

The Macon County **NEWS** & Shopping Guide

*Free
independent
weekly*

** HOMETOWN ** HERITAGE FESTIVAL

A Celebration of our
Traditional Mountain Life

Saturday, July 16

9AM - 4PM

Downtown Franklin



See Pg. 3

July 14, 2022 • 24 Pages

Volume 40 Number 9

FREE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

www.themaconcountynews.com



The Town of Franklin has once again created riotous clusters of color with its flower displays in front of town hall and in the recently placed planters around Main Street. Town employees plant, water and maintain the showy flower beds while the Franklin Garden Club maintains the gardens at the clock tower and Rankin Square. The sign in front of Town Hall is a popular place for visitors to record their visit to the area.

Photo by Vickie Carpenter

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Revival of 1900's Scott Griffin Hotel a possibility



Page 20

Chase Elliott posts third NASCAR win of season

Murder suspect thought to be in Franklin

Sheriff Robert L. Holland released the following statement regarding a murder suspect that may be in the area:

Wanted for homicide: Solomon Ramos-Santos has been confirmed to be in the Franklin, N.C., area following the murder of his estranged wife.

Solomon Ramos-Santos is wanted for the murder of his estranged wife in Dekalb County, Georgia on the evening of Sunday, July 11. According to an Atlanta news source, the suspect's son stated that his father went and retrieved a firearm and came back into the room and shot and killed his estranged wife while she was holding her grandchild.



Solomon Ramos-Santos

Macon County Sheriff's Office and United States Marshal Service have been able to confirm that Santos fled to the Franklin area and rented a room at a local motel. MCSO and the U.S. Marshals have been able to positively identify Santos as being in Franklin after reviewing video surveillance footage. Statements provided to investigators by multiple individuals also confirm that Santos remains in the Franklin area and is actively attempting to find a way back to the Atlanta or

See SUSPECT page 2

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Pilot makes emergency highway landing in Swain County

On July 6, the Swain County Sheriff's Office posted a video of a plane having to land on the highway for an "emergency landing." The video quickly went viral with the pilot, Vince Fraser from Florida, receiving accolades for his skills in maneuvering the plane onto a highway.

Fraser, a Florida pilot with less than 100 hours of experience, was flying an Aero Commander 100, a 1970s vintage plane. Fraser flies from Punta Gorda, Fla., to Lake Wales, Fla., a 227-mile flight that would take around two hours. According to flight records, Fraser topped off his gas tank in Lake Wales before heading to Toccoa, Ga., on July

2. Fraser was originally scheduled to fly into the Macon County Airport, however, his father-in-law was at the airport awaiting his arrival and contacted him to tell him that the



conditions. On July 3, flight records show that Fraser took off from the Toccoa airport and flew around the Fontana Dam area. The flight from Lake Wales, Fla., to Toccoa, Ga., would have been around 230 miles. Prior to leaving the Toccoa airport on July 3, there are no records of Fraser purchasing fuel before taking off, flying over the Macon County airport and around Swain County.

weather wasn't clear and cautioned Fraser against landing in Macon County due to the mountainous terrain and weather

flight from Toccoa, he ran out of fuel and is forced to land along US 74 near the Sandlin Bridge. According to the Swain County Sheriff's Facebook Page on July 3, "the pilot said the engine stalled and he had to set the plane down."

On July 6, Sheriff Curtis Cochran again posted about the emergency landing, sharing videos of the landing from the ground and commending the pilot for the landing.

"We are thankful that no injuries occurred during this emergency landing and the plane is safely back in the air. Thanks for all the help from our partners in other agencies," wrote Sheriff Cochran. "We have had plane crashes in Swain prior to this but I don't remember an emergency landing ever happening. This pilot did an outstanding job not only landing safely on a busy four-lane on a holiday weekend but he kept his composure and safely guided the plane off the 4 lane to a safe spot that did not interfere with traffic. Job well done by all involved."

Fraser's statement after the emergency landing stated he believed there was a clog in the aircraft and he was able to rectify it by cleaning out the fuel system. According to reports, he cleaned out filters and opened up valves on both tanks and it fixed the issue. Fraser noted one tank did not have fuel and there was fuel in the second tank, but a clog forced him to land.

SUSPECT

Continued from page 1

elsewhere.

Ramos-Santos is a 45-year-old Hispanic male that is about 5'8 and 180 lbs. He has skin tags around his left eye. Investigators have confirmed Santos is seeking rides from individuals he comes in contact with while in the Franklin area. Santos is also reported to have partially shaved.

"Solomon Ramos-Santos should be considered armed and dangerous and we know he is desperately attempting to find a way out of the Franklin area," said Sheriff Robert L. Holland.

Santos was last seen armed with a 45 caliber handgun. If anyone sees or comes in contact with him, do not approach him and immediately call 911.

"Law enforcement should be extremely cautious especially during all traffic stops until this suspect is

in custody," said Sheriff Holland.

If anyone has information they are encouraged to call 911 or contact the MCSO Criminal Investigations Division Captain Dani Burrows at (828)371-1201. Tips also may be sent by downloading the Macon County Sheriff's Office App. The CrimeStoppers tip line at 349-2600 is also available. The United States Marshal Service is offering a \$2,500 reward for assistance in the capture of Solomon Ramos Santos.




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 First Presbyterian Men's Group
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 Junaluskee Masonic Lodge/ Smoky Mountain Shrine Club
 FROGS

MAIN STAGE ENTERTAINMENT

9:00 - 10:30am – Kornbread Kreek
 10:30am - 12pm – BlueJazz
 12 - 12:30pm – Chelsi Reynolds
 12:30 - 1:30pm – Rachel Bellavance
 1:30 - 2:15pm – Brent Ledford
 2:15 - 3:00pm – Jay Baird & Dave Dexter
 3:00 - 3:45pm – Community Hymn Singl
 3:45 - 4:00pm – Closing Remarks, SOF Leadership

Special Thanks to Town of Franklin Fire Department for the Water Bell and Franklin Police Department for setting up cones. Also to our local media and Donald Holland for the use of his trailer for the stage in front of Wells Fargo. A Thank You to the Town of Franklin Employees and Town Council for their support.

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Revival of a once thriving boutique hotel coming to Main Street

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

The bygone days of early 20th century life in Franklin may have a resurgence – to some extent. Town of Franklin Planner Justin Setser shared with the Council in early June that an Opportunity Appalachia (OA) grant may open the way for the building that once served as an early-to-mid 20th century hotel to once again be used as not only a hotel but also as a restaurant.

Setser explained that when he learned about six months ago that an OA grant was a possibility, “I knew almost instantly that I wanted to do something with this building. I always envisioned it being apartments with a roof-top restaurant. But when I looked at the last cycle and saw how much support boutique hotels received with OA, I went that route.”

Located at 45 E. Main Street, what was

originally called the Scott Griffin Hotel in the early 1900s, is indeed listed as one of OA’s “selected properties,” with this description included in a June 7 Mountain Bizworks press release: “Restoration of the four-story 16,500 square foot Scott-Griffin Hotel in downtown Franklin. The addition of a rooftop restaurant will offer a 360-degree view of the Nantahala and Cowee mountain ranges. The building currently has retail operations on the first floor, with the upper three floors vacant for more than 50 years. Estimated costs total \$5-7 million with anticipated creation of 30 jobs.”

Present at the June 6 Town of Franklin Council meeting, where Setser announced the OA grant and the hotel/restaurant project, was Franklin native and Franklin High School (1969) alumni Janet Greene, whose father J.C. Jacobs, a Franklin merchant and businessman for 64 years who died in 2019 at age 101, pur-

chased the building in 1995. Greene stood up and announced to the Council and people in attendance at the public meeting that her father would have been “thrilled” to know that the building might finally be used.

Scott Griffin Hotel was once a hub of activity, as an advertisement in a 1933 The Franklin Press/The Highlands Maconian attested:

“Hotel - All Standard Brands of Beer Served In Rear Of Hotel - Drink and Be Merry With Us.”

According to Greene, who has researched extensively the history of the building her father owned and which is now owned by her and her sister, Nancy Paris (who resides in Apex, N.C.), three local businessmen partnered to have the hotel built; they were: Sam L. Franks, Franklin Postmaster; H.W. (Henry) Cabe, Bank of Franklin; and W.C. Cunningham, a local merchant. At the time, the brick

building’s first floor was the Sloan Brothers (merchants) storeroom and a barber shop operated by Lester Conley. In late December 1926 or early January 1927, the Sloan Brothers moved their business next door into a new first floor storefront and Smith’s Drug Store took the remaining space (which became Perry’s Drug Store on October 20, 1955).

The intention of the business partners was for the hotel to occupy the second and third floors with 36 bedrooms, 12 baths, steam heat, a circulating system of hot water, and hot and cold water in every bedroom. A kitchen, dining room, and ladies parlor were located on the second floor. A roof garden offered views of the surrounding mountains. And, servant’s quarters were built in the rear of the building. The cost for building was estimated at \$50,000.

To manage the hotel, the three businessmen



The Scott Griffin Hotel operated on Main Street in Franklin in the early 1900s. The hotel in its heyday contained 36 bedrooms, 12 baths, steam heat and circulating hot and cold water in every bedroom. A kitchen, dining room and ladies parlor were located on the second floor. An Opportunity Appalachia grant may allow the possibility of reviving the boutique hotel.



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signed a five-year lease with a Mrs. J. L. Farmer (given name is undetermined) from Gainesville, Ga. She had previously operated the Princeton Hotel in Gainesville.

Greene continues to research to learn where the hotel's name, Scott Griffin, originated.

Over the next 26 years, the building continued as a hotel, but several different people owned and managed it – and, consequently, the hotel's name changed from Scott Griffin to Bryson to Montague to Hearn. The store fronts of Perry's Drug Store, (Bill) Bryant's Market, and the barber shop remained in operation, but the hotel was shuttered in 1955. And, while the building changed ownership a few more times, with the intention of opening some sort of business in it, it never again became a hotel.

"I was four years old when the hotel closed," said Greene. Then on Jan. 9, 1995, the property was sold to JLP Enterprises, Inc., a corporation owned by the J.C. Jacobs family, of which Greene and her sisters are heirs. "Dad had an architect look at the building to see about opening it up again as a hotel, but at the time it cost too much."

She pointed out that people are beginning to become interested in saving and renovating historic properties.

"They see the value in how these buildings enhance the downtown ... how they are nostalgic and protect the past. And the nice thing about this grant [OA] is that there are people involved who are experienced with working on old buildings, who understand what it takes to revitalize them."

Greene reiterated that her father would be happy to know the building would again be used, because of his commitment to Franklin.

"He has such a legacy here. He did what he could for the common good of the community. He was part of what is referred to as the 'greatest generation' and he served the town and the county faithfully."

She added, "I'm my father's daughter, so I have been involved in different ways to sup-



The upper floors of what was once a thriving hotel has sat vacant for decades.

port downtown Franklin. And I think this hotel and restaurant will be a real energizer for Main Street."

Setser indicated that the renovation of 45 E. Main Street into a hotel and restaurant would be a win-win for the Town of Franklin and its residents. He explained that it is important for existing properties to be redeveloped so that Main Street can experience "... growth to its full potential. We have great street-level businesses, but we are only using half of our available space. Activating these additional floors will help Franklin get to that full potential."

