngallery.com](http://Franklinuptowngallery.com)

**AL-ANON Family Groups** In-person meeting with Covid 19 preventive measures is held each Thursday, noon at First Presbyterian Church, 471 Main St., Highlands. An AL-ANON Zoom meeting is held on Saturday, 10:15am ID:889-3772-7928 Password: Easy-Doesit or call to speak with a member of AL-ANON at (828)342-6866.

**Franklin Alcoholics Anonymous** In Person Meetings with Covid 19 Preventive Measures are held on Tuesday, 5:30 p.m. at No Wrong Door, 102 Thomas Heights Rd., Sunday at 1 p.m., Monday, Wednes-

day and Friday 5:30 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church Outreach Center, 66 Harrison Ave., Tuesday, 8 a.m., Thursday, noon at St. Agnes Episcopal Church on 66 Church St., 7 p.m. at St. Cyprians Episcopal Church, 216 Roller Mill Rd. On Line Meeting information is available by visiting [www.aawnc80.org](http://www.aawnc80.org). or to speak with a member of A.A. call (828)349-4357.

**Macon Chips, Franklin's Wood Carving Club** meets on Thursdays, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. inside the Franklin High School Wood Shop just off McCollum Drive. Anyone interested is encouraged to attend. Anyone under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult. For more information, call (828)342-8126.

**Slow Spokes Franklin, a bicycle riding group**, meets every Tuesday at 6 p.m., at Tasse Shelter on Ulco Dr. Join them for a casual ride on the Greenway. For more information, call (828)371-4925.

**Franklin Duplicate Bridge Club** Wednesday afternoon games are held from 1 to 4 p.m. Arrive no later than 12:45 p.m., at the Robert C. Carpenter Community Building on 441 S. While allowing play without masks, current regulations require all players to be fully vaccinated. For more information, call Larry Noyes at (828)200-9394 or email [LarryRNoyes@gmail.com](mailto:LarryRNoyes@gmail.com)

**Gem & Mineral Museum**, located in the Old Jail on Phillips Street in downtown Franklin is now open Fridays and Saturdays from 12 to 4 p.m., featuring gems and artifacts from North Carolina as well as all over the world.

**Franklin Seventh Day Adventist Community Services** are open on Monday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., to help Macon County residents in need with rent, power bill and a fully stocked food pantry. The church is located at 93 Church St., Suite 212. For more information, call (828)369-9000.

**Habitat for Humanity of Macon/Jackson County needs volunteers** to share skills or gain some experience learning new ones. From carpentry to cleaning, marketing to moral support, computer skills, planning and organizing or just plain common sense, the greatest gift you could ever give is time. Any amount is good. Some great times, lasting friendships and rewarding experiences await. Call (828)369-3716 or (828)371-5442.

**Friends of the Greenway FROG Quarters** is now open Wednesday to Saturday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at 573 E. Main. Stop by for coffee, a soft drink and a snack, and free internet. Reservations taken for the shelters.

**Celebrate Recovery at Discover Church** every Monday night, 6 to 8 p.m. Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind. Celebrate Recovery is a safe place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our life. Free childcare up to five years old for attending parents. Discover Church is located at 47 Macon Center Dr. (behind Bojangles). For more information, email [cr@discover.church](mailto:cr@discover.church) for questions.

**CHURCH HAPPENINGS**

**First Alliance Church** is holding Sunday Service, Oct. 3, at 10:30 a.m. Sunday School for all ages is at 9:30 a.m. Senior Pastor Scott Eichelberger will continue his message as part of his series on Genesis. The church is located at 31 Promise Lane (off Womack Street, next door to Trimont Christian Academy). For more information, call the church office at (828)369-7977.

**Saint Francis of Assisi Catholic Church** is beginning inquiry classes for those interested in learning about the Catholic faith beginning Monday, Oct. 4, at 7 p.m. Deacon David Ramsey will be leading the classes. Masks are required. Snacks will be provided. For information, call (828)524-2289.

**Franklin First United Methodist Church Sunday In-person Worship** is held at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. or on Facebook at Franklin First United Methodist Church, either live or later on recorded video. They follow COVID-19 health protocols for in-person worship. Plan to arrive early for check in, masks are required. The church is located at 66 Harrison Avenue in downtown Franklin; senior pastor is Rev. David Beam. For more information, call (828)524-3010 or visit us at <http://www.firstumcfranklin.org>

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

**Grace Baptist Church** services are held on Sunday, 11 a.m. Frank Rodriguez is the pastor. All are welcome to attend. The church is located at 130 Setser Branch Rd.

