

The Macon County **NEWS** & Shopping Guide

*Free
independent
weekly*



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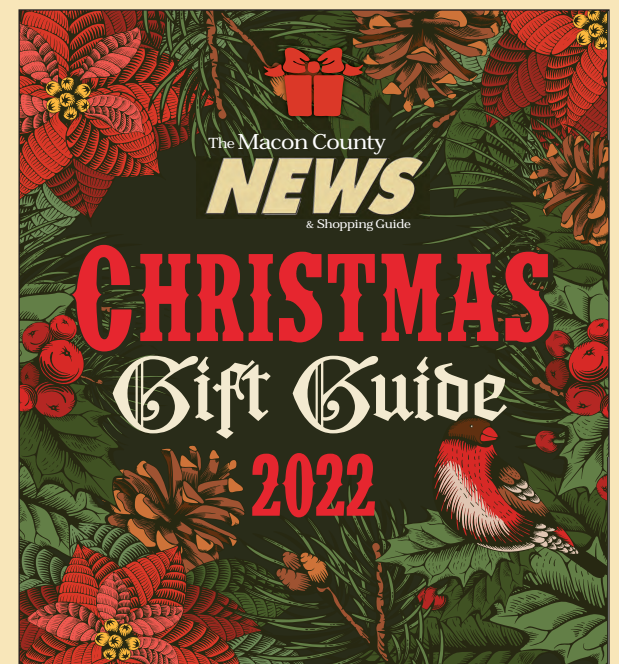


The Brasstown Ringers community handbell ensemble has placed Franklin on their holiday concert schedule with "We Need A Little Christmas" Saturday, Dec. 10, 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church. Ringing five octaves of Schulmerich bells and six octaves of Malmark chimes, these advanced ringers are from across Georgia, North Carolina and Tennessee. Members include Liza Lawrence, Terry Mayhew, Evie Miller, Tom and Jackie Volk, Glenda Wattenberger (Ga.); Danny Ferreira, Steve Holcomb, Aimee Johnson, Theresa Ramsey, Jackie Reed, Anne Rice, Mark and Sharon Schickedantz, Kathy Tant, Linda Sterrett (director) (N.C.); and Lonney and Brett McDonald (Tenn.). The concert series will showcase the beauty and depth of handbell music and spotlight various ringing techniques. The program's variety of pieces will feature traditional carols and pop favorites.

IN THIS ISSUE



Local missionary spending Christmas overseas



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Phase I of housing development completed

Dan Finnerty – Contributing Writer

At the Nov. 8 monthly meeting, Macon County Commissioners approved release of the remaining performance guarantee being held by Macon County in conjunction with Phase I development at the Gemstone Village subdivision. The homes, to be built in at least three different phases, will be located on former pasture land, just south of the Town of Franklin. The development is available only to residents 55 years of age and older, with the Town providing water and sewer and electricity to the Village.

According to Macon County Planning Manager Joe Allen, "The purpose of the bond is to ensure road work, water/sewer, and power are in place before a developer finishes a plat (proposed site for construction), starts selling

lots and building homes."

He explained that the bond is a measure of insurance for the county or municipality authorizing the development.

Allen received a letter, dated Oct. 25 from developer Snobar LLC, confirming completion of Phase I and requesting release of the remaining bond monies from the original performance guarantee, in the amount of \$244,002. The original performance guarantee was in the amount of \$617,119, which was 125% of estimated cost to install utilities and roads. On July 22, 2022, Macon County released an initial \$373,117 of the performance guarantee.

Currently, six units are completed and 20-30 lots ready for building of additional homes. Allen also requested

See PHASE I page 2

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DECEMBER 2

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DECEMBER 9



PHASE I

Continued from page 1

approval for release of a performance guarantee being held by Macon County in conjunction with Phase II development at Gemstone Village. The original performance guarantee for Phase II was in the amount of \$735,922.50, which was 125% of estimated cost to install utilities and roads. At the June 14, meeting, Allen reported that the developer would be putting up cash instead of the traditional bond. The board voted unanimously to accept the agreement as presented.

While it is not known for certain when Gemstone Villages will be completed, Snobar Managing Partner Joanne Snider offered: "All phases are planned to be completed within the next four years, pending sales, current inflation, the associated housing market, etc."

The total number of homes anticipated upon subdivision completion is approximately 140.

Town updates sex offender ordinance

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

The Town of Franklin's Ordinance Review Committee met Oct. 24 to discuss an ordinance banning registered sex offenders from parks and public places. Then, at the Nov. 7 Town Council meeting, the ordinance was adopted by the Town and signed by Town Manager Amie Owens and Mayor Jack Horton.

According to the Nov. 7 agenda item, the impetus for the change was "due to increasing park and other recreational facilities that the Town has under its purview."

Owens said, "As we are planning for, and providing more recreational opportunities (parks), it is important for us to ensure the safety of those using the facilities and prohibition of sex offenders is common practice at public parks."

She added, "There has not been an uptick in any issues, it was simply part of the review of our ordinances."

Ordinance No. 2022-03 states that the Town is "authorized and empowered to enact and amend from time-to-time ordinances providing for the preservation

of the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens." Owens also noted that the language in the updated ordinance is "standard" relating to "sex offenders and areas where children congregate."

The ordinance pertains to "registered" sex offenders with any state or federal agency and prohibits such individuals from entering "into or on any public park which is owned, operated, or maintained by the Town."

A fine of not less than \$500 and 30 days in jail is the penalty for each offense by a sex offender who violates the ordinance.

"There are 85 registered sex offenders in Franklin, N.C., a ratio of 218.90 sex offenders per 10,000 residents. ... Records indicate there are 1,660 incarcerated sex offenders in North Carolina, as well as 461 offenders whose location is unknown in North Carolina due to the sex offenders being transient or their address being unmappable," Homefact.com reports. Photographs and names of registered sex offenders are also listed on the site, as well as through the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation.

The Town "will post signage at our parks denoting the updated ordinance language," stated Owens

Thanksgiving Safety Campaign has a simple message: Buckle Up. It Could Save Your Life

"Please buckle up if you're driving or riding anywhere this Thanksgiving."

That's the message coming from the N.C. Governor's Highway Safety Program as part of this year's Thanksgiving Click It or Ticket campaign.

"This is traditionally one of the busiest times for

travel, but we want people to get where they're going safely," said Mark Ezzell, director of the North Carolina Governor's Highway Safety Program. "The sad truth is most of these deaths and injuries are preventable. If people wore seat belts every time they get into a vehicle, we would save so many lives."

The campaign, which runs from Nov. 21-27, aims to encourage motorists to buckle up through innovative and extensive enforcement and education, including seat belt checks in all North Carolina counties.

Last year, more than 1,700 people were killed and thousands more injured in vehicle crashes on North Carolina roads. One of the main contributors are people who don't wear seat belts. In 2021, 555 people died and 1,150 were seriously injured in unbuckled crashes.

Ezzell urges everyone to wear a seat belt for long trips and even short trips no matter where you sit in the vehicle.

"Whether you're driving, riding as a passenger up front or in the back seat, or if you have a young person riding in a child safety seat – everyone should be buckled up," Ezzell said.

Some other ways people can drive safely this holiday season include:

- Obey all speed limits.
- Never drive impaired, tired or distracted.
- Slow down and always maintain a safe following distance between you and other vehicles.

For more safety tips, follow @NCGHSP on Facebook and @NC_GHSP on Twitter and Instagram. For more information, visit www.ncghsp.org.

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CARS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2022	BMW	Alpina XB7	536
2022	Edge	Sport	101
2021	Chevrolet	Corvette	5,792
2021	Chevrolet	Spark	82
2021	Kia	Optima EX	20,010
2020	Chevrolet	Camaro	25,641
2020	Chevrolet	Corvette 3LT	8,263
2019	Dodge	Challenger SXT	16,993
2019	Dodge	Grand Caravan SXT	55,584
2019	Nissan	Sentra	66,190
2019	Nissan	Sentra SV	15,009
2019	Volkswagen	Beetle	42,676
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox	53,520
2018	Chevrolet	Cruze	34,692
2018	Traverse	LT AWD	95,105
2017	Dodge	Journey	110,982
2017	Honda	Fit	59,209
2015	Ford	Flex	99,016
2013	Hyundia	Genesis 6 SPD	69,381
2013	VW	Beetle Convertible	67,099

SUVS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2023	Chevrolet	Tahoe	257
2022	BMV	X5	1,402
2022	Buick	Enclave Essence	1,372
2022	Honda	Passport Trailsport	4,512
2022	Jeep	Wrangler Sahara Unlimited	10,539
2021	Chevrolet	Tahoe	33,592
2021	Ford	Bronco Badlands AWD	1,237
2021	GMC	Yukon XL	53,356
2021	Grand Cherokee	L	13,279
2021	Jeep	Wrangler Sport	8,094
2020	Acura	MDX AWD	46,606
2020	Buick	Encore	34,808

2020	Chevrolet	Trax	7,250
2020	Chevrolet	Trax Premier	28,030
2020	GMC	Acadia AT4	28,261
2020	Grand Cherokee	Trailhawk	26,226
2020	Jeep	Wrangler Rubicon Unlimited	24,249
2019	Chevrolet	Blazer RS	45,231
2019	Chevrolet	Tahoe LT	46,162
2019	Chevrolet	Trax AWD	16,288
2019	GMC	Terrain	63,316
2019	Honda	Pilot EX	40,801
2019	Jeep	Cherokee 4x4	65,409
2018	Chevrolet	Equinox LT	23,569
2018	Ford	Explorer Sport	57,475
2018	Forerunner	TRD Sport	65,055
2018	Nissan	Murano	53,903
2017	Rogue	SV	58,866
2016	Chevrolet	Traverse LS AWD	62,942
2016	Dodge	Grand Caravan	76,458
2016	Lexus	RX 350	72,919
2016	Sorrento	LX	112,933
2016	Toyota	Sequoia	96,869
2016	Trax	LT	20,021
2015	Suburban	LT	92,352
2011	Jeep	Wrangler	108,260

TRUCKS

YEAR	MAKE	MODEL	MILES
2022	Chevrolet	2500 LTZ	4,635
2022	Ram	2500	5,273
2021	2500	LT 4x4	16,442
2021	Chevrolet	1500 4x4	10,243
2021	Chevrolet	1500 RST	34,026
2021	Chevrolet	Colorado	8,980
2021	Chevrolet	Colorado ZR-2	10,842
2021	Chevrolet	LT Trailboss	34,069
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	5,822
2021	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500	8,432

2021	Chevrolet	Trailboss Crew	22,256
2021	Colorado	Z-71	12,912
2021	F-150	Crew 4x4	32,251
2021	Ford	F-150 SuperCrew Cab	32,251
2021	GMC	Canyon Elevation	50,934
2021	GMC	Sierra Denali	30,108
2021	Ram	2500 Tradesman	3,647
2021	Toyota	Tacoma TRD Sport	10,557
2020	Chevrolet	2500 Diesel	8,241
2020	Chevrolet	Colorado ZR-2	36,463
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado	52,944
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 High Country	22,601
2020	Chevrolet	Silverado 1500 RST	90,498
2020	Colorado	Ext Cab ZR2	26,842
2020	Toyota	Tacoma SR	12,448
2019	Chevrolet	1500 Trailboss	36,741
2019	Chevrolet	2500 LTZ Crew	38,248
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	Ford	F-150 Punisher	53,682
2019	GMC	Sierra 1500	18,811
2019	Nissan	Frontier	90,486
2019	Ram	3500 Flatbed	58,192
2018	Chevrolet	1500 LT Crew	28,131
2018	Chevrolet	1500 LT Crew	50,934
2018	Chevrolet	2500 LTZ Crew	56,558
2018	Chevrolet	Colorado Z-71	23,542
2018	Colorado	100th Anniversary	9,266
2018	Colorado	ZR2	36,012
2018	Ram	2500	101,661
2013	Ford	F-250 DSL	85,920
2011	Ford	F-150	182,492
2010	Chevrolet	1500 Z-71	98,460



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Sanctuary Relief meeting Ukrainian needs through Christmas season

Deena C. Bouknight – Contributing Writer

Loren Kennedy has been spreading the word, as a guest speaker at local organizations and through preaching at local churches, about overwhelming needs in Ukraine due to an ongoing war with Russia that began in February when Russia invaded the neighboring country. Kennedy knows

mas for the first time because it's so important to be in Ukraine and give people there hope and help in whatever way possible ... meet physical needs, all while sharing Christ with them to meet their spiritual needs," said Kennedy. "My wife, Jeri, is 110% behind me on this. And my family is very supportive because their hearts are in this too; they know it's an important time

He said, "Electricity is not off all the time, but it's off 8 to 10 hours a day, at least, so that causes issues when it gets cold."

