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Principals in the Saturday night celebration of Burns Night prepare to toast to the Haggis, a tradition practiced throughout the world at events honoring Scotland's most revered poet, Robert Burns. Held each year at Tartan Hall of the First Presbyterian Church in Franklin, Burns Night follows a prescribed order employed at celebrations worldwide. Known forever as the National Poet of Scotland, Burns' works have endured more than 250 years, including "Ode to a Mouse," "Address to a Haggis" and the familiar New Year's Eve song, "Auld Lang Syne." For more photos see page 12.

Photo by Ellen Randall

Board reviews Covid protocols from NC Toolkit

Diane Peltz - Contributing Writer

The Macon County School Board met on Monday, Jan. 24, for its regularly scheduled meeting. A discussion of protocols from the recently released updated NC Toolkit, regarding COVID 19 ensued. The NC Toolkit is used to guide schools in making decisions regarding COVID-19 issues, such as mask wearing, social distancing and quarantine times.

Superintendent Dr. Chris Baldwin provided information on the updates from the toolkit from Jan. 10, 2022.

"It's a fluid situation, due to the number of quarantine days down from 10 days to 5 days," stated Baldwin.

The following is taken directly from the toolkit and it shows the difficulty in trying to implement the new standards. These are the updated criteria to remain or return to school:

"Diagnosis: Person has tested positive with an antigen test but does not have symptoms of COVID-19 and is not known to be a close contact to someone diagnosed with COVID-

19.

"If the person has a repeat PCR/molecular test performed in a laboratory within 24 – 48 hours of their positive antigen test, and that PCR/molecular test is negative: the positive antigen test can be considered a false positive and the person can immediately return to school; OR

"If the person does not have a repeat PCR/molecular test, or has one within 24 – 48 hours and it is also positive, the person can return to school 5 days after the specimen collection date of the first positive test, as long as they did not develop symptoms. The person must continue to mask for an additional 5 days to minimize risk of infecting others. The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school.

"Diagnosis: Person has tested positive with a PCR/molecular test but the person does not have symptoms. Person can return to school 5 days after the specimen collection date

"It's a fluid situation, due to the number of quarantine days down from 10 days to 5 days."

– Dr. Chris Baldwin

Macon County Schools Superintendent

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SCHOOL BOARD

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of their positive test as long as they did not develop symptoms. The person must continue to mask for an additional 5 days to minimize risk of infecting others. Person can return to school when:

- It has been at least 5 days after the first day of symptoms; AND
- It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND
- Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving. The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school. The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the first day of symptoms to minimize the risk of infecting others

“Symptoms: Person has symptoms of COVID-19 and has tested positive with an antigen test or PCR/molecular test. Person can return to school when • It has been at least 5 days after the first day of symptoms; AND

- It has been at least 24 hours since the person had a fever (without using fever reducing medicine); AND

• Other symptoms of COVID-19 are improving. The person is not required to have documentation of a negative test in order to return to school. The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the first day of symptoms to minimize the risk of infecting others.”

One problem that results when a person has a PCR test done, is that results can take several days. As Dr. Baldwin pointed out, they

may not have the results until they are out of the 5 day quarantine.

The update continues:

“Exposure: Person in a mask optional setting for whom an exception to exclusion does not apply and has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19” Person must be excluded from school for 5 days after exposure. Person may return to school after exclusion if asymptomatic but must continue to



wear a mask for an additional 5 days, for a total of 10 days after exposure. The 5 days of exclusion begins on the day after the last known close contact with the COVID-19 positive individual. They should test on day 5, if possible. If symptoms occur, person should immediately isolate until a test either confirms COVID-19, or a negative result rules it out.

“Exposure (exemption vaccinated) Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and is in one of the following groups:

- They are 18 years of age and have received their primary series AND booster, if

eligible.

• They are between the ages of 5-17 and have completed a primary series of COVID-19 vaccines. Boosters are not required to meet this exception for this age group. Person does not need to be excluded from school if they have had no symptoms after being a close contact to someone with COVID-19. The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure to

minimize the risk of infecting others and should get tested on day 5, if possible.

“Exposure (exemption masked exposure): Person does not need to be excluded from school if masks were being worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potential exposed person. This applies to exposures in classrooms, other in-school settings, extracurricular activities, including athletic activities and school transportation.

“Exposure (Exemption Infection in past 90 days): Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test):

• Person does not need to be excluded from school if they have had no symptoms after being a close contact to someone with COVID-19. The person must continue to wear a mask for 10 days after the exposure to minimize the risk of infecting others and should get tested on day 5, if possible.

• Person has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 and had confirmed COVID-19 within the last 90 days (tested positive using a viral test). Person in a mask required setting and has been in close contact with someone with COVID-19 in which one or both individuals were not wearing a mask the entire time.

“Individuals in a mask-required school setting do NOT need to be excluded from school after a close contact, including unmasked exposures (e.g., during lunch or extracurricular activities), if they have no symptoms. Individuals with unmasked exposures in a mask required school setting should get tested on the day of notification of exposure and as close to day 5 after exposure as possible and must wear a mask in

school settings. This exemption applies to in-school exposures as described above as well as non-household, out-of school exposures. While the individual does not need to be excluded from the school setting, quarantine measures may still apply in non-school settings. If testing supply is limited, priority should be given to testing of students participating in athletics because of the higher risk of transmission in that setting.”

It was also brought to the board's attention that the positivity rate was 36.32% which puts Macon in the red category for high transmission.

Macon Middle School and Union Academy both had to return to remote learning for three days due the number of teachers in quarantine.

After much discussion including parents speaking out in the comment portion of the meeting and taking everything into consideration the board voted unanimously to uphold the mask optional mandate.

Other business

Todd Gibbs reported on the Iotla Valley Elementary School geothermal breach. He stated that MSM Solutions was the only company that submitted a bid for the geothermal repairs. The price for repairs to the controls would cost \$74,819 and the piping repair cost would be \$575,640. An agreement is pending for them to begin work in the near future. Gibbs also reported that there is a leak somewhere, could be under the parking lot. Custodians are adding water daily. Some 200 gallons had to be added on Monday. Aside from tearing up the parking lot, Gibbs noted that just because there is a "wet spot" in the parking lot doesn't mean the leak is coming from underneath. More inspections will need to be done in order to find the exact location of the leak, if that is even possible.

Curriculum Director Josh Lynch reported on the progress from the state mandated "LETRS" training. Lynch explained that the training was going well, teachers were engaged and they reported that the course is very beneficial to them. Several workdays have been set aside for the teachers to continue with this training.

Lynch also spoke about the summer school program for this year. As of now, two schools will be offering summer school classes to second and third graders for the RTA (Read to Achieve) program, which will be held at East Franklin Elementary School. Those dates are July 6-8 and 11-14.

A summer program for ESL (English as a second language) for grades two and four will be held at Cartoogechay Elementary School on July 11-14 and July 18- 22.

The next meeting of the School Board will be held on Feb. 28, at 6 p.m., in the Franklin Administrative Office.



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A SKATE PARK DESIGN MEETING with Brian Siedlecki, president of Pillar Design Studios will be held Thursday, Jan. 27, at 5:30 p.m., at the Franklin Town Council chambers at Town Hall. Siedlecki will be showing 3D models and talking about each design element of the new skate park to be constructed at Franklin's new sports park at Sunny Side (formerly known as The Whitmire Property.)

Bill delaying N.C. primaries further sharply divides parties

Jordan Wilkie – Carolina Public Press

Politicians are maneuvering, the courts are set to deliberate and voters are continuing to wait for finalized political maps and a date for the North Carolina 2022 primary elections.

Last Wednesday, Republicans passed a bill on party-line votes in the House and Senate to again delay the primary elections, this time to June. This comes in the context of the political and legal fight over the state's redistricting maps, which could shape the political future of the state's legislature and U.S. Congressional delegation for at least a decade.

The current maps, which the legislature drew in the fall, would all but lock in Republican control over state politics. If the court overturns those maps, Democrats have a chance to land on a more even playing field in a state whose geography slightly favors Republicans but votes nearly 50-50 in statewide races.

After a Democratic Party-affiliated group and two pro-democracy advocacy groups sued the state legislature over the maps they drew in the fall, the state Supreme Court delayed the elections from March to May to give courts time to review the case.

Republicans now aim for an additional delay to give the legislature time to redraw the political maps should the court rule the current maps violate the state constitution.

In the state courts' landmark redistricting case from 2002, called Stephenson, the courts ruled the maps were unconstitutional, created some new requirements for drawing maps, then asked the legislature to try again, said Michael Bitzer, a professor of political science and history at Catawba College.

Political map-drawing "is an inherently legislative duty," Bitzer said.

Both through legal filings in the lawsuit and in public statements supporting postponement of the primaries until June, Republican leadership stresses the importance of the General Assembly being able to draw, then redraw the maps.

But courts can and have, both at the state and federal levels, put conditions on how the legislature can redraw maps once their first attempts are deemed unconstitutional. They could appoint a "special master," or independent outside expert, to review the maps before the courts approve them, Bitzer said.

The Supreme Court could also decide to go with an entirely different process should it deem the maps unconstitutional. In 2018, the Republican-controlled legislature made appellate judicial elections partisan. Now, the state's highest court sits four Democrats and three Republicans, perhaps explaining Republican anxiety over the decision and timing of drawing new maps.

"Never be surprised by anything that happens in North Carolina politics nowadays," Bitzer said.

Timelines and justifications

The state Supreme Court is scheduled to hear the redistricting case on Feb. 2. The court will then have to issue a ruling, a process that often takes months but in this case is expected to take only days.

If the court rules that there is no problem with the maps, there seems to be little issue with carrying out the elections on the current timeline.

The debate starts with the possibility that the state Supreme Court rules that the maps are unconstitutional. In that case, either the legislature or a special master will need to redraw the maps.

In order to run elections on the current schedule with primaries on May 17, the State Board of Elections will need finalized maps no later than Feb. 23, according to Board spokesperson Pat Gannon.

Republicans say that is not enough time for the court to make its decision and for the legislature to redraw the maps.

Speaking for the Democrats, House minority leader Robert Reives, II said the legislature should not interfere with the court's schedule before it even has a chance to hear the case, let alone make a decision.

Each party claims that, if it doesn't get its way, voters will lose confidence in the election. Reives said passing the bill gives the appearance that the legislature is interfering with the courts.