**Prentiss Church of God** is holding Sunday worship service in its sanctuary beginning at 10:30 a.m. Social distancing is observed and safety measures are in place. Services are also streamed online on the Prentiss Church of God Facebook page. The church is located at 59 Church Hill Lane, off Addington Bridge Road. Phone: (828)369-3885.

**Seventh Day Adventist Church** meets on Saturday, with Sabbath School at 9:30 a.m., Worship Service at 11 a.m. Masks are optional. The church is located at 71 Brendle Rd.

**All Saints Episcopal Church, Franklin** Services are held Rite I, 8 a.m. without music and Rite II, 10:15 a.m. with music, every Sunday. First and third Sundays at St. Agnes Chapel, 66 Church St. and second and fourth Sundays at St. Cyprian's Chapel, 216 Roller Mill Rd. Sunday 10:15 a.m. services can be viewed live on the website: [www.allsaintsfranklin.org](http://www.allsaintsfranklin.org) and past Sundays can be viewed on YouTube by searching "All Saints Franklin" to find our YouTube page.

**Olive Hill Church Services** are held on Sunday at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.; and Wednesdays at 7 p.m. Pastor is Keith McWhite. The church is located at 2389 Olive Hill Road.

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**SUDOKU ANSWERS FOR PG. 22**

5	8	6	3	9	2	7	1	4
9	4	3	8	7	1	5	6	2
2	7	1	6	5	4	9	8	3
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8	5	2	7	3	6	1	4	9
1	9	4	2	6	7	8	3	5
7	2	8	5	1	3	4	9	6
3	6	5	9	4	8	2	7	1

**CROSSWORD PUZZLE ANSWERS FOR PG. 22**

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# SCC's 'Milestone' now taking submissions

Submissions are now being taken for the 2021 edition of the Milestone, the biennial art and literary review published by Southwestern Community College.

Milestone showcases the creative expressions of local writers and visual artists. The periodical is representative of the abundance of talent in the region and seeks to foster creative potential by providing artists an opportunity to gain public awareness.

All residents of Jackson, Macon and Swain counties and the Qualla Boundary, as well as SCC students and alumni, are eligible. Only unpublished work may be submitted. Prose should not exceed 2,000 words, and should be limited to two pages in length. Writers may submit more than one work. All writing must be double-spaced and submitted in paper format or via email. In addition, each page must be numbered, and the author's name, address, telephone number and email address should be included on the last page of each submission.



Southwestern Community College's biennial art and literary review is currently taking submissions.

Visual artists and photographers may submit only black and white copies of original artwork and must also include name, address, telephone number, email address, title of work and photo caption (if applicable) on the back of each submission. Artists and photographers may also submit more than one work.

First- and second-place prizes will be awarded in three categories: poetry, prose (short story or nonfiction works) and visual arts, including photography. In addition, one cash prize will be awarded for cover art.

Literary submissions must be postmarked by Dec. 3, 2021, and sent to SCC Milestone, Attn. Hannah Sykes; 447 College Drive; Sylva, NC 28779 or via email to milestone@southwesterncc.edu. Submissions in visual art must be postmarked by the same date and sent to the same address, Attn. Hannah Sykes or via email to milestone@southwesterncc.edu.

For more information, contact Hannah Sykes at 828.339.4463 or h\_sykes@southwesterncc.edu.



## Dancin' on the square

Audience members at last Saturday's Pickin on the Square broke into a line dance during a number by the Caribbean Cowboys, last week's featured band. Lisa & Harry are this week's performers. The music begins at 7 p.m. in downtown Franklin. Photo by Betsey Gooder

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So don't miss this concert. Bring your chairs and leave your cares and head to the gazebo in downtown Franklin this Saturday. Remember, these concerts are brought to you by the Town of Franklin, free of charge. See you there this Saturday.

Donnie Clay, Coordinator for Pickin' on the Square



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# Author Ron Rash's following reaches far and wide

Deena C. Bouknight  
Contributing Writer

For a primarily rural, mountainous Appalachian region with a population of fewer than 800,000 people across 16 counties, Western North Carolina can still boast exceptional talent in regard to the written word. Although many people know about author Ron Rash and may have read his *The New York Times* best-selling book, "Serena," or any number of his varied works, few realize that he is not just regionally renowned but world renowned as well.

At Highlands' Center for Life Enrichment on Sept. 7, Rash spoke to a packed lecture hall about his latest book, "In the Valley," which includes not only short stories, but an additional novella ending for "Serena." Participants learned that the Appalachian born and raised author, who is also the Parris Distinguished Professor in Appalachian Cultural Studies at Western Carolina University (WCU), has published poems, short stories, and novels that strike a chord with regional readers and foreign readers alike. In fact, his works have been translated into more than a dozen languages, and France is a favorite fan base.