And, while funds raised through Sanctuary Relief have so far provided around 7,000 boxes of staples and non-perishable food for families, the goal is to purchase enough food in December and January to pack 10,000 boxes, each of which feeds a family for two weeks or longer.

"We will try to purchase as many generators as possible as well," said Kennedy. "Even though I will be there for Christmas, we will not focus on gift giving but just securing practical items to meet needs. But we will be celebrating Christmas through worship. In fact, the churches there are phenomenal ... exploding with people. People are still worshipping, despite the dangers. And, people are banding together to help one another. It's wonderful to see and experience."

Kennedy uses 100% of funds raised through Sanctuary Relief to purchase items made and sold in Ukraine "in order to help their economy." He pays for his own travel expenses and handles administrative tasks for Sanctuary Relief so that all donated monies benefit Ukrainian people. "Most of the donations have come from people and businesses locally; they are such a big part of helping the Ukrainian

people. The Lord is blessing Ukrainians due to our community's generosity."

Despite the dangers of traveling to a war-torn country, Kennedy said he believes the Lord wants him there. He pointed out that he can leave the devastated country and return to the safety of his Franklin home, while the Ukrainians must stay and hope that the war is over soon.



Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February of this year, millions of Ukrainians have fled their homeland while others remain trying to survive in their war-torn country.

first-hand the needs which have escalated from food and shelter to warmth. The life-long missionary, previously to Africa, felt a tug to help back in the spring. Since then, he has spent a total of four months on the ground in Ukraine, working through churches there as the representative of non-profit Sanctuary Relief. He plans to return Dec. 5 and will remain until sometime in January.

"I will not be with my family for Christ-

for doing what we can for [Ukrainians]."

A longtime Franklin resident, Kennedy's goal for the upcoming over-holidays trip to Ukraine is to take enough funds to purchase firewood, oil, heating units, and blankets "for as many people as possible." He reported that in the first part of November, "the Russians knocked out 20% of [Ukraine's] infrastructure, which means more power and water is not available – as winter is setting in."



During his trip in the spring and then again in late summer/early fall, Sanctuary Relief's Loren Kennedy assisted in providing at least 7,000 bags or boxes of food to struggling Ukrainians. He leaves in early December with a goal of 10,000 boxes while he is there through Christmas and into January.

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“Right now, the war is back and forth,” he said. “Ukrainians are taking back land that has been occupied by the Russians ... some positive news. But this war is not over; there are still millions of refugees inside of Ukraine – many without homes or with homes that are not adequate.”

Prior to entering Ukraine for the first time in May, Kennedy was not familiar with the country or its people. Since then, during his last two missionary trips there, he has observed their general upbeat attitudes and tenacious character. He expressed, “Ukrainian people are very patriotic, wonderful, kind. The biggest thing that strikes me about them is their resiliency. They don’t want to give up their freedom, which is understandable. But no matter their circumstances, no one is begging or looking for a handout. They have a sense of community and are so generous, despite how much destruction has happened. Every time they are given anything, they are so thankful and gracious.”

Kennedy’s travels and Sanctuary Relief’s efforts in Ukraine can be followed on Facebook. Ongoing funds are needed to meet Ukrainian needs; donations can be made by mailing checks to P.O. Box 841, Franklin, N.C. 28744, or, by giving online at www.sanctuaryrelief.com.



Sanctuary Relief’s Loren Kennedy will spend Christmas this year away from his family to try and help meet the needs of the Ukrainian people.

Macon Co. Community Foundation awards more than \$14,000 in grants

The Macon County Community Foundation (MCCF) has awarded \$14,600 in grants to programs supporting the local community.

The board of advisors granted:

- \$500 to Blue Ridge Bartram Trail Conservancy for recreational development in downtown Franklin through the Bartram Trail rerouting
- \$500 to HIGHTS for its C.O.R.E. (Community Outreach, Restitution and Engagement) program
- \$1,500 to International Friendship Center for its Highlands Food Pantry
- \$1,500 to Macon County Care Network for its hunger relief project
- \$500 to Macon County Humane Society/Appalachian Animal Rescue Center for building renovations at its intake facility
- \$1,600 to Macon Program for Progress for community car seats
- \$500 to Macon Program for Progress for its Parents as Teachers program
- \$1,500 to Macon Program for Progress for Project Love
- \$1,000 to Meridian Behavioral Health Services for consumer support
- \$1,000 to Pisgah Legal Services for its Plateau Poverty Law Initiative
- \$500 to Prevent Blindness North Carolina for its Star Pupils program in Macon County
- \$1,500 to REACH of Macon County for its victim advocacy crisis textline and out-

reach initiative

– \$2,500 to Southwestern Community College Foundation for its New Century Scholars program

Funds for the grants came from MCCF’s community grantmaking fund.

“Nonprofits are the bedrock of our community,” said Regina Lupoli, advisory board president of the Macon County Community Foundation. “We’re honored to provide grants to these organizations that help our communities and neighbors thrive.”

MCCF is an affiliate of the North Carolina Community Foundation and is led by a local volunteer advisory board. Each year, MCCF uses dollars from its endowment funds to make grants to local nonprofit organizations.

Learn more about MCCF and its work in the community or make a tax-deductible donation at nccommunityfoundation.org/Macon. For further information about MCCF, contact Colby Martin at cmartin@nccommunityfoundation.org.

Macon County Community Foundation Advisory Board Members live and work in Macon County, positioning them to strategically leverage resources, meet local needs and access opportunities. In addition to Lupoli, board members include Claire Suminski (vice president), Karen M. Stiwinter (secretary), Kevin Holland, Lisa Leatherman, Dinah Mashburn, Faviola Olvera and Bonnie Potts.

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MEC learning real life applications

Katie Keener and Amber Sellino, nursing students from Southwestern Community College, and Fern Aspen, Nursing Success Coach and advisor, visited Macon Early College to speak to Mrs. Rowland's Math III class. The Math III class is studying Rational Functions and how they relate to real life experiences. The students will be using this background information to determine drip rates for IVs, find concentrations of medicine in the bloodstream, and calculate medication dosage based on various factors. They also spoke to the students about different career options available within the nursing field, expectations of nurses, and the nursing program at SCC.



RGNS awards fall season success

Rabun Gap-Nacoochee School awarded their Middle and Upper School students for their success in the fall season. Awards were given out for the Middle School musical, Upper School cirque, volleyball, cross country, boys soccer, tennis, football, Upper School girls golf, and Middle School swimming.

Boys Varsity Cross Country
Rookie of the Year - James Moore (Highlands, N.C.)

Boys JV Soccer
Finest Contribution to Defense - Julian Mulholland (Franklin, N.C.)

JV Volleyball
Offensive Player of the Year - Annalise Fon (Franklin, N.C.)
Defensive Player of the Year - Emberlyn Casebolt (Otto, N.C.)

Middle School Boys Tennis
Most Improved - Jackson Tyers (Franklin, N.C.)

Middle School Cross Country
Leadership - Sloan Mattis (Highlands, N.C.)

Middle School Boys Soccer
Most Improved - Ledger Culpepper (Franklin, N.C.)

Middle School Volleyball
Leadership: Gabby Rivera (Franklin, N.C.)

Middle School Musical
Directors Choice - Owen Murphy (Franklin, N.C.)
Most Improved - Mya Burnett (Franklin, N.C.)

Graham County road is dedicated to World War II hero Wayne Carringer

At the front of the Robbinsville High School auditorium sat a table adorned in World War II memorabilia fitting for a museum.

The table, draped in a white table cloth, featured a picture of Wayne Carringer as a young man in his U.S. Army Corps uniform, along with a sketch of him later in life. Also on the table were a book titled "Ghost Soldiers," a replica of the Enola Gay with a slice of metal from the historic plane, and the first P.O.W. license plate issued in North Carolina.

Everything on the table memorialized a local war hero.

On Friday morning, a Graham County road was memorialized him, too.

The N.C. Department of Transportation officials joined local officials and family members in a ceremony to dedicate a road leading to Robbinsville High School as Wayne Carringer Boulevard.

"If he was still alive, Papa Wayne probably wouldn't have accepted this honor," said Carringer's grandson, Robert Moody. "He was a strong advocate for all veterans and didn't really believe that he deserved special treatment more than anybody else."

But very few western North Carolinians endured the same torture as Carringer, who survived more than three years as a prisoner of war. He was forced in the Bataan Death March and transported on a hell ship stacked beside soldiers who died standing up. And he labored in a Japanese coal mine where he saw the mushroom cloud of the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki.

Moody outlined his grandfather's war history and deep faith for more than 10 minutes during the ceremony on Friday. Some presentation slides provided context of the war in the Pacific and others showed graphic images of the conditions Carringer survived.

"On the march, my grandfather fell but another man picked him up before they could notice," Moody said. "Over the next hill, that man fell and died."

Once the war ended, a malnourished Car-



World War II veteran Wayne Carringer was honored Friday by the N.C. Department of Transportation.

ringer, weighing only 75 pounds, was transported back to Angel Island in the San Francisco Bay. Later, upon his return to the North Carolina mountains, Carringer founded the annual Bataan-Corregidor survivor reunion at Fontana Village. Carringer dedicated the rest of his life to his community.

He served three terms on the Graham County School Board and also served on the Robbinsville Town Council and as a deacon at his church. In 1977, Carringer received the first license plate designed for former prisoners of war. It reads "POW-101," in now faded red paint with Prisoner of War stamped across the bottom.

In February, the N.C. Board of Transportation unanimously passed a resolution dedicating the road between N.C. 129 and Robbinsville High School as Wayne Carringer Boulevard.

"I hope you drive down the road and see the sign and remember freedom is not free," said Jimmy Millsaps, pastor at Grace Tabernacle Church. "People have paid a great sacrifice to have this country we have today."



Robert Moody speaks at a dedication ceremony honoring his grandfather, Wayne Carringer.

Christmas with Fiddler Finn

Award-winning violin virtuoso
Andrew Finn Magill,
with visual arts exhibit by
Uptown Gallery members.

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November a good time to reflect on gratitude

Clint Kendall
Angel Medical Center CEO



Clint Kendall

It's hard to believe that it has already been two months since the opening of the new Angel Medical Center; I remain grateful for all who came to help us celebrate. We also have so much more to be thankful for across our community.

November, for me, is all about being grateful, expressing my thanks to the many who help make my life richer — from the incredible AMC staff and caregivers in every department to my family and friends.

It's also the start of a season where we tend to over-indulge, whether it's that extra slice of pie, deciding we can forgo sleep to binge that new season of our favorite show, or enjoying more holiday beverages at parties than we usually would.

The interesting thing is when we start thinking about what triggers those decisions, it's often stress. During this time of year, you may be concerned about finances, whether family members will get along around the Thanksgiving table, or simply be trying to fit too much in during the busy holiday season. These types of situations can make us slip into relying on poor coping methods that often lead to unhealthy habits.

For example, my weakness is sweet snacks. In the moment, those goodies seem to offer me the perfect antidote to my stress, but ultimately, they adversely impact both my overall health and my waistline. In other words, some of us tend to consume things that aren't the best for us when our minds are consumed with worries.

I try to find alternative ways to cope that are better for me in the long run. Instead of turning to food, drink, shopping, or another not-so-good-for-you vice, consider a healthier choice. You could take a half-hour walk, catch up on the phone with someone you haven't spoken with in a while, make yourself a soothing cup of tea, or pick up an enjoyable project you've been too busy to work on lately — say a puzzle, knitting project, or DIY effort.

These all have the potential to balance out your stress, they're free, and they help you physically, emotionally, or intellectually. Ironically, the holiday season can be one of the most stressful times of the year, so take a moment to relax and find time to care for you.

To continue on the theme of gratitude for 2022, I'd like to say that I am profoundly grateful for this community. You welcomed my family and me with open arms as we started our lives here and I began to serve AMC — another opportunity I'm thankful for. My wife and son are also great sources of joy and I couldn't do without their support, day in and day out.

I am thankful for the health and wellbeing that those I love are enjoying, and that I'm lucky enough to have too.