During discussion on the Senate Redistricting and Elections committee, Republican co-chair Warren Daniel said passing the bill will reduce voter confusion.

Neither politician provided any evidence for those claims.

Daniel also stated that delaying the primary date would give potential candidates more time to decide whether they would like to run, and which district to run in.

Both in that Senate committee and on the House floor, Democrats asked about the timing of the June primary, which is currently scheduled for the last week of school. Schools often close and serve as voting locations on election days, but that would likely not be an option in the final week of classes, making it more difficult to find places to vote.

Gov. Roy Cooper has not said whether he will veto the bill. If he does, the unanimous Democratic opposition to the bill in the legislature would suggest Republicans would not have enough votes to override the veto.

Instead of commenting on the veto, Cooper's press secretary, Jordan Monaghan said "legislators should avoid additional attempts to undermine the voting process."

Monaghan did not respond to questions about how a further postponement of the election would undermine voting. The State Board of Elections will be able to run the primaries on May 17 or June 7, according to Gannon.

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Challenges remain for downtown dog park

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

It took a while for the “new” dog park on Phillips Street to open, but it did so about a year ago and has been a bustle of furry frolicking and wagging tails ever since. Grass growth issues delayed the opening, but Macon County Parks and Recreation Director Seth Adams said the turf fescue grass is holding up fairly well.

Even on cold days, every imaginable breed, from the tiny teacup chihuahuas to bear-sized Great Pyrenees congregate – with their caretakers – inside the two enclosures. One fenced-in area is for more fragile, smaller breeds, while the other side is for medium to larger breeds. Yet, depending on the individual dog’s demeanor, toughness, etc., sometimes the size difference in the dogs at play is vast.

Adams explained that the goal of waiting and letting the grass grow before opening the \$125,000-price-tag park was to make sure the park did not turn into a mud pit, which is what often happens to the dog park on the Little Tennessee River Greenway, which is next to wetlands and is prone to flooding.

Lately, a few muddy spots have developed in the newer Macon County Dog Park and the grass is bare in spots.

“So we will close the new one down for two to three weeks and reseed in the spring, depending on the weather,” said Adams. “We will look at timing based on the best time for grass to germinate. The stand of grass is not exactly what it needs to be and we are starting to see some wear and tear. We will give as much notice as we can; in the meantime people can use the old dog park at the Greenway and eventually that one will be closed down.

“We’ve filled in the holes a few times with sand and dirt and then dogs have dug them back out. We’re hoping the



About a year ago, the new Macon County Dog Park opened on Phillips Street in downtown Franklin. The grass is still not fully established and Parks and Recreation director Seth Adams predicts the park will be closed this spring to reseed.

new grass will fix the problem. And we’re also taking bids to pour concrete pads at the gate, because that has – even though there is mulch there – become a muddy mess at times. We are hoping a concrete pad will help ease that problem.”

Daily, an average of a half-dozen to a dozen people – with their dogs, of course – will congregate at one time at the park, which offers bags for cleaning up after the dogs, a water station, bathrooms, plenty of parking, and a gravel walking path that encircles the fenced-in play areas. At least six benches, shaded areas, and a recently built free library are also on the premises.

“The most I’ve seen there at one time is 17 dogs,” said Adams. “Some non-dog people said the park would never be used regularly, but that is certainly not the case. It’s popular.”

In fact, everyone from full-time to seasonal residents as well as visitors and long-term campers have used the park for their dogs to run and play and socialize.

Parks and Recreation is tasked with maintaining the park, but Adams said park goers are keeping it clean.

“I don’t get complaints about people not cleaning up after their dogs. I was concerned about that. My employees keep the bathrooms cleaned and empty the trash, but they typically don’t have to clean up after dogs.”

As is the case with all the parks in Macon County, evidence of homelessness and drug use is sometimes an issue at the dog park.

“That’s everywhere, but for the most part, the park has been clean and it’s a real benefit to the community,” noted Adams. Regarding evidence of discarded drug paraphernalia around the park, Adams cautioned, “Protect yourself. Don’t ever pick up anything with bare hands.”



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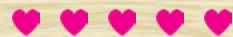
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Back to point that change is anything but easy. There are bumps in the road and growing pains in addition to confidence-boosting wins in the shaping of any institution, and the same holds true for Angel. This reality brings me back to the changes that my own family and I have experienced this past year, as we relocated here to Franklin. It all sounded thrilling to my 9-year-old son — until we rolled out of our old home's driveway and started the journey to an unknown town and address. It was then that reality hit. Since he's a child, he had to put his faith in my wife and me, and in God, about his next life chapter.

I think we all know how much we can learn from our own children, and my son said something quite profound during this time. He decided that if he stayed focused on the past, he'd never know what the future holds for him. Truer words have never been said.

As my son opened his mind and heart to our new life, there was a person who became a loving, pivotal support as he became accustomed to his new life and surroundings. It was his fourth grade teacher at Ilova Valley Elementary School, Mrs. Jenkins. She made him feel special and accepted him for who he was, which is something all of us need. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Jenkins and all of the Ilova Valley staff for making a real difference in my child's life, and I know that they do the same thing for every child there.

You may be wondering why I chose to share this story. It's because I see a strong parallel as Angel Medical Center is embarking on an enormous period of change as we approach the opening of our new facility. A brand new, state-of-the-art, expanded facility is a rarity in a rural community, a true gift we are all preparing to receive. In addition to being a gift, the new Angel Medical Center is a critical, historic investment in our special community, one that will fuel even more growth for Macon County. The future is ours to write.

Since our inception, the Angel Medical Center staff has always been highly committed to caring for our community members — after all, you are their neighbors. There are hundreds of individuals who have worked tirelessly over the last two years to ensure that their community received the best care possible, as we took on the ever-changing reality that is the pandemic, and their dedication is unwavering, remaining just as strong as it has always been.

As we go through transitions, it can feel easy to point out what's not going well, and I'm here to talk to you if you experience a problem or feel we have made a decision you don't agree with. I would ask that you also consider all that we do for our patients that is right and good, and to imagine if your son or daughter was on the receiving end of our care. I welcome the chance to talk with you directly if you have an issue you'd like to discuss; my door is always open.

We're much more powerful together than separate, so if we can keep our eyes on the prize of supporting the new Angel Medical Center, we will all be part of the light that makes a difference and helps to create a better future for Franklin and Macon County.

All of us at Angel are proud to be here for you 24/7 in our Emergency Department, and in the rest of the hospital as well. We're also Stroke Care Accredited by the Joint Commission, and our scores reflect the difference we make, since we know that "time is brain," or that every second counts when suffering a stroke.

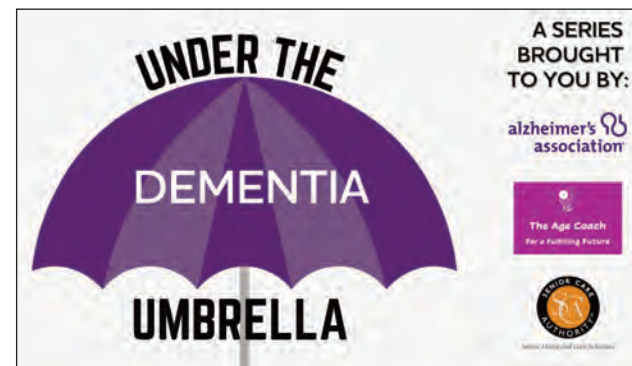
As we reflect on the past, we can at the same time look toward a bright future with high expectations. I'm happy to be here for the community, and encourage you to contact me with concerns and questions at Clint.Kendall@HCAHealthcare.com, or call the main number.

Virtual dementia education series starts this February

The Alzheimer's Association chapters in North Carolina and the Parkinson Association of the Carolinas are kicking off the first program this February in their Under the Dementia Umbrella Series, a four-part virtual education series taking place across North Carolina from February through August.

Dementia is not a single disease, but rather an overall term — like heart disease — that covers a wide range of specific medical conditions, including its most common form, Alzheimer's disease. This series will take a deeper dive into various disorders that fall under the umbrella of dementia.

"Confusion between Alzheimer's disease and other forms of dementia is common," said Katherine L. Lambert, CEO of the Alzheimer's Association, Western Carolina Chapter. "Learning about the differences between them is important



and can empower individuals living with any form of dementia, their families and their caregivers with necessary knowledge."

Part one of the series — "Mind, Movement, Memory: UNDERstanding Parkinson's Disease and Lewy Body Dementia" — will take place on Thursday, Feb. 3 from 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Learn more about Parkinson's disease, Lewy body dementia and their connections. Dementia with Lewy bodies (DLB) is the second most common cause of dementia and leads to a progressive decline in thinking, reasoning and independent function because of the presence of Lewy bodies. Lewy bodies are also found in several other brain disorders, including Parkinson's disease, Parkinson's disease dementia, and to a lesser degree in Alzheimer's disease. Many people with both DLB and Parkinson's disease have hallmark brain changes linked to Alzheimer's disease. This program will be presented by Mark Pippinger, M.D., a specialist in Behavioral Neurology at Novant Health Memory Care – Southpark.

"When people diagnosed with Parkinson's disease hear the phrase Lewy Bodies with Parkinson's they are confused and not sure where to go for information," said Ann Marie Worman, Executive Director of the Parkinson Association of the Carolinas. "Should they seek out Parkinson's or dementia related resources, this educational opportunity will help clear up some confusion related to cognitive/dementia issues in Parkinson's."

Remaining programs in the series are:

- April - Frontotemporal Degeneration (FTD)
- June - Depression, Addiction and Dementia
- August - Vascular Dementia and Heart Health for Brain Health

The series is offered in partnership with The Age Coach and Senior Care Authority. Each webinar will offer expert speakers, guest panelists, and time for discussion. Webinars are open to the general public and individuals and families affected by dementia. There is no charge to participate, but registration is required and a recording of each program will be made available to all registrants. Attendees can attend via video/webinar or through a toll-free number. To sign up, visit tinyurl.com/DementiaUmbrella2022 or call 1-800-272-3900.

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SCC to host job fairs in February

This spring, Southwestern Community College's Career Services will be holding a pair of Job Fairs featuring area employers for students and all area residents seeking employment in a wide variety of fields.

Both events will be held in the Burrell Building on SCC's Jackson Campus in Sylva.