He added, "In our proposal to OA, we talked about how we want the project to include features of Appalachian culture in the hotel. The downtown merchants stressed to us they wanted a hotel that would fit into the look and feel of the area ... not a corporate, cookie-cutter stamp on the building. People want something unique and different and we believe we can give it to them."

The project is expected to take upwards of two years to complete before the hotel and restaurant will be open for business.



A rooftop restaurant, with views of surrounding mountains, is envisioned for the boutique hotel project.

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Children's Home Society of NC receives \$8M donation

The Children's Home Society of NC, one of the nation's leading children and family services organizations, has received an \$8M donation from philanthropist MacKenzie Scott. The gift supports Children's Home Society's work for children and families, through innovative services that help families stay together and build resilience to navigate difficult life circumstances. The organization is also a leader in foster care and adoption across North Carolina.

"Ms. Scott's generosity comes at a critical time for our communities," said Brian Maness, President & CEO of Children's Home Society of North Carolina. "Children and families need more than ever to be seen, heard, and validated while facing the challenges of today's world. They need to feel hope for their future and that someone cares about them, particularly amidst current social inequities and the pandemic. We are so grateful to everyone who is helping and sharing in this work."

The organization recently launched an ambitious 5-year plan outlining a better future for North Carolina children and families. "Ms. Scott's donation will strengthen



and help sustain this vital work as we continue to embrace our identity as a mission-driven problem solver, and promote the right of every child to a permanent, safe, and loving family. We know that no one person, organization, or gift can do this work alone, but every person – no matter their background – can make an incredible difference through positive and inspired action," Maness said.

Consistent support from community members across North Carolina, make it possible for CHS to serve more than 15,000 North Carolina children and families annually. In 2021, more than 4,800 families were supported with parent education and support services, and a safe family placement was created for nearly 1,100 children who are in foster care. Children's Home Society has celebrated more than 16,000 adoptions since 1902.

For more information on the Children's Home Society, how to become a foster or adoptive parent, or financial support, work, and volunteer opportunities, call 1-800-632-1400 or visit www.chsnc.org.



Dr. Wilde retires from Franklin Family Practice

Franklin doctor Gustav C. Wilde M.D. announced his retirement last month and his wife and staff threw a party to celebrate. The party was held in the fellowship hall of the Franklin Church of God and members of the community and county officials dropped in to wish him well. Macon County Commissioners Ronnie Beale and Gary Shields and county manager Derek Roland presented gifts from the county. Dr. Wilde also introduced Dr. Timothy Bleckley who will be taking over the practice. Pictured from upper left (L-R): Evelyn Boatwright, Dr. Wilde, Joy Pannell, Melissa Conner, and Brenda Holland. Upper right: Dr. Wilde with Dr. Timothy Bleckley, his wife Stephanie and his children, Addison and Oliver. Bottom photo from left: Dr. Karina Gurney, Dr. Wilde, Beale, Shields, and Roland. Photos by Betsy Gooder

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Habitat partners with 828 Vets



Habitat for Humanity would like to thank a couple of groups that came together on a recent job – Macon Program for Progress with finances and 828 Vets. The group consists of all military branches who came together to help a fellow military friend of 92 years old here in Macon County. “The 828 Vets are a group of men I would be proud to work with any day of the week. It was truly a blessing to get to know each one of these guys. Thank you and may God bless you all,” said John Wert, Habitat Outreach Director.



Credit Union collecting school supplies

As an outreach program for the community, Mountain Credit Union is now collecting back to school items, including school supplies, cleaning supplies, hand sanitizer, Kleenex, etc. through August 26. Items will be dropped off with the school board to be dispersed appropriately. Mountain Credit Union is located at 746 E Main Street, Franklin.

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JULY 22-23

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Saturday Afternoon - 2:00 pm
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Grant Agadjanian
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Debbie Charlton, board chairman of BBBS of Western North Carolina received the award has helped guide the work that led the organization to win a national award.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Western North Carolina receives national recognition

With more than 30 years serving youth across Western North Carolina, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Western North Carolina (BBBSWNC) was recognized as the 2021 Small-Mid Agency of the Year by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America.

The honor, announced at BBBSA's national meeting this month in Indianapolis, honors BBBSWNC for its "extraordinary commitment to innovation and creativity," the national office said. Through the award, BBBSA recognizes agencies whose dedication and achievements have significantly furthered its mission of inspiring young people's passions and empowering them to achieve success in life and career.

Led by CEO Lelia Duncan, BBBS of Western North Carolina (www.bbbswnc.org) created new and ambitious programs aimed at supporting the BBBS community throughout the challenges faced over the last several years. The Asheville-based agency, which coordinates BBBS support in 18 of North Carolina's westernmost counties, worked to serve not only its "Littles," but their families as well. BBBSWNC demonstrated resilience during the pandemic, the national office said, not only by increasing financial reserves, but also by doubling its service area.

One of its major accomplishments was establishing a partnership with the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. Through "exciting, fresh programming" like Club Summit and Success 360, the agency laid a strong foundation for youth to grow and learn in diverse platforms, while continuing to empower its members during turbulent times, BBBSA said.

BBBSWNC serves Jackson, Macon, Swain, as well as Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, and Transylvania counties, as well as the Qualla Boundary.

The local chapter of Big Brothers Big Sister evolved from the "Friends" organization—a

program that began in 1975. Until 1980, it existed on government support and was mainly used by the courts to provide volunteers for juvenile offenders and operations ceased when this support was withdrawn.

A modest grant from the Phoenix Organization enabled the program to reopen in August 1981 and then in August 1982, it officially affiliated with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America. Five years later, the WNC chapter added a Henderson County branch office, and as of 2021, the organization has expanded to serve 18 Western North Carolina counties.

Debbie Charlton, board chairman of BBBS of Western North Carolina recently received the award and has helped guide the work that led the organization to win this national award.

BBBSWNC works to ensure every child in WNC has an enjoyable, long-term relationship with a caring adult who believes in them and sees their potential. They select and match mentors with children facing adversity and provide ongoing activities, training and support services for both families and volunteers to foster a successful match relationship and a lasting connection.

In four decades, BBBSWNC has served more than 14,000 children and believe that in each one is a special spark that can lead them to become positive, productive citizens of the community and the world.

For more information, contact the BBBSWNC branch office in your county:

– Jackson County: Program Coordinator: Stephen C. Hunter, jackson@bbbswnc.org Phone: 828-399-9958

– Macon County (Highlands/Cashiers): Program Coordinator: Danielle Hernandez, cashiers@bbbswnc.org. Phone: 828-399-9133

– Swain County & Qualla Boundary: Program Coordinator: Shelby Hyatt, shelbyh@bbbswnc.org. Phone: 828-736-0341

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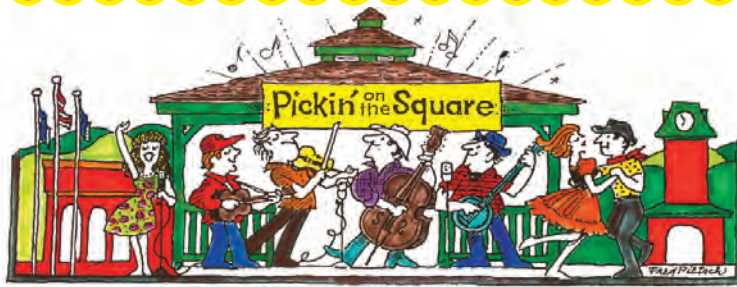
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Donnie Clay, Coordinator for Pickin' on the Square



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News from the Legislature

Rep. Karl E. Gillespie



Rep. Karl E. Gillespie

The House returned to Raleigh on Monday, June 27, for a non-voting session. Following session, I attended a caucus meeting Monday afternoon.

Various committees met Tuesday, including: House Finance and House Education, K-12. Tuesday morning, I attended a caucus meeting with my freshman colleagues.

Session convened Tuesday afternoon and we considered numerous bills, including:

– SB762, North Carolina Farm Act of 2022, would make various changes, including:

- Provide that a building used primarily for storage of agricultural commodities or products or storage and use of materials for agricultural purposes is considered a farm building for purposes of the building code, regardless of whether the building is located on the same property where the agricultural commodities or products were produced. The building must be surrounded by at least 60 feet of open space and be placarded as "Ag Ex-empt."

- Clarify that for purposes of county zoning, a building or structure that is used solely for the storage of cotton, peanuts, or sweet potatoes, or any of the byproducts of those commodities, is a bona fide farm purpose.

- Direct the Agriculture and Forestry Awareness Study Commission to study whether to establish a "right to repair" for electronic farm equipment.

I voted in favor and the bill passed, 99-13.

– SB265, Bond Info. Transparency/LGC Toolkit II, would strengthen the local government bond process and make changes to local government finance provisions. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 111-1.

– SB408, Rural Healthcare Access & Savings Plan Act, would create a Joint Legislative Committee on Medicaid Rate Modernization and Savings that would hear a Medicaid Modernization Plan to be developed by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) by Dec. 15, 2022. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 102-6.

Tuesday evening, the House and Senate unveiled a compromise budget. This budget is an adjustment to the previously passed budget from November 2021. The revised budget includes additional raises for state employees and teachers, water and sewer funding, and

See GILLESPIE on page 11

Letters to the Editor

Let's strive to become great

Been thinkin' lately 'bout M.A.G.A. What an acronym! It sounds strong. Unfortunately, there is a built-in weakness. It is this: great is an opinion only. It cannot be measured or agreed upon. When was it great? How was it great? Was there widespread greatness or only pockets here and there? Is there a chance that America has never been great?

Yet, Donald Trump has exploited many Americans and deceived them into believing he could restore America to greatness when for many that simply hasn't been so. His red cap became a symbol of something that may only be imaginary -a by-gone era that will never return because it never was here in the first place. Much like *Gone with the Wind* as written by Margaret Mitchell. Back when Blacks and women couldn't vote. When only property owners could. When some people were enslaved. Who wants to go back to those times?

Now, don't tell me I'm being less than patriotic. I served four years in the Navy. Members of my family have used copyright as well as patent laws to improve our lot in life. I have read/studied most of the Constitution. I have read the Bible extensively. I have voted for Republicans and Democrats. I am a native of Jackson County, N.C. And, I happen to believe Johnny Cash knew some people had been held back when he sang *Man in Black*. Listen for yourself. In addition to that his musical friend, Waylon Jennings, sang: "...I can't say I'm proud of all of the things that I've done. But, I can say I've never intentionally hurt anyone." How many can honestly say that? Can that be said about

America?

I admire those two musical legends. I also admire Jesus Christ. We have to get better at caring for others. If we don't we can never reach the level of greatness. We are told that by every major religion as well as most philosophies.

Let's strive to become great, though. Jesus, Waylon and Johnny will guide us.

Dave Waldrop – Webster, N.C.

Information can be found in medical literature

Phoebe Buchanan's position on homosexuality is so misguided! There has been no discovery of a "gay gene." I get my information from peer-reviewed medical literature, not the internet.

But even more is her misunderstanding of a loving God. God loves his children unconditionally.