I appreciate every day the large and small things that fuel my passion to continue to serve Angel Medical Center and the people of Macon County. These include everything from the warm greetings, conversations, and smiles I get during my daily travels in the hospital from my colleagues, the appreciation that I receive when I speak to our patients and their families, and the community partners that work with us to make our community safer and healthier, from law enforcement to our EMS teams.

There's no question that taking inventory of the many gifts in my life gives me a more positive outlook and improved mental health, which in turn helps me make better decisions and enjoy improved overall health. As I've said many times before, our physical and emotional health are completely intertwined, so tending to both is critical.

Very importantly, I'm thankful to you for so many things — supporting the dedicated healthcare providers here at AMC, our first responders, law enforcement, and all the other community members who make this an incredible place to live. We are all so fortunate that our new facility represents the opposite of what is happening in many other rural communities, where hospital closures have occurred over the last decade at an alarming rate.

Thank you for continuing to rely on Angel Medical Center for your care. Everyone here considers it a privilege to support your good health and healing. I wish everyone a safe, healthy and happy Thanksgiving.

Clint Kendall, FACHE, MBA, MSN, BSN, RN, is Chief Executive Officer/Chief Nursing Officer of Angel Medical Center.

Harris Regional among best maternity hospitals

Harris Regional Hospital has been named to *Money Magazine* and The Leapfrog Group's inaugural list of Best Hospitals for Maternity Care. The rankings are intended to help expecting parents make educated decisions about which hospitals consistently deliver the safest, highest-value care for patients and excellence in maternity experiences. Out of more than 2,200 hospitals surveyed, Harris Regional Hospital was one of 259 hospitals nationwide, and one of 30 in the state, to earn the first-time honor.

"Harris Regional Hospital is honored to be among the inaugural list of top hospitals to receive this honor," said Chris Munton, CEO of Harris Regional Hospital. "Our hard-working team of physicians, nurses and staff goes above and beyond every day to provide the best possible experience for mothers, babies and their families, and this is well-deserved."

To qualify for the honor, eligible hospitals were required to carry an A or B letter grade on the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade assessment for spring 2022. Hospitals also were required to meet specific criteria and achieve national standards related to:

- Early Elective Deliveries
- Cesarean Birth
- Episiotomy
- DVT (deep vein thrombosis) Prophylaxis
- Bilirubin Screening



Serving in Harris Regional's maternity department are (L-R) Katherine Miller, Taylor Crowe, Katie Riccardi, and Erin Ballew.

- High-Risk Deliveries (only applies to hospitals electively admitting high-risk deliveries)

Harris Regional Hospital delivers more than 600 babies per year, providing a variety of care and services for mother and baby, including prenatal care, education, labor & delivery, and breastfeeding support by certified lactation consultants.

For more information about the Best Hospitals for Maternity Care rankings, visit <https://money.com/methodology-best-hospitals-for-maternity-care/>

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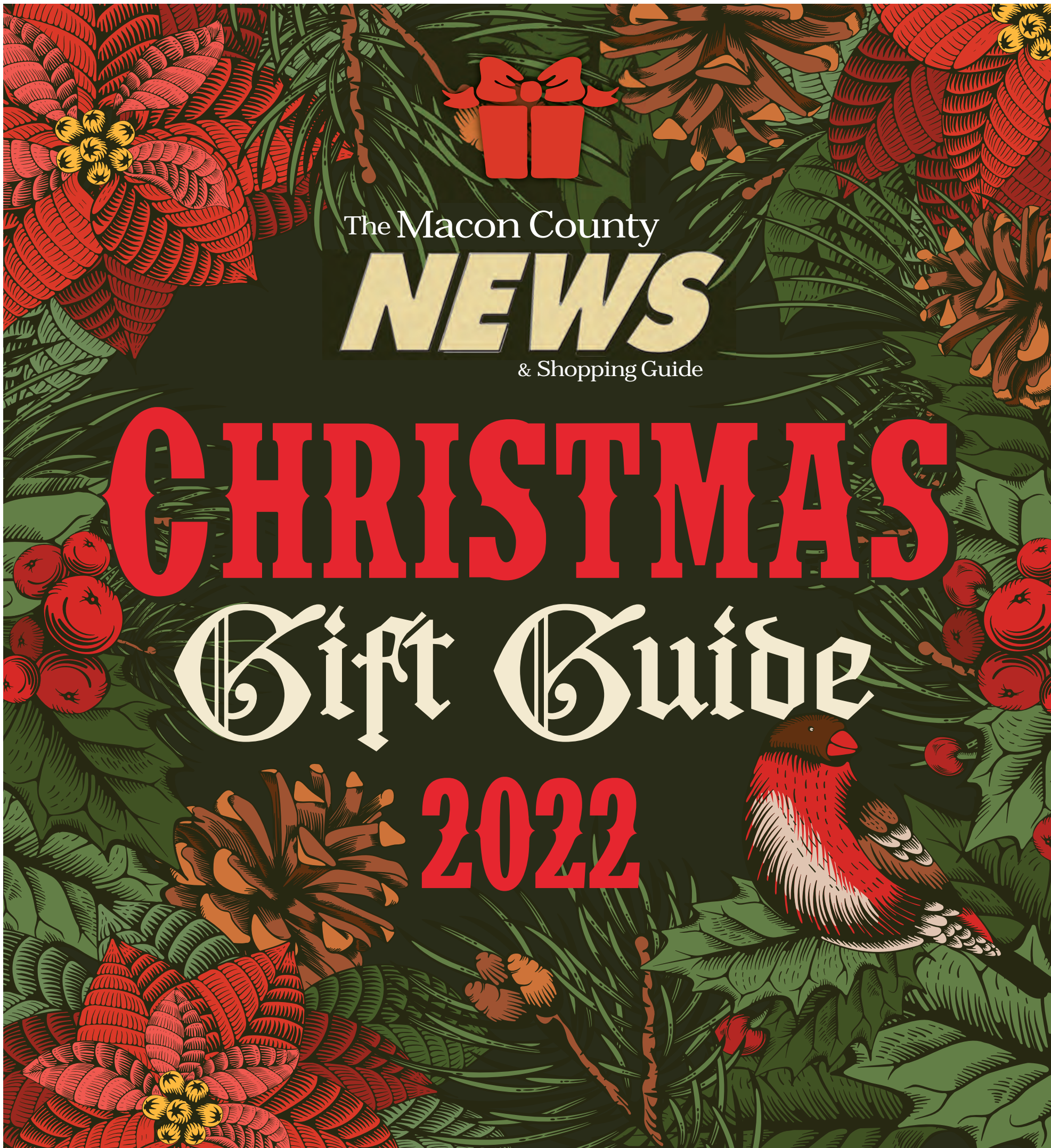
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Support local businesses on Small Business Saturday, November 26

Gregg Thompson

Black Friday is the unofficial start of the holiday shopping season, but with its doorbusters and discounts, I think it's become a time of grabbing rather than of giving.

If you're looking for the holiday spirit, go shopping the next day, Small Business Saturday.

Small Business Saturday, which is always on the Saturday after Thanksgiving, is a day to find unique gifts and enjoy a level of service you probably won't find at the national chains, but it's also a day to help the local shops and restaurants that do so much to help their communities throughout the year.

Small Business Saturday began 12 years ago as a way to steer shoppers toward Main Street businesses. Since then, it's become one of the busiest shopping days of the year.

Last year, Americans spent a record \$23.3 billion in person and online at small, independent shops and restaurants on Small Business Saturday.

Consider this: According to the latest figures from the U.S. Small Business Administration, small businesses account for 99.6 percent of all businesses in the state.

But it goes beyond that. When we shop small, we really are helping our friends and neighbors. We help the businesses that support our schools and give to local charities. Small businesses really hold our communities together.

Also, when we shop at a chain store, the proceeds go to a big corporation headquartered someplace else. But 67 cents of every dollar spent at a small business stays in the community. On top of that, every dollar spent at a small business creates an additional 50 cents in local business activity as employers and their employees shop at other local businesses.

Plus, when you shop at a small business, there's a good chance you'll be dealing directly with the owner, someone with a vested interest in turning the casual holiday shopper into a regular customer who'll come back throughout the year.

North Carolina's economy is built on its small businesses. That's why I'm asking everyone to shop small on Saturday, Nov. 26. When we help small businesses, we help everyone.

Gregg Thompson is the North Carolina state director of the National Federation of Independent Business.

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Franklin Christmas parade Sunday

The Franklin Chamber of Commerce will present the Annual Christmas Parade which will officially ring in the holiday season. The celebration will be held Sunday, Nov. 27, beginning at 3 p.m.

Entries will line up along Church Street behind the Courthouse. The route will begin by pulling out on the top of Town Hill beside Town Hall. The route will proceed down Main Street turning left at the Lazy Hiker Brewing Company onto Porter Street. Then turn left onto Palmer Street. The route will end at the intersection of the Highlands Road and Main Street.

This year's Grand Marshal will be Sheriff Robbie Holland who will be retiring at the end of the month. Holland has served as Macon County Sheriff for 20 years. He and his wife, Marcie, have been married for 29 years and have two children ages 12 and 16.

Sheriff Holland began his career with the Macon County Sheriff's Office in 1991. Before being elected as Sheriff, Holland served in many positions, including eight years as a juvenile officer where he earned numerous NC State awards, as well as, serving as President of the NC Juvenile Officer's Association. Sheriff Holland was also instrumental in the 2001



passage of the NC Infant Homicide Prevention Act.

Holland has served on the Board of Directors of KIDS Place for more than 20 years and served eight years on the Governor's Task Force for Safer Schools in leadership roles representing WNC law enforcement and has spent his career being a youth advocate.

Participants will again be able to have folks walk beside their float/entry handing out candy. Registration is required and entry forms can be picked up and returned to the Chamber office located at 98 Hyatt Road. Deadline for entry is Wednesday, Nov. 23 by 5 pm.

For additional information, contact the Franklin Chamber of Commerce by calling 828-524-3161.

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Town of Franklin ushers in Christmas season with Winter Wonderland

The Town of Franklin will officially welcome the holidays during Winter Wonderland a two-night event held in downtown Franklin on consecutive Saturdays, Nov. 26, and Dec. 3, from 5 to 8 p.m., each evening.

"This event is has become a favorite part of holiday traditions for both visitors and locals alike," said Town Manager Amie Owens. "Winter Wonderland truly celebrates the spirit of the season and will be enjoyed by all ages."

The first night of Winter Wonderland will include music from the White Sisters beginning at 6:30 p.m., at the Gazebo on the Square. Following will be the Annual Tree Lighting Ceremony at 7 p.m., and a merchant-sponsored candlelight service.

Saturday, Nov. 26 is also Small Business Saturday. This initiative, headed by Ameri-



can Express, shifts the focus from Black Friday and Cyber Monday to supporting small, local businesses. The Town of Franklin is proud to again be a Neighborhood Champion of Small Business Saturday.

"Much like last year, the downtown holiday décor will be enhanced this year with many different photo opportunities," said

Owens. "These holiday decorations are sure to brighten your holidays and can be enjoyed until a few days after the New Year."



Both nights of Winter Wonderland will feature free carriage rides and a visit from the Jolly Ole Elf himself, Santa Claus, who will be out on the streets spreading holiday cheer. Hours for both will be from 5 to 8 p.m.

As a reminder, Main Street will be closed to vehicular traffic both nights of Winter Wonderland with parking along Main Street closing at 4:30 p.m. The detour will be clearly marked. Plenty of

free parking is located throughout the downtown area.

"This is a great family event, and we look forward to seeing familiar faces and visitors from all over the area here in Franklin for Winter Wonderland," said Owens.

Winter Wonderland is sponsored by the Town of Franklin. For additional information, visit www.Townof-FranklinNC.com or call (828) 524-2516.

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Discover Church shows 'love' to town; supports ongoing mission projects

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

A few times a year, the 500-plus congregation of Discover Church volunteers throughout Macon County to assist in such efforts as cleaning and landscaping schools in time for school openings, painting inside and outside of nonprofit organization buildings, collecting clothing, and much more. Appropriately named, "I Love My Town," the initiative is a community-focused effort which takes place instead of church service on Dec. 4. The event provides the community an opportunity to provide Christmas gifts and practical items for foster and underprivileged children and families – as well as supporting needs in third-world countries.

Julie Adams, wife of one of Discover Church's pastors, John Adams, helps oversee logistics for I Love My Town Christmas.