The first, a Healthcare Job & Career Fair, is set for 1-4 p.m. on Feb. 10. It's an opportunity to meet with area healthcare providers about their job openings, and representatives from Southwestern's Health Sciences division will be available to talk about all 16 career fields in which the college offers training.

Two weeks later, a general career fair featuring employers from all sectors will be held from 1-4 p.m. on Feb. 24. They'll be looking to hire individuals to fill everything from professional full-time to part-time and seasonal positions as well as internships.

"In all my years of helping connect prospective employees with employment opportunities, there's never been a better time to

be job-hunting," said Michael Despeaux, SCC's Director of Career Services. "I'm thrilled with the quality and number of employers who've already registered to set up booths at both these job fairs, and I'm confident these will be very successful events."

Both fairs are open to alumni and the public, including local high school students looking for part-time, seasonal or summer jobs.

Working with Despeaux to help area high school students attend the job fairs have been April McNiff and Jodie Waldroup, who are part of SCC's high school partnership efforts.

"We've been working closely with our local high schools to make arrangements for their students to attend the general career fair (Feb. 24)," McNiff said. "We're excited to help them explore and practice better employability skills."

Hights and myFutureNC are other organizations that have been instrumental in promoting the events to new job seekers in public schools.

Job-seekers are encouraged to dress pro-



Michael Despeaux (left), who is SCC's Director of Career Services, stands beside Dr. Mark Ellison, SCC's Director of Enrollment Services, at SCC's Healthcare Job Fair last fall in Sylva.

professionally and bring a resume.

The snow date for both events would be March 24 with Healthcare in the morning and the general fair in the afternoon.

For more information about these events and SCC's Career Services, contact Despeaux at 828.339.4212 or m_despeaux@southwesterncc.edu.

How to spot scam debt collectors

Attorney General
Josh Stein



Josh Stein

If you have bills that are past due, you might be contacted by a debt collector. But don't be fooled: scammers often impersonate debt collectors to try to convince people that they owe unpaid debts or try to scare or threaten people to collect on non-existent debt. Being contacted by a legitimate debt collector can be stressful on its own – make sure that you look for these signs to help you spot any scam artists.

If you've been contacted by someone about a debt they claim you owe, do some homework to make sure the debt and the collector are real. Get the name of the caller, the name of the collection company, its address, and its phone number. You can verify that this company is licensed by contacting the North Carolina Secretary of State and the North Carolina Department of Insurance.

You should also confirm information that debt collectors are legally required to give you:

- the amount of the debt
- the name of the current creditor
- how to get the name of the original creditor
- how to dispute the debt if you don't think it's correct.

A telling sign of a scammer is the usage of threatening or aggressive language. Remember that debt collectors cannot use in-

appropriate language, call you again and again, or threaten to arrest you or take other actions, such as suspending your driver's license, reporting you to immigration authorities, or calling your employer. If you're being threatened, the debt collector is either a scammer or breaking the law. Hang up and report the call to NCDNJ's Consumer Protection Division (1-877-5-NO-SCAM) and the FTC (ftc.gov/complaint).

Do not give out personal information such as your address, social security

number, or birthdate to anyone who calls you, including someone claiming to be a debt collector. Real debt collectors already have this information.

Previously, debt collectors were only able to call you or send you a letter. Now, they can also contact you via text message, email, and social media. But if they contact you on social media, but they must follow certain rules. They cannot send you a message that others can see, they must identify themselves as a debt collector, and they have to tell you how you can opt out of social media communications.

If you have any questions about debt collectors, you can learn more at ftc.gov/debt-collection or at <https://ncdoj.gov/protecting-consumers/credit-and-debt/debt-collectors/>. If you have a complaint or are unsure about a debt collector, call us at 1-877-5-NO-SCAM or <https://ncdoj.gov/file-a-complaint/>.



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What's new on the plateau

Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor



Patrick Taylor

On Monday night the Highlands Planning Board completed a review of the draft proposal for amending town ordinances related to short term rentals. Their recommendations have now been sent to the Highlands Town Board for review. I anticipate the board holding several special work sessions to process the planning board's work and recommendations.

I want to thank all of the Highlands Planning Board members for the hard work and diligence that they put forward in addressing this critical issue. I, along with the town board, appreciate their extraordinary effort. Now, the town board will have to get to work in moving the process forward without delay.

The town should always continue to review and strive to improve what is done in the public interest. We are now in a period of review concerning the response to the recent heavy snow event. Izzy was not a normal snow storm. Some areas of the town got as much as a foot of snow, which made the response from our employees a major challenge.

This week our road crews have been using excavators and dump trucks to remove the mounds of snow in the downtown areas. This time consuming process is a challenge, but needs to be done. The loads of snow will be transported and downloaded at town sites such as the sewer plant. It will be a while before it all melts, but it is better to have it melt off location rather than in the business district.

At the January town board meeting I asked the public works committee and pertinent staff to review our schedule and protocols for plowing roads. Some folks, especially those on private roads, were concerned that town crews were late in plowing their roads. The huge volume of snow aggravated the situation. I look forward to the staff and committee reporting to the full board on how the town can improve snow plowing practices.

Another area of improvement is in how residents can report power outages. In this storm we had no major outages that impacted the entire town. I had asked folks not to call in after hours outages to 911 since a heavy call load could affect emergency response times. But, we do need to develop a better system for folks to report power outages, not just in snow storms, but throughout the year. I have asked staff and the public works committee to

Continued on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Authority rests in the body of the nation's citizens

When a political party runs out of springfresh and creative ideas and when the responsibility and burden of governing becomes too taxing, it must resort to more nonconforming methods to win elections. One popular scheme is known as gerrymandering. If you've lost your moral compass and no longer hold inviolate the best interests of your nation and fellow citizens, and your oath has lost its meaning, gerrymandering is a winning alternative albeit a poor substitute in a functioning democracy.

What is gerrymandering precisely? The term "gerrymandering" means the drawing of district lines in order to maximize the electoral advantage of a political party or faction. The term was first used in 1812 when Elbridge Gerry was governor of Massachusetts to characterize the state's redistricting plan. Gerry persuaded the state legislature to create a district in order to favor the election of a fellow Republican. Because of the district's unique shape, one critic reportedly observed, "that looks like a salamander!" to which another observer quipped, "that's not a salamander, that's a gerrymander." Since that incident, gerrymandering has become a common term in popular political discussion.

Fast-forwarding 210 years, North Carolina's Republican Party (for reasons stated in paragraph one) is using gerrymandering as their primary "go to" formula for winning elections. A three-judge panel recently ruled North Carolina's redistricting maps will not be tossed out.

Interestingly enough, all three judges agreed that both the legislative and congressional maps were "a result of intentional, pro-Republican partisan redistricting" (the precise definition of gerrymandering). The judges explained in their ruling that the maps are not unconstitutional, regardless of the partisan advantage they may give Republicans.

There are approximately 2.5 million Democrats, 2.5 million unaffiliated, 2.1 million Republicans and 47,000 Libertarians in NC, according to North Carolina's Board of Elections. The new congressional map could give Republicans as many as 11 of the state's 14 House seats.

A democracy is a form of government in which the people rule. Americans presume to advocate this form of governing body where the power lies in the hands of the people, who govern (indirectly) by electing representatives to act for the people. The American government is a democracy and the Constitution of the United States is designed to ensure the will of the people is protected. At the very heart of our democracy lies the concept of "popular sovereignty" – the premise that the people are the supreme authority, or sovereign, and that that authority, that independent power, rests in the body of citizens, not in one supreme ruler or one dominant party.

Both parties are well aware that gerrymandering is an anathema to the concept of representative government

where citizens choose their leaders, leaders do not hand-pick their voters. Too many politicians, however, have long since abandoned any consideration of fairness in their everlasting pursuit of power, wealth and their own self-interest, rendering representative government an illusion.

You will find the facts as I have laid them out indisputable and in the end, impossible to deny.

David Snell – Franklin, N.C.

Sheriff's Office: Watch out for rental scams

From the Macon County Sheriff's Office Facebook page

Detectives with the MCSO have had cases where suspects who have utilized social media are attempting to rent homes they do not own or who do not have authority to rent. Suspects are successful at doing this by using various sites on social media to lure those wishing to rent homes and then they scam those potential renters by providing photos of homes for rent and requesting an immediate deposit generally claiming they have multiple requests for the same rental. These suspects have been later found to be using hacked Facebook accounts and live either out of state or out of the country.

Anyone who feels they have fallen victim to this should call the Macon County Sheriff's Office [828-349-2104] and report such activity. More importantly, if you are looking for a rental home you should be very careful not to rush into any agreement without first verifying with the real estate company. If you are unsure about if the rental is legitimate DO NOT call a number the potential scammer provides you but instead look the real estate company up yourself and call them for assistance or for additional details. A legitimate business owner or real estate company would appreciate and respect your need to be cautious and welcome your business. These scammers are very good at what they do and are very savvy at carrying on a conversation to convince you they are legit and will continue to encourage you to do business with them. Many times their victims are desperate to find a place and these suspects will say anything to ease your mind and get you to fall for his/her trap. Getting a victim's hard earned money refunded back to them is next to impossible to trace. These criminals are experts at deceiving people and while sitting behind a computer screen all day lurking for potential victims is how they make their living.

Our recommendation would be to utilize an established realtor and for you to do your own homework looking for a rental before making any financial transactions. If it sounds good to be true... it probably is.

Email letters to the editor to
maconcountynews@gmail.com

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Pandemic lifestyle change leads to new book

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Like so many other people who have ended up penning a book, Jennifer Goldstein never thought of herself as an author. But the pandemic and the 2020 quarantine changed all that.

“During quarantine, I – like many people – coped by comfort eating,” said Goldstein, who lives with her husband and their two children in Franklin. “My emotions were up and down. My brain was foggy. I was making poor food choices. I didn’t have much energy.”

She discovered the book “Delay, Don’t Deny: Living an Intermittent Fasting Lifestyle” via a podcast, and she decided to look into the dieting lifestyle. Intermittent fasting involves only eating during a specific time-allotted “window.” According to John Hopkins Medicine, “Fasting for a certain number of hours each day or eating just one meal a couple days a week, can help your body burn fat.”

“I quickly experienced benefits,” she said. “I focused better, my mood was calmer, I had more energy.”