Thomas C. Wilson, M.D., M.S. – Sylva, N.C.

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

Cash-strapped drivers scammed with fake gas gift cards

Even if high gas prices are draining your budget, don't fall for this scam. Scammers are tempting drivers with phony gas station gift cards. It's really a way to get your credit card details and other personal information.

How the scam works

You see a post on social media, get an email, or take a survey that says you won a \$500 gas station gift card. Currently, the scam claims to be from Shell, but watch out for scammers using different gas station brands too.

To get the gift card, you only need to pay a small fee. But when scammers get your credit or debit card information, they will likely charge your account for amounts you never approved. One consumer told BBB Scam Tracker: "They said I won a Shell gas card and had to pay \$1.95 for shipping. A day later, they took \$89.95 out of my account. I called about the charge, and they fixed it, but the next day, another \$89.95 was taken out again."

In addition to your credit card information, the scam may also request other personal details. Some consumers say they

were asked to fill out a form and provide their name, phone number, physical address, credit card information, and other details. Sharing these details with scammers can open you up to identity theft.

How to avoid prize scams

- Never pay to win. No legitimate company will ask you to pay money to receive something you won or to get a free gift. If someone asks you to pay even a small fee to receive a prize, you're probably dealing with a scammer.

- Do your research. Impostor scams are common, so if a large company seems to be offering you a free gift, do some research first. Visit the company's official website (by typing it into your web browser, not by following a link someone sent you) to see if they really are participating in some kind of giveaway.

- Don't act on impulse. Scammers are hoping you'll get so excited about their offer that you won't stop thinking about any suspicious details. Use your good judgment and question any offer that seems too good to be true.

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GILLESPIE

Continued from page 10

much more.

Highlights of the revised budget bill include:

- Budget appropriates \$27.9 billion for FY 2022-23 (7.2% increase from FY 2021-22).
- Increases Rainy Day Fund balance to \$4.75 billion by the end of the biennium.
- Transfers \$1 billion into a newly created “State Inflationary Reserve” in anticipation of a recession.
- 3.5% pay raise for state employees (6% increase over the biennium).
- 4.2% average pay raise for teachers (9.1% increase over the biennium).
- Increases the starting salary for entry level teachers.
- \$80 million for state agencies to provide targeted salary increases to attract and retain employees.
- Noncertified public-school employees, like bus drivers, receive either 4% pay raise or an increase to \$15/hour, whichever is greater.
- Additional 1% one-time retiree supplement (4% total over the biennium).
- Total \$16.5 billion for education in FY 2022-23 (6.7% increase above FY 2021-22).
- Provides funds to cover copays for students qualifying for reduced-price lunches.
- Funds additional 124 literacy coaches and early learning specialists to aid in early literacy efforts.
- Adds \$32 million in School Safety Grants to support students in crisis, safety training, and equipment in schools (\$41.7 million total).
- Expands funding for school resource officers by at least \$41 million.
- Additional \$15 million for the School Resource Officer Grant program for elementary and middle schools.
- Increases state match for the School Resource Officer Grant program to \$4 per every \$1 for low-wealth counties.

I attended a Joint Appropriations Committee Wednesday morning. A presentation was provided on the newly unveiled state budget. The Committee provided a favorable report to the budget bill. My colleagues and I attended a caucus meeting Wednesday afternoon. Session convened at 4 p.m., and we voted on several bills, including:

- SB496, DOI Omnibus Bill, would make various changes to North Carolina's insurance laws, as recommended by the Department of Insurance. The bill passed unanimously, 109-0.
- SB911, Leland Annexation, would modify the requirements and procedure for the Town of Leland to conduct satellite annexations. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 103-6.
- I met with constituents from Macon County Thursday morning. At 1 p.m., my colleagues and I held a caucus just prior to the start of session. Session convened at

2 p.m., and we voted on several bills, including:

- HB103, 2022 Appropriations Act, would modify the current operations Appropriations Act of 2021 and make other changes in the budget operations of the state. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 85-27.
 - SB101, Require Cooperation with ICE 2.0, would do the following:
 - Require that Immigration and Customs Enforcement of the United States Department of Homeland Security (ICE) is queried when an individual charged with certain offenses is in custody and that person's legal residency or United States citizenship status is undetermined.
 - Require a judicial official to order that a prisoner subject to a detainer and administrative warrant be held in custody for 48 hours or until ICE resolves the request.
 - Create reporting requirements related to ICE queries. I voted in support and the bill passed, 65-47.
 - The House reconvened Friday morning at 10:00AM and we voted on many bills, including:
 - HB674, Require DNA for Various Convictions, would do the following:
 - Add additional offenses to the list of offenses requiring submission of a DNA sample after a conviction or a finding of not guilty by reason of insanity.
 - Clarify that medical facilities and medical professionals cannot bill sexual assault victims for forensic medical examinations and update certain definitions. I voted in favor and the bill passed, 107-1.
 - HB776, Remote Electronic Notarization, would allow remote electronic notarization. The bill passed 104-2 and I voted in favor.
 - HB911, Regulatory Reform Act of 2022, would amend various State laws related to State and local government, utilities, education, occupational licenses, and other regulations, as well as make budget technical corrections. I voted in support and the bill passed, 83-24.
- The House concluded its business for the legislative short session and adjourned.



What's new on the plateau

**Patrick Taylor
Highlands Mayor**



Patrick Taylor

Tonight [Thursday] is a Special Meeting of the Highlands Board of Commissioners. It will be held at the Highlands Community Center next to the ball field at 6 pm. The meeting can be accessed at the town website via Youtube.

The purpose of this public meeting is to review proposed unified development ordinance amendments regarding short term rentals. Bob Hagemann of Poyner Spruill will present proposed amendments to the board. These amendments were generated by the board's work group and also discussed by the entire board in an attorney/client closed session. At that meeting the board asked Bob to create draft proposals for final review before being sent to the planning board for their review.

Tonight Bob will guide the board through the draft proposals and answer questions from the board. The board may make final adjustments to the drafts during this period. There will be no public comment at tonight's meeting.

I also anticipate that the board will set at the meeting tonight a date and time for a public hearing in regard to the amendments that will be sent to the Highlands Planning Board for their recommendations. The planning board members will receive the drafts as soon as possible after tonight's meeting. They will also be posted on the town's website.

The planning board is scheduled to have its regular meeting on Monday, July 25, where they will begin the review process. If needed, the planning board can continue the review process at their August 22 meeting.

I anticipate the town board holding a public hearing concerning the planning board's recommendations on August 25. My caveat is that unforeseen circumstances could change the schedule that I have outlined above. If more time is needed for a complete review, that option will be available.

In my last column I asked any group that might have a compromise position on STRs to let me know, or bring it before the public for consideration. At the time of this writing I do not know whether the newspapers will publish a compromise proposal that I have not seen.

I know that on social media some folks have criticized me for calling for a compromise proposal at this time. My intent was to try to ascertain any new approaches to solving this divisive community issue. Some may think I am passing the buck, or am late in calling for a compromise.

I received a statement from the Highlands Neighborhood Coalition that pretty much confirms their previously held position. I have received no proposals from the Save Highlands Group.

I suspect my concern is correct that when it comes to short term rentals in R1 and R2 there is no middle ground. A person is for them or against them with possibly some conditions in between.

The coming weeks will be contentious and stressful times for many folks in the community. Is the mayor under stress? You bet, but I have been in stressful situations many times before. The town will work through this problem.

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Macon Middle School Softball finishes season with perfect 14-0 record



Macon Middle School girls softball closed out its 2022 season with a perfect 14-0 record in the Blue Ridge Athletic Conference. Coached by Missy McConnell and assisted by Chris Rumans, the MMS Lady Panthers made its successful run for an undefeated season. Playing for the Panthers were 8th graders, Ashlyn McConnell, Kendall Rumans, Makayla Pendergrass, Meliah Mason, Clarke Anders, Emma Peak, Evy Hoffman, Lydia Cabe; 7th graders, Audrey Pressley, Layla Maloy, Kamden Reis, Anna Stiles, Cami Mason; and 6th graders, Suzanna Cabe, Kyelynn Harvey, and Finley Mof-fitt. Photos by Ronnie Vanhook



Safe Kids & Rotary host Summer Safety Station

Brittney Lofthouse
Contributing Writer

After just three hours on Monday, July 4th in downtown Franklin, the hot car display hosted by Safe Kids Macon County and the Rotary Club of Franklin as part of the Summer Safety Station showed the temperature inside the van was 167 degrees — nearly double the outside temperature which was 87.8 degrees.

Since May, 10 children in the United States have died as a result of being left alone in a hot car. Those children ranged in ages from just eight months old to five years old with deaths occurring in North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, Georgia, Texas, Tennessee, Alabama, and Pennsylvania.

About 38 children die each year from vehicular heatstroke, according to KidsAndCars.org and NoHeatStroke.org. Heatstroke is the leading cause of death in vehicles (excluding crashes) for those 14 and younger.

It's never safe to leave a child unattended in a vehicle. Even with the windows cracked or the vehicle parked in the shade, the interior temperatures within the car can reach dangerous levels in a short period of time.

Even on days with mild temperatures, the heat inside a closed vehicle can reach dangerous levels within an hour, posing major health risks to small children or pets left inside, Consumer Reports says.

"Whether your child is asleep in the car, or you are running into the store for just a moment, it is never safe to leave your child alone in the car," said Safe Kids of Macon County Coordinator and Macon County Sheriff

Office Sergeant Nick Lofthouse. "After three hours the temperature inside the car on Main Street in Franklin had nearly doubled, but when we first started the display, the temperature in the car was 20 degrees hotter than the outside temperature in less than half an hour."

Safe Kids sets up hot car displays a couple of times a year to demonstrate the dangers of the temperatures inside of a vehicle for both children and pets.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has warned that on a 60° F day—something akin to spring weather—the temperature inside a vehicle can reach a dangerous 110° F over the course of several hours.

The threshold for heatstroke in children is when the internal body temperature reaches about 104° F. And a child is at serious risk of death if their internal body temperature reaches 107° F, according to medical experts.



Sgt. Nick Lofthouse, Safe Kids coordinator, outfits a young biker with a safety helmet.

The danger from high temperatures is particularly acute for young children because their bodies heat up three to five times faster than adult bodies, according to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

In addition to the hot car display, Safe Kids Macon County and The Franklin Rotary Club sized, fitted, and gave away 200 bicycle helmets for children as part of the North Carolina Department of Transportation's Bicycle Helmet Initiative.

A record number of

children across North Carolina will receive free bike helmets through the N.C. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Bicycle Helmet Initiative.

In 2022, a record 19,900 children across the state will receive a new bike helmet as part of the program. The goal of the initiative, which began in 2007, is to reduce bicyclist injuries and fatalities. On average, 20 bicyclists are killed each year in North Carolina, according to N.C. Department of Transportation statistics. One in six is under 16 years old. Children 5 to 14 years old visit emergency rooms for bicycle-related injuries more than any other sport or recreational activity. Typically, less than 50 percent of children wear safety helmets, according to Safe Kids Worldwide. The Helmet Safety Institute says wearing a helmet can reduce the risk of severe brain injuries by 88 percent.