"Last year Discover provided gifts for more than 250 children. It's definitely a community effort, and anyone is invited to I Love My Town Christmas, not just people who attend the church," said Julie.

She explained that Discover Church partners with such entities as Macon and Jackson County Department of Social



On Dec. 4, instead of regular church service, Discover Church provides an opportunity through "I Love My Town Christmas" for anyone to choose an "ornament" that includes information about a child, family, or ministry in need, and then shop (or donate monetarily) and bring the unwrapped gifts back to the church.

Services, Swain Family Resource Center, Macon Program for Progress, and schools in Macon, Rabun (Georgia), and Graham counties.

"The goal is to make sure no kids are left out," said Adams. "In late October, we reached out to local principals and school counselors and asked for names of



kids and families who might go without any presents on Christmas. The schools provide information for kids in need (i.e., clothes sizes, shoe sizes, and a particular gift or interest they have). As a church, we cancel regular service, spend a few minutes worshipping together on that Sunday morning, and then anyone can

choose 'ornaments' with information about the children so they can go out and shop.

"As a church, we especially have a huge heart for children in the foster system, and for foster families," she added. "One thing I love about I Love My Town Christmas is that the gifts are given with no strings attached ... gifts are given to the parents so they can wrap and give the gifts on Christmas. So, in the kids' eyes, these gifts are not from Discover Church but from their families."

I Love My Town Christmas takes place Dec. 4 for both services: 9:15 and 11 a.m.



Discover Church also supports needs in third-world countries such as Haiti. Discover has led mission teams to the poverty-stricken nation.

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Cowee Christmas and Balsam Bee highlight Appalachian traditions

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

The mission of Cowee School Arts & Heritage Center is “to promote the teaching and preservation of the cultural and artistic heritage of the Southern Appalachians and Cherokee people and to serve as a community resource and gathering place.” Cowee School – a historic stone building that formerly housed an elementary school – will present a day of age-old Appalachian crafts, music, food, and more at Cowee Christmas and Balsam Bee. This year, the free holiday event takes place Saturday, Dec. 3, starting at 10 a.m.

“Cowee Christmas and the Balsam Bee help give our Cowee School studios and local vendors something to get excited about and to prepare for. It is a big shopping day at the school,” said Claire Suminski, one of the organizers.

Cowee School provides space for at least eight studios, including Cowee Textiles, Jon Houglum Fine Art and Painting, The Mountaineer Woodworking and Leather, Cowee Pottery School, and Down Memory Lane Toy Museum. Also at Cowee School is a stage and gymnasium, available for events and activities, and Blue Ridge Bartram Trail



Dennis Deitz, a lifetime artist who primarily conveys local landscapes and Appalachian culture, drew a horse and barn scene a few years ago that was chosen to grace balsam-stuffed pillows at the Dec. 3 Cowee Christmas and Balsam Bee at Cowee School. Deitz will also have prints of the same image available for sale at the event.

Conservancy and Alarka Expeditions has its offices there.

Among the 20-plus vendors exhibiting wares at the event, some also give additional donations to the school, based on their sales that day.

Quilters and seamstresses have been working on making the balsam-scented pillows and ornaments, which are decorated with different designs. Proceeds from the sale of items such as the balsam-filled pillows, Fraser fir wreaths

and swags, soaps, candles, jewelry, and much more, also benefit Cowee School.

This year, local Appalachian culture artist Dennis Deitz’s drawing of a red barn and field with two horses was reproduced as the covering on some of the pillows. Deitz, who has been drawing “since I was old enough to hold a pencil,” said prints of the original 10-inch by 13-inch drawing will also be available for sale at the Dec. 3 event.

He said the inspiration for the image came from observing his stepdaughter’s horses.

“And then I added the barn and background. In my drawings are different elements from places and things I’ve seen. I like to draw my own world ... my own story,” said Deitz.

The 63-year-old Deitz works primarily in graphite pencil, pen and ink, acrylic, pastel with charcoal, and charcoal – “whatever mood I’m in is what I’ll pick up.”

He draws portraits, landscapes, historic scenes, native animals, and more, and some of his drawings have graced past Balsam Bee pillows.

“I love it when people enjoy my artwork, and the sales of the pillows goes to a good cause,” he said.

Suminski indicated that much

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planning goes into the events at Cowee School.

"We have been working a little bit all year ... planning, sewing, grinding balsam. We have wonderful locally made gifts at this event, and this has always been a great fundraiser for the school. We expect around 1,500 in for the day, but every year this grows a little bigger."

She added, "Those of us who work on the planning and preparations for these two events often remark how truly blessed we are to be a part of this community. And, the smell of balsam puts us in a holiday frame of mind."

Additional highlights of the Dec. 3 event at Cowee School are Cherokee storytelling, a quilt auction, ornaments for sale by Smoky Mountain Quilters, artwork, woodwork, carolers, fire trucks, antique cars, and home-cooked soups. In fact, Tellico Tomato Basil, Nantahala Chicken and Rice, Wayah Potato, and Cowee Chili will be made by Roland Mock of Southern Fusion Catering and served from 11 a.m. to 2



This Dennis Deitz design was chosen to be printed on the Balsam pillows that will be for sale at Cowee Christmas Dec. 3.

p.m. at Cowee School's "The Fraser Fir Café," with apple crisp for dessert. Cost for lunch is \$8 adults and \$5 for children.

Traditional Appalachian music will be featured on the main stage including banjo musician Wyatt Duvall, dulcimer group Lady and the Tramps, triplet vocalists The White Sisters, and fiddle musician Richard Tichich.

(According to Suminski, Cowee School received a message in mid-November from Santa that he had enlisted transportation assistance from Cowee Fire Department and would be stopping by for a visit at 11 a.m. on December 3.)

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This year marks the presentation of church's biennial live nativity

Deena Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Cartoogechaye Baptist Church's new pastor, Randy Campbell, said people within and outside the community regularly ask the same question: "When will you have the live nativity?"

The elaborate event is scheduled every other year due to the months of labor involved in putting on the production. The small, historic, 19th century-established church offers the area's only live nativity for two weekends: Friday, Dec 2, Saturday, Dec. 3, and Sunday, Dec 4.; Friday, Dec 9, and Saturday, Dec 10. Each



Since late October, the small 19th century established Cartoogechaye Baptist Church has been preparing for its biennial live nativity event, which takes place over two weekends in December.



Signs placed along the "drive-through" nativity quote scripture pertaining to the age-old Christmas story.

evening, the event begins at 5:30 and ends at 9 p.m.

So far more than 40 hours of labor have resulted in the set-up of massive, hand-painted sets to create a realistic Bethlehem village scene. Visitors will have an opportunity to drive up to the church, hear a short introduction with instructions, be handed an audio device, and then drive through "Bethlehem" to pause at various au-

thentically-conveyed scenes and learn details of the Christmas story. Church volunteers dress in authentic period costumes that were made by church members or ordered online.

"Because we are such a small church of anywhere from 50 to 75 members, there is no such thing as "This is not my job," said Campbell. "Everyone helps make sure the live nativity is as real an experience as possible. Everyone plays a part, whether setting up, sewing, bringing in animals, acting ... Our small church

parking lot is completely transformed. It typically takes a few months to get everything ready."

Camels, donkeys, chickens, sheep, and goats are often part of the nativity.

Campbell said in the past, anywhere from 100-200 cars a night are lined up to view the live nativity.

"My understanding is that people visiting from all over the United States and even Canada have come in the past."

While Campbell will not be preaching

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- Make tree decorations with Folk Heritage Association of Macon County
- Wyatt Duvall/The White Sisters/ Lady and the Tramps/Richard Tichich

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during the live nativity, he does make himself available at the end to meet visitors. And, he said he will gladly plan to meet anyone who wants to come back to the church at some point to discuss the Gospel.

“This live nativity makes an impact. It’s a small church, yes, but God specializes in the small magnifying the big. The main intention of this live nativity is to celebrate Christ and spread the Gospel. If we are faithful to sow the seeds, we let God take care of the rest.

But we hope the impact is far and wide and that they hear the Lord speak through this event.”

While the live nativity is a free event, Campbell said Cartoogechaye Church welcomes donations, which help with the ongoing maintenance of sets and props and costumes.

Directions: From Franklin, take U.S. 64W for about 6 miles; at the end of the four-lane, turn left onto W. Old Murphy Road. Cartoogechaye Baptist Church is about a half a mile on the right.

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FRANKLIN

November 24

Community Thanksgiving Meal, 12 noon to 2 p.m., will be offered as take-out meals in a curbside pickup in front of the First Presbyterian Church, 26 Church St. No dine-in service, beverages or utensils. Cars should enter Church Street from Iotla Street and exit onto Harrison Avenue. Reservations not required.

November 26

Winter Wonderland in downtown Franklin, 5 to 8 p.m. Tree Lighting at 7 p.m., followed by a candlelight service. Roving Santa, free carriage rides, photo opps, merchants open late, live music and more.



and roll- Elvis Presley, Carl Perkins, Jerry Lee Lewis and Johnny Cash-gathered together for an impromptu jam session at the legendary Sun Studios in Memphis. Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. For ticket information, visit SmokyMountainArts.com or call (866)273-4615.

December 10

Breakfast with Santa 8 to 11 a.m., Junaluske Masonic Lodge. Pancakes, sausage, coffee, juice, milk, and ornaments. Photo opp with Santa. No charge; donations are encouraged. The Lodge is located at 50 Church Street.

December 11

Cookies with Santa, 1 p.m., presented by Holly Springs Community Development Club. Cookie decorating with Hot Cocoa/Hot Cider/Milk. Christmas activities for all. Santa Claus will be there 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Donations accepted for Shriners Hospitals for Children.



December 16

Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer - The Musical, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. Presented by the Overlook Theatre Company.



November 27

Christmas Parade in downtown Franklin begins at 3 p.m., with Sheriff Robert Holland as the Grand Marshal. Procession will begin at Town Hall, turn left onto Porter Street, then left on Palmer Street and proceed to Highlands Road, ending at the flea market.

December 2

Christmas Back Home will kick start your holiday season and have your toes tapping to your favorite Christmas tunes. From blues to reggae and jazz to rock, classic holiday tunes are new again with a delightful twist on some well-worn favorites as well as original songs at the Smoky Mountain Center for the Performing Arts. For ticket information, visit SmokyMountainArts.com or call (866)273-4615.

December 8

Pictures with Santa 4 to 6:30 p.m., Franklin Chamber and Welcome Center, 98 Hyatt Road, Franklin.

December 9

One Christmas Night In Memphis – a high energy concert that takes you back to Dec. 4, 1956, the night when four of the biggest names in early rock

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December 31

9th Annual Ruby Drop New Year's Eve Celebration 10 p.m., Motor Company Grill, 86 W. Main Street, Franklin. Come join the party.

HIGHLANDS/ CASHIERS

November 25 & 26

Cashiers Festival of Trees is a two-day, family-friendly event during Thanksgiving weekend where guests bid on decorated trees and holiday décor, enjoy a wide variety of holiday performances, create personalized children's crafts, celebrate literacy on the Dolly Parton Imagination Library Storytime Stage, and shop one-of-a-kind gifts. Benefits the Summit Charter School Foundation and local nonprofits. Summit Center, 370 Mitten Lane, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Santa on the Green, Cashiers Christmas Tree Lighting, & Mistletoe Market Nov. 25, 2 to 6:30 p.m., The Village Green, 160 Frank Allen Road, Cashiers.

November 26

Light Up the Park from 6 to 8 p.m. in Kelsey-Hutchinson Founders Park. Enjoy treats and a program that includes live music and carols led by Silly Ridge, a display of children's artwork and a reading of the Christmas story. And Santa! Presented by Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

December 3

Highlands Olde Mountain Christmas Parade Saturday, 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Presented by Highlands Chamber of Commerce.

Cashiers Christmas Parade at 3 p.m. Theme is "The Most Favorite Time of the Year."

December 16-31

Home for the Holidays A Christmas Tradition. Sing along to your favorite holiday hits while being dazzled by high energy choreography, beautiful costumes, a triple threat cast and incredible live musicians. Wednesday - Saturday at 7:30 p.m., Saturday & Sun-

day at 2 p.m. Mountain Theatre Company, 362 Oak Street, Highlands.

JACKSON COUNTY/SYLVA

November 25-26

35th Annual Hard Candy Christmas Art and Crafts Show, 10 - 5 p.m., WCU Ramsey Center, Cullowhee. Featuring authentic crafts from the hands of 100+ regional artisans. Additional information at mountainartisans.net. Adult admission, \$5.