She had researched fasting in 2017 when she experienced gestational diabetes while pregnant with her second child. She tried some “diet changes” but did not embrace fasting until 2020.

Goldstein, a Christian, decided to use some of her fasting time to focus on her relationship with God, praying, and delving more into scripture.

“For me, intermittent fasting also became a spiritual thing. I realized that we might turn to other things, like food, but He truly satisfies.”

Goldstein began to write her thoughts based on various



Jennifer Goldstein was inspired to write a book during the quarantine that was just published in January.

biblical scriptures pertaining to food, fellowship, faith, and more. A book idea formulated. Published mid-January, “Fasting & Feasting in Worship & Warfare” is organized as a 40-day devotional journal, with a passage of scripture, her thoughts, and journaling space for individuals “to process their progress,” she said.

All the Bible verses in the book are from Luke. Goldstein explained why in the book’s introduction.

“I was surprised by how often feasting and banquets came up in the book of Luke. I saw for the first time how much Jesus had to say about food, even while I was looking through the lens of fasting. They are spiritually intertwined.”

For example, Day 35 focuses on how “breaking bread with others,” as Goldstein expressed, should not be avoided just because

someone might be adopting an intermittent fasting lifestyle. She writes, “... feasting in fellowship with others has come up over and over in these passages, so it’s obviously something Jesus wants us to do.”

What Goldstein’s book is not is a “how to” regarding intermittent fasting. It is also not a thesis on why individuals should choose to adopt the dietary lifestyle. She also pointed out that anyone with a food-related mental health condition should consult a physician and/or a counselor before delving into intermittent fasting.

Goldstein added that she enjoyed the process of writing every day “when I had some quiet time.” She is already at work on a devotional for foster parents that may be available later this year or in early 2023.

“Fasting & Feasting in Worship and Warfare” is available on Amazon.com.

TAYLOR

From previous page

also review options to address this problem. Maybe the public safety committee will also review this issue since it does impact county emergency services and how the town interfaces with that system.

There are systems and services that the town can use to handle after hours service problems. It will cost the town money, but the improvements to the reporting system will outweigh the incurred additional costs. The staff is looking at options and will work with the committee to develop a proposal to the full board. I want the town to move forward to address this issue without delay.

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Taste of Scotland Society presents annual Burns Night in Franklin



Convenor of Hay Clan Arthur Hayes



The Burns Night dinner consisted of Cock-a-Leekie soup, garden salad, roast beef, scones with jam, rosemary roasted potatoes, broccoli florets, yeast rolls and wild berry parfait for dessert. Prior to the meal, the Selkirk Grace was said, "Some hae meat and canna eat, And some wad eat that want it; But we hae meat, and we can eat, And sae the Lord be thankit. – Robert Burns (1793)

Photos by Ellen Randall



George McClellan presented Immortal Memory of Robert Burns.



Bill and Shirley Barr



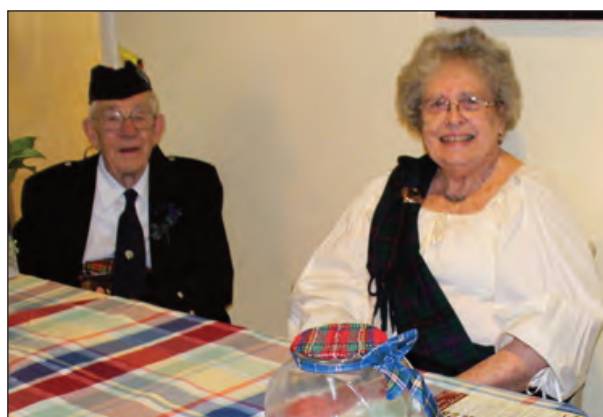
The Jacobites By Name entertained at Burns Night along with Norma Jean & Jim.



Market Farmhouse of Lake Burton, Ga., catered the traditional Burns Night meal.



Elinor and Liza McArthur and Asa Elmore



Lloyd and Eleanor Swift





Piper Michael Waters



Madeline Watt



Arthur Hayes presents the Haggis



Miranda, Michael and Little Miss Tartan Daisy Haley and grandfather Scott Swann.



Arthur Hays presenting a gift from Tartans to Denise Cook, president of The Taste of Scotland Society.



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Arrest Report

The Macon County Sheriff's Department, Franklin Police Department or Jackson County Sheriff's Department made the following arrests Jan. 10 - 23. Suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

January 10

Lance Edward Hughes, was charged with failure to appear. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

January 11

Rickey Anthony Caldwell, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. Matthew T. Breedlove made the arrest.

January 12

Mark Daniel Castro, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Richard Sevear Green, was charged with sexual exploitation of a minor third degree. Cassie J. Shuler made the arrest.

January 13

Matthew Thomas Lockwood, was issued a governors warrant for fugitive. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Tyler Elden Deats, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Trance Lewis Stoudemire, was charged with assault on a female, assault inflicting serious injury with a minor present, assault by strangulation and injury to personal property. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Derald Fredrick Queen, was charged with violate domestic violence protective order violation. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

William Clinton Holt, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

January 14

Luther Victor Stinnett IV, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Steven Cody Ulsh, was charged with child support enforcement. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Lazaro De Jesus Candelario, was charged with driving while impaired. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

January 15

Angel Chavez-Zalaph, was charged with possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell/deliver, maintaining a place for a controlled substance and breaking and entering. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

January 16

Jessie Lee Cody Atcheson, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

Jose De Jesus Feria Mendoza, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction, possession of a controlled substance with intent to sell/deliver, maintaining a place for a controlled substances and breaking and entering. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

January 18

William Zachary Patterson, was charged with possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver marijuana. Deputy

Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Travis Scott Mason, was charged with breaking and entering, larceny and possession of stolen goods/property. Cassie J. Shuler made the arrest.

January 19

Jason Field, was charged with assault on a female. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Luke Elijah Arvey, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. Corporal James E. Crawford III made the arrest.

Leticia Cheyenne Rodriguez, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

January 21

Jeanette Irene Lehtinen, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Denver J. Elliott made the arrest.

January 22

Wesley Preston Crone, was charged with failure to appear for misdemeanor. Deputy Cody J. Howard made the arrest.

Chandler Reed Stanley, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, all other offenses and carrying a concealed gun. Deputy Cody Tiger made the arrest.

Yaling White, was charged with simple assault. Corporal Clay A. Saunders made the arrest.

January 23

Joseph Michael Cyphers, was charged with operation of vehicle with no insurance, driving a vehicle not registered or titled, failure to secure passenger under 16, reckless driving, driving while license revoked/impaired revocation notice and resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer. Timothy B. Carter made the arrest.

Alexis Miles Bragg, was charged with resist/obstruct/delay law enforcement officer, no operators license, expired registration card/tag, felony possession of a schedule I controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia. Matthew L. Long made the arrest.

Tony Dustin Bateman, was issued warrant service for offense committed in jurisdiction. Deputy E. Sands made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

January 13

Michael Adam Crisp, was issued a fugitive warrant for probation violation. Michael Adam Crisp made the arrest.

Caleb Troy William Davis III, was charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia. Caleb Troy William Davis III made the arrest.

January 15

Samuel Ray, was issued an order for arrest for driving while intoxicated level 5. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Ladarius Deshun Hawthorne, was charged with possession with intent to sell/deliver marijuana, felony possession of marijuana, maintaining vehicle for use/sale/keeping of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, speeding 66 mph in 55 mph zone and no operators license. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

January 17

Kenneth Khristopher Knight, was issued a warrant for arrest. M.A. Bingham made the arrest.

January 19

Daniel Joshua Koenig, was charged with driving while impaired. J.A. Riles made the arrest.

January 20

Danelle Kay Jimenez, was charged with possession of methamphetamine, issued an order for arrest for possession of methamphetamine and maintaining a dwelling/vehicle. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Charles Samuel Carpenter, was issued a warrant for breaking and entering and issued an order for arrest for larceny of a motor vehicle. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

January 18

Kristi Danielle Brooks, 36, of Sittin Creek Rd., Bryson City, was charged with failure to appear for possession of a schedule II controlled substance and probation violation. A secured bond of \$68,000 was set. Josh A. Yopp made the arrest.

Mark Loren Miller, 33, of Queen St., was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia and felony possession of a synthetic cannabinoid. No bond was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

January 19

Lauren Ashley Cauthan, 21, of Sunset Lane, Moore, S.C., was charged with motor vehicle theft. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set. Megan L. Rhinehart made the arrest.

January 20

Steven Douglas Teesateskie, 37, of Sam George Jr. Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for driving while license revoked impaired revocation and failure to wear seat-belt. A secured bond of \$1,000 was set. William S. Collins made the arrest.

January 21

Craig William Shuler, 49, of Maple St., Bryson City, was charged with violation of domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set. Tyler B. Bryson made the arrest.

Charles Edward McCoy, 43, was charged with domestic violence protection order violation. No bond was set. Conner L. Wilson made the arrest.

Adam James Cartwright, 46, of Rushing Rapids Rd., Cullowhee, was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set. Trevor K. Baldwin made the arrest.

John Wesley Hooper, 42, of Keyhole Lane, Cullowhee, was charged with failure to appear for a misdemeanor and no operators license. A secured bond of \$500 was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

Jesus Octavio-Cruz Carballo, 21, of Cashiers, was charged with no operators license. No bond was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

January 22

Jaden Charles Marvin, 21, of Cedarcliffe Circle, Asheville, was charged with violation of court order, sexual battery and intimidating a witness. A \$30,000 bond was set. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

January 23

Gilbert Keith Maclean, 74, of Old St. Augustine Rd., Jacksonville, Fla., was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. William M. Hawkins made the arrest.

Jimi Ray Bivins, 44, of Swiss Lane, Cashiers, was charged with assault on a female. No bond was set. Michael T. Smathers made the arrest.

Alvaro Jose Valle-Gonzalez, 40, of Devin Dr., was charged with domestic violence protective order violation. No bond was set. Michael T. Smathers made the arrest.

Ashley Marie Saladin, 25, of Hawk Trail, was charged with possession of a controlled substance on prison/jail premises, felony possession of cocaine, possession with intent to sell/deliver cocaine, failure to appear for Haywood County for possession of stolen goods/property and misdemeanor larceny. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set. Hunter M. Karup made the arrest.