Brian Railsback, Ph.D., a professor of English and the former founding Dean of The Honors College at WCU, introduced Rash during the Sept. 7 event and explained that the French were so enamored with the author's "loyalty to the [WNC] region" and his "writings about the Appalachian landscape and culture," that Frédérique Spill, associate professor of American literature at the University of Picardy-Jules Verne in Amiens, France, wrote a 2019-published book about him: "The Radiance of Small Things in Ron Rash's Writing."

During an extensive 2014 interview, conducted by *Spill* in Paris, Rash explained that his books have also "done particularly well" not only in English-speaking countries, like Ireland, England, and Australia, but in countries such as Denmark, Netherlands, and China. In part because universi-



Author Ron Rash, who is also a professor at Western Carolina University, spoke recently in Macon County about his book "In the Valley," which like his other works about Appalachian culture, appeals to a global audience.

ties worldwide are beginning to teach Southern literature as a genre, but the distinct vernacular of the Appalachian region fascinates readers globally as well.

"My family has very deep roots in this region since the 1700s," said Rash. "I have tried to write about this place as truthfully as possible. I've never thought about being a regional writer as being anything limiting."

His books, including "The Cove," "One Foot in Eden," "Saints at the River," and "The World Made Straight," have earned a multitude of followers and awards primarily due to his historic and modern literary conveyance of "... the lives and longings of people living precariously in Southern Appalachia," as David A. Davis, chair of the Lanier Prize committee and associate professor of English at Mercer University shared in February 2020.

Rash read to the audience his story "The Belt," from "In the Valley," that tells of a century-old Appalachian flood and how a grandfather saves his grandson from being swept away from the rising waters. "The story is very timely for today and what happened recently in this area," said Rash. "Then and now, the flood wasn't anticipated."

Woven into the short story is not only elements of the Great Flood of 1916, but also specific details that take the reader into the historic time period: "... the Franklin clock chimed;" "He felt the hippin (diaper); "... went to the larder (cupboard)."

"I like to do research and find the names of actual things ... the details that help you believe the story," said Rash, who shared that he spent much time visiting his grandparents' farm near Boone and was able to hear regularly regionally distinct words and phrases, many of which – like hippin – might find their way into his stories.

"I like to write about the changes in this region," he said, "but also bring as much poetry into the prose as possible."

As far as where Rash's ideas for stories come from, he points often to his own childhood and the true stories he collected in his consciousness. But the idea for one of his most popular works, "Serena," came from a single image in his mind of a woman on a horse. For fans of "Serena," "In the Valley" includes a novella of the same title that provides readers of the 2008-released novel with more of the antagonistic female character's cunning villainess.

Books Unlimited in Franklin has for many years carried Rash's books.



## Deaths & Funerals

### Billy Solesbee

Billy Solesbee, 87, passed away Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021. He was born Feb. 21, 1934, in Macon County, North Carolina to the late Charles S. Solesbee and Nobia Cunningham Solesbee. He served his country for 23 years in the U.S. Navy and he served four years in the U.S. Air Force. He traveled the world and served two tours in Vietnam. He was of the southern Baptist faith. He loved fishing especially for trout.

Surviving are his wife, Juanita S. Solesbee; a son, Ronald Solesbee (Sharon) of Franklin, N.C.; Janet Solesbee of Spartanburg, S.C.; a brother, David Solesbee of Amosville, Va.; four grandchildren, Eddie Solesbee, Ronnie Solesbee, Sasha Henderson, and Judson Hall Jr.; four great-grandchildren, Kasi Solesbee, Addison Bates, Alexa Solesbee and Zayden Solesbee.

In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by three siblings, John Solesbee, Peggy Knoth, and Sue Allen.

A military graveside service will be held Saturday, Oct. 2, at 2 p.m., at Holly Springs Baptist Church Cemetery. The family will greet friends following the service at the cemetery.

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

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

### Hollis 'Kent' Busing

Hollis "Kent" Busing, 91, went home to his Lord and Saviour Jesus, on Sept. 18, 2021.

He was born in Lakeland, Fla., Sept. 1, 1931, to his parents, Ruth & Glenn Busing.

He graduated from the University of Florida as an electrical engineer in 1953. He was a decorated Air Force veteran who served in the Korean War. He became a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ for more than 50 years.

He is survived by his wife of 58 years, Diana Peck Busing.

They resided happily in beautiful Franklin, N.C., for more than 40 years. Also surviving are sons, W. David Busing, Max R. Busing and daughter, Lisa B. Antonowicz. They were blessed with eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Oct. 5, 12 p.m. at Western Carolina State Veterans Cemetery.



Hollis 'Kent' Busing

### Roland Dudley Bodden

Roland Dudley Bodden, 75, of Franklin, N.C., went to be with Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour on Thursday, Sept. 23, 2021.