December 2

Sylva Tree Lighting, Downtown Sylva Historic District, 3 to 7 p.m.

December 2 & 3, 10 & 11

Dillsboro Lights and Luminaries A Mountain Tradition for nearly 40 years. Join in the spirit and the splendor as the entire town is aglow with candles, 5 to 9 p.m., nightly. Free parking. Shopkeepers hold "Open House" and serve coffee, warm cider, hot chocolate and home baked goodies and stay open late to accommodate



holiday shoppers. <https://www.visitdillsboro.org>. Contact Town of Dillsboro for more information: 828-586-1439.

December 4

Sylva Christmas Parade 3 to 5 p.m., Theme: "My Christmas Story" takes place along Historic Main Street for celebration, cheer and a chance to see Santa. Grand Marshals are "The Story Builders of Sylva" honoring those who have worked tirelessly to improve downtown Sylva over the years.

December 16

Holiday Fireworks beginning at 6:30 p.m. Can be viewed from downtown Sylva. Presented by Jackson County Parks & Rec and Jackson County Chamber.



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Buy a Tree. Change a Life. launches the day after Thanksgiving

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

The day after Thanksgiving Day-tree lot opening at Crabtree General Store in downtown Franklin has fast become a tradition in Macon County. Sales of Christmas trees benefit the annual and national effort, Buy A Tree. Change a Life. (BATCAL), sponsored locally by Prentiss Church.

"[BATCAL] affords us the opportunity

to contribute to the needs of children globally and locally, with the simple purchase of a Christmas tree," said J.D. Woodside, Prentiss Church's lead pastor. "It's really amazing, that because of a simple tree purchase, children halfway around the world can be fed and clothed. Also important to remember is that each year a simple tree purchase helps children right here in our own community, not only during Christmas but throughout the year."

year's Buy a Tree Change a Life. Last year we raised over \$33,000 and were able to bless several projects in our community with over \$2,000 each: Shop with A Cop, Pregnancy Care Center, KIDS Place, Union Academy and South Macon Elementary."

Besides monies allocated for various charities, as well as for the purchase of backpacks for school-children in Macon County, BATCAL funds ongoing Prentiss Church ministry efforts in Cambodia, considered a "least developed" country by the United Nations. BATCAL funds building projects, clothing, food, education, the needs of orphans, and more. Historically, Cambodia has struggled with poverty and ongoing government oppression since Cambodia was ravaged by the Khmer Rouge regime under the leadership of Pol Pot. Two million people lost their lives in the mid-1970s.

Fraser fir trees, purchased regionally when possible, are paid for by donated

funds from individuals and businesses and are usually sold out by Saturday afternoon. Woodside noted, "We are still accepting business sponsors if they would like to reach out to Prentiss Church at (828)369-3885."

And, even though BATCAL is a Christmas season-focused fundraiser, donations may be made year-round. For more information, visit www.buyatreechangealife.com.

BATCAL is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization founded in 2012. It was established to help children globally and locally, and 100% of proceeds raised during the project goes directly to efforts chosen by area hosts. In 2021, 17 states participated with 59 total sites selling at total of 15,000 trees.

BATCAL's local site-director is Randy Stoudemire, who Woodside credited for "making this community-wide event possible."

Woodside added, "We're super excited about this



Randy Stoudemire has visited Cambodia several times, where funds from Buy a Tree. Change a Life. are directed each year to pay for housing, food, and much more.



Pictured at Crabtree General Store lot in Franklin at the annual Christmas tree sale, are Randy Stoudemire, site director for BATCAL, and Prentiss Church pastor J.D. Woodside, with his wife, Angie; sons, Jayden, Julian and Jensen; and daughter, Ava.

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Shop With a Cop program a win-win for both children and volunteers

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

Captain Dani Burrows of the Macon County Sheriff's Department, has been assisting with the annual Christmas project, Shop With a Cop (SWAC), for several years. Although it is a national volunteer effort, the holiday program became one that outgoing Sheriff Robbie Holland began to champion, due to a law enforcement incident that had occurred one Christmas season.

Currently, Capt. Burrows, who retires Nov. 30, is working with Deputy SRO (School Resource Officer) Cassie Shuler, who will take over SWAC logistics next year. Capt. Burrows explained that the volunteer-run effort makes certain underprivileged children have an opportunity to shop for a Christmas gift for themselves and a loved one. SWAC will take place this year on Friday, Dec. 16, from 4 to around 8 p.m.

Approximately 100 area service-oriented professionals serving in various departments, including police, sheriff, fire, social services, education, emergency, forest service, wildlife, and more, are paired with 250-300 Macon County children in need. And, non-service volunteers help in other capacities.



Captain Dani Burrows helps Laurel Brown with her Christmas shopping in photos from a past Shop With a Cop.

"Volunteers go and pick up the child, with another volunteer riding along, take them shopping at Wal-Mart with their \$100 donated gift card, take them out to dinner, take them to the Drake Education Building at 210 Phillips Street in Franklin to get their packages wrapped, and then spend time with Santa Claus and have their photograph taken, before they are returned home," said Capt. Burrows.

"[SWAC] is a program that I and many people believe in," she added.

"It's a program that blesses the children, but it also blesses the volunteers. You only have to look as close as your backyard to see people in need. And there are many children in Macon County in need."

Capt. Burrows pointed out that if any children are not served on Dec. 16, for various reasons, she and volunteers work up until Christmas Eve "to make sure all children have a shopping opportunity."



"We are looking forward to another great event, and it wouldn't be possible if not for the incredible support we get from our community," said Sheriff Holland. "One hundred percent of the contributions to SWAC goes directly to the program. For more than 26 years, SWAC has provided Christmas to families who might not have had presents under their tree on Christmas morning

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like many of us do. It's not just about gifts. It's about building relationships and bonds with kids who may only see these officers and local heroes during dramatic and life changing times in their lives. Most who participate with taking children have made it a family tradition each year and enjoy taking their children to take other children on their shopping spree."

"We let the children choose their gifts during their shopping spree," said Capt. Burrows, "They usually always have their idea of what is needed or what they want – and what someone else might need or want. What is really special to see is that some kids want to spend all their money on someone else."

SWAC "always needs volunteers," said Capt. Burrows. Anyone interested can contact her by email at dburrows@maconnc.org or by calling her office, 828/349-2107, through Nov. 30. Or, email or call Shuler: cshuler@maconnc.org, 828-200-2243.

Anyone can also make a donation for SWAC by mailing a check to Caroline Cook, P.O. Box 2785, Highlands, N.C. 28741; or, drop the check by



Sheriff's Department Capt. Dani Burrows has helped organize the annual Shop With a Cop effort for many years. A visit with Santa is also a part of the experience for underprivileged Macon County children.

the Highlands Police Department. Make checks out to Shop With a Cop or SWAC. Donations are tax deductible.

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Cowee's Rickman Store offers an historical Christmas experience

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

For a dose of feel-good Christmas cheer, The Rickman Store's last Saturday opening – before it closes up for the winter – is a focus on holiday traditions – caroling, bluegrass music, baked goods, hot chocolate, crafts, art, locally authored books, and more. On Dec. 10, from 10-4, the Nikwasi Players dulcimer group is featured, as is local writer/author



Bluegrass jam sessions are held each Saturday May through December for anyone who wants to participate.



Every Saturday from mid-May to mid-December, the historic general store is open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., but on Dec. 10, the focus is on a traditional Christmas.

J.A. McPhail.

For just a year shy of a century, Rickman General Store has thrived in the Cowee-West Mill area, now considered a National Historic District. Merchant Thomas Rickman, who began operating the store in 1925, died in 1994. Mainspring Conservation Trust purchased the building so that the historic spot would be preserved and available to the public. The store opens each Saturday, from the second Saturday in May to the second Saturday in December, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The store is now part museum, part antique store, part information center, and part local arts and crafts retailer.

Volunteer Connie Reynolds said, "People don't realize how much is offered here, and it's a great place to ... just enjoy this time of year, a true, traditional holiday experience. The store has really blossomed since we opened back up after the pandemic. People suddenly realize it's here and they see it as a true gem. We have people come here from all over the world."

The weekly bluegrass jam sessions draw musicians from throughout the region.

"We never know who will show up, but they play so well together," added Reynolds.

For the special Christmas Saturday at The Rickman Store, volunteers are needed.

"But we need volunteers every Saturday as well," said volunteer Elena Carlson, "for whatever hours people can



Rickman Store features antiques from a bygone era as well as crafts from local artists.



spare."

Carlson, who is also considered the store's unofficial

historian, said interested volunteers can sign up through Mainspring Conservation Trust; in person at The Rickman Store, 259 Cowee Creek Road; or, Friends of The Rickman Store on Facebook.

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Holiday Angels bringing community together for decades

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

For the last month or so, Macon Program for Progress (MPP) has been connecting “sponsors” with “clients” for its annual Holiday Angels project. Community residents, business owners, and organization leaders have “adopted” a family, adult or veteran to make their Christmas a bit brighter.

MPP’s Holiday Angels organizer, Felicia Roberts, explained that the annual, 30-plus-year-old effort “helps facilitate the giving and support of community partners to provide for families during the Christmas holidays. Last year Holiday Angels provided services to more than 350 eligible clients.”

In order to meet all needs, MPP accepts donations and sponsorships. Said Roberts,

“Sponsors then shop, wrap, and deliver gifts, and then they arrange to take their sponsored children shopping or bring their wrapped gifts to MPP administrative offices no later than Monday, Dec.12,” said Roberts.

Clients pick up their gifts at MPP before Christmas.

Prior to the holidays, MPP accepts financial donations to purchase food gift



Volunteer Phyllis DeNeef is surrounded by donated toys and other gifts for Macon Program for Progress's annual Holiday Angels program.

cards, gifts, and toys for children and families that do not receive a sponsor. In order to qualify as a “client,” applicants must be low-income adults 65 and older, special needs adults on disability, veterans, or low-income families of children, birth through age 18 years old. El-

igibility is based on the Federal Poverty guidelines and applicants must provide valid proof of all household income.

“This program is so important to our community,” commented Roberts. “It gives families and individuals going through tough times and hardships a

chance to receive a Christmas blessing. It also brings our community together through sponsorships. We are so lucky to live in a town where we all come together to support one another and bring holiday hope and cheer to those in need.”

For questions about Holiday Angels, contact Felicia Roberts at froberts@mppnhc.org.



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828 Vets now overseeing Toys for Tots in Western North Carolina

Deena C. Bouknight
Contributing Writer

A local veterans group – 828 Vets – has assumed responsibility for Toys for Tots early this year.

828's mission is to promote growth, awareness, and success for veterans in business. The group was approved in May to manage logistics for the local effort of the Marine Reserves Toys for Tots initiative. Representatives of the group attended a national training event in Washington, D.C., in September to successfully facilitate Toys for Tots in Franklin, which typically meets the holiday gift needs of more than 700 children in the area.

A United States Marine Corps reservist founded the national Toys for Tots in 1947 at the urging of his wife. More than 400,000 Americans were killed in action during World War II, and many children suffered from the loss of parents and relatives and financial difficulties at Christmas during and following those war years. The Toys for Tots program is celebrating its 75th year and collects new unwrapped toys and distributes them to children. Besides toys, Toys for Tots do-



Marine Reserve Toys for Tots Coordinator, Jack Brennan, works with volunteers (from left) Jeanilee Fenoglio, Sara Taylor and Paula Thompson.

nates books through a literacy effort with Scholastic, Inc.

Macon County CareNet is providing a warehouse locally for the accumulation and organization of toys this year.

"We moved the remaining prior year's inventory to the CareNet Warehouse on Bidwell Street in early October," said the Marine Reserve Toys for Tots Coordinator Jack Brennan. "The 828 Vets organized and inventoried all items, and we are currently awaiting additional books, toys, and supply shipments."

Brennan extolled the efforts of 828 Vets volunteers, including member Alan Anderson, who Brennan said, "has done an incredible job of signing over 30 local businesses for the 828 Vets Toys for Tots program. We have distributed collection boxes for most of these organizations and are hoping for an additional shipment to fill the demand."

Several events in November have helped bolster support for Toys for Tots. Countryside Chevrolet hosted a Toys for Tots fundraiser the second weekend of November. Old Edwards Inn in Highlands had a Christmas party for local employees and patrons with a Toys for Tots fund-raising component.