Oak Island man attempts to break Mountains-to-Sea Trail record

Cross-country runner Luke Bennett will attempt to beat the fastest known time of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST) in early April while raising awareness about protecting, conserving and restoring North Carolina's wildlife and habitat.

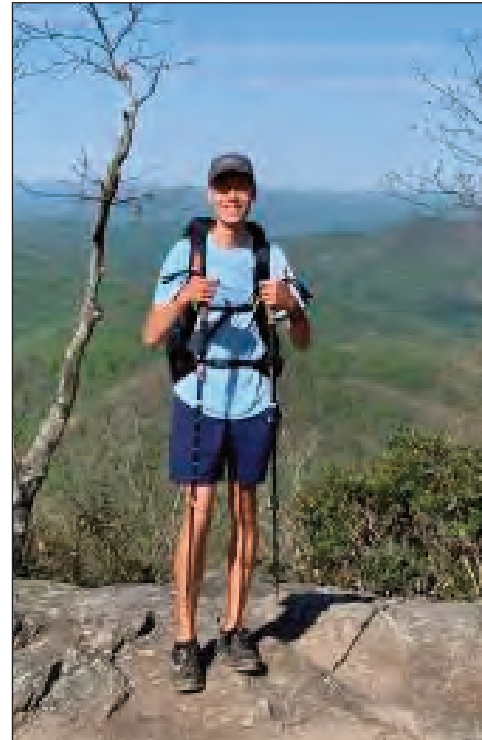
The 22-year-old's Hiking for Habitat trek benefitting North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) will span 1,175 miles from the Great Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks. Bennett will run and hike the trail over 27-28 days with a small support crew of friends and family to assist him along the way. His record-breaking journey coincides with the 45th anniversary of MST, first proposed in 1977 at Lake Junaluska.

During the hike, Bennett hopes to shed light on issues threatening habitats and

outdoor experiences and serve as a tribute to our state," Bennett said. "After taking a deep dive into the diversity of habitats and wildlife throughout the state, it's time for me to give back, and I'm thrilled to partner with NCWF."

Bennett, who lives in Oak Island, said he was "itching for a challenge" when he set his sights on MST. "It connects North Carolina's three distinct regions and offers rugged terrain and a chance to experience the state's geographical diversity," he said. "I've lived in all three areas of North Carolina, so hiking the MST will feel like an adventure in my backyard."

Growing up in Durham, Bennett developed a sense of wonder and appreciation for the outdoors while spending his childhood fish-



Luke Bennett, 22, is Hiking for Habitat in early April when he attempts to break the fastest known time of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail while raising awareness about protecting, conserving and restoring North Carolina wildlife and habitat.

in less than 100 days.

His training for MST includes a 30-mile run later this month, a 40-mile Uwharrie National Forest trail race on Feb. 5, a 40-mile trail race up Mount Mitchell on Feb. 26 and possibly a 50-mile MST endurance race on March 19.

"I'll have my 23rd birthday on the MST and can't think of a better way to celebrate than experiencing the peace and clarity that comes with a long day of hiking towards complete exhaustion," Bennett said. "I'm eager to find new gears in my body and mind that I didn't know existed - new gears that will help me reach my full potential as an athlete and as a person."

He added, "I want to raise awareness about the diversity of habitats and wildlife and push myself on their behalf. Hiking the entire MST will reinforce my connection with North Carolina, so I never forget where I came from no matter where I'm heading."

To learn more about Bennett, visit <https://ncwf.org/blog/hiking-for-habitat>. Follow Luke's journey on Facebook (@NCWildlifeFederation), Instagram (@ncwildlifed) #hikingforhabitatnc and LinkedIn (@nc-wildlife-federation).

About North Carolina Wildlife Federation

Since 1945, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) has worked on behalf of all wildlife and habitat - from the Great Smoky Mountains to the Outer Banks. The nonprofit organization brings together citizens, outdoor enthusiasts, hunters and anglers, government and industry to protect the state's natural resources. NCWF's work is centered around conserving wildlife, restoring habitat, getting people outside, celebrating conservation, conservation policy and climate resiliency. Learn more at <https://ncwf.org/>.



wildlife, the risks to their survival and ways to give them a fighting chance. NCWF will track his efforts through an ongoing blog and social media posts.

"North Carolina's wildlife, outdoors and adventures are the foundation of my life. Hiking for Habitat will be a culmination of all my

ing, swimming and exploring the Eno River. He started running cross-country in 7th grade to get in shape for his middle school's basketball season. His first race - a two-miler at Eno River State Park - ignited his passion for running and exploring opportunities to push himself physically and mentally.

Bennett, who graduated last May with a bachelor's degree in biology from Appalachian State University, estimates he's traversed more than 20 thousand miles since he started running a decade ago. Shortly after graduation, he completed the entire 2,193-mile Appalachian Trail Thru-Hike, a feat accomplished by only one in four of the thousands of hikers who attempt it each year. While it typically takes thru-hikers 5 to 7 months to complete the trail, Bennett finished

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NC State Poetry Contest accepting submissions

The annual NC State Poetry Contest is a free literary competition open to all North Carolina residents (including out-of-state and international students who are enrolled in North Carolina universities). It remains one of the largest free-to-enter poetry contests in the South.

This year's guest judge is award-winning poet Michael Prior and features a grand prize of \$500.

CONTEST RULES:

1. The contest is open to all North Carolina residents except:

a. Tenured/tenure-track professors in the University of North Carolina system; creative-writing instructors teaching at North Carolina State University (but teaching assistants and graduate students are eligible);

b. Writers with a published book of poetry (if we can buy your book online or from a publisher or bookstore, we consider you published); and

c. Previous winners. Previous finalists must submit poems that have not been previously submitted.

2. Contestants may submit up to three poems.

a. There is no limit as to genre or length.

3. Entries may not have been previously published anywhere, in print or online (including personal blogs/websites).

4. All entries must be typed and titled.

5. Contestants should not include their name on their poems so that their work can be judged anonymously. Instead, contestants should include their name, address, telephone number and email address on a separate cover sheet.

6. No emailed entries are accepted. Mail entries to:

NC State Poetry Contest
Department of English
North Carolina State University
Campus Box 8105,
Raleigh, NC 27695-8105

7. The postmark deadline is March 1, 2022.

Due to volume, we cannot contact each contestant or return your poems afterward. Winners and honorable mentions will be contacted directly. There will not be a public ceremony this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The results will be posted at go.ncsu.edu/poetrycontest in early April.

For more information, visit go.ncsu.edu/poetrycontest.



Deaths & Funerals

Mitchell Edward Sands

Mitchell Edward Sands, 62, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022.

He was born in Leesburg, Fla., to the late Edward Franklin "Sonny" Sands and Melba Georgianne Gill Sands.

He learned to play the guitar at an early age, following in the footsteps of his musical family. In school, he was president of the FFA and a member of the FFA String Band. He also sang and played guitar at talent events in high school.

He continued with his music and singing throughout his life and has written many songs with Nashville recordings. He was one of three founding members of the Christian Country group, Mercy Mountain Boys while living in Alachua, Fla. MMB produced several albums and videos, some of which are original songs.

Together with his son Marshall, he wrote "Soldier's Letter" while Marshall was in the Army in Iraq. MMB made a video of the song to honor all American soldiers. The "Bloodline" was another of his most popular recordings; and of course, "The Yodel Song" was his most requested original song of all time.

He was gifted with the ability to play anything with strings, and had a massive collection of guitars, mandolins, fiddles, and banjos, but his gift from God was his voice. He had an astounding vocal range with the ability to sing both bass and tenor in the same song.

For the past several years, he worked for Harrah's Cherokee Casino, and as a "people person" loved and was loved by his customers and fellow co-workers in his position as Table Dealer. He loved humor and helped keep his customers happy and laughing at his table with his "dealer jokes."

He was a happy person, was always singing a song, working on a project around the house or playing with the dogs or cats. He loved to bring joy to people and loved laughing at funny commercials and animated movies. He had a personal relationship with Jesus and his faith in God was strong.

He had a great love for his family and extended family – from his wife, sons, daughters, his 13 grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

Mitch's voice is stilled here on earth, but we know he is singing with the angels and God in Heaven.

He is survived by his wife, Deborah Sands; children, Marshall Sands (Xiomara), Michael Caldwell (Jennifer); deceased stepson, Mathew Watson (June); stepson, DJ Watson; stepson, Adam Watson; stepson, JB Ippolito (Kimberly); stepson, Jason Ippolito (Dani); stepdaughter, Jessica Ippolito; sisters, Gwen Ellis and Nancy Smith (Steve); 13 grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

A memorial service will be held on Saturday, Jan. 29, at Macon Funeral Home from 2 to 4 p.m.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Mitchell Edward Sands

Shelby Jean Dryman Owen

Shelby Jean Dryman Owen, 82, of Otto, N.C., passed away on Jan. 20, 2022.

She was born in Macon County to the late Fred Dryman and Emma Hopkins Dryman. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a grandson, Sam Waldroop; a great grandson, Isaiah Ezechel; and two sisters, Beatrice Schwabe and Rowena Joyce. She was a lifelong resident of Macon County, a member of Tessentee Baptist Church and loved gardening.

She is survived by her husband of 65 years, Homer Owen; children, Rondal Owen (Sharon) of Otto, Fred Owen (Jean) of Franklin, N.C., and Sandra Wood (Tony) of Mt. Rest, S.C.; one sister, Betty Vinson of Otto; six grandchildren, Jamie Waldroop (Crystal), Lacey Kocian (Jason), Jonathon Owen (Lindsay), Jennifer Ezechel (Joe), Steven Owen (Kayla), and Evan Laudon (Katie); and 11 great grandchildren, Iliana Wooten, Ivy Chapman (Noah), Ilyssa Ezechel, Ilaeh Ezechel, Camryn Waldroop, Luca Kocian, Nico Kocian, Peyton Owen, Adele Laudon, Asa Laudon, and Will Laudon; and several nieces and nephews.

A graveside service was held Monday, Jan. 24, at Wright Cemetery in Otto. Rev. Tyler Nations officiated. Pallbearers were Steven Owen, Jamie Waldroop, Doug Cabe, Marshall Owen, Dexter Vinson, and Joe Ezechel.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to Wright Cemetery Fund.