Born in Miami, Fla., he was the son of the late Rayal Brazley Bodden and Ellice Kathryn Bodden. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a brother, Ken Bodden.

He was a retired electrician, and a member of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church. In his spare time, he enjoyed collecting records.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Linda Holder Bodden of Franklin; two brothers, Ellington Bodden, and Ralph Bodden (Bonnie) both of Florida; and two sisters, Alice Taylor of Georgia and Valerie Galloway of Florida; and several nieces and nephews.

No services are planned.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

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**Patricia 'Diane' Bryant Mathis**

Patricia "Diane" Bryant Mathis, 71, of Cullowhee, N.C., went home to be with Jesus on Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021.

She was the daughter of the late Jess Bryant and Jean Coggins Tilley. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by two siblings, Sandra Reece and Billy Bryson. She was a member of Sugar Creek Baptist Church on Caney Fork.

She lived most of her life in Jackson County. She loved her church, nature, and bird watching, especially hummingbirds. The thing she cherished most was spending time with family. Her granddaughter, Parker, was her world.

She is survived by her husband of 50 years, Dale Mathis; one daughter, Susan Mathis; and one granddaughter, Parker Sophie Mathis, all of Cullowhee; seven sisters, Martha Jones of Sylva, N.C., Bobbie Durham of Waynesville, N.C., Peggy Pace of Pickens, S.C., Dana Byers of Grover, N.C., Debbie Rushing of Tenn., Jamie Cunningham of Sylva, and Kim Austin of Sylva; one brother, Steve Tilley of Whittier, N.C.; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Funeral service was held Sunday, Sept. 26, at Sugar Creek Baptist Church. Rev. Steve Webb and Rev. Robert Stiles officiated. Burial was in the Balsam Grove Baptist Church Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Doug Mathis, Caleb Mathis, Cole Mathis, Todd Mathis, Dustin Melton, and Trevor Burns.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Balsam Grove Baptist Church Cemetery, C/O Dale Mathis, 270 Potpourri Ln., Cullowhee, NC 28723 or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

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

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.

**Joseph Edward Farrell**

Joseph Edward Farrell, 60, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus on Tuesday, Sept. 21, 2021.

Born in Philadelphia, Pa., he was the son of the late Joseph Edward Farrell Sr. and the late Patricia Ann Linn. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his grandparents, Helen Florence Linn, and Elmer John Linn, whom Joe loved and spent most of his childhood with. He was a graduate of the University of Tampa, and a member of Holly Springs Baptist Church, where he served as an assistant deacon. "Joey," as he was affectionately known to his girls, loved life, and trying to surprise others. He loved to play racquetball, deep sea fish, and woodworking. The most important of all was his family, especially his loving wife, his daughters, grandkids, and his dogs.

He is survived by his wife of 17 wonderful years, Tammie Farrell; daughters, Andi Harsey (Andrew) of Sugar Grove, N.C., Brianna Sumner (Chris) of Mooresville, N.C., Alyssa Burk (Luke Cook) of Franklin, and Amanda Hooper (Matt) of Clyde, N.C.; sister, Diane Farrell Kramer of Chattanooga, Tenn.; and a sister-in-law, Judy Jones of Franklin; grandchildren, Wayah Harsey, Finley Harsey, Wesley Hooper, Waylon Hooper, and Ansley Cook; niece, Patricia Helen Kramer; nephew, Jonathan James Kramer; and his faithful four-legged companions, Cooper, Casper, Wiz, and Ruger; along with many other numerous friends.

A celebration of life will be on Sunday, Nov. 28, at 2 p.m. at Holly Springs Baptist Church. Rev. Donnie Seagle will officiate.

Memorial donations can be made to Care Net, 130 Bidwell Street, Franklin, NC 28734.

Online condolences can be left at [www.maconfuneralhome.com](http://www.maconfuneralhome.com). Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



**Patricia 'Diane' Mathis**

**Linda Greene Clary**

Linda Greene Clary, 82, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Wednesday, Sept. 22, 2021. She was born March 2, 1939, in St. Petersburg, Fla., to the late Ben and Lora Gillis Greene. She worked and retired from many dental offices in St. Petersburg, Fla., and Atlanta, Ga. She was a flight attendant for Eastern Airlines in the early 1960s and was Episcopal by faith. She loved the beach, the coast and the mountains; she also loved her grandchildren, family and friends. She had two wonderful husbands and was preceded in death by her first husband of 25 years, the late Bill Wells.