"828 Vets' primary mission for Toys for Tots revolves around making this event successful for the children of Macon County and developing a game plan to maximize effectiveness for the fu-

ture. We want to participate in many counties in this area and must build our infrastructure first," said Brennan.

Toys for Tots needs your help with toys. Volunteers are always needed to assist in various ways to ensure Toys for Tots is successful. Email Jack Brennan at jb@828vets.com to participate.

"Toys for Tots is a year-round business requiring a budget to cover inventory, supplies, supplemental toys, and other operational expenses," added Brennan. "Without monetary donations, we would not be able to continue this mission."

Make checks payable to Marine Toys for Tots CO/828 Vets, Attn: Jack Brennan, 53 East Main Street Suite J, Franklin, N.C. 28734.

828 Vets is a volunteer-run organization and also participates when families lose their homes due to fires, accidents, and natural calamities.



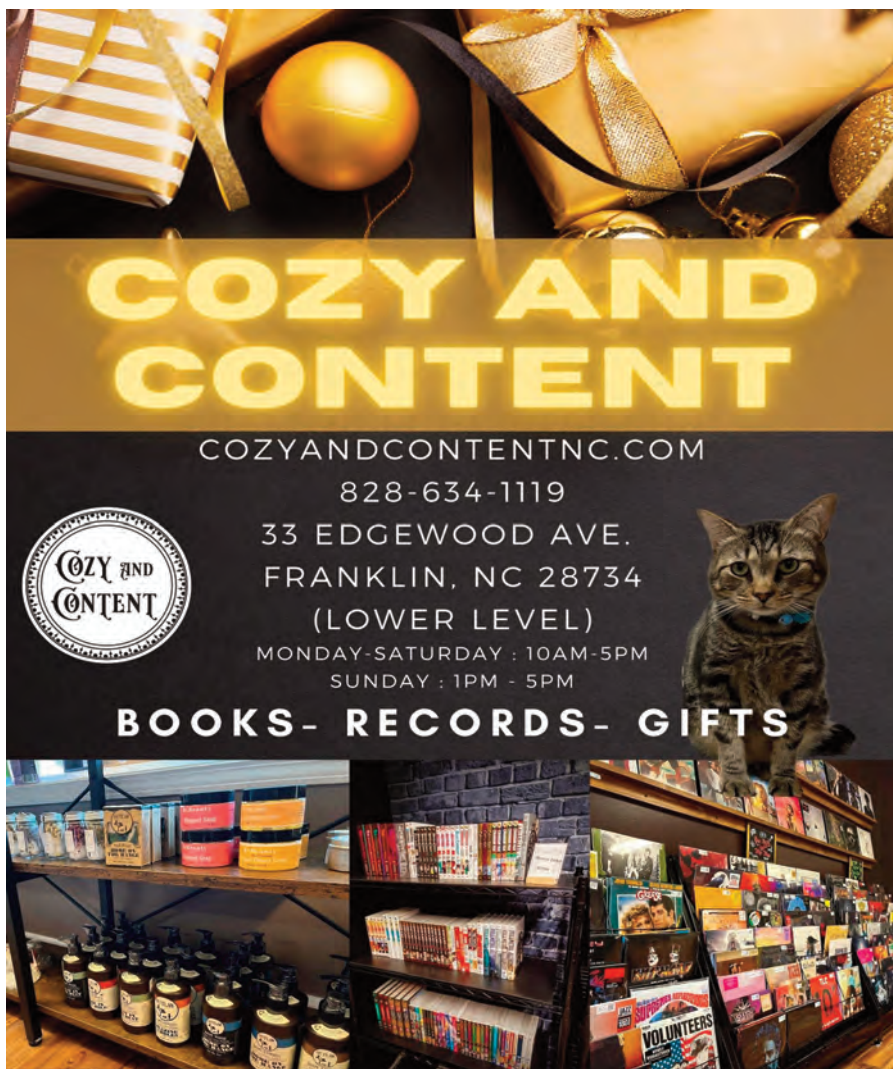
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'Hard Candy Christmas Arts and Craft Show' celebrating 35 years

The Mountain Artisans Hard Candy Christmas has been offering fine arts and crafts for 35 years.

The Annual 'Hard Candy Christmas' is being held Nov. 25 and 26, at the Western Carolina University Ramsey Center in Cullowhee, N.C.

This event is a "Mountain Christmas Tradition" in this area, featuring original arts and crafts at great prices.

This year's Featured Artist is Ginger Rutland famous for her fine needlework. She creates original quilts, home accessories, and ornaments.

One hundred local and regional artisans will be joining Rutland with their dazzling collections of handwork in categories including clay, glass, rustic woodcraft, holiday quilts, along with heirloom ornaments and much more including a Pine Needle Basketmaker this year.

Exhibitors from Macon County are: Jerry Stanley - Fine Outdoor Furniture; Sandy DeNeir - painting on found pieces; Bonnie & Denny Wallace - Holiday Decorations; Laura Craig - Goat Milk Soap; Janet Anderson - Fine jewelry and fused Glass Art; David & Silvia Pruitt - Little



This year's featured artist at the "Hard Candy Christmas Arts & Crafts Show" is Ginger Rutland with her fine needlework, original quilts, home accessories and ornaments.

Mountain Churches /Heritage needlework; Andrew Hunter - Rustic Furniture; Roy Owenby - Books; Steve & Karen Waldroop - Western Wood; Bev Borhardt - Quilting; Debbie Fouts - Pebble Art; Mountain Soap Box - cold processed soap; Mark & Susan Kennedy - Hand-quilted Purses/Photography; Live Edge Designs - Tables and Accessories; Shannon Noelke - Sterling Silver/Gemstones;

Joanna Ormond - Kids Soap/toys; Steven Yuzzi - Hemp.

Local favorite guitarist Ronnie Evans will be strumming old favorite holiday tunes and presenting his newest historical novel.

Humble Beginnings

The Mountain Artisans Arts & Crafts Show started in 1987 with a dream and only eight exhibitors.

Organizer Doris Hunter shared the details of the show's humble beginnings.

"The very first year of the Christmas show was birthed from just wanting to make some Christmas money," said Hunter.

Hunter talked seven other artisans into joining her in renting the Slagle Memorial Building in Franklin. Those artisans were Michael M Rogers (Watercolors); Linda McKay (Victorian crafts and bears); Cowee Creek Pottery (the Deeks); Marty Wilson (Wooden toys); Cindy Lightfoot (Granny Dolls); Gail and Roger Marsengill (Country Craft) and Ron Eirwood (Jewelry).

The group put ad in the local papers

and stuck a little sign on the road and hoped someone would come.

"It was an amazing turnout," said Hunter. "Customers parked everywhere to shop for original craft and art at great prices and they never stopped coming."

The next year, Phil Drake donated the Callahan Building and 18 exhibitors participated.

The third year, the show moved to the Macon County Community Building with 24 artisans.

"By the fourth year, the fun of setting up the show on Thanksgiving afternoon was wearing thin and most participants wanted to exhibit but not work, so I bravely volunteered to promote the event," Hunter said.

She called it "The Hard Candy Christmas" and charged a \$1 admission.

"It was a daring decision. A lot of work and not much money, but I had stepped into my destiny. I discovered I liked people and wanted to help them sell their creations, too. I had discovered my 'calling' and never looked back," Hunter shared.

Hunter had her own booth of her popular Pinecone birds and managed the show, too.

"I was a single mother with children in school and needed every dollar."

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County Chamber, Hunter moved the show to Western Carolina University Ramsey Center. Hunter considered this a step up as many artisans would come to Cullowhee that may never come to

every year to see what is new; my family, who encouraged me when the show was in its chrysalis stage; and newspapers who gave me coverage when I could hardly afford to pay," she said.



Then and Now: Doris Hunter has been participating and organizing the Mountain Artisans arts and crafts shows for 35 years.

Franklin.

"We had better accommodations and comfortable surroundings there."

Hunter expressed that many people have contributed to the ongoing success of the show.

"As the 35th anniversary of the Christmas show comes around, I have many people to thank for the success it has become: My son, Dan, built me a web site www.mountainartisans.net that I never dreamed would happen and patiently taught me to be computer savvy; many customers, who became friends, return

"Most of all, it all happened because of faith – faith in God, my Father and my Lord Jesus, and I thank Him. He unfolded this plan for my life. What a grand reward," she concluded.

Hard Candy Christmas hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day. Admission is \$5 for adults and children under 12 are admitted free. Free convenient parking and concessions.

Learn more at www.mountainartisans.net or email Doris Hunter djhunter155@gmail.com, show producer, or call (828)524-3405.

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      Q1[Do you know them well?] -- YES --> Q2[Do you have trouble deciding?]
      Q1 -- NO --> Q3[Is there a bookstore near you?]
      Q2 -- NO --> Q3
      Q2 -- MAYBE --> A1[Get them a bookstore gift card!]
      Q3 -- YES --> A2[Get them a book!]
      Q3 -- DUH. --> A2
  
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Grandfather Mt.'s Hawk Watch results are in

Staff and volunteers at Grandfather Mountain, the not-for-profit nature park run by the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation, came together during the month of September for a vast citizen-science project to count and identify the numerous species of raptors during their annual journey to warmer climates.

Raptors are birds of prey, such as hawks, eagles, owls and vultures. The telltale signs of the raptor are sharp talons, a hooked upper bill and keen eyesight. While some raptors remain in place during winter, most will travel south, where food is more abundant.

Visitors had a front-row seat to one of nature's most stunning spectacles and were invited to join the mountain's naturalists as they tallied the number of migrating passersby in the sky from viewing locations on Linville Peak and Half Moon Overlook. Grandfather Mountain is one of more than 300 Hawk Watch sites officially designated by the Hawk Migration Association of North America.

This year, a total of 3,064 migrating raptors were recorded overhead, with broad-winged hawks being the most-counted species. The average monthly total for Hawk Watch over the last 12 years is 4,108.

More than 900 hours were invested in Hawk Watch in September 2022, between both volunteer and staff time.

The busiest day of the count came on Sept. 21, during which 1,387 birds were recorded, with favorable weather conditions of clear skies and sunshine. The second-busiest day came on Sept. 23, when 929 raptors were counted.

"Weather is always a key factor when it comes to Hawk Watch and is ultimately what determines if we see a large number of birds, or if they get pushed further east or west," said John Caveny, director of education and natural resources with the Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation. "Rain or fog, storm systems, temperature and prevailing winds all play a key part in the routes that raptors



Staff and volunteers at Grandfather Mountain came together during the month of September for a vast citizen-science project to count and identify the numerous species of raptors during their annual journey to warmer climates. More than 900 hours were invested in Hawk Watch in September 2022, between both volunteer and staff time. Photo by Dennis Smith

take as they migrate. They want to take the path of least resistance on their journey south – and sometimes that is directly over Grandfather Mountain, and other times it is not."

Grandfather Mountain is typically a prime spot for viewing this phenomenon because it sits along the eastern escarpment of the Appalachian Mountains, and its rocky peaks generate strong thermal uplifts and allow excellent visibility.

Aside from offering quite a show, Hawk Watch serves an important purpose. The annual counts from Grandfather Mountain and other locations help track hawk populations and migration routes over time and contribute to this growing body of research.

"We cannot make population trend estimates based on our site alone," said Caveny. "We have to zoom out and look at the region as a whole to get an idea if we are seeing more or less of a species."

The goal is to accumulate a large set of data over an extended period of time in order for researchers to examine the birds' migratory patterns and what external factors may be affecting them.



This year, a total of 3,064 migrating raptors were recorded overhead, with broad-winged hawks being the most-counted species. The average monthly total for Hawk Watch over the last 12 years is 4,108. The annual counts from Grandfather Mountain and other locations help track hawk populations and migration routes and contribute to a growing body of research. Photo by Will Bennett

"Overall, this is a great program because all of the data that we, and all other Hawk Watch sites, input into Hawk-Count.org is available for researchers to look at population trends of species, as well as to create models of the flyways that the species are taking," said Caveny. "When it comes to conservation projects like this, long-term data is key in being able to better understand the issues that these species are facing."

To learn more about Hawk Watch at Grandfather Mountain, visit www.grandfather.com/hawk-watch.

To view more data from this year's Hawk Watch, visit www.hawkcount.org/grandfathermountain.



Mountain Voices is a 50-voice mixed community chorus under the direction of Beverly Barnett.