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Shelby Jean Owen

Olive Jean Cannon Maret

Olive Jean Cannon Maret passed peacefully on Jan. 22, 2022. She was born in Pitt County, North Carolina, to Docia Ann Clark Cannon and Alonza David Cannon.

Upon graduation from the Farm Life School in Vanceboro, N.C., she joined her sister, Alice, in New Bern, N.C., and went to work at the Western Union office. There, she met Norman Charles Maret, an aircraft technical representative for Vought Aircraft Corporation.

They married on Jan. 2, 1946, and were together for 55 years until Norman's passing in July 2001. The couple retired in 1978 and moved to the home they had established in Otto, N.C., in 1968.

She was a valued volunteer worker in Macon County. Her contributions included the Child Safety Identification Program at Otto Elementary School; Otto Garden Club; Franklin Garden Club; Church women's groups; PEO; Republican Women's Club; Macon County Republicans; Angel Hospital; FROG; Medication Assistance Program; and Franklin Women's Club. She also enjoyed women's golf and tennis. She valued her friends and was ever ready to help each.

She is survived by her son, Richard (Janet) of Iowa; daughter, Pamela of Otto; grandchildren, Peyton of Greensboro, Christopher (Stephanie) of Iowa, Rebecca Passi (Christopher) of Minnesota; great grandchildren Alexander, Owen, Ben, Keira; sister-in-law, Sherry Cannon of Virginia; her very loved nieces, nephews, grand-nephews and grand-nieces, in North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Washington, and California.

She was a beautiful woman inside and out, a good wife, mother, loyal friend, and believing Christian.

A funeral service will be held Saturday, Jan. 29, at 11 a.m., at the Macon Funeral Home. A graveside service follows at Rush Cemetery in Otto. The family will receive friends from 10:30 to 11 a.m., prior to the service.

Memorial donations may be made in her name to the Otto Volunteer Fire Department, 60 Fire House Road, Otto, NC 28763.



Olive Jean Maret




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Deaths & Funerals

Daniel Hayward Coates

Daniel Hayward Coates, 74, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022.

Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Edward and Mildred Arlesa Roper Coates. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Barbara Jane Waldrop on Jan. 14, 1997. He was a life member of the VFW and had a love of classic cars.

He retired as Chief Warrant Officer III, in the United States Army. While in the Army, he spent many years in Germany, and oversaw operation "Checkpoint Charlie." After retiring from the military, he became a government contractor for the State Department. While doing this job he traveled and lived in Cuba, Peru, New Zealand, Moscow, Hanoi Vietnam, Slovenia, Bosnia, Austria, Hong Kong, Shenyang China, Poland, Istanbul Turkey, Toronto Canada, Rome, Italy, and Germany.

He is survived by his daughters, Jennifer Lynn Coates, and Laurie Coates Beegle; sister, Roseanna Coates; brother, Michael Coates; and grandchildren, Emily Bishop, and Jacob Bishop.

A memorial service was held Sunday, Jan. 23, in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Family and close friends spoke. Military honors were provided by American Legion Post 108 and VFW Post 7339.

A private graveside service will be at Woodlawn Cemetery at a later date.

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

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Catherine Franks Mason

Catherine Franks Mason, 94, of Franklin, N.C., went to her heavenly home on Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022.

Born in Jackson County, North Carolina, she was the daughter of the late Tillman and Jessie Franks. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Carl David Mason; son, Steve Mason; infant daughter, Phyllis Diane Mason; and seven brothers and sisters. She loved cooking and taking care of everyone, but she especially loved spending time with her family. She was of the Baptist faith.

She is survived by her daughter, Carletta Bryant of Logan County, W.Va.; two sons, John Mason, and Boonie Mason, both of Franklin; and daughter-in-law, Claudia Parette of Otto, N.C.; seven grandchildren, and numerous great grandchildren, nieces and nephews surviving.

Funeral service was held Friday, Jan. 21, at Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Jamie Passmore officiating. Burial was in the Zion Hill Baptist Church Cemetery in Sylva.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Daniel H. Coates



Catherine Franks Mason

Creighton Wolfe Sossomon

Creighton Wolfe Sossomon passed away peacefully at his home in Highlands, N.C., on Jan. 12, 2022, following a period of declining health. He was predeceased by his parents, Jane Wolfe Sossomon and Dr. Daniel Creighton Sossomon, as well as his stepmother, Beverly Matthews Sossomon.

Known throughout his life by his family and most of his friends as "Zeke," he was born in Charlotte, N.C. His younger years were spent in Charlotte, Chapel Hill, N.C., and Memphis, Tenn. As a teenager, he moved with his family to Cullowhee, N.C., where he made many lifelong friends and graduated from the McKee Laboratory School in 1962. He then attended and graduated from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1966, earning dual degrees in history and economics. He then attended and graduated from the University of North Carolina School of Law, Chapel Hill, in 1969, earning his Juris Doctor. He immediately sat for and passed the North Carolina Bar. Ever the explorer, he then ventured to Atlanta, Ga., where he clerked for a superior court judge. Once being admitted to the Georgia Bar, he practiced law with the Fulton County, Georgia, District Attorney's office until he moved back to Cullowhee, where he began practicing law with Holt & Haire, PA in nearby Sylva, N.C. In 1976, he opened his own law practice in Sylva.

During that time, he served as the County Attorney for Jackson County, North Carolina, from 1979 until 1982. He was also an active member of St. John's Episcopal Church, Rotary Club (Paul Harris Fellow), Jaycees, and the Board of Trustees at Western Carolina University (distinguished service award). He was instrumental in the growth of Southwestern Community College, where he taught real estate.

In 1984, he moved his law practice to Highlands, joining with Coward, Coward, and Dillard, PA until 1992, when he opened his solo practice in Highlands. In addition to practicing law in Highlands, he continued to be a Rotarian (business leader award); he served terms on both the Zoning Board of Highlands and the Planning Board of Highlands; he served six years as a member of the Town Board of Highlands; he was a member of the Church of the Incarnation, serving in many capacities, including the vestry, lay reader, usher, and camera operator; he served on the Peggy Crosby Center Board of Directors and the Crosby Center Founding Board.

Throughout his life, he was active in numerous other civic clubs, committees, and charitable endeavors. However, the practice and study of law was his calling and passion; he was a skilled litigator and respected attorney for many years.

In his later years, what he enjoyed most was spending time with his family, his friends, and his pets. He also enjoyed participating in church services and activities, traveling, and helping others through volunteering and work. His lifelong interests included reading, diligently keeping up with current events, and rooting for the Tarheels. He will be truly missed and fondly remembered.

He is survived by his beloved wife, Janet Allison Sossomon and his stepdaughter, Treacy Lois Bergen of Austin, Texas, whom he also dearly loved; his stepisters, Lynn Kilette of Belmont, N.C., Beverly Ann Lyda of Powder Springs, Ga., Patty M. Hart of Euroa, Victoria, Australia, and Guerry McConnell of Jonesborough, Tenn.; a brother-in-law, sisters-in-law, beloved nieces and nephews, and many cherished friends.

A memorial service will be held Saturday, Jan. 29, at 11 a.m., at the Episcopal Church of Incarnation in Highlands.

Masks will be provided, and social distancing will be observed. In addition, the service will be live streamed. A link will be provided on www.maconfuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the American Diabetes Association at www.diabetes.org, the American Cancer Society at www.cancer.org, or the Highlands-Cashiers Land Trust at www.hicashlt.org.

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



Creighton Sossomon

Rev. Michael Eugene Chastain

Rev. Michael Eugene Chastain, 51, of Franklin, N.C., went to his heavenly home on Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022.

Born in Vietnam, he was the son of Maily Thach Chastain and the late William Eugene Chastain. He was the Associate Pastor at Pine Grove Baptist Church. He had a servant's heart, which was made evident by the way he loved and served his family and church family. He put others' needs first and ensured those needs were met in any way that he could. The way God's love shown through him will always be remembered.

In addition to his mother, Maily of Franklin, he is survived by his wife and best friend of 27 years, Robin Mason Chastain; children, Christopher Chastain of Cary, N.C., Joshua Chastain of Sylva, N.C., and Kaitlyn Chastain of Franklin; brother, Mark Chastain (Katie) of Chapel Hill; and sister, Tina Chastain Brinson (Jason) of Franklin; and numerous nieces, nephews, other family members and friends.

A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday, Jan. 30, at 5 p.m., at Pine Grove Baptist Church. Rev. Greg Rogers and Rev. Tim Hogsd will officiate.

The family will receive friends from 4 to 5 p.m., one hour prior to the service at the church.

The family respectfully asks that masks be worn, and social distancing be practiced.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Rev. Michael Chastain

James Manuel Hedden

James Manuel Hedden, 71, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Jan. 17, 2022.

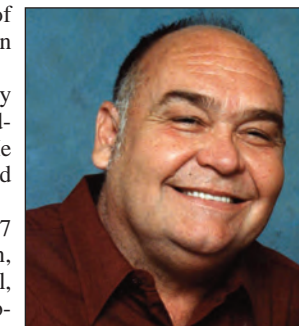
He was born in Macon County to the late Sherman Manuel Hedden and Ruth Gregory Hedden. He enjoyed camping, fishing and loved spending his time at the lake.

He is survived by his wife of 47 years, Wilma Hedden; children, Ruthy Dorthia Fry, Jackie Joe Deal, and Joseph James Hedden; siblings, David Hedden, Ina Woods, Sue Jenkins, Becky Shepherd, and Mary Anne Shepherd; 11 grandchildren, seven great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

A memorial service was held Thursday, Jan. 20, at Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Frank Rodriguez officiating.

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

Macon Funeral Home will be handling the arrangements.



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Deaths & Funerals

Betty Catherine Duvall

Betty Catherine Duvall, 86, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022.

Born on June 11, 1935, in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Walter and Dessie Pickens Tippet. She held different jobs over the years working at Wal-Mart for 21, Sky City for 17 and Burlington Industries for 10 years. She was a faithful member of Cowee Baptist Church where she volunteered in the nursery and with office administration. She loved gardening, flowers and crocheting doilies.



Betty Catherine Duvall

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, J.B. Duvall, who passed away in 1996; brothers and sisters, George W. Tippet, Aubrey Tippet, Roy Tippet and Truman Tippet.

She is survived by her sons, Terry Duvall and wife Rhonda, Dale Duvall and wife Lisa, and Eric Duvall and wife Tammy; daughter, Marcia Moore and husband Tim; sister, Thelma Sanders and husband Ralph; 11 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren.