NCDOT uses funds from the sale of "Share the Road" specialty license plates to pay for bike helmets that are distributed at bicycle safety events for children by government and non-government agencies.

A record 256 organizations 93 more than in 2021—have received helmets this year as part of the state program.



Paw Patrol's Marshall and Chase were on hand for photo ops.



The hot car display demonstrates the intensity with which a parked car heats up on the inside. The outside temperature was nearly 88 degrees; inside the car, it was 167 degrees.

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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 July 2- 10. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.



Macon County Sheriff's Department

July 6

Max Colton Edwards, was charged with interfering with emergency communication. Adrian L. Mace made the arrest.

July 7

Kaylea Gail-lynn Cannon, was charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of drug paraphernalia. Jordan C. Sutton made the arrest.

Eric William Gonzalez, was charged with possession of methamphetamine and possession of a weapon of mass destruction. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

Richard Kaleb Bates, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Lance Edward Hughes, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

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

William Lee Swanson, was charged with child support enforcement contempt. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

Joshua Henry Dale Driver, was charged with assault with a deadly weapon with intent to kill inflicting serious injury. Costin Jigla made the arrest.

July 8

Jaquelyn Ruth Stewart, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. Nick Lofthouse made the arrest.

Franklin Police Department

July 2

Griffin Rene Griffin, was charged with driving while impaired. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

July 3

Stephen Terrence Gibson, was issued an order for arrest. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Michael Shane Bates, was charged with possession of methamphetamine. A.R. Holland made the arrest.

Two Macon men enter drug trafficking pleas

Two Macon County men admitted guilt last week in connection with drug-related crimes, District Attorney Ashley Hornsby Welch said. Carl Floyd, 32, Franklin, pleaded guilty to drug trafficking in connection with his arrest on June 2, 2019, along U.S. 441 North.

A Macon County Sheriff's Office deputy stopped a vehicle for erratic driving. Two syringes were in plain

view in the vehicle, and a search revealed a plastic baggie with methamphetamine in Floyd's possession.

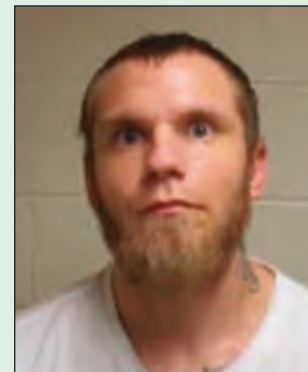
Senior Resident Superior Court Judge Bill Coward sentenced Floyd to serve a minimum of 70 months in prison up to a maximum of 93 months. He also ordered Floyd to pay a state-mandated \$50,000 fine.

Derek Camp, 32, of Franklin, pleaded guilty to two counts of trafficking opium/heroin fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine, in connection with his arrest on Sept. 1, 2021, at a service station on Dowdle Mountain Road, and Feb. 3, 2022, at a local Franklin hotel.

On Sept. 1, 2021, a Franklin Police officer observed Camp participate in a drug deal. After seeing suspected



Carl Floyd



Derek Camp

drug paraphernalia in plain view in the defendant's vehicle, a search revealed fentanyl and methamphetamine, as well as drug paraphernalia.

The defendant was arrested in a separate incident for trafficking in fentanyl, on Feb. 3, 2022, as the result of an investigation by law enforcement and probation officers who were super-

vising the defendant's girlfriend.

Judge Coward sentenced Camp to serve a combined sentence of a minimum of 160 months in prison up to a maximum sentence of 213 months, plus levied the state mandated \$150,000 fine.

The successful prosecutions are part of a targeted effort across the 43rd Prosecutorial District to take dealers off the streets, Welch said. Her district is made up of the state's seven westernmost counties.

Also last week, five drug traffickers in Haywood County pleaded guilty to drug-related charges and are now in the N.C. Division of Adult Corrections.

Chief Assistant District Attorney Jason Arnold prosecuted the cases.

July 7

Brenton David Wilding, was issued an order for arrest for possession with intent to sell/deliver a schedule II controlled substance. R.S. Dula made the arrest.

Jackson County Sheriff's Department

July 4

Joshua Adam Goff, 24, of Scotsdale Ct., Winterville, was charged with violation of a domestic violence protective order. No bond was set.

George Levi Alexander Norris, 17, of Skyland Dr., was charged with resist/obstruct/delay and simple assault. No bond was set.

Jason Anthony Sisi, 61, of Mountain Oaks Lane, was charged with communicating threats. A secured bond of \$200 was set.

Wendy Pearl Brady, 44, of Bigwitch Rd., Cherokee, was charged with failure to appear for cyberstalking. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Shira Lynn Littlejohn, 32, of North Country Club Dr., Cullowhee, was charged with possession of drug paraphernalia, possession of schedule I and possession of methamphetamine. No bond was set.

Belinda Smiddy Byrd Webb, 53, of Celestial Lane, Whittier, was charged with simple possession of a schedule IV controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia and possession with intent to manufacture/sell/deliver a schedule I controlled substance. No bond was set.

July 5

Charles Alden Brooks, 19, of Willetts Rd., was charged with resisting a public officer, larceny after breaking and entering and breaking and entering non-forcible. A secured bond of \$20,000 was set.

Roger Clay Bryson, 69, of Whisper Wind Rd., Cashiers, was charged with assault on a female. A secured bond of \$2,000 was set.

Stephen Ray Bengivenga, 21, of Manor Trace, was charged with simple affray. No bond was set.

Amber Nicole Franks, 26, of Manner Trace, was charged with simple affray. No bond was set.

Anferny Joshua Morales Vazquez, 26, of Manor Trace, was charged with simple affray. No bond was set.

Christopher Todd Jones, 35, of Cloudy Valley Rd., was charged with filing a false police report and assault on a female. No bond was set.

July 6

Christopher Ian Cotterman, 38, of Adams Creek, Cherokee, was charged with damage to property. A secured bond of \$500 was set.

July 7

Rachael Christine Driver, 26, of Moody Reed Rd., Cherokee, was charged with probation violation. A secured bond of \$10,000 was set.

July 8

Moises Erasmo Perez-Meza, 36, of Floral Dr., was charged with child support purge. A \$1,000 bond was set.

Ronald Daniel Paul Rhyne, 39, of Peeble Brook Circle, Concord, was charged with child support. A secured bond of \$10,635 was set.

July 9

Christopher Ian Cotterman, 38, of Adams Creek, Cherokee, was charged with malicious conduct by prisoner, resist/obstruct/delay and assault on a government employee. A secured bond of \$30,000 was set.

July 10

Travis Keith Mathis, 44, of Jonquil Dr., was charged with child support purge. A \$4,976.80 bond was set.

Frederick Earl Stillwell, 23, of Pecan Dr., was charged with probation violation. A secured bond of \$15,000 was set.

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Lecture topic: Hellbenders

On Monday, July 18, the series Where We Live: History, Nature, and Culture will present a program on the Hellbender, a giant salamander found in area streams.

The hellbender is one of only three giant salamanders found in the world. North Carolina is home to more than 65 species of salamanders, with 50 species in our mountain region alone. The Eastern hellbender (*Cryptobranchus a. alleghaniensis*) is the largest salamanders found in North America.



Hellbenders are 16 to 17 inches long on average, but they can grow to be more than 2 feet long and weigh more than 2 pounds. Once common throughout the mid-eastern United States, this giant salamander has disappeared from many streams.

Local names for hellbenders include water dog, mud puppy, devil dog, snot otter, grampus and Alleghany alligator. Although they are large and slimy, hellbenders are harmless and not poisonous, toxic, or venomous.

Lori Williams, Wildlife Diversity biologist with the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, will be the speaker. Williams is conducting a long-term inventory and monitoring project on hellbenders.

The program will be held at the Cowee School Arts and Heritage Center at 51 Cowee School Drive in Franklin, beginning at 6:30 p.m.



Recent recital showcases local talent

A recital was held recently at Coweeta Baptist Church. The program consisted of vocals, piano solos, piano duet and eight, hands-two pianos, a marimba/vibes duet, a violin duet and a violin trio. The young people performing are students of Mildred McSwain, Shereen Ivey, Kathy Hill, Quashona Antoine and Buddy Huckabee. Pictured in no particular order are Jacob Clark, Abigail Wright, Lia Lallo, Abigail Pope, Kyla Albers, Miles Caldwell, Jack Lewis, Emmaline Albers, Elena Rizek, Daniela Rizek, Savanna Bubenick, Jeneva Stanley, Isaiah Stockton, Eliza Wahtera, Jack Moore, Matthew Albers, Daniel Riddle, and Callie Barnett.

Summit Church Band to make the Concerts on the Creek debut July 15

The 13th season of Concerts on the Creek continues with a performance by the Summit Church Band on Friday, July 15 from 7-9 p.m.

The Summit Church Band is a local group that will perform powerful pop, rock, country and praise originals and covers.

Concerts on the Creek are held every Friday night from 7-9 p.m. at the Bridge Park in Sylva, from Memorial Day through Labor Day.

Everyone is encouraged to bring a chair or blanket. These events are free but donations

are encouraged and welcomed. Dogs must be on a leash. No smoking, vaping, coolers or tents allowed in the park please. Food trucks will be available.

These concerts are organized and produced by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce, the Town of Sylva and the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department.

For more information, call the chamber at 828-586-2155, visit www.mountainlovers.com or Concerts on the Creek's Facebook page.



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Deaths & Funerals

Robert James Alexander

Robert James Alexander, 82, died July 7, 2022, after battling dementia. He was born on Sept. 26, 1939, in Jackson County, North Carolina, to parents Rebecca Lula Alexander and D. Cecil Alexander. He was the oldest brother to Frances, Richard, and Carl.

Raised on a small family farm, he quickly learned the value of hard work and a deep lasting love for the North Carolina mountains. His mother helped shape many of his Christian values including a strong, unwavering sense of right and wrong as well as the importance of family. He was always front and center at family reunions, holidays, and other family gatherings.

He was a proud graduate of Franklin High School and went on to attend Clemson University. After serving in the Air National Guard, he married Joyce Brown of Clayton, Ga., and they enjoyed life together for 59 years.

Next, he embarked on a career in the sand and gravel business. He provided sand for the concrete that built I-95 through Georgia and South Carolina. He then worked for Claussen Paving Co., later known as Southern Aggregates, in Augusta, Ga., where he served as vice president in charge of the aggregates division.

His entrepreneurial spirit and work ethic led him to many other ventures. These ventures varied from unloading rip rap for the Kings Bay Naval Base to finding ways to utilize waste from paper recycling.

He also cofounded Sand Rock Transit, a materials yard in Atlanta, and sister company Agg-Tran, LLC in Cartersville. Later in life he established Alabama Gravel to mine river gravel for the metallurgical industry.

Robert and Joyce have two sons, Robert (Doolin) and Mark (Taunya), and three grandchildren Eliza Duncan (Tommy), Sam, and Sutton.

He was a lifelong golfer and an avid Clemson Tiger fan. He loved attending football games until late in life.

He enjoyed being outdoors, whether in Georgia, on Lake Keowee or in the North Carolina mountains. While he was proud of solving the world's problems with friends on the porch of the Rockin' R and watching sunsets at Lake Keowee, his favorite spot was always the North Carolina mountains!