Mountain Voices to present Christmas concert Dec. 8

Theresa Ramsey

It's that time of year when we embrace our "favorite things" to help us remember the joys of Christmases past in an endeavor to help spread holiday cheer in a meaningful way today. Most often, we feel overwhelmed and bombarded by the busyness of the season so finding those calming moments of reflection are true gifts which recharge us and lift our spirits.

Celebrating all things Christmas, Mountain Voices community chorus will perform their Christmas Concert on Thursday, Dec. 8, beginning at 7 p.m., at First United Methodist Church, 66 Harrison Avenue, Franklin. From jazzy arrangements to big band orchestral scores, from Irving Berlin's movie themes to sounds of the '60s, from bluegrass tunes to favorite carols with an African twist, from gospel songs to traditional anthems – this year's concert represents all genres of music and is sure to bring holiday cheer.

Mountain Voices, a 50-voice mixed community chorus with members from Western North Carolina and northeast Georgia, was formed in 2015 and is under the direction of Beverly Barnett. Chorus members meet year-round to prepare for summer and winter concerts. Mary Pittman is the piano accompanist and other local instrumentalists will join her to complete the band – flute, cello, violin/fiddle, bass, guitar, drums, concert bells, percussion, and brass: trumpets, trombones, and tuba.

The public is invited for an evening of familiar songs – a mountain tradition you don't want to miss. The concert is free; donations are appreciated to offset the cost of music and are tax deductible as allowed by the IRS for this 501 (c) 3 organization.

If you like to sing or want more information about Mountain Voices, contact us at mountainvoiceswnc@gmail.com or visit facebook.com/Mountain-Voices-875849255839858.

Christmas with fiddler Finn Magill Nov. 29

Award-winning violin virtuoso Andrew Finn Magill will play a program of holiday music on Tuesday November 29 at 7:00 pm in the First Presbyterian Chapel, 26 Church Street, Franklin. Magill grew up studying Irish, old-time, and bluegrass music with some of the world's best fiddlers at Asheville's Swannanoa Gathering, and has been performing it worldwide ever since. Along with beloved Christmas tunes, the Nov. 29 concert includes selections with a distinct Celtic flavor. In addition to Finn's music, the event will feature a visual arts exhibit by ceramicist



Kay Wolf and other artists from Franklin's Uptown Gallery. An All-Ireland Fiddle finalist, Magill has performed on



Andrew Finn Magill

The historic First Presbyterian Chapel has wheelchair access from the Church's parking lot. Doors will open at 6:30. This pay-what-you-can event is produced by the Arts Council of Macon County. For information phone 828-524-ARTS or email arts4all@dnet.net.

NPR, TEDx, and MTV-U, has played concert halls around the world, was a Fulbright Fellow and North Carolina Arts Council Fellow, and has taught traditional and old-time music at fiddle camps across the U.S. and abroad. He'll spend the day Nov. 29 working with students in Cartoogechaye Elementary School. While performing steadily, he has always composed and is now creating film scores. Hear and learn more about him at andrewfinmagill.com.



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Go beyond the traditional with unique Amaryllis, Poinsettia varieties

Melinda Myers – Columnist

Boost your spirits and winter décor with new shapes and colors of amaryllis. Today there are many beautiful options beyond the traditional red.

Double amaryllis have jumbo flowers with multiple layers of petals. Kick off the season with the early-blooming variety Alaska. Its frilly white petals contrast nicely with the lime green throat and the flowers last for weeks. Early blooming amaryllis are grown in the southern hemisphere and, if planted by early November, they bloom in time for holiday decorating and gift-giving.

Extend amaryllis season with doubles that are grown in the northern hemisphere. Start these amaryllis bulbs any time before January for flowers in mid to late winter. Sweet Nymph has layers of creamy white petals that are decorated with coral pink stripes. The blossoms add romantic charm

to any setting. The extra-large flowers of Giant Amadeus change colors as they go from bud to mature bloom. The blossoms start out mostly white with a fine red outline. The color of the petals gradually intensifies to blushing pink, rose, and coral.

Doublet is another stunning winter-blooming double. Its flowers feature narrow petals in a variety of widths, all with red and white candy cane stripes. You can expect two or three flower stalks from each bulb and as many as a dozen flowers. For more subtle beauty, consider double amaryllis Elvas with white petals outlined in red.

New varieties of single amaryllis can be equally dramatic. Opal Star is an early bloomer with slightly longer and narrower petals than most. Its muted, pale red flowers feature a chartreuse and white star in the center that extends to the tips of the petals. Cape Horn has broad, rose-pink petals and a white star. Remember to plant these early-blooming amaryllis in the fall so you can share living bouquets for the holidays.

Keep the flowers coming with varieties that bloom in January and February. Terra



Melinda Myers

Cotta Star is sure to attract attention with its striking colors and exquisite details. The salmon, rose, buttercream and pistachio petals have dark red veining that makes each blossom a standout. Yellow Star is another unique variety with elegant ivory and lime green flowers that are sure to lift your spirits. Rosy Star's exquisite flowers feature snowy white petals and a rose-pink blush.

Don't underestimate red amaryllis as there are many exciting variations to choose from. Charisma is an early-blooming single with petals that display an ombre effect of red and white. Gervase and Flamenco Queen are later blooming singles with a similar fade on their petals. For extra bold red and white flowers, consider single amaryllis Spartacus or Minerva, and the double variety Splash.

Order your amaryllis bulbs early for the best selection. When the bulbs arrive, store them in a cool, dry dark place until you are ready to plant.

After you pot up the bulbs, place them in a warm, bright location to encourage them to break dormancy. Once the first bud emerges, you can expect to have flowers in two to four weeks. Enjoy all the beauty that growing amaryllis (Longfield-Gardens.com) provides with only minimal care.

New Ways to Display Poinsettias This Holiday Season

Nothing says the holidays like a poinset-

tia. This year, try some new ways to display this festive plant.

Poinsettias are available in a variety of colors including white, pink, hot pink, yellow, peach, marbled and speckled. These colorful parts of the plant, often referred to as flowers, are actually modified leaves called bracts. The real flowers are small, yellow and appear at the tip of the stem surrounded by the bract.

Look for new places to display your poinsettia. Place a plant on a side or serving table. Remove the foil and set the plant in a decorative container. Try a hot pink poinsettia in a white pot or several different colors set in a serving tray, basket, or unique container. Add a table runner, candlestick, bowl of colorful fruit or other decorative touches.

Dress up individual or a group of poinsettias. White poinsettias donned with colorful berries, Chinese lantern pods and bobbles may be all you need for an eye-catching display.

Use poinsettias as a centerpiece for your holiday meals. Place several potted poinsettias in the middle of the table. Cover the plastic pots with greens. Then add some colorful pepper berries, cranberries, apples, or ornaments. Compact poinsettias like the Princettia poinsettia with its abundant vibrant flowers work well for this application. Your guests will be able to see across the table as they visit over dinner, enjoying the holiday ambience created by these beautiful plants.

Dress up each place setting with a cut poinsettia bloom. Simply cut the flowers off a potted poinsettia plant to the desired length. Place it in a floral water pick, the water-filled tubes used for cut flowers. Tuck the bloom into a napkin, set it in a small bud vase or add a ribbon to dress it up. They make great party favors for your guests.

Look for other ways to include these in your holiday décor. Even one cut poinsettia flower set among a bowl of silver, gold or white ornaments adds a nice holiday touch. Set a few cut flowers aside to use as unique package adornments. Just secure the flower, floral pick and all, with a colorful ribbon to the gift.

Use cut poinsettia flowers in a vase like you would other blooms. Even one of these

large blossoms puts on quite the display and is sure to brighten even the smallest of rooms.

Combine your poinsettia with a few greens and other flowers. Quickly sear the cut end of the poinsettia stems to prevent the sticky sap from leaking into the water. Dress up your arrangement by filling the vase with cranberries, small ornaments, or other colorful adornments.

While enjoying your holidays, a discussion on the proper pronunciation of the plant's name may arise. Some say Poinsett-a and don't pronounce the second i. Others include it and say Poinsett-e-a? You will find both pronunciations in various dictionaries. In other words, either one is considered correct, so no one loses this debate.

These colorful plants are sure to



A holiday display with pink and red Princettia Euphorbia poinsettias.

Photo courtesy of Suntory Flowers

brighten your spirits throughout the holiday season, so be sure to make some space for a few poinsettia displays.

Melinda Myers has written more than 20 gardening books, including the recently released *Midwest Gardener's Handbook, 2nd Edition* and *Small Space Gardening*. She hosts *The Great Courses "How to Grow Anything" DVD* and instant video series and the nationally-syndicated *Melinda's Garden Moment TV & radio program*. Myers is a columnist and contributing editor for *Birds & Blooms* magazine and is often commissioned for her expertise to write articles. For more, visit the web site at www.MelindaMyers.com.



Flamenco Queen is a new and unique amaryllis variety with a later bloom time.

Photo courtesy of Longfield-Gardens.com



Deaths & Funerals

Josephine Ray Roper

Josephine Ray Roper, 96, of Franklin, N.C., passed away, Nov. 11, 2022. She was born in Macon County on Oct. 29, 1926, to the late Robert Ray and Beulah Dowdle Ray. She was preceded in death by her husband, George W. Roper.

She worked as a nursing assistant at Angel Medical Center and also worked for Dr. Ernest Fisher for many years. She was a member of Clarks Chapel United Methodist Church and she faithfully watched Dr. Charles Stanley on TV.

She is survived by a special friend, Vicki Allen and several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents and husband, she was preceded in death by two sisters, Myrtle Baker and Christine Dale Ray; and four brothers, R. L. Ray, Paul Ray, Ralph Ray and George Ray.

The family would like to thank the staff of Macon Valley for their care of Mrs. Josephine Roper.

A private service was held at Woodlawn Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Clarks Chapel United Methodist Church Perpetual Cemetery Fund Attn: Alvin Doster 2741 Middle Creek Rd. Otto, NC 28763.

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

Brett Deal

Brett Deal was born on Aug. 1, 1955, to Borden and Babs H. Deal. Both of his parents were writers and successful novelists who encouraged him to be passionate about learning. He attended Millbrook School in New York before going to The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he not only earned a Bachelor of Arts degree but also met his future wife who was the love of his life.

His home library contained thousands of books, many of which are written in several different languages, especially Russian and Greek. He was a history buff and loved literature which ultimately gave him the motivation to study the Russian language. He was outstanding in his ability to learn how to read and speak Russian, and he enjoyed teaching the language to others. He was always very proud of his students.

He was an adventurer and an explorer. He was interested in many different things from art museums to Civil War battlefields. He was an ambitious hiker, naming Mt. Mitchell and the Black Mountains as his favorites. His love of animals, especially dogs and cats, led him to be a volunteer dog walker.

He enjoyed watching movies and listening to a variety of music including classical, with Beethoven as his favorite, old rock and roll, like Chicago and the blues. He was such a big fan of The Grateful Dead he could claim his right to be called a "Dead Head". He also loved to cook and bake, with bread being his specialty. He left a freezer full of different types of flour just waiting to be turned into delicious loaves and pastries.

He passed from this life on Nov. 14, 2022.

He is survived by his wife of 38 years, Karen L. Wallace; his sister, Ashley D. Moss; his half sister, Terry Weinburg; his niece, Amber; his great niece, Isabella; his great nephew, Roman and his aunt, June Hans. He was preceded in death by his parents and his sister, Shane Deal Townsend.

A private service will be held at a later date.

Memorial contributions may be made to Appalachian Animal Rescue, 1521 Old Murphy Road, Franklin, NC 28734.

Moffitt Family Funeral Care is honored to serve the family.

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



Brett Deal

Suzi Kinamon

Suzi Kinamon, 59, of Franklin, N.C., passed away on Nov. 12, 2022. She was born in Phoenix, Ariz., on May 4, 1963, to the late J.C. Sumner and Opal Sumner, who survives her. She was a free spirit and she enjoyed gardening. She was very family oriented, and her greatest passion was her grandchildren. She will be missed by all those who loved her.

In addition to her mother, she is survived by two daughters, Jodi Libasci (Jeremy), and Hali Nordan (Devin); five grandchildren, Cohen Sumner Libasci, Brody Gibbs Libasci, Arleigh Claire Libasci, Adaline Rose Nordan, and Oliver Wren Nordan; two sisters, Patti Taylor, Mary Antoine (Danny); one brother, David Blevins and numerous nieces and nephews.

A private family ceremony will be held at a later date.