A funeral service was held Wednesday, Jan. 26, at Cowee Baptist Church with Rev. Jason Smith, Rev. J.D. Woodside and Rev. Ronnie Branson officiating. Interment followed at the church cemetery.

The family would like to send a thank you to Four Seasons Hospice and Sandra Shepherd for their exceptional care of Mrs. Betty.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cowee Baptist Cemetery Fund, 6301 Bryson City Rd. Franklin, NC 28734.

Frederick Charles Snell

Frederick Charles Snell, 71, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Jan. 17, 2021.

He was born in Wilmington, N.C., to the late Frederick Frank William Snell and Muriel Rae (Brendy) Brendemuhl Snell. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by siblings, David Snell and Julie Snell. He grew up in Panama City, Fla., but had lived in Franklin for the last four decades. He loved animals, being in nature, and caring for others. He was a good friend to many.

He is survived by a sister, Linda Rahija (Rick) of Collierville, Tenn.; and a nephew, Bryan Rahija of Portland, Ore.

A small graveside service was held Tuesday Jan. 25, at Woodlawn Cemetery. Rev. Steve Reeves officiated.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue at PO Box 81, Franklin, NC 28744 or to his 2nd home, the Fontana Regional Library at 149 Siler Farm Rd, Franklin, NC 28734.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Macon Funeral home is handling the arrangements.

Bonnie Mae Scott Franks

Bonnie Mae Scott Franks, 79, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus, on Sunday, Jan. 23, 2022.

Born in Macon County, she was the daughter of the late Ralph and Alice Franks Scott. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband of 35 years, Hayes Franks; infant son, Mark Wayne Franks; brothers, Fred Scott, Clyde Scott, Clarence Scott, and George Scott; and a sister, Margie Scott.

She was of Baptist faith. She loved to plant flowers, work in her garden, and listen to music, but the thing she loved most was spending time with her family and friends.

She is survived by a daughter, Susie Franks Welch; four sons, William Larry Franks, Gary Lee Franks, Bobby Ray Franks (Patsy) and Billy Joe Franks (Ali) all of Franklin; her 10 grandchildren, Justin, Jacob, Benjamin, Charlotte, Hayes, Cayley, Mace, Brandon, Trevor, and Crystal; five great grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews.

A funeral service will be held Friday, Jan. 28, at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Gary McCoy, Rev. Derek Scruggs, and Rev. Jamie Passmore will officiate. Burial will be in the Zion Hill Baptist Church Cemetery in Sylva, N.C.

The family will receive friends from 1 o 2 p.m., one hour prior to the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Zion Hill Baptist Church Cemetery Fund.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Bonnie Mae Franks

Elaine Jane Kubalek O'Connor

Elaine Jane Kubalek O'Connor, 81, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, Jan. 16, 2022.

Born in Cook County, Ill., she was the daughter of the late Emil and Blanche Randa Kubalek. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Brendan O'Connor; and a brother, Emil Ernest Kubalek.

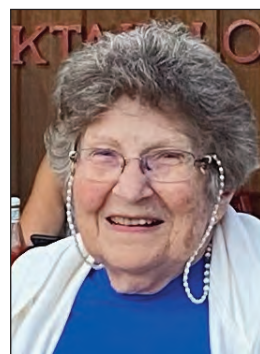
She is survived by her daughter, Jennifer Garrett and husband, Bobby; son, Brian Kelly O'Connor and wife Natalie of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; and two grandsons, Logan James O'Connor, and Tyler Cole Garrett.

In keeping with Mrs. O'Connor's wishes, no services are planned at this time.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Special Olympics of Macon County.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Elaine Jane O'Connor

Carol Faye 'Ginney' Clemons

Carol Faye "Ginney" Clemons, 68, of Franklin, N.C., went to her heavenly home on Thursday, Jan. 20, 2022, after a short but hard-fought battle.

Born in Pennington Gap, Va., she was the only child of the late Chilton and Aileen Emmette Stewart. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Tommy Clemons, in 2009.

She lived most of her life in Big Stone Gap, Va. She was a 1972 graduate of Powell Valley High School and a 1997 graduate of Mountain Empire Community College. She was a member of Cowee Baptist Church and loved to participate in various things at the church. She loved helping with Operation Christmas Child, reading her Bible, doing coloring apps on her phone, and watching Duke basketball, but the thing she loved most was spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She is survived by her daughter, Brianne Newsome and husband, Chris; two grandchildren, Cody Newsome (Leah) and Joey Newsome (Alexis); five great grandchildren, Leanna, Ariella, Sawyrie, Daisy-Lee, and Haxley; and her very special cat, Greyson.

The family will receive friends on Thursday, Jan. 27, at Cowee Baptist Church from 5 to 6 p.m., followed by a Celebration of Life with Rev. Jason Smith and Rev. Ronnie Branson officiating.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to Cowee Baptist Church, "Operation Christmas Child" Fund.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneral-home.com.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Carol Faye Clemons

Stephen Eugene Pitts

Stephen Eugene Pitts, 57, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Wednesday, Jan. 19, 2022, on his beloved farm.

He called his closest friends, and some acquaintances, "wild man," but he was the real wild man. Dirt-track truck racing was one of his early hobbies. He won 10 races in just two years in his self-built truck. Though he was born in Franklin, he was raised in Riverdale, Ga. Every chance he got, he came back to these mountains to visit his grandparents and take in the slower lifestyle of these country roads. He enjoyed deer hunting, fishing, and farming.

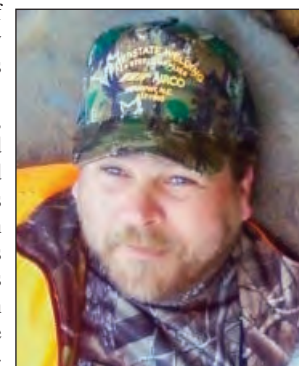
Whether trailblazing Mulberry, burning up the road to Wayah, or trolling through nearby lakes, he was an avid outdoorsman who felt at home in nature. For 16 years, he served as the Macon County welder. He was a great craftsman and enjoyed using his talent for others.

He is survived by his wife, Carol Maria Pitts; mother, Nancy Henry Pitts; father, Gene Pitts; daughter, Holly Paige; son, Stephen Pitts; stepdaughters, Savannah "Savvy" Mansour and Jacquelyn Bruun; three grandchildren; and a great wealth of beloved extended family and friends.

Services were held Tuesday, Jan. 25, at Macon Funeral Home. Honorary pallbearers were Destry Avans, Terry Bates, Chris Queen, Leshar Green, Bobby Haynes, Jamie Wiggins.

In lieu of food or flowers, consider making a donation to Pine Grove C.A.M.O. ministry in Steve's honor. This local ministry serves disadvantaged children and disabled vets on hunting trips, among other services. Donations should be sent to Pine Grove Baptist Church, CAMO Ministry, 7454 Highlands Road, Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Stephen Eugene Pitts

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NASCAR Hall of Famers Leonard Wood, Bobby Allison, Jerry Cook, Jack Roush, Darrell Waltrip, Rick Hendrick, Ray Evernham, Joe Gibbs, Mark Martin, Tony Stewart and Jeff Gordon join Julie Stefanik, NASCAR Hall of Fame inductees Red Farmer and Dale Earnhardt Jr., NASCAR Hall of Fame Executive Director Winston Kelley and NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France during the NHOF Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on Jan. 20, 2022, in Charlotte, N.C. Photos by Mike Comer/Getty Images

NASCAR Hall of Fame welcomes Dale Earnhardt Jr., Mike Stefanik and Red Farmer

Reid Spencer – NASCAR Wire Service

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — At first glance—aside from sharing the profession of “race car driver” — Dale Earnhardt Jr., Mike Stefanik and Red Farmer couldn’t be more different from one another.

A perennial Most Popular Driver at NASCAR’s highest level of competition, Earnhardt holds two Daytona 500 wins among his 26 career victories.

More than that, as a driver, team owner and television analyst, Earnhardt has transcended both the sport of stock car racing and his own legacy as the son of seven-time NASCAR Cup Series champion Dale Earnhardt.

Stefanik, a hard-nosed New Englander, drove modifieds with a relentless tenacity that carried him to seven Whelen Modified Tour titles. Stefanik, who died in 2019 at age 61 from injuries sustained in the crash of a private plane, also collected two championships in what was then the Busch North Series.

The patriarch of the Alabama gang, Farmer accumulated innumerable victories—estimated between 700 and 900—at short tracks located primarily in the Deep South. At age 89, he still competes on the one-third mile dirt oval at the Talladega Short Track across the highway from NASCAR’s biggest superspeedway.

Despite their varying backgrounds and diverse racing pursuits, Earnhardt, Stefanik and Farmer now share one monumental achievement in common—after all three entered the NASCAR Hall of Fame during an induction ceremony at the Charlotte Convention Center on Friday night.

The climax of the ceremony was the induction of Earnhardt, who has made an indelible mark on a sport he was born to. Earnhardt joined his father, a member of the inaugural class of 2010 in the NASCAR Hall of Fame.

Earnhardt’s wife Amy performed the induction of her husband.

“My eyes are already watering,” Earnhardt said as the start to his acceptance speech. “...To join Dad in the Hall of Fame is probably as good as it’s going to get...



NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France talks with NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee Dale Earnhardt Jr. during the NHOF Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on Jan. 20, 2022, in Charlotte, N.C.

“I was a mechanic at a dealership. That was my destiny, or so I thought. I changed the oil in thousands of cars.”

From those inauspicious beginnings, however, Earnhardt followed his father into the NASCAR Xfinity Series, where he won back-to-back championships in 1998 and 1999, and then into NASCAR’s premier division, where he drove first for family-owned Dale Earnhardt Inc. and then for Hendrick

Motorsports.

Earnhardt acknowledged the importance of uncle Tony Eury Sr., his crew chief; his sister Kelley Earnhardt Miller, who spurred the growth of JR Motorsports and Earnhardt’s broadcasting career; team owner Rick Hendrick; and Steve Letarte, his crew chief at that organization.

Key to his personal life, Earnhardt said, was wife Amy. “How do you explain someone who makes every day of your life better?” he said.