She is survived by her husband of 22 years, William Claiborne Clary III; two daughters, Amy Putnam (Larry) of Sylva, N.C., and Catherine Clary-Brown (Chris) of Stafford, Va.; a son, Christopher Clary (Cheryl) of Florida; special niece, Dori Vasquez (Paul) of Sacramento, Calif.; sister, Debby Lynch (Kelly) of St. Petersburg, Fla.; four grandchildren, Kaitlyn Putnam, Kari Putnam, Olivia Clary and Wyatt Brown; and many family and friends.

A memorial service was held Saturday, Sept. 25, in the Chapel of Bryant-Grant Funeral Home.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home is serving the Clary family. Online condolences can be made at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).



**Linda Greene Clary**

**James Ware McCallum Jr.**

James Ware McCallum Jr., 79, of Franklin, N.C., died Wednesday, Sept. 1, 2021, at Angel Medical Center in Franklin, N.C., after a brief battle with Covid. He was a native of Montgomery County, a 1960 graduate of Montgomery County High School and served in the Army National Guard. He lived in North Augusta, South Carolina and in south Georgia most of his life. He was the owner of McCallum Landscape in North Augusta before moving to Franklin in 2005. He was a member of Community Baptist Church in Franklin. He is preceded in death by his son, Jay McCallum; his parents, James Ware McCallum Sr. and Mauren Meadows McCallum; and siblings, Betty Ware Bivins and James Archibald McCallum.

His family includes his life partner, Phyllis Rowland of Franklin; one brother-in-law, Sonny Bivins of Nashville, Tenn.; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

A graveside funeral service will be held at Mt. Vernon Memorial Cemetery on Saturday afternoon, Oct. 2, at 3 p.m., with Rev. Don Moyer officiating.

The family will receive friends at Ronald V. Hall Funeral Home on Friday evening from 6 until 7 p.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Shriners Hospitals for Children at [www.shrinerschildrens.org/en/giving](http://www.shrinerschildrens.org/en/giving)

Ronald V. Hall Funeral Home of Vidalia is in charge of arrangements.



**James Ware McCallum Jr.**

**Rowland Baker Ranger Jr.**

Rowland Baker Ranger Jr., 74, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Sept. 22, 2021. He was born Feb. 11, 1947, in Miami, Fla., to the late Rowland Baker Ranger Sr. and Lillian Matussek Ranger. He was a Vietnam veteran.

He is survived by his wife Jill Ranger; and his son, Keith Ranger.

Bryant Grant Funeral Home is serving the Ranger family. Online condolences can be made at [www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com](http://www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com).

**Richard 'Dick' Weaver**

Richard "Dick" Weaver, 80, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with the Lord on Sept. 25, 2021. He was born in Rochester, N.Y., to the late Peter and Margery Tacy Weaver.

He served his country in the United States Navy during the Vietnam Era. After his military service he was employed as an inspector in the cotton mill industry. He was a faithful member of Victory Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife of 56 years, Jane Weaver; brother, Peter John Weaver (Sue) of New York; sister-in-law, Kathy Bailey (Phil) of West Virginia; and three nephews, Tony Wilder, Luke Weaver, and Jeff Weaver.

A memorial service will be held Oct. 15, at 1 p.m., at Victory Baptist Church. The family will receive friends one hour prior to the service. Rev. Rusty Wolfrey and Rev. Frank Rodriguez will officiate. Interment to follow at the Victory Baptist Church Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers memorial donations can be made to Victory Baptist Church School.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



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## Denny Hamlin secures spot in round of 8 with Las Vegas win

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

LAS VEGAS - As he crossed the Las Vegas Motor Speedway finish line to claim the South Point 400 trophy, Denny Hamlin screamed into his team radio, "Viva Las Vegas." And indeed, it was that kind of night for the perennial championship contender, who led a race best 137 of the 267 laps to earn his first Las Vegas victory in 20 starts and take an automatic bid into the next round of the Playoffs.

The 40-year old Virginian edged reigning NASCAR Cup Series champion Chase Elliott by .442-seconds. Elliott cut into Hamlin's lead on every one of the closing 10 laps, taking full advantage of traffic, but was ultimately unable to catch Hamlin's No. 11 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota.

Hamlin's JGR teammates Kyle Busch and Martin Truex Jr. finished third and fourth with Penske Racing's Ryan Blaney rounding out the Top-5 – all Playoff drivers.

Tyler Reddick, who just missed advancing to this three-race Playoff round by a mere two-points last week, finished sixth after running among the Top-3 for much of the late race laps.

Penske Racing's Brad Keselowski, Chip Ganassi Racing's Kurt Busch, Stewart-Haas Racing's Kevin Harvick and regular season champion, Kyle Larson rounded out the Top-10. Keselowski, Harvick and Larson are also championship eligible.

Hamlin led seven different times, won Stage 2 and took the lead for good with 39 laps remaining - facing that challenge from Elliott in the waning laps of a what was a relatively clean race – only one yellow flag outside of the competition caution and two stage breaks.