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

Macon Funeral Home is assisting with arrangements.



Suzi Kinamon

William 'Bill' Beasley Wykle

William "Bill" Beasley Wykle, 76, of Franklin, N.C., passed away of a stroke, on Thursday, Nov. 17, 2022.

Born in Asheville, N.C., on Dec. 23, 1945, he was the son of the late Martin L. and Alice Jenkins Wykle. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his wife, Deloris Jean Collins Wykle; son, Anthony "Tony" William Wykle; and sister, Juanita E Smith.

He graduated from Franklin High School and received a B.S. in Biology from Western Carolina University. He worked several years in Florida as a Nursery inspector and as a technician in a citrus fruit research laboratory. After returning to Franklin, he worked at the Highlands Biological Station. He was a botanist and enjoyed studying plants. He compiled a book on history and genealogy of the Wykle family. He enjoyed reading, hiking, playing chess and checkers, and gardening. He had a passionate interest in medicinal plants and mushrooms. He was a member of the Franklin Seventh Day Adventist Church and involved in Pathfinders for many years. He will be deeply missed by his many friends and relatives.

He is survived by his wife, Lois Holland Clark Wykle; brother, Robert "Bob" Wykle of Winston Salem, N.C.; granddaughter, Rachael Wykle; and one great granddaughter, Antoinette Wykle; Lois's children, Michael Clark, Michelle Strickland, and Arlene Drinnon of Franklin; six step grandchildren; and 13 step great grandchildren.

Funeral service will be held Wednesday, Nov. 23, at 2 p.m., in the Chapel of Macon Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 1 to 2 p.m., one hour prior to the service at Macon Funeral Home. Rev Randy Drinnon, Rev. Michael Stephens, and Rev. Davis Hooper will officiate. Burial will be at Liberty Baptist Church cemetery.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

Elizabeth Adams

Elizabeth Adams, 91, of Franklin, N.C., passed away Thursday, Nov. 17, 2022.

She was born to the late James and Jacqueline Durham Norwood in Birmingham, Ala. She was of the protestant faith and was baptized into the Methodist church. She was a master gardener, HOA Treasurer for Heritage Hills for several years, and a lifetime lover of Frank Sinatra.

She is survived by her sons, William L. Adams, David Adams (Savita); daughters, Kim Merritt (Scott), Karyn Adams, Jenni Adams Brannen (Bill); four grandchildren, Rebecca Leigh Merritt (Mikaela Dworken), Andrew Scott Brannen, Adam Russell Brannen, Ian Edward Adams; two great grandchildren, Carter Scott and Catherine Anna Dworken; her significant other, Victor Forbes; and many nieces and nephews.

A celebration of life will be held Saturday, Dec. 10, at 11 a.m. in the chapel of Macon Funeral Home. The family will receive friends one hour prior to service, 10 to 11 a.m. Rev. Minor Gorge will officiate.

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

Macon Funeral Home is handling the arrangements.

'Mountain Holiday Traditions' with Genealogy Society December 1

The Swain County Genealogical and Historical Society Holiday Party "Mountain Holiday Traditions," will be held Thursday, Dec. 1, at 6:30 p.m., at the Swain County Regional Business Education and Training Center, 45 East Ridge Drive, Bryson City.

Good cheer planned for the evening is the celebration of the holidays with Society family and friends with the first potluck meal since 2019. The evening will begin with a Potluck meal. Everyone is asked to bring your favorite traditional holiday food to share. Good Times for the evening will be led by Curtis Blanton who will tell stories of Christmas Past in the Mountains mingled with leading holiday carols. Note that this year's event is different from the past—we will not be doing the silent auction but instead plan to have a raffle some time in 2023.

Curtis Blanton, native of Jackson County, served in the U.S. Air Force and then worked with the US Department of Energy, Oak Ridge, Tenn. Upon retirement, he returned to his childhood home of Jackson County. As with so many natives, he has that unique, special knowledge and historical understanding of mountain cultural and heritage that comes from having lived here. In the past, he has presented stories during the holiday season at Webster. Blanton has produced several books about mountain people and their stories among which are "Tales from the Porch" and "Fireside Tales." Blanton lives with his wife, Janice Monteith Blanton in Webster.

Come and help launch the holiday season with an evening steeped in good cheer, good food and good stories and holiday carols on Dec. 1, at 6:30 p.m., at the Swain County Regional Business Education and Training Center, 45 East Ridge Drive, Bryson City. East Ridge Dr. is a right turn off Buckner Branch Road.

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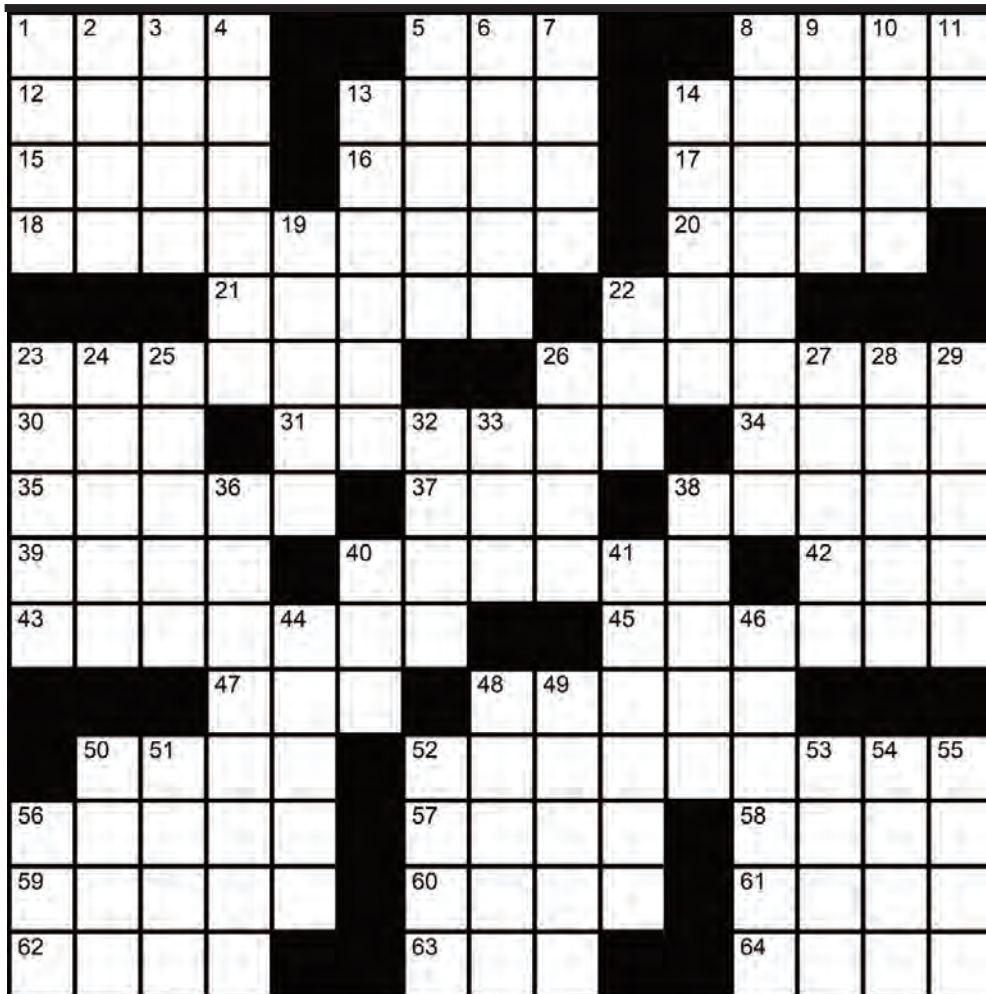
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ACROSS

1. Concert units
5. *Kevin to Buzz in "Home Alone"
8. Emphatic no
12. Phyllo, alt. sp.
13. Chicken of the sea?
14. a.k.a. papaya
15. Biblical firstborn
16. Aquarium show star
17. Type of squash
18. *Like George Bailey's life
20. Struggle for air
21. Aggregate
22. Gangster's gun
23. *Mount Crumpit's misanthrope
26. They refuse to believe
30. *_____ Howard, directed a movie about #23
31. High regard
34. Like dental exam
35. Bullying, e.g.
37. Popular deciduous tree
38. Kaa of "The Jungle Book"
39. Cleopatra's necklace
40. *Like characters in Will Ferrell's famous Christmas movie
42. Use a Singer
43. Continuing forever
45. Wonder Woman's ability to fly, e.g.
47. Galley propeller
48. Type of consonant
50. Corner chess piece
52. *Nicolas Cage's character gets a glimpse of a





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- different life (2 words)
56. Like famous Moulin
 57. Computer image
 58. French money
 59. Alleviated
 60. Target of a jok
 61. Iditarod ride
 62. *Nick Claus' brother, a re-possession agent
 63. Famous frat house
 64. Black and green brews

DOWN

1. Not many (2 words)
2. Japanese soup
3. Architectural drawing
4. Sudan, in French
5. Rides the wave
6. Ear bone, a.k.a. anvil
7. Jezebel's idol
8. *Griswold family's pastime
9. Epic poem
10. Waterproof canvas
11. Part of B.Y.O.
13. Synagogue scrolls
14. Like a Druid
19. Master of ceremonies
22. Engagement symbol
23. Prepare carrots, some-times
24. R2-D2, e.g.
25. Accustom
26. Bruce Willis' ex
27. Use the blunt pencil tip
28. Autumn laborer
29. Lots and lots
32. Regale with a tale, e.g.
33. *Human from North Pole

36. *Bill Murray movie, inspired by Charles Dickens
38. Water-covered sandbank
40. Corncob
41. Orthopedic device
44. In the buff
46. Dryest, as in humor
48. Vacuum, pl.
49. Be theatrical
50. Katy Perry's 2013 hit
51. Yorkshire river
52. Trivial lies
53. Drug smuggler
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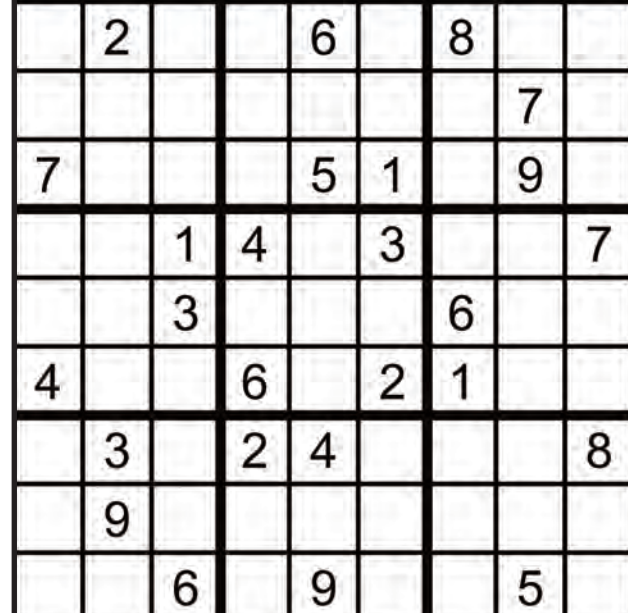
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POSITION AVAILABLE Community Inclusion Specialist Disability Partners is seeking an outgoing individual who can assist people with disabilities to reach their desired level of independence through many specialized services. Must have high school diploma or equivalent, be a self-starter with organizational skills, excellent written and communication skills, knowledge of Microsoft Office and data base operations. Work experience and education will be considered. Benefits include vacation, sick, holidays, dental, life, vision and health insurance along with 401K. Join our team and make a difference. Applications available at Disability Partners, 525 Mineral Springs Drive, Sylva or on our website: disability-partners.org. Call Chuck Oaks for more information (828)631-1167.

Community Fundraisers

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LOOKING FOR Full-time Office Assistant/Service Writer, Must have basic computer, phone skills, knowledge of cars a plus, but willingness to learn is required. Stop by in person at Ramseys Auto Clinic, Inc. 967 Roller Mill Rd.

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POSITION AVAILABLE Program Administrative Assistant Disability Partners is seeking an individual with two years' experience in office administration including Proficient experience with Microsoft Office, accuracy and ability to meet deadlines a must, be a team player with personality to work with all levels of management in a fast-paced work environment. Confidentiality, verbal and written communication a high priority. People with disabilities are encouraged to apply. Applications are available on our website: disability-partners.org or at 525 Mineral Springs Drive, Sylva NC 28779 between 9am and 4pm. Please call Philana Griffin at (828)631-1167 for more information.

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