He had an infectious smile and an abundant love of life. He will be greatly missed by his friends and loved ones.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making an online donation to Alzheimer's Association (alz.org) in memory of Robert James Alexander.

A Memorial Service will be held Thursday, July 14, at 11 a.m. at the First United Methodist Church South Campus, 4741 Carey Station Road, Greensboro, Ga., with Rev. Chris Laskey officiating. The family will receive friends from 10:00 a.m. until time for the service at the church.

McCommons Funeral Home, 109 W. Broad St., Greensboro, Ga., is in charge of arrangements. Visit www.mccommonsfuneralhome.com to sign the online register.



Robert James Alexander

Christopher Logan Cowart

Christopher Logan Cowart, 20, of Franklin, N.C., went home to be with Jesus and his dad on Friday, July 8, 2022.

Born in Franklin, he was the son of Marcella Cook Cowart and the late Robert Lewis Cowart. He was an honor roll child all the way through his school years. He loved spending time with his family and enjoyed playing tricks on everyone, especially his younger brother, Ryan. In his spare time, he enjoyed fishing, playing video games, and going to Dollywood.

He is survived by his mother, Marcella Cook Cowart; brothers, Brandon "Bubba" Cowart and Ryan Cowart, both of Franklin, and Conner Hobbs of Dublin, Ga.; sister, Angelica Cowart of Little Rock, Ark.; grandmothers, Melinda Massung and Anna "Abuela" Cook, both of Franklin; great grandmother, Marcella Massung of Franklin; and numerous aunts, uncles, cousins, and friends surviving.

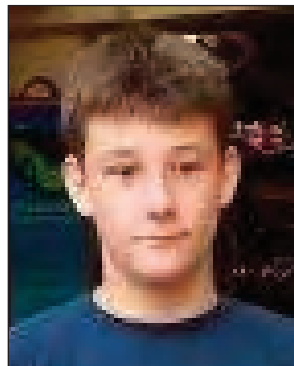
A celebration of life will be held Thursday, July 14, at 5 p.m., at Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Gary McCoy and Rev. Robert Lambert officiating.

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

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be given to Christopher's family to help with the family's various needs.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Christopher Cowart

Ross William (Joe) Marks

Ross William (Joe) Marks, 71, passed away Saturday July 2, 2022. No public services are planned.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.

Dovie 'Colene' Evitt Ledbetter

Dovie "Colene" Evitt Ledbetter, 85, went home to be with the Lord on Thursday, July 7, 2022. She was born June 26, 1937, in Alamogordo, N.M., to the late Mack B. Evitt and Delphia G. Evitt.

She previously worked as a billing secretary for Highlands Cashiers Hospital. She was a loving mother, grandmother and great-grandmother; she was faithful and dedicated to her family and Lord.

She is survived by her daughter, Vikki Montgomery (Craig); a granddaughter, Taylor Montgomery (Ted Catron); a great granddaughter, Eleanor "Ellie" Catron; and a sister, Shirley Houston (Clinton).

In addition to her parents, she is preceded in death by two sisters, Maxine Evitt and Kathleen Evitt; and a brother, Leland Evitt.

A Celebration of Life service was held Monday, July 11, at Bryant-Grant Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Jeff Houston officiating. Burial followed at the Evitt Cemetery in Cashiers. Pallbearers were Craig Montgomery, Thad Evitt, Chuck Knowlton, Clinton Houston, Jeff Houston, Ted Catron, and John Swann.

Bryant-Grant Funeral Home and Cremation is serving the Ledbetter family.

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



Dovie Evitt Ledbetter

Jeffrey Rogers

Jeff Rogers, 63, of Franklin, N.C., passed away in Asheville on Tuesday, June 14, 2022, after a brief illness.

He was born in Middlesex, N.J., to the late Robert and Gloria Rogers. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Anthony Rogers.

After moving to Florida in 1981 where he owned and operated numerous businesses, he enjoyed getting away in the RV with "his Mares," as much as possible, walking along the intracoastal and going to Miami Dolphin games. Go Fins.

Moving to the mountains in 2015, he cooked at many local restaurants and worked for H&R Block in Clayton, Ga. Thanks, Steve, for being a great boss. Jeff loved you.

Always a hard worker, he looked forward to the day he could just sit on the beach with his RV nearby. Thankfully, he and his wife Mary spent five months last winter doing just that. He was so happy catching the sunrise every morning, having picnics on the beach and being carefree. Life was good. How I miss you baby, you always made everything so perfect.

He is survived by his wife, Mary; daughter, Dana Rogers, of Clermont, Fla.; and brother, Michael Rogers of Bath, Pa.

No public services are planned.

Highlands Cremation and Funeral Care is serving the family.



Jeffrey Rogers

Marlene Theresa Woods

Marlene Theresa Woods, 89, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Sunday, July 10, 2022.

She was born in Ohio to the late John Schneider and Frances Mae Dobson Schneider. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Arthur Woods; brothers, Jack and William Schneider; a sister, Dorothy Schneider; and grandson, Jeremy Ritchey.

She enjoyed gardening and loved spending time with her family and best pal, a Bichon named Cotton.

She is survived by her children, Michael Ritchey (Linda) and Mark Ritchey (Edda); a stepson, James Woods (Paula); four grandchildren, six step grandchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

A service will be held Wednesday, July 20, at 11 a.m., at St Francis of Assisi in Franklin. Visitation is between 5 and 7 p.m., on Tuesday, July 19, at Macon Funeral Home.

Pallbearers will be Michael Ritchey, Mark Ritchey, James Woods, Matthew Ritchey, Ryan Ritchey, and Jon Raymond.

Online condolences at www.maconfuneralhome.com.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in memory of Marlene to St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 299 Maple St Franklin, NC 28734.

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Marlene Theresa Woods



Obituaries
can be viewed
online at:

themaconcountynews.com

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Deaths & Funerals

Barbara Ann Becker

Barbara Ann Becker, 70, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, July 5, 2022.

She was born in Geneva, Ala., to the late J.E. Grimes and Mary Harrison Youngblood. In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by her husband, Richard Charles Becker; sister, Linda Morgan; and niece, Carrie Dudley.

She was a member of Coweeta Baptist Church. She enjoyed painting, puzzles, watching hummingbirds, playing bingo and poker, and spending time with her family.

She is survived by her siblings, Johnny Grimes (Debby) of Clermont, Fla., James Edward Grimes and Timothy Grimes; adopted son, James Grimes Jr. (Cari) of Minneola, Fla.; nephews, Matthew Grimes, and Damon Culver; nieces, Christy Morgan (Gary), Jennifer Grimes, Megan Grimes, Ashley Grimes, Chasity Grimes; many great nieces and nephews; and boyfriend, Jeff Parnell of Otto, N.C.

Funeral service was held Saturday, July 9, at Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Keith Ashe and Rev. Jeff Shaver officiating. Burial was at Rush Cemetery. Pallbearers were James Grimes, Matt Grimes, Justin Highnote, Cameron Highnote, Timothy Highnote, and Damon Culver.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to American Cancer Society.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Mildred Thornton Johnson

Mildred Thornton Johnson, 87, passed away Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at the Elizabeth House in Flat Rock, N.C. She was born in Daytona Beach, Fla., on Nov. 5, 1934, to the late Burwell Thornton and Mildred Fentress Felton.

She worked many years in nursing and in later years did real estate. She was a graduate and alumni from Massachusetts General Hospital School of Nursing. She was a resident of Mount Desert, Maine and lived her whole life in Highlands at the home her family built and established many years ago. Mildred loved life and she lived it to the fullest.

Survivors include her children, Maynard Johnson and his wife, Susan of San Diego, CA, Lewis B. Johnson and his wife, Cindi of Long Island, New York, and Shannon E. Johnson of Philadelphia, Pa.; three grandchildren, Elise L. Johnson, Derek R. Johnson and his wife, Debra, and Chelsea V. Johnson.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a sister, Marion Blackman.

A private graveside service will be held in the Highlands Memorial Park.

Online condolences can be left at www.bryantgrantfuneralhome.com.

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



Barbara Ann Becker



Mildred Johnson

Marshall Victory Nation Jr.

Marshall Victory Nation Jr., 56, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, July 5, 2022.

Born in Abbeville, S.C., he was the son of Linda Willis Evans and the late Marshall Victory Nation Sr. He enjoyed writing poetry and short stories. He loved preparing five course meals, studying his Bible, painting, and playing the guitar and piano. He was a very gifted artist. He loved spending time with his family, especially his niece and nephews.

He is survived by his mother, Linda Willis Evans of Franklin; three siblings, Michelle Heard (Zack) of Travelers Rest, S.C., Dedra Nation Justus of Travelers Rest, and Michael Nation of Bradenton, Fla.; niece, Gracie; seven nephews, Jesse, Gregory, Nathanael, Eli, Thad, Jacob, and Isaac; and several great nieces and great nephews.

A funeral service was held Friday, July 8 in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. Rev. Brandon Breedlove officiated. Burial was in the Iotla Baptist Church Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Iotla Baptist Church Youth Group.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Marshall V. Nation Jr.

Michelle Yvonne Rowe Weeks

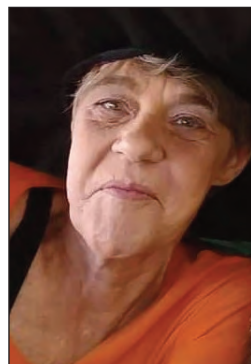
Michelle Yvonne Rowe Weeks, 58, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Tuesday, July 5, 2022.

She was born in Orlando, Fla., to Norma Cherokee Payne (Frank Sisinni) and the late Jimmy Rowe. In addition to her father, she was preceded in death by husband, Charles Week. She was a long-time resident of Macon County who loved spending time with her grandchildren.

She is survived by her children, Samuel Griffin (Kristin), Charles Weeks; stepson, Shawn Ray Weeks; fiancée, John Boyce; siblings, Sadie Rowe, Sonya Rowe, Janet Rowe, Hank Rowe, and JP Rowe; 11 grandchildren; one great grandchild; and numerous nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, July 16, at 4 p.m. For details contact Sam Griffin.

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



Michelle Weeks

Tommy Lee Reece

Tommy Lee Reece, 79, of Franklin, NC, passed from this life at his home on July 4, 2022. A native of Franklin, he was the son of Thomas Grady and Lorraine Anita Lee Reece.

He retired from Fruit of the Loom manufacturing and was a plumbing contractor. As his health declined his favorite things to do were to "watch people work" and drive around in his Jeep looking for wildlife. If any local farmers were planting or harvesting, he would likely be parked nearby watching them. He loved reporting how many deer and turkeys he had seen for the day. He never failed to appreciate God's creation and the blessings that came from living in these mountains.

Surviving is his wife of 57 years, Rella Wilson Reece; his son, Chris Reece (Shanna); his daughter, Dawn Westbrook (Tom); his beloved grandchildren, Carrie Enloe (Jesse), Wilson Reece, Zeb Enloe, and Reagan Reece; his great-granddaughter, Lyra Elaine Hogan; his sisters, Juanita Phillips (Carl), Caroline Kimsey, Becky Kimsey, and Elaine Morris (Joe) and many nieces and nephews.