NASCAR Hall of Fame crew chief Ray Evernham opened the inductions by ushering Stefanik into the Hall. Stefanik’s wife Julie, who served as her husband’s spotter throughout his career, accepted the induction.

“This is a huge honor, and I know Michael would have been very humbled,” Julie Stefanik said of her husband, who set Whelen Modified Tour records for victories (74) and poles (48).

“He was more than just a racer to us. He was a beloved husband, father, brother and friend. And in his honor, I’ll have a Jack and diet (Stefanik’s favorite drink).”

Stefanik and fellow modified driver and mentor Richie Evans are the only drivers to win nine NASCAR championships. All of Evans’ titles came on the Modified Tour.

Three-time NASCAR Cup Series champion Tony Stewart inducted his close friend and hunting and fishing buddy Charles “Red” Farmer.

“He doesn’t know how to be quiet in a deer stand—I can tell you that,” Stewart said. “But his stats speak for themselves. He’s a racer’s racer and he deserves to be in the NASCAR Hall of Fame.”

Born in Nashville and starting his racing career in Florida, Farmer nevertheless considers Hueytown, Alabama his hometown, in part because of his association with fellow Alabama Gang members Bobby and Donnie Allison. Farmer



NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France presents Red Farmer with his jacket during the NHOFF Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on Jan. 20, 2022, in Charlotte, N.C.



NASCAR Chairman and CEO Jim France presents Julie Stefanik with the jacket for her husband NASCAR Hall of Fame inductee Mike Stefanik during the NHOFF Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on Jan. 20, 2022 in Charlotte, N.C.

has been racing for 75 of his 89 years.

“It’s something that gets in your blood, and you can’t get it out,” Farmer said in a “fireside chat” at the induction dinner before the official ceremony.

Though Farmer raced 36 times in the Cup Series over a 23-year span, with a best finish of fourth (twice) at Middle Georgia Raceway in Macon and Talladega Superspeedway, he routinely turned down full-time Cup offers in less-than-competitive equipment.

“I was not going to be an also-ran,” said Farmer, who preferred to win races and championships on the short tracks. That didn’t prevent him, however, from winning the Modified title in 1956.

The NASCAR Hall is the 10th hall of fame to honor Farmer.

“If these Hall of Fames were a Christmas tree with all the ornaments around it, this NASCAR award would be the gold star on top of that Christmas tree,” Farmer said during his induction speech.

As part of the Friday night program, the late Bob Jenkins was recognized with the

Squier-Hall Award for NASCAR Media Excellence for his pioneering work in television and radio broadcasting.

The late Ralph Seagraves was honored with the 2021 Landmark Award for Outstanding Contributions to NASCAR. As an executive with R.J. Reynolds, Seagraves

was instrumental in bring the Winston sponsorship to NASCAR’s foremost series, as well as to the grassroots racing NASCAR supported.

Richard Childress Racing announces partnership with guaranteed rate

WELCOME, N.C. – Guaranteed Rate, a leader in mortgage lending and digital financial services, and Richard Childress Racing (RCR) have announced a partnership with Tyler Reddick and his No. 8 Chevrolet for multiple races during the 2022 NASCAR Cup Series.

Fans can experience the unveiling of the new No. 8 Guaranteed Rate Chevrolet on social media as it hits the track for the first time on Tuesday, Jan. 25 with Reddick behind the wheel at the final Next Gen test of the offseason at Phoenix Raceway.

“I’m excited to partner with Guaranteed Rate this season,” said Reddick. “Their commitment to the power of belief connects perfectly with what the entire Richard Childress Racing team is striving to achieve. We are looking forward to working together to showcase our commitment to NASCAR fans everywhere.”

Reddick and RCR join a host of Guaranteed Rate’s successful sports partnerships, which include the NHL, National Lacrosse League, UFC, Bassmaster and the Professional Bowlers Association.

“We’re thrilled to partner with Richard Childress Racing as Tyler gets behind the wheel of his new and improved Next Gen No. 8,” said Guaranteed Rate Vice President of Sports Marketing and Partnerships Steve McNelley. “Our focus on technology, innovation and speed makes this sponsorship a perfect fit, and we’re proud to kick off the season with one of NASCAR’s most talented drivers.”



NASCAR Hall of Famers Leonard Wood, Rusty Wallace, Ray Evernham, Mark Martin, Tony Stewart and Jeff Gordon talk during the NHOFF Class of 2021 Blue Jacket ceremony at NASCAR Hall of Fame on Jan. 20, 2022, in Charlotte, N.C.

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ACROSS

- 1. Sleeps in a tent
- 6. Horror movie franchise
- 9. Varieties
- 13. Mozart's "Die Zauberflote"
- 14. Road crew supply
- 15. Moron
- 16. Workman's cotton, once
- 17. Exclamation of surprise
- 18. Monte Cristo's title, in French
- 19. *Olympic Athletes from _____, 2018 hockey winners
- 21. *Figure skating jump (2 words)
- 23. Capone's ilk, e.g.
- 24. Attention-getting sound
- 25. Eminem's genre
- 28. Cashier's call
- 30. Hit-or-miss
- 35. It will
- 37. *Triple one in figure skating
- 39. Hustle and bustle
- 40. German Mrs.
- 41. A mile racer
- 43. a.k.a. horse mackerel
- 44. Jargon
- 46. Workbench holding device
- 47. Health club offering
- 48. Diner, e.g.
- 50. Latin for "and others"
- 52. _____ Aviv
- 53. Ill-mannered one
- 55. Curiosity's victim?
- 57. *2022 Winter Olympics location
- 61. *Torch Relay starting point
- 64. "_____ the Family" TV series

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- 65. Refrigerator sound
- 67. Poppy seed derivative
- 69. Bitterly regretting
- 70. Egyptian cobra
- 71. Part of a stair
- 72. Seedy source of Omega-3s
- 73. More, in Madrid
- 74. Changes to a manuscript
- 9. Revered one
- 10. Fancy ride
- 11. Japanese zither
- 12. Pas in ballet
- 15. "Freezing" Marvel character
- 20. Letter-shaped girder
- 22. "_____ the land of the free..."
- 24. Designer's studio
- 25. *Biathlon gear
- 26. Skylit lobbies
- 27. Manufacturing site
- 29. *2022 Winter Olympics number
- 31. Like Curious George
- 32. Monocot's alternative
- 33. "Killers of the Flower Moon" Oklahoma location
- 34. *Olympic award
- 36. *Olympic sled
- 38. For fear that
- 42. Respond
- 45. Circling
- 49. Far, old-fashioned
- 51. Capital of Punjab
- 54. Early Irish alphabet
- 56. Sort of warm
- 57. Vomit
- 58. Twelfth month of Jewish year
- 59. Pelvic bones
- 60. Put a hex on
- 61. Concert units
- 62. Not yet final
- 63. Edible fat
- 66. *Miracle on Ice winner
- 68. Not Miss or Ms.

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YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD LTZ	20,791
2021	Ford	Bronco Sport	209
2021	Ford	Bronco Sport	1,201
2019	Volkswagen	Golf SportWagen	56,048
2017	Toyota	RAV4 LE	83,441
2011	Cadillac	CTS Sedan Luxury	73,798
2022	Chevrolet	Silverado 3500HD High Country	3,761
2020	Ram	2500 Longhorn Diamond	23,286
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 High Country	22,240
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 LT Trail Boss	15,112
2011	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 LT	83,857
2020	GMC	Acadia AT4	28,261
2020	Chevrolet	Traverse LT	14,559
2002	Hyundai	Elantra	232,0432
2017	Volkswagen	Tiguan Wolfsburg Edition	59,132
2019	Chevrolet	Express Cargo Van	12,089
2022	Toyota	Tacoma 4WD	489
2015	Buick	LaCrosse	104,189
2015	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	103,259
2020	Subaru	Outback Onyx Edition XT	27,594
2018	TRAILER	TRAILER	0
2021	Toyota	Highlander	1,996
2021	Tesla	Model 3 Standard Range Plus	15,196
2008	Ford	Super Duty F-350 DRW	122,960
2019	Nissan	Sentra SV	15,009

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2019	Chevrolet	Malibu LT	43,903
2021	Kia	K5 LXS	4,963
2013	Chevrolet	Equinox LT	161,626
2019	Chevrolet	Sonic LT	59,039
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD	30,903
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 LT	35
2002	Chevrolet	Avalanche	257,555
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD Work Truck	30,903
2020	Subaru	Crosstrek Limited	14,430
2008	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD LT w/1LT	139,065
2015	Chevrolet	Traverse LS	85,983
2021	Ram	2500 Tradesman	3,647
2022	Chevrolet	Corvette 2LT	201
2021	Chevrolet	Equinox Premier	23,547
2015	Nissan	Altima 2.5 S	59,261
2016	Chevrolet	Traverse LT	59,421
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 High Country	44,359
2005	Ford	Five Hundred SEL	106,364
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 RST	7,681
2021	Chevrolet	Tahoe Z71	14,918
2018	Volkswagen	Atlas 3.6L V6 SE	71,947
2020	Chevrolet	Corvette 3LT	8,263
2017	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	55,201
2017	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	61,657
2021	Kia	Telluride S	8,173

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2012	Chevrolet	Colorado LT w/1LT	117,555
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 RST	90,498
2018	GMC	Sierra 1500 Denali	25,059
2020	Porsche	911	6,135
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 Custom	104,810
2021	Toyota	Tacoma 4WD	4,746
2019	Land Rover	Range Rover Sport HSE Dynamic	37,751
2018	Chevrolet	Cruze LS	54,872
2018	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited Sport S	35,240
2020	GMC	Sierra 1500 AT4	15,588
2019	Chevrolet	Colorado 4WD ZR2	6,685
2021	Chevrolet	Tahoe RST	4,798
2015	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited Altitude	39,030
2019	GMC	Yukon XL Denali	63,696
2020	Cadillac	Escalade Premium Luxury	7,309
2019	Chevrolet	Tahoe LT	46,162
2021	Chevrolet	Suburban RST	3,017
2021	Chevrolet	Tahoe RST	10,875
2021	Jeep	Wrangler Rubicon	2,594
2015	Chevrolet	Corvette 2LT	15,349
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 RST	18,191
2018	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	44,668
2019	Ram	1500 Big Horn/Lone Star	17,208
1983	Chevrolet	Corvette	61,350
1972	Chevrolet	Corvette	97,217



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