The only other caution for an on-track incident came out for a single car accident involving driver Joey Gase, who whose No. 15 Chevrolet lost a tire and made heavy impact with the wall. He was examined in the Infield Care Center but transported to an area hospital for a precautionary exam.

"It feels so good to win in Vegas, last couple times I've been so close but just didn't have the right breaks, but they got the car great and great to hold those guys off," said Hamlin, who earned his 46th career victory and becomes the first driver to officially earn a shot into the Playoff Round of 8.

"I'm so happy to not have to worry about the next two weeks, but I am a professional and I will work just as hard each and every week to win."

Obviously disappointed not to win, Elliott was still enthusiastic about his runner-up finish – his 12th top five of the season - rallying from a pit stop strategy that put him a lap down at one point.

"We were really close, just not quite close enough," Elliott said. "Denny did a really good job controlling the gap to me and he was having a hard time [lapping] with the 21 (Matt DiBenedetto)."

"Super close. Really proud of our NAPA team and I feel like we've been performing at a really nice level the last three or four weeks, just haven't had great results to show for it.

"Proud of the effort tonight and looking forward to the next two [races]. It's going to be wild."

Elliott's Hendrick Motorsports teammate Larson certainly looked like the driver to beat early on. He led 95 laps and won his series best 15th Stage win in the opening portion of the night, but a different pit strategy put him a lap down mid-race and he never fully recovered to challenge for the lead again.

While Hamlin earned the automatic bid into the next round of the Playoffs, Larson still leads the championship standings – 22 points over Kyle Busch.

With his seventh-place finish Keselowski moved into the eighth position in the standings, with races at Talladega, Ala. and the Charlotte ROVAL remaining to determine which eight drivers move on in the championship battle.

Hendrick Motorsports William Byron, who suffered a tire



Denny Hamlin, driver of the #11 FedEx Office Toyota, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series South Point 400 at Las Vegas Motor Speedway on Sept. 26, 2021 in Las Vegas, Nev.

Photo by Steph Chambers/Getty Images

Racing team swept the top four positions in the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Playoff race.

Berry's win proves himself versatile and up for the challenge. He won at the Martinsville, Va. short track earlier this year in the No. 8 JR Motorsports Chevrolet that he will drive fulltime next year. He matched that standard Saturday in the

No. 1 JR Motorsports Chevrolet. And he drove four other races this season in the No. 31 Chevrolet for team owner Jordan Anderson.

"Oh my gosh, that thing was so fast, it just took me a while to figure out," Berry said, adding, "I just had to stay disciplined and keep working on it and the guys made the right adjustments. And it was fast, man. Finally got a long run and got it all together."

As for racing his teammates, who are fighting for the championship.

"It was tough," Berry said smiling. "Me and Justin raced together a lot this year and most of them, he's gotten the better of me. Today we were able to get one. This is cool."

Eight of the 12 Xfinity Series Playoff drivers finished among the Top-10, including championship leader, Penske Racing's Austin Cindric in fourth and Joe Gibbs Racings drivers Daniel Hemric and Brandon Jones in fifth and sixth.

Regular season champion A.J. Allmendinger, who won Stage 1 for a season best 10th stage win - was seventh. Ty Gibbs, who joined Berry as the only two non-Playoff drivers among the Top-10 finished eighth. Allmendinger's Kaulig Racing teammate Justin Hailey was ninth and JGR's Harrison Burton 10th. Playoff driver Myatt Snider finished 15th, the last Playoff driver running at the end of the race.

The sweep up front was indicative of the evening as the JR Motorsports teammates paced the field all night. Allgaier led a race best 90 laps and won the Stage 2.

Berry took the lead from Allgaier with 42 laps remaining, relinquishing it only during final late race pit stops. He re-took

problem late in the race, finished 18th and is now four points below the cutoff line. Even with his Top-10, Harvick remains ninth in the standings – still looking for his first victory of the season.

Hendrick driver Alex Bowman finished 22nd and is 13 points behind Keselowski and Joe Gibbs Racing's Christopher Bell finished 25th, two laps down Sunday night fighting through several setbacks. He is 25 points out of that transfer position.

The second race in this Playoff NASCAR Cup Series round is the YellaWood 500 next Sunday at Talladega (Ala.) Super-speedway (2 p.m. ET, NBC, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). Keselowski won at Talladega this April. Hamlin is the defending Playoff race winner there.

**Josh Berry Steals Spotlight in Xfinity Series Playoff Opener**  
LAS VEGAS - Josh Berry seized opportunity and drove away from the competition Saturday night at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Tabbed to substitute for injured JR Motorsports driver Michael Annett, the Tennessee late model champion Berry earned his second win of the NASCAR Xfinity Series season claiming an impressive 4.396-second victory in the Playoff opener.