A private family service was held on Friday, July 8.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.

Charles Curtis Pearson

Charles Curtis Pearson, 69, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, July 6, 2022.

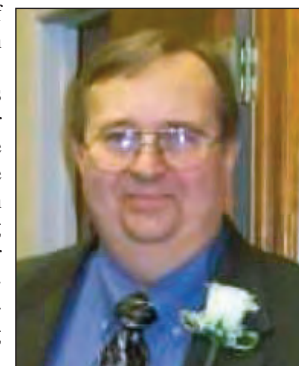
Born in Macon County, he was the son of the late Curtis Lamar and Elizabeth Cabe Pearson. He was a member of the Westside Church of Christ and was an Army veteran serving during Desert Shield. He had worked for many years as a RN in the operating room at Angel Medical Center. He enjoyed building computers, photography, and painting.

He is survived by his wife of 49 years, Charlotte Carnley Pearson; two children, Jessica Tallent (Jonathan) and Matthew Pearson (Tabitha McCall) all of Franklin; brother, Douglas Pearson (Alice) of Denton, N.C.; and three grandchildren, Jackson, Rylan, and Harlan; one niece, Alyson Bosworth; two nephews, Kurt Pearson, and Bradley Pearson; and several great nieces and nephews.

A funeral service was held Monday, July 11, at Macon Funeral Home with John Gurtler officiating. Burial was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

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

Macon Funeral Home is in charge of the arrangements.



Charles Curtis Pearson

Gary Michael Peterson

Gary M. Peterson, 76, born on April 26, 1946, knew exactly what he wanted included in this notice so he wrote it himself.

My name is Gary M. Peterson, and I passed away at my home in Franklin, N.C., on July 1, 2022. I was preceded in death by my parents, John T. and Kathryn A. Peterson, and by my grandfather, Charles E. Austin.

I leave behind my wonderful wife, Karen L. Peterson. I also have two sons of whom I am very proud, David M. Peterson and John T. "Teddy" Peterson (Jennifer). Teddy and Jennifer have two boys, John T. "Tripp" Peterson III, and Charles Austin "Bubba" Peterson, and I have a sister, Nadine Barrett (Seb). These are the people I love most in the world. I will miss them.

I was born and raised in Pennsylvania. My father died in 1959, when I was only 12 years old from wounds received during World War II. He was my hero, and I missed him all of my life.

My mother remarried in 1962, and we were forced to move to Ninety-Six, S.C. I swear there was not even a stoplight anywhere! Nevertheless, I attended Ninety-Six High School, and we won the state championship in both football and baseball.

For my undergraduate work, I attended Erskine College for four years. For my masters degree, I attended Clemson University an additional two years. I taught school for a total of 11 years in Abbeville, S.C., Seneca, S.C., and in Walterboro, S.C. I was a special education teacher. I coached football for 13 years before becoming an announcer.

I called football and baseball games on WBHN for 13 years. I became known as the "Voice of the Devils." Football was tape delay: baseball was live. We aired the high school Game of the Week. I worked another six years as an announcer for WBLB television. We covered all Western Carolina University sports. The games were seen on cable television for viewers in North Carolina, Georgia, and Virginia.

I've had an awesome life. Two wonderful grandchildren, a beautiful wife, and living in Franklin, N.C. I've had such a great run! Goodbye, all.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.



Gary Michael Peterson



Deaths & Funerals

Alma Moffitt Berg

Alma Moffitt Berg passed away July 6, 2022 in Irmo, S.C.

Born and raised in Franklin, N.C., she was a devoted Christian and a devoted mother to her four children. As a military wife, she raised her children by herself much of the time. She had good values, and was a resourceful person and mother, often making due with what she had to be the best mom she could be.

She was a kind and caring person who enjoyed the simple things in life. Above all she took great joy in her family and loved visits from her grandchildren.

Later in life she spent time as a volunteer where she enjoyed meeting people.

She is survived by her children, Teresa Rizzo (Doug) of Irmo, Chris Bottoms (Vicky) of West Union, S.C., Casey Southard (Mike) of Franklin, N.C., and Will Bottoms of Franklin; several grandchildren, great grandchildren, nieces and nephews; a sister, Helen Ammons of Bakersfield, Calif.; brothers, Bud, Don, Frank, and Terry Moffitt and their families of Franklin.

A graveside service was held Monday, July 11, at Woodlawn Cemetery.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is humbly honored to serve such a great lady and her family.

Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.

Tony Ellis Tice

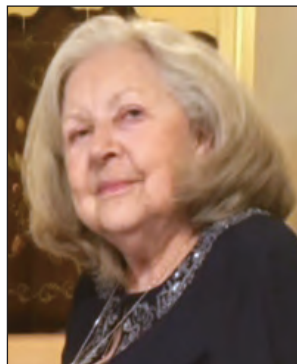
Tony Ellis Tice was born in Tampa, Fla., to Roy Ellis Tice and Debra Marlene Holden Tice on Nov. 17, 1974. He passed from this life on July 4, 2022.

He was a hardworking man and a great provider. He couldn't be called materialistic: he just wanted to make sure the love of his life, Allison, and their children were well cared for. He was a simple man with simple tastes who enjoyed being a family man and doting on his grandchildren. He could be hard headed and strong willed, but he had another side that was generous and willing to help anyone in need.

He loved attending concerts. He enjoyed all kinds of music including southern rock like Lynyrd Skynyrd, CCR, and some country music. Salt water fishing, especially for redfish, was one of his favorite things to do. If the television was on, he probably was watching The History Channel or an outdoor show about fishing. He loved the mountains and vacationed in Pigeon Forge, Tenn., a few months ago. He had wanted to go to the mountains one more time.

A resident of Lake Wales, Fla., he is survived by his parents; his wife, Allison K. Tice; his daughter, Tiara Tice; his sons, Austin Tice, Logan Tice, and Jacob Tice; his grandchildren, Grayson, Shaylee, Gunner, and Ryder; his sister, Tina Maciejewski (Robby); his brothers, Tim Tice (Lisa) and Jason Tice; his in-laws, Roger and Debbie Newton; and a number of nieces and nephews.

A Celebration of Life will be held at a later date in Lake Wales. Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family. Online condolences may be made at www.moffittfunerals.com.



Alma Moffitt Berg



Tony Ellis Tice

Barbara Lourena Raby Williams

Barbara Lourena Raby Williams, 92, passed away on July 2, 2022.

Born in Macon County on Oct. 30, 1929, she was the daughter of the late Charles Donald Raby and Bedell Parrish Raby. She was preceded in death by her husband, Charles Edward Williams in 2004; son, Robert Liner Williams in 1991; sisters, Helen Raby, Jackie Norman; brother, Albert Raby; and great grandson, Shane Tastinger.

She was a member of Oak Grove Baptist Church. She graduated from Franklin High School in 1948. She was a homemaker, and a caregiver. She enjoyed sitting on her porch and looking out over the beautiful mountains, listening to the Atlanta Braves ballgames, and always quick to let you know she was proud of her southern heritage. "Gran" loved spending time with her children, and especially her grandchildren. The Franklin House staff took special care of her.

Surviving are daughters, Edna Morgan (Joe), of Franklin, Teresa Dodge (Mark), of Woodland, Calif., and Jeanne Tastinger (Tom), of Franklin; daughter-in-law, Marlene Cook Williams of Franklin; brother, Clark Raby of Pompano Beach, Fla.; sisters, Carol Ann Estes, of Franklin, Linda Lacy of Franklin, and Donna Setser of Asheville; sister-in-law, Jean Raby; grandchildren, Dennie Holland (Therese), Sissy Holland, Ryan Dodge (Mindy), Christy Young, Alisha Higdon (Denver), Travis Dodge (Erica), Nicholas Morgan (Kimberly), Brooke Smith (James), Robbie Williams (Kelly), Jason Tastinger, Tommy Tastinger (Wynell), and John Tastinger (Julie); 22 great-grandchildren; and eight great-great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations can be made to the Hospice House Foundation WNC, PO Box 815, Franklin, NC 28744, or the charity of one's choice.

Macon Funeral Home is handling arrangements and services will be announced at a later date.

Robert Louis Mast

Robert Louis Mast, 91, of Franklin, N.C. and Cape Coral, Fla., passed away on Wednesday, June 29, 2022.

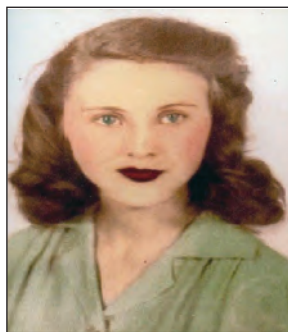
Born in Mishawaka, Ind., he was the son of the late Lowell Russell and Phoebe Goss Mast. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his brother, Lowell "Bud" Mast Jr. He was a member of St. Francis of Assisi in Franklin and St. Katherine Drexel in Cape Coral. He was a HAM Radio Operator (an active member of the ARRL) and a General Aviation pilot. He was a member of the Elks Club, the Waterway Cruising Club, and enjoyed RV-ing, traveling to most of the states in the U.S. with his wife and daughters.

He is survived by his wife of 32 years, Rita Greene Mast; eight children, Janet Powell of Salem, N.Y., Robert Mast of Webster, N.Y., Thomas Mast of Leigh High Acres, Fla., Ted Mast of Largo, Fla., Jeanne Leathley of Syracuse, N.Y., Donald Mast of Clearwater, Fla., Amanda Johnson (Mast) of High Point, N.C., and Ann Marie Mast of Franklin; one sister, Sharon Rowell of Tempe, Ariz.; and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren.

A funeral mass will be at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the Eternal Word Television Network, Birmingham, Ala.

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



Barbara Williams



Robert Louis Mast

Alvin Andrew Nicholson

Alvin Andrew Nicholson, 76, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Thursday, July 7, 2022.

Alvin, or "Pickle" as he was affectionately called, was born in Jackson County to the late Van Nicholson and Bessie Talley Nicholson. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Linda Bone Nicholson.

He was a dedicated member of Maidens Chapel United Methodist Church, was a member of West Macon Fire and Rescue and The Mighty Methodist Men. He was a friend to many and will be dearly missed.

He is survived by his brother, Richard "Red" Nicholson of Pennsylvania; his cousins that were like brothers, Lonnie Barnes (Sue) and Danny Chastain; his caregiver and friend, Georgia Giles of Franklin; special godchild, Jacey Rae Flerzar; and godchildren, Weston and Braxton Mace.

A service was held Sunday, July 10, at Macon Funeral Home with Rev. Oliver Rice and Rev. Stephanie Thompson officiating. Burial was at Maidens Chapel Cemetery.

Pallbearers were Jimmy Teem, Steve Carpenter, Jacob Bingham, Kevin Corpening, Chris Hicks, Chad Hand, and Johnny Pendergrass.

Honorary pallbearers were the Macon County Fire and Rescue and The Mighty Methodist Men.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to West Macon Fire and Rescue or The Mighty Methodist Men.

Online condolences can be made at www.maconfuneralhome.com

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Alvin Andrew Nicholson

Daniel Robert Allegretti

Daniel Robert Allegretti, 91, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Wednesday, July 6, 2022.