Berry, 30, led a 1-2-3 JR Motorsports team sweep in the Alsco Uniforms 302 – besting his teammates Justin Allgaier and Noah Gragson, whose second and third place finishes were tops among the 12 Playoff eligible drivers.

It was the second consecutive night one team showed the way up front at the Vegas 1.5-miler. On Friday, the ThorSport

the position with 17 laps and drove away for the victory.

Gragson's third place finish was remarkable considering the Las Vegas native was penalized twice on pit road and still drove through the field multiple times.

"I need to be better and they brought an unbelievable race car to the track and I'm happy for Josh and happy for everyone at Junior Motorsports, just wish we could have been the guy.

"We have really fast race cars at Junior Motorsports and everyone is super proud."

A handful of Playoff drivers were on the other end of fortune Saturday with Riley Herbst, Jeb Burton and Jeremy Clements all having their race cut short because of a 12-car accident on the restart following the Competition Caution period.

"I don't really think we need to be four-wide getting into [turn] one on lap 26," Burton said. "Nothing we could do there, frustrating. We needed a good run today, but we'll go to Talladega next week and win a race.

"Won there earlier in the year and almost won Daytona a couple weeks ago so I know I can go do it. Have the best team in the garage at speedway tracks so we'll go get it done next week and then go to the ROVAL."

With his fourth place finish at Vegas, Cindric takes a seven-point lead over Allmendinger in the Playoff standings. Allgaier is 28 points back, followed by Gragson (-29) and Hemric (-32).

Round 2 of the NASCAR Xfinity Series Playoffs, the Sparks 300 at Talladega, takes place next Saturday (4:30 p.m. ET, NBCSN, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio) on the 2.66-mile Talladega Superspeedway. Jeb Burton won at Talladega this Spring. Justin Haley is the defending Playoff race winner.

**Christian Eckes Leads Historic 1-2-3-4 Finish for Thor Sport Racing**

For the second consecutive week the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series crowned a first-time winner. Christian Eckes, a 20-year old New York native, took the lead on a final restart with four laps remaining to claim his first trophy and lead a historic 1-2-3-4 finish for the ThorSport Racing team.

Eckes teammate Ben Rhodes finished .272-seconds back, followed by Playoff driver Matt Crafton and veteran Johnny Sauter who completed the ThorSport four-of-a-kind at Las Vegas Motor Speedway. Todd Gilliland finished fifth after leading a race best 66 laps.

Although understandably excited on the radio when he realized he'd won the race, Eckes was more subdued and reflective when he climbed out of his No. 98 ThorSport Toyota and greeted the crowd.

"Man, this is big," said Eckes, formerly a Kyle Busch Motorsports driver, who was making only his ninth start in a part-time campaign with ThorSport this season.

"It's been a tough year. That's all I got to say, it's been a tough year since last November. Hopefully I proved I can still do this.

"I'm speechless. It's been a rough year, been a rough year."



Christian Eckes, driver of the #98 Curb Records Toyota, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series Victoria's Voice Foundation 200 presented by Westgate Resorts at Las Vegas Motor Speedway on Sept. 24, 2021, in Las Vegas, Nev. Photo by Steph Chambers/Getty Images

With the runner-up effort, Rhodes was the top finishing Playoff driver in a race that saw five of the eight playoff contenders finish 20th or worse. Rhodes' work, coupled with an uncharacteristically tough outing for regular season champion John Hunter Nemechek changed the points standings for the first time since Week 3 of the season.

Rhodes, who won the opening two races of the season, now holds a six-point edge over Nemechek, who finished 33rd with mechanical problems as the series goes into the second race of this three-race Playoff round. Prior to his No. 4 KBM Toyota suffering issues, Nemechek earned his series best 11th stage win, taking the opening Stage Friday night.

Playoff driver Stewart Friesen finished sixth, followed by Grant Enfinger, Austin Wayne Self, Ryan Truex and Austin Hill. Not only was it a rough night for the championship contenders – it was a bitter pill to swallow for Gilliland, who paced the race most of the night and had been leading prior to that last restart.

"I think that was the most fun I've ever had racing a truck, but it stinks walking away from a race track for the second straight week, ultra-disappointed," said Gilliland, who won Stage 2 and led a race best 66 laps. Last week, he was eliminated from Playoff contention by a mere two points.

The majority of current Playoff drivers could relate.

Last week's first-time race winner Carson Hocevar, who ran among the Top-10 most of the night, had a late race green flag pit stop and ended up 22nd. Zane Smith was 29th and Chandler Smith and reigning series champion Sheldon Creed were 35th and 36th after being involved in a big accident on Lap 70.

"Restarts were insane all night," Creed said, adding, "I didn't have a great truck but thought we were a top-eight truck at least. Unfortunate, but it's going to make Talladega fun and interesting."

The series races next Saturday in the Chevrolet Silverado 250 at Talladega Superspeedway (1 p.m. ET, FS1, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). Raphael Lessard won the race in 2020

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1. Locker room infection?
6. Vow at #41 Across
9. Smoke plus fog
13. Veranda in Honolulu
14. Salmon on a bagel
15. Hindu religious teacher
16. To the left, on a boat
17. Hula dancer's necklace
18. Cheryl Strayed on the Pacific Crest Trail, e.g.
19. \*Winningest World Series team
21. \*Infield shape
23. Acronym, abbr.
24. Make or break, e.g.
25. Repellent brand
28. Minimal distortion
30. Loathes
35. Make children
37. Low-\_\_\_\_\_ diet
39. Cry of the Alps
40. Swarm like bees
41. Location of #6 Across vow
43. Tiny piece
44. Lack of intestinal movement
46. Siren's song
47. Buffalo lake
48. Makes sense, 2 words
50. "Aid and \_\_\_\_\_"
52. "Game, \_\_\_\_\_, match"
53. Like time with Bill Maher
55. Road, in Rome
57. \*Current baseball champions
61. \*Won in NLCS or ALCS
65. Mode of communication
66. "\_\_\_\_\_ Now or Never"
68. Styluses

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69. \*\_\_\_\_\_ Martin, 5-time World Series champion
70. Bad-mouth
71. Upright in position
72. Let it stand, to proof-reader
73. Is, in Paris
74. Rodeo rope
9. Sink or this?
10. Type of shark
11. Damien's prediction
12. To put a girdle on
15. Showing signs of wear and tear
20. Writer \_\_\_\_\_ Jong
22. Retirement plan acronym
24. Like a Zoom session
25. Port of old Rome
26. \*\_\_\_\_\_ of dreams?
27. Let out of jail
29. \*\_\_\_\_\_ Classic
31. \*Runner's destination
32. Frankincense and myrrh, but not gold
33. Adjust, as laces
34. Between rain and snow
36. Outback birds
38. Prickle on a wire
42. "Super" Christopher
45. Definitely
49. p in mpg
51. Glittery decoration
54. Digression
56. Bone hollows
57. Young female socialites, for short
58. Fail to mention
59. Earnhardt of racing fame
60. Coating of aurum
61. Attention-getting sound
62. Pirates' affirmatives
63. \*ALCS counterpart
64. \*Nickname of Red Sox manager who won two World Series
67. "\_\_\_\_\_ the season ..."

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2016 JEEP WRANGLER



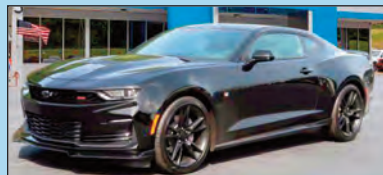
Unlimited sport 4x4, V6 engine with automatic transmission, hardtop tilt, cruise and navigation with 58,000 miles for ONLY \$33,995

2015 CHEVROLET CORVETTE



Fully loaded with glass top, chrome wheels, leather int., navigation and only 15,000 original miles!!

2021 CHEVROLET CAMARO SS 6.2LT



V8, 6 speed manual transmission, leather interior, heads up display, power sunroof, Bose sound system, and too much more equipment to list here!!

2021 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE L



Limited 4x4 fully loaded with leather, heated memory seats, panoramic roof, navigation with 3rd row seating with only 1,149 miles for ONLY \$58,995

2010 NISSAN FRONTIER SE



Crew cab, 4x4 with 4.0 lt. V6 auto transmission, power windows, locks, mirrors, tilt, cruise and only 72,615 miles. \$18,995

2018 CHEVROLET MALIBU LT



1 local owner with only 5,829 miles on this fully equipped full size sedan with power windows, locks, mirrors, power seats and keyless entry!!

2020 TOYOTA CAMRY



V6 engine makes this a powerhouse sedan with two tone red leather interior with heated/cooled seats with heads up display. This is the sharpest toyota in town!!

2019 CHEVROLET BLAZER RS AWD



V6 automatic transmission, remote start, heated seats, 1 local owner with only 30,194 miles!! Save thousands!!

2018 NISSAN FRONTIER



Pro 4x4 crew cab, off road beast with factory navigation, full power, heated seats with dual climate control, trailer, and tow package! Save thousands! ONLY \$34,995

2014 JEEP PATRIOT 4X4



Only 73,016 miles with full power package including power sunroof and heated seats and so much more!!



**YOUR HOMETOWN DEALER**

**FIND NEW ROADS**



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