He was born in Chicago, Ill., to the late Aldo Allegretti and Mary Sullivan Allegretti. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by two sons, Stephen and Anthony Allegretti. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, was a handy man and enjoyed woodworking.

He is survived by his wife, Shirley Nilles Allegretti; son, Robert Allegretti of Ft. Lauderdale, Fla.; stepsons, James Kiersnowski (Laura) of San Diego, Calif., and Paul Kiersnowski (Janna) of Lake Mary, Fla.

A mass will be held Thursday July 14, at 11 a.m., at St Francis of Assisi in Franklin. Burial will follow at Woodlawn Cemetery. Father Tein will officiate.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.



Daniel Robert Allegretti



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Chase Elliott wins at home, posts third victory of season

Holly Cain – NASCAR Wire Service

Chase Elliott is a former NASCAR Cup Series champion and currently the 2022 title leader. But finally scoring a dramatic victory Sunday afternoon at his home track – Atlanta Motor Speedway – in front of a vocal and adoring home crowd ranks right up there as far as he's concerned.

Elliott's No. 9 Hendrick Motorsports Chevrolet led a race best 96 of the 260 laps and held off a charging field to win Sunday's Quaker State 400 Presented by Walmart, ultimately securing the trophy when the caution flag came out in the closing portion of the frenzied final lap.

Corey LaJoie, who was dueling it out with Elliott on that last lap, brought out that caution after hitting the wall on the backstretch in a final attempt to pull alongside and pass Elliott for what would have also been a popular first career NASCAR Cup Series victory for the well-liked LaJoie.

"This one's up there for sure, to win at your home track is a real big deal I think to any race car driver," said Elliott, 26, of nearby Dawsonville, Ga. "I watched a lot of guys do it over the years, Jimmie [Johnson] out in California. We haven't really had a very good run here, so I felt like today was a good opportunity for us.

"I'm just so proud. This is obviously home for me and home to a lot of great fans who made a lot of noise today. Couldn't be more proud of our team."

Obviously disappointed not to earn the victory, but not disheartened, LaJoie said he was encouraged by the No. 7 Spire Motorsports Chevrolet team's work on Sunday and boosted by the confidence of being in position to win late in a race.

"Closest I've ever been, for sure that was fun" LaJoie said. "I'm proud of my guys at Spire and everyone whose helped us out.

"I made my move and it didn't work out, and the siren is ringing in Dawsonville (Ga.) unfortunately," LaJoie said referencing the famed Dawsonville (Ga.) Pool Room where the owners ring a bell to celebrate each of Elliott's victories.

With 27 lead changes among 12 drivers and 13 caution periods, it was an eventful day on the newly reconfigured and re-paved Atlanta Motor Speedway's 1.54-mile track. And there was plenty of drama from the hometown kid winning his series-best third race of the year to several dust-ups among popular drivers.

Ross Chastain, who had a busy day on track and was part of a couple of those incidents, rallied to finish runner-up to Elliott.

"I hated that I took the best car here and I tore it up a couple times, but yeah, it's incredible," Chastain said of rebounding to score his fifth top two finish of the season.

"Hats off to Chevrolet and Trackhouse for bringing this fast of a Jockey Chevrolet to be able to come back. Our road crew and pit crew did an awesome job to rebound through all the damage repair and we had a shot and I got inside of the 9 [Elliott] coming off [turn] 2 coming to the checkered and the caution came out."

After being collected in a nine-car accident just before the race's mid-point, Chastain worked his way forward again only to make contact with veteran Joe Gibbs Racing driver Denny Hamlin as the two were running in the top 10 late in the race. The pair have had run-ins previously this season and Hamlin, whose car was badly damaged, was not happy after the race.

"Everyone has different tolerance levels and as you all know, I've reached my peak," Hamlin said.

Team Penske rookie Austin Cindric – winner of the season opening Daytona 500 – finished third, with Petty GMS Motorsports' Erik Jones and Team Penske's Ryan Blaney round-



Chase Elliott, driver of the #9 NAPA Auto Parts Chevrolet, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Cup Series Quaker State 400 at Atlanta Motor Speedway on July 10, 2022 in Hampton, Georgia. Photo by James Gilbert/Getty Images

ing out the top five.

Chastain's Trackhouse Racing teammate Daniel Suarez was sixth, followed by Justin Haley, Aric Almirola, Martin Truex Jr. and Kevin Harvick rounding out the top 10.

Austin Hill makes his way to Victory Lane at home track

Radio trouble prevented driver Austin Hill from being able to speak to his Richard Childress Racing crew during the AlSCO Uniforms 250 NASCAR Xfinity Series race Saturday afternoon at Atlanta Motor Speedway, but he sure understood the final hand signal.

Number one.

The Georgia native, 28, won at his hometown track for the first time in his NASCAR career – holding off JR Motorsports driver Josh Berry by a mere .111-second – the closest Xfinity Series race finish in track history and another fitting number nod to Hill's finish.

His 73 laps led in the No. 21 RCR Chevrolet was most on the day and the most of his young NASCAR Xfinity Series career.

"Man, look at this crowd, I love the fans" a smiling Hill said looking toward the loud and enthusiastic grandstands. "What a car. Man, RCR has been working their ever-loving tails off to give me a car that will race really fast."

Hill was so impressed and appreciative of the work of his crew, particularly to win on a day it had to overcome a major challenge. He came down pit road on the pace laps once the

team realized his radio didn't work. Hill could hear the crew, but they could not hear him.

Even a new helmet didn't solve the problem so he spent all of the often eventful 163 laps around the 1.54-mile speedway listening only. They worked out hand signals for adjustments he wanted during the pit stops.

There were 17 lead changes in the race, but Hill took the lead for good on a restart with 48 laps remaining and held off Berry, Ryan Truex, Daniel Hemric and Tyler Reddick – sure that they would try to pass him in the final lap. The frontrunners got dicey as expected, but Hill was able to pull away and was never challenged heading to the checkered flag to take his second series victory in 2022.

Truex finished third, followed by Reddick – who became a first-time NASCAR Cup Series winner last week – and reigning Xfinity Series champion Daniel Hemric.

Noah Gragson and his JR Motorsports teammate Justin Allgaier were sixth and seventh, followed by Landon Cassill, Riley Herbst and A.J. Allmendinger

That 10th place finish marked a solid comeback for Kaulig Racing's Allmendinger, who led the championship standings by a mere nine points going into the Atlanta race. A tire problem and slow pit stop put him down two laps in Stage 2, and it proved to be a long, challenging day for Allmendinger who methodically worked his way forward.

At one point, he briefly lost the championship lead to Ty Gibbs. But Gibbs, Saturday's polesitter, had his own problems. Racing hard with Herbst at the front on a restart for the final stage, Gibbs' No. 54 Joe Gibbs Racing Toyota hit the wall hard and suffered enough damage for him to take a DNF.

A four-race winner, Gibbs went into the race trailing Allmendinger by only nine points, but now he'll go to New Hampshire for next week's race 29 points out of the championship lead.

"We had a very fast Supra, we had a good car," Gibbs told PRN Radio. "The 98 [Herbst] slid up and wasn't clear and



Austin Hill, driver of the #21 Bennett Transportation and Logistics Chevrolet, celebrates with a burnout after winning the NASCAR Xfinity Series AlSCO Uniforms 250 at Atlanta Motor Speedway on July 09, 2022 in Hampton, Ga.

Photo by James Gilbert/Getty Images



hooked us in the left front. It was hard racing and I just came home on the wrong side of it.”

The Xfinity Series moves to New England next week with the Crayon 200 on Saturday at the one-mile New Hampshire Motor Speedway (2:30 p.m. ET, USA Network, PRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). NASCAR Cup Series driver Christopher Bell has won the last three New Hampshire Xfinity races.

Parker Kligerman takes the checkered flag at Mid-Ohio, takes home bonus \$50,000

Parker Kligerman may be a popular television race commentator but the 31-year old Connecticut driver reminded the NASCAR world that he is first, a race car driver, winning Saturday's Inaugural O'Reilly Auto Parts 150 at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course in a highly-spirited final laps battle with Zane Smith.

Ultimately, Kligerman held off the three-time race winner Smith – the two crossing the line side-by-side with Kligerman's No. 75 Henderson Racing Chevrolet taking a .119-second margin of victory in a race that concluded with all the drama expected of a road course event.

Smith – who won at Circuit of the Americas and finished runner-up at both Sonoma, Calif. and Mid-Ohio – takes a great “consolation prize” with his second-place finish Saturday. He heads into the regular season finale in two weeks now only two points away from earning the 2022 regular season Camping World Truck Series championship.

Saturday's victory is the third career series win for Kligerman

man and first since 2017. And he becomes the series' 17th consecutive different winner on a road course.

“It's hard to put into words [what this means], I was pretty emotional on the cool-down lap because this whole team it's like a team of second chances,” said an absolutely elated Kligerman of his small team.

“Two years ago, I thought my driving days were done. This team gave me a call, wanting to get back racing and it's just been a steady improvement.

“It's just unbelievable when you put a talented group of humans together, what they achieve,” Kligerman said of his Henderson Racing team, which employs only one fulltime crew member. “And we're doing this on absolutely a fraction



Parker Kligerman, driver of the #75 Food Country USA/Tide Chevrolet, celebrates in victory lane after winning the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series O'Reilly Auto Parts 150 at Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course on July 09, 2022 in Lexington, Ohio.

Photo by Ben Jackson/Getty Images

of the trucks we run against.

“This is a small team that ‘could,’ but we're not a small team that doesn't win,” Kligerman shouted turning toward the crowd. “We win.”

Corey Heim was making it a three-truck contest for the trophy, going wheel to wheel with Kligerman and Smith for what would have been an extra \$150,000 Triple Truck Challenge bonus for him when his No. 51 Kyle Busch Motorsports Toyota suddenly lost power. That brought out the seventh caution period of the day and left the trophy to be decided in a frantic three-lap sprint by Kligerman and Smith, who each won a stage.

Kligerman, who led a race best 56 of the 67 laps -also earned a \$50,000 bonus for his win in the third and final round of the Triple Truck Challenge.

Carson Hocevar finished third with Stewart Friesen and Christian Eckes rounding out the top five. Chandler Smith, Kaz Grala, Derek Kraus and Shelby Howard finished sixth through ninth with Hailie Deegan earning a 10th place finish – her first top 10 of the 2022 season.

Mid-Ohio was especially tough for race favorites and championship contenders. John Hunter Nemechek, who entered the race trailing Smith by only 21 points in the standings was still hoping to race for his second consecutive Camping World Truck Series regular season championship. Instead, Nemechek's No. 4 Kyle Busch Motorsports Toyota had mechanical problems about midway through the race.

The KBM team worked on the truck in the garage to repair a problem with third gear. Nemechek returned to the race with only 18 laps remaining and was able to make up enough ground to stay in second place in the standings – tied with Chandler Smith – but now 58 points behind Zane Smith.

Reigning series champion Ben Rhodes also experienced mechanical problems mid-race and was never able to challenge up front. He finished 23rd.

Drivers Ty Majeski (12th), Eckes (fifth) and Hocevar (third), secured their Playoff berths with their results on Saturday. Ninth place Grant Enfinger and 10th place Matt Crafton still must battle Kraus for Playoff position. The three-time series champion Crafton holds a 19-point advantage over the 20-year old Kraus entering the final regular season race.

The regular season concludes July 23 at Pocono (Ra.) Raceway with the CRC Brakeleen 150 (noon ET, FS1, MRN, SiriusXM NASCAR Radio). The top 10 drivers in the standings will contend in a seven-race Playoff to determine the 2022 NASCAR Camping World Truck Series champion.



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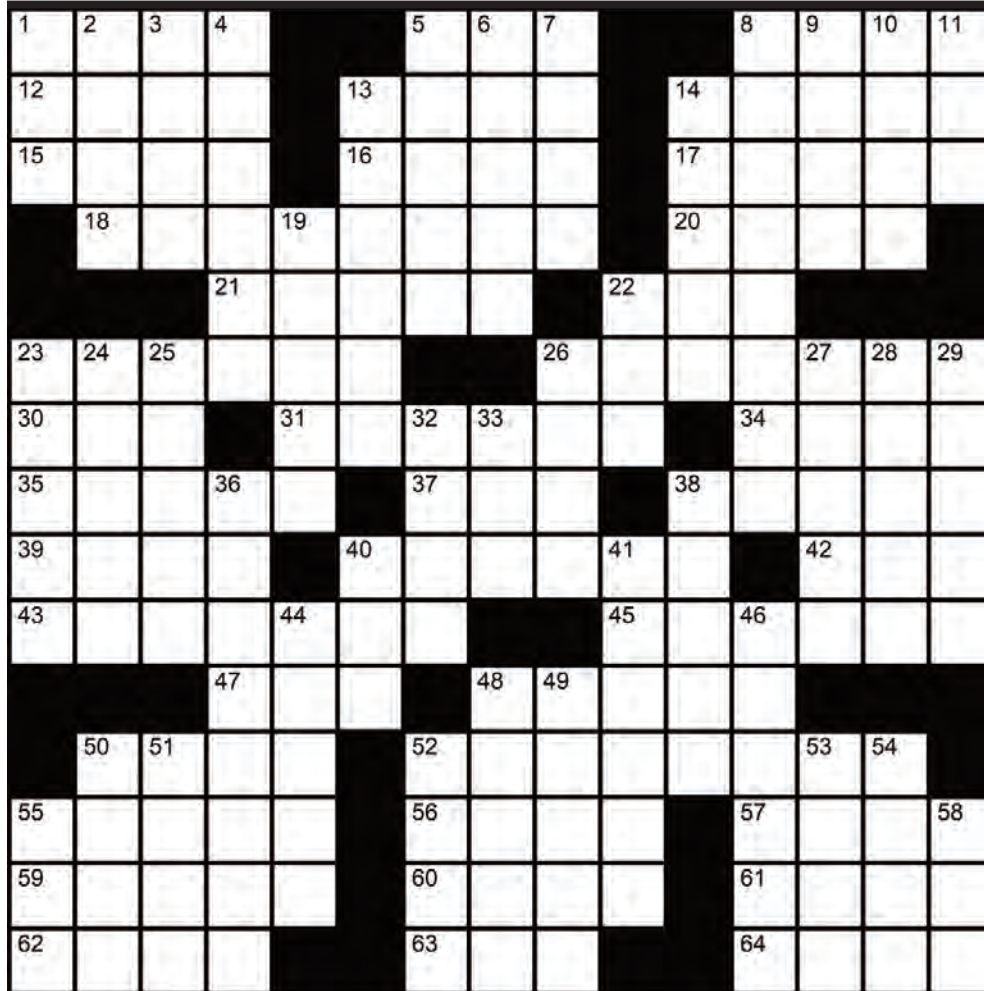
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ACROSS

1. *Shari Lewis' TV puppet, ___ Chop
5. Black gunk
8. Not kosher
12. Chills and fever
13. Misbehavior on road
14. Near the wind
15. Ship's steering wheel
16. Sign of escape
17. **"How to Get Away with Murder," starring ___ Davis
18. *Featuring Jerry, Elaine, George, Kramer
20. Theories
21. Make awake
22. Mai follower
23. *Featuring Sam, Diane, Cliff, Norm, Carla
26. Scary creature
30. Salmon on a bagel
31. Etsy member
34. Craving
35. Old and feeble
37. Quaker Man's grain
38. Romanov rulers
39. Without help
40. Stay clear of
42. **"The ___ Life" on Animal Planet
43. Keep from happening
45. Sets to zero
47. Old age, in the olden days
48. ** ___ Previews" with Siskel and Ebert
50. Same as taboo
52. *Featuring Dre, Rainbow, Zoey, Andre, Diane, Jack
55. New Testament king
56. Is not, colloquially
57. At hand



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59. Pond buildup
 60. Microscope part
 61. **"Hogan's Heroes," set in ___ Germany
 62. Coin opening
 63. Like some martinis
 64. Big Bang's original matter
- DOWN**
1. ___-di-dah
 2. Awfully long time
 3. Stubborn beast
 4. Make soiled, in the olden days
 5. At the heart of Boston Tea Party
 6. Quick or nimble
 7. No longer working, shortened
 8. *Featuring Rebecca, Jack,

- Kate, Randall, Kevin
9. *ABC comedy-drama, " ___ 222" (1969-74)
10. 90-degree pipes, e.g.
11. Public health agency, acr.
13. "The wretched ___ of your teeming shores"
14. Of a bird
19. Relating to Scandinavia
22. Lookout point
23. Necklace lock
24. Great esteem
25. Napoleon's time on Elba
26. Crystalline hydrochloride
27. Crossbeam
28. Kind of heron
29. "The defense ___"
32. *Featuring Hurley, Sawyer, Kate, Sayid, John
33. Lake, in Provence

36. *Featuring Stubing, Smith, Washington, McCoy, Bricker
38. Fine-tune
40. Finish line, e.g.
41. Builds
44. Dodge
46. Certain jeans fit
48. More than sly
49. **"The ___," featuring Fran, Maxwell, C.C., Niles
50. **"To ___ the Truth," game show
51. Golden Fleece ship
52. *Like George Costanza, Homer Simpson or Captain Picard
53. Close an envelope
54. Mental confusion
55. Possesses
58. Canyon feature

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TRIVIA NIGHT Otto Community Development, 65 Firehouse RD., Monday, July 18, 7 p.m. Come join the fun and test your knowledge. Snacks and refreshments provided. \$5 donation per person

DRIVE-THRU SPAGHETTI DINNER July 23, 5-7 p.m. Memorial United Methodist Church. menu will include spaghetti with meat sauce, salad, garlic bread and a dessert. free meal, all donations go towards missions. Information call church office (828)369-5834.

CECIL & TERESA JOHNSON benefit Bake Sale and 50/50 Drawing, Saturday, July 16, 8-2, H&R Block, 316 Depot St. (828)524-7014.

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2022	BMW	Alpina XB7	536
2022	BMW	530	240
2022	Chevrolet	Corvette 2LT	201
2022	Edge	Sport	101
2021	Tesla	Model 3 Standard Range Plus	15,196
2020	Chevrolet	Corvette 3LT	8,263
2020	Jaguar	XE AWD	5,214
2019	Buick	Enclave	24,669
2019	Dodge	Grand Caravan SXT	55,584
2019	Nissan	Sentra SV	15,009
2019	Toyota	Corolla LE	11,095
2019	Volkswagen	Beetle	42,676
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	53,520
2018	Chevrolet	Cruze	34,692
2018	Cruze	LS	25,170
2018	Focus	SE	44,403
2018	Traverse	LT AWD	95,105
2015	Nissan	Altima 2.5 S	59,261
2015	Mustang	GT	45,724
2014	Chevrolet	Cruze	113,152
2014	Ford	Focus SE	84,984
2009	BMW	i28	86,081
2008	Corvette	Coupe	9,007
1990	Corvette		125,701

SUVS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2021	Grand Cherokee	L	13,279
2021	Ford	Bronco Badlands AWD	1,237
2021	Tahoe	LT	16,432
2020	Grand Cherokee	Trailhawk	26,226
2020	Cadillac	Escalade Premium Luxury	7,309

2020	GMC	Acadia AT4	28,261
2019	Chevrolet	Equinox Premier AWD	34,109
2019	Chevrolet	Tahoe LT	46,162
2019	GMC	Terrain	63,316
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox LT	23,569
2018	Chevrolet	Tahoe	84,386
2018	Ford	Explorer	69,517
2018	Forerunner	TRD Sport	65,055
2018	Grand Cherokee	4x4	48,031
2018	Kia	Soul	58,573
2018	Nissan	Murano	53,903
2017	Rogue	SV	58,866
2017	Toyota	RAV4 LE	83,441
2016	Lexus	RX 350	72,908
2016	Sorento	LX	112,933
2015	Chevrolet	Equinox LTZ AWD	107,485
2015	Jeep	Wrangler Unlimited Altitude	39,030
2015	Suburban	LT	92,352
2014	Ford	Explorer 4x4	68,342
2013	Ford	Escape SE AWD	89,455
2012	Chevrolet	Express 2500 VAN	160,946
2010	Wrangler	2DR	96,217

TRUCKS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2022	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 LT Trail Boss	651
2022	Ram	2500	5,273
2021	Chevrolet	1500 4x4	10,243
2021	Chevrolet	Colorado ZR-2	10,842
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	5,822
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	8,432
2021	Colorado	Z-71	12,912
2021	Ford	F-150 SuperCrew Cab	32,251
2021	Jeep	Gladiator	2,054
2021	Ram	2500 Tradesman	3,647

2021	Toyota	Tacoma TRD Off-Road	8,507
2021	Toyota	Tacoma 4WD	4,746
2020	Chevrolet	2500	30,233
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado ZR-2	36,463
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado	31,506
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado	52,944
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 High Country	22,601
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 RST	90,498
2020	GMC	Sierra 1500 AT4	15,588
2020	Ram	2500 Longhorn Diamond	23,286
2020	Silverado	1500 Regular Cab	21,430
2020	Toyota	Tacoma SR	12,448
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 2500HD	30,903
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 3500 HC Dually	45,535
2019	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 High Country	44,359
2019	Colorado	WT 4x4	6,261
2019	GMC	Sierra 1500	18,811
2019	Nissan	Frontier SV 4x4	60,592
2019	Toyota	Tacoma SR5	43,420
2019	Toyota	Tacoma TRD 4x4	43,577
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado Z-71	23,542
2018	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	31,379
2018	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	44,668
2018	GMC	Sierra 1500 Denali	25,059
2017	GMC	Sierra 1500 SLT	61,657
2016	Chevrolet	1500 LT Crew	118,872
2016	GMC	Sierra SLT	61,530
2016	Ram	Diesel Crew 2500	60,495
2016	Toyota	Tacoma	127,336
2015	Chevrolet	Colorado	95,530
2014	Ram	1500 Sport Crew 4x4	107,828
2012	GMC	Sierra 2500 Diesel	192,749
2008	Avalanche	LTZ	66,581
2008	Colorado	LT 4x4	128,003
2006	Chevrolet	2500 Diesel	194,159



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